



WEEKLY THOUGHTS - DECEMBER 24, 2021

Dearly beloved,

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

Sunday, December 26, Sunday after the Feast of Nativity

Epistle Readings: Acts 16:6-10, 1 Corinthians 10:1-13

Holy Evangelion, St Matthew 2:9-15, 19:23

2. 9 When they had heard the king they went their way; and lo, the star which they had seen in the East went before them, till it came to rest over the place where the child was. 10 When they saw the star, they rejoiced exceedingly with great joy; 11 and going into the house they saw the child with Mary, his mother, and they fell down and worshiped him. Then, opening their treasures, they offered him gifts, gold and frankincense and myrrh. 12 And being warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they departed to their own country by another way. 13 Now when they had departed, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, "Rise, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there till I tell you; for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him." 14 And he rose and took the child and his mother by night, and departed to Egypt, 15 and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet, "Out of Egypt have I called my son."

2.19 But when Herod died, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt, saying, 20 "Rise, take the child and his mother, and go to the land of Israel, for those who sought the child's life are dead." 21 And he rose and took the child and his mother, and went to the land of Israel. 22 But when he heard that Archelaus reigned over Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there, and being warned in a dream he withdrew to the district of Galilee. 23 And he went and dwelt in a city called Nazareth, that what was spoken by the prophets might be fulfilled, "He shall be called a Nazarene."

Reflections:

The sacred history of the world says that communities have been guided to destinies by God. Whatever happened in history was made possible by the Divine Will. For the Magi, there was a comet. For the shepherds there were angels. For Mary, Elizabeth, Zachariah, and Joseph, they had visitations or visions. For Moses, it was the fire in the bush. For the Israelites, it was the plagues, pillar of fire and cloud, and the Arc of the Covenant. For the early church, it was the tongues of fire. For all the liberation movements and scientific inventions, certain sheer incidents lead to situations.

As we look at our own life, we could see certain guidance working in situations. Our coming to Canada also happened through certain external interventions. As faithful people, we could sense how the Divine intervention guided us to this moment, to this land, to this phase of life. If the star had a purpose, all signs in our life also have purpose. Let us be convinced that our life is purposeful and intended. May the Holy Spirit guide us further.

Feasts:

December 20, St Ignatius Nurono

St. Ignatius was the bishop of Antioch. He was thought to be the child whom Jesus called near and blessed (Matthew 18:2, 19:13-15). It has been believed that Ignatius had a vision of heavenly fiery hosts praising Hallelujah standing in rows and he was called 'Ignatius the Fiery'. It was him who said,



‘Eucharist is the medicine of immortality and an antidote to death.’ He loved the Lord and died for his faith, torn apart by lions.

We all are held by the Lord through Holy Baptism. The Lord has touched and blessed us when we were formed and born in our mother’s womb. How are we going to testify to Christ?

December 21, Martyrdom of St Thomas

St. Thomas came to India in search of us. He died for us. He reflected Christ through his life. His death was not of despair or defeat but hope and victory. The Lord has won through the life and death of His Apostle. As successors to this legacy, we are here to follow up. It will not be that easy. But by the Grace of God, we will be able to do it. May the feast of the martyrdom of the Apostle strengthen us in witnessing Christ.

December 23, Fr N K Koruthu Malpan, 20th anniversary, entombed at Vadavukodu Church

Njarthaankal Koruthu Malpan Achen was a soft-spoken, really loving, pious, gentle, and meek person. He was a teacher who radiated positivity through his tender smile and honest interactions. He taught Syriac hymns and tunes (Ekkara- eight ragas of Syriac chanting) at Pazahaya Seminary. His beautiful voice still reverberates in the hearts and ears of all his students - most of the bishops and priests are his pupils.

December 25, Feast of Nativity (Yaldo Perunnal)

December 25 could be the most beautiful day in our memory. We loved it. We enjoyed it. We smelt it. We enthused the night fire during the Liturgy. We loved the procession in the early morning- usually we had the Christmas liturgy starting at 02:00 am! All will have lighted candles for the procession, we all carry the frankincense too for offering to the fire. Saying aloud the hymns of the angels ‘As the angels and archangels on high in heaven sing praise.

(Melppetta uyarangalil swargeeya maalaakhamaar sthuthiykkunnathu pole..), we go around the fire, watching the flames flying high, feeling the heat and offering the incense, sensing the sweet aroma of the Magi’s gift, we felt Christ with us. He was in the fire, or he was the fire!

Here, in the new era, we are here in Canada to revisit our olden days. As we carry the faith through our childhood liturgical practices, let our kids receive the Lord through the liturgical gathering. Let us come together to join the heavenly angels, shepherds, and the Magi in praising His Nativity and offering the best we have.

