

Pre-Nativity Hymns from the Menaion

Isaiah, dance for joy: receive the word of God. Prophecy to the Virgin Mary that the bush burning with fire will not be consumed by the radiance of our God. Let Bethlehem be prepared! Let the gates of Eden be opened! Let the Magi come forth to see wrapped in swaddling clothes in a manger of beasts the salvation which the star has pointed out from above the cave, the life-giving Lord, who saves mankind! (*Vespers, Nov 30*)

Bethlehem, receive Mary, the City of God: in you will be born the Light that never sets. Let the angels stand in wonder in Heaven, and let mankind glorify the Lord on earth! O Magi from Persia, prepare your illustrious gifts! Shepherds, who pass the night in the fields, sing a hymn to the thrice-holy God. Let everything that has breath celebrate the Creator of All. (*Matins, Nov 30*)

O Sion, be happy! Rejoice, O Jerusalem, the city of Christ our God! Welcome the Creator who rests in a manger in the cave. Open your gates, O Jerusalem, and I will enter so that I may see Him who holds all creation in His hand, even though He lies in a manger wrapped in swaddling clothes. The angels ever praise this life-giving Lord, who is the only Savior of mankind. (*Vespers, Dec 6*)

Our Lady of Perpetual Help Melkite Catholic Church

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Divine Liturgy: Sunday 10:00 AM



**St. John Chrysostom
Feast Day—November 13**

**EIGHTH SUNDAY OF THE CROSS
TWENTY - SECOND SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST
NOVEMBER 10, 2019**

Antiphon (2nd)

1: Be gracious to us, O God, and bless us; let your face shine upon us, and have mercy on us.

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

2: That your name may be known upon the earth, among all the nations your salvation.

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

3: Let all the peoples praise You, O God, let all the peoples praise You.

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 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.

When and How Do We Fast?

Each Patriarchate and other local Byzantine Church has a slightly different way of keeping this Fast. According to one tradition a person should fast from meat and dairy for the forty days, but only need fast from fish after December 17. Another tradition holds that fish may be eaten throughout the Fast, but only on Saturdays and Sundays.

In Greece and the Middle East it is customary to limit the fast to Tuesdays and Thursdays until December 12 (Greece) or December 19. In the Melkite Church the fast has been shortened to begin on December 10 but to continue uninterrupted after then.

The number of feast days at the beginning of the forty days may account for these practices. Besides the Great Feast of the Entrance of the Theotokos into the Temple (November 21 to 25), we observe feasts in honor of these popular saints: the Apostles Matthew (11/16) and Andrew (11/30), Sts Catherine of Alexandria (11/25), Barbara, and John of Damascus (12/4), Sabbas the Sanctified (12/5) Nicholas the Wonder-worker (12/6), the Maternity of St Anne (12/9), and St Spyridon the Wonderworker (12/12). In addition, of course, we in the U.S. also have the national holiday of Thanksgiving during this time. That doesn't leave much time for fasting!

There are no penitential services appointed for this Fast like those we know during the Great Fast. Some Greeks, who do not generally do so otherwise, serve the Divine Liturgy daily during these forty days. This practice echoes the idea that the Nativity Fast is a joyous fast, celebrating the immanent coming of Christ. Other Churches may serve the Akathist or the Paraclisis to the Theotokos during these days.

Character of the Nativity Fast

Many contemporary Eastern writers have encouraged the observance of the Nativity Fast in contrast to the popular secular Western "pre-celebration" of Christmas, which focuses on decorating, spending, and partying. They emphasize preparation for the feast in quietness and a simplified way of life. Instead of a harried pursuit of gifts and cards for people who will likely "re-gift" them for the next Christmas party, the Fast enables believers to focus on the mystery of the Incarnation, the "reason for the season."

Many see this Fast as essential for us at this time of the year, to shift our focus from ourselves to others, spending less time worrying about our appearance, our cuisine and our home decor in order to use our time in increased prayer and caring for the poor.

