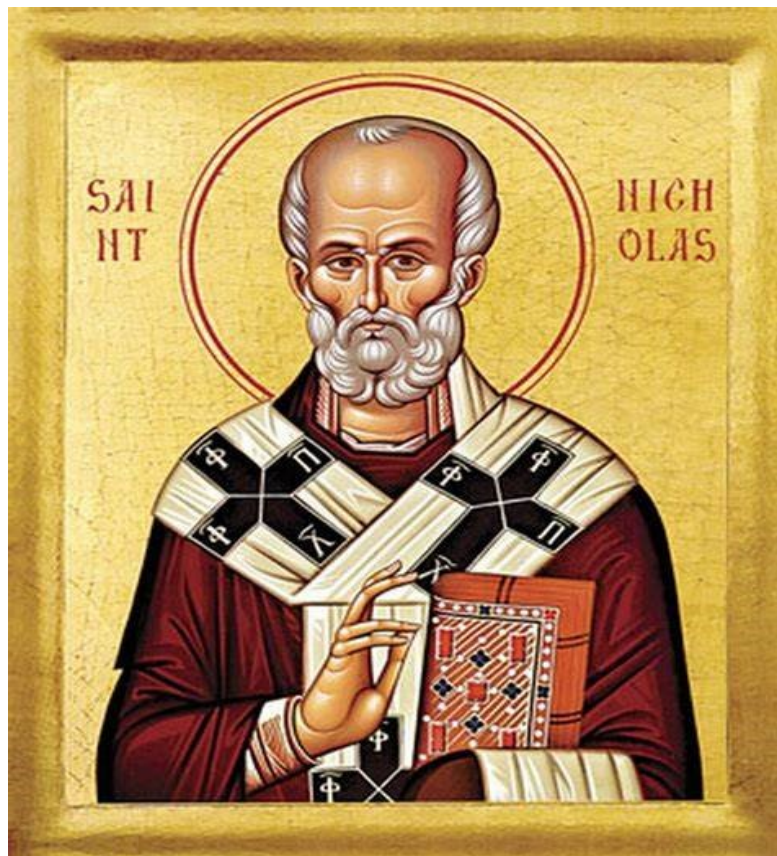


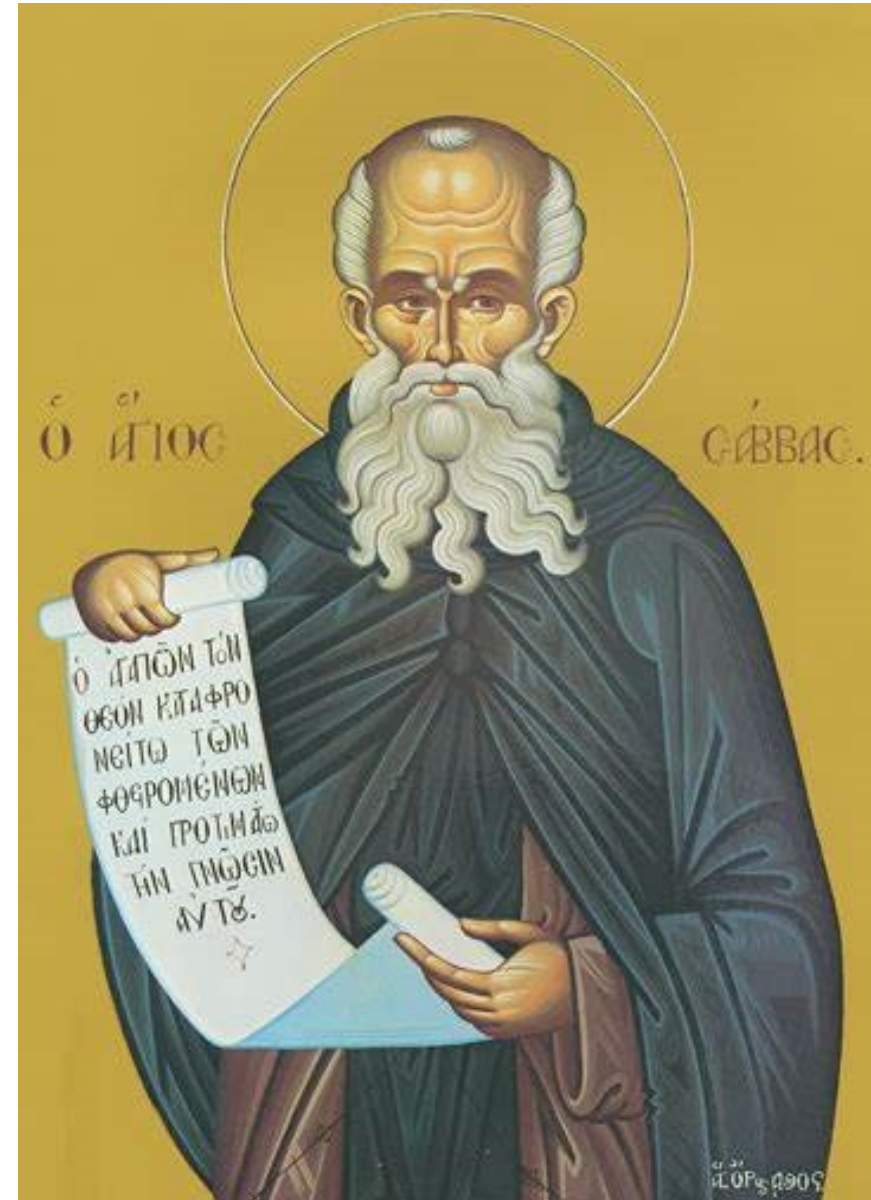
From the Divine Office for St. Nicholas (Dec. 6)

