

Financials

Last Week's Collection

Weekly \$ 1,430
Candles \$ 7
Flowers \$ 45
Memorials \$ 25
TOTAL \$ 1,732

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>



THIRTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST AUGUST 30, 2020



OUR LADY OF PERPETUAL HELP

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)

I: 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 4, pg. 40)

The women disciples of the Lord, having learned from the angel the joyful announcement of the resurrection, and having rejected the ancestral sentence, proudly told the apostles: “Death is despoiled. Christ God is risen, bestowing 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 Nativity of the Theotokos (Tone 2)

Through your holy birth, O Immaculate One, Joachim and Anne were delivered from the shame of childlessness, and Adam and Eve from the corruption of death. Your people, redeemed from the debt of their sins, cry out to you to honor your birth: “the barren one gives birth to the Mother of God the Sustainer of our life!”

Avoid eating any round fruits or vegetables (they resemble a head);

Avoid eating anything that requires use of knives or anything that cuts;

Avoid eating or drinking anything red (they remind us of blood).

A contemporary way to observe this commemoration might be to fast and pray for those who have died senselessly at the hands of others through terrorism, armed conflicts or senseless violence. Think of them as John’s “companions in suffering.”

Did John Witness in Hades?

As the Gospels affirm, Jesus was still alive when John was executed. But the New Testament does not teach that John witnessed to Christ in Hades. How and when did this concept enter our tradition?

Origen of Alexandria, the foremost commentator on the Scriptures in the third century, explained that John the Baptist had died before Christ, “so that he might descend to the lower regions and announce His coming. For everywhere the witness and forerunner of Jesus is John, being born before and dying shortly before the Son of God, so that not only to those of his generation but likewise to those who lived before Christ should liberation from the death be preached, and that he might everywhere prepare a people trained to receive the Lord” (Origen, *Homily on Luke 4*).

Those in Hades would “receive the Lord” upon His death as we read in the New Testament: “*Christ also died for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive in the spirit; in which he went and preached to the spirits in prison, who formerly did not obey...*” (1 Pt 3:18, 19). A number of the Apostolic Fathers such as Saints Polycarp of Smyrna, Ignatius of Antioch, Irenaeus of Lyons, and Clement of Alexandria all taught that Christ had descended into Hades. We find the same teaching in the Syriac Fathers Jacob of Sarouj, Aphrahat the Persian and Ephrem the Syrian as well as the Greek Fathers Athanasius the Great, Basil the Great, Gregory Nazianzen, John Chrysostom, Cyril of Alexandria, Maximus the Confessor and John of Damascus.

Our most common icon of the resurrection depicts Christ emerging from Hades leading out by the hand Adam and Eve (and, by implication, the human race). In many icons John the Forerunner is beside Him, at the head of those who had died before Christ and were now brought to eternal life by Him.



DIVINE LITURGY INTENTIONS

Today The people of Beirut

Health & Salvation of the Yanni and Arraj families. Requested by Mae Yanni.

+Naphie Samara, Aileen Abraham, Richard Francis, Mitchell Bollus, James Halal, Nicholas Aboody, Mountaha Abboudy. Requested by Antoinette Arraj and family.

+The People of Beirut who lost their lives in the recent explosion.

Today's flowers were donated by Sadie Mirante in memory of Joseph Mirante, Sr. & Joseph Mirante, Jr.

Sept 6 +Mitchell Bollus, Richard Francis, Naphie Samara. Requested by Robert Ghiz

Upcoming Feast Day Liturgical Schedule

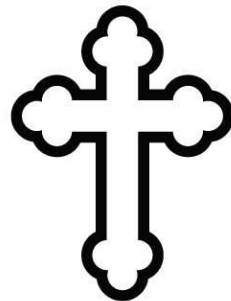
Tue. 9/8, 6PM - Divine Liturgy for the feast of the Nativity of the Theotokos

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.



The Samuel J. Daige Educational Trust Our Lady of Perpetual Help Scholarship



The Samuel J. Daige Educational Scholarship Trust was funded by the estate of Gloria Daige in memory of her son, Samuel J. Daige. Samuel was highly decorated for his military service in Vietnam receiving the Bronze Star Medal, Navy Commendation Medal, Purple Heart w/One Oak Leaf Cluster and the Vietnam Service Medal.

