

*From the Divine Office for the Feast of our Father Among the Saints
Nicephoros the Confessor (June 2)*

O Nicephoros, Hierarch of God, in you we recognize a firm pillar of the faith, a rampart of sacred doctrine, a defender of piety, a dwelling of purity, a precious flask filled with the myrrh of the Spirit, repository of teachings, upon whom rests the Church of Christ! (Vespers)

Glorious Nicephoros, since you are a High Priest of Christ and a teacher, you have deserved from the Lord Himself a heavenly crown of victory. Therefore, save those who honor you with faith (Kontakion)



**SECOND SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST
JUNE 2, 2024**



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Divine Liturgy: Sunday 10:00 AM

Antiphon (1st)

1: Shout joyfully to the Lord, all the earth, and sing praise to His name.

Through the prayers of the Mother of God, O Savior, save us.

2: Say to God: How awesome are Your deeds! So great is Your power that Your enemies cringe before You.

Be shafa'ati Walidatil Eelah, ya Mukhallisu, khallisna.

3: Let all the earth worship You and sing praises to You; let it sing praises to Your name, O Most High!

Through the prayers of the Mother of God, O Savior, save us.

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 1) Pg. 38

After the stone was sealed by the Jews and the while the soldiers were watching Your spotless body, You rose, O Savior, on the third day, bestowing life to the world. Wherefore, the heavenly powers cried out to You, O Giver of Life: "Glory to Your resurrection, O Christ! Glory to Your kingdom! Glory to Your economy, O You who alone are the lover of mankind!"

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 (Tone 2) Pg. 16

O never failing Protectress of Christians and their ever-present intercessor before the Creator, despise not the petitions of us sinners, but in your goodness extend your help to us who call upon you with confidence. Hasten, O Mother of God, to intercede for us, for you have always protected those who honor you.

The Kingdom of God

All through Jesus' ministry the preaching of Jesus was filled with "kingdom talk." The Lord's Prayer, the parables, and even His final word to Pilate, "*My kingdom is not of this world*" (Jn 18:36), all use this term drawn from Jewish experience and expectation.

In Jewish history the kingdom of God was a worldly entity, the kingdom of David. This kingdom was short-lived. It was divided on the death of David's son, Solomon, and then destroyed by the Babylonians in the sixth century BC. From then until the coming of Christ the Jews largely lived under foreign rule, but always looked for the restoration of "God's kingdom," meaning their independence.

By announcing that the kingdom of God was at hand the Lord was dismissing the ideas that the kingdom was a matter of political independence and therefore something in the material future. For Jesus the "kingdom" was something of the spirit. With the incarnation it is "at hand." With the spread of Christ's public ministry through the ministry of the apostles it "has come near to you" (Lk 10:9) because the kingdom of God is inner communion with Him. It was already realized in Christ and would become possible for anyone with His death and resurrection which occasioned the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. As St Paul writes, "*For it pleased the Father that in Him all the fullness should dwell, and by Him to reconcile all things to Himself, by Him, whether things on earth or things in heaven, having made peace through the blood of His cross*" (Col 1:19, 20).

Thus the kingdom of God is life in and with God, which is now ours mystically through our sharing in the life of the Church and in the ways we make Christ's teachings the basis of our life. The kingdom will come in power at the end of the age when "*Christ who is our life appears*" and those who are in Him will share in His glory (see Col 3:1-4).

Jesus' "Good News"

The message preached by both Jesus and the Forerunner was that the kingdom of heaven is at hand. In Mark's Gospel a comment is added: "*Now after John was put in prison, Jesus came to Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the gospel"*" (Mk 1:14, 15).

We associate the term "gospel" with the four New Testament texts which speak of the life and message of Christ. In the Roman Empire a "gospel" was an imperial proclamation heralded with fanfare – "good news," as it is often translated. By adopting that word the apostles were saying that Jesus was the "real news" in our world.

"The kingdom of heaven has no price tag on it: it is worth as much as you have. For Zacchaeus it was worth half of what he owned, because the other half that he had unjustly pocketed he promised to restore fourfold. For Peter and Andrew it was worth the nets and vessel they had left behind; for the widow it was worth two copper coins; for another it was worth a cup of cold water. So, as we said, the kingdom of heaven is worth as much as you have." St Gregory the Great, Forty Gospel Homilies, 5.2

DIVINE LITURGY INTENTIONS

Today + **Jordan Taylor Wingate.** Requested by Tom Sarrouf and family

This morning's Coffee Hr. is hosted by Mark Bashour

Next Sunday's Coffee Hr. will be hosted by Eric Ewanco

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	\$
Coffee Hr.	\$
Candles	\$
Hall Rental	\$
Donations	\$
Flowers	\$
TOTAL	\$

God bless you for your generosity!
Just a reminder that we need at least \$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.

