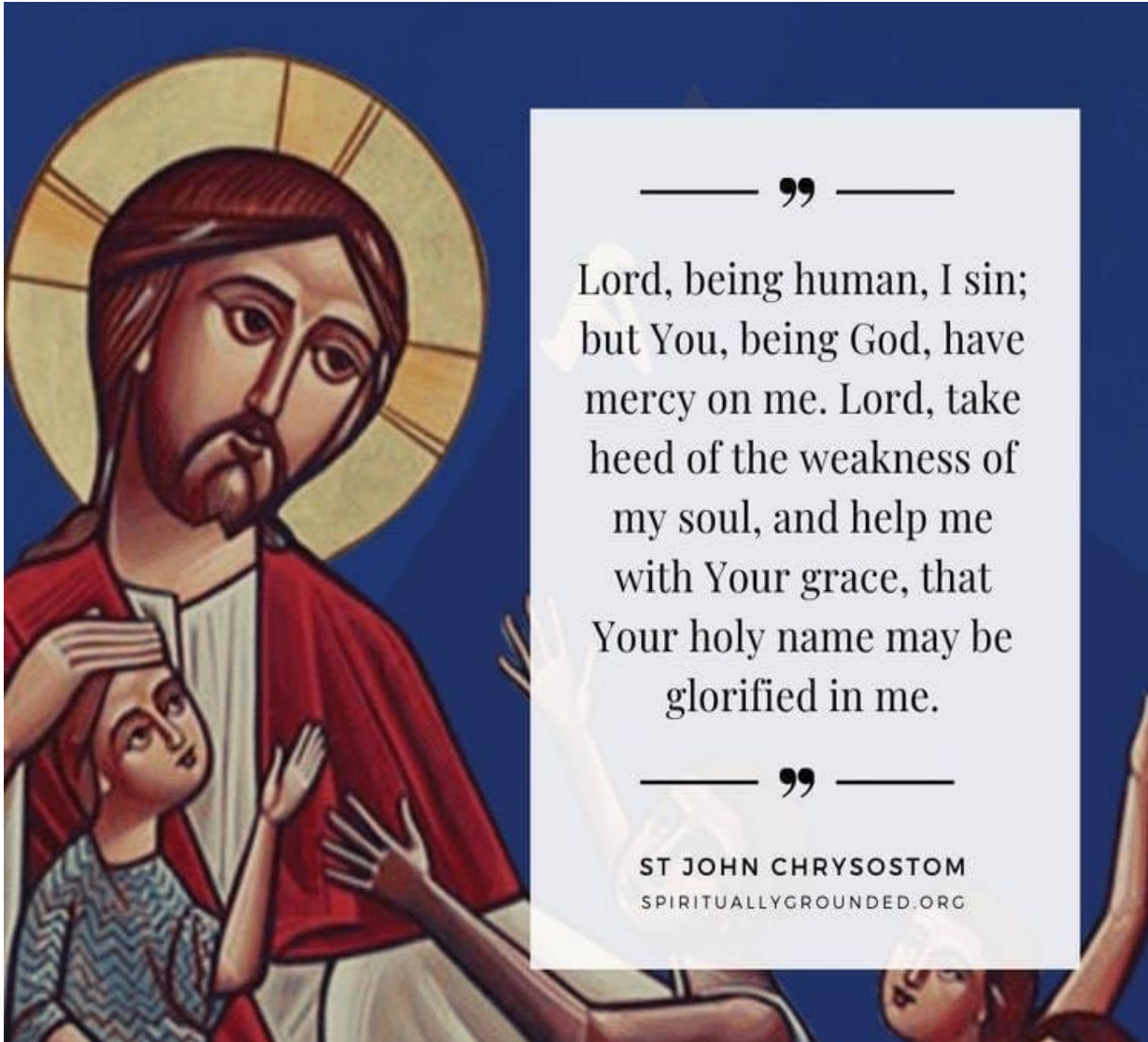


Sayings from the Church Fathers

While we are living improperly, we fear all kinds of things. When we recognize God, there occurs a fear of His judgements. But when we start to love God, all fears vanish.
(St. Isaac the Syrian)



TWELFTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST AUGUST 23, 2020



JESUS AND THE RICH YOUNG MAN

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 (Feast)

1: Sing joyfully to the Lord, all you land; serve the Lord with gladness; come before Him with joyful song.

