

From the Divine Office for the Forefeast of the Transfiguration of the Lord (Aug. 5)

Come, let us climb the mountain of the Lord to the house of our God. Let us contemplate the glory of His Transfiguration, the glory of an only Son coming from the Father. Let us take Light from His Light. Then, lifted up by the Spirit, let us sing to the consubstantial Trinity throughout all ages. (Vespers)

Today the whole human race prepares to reflect the radiance of divine splendor brought about in the Transfiguration of Christ, and to cry out with joy: "Christ is transfigured to save us all!" (Orthros)



**EIGHTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST
JULY 31, 2022**



FEEDING OF THE FIVE THOUSAND

Our Lady of Perpetual Help Melkite Catholic Church
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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 7) pg. 42

You destroyed Death by Your cross. You opened paradise to the thief. You changed the weeping of the myrrh-bearers, and commanded Your apostles to proclaim that You, O Christ God, have risen, granting 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 of the Transfiguration (Tone 7)

You were transfigured on the Mountain, O Christ God, and Your disciples saw as much of Your glory as they could hold, so that when they should see You crucified they would know You suffer willingly, and would proclaim to the world that You are verily the Splendor of the Father.

The Future: the Messianic Banquet

Earlier in Matthew's Gospel we see Jesus pointing to the future: "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" (Mt 8:11). He was alluding to the idea of the Messianic Banquet, the great feast that represented for Jews that communion with God, which the coming of the Messiah would bring about.

This feast is described in Isaiah 25:6-9 in terms which make us think of the feeding of the 5000: "And in this mountain the LORD of hosts will make for all people a feast of choice pieces, a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of well-refined wines on the lees. And He will destroy on this mountain the surface of the covering cast over all people, and the veil that is spread over all nations. He will swallow up death forever, and the Lord GOD will wipe away tears from all faces; the rebuke of His people He will take away from all the earth; for the LORD has spoken. And it will be said in that day: 'Behold, this is our God; we have waited for Him, and He will save us. This is the LORD; we have waited for Him; we will be glad and rejoice in His salvation.'" The Messiah would come and restore Israel. The scattered Jews of the world would be drawn back to their homeland and they would all sit down to a great meal of celebration. How could the first Jewish believers in Christ not have thought of this banquet when reflecting on the feeding of the 5000?

When Jesus spoke of many "coming from east and west," He was adding a new note to the concept of this banquet: it would be open to Gentiles and many "sons of the kingdom" would be excluded. The kingdom of God – and this, the great feast of the kingdom – would feature Jews and Gentiles eating together (an act forbidden in Jewish tradition). And so in Mt 15:30-38 we find Jesus' miracle repeated, after He heals the Canaanite woman in the area of Tyre and Sidon. But this time it is 4000 Gentiles who were fed. The feeding of these multitudes – Jews and Gentiles – would proclaim to believing Jews that the time of the Messiah had arrived.

In Our Worship

Byzantine worship includes several allusions to the feeding of the multitudes. In the Divine Liturgy it is prescribed that five loaves be used to prepare the oblation.

The Lamb is cut from one of them; the others are used to provide the particles representing the Theotokos and the saints, and the living and the dead for whom we pray. Once again the Church is fed from five loaves.

Five loaves are also used in the rite of *artoklasia* (breaking of the bread) celebrated on major feasts. The priest prays, "O Lord Jesus Christ our God, who blessed the five loaves in the wilderness and thus sustained five thousand men, bless these loaves, along with this wheat, wine and oil, and multiply them in this holy city and for Your whole world, and sanctify the faithful who partake of them..." Traditionally in some Churches many other loaves would be provided to feed the needy while the people sing, "Rich men have turned poor and gone hungry, but they that seek the Lord shall not be deprived of any good thing." Thus the Messianic banquet and the soup kitchen have something in common: both point to the Lord as the ultimate and unfailing nourisher of all mankind.



DIVINE LITURGY INTENTIONS

Today +**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 Laurance & Seemon Aulo

Next Sunday's Coffee Hr. will be hosted by Janice Abdelnour

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, Bob Lynch, Michael Mooradian, the people of Ukraine, and 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	\$333
Candles	\$ 34
Coffee Hr.	\$ 38
TOTAL	\$405

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 **August 9 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.**



Seraphim of Sarov



You cannot be too gentle, too kind. Shun even to appear harsh in your treatment of each other. Joy, radiant joy, streams from the face of one who gives and kindles joy in the heart of one who receives.