With what crowns of glory shall we praise the holy bishop Nicholas? Living in Myra in the flesh, he extends his spirit to all who love him sincerely. He is the protector and defender of everyone. He comforts those in sorrow. He is the haven for those in difficulty. He is the pillar of piety, an advocate for the faithful for whom Christ subdued the Enemy's rage in His mercy. (Vespers)

Let us now sing songs of praise to the bishop who was shepherd and teacher to the people of Myra, that by his intercessions we may be filled with light. Behold, he was utterly pure and undefiled in spirit, offering a spotless and unblemished sacrifice acceptable to God, being purified himself as a priest in body and soul. Therefore he was indeed a leader and champion in the Church, a great guide towards the things of God. (Orthros)



**TENTH SUNDAY AFTER THE HOLY CROSS
DECEMBER 5, 2021**



**ST. SABA THE SANCTIFIED
DECEMBER 5**

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 (1st)

1: Shout joyfully to the Lord, all the earth; 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 3) pg. 39

Let all in Heaven rejoice, and all on earth be glad, for the Lord has exerted power with His arm, by death He has trampled upon death, and has become the first born to rise from the dead. He has delivered us from the bosom of Hades and has granted to the world His great mercy.

Troparion of St. Sabbas (Tone 8)

Your abundant tears made the wilderness sprout and bloom, and your deep sighings made your labors fruitful a hundredfold. You became a star shining over the world with miracles, Holy Father Saba, pray to Christ God that He may save our souls.

Patronal Troparion (Tone 1) pg. 15

In giving birth, you 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 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 a new Child being God from all eternity.

To bolster the revival of the Chalcedonian doctrine, Mar Saba led a group of abbots from the Judean monasteries to eastern Palestine (Samaria) in order to proclaim the emperor's decree restoring Chalcedonian orthodoxy and ending the schism with the West. Although Severus never returned to Antioch, the controversy split the Church of Antioch in two: the (Chalcedonian) Greek patriarchate and a (non-Chalcedonian) Syriac patriarchate. Mar Saba returned to the region in 531. In the preceding century, Emperor Zeno (474-491) had attempted to force the conversion of the Samaritans to Christianity. He only succeeded in sparking a series of rebellions against Roman rule. From 529 to 531 an especially violent uprising occurred. When it was finally put down, the Samaritans had been decimated. Many churches and monasteries had been damaged and destroyed in the process. Mar Saba was asked by the Patriarch of Jerusalem to inspect the areas throughout Palestine damaged in the revolt. In 531 he traveled throughout Samaria and the Decapolis fulfilling this task. Mar Saba then traveled to Constantinople, asking Emperor Justinian to remit the taxes due from the people in Palestine because of what they had suffered during the Samaritan revolt. Saba promised to build a hospice at Jerusalem for pilgrims, and a fortress for the protection of hermits and monks against raiders. Shortly after his return, Saba fell ill and was not to recover, dying at the age of 91, on December 5, 532. Saba was buried in the courtyard between two churches in the Mar Saba Monastery. In the twelfth century, during the Crusades, the relics were taken to Rome. In 1965 Pope Paul VI returned them to the monastery. They are now enshrined in its principal church.

