

BELIEVERS EASTERN CHURCH

LECTIONARY

Scripture Readings for Sundays
and other Special Days 2024–2025

Imprimatur

Metropolitan, Believers Eastern Church

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Prepared by

Synodal Department of Liturgics and Faith

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PREFACE

In the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, One True God.
Amen.✠

A foundational principle of the Believers Eastern Church is the priority we give to the reading, studying and teaching of God's Word. This is not only because it is a pattern given to us to follow by the Apostles and Church Fathers, but also because God's Word is powerful and is the means to change and transform our lives.

The Word of God has the power to change lives inside out. "For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart" (Hebrews 4:12).

The Holy Scriptures provides us divine principles to live by, and it gives us hope and faith. "Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (Romans 10:17). It is important that we read and study the Word and teach it regularly in our parishes.

Designed to achieve that end, the lectionary is a compilation of Scripture portions arranged for our Sunday worship and other special days of the year. It thus becomes a guide for us to systematically read and study God's Word.

My prayer is that this lectionary will help all of our parishes to become healthy, strong and vibrant in our knowledge and walk with God.

Blessings of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit be with you.
Amen.✠

✠ Moran Mor Samuel Theophilus
Metropolitan

Church World Headquarters
29 October 2024

<div> <div>3 November 2024</div> <div>1st Sunday</div> <div>Sanctification of the Church (<i>Koodhosh Eetho</i>)</div> </div>			
Scripture Readings			
Isaiah 6:1–8	Psalm 43	1 Corinthians 3:16,17; 6:15–20	St Matthew 16:13–23
<p>Gospel Theme: Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God</p> <p><i>What is this passage about?</i></p> <p>After asking what others say about who He is, Jesus then asks His disciples the same question. St Peter by divine revelation answers correctly, and Jesus says that the Church itself is built on this true confession of faith. Yet later, when Jesus talks about His upcoming sufferings, unable to understand it, St Peter speaks the thoughts of Satan.</p> <p><i>What do we learn from this?</i></p> <p>Although people might have different understandings of who Jesus is, we confess by faith that Jesus is the Christ, Son of the living God!</p> <p><i>How can we apply this?</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. This confession is the foundation of the Church. 2. As part of the Church, we confess our faith daily by reciting the Nicene Creed collectively and individually, during our family prayers and in church. 3. Nothing, not even death (Hades) can stop the Church in proclaiming about Jesus and the salvation He offers to the world. 			

10 November 2024

2nd Sunday

Dedication of the Church (*Hoodosh Eetho*)

Scripture Readings

1 Kings 8:22-40

Psalms 78:1-7

Hebrews 9:1-14

St John 10:22-38

Gospel Theme: Hear God's voice and follow Him

What is this passage about?

Jesus says He is the shepherd who gives eternal life to those who listen and follow Him, although there are many who will not believe in Him or listen to Him, even though they have seen many wonders Jesus has done.

What do we learn from this?

Jesus is the good Shepherd, and we will be safe if we follow His voice. We also learn that the Pharisees got ready to stone Jesus since He claims to be God's Son.

How can we apply this?

1. When we hear and read God's Word, we are listening to God's voice.
2. To hear means, to obey; and obedience is to trust what God says in the Holy Scriptures.
3. When we follow the Shepherd's voice, we can be confident that we will not go wrong.

17 November 2024		Parents’ Sunday— <i>Special Offering</i>	
3 rd Sunday			
Season of Annunciation: Birth of John the Baptist is foretold			
Scripture Readings			
Genesis 17:15–22	Psalm 123	2 Peter 1:1–15	St Luke 1:5–25
<p>Gospel Theme: Trust in God’s promises</p> <p><i>What is this passage about?</i></p> <p>God miraculously answers the prayer of an old righteous couple for a child. The angel of the Lord tells what to name the child, how to bring him up and what his role will be in bringing salvation to all. But the father Zachariah, lacks faith and as a result he is unable to speak till the birth of his child.</p> <p><i>What do we learn from this?</i></p> <p>God answers our prayers in His own miraculous ways. But we need to have faith and act on God’s promises for our lives.</p> <p><i>How can we apply this?</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. God can do a miracle even if the situation looks practically impossible.2. But we need to have faith as it’s impossible to please God without faith [Hebrews 11:6].3. Faith should lead us to acting on God’s promises.			

21 November 2024

FEAST OF THE ENTRANCE OF THE THEOTOKOS

Scripture Readings

Exodus 40:1-5,
9-10

1 Kings 8:1, 3-4,
6-7, 9-11

Hebrews 9:1-7

St Luke 10:38-42,
11:27-28

Gospel Theme: We are the temples of the living God

What is this feast about?

This Feast, as passed on by the living tradition of the Holy Church, commemorates the presentation of St Mary to the temple in Jerusalem by her parents, when she was a child.

What do we learn from this?

We learn that, fulfilling their vows, Mother Mary's parents took her to the Temple in Jerusalem, where the priest Zechariah (the father of St John the Baptist) received her, and she lived there serving God, until the time she was betrothed to St Joseph.

How can we apply this?

1. Just like Mary's parents dedicated her to the service of God, we as parents too must desire to do the same.
2. It is a good time to contemplate about the life of Mother Mary – especially her total readiness to obey God.
3. Since this feast is celebrated only a month before Christmas, it helps us to look forward to the Feast of Nativity of Christ (Christmas).

<div>24 November 2024</div> <div>4thSunday</div> <div>Season of Annunciation: Birth of Jesus announced to Mary</div>			
Scripture Readings			
Genesis 28:10–22	Psalms 40:5–10	Hebrews 2:14–18	St Luke 1:26–38
<div>Gospel Theme: Respond with obedience</div> <div><i>What is this passage about?</i></div> <p>Angel Gabriel is sent to announce the greatest news for mankind to a young virgin in Galilee named Mary. Her response is obedience to God.</p> <div><i>What do we learn from this?</i></div> <p>Mary is our greatest example of faith, obedience, and saintly life, because even when she understood the impossibility of the situation, she chose to believe what the angel told her and submitted herself to God’s will.</p> <div><i>How can we apply this?</i></div> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. We respect, venerate, and call Mother Mary, blessed!2. Trust God and let us say – ‘let it be done to me according to Your will.’3. Just like Mother Mary’s life pointed to Christ, let our lives also point towards Christ.			

1 December 2024		Women Sunday— <i>Special Offering</i>	
5 th Sunday			
Season of Annunciation: St Mary’s visit to Elizabeth			
Scripture Readings			
Proverb 31: 10–31	Psalm 80:1–7, 17-19	I Peter 3: 1–7	St Luke 1: 39–56
<p>Gospel Theme: Blessed to be a blessing</p> <p><i>What is this passage about?</i></p> <p>This passage is about the meeting of Elizabeth with Mother Mary. Here Mother Mary sings a prophetic song, ascribing to God the miracle of her conception. She humbles herself and exalts God who has done such great things.</p> <p><i>What do we learn from this?</i></p> <p>Because Mother Mary believed in the promise of God and accepted it, Mother Mary is now to become a blessing to all generations.</p> <p><i>How can we apply this?</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Do not forget to bless God when He fulfils His promises.2. We fulfil the prophesy in this passage when we call Mother Mary, blessed.3. This is a great season to tell others and to give God all the glory for the greatest gift of all - salvation through Jesus Christ!			

8 December 2024		Children’s Sunday— <i>Special Offering</i>	
6 th Sunday			
Season of Annunciation: Birth of John the Baptist (Forerunner)			
Scripture Readings			
I Samuel 1: 20–28	Psalm 127:1–5	Ephesians 6:1–4	St Luke 1: 57–80
<p>Gospel Theme: Let our lives point people to Christ</p> <p><i>What is this passage about?</i></p> <p>God’s promises to Zachariah and Elizabeth are fulfilled, Zachariah’s mouth is opened and they name their child John – meaning ‘grace of God.’ And because of his special call, John the Forerunner grew up away from people, being prepared for a very special ministry.</p> <p><i>What do we learn from this?</i></p> <p>We learn that God fulfils His promises and that God calls and prepares the chosen for His special purposes. And that purpose was for John to be the ‘forerunner,’ the one who went ahead of Jesus and prepared the way.</p> <p><i>How can we apply this?</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Since children are a gift from God, parents must raise them as God has instructed.2. As parents, we must pray that our children will dedicate their lives to bring many unto salvation.3. Our roles also must be like St John – pointing the way to salvation in Christ, by our words and actions.			

15 December 2024

7th Sunday

Annunciation to St Joseph

Scripture Readings

Isaiah 45:18–25

Psalm 126

1 Peter 2:11–17

St Matthew 1:18–25

Gospel Theme: God's plans are fulfilled when we obey

What is this passage about?

After it became known to Joseph that Mary was pregnant before marriage, an angel of the Lord tells him to take Mary as his wife and not put her away. Then he reveals the utterly impossible – that Mary's child was no ordinary child but had been conceived by the Holy Spirit.

What do we learn from this?

