

From the Divine Office for Commemoration of St. Gregory the Theologian (Jan. 25)

The sweet melody of your theological teaching has overcome the noisy blasts of orators, for God has granted you the power of penetrating spiritual depths and the gift of brilliant literary talent. Gregory our father, intercede with Christ God that He may save our souls. (Troparion)

Glorious Gregory, your theological knowledge has solved the problems raised by rhetoricians: you have robed the Church with true theology inspired from on high. The Church puts on this robe and cries out with us, your children, "Hail, O Father whose theological intelligence is so great!" (Kontakion)



**FIFTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER THE HOLY CROSS
JANUARY 22, 2023**



JESUS CALLING ZACCHAEUS

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!

Patronal Troparion (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 intercession, save our souls from death.

Kontakion of the Presentation of our Lord (Tone 1)

O Christ our God who through Your birth have sanctified the virginal womb and have blessed the arms of Simon, 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.

Just which Scriptures could Timothy have known from his childhood? When St Paul first met Timothy's family in c. AD 48, and for decades afterwards, many of the New Testament books were yet to be written. In the next 50 years the Gospels and most of the epistles were being circulated, but it took some time for all the local Churches to become aware of them or to accept them as inspired. For most of this time – and certainly while Paul was writing to Timothy – when Christians spoke of “the Scriptures,” they meant the Old Testament. St. Paul is encouraging Christians under persecution to resort to Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms. As St Clement of Alexandria wrote in his Exhortation to the Heathens, “*These books are truly holy as they sanctify and deify.*”

In this Paul echoes the witness of Abraham in the parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus (Lk 16:19-31). When asked to send an emissary from paradise to the rich man's brothers, Abraham replies, “*They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them*” (v. 29). When the rich man protests, Abraham answers, “*If they do not hear Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rise from the dead*” (v. 31). Spectacular wonders amaze us but don't necessarily lead us to faith; the Scriptures speak to truly believing hearts and strengthen the gift of faith within them. This is why St John Chrysostom would comment, “One single word from the divine Scriptures is more effective than fire! It softens the cruelty of the soul and prepares her for every good work” (*Ninth Homily on 2 Tim*).

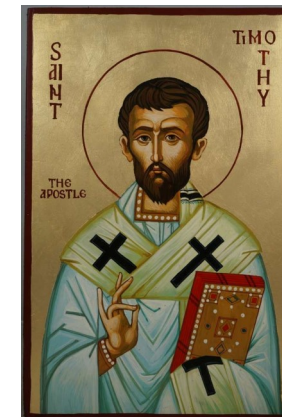
Witness of the Saints

Besides the Scriptures, St Paul commends to Timothy “*the things which you have learned and been assured of, knowing from whom you have learned them*” (v.14). Timothy had worked with Paul for several years and knew his teaching, which, earlier in the chapter, he called “*my gospel*” (2 Tim 2:8), the saving mystery of Christ which would later be put in writing in the four Gospels. He also knew how Paul lived out his faith in daily life and how he behaved under trials and persecution. The living witness of Timothy's mentor would be a source of strength for him when he too suffered for his faith in Christ. Over the centuries until today, the encouragement of believing parents and spouses as well as teachers and fellow Christians would provide the support from which martyrs drew the strength to face the suffering they endured for Christ.

Called before time by God and becoming a disciple of holy Paul, you were an initiate in the divine mysteries. Outstanding in your life, keeping the Faith intact until death, you became a faithful hierarch of God, O holy apostle Timothy. After denouncing the worship of idols as foolishness, you were stoned and beaten, receiving the crown of martyrdom. O blessed one, intercede for us who celebrate your sacred memory with faith.

Come, O people, let us sing to Timothy, the apostle distinguished as a herald of the Gospel. Let us say, “Hail, venerable offshoot of the Faith, who were like a son to holy Paul! Hail, venerable model of virtue, thrice-wise mouth of the divine Word! Hail, divine flute announcing God to the whole world! Hail, pillar of Faith, on which the Church finds support!”

Vespers Stichera, Feast of St. Timothy (Jan 22)



DIVINE LITURGY INTENTIONS

Today +Alice Esper (40 day). Requested by the Esper & Dowd families
 Jan 29 +Richard Nejaimey (1yr.). Requested by his family
 Feb 5 +Diane Moossa (40 Day). Requested by her family

This week's Coffee is hosted by the Esper & Dowd families

Next week's Coffee Hr. by the Nejaimey family

Please remember in your prayers: George Arraj, Jr., Ron Abraham, Peter Abraham, Vi Gazal, Robert Ghiz, Sadie Mirante, Archie Opatka, Anthony Poti, Katherine Thomas, Charlotte Stockhaus, Ruth Welsh, Richard Abraham, Sr., Daneil Sarrouf, Bob Lynch, Michael Mooradian, Michael McNeil, Jeff McNeil, Wyatt Willian Rahall, Lauren Abraham and the people of Ukraine.

If there are people for whom you would like me to pray, please reach out and give me their names. Part of our vocation as Christians is to pray for each other, especially when someone is sick or suffering in any way.

CALENDARS

The 2023 calendars are at the rear of the church. Please take only one until we're sure everyone has gotten one. We will not do a general mailing of calendars. If you know someone who would like a calendar and can't get to church, please let me know and I will send them one.

Last Week's Collection

Weekly	\$1,125
Candles	\$ 31
Coffee Hr.	\$ 64
Memorials	\$ 300
TOTAL	\$1,520

God bless you for your generosity!



Welcome to any visitors we have with us this morning! We are happy to have you worship with us.

