

From the Divine Office for the Great-Martyr Christina

By your deeds, you truly conformed yourself to the name of Christ, which you bore. Becoming His bride in virginal purity, by the good will of the Father and with the help of the Holy Spirit, you shone more brightly than the sun in your perseverance as you struggled in martyrdom. Thus, you were offered at the heavenly altar as a pure and spotless victim, exulting throughout the ages in the choir of virgins and martyrs. Together with them, O Christina, entreat the Lord, whose name you bear, to grant peace and great mercy to those who honor you. (Vespers)

O venerable Christina, you appeared as a bright dove with a pair of golden wings alighting in the heights of heaven; wherefore, we celebrate your glorious feast, and bow before the place that contains your remains and from which there springs forth grace and healing for body and soul. (Orthros)



SEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

JULY 24, 2022



GREAT-MARTYR CHRISTINA

JULY 24

Our Lady of Perpetual Help Melkite Catholic Church
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Rev. Bryan McNeil, Pastor
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Divine Liturgy: Sunday 10:00 AM

Antiphon (1st)

1: Come, let us sing joyfully to the Lord; let us shout with joy to God our Savior.

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

2: Let us come into His presence with thanksgiving and let us joyfully sing psalms to Him.

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

Haleloueya.

3: For God is a great Lord and a great King over all the earth.

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

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 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!

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.

Kontakion (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.

Elijah and Mount Carmel

Several events in the life of the prophet Elijah are connected with Mount Carmel, a promontory on the Mediterranean near the city of Haifa. Christians, Druze, Jews and Muslims all revere this place for its connection with Elijah. Early in the spread of monasticism ascetics settled in the area, often living in caves on the outcropping. When Western monks came to the Holy Land during the Crusades, they found Eastern hermits settled on Carmel and stayed among them. The Western monks adopted the Easterners' way of life in the spirit of Elijah. When they returned to Europe, however, these "Carmelites" were obliged to adopt a communal way of life. While living as a hermit was considered the summit of monastic life in the East, it was seen as eccentric in the West.

Elijah's Return

The last Old Testament prophetic book, Malachi, ends with these words of the LORD: "*Lo, I will send the prophet Elijah before the coming of the awesome, fearful day of the LORD. He shall reconcile parents with children and children with their parents so that, when I come, I do not strike the whole land with utter destruction*" (Mal 3:23-24). Believing Jews saw Elijah's return as a herald of the Messiah's coming. To this day Jews pray every Sabbath: "Elijah the prophet, Elijah the Thisbite – let him come quickly in our day with the Messiah, the son of David." Christians, of course, believe that the Messiah has come – it is Jesus. Jesus Himself identified John the Baptist as Elijah come again: "*If you are willing to receive it, he is Elijah who is to come*" (Mt 11:14). But Christians also believe that Elijah is "the herald of the Second Coming of Christ" (aposticha): the coming in power at the end of the age. In 2 Kgs 2:11 we read "*And it came to pass while they [Elijah and Elisha] were walking, speaking together as they walked, behold, a chariot of fire came between the two of them and Elijah was swept up in a whirlwind...*" The current Hebrew text, on which most modern translations are based, says that Elijah was swept up "*into heaven.*" The oldest existing text, however, the Greek Septuagint, says that he was swept up "*as if into heaven.*" This accords with the statement in the Gospel of John, "*No one has ascended to heaven but He who came down from heaven, that is, the Son of Man who is in heaven*" (Jn 3:13). Jewish commentaries describe heaven as the dwelling place of the angels. Christians, however, see heaven as the state of intimate communion with God: something made possible only after Christ. Thus St Athanasius would write, "Elijah did not ascend into heaven... Heaven was reserved for the Creator, the Author of mankind. Thus, with Enoch and Elijah, God gladdened the people with a promising hope by spreading before them an 'airborne highway' as though for horse-drawn vehicles" (Homily 2 on the Ascension). As St. Gregory mused concerning Enoch and Elijah, "...even he [Elijah] did not go beyond the boundaries of the earth, but who knows what kind of transportation each of these ascensions was, which lifted them off the face of the earth, yet did not remove them from earth altogether" (Homily 1 on the Ascension).



DIVINE LITURGY INTENTIONS

Today +William (23rd) & Bertha Rahall, Habib & Miriam Rahall.
Requested by Nick Rahall & Family

July 31 +Vincent Mischitelli. Requested by Michael & Virginia Mischitelli
& Family

August 7 +Vincent Mischitelli. Requested by Antonio & Karen Solitro

This morning's Coffee Hr. is hosted by Nick Rahall & Family
Next Sunday's Coffee Hr. will be hosted by Laurance & Seemon Aulo

Please Remember in your prayers: Susan Arraje, George Arraj, Jr., Peter Abraham, 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 various cities in the country.

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	\$1,367
Candles	\$ 21
Coffee Hr.	\$ 40
Stole	\$ 25
TOTAL	\$1,453

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.



