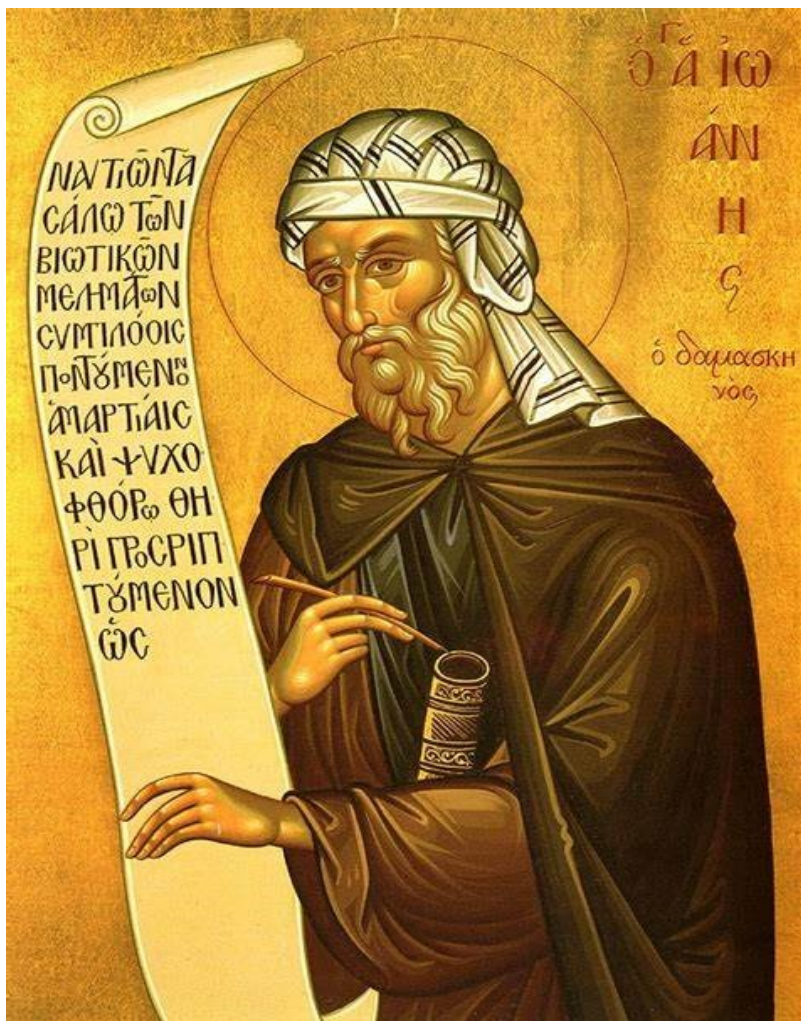


*From the Divine Office for the Feast of St. John of Damascus (Dec. 4)*

*What name can we give you holy John? The gentle preacher of wondrous words! The shining star of dazzling clarity! A man of vision illumined by the brightness of the Trinity! You entered into the dark cloud of the Spirit, and like Moses you penetrated the mysteries of God, which you clearly explain to us with a melodious tongue. Intercede with God that He may save our souls. (Vespers)*

*O faithful, let us praise John, worthy of great honor, the composer of hymns, the star and teacher of the universal Church and the defender of its doctrine. Through the power of the Lord's Cross, he vanquished heretical errors. Since he is a fervent intercessor, Christ God will grant forgiveness of sins to us. (Kontakion)*



**TENTH SUNDAY AFTER THE HOLY CROSS  
DECEMBER 4, 2022**



**Great Martyr St. Barbara  
December 4**

**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](mailto:olphmelkite@gmail.com)  
Rev. Bryan McNeil, Pastor  
Email: [Brymc56@comcast.net](mailto:Brymc56@comcast.net) Cell: (978) 314-1962  
Divine Liturgy: Sunday 10:00 AM

### **Antiphon (1st)**

1: Shout joyfully to the Lord, all the earth, and sing praise to His name.

*Through the prayers of the Mother of God, O Savior, save us.*

2: Say to God: How awesome are Your deeds! So great is Your power that Your enemies cringe before You.

*Be shafa'ati Walidatil Eelah, ya Mukhallisu, khallisna.*

3: Let all the earth worship You and sing praises to You; let it sing praises to Your name, O Most High!

*Through the prayers of the Mother of God, O Savior, save us.*

### **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 1) pg. 38**

After the stone was sealed by the Jews and the while the soldiers were watching Your spotless body, You rose, O Savior, on the third day, bestowing life to the world. Wherefore, the heavenly powers cried out to You, O Giver of life: “Glory to Your resurrection, O Christ! Glory to Your kingdom! Glory to Your economy, O You who alone are the lover of mankind!”

