



WEEKLY THOUGHTS - SEPTEMBER 25, 2020

Dearly Beloved,

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

September 27, 2nd Sunday after the Feast of the Cross

Gospel Reading, St Mathew 16:5-12 RSV

5 When the disciples reached the other side, they had forgotten to bring any bread. 6 Jesus said to them, "Take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees." 7 And they discussed it among themselves, saying, "We brought no bread." 8 But Jesus, aware of this, said, "O men of little faith, why do you discuss among yourselves the fact that you have no bread? 9 Do you not yet perceive? Do you not remember the five loaves of the five thousand, and how many baskets you gathered? 10 Or the seven loaves of the four thousand, and how many baskets you gathered? 11 How is it that you fail to perceive that I did not speak about bread? Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees." 12 Then they understood that he did not tell them to beware of the leaven of bread, but of the teaching of the Pharisees and Sadducees.

Reflections

Many people live in this world without proper food; having no bread to eat can be miserable.

Fortunately, there are organisations and individuals who try to reach out to the hungry and feed them. Although it won't fill all the hunger in the world, it helps millions to survive. The lack of food would eventually harm people and they could die. Consuming the wrong food can also severely harm or kill a person through poisoning. Likewise, consuming the wrong kind of advice can destroy a person.

Humans survive in this highly challenging world making use of ample advises. We tend to rely on some sort of guidance in everything we do. On the road, we follow traffic advises. But what if the sign boards were placed incorrectly? If a driver tried to follow them, he could end up skidding from edges, falling in while turning curves, collide at intersections and so on. The Holy Scripture is full of advises. It helped people in surviving or overcoming adverse situations. Divine guidance liberated people from bondage and miseries. King Ahab's doom was the result of the wrong advice from his wife Isabel. Similarly, the unkind Council of the Sanhedrin led Judas to hang himself after he committed the devastating act of betraying his guru. The Indian Hindu Epic 'Ramayana' tells us the story of how Manathara, the maid's, devilish advice led Kaikeyi to persuade King Dasaratha of Ayodhya to banish his son Lord Rama to forest to live there in exile for 12 years. In the classic tragic Shakespearian play Othello, listening to villainous Iago's traitorous advice, Othello had to kill his wife Desdemona; his loyal and beloved captain Cassio; and then finally himself. Wrong advice can happen due to ignorance. Treacherous advices are most often made with evil intentions to achieve things undeserved.

While Jesus was talking about the leaven of Pharisees and Sadducees, he was pointing to their venomous counsel. He was warning his flock to be careful about never falling prey to them. He knew their intentions than their appearance. What he had cautioned, has come true. Judas was unable to



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take stance from yielding into their vile ways. Even the close followers of Jesus couldn't save him from dying on the cross. They were confused by the words of their leaders, even Peter failed in acknowledging his discipleship in front of those who were warming themselves near the fireplace (Luke 22:54-62). We also give guidance, advice and directions. Are we really thoughtful about what and why we advise others? Do we talk to people with right intentions? How could we assure that our advices never bring any harm to anyone? What precaution could we take from receiving the wrong guidance which might kill the Christ in us?!

Feasts

Sept 21: Alvares Mar Julius Metropolitan, 97th anniversary, entombed at Panaji St Mary's Orthodox Church Goa

St. Julius was born Antonio Francisco Xavier Alvares on April 29, 1836 to a Roman Catholic family in Goa. He got ordained to the Roman Catholic priesthood and served for 18 years. His philanthropic work attracted people. He had come to contact with St Gregorios of Parumala and was received to the Malankara Orthodox Church. He became a Ramban (monk) and went to Brahmavar. By his influence, many joined the Orthodox faith. He was consecrated a bishop by Pulikottil Mar Joseph Dionysius II and got assigned with the mission in Goa and Ceylon. Fr Roche Lopez Nuronah, who had been received into Orthodoxy with St. Julius, also played a major role in nurturing the Brahmavar community in Christian growing. The Brahmavar mission spread and reached to Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh and Maharashtra. During his ministrations, St. Julius participated in the consecration of an Old Catholic priest from France, Joseph Rene Vilatte, to the episcopacy as Metropolitan Joseph Mar Timotheos. Vilatte was sent to the United States to reconcile Catholics to the Orthodox Church.

