

*From the Divine Office for the Sunday of the Ointment-bearing Women*

*Why do you mingle tears with ointments? The stone has been rolled away, and the tomb is empty. Behold, corruption has been trampled down by Life! Behold, the grave seals bear a radiant witness! The guards are asleep. All the dead are saved by God, and Hades is in mourning! Hasten with joy to the Apostles and tell them, "Christ, the First-born of the dead, He who caused death to die, shall go before you into Galilee!" (Vespers)*

*You fell asleep in Your body, O King and Lord of all mankind. Then you rose on the third day, raising up Adam from corruption and destroying Death: You are the immortal Passover and the salvation of the world.*

*Hear the voice of gladness, O ointment-bearing women: "I have trampled down tormenting Hades, and I have raised up the world from corruption. Therefore, hasten and tell the good news to My beloved disciples. Let Joy break forth on My creation in which sorrow and grief formerly appeared!" (Exapostilaria)*



**SUNDAY OF THE OINTMENT-BEARING WOMEN**

**APRIL 14, 2024**



**Our Lady of Perpetual Help Melkite Catholic Church**  
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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 2) pg. 38**

When You descended to death, O Immortal Life, You put Hades to death by the splendor of your divinity. And when You raised the dead from below the earth, all the heavenly powers cried out to You: “O Giver of life, Christ our God, glory to You!”

**Troparion Of Joseph (Tone 2)**

The Noble Joseph took down from the tree your spotless body and wrapped it in pure linen and laid it for burial in a new tomb. But on the third day, You arose, O Lord, and bestowed great mercy upon the world.

**Troparion of the Myrrh-bearers (Tone 2)**

The angel stood by the tomb and cried out to the Ointment-bearing Women: “Ointments are for the dead, but Christ has proved Himself free from corruption. Cry out, then: “The Lord is risen and has bestowed great mercy upon the world.”

**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.

They arranged for the baptism of those who were catechumens and brought Holy Communion to the baptized, encouraging each one to remain strong in their witness to Christ. As the Church developed, deacons were easily targeted during the persecutions. Their activities in tending to the needs of widows, orphans, the sick, and the imprisoned made them highly visible to the authorities. Since deacons were responsible for an increasing amount of church property and sacred items such as liturgical books and vessels as well as funds for the needy, it was lucrative to seek them out and seize these treasures.

In AD 258 the Archdeacon of Rome, Lawrence was arrested and ordered to hand over the Church’s treasures. He gathered all the poor and the needy in his care and presented them to the Prefect, saying “Behold the treasures of the Church.” Lawrence was martyred and today is commemorated in the Church on the anniversary of his death, August 10. Other early deacon martyrs remembered in our Church are Saints Benjamin the Persian (October 13), Vincent of Saragossa (November 11), and Habib of Edessa (November 15).

Over the ages the deacons’ ministry of service to the “Church’s treasures” evolved to include service to the priest at the holy table. As the deacon handled the material side of the Church’s affairs – particularly its charitable ministry – he also came to care for the material side of the Liturgy. He received and apportioned the holy gifts, carried the Holy Gospel, incensed the church and directed the work of the servers. In icons saintly deacons are often shown holding a censer – symbol of their liturgical ministry – and a church or cashbox, representing their material responsibilities.

**Were There Women Deacons?**

In Romans 16:1-2 we read, “*I commend to you Phoebe our sister, who is a servant of the Church in Cenchrea that you may receive her in the Lord...*” It is thought that Phoebe may have brought St Paul’s epistle to the Church at Rome. The Greek word translated here as “servant” is diakonos, giving rise to the idea that Phoebe was an ordained deacon. Both Clement of Alexandria and John Chrysostom recognized Phoebe as a deacon and she is commemorated as such on September 3 with this troparion:

Enlightened by grace and taught the Faith by the chosen vessel of Christ, you were found worthy of the diaconate; and you carried Paul’s words to Rome. O Deaconess Phoebe, pray to Christ God that His Spirit may enlighten our souls!