The Samuel J. Daige scholarship trust provides for an allocation for members of Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church (Worcester, MA) who are of Lebanese descent. Scholarships are intended to support the tuition and tuition-related fees incurred by eligible students who are pursuing an associate, bachelor or graduate degree at an accredited college or university in the United States. One scholarship will be awarded each year to an active member of Our Lady of Perpetual help Church in Worcester, MA.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Members of Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church

To be considered for this scholarship, you must:

1. Be under 25 years of age.
2. Be accepted and enrolled in an accredited college or university in the United States in an Associate's, Bachelor's or graduate degree program.
3. Be a member of Our Lady of Perpetual Help church in Worcester, MA.

Be of Lebanese descent (minimum of 6.25% Lebanese ancestry)

SELECTION PROCESS

Members of Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church

The following criteria will be considered in the selection process:

1. Letter of recommendation from church priest or member of church leadership council.
2. Written essay on educational goals and career objectives (100 words maximum) .

Application and required documents should be mailed to the Chairman of the Board of Trustees:

Zachary W. Esper, Jr.
3 Cedar Hill Road
Grafton, MA 01519

If you have any questions or need additional information, please send inquires to OLPH or zesper@hotmail.com or call (508) 930-0945.

The Forerunner in Hades

THE GOSPELS DEPICT St John the Baptist as the “forerunner” or herald, announcing the imminent coming of God’s saving work in Jesus Christ. In the Gospel of Mark, for example, we hear John say: “*There comes One after me who is mightier than I, whose sandal strap I am not worthy to stoop down and loose. I indeed baptized you with water, but He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit*” (Mk1: 7, 8).

John’s work as herald of our salvation was not limited to announcing the beginning of Christ’s ministry in Galilee. Our troparion for today’s commemoration mentions that John baptized the Lord Jesus. Then, it continues, “You have fought for the sake of truth and proclaimed to those in Hades that God, who appeared in the flesh, has taken away the sins of the world and bestowed His great mercy upon us.” John’s ministry continued after death, as he announced to the dead in Hades that Christ’s coming was close at hand.

The Story of John’s Struggle

We read the story of John’s final fight “for the sake of truth” in Mark’s Gospel. “*For Herod himself had sent and laid hold of John, and bound him in prison for the sake of Herodias, his brother Philip’s wife; for he had married her. Because John had said to Herod, ‘It is not lawful for you to have your brother’s wife’*” (Mk 6:17, 18).

John languished in prison because Herod had a superstitious fear of the prophet. He revered John as a holy man, but could not bring himself to follow the Baptist’s teachings.

“*Then an opportune day came when Herod on his birthday gave a feast for his nobles, the high officers, and the chief men of Galilee. And when Herodias’ daughter herself came in and danced, and pleased Herod and those who sat with him, the king said to the girl, ‘Ask me whatever you want, and I will give it to you.’ He also swore to her, ‘Whatever you ask me, I will give you – up to half my kingdom’*” (Mk 6:21-23).

What followed has frequently been retold in literature, music, painting and sculpture. Prompted by her mother, Salome asks for the head of John: “*I want you to give me at once the head of John the Baptist on a platter*” (v. 25).

Because of the oath he had sworn in the presence of his guests, Herod agreed and had John beheaded, making possible the prophet’s ministry in Hades.

Our Observance of John’s Death

Because John, whom the Lord Himself had called the greatest man born of woman, was killed as a result of Herod’s birthday revels, the Byzantine Churches observe today as a strict fast: no parties, no luxury foods, no drink. We see where these things can lead.

A number of popular local customs have risen to mark the day among various Eastern Christians. People may:

Avoid eating anything on round plates, since Salome asked for John’s head “*on a platter*” (Mk 6:25). Use bowls instead.

Prokimenon

Reader: How great are your works, O Lord! In wisdom you have wrought them all.
People: How great are your works, O Lord! In wisdom you have wrought them all.
Verse: Bless the Lord, O my soul! You are very great indeed, O Lord my God!
People: How great are your works, O Lord! In wisdom you have wrought them all.
Reader: How great are your works, O Lord!
People: In wisdom you have wrought them all.

Epistle: 1 Cor 16:13-24

Alleluia Verses

String your bow, go forth, reign for the sake of truth, meekness and righteousness and your right hand shall lead you wonderfully.

Verse: You loved righteousness and hated iniquity: therefore God, your God, anointed you with the oil of joy above your companions.

Gospel: Mt 21:33-42

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 coronavirus that they 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 pray to You, Lord, hear us and have mercy.

Hirmos - It is Truly Meet...