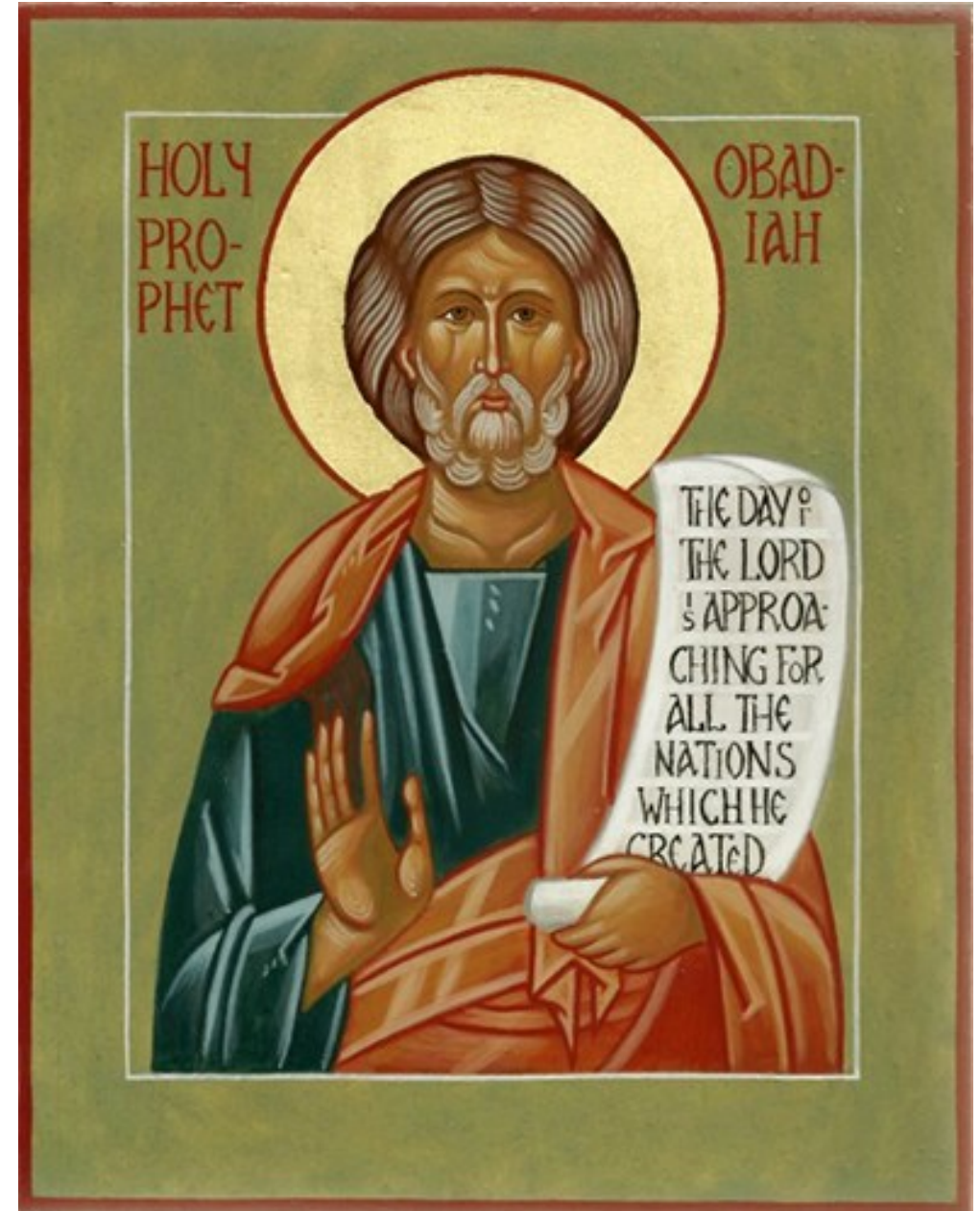


From the Divine Office for the Commemoration of the Prophet Obadiah (Nov. 19)