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

2: Enter his gates with thanksgiving, his courts with praise; give thanks to Him, bless his name.

Be shafa'ati Walidatil Eelah, ya Mukhallisu, khallisna.

3: As we have heard, so we have seen in the city of the Lord of Hosts, in the city of our God.

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 3, pg. 39)

Let all in heaven rejoice and all on earth be glad, for the Lord has exerted power with His arm: By death He has trampled upon Death and has become the firstborn from the dead. He has delivered us from the bosom of Hades and has granted to the world great mercy.

Troparion of the Dormition (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 of the Dormition (Tone 2)

Neither death nor the tomb could hold the Mother of God, our watchful Protectress and our un-failing hope. Since she is the Mother of Life. Christ who dwelt in her ever-virginal womb lifted her up to the eternal life.

To reflect on just how our ego may be tied to the things of this world, consider how difficult it is to fast for any length of time: how much we feel the loss of a favorite food and to what lengths we go to find a pleasing substitute... and how happy we are when the Fast is over.

In addition, "mammon" can also include the non-material wealth of this world: power, prestige or social position. How do we feel when another is promoted over us, receives a bigger bonus or a more lucrative assignment. Serving mammon takes many forms and they all interfere in some way with our relationship to God.

The Fathers on the Power of Mammon

When St John Chrysostom commented on this Gospel passage, he noted that being devoted to the things of this world did not make you free. "The rich man is a slave, being subject to loss, and in the power of everyone wishing to do him harm" (Homily 46 on Matthew). Serving mammon is a form of slavery.

In another place, Chrysostom said, "If you see someone greedy for many things, you should consider him the poorest of all, even if he has acquired everyone's money. Be accustomed to judge poverty and affluence by the disposition of the mind, not by the substance of his possessions. Serving mammon is a kind of poverty. As some people today phrase it, "What you own, owns you."

A century before and on another continent, St Cyprian of Carthage had said much the same thing. "The property of the wealthy holds them in chains... which shackle their courage and choke their faith and hamper their judgment and throttle their souls. They think of themselves as owners, whereas it is they rather who are owned: enslaved as they are to their own property, they are not the masters of their money, but its slaves."

Asceticism and the Pursuit of Perfection

The choice between serving God and mammon is at the heart of Christian asceticism, where making that choice is lived and experienced on a daily basis. It is most intensely observed by monastics, but also by Christians living in this world, married or single. A person living an ascetic life tries to distance himself or herself from being tied to the passing pleasures of the world so as to be more open to following Christ and living the life of God.

People often consider life with God as something of the world to come. It is clear to most people, even in the wider society, that our earthly attachments have no place in heaven. A recent installment in Dan Piraro's widely syndicated cartoon strip, *Bizarro!* makes this point. Two long-time residents of heaven are observing two younger ones. "Most of the new arrivals seem incapable of conversation," the eldest notes. "They just stare at their hands in despair," trying to text, but there are no electronic devices in heaven!

Yes, there are no cigarettes, no movies, no alcohol in heaven. To be without them would surely frustrate someone who has made enjoying these things the focus of life. Thus some Christian thinkers have observed that to be in heaven without the object of one's passions would actually be to dwell in hell.

