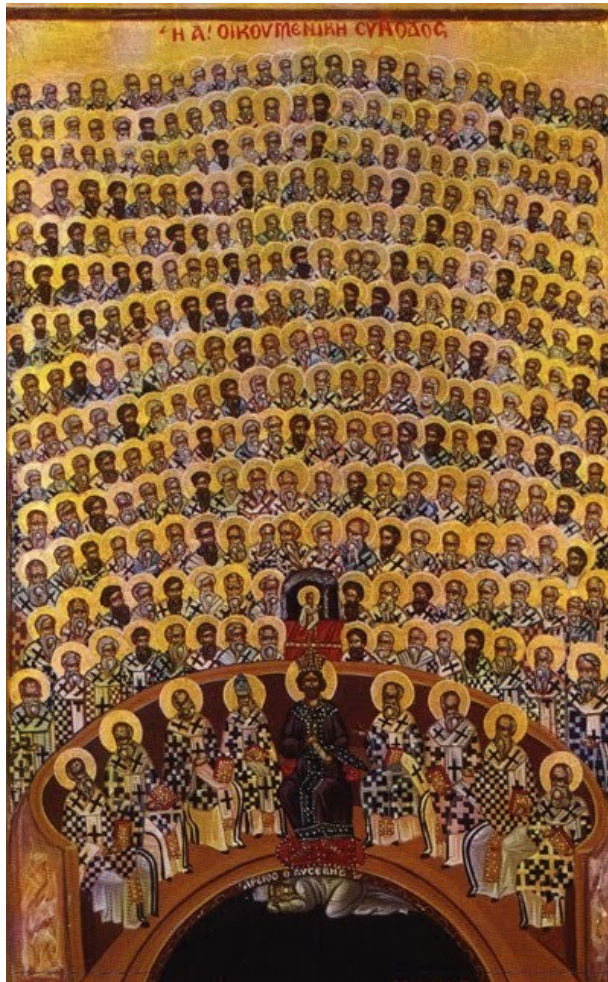


From the Divine Office for the Sunday of the Father of Nicea I

O holy Fathers, you have carefully kept the Apostolic Tradition. In true faith, you taught the doctrine of the consubstantial Trinity. Assembled in Council, you rejected the blasphemy of Arius, refuted Macedonius, the adversary of the Spirit, condemned Nestorius, Eutyches, Dioscoros, Sabellius, and Severus the “headless.” We entreat you to intercede that, preserved from their errors, we may keep the purity of the true Faith throughout all our lives. (Vespers)

The Apostles’ preaching and the Fathers’ teaching established in the Church a single and unified Faith. Wherefore, this Church, robed in the truth of a heaven-inspired theology, explains and declares with certainty the great mystery of Christ. (Orthros)



**SUNDAY OF THE FATHERS OF NICEA I
MAY 29, 2022**



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 (Ascension)

1: All you peoples, clap your hands: shout to God with cries of gladness.

All: O Son of God, who ascended in glory to Heaven, save us who sing to You. Alleluia!

2: For the Lord, the Most High, the Awesome One, is the great King over all the earth.

All: O Son of God, who ascended in glory to Heaven, save us who sing to You. Alleluia!

3: He brings peoples under us, nations under our feet.

All: O Son of God, who ascended in glory to Heaven, save us who sing to You. Alleluia!

Entrance Hymn

Priest: God ascended amid shouts of joy, the Lord amid trumpet blasts.

People: O Son of God, who ascended in glory to Heaven, save us who sing to You.

Alleluia!

Resurrectional Troparion (Tone 6) Pg. 41

The angelic powers were around Your tomb, and the guards became as dead, and Mary stood at the tomb, seeking Your spotless body; Then You despoiled Hades without being tried by it, and You met the Virgin O Bestower of life. O Lord, who rose from the dead, glory to You!

Troparion of the Ascension (Tone 4)

You ascended in glory, O Christ our God, and gladdened Your disciples by the promise of the Holy Spirit. Through Your blessing they were confirmed in their belief that You are the Son of God, the Redeemer of the world.

Troparion of the Fathers (Tone 8)

O Christ our God, You are infinitely glorified, for You established our Fathers as radiant stars on earth: You led us to the true faith through them. O Most Merciful One, glory to You!

Kondakion of the Ascension (Tone 6)

After fulfilling for us Your plan of redemption and joining the things of earth with those of heaven, You gloriously ascended, O Christ our God, without abandoning us, but remained with us forever and proclaimed to those who love You: "Behold, I am with you: no one has power against you."

Look to the Here and Now

Just before Christ's ascension the disciples asked Him a question which He refused to answer. Expecting, as did most Jews, that the Messiah would free their nation from foreign control, the disciples "*asked Him, 'Lord, will You at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?'*" (Acts 1:6) The Lord's response has served as the Church's yardstick in discussing the Second Coming. "*And He said to them, 'It is not for you to know times or seasons which the Father has put in His own authority'*" (Acts 1:7). We are not meant to know when God will act; we are meant to be confident that He will do so and to live accordingly.

