

From the Divine Office for the Sunday of the Man Born Blind

Passing through the Temple, Jesus saw a man who had been blind since birth. He had compassion on him. Putting clay on his eyes, He said to him, "Go to the pool of Siloam and wash." And as the man washed, he recovered his sight; and he proclaimed the glory of God. But his relatives asked him, "Who opened your eyes that no living creature could heal?" And he answered, "A man called Jesus. He told me to go and wash in the pool of Siloam. He is truly the Christ, the Messiah, of whom Moses wrote in the Law: He is the Savior of our souls!" (Vespers)

I have lost the very eyes of my soul, wherefore I come to You, O Christ, as did the man who had been blind from birth, and I cry out to You with repentance: "To those who stumble in darkness, You are a radiant and resplendent light." (Kondakion)



**SIXTH SUNDAY OF PASCHA
SUNDAY OF THE MAN BORN BLIND
MAY 14, 2023**



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Divine Liturgy: Sunday 10:00 AM

After “Blessed is the Kingdom... Christ is Risen from the dead and by His death He has trampled upon Death and has given life to those who were in the tombs (3 times)

Antiphon (Feast)

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 Your 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!

Troparion of the Resurrection (Tone 5) pg.40

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 of Pascha (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.

Our Call to Respond

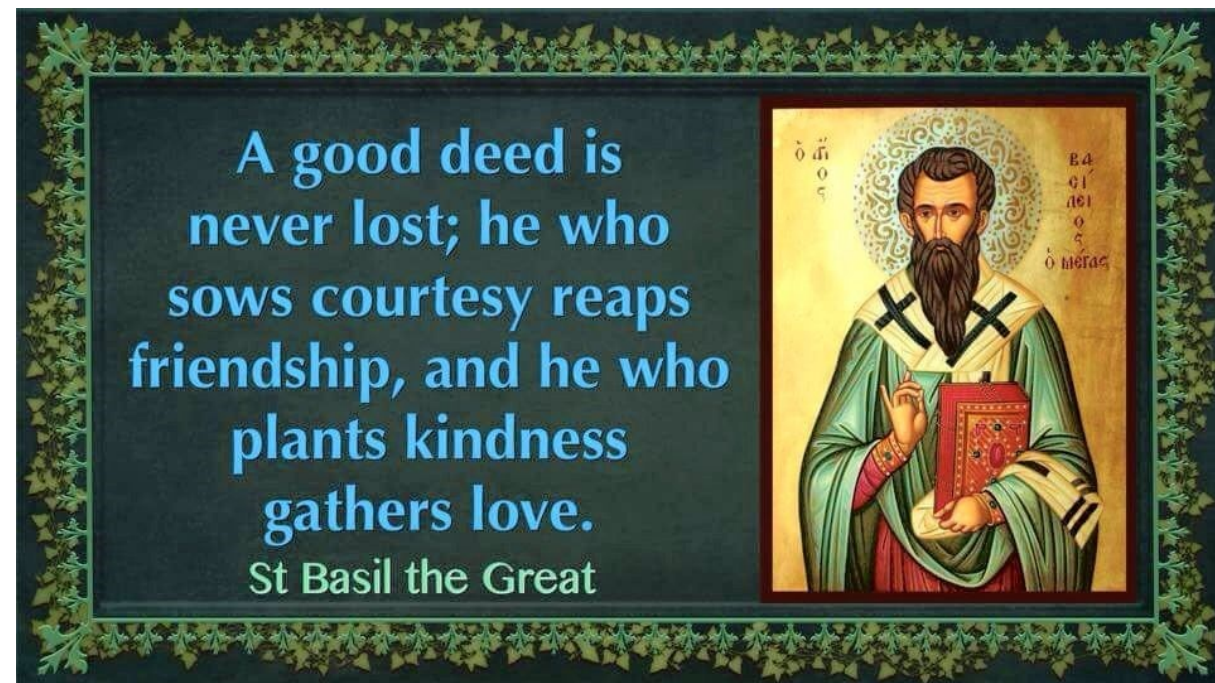
In the passage from Romans quoted above, St Paul makes another connection. As we have seen, he links baptism in water with Christ’s burial; he also relates Christ’s risen life to the way the baptized should live here and now. We can live a ‘resurrection life’ by following the Scriptural precepts that characterize the new life for believers. Later in the epistle St Paul expresses it this way, “...present your bodies a living sacrifice holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. And do not be conformed to this world but be transformed by the renewing of your mind...” (Rom 12:1, 2).