Filled with inaccessible light and contemplating the glory of God who surpasses all intelligence and understanding, O blessed Obadiah, you stand as a divine prophet in the presence of the Master of All. Entreat Him to give our souls peace and great mercy. (Vespers)

As a prophet chosen by God, you foretold things from afar, that salvation would be accomplished on Mount Zion, for the mysteries of Heaven shone upon you. Dwelling now above with all the prophets and rejoicing in Christ whom you foretold, O Obadiah, entreat Him to save us who honor you with love. (Kontakion)

**NINTH SUNDAY AFTER THE HOLY CROSS
NOVEMBER 19, 2023**



PROPHET OBADIAH (NOV. 19)

Our Lady of Perpetual Help Melkite Catholic Church
256 Hamilton St.
Worcester, MA 01604
Phone: (508) 752-4174
Email: olphmelkite@gmail.com/Website: olphworchester.org
Rev. Bryan McNeil, Pastor
Cell: (774) 502-8547
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 8) pg. 42

You descended from on high O compassionate One; and consented to burial for three days that You might free us from suffering. O Lord, our life and our resurrection, 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 intercession, save our souls from death.

Kontakion (Tone 4)

The most pure Temple of our holy Savior, and the most precious and bright bridal chamber, the Virgin, sacred treasury of the glory of God, openly appears today into the temple of the Lord, bringing with her the grace of the most Holy Spirit. Wherefore the angels of God are singing: “This is the heavenly tabernacle!”



The Purpose of Our Abundance

Many people feel that they are just getting by, they have no “abundance” to share with others. This is often because we have come to believe the admen who say you absolutely need the latest model, style or title, especially when promoted by a celebrity. If Alex Trebek says you need it, who am I to judge?!

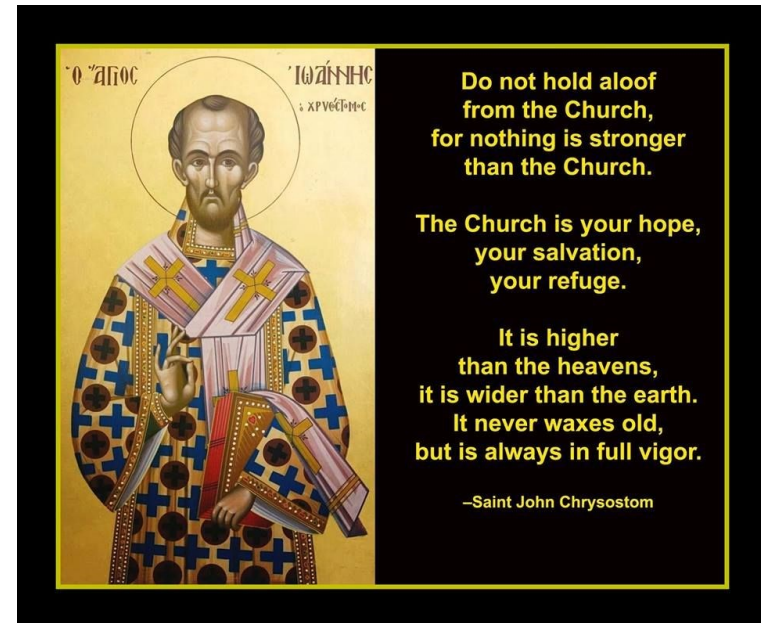
Once we take a realistic look at our needs we find that we can do without things which may be pleasurable or desirable but are not necessary for our life. We may then find that we have an abundance after all.

Each person’s life presents a countless number of opportunities to do good with our abundance. We may support – or increase our support for – charitable causes both at home or in our Mother Church, contribute to educational or philanthropic organizations. We will have no difficulty finding ways to use our abundance for good once we have decided that God has actually provided us with an abundance.

