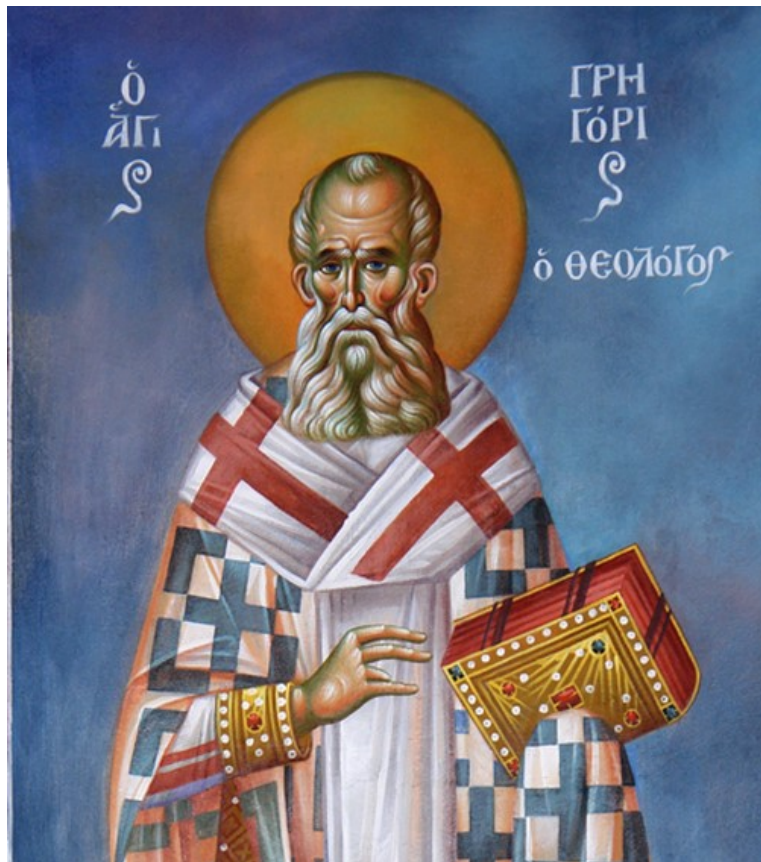


From the Divine Office for Our Father Among the Saints, Gregory the Theologian (1/25)

In our hymns, we, the flock of the Church, call upon Gregory as the lyre of the Spirit, the corrector of heresies, the gentle sweetness of the Orthodox Faith, the second Theologian, resting on the breast of Christ, the one who saw the Word with his vision as a Teacher, the wise guide for pastors. Let us say to him, "You are a good shepherd, laying down your life, like Christ, your Master, for us. You now exult in the company of holy Paul, interceding for our souls." (Vespers)

O Gregory, blessed Theologian, you teach us to adore the Three Persons who form the Unity of the perfect Trinity in its unique Divinity. You tell us that the Father is Light; Light also are the Son and the Holy Spirit - yet only one Radiance, without division, without confusion: one God, the Trinity, One in Essence, which you so clearly expounded.



**FIFTHTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER THE HOLY CROSS
JANUARY 23, 2022**



JESUS AND 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 2) pg. 38

When You descended to death, O immortal Life, You put Hades to death by the splendor of Your divinity. And when You raised the dead from below the earth, all the heavenly powers cried out to You: "O Giver of life, Christ our God, 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.

Kondakion of the Presentation of our Lord (Tone 1)

O Christ our God who through Your birth have sanctified the virginal womb and have now blessed the arms of Simon, today You have come to save us. O Lord, 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.