But the differences between this age and the age to come are not really the point. Life with God, transformation into the image of God, begins *now*, with baptism. That life is meant to be experienced in ever deeper ways as we mature in the Christian life here, as well as in the life of the age to come. The Christian seeks to avoid anything which can captivate our minds and, at best, distract us from that relationship to God. Following Christ is meant to be the real source of our joy here on earth, as well as in the world to come. Serving Christ in worship and ministering to Him in the needy should be our joys, rather than obligations to be gotten through as quickly as possible. The Christian life, to paraphrase St Catherine of Siena, is meant to be "heaven all the way to heaven."

DIVINE LITURGY INTENTIONS

Today The people of Beirut

- +Richard Francis, James Halal. Requested by Joe and Lorraine Lian.
- +Elizabeth (Reeks) Harlacher who fell asleep in the Lord this past week. Requested by Nick Rahall and family.
- +The People of Beirut who lost their live in the explosion.

Upcoming Feast Day Liturgical Schedule

- Tue. 9/8, 6PM** - Divine Liturgy for the feast of the Nativity of the Theotokos
- Mon. 9/14, 6PM** - Divine Liturgy for the feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross
- Wed. 9/23, 6PM** –Divine Liturgy for the feast of Conception of John the Baptist

NOTE: Evening feast day services will be at 6PM effective September 1 unless announced otherwise.

There are a number of things we need for the church. They include: a second icon stand, a second candle box, red & blue altar cloths, new vigil lamps for the iconostasis and walls, new altar server sticharia, as well as some smaller items. If you would like to donate any of these items in memory of your loved ones, please contact Fr. Bryan.



Financials

Last Week's Collection

Weekly	\$ 475
Candles	\$ 10
Stole	\$ 50
TOTAL	\$ 535

Thanks to everyone who has continued to send in their contributions on a regular basis. As a reminder, it costs approximately **\$8,000** monthly to maintain the parish. Your continued generosity has made it possible to pay our operating costs without dipping into savings.

May God continue to bless you for your generosity to your parish!

Please read the message below from Bishop Nicholas

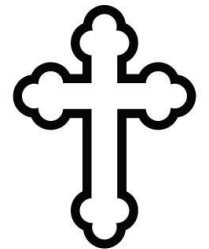
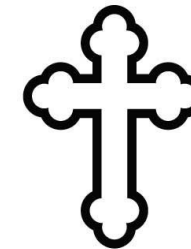
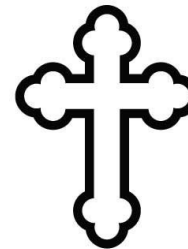
The disastrous explosion in Beirut has created severe destruction to all of Beirut. So far, over 100 people have perished and possibly over 300,000 are homeless; no neighborhood is without destruction. Most of our Churches in Beirut have suffered great losses. I spoke with Metropolitan Archbishop George Bacouny this morning and offered him our prayers and support. We are immediately wiring \$10,000 from the Eparchy to help the people with food and medical supplies.

I am asking each parish to forward to the Eparchy generous gifts from the parish charitable funds, and also to announce on Sunday, and every week thereafter, that we have an open account for individual donations from parishioners.

We need to care for our brothers and sisters during this new crisis added to the Covid crisis. Please be generous. Send the parish gift as soon as possible to our CFO office and all future gifts from parishioners as soon as they are received, as the economic situation is so severe and our loving support is needed. All checks should be payable to the Diocese of Newton.

From Fr. Bryan: If you would like to make a personal gift, please contact me. You may also contribute electronically by typing the following link in your browser:

<https://melkite.org/products-page/donation/donate-to-a-melkite-greek-catholic-ministry>



In What Is Our Joy?

THE THREE SYNOPTIC GOSPELS – Matthew, Mark and Luke – all record Christ’s meeting with a rich young man who sought His guidance. The young man (Luke calls him a “ruler”) seeks to know what to do to have eternal life. Christ responds by telling him to keep the commandments. When pressed to be more specific, the Lord begins by listing the Ten Commandments. Then He quotes the Great Commandment from Leviticus, “*You shall love your neighbor as yourself.*”

The young man says that he has kept all these commandments from his youth and presses the Lord to tell him what more he should do. The Lord Jesus then attempts to lead him from a stage of merely being obedient to God’s commandments, to one of being in a relationship of love with God.