The Greek Orthodox Patriarch of Antioch, John X, emphasized the Nativity as the "feast of almsgiving" in which we celebrate and perpetuate Christ's love for mankind. "The Nativity of Christ is primarily the feast of divine dispensation – the feast of charity and of almsgiving... Through acts of mercy, extended to one another and to everyone, no matter what race we belong to, we implore the tender mercies of the Divine Child, whose springs of mercies and bounties we will never be able to surpass. As the pious Augustine says, "the lamp of our love toward our neighbors causes the divine compassion to abide in this creation."

DIVINE LITURGY INTENTIONS

Today +Joseph Mirante (40 day). Requested by his family. Coffee Hour sponsored by the Mirante Family

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- ◆ Last Week's Attendance/Donations: **39/\$615**
- ◆ **Help Wanted** - As you all know, our weekly Bingo is a major source of income for the parish. We could use some additional workers! Please consider volunteering some of your time on Tuesday evenings. If you can volunteer, please see Joe Najemy.
- ◆ Have you ever wondered why we do what we do in the Divine Liturgy? Do you want to learn the music better? Our series on the Divine Liturgy concludes this Wednesday (**11/13**) from 7PM to 8PM. Please join us!
- ◆ **Help Wanted II** - We really need help setting up the food for the coffee hour. If you can come to Liturgy early and help out, it would be much appreciated!
- ◆ St. Basil Melkite Church in Lincoln, RI is having its annual Christmas Bazaar on **November 9-10**. The Bazaar runs from 10AM-6PM on November 9 and 10AM-4PM on November 10.
- ◆ The Icon and Book Store will be open on Saturdays from 9AM till Noon beginning **November 9**. We plan to have a presentation on the icon of the Nativity by Fr. Mark Melone, iconographer and pastor of St. Joseph Melkite Church in Lawrence, on a Saturday in December. We will also have other presentations from time to time. Fr. Bryan will be available to hear confessions as well. Come and spend a little time with us and purchase a book and/or an icon or two!
- ◆ We will have Divine Liturgy for the Feast of the Entrance of the Theotokos into the Temple (Nov 21) on Wednesday **November 20 at 7PM..**
- ◆ The traditional Nativity Fast, also known as St. Phillip's Fast, begins November 15. This fast is a bit more relaxed at the beginning and gets more strict during the final two weeks. In the Melkite usage, the Fast begins on December 10 through December 24, the Paramony of the Nativity, which is a strict fast day. Please read the catechetical reflection in today's bulletin to learn more about the Fast. Remember that the Church gives us the ideal to follow and we do our best to live up to it. If you fall in your fasting, just get up and start again!

Welcome to those who are visiting today. We are happy to have you worship with us. If this is your first time here, please come downstairs to the Hall, introduce yourself, have some refreshments, and get to know the Community. If you have any questions about the Melkite Church and its traditions, please don't hesitate to ask Fr. Bryan.

Weddings — One year notice. Contact Fr. Bryan for Sacramental Preparation.

Baptisms — One month notice. Contact Fr. Bryan for Sacramental Preparation.

Please let Fr. Bryan know about anyone who is sick, in the hospital, or homebound so that he can visit and bring them the Eucharist on a regular basis.

On November 13 we commemorate our Father among the Saints, John Chrysostom, Archbishop of Constantinople. He was born about the year 345AD in Antioch to Christian parents. His father, an army commander, died young and his mother was left to raise her son. Like many of the saints, St. John's mother inspired him with love of chastity and the virtues, primarily by the example of her life. After his baptism at eighteen, John withdrew to the family home to live a severely ascetic life. The Bishop of Antioch wanted to ordain him a priest. St. John was so terrified by this that he fled so that the bishop was unable to ordain him. He was eventually ordained a priest in 386AD and became responsible for spiritual direction of the people of Antioch. The eloquence of his preaching earned him the name *Chrysostom* which means "of the golden mouth."

St. John became the Archbishop of Constantinople in 398AD and his spiritual gifts quickly became apparent to the people of the imperial capital. He continued to live an ascetical life and preached against sumptuous living at the expense of neglecting the poor. His criticism of the rich, especially the Empress Eudoxia, led to his deposition and exile from Constantinople. An earthquake rocked the city shortly thereafter. Thinking it divine retribution for St. John's exile, the Emperor had him restored to his episcopal seat.