### **Troparion of St. Barbara (Tone 8)**

Let us praise the most honorable Barbara: she thwarted the enemy’s power, and through the might and the strength of the cross, she was made free in her flight to God.

### **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 Preparation of the Nativity of our Lord (Tone 3)**

Today the Virgin is on her way to the cave where she will give birth to the Eternal Word of God in an ineffable manner. Rejoice, therefore, O Universe, when you hear this news, and glorify with the angels and the shepherds, Him who shall appear as a new Child being God from all eternity.

### **Also on December 4 – St John of Damascus**

WHILE ST BARBARA LIVED in the fourth century during the Roman persecutions, John of Damascus lived in the seventh century, after the Arab conquest of Syria.

John was born in Damascus in c. 680, the son of Sergius ibn al-Mansour, a civil servant to the Umayyad caliphate, as was his father before him. Sergius wanted his son to “learn not only the books of the Muslims, but those of the Greeks as well,” according to one ancient source. John was tutored by a Sicilian monk who had been kidnapped by Arabs and brought to Damascus. This monk was also tutor to St Cosmas of Maiuma, John’s foster brother whom his father had taken in after he was orphaned.

In 706 the caliphate increased the Islamizing of Syria. Many Christians in civil service, including John’s father, left the government administration at that time. Some think that this was when John entered the monastery of Mar Saba near Jerusalem. John was certainly a professed monk before the outbreak of iconoclasm in 717, which he opposed. In all John composed three *Apologetic Treatises against those Decrying the Holy Images* which were widely circulated and were cited as authoritative at the Second Council of Nicaea, years after his death.

John also composed a number of apologetic treatises against the Monophysites, Monotheletes, Nestorians and Muslims as well as dogmatic treatises. His *An Exact Exposition of the Orthodox Faith* was perhaps the first systematic presentation of Christian theology in both East and West.

John of Damascus is perhaps most revered as a poet and hymnographer. He composed a number of canons which are still sung at Orthros (Matins). Some credit the beauty of his poetry with making the canon an important part of the morning service. His Paschal canon, “Today is the day of the resurrection” is most particularly loved. He also composed the canons sung in the Byzantine Churches on the Great Feasts of the Nativity, the Theophany and Pentecost. John is also credited with composing the principal parts of the Octoechos, the book of eight tones, which contains the weekly services used in Byzantine churches.

John ended his life in his monastery on December 4, 749. The cave he used as a hermitage is kept today as a chapel dedicated to his memory.

### **From St John of Damascus**

**“These eight passions should be destroyed as follows: gluttony by self-control; un-chastity by desire for God and longing for the blessings held in store; avarice by compassion for the poor; anger by goodwill and love for all men; worldly dejection by spiritual joy; listlessness by patience, perseverance and offering thanks to God; self-esteem by doing good in secret and by praying constantly with a contrite heart; and pride by not judging or despising anyone in the manner of the boastful Pharisee (cf. Lk 18:11-12), and by considering oneself the least of all men. When the intellect has been freed in this way from the passions we have described and been raised up to God, it will henceforth live the life of blessedness, receiving the pledge of the Holy Spirit (cf. 2 Cor 1:22). And when it departs this life, dispassionate and full of true knowledge, it will stand before the light of the Holy Trinity and with the divine angels will shine in glory through all eternity.”**  
*On the Virtues and the Vices*

### DIVINE LITURGY INTENTIONS

**Dec 11** + James Rahall (40 day), William & Bertha Rahall, Habib & Miriam Rahall. Requested by Nick Rahall & Family  
**Dec 18** +James Rahall. Requested by Lisa Jagielski & Antoinette Arraj

**Today's Coffee Hr. is hosted by the Parish**  
**Next week's Coffee Hr. will be hosted by Nick Rahall & Family**

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

### MABROUK!

**Congratulations to Anthony & Diana Esper on the birth of their son Antoine!**

### Last Week's Collection

Weekly	\$1,197
Candles	\$ 61
Coffee Hr.	\$ 69
Christmas Flowers	\$ 105
Donations	\$ 250
Christmas Offer.	\$ 25
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$1,727</b>

**God bless you for your generosity!**



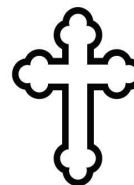
**Welcome to any visitors we have with us this morning! We are happy to have you worship with us.**

**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.**

### CHRISTMAS FOOD/TOY DRIVE

Our Christmas Food & Toy Drive is in progress. There are two bins in the narthex: one for new, unwrapped toys/gifts and one for non-perishable food items. The cutoff is **Sunday December 18**. We will deliver the items after the Divine Liturgy that day. All are welcome to come!

