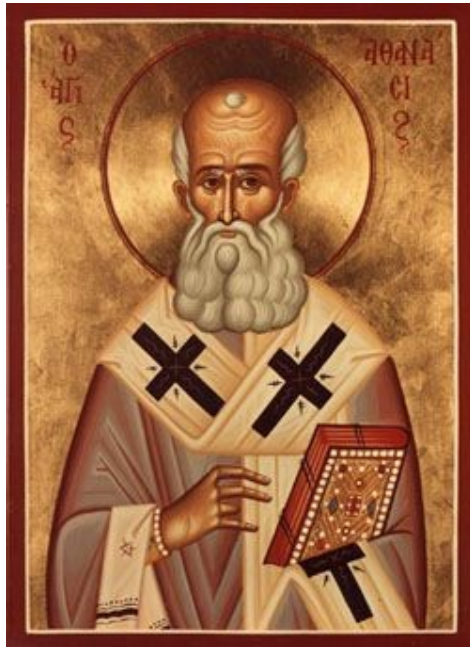


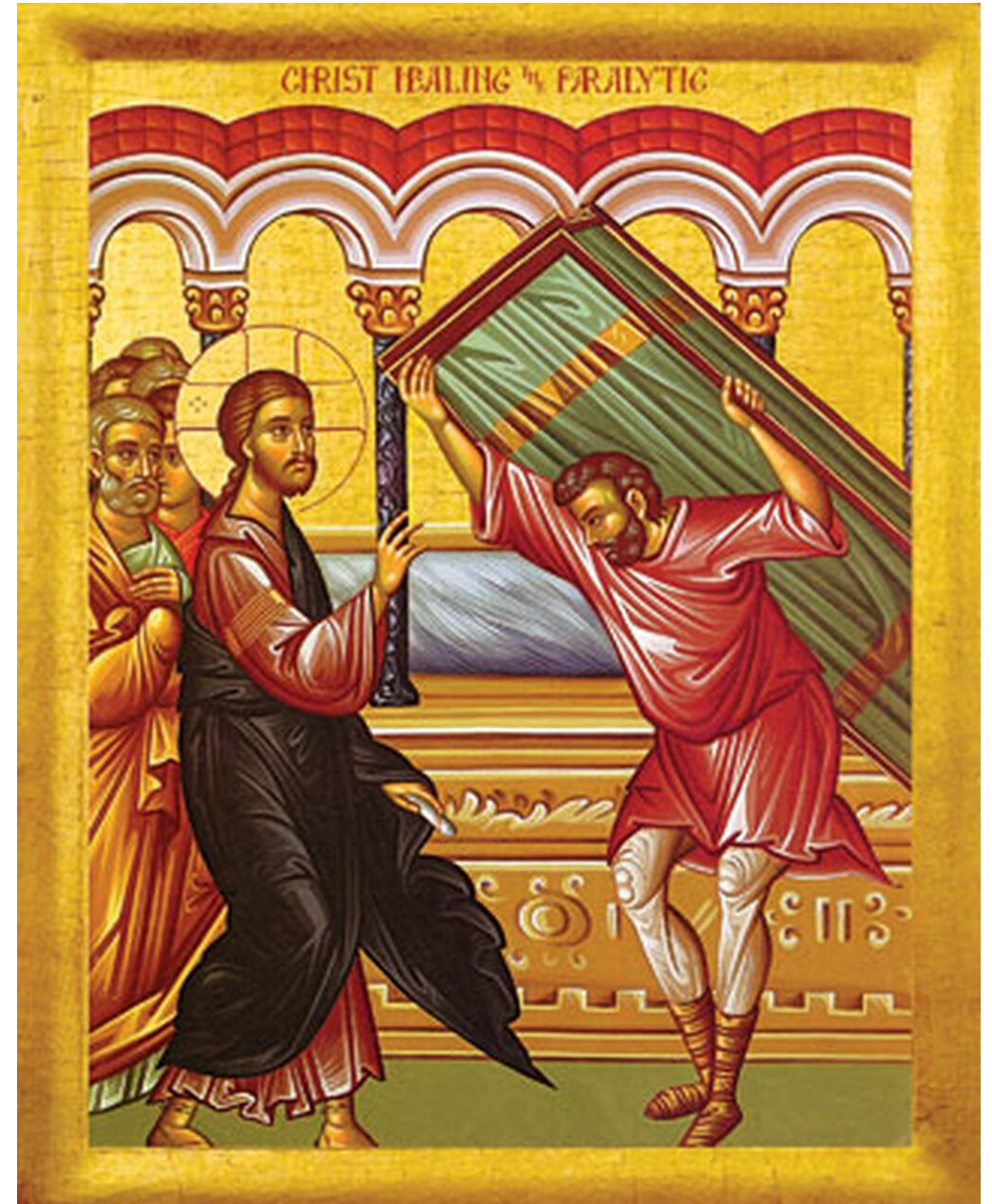
*From the Fathers*

*“The Lord did not come to make a display. He came to heal and to teach suffering men. For one who wanted to make a display the thing would have been just to appear and dazzle the beholders. But for Him Who came to heal and to teach the way was not merely to dwell here, but to put Himself at the disposal of those who needed Him, and to be manifested according as they could bear it, not vitiating the value of the Divine appearing by exceeding their capacity to receive it.”*

— St. Athanasius the Great



**SIXTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST  
JULY 4, 2021**



**JESUS HEALING THE PARALYTIC**

**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, 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.

### Resurrection Troparion (Tone 5) pg. 40

Let us, O faithful, praise and worship the Word, coeternal with the Father and the Spirit, born of the Virgin for our Salvation, for He was pleased to be lifted in the flesh upon the cross, and to endure death, and to raise the dead by His glorious resurrection.

### 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 (Tone 2) pg. 16

O never-failing Protectress of Christians, and their ever-present Intercessor before the Creator, despise not the petitions of us sinners, but in your goodness extend your help to us who call upon you with confidence. Hasten, O Mother of God, to intercede for us, for you have always protected those who honor you

*Receiving the Eucharist* – Several times during the Divine Liturgy we are reminded that the Eucharist is given to us “for the remission of sins.” To receive this gift we must approach “discerning the Body,” as St Paul says: sensing the depth of this Mystery and our unworthiness to take part in it. And so before receiving we say the prayer “I believe, Lord, and profess” specifically asking for the pardon of our offences – the deliberate and the indeliberate, whether committed knowingly or inadvertently – so that we may receive the remission of sins and eternal life in this Mystery.

