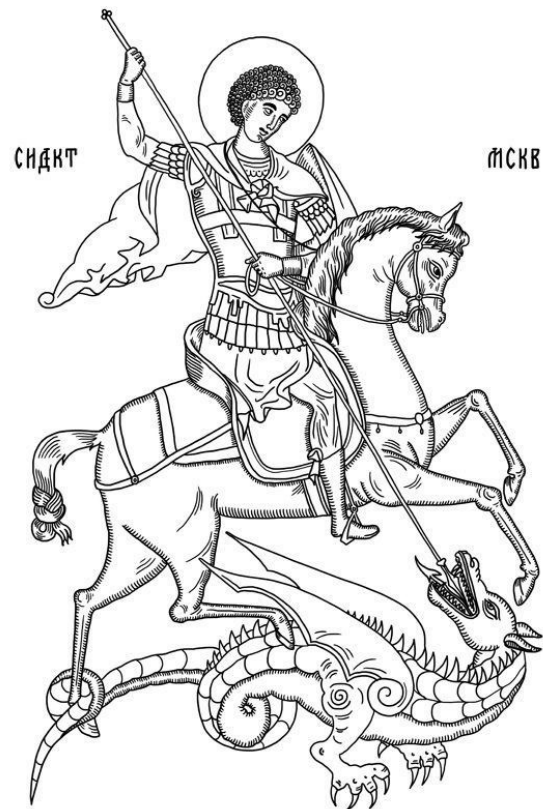


From the Divine Office for the Great-Martyr George (April 23)

O George, with psalms and hymns, the nations praise your honorable feast which has dawned for us, bearing the wondrous light of the glory and grace with which you are adorned. Therefore the hosts of Angels now dance, and the martyrs and apostles acclaim your deeds, singing the praises of Christ our God, the Savior who glorified you. Entreat Him to save and enlighten our souls. (Vespers)

Christ laid down His life for the world; and George, the generous soldier who loved Christ the King, hastened to his death. Having divine zeal in his heart, he offered up his life. O faithful, let us then sing of him as our fervent advocate who was a glorious servant of Christ. He clearly imitated his Master to the end, and now by his prayers he obtains the forgiveness for all. (Orthros)



**SUNDAY OF THE MYRRH-BEARING WOMEN
APRIL 23, 2023**



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
Cell: (774) 502-8547
Divine Liturgy: Sunday 10:00 AM

After “Blessed is the Kingdom... Christ is Risen from the dead and by His death He has trampled upon Death and has given life to those who were in the tombs (3 times)

Antiphon (Feast)

1: Shout joyfully to God, all you on earth.

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

2: Sing praise to the glory of His name; proclaim His glorious praise.

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

3: Say to God how tremendous are Your deeds! For Your great strength, Your enemies fawn upon You.

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

Entrance Hymn

Priest: In Your assemblies bless the Lord our God, from the wellsprings of Israel.

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!”

Troparion Of Joseph (Tone 2)

The Noble Joseph took down from the tree your spotless body, and wrapped it in pure linen and laid it for burial in a new tomb. But on the third day, You arose, O Lord, and bestowed great mercy upon the world.

Troparion of the Myrrh-bearers (Tone 2)

The angel stood by the tomb and cried out to the Ointment-bearing Women: “Ointments are for the dead, but Christ has proved Himself free from corruption. Cry out, then: “The Lord is risen and has bestowed great mercy upon the world.”

Troparion of the Holy Great Martyr George (Tone 4)

Since you are a deliverer of captives and a defender of the poor, and a physician of the sick, and a protector of the kings, O great among the martyrs and victorious George, intercede with Christ God that He may save our souls.

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 Pascha (Tone 2)

Though You went down in the tomb, O immortal One, You overthrew the power of Hades and rose victorious, O Christ God, You greeted the ointment bearing women, saying: Rejoice! You gave peace to Your apostles, and to those who had fallen, resurrection.

Their rebuke may have served to increase Nicodemus’ attachment to Jesus. He next appears as a public follower of Jesus at His death, assisting Joseph of Arimathea in burying His body. “*Nicodemus, who at first came to Jesus by night, also came, bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about a hundred pounds. Then they took the body of Jesus, and bound it in strips of linen with the spices, as the custom of the Jews is to bury*” (Jn 19:39-40).

While the Jews regularly buried their dead enshrouded in spices, there is something more indicated here. Pope Benedict XVI, in his three-volume study *Jesus of Nazareth*, writes: “The quantity of balm is extraordinary and exceeds all normal proportions: this is a royal burial. If Jesus was manifested to us as high priest by the casting of lots for his robe [Christ’s *chiton*, like the high priest’s, was seamless], so now he is revealed to us as king by the manner of his burial.”

After Christ’s Burial

There is no further mention of either Joseph or Nicodemus in the Gospels or other contemporary sources. Many later writings, such as the *Gospel of Nicodemus*, became popular in the first millennium AD but are not regarded as historical today.