Earlier in His ministry the Lord Jesus told a parable that speaks to this issue: the story of the ten virgin attendants at a marriage feast (Mt 25:1-13). Five came prepared with sufficient oil for their lamps; the others did not. They had to go and buy more; and as a result they missed the feast. Jesus' final words put this parable in the context we are discussing today. "*Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour in which the Son of Man is coming*" (v.13). We are to keep alert, to be prepared for the coming of the Lord – whether it is His ultimate return at the end of the age or His coming to me at the end of my life.

Commenting on this parable, St John Chrysostom says that the "oil" required for the coming of the Bridegroom is the alms we offer to those in need. Refusing to give alms marks us as fools for we have neglected to do what is needed to enter the wedding feast with the Bridegroom. We have .come to the feast empty-handed because we have neglected to open our hand to the needy

Another image from this parable is found in the troparion of the Bridegroom, sung on the first days of Great Week. "Beware, therefore, O my soul lest you fall into a deep slumber and be delivered to death and the door of the kingdom be closed on you." We can easily forget that the Lord is coming and drift off to sleep if we are not constantly alert. Cultivating the life in Christ .("trimming our lamps") requires our continual attention.

We are reminded to keep alert whenever we gather in the church for prayer where we stand facing east. This ancient custom which we inherit from the Old Testament era is connected in the Church to the words of Christ, "*For as the lightning comes from the east and flashes to the west, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be*" (Mt 24:27). We face the East, the direction of His coming, in the imagery of this saying. As we stand in church and look up we see the image of Christ in glory, the Pantocrator, in the dome or another prominent place. This is in fact the central detail in the icon of the Ascension: Christ, enthroned upon the cherubim, taken up from the disciples. Placing this icon in the domes of our churches is a graphic reminder that "*This same Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will so come in like manner as you saw Him go into heaven*" (Acts 1:11).

O Lord, Your Angels spoke to Your Apostles: "Men of Galilee, why do you stand here looking up at the skies? This Christ God who has been taken from you will return, just as you saw Him go up into the heavens. Serve Him in holiness and righteousness!" *Feast of the Ascension, Hymn at the Liti*

DIVINE LITURGY INTENTIONS

Today HS David Brusseau. Requested by Eric Ewanco
+Loutfi Hajjar. Requested by Susan Arraje
June 5 +Loutfi Hajjar. Requested by Antoinette Arraj
June 12 +George Chebib (40 Day). Requested by Jeanette Halal
June 19 +George Chebib. Requested by Antoinette Arraj

Today's Coffee Hr. is hosted by Susan Arraje
Next Sunday's Coffee Hr. is hosted by Eli Francis

Please Remember in your prayers: Susan Arraje, George Arraj, Jr., Robert Ghiz, Archie Opatka, Katherine Thomas, Charlotte Stockhaus, Ruth Welsh, James Rahall, Richard Abraham, Sr., Daneil Sarrouf, the people of Ukraine, those who suffered a loss as a result of the mass shootings in Buffalo, NY or Uvalde, TX .

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	\$1,000
Candles	\$ 32
Coffee Hr.	\$ 48
Stole	\$ 45
Donations	\$ 60
TOTAL	\$1,210

God bless you for your generosity!



Welcome to any visitors we may 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.



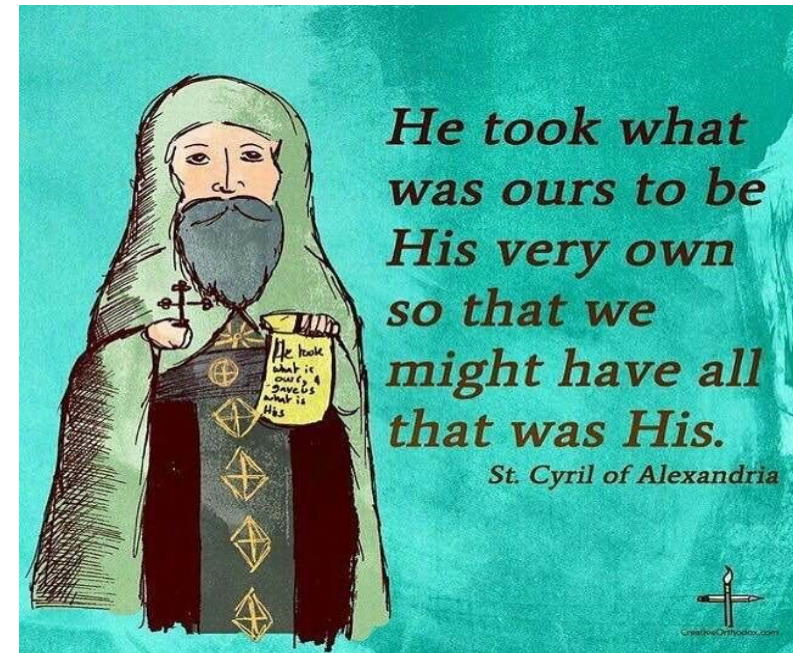
PICNIC PLANNING MEETING

Our annual Family Picnic will be September 11, 2022 from noon to 6 PM.