*Observing the Church’s Fasts* - The Fasts are another liturgical expression of repentance. Rearranging our lives in obedience to the Church’s weekly and seasonal fasts is a most practical way of affirming our commitment to life in Christ, a daily reminder that “*Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God*” (Mt 4:4).

*The Mystery of Confession* – As we have seen, Confession was at first considered a “second baptism,” a starting over in the Christian life, when a person had committed serious sin. Over the centuries it became more widely used and is considered appropriate today whenever a person feels the need for it, particularly:

When a serious sin has been committed;

When a habitual sin has overwhelmed the Christian;

When a Christian has stopped growing spiritually and needs a reorientation of priorities.

Confession, with prayer and fasting, is also a customary preparation for important spiritual experiences such as receiving the Eucharist or other Mysteries and observing the Great Feasts of the Church year as a part of the Christian’s ongoing repentance. Thus we read in the *Didache* (late first or early second century), “On the Lord’s Day come together and break bread ... having confessed your transgressions that your sacrifice may be pure.”

### **No “Cheap Forgiveness”**

Some people think that for us to obtain forgiveness we simply need to say a prescribed prayer or undergo a stipulated rite without any real connection to one’s heart. Obtaining God’s forgiveness is not the religious equivalent of paying a traffic ticket. Our sin is forgiven only when two conditions are met.

**The first condition is that we extend to those who may have hurt us the same forgiveness we seek to receive from God.** We recall this each time we say the Lord’s Prayer: “forgive us...as we forgive.” If this is not clear enough we also have the Lord’s caution, “*For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses*” (Mt 6:14, 15).

