



## BELIEVERS EASTERN CHURCH

World Church Headquarters, St Thomas Community  
Thiruvalla - 689 103, Kerala, India

### SHEPHERD'S LETTER

May-June 2026

To My Beloved Shepherds and all the Faithful of the Holy Church scattered across the world,  
Grace, mercy, and peace be with you from our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ!

Christ is Risen!

We are in the Season of Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, according to our church liturgical calendar. Even as the world around us continues to experience unrest and uncertainty, we are called to live in the unshakable hope and joy of the Resurrection of our Saviour. For together we can say: Christ is risen, and because He lives, I can face tomorrow. With this boldness and courage, the Risen Christ sent forth His disciples — to reflect the joy of Easter and the hope of the Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ to the world around us. And as promised by Jesus, the Holy Spirit came upon the disciples, empowering them to be reflections of God's love.

And the Apostles, the 'ones who were sent forth', went far and wide – even unto the ends of the earth. To honour the Twelve Apostles, who, strengthened by the Holy Spirit, went forth to bear witness to Christ in all the world, the church has set apart a sacred period of Lent, called the 'Apostles Lent.'

**How did this Lent originate?** In Acts of the Apostles 1:4, we see that Lord Jesus had asked the Apostles to first wait for the promise of the Holy Spirit before they set out to fulfil the Great Commission. The sacred tradition of the Church tells us that the Apostles then began a Lent, asking God to empower them for their missionary undertakings. And they continued this until they were filled with the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost.

Ever since then, the Church has observed this period of fasting, popularly called as the Apostles' Lent. The Apostle's Lent begins on June 16 every year and continues for 13 days until June 28, after which we will be celebrating two feasts – the Feast of St. Peter and St. Paul on June 29 and the Feast of the Apostles on June 30.

**How do we observe this Lent?** Like all Lenten periods of the Church, the Apostle's Lent calls us to focus our attention on prayer, fasting and almsgiving in our pursuit of living more God-centred, faithful lives. But this Lent is distinct from the other Lents of the Church in that it calls us to continue in the mission of the Apostles. And that is why, I encourage you, my children, to set apart this holy season to read through the entire Book of Acts. As our beloved Metropolitan Athanasius Yohan I of blessed memory used to say, the Book of Acts is 'the

blueprint' of the Holy Church, and the main resource for us to understand the ministry of the Apostles and reflect upon their unwavering commitment to share the Gospel. Through this deliberate practice, we seek to follow in the footsteps of the Apostles, praying to the Lord for strength and power to continue the task of spreading the Gospel message to all around.

### **Three Practical Ways to Observe the Lent of the Apostles**

**Serve:** The Lent of the Apostles gives us an annual occasion to reflect upon the lives and example of the Holy Apostles. But remembering them alone is not enough to honour them. We must honour the memory of the Apostles by ensuring that we continue the work that they began. It was entrusted to us who are their followers and spiritual descendants to share the hope and joy of the Risen Christ with those around us. So, during this season, let us continue to do that, especially the mercy ministries and compassion services in all of our parish and dioceses.

**Pray:** As St. Paul reminds us in Ephesians 6:19-20, we must pray for our priests and missionaries that they will recommit their lives and be encouraged and empowered to continue the work of the Gospel even in the midst of various forms of difficulties. Let us also pray for more of our children and youth to dedicate their lives to serve the holy church. Remember, the Holy Church is the Body of Christ, the true extension of Jesus in the world.

**Give:** In addition to our tithes and offerings, we are also called to support the mission work with our finances. In Philippians 4:18, St. Paul tells us that these gifts are 'acceptable sacrifices that are pleasing to God.' Hence, the Apostles Lent is an opportune time for us to set aside the money we save by fasting from certain kinds of food so that it may be given to support the ministries of our church.

My beloved children, as always, I hold each of you in my prayers during these sacred days. Let us renew our commitment to follow the Apostles' example and reflect the joy and hope offered to us by the Gospel of Jesus Christ, in our families, our communities and even unto the ends of the earth. If our fasting is limited to prayer and abstaining from food, we have missed the purpose of the Apostles' Lent. May the Lord grant us grace to honour the Apostles by following them in word and deed. May the Lord our God grant you wisdom to discern His will, strength to obey His commandments, and love to reflect His mercy.

May the Holy Trinity—the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit guide us with His abounding grace and mercy and the intercessions of all the Saints and Theotokos be the protection for us before the throne of God now and always. ✠Amen.

With paternal love and prayers,

Your Father in Christ,



✠ **Moran Mor Samuel Theophilus Metropolitan**

**Date :** 5 May 2026

**Place :** World Church Headquarters

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**P.S:** Please make sure this is translated into all regional languages and read in all parishes for the encouragement of the faithful.