



WEEKLY THOUGHTS - MAY 29, 2020

Dearly Beloved,

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

Sunday 31 May – Holy Feast of Pentecost

Holy Gospel: John 14:13-27 (Pentecost Liturgy), John 16:5-15 (Holy Qurbana)

John 16:5-15 Revised Standard Version (RSV)

5 But now I am going to him who sent me; yet none of you asks me, 'Where are you going?' 6 But because I have said these things to you, sorrow has filled your hearts. 7 Nevertheless I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Counsellor will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you. 8 And when he comes, he will convince the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment: 9 concerning sin, because they do not believe in me; 10 concerning righteousness, because I go to the Father, and you will see me no more; 11 concerning judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged.

12 "I have yet many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. 13 When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth; for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come. 14 He will glorify me, for he will take what is mine and declare it to you. 15 All that the Father has is mine; therefore I said that he will take what is mine and declare it to you.

Reflections:

The Christian life is that of Martyrdom in all aspects. The founder Himself and His followers had to undergo innocent suffering and brutal killing. Even before that, they all practiced and promoted martyr virtues. Primarily it is about doing things for the Glory of God, leaving the comforts of life, denouncing personal will and wish, and after carrying out the mission, never taking chance to remain on scene for appreciation or any sort of benefits. John the Baptist, while saying (John 3:28-30) "I am not the Christ, but I have been sent before him. 29 He who has the bride is the bridegroom; the friend of the bridegroom, who stands and hears him, rejoices greatly at the bridegroom's voice; therefore this joy of mine is now full. 30 He must increase, but I must decrease." confirms this martyr element. Shortly after, he was taken to prison and got executed. His mission was to reveal Christ to the world. After he had done his part, he left the scene. In the Indian philosophical tradition it is 'Nishkaama Karma', which means do our work and go our way. Never look for reward. No claim for what we do.

Christ had to leave the world when He was in his heights of appreciation and recognition. Many thought he would become a king. Even His disciples thought, He would establish the 'Ideal World' that assure a delightful living. However Jesus always reminded them of His leaving the world which mean He was ready to accomplish His mission and to leave. When He says, (John 17:14-16) "they are not of the world", here we find the meaning. The thought process and planning strategy of Christians would be and should be deferent from that of the world. The same is applicable to praying for the



ST. GREGORIOS ORTHODOX CHURCH OF TORONTO

(Since 1969)

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



renewal of the Holy Spirit. (John 17:25) “Righteous Father, though the world does not know You, I know You.” suggests that we have something that the world may not recognise. Because the world stands for material and the faithful concerns more for the spiritual, there would be a gap. We cannot fill or bridge it. Here we see the role of Holy Spirit who can perfect everything. He can bridge everything by transforming things and situations. Unless and until filled by Spirit, humans will struggle in between and never find peace. Tension and stress would be a daily experience. We have realised how much we need a real spiritual filling. Let us submit ourselves in prayer and humility and seek for Spiritual renewal. Hope the Feast of Pentecost would bring new experiencing of Christ through Holy Spirit. Let us rejoice in the transforming presence of Holy Spirit in all our thoughts, words and deeds.

Feasts:

Sunday 31 May- Feast of Pentecost, Morning Prayer will begin at 09:00 am followed by the Holy Qurbana and Holy Liturgy of Pentecost. Please access the link for live-streaming https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCDT7tcyQw1yZ1_yCG9AWStA

26 May- HH Baselios Marthoma Didymos I, 6th Anniversary of Parting, Entombed at Pathanapuram Dayara Chapel. Thirumeni had served the Diocese of Malabar when it had only limited resources. With his unique way of shepherding, he could take the Diocese to progress by providing assistance to people of lower economy, supporting village parishes in construction of churches, inviting clergies from other parts of Kerala to serve in the Malabar area, promoting education through establishing of institutions and living a life of monastic virtues Chastity, Poverty and Obedience. Since he got elevated to the Catholicose & Malankara Metropolitan, he had initiated many reforms in the church and made new policies effective for the discipline and progress of the church. Like his predecessors, he willingly abdicated the Catholicate Office and invited HG Paulose Mar Milithios Metropolitan (the present Catholicose HH Baselios Marthoma Paulose II) to take over. Thirumeni’s voice was sweet, melodious and heavenly while conducting sacraments. His dealing with people was so polite, kind, caring and loving. May his soul be in everlasting joy among the angels and saints. May his remembrance be a blessing for us.

