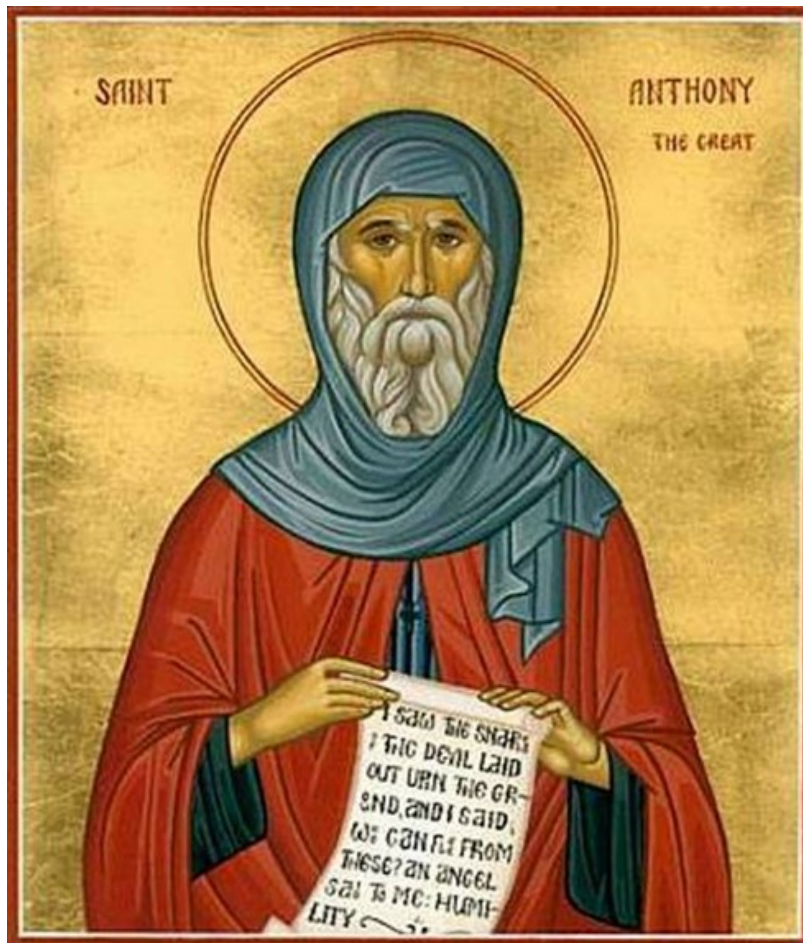


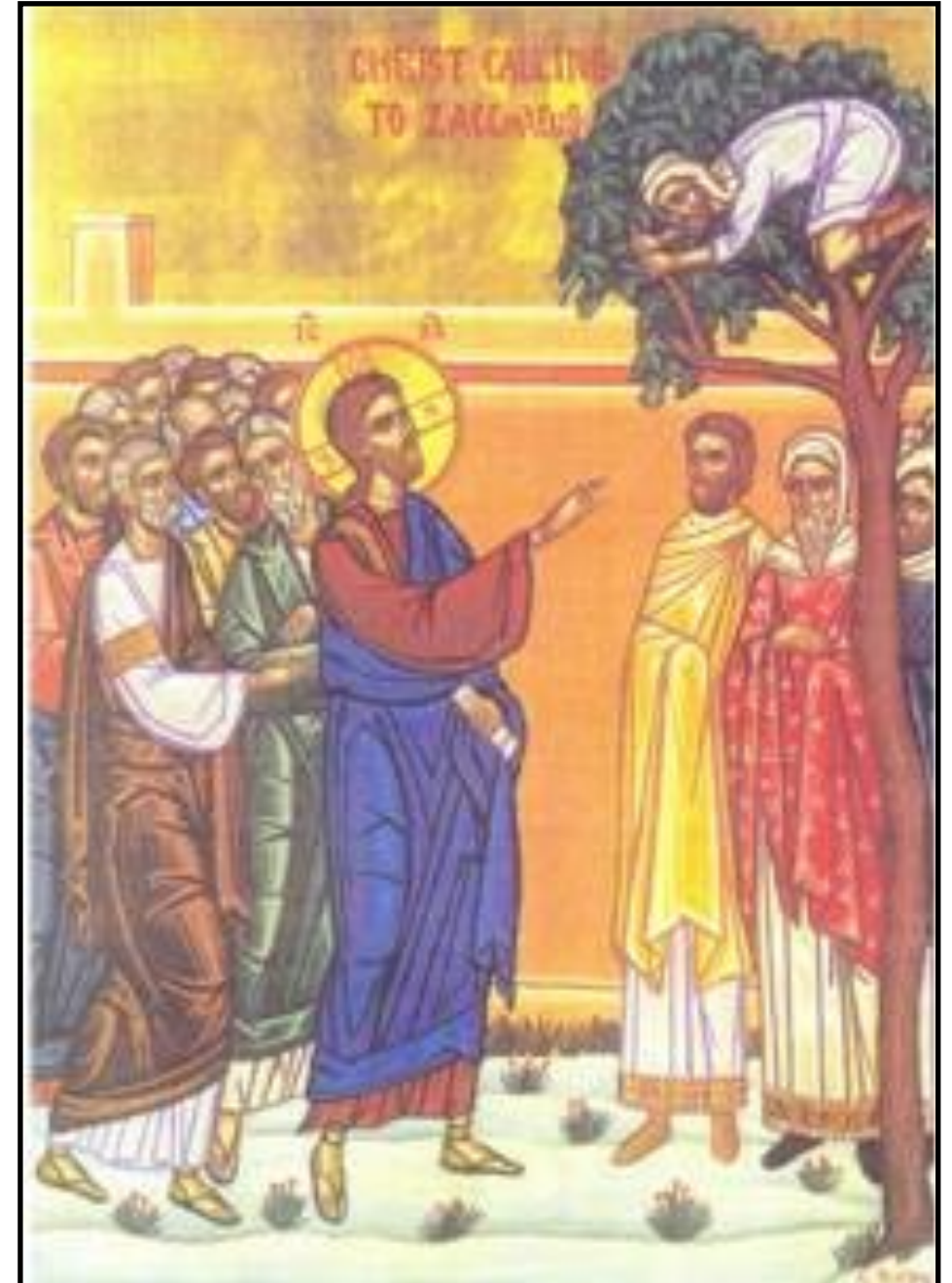
From the Divine Office for the Commemoration of Anthony the Great (Jan 17)