CLEAN UP DAY

Next Saturday, June 8 we will have a clean up day at the church. Please come and help up spruce up the interior and exterior of the church. We will be there from 10am-1pm. Lunch will be served.

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 are now on sale. See Nick Rahall or Ryan Dumont. You may also purchase tickets online through our website.

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!

Registration has been extended to June 10.

ON THE FIRST SUNDAY that occurs during the Apostles' Fast our Church regularly reminds us of the call of the leaders of these apostles by the Lord. The Gospel passage read at the Divine Liturgy is Mt 4:18-23, the call of the fishermen. Mark and Luke also tell of this incident, at the effective beginning of Christ's public ministry.

The call of these disciples seems unusually abrupt to many readers. Jesus approaches some fishermen and says "Follow me," and they do. In the Gospel of John we read of a previous encounter that may make this prompt response a bit less jarring.

Meeting Jesus at the Jordan

John describes both Jesus and some of those who would become His followers among those around John the Baptist at the Jordan. While Jesus and the apostles mentioned in John were from Galilee, they may have first met in Judea, where John was baptizing. John the Baptist had acquired a reputation for radical holiness and had drawn people from even farther away than Galilee (see Mk 3:8). It is not unreasonable than religious Galileans like Jesus and His future followers would have traveled to Judea as well

In John we read: *"Again, the next day, John stood with two of his disciples. And looking at Jesus as He walked, he said, 'Behold the Lamb of God!' The two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus. Then Jesus turned, and seeing them following, said to them, 'What do you seek?' They said to Him, 'Rabbi' (which is to say, when translated, Teacher), 'where are You staying?' He said to them, 'Come and see.' They came and saw where He was staying, and remained with Him that day (now it was about the tenth hour). One of the two who heard John speak, and followed Him, was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. He first found his own brother Simon, and said to him, 'We have found the Messiah' (which is translated, the Christ). And he brought him to Jesus"* (Jn 1:35-42). The disciples' question, "Where are you staying?" implies that Jesus was not at home; He was a visitor in lodgings. His fellow Galileans were thus doubly attracted to Him. He had John's endorsement and He was from their own native region. It is also in light of this passage that the Byzantine Churches call Andrew the First-Called of the apostles.

Next called of the apostles, according to John, would be Philip and Nathaniel. As John tells it, *"The following day Jesus wanted to go to Galilee, and He found Philip and said to him, 'Follow Me.' Now Philip was from Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter. Philip found Nathanael and said to him, 'We have found Him of whom Moses in the law, and also the prophets, wrote—Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.' And Nathanael said to him, 'Can anything good come out of Nazareth?' Philip said to him, 'Come and see'"* (Jn 1:43-46).

Back in Galilee

The Gospels do not dwell on Jesus' return from the Jordan. Matthew outlines it in a few words: *"Now when Jesus heard that John had been put in prison, He departed to Galilee. And leaving Nazareth, He came and dwelt in Capernaum... From that time Jesus began to preach and to say, 'Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.'" (Mt 4:12, 13, 17).* This was the same message that John was spreading around Judea (see Mt 3:1) – it is as if Jesus was continuing John's work in Galilee.

The Gospel of John reports how, soon after returning to Galilee, Jesus *"and His disciples"* (Jn 2:2) attended a wedding at Cana. This is the first we hear that Jesus has disciples. When did they begin to follow Him? Once Jesus began His own ministry He quickly surrounded Himself with local followers, some of whom had been attracted to John the Baptist.

When Jesus approached Andrew and Peter as they were fishing, He invited them to follow Him, but with a promise. "Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men" (Mt 4:20). This image becomes clearer at the end of Matthew's Gospel when Jesus tells His eleven foremost disciples, "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations" (Mt 28:19). Ultimately these former fishermen would be catching their "fish" in Asia Minor and Europe.

Prokimenon

Reader: May your kindness, O Lord, be upon us, for we have hoped in You.

People: May your kindness, O Lord, be upon us, for we have hoped in You.

Reader: Exult, you just, in the Lord; praise from the upright is fitting.

People: May your kindness, O Lord, be upon us, for we have hoped in You.

Reader: May your kindness, O Lord, be upon us,

People: For we have hoped in You.

Epistle: Rom. 2:10-16

Alleluia

O God, You granted me retribution and made peoples subject to me and saved me from my raging enemies.

Verse: Therefore, I will proclaim You, O Lord, among the nations, and I will sing praise to Your name.

Gospel: Mt. Mt. 4:18-23