Almost 600 years before the birth of Jesus, the Prophet Isaiah had prophesied about the Virgin birth of the Saviour. Now at the right time, the promise was fulfilled. We must remember that God will fulfil His promises.

How can we apply this?

1. Just like St Joseph obeyed God, we too must obey what God tells us, even if we cannot understand His ways.
2. Be encouraged; God will fulfil His promises, even if we think it's late.
3. Learn to be patient; have faith.

22 December 2024		Sunday before Christmas	
8 th Sunday			
Scripture Readings			
Isaiah 11:1–9	Psalm 89:1–4, 19–26	Acts 3:16–26	St John 1:1–14
<p>Gospel Theme: God takes on humanity</p> <p><i>What is this passage about?</i></p> <p>This is one of the most important passages in the whole of Holy Scriptures. It tells us that, the Word – that is Jesus, the eternal Son of God, took on complete human nature (flesh) like us and lived among men [Immanuel – God with us].</p> <p><i>What do we learn from this?</i></p> <p>We learn that Jesus was fully (100%) God and at the same time fully (100%) human. We learn that we have an incredible privilege to ‘receive’ Jesus, the light of the world, into our lives, participate in the life of God and thus become ‘children of God.’</p> <p><i>How can we apply this?</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Read the gospels to see the human aspect of Jesus – how He lived and did things.2. Today we represent Jesus to others; let us live like He did.3. There are many who are still in spiritual darkness. Pray continuously that God’s light will shine into their hearts.			

25 December 2024

**FEAST OF THE NATIVITY OF JESUS CHRIST—CHRISTMAS
(Yeldo)**

Scripture Readings

Isaiah 9:1–7

Psalm 96

Hebrews 1:1–12

St Matthew 2:1–12

Gospel Theme: God fulfils His promise of salvation

What is this feast about?

We celebrate how God entered humanity by being born as a human being – Jesus Christ.

What do we learn from this?

We learn about the fulfilment of God's promise of salvation to mankind in the form of child Jesus. The account of Nativity is filled with divine interventions – the child being born in Bethlehem in a manger fulfilling prophecies, a star which brought wise men from the East with special gifts, them being led to go back another way, the angels who declared the birth to the shepherds in the field and child Jesus being divinely protected from the wrath of an evil king.

How can we apply this?

1. During Christmas season, greet each other by saying – 'Christ is born' and by responding 'Glorify Him.'
2. Celebrate Christmas rejoicing at what God has done for us and all of mankind.
3. Use this opportunity to share the story of Christmas with others – creatively, in words and deeds.

29 December 2024		First Sunday after Christmas	
9 th Sunday			
Scripture Readings			
Genesis 37:12–28	Psalms 148	1 Corinthians 10:1–13	St Matthew 2:9–15,19–23
<p>Gospel Theme: Follow as God leads</p> <p><i>What is this passage about?</i></p> <p>This passage is about how God foils the plan of the evil one to destroy Jesus in His childhood and how through all this, Jesus fulfilled ancient prophecies about the Messiah.</p> <p><i>What do we learn from this?</i></p> <p>No matter how much the enemy tries, God’s plan and purpose cannot be destroyed. God will not only fulfil His promises, but also protect those through whom His promises are to be fulfilled.</p> <p><i>How can we apply this?</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Follow God’s direction, like the wise men and St Joseph, the earthly father of Jesus.2. Parents, particularly fathers, because they have a responsibility to protect their children especially when young, must carefully listen to God.3. Trust in God’s protection: for yourself, your family, and your children.			

5 January 2025		Second Sunday after Christmas	
10 th Sunday			
Scripture Readings			
Isaiah 26:1–12	Psalm 85	Hebrews 11:23–31	St Luke 2:40–52
<p>Gospel Theme: Growing in favour with God and man</p> <p><i>What is this passage about?</i></p> <p>After celebrating the Feast of Passover as was their custom, Jesus’ family returns only to realize after a day that the Boy Jesus is not with them. The parents find Him, in the temple of God, astonishing everyone who heard Him, with His wisdom. The Boy Jesus then returns with His parents and grows up in favour with God and men.</p> <p><i>What do we learn from this?</i></p> <p>Jesus very clearly knew the purpose in His life; yet even as His wisdom was astonishing, He grew up in submission and therefore in favour with God and man.</p> <p><i>How can we apply this?</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. We must submit to those who have been kept as authorities over our lives. E.g. Children to parents.2. Growing in submission to your authority brings graces of God both with God Himself and also with people.3. Just like Jesus, wherever we are, we must be involved in the Father’s business – which is bringing the news of salvation to all.			

6 January 2025, Monday			
FEAST OF THE THEOPHANY OF OUR LORD (<i>Denho</i>)			
Scripture Readings			
Isaiah 12:1–6	Psalms 29	Hebrews 10:15–25	St Matthew 3:1–17
<p>Gospel Theme: Renewal of all of creation in Jesus</p> <p><i>What is this feast about?</i></p> <p>This feast celebrates Christ's baptism in the Jordan river by St John the Baptist.</p> <p><i>What do we learn from this?</i></p> <p>We learn, who Jesus is, and the answer is publicly declared by God Himself that Jesus was His Son. We also learn that Jesus came to become the Lamb of God who would take the sin of the world upon Himself. Also, creation was itself being renewed during the baptism of Jesus.</p> <p><i>How can we apply this?</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Blessing of waters: During the feast, the priest blesses water either in a container (glass jar) or even large bodies of water (sea, rivers or lakes). This blessed water is then used for blessing of homes.2. Blessing of our homes: Using holy (or blessed) water the priest goes to houses and blesses it and everything within, including ourselves. This way we establish the spiritual connection between our homes and our church.3. In and through baptism we become a member of God's family, cleansed by water and sealed by Myron, representing the Holy Spirit.			

12 January 2025		First Sunday after Theophany	
11 th Sunday			
Scripture Readings			
Isaiah 49:7–13	Psalms 91	Ephesians 1:3–14	St Matthew 4:1–22
<p>Gospel Theme: Overcoming Temptations</p> <p><i>What is this passage about?</i></p> <p>In this passage, Jesus overcomes the devil’s temptations through the power of the Scriptures. Later Jesus starts His earthly ministry by calling people to repentance and calls His first disciples to ‘follow Him.’</p> <p><i>What do we learn from this?</i></p> <p>Just like Jesus we too will be tempted, and our faith will be tested. But just like Jesus we too can be overcomers through the power of the Scriptures.</p> <p><i>How can we apply this?</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Make it a habit to listen, read, study, meditate and memorize the Holy Scriptures.2. When temptations come, recollect God’s Word, and confess it. They are a powerful aid to overcome the temptations brought by the evil one.3. As it was with Jesus, Scriptures will help us to discern and thus withstand the deception of the devil.			

19 January 2025		Second Sunday after Theophany	
12 th Sunday			
Scripture Readings			
Isaiah 51:1–8	Psalms 139:1–6, 13–18	Hebrews 1:1–2; 2:1–4	St John 1:43–51
<p>Gospel Theme: He knows us before He called us</p> <p><i>What is this passage about?</i></p> <p>This passage describes how Philip brings his friend Nathanael (also known as Bartholomew) to Jesus.</p> <p><i>What do we learn from this?</i></p> <p>God knows us even before He called us - just like Jesus knew Nathanael's pure heart and saw him where he was before Philip brought him to Jesus.</p> <p><i>How can we apply this?</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. God can use people irrespective of where they come from. No one believed anything good could come from Nazareth.2. The invitation of Philip to Nathanael to 'come and see' is an invitation to all of us; an invitation to experience Christ personally.3. Just like Philip brought his friend to Jesus, look for opportunities to bring people to Jesus.			

26 January 2025		Third Sunday after Theophany Clergy Sunday— <i>Special offering</i>	
13 th Sunday			
Scripture Readings			
Jeremiah 31:1–12	Psalms 62:5–12	1 Corinthians 3:16–4:5	St John 3:1–12
Gospel Theme: The New Birth			
<i>What is this passage about?</i>			
Jesus reveals to Nicodemus the way to enter God’s Kingdom – by being born again. Jesus further says: being born again is to be born of the water (baptism) and of the Spirit (gift of the Holy Spirit).			
<i>What do we learn from this?</i>			
New Birth is a spiritual mystery. It is the beginning of our salvation journey, wherein we are joined to Jesus in the waters of baptism [Rom 6:1-10] and receive the Holy Spirit by anointing [Chrismation].			
<i>How can we apply this?</i>			
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Since baptism is entry into the Kingdom of God, the start of our journey of salvation, we all must be baptized, irrespective of age.2. Repentance and faith must both accompany our baptism in water.3. We, who are already part of God’s Kingdom, have a responsibility to invite many to become children of God and experience the new birth.			

2 February 2025

Fourth Sunday after
Theophany

14th Sunday

FEAST OF THE PRESENTATION OF CHRIST (*Mayaltho*)

Scripture Readings

Isaiah 11:1–10	Hebrews 7:7–17	Ephesians 3:13–21	St Luke 2:22–40
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Gospel Theme: God reveals Himself to those who wait for Him

What is this feast about?