There are a number of references over the next few centuries to women deacons, but their place in the Church is debated. Many say that they ministered to women, particularly catechumens, preparing them for and assisting in their baptism where the presence of men would have been unseemly. They were ordained in a rite similar to but not identical with that of deacons.

Perhaps the best known deaconess in the Byzantine Church was St Olympia (July 25) who headed a community of some 250 women. She is known for her care of St John Chrysostom, attending to his garments and preparing his meals, which she sent daily to the episcopate. Other leading deaconesses of her community known to us by name were the Pentadia, Procla, Sylvina, and Nicarete.

As Christianity became the norm in the Byzantine Empire the adult catechumenate – and the deaconesses’ principal function – came to an end. Deaconesses survived for a time only in women’s monasteries. They all but died out in the Armenian, Georgian and Greek Churches after World War I but have since been revived. Deaconesses in the Coptic Church are comparable to Catholic sisters. They are not ordained, but blessed.

**DIVINE LITURGY INTENTIONS**

**Today** +Violet Gazal (1 yr.) Requested by her family  
**April 21** +Wendy Halal (1 yr.). Requested by her husband Nick and family  
**April 28** +Samara, Aboody & Rahall Families, living & deceased. Requested by Paul & Doreen Samara & family and the Rahall family

**Today's Coffee Hr. is hosted by the family of Violet Gazal**

**Next Sunday's Coffee Hr. will be hosted by Nick Halal & family**

**Please remember in your prayers:** George Arraj, Jr., Peter Abraham, Robert Ghiz, Sadie Mirante, 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, Sandra Hanlan, Susan Bailey, Jacqueline Ventriglia, 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** \$1,360  
**Coffee Hr.** \$ 63  
**Candles** \$ 58  
**Stole** \$ 100  
**TOTAL** \$1,581

**God bless you for your generosity!**

**Just a reminder that we need \$2,000 per week to meet our financial obligations.**



**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.**

Thanks to all who worked so hard during Great Lent and Holy Week to make our celebrations both beautiful and spiritually fulfilling. Those who sang, those who read, those who baked or cooked/dyed the eggs, those who donated funds for the various items needed for our celebrations (flowers eggs, service books, etc.) Know that your contributions are much appreciated and never taken for granted! Christ is Risen! He is Truly Risen! Fr. Bryan

Below is a list of donations we received for flowers and other items **to date:**

Janice Abdelnour	
Antoinette Arraj	In memory George Arraj, Sr.
Susan Arraje	In memory of deceased members of Arraje & Hajjar families
Laurance & Seemon Aulo	In memory of Sadallah Al Kateb & those who died in the Iraq fire
Dumont Family	
James & Karen Esper	In memory of James & Catherine Esper, Carol Ann Esper Webster and Robert & Lorraine Nelson
Maria Filewicz	
Lisa Jagielski	In memory Alfred Jagielski
Joe & Lorraine Lian	In memory of Paul Hajjar, Terese Russell Jones
Sadie Mirante	
Mary Rizk	
Jean & Nadia Sakhat & Family	
Antonio & Karen Solitro	In memory Nick & Dora Barouk, Peter Solitro, Matteo & Lucia Solitro
Marilyn & Zenon Tencza	In memory Alice & George Joseph, Michelina & Stanley Tencza
Lauri Moossa & Michael Georges	

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROSITY!**

## The Apostles Institute the Order of Deacons (Acts 6:1-7)

WHY DO WE HAVE DEACONS in the Church? The emergence of this order came about in response to a specific issue which the apostles faced in Jerusalem. In Acts 6:1 we read that the “Hellenists” were complaining against the “Hebrews” *“because their widows were neglected in the daily distribution.”*

Almost from its beginning it seems the followers of Christ concerned themselves with feeding their poor. In first century society women who had outlived their breadwinner husbands were especially vulnerable, particularly if they had no sons to care for them. If a widow had no children or relatives she was reduced to the status of a beggar. Needless to say, they had nothing like today’s workplace where they could be employed.