One of the most popular is a homily on the Burial of the Divine Body of Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ attributed to St Epiphanius, Bishop of Salamis (c.310–403). It is often read in monasteries on Great Saturday and an excerpt is frequently sung as people venerate the holy shroud.

“When evening had come – for the sun of Righteousness had then set into Hades – a rich man, Joseph of Arimathea, who was a secret disciple for fear of the Jews, came with Nicodemus, who had first come to Jesus by night. Two secret disciples came to conceal Jesus in a tomb, thus teaching by this concealment the mystery of God concealed in Hades in the flesh. Each of them surpassed the other in their affection for Christ. Nicodemus proved his magnanimity by the myrrh and aloes while Joseph proved worthy of praise by his daring and boldness before Pilate.

“Now when Joseph went in he acted very shrewdly in order to achieve his desired goal. He did not employ high sounding and pompous words but a humble plea: ‘O Judge, I have come with a trifling request. Give me a dead man for burial: Jesus of Nazareth – Jesus the poor, Jesus the homeless, Jesus the crucified, the naked ... Give me this Stranger, for what profit does this body bring you? Give me this Stranger whose country we know not, whose Father we know not, whose place of birth and ways we know not ...’ “

Tell me, O Joseph, do you really bury toward the East a dead man who is the Dayspring of the East? Do you close the eyes of Him who opened the eyes of the blind? ... Do you empty out myrrh upon the celestial Myrrh who emptied Himself and sanctified the world? ... Do you wash with water God’s body which cleanses all and bestows purification? ...

“Fearlessly Joseph and Nicodemus bury Him before whom the cherubim stand with reverent fear. Looking upon You dead, stripped and exposed, in his grief and tender compassion he lamented, saying: ‘How shall I bury You, my God? How shall I wrap You in a winding sheet? How shall I touch Your most pure body with my hands? ... I magnify Your sufferings. I sing the praises of Your burial and resurrection, crying: O Lord, glory to You!’”



DIVINE LITURGY INTENTIONS

Today +Wendy Halal
+Cheryl Khoury
April 30 +George Arraj, Sr. Requested by Antoinette Arraj & Family

Today's Coffee Hr. is hosted by Eric Ewanco

Next Sunday's Coffee Hr. is hosted by Antoinette Arraj & Lisa Jagielski

Please remember in your prayers: George Arraj, Jr., Ron Abraham, Peter Abraham, Robert Ghiz, Sadie Mirante, Archie Opatka, Anthony Poti, Katherine Thomas, Charlotte Stockhaus, Ruth Welsh, Richard Abraham, Sr., Frank Boyda, Carol Boyda, Bob Lynch, Michael Mooradian, Michael McNeil, Jeff McNeil, Wyatt William Rahall, Lauren Abraham, Nicholas Haddad, Elaine Foley, David Ahlin, Elio Kanaan, all those affected by the earthquakes in Syria and Turkey, 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.

Last Week's Collection

Weekly	\$245
Candles	\$ 48
Coffee Hr.	\$ 27
Stole	\$250
Memorials	\$250
Diocesan	\$ 82.50
TOTAL	\$902.50

God bless you for your generosity!

LIGHTING UPGRADE

We have finished the upgrade of the interior lighting in the church. It is much brighter and will be more cost effective!

Thanks to Jean Sakhat and family for their generous donation of the materials and labor that made the upgrade possible.

God bless you for your generosity to the parish!

Thanks to all who worked so hard during Great Lent and Holy Week to make our celebrations both beautiful and spiritually fulfilling. Those who sang, those who read, those who baked or cooked/dyed the eggs, those who donated funds for the various items needed for our celebrations (flowers eggs, service books, etc.) Know that your contributions are much appreciated and never taken for granted! Christ is Risen! He is Truly Risen! Fr. Bryan

Below is a list of donations we received for flowers and other items **to date**:

Flowers

William & Janice Abdelnour	In memory of Abdelnour and Tagman families
Ron Abraham	In memory of Salim & Annie Abraham, Aileen Abraham, Robert Abraham, Gloria Mooradian, Arthur Abraham
Francis & Carol Boyda	In memory of Philip J. Jordan, Thomas J. Boyda, Fran & Mary Boyda, Phil & Isabel Nassif
Steven & Phyllis Callan	In memory of Robert Esper, Isabella Esper Sabacinski, Francis Callan, Catherine Callan, Robert & Lynn Cronin
James & Karen Esper	In memory of James & Catherine Esper, Carol Esper Webster, Robert & Lorraine Nelson
Maria Filewicz	In memory of Amelia Filewicz
Arthur Gazal	In memory of Arthur Shaker Gazal, Shaker & Amelia Gazal, Frank & Antoinette Ricciardi, Selma Wenko
Lisa Jagielski & Antoinette Arraj	In memory of George Arraj, Sr., Alfred Jagielski, Josephine Gazel
Joe & Lorraine Lian	
Sadie Mirante	H&S Paul Mirante, Carol Stankus. In memory of Joseph S. Mirante, Sr, Joseph S. Mirante, Jr., George Hajjar & Family
Jeanne & Ted Nader	In memory of Mr. & Mrs. Roland Allaire, Mr. & Mrs. David Nader
Nicholas Rahall	In memory of JR Rahall, William & Bertha Rahall
Marilyn & Zenon Tencza	In memory of Joseph, Nejaimey, and Tencza Families
Katherine Thomas	
<u>Other Donations</u>	
Susan Aboody-Kallio	Joan Opatka
Antoinette Arraj & Lisa Jagielski	Jean & Nadia Sakhat & Family
Frank & Carol Boyda	Marilyn & Zenon Tencza
Ryan & Tina Dumont	Mae Gianni
James & Karen Esper	
Joanne Kanaan	
Lauri Moossa & Michael Georges	

