



# BELIEVERS EASTERN CHURCH WORLD HEADQUARTERS

Office of the Metropolitan, St. Thomas Community, Kuttapuzha P. O., Thiruvalla - 689103 Kerala, India.

## SHEPHERD'S LETTER

January/February 2025

### To My Beloved Shepherds and all the Faithful of the Holy Church

Grace, mercy, and peace be with you from our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ ✠.

Since time immemorial, Great Lent has been a season set apart by the Holy Church for the purification of our souls, deepening of our union with God, a season to humble ourselves, reflect on the boundless mercy of our Lord, and prepare our hearts for the glorious celebration of Pascha (Easter).

As we prepare to embark on this holy journey, may I, as your spiritual father, invite your earnest attention to a few specific guidelines that will help you observe this season faithfully and meaningfully:

- 1. Fasting:** The discipline of fasting during Great Lent is an act of repentance and self-control. Our Lord Jesus Christ said in the Gospel of St. Matthew chapter 4:17: "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand". Repentance is not merely the acknowledgment of our sins but the turning of our entire being toward God, opening ourselves to receive His grace, mercy, and cleansing. And therefore, let us not focus solely on abstaining from food but also on abstaining from all that hinders our relationship with God and our fellow human beings—pride, anger, greed, bitterness, and all that erodes the inner chambers of our souls.
- 2. Increased Prayer:** Let us commit to deepening our relationship with God through prayer.
  - Daily Prayer: Establish a routine of personal prayer each day.
  - Liturgical Prayer: Participate actively in the daily services and prayers offered in your parish, as they provide profound moments for reflection and worship.
  - The Jesus Prayer: Practice the Jesus Prayer as often as possible: "Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me, a sinner."
- 3. Almsgiving:** Great Lent calls us to care for those in need. Remember the words of our Lord: "Whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of Mine, you did for Me" (St. Mathew 25:40).
  - a. Set aside a portion of your income and resources to support the poor and needy in your community.

- b. Actively participate in parish initiatives, contributing your time, talents, and finances.
- c. Show compassion to those who are suffering, and demonstrate kindness, empathy, and comfort in all that you do.

Remember, through every prayer offered, every act of almsgiving, and every effort to overcome temptation, we draw closer to the light of the Resurrection.

Great Lent is not merely an individual discipline but a communal effort. We are one Church, and together, let us strive to follow the example of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who fasted in the wilderness for forty days, showing us the path of self-denial and spiritual renewal.

Do not forget to utilise the Lenten resources provided by the holy Church, such as daily Scripture readings and the writings of our beloved Metropolitan Father, Moran Mor Athanasius Yohan I of Blessed Memory, to nourish your spirit.

May this season be a time for:

- personal reflection, spiritual growth, and healing of relationships
- examining your conscience sincerely, repenting for where you have fallen short in your relationship with God and others
- approaching the sacrament of confession with humility, seeking the cleansing of your soul through God's grace
- forgiving those who have wronged you and to seek forgiveness from those you have hurt
- humbling yourselves before God and others
- making peace where there is division and
- striving to live as one body in Christ.

I offer my prayers for each of you, that the grace of God will strengthen you throughout these sacred days of fasting. May He grant you the wisdom to discern His will, the strength to follow His commandments, and the love to extend His mercy to all.

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,



Moran Mor Samuel Theophilus Metropolitan

**Date :** 11 February 2025

**Place :** World Church Headquarters

---

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