This feast commemorates the presentation of Jesus to the priest in the temple by his parents 40 days after His birth, in accordance with the requirements of the Jewish laws.

What do we learn from this feast?

We are reminded that our Lord will reveal Himself to those who are pure and wait expectantly to meet Him, just like St Simeon and St Anna. That, Jesus is fully human and He showed it by fulfilling all the requirements of the law.

How can we apply this?

1. Churching of women: 40 days after childbirth, the early church asked women to come to the Church, to give thanks for safety of child and mother.
2. The new born (infants) are also prepared for baptism and chrismation into the church at the same time. This way the parents publicly declare that their children were given by God and so will be brought up for the glory of God.
3. Holding candles – As a symbol of St Simeon’s reference that Christ is the light of revelation for the Gentiles, the faithful hold lighted candles during the Divine Liturgy of this feast day.

9 February 2025		Fifth Sunday after Theophany	
15 th Sunday			
Scripture Readings			
Isaiah 41:8–20	Psalm 131	2 Corinthians 4:1–6	St Mark 1:12–20
<p>Gospel Theme: Responding to the call of Jesus</p> <p><i>What is this passage about?</i></p> <p>This passage marks the start of Jesus’ earthly ministry, where He calls people to repentance proclaiming the Gospel of the Kingdom of God and calls His first disciples to follow Him.</p> <p><i>What do we learn from this?</i></p> <p>God chose simple, common and unschooled men, to be His first disciples. But, because they responded to Christ and followed Him, they became the Apostles [Ephesians 2:20] upon whom the Church was built and with the power of the Holy Spirit became ‘world changers’ [Acts 17:6].</p> <p><i>How can we apply this?</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Repentance is not only the beginning of our journey with Jesus, but a continuous reality in our lives.2. We must prepare to respond to Jesus’ call, to leave everything behind and follow Him.3. God often uses simple people to accomplish mighty things for Him.			

<div>16 February 2025</div> <div>16th Sunday</div> <div>All Departed Priests</div>			
Scripture Readings			
Deuteronomy 34:1–8	Psalms 90	1 Thessalonians 4:13–5:11	St Matthew 24:42–51
<div>Gospel Theme: The Master's return</div> <div><i>What is this passage about?</i></div> <p>A master goes away after making his servant responsible for his household. The master then returns at an unexpected hour and gives rewards to his servants according to their faithfulness or stewardship.</p> <div><i>What do we learn from this?</i></div> <p>This parable is a warning for us – we must be ever ready for the return of our master, Jesus Christ. His delayed coming should not make us irresponsible or evil. Rather, we must be faithful and wise.</p> <div><i>How can we apply this?</i></div> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Live each day with the mind that Jesus will return today.2. The servant is called to be faithful and responsible for what has been entrusted to him.3. When tempted to be lazy, remind ourselves about the rewards waiting for us, if we are faithful and diligent with what we have been given.			

23 February 2025		Sunday before start of Great Lent	
17 th Sunday All the Departed Faithful			
Scripture Readings			
Isaiah 38:10–20	Psalms 111	1 Corinthians 15:20–28	St Luke 12:32–48
Gospel Theme: Be faithful with what we have been given			
What is this passage about?			
Jesus tells a parable about a master who went for a wedding leaving his servant to look after his household and how the servant must be ready to receive his master at any time, even very late at night.			
What do we learn from this?			
Let us ask ourselves: When our master returns at an unexpected hour, will He find us to be faithful at what has been given to us? Or will He find us lazy and forgetful? We must have our waist girded and lamps always burning [St Luke 12:35].			
How can we apply this?			
1. Don't be tempted to go after finding the exact 'day' of Jesus' coming back as many do. Only the Father knows that [St Mark 13:32].			
2. Our master has given each one of us responsibilities – as a parent, a husband/wife, child, worker, a priest, etc. Let us fulfil it faithfully.			
3. To us who know our master, we must be more careful. If we know what our master wants and still do not do His will, then our punishment will be much greater.			

START OF GREAT LENT			
2 March 2025		First Sunday of the Great Lent	
18 th Sunday			
Scripture Readings			
Isaiah 58:5–14	Psalm 50:1–6	Colossians 3:1–17	St John 2:1–11
<p>Gospel Theme: Jesus turns sadness into joy</p> <p><i>What is this passage about?</i></p> <p>A wedding where His disciples and Mother are also present, Jesus changes water into wine, leading many to believe in Him.</p> <p><i>What do we learn from this?</i></p> <p>Even when unexpected things happen in our lives Jesus can do a miracle, and change our situation into a joyous one. Usually, it takes years to make good wine, but it only took a moment for Jesus to change water into wine.</p> <p><i>How can we apply this?</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. In moments of unexpected distress and sadness, trust Jesus to do a miracle.2. Trust Jesus to restore the joy in our lives.3. Miracles point us to Jesus and help us to believe in Him.			

9 March 2025		Second Sunday of the Great Lent (Healing of Leper)	
19 th Sunday			
Scripture Readings			
2 Kings 5:1–14	Psalm 51:1–17	Romans 3:27–4:5	St Luke 4:40–41, 5:12–16
<p>Gospel Theme: Jesus embraces the outcast</p> <p><i>What is this passage about?</i></p> <p>Here, Jesus heals a leper, who then becomes a powerful witness as multitudes come to hear Jesus and to be healed by Him.</p> <p><i>What do we learn from this?</i></p> <p>Jesus welcomed and embraced everyone; especially those who were rejected by the society. We see Jesus touching and making a leper whole, thus showing God’s love and care for everyone.</p> <p><i>How can we apply this?</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Search out the outcasts in society – the poor, the widowed, the lepers, the homeless and unwanted; let us touch them with the love of Jesus.2. Let us become powerful witnesses of what God has done for us.3. When we serve others, we become a ‘Jesus’ to them.			

16 March 2025		Third Sunday of the Great Lent (Healing of Paralytic)	
20 th Sunday			
Scripture Readings			
2 Kings 2:1–11	Psalms 22:23–31	Romans 5:1–11	St Mark 2:1–12
<p>Gospel Theme: Jesus forgives sins and heals our bodies</p> <p><i>What is this passage about?</i></p> <p>Four friends bring a paralytic man to Jesus. He forgives his sins and heals him. Many are amazed at this miracle, while many wonder how Jesus can forgive sins.</p> <p><i>What do we learn from this?</i></p> <p>Faith, whether personal or others having faith for you, is important in receiving healing and salvation from God. Christ came into this world not just to heal our bodies, but to forgive our sins and to heal our souls.</p> <p><i>How can we apply this?</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Just like the four friends of the paralytic man overcame many obstacles to bring him to Jesus, we too should do all we can to point others to Christ.2. We must believe and have faith for others – for their healing and salvation.3. The healing act of God is holistic – body, soul and spirit.			

23 March 2025		Fourth Sunday of the Great Lent (Healing of Canaanite Woman)	
21 st Sunday			
Scripture Readings			
Isaiah 56:1–7	Psalms 19	Romans 7:14–25	St Matthew 15:21–28
<p>Gospel Theme: An example of great faith</p> <p><i>What is this passage about?</i></p> <p>A mother whose daughter is tormented by demons comes to Jesus for mercy and healing for her daughter. Jesus commended her deep faith in Christ’s ability to heal.</p> <p><i>What do we learn from this?</i></p> <p>God is always pleased with our faith [Heb. 11:6]. And when we approach Him in faith and trust, He will never leave our prayers unanswered and will show mercy on us.</p> <p><i>How can we apply this?</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. If our prayers are unanswered, we should not give up. But, as in this mother’s example, we should be persistent.2. Believe and have faith in Jesus for our loved ones, that He will have mercy on them.3. Pray and grow your faith, so that you can trust God regardless of circumstances.			

<div>25 March 2025, Tuesday</div> <div>FEAST OF THE ANNUNCIATION TO THE THEOTOKOS</div> <div>(<i>Suboro</i>)</div>			
Scripture Readings			
Genesis 28:10–22	Psalm 40:5–10	Hebrews 2:11–18	St Luke 1:24–38
<div>Gospel Theme: Cultivate a spirit of obedience</div> <div><i>What is this feast about?</i></div> <p>The Feast celebrates the announcement by the angel Gabriel to the Virgin Mary about the birth of Christ– the beginning of the fulfilment of God’s promise of sending His Son for the redemption of the world.</p> <div><i>What do we learn from this?</i></div> <p>Salvation was God’s initiative. The annunciation and thus the incarnation was planned by God Himself for the salvation of mankind. Yet, at the same time, we also see that a human response was involved, when Mother Mary accepts God’s will.</p> <div><i>How can we apply this?</i></div> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Follow the great example set before us by Mother Mary and cultivate a spirit of obedience, even when His will may seem difficult or uncertain.2. The humble acceptance and commitment to what God has instructed, is the road to salvation and blessing.3. We are called to participate actively in God’s mission on earth – both in words and deeds - knowing that God works through human cooperation.			