The first verse concerns our *actions*. Where in the Old Covenant people would offer animals, grain or other offerings in the temple, we the baptized are told to offer all our faculties as our act of worship. “Turn this body in which you are clothed into a censer...” we read in the letters of St Anthony the Great. There is nothing that we have or that we are which is not meant to be given over to God.

We are called to commend “ourselves, one another and our whole life to Christ God.” Sometimes this “spiritual worship” is a matter of giving things up, as during the Fasts. At other times, such as during this festive season, it may be a matter of sharing the things that we enjoy with others in acts of hospitality. In either case we are called to see all our actions as oblations, like the prosphora, the candles or the incense we give over completely to God in church.

The second verse is concerned with our *attitudes*. We are urged to avoid thinking like people who do not know God: to avoid thinking that the purpose of life is acquiring more and more of the world’s goods or respect. If our values are formed by the commercials we see on TV or the lifestyles promoted there, then we are conforming to this world. After all, sitcoms or reality shows never feature people who serve others, do they?

If we accept the social engineers’ idea that other people – even our own older relatives or unborn children – are an inconvenience to be put aside, then we are conforming to this world. If we endorse the concerns of special interest groups rather than the values of the Gospel, then we are conforming to this world. We have been given a new life; we need to develop a new mind as well.



HAPPY MOTHER'S DAY

We wish all the mothers of the parish a happy Mother's Day! Please join us downstairs for the coffee hour and take a flower as a small token of appreciation for all you do!

We love you!

DIVINE LITURGY INTENTIONS

Today All of our mothers living and deceased
+Lorraine Bayrouy
+ Karen Lyon. Requested by Virginia & Michael Mischitelli

May 21 +Violet Gazal. Requested by Antoinette Arraj

Today's Coffee Hr. is hosted by the men of the parish in honor of Mother's Day

Next Sunday's Coffee Hr. will be hosted by the Dumont family

Please remember in your prayers: George Arraj, Jr., Ron Abraham, Peter Abraham, Robert Ghiz, Sadie Mirante, Archie Opatka, Anthony Poti, Katherine Thomas, Charlotte Stockhaus, Ruth Welsh, Richard Abraham, Sr., Frank Boyda, Carol Boyda, Bob Lynch, Michael Mooradian, Michael McNeil, Jeff McNeil, Wyatt William Rahall, Lauren Abraham, Nicholas Haddad, Elaine Foley, David Ahlin, Elio Kanaan, all those affected by the earthquakes in Syria and Turkey, and the people of Ukraine.

If there are people for whom you would like me to pray, please reach out and give me their names. Part of our vocation as Christians is to pray for each other, especially when someone is sick or suffering in any way.

Last Week's Collection

Weekly	\$1,566
Candles	\$ 31
Coffee Hr.	\$ 98
Stole	\$ 225
Donations	\$ 100
Other	\$ 112
TOTAL	\$2,132



Welcome to any visitors we have with us this morning! We are happy to have you worship with us.

Please join us downstairs in the church hall for the coffee hour so that we can get to know each other better and answer any questions you may have about the parish or the Melkite Church.



LITURGICAL SCHEDULE FOR THE FEAST OF THE ASCENSION

Wed. May 17, 6PM - Great Vespers

Thu. May 18, 6PM - Divine Liturgy

SAVE THE DATE

As you may know, 2023 is the 100th anniversary of the parish. We will mark the occasion on **November 4-5**. We will celebrate Great Vespers followed by a banquet on November 4. On November 5, we will celebrate a hierarchal Divine Liturgy followed by lunch in the parish hall. Please mark your calendars and plan to attend. More information will be forthcoming. Please contact Fr. Bryan if you would like to help with the planning and preparation for the occasion. Our next planning meeting will be May 23 **at 6:30pm**.