**The second condition is that we do something about our sin.** This may mean that we make some kind of restitution: return stolen property, or try to rebuild another’s reputation which we have harmed, or the like. It may mean that we take steps to avoid repeating the same kind of offence in the future, particularly if our sin is habitual like indulging in gossip or unseemly talk. As the nineteenth century Greek saint, Cosmas the Aetolian, once remarked: “Even if every spiritual father, patriarch, and hierarch, with all the people forgive you, you are unforgiven if you don’t repent in action.”

To repent in action does not simply mean resolving not to sin again. Like New Year’s resolutions, such declarations rarely are kept for long. We simply do not have the power to keep ourselves from sin. Repenting in action means, first of all, turning to God in prayer to be delivered from our sin. We are counseled to repeat continually the prayer of the tax collector, “O God, be merciful to me a sinner.” Only God, who forgives us when we sin, can prevent us from falling into sin... and that only when we continually desire Him to do so. The sincerity of our prayer to be delivered from sin is shown by how often we are moved to utter it.

## HAPPY INDEPENDENCE DAY !

### DIVINE LITURGY INTENTIONS

**Today** Those injured or missing in the Florida Condominium collapse  
+Those who lost their lives in the Florida Condominium collapse

**July 11** +Habib & Mariam Rahall, William & Bertha Rahall, Reeks & Rahall Families.  
Requested by Nick Rahall and Family

**July 18** +Saadallah al Kateb. Requested by Laurence & Saimon Aulo and Family

Today's flowers were donated by Houda Daou in memory of George and Dori Kahale  
This morning's Coffee Hour is hosted by Maria Filewicz  
Next Sunday's Coffee Hour is hosted by Nick Rahall

### Last Week's Collection

Regular	\$ 544
Candles	\$ 30
Coffee Hr	\$ 25
Diocesan	\$ 104
Total	\$ 703

God bless you for your generosity!

### Financials

<u>6.2021</u>	<u>YTD</u>
Income 4,666	Income 60,413
Expense 5,705	Expense 68,170
Net (1,039)	Net (7,757)

### Summer Liturgical Schedule

**Mon July 19, 6PM** - Vespers for the Feast of St. Elias followed by blessing of cars

**Wed Aug 4, 6PM** - Paraclisis

**Fri Aug 6, 6PM** - Divine Liturgy for the Feast of the Transfiguration followed by blessing of grapes

**Wed Aug 11, 6PM**- Paraclisis

**Sun Aug 15, 10AM** - Divine Liturgy for the Feast of the Dormition of the Theotokos

As you know, we were not able to have our Picnic last year due to the pandemic. I would like to try to have something this Fall. It doesn't have to be on the same scale. I was thinking of several things: We could have a simpler version of the Picnic or a Take-Out Food Fair. Someone also mentioned a Memorial Service for all the loved ones we lost during the pandemic followed by a luncheon. We would charge a minimal amount for the luncheon, which would be catered. That gives everyone a chance to enjoy the event. If we make a little profit, that's great, but the primary purpose is to welcome everyone back to the parish. As I have said several times, you are missed!

If you have some other ideas or would like to help with one of the above possible events, please call, text, or email me. My contact information is on the first page of the bulletin. **We will have a planning meeting in July.**

I have cut back on mailing out the Bulletin. Currently, I am mailing out approximately 20 to parishioners I know who do not have email or can't get to church. If you know someone who would like the Bulletin and is not receiving it either in the mail or via email, please let me know and I'll send them a copy.

### Collection Envelopes

If you are not currently receiving collection envelopes and would like to, please let me know. I now have online access to the list our envelope company has and can easily add you.

### PARISH COUNCIL

I would like to form a Parish Council this fall. It is an important part of parish life. For a parish of our size, I think nine people will be enough, at least to begin. We will elect six members and I will appoint three. Currently, we have both a Finance & Building committee. Each of these committees will have a representative on the Council.

We will have an election this Fall. If you are interested in serving on the Council or want to nominate someone, please let me know. The election will take place in late September.

Please remember that the Parish Council, like all of the councils, is an advisory body. It's purpose is to advise the pastor on elements of church life, not to set policy for the parish. It is not a governing body. Problems often arise when that distinction is not understood by all, including the pastor.