While a person's riches might be monetary like Zacchaeus, it may be other things as well. Paul – Saul as he was then – was not a wealthy man monetarily speaking but he had riches, which he described in Philippians 3:5-8. Paul's "wealth" was his status as "a Hebrew of the Hebrews," one who credentials as a practitioner of Judaism was unmatched. He was an observant Pharisee, blameless in his observance of the Law. But after encountering Christ he says, "What things were gain to me, these I have counted loss for Christ" (v.7). Throughout the centuries people have put aside their "wealth" for Christ. They gave up lands and possessions like St. Anthony the Great, but also high rank like St. Arsenius the Great, scholarly repute like Evagrius, or political convictions like Dorothy Day. They chose to give up their "wealth" for something greater. The second way of experiencing God in the Tradition is through asceticism: struggling to change the focus of our life. Most people today follow the lead of our secular culture in pursuing whatever gives us pleasure or material security while ignoring the continual presence of God on whom we all depend. Like teenagers focused on their iPhones or MP3 players, they are oblivious to the real world around them, in this case the presence of God. When people embrace the ascetic life they work to refocus their lives away from the values of this age. They strive to break away from the compulsions or fixations that enslave so many, from a full-time pursuit of the attractions of the world. They cease relying on their own minds to determine what is good for them and begin looking to God. In their innermost being they hear the Lord's words, "Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you" (Mt 6:33). In this way they prepare themselves to recognize God "everywhere present and filling all things." The Lord Jesus described the choice they and countless others have faced like this: "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and hid; and for joy over it he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field. "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant seeking beautiful pearls, who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had and bought it" (Mt 13:44-46). The "treasure hidden in a field" is the unique relationship with God in Christ which Zacchaeus, Paul and all the saints had found and which St Paul described as "Christ in you, the hope of glory" (Col 1:27). Each of us can attain this treasure because: • While all creation reflects something of God, the Source of its being, we were created with something more of God in us: made "in our image, after our likeness" (Gen 1:26) • The Word of God has become one of us in Jesus Christ, completely sharing our humanity so that we might share in His divine life: "God became man so that man might become godlike" (St Athanasius the Great) • Christ has lived His human life in perfect communion with His Father: "I am not alone, but I am with the Father who sent me" (Jn 8:16) • Christ has promised to dwell in those who keep His word: "If anyone loves me, he will keep my word; and my Father will love him and we will come to him and make our home with him" (Jn 14:23) • When we maintain this communion with God by keeping His word we come to share by grace in His divine nature: "His divine power has given us all things that pertain to life and godliness through the knowledge of Him ...that through these you may be partakers of the divine nature" (2 Pt 1:3-4). What are you willing to put aside or to take up to attain this treasure? In the Church calendar the story of Zacchaeus is read as the herald of the Triodion, the last Sunday before we open that guide to repentance and the Great Fast. As we recall the movements of Zacchaeus' repentance we should be led to ask ourselves about the quality of our love for God. To what concrete action are we being led to perform during the coming Fast? What tangible form will love take in our lives as we look to the celebration of Pascha? And what past offenses to others which have yet to be righted hang over us and taint our intentions for this season? Like Zacchaeus we are called to begin our spiritual exercise with the "warm-up" of repentance in deed as well as in thought.

DIVINE LITURGY INTENTIONS

Today Healing of Archie Opatka
 HS Richard Nejaimey

Upcoming Liturgical Schedule

Tue Feb.1, 6PM—Divine Liturgy for the Feast of the Encounter followed by the blessing of candles

Please Remember in your prayers: Susan Arraje, George Arraj, Jr., Richard Nejaimey, Archie Opatka, Katherine Thomas, Charlotte Stockhaus, and Ruth Welsh.

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.

Fr. Bryan

Last Week's Collection

Weekly	\$ 820
Candles	\$ 11
Christmas Flowers	\$ 100
Nativity Donation	\$ 100
Donation	\$ 100
TOTAL	\$ 1,131

God bless you for your generosity!



COFFEE HOUR

Given the recent spike in Covid cases in the Commonwealth, I have decided to suspend the coffee hour until cases subside. We have had some parishioners contract covid and I want to keep us all as safe as possible. When the situation improves, we will restart the Coffee Hour.

Thanks for your understanding!

Please go to archiesarmy.net to see updates on Archie Opatka's battle heptoblastoma. "O Christ, Physician of our souls and bodies, heal, bless and have mercy on Your child Archie!"

2022 Calendar

The 2022 calendar is available at the back of the church. Please pick one up. We will not be mailing the calendar *en masse* this year. I will be sending the calendar to folks I know who cannot get to church. If you or someone you know cannot get to church to pick up a calendar, please let me know and I'll be happy to send them one.