30 March 2025		Fifth Sunday of the Great Lent (Healing of Crippled Woman) 22 nd Sunday	
Scripture Readings			
Isaiah 50:1–5	Psalm 107:1–3, 17–22	1 Peter 3:8–16	St Luke 13:10–17
<p>Gospel Theme: God desires us to be merciful</p> <p><i>What is this passage about?</i></p> <p>Jesus heals a woman during Sabbath. When the angry synagogue ruler accuses Jesus of breaking their tradition, He exposes his hypocrisy.</p> <p><i>What do we learn from this?</i></p> <p>While rules and regulations are good, they must not make us blind and insensitive to the needs of those around us. The welfare of men must be the focus of all our spiritual disciplines.</p> <p><i>How can we apply this?</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Spiritual disciplines like prayer, fasting and almsgiving we practice during the season of Great Lent, should make us humble. Look inside and evaluate. Are these disciplines (rules) making me more merciful to others? [St Matthew 12:7].2. Let us not be proud and self-righteous like the Pharisees, but repent of our spiritual pride and ask God to help become like little children once again [St Matthew 18:3].3. Consistently follow the spiritual disciplines, joining along with the Church, during this season of Great Lent.			

6 April 2025		Sixth Sunday of the Great Lent (Healing of Blind Man)	
23 rd Sunday			
Scripture Readings			
Deuteronomy 25:13–16; 26:1–13	Psalm 119:9–16	Ephesians 5:1–14	St John 9:1–41
<p>Gospel Theme: Giving of sight</p> <p><i>What is this passage about?</i></p> <p>Jesus heals a man who was blind from birth. He then testifies as to what God has done for Him to the unbelieving Pharisees. At the end Jesus reveals Himself to the man who got sight.</p> <p><i>What do we learn from this?</i></p> <p>One's own sin or one's parents' sin are not always the reason for suffering and sickness. Through this 'creative' miracle, we see that Jesus was indeed God and from the man who was healed we learn how to be an effective christian witness.</p> <p><i>How can we apply this?</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Our witness of Jesus may invite persecution and oppositions.2. Pray for boldness, courage, confidence in every situation to stand firm for Jesus.3. Nevertheless, we must share what God has done for us, so that others might see who Jesus truly is.			

13 April 2025		Hosanna/Palm Sunday	
24 th Sunday			
FEAST OF PALM SUNDAY			
Scripture Readings			
Micah 4:1–5	Psalm 118:1–2, 19–29	Romans 8:18–25	St John 12:12–19
Gospel Theme: The Servant King			
<i>What is this feast about?</i>			
Jesus enters Jerusalem, riding on a donkey and a huge crowd welcomes Him like a King, with palm leaves and shouting Hosanna.			
<i>What do we learn from this?</i>			
Just before entering the Holy Week, the last week of Jesus’ life on earth, Jesus fulfils prophecies about the Messiah. People see Jesus as someone who has come to deliver them from a political oppression. But riding in on a donkey, instead of a horse like an earthly King, Jesus points to the eternal Kingdom which He has come to establish.			
<i>How can we apply this?</i>			
1. Let us be humble and serve others like Christ. He said and demonstrated, that the greatest of all is the servant of all. He is our Servant-King.			
2. Don’t be surprised if those who welcome us now, will turn against us later. It happened to Jesus, our Master.			
3. Learn to put our trust and hope in our glorious future and not in the present day glory or even sufferings.			

20 April 2025		Easter Sunday (Kymtho)	
25 th Sunday FEAST OF EASTER			
Scripture Readings			
Acts 2:22–36	Psalm 16	1 Corinthians 15:1–19	St Matthew 28:1–20
<p>Gospel Theme: The defeat of death</p> <p><i>What is this feast about?</i></p> <p>Jesus’ disciples become witnesses to His resurrection and defeat of death while those opposing Jesus try to hide the truth. Later on, Jesus gives the Great Commission to His disciples.</p> <p><i>What do we learn from this?</i></p> <p>Easter is the greatest event in history – because Jesus defeated death! Without the resurrection our faith is futile, [1 Corinthians 15:14] and with the boldness Christ’s resurrection gives us, we should go into all the nations.</p> <p><i>How can we apply this?</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. We don’t have to be afraid of death anymore, because Jesus has defeated death.2. This season we say to one another: Christ is risen! He is risen indeed!3. We must share this news of the hope we have with others.			

27 April 2025

New Sunday
Youth Sunday—*Special offering*

26th Sunday

Scripture Readings

Isaiah 40:9–15

Psalms 133

2 Timothy
2:1–13

St John 20:19–31

Gospel Theme: Overcoming our fears and doubts

What is this passage about?

The resurrected Jesus appears to the fearful disciples. He gives them His peace, grants them the promise of the Holy Spirit and power to forgive sins. He appears a second time, clears the doubts of St Thomas, who confesses Him as ‘my Lord and my God.’

What do we learn from this?

The presence of the risen Christ with us dispels all our fears. Jesus is commissioning His disciples to continue His priestly ministry and turning the doubt of Thomas into a deeper confession of faith.

How can we apply this?

1. Are we fearful? Remember that the resurrected Christ is with us! [St Matthew 28:20]
2. Are we doubtful? God can use that to lead us to having a greater faith when we confess it.
3. Don't ignore, disregard, or judge, those who appear fearful and doubtful. God can change them and use them for His glory, just like the disciples.

**St Thomas, the one who doubted, later was used by God to bring the Gospel of Jesus Christ to many parts of the world including, India, where he laid down his life as a martyr.*

4 May 2025		First Sunday after New Sunday	
27 th Sunday			
Scripture Readings			
Joshua 6:9–21	Psalm 4	Ephesians 6:10–24	St John 21:1–14
<p>Gospel Theme: Never give up on our calling</p> <p><i>What is this passage about?</i></p> <p>After a whole night of unsuccessful fishing, the resurrected Christ directs His disciples to a miraculous catch of fish and reveals Himself to them.</p> <p><i>What do we learn from this?</i></p> <p>This miracle reminds the disciples of the first miracle Jesus did [St Luke 5:1-11] and thus reminds them of their calling – to be fishers of men [St Matthew 4:19]. The huge catch of fish is also an image of the disciples bringing people to the Kingdom of God.</p> <p><i>How can we apply this?</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. If you are tempted to go back from your calling, Jesus is reminding us of our calling to be fishers of men.2. It is through us, His disciples, that all of mankind must come to know about Jesus.3. Pray for those who have gone back from Christ’s call on their life; that they might come back to His love and calling.			

11 May 2025		Second Sunday after New Sunday	
28 th Sunday			
Scripture Readings			
Acts 4:8–21	Psalm 100	Hebrews 3:1–13	St John 21:15–22
<p>Gospel Theme: Jesus restores us</p> <p><i>What is this passage about?</i></p> <p>Jesus restores St Peter who had denied Him three times [St Luke 22:31] and prophesies about how he would lay down his life for his master in the future.</p> <p><i>What do we learn from this?</i></p> <p>Jesus seeks to restore everyone; even the one who denies Him and then gives the highest responsibility as we see given to St Peter of feeding His flock. Jesus’ love can change anyone – just like it changed St Peter so much that, He was willing to lay down his life for His master.</p> <p><i>How can we apply this?</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. No one is beyond the reach of Jesus’ love.2. Jesus will restore us back into the community of His disciples, if we repent and accept His love.3. Pray and work hard that we will be faithful witness of Jesus, even in our death.			

18 May 2025		Third Sunday after New Sunday	
29 th Sunday			
Scripture Readings			
Exodus 34:4–12	Psalms 22:25–31	1 John 5:13–21	St Luke 24:13–35
<p>Gospel Theme: Scriptures and Eucharist open our eyes to know Jesus more</p> <p><i>What is this passage about?</i></p> <p>Walking along with two disciples who were on the road to Emmaus, Jesus first explains the Scriptures relating to the Messiah. Then as He breaks bread with them, He reveals Himself to them.</p> <p><i>What do we learn from this?</i></p> <p>When we read, hear and are taught the Holy Scriptures rightly, it will convict us and bring us to Christ. We also learn that, when we take part in the Holy Eucharist (breaking of the bread), our eyes will be opened to know Jesus.</p> <p><i>How can we apply this?</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. It must be our habit to read, hear, and learn the Holy Scriptures.2. When we are discouraged or confused, just like these two disciples, make it a point to read the Holy Scriptures. It will convict us and point us to Jesus.3. We must regularly take part in the Holy Eucharist. It is in and through it, the eyes of our hearts will be opened to know Jesus more and partake of His divine nature [2 Peter 1:4].			

25 May 2025		Fourth Sunday after New Sunday	
30 th Sunday			
Scripture Readings			
Isaiah 54:1–8	Psalm 98	1 Peter 3:17–22	St Luke 9:51–62
<p>Gospel Theme: Cost of being a disciple of Jesus</p> <p><i>What is this passage about?</i></p> <p>As Jesus sets His face firmly to go to Jerusalem and to endure suffering, there are three individuals who express their desire to follow Him. Jesus tells them what it will cost them to follow Him.</p> <p><i>What do we learn from this?</i></p> <p>Although we might desire to follow Jesus, often we do not count the cost. But here Jesus is challenging us to make a commitment by counting it's cost and to follow Him, with undivided loyalty.</p> <p><i>How can we apply this?</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. If we think about earthly security, we will not be able to follow Jesus whole heartedly [vs. 58].2. Understand that nothing should stand in our way, not even our parents, in fulfilling our commitment to Christ [vs. 59].3. We should not go back, but go forward without delay [vs. 61].			

