



## WEEKLY THOUGHTS - DECEMBER 18, 2020

Dearly Beloved,

Greetings to you in the name of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ!

### Sunday, December 20

**Epistle Readings: Acts 3:16-26, Romans 4:13-25, Galatians 4:18-20**

**Gospel Reading, St Luke 3:23-38 RSV (St Matthew 1:1-16) - Genealogy of the Lord**

23 Jesus, when he began his ministry, was about thirty years of age, being the son (as was supposed) of Joseph, the son of Heli, 24 the son of Matthat, the son of Levi, the son of Melchi, the son of Jan'na-i, the son of Joseph, 25 the son of Mattathi'as, the son of Amos, the son of Nahum, the son of Esli, the son of Nag'ga-i, 26 the son of Ma'ath, the son of Mattathi'as, the son of Sem'e-in, the son of Josech, the son of Joda, 27 the son of Jo-an'an, the son of Rhesa, the son of Zerub'babel, the son of She-al'ti-el, the son of Neri, 28 the son of Melchi, the son of Addi, the son of Cosam, the son of Elma'dam, the son of Er, 29 the son of Joshua, the son of Elie'zer, the son of Jorim, the son of Matthat, the son of Levi, 30 the son of Simeon, the son of Judah, the son of Joseph, the son of Jonam, the son of Eli'akim, 31 the son of Me'le-a, the son of Menna, the son of Mat'tatha, the son of Nathan, the son of David, 32 the son of Jesse, the son of Obed, the son of Bo'az, the son of Sala, the son of Nahshon, 33 the son of Ammin'adab, the son of Admin, the son of Arni, the son of Hezron, the son of Perez, the son of Judah, 34 the son of Jacob, the son of Isaac, the son of Abraham, the son of Terah, the son of Nahor, 35 the son of Serug, the son of Re'u, the son of Peleg, the son of Eber, the son of Shelah, 36 the son of Ca-i'n'an, the son of Arphax'ad, the son of Shem, the son of Noah, the son of Lamech, 37 the son of Methu'selah, the son of Enoch, the son of Jared, the son of Maha'lale-el, the son of Ca-i'n'an, 38 the son of Enos, the son of Seth, the son of Adam, the son of God.

### Reflections

The whole book of the Bible is a revelatory description of salvation made possible by the Incarnation of the Only Begotten Son. The Scriptures of the Old Testament endure the prophetic announcement of the coming of the Messiah. The Scriptures of the New Testament reveal and affirm that all prophecies are fulfilled and accomplished in the person of Christ. The Bible has two genealogy presentations, one of which is in St Matthew 1:1-16, which begins with Abraham and ends with Jesus. The other is in St. Luke 3:23-38, which goes back from Jesus to say, "Adam was the Son of God." These two descriptions are family trees which proclaim that Jesus Christ is the Son of God who came into this world into the family of Abraham and David. Abraham is the father of the faithful, and David has the royal inheritance which has been handed down to Jesus for generations to come.

Lukan narrative also conveys the message that Christ came into the family of Adam to correct the first disobedience that led to the first sin and the first taste of death. Altogether, Jesus' genealogy confirms him as the redemptive person entered secular history and lived as one of the rest of the creations.

The Word that became flesh is the essence of the Incarnation. It means that God has become united with his own handwork. When he became one of us, he also made us one with him. Here by reading the ancestry of Jesus, we could feel ourselves as members of his family. We are the Adams and Eves destined to live in the world in this particular period of time. We could walk past every name in the



# ST. GREGORIOS ORTHODOX CHURCH OF TORONTO

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family tree to reach out to God. Thus the genealogy of the Lord is a revelatory treasure hunt for us to see how far or how close we are to Him! Is not that a wonderful, awesome realisation?! Oh, Hallelujah!!!

## Feasts

**December 13, HG Daniel Mar Philexinos Metropolitan, 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary, entombed at Basil Dayara Pathanamthitta.** Sorry we missed it last Sunday. He was a close associate of Puthencavil Kochu Thirumeni. He was appointed the first Secretary General of OCYM, which was clearly a recognition of his enthusiasm as a Christian youth.