Christ tells the young man what must happen “*If you want to be perfect*” (v. 21): he must give his wealth to the poor and follow Jesus as He went from place to place proclaiming the kingdom of God. The Lord offered this inquirer the chance to join the company of His disciples, to show that he preferred life with Christ to enjoying his possessions. The young man declined.

What Does It Mean to Be Perfect?

The Lord has held out this goal of “perfection” before, in the Sermon on the Mount. Being “perfect” seems an impossible task if we think it means absolute perfection without any fault or stain. In the Greek of the New Testament (and our Liturgy), however, to be “perfect” or to be “complete” might best be translated “to be all that we were meant to be:” living in the light of the Lord, walking in His way. Jesus pushed His hearers to go beyond the commandments to arrive at a more godly way of life.

The Lord then contrasted regard for God with attachment to one’s belongings. They will ever be competing for a person’s devotion; as Christ tells His listeners, “*Where your treasure is there your heart will be also*” (Mt 6:21).

The path to perfection, as Christ teaches, begins with making a choice between following Him and devoting oneself to enjoying the things of the world. As He said so clearly, “*No one can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon*” (Mt 6:24).

Do I Serve Mammon?

Most of us do not think that we are “serving mammon.” We may even look down on the obviously greedy or on people driven by addictions. Yes, there are people who “serve” money, drugs or sex. They may be slaves to alcohol or tobacco. We don’t believe that we are controlled like that.

We may not be overly driven to making inordinate amounts of money, but we should consider that dependency on mammon takes many forms. We should become more conscious of how many of this world’s riches we feel that we “need,” that we “can’t do without,” from our morning coffee to the latest smart phone. We don’t physically need these things; it is our ego that requires them. Is this not another form of serving mammon?

Prokimenon

Reader: Sing praise to our God, sing praise! Sing praise to our King, sing praise!

People: Sing praise to our God, sing praise! Sing praise to our King, sing praise!

Verse: All you peoples, clap your hands! Shout to God with cries of gladness!

People: Sing praise to our God, sing praise! Sing praise to our King, sing praise!

Reader: Sing praise to our God, sing praise!

People: Sing praise to our King, sing praise!

Epistle: 1 Cor 15:1-11

Alleluia Verses

In You, O Lord, I have hoped: let me never be put to shame. In Your justice, save me and deliver me.

Verse: Be for me a protecting God, a sheltering house to save me.

Gospel: Mt 19:16-26

Special Petitions for the Ecumenic Prayer (Inserted after the third petition)

- For all your people who have proven positive with the coronavirus, that they may be restored to full health and offer you their praise and thanksgiving, we pray to you, Lord, hear us and have mercy.
- For all those who have died as a result of the corona virus that he may be granted rest with the Saints and the mercy of God in the Heavenly Kingdom, we pray to You, Lord, hear us and have mercy.
- For doctors, nurses, and all in health care, risking their lives to minister to those afflicted with the coronavirus, that they remain safe, and in good health as they serve others, we pray to You, Lord, hear us and have mercy.
- For all your people in Lebanon who were hurt during the disastrous explosion, that they may be restored to full health, and for those who died that they may be granted rest among the Saints, we pray to You, Lord, hear us and have mercy.
- For peace throughout the Middle East, especially in Lebanon, Syria, Palestine, and Iraq, we pay to You, Lord, hear us and have mercy.

Hirmos (Dormition)

All human generations bless you, O Mother of God. The laws of nature were bypassed in you, for your birth-giving left you a virgin and your death became the herald of your life. O you who remained virginal after having given birth, and alive after having died, O Mother of God, deign always to save your inheritance!

Kinonikon- Praise the Lord from the heavens...

After Communion - We have Seen the True Light ...