Please join us downstairs in the church hall for the coffee hour so that we can get to know each other better and answer any questions you may have about the parish or the Melkite Church.



HOUSE BLESSINGS

The post-Theophany period is the traditional time for blessing homes. If you would like me to come and bless your home, please see me after the Divine Liturgy or contact me at (978) 314-1962 (Brymc56@comcast.net).

I would love to come and spend some time with you!
 Fr. Bryan

ADULT EDUCATION

Our adult education series will begin on **January 31, 2023 at 6:30PM**. Our text will be Fr. Justin Rose's book "Come, Follow Me." It is a Byzantine Christian approach to evangelization and disciple-making. It fits in well with Bishop Francois' motto: Becoming Disciples, Making Disciples. Please plan to join us!

UPCOMING LITURGICAL SCHEDULE

Wed 2/1, 6PM Divine Liturgy for the feast of the Encounter (Hypapanty)

Sat 2/11, 10AM Divine Liturgy & Memorial Service for Saturday of the Dead

FINANCIALS

<u>12/2022</u>		<u>YTD (10/2022-12/2022)</u>
Income	\$10,791	\$24,130
Expenses	(\$11,879)	(\$26,405)
Net	(\$ 1,088)	(\$ 2,275)

January 22 – The Holy Apostle Timothy

THE GREATEST JOY OF EVERY PRIEST or other mentor may be seeing a pupil follow in his footsteps. St Paul was no exception. He traveled with several disciples at one time or another: Barnabas, John Mark, Silas (all of whom we honor as saints). His favorite, the one he called his “*true son in the faith*” (1 Tm 1:2), was Timothy.

According to Acts 16:1-9, Timothy was a believer, the son of a pagan father and a Jewish mother in the Anatolian town of Lystra. St Paul had first visited Lystra with Barnabas in c. AD 48 and preached the Gospel in the surrounding area. Possibly Timothy’s mother, Eunice, and his grandmother, Lois, became believers at that time (see 2 Tm 1:5).

When Paul returned to Lystra three years later he proposed taking Timothy along on his travels. Although Eunice was Jewish, her husband was not and Timothy had not been circumcised. Paul arranged for that to be done (see Acts 16:1-5) and the two set off together.

For several years Timothy accompanied Paul on his travels in Europe and Asia Minor. Timothy worked with Paul as he evangelized Galatia, Philippi, Thessalonika, Corinth and Macedonia, sometimes visiting churches on his own as Paul’s emissary. In witness to their relationship, Timothy is listed along with Paul as the author of several New Testament epistles: 2 Corinthians, Philippians, Colossians, 1 Thessalonians, 2 Thessalonians, and Philemon. “*He served with me in the gospel,*” Paul would write, “*as a son with his father*” (Phil 2:22).

Timothy in Ephesus

In the early 60s Paul sent Timothy to Ephesus to personally oversee that community where doctrinal speculation was rife. St Paul’s two Epistles to Timothy offered his former companion guidance in shepherding the Ephesian Christians.

According to the fourth-fifth century *Acts of Timothy*, this disciple remained in Ephesus even after Paul’s death. Timothy himself was slain by a mob during a pagan festival in AD 97.

Based on his own experience Paul warned Timothy that, “*all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution*” (2 Tm 3:12). Paul himself had been one of the first to persecute Christians when he was an observant Jew. This persecution began as soon as the Apostles started proclaiming Jesus as the risen Messiah.

The Romans, who cared nothing about Jewish messiahs, feared the Christians, who preferred the Kingdom of God to the Roman Empire. They refused to honor the Roman gods – considered a civil duty – or to venerate the emperor as a god himself. They appeared to be a divisive force and they continued to grow.

All the Apostles except for John died at the hands of either Jews or Romans intent on eradicating this new sect. Paul himself would suffer death for his faith, beheaded in Rome in AD 68. Sometimes Christians suffered in sporadic attacks of random mobs. In the second and third centuries it was the state itself which was responsible for many deaths. It is thought that, before the Roman persecutions ended in the early fourth century, upwards of 100,000 believers had lost their lives or been deprived of their possessions.

In the face of persecution St Paul proposes what may at first seem an inadequate, if not strange, response: a two-pronged fidelity to the teachings that Timothy has learned and from whom he learned them. The Word of God and the living witness of the believers who mentored them, Paul affirms, should be the most compelling supports for committed Christians under threat of persecution.

What Scriptures Does Paul Recommend?

“...from childhood,” St Paul reminds Timothy, “*you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.*”

“*All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work*” (2 Tm 3:15-17).

Prokimenon

Reader: The Lord will give strength to His people; the Lord will bless His people with peace.

People: The Lord will give strength to His people; the Lord will bless His people with peace.

Reader: Give to the Lord, you sons of God, give to the Lord glory and praise.

People: The Lord will give strength to His people; the Lord will bless His people with peace.

Reader: The Lord will give strength to His people;

People: The Lord will bless His people with peace.

Epistle: 1 Tim. 4:9-15

Alleluia

It is good to give thanks to the Lord, to sing praises to Your name, O Most High!

Verse: To proclaim Your kindness at dawn and Your faithfulness throughout the night.

Gospel: Lk. 19:1-10



BISHOP’S APPEAL

The Bishop’s Appeal is in full swing. The Appeal makes it possible to grow the diocese by helping to establish new outreaches and missions, train candidates for the diaconate and priesthood as well as assist our retired priests.

Bishop Francois’ motto is: *Becoming Disciples, Making Disciples.*

Let us become disciples and help make disciples. Let each of us share our time, talents, and treasure to build up the Diocese of Newton.

Please prayerfully consider making a donation to the Appeal!

God bless you!