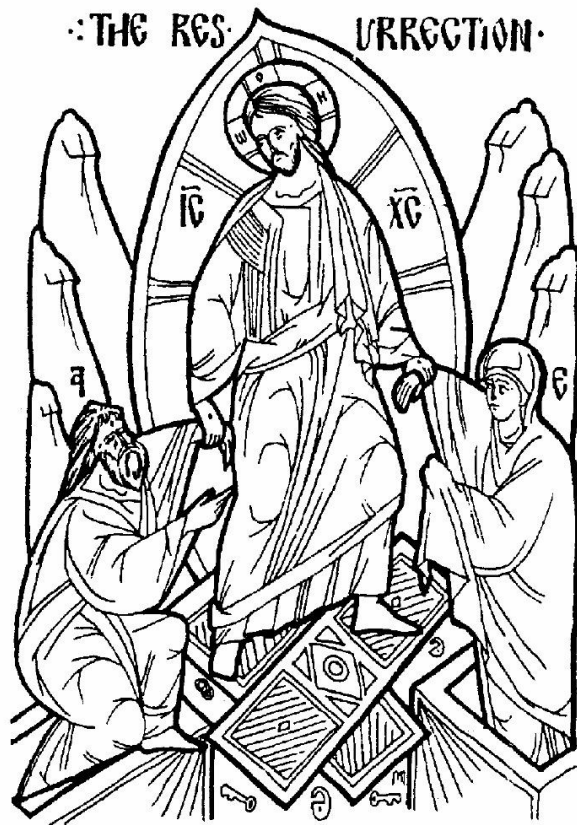


Prayers for the Sunday of the Man Born Blind

When You came upon the man born blind, Lord, Your disciples wondered who had sinned, that the man should bear this burden from birth. But You assured them, O Savior, and said, "Neither he or his parents sinned; but it is that the marvels of God be manifested in him. For I must be about the works of Him who sent Me, and no other can do it but Me." Saying this, You made clay with spittle upon the ground. Anointing the eyes of the blind man, You said, "Go and wash in the Pool of Siloam!" The blind man washed and was healed. The cried out, "I believe, O Lord!" and prostrated before You. With him, we also cry out, "Have pity on us, O Lord!" (Vespers)

O Christ, grant me a stream of ineffable wisdom and knowledge from on high, O Light of darkened hearts and Guide of those who stray, that I may proclaim the miracle of the man born blind, as it is taught in the divine book, the Gospel of peace. A man blind from birth recovers the use of the organs of sight, but also the eyes of the soul are opened and he cries out in faith, "To those who stumble in darkness, You are a radiant and resplendent Light!" (Orthros)



SUNDAY OF THE MAN BORN BLIND



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
May 17, 2020

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

Antiphon (1st)

1: Shout joyfully to God, all you on earth.

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

2- Sing praise to the glory of His name; proclaim His glorious praise.

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

3- Say to God how tremendous are Your deeds! For Your great strength Your enemies fawn upon 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 5)

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)

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!

Some scholars believe that this verse is the Evangelist's commentary on Christ's prayer, an aside in the text, since it refers to the Lord in the third person. There were no quotation marks, punctuation or even paragraphs in first-century Greek manuscripts, so it is possible that this is so.

This verse does make an excellent commentary, a kind of liturgical refrain, not only to this prayer but to our entire life in Christ. All of the Church's life – our liturgies, icons, practices – draws its power from the relationship which we have with God. When we are in a living communion with Him, all that we do as Christians shows forth that life. Our interior eyes gain the power to see what is present in the Scriptures, the Eucharist or the saints. They become means for us to deepen the life which comes from our relationship with God in Christ. If we are not living in that relationship, then these practices are simply outward forms which will increasingly bore us.

