

The Parish Myrrhbearers

The holy Myrrhbearers are the patrons of many sisterhoods in Eastern Orthodox and Greek Catholic Churches. As the women in the Scriptures ministered to the material needs of Christ and His disciples, parish myrrhbearers serve their community by coordinating Sunday morning coffee hours and other parish meals. Some Myrrhbearers organize mercy meals for the departed or receptions for churchings and baptisms.

Elsewhere the parish Myrrhbearers may maintain the parish prayer list or ministry of intercession' remembering the needs for which parishioners have asked their prayers.

In some Churches local Myrrhbearers undertake charitable programs at home and abroad. Orphan adoption programs and support for seminarians are supported by Myrrhbearers in several dioceses.



SUNDAY OF THE MYRRHBEARING WOMEN



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Divine Liturgy: Sunday 10:00 AM
April 26, 2020

After Blessed is the Kingdom... Christ is Risen... 3X

Antiphon (Feast)

1: May God be propitious to us and bless us; may He make His face to 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: May Your name be known upon the earth; among all the nations Your salvation.

Khallisna Ya-Bnallah, Ya Man qama min baynil-amwaat, nahnu muranneemeena Laka. Haleloueya.

3: May the peoples praise You, O God; may 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: In the assemblies bless the Lord our God, from the wellsprings of Israel.

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

Resurrectional Troparion (Tone 2)

When You descended to death, O Immortal Life, You put Hades to death by the splendor of Your Divinity. And when You raised the dead from below the earth, all the heavenly Powers cried out to You: “O Giver of Life, Christ our God, glory to You!”

Troparion of Joseph (Tone 2)

The noble Joseph took down from the tree Your spotless body, and wrapped it in pure linen with spices and laid it for burial in a new tomb. But on the third day, You arose, O Lord, and bestowed great mercy upon the world.

Troparion of the Myrrh-Bearing Women (Tone 2)

The Angel stood by the tomb and cried out to the myrrh-bearing women, “Myrrh is proper for the dead; but Christ has shown Himself free from corruption. Cry out then, ‘The Lord is risen and has bestowed great mercy upon the world!’”

Kondakion (Tone 2)

Though You went down in the tomb, O Immortal One, You overthrew the power of Hades and rose victorious, O Christ God. You greeted the ointment bearing women saying, “Rejoice!” You gave peace to Your Apostles, and to those who had fallen, resurrection!

The Jews did not embalm the dead like the Egyptians. Rather they anointed a corpse and surrounded it with large quantities of spices to counteract the odor of decay. Jn 19:39 says that Nicodemus brought one hundred pounds of myrrh and aloes for that purpose. When the women returned to the tomb at first light on Sunday morning, according to Mark and Luke, they brought more spices. The odor should have increased to such a degree that further masking would be needed if people were to visit the tomb. But the Lord did not need their spices; not subject to corruption, He had conquered Death and destroyed its hold over us.

The Myrrhbearers knew that the service they offered was fruitless in a sense – Jesus was dead and they could not change that. They could simply perform a last act of love and remain by the tomb in witness to their love for Him. Their faithfulness to serve Christ even in death was rewarded; they were blessed to see the empty tomb and to bear witness to the Apostles that Christ was risen.

The Burial of Christ

The role of Joseph, Nicodemus and the Myrrhbearers is particularly remembered in our worship at the Holy Friday service of the Burial of Christ. The hymns we sing before the image of the dead Christ make frequent mention of them:

Nicodemus and Joseph
are now joined by heaven’s hosts.
Within a narrow tomb
they place the precious body
of the One whom nothing
at all can contain.

The most noble Joseph,
With Nicodemus buried You with myrrh in a new and strange way,
O Christ; and they cried aloud:
“Be afraid, O earth, and tremble with fear!”

Ointment bearing women
drew near to You, O Lord,
to offer myrrh in their love.

Ointment bearing women
came to anoint with myrrh
Christ, the true Myrrh of our God.