The evening prayer will begin at 06:00 pm followed by night prayer, Christmas Liturgy and Holy Qurbana. Please follow the Covid guidelines to ensure the safety of all. See you at church! He is Immanuel, God is with us!

Salute to Sri P T Thomas

Sri P T Thomas, 71 years, the Congress Working President and MLA of Thrikkakkara, has passed away. People in the State of Kerala, irrespective of political differences, offered an emotional farewell. He was one of the best parliamentarians who always spoke convincingly on issues. He stood for environmental protection and ecological conservation. He was a voracious reader and an excellent orator who voiced for social justice and against corruption. He was a secularist who always maintained a healthy relationship with people of all strata. He had asked for his funeral arrangements that no flowers to be offered, only the beautiful Malayalam song ‘Chandrakalabham chaarthiyurangum theeram’, sung by K J Yesudas, written by Vayalar Ramavarma, and music by G Devarajan be played and that his remains should be cremated. After V N Gadgil placed his commission report regarding the conservation of Eastern Ghats, P T Thomas stood with the recommendations and raised his voice in all forums to bring awareness. Saying no to flowers was the last gesture of his commitment to the preservation of nature.



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Christmas Eve – 2021, it was awesome!

Our parish celebration of Christmas by all the organizations was awesome! It was a memorable evening. We had our members come to church in person which encouraged and motivated the performers. Those who couldn't come in person joined virtually. A big thanks to all our members for their prayerful support. We had many kids participate. Sunday School, MMVS, Gregorian Senior Forum, OCYM, MGOCSM, and Parish Choir amazed us with their excellent presentations. We know how difficult it is to find time for planning, scripting, casting, practicing, and performing during the pandemic and amid our various constraints. We can be proud that we have made it!

Sincere thanks to our Managing Committee and all the organizational leaders for taking the effort and for the hard work. Thanks to all participants for their dedication and enthusiasm. All the performers did their roles amazingly and beautifully. How blessed we are with these many talents!

Hope and pray that we will be able to put more into the future and will be able to find the hidden talents in all our members. If God willing, in the coming years, we will have the participation of every family and member in all the programs and events.

May the Lord reward all our hard work and efforts. May we all keep the spirit of unity, fraternity and fellowship always. May the Lord keep us all illumined, healthy, joyful, blessed, and peaceful in the New Year and all years ahead.

Christmas 2021 Celebration news report will be aired through Kairali TV Canada and Radio Madhuraageetham

With immense joy, we wish to announce that our Christmas Celebrations 2021, will be aired as a short report through Kairali TV Canada and also the Carols sung by our Parish Choir will be played in the radio program Madhuraageetham in CMR 101.3 FM.

It is undoubtedly very exciting for our community, especially the participants. Let us look for the timing and enjoy them both. We can also share the schedule to our friends and relatives. We do thank Kairali TV and Canadian Multicultural Radio Network (CMR) for this wonderful opportunity. Our sincere thanks to Sri Mathew Jacob, Bureau Chief, Kairali TV Canada for including and scheduling our programs. We express our deep gratitude to Fr Mathew Thomas for editing and mixing of the 3 hour program to a 6 minutes report. Achen has spent many long hours to do the editing. It has come out amazingly well. Sincere thanks to Gijo Peter for the excellent camera coverage.

The scheduled timing for the Program Telecast is as follows:

Radio

Please tune into:

Madhuraageetham CMR 101.3 FM Radio: December 25th Saturday at 08:30 AM

(The SGOCT Choir Carol Songs audio will be aired and it is going to be in the early part of the program)

Television - KAIRALI TV

December 25th Saturday at 07:30 PM & December 26th Sunday at 03:30 PM

KAIRALI NEWS

December 26th Sunday at 06:30 PM

(All timings are Eastern local)

Communicants Counting Machine, Wave your hand 'ONCE' please

All Sunday participants are requested to register their names at the entrance and as we enter the church interior. Please wave your hand once between the sensor poles of the counting machine if you are to



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take Holy Communion. Please do not wave if you are not taking Holy Communion. Thanks to everyone for your cooperation.

Choir & Acolytes joint practice- Saturdays 05:00-07:00 pm

There will not be choir and acolytes practice this Saturday. Enjoy Christmas!

Meetings ahead, In-Person & Virtual

December 25, Saturday, Evening Prayer at Church, 06:00 - 07:00 pm.

December 26, Sunday, Sunday School Annual Day at church, after Holy Qurbana and refreshment.

Liturgical Text for this Sunday

This Sunday, we will be using the English Taksa of St John Chrysostom.

Link to Sunday Holy Liturgy

Please see below the Link for Live Streaming

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCDT7tcyQw1yZ1_yCG9AWStA

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

Yours in Christ,

Thomas John Achen

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