

From the Divine Office for the Commemoration of the prophet Daniel (December 17)

O wondrous prophet, you contemplated the just judge who surpasses all understanding, seated on His throne, surrounded by the angels and saints; overcome by awe at this formidable vision, you revealed it for posterity, describing the second coming of our Lord God, robed in the garment of our flesh. (Vespers)

O faithful, today the prophet Daniel calls us together in spirit; he has prepared an abundant table of the virtues for the rich, the poor, citizens and strangers. The spiritual cup overflowing with faith brings joy to the hearts of the faithful and bears the grace of the Holy Spirit. Behold the Prophet, enlightening the world like a brilliant chandelier, he who destroyed the Assyrian idols and closed the mouths of fierce lions. (Orthros)



**SUNDAY OF THE FOREFATHERS
DECEMBER 17, 2023**



**HOLY YOUTHS ANANIAS, AZARIAS, & MIZAEEL
DECEMBER 17**

Our Lady of Perpetual Help Melkite Catholic Church
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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 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 Forefathers (Tone 2)

Through faith, You have justified Your Ancestors, O Christ our God, and through them You have espoused in advance the Church set apart from the Gentiles. The saints rejoice in glory because, from the seed of these Ancestors, has come forth the glorious fruit, who gave You birth without seed. Through their intercession, O Christ God, save our souls.

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 of the Preparation of the Nativity of our Lord (Tone 3)

Today the Virgin is on her way to the cave where she will give birth to the eternal Word of God in an ineffable manner. Rejoice, therefore, O universe, when you hear this news: and glorify with the angels and the shepherds, Him who shall appear as a new Child, being God from all eternity.

The first part of the book includes three dramatic and prophetic scenes concerning Daniel and three other young Jewish nobles. When they were taken captive, they were impressed into their captor’s service and given Babylonian names. “Then the king instructed Ashpenaz, the master of his eunuchs, to bring some of the children of Israel and some of the king’s descendants and some of the nobles, young men in whom there was no blemish, but good-looking, gifted in all wisdom, possessing knowledge and quick to understand, who had ability to serve in the king’s palace, and whom they might teach the language and literature of the Chaldeans. And the king appointed for them a daily provision of the king’s delicacies and of the wine which he drank, and three years of training for them, so that at the end of that time they might serve before the king. Among those who were chosen were some from Judah: Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah. The chief official gave them new names: to Daniel, the name Belteshazzar; to Hananiah, Shadrach; to Mishael, Meshach; and to Azariah, Abednego” (Dan 1:3-7). The book uses these names indiscriminately, which sometimes confuses readers.

From the first these young Jews refused to violate the Law. They would not eat the meats given them and would only eat vegetables. Nevertheless they rose to positions of responsibility in the Babylonian Empire.

When Nebuchadnezzar erected a golden idol on the plain of Dura, the three young men refused to worship it as the king had commanded, even though he had stipulated: “whoever does not fall down and worship shall be cast immediately into the midst of a burning fiery furnace” (Dan 3:6).

When confronted by the king the three Jews insisted, “Our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and He will deliver us from your hand, O king. But if not, let it be known to you, O king, that we do not serve your gods, nor will we worship the gold image which you have set up” (Dan 3:17-18). They knew that God could deliver them and believed that He would. But if that was not His will, they would not lose faith: they still were not going to worship the idol.

“And these three men, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego, fell down bound into the midst of the burning fiery furnace. Then King Nebuchadnezzar was astonished; and he rose in haste and spoke, saying to his counselors, ‘Did we not cast three men bound into the midst of the fire?’ They answered and said to the king, ‘True, O king.’ ‘Look!’ he answered, ‘I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire; and they are not hurt, and the form of the fourth is like a Son of God’” (Dan 3: 23-25).

The angel of God who protected these young Jews is seen by the Church as a type of Christ, the One who walks among His people at all times, in the midst of every circumstance, even when God seems absent. It is He whose coming in the flesh we are about to celebrate.

Troparion and Kontakion (Dec. 17)

Faith can accomplish great things! Through it the three holy young men rejoice in the flames as if they had been in refreshing water; and Daniel in the midst of lions is like a shepherd among his sheep. Through their intercession, O Christ God, save our souls.

Armed with God’s invisible power, you shunned the adoration of man-made idols, O thrice-blessed young men. Strengthened with this power beyond words, you stood in the midst of a devouring fire and called upon God, saying: “Hasten, O merciful One, and speed to our help, for You are good and have the might to do as You please.”

DIVINE LITURGY INTENTIONS

Today +Robert Aboody
 +Mary Donahue

Today's Coffee Hr. is hosted by the Dumont family
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, 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.