<div>29 May 2025, Thursday</div> <div>FEAST OF THE ASCENSION OF OUR LORD</div>			
Scripture Readings			
Acts 1:1–11	Psalm 47	Ephesians 1:15–23	St Luke 24:36–53
<div>Gospel Theme: Christ will come back, just like He went up</div> <div><i>What is this feast about?</i></div> <p>The Feast commemorates the ascension of our Lord Jesus Christ into heaven, after spending 40 days with His disciples after His resurrection.</p> <div><i>What do we learn from this?</i></div> <p>Feast of hope – Because of the resurrection and ascension of Jesus into heaven, we look at death with hope – as the door to heaven.</p> <p>Feast of joy –Because Jesus has sent us the Holy Spirit to dwell within us and guide us into the way of truth and life.</p> <p>Feast of waiting – Because it reminds us of Jesus’ second coming. So we wait and seek to keep ourselves pure and holy, so that when He comes, He will find us as faithful servants who awaited His coming.</p> <div><i>How can we apply this?</i></div> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. No need to fear death anymore!2. Ask the Holy Spirit to empower us to be effective witness of Jesus our Lord.3. Always be prepared for Jesus’ second coming.			

1 June 2025		Sunday before the Pentecost	
31 st Sunday			
Scripture Readings			
Joshua 1:5–9	Psalms 1	1 Corinthians 7:1–2, 25–34, 9:1–10	St John 17:13–26
<p>Gospel Theme: A prayer for unity</p> <p><i>What is this passage about?</i></p> <p>Just before Jesus is arrested and led to His trial, He prays alone to the Father – first for His disciples and then for those who will believe in Him through the disciples.</p> <p><i>What do we learn from this?</i></p> <p>Although we Christians live in this world, we do not belong to this world. Jesus’ greatest prayer was that ‘we all will be one’ – i.e. for true unity among believers; because that is the way others will believe in Jesus.</p> <p><i>How can we apply this?</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. We are sent out into the world to help the world know about Jesus [vs. 18].2. Even though the world will hate us, God will protect us from the evil one [vs. 14,15].3. We must strive to be united with one another; that is how others will come to know Jesus [vs. 21] and that we belong to Him.			

8 June 2025		Pentecost (Fiftieth day after Easter)	
		Missions Sunday— <i>Special offering</i>	
		32 nd Sunday	
Scripture Readings			
Acts 2:1–21	Psalm 104:24–34, 35b	Galatians 5:16–26	St John 16:1–15
Gospel Theme: The Holy Spirit our Helper			
<i>What is this passage about?</i>			
Jesus tells His disciples that He is leaving them and that the Holy Spirit who will then come, will abide with them forever [St John 14:16] and guide them into all truth [St John 16:13].			
<i>What do we learn from this?</i>			
The Holy Spirit is our Helper – our comforter, our counsellor, and our guide. The Holy Spirit is present with us and is the Spirit of truth who makes God known and brings conviction to the world.			
<i>How can we apply this?</i>			
1. When we follow Jesus, we can expect persecutions [vs 1-3].			
2. When we feel we are alone, remember the Comforter, our Helper, the Holy Spirit is always with us [vs 6,7].			
3. Holy Spirit is given to empower us to be a powerful witness of the truth, to the whole world [Acts 2:11].			

15 June 2025		First Sunday after the Pentecost	
33 rd Sunday			
Scripture Readings			
Jeremiah 29:10–16	Acts 17:10–15	2 Corinthians 5:14–6:10	St John 6:26–35
<p>Gospel Theme: Jesus the Bread of Life</p> <p><i>What is this passage about?</i></p> <p>Many followed Jesus after He feeds the 5000 men, apart from women and children, only with five loaves of bread. Jesus directs them to seek food which lasts forever, i.e. Himself, and declares that He is the true bread from heaven, the bread of God who gives life to the world.</p> <p><i>What do we learn from this?</i></p> <p>Don't seek after signs; rather seek the One to which these signs point – Jesus. Believe in Him and He will fulfil our spiritual hunger and thirst forever.</p> <p><i>How can we apply this?</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. When we receive blessings and miracles, do not forget God, the source of all blessings.2. Follow and seek after Jesus because He is the source of eternal life.3. Regularly take part in the Holy Eucharist, because Jesus gives Himself to us through this sacrament [St John 6:51, 53].			

22 June 2025		Second Sunday after the Pentecost	
34 th Sunday			
Scripture Readings			
Daniel 6:25–28	Acts 4:23–31	Ephesians 2:11–22	St Matthew 10:5–16
<p>Gospel Theme: Sent to preach and to heal</p> <p><i>What is this passage about?</i> [see also St Luke 9:1-6]</p> <p>Jesus gives clear instructions – what to take, where to go, how to respond, even as He sends out His disciples to preach the Kingdom of God and to heal the sick.</p> <p><i>What do we learn from this?</i></p> <p>Jesus’ ministry was to preach and heal. This is now shared with His disciples, who need to ‘go’ with single minded focus in this mission and share freely what they have received from Jesus.</p> <p><i>How can we apply this?</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. As Jesus’ disciples, we are called to preach and heal – with our words and deeds.2. We must not get distracted in our mission. God will take care of all our needs.3. We are carriers of peace and forgiveness, to those who receive it.			

29 June 2025		Third Sunday after the Pentecost	
Seminary Sunday— <i>Special offering</i>			
35 th Sunday			
Scripture Readings			
Jeremiah 3:1–5	Acts 13:26–39	Galatians 6:10–18	St John 6:35–46
<p>Gospel Theme: Sent to do the Father’s will</p> <p><i>What is this passage about?</i></p> <p>In this passage, Jesus states once again that He is the bread that has come from heaven, to do the Father’s will, leaving the Jews confused about who He really is.</p> <p><i>What do we learn from this?</i></p> <p>We learn that Jesus is Divine; that He is God’s Son, the life-giving Bread, sent from heaven. God the Father’s will is that all receive everlasting life, through His Son Jesus Christ.</p> <p><i>How can we apply this?</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Just like Jesus, we should submit our will to do the Father’s will in our lives.2. Help others to see Jesus and believe in Him – that is the only way they can have everlasting life.3. Eternal life is strengthened and nurtured by partaking in the sacrament of the Holy Eucharist. In Eucharist Jesus gives Himself to us in the bread and the wine.			

6 July 2025		Fourth Sunday after the Pentecost	
36 th Sunday			
Scripture Readings			
Isaiah 65:8–12	Acts 6:1–7	1 Corinthians 16:14–22	St Luke 10:1–16
<p>Gospel Theme: The reality of the harvest and labourers</p> <p><i>What is this passage about?</i></p> <p>Jesus sends out 70 of His disciples to preach and to heal. He reminds them that they are to carry on this mission often in the midst of danger. Jesus also warns of the danger of rejecting Christ and His works.</p> <p><i>What do we learn from this?</i></p> <p>Jesus states that the harvest is plentiful (which simply means that there are a lot of people out there in the world who are in need of hearing and responding to the Gospel). And therefore, we need to pray for more labourers to make a commitment to ‘go’. On this mission, we are going as lambs among wolves.</p> <p><i>How can we apply this?</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Pray continuously, deliberately and regularly for God to raise up more workers to fulfil Christ’s mission.2. We must be prepared for persecution and therefore be very wise in our communication of the Gospel.3. Let us who have seen and experienced the mighty works of God, remember to be humble and lead repentant lives.			

13 July 2025		Fifth Sunday after Pentecost	
37 th Sunday			
Scripture Readings			
Isaiah 40:27–31	Acts 9:10–18	2 Corinthians 5:14–20	St Luke 9:10–17
<p>Gospel Theme: God’s power in our inadequacy</p> <p><i>What is this passage about?</i> [See also St John 6: 4-14]</p> <p>In this miracle recorded in all the four gospels, Jesus feeds 5000 men (plus children and women) with only five loaves and two fish, demonstrating God’s ability beyond human limitations.</p> <p><i>What do we learn from this?</i></p> <p>When we are faced with a need and we don’t have the resources to meet it, give what we have to Jesus. That will be more than sufficient for God to multiply to meet our needs.</p> <p><i>How can we apply this?</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Jesus will test us, just as He tested His disciples, to know if we trust Him.2. When faced with a need, rather than being anxious, trust God to meet it.3. When God uses us to meet the needs of others, He will meet our needs too. Remember, there were 12 baskets full remaining after everyone ate and were satisfied.			

