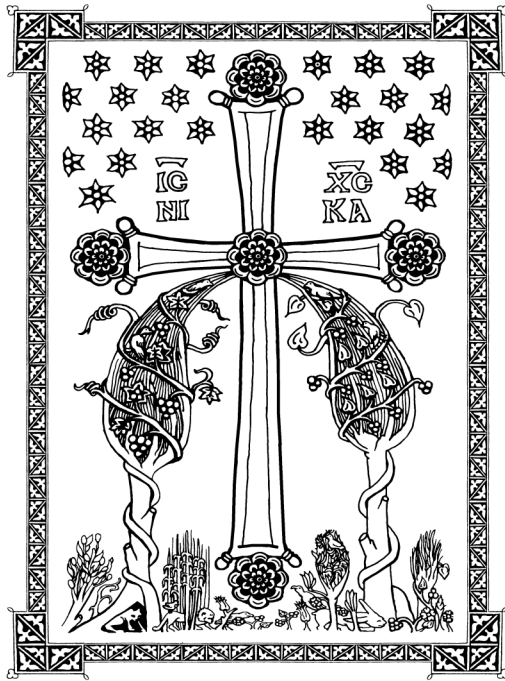


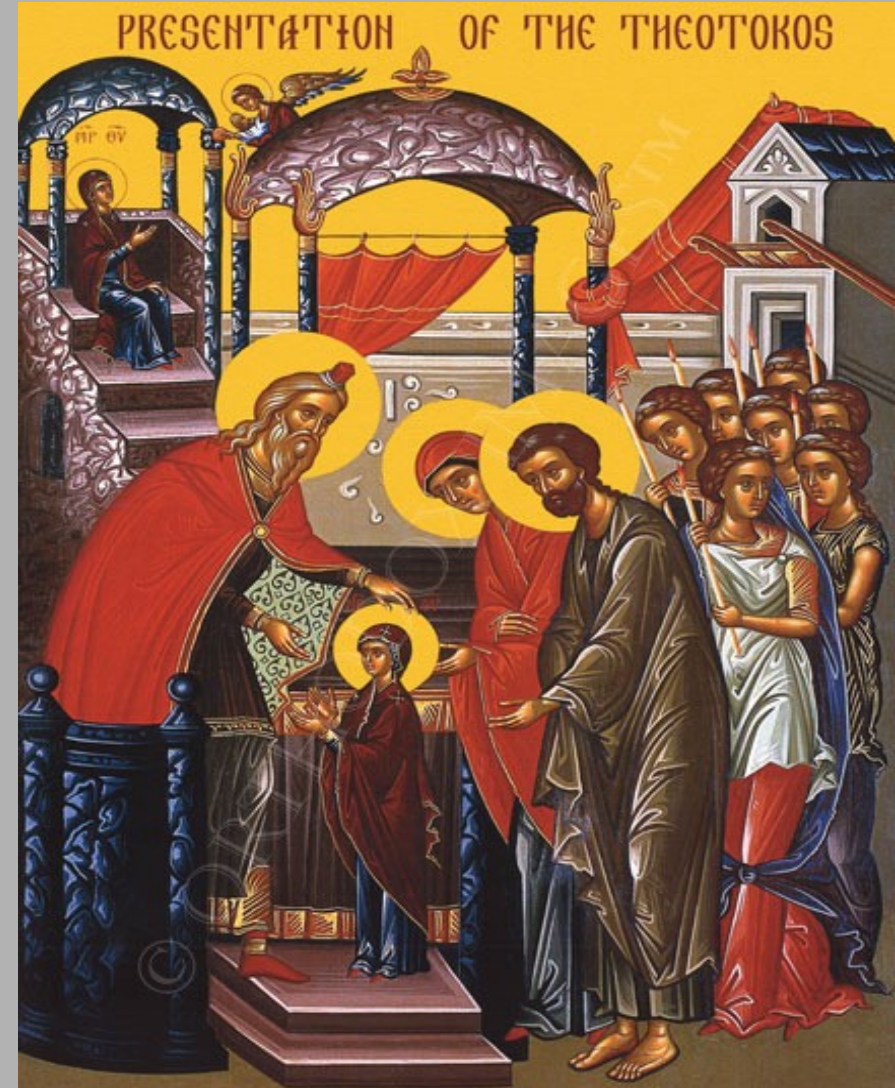
SAYINGS FROM THE FATHERS

“ARE YOU FASTING? SHOW ME WITH YOUR WORKS. WHICH WORKS? IF YOU SEE SOMEONE WHO IS POOR, SHOW HIM MERCY. IF YOU SEE AN ENEMY, RECONCILE WITH HIM. IF YOU SEE A FRIEND WHO IS BECOMING SUCCESSFUL, DO NOT BE JEALOUS OF HIM! LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR”.