29 May – Rev Sister Susan Kuruvilla, 1st Anniversary of Parting, Entombed at Mulanthuruthy St Gregorios Asram

Sister Susan Kuruvilla, a member of the Malankara Orthodox Church, has been well appreciated, revered and widely acknowledged by communities and individuals from around the world for her support projects for the needy. She could be the first among the Malankara Church who had revealed stigmata, a physiological condition of showing wounds uncreated and she had five on her body in cross pattern- two under foot, two on her palms and one over the forehead. Many considered her a saint due to the stigmata. Orthodox Churches tend to refrain from calling a person saint based on certain physiological phenomena. Sister Susan Kuruvilla had lead a monastic life and gave her time and life for uplifting of lives materially and spiritually. She had constructed a church within the premises of her Asram at Mulanthuruthy and dedicated it to the patronage of St Gregorios of Parumala. She had been taking care of women and girl children to assure them a dignified living through providing education and life facilities. Many people from around the world went to meet her and ended up in dedicating their lives in support to Sister Susan’s many social service projects. She



had visited Canada a few times, attended our worship and got familiarised with many of our members. In an encouraging way of reciprocation, our members have been of support to her projects. It has been observed, she could survive without food for many days which points to her spiritually disciplined life of fasting and prayer. Though she was well recognised by the society, she had never given way for self establishing. She lived simple, humble, minimal, radiant, vibrant and highly appealing. Let us be thankful to God for enriching the Church in particular and the world in general through her life and presence. May her soul rejoice in the Heaven's Court forever. May her life inspire and her prayers shelter us. Her life suffered much pain and discomfort in both body and mind but spared for the well being of the needy ones. She has left an example for how a village girl could get elevated to great heights and become a leader within a male-dominant culture. Let her legacy continue through lives of those she supported and also through whoever has found motivation from her.

Clergy Meeting of NE American Diocese, Thursday 28th May:

A meeting of clergies in the NE American Diocese had organised yesterday. The Diocesan Metropolitan chaired the meeting and enquired on our members in various parishes. Majority of clergies were present. It has given an outlook of situations in various parts of NE America. Currently more worship centres are getting reopened in the US. There were discussions on how could the services be conducted involving more people while keeping social distancing. The meeting has brought together clergies from various parts to enjoy fellowship and brotherhood. Diocese has planned to offer emotional support through identifying counselling experts within our parish communities and deploying them accessible by the needy ones. If any of our members wish to join this team work, please inform the Vicar on phone (416) 570 5610.

Virtual Meetings of Parish Organisations scheduled for this weekend:

Gregorian Seniors Forum: Next meeting would be on Thursday 18 June, 07:00 - 08:30 pm. The first virtual meeting was conducted on Thursday 28th and it was enlightening and refreshing. It would be highly appreciable, for the next scheduled meeting on Thursday 18th June, all our Senior members joining and contributing. I request, please block your diary for the meeting.

Saturday 30 May- SGOCT Prayer Meeting- 07:00 - 08:30 pm

SGOCT Gardening:

It is the best season for gardening. We have a beautiful church and spacious surroundings. It would be great if we could bring plants and beautify the sacred place to keep it a replica of Paradise! As we are aware, all monasteries and spiritual/pilgrim centres would have beautiful gardens which reflect the beauty of God and His creation. It also points to the eternal garden we all are destined to enter one day! Please join.

Holding you all in prayer



ST. GREGORIOS ORTHODOX CHURCH OF TORONTO

(Since 1969)

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



Yours in Christ

Thomas John Achen

fr.thomaspjohn@gmail.com

+1 (416) 570 5610