## The Son of Man Forgives Sins

We read in Matthew 9: 1-8 that, when people brought a paralyzed man to the Lord Jesus, He healed the man's paralysis, but not before telling him, "*Your sins are forgiven*" (Mt 9:2). The bystanders' initial thought that Jesus had blasphemed was replaced by wonder. As Matthew described it, "*they marveled and glorified God, who had given such power to men*" (Mt 9:8).

The Lord Jesus, of course, was more than just a man. His full humanity was joined without confusion to the divine nature of the Word of God. He forgave sin, then, as the only-begotten Son of the Father. But the onlookers' amazement would be justified in time: God *would* give men the power to forgive sin, in the Church.

When the glorified Christ appeared to His disciples after His resurrection, He told them, "*Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained*" (Jn 20:22, 23). The Church was to extend the presence of Christ in the world both physically and spiritually by imparting the forgiveness of sins to those who came to it in faith.

The first place where the Church bestows forgiveness of sins is in the mystery of baptism. When we are buried with Christ in baptism we rise to a newness of life marked by deliverance from the power of sin. Infants brought for baptism, of course, have no sins of which they may be guilty; adults who receive baptism with repentance are freed from their past sins. As the priest announces at the eighth day removal of the baptismal garments, "you have been baptized, enlightened, chrismated, sanctified and cleansed in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit!"

### The "Second Baptism"

The early Church recognized that believers might fall into serious sin, particularly when threatened with imprisonment and death during the Roman persecution of Christians. It began using its ability to forgive sin in a new way. Those guilty of serious sin would be reconciled to the Church after confessing their sin and undergoing a period of repentance – what came to be called the Mystery of Repentance.

Today we express repentance and experience the forgiveness of sins through the Church in a number of ways:

**Daily prayer of repentance** – For a member of Christ's Body, the Church, prayer is the most basic way to experience God's forgiveness. As St John of Kronstadt said, "Often during the day I have been a great sinner, and at night, after prayer, I have gone to rest justified and whiter than snow by the grace of the Holy Spirit, with the deepest peace and joy in my heart" (*My Life in Christ*, Part 1).

**Regular Self-Reflection** – Periodic, even daily self-examination helps us to see the direction of our lives. Our entire existence should be lived in the light of the Holy Spirit. We examine our actions, thoughts and feelings, affirming our true selves in Christ who has taught us to live for God's glory and discerning where we have let sin draw us away from our true goal.

**A Relationship with a Confessor/Spiritual Father** – Each person is in a different place in his or her journey. We may on occasion find thoughts in the Scriptures or the Fathers that touch our hearts, but finding someone who knows you and knows the ways of Holy Tradition is like taking a giant step in the Christian life. The fullest dimension of spiritual guidance involves sharing our thoughts and yearnings, not just our sins with this spiritual guide.

### Prokimenon

**Reader:** You, O Lord, will keep us and preserve us always from this generation.

**People:** You, O Lord, will keep us and preserve us always from this generation.

**Verse:** Save me, O Lord, for there is no longer any holy man, for truthfulness has vanished among the children of men.

**People:** You, O Lord, will keep us and preserve us always from this generation.

**Reader:** You, O Lord, will keep us

**People:** And preserve us always from this generation.

### Epistle: Rom 12:6-14

#### Alleluia Verses

Your favor, O Lord, I will sing forever, from generation to generation, my mouth will proclaim Your faithfulness.

Verse: For You have said, "My kindness is established forever." In heaven You have confirmed Your faithfulness.

### Gospel: Mt 9:1-8

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

**I would like to start religious education this fall for adults and children. We will use diocesan resources for the children. For the adults, we will discuss different aspects of our Faith. If there is anything you want to know more about, please don't hesitate to let me know.**

**I believe that our Byzantine music is also part of religious education, so I plan to have regular music sessions so that those who want to become more familiar with our music have that opportunity. We will begin with the music for the Divine Liturgy and then move on to feast day and other music. I hope you will be able to join us!**

**There will be more to come during the summer.**