Mar Julius had to suffer persecution under the Portuguese. He made his ministry more to the benefit of the poor, particularly lepers. When he died (September 23, 1923), due to the opposition of the Portuguese government St. Julius did not receive any sort of Orthodox Christian funeral and was buried in the Municipal cemetery.

In January 1967, St. Julius' tomb was discovered by Metropolitan Mathews Mar Athanasios. On October 5, 1979 Metropolitan Philipose Mar Theophilos had St. Julius' relics translated from the municipal cemetery to St. Mary's Orthodox Church in Panaji (It is a coincidence that the commemoration of HG Philipose Mar Theophilos falls on Sept 28th). In the meantime, his old parish in Brahmavar was assigned to a new priest in 1986 who replaced the church's Roman Rite services in Konkani, Kannada, and Latin with West Syrian Rite services in Konkani and Kannada. In 2010, the parish was made the seat of a diocese under Metropolitan Yakub Mar Elias. (Courtesy: Orthodox Wiki) It is worth noting that the Malankara Church had not only its growth and expansion carried out through its members reaching to various parts of the world where congregations, parishes and Dioceses got established, but also through church's mission established in Srilanka, Karnataka, Tamilnadu, Maharashtra and America under the leadership of Mar Julius, Mar Nuronah and Mar Vilatte. Unfortunately, due to various political, geographical reasons, church couldn't do much follow up till 2000. With the establishing of Brahmavar Diocese, church has made a leap forward regarding its old mission under Mar Julius.



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RSVP/confirmation stopped

We have stopped the RSVP for confirming participation in the Holy Qurbana . Our members can come straight without sending RSVP. Please fill in the data sheet kept in front at the left entrance with the name of only one family member and mention the number of total attendees including small kids from that family. Live-streaming will continue.

MOSC: Catholicate Day collection

The Catholicate Day collection has to be sent by Sept 30 to the MOSC church office. If anyone wishes to contribute, please do so ASAP (note: subscription includes Catholicate Day share).

NEAM Diocese's MMVS virtual retreat:

Northeast American Diocese MMVS has scheduled virtual retreats on Fridays between 12:00 and 01:00pm. It will be a good platform for us to meet other MMVS members spread out all over the US and Canada. Those who are working could also conveniently join because the meetings happen at lunch-break.

Virtual (remote) meetings

Friday Sept 25, SGOCT Divyabodhanam, at 07:30 pm

Saturday September 26, SGOCT Prayer Meeting, 07:00 – 08:30 pm

SGOCT Sunday School

Our parish Sunday School has reopened for the new academic year. If there are any more kids yet to join or yet to register, please find this as the right opportunity to start. Please feel free to contact Elizabeth Vaidhyan on (647) 984 3258 for admission proceedings.

SGOCT OCYM Charity

The Annual Charity drive organised by our parish OCYM is coming to a close by September 30th. Our members those who are willing but yet to contribute, please make it before the closing date.

SGOCT Choir

Our parish Choir is looking for singers, male and female, including previous members and high school students to be part of the church choir. We look for members who would dedicate their time for participating training sessions and church services including Sunday liturgy. Please contact Anand Joseph on (416) 276 5021.

A Good Samaritan

Fr Nobin Philip has made himself an example of sacrificial love of the Lord by donating one of his kidneys to a house wife who was suffering from severe renal failure. Fr Nobin is a priest from Kottayam currently in the Diocese of Angamaly serving the Always UC College Hill St Thomas Orthodox Parish. The surgery has been administered successfully. Both the donor and recipient are doing well. Let us keep them in prayer. Indeed it is a great act of God's love!

Liturgical Text for this Sunday

This Sunday we will be using the English version of the Taksa of St John Chrysostom the 'Golden Tongued'. Please be keen on it to enjoy the literary beauty and to listen to the theological content.



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Please find the Link of Live Streaming

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

Sad Parting

The funeral service of V S Joshua, beloved father of Binu Joshua and father-in-law of Ansu (Dir Ref: B 07) was conducted on September 22nd Tuesday 2:00 PM at St.Mary's Orthodox Church, Mallassery. There was a memorial service conducted at our parish church on Tuesday evening. May we keep the departed soul in our prayer and also pray for the grieving family members.

Holding you all in prayer

Yours in Christ

Thomas John Achen

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