The Monastery and Its Martyrs

Saba's principal monastery, the Great Lavra, has been the spiritual center of the Jerusalem patriarchate since its foundation. The order of monastic services developed there, the Typikon of Mar Saba, became the basis for the liturgical life of Constantinople and all the Byzantine churches. Though much augmented and adapted since the first millennium, the ordering of Byzantine services is still called the Typikon of Mar Saba. The monastery, which numbered 500 at its peak, was frequently assailed by invaders. The first martyrs of Mar Saba were the 44 fathers slain on May 16, 614, during the Persian invasion. As described by St Antiochus, one of the survivors, a band of Arab tribesmen fighting with the Persian army attacked the monastery in search of plunder. When they were unable to find the treasure they expected, they became angry and murdered a number of the monks, beheading some and hacking others to pieces. They are remembered in our Church on May 16. The Arab armies had taken Jerusalem in 638. The Arab rulers imposed the jizya (tax on non-Muslims) and frequently seized properties from their subjects. Attacks on Christian sites became common. In 797 Mar Saba Monastery experienced a particularly savage assault. On March 13, a band of Arabs attacked the monastery, demanding valuables. Thirteen monks were killed and others wounded. One week later the Arabs returned with reinforcements. The remaining monks were herded into the church and tortured until they would reveal the location of their treasury. The sacristan hid the church vessels and attempted to flee but was captured and beheaded. Several monks were able to escape and hid in a nearby cave. An Arab sentry spotted them and demanded their surrender. One monk, Patrikos, surrendered but said he was alone. He, along with other monks, was herded into a cave and a fire lit at the entrance with dung piled in it to produce poisonous gases. Eighteen additional monks perished as a result. After the Arabs left, the survivors returned to bury these martyrs. They are remembered in our Church on March 20.

DIVINE LITURGY INTENTIONS

Today **Healing of Archie Opatka**
+Habib & Mariam Rahall, William & Bertha Rahall, Reeks & Rahall Families.
 Requested by Nick Rahall and Family

Dec 12 **+Raymond Kalil, Louise Kalil, Charlotte Ghiz, Eva Ghiz, Louis Ghiz, Lena Kouri.** Requested by Robert Ghiz

This morning's Coffee Hour is hosted by Nick Rahall and Family
 Next Sunday's Coffee Hour is hosted by Houda Daou

Last Week's Collection

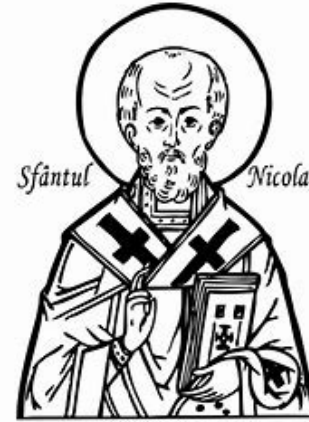
Weekly	\$ 729
Candles	\$ 30
Coffee Hr.	\$ 52
Stole	\$ 31
Donations	\$ 200
TOTAL	\$1,042

God bless for your generosity!



FINANCIALS

<u>11/2021</u>		<u>YTD(10/2021-11/2021)</u>	
Income	\$7,015	Income	\$11,944
Expenses	\$5,321	Expenses	\$10,302
Net	\$1,694	Net	\$ 1,642



ST. NICHOLAS BREAKFAST

Please join us this morning after the Divine Liturgy for a St. Nicholas Breakfast. There will be French Toast and eggs along with other breakfast foods. We also hope to have a visit from St. Nicholas. This is a great opportunity to come back to the parish if you have been away for awhile! Please plan to attend.

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!"

UPCOMING LITURGICAL SCHEDULE

Mon 12/6 , 6PM - Divine Liturgy for the feast of St. Nicholas

Fri 12/17, 6PM - Service of Anointing

Fri 12/24, 4PM - Vesper/Liturgy of St. Basil for the Feast of the Nativity of Christ

Sat 12/25, 10AM—Divine Liturgy for the Feast of the Nativity of Christ



THE BISHOP'S APPEAL: What a wonderful weekend this is for our church. We celebrate the life of St Barbara on the 4th, the life of Mar Saba on the 5th and especially Blessed Saint Nicholas whose feast we celebrate with joy on Monday the 6th. St Nicholas is the Patron Saint of charity and the inspiration for all images of Father Christmas and Santa Claus throughout the world. Let us imitate his loving generosity by making a special gift to the Bishop's Appeal for the support of our Melkite Church in America and for our suffering and persecuted fellow Christians in the Middle East. **Please give an end-of-year, tax-deductible gift to the Melkite Church** in America. Please give generously so the vital works of our Church can continue and grow. May God bless you for your generosity.