Ointment bearing women
came to Your tomb, O Lord,
to anoint You with their myrrh

It is the custom in many places that members of the church council represent Joseph and Nicodemus by carrying the image of the dead Christ before its burial in anticipation of the Resurrection. Similarly, young women depict the myrrhbearers by walking in the procession and sprinkling scented water as they go.

Divine Liturgy Intentions

Today +Aileen Abraham. Requested by Michael & Virginia Mischitelli and Antonio & Karen Solitro

+Rev. Victor Warkulwiz, +Rev. Richard Hokanson. Requested by Thomas Syseskey

If you want me to remember someone at the Divine Liturgy, please send me an email at olphmelkite@gmail.com or call the rectory.

MEMORY ETERNAL

Our brother Mitchell Bollus passed away on April 23. Our condolences to his son Matthew and the entire family.

Several other of our brothers and sisters have passed away in the last few weeks. Please remember them and their families in your prayers. They are: Nan Nejaimy, Naphie Samara, Aileen Abraham, and Wayne Kallio. It is hard for us when we can't comfort and pray with the families in person. When the pandemic is over, I'd like to do a memorial service for all those who have passed away and whose funerals were done privately.

REMINDER

Thank-you to everyone who has continued to mail in their contributions to the parish. We still have expenses even though we can't gather together to worship. It costs approximately \$8,000 a month to operate the parish. We do not have income from Bingo to supplement your contributions. If you are not sending in your contributions and can do so, I would really appreciate it. I know that some of you may be suffering financial hardship as a result of the pandemic and I certainly understand that. I am continuing to look at a method for you to make payments online, if you prefer.

May God continue to bless us!

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

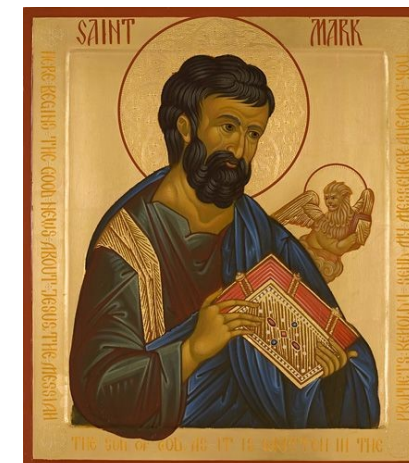
Baptisms — One month notice. Contact Fr. Bryan for Sacramental Preparation.

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 as soon as the coronavirus has passed.

Yesterday, April 25, was the feast of St. Mark the Evangelist. He was a companion of both St. Peter and St. Paul at different times in his life. St. Peter instructed him in the faith and baptized him. Mark accompanied Paul and Barnabas on their early missionary journeys. The Book of Acts tells us of Mark's parting ways with Paul and being later reconciled in Rome. It was also in Rome that Mark rejoined St. Peter. Roman converts asked St. Mark to write down the teachings of Christ as delivered by St. Peter. The Synaxarion tells us that this task was "confirmed by divine revelation and Peter's agreement." Again, according to the Synaxarion, Mark "set to work and wrote, in a short, simple, popular and lively way, a summary of the Saviour's works and words, according to the teaching of the Chief of the Apostles." St. Mark's Gospel is the shortest and his language the most direct. Many of the early Church Fathers believed that Mark's Gospel was the first to be written. Along with the Gospels of St. Matthew and St. Luke, they form what are called the *Synoptic Gospels*, as they share many of the same events.

St. Mark eventually went to Alexandria and established the Church there. He also evangelized other parts of North Africa. Returning to Alexandria after being told by the Lord in a vision that he would end his evangelical work in the glory of martyrdom, St. Mark was indeed martyred at Bucolia. His remains were buried by the Christians of Alexandria who later built a church over his grave. In the ninth century, they were transferred to Venice and were placed in the basilica of St. Mark.

Holy Evangelist Mark, intercede for us!



Myrrh Bearers at the Tomb

SERVICE IN THE CHURCH TODAY can mean many things. The clergy are said to *serve* the Divine Liturgy and other services. They are not improvising or directing or even celebrating; their role as servers suggests that their personality take a back seat to what they serve, much as good waiters are unobtrusive when they serve at table.