Christ filled you with divine gifts of grace; having found in you a spotless mirror of His divine and radiant manifestations, He shone upon you the flashes of His own light. Therefore, you became an overflowing fount of healings, food for the hungry, and a heavenly rain for the thirsty. With the gift of reading hearts, you wisely made them better for God by your word. Pray to him to enlighten and save our souls. (Vespers)

Anthony most venerable, you rejected the troubles of this world and spent your life in peace by imitating John the Baptist. With him, we exalt your name, for you are a perfect example of action. (Kontakion)



**SUNDAY OF ZACCHAEUS
JANUARY 17, 2021**



Our Lady of Perpetual Help Melkite Catholic Church
256 Hamilton St.
Worcester, MA 01604
Rectory: (508) 752-4174 Hall: (508) 755-2199
Email: olphmelkite@gmail.com
Rev. Bryan McNeil, Pastor
Email: Brymc56@comcast.net Cell: (978) 314-1962
Divine Liturgy: Sunday 10:00 AM

Antiphon (3rd)

1: Come, let us sing joyfully to the Lord; let us shout with joy to God our Savior.

O Son of God, who are risen from the dead, save us who sing to You, Alleluia

2: Let us come into His presence with thanksgiving and let us joyfully sing psalms to Him.

Khallisna Ya-Bnallah, Ya Man qama min baynil-amwaat, nahnu muranneemeena Laka.

Haleloueya.

3: For God is a great Lord and a great King over all the earth.

O Son of God, who are risen from the dead, save us who sing to You, Alleluia.

Entrance Hymn

Priest: Come, let us worship and bow down before Christ.

People: **O Son of God, Who are risen from the dead, save us who sing to you Alleluia!**

Troparion of the Resurrection (Tone 8, pg. 42)

You descended from on high O compassionate One; and consented to burial for three days that You might free us from suffering. O Lord, our life and our resurrection, glory to You!

Troparion Of Anthony (Tone 4)

Father Anthony, you equaled Elias in his zeal and followed John the Baptist in his holy way of life: you peopled the wilderness and established the world on the firm foundations of your prayers. Intercede with Christ God that He may save our souls!

Troparion of the Dormition (Tone 1, Pg 15)

In giving birth, you have preserved your virginity and in falling asleep, you did not forsake the world, O Mother of God. You have passed to life, being the Mother of Life. Through your intercessions, save our souls from death.

Kondakion of the Encounter (Tone 2)

O Christ our God who through Your birth have sanctified the virginal womb, and have blessed the arms of Simeon. You have come today to save us. When wars prevail keep Your people in peace and strengthen our public authorities in every good deed, for You alone are the Lover of Mankind.