THEOPHANY HOUSE BLESSINGS

I would like to do house blessings this year. Given the current covid situation, we need to wait until things improve. I am fully vaccinated and have received a booster.

Once it is safe, we can schedule a time for me to bless your home.

Fr. Bryan

Zacchaeus and His Treasure (Luke 19:1-10)

ONE OF THE SAYING OF THE LORD JESUS which puzzled His hearers and still puzzles people today is, “How hard it is for those who have riches to enter the kingdom of God” (Lk 18:24). It flies in the face of the “prosperity gospel” preached in many mega-churches as it did in Israel. Wealth is a blessing, it is said, and so the wealthy have been blessed by God. This must be a sign of God’s favor to them. The Lord’s words make no sense in the face of this ‘logic.’ When questioned how this could be, Jesus replied, “The things which are impossible with men are possible with God” (v.27). A few verses later in Luke we read the story of Zacchaeus’ encounter with Christ in which a rich man enters the kingdom of God. This happens when Zacchaeus, a leading tax collector – and, therefore, a man in whose position greed and extortion would be a way of life – is so drawn to the Lord Jesus that his riches cease to matter. He gives half his wealth to the poor and restored fourfold anything gained by fraud. Zacchaeus is therefore the opposite of the rich young man in Luke 18 who chose keeping his wealth over following Jesus. The Gospel story of Zacchaeus’ conversion (Lk 19:1-10) offers some valuable insights into repentance. His spiritual journey begins with an encounter with Christ. At first Zacchaeus is moved by a kind of curiosity to climb the tree and see who this Jesus is. Then Christ calls him personally and they go off to Zacchaeus’ house. True repentance always involves both our work and the Lord’s. If He calls and we are not even curious, nothing will happen. If we seek Him in an inappropriate way – such as only coming to Him when we want something – He may remain silent. Zacchaeus’ repentance is not mere sentiment; it has concrete exterior manifestations. One is the desire to repair any wrongs he may have done to others. “...if I have taken anything from anyone by false accusation, I restore it fourfold” (v. 8). We cannot move ahead unless we correct what we can of our past sins. When material things are at the heart of our sin it is relatively easy to make restitution. But how does anyone restore a broken relationship, heal a damaged childhood or re-establish another’s reputation which we have smeared? The one we have harmed may demand something from us or our spiritual guide may offer alternative acts of reparation. But something concrete must be done.

Zacchaeus does not only look back, he also looks ahead. “I give half of my goods to the poor...” (v.8) Zacchaeus actually does something to fulfill the Lord’s precept to love in a concrete way. This dynamic was explained most clearly by St Diadochos, the fifth-century Bishop of Photiki in northern Greece: “When a man begins to perceive the love of God in all its richness, he begins also to love his neighbor with spiritual perception. This is the love of which all the scriptures speak.” (On Spiritual Knowledge and Discernment, 15). Zacchaeus’ life-changing decision is clearly spelled out, but the dynamics of his encounter with Christ are not. What brought Zacchaeus to such a decision? What did he see in Jesus? We are not told because it is Zacchaeus’ decision rather than how he experienced Christ which is of importance to us. Later events in the life of the Church have shown that there are two principal ways to experience God. The first way is more dramatic, but less common. Here God reveals himself to a person directly, as he did to St. Paul, or perhaps through reading the Scriptures or through an icon. When such an encounter takes place the person meeting the Lord reacts much as did Zacchaeus. He puts aside his “wealth” to follow Christ.

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.

Verse: 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 Verses

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, Fifteenth Sunday After the Holy Cross



ORDER OF SAINT NICHOLAS

Bishop Nicholas has reactivated the Order of Saint Nicholas. The Order has done much to support the work of the Eparchy over the years. Please see the flyers in the back of the church for the bulletin boards for more details. Please prayerfully consider joining the Order.

WELCOME

Please welcome Fr. Thomas Moses and his family this morning. Fr. Thomas is celebrating the Divine Liturgy here at OLPH while Fr. Bryan is at St. Basil Melkite Church in Utica, NY covering for Fr. Tom. Fr. Tom was ordained by Bishop Nicholas this past November.