20 July 2025		Sixth Sunday after Pentecost	
38 th Sunday			
Scripture Readings			
Isaiah 14:22–27	Acts 1:15–20	1 Corinthians 8:1–6	St Matthew 15:32–39
<p>Gospel Theme: God is able to meet all our physical needs</p> <p><i>What is this passage about?</i></p> <p>In this second feeding of multitude, Jesus, seeing that they have not had anything to eat for three days, does a miracle and feeds 4000 men, besides women and children, with seven loaves of bread.</p> <p><i>What do we learn from this?</i></p> <p>Jesus is concerned about our spiritual and physical needs as well. When the disciples gave the little they had with them to Jesus, it was more than enough to meet all of their needs.</p> <p><i>How can we apply this?</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Pray that we will see people with the same compassionate eyes that Jesus had.2. Do not be discouraged if we have only little to meet the needs before us. Whatever is given to Jesus will be multiplied to meet all of our needs.3. It is through us, His disciples, that Jesus wants to meet the needs of those around. We are His hands and feet.			

27 July 2025		Seventh Sunday after Pentecost	
39 th Sunday			
Scripture Readings			
Isaiah 57:15–19	Acts 4:32–37	Ephesians 2:11–22	St Mark 3:20–30
<p>Gospel Theme: Jesus’ authority over evil powers</p> <p><i>What is this passage about?</i></p> <p>When Jesus casts out a demon, some said that He did so by the power of demons. Jesus questions them on how an evil kingdom could destroy itself, stating that He is the stronger man who has come to deliver those held captive by the strong man[St Luke 11:21,22].</p> <p><i>What do we learn from this?</i></p> <p>Jesus, the Son of God, came to liberate those held under evil powers. But even when doing such good works, many still misunderstood the source of His power as well as His intentions.</p> <p><i>How can we apply this?</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. We do not need to be afraid of evil powers; Jesus Christ is stronger than all those powers.2. Pray for those held captive by the evil one to be delivered in Jesus’ name.3. Don’t be discouraged when some misunderstand, question, or oppose the works of God.			

3 August 2025		Eighth Sunday after Pentecost	
40th Sunday			
Scripture Readings			
Isaiah 52:1–6	Psalms 23	1 Peter 2:4–10	St John 6:47–59
<p>Gospel Theme: The life- giving Body and Blood of Jesus</p> <p><i>What is this passage about?</i></p> <p>In this passage Jesus is establishing the foundational principle of the Divine Eucharist.</p> <p><i>What do we learn from this?</i></p> <p>In the Holy Eucharist, we mystically eat of the flesh and drink of the blood of Christ. Although hard to comprehend, mystically, when the bread and wine are blessed, they become the holy Body and holy Blood of Christ. And when we partake of these holy elements by faith, it renews us spiritually and grants us eternal life.</p> <p><i>How can we apply this?</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. The Holy Eucharist is the epicentre of the Church. It is Christ with us, in our midst.2. Therefore, we must not approach the Divine Eucharist lightly or miss it for anything else.3. Let us go out and bring those who are spiritually dying, so that they too can be part of the life-imparting Body and Blood of Jesus.			

6 August 2025, Wednesday

FEAST OF THE TRANSFIGURATION OF OUR LORD

Scripture Readings

Deuteronomy
16:13–17

Psalms 24

1 John 2:23–3:1

St Luke 9:27–36

Gospel Theme: Transformed into likeness of Christ

What is this feast about?

The Feast commemorates the miracle where our Lord Jesus Christ was transfigured, revealing His divinity to His disciples.

What do we learn from this?

It revealed the divine nature of Jesus and that He is God's beloved Son. We see Moses (who had died) appear and talk to Jesus. This is proof that death is not the end for humans, and that saints who are dead in Christ continue to communicate with God. Transfiguration reminds us of 'theosis' – God working in us to transform us into the image of Jesus Christ, the complete process of we humans integrating into union with God.

How can we apply this?

1. Partaking of the holy sacraments especially the Holy Eucharist, helps transform our nature.
2. Church practices like prayer, fasting and almsgiving help reshape and refine our character.
3. We can face our life difficulties with hope that one day, we will see God face to face.

10 August 2025		First Sunday after Transfiguration	
41 st Sunday			
Scripture Readings			
Deuteronomy 25:13–16	Psalms 27	James 4:7–5:6	St Matthew 21:28–32
<p>Gospel Theme: Be doers of God’s will</p> <p><i>What is this passage about?</i></p> <p>This parable is about a man who had two sons. He asks both to work in his vineyard, but they responded one way and acted another. Jesus uses this example to show the hypocrisy of the Jewish chief priests and elders.</p> <p><i>What do we learn from this?</i></p> <p>Simply saying something is not good enough; rather doing the right thing at the right time is important. We also learn that God is closer to the sinner who knows the need for mercy, than the spiritually proud – who say all the right things, but fail to act on it.</p> <p><i>How can we apply this?</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Let us not be self-righteous and proud but be like the sinners who recognize our need for repentance and mercy [St Luke 18:13].2. Make every effort to remain humble [1 Peter 5: 5(b)] in heart and attitude.3. Let us be doers of God’s will, only they will enter the Kingdom of heaven [St Matthew 7:21].			

15 August 2025, Friday

**FEAST OF THE DORMITION OF THE THEOTOKOS
(*Shoonoyo*)**

Scripture Readings

Exodus 3:1–6;
19:16–23

Ezekiel 44:1–3

Hebrews 2:14–18 ;
9:3–12

St Luke 11:22–28

Gospel Theme: Death is just a door to heaven

What is this feast about?

This feast celebrates the ‘falling asleep’ of the Mother Mary, the Mother of God.

What do we learn from this?

This is a reminder of how much the Church loved and respected Mother Mary, the Mother of God. We learn that death need not be feared; that for those who die in Christ, death is a joyful event. We should never forget the departed; but keep their memory alive.

How can we apply this?

1. We respect and love Mother Mary – the greatest saint, by venerating her icon, just like the Church always has done.
2. By remembering the saints who departed from us in our Divine Liturgy and on special days, we keep their memory alive.
3. Those who have departed from us, like Mother Mary and our dear departed Metropolitan, Athanasius Yohan are with Jesus now and they are interceding for us.

** When we revere St Mary as the Theotokos – which means ‘God-bearer’, we are affirming that Jesus’ divinity and humanity are not separate. Rather there is one person, who has two natures: the divine and the human. Jesus was the God-man.*

17 August 2025		First Sunday after the Dormition	
42 nd Sunday			
Scripture Readings			
1 Samuel 8:4–9	Psalms 34:15–22	Ephesians 6:10–17	St Luke 6:39–45
<p>Gospel Theme: Do not judge others, but be merciful</p> <p><i>What is this passage about?</i></p> <p>Jesus tells a parable about why we should not judge others, but rather judge ourselves.</p> <p><i>What do we learn from this?</i></p> <p>We learn not to judge others, because we will be judged by the same measure, we judge others [St Matthew 7:1]. We also learn that we should forgive and be merciful.</p> <p><i>How can we apply this?</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. When we are tempted to judge another, we should stop and repent; because we are guilty of the very things we point out in others.2. We should be generous in forgiving others because God has forgiven us.3. Always pray the ‘Jesus Prayer’: Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me, a sinner.			

24 August 2025		Second Sunday after the Dormition	
43 rd Sunday			
Scripture Readings			
Genesis 6:3–12	Psalms 12:1–7	1 Thessalonians 5:1–11	St Luke 11:9–20
<p>Gospel Theme: Persistent Prayer</p> <p><i>What is this passage about?</i></p> <p>In teaching about prayer, Jesus says that God will respond to our persistent asking for that which is good. When Jesus heals a demon possessed man, many are amazed, while some test Jesus and accuse Him of using demonic powers to do miracles.</p> <p><i>What do we learn from this?</i></p> <p>We should not give up in praying for things that are pleasing to God. Those who test God are never given the answer they demand [vs. 16] and Jesus casts out demons because He is God’s Son.</p> <p><i>How can we apply this?</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. We should never be discouraged and give up praying for good things. Be persistent.2. Avoid asking for signs from God to test Him; rather trust His promises.3. Even when good things happen to people in Jesus’ name, opposition will be there.			

31 August 2025

Third Sunday after
the Dormition

44th Sunday

Scripture Readings

Ezekiel 18:21–24	Psalms 146	2 Corinthians 10:1–7	St Matthew 17:22–27
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Gospel Theme: Fulfilling our duties

What is this passage about?

Jesus predicts His passion and His death. Also He does a miracle so that He and St Peter can both pay the obligatory temple tax.

What do we learn from this?

We learn that, Jesus willingly went to the cross. No one forced Him; He was prepared for it. Jesus wanted to avoid unnecessary offence by remaining loyal to the civil duties and laws and therefore paid the obligatory tax.

How can we apply this?

1. Jesus is aware of everything, our needs and our future. That is very comforting for us to know.
2. Jesus has promised to assist us to fulfil our duties and responsibilities. We only need to trust in Him and bring every thought into subjection to Christ.
3. We should not unnecessarily offend people, even though we might have the right to do so.

