



WEEKLY THOUGHTS - APRIL 30, 2021

Dearly beloved,

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

Sunday May 02nd, Fourth Sunday after Easter

Epistle Readings: 1 John 5:13-21, Hebrews 11:3-6

Holy Gospel: St Luke 24:13-35 NRSV

24.13 Now on that same day two of them were going to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem, 14 and talking with each other about all these things that had happened. 15 While they were talking and discussing, Jesus himself came near and went with them, 16 but their eyes were kept from recognizing him. 17 And he said to them, “What are you discussing with each other while you walk along?” They stood still, looking sad.[b] 18 Then one of them, whose name was Cleopas, answered him, “Are you the only stranger in Jerusalem who does not know the things that have taken place there in these days?” 19 He asked them, “What things?” They replied, “The things about Jesus of Nazareth,[c] who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, 20 and how our chief priests and leaders handed him over to be condemned to death and crucified him. 21 But we had hoped that he was the one to redeem Israel.[d] Yes, and besides all this, it is now the third day since these things took place. 22 Moreover, some women of our group astounded us. They were at the tomb early this morning, 23 and when they did not find his body there, they came back and told us that they had indeed seen a vision of angels who said that he was alive. 24 Some of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said; but they did not see him.” 25 Then he said to them, “Oh, how foolish you are, and how slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have declared!

Reflection:

The gospel makes no note of the reason for two disciples' journey from Jerusalem (the center of events) to Emmaus (a small village). Towards the end of the text, it became clear that the Lord had an intention. There may be a reason for everything in life, even Covid 19. For each, there would be a reason. Finding the cause would be less important than finding the purpose. There will be no point in making some case or occurrence in existence if the cause is not discovered and the intention is not fulfilled. When Moses saw the burning bush, he wondered why it was burning. He became the greatest leader in history after discovering his purpose. There is a reason we get up in the morning. When we discover its purpose, every day will be transformed by our purposeful input, resulting in a transformed setting. All came into being for a reason, according to science. The meaning of it is revealed in the Bible. The realization inspired the Apostles, who were all great people who wanted to change the universe. A stranger can reveal to us the purpose of life. Here the strange co-traveller opened their inward eyes to look unto their vocation and possibilities. He was the familiar one who got estranged to them. Why couldn't they recognise their Master? They always recognised Him not through his appearance but by his personality. After his death and burial, they got confused and couldn't take a chance to see into the person while they were walking together to Emmaus. They got stuck with the external view of incidents and forgot what he had already warned them on his own death and resurrection. Becoming too much pragmatic can fail us in life by letting us only to see things outwardly and no insights be taken into thoughts. We need more insights and inward realisation than peripheral view of life. Otherwise we will live in distress and despair. Resurrection is



meant for those who can look at possibilities than occurrences.

Feasts:

Mar Gregorios Abdul Jaleel Bava was entombed at Vadakkan Paravoor Church on April 27, the 350th anniversary of his death. From his arrival in India in 1664 until his death in 1681, he was an Orthodox bishop of Jerusalem, serving the Malankara flock. Mosul, Iraq, is where he was born. He was a successful defender of Oriental Orthodox faith, bridging the Malankara Nazranis and Syriac Christianity. He was said to have known the time of his departure and had dressed in his pontifical garments in preparation. At the moment of his departure, the church bell rang by itself. The relics kept at his tomb include an 'Arulikka' which has 12 partitions in which 11 of them have relics of various saints and the 12th central niche has a piece of wooden cross, said to be part of the cross on which Christ was crucified. The next time we visit India, let us schedule a visit to such places.

April 29, Mar Sabor & Mar Aphroth

Two Syrian bishops, Mar Sabor and Mar Afroth, came to Malabar as missionaries to preach the Gospel to a migrant group. They arrived in Kollam, the capital of Venadu, in 823 AD.

As it was customary in those days to host foreign traders, the Chera king of the time gave them copper plates with rights and a village to live in. The villagers eventually adopted Christianity and were raised in the St. Thomas tradition. When the Portuguese arrived in Kerala, they were astounded to see a well-established St Thomas culture and called the people Syriac Christians. According to the 'Tharisa Pally Cheppedu', Kollam Syrian copper plates, a 9th century royal grant from Kerala, a certain Mar Sapir established a Church at Kollam with the blessing of the then king of Kerala.

May 01, Martyrdom of St James the Apostle.

Because of their fiery passion, James and his younger brother John, Apostles of Christ, were also known as Boanerges or "Sons of Thunder." James and John were the first four apostles named by Jesus, along with Peter and Andrew. James saw the resurrection of Jairus' daughter from the dead, the Transfiguration, and Jesus' torment in the Garden of Gethsemane as a part of the inner circle. In Jesus' future glory, James and John (or their mother) requested seats to his right and left, but Jesus refused. King Herod Agrippa I of Judaea ordered James' beheading.

Acolytes Meeting and Training

We have monthly meetings of Acolytes, currently virtual, for fellowship and training. Every field of work/service would demand refresher training and practice with appraisal to check on efficiency. We need to practice and refresh to serve at the Altar better. We earnestly request all the acolytes to attend the scheduled meetings with commitment. Whoever wants to have training for taking the censor, preparing the Altar, dispensing of vestments, reading and chanting, we have provision to avail it on Sunday after the service. We can also have virtual training during monthly sessions or we can schedule special meetings too. Please find this as a reminder for the upcoming meetings. If we have any suggestions regarding the time and date, please feel free to share with Santosh Varughese or with the Vicar.

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.



ST. GREGORIOS ORTHODOX CHURCH OF TORONTO

(Since 1969)

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Virtual Meetings ahead

Friday April 30, NEAD MMVS Retreat, 12:00 – 01:00 pm

Saturday May 01, SGOCT Choir, 11:30 – 01:30 pm

Saturday May 01, SGOCT Prayer, 07:00 – 08:30 pm

Monday May 03, Acolytes Meeting, 07:30- 09:30 pm

Friday May 07, SS Liturgical Session for Seniors, 06:00 – 07:00 pm

Liturgical Text for this Sunday

This Sunday we will be using the Taksa of St John the Evangelist which has a bit more extensive prayers. We will love it.

Please see below the Link for Live Streaming

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

COVID-19 Guidelines

Please don't get disappointed. Be positive and spiritually strong. No harm shall come to us. Pray for the whole world. Let us also think loud on how to contribute to the healing of the world through our various possible inputs.

We continue to have Holy Liturgy with only 10 members and shall be live streamed.

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

Yours in Christ,

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