



## WEEKLY THOUGHTS - MARCH 26, 2021

Dearly Beloved,

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

### March 28 Sunday, Palm Sunday

**Epistle Readings: 1 John 5:1-12, Romans 8:18-25, Ephesians 6:1-24**

**Gospel Reading, HQ- St John 12:12-19, Blessing of Palm Leaves- St Mark 11:1-11 RSV**

12 The next day a great crowd who had come to the feast heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem. 13 So they took branches of palm trees and went out to meet him, crying, *“Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord, even the King of Israel!”* 14 And Jesus found a young ass and sat upon it; as it is written, 15 “Fear not, daughter of Zion; behold, your king is coming, sitting on an ass’s colt!” 16 His disciples did not understand this at first; but when Jesus was glorified, they remembered that this had been written of him and had been done to him. 17 The crowd that had been with him when he called Lazarus out of the tomb and raised him from the dead bore witness. 18 The reason why the crowd went to meet him was that they heard he had done this sign. 19 The Pharisees then said to one another, “You see that you can do nothing; look, the world has gone after him.”

### Reflections:

With Palm Sunday, church will be starting the Paschal journey with Christ to Calvary. The week starts with the celebration and procession of Hosannah and ends with the glorious announcement of Resurrection. Days in between are of melancholy and grief. Life is like that. There could be ups and downs. How we balance the extremes would determine our life. Jesus knew that his life on earth was coming to its end. He was young, of vigour, popular, charismatic and had miraculous powers. When he realised the closeness of death, he did not panic or become depressed, but chose to be active in his ministry. He dared to proceed to the Temple with a huge crowd, demonstrated his protest against the wrong practices and publicly challenged the authorities. He didn’t mind striding on a colt. A king will be a king, no matter where one sits or live. One’s dignity is not to be counted on which vehicle one rides. The triumphant entry into the temple rang the final bell for his execution. Leaders decided, not to spare him this time. Days followed by Palm Sunday were of plotting, last supper, farewell, betrayal, rejection, captivity, trial, abuses, manhandling and penal execution. Literally those were days of no hope. When and where, all the hopes vanished; there came the day of resurrection. It was the culmination point of incarnation. Jesus, through his life events, revealed the universal truth of survival of the unfit (world has been taught the other way- survival of the fittest). Let us begin the journey of faith which the Lord travelled. He is inviting us to go with him. The final point will be resurrection, the moment of eternal and everlasting joy. Hosannah in the highest!

### Saturday March 27, Lazarus Saturday

Morning Prayer at 07:00 am, Holy Qurbana at 08:00 am

**SGOCT Parish Lenten Retreat- Saturday March 27, 10:00 am– 12:30 pm**

Our parish Lenten Retreat will be on Saturday March 27 starting at 10:00am. Fr Thomas Raju from Mavelikara Diocese will be delivering the message. This retreat will be meant for all our members, not limited to any particular age group. Please keep the meeting in prayer. Please assure everyone’s participation. The retreat shall be live-streamed through our SGOCT YouTube channel.

**Holy Week: Please find the service schedule**



# ST. GREGORIOS ORTHODOX CHURCH OF TORONTO

(Since 1969)

6890 Professional court, Mississauga, Ontario, L4V 1X6, Canada



**Sunday March 28, Palm Sunday**, Morning Prayer at 09:00 am.

**Wednesday March 31, Pesaha**, Evening Prayer at 06:00 pm, Night Prayer at 07:00 pm, Holy Qurbana at 08:00 pm.

**Friday April 02, Great Friday**, Morning Prayer at 09:00 am followed by 3<sup>rd</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup> hour and Veneration of the Cross, Evening Prayer at 05:30 pm, Night Vigil starts at 07:00 pm.

**Saturday April 03, Gospel Saturday**, Morning Prayer at 09:00, Holy Qurbana at 10:00 am.

**Sunday April 04, Easter**, Night Prayer at 06:00 am, Morning Prayer at 07:00 am, Easter Liturgy at 08:00 am, Holy Qurbana at 09:00 am.

Monday to Thursday Noon Prayer at 12:00 pm through WebEx.

Sunday to Saturday Evening Prayer at 07:00 pm at church, shall be live-streamed.