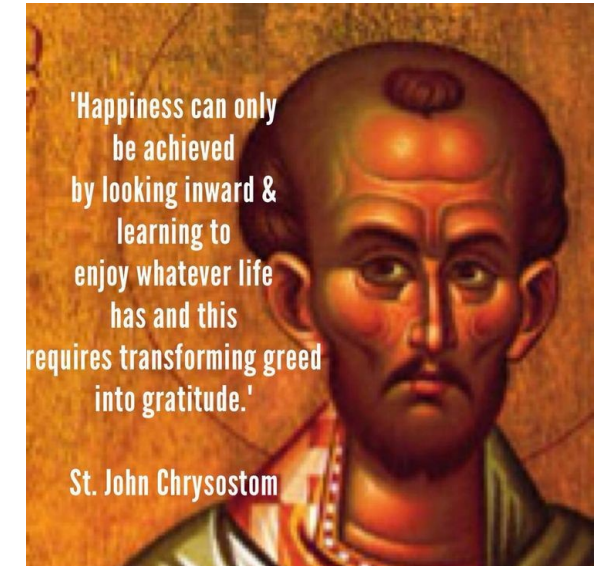
2022 Family Picnic

Our annual Family Picnic will be on **Sunday September 11, 2022 from Noon to 6:00PM.**

Our next meeting will be **July 26 at 6:30PM**

We need volunteers for many tasks: advance food preparation, food runners, setup/breakdown, cashiers, children's activities, etc. If you can share a couple of hours prior to, or on the day of the Picnic, please reach out to **Marilyn Tencza at (774) 239-2081 or mtencza9@hotmail.com.**

We will be accepting advance orders for full trays of kibbeh and small trays of grape leaves. Please look for a mailing in the next week or so.



July 20 – The Holy Prophet Elias the Thisbite The Pillar of the Prophets

THE SCRIPTURES ARE FILLED with writings of the prophets, particularly the fifteen books named after the most celebrated Hebrew prophets. Nevertheless, the one most revered as “the pillar of the prophets and their leader” (aposticha) seems to have written nothing, except a letter to King Jehoram of Israel, which was delivered sometime after the prophet had left this world (see 2 Chron 21:10-12).

Elijah (Elias) the Thisbite lived in the ninth century BC, in the northern kingdom of Israel during the reign of King Ahab. Five hundred years had passed since Moses led the Israelites out of Egypt. Several generations had come and gone since David and Solomon ruled in God’s name. Their kingdom had been divided in two and thereby weakened by rivalries among its leaders. The Israelites had grown lax in their conviction that there was but one God. Proximity to and intermarriage with neighboring Canaanites had made them more accepting of these other gods, such as Baal, favorite of the king’s wife, Jezebel. The dramatic story of Elijah’s encounter with the prophets of Baal is recorded in 1 Kings 17-19.

Elijah – whose name means “Yahweh is my God” – personifies the most important characteristic of the Hebrew prophets. He is described repeatedly as consumed by zeal for the LORD, devoted to observing and restoring the worship of the one true God in a spiritually feeble age. The commitment of the Israelites to their God would wax and wane over succeeding generations and other prophets would rise up to do as Elijah had done in his day to exalt the name of the one true God.

Elijah the Wonderworker

The Scriptures recount several marvels in the life of Elijah for which he is especially revered. The most dramatic involves the drought brought about by the prophet who warned the king, “*There will be no dew or rain except at my bidding*” (1 Kgs 17:1). The three-year long drought was ended at Elijah’s prayer, after the prophets of Baal had failed to do so, bringing about the conversion of the people to the LORD. “*When they saw this, all the people flung themselves on their faces and cried out: ‘THE LORD alone is God! THE LORD alone is God!’*” (1 Kgs 18:39). A series of wonders took place in Zarephath, a village near Sidon. There Elijah multiplied flour and oil for a poor widow so that “she and her household had food for a long time” (1 Kgs 17:15). Elijah also restored the widow’s son to life after a fatal illness had claimed him by prostrating himself three times over the child and praying, “*O LORD, let this child’s life return to his body*” (1 Kgs 17:21). St Ephrem the Syrian would see this triple prostration as an image of Christ’s triple descent (to becoming man, to death, and to Hades) in order to bring life to the human race.

Elijah the Ascetic

Monastics in the Christian East have long revered Elijah as a kind of proto-monk, a desert-dweller for the Lord. During the drought God sent Elijah east of the Jordan to Wadi Cherith, a secluded ravine out of Ahab’s reach where “ravens brought him bread and meat morning and evening, and he drank from the river” (1 Kgs 17:6). Modern commentators have noted that the original Hebrew text has no vowels and that the same consonants in the word ravens can also be read as Arabs. Perhaps Bedouin tribesmen brought food to Elijah in his wilderness retreat as their descendants would assist hermits in later centuries. Monastics also identified with Elijah’s forty-day fast on his journey to Mount Horeb (see 1 Kgs 19:8). At the conclusion of this fast the LORD revealed His presence to Elijah in “a still, small voice” (1 Kgs 19:12). This they saw as an icon of the monastic life. The monk distances himself from the world through fasting and other ascetic practices to pursue communion with God (theosis).

Prokimenon

Reader: O Lord save Your people and bless Your inheritance!

People: O Lord save Your people and bless Your inheritance!

Reader: To You, O Lord, I have called: O my Rock, be not deaf to me!

People: O Lord save Your people and bless Your inheritance!

Reader: O Lord save Your people

People: And bless Your inheritance!

Epistle: Rom. 15:1-7

Alleluia Verses

He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High abides in the shadow of the God of heaven.

Verse: He will say to the Lord, “My wall, my refuge, my God in whom I will trust!”

Gospel: Mt. 9:27-35

UPCOMING LITURGICAL SCHEDULE

Aug 1-14

Dormition Fast

Wed Aug 3, 6PM

Paraclisis

Fri Aug 5, 6PM

Great Vespers for the Feast of the Transfiguration of the Lord

Sat Aug 6, 10AM

Divine Liturgy for the Feast of the Transfiguration of the Lord followed by blessing of grapes

Wed Aug 12, 6PM

Paraclisis

Mon Aug 15, 6PM

Divine Liturgy for the Feast of the Dormition of the Theotokos