Prayer that His Disciples Be One – The prayer continues: "*I have manifested your name to the men whom you have given me out of the world ... and they have believed that You sent me*" (vv. 6, 8). The Apostles had been called forth by Christ to leave their families and their livelihoods to follow Him. They were about to see Him arrested, humiliated and killed. They in their turn would face similar ends. Yet He prays, not that they remain steadfast, but that they remain one. "*Holy Father, keep through Your name those whom You have given me, that they may be one as we are*" (v. 11). The unity of the Apostles in Christ would be more significant than the physical lives of any one of them, because from that communion would come the ongoing life of the entire Church.

Prayer for the Church and the World – A few verses later, we find a similar prayer for the whole Church and the world as well: "*I do not pray for those alone, but also for those who will believe through their word that they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me and I in You – that they also may be one in us, that the world may believe that You sent Me*" (vv. 20, 21).

This mutual interaction of Father, Son and Holy Spirit in the Trinity is extended to humanity in the Church. The bond we have with God is no longer simply that of creature to Creator; but is the filial relationship of the Son to the Father "*as You, Father, are in Me and I in You.*" The Church, then, is not simply a human association of Jesus' followers, but an organic union of those who are "*one in us.*"

Finally, the world's conversion to Christ is tied to the communion of the Church with God. This passage is often explained to mean that, when Christians are united to one another, the rest of the world will believe. It is perhaps more accurate to say that, when the Church is "*one in us*" – finding the source of its unity in the life of the Trinity rather than in authority, political power or other external factors – people will be drawn to it.

The Icon of Our Communion with God

The icon which most perfectly expresses this vision for the communion of the Church as being "*one in us*" is the adaptation by St Andrei Rublev of the traditional image, "The Hospitality of Abraham." The patriarch himself and other details from the Genesis story are deleted and all we see are the three guests whom he entertained, seated around a table. In Gen 18:2 these visitors are described as "*three men,*" but Rublev depicts them as angels. In fact, Gen 18:13 and verses following refer to Abraham's company as "*the LORD,*" causing the Fathers to see this visitation as an early indication of the Trinity. Their eternal relationship is expressed by the fluid motion of their gestures.

The fourth place at the table, included in these gestures, is set for us. Through baptism we have been brought into the eternal relationship of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. The single vessel on the table suggests the means of our ongoing communion with God: the Eucharist.

Divine Liturgy Intentions

Today +Richard Francis

May 24 +Aileen Abraham. Requested by Joe & Lorraine Lian

+Mitchell Bollus. Requested by Antoinette Arraj & Lisa Jagielski

May 31 +Naphie Samara. Requested by Joe and Lorraine Lian

+Richard Francis. Requested by Michael & Virginia Mischitelli and Antonio & Karen Solitro

I always place a particle on the discos for the living of the parish as well as those who have passed away. If would like me to remember someone during the Divine Liturgy, Please call the rectory or email me at olphmelkite@gmail.com. I also plan to do the full Memorial Service after the pandemic is over for our brothers and sisters who passed away during the pandemic. Hopefully, the family members will all be present and we can offer our condolences in person and share a meal of mercy.

Liturgical Calendar (Subject to change depending on social distancing restrictions)

Wed. May 20 (7pm) Vespers for the feast of the Ascension

Thur. May 21 (7pm) Divine Liturgy for the feast of the Ascension

Sun. May 31 (10am) Feast of Pentecost

MEMORY ETERNAL

Our brother Richard (Dick) Francis fell asleep in the Lord on May 11. Our condolences to Dorothy, Diane, Joanne, and the entire family.

“O Christ God, with the saints grant rest to the soul of your servant Richard, in a place where there is no pain, no, grief, no sighing, but everlasting life!”



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 once the social distancing guidelines are eased.

Thanks to all who have continued to send in their weekly contributions. It is very much appreciated. We have received several generous donations to assist us. As I stated previously, it costs approximately \$8,000 per month to operate the parish. If you are financially able during the pandemic and are not sending in your weekly contributions, please prayerfully consider doing so.