## **December 18-21, Martyrdom of St Thomas, the Apostle to India**

What else could be said of him other than our own faith, which was received from him?! We have become the flock of Christ because of his ministry. If we have any pride in being called Christian, any admiration for Orthodox faith and practise, any benefit that our religion has brought to us, any life examples that we might recall that have made our spirituality significantly possible, it should be St Thomas to be praised and thanked for! It was believed that he was attacked from the back by a lancer while he was praying, and he had to literally crawl to reach his death spot after three days. It was at Mylapore, Tamil Nadu, that he breathed his last. His tomb is preserved in St. Thomas's Mount. May the memorial of his blessed martyrdom empower and strengthen us in our pursuit of the Lord.

## **December 20, Martyrdom of St Ignatius Nurono**

He was the bishop of Antioch and the martyr of the church in the first century. He was called 'Theophorus,' the bearer of God, and 'Nurono,' the bearer of fire. On his way to execution, he found himself engaged in talking to people on the streets and writing letters to the faithful communities around him. His letters reflect the early church's Christian theology. His zeal for Christ has been a powerful source of inspiration for millions of Church faithful throughout the centuries.

## **Christmas Holy Liturgy**

The Holy Liturgy of the Nativity will be celebrated on Thursday, 24 December, starting with the evening prayer at 6:00 p.m. followed by the Holy Qurbana and the Nativity Service. Remember to send tender leaves (Osaana Kurutholakal) for offering in the divine fire on or before the 24th.

## **New Year Service**

The New Year's service will take place on Thursday 31st December with evening prayer starting at 6:00 p.m. followed by hymns, devotional talk, intercession and Holy Qurbana.

## **Christmas Lent**

Let us continue prayers and fasting for the Lent season. May the Holy Spirit empower us.

## **Christmas Area Carol Service & Celebration**

The area carols ended this year with a service dedicated to the St. George area last Sunday. Thank you very much to the carol singers and to the members of the area for their participation. Donations are welcome and highly valued.

The Christmas celebration will take place on Saturday 19th December. We will begin our evening prayer at 6:00 p.m. We ask all of our organisations to complete their virtual presentations and send them to the coordinator as soon as possible. The link to join the celebration will be emailed.



## Virtual Meetings

Friday December 18, NE American Diocese MMVS Retreat, 12:00- 01:00 pm  
Friday December 18, Sunday School Liturgical Session for Seniors, 06:00 – 07:00 pm  
Saturday December 19, NEAD Sunday School Virtual Social, 10:00 – 12:00 pm  
Saturday December 19, SGOCT Christmas Celebration, 06:00 – 09:00 pm  
Sunday December 20, SGOCT Choir, Christmas Hymns Practice, 06:00- 08:00 pm

## Thanksgiving Day- Best Contributor Award

Please be informed that this year's highest contributor towards Thanksgiving shall be awarded a souvenir of gratitude from the parish as promised. The awardee is Jason Varghese (J 05). It will be presented at Church after the Christmas Liturgy on Thursday December 24, 2020.

## Thanksgiving Charity Disbursal

As planned earlier, we will be disbursing \$2,000/- which is the 50% of thanksgiving collection to Mississauga Food Bank. It will also be handed over after the Christmas Liturgy. Sincere thanks to all members who have contributed towards the fund.

## MGOCSM

Please find communication from MGOCSM Toronto.

