



WEEKLY THOUGHTS - AUGUST 27, 2021

Dearly beloved,

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

Sunday, August 29th, Second Sunday after Soonoyo

Epistle Readings: 2 Peter 3:8-14, 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11

Holy Evangelion: St Luke 11:14-26

11. 14 Now he was casting out a demon that was dumb; when the demon had gone out, the dumb man spoke, and the people marveled. 15 But some of them said, "He casts out demons by Be-el'zebul, the prince of demons"; 16 while others, to test him, sought from him a sign from heaven. 17 But he, knowing their thoughts, said to them, "Every kingdom divided against itself is laid waste, and a divided household falls. 18 And if Satan also is divided against himself, how will his kingdom stand? For you say that I cast out demons by Be-el'zebul. 19 And if I cast out demons by Be-el'zebul, by whom do your sons cast them out? Therefore they shall be your judges. 20 But if it is by the finger of God that I cast out demons, then the kingdom of God has come upon you. 21 When a strong man, fully armed, guards his own palace, his goods are in peace; 22 but when one stronger than he assails him and overcomes him, he takes away his armor in which he trusted, and divides his spoil. 23 He who is not with me is against me, and he who does not gather with me scatters.

24 "When the unclean spirit has gone out of a man, he passes through waterless places seeking rest; and finding none he says, 'I will return to my house from which I came.' 25 And when he comes he finds it swept and put in order. 26 Then he goes and brings seven other spirits more evil than himself, and they enter and dwell there; and the last state of that man becomes worse than the first."

Reflection:

Gospel is the good news and here what we hear is the power of good over evil. Jesus was driving out a demon from a possessed and his critics thought that he was invoking and using Satan to banish evil spirits. Jesus ruled out their suspicion by affirming that he was not using Satan against Satan, but the Holy Spirit against Satan. The power of the Holy Spirit is many fold greater than evil or in other words evil has no existence in the presence of the Holy Spirit. We are the tools of the Holy Spirit to rule out the possibility of existence of evil forces. With the power of Spirit, we can overcome any evil of any magnitude.

Pray and Act Please

Afghanistan is one of the most beautiful places on earth with its beautiful landscape, mountains, valleys, serene green pastures, flora and fauna. Now there is unrest, cries, bloodshed, fleeing for life, and total insecurity. Any thought or ideology that goes to extremes can bring absolute destruction. There will not be any human value, care, consideration or compassion but only cruelty in its worst form. Let us pray that God transforms hearts and minds and fills souls with love and mercy. May the Holy Spirit intervene and bring peace and harmony. Seeing from afar, our fellow-beings fleeing for life, getting crushed under wheels, brutally killed and massacred, the world goes breathless. Each and every human in this world will have to raise voice for the voiceless and influence governments to act to stop any brutality anywhere.



Feasts:

August 24, HG Thomas Mar Athanasios Metropolitan, 3rd anniversary, entombed at Othara Dayara Chapel

His Grace was an excellent educationist and administrator who initiated and organised congregations in various Indian North West states Maharashtra, Rajasthan and Gujarat. His Grace served The Malankara Church in various capacities including the Secretary of The Holy Episcopal Synod, the Manager of the Catholicate & M.D. Schools, the President of Akhila Malankara Balasamajam, etc. May his memory be eternal.