## Virtual Meetings

Monday to Thursday Noon Prayer at 12:00 – 12:30 pm WebEx

## Great Lent – Evening Prayer, Lenten Devotional Talk Series

1. The Lenten evening prayer and talk series coming to a close this week. We highly appreciate the way our Altar Servers, Choir members, Technical Support team and Devotional speakers participated in this Lenten journey.
2. The Lenten Devotional Talk Series is going really well and every talk lifts up our souls. We sincerely thank **Milly Prince, George Varghese & Jewel Gijo** for their spiritually enlightening talks.
3. As we are observing our fast, the money saved from the food expenses shall be collected and used for charity. We request our members to take this opportunity to help the needy and change their lives in whatever way we can. We will have a charity fund-raising towards the end of the Great Lent and the proceeds will be donated to a local charity.
4. Holy Week Noon Prayer through WebEx, Monday – Friday, 12:00 - 12:30pm. The WebEx link for noon prayer has been sent to our members. Whoever finds it convenient and useful, please join. There is no pressure.
5. The Holy Week Flyer has been sent to our members. Please follow the timing.

## Support our Parish

Please support our parish by contributing financially. Please remember to pay the Catholicate Day share along with monthly subscription. We used to collect Holy Week donation too. Any contribution will be highly appreciated.

## MGOCSM Charity donation to ‘Youth without Shelter’

MGOCSM unit of our parish had raised a fund by selling face masks. The collected amount has been handed over to ‘Youth without Shelter’ project in Mississauga. We have enquired on the need of any more voluntary assistance. They have other projects too. After the restrictions lifted up, our parish organisations can arrange for reach out programs for the homeless and needy. Highly appreciate MGOCSM members for initiating this charity. Sincere thanks to our beloved members for their support.

## Assistance to Edwin: \$3,000/- has been transferred

We really appreciate the benevolence of our members in supporting Edwin for his surgery. We have sent \$3,000/- to their account in India. Edwin’s parents Sony and Simi were working outside Kerala.



Edwin is their only child for whom they had to take clinical assistance and to wait for many years. Due to his hearing inability from birth, they had to visit various hospitals and to consult doctors. They had no option than to quit their job. Later, Sony started a business but he couldn't focus on it. He had to close it. It did cost him a huge sum of money. Now they both are jobless.

The surgery will be done at JIPMER Pondichery. JIPMER will be doing the surgery free of cost. But the device will cost around Rs 20,00,000/- (Twenty Lakh). Two times they had to move the surgery date due to scarcity of fund. The next date for surgery will be April 10. Sincere thanks to all our members for supporting this child. Please keep Edwin, Sony and Simi in our daily prayers. May we believe, the Lord will touch him and he will be able to hear perfect. Kurielaison, Lord, have mercy.....

### **'Share Your Blessings'- A charity initiative of Gregorian Forum**

Gregorian Seniors Forum is initiating a charity drive 'Share Your Blessings'. God has blessed us abundantly. The Bible constantly teaches us to share what we have with those who are less fortunate than us. Also, sharing gives us an elevated sense of responsibility towards our society. Share what you have to show how much you care and remember when you care for others, the Almighty Lord cares for you more. The fund collected shall be donated towards Mental Health Wellness in Peel Region. Our share can be transferred to [treasurer@sgoctoronto.org](mailto:treasurer@sgoctoronto.org).

*"Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have, for such sacrifices are pleasing to God."*  
*Hebrews. 13:16*

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

We have started receiving emails from members with details of their beloved departed ones and have started adding them to our list. Please continue to let us know as we would like to keep this list going forward for remembrance prayers on the respective Sundays just like we do for Birthdays and Wedding Anniversaries.

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

We will be using the Taksa of the Twelve Apostles.

**Please see below the Link for Live Streaming**

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

### **COVID-19 Guidelines**

We are going grey with no change in the number of indoor gathering from existing 10. Let us maintain the safety measures and look for a hassle free future soon with the finishing of vaccination program.

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

Yours in Christ,

Thomas John Achen

Fr Thomas P John

[fr.thomasjohn@gmail.com](mailto:fr.thomasjohn@gmail.com)

+1 (416) 570 5610