I am researching an online payment company called Tithe.ly. Several of our parishes use it. I will let you know when it is available.

God bless your generosity!



Dear Parish Family:

Christ is risen!

It's hard to believe that today is the last Sunday of Pascha. This Thursday is the feast of the Ascension.

As you know, Gov. Baker will release his plan for re-opening the State. As he has previously mentioned, this will be done in four phases. We do not yet know into which phase churches have been placed. As I know more, I will keep you updated. Bishop Nicholas has also sent a video message that I have posted on our Facebook page. We will continue to livestream divine services until such time we are told that it is once again safe to hold public services. Please be safe and comply with all city and state regulations. I miss you all and look forward to seeing you again in person. Continue to pray for all those infected with Covid-19, all those who are treating them, and all the essential workers who risk their health so that we can continue to get the things we need (food, medicine, etc.) May God continue to bless them and you! Let also remember all those who have lost their lives to the virus. Memory Eternal!

Who Is the Blind Man?

IN MONASTIC OR RELIGIOUS CIRCLES it is common for spiritual leaders to leave their followers a “spiritual testament,” an outline of the teachings and instructions which they want uppermost in their disciples’ minds. Christ’s prayer in John 17 is a kind of spiritual testament. In it the Lord expresses His holy will for Himself, for His apostles, for the Church, and for all mankind on the eve of His crucifixion.

The Time of His Glorification – The prayer begins with Christ praying for Himself: “*Father, the hour has come. Glorify Your Son, that Your Son may glorify You*” (v. 1) What the Scriptures call Christ’s “hour” refers to the time of His redeeming sacrifice. Christ prays that He would be glorified by the completeness of this self-emptying. He totally enters into our experience of suffering and death in order to be one with us in all things except sin. His glory would not be the earthly idea of glory – power and might – but the glory of absolute and unconditional love.

Jesus as the Eternal Word Made Flesh – The prayer continues: “*Glorify me in Your presence with the glory I had with You before the world began*” (v. 5). The heavenly glory, known to the angels, was to be manifested to us on earth through the cross.

This reference brings us back to the proclamation of who Jesus is, which is found in the very first verse of John’s Gospel: “*In the beginning was the Word...*” The Gospel proclaims Jesus as the pre-eternal Word of God who is glorified with the Father before all ages. Jesus is not simply a prophet or inspired teacher – He is the One whom the Gospel says “*...was in the beginning with God. All things were made through Him and without Him nothing was made that was made*” (Jn 1:2, 3)

This portrait of the eternal Word as one with the Father shows us a God who is in an eternal relationship and who is, therefore, love by His very nature (see 1 Jn 4:8). God’s relationship is, first of all, with the true and eternally appropriate object of His love: His divine Word, who is glorified with Him from all eternity. Based on the words of this prayer, the Church would go on to speak of Christ as “equal in glory with the Father.” Combining this with Christ’s teaching on the Holy Spirit, later believers would express this relationship as the doctrine of the Holy Trinity.

Our Recreation is in Christ – Between verses 1 and 5 we find a third concept recorded in the Gospel: “*... You have given Him authority over all flesh that He should give eternal life to as many as You have given Him*” (v. 2). The Word of God, through whom all things were made, is now incarnate in Jesus of Nazareth as the agent of a new creation. Mankind is given a new life, which is, in fact a second chance at the life intended for him from the beginning, as described in the book of Genesis.

This life is then described: “*And this is eternal life: that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent*” (v. 3). Eternal life – authentic life – is communion: that knowledge that flows from a relationship with God. It was a relationship of communion which Genesis describes as God “walking with Adam” in the Garden. That fellowship, once lost, is restored through Christ.

Trisagion

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

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.

Reader: 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

People: And preserve us always from this generation.

Epistle: Acts 16:16-34

Alleluia Verses

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

Verse: For You have said, “My kindness is established forever.” In heaven You have confirmed Your faithfulness.

Gospel: John 9:1-38

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!