

St John Chrysostom on the Centurion

Great is the pride of those who are in places of command; not even in afflictions do they take lower ground. In John 4, for example, the nobleman is all for dragging Him to his house, and says, "Sir, come down before my child dies!" (Jn 4:49) But not so this man; rather he is far superior both to him, and to those who let down the bed through the roof. For he does not seek His bodily presence, nor did He bring the sick man near the physician... he says, speak the word only... not looking so much to the health of the servant, as to the avoiding all appearance of doing anything irreverent.

Homily 26 on Matthew



FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST
JULY 3, 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 (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.

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 firstborn from the dead. He has delivered us from the bosom of Hades and has granted to the world great mercy.

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)

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.

Christian tradition has also stressed the man's humility and made it the model for our response when the Lord is near. In both East and West, his words are incorporated into our prayer as we approach the Eucharist. In the Byzantine prayers before receiving Communion we say, "I know that I am not worthy or sufficient that You should come under the roof of my soul, for all is desolate and fallen" (Second Prayer) and "I am not worthy, O Lord and Master, that You should enter under the roof of my soul" (Seventh Prayer). The centurion's humble protestation is clearly the model here.

What is the Principal Message Here?

The "punch line" in Matthew's story of this healing tells us what his principal message is for us. Jesus marvels at the centurion's faith, then He adds: "*And I say to you that many will come from east and west, and sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven. But the sons of the kingdom will be cast out into outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth*" (Mt 8:11,12).

The idea that Gentiles would be preferred to Jews in the heavenly realm was scandalous to Jews. When Jesus had expressed a similar idea in the synagogue at Nazareth, it nearly got Him killed: "*Assuredly, I say to you, no prophet is accepted in his own country. But I tell you truly, many widows were in Israel in the days of Elijah, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, and there was a great famine throughout all the land; but to none of them was Elijah sent except to Zarephath, in the region of Sidon, to a woman who was a widow. And many lepers were in Israel in the time of Elisha the prophet, and none of them was cleansed except Naaman the Syrian.*" So all those in the synagogue, when they heard these things, were filled with wrath, and rose up and thrust Him out of the city; and they led Him to the brow of the hill on which their city was built, that they might throw Him down over the cliff. Then passing through the midst of them, He went His way" (Lk 4:25-30).

The Lord referred to times in the ninth century BC when the Jews fell away from the worship of the one God, accepting the Phoenician deities Baal and Asherath. The prophets Elijah and his successor Elisha confronted the Jews for their apostasy but ministered to Phoenicians and Syrians who were disposed to hear their message. As the widow of Zarephath confessed to Elijah, "Now by this I know that you are a man of God, and that the word of the LORD in your mouth is the truth" (1 Kgs 17:24).

Their stories are told in the first and second books of Kings. The story of Jesus and the Canaanite woman (Mt 15:21-28) is another example of a believing pagan contrasted to contentious Jews. After a confrontation with Jewish leaders from Jerusalem, the Lord went to the region of Tyre and Sidon where a woman begged His help for her daughter. After at first appearing to decline because she was not a Jew, Jesus obliged her saying, "*O woman, great is your faith! Let it be to you as you desire*" (Mt 15:28). Again, a Gentile's faith is contrasted to the argumentative response of God's own people.

In each case, the prophets and the Lord Himself step outside the box to respond to a believing Gentile, who is then held up an example to Jews who doubted Him and an encouragement to the Gentiles who were being added to the company of His followers.



DIVINE LITURGY INTENTIONS

Today **Our Families and Friends**

July 10 +**Nicholas & Theodora Barouk.** Requested by Michael & Virginia Mischitelli and Antonio & Karen Solitro

July 24 +**William (23rd) & Bertha Rahall, Habib & Miriam Rahall.**
Requested by Nick Rahall & Family

There will be no Coffee Hr. this morning
Next Sunday's Coffee Hr. is hosted by Antonio & Karen Solitro and Virginia & Michael Mischitelli

This morning's flowers were donated in memory of John Sillup by Marilyn & Zenon Tencza and in memory of James & Catherine Esper by Richard and Antoinette Esper

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 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	\$ 664
Candles	\$ 36
Coffee Hr.	\$ 42
Donation	\$ 15
Diocesan	\$ 5
TOTAL	\$762

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.

UPCOMING LITURGICAL SCHEDULE

Wed July 20, 6PM Divine Liturgy for the Great Prophet Elijah followed by blessing of cars.

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 12 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.

Thanks in advance for your help!



