

Hymns from the Divine Office

By Your Cross, You abolished the curse pronounced against those who hang on a tree, By Your burial, You put to death the might of Death; and by Your Resurrection, You enlightened mankind. Therefore, we cry out to You: "O Christ our God, the Benefactor, Glory to You!" (Vespers)

O Light of those in darkness, You are the Resurrection of all! You bring life to mankind, raising up the faithful with You. O Savior, You despoiled the Kingdom of Death! O Word, You shattered the gates of Hades! Mankind marvels at the sight of this wonder, and every creature rejoices in Your Resurrection. O Lover of Mankind, we all glorify and celebrate Your condescension; and the universe exalts You forever, O Savior! (Orthros)



THIRD SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

JUNE 21, 2020



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

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.

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

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 2, pg. 38)

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!”

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 intercessions, save our souls from death.

Kondakion (Tone 2)

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.

Solitude and Fasting Today

The first practice which our Church recommends to us in a fasting season is that we imitate Christ by social distancing (to use the modern term) – going “to the desert,” apart from our usual social and recreational activities. In earlier times, it was common that theaters and other recreational centers would close during a fasting season. A corresponding practice today might be to turn off one’s devices for the duration of a fast. That would at least expose us to the emptiness we feel without them.

It may mean, that the Christian, like Christ, go apart in a physical way to a special place, for only a few moments, for a day or more. We may go out of doors, to a church or to our personal icon corner. Serious prayer begins, as we say in the Liturgy when we “lay aside all earthly cares that we may welcome the King of all” into our hearts.

What would we do without the diversion our device offers us? The first activity to which we would be called is increased prayer. In our childhood, most of us were taught prayers to say. We learned to say the Lord’s Prayer, for example, before we even understood the meaning of words such as *temptation* or even *evil*. In time, we learned the meaning of those words, but our prayer life often did not deepen as our knowledge grew. It is as if we became deaf and mute in regards to God and our prayer to Him. We know the words of the prayers, but do we know how to pray them from our heart to God?

Apart from liturgical services, Eastern Christian prayer includes formal prayers for many occasions, the most common being Morning Prayers, Prayers at Meals, and Prayers before Retiring. If a Christian is usually too busy to observe these prayer times, the fasting season may give you the opportunity to practice them. Other formal prayers in the Eastern Christian’s repertoire may include canons and akathists, such as those to the Mother of God. Another common practice is to pray for the dead. Use the fasting season as an occasion for going to your local cemetery, or the place where your family members are buried, and remember them in prayer.

Besides formal prayers, our Church recommends the Jesus Prayer as a way to keep our minds “in the desert” wherever we are. Repeat this prayer – so easily memorized – throughout the day to keep your mind and heart in the presence of God. Using a prayer rope as a counter, you can commit yourself to a certain number of prayers every day.

Make time to spend with the Scriptures. We read in the Gospel that, when Christ was tempted to break His fast, He responded, “*It is written, ‘Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God’*” (Mt 4:4). Strive to read one New Testament book during each fasting season to deepen your acquaintance with the Word of God.

What about Almsgiving?

When St John the Forerunner noticed some Pharisees coming to him, he told them, “... *bear fruits worthy of repentance*” (Mt 3:8): or, as American folk preachers often say, don’t just talk the talk: walk the walk.” Without the fruits of caring for those in need, our prayers and acts of worship run the risk of being the “talk” without the “walk.” The alms we may give to those in need are a way of making our repentance lasting. When the fast is over, we will go back to the foods and diversions we have put aside during the season. But what we give as alms is gone and stays gone – God has accepted it through the hands of the person in need.



HAPPY FATHER'S DAY TO ALL OUR FATHERS!

DIVINE LITURGY INTENTIONS

Today Health and Salvation of Bertha Peters on the occasion of her 100th birthday.
All the fathers of the Parish, living and deceased.

Today's flowers were donated by Karen & Antonio Solitro in memory of Theodora & Nicholas Barouk and Lucia & Matteo Solitro.

June 28 +Nicholas & Theodora Barouk, deceased members of the Barouk family, deceased members of the Vasil family. Requested by Michael & Virginia Mischitelli and Antonio & Karen Solitro.

At each Divine Liturgy, I place a particle on the discos for the living of the parish and on for those who have passed away. I would like me to remember someone, living or deceased, at the Divine Liturgy, please call the rectory (508) 752-4174) or email me (olphmelkite@gmail.com).