Anthony's reputation spread over the years and people increasingly came to see him, hoping to imitate his way of life. After twenty years "Anthony came forth, as from a shrine, initiated in the [mysteries](#) and filled with the [Spirit of God](#). Then for the first time he was seen outside the fort by those who came to see him. And they, when they saw him, wondered at the sight, for he looked as he had years before. He was neither fat, like a man without exercise, nor lean from [fasting](#) and striving with the [demons](#). He was just the same as they had [known](#) him before his retirement."

Anthony now encouraged others to settle nearby and adopt his way of life. The numbers so increased that, as Athanasius says, "cells arose even in the mountains, and the [desert](#) was colonized by [monks](#)."

Forays to Alexandria

Although other monks leaved nearby, Anthony still lived in seclusion for most of the time, coming together with them for occasional worship and instruction. He first left this place of solitude in 311, during the persecution of Maximinus when Christians were being rounded up and taken to Alexandria. He presented himself publicly in the city but no one dared touch him. He spent some time ministering to the suffering Christians there. When the persecution ceased, he then returned to his cell.

Anthony now resolved to return to solitude. He settled further into the mountains and allowed other monks to bring him food once a month. He would descend to the other monks from time to time to instruct and encourage them in their monastic life.

Anthony returned to Alexandria to refute the rumor that he sided with the Arians. He publicly denounced the Arian teaching, calling it the forerunner of the antichrist. During his stay there he healed many and freed others from demons.

As the years progressed more and more people came to live the monastic life in Anthony's shadow. His fame even reached Emperor Constantine and his sons who wrote to him seeking guidance. Anthony lived to be 105. His body was placed in an unmarked grave, as he directed.

Asceticism and Us

What does the witness of St Anthony – and of the ascetic life in general – say to people in the world? We are all called to follow Christ, if not to a martyr's death or to a foreign mission, but where is He leading us? St Paul gives us this answer: "*If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth*" (Col 3:1, 2).

Asceticism is essentially a refocusing of our hearts away from "things on the earth" to enable us to develop our relationship to Christ where He is now. While people in the world have important family and career responsibilities, we also have a great deal of free time which we devote to recreation or entertainment of one sort or another. In our society we are increasingly addicted to non-stop music, TV or Internet, with their increasingly godless atmosphere. What time do we have left for prayer, Scripture reading or service? What spirit do we have left for relishing fellowship with God? Asceticism for us might well involve turning from such pursuits at least in part to set our minds "*on things above, where Christ is.*"

Holy Father Anthony, pray to God for us!

DIVINE LITURGY INTENTIONS

Today +Patricia Cronican

Jan 24 +Phil Jordan. Requested by the Jordan Family

Feb 14 Nan Nejaimey (1yr.), Charles & Lena (Esper) Nejaimey, Thomas & Irene (Ryan) Kelly, Katherine (Nejaimey) Kleimer. Requested by James Nejaimey & family.

Feast Day Liturgical Schedule

Tue, Feb 2, 6PM - Divine Liturgy for the Feast of the Encounter w/Blessing of Candles

Sat, Feb 6, 10AM - Divine Liturgy for the Saturday of the Dead

Last Week's Collection

Regular	\$ 572
Stole	\$ 220
Candles	\$ 19
Donations	\$ 100
Total	\$ 911

Remember the Melkite Church in Your Will: Give a lasting gift for future generations of Melkites and help to ensure that our beautiful Melkite heritage continues to grow and flourish for your children's children. Simply add the following statement to your last will and testament: ***I hereby bequeath to the Melkite Eparchy of Newton the following sum: \$_____.*** Contact Bishop NICHOLAS personally to inform him of your generous bequest: 3 VFW Parkway, West Roxbury, MA 02132.

Christmas Donations

Antoinette Arraj

Arthur Gazal

Barbara Thomas in memory of her parents

Mr. & Mrs. Francis Boyda

George Arraj, Jr.

Harry & Gina Tembenis

James & Karen Esper

James Nejaimey

Joe & Bonnie Najemy

Joe & Lorraine Lian

Karen & Antonio Solitro

Katherine Thomas

Lisa Jagielski

Maria Filewicz

Mary Rizk

Mercadante Funeral Home

Mr. & Mrs. Nicholas Hallal

Nick Rahal

Paul & Patricia Abraham

Raymond Esper

Richard & Sharon Dowd
(Health of Alice Esper. In memory of Amen Esper, Jr., M/M Amen Esper, Sr Lt. Joseph Esper)

Ron Abraham

Ryan & Tina Dumont

Sadie Mirante

Susan Arraje

Tom & Daneil Sarrouf

William & Janice Abdelnour

Zenon & Marilyn Tencza

God bless you for your generosity!