Help from the Tradition

Throughout its history the Church has given us a valuable tool to help us recognize that our needs and our desires are not always the same. The weekly fast days of Wednesday and Friday – practiced as early as the first century – and the four fast periods of the year are connected with liturgical observances, to be sure. They have another level of meaning as well. Our ascetic fasts are recurring reminders that “*a man’s life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions.*” We put aside food and drink, leisure and entertainment periodically to remind ourselves of a lesson too easily forgotten: that we don’t need stuff, we need God.

Our tradition of fasting coupled with almsgiving may be especially important to us today since we live in an age when we can easily pamper ourselves every day and thereby weaken our resistance to evil. People who are addicted to luxuries are less likely to put them aside when forced to choose between keeping them or following the Gospel. As Pope St Leo the Great noted in the fifth century, “Against the threatened attacks of persecutors, against the terrifying shouts of the ungodly, they could not fight with bodily strength or pampered flesh since that which delights the outer does most harm to the inner man, and the more one’s fleshly substance is kept in subjection, the more purified is the reasoning soul” (Homily 70 On the Fast of Pentecost I).



DIVINE LITURGY INTENTIONS

Today **For peace in the Middle East**
 + **John Arraje, Souhaila Arraje, Paula Arraje Lewis.** Requested by Susan Arraje

Nov 26 +**Rose Garabedian.** Requested by Antoinette Arraj and family

Today's Coffee Hr. is hosted by Susan Arraje
Next week's Coffee Hr. will be hosted by

Please remember in your prayers: Lorraine Lian, George Arraj, Jr., Ron Abraham, Peter Abraham, Robert Ghiz, Sadie Mirante, Archie Opatka, Katherine Thomas, Charlotte Stockhaus, Richard Abraham, Sr., Frank Boyda, Carol Boyda, Bob Lynch, Joe Najemy, Michael Mooradian, Dennis Desplaines, Michael McNeil, Jeff McNeil, Wyatt William Rahall, Billy Rahall, Dan Rahall, Lauren Abraham, Nicholas Haddad, NicholaS Halal, Elaine Foley, David Ahlin, Elio Kanaan, Tom Sarrouf, Sandra Hanlan, Melissa Kalpakgian, Susan Bailey, those affected by the natural disasters throughout the world, the people of Gaza, and for peace in the Middle East.

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.

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.

Upcoming Liturgical Schedule

Tue, Nov. 21 6PM - Divine Liturgy for the Entrance of the Theotokos into the Temple

FOOD DONATION BOX

There is a green box in the narthex for food donations. Once a month, we will deliver whatever we collect to a local charity that helps those with food insecurity. Please buy a couple of extra items when you go the grocery store and put them in the box on your way into the church on Sunday. Thank you in advance for your generosity in helping those who need a little extra assistance!

We will also be having our Thanksgiving food drive again this year. Our goal is to provide Thanksgiving dinners for those who need our help. We hope to provide as many meals as we can. Please assist us in this important ministry by donating a turkey and/or sides. The deadline is today, November 19. We will deliver our donations on Tuesday, November 21.

God bless you for your generosity!

Last Week's Collection

Weekly	\$ 905
Coffee Hr.	\$ 43
Candles	\$ 17
Stole	\$ 55
Other	\$1,115
TOTAL	\$ 2,135

FINANCIALS

	<u>10.2023</u>	<u>YTD</u>
Income	\$14,177	\$14,177
Expenses	\$16,519	\$16,519
Net	(\$ 2,342)	(\$ 2,342)



Enough vs. Abundance

DAY AFTER DAY Christians say the Lord's Prayer, asking God to "give us this day our daily bread," that is, to provide us with what we need for today. The rich man in Christ's parable (Lk 12:16-22) clearly has a different perspective. He is not just concerned about today but about tomorrow, finding his security in the "grain and goods" he has stored up.

The man's approach seems eminently practical – we do the same with our IRAs and annuities. Nobody wants to end their days on earth in a welfare hotel. But if we put absolute confidence in any earthly resource we will be as foolish as this rich man for "*a man's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions*" (Lk 12:15).

The parable raises a number of questions for Christians: what are possessions for? Should a Christian's use of his or her wealth differ from that of a non-Christian? Where do we find God's will in these matters?