August 29, St John the Baptist

John was the cousin of Jesus whose close spiritual association with Christ has clearly been mentioned in the gospel where his leaping forward in his mother Elizabeth's womb when Mary visited her was narrated. He was on his mission to reveal the Messiah to the world. He was a strict ascetic who lived in the wilderness community and had a great influence in the society through his preaching and warnings. People found him as the continuation of the legacy of Prophet Elijah or even they thought he could be the Messiah. John has set the perfect example of martyrdom by saying, let Him increase and me decrease. He even sent his messengers out of a certain impatience to Jesus to ask whether he was the expected saviour or should they wait for another person (Lk 7:20). This was when John was in prison, knowing that his life was ending soon, was worried that his prophecy about Christ was failing because Jesus hadn't clearly revealed his Messiah role all the more there were already people claiming themselves as the Messiah. Jesus replied to them about the signs already happening through him which were the expected signs of the Messiah mentioned in Isaiah 35:5,6 about blind seeing, deaf hearing, lame walking. John didn't want people following a false saviour. By the time John was beheaded, Jesus was into his ministry with extensive peripatetic preaching and doing many miracles and signs. As he said, he decreased and the Lord increased, which is the real martyrdom, vanishing from the scene after accomplishing the mission, not waiting for any claims or rewards.

HE Dr Jacob Mar Barnabas enters heavenly abode

HE Most Rev Dr Jacob Mar Barnabas, the Metropolitan of the Eparchy of St John Chrysostom of Gurgaon-Delhi of the Malankara Catholic Church has passed away. Our prayers are due for his soul. We send heartfelt condolence to the Malankara Catholic community.

Rev Fr N P Kuriakose passes away

Rev Fr N P Kuriakose Neyyan Veetil, a senior priest of Kunnankulam Diocese has passed away. May his soul find eternal joy and bliss in heaven's court.

Rev Fr Abraham Oommen (Abu Achen) departs

Rev Fr Abraham Oommen, dearly called Abu Achen, former Diocesan Secretary of Calcutta, Professor at Nagpur Seminary, a potential contributor towards Malankara Church's North Indian Mission, a good scholar, well disciplined clergy and a mentor to many, has passed away. May he find comfort and eternal solace in the heavenly court.

Town Hall Meeting on Sunday August 29

The Parish Town Hall meeting will be conducted on coming Sunday at church after the Holy Liturgical service. In-person participation shall be based on RSVP and for other members, they can join virtually. Please keep the meeting in our prayers. Members will be presented with updates on finance, budget, etc. and they can make suggestions during the meeting. Please send your questions or



concerns by email to Treasurer or Secretary as soon as possible. The senders will have opportunity to raise questions during the meeting.

Saturdays in August - Evening Prayer conducted at Church at 06:30 pm

We have been on a virtual platform with our Saturday evening prayers since the COVID lockdown began. In August, we will be conducting the Saturday evening prayers at church starting at 06:30 pm. Our members, whoever finds it convenient, please come to church. The evening prayer might not be live-streamed.

MMVS Diocesan Programs

Bible Quiz: Saturday, October 02

Annual Conference: Saturday, October 09

Bible Study: Every Thursday 8.30 - 9.30 pm. The study is based on the books Amos – Malachi led by Rev Fr VM Shibu (Vicar, St Gregorios Orthodox Church Bensalem)

Virtual Meetings ahead

Choir meetings will be on Wednesdays 08:00-09:00 pm.

OVBS 2021 – August 18-22

OVBS for us is the parish Olympics, which is not because of its competition aspect but because of its overall positivity which can last till the next event. Actually it is a learning program like Sunday School which could have fallen into boredom and monotony, however the way it has been programmed keeps it from going exhaustive. It is just another academic exercise sweetened with music and games and wrapped in glitterati. Everybody enjoys it as it brings neither burden nor worry, only pure joy. We can make an OVBS everyday in our life if we don't complicate things.

We do sincerely acknowledge the efforts and hard work of the dedicated team of our teachers, wonderful participation of our children, tremendous support from parents, excellent assistance from the technical team and all possible support from the Management Committee. Special mention is due to Mridula Liju Thakadiyel for her brilliant coordination of OVBS 2021.

Liturgical Text for this Sunday

This Sunday, we will be using the Taksa of Mar Julius.

Please see below the Link for Live Streaming

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCDT7tcyQwlyZ1_yCG9AWStA

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

Yours in Christ,

Thomas John Achen
fr.thomaspjohn@gmail.com
Mobile: (416) 570 5610