- ST. JOHN CHRYSOSTOM



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
November 17, 2019



Presentation of the Theotokos in the Temple
November 21

Ninth Sunday of the Cross
Twenty - Third Sunday after Pentecost
Parable of the Rich Fool
November 17, 2019

Antiphon (3rd)

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.

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

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.

Kondakion of the Entrance of the Theotokos into the Temple (Tone 4)

The most pure Temple of our holy Savior, and the most precious and bright bridal chamber, the Virgin, sacred treasury of glory of God, openly appears today into the temple of the Lord, bringing with her the grace of the most Holy Spirit. Wherefore the angels of God are singing: “This is the heavenly tabernacle!”

In the Epistle to the Hebrews we are given a reason why no one was allowed into the Holy of Holies: “*The Holy Spirit was showing by this that the way into the Most Holy Place had not yet been disclosed as long as the first tabernacle was still functioning*” (Heb 9:9). By placing Mary in the Holy of Holies, the *Protoevangelion* is saying that the way into the Holy Place – the presence of God – now *is* disclosed. It is Christ, who would be incarnate in the womb of this same Mary, the Theotokos. For this reason the story and its celebration have been embraced by the Tradition as affirmations of the Gospel.

On this feast in the Christian East, Mary’s coming into the temple is portrayed as an “Entrance” rather than as a “Presentation” as in the West. This term puts us in mind of things like the “Great Entrance” at our Divine Liturgy or the Entrance Procession in the Western rites. Her coming is not the blessing of an insignificant child given in a “side chapel,” as it were, but a festive “prelude” or “overture” inaugurating the main event, the New Testament itself.

Our celebration of this feast focuses on Mary as the temple of the incarnate God, the one for whom the Jerusalem temple was only a prefiguration. After their entry with Christ into Jerusalem, His disciples came up to Him to call His attention to the temple and the buildings in its compound. Jesus replied, “‘*Do you see all these things?’ he asked. ‘Truly I tell you, not one stone here will be left on another; every one will be thrown down*’” (Mt 24:2).

This feast celebrates the fulfillment of His prophecy. God’s people will no longer reach heaven via Jerusalem; rather the heavens have been opened to us and God’s temple, the Theotokos, is become for us the way to heaven through her childbearing.

“Hail, Full of Grace”

Perhaps the most popular hymn of this feast is the kontakion, *O katharotatos naos*, which summarizes in a few lines the theology we have been presenting. It reads: “The most pure Temple of the Savior, the most precious and bright bridal chamber – the Virgin, sacred treasury of the glory of God – enters today into the Temple of the Lord, bringing with her the grace of the Most Holy Spirit. Wherefore, the angels of God are singing: “This is the heavenly Tabernacle!”

In this hymn two teachings are affirmed. Mary is proclaimed by the angels as “the heavenly tabernacle.” The tabernacle, we know, was the portable holy place which the Hebrews brought with them in the desert until they reached the promised land. It was rendered into a more permanent form as the temple. She, not any building, is the holy place where God dwelled.

Secondly we are told that Mary entered the temple “bringing with her the grace of the Most Holy Spirit.” People went to the temple to encounter God, to receive His blessings. Mary, instead, brings God’s grace with her. She is proclaimed as “full of grace,” even as a child, by the angels themselves. This feast is thus for the Eastern Churches what the Immaculate Conception is to the West: a celebration of the holiness of Mary, sanctified from her earliest days by the Most Holy Spirit who dwelt in her.

As we have said, it was unthinkable that a child, or anyone for that matter, should enter the Holy of Holies. But it is Mary’s rightful place as the woman full of grace who would contain within the Platytera between earth and heaven, the foremost worshipper of the Lord whom she bore.

DIVINE LITURGY INTENTIONS

Today - **Hannah-Marie Aulo and her parents Andy and Jocelyn**

+**Archimandrite Joseph Francavilla**

+**Raymond Yanni**. Requested by his wife, Mae

November 24 - +**James & Catherine Esper**, +**Robert & Lorraine Nelson**. Requested by James and Karen Esper

December 1 - +**Robert & Isabella Esper**. Requested by Linda Esper

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- ◆ Last Week's Attendance/Donations: **61/\$860**
- ◆ **Mabrouk** to Andy & Jocelyn Aulo on the birth of their daughter Hannah-Marie who was born last Sunday.
- ◆ **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.
- ◆ **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!
- ◆ The Icon and Book Store will be open on Saturdays from **9AM till Noon**. We will periodically have presentations on icons and other topics. 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 celebrate 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, began 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 is from December 10 through December 24, the Paramony of the Nativity, which is a strict fast day. In the Byzantine Tradition, we fast before most major feasts in preparation for our festal celebration. Our liturgical life is a series of fasts and feasts. If you have not previously kept the Nativity Fast, consider doing so this year. If you have questions about how to begin, please see Fr. Bryan.
- ◆ Next Saturday, **November 23**, we will have another Clean-Up Day. This session will focus on the inside of the church and hall. We need to organize and paint the closets in the hall, as well as several other projects. We will be here from **9AM till Noon**. Lunch will be served. Please join us!