We will have our next planning meeting on Sunday June 5 after the Divine Liturgy. All are welcome. The success of the picnic depends on your participation in whatever way you can. There are plenty of tasks to accomplish. I'm sure that at least one of them will make use of your talents!

ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

As most of you know, next year (2023) is the one-hundredth anniversary of the parish. I would like to form a committee to explore how we want to mark the occasion. If you are interested in being on the committee or have some ideas about how to celebrate this milestone in the life of the parish, please contact me. We will have an initial meeting in the next month or so.



“He Shall Come Again”

IN 1831 A BAPTIST PREACHER in upstate New York began to announce that the Second Coming of Christ was to take place in 1844. By that year over 100,000 people were anticipating that what William Miller had identified as the “Blessed Hope” of Titus 2:13 would take place on October 22. When Christ did not return on that date the “Blessed Hope” became known as the “Great Disappointment.” Remnants of this group, the first Seventh Day Adventists, then said that the Last Judgment had begun in heaven on that day.

The date of choice for early Jehovah’s Witnesses was 1914. When Christ didn’t visibly return, they said that He came invisibly in the spirit. Members were told that the world would end in 1920, 1925, 1957, 1975 and 1984. In 1995 the Witnesses announced that the end of the world had been postponed.

California radio preacher Harold Camping claimed that the world would end in September 1994, in May, 2011 and then in October, 2011. He is not the last to make such predictions. There are still groups looking to 2012, 2016 and 2034 as their target dates. No doubt others will join the parade of false prophets before long.

Conflicting prophecies are certainly nothing new. The Old Testament tells of many such disputes among the Jews, such as the struggle between Elijah and the prophets of Baal. In the first century AD, of course, the Jewish leaders considered Jesus and His followers as false prophets.

From the very beginning of the Church there were rival teachers as well. As St Paul reminded the elders of the Church at Ephesus (see Acts 20:28-29), there were competing evangelists going from community to community with a different take on the Gospel. Inevitably members of the local community would be led to follow them and themselves “rise up, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after themselves” (Acts 20:30). We would do well to reread Paul’s warning when we hear on TV or read in novels about “secret” or “newly discovered” Scriptures which “the Vatican” has suppressed. Never secret and most known since the first centuries, these writings reflect the contending religious visions among the early believers.

The “Blessed Hope”

Among the central doctrines of the Church from its earliest days has been the expected second coming of Christ. “He shall come again,” the Creeds confess, “to judge the living and the dead.” We particularly focus on this promise during the Feast of the Ascension of Christ which we are celebrating this week. The Acts of the Apostles tells of this event. Christ instructs His disciples and then is taken up out of their sight. “And while they looked steadfastly towards heaven as He went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel, who said, *‘Men of Galilee, why do you stand gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will so come in like manner as you saw Him go into heaven’*” (Acts 1:10-11).

The promise of Christ’s return is found in almost every New Testament book. But do the Scriptures predict when this will happen? Apocalyptic books such as the Old Testament book of Daniel and the New Testament Revelation to John indicate that the events they describe “must shortly take place” (Rev 1:1) but even these books are nowhere nearly as precise in dating what “shortly” means as some people have predicted.

Prokimenon

Reader: Blessed are You, O Lord God of our Fathers, and Your name is worthy of praise and glorious forever.

People: Blessed are You, O Lord God of our Fathers, and Your name is worthy of praise and glorious forever.

Reader: For You are just in all You have done to us, and all Your works are true and Your ways right.

People: Blessed are You, O Lord God of our Fathers, and Your name is worthy of praise and glorious forever.

Reader: Blessed are You, O Lord God of our Fathers,

People: And Your name is worthy of praise and glorious forever.

Epistle: Acts 20:16-18; 27-36

Alleluia Verses

The God of gods, the Lord has spoken and summoned the earth from the rising of the sun to its setting.

Verses: Gather His faithful ones around Him, those who have made a covenant with Him through sacrifices.

Gospel: Jn. 17:1-13, Sunday of the Fathers of Nicea I

Hirmos of the Ascension (Tone 5)

O you who have given birth in time to the One whom no limit of time can hold, you thus have become the Mother of God in a manner beyond understanding and beyond words: We the faithful magnify you in one mind.

After Communion - Troparion of the Ascension