7 September 2025		Fourth Sunday after the Dormition	
45 th Sunday			
Scripture Readings			
Exodus 3:1–6, 11–14	Psalms 37:1–11	1 Corinthians 3:16–23	St Matthew 5:38–48
<p>Gospel Theme: Walk with integrity</p> <p><i>What is this passage about?</i></p> <p>While teaching about the principles we should live by, Jesus emphasizes the importance of loving others, even those who are unkind or unloving toward us.</p> <p><i>What do we learn from this?</i></p> <p>We learn that we should not respond to evil with evil, but instead with love and mercy. In doing so, we imitate the Father and grow in perfection.</p> <p><i>How can we apply this?</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Pray for self-control, so that when someone hurts you with words or actions, you won't respond with harsh words or violence.2. Pray earnestly that God will bless those who oppose you.3. Practicing spiritual disciplines like almsgiving, prayer, and fasting [St Matthew 6:1-18] will help us become more like our Father in heaven.			

8 September 2025, Monday			
FEAST OF THE NATIVITY OF THE THEOTOKOS			
Scripture Readings			
Genesis 28:10–17	Ezekiel 43:27–44:4	Philippians 2:5–11	St Luke 1:39–49, 56; 11:27–28
<p>Gospel Theme: Mother Mary the great example</p> <p><i>What is this feast about?</i></p> <p>The feast celebrates the birth of St Mary, the mother of our Lord Jesus Christ, as passed on to us by the tradition of the Holy Church.</p> <p><i>What do we learn from this?</i></p> <p>We learn how God answered the prayers of a devout and elderly couple and how the couple offered their promised child, Mary, as a gift to the Lord.</p> <p><i>How can we apply this?</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Just like Mother Mary's parents, it is our greatest privilege to offer our children, whether boy or a girl, to serve God and His Holy Church.2. We have a great example about following God's purposes in the life of Mother Mary, who was a human being like us and chose to obey God fully.3. We are to become 'temples' of the living God – just like Mother Mary and point everyone to Christ.			

14 September 2025

46th Sunday

FEAST OF THE HOLY CROSS

Scripture Readings

Numbers 21:4–9

Psalms 98:1–5

Galatians 2:17–
3:14

St Luke 21:5–28

Gospel Theme: Victory of the Cross

What is this feast about?

This feast commemorates the historical event of the finding of the 'True Cross' – the cross used in the crucifixion of the Lord Jesus Christ.

What do we learn from this?

We learn that in the 4th century, St Helena was led to find the True Cross, the miraculous confirmation of it, the True Cross, and how her son Emperor Constantine later built a shrine there.

How can we apply this?

1. The Cross being the primary symbol of our faith, we sign ourselves with the cross, have cross at our altars (home & church) and even wear them.
2. Cross being the sign of triumph of God over all evil, we raise the cross to all four corners of the world during the Feast.
3. When we look at the Cross, we thank God for Christ's suffering for us.
4. The Cross is a reminder of Christ's calling to take up our cross and follow Him.

21 September 2025		First Sunday after the Feast of the Holy Cross	
47 th Sunday			
Scripture Readings			
Isaiah 1:10–20	Psalms 34	1 Corinthians 2:10–16	St Mark 13:28–37
<p>Gospel Theme: Watch and be ready</p> <p><i>What is this passage about?</i></p> <p>Christ will certainly return. But the ‘suddenness’ of His return means that we need to be ‘watchful’ and ready.</p> <p><i>What do we learn from this?</i></p> <p>Sometimes, because of the delay in His coming, we can get distracted with earthly pursuits [St Matthew 13:38,39] and be caught unprepared [parable of ten virgins]. We should not allow laziness and complacency in our lives, rather be faithful and earnest in His work till He returns.</p> <p><i>How can we apply this?</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Never be deceived by those who say – Jesus is coming back on a particular date! No one knows the timing of His return and we should not go after knowing it either.2. Be assured that Christ will return to take us home, just like He has promised.3. When He comes, He should find us faithful; so, let us keep doing what Christ has given us to do.			

28 September 2025		Second Sunday after the Feast of the Holy Cross	
48 th Sunday			
Scripture Readings			
1 Kings 3:5–9	Psalms 19:7–14	1 Corinthians 2:14–3:9	St Matthew 16:5–12
<p>Gospel Theme: Beware of false teachings and teachers</p> <p><i>What is this passage about?</i></p> <p>Here Jesus warns His disciples to be careful about being wrongly influenced by the teachings of the hypocritical Pharisees and Sadducees.</p> <p><i>What do we learn from this?</i></p> <p>Even though the disciples had been with Jesus, due to lack of faith, their hearts were hardened, so that they could not understand spiritual truths. We also learn that, just like a little leaven can spread to a lot of dough and leaven it fully, false teachings can spread fast and destroy people's lives.</p> <p><i>How can we apply this?</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Ask God to give us discernment and enlightened hearts to understand His truth.2. Hold on to the right teachings the early Church Fathers handed down to us – so that we do not go astray.3. Don't entertain false teachers and their doctrines; they will destroy you [2 Timothy 2:17].			

5 October 2025		Third Sunday after the Feast of the Holy Cross SOC Sunday— <i>Special offering</i> 49 th Sunday	
Scripture Readings			
Proverbs 1:2–9	Psalms 8	Romans 8:1–11	St Mark 2:23–28
<p>Gospel Theme: Mercy must triumph legalism</p> <p><i>What is this passage about?</i> [also read St Matthew 12:1-14 & St Luke 6:1-11]</p> <p>The Pharisees, who are rigid in their religious laws, finds fault with Jesus, because His disciples broke the ‘law’ on the Sabbath. Jesus, the Law giver Himself, reminds them that mercy and not sacrifice (religious observances) is what God desires [St Matthew 12:7].</p> <p><i>What do we learn from this?</i></p> <p>God’s laws should not be used to condemn people; neither should they make us insensitive to others’ needs. Having ‘mercy’ – doing good and being sensitive to others and their needs, must take priority over simply fulfilling religious obligations.</p> <p><i>How can we apply this?</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Have mercy on people; be sensitive to their needs and be slow to judge them.2. Do not allow religious rules to make us blind or insensitive to others.3. Follow Jesus’ example and not the self-righteous Pharisees.			

12 October 2025		Fourth Sunday after the Feast of the Holy Cross	
50 th Sunday			
Scripture Readings			
1 Kings 8:22–30	Psalms 42	1 Corinthians 1:21–29	St Luke 16:9–18
<p>Gospel Theme: Be faithful with money</p> <p><i>What is this passage about?</i></p> <p>This passage talks about being faithful, especially with our money (material possessions, wealth etc.), how our attitude towards money should be and how it is related to true spiritual blessings in our lives.</p> <p><i>What do we learn from this?</i></p> <p>We learn that while money by itself is not evil, our faithfulness in handling money (ours or others) is directly related to God for giving us spiritual blessings.</p> <p><i>How can we apply this?</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Be faithful with the money and resources God has given us by giving tithes, offerings, alms and giving for God’s work.2. Never be a slave to money, by making decisions solely based on money.3. Use money to gain friends in eternity.			

19 October 2025		Fifth Sunday after the Feast of the Holy Cross	
51 st Sunday			
Scripture Readings			
Leviticus 2:1–3	Psalm 46	1 Timothy 6:13–21	St Matthew 23:1–12
<p>Gospel Theme: The Humble will be exalted</p> <p><i>What is this passage about?</i></p> <p>Jesus talks about how some abuse their spiritual authority and how we His disciples should be different from them.</p> <p><i>What do we learn from this?</i></p> <p>We learn that we cannot escape God’s eyes and all our intentions are clearly visible to God. So, when we exalt ourselves, it does not please Him. What pleases God is humility and being servant-hearted.</p> <p><i>How can we apply this?</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. We should never do things simply for others to see.2. We should submit and obey the authority God appointed over us.3. Strive to be humble and servant-hearted. <p><i>*Do not misunderstand Jesus’ warning not to call hypocritical leaders as fathers and teachers as a prohibition against using these terms. From the early days of the Church, those in God-given authority – Bishops and priests were called ‘fathers.’</i></p>			

26 October 2025		Sixth Sunday after the Feast of the Holy Cross	
52 nd Sunday			
Scripture Readings			
Isaiah 43:16–25	Psalms 84	1 Corinthians 5:6–13	St Luke 18:18–27
<p>Gospel Theme: : Prioritizing God above all</p> <p><i>What is this passage about?</i></p> <p>In a conversation between a rich, young, righteous ruler, who sincerely wants to follow God, Jesus helps him realise what is standing in the way of his entering into the Kingdom of God.</p> <p><i>What do we learn from this?</i></p> <p>Entering the Kingdom of God is more important than all the wealth in the world. But we can be so attached to wealth that it can prevent us from entering the Kingdom of God.</p> <p><i>How can we apply this?</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Observing commandments is not enough; but must be willing to forsake all for the sake of Christ.2. Everything - wealth, possessions, family, honour, society, education and all such must come second to God.3. If there's something which is hindering us from following Christ fully, pray that God will help us overcome that attachment. With God nothing is impossible.			