Feast Day Liturgical Schedule

Wed. 6/24, 7PM - Divine Liturgy for the Nativity of John the Baptist

Mon. 6/29, 7PM - Divine Liturgy for the feast of SS. Peter & Paul

Mon. 7/20, 7PM - Divine Liturgy for the feast of the Great Prophet Elijah

Wed. 8/5, 7PM - Great Vespers for the feast of the Transfiguration

Thu. 8/6, 7PM - Divine Liturgy for the feast of the Transfiguration and Blessing of Grapes

Mon. 8/10, 7PM - Paraclisis

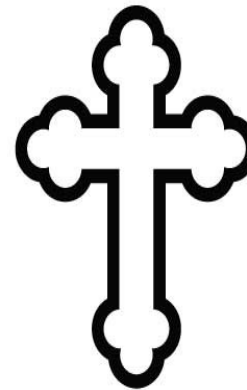
Fri. 8/14, 7PM - Great Vespers for the feast of the Dormition of the Theotokos

Sat. 8/15, 10AM - Divine Liturgy for the feast of the Dormition of the Theotokos

The traditional Apostles Fast began **June 8**. The modified Melkite version of the Fast began **June 18**. No matter which version you choose to follow, meat and meat products are not eaten during this period. The Fast will culminate in the celebration of the Divine Liturgy for the feast of Saints Peter and Paul on **June 29 at 7PM**. If you have any questions, please reach out to Fr. Bryan.

If you have family news you would like to share with the parish, please contact Fr. Bryan so that he can put it in the bulletin.

Also, if you need help with anything during this uncertain time, please contact Fr. Bryan so that he can assist or put you in contact with parishioners who have volunteered to help.



Please continue to pray for all those infected with Covid-19 as well as those who care for them. Let us also remember those who have lost their lives to the virus. Memory eternal!

Please remember in your prayers all the members of our parish who are sick or suffering in any way. Please contact Fr. Bryan with the names of those folks whose names you would like to include in the bulletin so that we can all pray for them.

Let us also pray for our country and for our public authorities, that that may be strengthened in every good deed.

Into the Wilderness

IN THE CHRISTIAN EAST, the fasting seasons are always periods in which the practices of prayer, fasting and almsgiving are observed in a heightened way. The particular rules for augmenting the services and for fasting vary from one Local Church to another (eg Greek, Middle Eastern, Slav-ic, etc.) but the principle behind observing them is the same: the “ordinary business” of those who have put on Christ is prayer, fasting and almsgiving.

After Christ was baptized, we read in the Gospels, He “*was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness*” (Mt 4:1), apart from others, where He would encounter both His Father and the devil. The Gospel story of His experience in the wilderness gives us some indications of the life which those, who have been baptized, should expect as normal. First of all, it involves **solitude**: separation from the ordinary world in order to refocus the mind away from everyday concerns to God, who is in our midst.

The second aspect of Christ’s experience described in Mt 4 is **food fasting**: “...*when He had fasted forty days and forty nights, afterward He was hungry*” (Mt 4:2). Clearly what is described is a total fast (not eating), in contrast to the fast which most in the Church practice: fasting from certain foods (abstinence).

The Gospels testify that, during Christ’s public ministry His disciples did not fast. When questioned about this by some disciples of John, the Lord responded, “*Can the friends of the bridegroom mourn as long as the bridegroom is with them? But the days will come when the bridegroom will be taken away from them, and then they will fast*” (Mt 9:15).

This prophecy was fulfilled when the first monastics made solitude and fasting the central aspects of their Christian asceticism. In his life of St Anthony the Great, St Athanasius says that the ascetic moved from his village to the local cemetery where he dwelt in one of the tombs. “He ate once a day, after sunset, sometimes once in two days, and often even in four. His food was bread and salt, his drink, water only” (*Life*, 7).

As monasticism spread, Anthony’s practices were lessened for the many believers who sought to live in solitude or in the monastic communities which grew up throughout the Church. The Church mitigated the strictness of their fasting even further when it proposed their lifestyle as the model for all Christians during fasting seasons. Thus we adopt the everyday practice of monastics (no meat or dairy) on Wednesdays, Friday and during fast periods only.

People who have visited monasteries in this country might be surprised that ascetics like St Anthony might still be found. Thus Fr Alexander Schmemmann, writing in his journal, described his visit to monastics in Egypt in 1978: “Today I had an extraordinary day. A visit in the desert to three monasteries with an uninterrupted tradition from Antony the Great, Makarios, etc. ... And the most amazing, of course, is how very much alive it all is: Real monks! In my whole life I have seen only imitations, only playing at monastic life, false, stylized; and mostly unrestrained, idle talk about monasticism and spirituality. And here are they, in a real desert. A real heroic feat. So many young monks. No advertisements, no brochures about spirituality. Nobody knows anything about them, and they do not mind it. I am simply stunned. I have a thousand questions, and I will have to start sorting it out...” (cited in Fanous, *A Silent Patriarch*, 2019, Yonkers, NY).

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.

Verse: 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, and He has been my Savior.

People: And He has been my Savior.

Epistle: Rom 5:1-10

Alleluia Verses

May the Lord answer you in the days of distress; may the name of the God of Jacob defend you.

Verse: O Lord, save Your people and bless Your inheritance

Gospel: Mt 6:22-33

Hirmos— It is truly meet...

Kinonikon: Praise the Lord from the heavens...

After Communion: We have seen the True Light...