Following Christ to the Desert

THE LORD JESUS SAID to the rich young ruler, “You still lack one thing. Sell all that you have and distribute to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me” (Lk 18:22). This young man declined, but others through the centuries have left all and followed Him. In times of persecution they followed Him to the cross (or the sword, the wild beasts, or the flames) as martyrs. But what if there is no persecution – how can one follow Christ?”

A number of early Christians sought to follow Him into the wilderness. Ascetics, both men and women, left their homes and withdrew from society to follow the One who had said, “*Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay His head*” (Lk 9:58). The first to do so, like St Takla, the first woman martyr, left their homes to dwell outside their town or village in relative seclusion. Two others, whom the Church remembers this week, went further than that.

The first, **St Paul of Thebes** (January 15), is revered as the first hermit in Egypt. *During the persecution of Decius, Paul fled to the Theban desert where he lived in a cave for almost 100 years before his death in 342.*

*We know more about the second, **St Anthony the Great** (January 17), the “father of monks” whose life was written by his contemporary, St Athanasius the Great, Archbishop of Alexandria. This work was soon translated into numerous languages and spread the fame of St Anthony and of the ascetic life throughout the Churches of East and West.*

“Sell all that you have...”

Anthony (c. 251-356) was the son of landowners from the village of Coma on the Nile, south of Alexandria. When he was 18 years old, his parents died, leaving his unmarried sister in his care. A few months later he had what we might call a “Conversion Experience” while attending the Liturgy in the village church. He heard the Gospel passage quoted at the start of this article and, as St Athanasius tells it, “As though God had put him in mind of the

Saints, and the passage had been read on his account, Anthony went out immediately from the church, and gave the possessions of his forefathers to the villagers— they were three hundred acres, productive and very fair— that they should be no more an obstruction to himself and his sister. And all the rest that was movable he sold, and having got together much money he gave it to the [poor](#), reserving a little however for his sister's sake.”

Soon after he felt called to a more ascetic way of life. Placing his sister in the care of “known and faithful virgins,” Anthony began living in solitude outside his village, visiting any nearby ascetics and studying their way of life. When he was about 35, he settled among the tombs at the edge of the Western Desert, giving himself over to prayer and fasting. A friend bringing him bread one day found him collapsed outside the tomb and brought him back to the village. St Athanasius says that Anthony had a divine visitation in which he was told, “since you have endured, and have not been overcome, I will always help you, and will make your name [known](#) everywhere.’ Having heard this, Antony arose and [prayed](#), and received such strength that he perceived that he had more power in his body than formerly.”

20 Years at Deir al-Meimun

As soon as Anthony recovered he headed further into the desert, settling in the ruins of an abandoned fort in the mountains on the other side of the Nile. Friends would come to bring him food but he would not leave the fort, speaking to them through a slit in the wall. St Athanasius says that these friends often heard him beset by demons and that they “used often to come expecting to find him dead, and would hear him singing, ‘Let God arise and let His enemies be scattered, let them that [hate](#) Him flee before His face. As smoke vanishes, let them vanish; as wax melts before the face of fire, so let the sinners perish from the face of [God](#).’ and again, ‘All nations compassed me about, and in the name of the Lord I requited them.’”

Prokimenon

Reader: Precious in the Lord’s eyes is the death of His holy ones.

People: Precious in the Lord’s eyes is the death of His holy ones.

Verse: How shall I make a return to the Lord for all the good He has done to me?

People: Precious in the Lord’s eyes is the death of His holy ones.

Reader: Precious in the Lord’s eyes

People: Is the death of His holy ones.

Epistle: Heb 13:17-21

Alleluia Verses

Happy the man who fears the Lord! He will joyfully agree with His commands.

Verse: His holiness shall endure for ever and ever.

Gospel: Lk 19:1-10

Special Petitions for the Ecumenic Prayer (Inserted after the third petition)

- For all your people who have proven positive with the coronavirus, that they may be restored to full health and offer you their praise and thanksgiving, we pray to you, Lord, hear us and have mercy.
- For all those who have died as a result of the coronavirus that they may be granted rest with the Saints and the mercy of God in the Heavenly Kingdom, we pray to You, Lord, hear us and have mercy.
- For doctors, nurses, and all in health care, risking their lives to minister to those afflicted with the coronavirus, that they remain safe, and in good health as they serve others, we pray to You, Lord, hear us and have mercy.
- For all your people in Lebanon who were hurt during the disastrous explosion, that they may be restored to full health, and for those who died that they may be granted rest among the Saints, we pray to You, Lord, hear us and have mercy.
- For peace throughout the Middle East, especially in Lebanon, Syria, Palestine, and Iraq, we pray to You, Lord, hear us and have mercy.