St Saba the Sanctified

A DESERT IS ONE of the most inhospitable places on the planet. Torrid by day and frigid by night, it offers none of the comforts with which we surround ourselves. And yet, it is a desert – the Judean desert, to be precise – to which St Saba the Sanctified (Dec. 5) followed Christ. In time, in the words of his friend and biographer, Cyril of Scythopolis (echoing St Athanasius), Mar Saba and his followers would turn the desert into a city peopled by monks. Their successors are there today, 1500 years later.

The story of Mar Saba begins in a Cappadocian village called Mutalaska where he was born in AD 439. When Saba was five years old, his father John, a military commander, was sent to Alexandria and Saba was entrusted to an uncle, who took charge of the family's estate. In some accounts, this uncle was so harsh that the boy fled, first to another uncle and then, at the age of eight, to Bishop Flavian of Antioch, who placed him in his own household. It was here that Saba first experienced the monastic way of life.

After ten years, Saba was tonsured as a monk and, in 456, traveled to Jerusalem. He wanted to live with the noted hermit, St Euthymios the Great, but the saint sent him to his own elder, St Theoktistos, whose nearby monastery practiced a communal rule. When Theoktistos died in 467, St Euthymios took Saba, whom he called a "child-elder," as his companion, allowing him to return to the monastery only for divine services on the weekends. When Euthymios himself died in 473, Saba began to live as a hermit.

After five years, Saba sought even more isolation, moving to a cave on the cliffs of the Kedron Valley, south of Jerusalem.

Saba's life of solitude there only lasted five years; as he became known as an experienced elder, others interested in the monastic life came to join him. By 483 Saba had been forced to build a church and a number of cells on the cliffside to accommodate them. This lavra – a gathering of individual cells around a common church – was the beginning of what we call the Mar Saba Monastery. Over the next fifty years, Saba became the center of a developing monastic presence surrounding the Holy City. Ordained a priest in 491, he was named archimandrite of all the monasteries in Palestine three years later. His prayers were recognized as instrumental in healings and other wonders which took place around him. Saba himself founded a second monastery nearby, the "New Lavra." Before his death he had established seven monasteries in all.

Saba, a Healer of the Church

Besides effecting physical cures by his prayers, Mar Saba also strove to heal the physical and spiritual ills of the Church. Saba's position first thrust him into the midst of a controversy in which the local Church was entangled. The Council of Chalcedon (451) had defined as Orthodox doctrine the belief that Christ was truly God and truly man: one person in two natures. Many in the Eastern Churches did not accept this teaching, supported from time to time by important imperial figures. On the very day in 511 that Severus was enthroned as Patriarch of Antioch with imperial backing, he denounced Chalcedon and set the Antiochian Church against Rome and Constantinople. When the commander of the palace guard, Flavius Justinus, became emperor in 518, he immediately reversed his predecessor's policy. Severus fled to Alexandria and a Chalcedonian, Paul I, was installed as patriarch.

Prokimenon

Reader: Let the saints triumph in glory and let them sing for joy on their couches.

People: Let the saints triumph in glory and let them sing for joy on their couches.

Verse: Sing to the Lord a new song: his praise in the assembly of the saints.

People: Let the saints triumph in glory and let them sing for joy on their couches.

Reader: Let the saints triumph in glory and let them sing for joy on their couches.

People: Let the saints triumph in glory and let them sing for joy on their couches.

Epistle: Gal 5:22-26; 6:1-2

Alleluia Verses

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

Verse: His holiness shall endure forever and ever.

Gospel: Lk. 13:10-17

ORDER OF SAINT NICHOLAS

Bishop Nicholas is reactivating 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.

NATIVITY FAST

The traditional Nativity Fast began on November 15. In the Melkite usage, it begins on December 10. That is the date we will begin the Fast as a parish. Of course, if you began the Fast on November 15, that is fine. While not quite as strict as the Lenten Fast, this fast period prepare us to receive God Incarnate. Fasting is a tool to help us in our spiritual lives. It is a means to an end: that end being communion with God! Exactly how you fast is between you and your spiritual father. If you have any questions, don't hesitate to reach out to me.

Fr. Bryan