Need vs. Abundance

The Scriptures frequently speak about money or other assets. It has been estimated that there are over 800 indications in the Bible about using our resources. Perhaps the greatest clarity on this question is found in St Paul's Second Epistle to the Corinthians. He tells his readers that "*God is able to provide you with every blessing in abundance, so that you may always have enough of everything and may provide in abundance for every good work*" (2 Cor 9:8). St Paul's principle is clear: God provides – that we have "**enough** of everything" and "**an abundance**" for doing good.

What is "Enough"? – this refers to what we actually need: the "basics" (food, clothing, shelter, etc.). What is actually necessary varies over time and place as well as circumstances of life. We need things in our culture which others societies either did not require or did not have. Today we need health insurance, for example – something which did not even exist before our own age.

Similarly "need" is different for a family than for a single person. A single person probably doesn't require three cars while a suburban family with a son or daughter in college might require just that. Need is different for a couple raising children than for a couple caring for an older relative or for grandparents living alone. The circumstances of our lives and of our society will dictate what we actually need to live the lives which we have been given. St Paul's principle applies in all circumstances, however. Anything more than what we truly need is given to us by God for the doing of good.

The Age of Conspicuous Consumption

Sociologists have long described the modern age as a time of "conspicuous consumption" when people spend money on expensive or unnecessary items, not to meet their real needs but to display wealth or status. People often are pushed to acquire bigger and better houses, cars, flat screen TVs, etc. – not because they need them but in order to outshine their neighbors or social rivals. Products are marketed with an eye towards making people believe they need something they can never even use (Does anyone really need 400 channels?) In the past products were made to last and to be repaired if necessary; today those same items are designed to break down and be replaced by newer and "better" ones. We are taught to keep upgrading our possessions and thus "better" our lives.

This dynamic is not limited to the upper classes of society. The poor are perhaps more susceptible to the tendency to prove one's real worth by the number of their possessions. The spectacle of teenagers being knifed for their sneakers demonstrates how far the concept of conspicuous consumption has penetrated our society.

Two automobiles have become icons of contrasting economic strategies in the world today. The "solid gold Cadillac," title of a 1950s Broadway play and film, represents the world of conspicuous consumption, of spending for show rather than for need. The second automobile, symbolizing the Scriptural principle of spending for need, is the Fiat compact sedan in which Pope Francis rode during his 2015 American visit. People who had never heard of conspicuous consumption instinctively realized that the pope's Fiat was saying something important about the ways of God on earth. God's blessings abound, but they are not meant to be wasted on empty display. As the British newspaper The Guardian quipped at the time, "A Fiat is worth a thousand words."

Prokimenon

Reader: Make vows to the Lord your God and fulfill them; let all round about Him bring gifts to the awesome Lord.

People: Make vows to the Lord your God and fulfill them; let all round about Him bring gifts to the awesome Lord.

Reader: God is renowned in Judah; in Israel, great is His name.

People: Make vows to the Lord your God and fulfill them; let all round about Him bring gifts to the awesome Lord.

Reader: Make vows to the Lord your God and fulfill them;

People: Let all round about Him bring gifts to the awesome Lord.

Epistle: Eph. 4:1-7

Alleluia Verses

Come, let us rejoice in the Lord; Let us sing joyfully to God our Savior!

Verse: Let us greet His presence with thanksgiving; let us joyfully sing psalms to Him!

Gospel: Lk. 12:16-22, Ninth Sunday After the Holy Cross

Nativity Fast

The traditional Nativity Fast began **November 15**. In the Melkite usage, it begins on **December 10**. It is important for our spiritual life that we observe these fast periods in order to reorient ourselves to God; that we focus on Him rather than on our desires.

Whether you observe the Fast from November 15 or December 10, abstain from meat and dairy, from gossip and speaking ill of your neighbor, perform acts of charity, increase your prayer life, focusing on the great mystery of the Incarnation: God becoming one of us in order to restore us to our true nature.

