

*From the Divine Office for the Sunday of the Fathers of Nicaea I*

*Who tore Your garment, O Savior? It was Arius, who separated and caused division within the Trinity of equal and eternal majesty. He did not admit that You are One of the Holy Trinity. He inspired Nestorius to reject the title of "Theotokos" but the Council of Nicaea proclaimed You as the Son of God, the Lord who share the same throne with the Father and the Spirit. (Vespers)*

*Let us hear the Church of God crying out to us in a sublime proclamation: "Let him who has thirst come to me and drink; I have mixed my wine in the cup of wisdom. I have prepared it with the Word of Truth; and the water I pour out is not that of discord, but of unity in the Faith!" The new Israel drinks from it and sees God, who says, "Behold and see: I am the same; I never change; I am God for all time, and there is no other God beside Me!" Those who partake will be satisfied and will praise the great mystery of Christ! (Orthros)*



**SUNDAY OF THE FATHERS OF NICAEA I**

**MAY 12 , 2024**



**FATHERS OF THE FIRST ECUMENICAL COUNCIL (325 AD)**



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Divine Liturgy: Sunday 10:00 AM

### Antiphon (Feast)

1: All you peoples, clap your hands: shout to God with cries of gladness.

*All: O Son of God, who ascended in glory to Heaven, save us who sing to You. Alleluia!*

2: For the Lord, the Most High, the Awesome One, is the great King over all the earth.

*All: O Son of God, who ascended in glory to Heaven, save us who sing to You. Alleluia!*

3: He brings people under us, nations under our feet.

*All: O Son of God, who ascended in glory to Heaven, save us who sing to You. Alleluia!*

### Entrance Hymn

**Priest:** God ascended amid shouts of joy, the Lord amid trumpet blasts. O Son of God, Who gloriously ascended into heaven

*All: O Son of God, who ascended in glory to Heaven, save us who sing to You. Alleluia!*

### Troparion of the Resurrection (Tone 6) Pg. 41

The angelic powers were around your tomb, and the guards became as dead, and Mary stood at the tomb, seeking your spotless body; then You despoiled Hades without being tried by it, and You met the Virgin O Bestower of life. O Lord, who rose from the dead, glory to You!

### Troparion of the Ascension (Tone 4)

You ascended in glory, O Christ our God, and gladdened Your disciples by the promise of the Holy Spirit. Through Your blessing they were confirmed in their belief that You are the Son of God, the Redeemer of the world.

### Troparion of the Fathers (Tone 8)

O Christ our God, You are infinitely glorified, for You established our Fathers as radiant stars on earth. You led us to the true faith through them. O Most Merciful One, glory to You

### Kondakion of the Ascension (Tone 4)

After fulfilling for us your plan of redemption and joining the things of earth with those of heaven, O Christ our God, You gloriously ascended without abandoning us, but remained with us forever and reassured all who love You by telling them: “Behold, I am with you: no one has power against you.”

**Prayer That His Disciples Be One** – The prayer continues: “I have manifested Your name to the men whom You have given me out of the world.... and they have believed that you sent me” (verses 6, 8). The apostles had been called forth by Christ to leave their families and their livelihoods to follow Him. They were about to see Him arrested, humiliated and killed. They in their turn would face similar ends. Yet He prays, not that they remain steadfast, but that they remain one. “Holy Father, keep through Your name those whom You have given me, that they may be one as we are” (verse 11). The unity of the apostles in Christ would be more significant than the physical lives of any one of them, because from that communion would come the ongoing life of the entire Church.

**Prayer for the Church and the World** – A few verses later we find a similar prayer for the whole Church and the world as well: “I do not pray for those alone, but also for those who will believe through their word that they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me and I in You that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me” (verses 20-21).

This mutual interaction of Father, Son and Holy Spirit in the Trinity is extended to humanity in the Church. The bond we have with God is no longer simply that of creature to Creator; it is the filial relationship of the Son to the Father. “as You, Father, are in Me and I in You.” The Church, then, is not simply an human association of Jesus’ followers but an organic union of those who are “one in Us.”

Finally, the world’s conversion to Christ is tied to the communion of the Church with God. This passage is often explained to mean that when Christians are united to one another the rest of the world will believe. It is perhaps more accurate to say that when the Church in “one in Us” – finding the source of its unity in the life of the Trinity rather than in authority, political power or other external factors – people will be drawn to it.

### **The Icon of Our Communion with God**

The icon which most perfectly expresses this vision for the communion of the Church as being “one in Us” is the adaptation by St Andrei Rublev of the traditional image, “The Hospitality of Abraham.” The patriarch himself and other details from the Genesis story are deleted and all we see are the three guests whom he entertained, seated around a table. In Gen 18:2 these visitors are described as “three men” but Rublev depicts them as angels. In fact Gen 18:13 and verses following refer to Abraham’s company as “the LORD,” causing the Fathers to see this visitation as an early indication of the Trinity. Their eternal relationship is expressed by the fluid motion of their gestures.

The fourth place at the table, included in these gestures, is set for us. Through baptism we have been brought into the eternal relationship of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. The single vessel on the table suggests the means of our ongoing communion with God, the Eucharist.



## DIVINE LITURGY INTENTIONS

Today All our mothers living and deceased  
May 19 Our families and friends, living and deceased

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

Next Sunday's Coffee Hr. is hosted by

**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	\$ 1,475
Coffee Hr.	\$ 91
Candles	\$ 36
Rent	\$ 600
Dividends	\$ 103.50
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 2,305.50</b>

God bless you for your generosity!

