



## BELIEVERS EASTERN CHURCH

Office of the Metropolitan, Synod Secretariat, St. Thomas Community, Thiruvalla, Kerala, India.

### SHEPHERD'S LETTER

Mar/Apr 2023

Blessings and greetings to all the Archbishops and Bishops, Priests and Deacon Fathers, Evangelists and Order of Sisters, and all the Faithful of the Believers Eastern Church world-wide, in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Amen!

Dearly beloved in Christ,

May the grace, mercy and peace be yours in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit ✠

The Great Lent is the most important season of the Holy Church when we journey with Jesus to His death on the cross, burial and resurrection.

Now as we have come to the last part of this years' Lent known as 'Holy Week' which starts on April 3rd and ends with Easter Sunday on the 9th, I pray you have been strengthened spiritually and blessed in every way during this season through prayer, fasting, deliberately choosing to represent Christ to those around us.

Now that soon we enter in the Holy Week, may I recommend a few things that all the faithful of the Believers Eastern Church must do.

One: Make it a deliberate choice to be part of the Holy Week services in your local parish. On Easter Sunday we celebrate the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ by taking part in the Holy Eucharist and saying 'Christ is Risen' to each other, with joy and gladness in our hearts.

Two: Commit yourself to continue to share the message of hope of Christ's resurrection that brings inner healing and restoration with others. This is the message Apostle Paul and the early Church Fathers proclaimed and passed on to us as we see in 1 Corinthians Chapter 15 verse 3 - 4, "For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures" You can do this every day by finding time to pray and care those who are sick in your community; comforting those in sorrow and despair, caring for the poor and needy and just by being kind and compassionate in your words and actions.

Third: If you find someone in your family, neighbourhood or working place that go through difficult crises in life and need special prayers, you can invite them to come to church one day where your priest could be praying and helping them find hope and restoration. And you the faithful could join along with your priest in praying with faith and confidence in God's promises.

Four: Set apart times every day to pray that the Lord will raise more young men and women from our churches to continue to serve the Holy Church and the community. Our Lord Jesus Christ commanded us to pray as we read in St. Matthew Chapter 9 verses 37 - 38, "The harvest

is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field.”

Make a personal decision that you will pray for your children every day that they will receive the call of God and choose serving Him as the most desirable thing in life.

Five: And finally my dear brothers and sisters in Christ, the foundation of our hope is the resurrection of Christ which gives us the answer to life’s hardest question, by offering hope of a life beyond the grave. Because He lives, we can face tomorrow with boldness, courage and hope. For because He lives, we too will live as it says in St. John 14:19. Therefore, live each day with hope and positive attitude despite all the struggles you go through and never be ashamed to put your trust in the risen Lord. As your spiritual father, I am together with you in this journey and pray for you all every day.

May we be strengthened each day in the grace and mercy of our risen Lord to live in the light of eternity!

In service of the Holy Church,

Your Father in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Athanasius Yohan I', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Athanasius Yohan I Metropolitan