Last Week's Collection

Weekly	\$1,426
Coffee Hr.	\$ 55
Candles	\$ 27
Xmas Flowers	\$ 80
Xmas Offering	\$ 45
Donations	\$ 100
Charity	\$ 220
TOTAL	\$1,953

FINANCIALS

11.2023		YTD(10.2023-11.2023)	
Income	\$21,819	Income	\$35,996
Expenses	\$15,371	Expense	\$31,890
Net	\$ 6,448	Net	\$ 4,106



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. Dec. 19, 6PM - Anointing Service

Nativity Liturgical Schedule

Sun 12/24, 10AM - Divine Liturgy, Sunday of the Genealogy & Paramony

Sun 12/24, 4PM –Vesper/Liturgy of St. Basil for the Feast of the Nativity of Christ

Mon 12/25, 10AM-Divine Liturgy for the Feast of the Nativity of Christ

There is no fasting from December 25 until the Paramony of Theophany (Jan. 5)

Christmas Toy Drive

The deadline for donating to our toy and clothing drive is today. Our collection will be delivered to Pernet House tomorrow (12/18).

It is not too late to donate money to cover the cost of what we purchased. See Fr. Bryan after the Divine Liturgy if you want to donate.

God bless you for your generosity toward our needy brothers and sisters!

IN OUR FIRST TONE TROPARION of the resurrection, sung repeatedly throughout the year, we chant these words: “Glory to Your economy, O You who alone are the Lover of mankind.” Our secular society uses the word economy for financial matters exclusively; the term has other meanings in the Church, particularly in the East.

“Divine economy” is the traditional way we refer to the way God interacts with the world, particularly in achieving the restoration of humanity to communion with Himself. Sometimes the term is paraphrased as plan of salvation or dispensation. The creation itself, and all the events connected with our redemption in Jesus Christ are included in the Church’s term economy. They are the way God “manages” His creation.

The highpoint of God’s plan for us is the Incarnation of the Word. Everything in the divine economy leading up to the coming of Christ is in some way a preparation for this event. The saga of Abraham and his descendants, the Israelites in Egypt, their exodus to the promised land and their subsequent history are all aspects of this plan which St Paul calls “*the mystery, which from the beginning of the ages has been hidden in God who created all things through Jesus Christ*” (Eph 3:9).

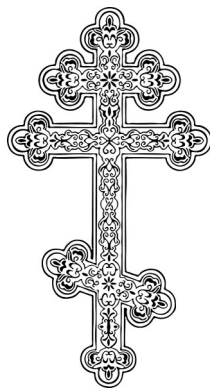
One particular moment in the story of Israel figures prominently in our celebration during the Nativity Fast: the exile of the Jews to Babylon and the experience of three of them in the fiery furnace. These three young men are remembered along with the prophet Daniel on December 17 each year. They are also specifically invoked on the two Sundays before the Nativity because of the accomplishments of their faith.

The Babylonian Exile and the Book of Daniel

In 605 BC the Babylonian king Nebuchadnezzar besieged Jerusalem and made its king a vassal. Responding to several rebellious incidents the Babylonians pillaged the city in 597 BC and destroyed the temple built by Solomon. The Jewish king, his court and many prominent Jews were taken captive and deported to Babylon. Their exile would end in 538 BC when the Persian king Cyrus the Great defeated the Babylonians and allowed the Jews to return home.

The story of the exile and captivity of the Jews forms the background of the Book of Daniel. Its present form, written in Hebrew and Greek, dates to the mid-second century BC, but contains some original Aramaic tales dating from the exile as well. It is generally considered an apocalyptic book, offering its readers consolation that their present troubles (Greek and Roman occupation) would one day end as the Babylonian exile had ended: with the liberation of the Jews and the restoration of true worship.

Daniel was a highly placed Jew, highly regarded for his faithfulness to the Law in an era when the Law was largely neglected. The prophet Ezechiel, who lived through the Babylonian exile, puts Daniel in the highest company in this prophecy: “*The word of the LORD came again to me, saying: ‘Son of man, when a land sins against Me by persistent unfaithfulness, I will stretch out My hand against it; I will cut off its supply of bread, send famine on it, and cut off man and beast from it. Even if these three men, Noah, Daniel and Job, were in it, they would deliver only themselves by their righteousness, says the Lord GOD’*” (EZ 14:14).



Prokimenon

Reader: Blessed are You, O Lord, God of our Fathers, and Your name is worthy praise and glorious forever.

People: Blessed are You, O Lord, God of our Fathers, and Your name is worthy praise and glorious forever.

Reader: For You are just in all You have done to us, and all Your works are true and Your ways right

People: Blessed are You, O Lord, God of our Fathers, and Your name is worthy praise and glorious forever.

Reader: Blessed are You, O Lord, God of our Fathers,.

People: And Your name is worthy praise and glorious forever.

Epistle: Col. 3:4-11

Alleluia Verses

Moses and Aaron were among His priests, and Samuel among those who called upon His name.

Verse: The just cried out, and the Lord heard them, and He delivered them from all their trials.

Gospel: Lk. 14:16-24, Sunday of the Forefathers