God bless you for your generosity in helping our brothers & sisters who are having a difficult time making ends meet!



### UPCOMING LITURGICAL SCHEDULE

**Tue 12/6, 6PM—Divine Liturgy for the feast of St. Nicholas**

### LITURGICAL SCHEDULE FOR THE NATIVITY & THEOPHANY

- TUE 12/20, 6PM Anointing Service**
- SAT 12/24, 4PM Nativity Vespers/Liturgy of St. Basil**
- SUN 12/25, 10AM Nativity Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom**
- SUN 1/1, 10AM Divine Liturgy - Sunday before Theophany/Feast of the Circumcision of the Lord**
- THU 1/5, 6PM Great Vespers—Feast of Theophany**
- FRI 1/6, 6PM Divine Liturgy-Feast of Theophany followed by the Great Blessing of Water**



## December 4 – The Great Martyr St Barbara

EVERYONE WANTS TO CLAIM St Barbara as their own. This is possible because she is not mentioned in any contemporary writings which have come down to us. She is first mentioned in a seventh-century Roman Martyrology, some 350 years after her death. The sources of what has been passed down about her were collected by St Simeon Metaphrastes (“the Translator”) in his tenth-century lives of the saints, the Menologion.

Middle Eastern sources record that Barbara was from Heliopolis in present-day Lebanon. Some sources describe her as a native of Heliopolis in Egypt or of Nicomedia (in Turkey today). All the stories of this martyr say that she was the daughter of a rich pagan named Dioscoros who, after his wife’s death, kept her locked in a tower to keep her from the eyes of strangers.

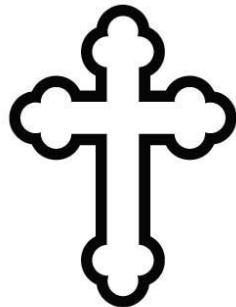
After a certain time Dioscoros relented and allowed his daughter a measure of freedom. She became acquainted with the Gospel through some young Christian women who befriended her and through a priest fleeing persecution in Alexandria who ultimately baptized her.

Dioscoros had commissioned the construction of a bath house on his estate. In his absence Barbara had altered the plans to include a third window, to represent the Trinity. When Dioscoros learned the reason for her actions he flew at her in a rage. She escaped, but was later captured and severely beaten.

The last great persecution of Christians in the Roman Empire was in full swing. When Barbara would not renounce her faith, Dioscoros handed her over to the prefect of the city, Martian, who subjected her to public humiliation and torture. Juliana, a Christian woman in the crowd reproached Martian for his cruelty. In return he condemned Juliana to die with Barbara. Both were beheaded, Barbara (it is said) by her own father. A pious man named Galentain recovered the bodies of Barbara and Juliana, buried their remains and, when the persecutions ended, erected a shrine in their memory.

In the sixth century relics of St Barbara were brought to Constantinople. Six hundred years later a portion of them was brought to Kiev by Barbara, the daughter of the Byzantine emperor, when she married Michael, the Grand Prince of Kiev. Around the same time the Coptic church of St Cyrus in Old Cairo was rebuilt as the Church of St Barbara to house relics of this saint. She is venerated in all the Churches of East and West. Because of the lack of contemporary witnesses to her struggle, the Roman Church removed her name from their universal calendar. She is still venerated in many local Western Churches, particularly in Europe.

In the Middle East her feast is observed by the preparation of sweets, including the “Barbara.” This is the traditional boiled wheat dish made for memorials of a saint or of the deceased. In this case it is sweetened with pomegranate seeds, raisins, anise and sugar. It is frequently brought to homes by children singing a traditional carol about this saint. They are often costumed to recall the disguises St Barbara used to elude her father.



### Prokimenon

**Reader:** Awesome in His saints is God, the God of Israel.

**People:** Awesome in His saints is God, the God of Israel.

**Reader:** In the churches, bless God, the Lord of Israel’s wellsprings.

**People:** Awesome in His saints is God, the God of Israel.

**Reader:** Awesome in His saints is God,

**People:** The God of Israel.

**Epistle:** Gal. 3:23-29; 4:1-5

### Alleluia Verses

I have waited, waited for the Lord, and He stooped toward me and heard my cry.

**Verse:** He set my feet upon a rock; He made firm my steps

**Gospel:** Lk 13:10-17