Fearing But Faithful: Joseph and the Myrrhbearers (Mark 15:43-16:8)

“THE NOBLE JOSEPH took down from the tree Your spotless body, wrapped it in pure linen with aromatic spices and laid it for burial in a new tomb.” This troparion, which summarizes the Gospel account of the Lord’s burial, is sung as the holy shroud (epitaphios) is placed in the tomb on Great Friday evening. It is sung again on the Third Sunday of Pascha, but with this addition: “But on the third day, You arose, O Lord, and bestowed great mercy upon the world!”

The noble or righteous Joseph of Arimathea, along with Nicodemus, is commemorated on this Sunday together with the myrrhbearing women who ministered to Christ at the tomb. As we read in the Gospels, Joseph was “*a rich man*” (Mt 25:57) and “*a prominent member of the council*” (Mk15:43). This “council” may refer to one of the regional courts in Israel or to the Great Sanhedrin, the chief religious court of the Jews which met in Jerusalem. In any case, Joseph and Nicodemus, whom John describes as “*a ruler of the Jews*” (Jn 3:1) and one of those in the high priest’s circle (see Jn 7:50-52), had sufficient influence to approach Pontius Pilate and ask to bury Jesus’ body.

Jesus is often described as being poor – He Himself alluded to this when He said, “*Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay His head*” (Mt 8:19-21; Lk 9:58). He had put aside His carpenter’s craft to preach the kingdom of God and depended on others to provide His needs. He attracted other tradesmen, like Andrew and Peter, James and John who did the same. His followers included the poor but also some prominent individuals as well. The Evangelist Matthew was a tax collector, a civil servant in the Roman administration, as was Zacchaeus who had grown rich in that pursuit (see Lk 19:1-10). Others, like the rich young man whom He invited to follow Him (Mt 19:16-22), were attracted to Jesus but could not break with their wealth or position to follow Him.

Jesus’ Secret Disciples

While Joseph is not mentioned in the Gospels before Christ’s death, Nicodemus is featured twice in John’s Gospel, giving us an insight into the struggle which a member of the Jewish establishment would have experienced when drawn to Jesus. Nicodemus first approached Jesus at night when he would not be noticed. This encounter is described in John’s Gospel: “*There was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews. This man came to Jesus by night and said to Him, ‘Rabbi, we know that You are a teacher come from God; for no one can do these signs that You do unless God is with him.’*”

“*Jesus answered and said to him, ‘Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.’ Nicodemus said to Him, ‘How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother’s womb and be born?’*”

“*Jesus answered, ‘Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not marvel that I said to you, ‘You must be born again.’ The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear the sound of it, but cannot tell where it comes from and where it goes. So is everyone who is born of the Spirit.’*”

“*Nicodemus answered and said to Him, ‘How can these things be?’ Jesus answered and said to him, ‘Are you the teacher of Israel, and do not know these things?’”* (Jn 3:1-10).

Nicodemus appears in the Gospel a second time when the chief priests and Pharisees, alarmed at the people’s reaction to Jesus, were considering how to deal with Him (see Jn 7:45-52). Nicodemus offers a timid resistance to their resentment. “*Does our law judge a man before it hears him and knows what he is doing?*” (Jn 7:51). In response the Pharisees ridiculed him: “*Are you also from Galilee? Search and look, for no prophet has arisen out of Galilee*” (Jn 7:52).

Trisagion

All of you who have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ. Alleluia! (3X)

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 out 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 of Saint George

Alleluia Verses

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

Verses: He set my feet upon a rock; He made firm my steps.

Gospel: Mk. 15:43-47; 16:1-8, Sunday of Ointment-Bearing Women

Hirmos (Tone 1)

The angel cried out to the one who is full of grace: “Hail, immaculate Virgin!” Again, hail, for your Son is risen from the tomb on the third day. Shine, shine, O New Jerusalem, for the glory of the Lord has shown upon you. Rejoice and be glad, O Sion, and you, O pure one. O Mother of God, exult in the resurrection of your Son.

Kinonikon (Tone 1)

Receive the body, the body of Christ, and drink from the Fountain of immortality. Alleluia.

After Communion—Christ is risen... (Once)

Instead of “Blessed by the name of the Lord...” Christ is risen (three times)

At the end of the Divine Liturgy

Priest: Christ is Risen!

People: He is truly Risen! (three times)

Priest: Glory to His Resurrection on the third day!

People: We adore His holy Resurrection on the third day!