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



## HAPPY MOTHER'S DAY TO ALL THE MOTHERS OF THE PARISH

**GOD BLESS YOU!**



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.

### COOKOUT FUNDRAISER

On June 23 after the Divine Liturgy, we will have a cookout to raise funds for various projects. Among those are replacing the freezer and stove in the Hall kitchen, new ceiling tiles in the Hall, and renovating the rectory kitchen.

Tickets are \$20 for adults and children over 12 and \$10 for children under 12.

The menu includes: hamburgers, hot dogs, chicken, French fries, macaroni salad, salad, and desserts.

Tickets go on sale in May.

Please plan to attend and support our continuing effort to spruce up our property!

### MELKITE CONVENTION

The 53rd National Melkite Convention will take place **July 4-7, 2024** at the Marriott Boston Quincy Hotel. The convention is sponsored by Our Lady of the Annunciation Cathedral.

Check the sheets in the back of the church for more details. Please make every effort to attend! It is a weekend filled with worship, spirituality, and fellowship!

## Being “One in Us” (John 17:1-13)

IN MONASTIC OR RELIGIOUS CIRCLES it is common for spiritual leaders to leave their followers a “spiritual testament,” an outline of the teachings and instructions which they want uppermost in their disciples’ minds. Christ’s prayer in John 17 is a kind of spiritual testament. In it the Lord expresses His holy will for Himself, for His apostles, for the Church and for all mankind on the eve of His crucifixion.

**The Time of His Glorification** – The prayer begins with Christ praying for Himself: “*Father, the hour has come. Glorify your Son, that your Son may glorify You*” (verse 1). What the Scripture calls Christ’s “hour” refers to the time of His redeeming sacrifice. Christ prays that He would be glorified by the completeness of this self-emptying. He totally enters into our experience of suffering and death in order to be one with us in all things except sin. His glory would not be the earthly idea of glory – power and might – but the glory of absolute and unconditional love.

**Jesus as the Eternal Word Made Flesh** – The prayer continues: “*glorify me in your presence with the glory I had with You before the world began*” (verse 5). The heavenly glory, known to the angels, was to be manifested to us on earth through the cross. This reference brings us back to the proclamation of who Jesus is which is found in the very first verse of John’s Gospel: “*In the beginning was the Word...*” The Gospel proclaims Jesus as the pre-eternal Word of God who is glorified with the Father before all ages. Jesus is not simply a prophet or inspired teacher – He is the One whom the Gospel says ‘...was in the beginning with God. All things were made through Him and without Him nothing was made that was made’ (John 1:2, 3).

This portrait of the eternal Word as one with the Father shows us a God who is in an eternal relationship and who is, therefore, love by His very nature (see 1 John 4:8). God’s relationship is, first of all, with the true and entirely appropriate object of His love: His divine Word who is glorified with Him from all eternity. Based on the words of this prayer the Church would go on to speak of Christ as “equal in glory with the Father.” Combining this with Christ’s teaching on the Holy Spirit, later believers would express this relationship as the doctrine of the Holy Trinity.

**Our Re-creation is in Christ** – Between verses 1 and 5 we find a third concept recorded in the Gospel: “...*You have given Him authority over all flesh that He should give eternal life to as many as You have given Him*” (verse 2). The Word of God, through whom all things were made, is now incarnate in Jesus of Nazareth as the agent of a new creation. Mankind is given a new life which is, in fact, a second chance at the life intended for him from the beginning as described in the book of Genesis.

This life is then described: “*And this is eternal life: that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent*” (verse 3). Eternal life, authentic life is communion: that knowledge which flows from a relationship with God. It was a relationship of communion which Genesis describes as God “walking with Adam” in the Garden. That fellowship, once lost, is restored through Christ.

Some scholars believe that this verse is the Evangelist’s commentary on Christ’s prayer, an aside in the text, since it refers to the Lord in the third person. There were no quotation marks, punctuation or even paragraphs in first-century Greek manuscripts so it is possible that this is so.

This verse does make an excellent commentary, a kind of liturgical refrain not only to this prayer but to our entire life in Christ. All of the Church’s life – our liturgies, icons, practices – draws its power from the relationship which we have with God. When we are in a living communion with Him, all that we do as Christians shows forth that life. Our interior eyes gain the power to see what is present in the Scriptures, the Eucharist or the saints. They become means for us to deepen the life which comes from our relationship with God in Christ. If we are not living in that relationship then these practices are simply outward forms which will increasingly bore us.

### Prokimenon

**Reader:** Blessed are You, O Lord God of our fathers, and your name is worthy of praise and glorious forever.

**People:** Blessed are You, O Lord God of our fathers, and your name is worthy of 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 of praise and glorious forever.

**Reader:** Blessed are You, O Lord God of our fathers,

**People:** And your name is worthy of praise and glorious forever.

### Epistle: Acts 20:16-18; 27-36

### Alleluia Verses

The God of gods, the Lord has spoken and summoned the earth from the rising of the sun to its setting.

**Verse:** Gather his faithful ones around Him, those who have made a covenant with Him through sacrifices.

**Gospel:** Jn. 17:1-13, Sunday of the Fathers of Nicaea I

### Hirmos of the Ascension (Tone 5)

O you who have given birth in time to the One whom no limit of time can hold, You thus have become the Mother of God in a manner beyond understanding and beyond words: we the faithful magnify you in one mind.

### Kinonikon

Praise the Lord from the heavens...

### **After Communion=Troparion of the Ascension**