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 14, we commemorate the Holy Apostle Philip. Like his friends Peter and Andrew, Philip was from Bethsaida. Jesus called him the day after he called Andrew and Peter. Philip followed Jesus faithfully throughout the three years of his public ministry. During Jesus' final discourse with his Apostles, found in the Gospel of John, Philip asks Jesus, "Lord, show us the Father, and it is sufficient for us." (Jn 14:8) Jesus, answers, "Have I been with you so long, and yet you have not known Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father." (Jn 14:9)

After Jesus' Ascension and the descent of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, Philip was chosen to preach the Gospel in Asia Minor. He was accompanied by his sister Mariamne and the Apostle Bartholomew. He spread the Gospel in this region in spite of suffering blows, scourging, imprisonment, and stoning. According to tradition, Philip was martyred at Hierapolis in Phrygia after healing the wife of the Proconsul of Asia and converting her to the Faith.

O Holy Apostle Philip, intercede for us!

Rt. Rev. Joseph Francavilla reposed in the Lord on November 13. He suffered from pancreatic cancer for the last few years. Fr. Joe served the Eparchy faithfully for over fifty years, almost all of them as Pastor of Holy Transfiguration Melkite Church in McLean, Virginia. He went to perform the funeral for his predecessor and Archbishop Joseph Tawil asked him to stay. With God's help he built Holy Transfiguration into a vibrant community. Fr. Joe was a good friend of our former Pastor and son of the parish, Rt. Rev. Charles Aboody. In fact, Fr. Joe was Fr. Charles' primary caregiver for several years before his passing. Fr. Joe had a sharp wit and was a great storyteller. He also mentored many young priests and deacons. "Well done, good and faithful servant."

Funeral arrangements are in preparation.

May his memory be eternal!

November 21 Entrance of the Theotokos into the Temple The Prelude to the Benevolence of God

IT IS PROBABLY SAFE TO SAY that most people would prefer to read a story than an academic treatise. Both forms might be conveying the same point, but a narrative is likely to be more compelling – and more memorable – than a dissertation.

The Entrance of the Theotokos into the Temple, the Great Feast we celebrate today, rests on such a narrative. The story is found in *The Protoevangelion of James*, a second-century telling of the birth and infancy of the Theotokos. We know that in the first and second centuries AD a number of books were written about Christ and His Mother. Some were accepted by all the local Churches as presenting a true portrait of the Messiah. Others were rejected because the Christ they portrayed was not the one who had been preached by the Apostles. In some He was a Gnostic philosopher, in other a magician. We call these “apocryphal gospels” and do not see them as the voice of the Holy Spirit to us.

Still other books, *The Protoevangelion of James* among them, were revered by the Christians of their day but not considered canonical Scriptures because their content was not at the heart of the apostolic proclamation or the early Creeds. Their subject matter treated things like Jesus’ physical appearance or the early periods of Christ’s life not covered in the Gospels. They may be true but not central to our faith.

The Source of This Feast

The prayers and icon of this Feast focus on two elements of the *Protoevangelion* story. In the first, Mary at the age of three is presented to God in the temple at Jerusalem accompanied, as the text reads, “by the daughters of the Hebrews that are undefiled.” There “the priest received her, kissed her and blessed her.”

After describing the scene, the *Protoevangelion* continues: “And Mary was in the temple of the Lord like a dove that is being nurtured: and she received food from the hand of an angel” (8:1). The image of the Virgin receiving food from an angel, often represented in our icon of the Feast, points to the spiritual environment in which Mary was raised and which would prepare the holy Virgin for her future role as Theotokos.

The second vignette is shown in the upper right hand corner of this icon. There Mary sits in the innermost sanctuary of the temple, the Holy of Holies, ministered to by an angel. According to Jewish Law, no one entered the Holy of Holies: “*only the high priest entered the inner room, and that only once a year, and never without blood, which he offered for himself and for the sins the people had committed in ignorance*” (Heb 9:8). It is unthinkable that a child would be not only allowed there but actually live there as the *Protoevangelion* avows.

Prokimenon

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

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

Verse: 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: Eph. 2: 4-10

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: Luke 12:16-22 , 9th Sunday of the Holy Cross – The Rich Fool

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)