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. We will have an initial meeting on **July 19 at 6:30PM.**

Coming from East and West

BY THE TIME CHRIST BEGAN His public ministry, Rome had been ruling the Holy Land for almost 100 years, through a succession of local governors and administrators. The ruler of Galilee at the time was the tetrarch Herod Antipas, whom the locals called “King Herod.” The region of Galilee was the site of much of the Lord Jesus’ early ministry.

When the Lord’s teaching was rejected in His home town of Nazareth, we are told that *“leaving Nazareth, He came and dwelt in Capernaum, which is by the sea”* (Mt 4:13). It was there that He chose four local fishermen - Peter, Andrew, James and John – and called them to be His followers.

As a seaside fishing village, it is likely that Capernaum was a place where taxes would be collected, particularly from the local fishermen. Matthew the evangelist was collecting taxes there when Jesus called him (see Mt 9:9). It was perhaps to insure that taxes were collected that Roman soldiers were stationed in the area as well.

The Centurion at Capernaum

Matthew does not tell us anything about the officer who called on His help. In the Gospel of Luke we learn a bit more. In Lk 7, the first approach to Jesus on this matter was made by the local Jewish elders: *“And when they came to Jesus, they begged Him earnestly, saying that the one for whom He should do this was deserving, ‘for he loves our nation, and has built us a synagogue’”* (Lk 7:4,5). Some commentators have concluded that the centurion might have been a God-fearer or even a proselyte (Gentile convert), but this is not mentioned in either Gospel, as it was not pertinent to the story or its message.

In both tellings of this story, the centurion refrains from summoning Jesus to the servant’s bedside, *“for I am not worthy that You should enter under my roof”* (Mt 8:8, Lk 7:6). Perhaps the centurion knew it would violate local custom for a Jew (much less a holy man) to enter the home of a Gentile. This is not mentioned, because it too was not pertinent to the story or its message.

What was emphasized by the Lord in both Gospels is the centurion’s faith. Many of Jesus’ contemporaries relied on their being members of the people of Israel to, as it were, guarantee their status before God. But, as the Lord said elsewhere, *“Do not think to say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham as our father.’ For I say to you that God is able to raise up children to Abraham from these stones”* (Mt 3:9).

Many looked to the correct observance of the precepts of the Law as the sign that they were doing God’s will. The centurion, not being a Jew, could not rely on either of these principles. His response, however, showed that he had the deep reliance on God which validates any religious observance then or now.

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Prokimenon

Reader: Sing praise to our God, sing praise! Sing praise to our King, sing praise!

People: Sing praise to our God, sing praise! Sing praise to our King, sing praise!

Reader: All you peoples, clap your hands! Shout to God with cries of gladness!

People: Sing praise to our God, sing praise! Sing praise to our King, sing praise!

Reader: Sing praise to our God, sing praise!

People: Sing praise to our King, sing praise!

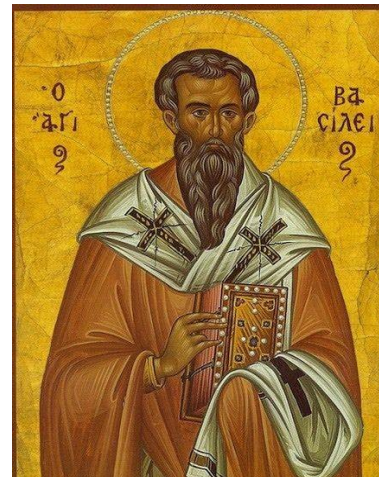
Epistle: Rom. 6:18-23

Alleluia Verses

You, O Lord, I have hoped: let me never be put to shame. In Your justice, save me and deliver me, lend me Your ear, and hasten my deliverance.

Verse: Be for me a protecting God, a sheltering house to save me.

Gospel: Mt. Mt. 8:5-13



“Through the Holy Spirit comes our restoration to paradise, our ascension into the kingdom of heaven, our return to the adoption of sons, our liberty to call God our Father, our being made partakers of the grace of Christ, our being called children of light, our sharing in eternal glory, and, in a word, our being brought into a state of all “fulness of blessing,” both in this world and in the world to come, of all the good gifts that are in store for us, by promise hereof, through faith, beholding the reflection of their grace as though they were already present, we await the full enjoyment.” (St. Basil the Great)

FINANCIALS

6.2022

Income \$4,741

Expense \$6,890

Net (\$2,149)

YTD (10.2021-6.2022)

Income \$61,338

Expense \$58,486

Net \$ 2,851