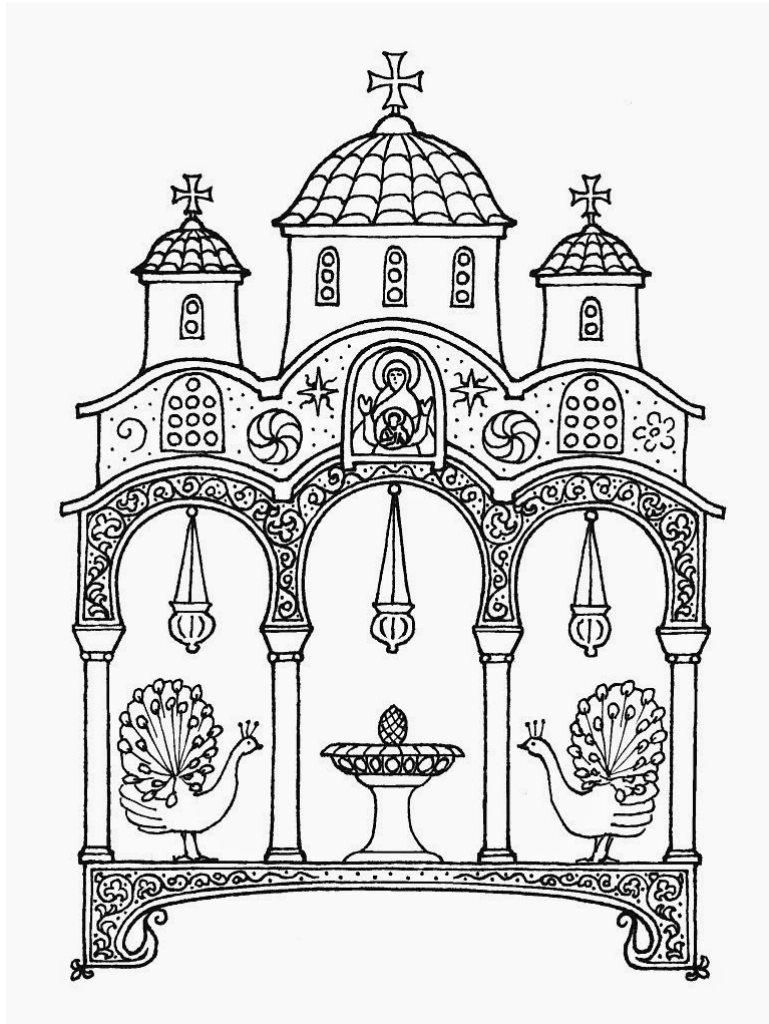


Leaving Attachments Behind

“Abraham set forth without wondering curiously ‘What does this land look like, that Thou wilt show me? What is awaiting me there?’ He simply set out and departed as the Lord had spoken unto him (Genesis 12:4). Do likewise. Abraham took all his possessions with him, and in that respect you ought to do as he did. Take everything you have, your whole being with you on your wandering; leave nothing behind that could bind your affection to the land where many gods are worshipped, the land you have left.”

Tito Colliander, *Way of the Ascetics* 18



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



St. Andrew, the First Called

November 30

THIRTEENTH SUNDAY OF THE CROSS

TWENTY - FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

NOVEMBER 24, 2019

Antiphon (Feast)

1- Great is the Lord and wholly to be praised in the city of our God, in His holy mountain

Through the prayers of the Mother of God, O Savior, save us!

2- Glorious things have been said of you, O City of God!

Through the prayers of the Mother of God, O Savior, save us!

3- God is within her castle; renowned is He as a stronghold.

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.

Troparion of the Presentation (Tone 4)

Today is the prelude of the benevolence of God, and the announcement of the salvation of men: in the Temple of God the Virgin is seen openly, foretelling to all the coming of Christ. Wherefore let us cry out to her in a loud voice: "Hail, Fulfillment of the Creator's Plan!"

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!"

But the Gospel is not addressed simply to monks and nuns; it is meant for all believers. How does a Christian in the world "sell all" and follow Christ? Is there a way for a believer to live *in* the world but not be *of* the world, as Christ enjoins? It is not wearing some distinctive dress that says "I am different." It is rather living by a different set of principles, given by Christ.

The popular book, *Way of the Ascetics* by Tito Colliander, affirms that our "wealth" is nothing less than our self-centeredness. "Take a look at yourself and see how bound you are by your desire to humor yourself and only yourself. Your freedom is curbed by the restraining bonds of self-love, and thus you wander, a captive corpse, from morning till eve. 'Now I will drink,' 'now I will get up,' 'now I will read the paper.' Thus you are led from moment to moment in your halter of preoccupation with self, and kindled instantly to displeasure, impatience or anger if an obstacle intervenes" (p. 5).

Colliander stresses that asceticism is the only path to victory over our self-centeredness. He gives some practical suggestions for living an ascetic life in the world. Like St Paul, Colliander begins with meekness and humility. He contrasts true humility with the desire to be perceived as humble: "We notice the person who is forever bowing and fussily servile, and perhaps say, 'How humble he is!' But the truly humble person escapes notice: the world does not know him (1 John 3:1); for the world he is mostly a 'zero'" (p. 26).

Ascetics strive to lessen their attachment to material things through fasting and almsgiving and to lessen their psychological self-reliance through humble obedience. They seek to fill the void created by these "interior deaths" through prayer.

Colliander teaches that following the Church's tradition for fasting is the most basic school for obedience. We fast when the Church says to, we do not fast when the Church says not to. We fast not to be "righteous," but to be obedient.