CHURCH CALENDAR OF BEC : 2024-2025

Date/Day	Feasts	Description
3 November 2024, Sunday	Sanctification of the Church (Koodhosh Eetho)	Beginning of liturgical calendar year. Sanctification of Church.
10 November 2024, Sunday	Dedication of the Church (Hoodosh Eetho)	Dedication of Church Sunday/Renewal of the Church.
17 November 2024, Sunday	Annunciation to Zachariah (Suboreh Dazkharyo)	This Sunday is commemorated as the day when John the Baptist's birth was announced to Zechariah by the Archangel Gabriel.
21 November 2024, Thursday	FEAST OF THE ENTRANCE OF THE THEOTOKOS	The Feast commemorates the Virgin Mary entering the Temple in Jerusalem as a young child.
24 November 2024, Sunday	Annunciation to the Theotokos (<i>Suboreb Dabthalto</i>)	Announcement made by the Archangel Gabriel to the Virgin Mary that she would become the mother of Jesus Christ.
1 December 2024, Sunday	Fast of the Nativity (25 days fast)	Period of fasting in preparation for the nativity of Jesus Christ.
1 December 2024, Sunday	St Mary's Visit to Elizabeth (Mezalto)	Day commemorating the visit of St Mary to Elizabeth.
8 December 2024, Sunday	Birth of John the Baptist (Mawlodeb-d-yubanon Mamdono)	Day celebrating the birth of John the Baptist.

Date/Day	Feasts	Description
15 December 2024, Sunday	Annunciation to St Joseph	Announcement by the Archangel Gabriel about the birth of Jesus to St Joseph.
18 December 2024, Wednesday	Dukhrono of St Thomas the Apostle	Day to commemorate the martyrdom of St Thomas.
25 December 2024, Wednesday	FEAST OF THE NATIVITY OF CHRIST (Yeldo)	Nativity of our Lord/ Incarnation of the Lord.
1 January 2025, Wednesday	Feast of the Circumcision of our Lord	To celebrate the circumcision of our Lord and His receiving the name Jesus, according to Jewish tradition.
6 January 2025, Monday	FEAST OF THE THEOPHANY OF OUR LORD (Denho)	This feast commemorates the baptism of Jesus in the Jordan river by St John the Baptist.
7 January 2025, Tuesday	St John the Baptist's Day	Feast commemorating the beheading of St John the Baptist.
8 January 2025, Wednesday	St Stephen's Day	Feast commemorating the martyrdom of St Stephen, the head of the Deacons and the first among martyrs.
18 January 2025, Saturday	Feast of St Athanasius the Great, the Patriarch of Alexandria	This is the feast day of St Athanasius the Great, the Patriarch of Alexandria in the 4th century, who is considered a Doctor of the Church and called as 'the father of orthodoxy'.

Date/Day	Feasts	Description
2 February 2025, Sunday	FEAST OF THE PRESENTATION OF CHRIST (<i>Mayaltho</i>)	Celebrating the day when infant Jesus was presented in the temple.
10 February 2025, Monday	Nineveh Lent/Three-day Lent begins	This fast is practiced following the example of the people of Nineveh of old times who listened to the warning of God through the Prophet Jonah and proclaimed a fast for all, seeking God's mercy.
16 February 2025, Sunday	All Departed Priests (Kohne Sunday)	Day to remember the faithful departed priests as well as their true faith and service in the Holy Church.
23 February 2025, Sunday	All Departed Faithful (Aneedé Sunday)	Day to commemorate all the departed faithful.
2 March 2025, Sunday	First Sunday of the Great Lent (Pethurtha of the Great Lent (Kothine Sunday)	Great Lent starts by commemorating the first miracle performed by Jesus at Cana. (Pethurtha- returning, ceasing.)
3 March 2025, Monday	First Monday of the Great Lent	The service of reconciliation is done on the First Monday of the Great Lent to help prepare the faithful to enter into the season of Great Lent.
9 March 2025, Sunday	Second Sunday of the Great Lent	Day to commemorate the miracle of the Healing of the Leper.

Date/Day	Feasts	Description
16 March 2025, Sunday	Third Sunday of the Great Lent (M'haryo Sunday)	Day to commemorate the Healing of the Paralytic.
23 March 2025, Sunday	Fourth Sunday of the Great Lent (Kna'naito Sunday)	Day to commemorate the Healing of the Canaanite's Daughter.
25 March 2025, Tuesday	FEAST OF THE ANNUNCIATION TO THE THEOTOKOS (<i>Suboro</i>)	The feast commemorates the announcement about the incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ by the Archangel Gabriel to the Virgin Mary.
30 March 2025, Sunday	Fifth Sunday of the Great Lent (Kpiptho Sunday)	Day to commemorate the Healing of the Hunched-back Woman.
6 April 2025, Sunday	Sixth Sunday of the Great Lent (Samyo Sunday)	Day to commemorate the Healing of the Blind man.
13 April, Sunday	FEAST OF PALM SUNDAY	The feast commemorates the triumphal entry of our Lord into Jerusalem.
16 April 2025, Wednesday	Holy Wednesday	This is the Wednesday of the Great & Holy Week where the Church remembers two events - The anointing of Christ with myrrh from a 'sinful woman' and the agreement made by Judas with the Jewish authorities to betray his Master. In the evening services of this day, the Sacrament of Holy Unction is usually administered to the faithful.

Date/Day	Feasts	Description
17 April 2025, Thursday	Holy Thursday	This is the Thursday of the Holy Week, where the Church commemorates the Mystery Supper of Christ, wherein He established the Sacrament of the Divine Eucharist to be observed forever in His remembrance.
18 April 2025, Friday	Holy Friday (Hasho)	Day to commemorate the crucifixion of Jesus Christ.
19 April 2025, Saturday	Holy Saturday	This is the last day of the Holy Week and the end of the Lent season. The Church remembers this as the day when, as the mortal body of Christ lay in the tomb, His soul descended into Hades to plunder it and preach the Good News to its inhabitants.
20 April 2025, Sunday	FEAST OF THE FEASTS Easter Sunday (<i>Kymtho</i>)	Easter: Celebration of the life-giving Resurrection of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.
27 April 2025, Sunday	New Sunday	The first Sunday after Easter, when the Church commemorates the appearance of Christ to St Thomas and the other disciples, where He showed them His wounds, thus dispelling the doubts of St Thomas.

Date/Day	Feasts	Description
8 May 2025, Thursday	Memorial Day of Athanasius Yohan 1 Metropolitan	Memorial day of reposed Metropolitan, Athanasius Yohan I, of Blessed Memory.
29 May 2025, Thursday	FEAST OF THE ASCENSION OF OUR LORD (<i>Suloqo</i>)	The Feast commemorates the ascension of Jesus to heaven, 40 days after His resurrection.
8 June 2025, Sunday	FEAST OF THE PENTECOST	The Feast commemorates the descent of the Holy Spirit upon the Apostles on the day of Pentecost, resulting in the establishing of the Church.
16 June 2025, Monday	The Apostles' Lent begins	The Fast begins on June 16 and ends on June 29. The practice of this fast is to follow in the Apostles' footsteps (Hebrews 13:7) who fasted in fulfillment of the Lord Jesus' words in St Matthew 9:15.
29 June 2025, Sunday	Feast of St Peter and St Paul	The Apostles' Lent ends with the celebration of the memory of these two great saints.
3 July 2025, Thursday	Feast of St Thomas	Remembering the life and works of St Thomas.
5 July 2025, Saturday	Feast of the Seventy-two Evangelists	Memory of the 72 disciples.

Date/Day	Feasts	Description
1 August 2025, Friday	15-day Dormition Lent begins	From the 1 st to the 15 th of August, this is the time for the faithful to prepare themselves for their death because the death of the Mother of God is a desirable and exemplary death for all.
6 August 2025, Wednesday	FEAST OF THE TRANSFIGURATION OF OUR LORD	The feast commemorates the transfiguration of Christ on Mount Tabor.
15 August 2025, Friday	FEAST OF THE DORMITION OF THE THEOTOKOS <i>(Shoonoyo)</i>	The Feast commemorates the dormition or “falling-asleep” of the Mother of Jesus Christ our Lord.
8 September 2025, Monday	FEAST OF THE NATIVITY OF THE THEOTOKOS	The Feast commemorates the birth of the Mother of Jesus Christ, our Lord.
14 September 2025, Sunday	FEAST OF THE HOLY CROSS	The Feast commemorates the finding of the True Cross of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ by Saint Helen, the mother of the Emperor Constantine.
23 October 2025, Thursday	Feast of St James the Apostle	Remembering the life of St James, the brother of our Lord Jesus and the first Bishop of Jerusalem.

SPECIAL DAYS

Special Days	Week	Date
Parents’ Sunday	3 th Sunday	17 November 2024
Women Sunday	5 th Sunday	1 st December 2024
Children Sunday	6 th Sunday	8 th December 2024
Clergy Sunday	13 th Sunday	26 th January 2025
Youth Sunday	26 th Sunday	27 th April 2025
Missions Sunday	32 nd Sunday	8 th June 2025
Seminary Sunday	35 th Sunday	29 th June 2025
SOC Sunday	49 th Sunday	5 th October 2025