In Jerusalem the synagogues tried to ease the hardships faced by these women. Early on Friday men from the synagogues would canvass the city for goods and money for the widows. These would be distributed that afternoon, before the onset of the Sabbath. The Jewish believers in Jesus would naturally do something similar.

These first followers of the Lord lived with the memory of His preaching, His miracles, His death and resurrection and the descent of His Spirit fresh in their minds. Yet, human weakness made itself felt as well. The local believers – the Aramaic-speaking Jews of the Holy Land, whom Acts calls the Hebrews – seemed to be more attentive to their poor while neglecting the “Greeks,” those Hellenized Jews more inclined to embrace Greek culture, perhaps from places like Antioch or Caesarea, who had come to Jerusalem seeking help

The Apostles were torn between the needs of those indigents and the mission from Christ to spread the Gospel. Wanting to address this problem without allowing it to distract them from their proper task of preaching the Gospel, the apostles instituted the order of deacon to deal with the matter. They ordained seven men as the first deacons for the purpose of caring for these widows. While the deacons served the material needs of the people, the apostles concentrated on the spiritual: *“We will give ourselves continually to prayer and to the ministry of the Word”* (Acts 6:4).

### The First Deacons

Acts identifies the first seven deacons and describes how they began their ministry. They were chosen by *“the whole multitude”* (v. 5) and presented to the apostles who prayed and laid hands on them. Prayer and the laying-on of hands has been the rite prescribed for the ordination of deacons, priests and bishops ever since.

Each of the seven listed in Acts bore Greek names. They may have been Hellenized Jews, the very people who felt as a disadvantage in the Jerusalem community. One, Nicholas, is identified as *“a proselyte from Antioch”* (v. 5) and would have been of pagan origin. The only two who appear elsewhere in Acts are Stephen and Philip.

Stephen, described as *“full of grace and power”* (Acts 6:8), incurred the resentment of some Jews with whom he disputed. They denounced him to the Sanhedrin where he was condemned to death and executed (Acts 7). The Church honors him as the Protomartyr, the first to die because of his faith in Christ. Chapter 8 of Acts tells of the activities of the deacon Philip who preached the Gospel in Samaria and converted an Ethiopian on the road to Gaza.

Various local traditions connect Prochoros with Nicomedia, Nicanor with Cyprus, Timon with Bosra, and Parmenas with Macedonia. According to St Irenaeus, the name of Nicholas was connected with the Nicolaitians, a sect condemned in the Book of Revelation. It is not known whether he was actually a part of this group or, as Clement of Alexandria believed, they corrupted his teachings.

### Deacons in the Early Church

The importance which deacons assumed in the first-century Church is shown in 1 Tim 3:8-13 where the qualifications for deacons closely resemble the requirements for bishops, with this exception. Potential bishops should demonstrate hospitality (as the head of a family) and an ability to teach (see 1 Tim 3:2). From the first the role of deacons has been connected with a developing range of administrative responsibilities, beginning with the distribution of goods to the poor. During the Roman persecutions they ministered to prisoners. The third-century Martyrdom of Saints Perpetua and Felicitas, tells how deacons served as intermediaries with the authorities to improve the condition of the prisoners and between the prisoners and their families.

### Trisagion

**All of you who have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. Alleluia!**

### Prokimenon

**Reader:** My strength and my courage is the Lord, and He has been my Savior.

**People:** My strength and my courage is the Lord, and He has been my Savior.

**Reader:** The Lord has chastised me through his teaching, yet He has not delivered me to death.

**People:** My strength and my courage is the Lord, and He has been my Savior.

**Reader:** My strength and my courage is the Lord,

**People:** And He has been my Savior.

### Epistle: Acts 6:1-7

### Alleluia Verses

The Lord shall hear you on the day of distress; may the name of the God of Jacob defend you.

**Verse** Lord, save your king and listen to us whatever day we call upon you.

### Gospel: Mk. 15:43-47; 16:1-8, Sunday of Ointment-Bearing Women

### Hirmos of Pascha: (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 8)

Receive the Body of Christ and taste the Source 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!**