Ordinary life provides countless other occasions for us to develop a humble spirit through obedience. Colliander notes, "Your wife wants you to take your raincoat with you: do as she wishes, to practice obedience. Your fellow-worker asks you to walk with her a little way: go with her to practice obedience. A novice in a cloister could not find more opportunity for obedience than you in your own home. And likewise at your job and in your dealings with your neighbour" (p.44).

To "sell all one has," then, ultimately means to give up one's own will to follow Christ. Along with a certain simplicity of life and chastity appropriate to one's marital state, we attain what St Tikhon of Zadonsk called "interior monasticism." We put aside the values and pursuits of the world to follow Christ along the way of perfection in whatever state of life we find ourselves.

Gain Strength through Continual Prayer

When we begin to see that everything around us is nothing other than a gift from God, we start to develop an attitude of joyful gratitude. We come to value material things less for themselves than as the work of God in our lives. To the extent that we practice a form of unceasing prayer such as the Jesus Prayer, we turn our mind more regularly to God. At first we concentrate on Him during the set times which we set apart for the prayer, Little by little the prayers becomes second nature to us we find ourselves focusing on Him in the midst of our other activities as well.

DIVINE LITURGY INTENTIONS

Today - James & Catherine Esper, Robert & Lorraine Nelson. Requested by James & Karen Esper.

+Archimandrite Joseph Francavilla

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

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- ◆ Last Week's Attendance/Donations: **36/\$1,051**
- ◆ **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. 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!
- ◆ 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.
- ◆ Thanks to all who participated in yesterday's Clean-Up Day. We were able to chip away at some of the small but important projects to beautify and organize things around the parish.
- ◆ Our annual St. Nicholas celebration will be December 15 following the Divine Liturgy. It is fun time for children of all ages! Please plan to attend.

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.

Liturgical Schedule for the Holiday Season

Friday December 6 @ 7:00PM - Divine Liturgy for Feast of St. Nicholas

Sunday December 8 @ 10:00AM- Divine Liturgy for Maternity of St. Anne

Sunday December 15 @ 10:00AM- Divine Liturgy followed by St. Nicholas Celebration

Friday December 20 @ 7:00PM - Anointing Service

Christmas Liturgies:

Tuesday December 24 @ 5:00PM - Vesper-Liturgy of St. Basil

Wednesday December 25 @ 10:00AM - Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom

Sunday December 29 @ 10:00AM - Sunday after the Nativity

FLOWER DONATIONS IN MEMORY OF:

Salim Abraham & Arthur Abraham. Donated by Ronald Abraham

Annie Abraham & Robert Abraham. Donated by Eileen Abraham

Nicholas & Theodora Barouk & Matteo & Lucia Solitro. Donated by Mr. & Mrs. Antonio Solitro

Robert & Alice Najemy. Donated by Mr. & Mrs. Joseph Najemy

Thomas & Nikosey Families. Donated by Katherine Thomas

William Rizk. Donated by Mary Rizk

Commending One's Whole Life to Christ God

WHAT MUST I DO TO INHERIT ETERNAL LIFE? This question is posed by a young Jewish leader whom Jesus meets on His way to Jerusalem. At first glance it seems a reasonable inquiry, one that many people would still ask today. "Tell me what prayer to say, what shrine to visit, what project I can take on which will guarantee that I'll get to heaven."

Church Fathers, however, saw this as a trick question, seeking to trap Jesus into setting some new requirement not in the Law. The Lord does not give him another thing to do, adding to the list of precepts which devotees of the Torah felt set forth God's will for them. Rather Jesus says that to be perfect you must "*sell all you have*" and commit yourself completely to Him. Perfection does not come from performing this or that isolated action, however good it may be. Perfection comes from entrusting one's whole life to Christ.

Asceticism: Death to the World

In the Pastoral Epistles we see some consequences of this life in Christ as it was perceived in the apostolic Church. The "*elect of God*" (Col 3:12) have died to the world, been buried in Baptism and are now alive in Christ. Their way of life is to be Christ's, embodying the compassion and forgiveness of Christ Himself. They are to bear with one another (after all, others are putting up with them). They are to build up one another's faith "*with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs*" (Col 3:16), thankful for the grace filling their hearts. This is certainly in stark contrast to the way of the world, where self-love, resentments, grudges, and slanderously tearing others down is the norm for many.

St. Paul's image of being crucified to the world would find repeated expression in the writings of Christian ascetics in both East and West. Those who seek to love God are continually urged to "put to death" anything which would deflect that love to something else. Anything to which we may be attached and in which we might take pride – our possessions, accomplishments, even our memories, our reputations and convictions – can deflect our focus from the One we seek to love. By gradually putting these things aside, the ascetic strives to sharpen his or her ability to concentrate on God. As we become less and less drawn to the things of this world we become more and more single-minded in our attachment to God. We die to the world and, in the words of the popular Greek monastic adage, "If you die before you die, then you won't die when you die."

Asceticism for All Believers

Single-minded attachment to God is a virtue most associate with monasticism rather than with life in the world. In fact, as the Church grew, ascetic life came to be associated increasingly with life in some kind of recognized style different from ordinary living. Some ascetics, like the "sons and daughters of the covenant" in the Syriac Church, lived in the world but somewhat apart from others, devoting themselves to prayer and good works.

By the third century ascetics like St Antony and the Desert Fathers lived as hermits in the wilderness, completely apart from others. Monasticism brought like-minded people together to live in a community, where they could commend themselves and one another and their whole life to Christ God while being apart from the world at large.

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.

Verse: 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: Eph. 2: 14-22

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: Luke 18:18-27, 13th Sunday of the Holy Cross – The Rich Young Man

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)

