

ST GEORGE INDIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH MANCHESTER

هفدزجنا

# SPOR-ZOV-NO

CHRONICLE OF THE TIME



Date: April 15, 2018

## TOPIC ONE

### Greetings in the name of Risen Lord

Resurrection is the pivot doctrine of Christianity. We are now going through the days of light to enrich the power of Holy Spirit. asato mā sadgamaya, tamosomā jyotir gamaya, mriyormāmritam gamaya, Om śhānti śhānti śhāntiḥi. From ignorance, lead me to truth; From darkness, lead me to light; From death, lead me to immortality Om peace, peace, peace. By the resurrection we always uphold the message of truth, light and immortality.

"But because of his great love for us, God who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were

dead in trespasses—it is by grace you have been saved. And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus."Ephesians 2:6. As a church we are preparing ourselves to celebrate the feast of patron saint St George. We need to witness not only in Manchester, but everywhere where we are and in all walks of life.

We have the opportunity to show the resurrection power in our life every day. Visualise the goodness and praise Him.

May God Bless you all.

Happy Achen .

## FOLLOWING THE LECTIONARY

**April 15** First Sunday after New Sunday Acts 13:26-39 Ephesians 6: 10-20 St. John 21: 1 – 14

**April 22** Second Sunday after New Sunday Acts 4: 8-21 Hebrews 3: 1-13 St. John 21: 15 -19

**April 29** Third Sunday after New Sunday I John 5: 13 - 21 Hebrews 11: 3-6 St. Luke 24: 13 - 35



## A LOOK BACK AT OUR PASSION WEEK



## LITTLE PRINCESS TRUST - ANN BAIJU

I don't know how many of you have heard of 'Little Princess Trust' but this is the one of the leading cancer charities in the UK. The Little Princess Trust provides real hair wigs free of charge to children and young adults up to the age of 24, who have sadly lost their own hair due to cancer treatment and other illnesses. And I'm very proud to say that I was part of many who donated their hair for those in need. Someone very lucky must have got my hair. It was around this time 2 years ago and I presume you all will be wondering why I'm coming with this now. Cancer patients are increasing and we need more people who are willing to cut a few inches of hair that can place a smile on someone's face for a lifetime. The theme for our last years OVBS was "Do Good to All" (Thessalonians 5:15) This as Sunday school children and as members of the wider community, we should take the initiative to make a brighter future. Every strand of your hair is the strand that gives hope to those suffering from cancer and other illnesses, to live a normal life. Especially as we just passed Easter, it is the time we should give back and be grateful and this would be the perfect opportunity. Questions that come up are 'What if my hair doesn't suit the child?' If a suitable donated-hair wig cannot be sourced, then they would buy the most appropriate wig for the boy or girl, as close as possible to their original hair. The cost for the charity to purchase one wig is on average between £350-£500. Any amount of fundraising that you can generate towards this cost would help this charity. So next time instead of getting your hair done at expensive salon why not try and put that money into helping this growing charity.

I hope everyone will take this into consideration and wish everyone had a blessed Easter :)

## FOOD BANK SUCCESS



A huge thank you to all parish members for donating food items to the food bank in Manchester. As one of the first events led by the newly established youth group of our church, this was a great success and it is all thanks to the support of all our church members. Once again, thank you to everyone who kindly donated items and we ask for further support in the future.

~ Youth Team :)

## MY LENTEN EXPERIENCE - TOBY SHAJI

My dear brothers and sisters in Christ, as an acolyte, I feel like my Lenten experience this year has been undoubtedly different to last year in many different aspects. We kick-started this year's lent with the Shub-Kono service, this is known as 'The Day Of Forgiveness.' Personally I feel like this was the best way to begin the lent because in this season we fast, this in Malayalam is known as 'Upa-Vasam.' This word in English doesn't actually mean 'to fast' but 'to be nearer to God.' In my opinion, I don't think that it's possible to be nearer to God when we hold grudges with other people in our hearts. This is taught a lot in the New Testament in the Gospel of St. Mathew when Jesus says to the people 'For if you forgive men when they sin against you, your Heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive other men of their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins' (6:14-15).