A Table in the Wilderness (Mt 14:14-22)

THE MIRACULOUS FEEDING OF 5000 with five loaves and two fish is reported in each of the four Gospels. In both the earliest and latest Gospels there is an unusual unanimity in the details they relate: more than most other Gospel narratives, including the resurrection. This reflects the great importance which the first Christians attached to this narrative. In it they saw the Lord Jesus connected to the great movements of God in the past, the present and the future.

The Past: the Exodus from Egypt

As is well known, the Gospel of Matthew was written for Jewish believers who were convinced that Jesus fulfilled the Old Testament prophecies concerning the Messiah. They also saw many Old Testament events as “types,” pointing to New Testament events which fulfill and surpass the Old in God’s plan for our salvation. The early Church Fathers in the Greek and Latin worlds had the same vision. Thus St. Cyril of Alexandria would write, “All that is written about the blessed Moses we affirm to be an icon and a type of that salvation which comes in Christ” (*Glaphyra [Illumination] on Exodus*, 1.3).

The feeding of the 5000 was one such event, in which Christ’s actions reflect that He is the New Moses and more: the One who worked through Moses on behalf of the children of Israel. Just as the exodus from Egypt begins with Pharaoh oppressing the Israelites, the Gospel story begins with Herod’s murder of John the Baptist. While Pharaoh oppresses the Israelites because they were so numerous, Herod kills John because of his moral stance.

Hearing about John’s death, Jesus goes apart, to “*a deserted place*” (Mt 14:13). Jesus, His disciples and the people who came to Him from the cities were in a “desert” just as Moses, his soldiers, and the crowd were in Sinai.

When the Israelites were in the desert with Moses God fed them with manna and quail, which Psalm 78:24 calls “*the bread of heaven.*” While the Galileans were in the wilderness with Jesus, He himself fed them with bread and fish.

The feeding of the Israelites in Sinai was connected to their passage through the Red Sea “*on dry ground*” (Ex 14:23 et al.). The feeding of the 5000 is connected to the miracle of Jesus “*walking on the sea*” (Mt 14:25) which follows immediately. While the Israelites walked on the ground exposed by the parting of the sea, Jesus walks on the sea itself.

The Present: Jesus Nourishes the Church

This event marks the first time in the Gospel that the whole crowd will be invited to eat together with Christ, showing His desire to gather all His followers around a common table with Him. St Hilary of Poitiers noted that the first Church – those who responded to the preaching of Peter – numbered about 5000 men (Acts 4:4). The 5000 fed in the wilderness point to those 5000 who were the first to be nourished by the presence of Christ in His Church.

On that “table” in the wilderness was bread and fish. We recall that, for Christians during the Roman persecutions, the fish was a code-sign for Christ. The letters of the Greek word for fish – *ichthys* – were an anagram for the profession of faith, “Jesus Christ Son of God, Savior.” The bread – which Jesus “*took... blessed...and broke*” (Mt 14: 19) – was an “icon” for the early Christians of the Eucharist in which we receive the Son of God our Savior, the Bread of life.

Thus the feeding of the 5000 points to the Church and its communal meal, the Eucharist.

Prokimenon

Reader: The Lord will give strength to His people; the Lord will bless His people with peace.
People: The Lord will give strength to His people; the Lord will bless His people with peace.
Reader: Give to the Lord, you sons of God, give to the Lord glory and praise.
People: The Lord will give strength to His people; the Lord will bless His people with peace.
Reader: The Lord will give strength to His people;
People: The Lord will bless His people with peace.

Epistle: 1 Cor. 1:10-17

Alleluia Verses

It is good to give thanks to the Lord; to sing praises to Your Name, O Most High!

Verse: To proclaim Your kindness at dawn and Your faithfulness throughout the night.

Gospel: Mt. 14:14-22

UPCOMING LITURGICAL SCHEDULE

Aug 1-14

Dormition Fast

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

Paralipsis

Mon Aug 15, 6PM

Divine Liturgy for the Feast of the Dormition of the Theotokos