Church members serve in a variety of ways in the worship, teaching and fellowship activities of the community. In many places they are honored today as the Church remembers those who volunteered to serve at the Lord's burial: Joseph, Nicodemus and the Myrrhbearers. Today we also remember the Church's first ordained servants, the Deacons.

Both Myrrhbearers and Deacons had one thing in common: they served Christ the Unwanted. The Myrrhbearers served the despised and rejected Jesus, condemned by the Jewish leaders and abandoned in death by even His closest followers, These volunteers stepped forward to provide a burial for Him, when the alternative was to leave His body for animals to scavenge. The Deacons were set apart by the Apostles to serve Christ unwanted in the weakest segment of society: those who had no family to care for them in their old age.

Joseph and the Myrrhbearers

In Mark 15:44-16:8, which is read at this Sunday's Liturgy, we see Joseph of Arimathea, a member of the Council, arrange for Jesus' burial. St John Chrysostom observes, "This was Joseph, who had been concealing his discipleship. Now, after the death of Christ, he became very bold. For neither was he an obscure person nor unnoticed. He was one of the Council, and highly distinguished and, as we see, courageous. For he exposed himself to death, taking upon himself the enmity of all by his affection for Jesus. He begged for the body and did not desist until he obtained it. Not only that, but by laying it in his own new tomb, he actively demonstrated his love and courage" (Homily 88 on Matthew).

In Jn 19:39 we are told that the seeker Nicodemus, a leading Pharisee, helped Joseph in this task. Their service is memorialized in the troparion sung on this day, itself drawn from the Gospel of St Mark: *The noble Joseph took down from the tree Your spotless body. He wrapped it in fine linen with aromatic spices and laid it for burial in a new tomb...*

Mark notes that Mary Magdalene and Mary, the mother of Joses (whom John identifies as the wife of Clopas – Cleophas in the King James Bible – and a relative of the Theotokos) saw where Jesus had been buried and returned with others on Sunday morning with more spices. Mk 15:40 tells of a Salome, one of those who had witnessed the death of the Lord, who accompanied them. These women were among those whom Luke says provided for Jesus' needs during His ministry from their possessions. Others among them, according to Luke, were "*Joanna, the wife of Chuza, Herod's steward, and Suzanna, and many others*" (8:3). Mt 27:56 mentions "*the mother of the sons of Zebedee*" (i.e. James and John).

Mary and Martha, the sisters of Lazarus, are included among them as well. As St John Chrysostom remarked, "They lamented over what had happened, beating their breasts. Meanwhile, the religious leaders were glorying in those very things for which the others were grieving, neither moved by pity nor checked by fear" (Homily 88.2 on Mt).

Trisagion

All of you who have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. Alleluia!

Prokimenon

Reader: My strength and my courage is the Lord, and He has been my Savior.

People: My strength and my courage is the Lord, and He has been my Savior.

Reader: The Lord has chastised me through His teaching, yet He has not delivered me to death.

People: My strength and my courage is the Lord, and He has been my Savior.

Reader: My strength and my courage is the Lord,

People: And He has been my Savior.

Epistle: Acts 6:1-7

Alleluia Verses

The Lord shall hear you on the day of distress; the name of the God of Jacob shall defend you.

Verse: O Lord, save your king and listen to us on whatever day we call upon You.

Gospel: Mark 15:43-47 & 16:1-8

Hirmos (Pascha)

The angel cried out to the One who is full of grace: "Hail, O immaculate Virgin!" Hail again, for Your Son is risen from the tomb on the third day. Shine, shine, O New Jerusalem, for the glory of the Lord has shone upon You. Rejoice and be glad, O Sion; and You, O Pure One, O Mother of God, exult in the resurrection of your Son

Kinonikon:

Receive the Body of Christ and drink from the Fountain of Immortality. Alleluia.

After Communion:

Christ is risen... (once)

After final blessing (3x)

Priest: Christ is risen!

People: He is truly risen!

Priest: Glory to His Holy Resurrection on the third day!

People: We adore His Holy Resurrection on the third day!