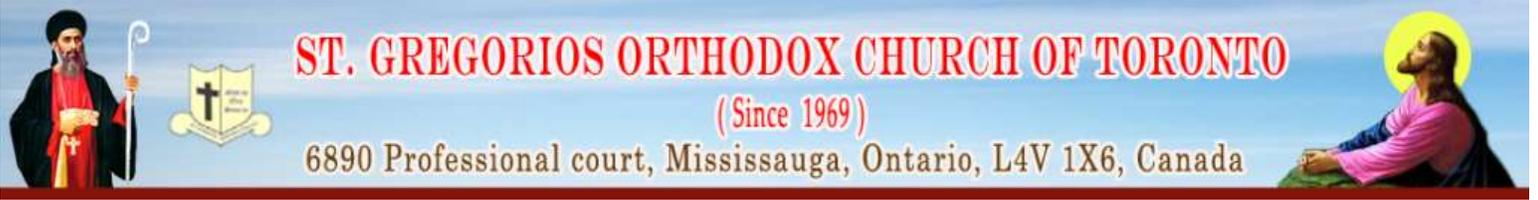
1. We are looking for nominees from our region to be a part of the MGOCSM Toronto Area Core team which leads the Area council, and oversees all regional activities. There are **three positions** available: Diocesan Council Member, Area Secretary and Area Treasurer. These positions are for 2 years and would ideally require someone who has been involved with the regional level activities in the past. If you would like to nominate yourself or someone for any of the roles, please send an email to [mgotoronto@gmail.com](mailto:mgotoronto@gmail.com), no later than Wednesday, **December 23, 2020 by 11:59 PM**. We will be speaking with the nominees and will forward details on finalizing a team towards the end of the month.
2. As per the Kalpana sent out to all the churches in our diocese on December 2, 2020, the annual **Unit Registration** for each church for its MGOCSM chapter is due by the end of the month. Please prepare the registration form and **\$100 USD** to forward to your Church Rep as soon as possible, and it will be mailed out on your behalf to the diocese. Please feel free to contact us by replying to this email, or through your Church Rep if you have any other questions or concerns regarding either of the updates. Please keep this ministry in your prayers, and we hope you have a blessed Nativity season.  
Yours in Christ,  
MGOCSM Toronto Core Team

## Parish Directory

The Parish Directory is in the process of distribution. We are trying to send through members who could drop them at houses within their reach.

## Plaque of Contributors

We are in the process of installing the plaque. Sincere thanks to all our beloved members for their positive response towards this project.



### **Articles required for the church**

We do hope that the articles would be made available for use before Christmas. Sincere thanks to all the contributors.

### **Names of the beloved departed members, a gentle reminder**

We request our members to send the names and dates of the parting of their beloved family members. We would like to keep the list of the departed for remembrance on respective Sundays as we do for Birthdays and Wedding Anniversary Days. Please respond.

### **Election of new office bearers**

We request all the spiritual organizations to elect new office bearers and send their list to the parish office. Please include the election of office-bearers in the next meeting agenda and do the needful.

### **Support HTRC**

Holy Trinity Transfiguration Retreat Centre is a prestigious meeting place of the Diocese of North East America. It requires our support, especially at this time of pandemic. Our holy father Bava Thirumeni has asked all the members of the Malankara Orthodox church to support this spiritual renewal centre. Please find the link to offer our support.

Join us, #GivingTuesday, December 1, 2020, in donating to Holy Transfiguration Retreat Center, a ministry of the Northeast American Diocese. 10% of the funds raised will go to support the seminarians studying for the #NEDiocese. Give now: <https://bit.ly/Give2HTRC>  
#Give2HTRC #SupportOurSeminarians #SupportThisMinistry

### **Liturgical Text for this Sunday**

We will be using the Taksa of St Peter. Please look for the prayers to see how distinct they are.

### **Please find the Link for Live Streaming**

[https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCDT7tcyQw1yZ1\\_yCG9AWStA](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCDT7tcyQw1yZ1_yCG9AWStA)

### **COVID-19 Guidelines**

We continue Holy Liturgy with limited participation of 10 members. We hope that the current restrictions would help in bringing down the spread of infection to zero. News about the vaccine starting to be administered by the end of December gives us more peace at heart. Let us keep on praying for the whole world. God shall protect us, his children everywhere.

May the Gracious Lord keep us from harm and heal the whole world.

Yours in Christ

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