As the Lenten season progressed I started to realize that no matter how much I abstained from any meat products, it was not doing me any good in other aspects. One day I was scrolling through my phone on Instagram and I saw a quote posted on the NE American Diocese' page (@northeastamericandiocese), the quote was by St. John Chrysostom, a great teacher in our Orthodox faith, it said 'He is mistaken, who thinks that the fast only consists only in abstinence from food. True fasting is departing from the devil.' This quote made me think, it made me realize that even though I was abstaining from meat, I was still doing evil deeds, that I knew in my own self conscious was wrong, this was also followed by a very inspirational talk from our Sunday school head teacher re-iterating this exact same point, so this led me to the decision as to not only carry on my abstinence from meat, but to also do tiny things to get closer to God, you don't need to make big drastic changes to get closer to God, you could start with small things and work your way up at your own pace, this could be things like helping your parents at home, or trying not to argue with your siblings.

I was very fortunate to be able to attend the 'pathi-nombu sandhya namaskaram' at church. This is known as the mid-lent. During this service, we brought the Golgotha to the middle of our church, this service gave me many mixed emotions because we were only about two weeks away from entering into the Great Passion of Christ, this gave me a sense of excitement because it would be my first passion week as an acolyte but it also gave me a slight feeling of sadness because of all the pain that Jesus was about to endure for us. The day before Palm Sunday, we celebrated an English Qurbana to commemorate the resurrection of Lazarus. Straight after the qurbana, preparations for Palm Sunday had already begun, we cut off the ends of the fresh palm leaves that came from India to round them off, we got all the books out ready and we made the cross from the leaves.

On the day of Palm Sunday I felt excited and full of joy to be able to celebrate the service, as we all went outside for the procession it made me feel very proud of our faith because we are still following old traditions and we are still re-enacting that very moment of joy and happiness that happened around 2,000 years ago. After this service we had to change all the altar and the curtain and everything black, signifying that death was now upon us. I also got the opportunity to go to the evening prayer of that day. During that evening prayer the mood of everybody changed, before the Palm Sunday service, it was joy but during the evening prayer our moods saddened as we had now properly entered into the Holy Passion Week. During the passion week we did 'kumbu (kneeling)' we did a completely different kauma which didn't include the Hail Mary. Before every kauma we would chant the syriac phrase 'Brikmookok Dahlophain,' this in Malayalam is translated into 'Njangalku vendiyulla ninte kashtanubhavam vazhthapettathakunnu' this means 'Your suffering and passion for us is blessed.' When I pronounce this phrase, it brings to memory the sacrifice of all sacrifices that the Father Almighty made for us through his only son. The Pesaha or Maundy Thursday service was very powerful, we didn't use the marbhasas or the bells and we weren't allowed to kiss the altar, there was also no kiss of peace, this made me feel a bit uneasy because it wasn't like normal qurbanas because there was no peace or calm at this time because Jesus had revealed that one of his own disciples were going to betray him. The Good Friday service was probably the most emotional service of my Lenten experience. The Promiyon and Sedra's that we're read during this time we're very powerful. For example, in the Sedra during the Sleeba Aagosham (Adoration of the Cross) it says 'by the blood and water that came out from your side, he gained new life and was brought back to his former state.' This very sentence signifies the whole reason as to why we are known Christians, because Jesus Christ died for our sins and went down to hell to once again make us pure like we were in the Garden of Eden. We also had to drink that bitter drink called chorukka which left a foul taste in your mouth, this represented the drink that Jesus received on a sponge while he was stuck on the cross.

Another experience that I had this year which I didn't have last year was being able to witness the burial of the Jesus, this made me feel very privileged because no one else saw this except from me and the fellow acolytes. It is quite a touching and emotional experience when you dwell deep into it.

To conclude the commemoration of the sacrifices of all sacrifices we ended it on Easter by celebrating the sacrament of all sacraments, the Holy Qurbana. We also ended by holding everyone's hand and wishing everyone a happy Easter

I conclude my words by saying my experience has certainly taught me lots and I hope it has done as much good for you as it has done for me. I end with probably the most important words in our whole faith. My brothers and sisters, Christ has risen....Indeed he has risen!!