Several months later, the conflict between St. John and the aristocracy arose again. Chrysostom was once more exiled. This time, he was not to return. After enduring an extremely harsh exile, he died in peace on September 14, 407. His relics were returned to the capital in 435 to the great joy of the people.

St. John Chrysostom left a large body of writings: Scriptural commentaries, homilies, catechetical instructions, and numerous other writings. St. John Chrysostom along with his friend St. Basil the Great and St. Gregory the Theologian, are known as the Three Holy Hierarchs in recognition of their immense contribution to the Church.

Eighth Sunday after the Holy Cross (22 Pentecost, 8 St Luke)

THE AMERICAN SHOPPING SEASON is at hand. Some people will spend it jostling for bargains; others will pass the time lamenting the commercialization of Christmas. The Eastern Churches, on the other hand, encourage their faithful to prepare for this feast by fasting. Each of these Churches has a pre-Nativity Fast, but each Church observes it to a different degree.

Like the feast of Christ's Nativity itself, this fast originated in the West. In AD 380 the Council of Saragossa in Spain mandated daily church attendance beginning on December 17. Pope St Leo the Great (400-461) described four Fasts, one in each season, "so that over the course of the year we might recognize that we are constantly in need of purification." He indicated that the "winter fast" was to begin when the "ingathering of the crops was complete." In France it was specified in the next century that this Fast begin on November 11, the feast of St Martin; the Fast was called "St Martin's Lent."

The Eastern Churches began observing this Fast between the sixth and eighth centuries. Originally it lasted one week, as in the Armenian Church today. In the eleventh century Pope Christodoulos of Alexandria lengthened it to forty days for the Coptic Church. The Byzantine Church followed suit in the next century. The Syriac Churches observe a six week long "Season of the Announcement" recalling the time of preparation for the Nativity. Fasting is not observed for the whole length of this season. The East Syrian Churches (Chaldeans, Indians, etc.) keep it for three to four weeks in December.

Why Do We Fast?

St Simeon of Thessalonika, writing in the fifteenth century, explained the purpose of this Fast in terms of its length. "The Nativity Forty-day Fast represents the fast undertaken by Moses, who—having fasted for forty days and forty nights—received the Commandments of God, written on stone tablets. And we, fasting for forty days, will reflect upon and receive from the Virgin the living Word—not written upon stone, but born, incarnate—and we will commune of His Divine Body." As Moses received the Law after his forty-day fast, we will receive the living Word incarnate at the end of this Fast.

One thread running through this Fast is the *remembrance of the time before the Incarnation*. Mankind was in one sense disconnected from God, having lost the intimacy with Him which we were meant to have because we were created in His image. Fasting is our way to express our sorrow at man's loss of fellowship with God.

The process of recovering this intimacy with God climaxed with the Incarnation, but was prepared for centuries by the Old Testament prophets. During the Nativity Fast we commemorate the prophets Nahum (12/1), Habakkuk (12/2), Zephaniah (12/3), Daniel and the Three Young Men in the Furnace (12/17). On the second Sunday before the feast we remember all those in sacred history who came before Christ and prepared the way for Him – His ancestors and ours.

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.

Verses: Save me, O Lord, for there is no longer any holy man, for truthfulness has vanished from 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 and preserve us always from this generation.

People: And preserve us always from this generation.

Epistle: Gal. 6:11-18

Alleluia Verses

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

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

Gospel: Luke 10: 25-37, 8th Sunday of the Holy Cross – The Good Samaritan

Kiss of Peace (Pg. 23)

Priest: Christ is among us!

People: He is and always will be!

Then offer the kiss of peace to the person on your right and left using the greeting above.

Hirmos - "It is truly meet..." (Pg. 26)

Kinonikon: "Praise the Lord..." (Pg. 32)

After Communion: We have seen the True Light..." (Pg. 34)