FINANCIALS

April 2023

Income \$ 7,754
Expenses \$ 6,510
Net \$ 1,244

YTD (10/2022-4/2023)

Income \$53,779
Expenses \$60,319
Net (\$ 6,540)

Our Radiant Light (John 9:1-38)

THE BAPTISM OF CATECHUMENS ON PASCHA was one of the most widespread practices of the early Church. Speaking of baptism, St. Paul had written, “*We were buried with[Christ] through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life*” (Rom 6:4). The connection Paul made between Christ’s burial in the earth and our burial in the water was so powerful in the minds of early believers that Holy Saturday, the eve of Christ’s resurrection, became the most appropriate day for baptism in both East and West. Those baptized on this day would share in the Eucharist for the first time on Pascha, the “Feast of Feasts” and celebrate their new life in the days that followed.

To this day the Scriptures we read at the Divine Liturgy on this Sunday reflect on various aspects of the mystery of baptism. In the reading from the Acts of the Apostles we saw the jailer and his family baptized after experiencing the power of God and hearing the word of the Lord. In the Gospel we see the Lord approach a blind man at the Pool of Siloam – water again – and healing him. The Lord anoints him and he is able to see for the first time in his life. More than that, he sees with the eyes of his soul and confesses his faith in Christ. Countless people today are familiar with a similar image from the eighteenth-century hymn, Amazing Grace, where the new believer proclaims “I once was lost, but now am found; was blind but now I see.”

These readings taken together suggest a pattern that has been followed throughout the centuries. People have heard the word of God, then been baptized, and anointed (chrismated), when they came to faith in Him.

Sight and Light

In the Middle East Holy Saturday is still the most popular day for baptisms. Christians of all traditions call this day *sabt al-noor*, the Saturday of Light, from another early image of baptism. Very early in the Church’s life baptism came to be called Holy Illumination. The term is used by St Justin the Philosopher in Rome and St Clement of Alexandria in the second century to say that when we come to know God, then we are able to see clearly. Like the man once blind, we are delivered from darkness and, most particularly, we are able to see the divine plan. Our “spiritual eye becomes full of light” and we can recognize the hand of God at work among us.

At a baptism our radiant new nature is represented by the shining white garments the newly baptized puts on while we sing, “*Give me a robe of light, O You who clothe Yourself with light as with a garment, O most merciful Christ our God.*” We find the same image described beautifully in Agathangelos’ description of the baptism of the first Armenian Christians in the fourth century: “They went forth in great joy, in white garments, with psalms and blessings and lighted lamps and burning candles and blazing torches, with great rejoicing and happiness, illuminated and become like the angels.”

For the same reason the Church describes the Feast of the Theophany, the remembrance of Christ’s baptism, as the Feast of Light. As we say in Kondakion for the feast, actually the first verse of St. Romanos’ Kondakion on the Life of Christ:

Today you have appeared to the inhabited world, and your light, O Lord, has been signed upon us, who, with knowledge, sing your praise, ‘You have come, You have appeared, the unapproachable Light.’ The Gospels say that, at Christ’s baptism, the heavens were opened, which the Fathers assumed to mean that the mystery of the Trinity was revealed. Christ is the Light who enables us to see by revealing the mystery of God and His plan for our regeneration to the world.

Clement of Alexandria also speaks of this light as being “signed” upon us. He describes this sign as a “seal,” a mark of belonging – in this case, to Christ. At our chrismation, the completion of our baptism, we receive this “seal of the gift of the Holy Spirit” who affirms that we belong to the Lord. We are His, and He is ours, as a pledge of the life that awaits us in glory.

Trisagion

All of you who have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ. Alleluia! (3X)

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: Jn. 9:1-38, Sunday of the Man Born Blind

Hirmos (Tone 1)

The angel cried out to the one who is full of grace: “Hail, immaculate Virgin!” Again, hail, for your Son is risen from the tomb on the third day. Shine, shine, O New Jerusalem, for the glory of the Lord has shown 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 (Tone 1)

Receive the body, the body of Christ, and drink from the Fountain of immortality. Alleluia.

After Communion—Christ is risen... (Once)

Instead of “Blessed by the name of the Lord...” Christ is risen (three times)

At the end of the Divine Liturgy

Priest: Christ is Risen!

People: He is truly Risen! (three times)

Priest: Glory to His Resurrection on the third day!

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