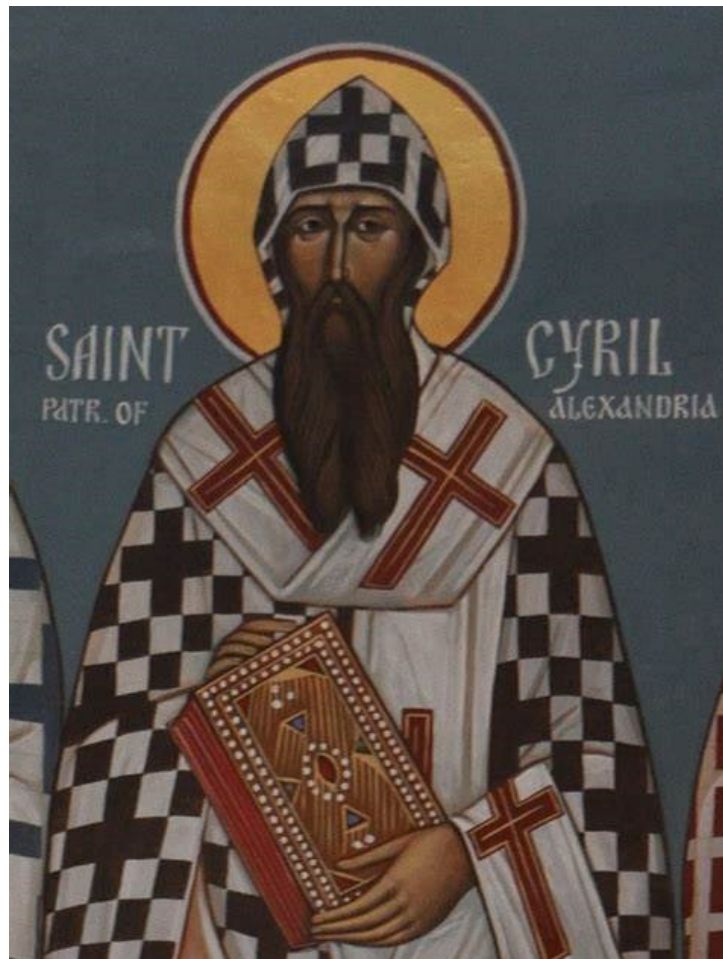


*From the Divine Office for the Feast of our Father Among the Saints  
Cyril, Archbishop of Alexandria (June 9)*

*The entire Church is adorned by the elegance of your discourses, O Cyril, thrice-blessed hierarch. She is radiant in the splendor of the Faith as she reverently venerates your memory, O glory of the Orthodox, spokesman for the Fathers gathered in Council, and champion of the all-holy Mother of God! (Vespers)*

*O Cyril, through the power you received from Christ, you answered the questions of heretics and enriched the Church with your sublime doctrine, weeding out the errors of Nestorius; wherefore, O blessed one, you now stand with the choirs of angels before Christ, unceasingly interceding that He may grant forgiveness of sins to us all. (Kontakion)*



**THIRD SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST  
JUNE 9, 2024**



**SERMON ON THE MOUNT**

**Our Lady of Perpetual Help Melkite Catholic Church**  
256 Hamilton St.  
Worcester, MA 01604  
**Rectory: (508) 752-4174 Hall: (508) 755-2199**  
**Email: olphmelkite@gmail.com**  
**Rev. Bryan McNeil, Pastor**  
**Rev. Deacon Elias Bailey**  
**Email: Brymc56@comcast.net 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 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!

### 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.

### **Recreated in Christ**

The communion with God which our first parents once enjoyed could only be restored to us by One who lived that communion Himself; and so the Son of God became one of us, taking on our human nature. Sharing in our humanity, He became like us in everything except sin. Death is an inevitable part of human life, and so, because we die, He died. We can say that in this sense Christ died because He was fully human. Just as He shared our existence in the womb and in the helplessness of infancy, He also shared in death. He died, as many do, suffering innocently at the hands of others; He did so, however, without sinning. His death was characterized by surrender to His Father and compassion for others, not by reacting with anger, hatred or even self-pity for what He suffered. To His last breath He lived in unbroken communion with His Father and thereby fulfills the divine plan for humanity in Himself. By sinlessly sharing in all that we are, He opens a way for us to live as human beings were meant to from the start.

And so when Eastern Christians say “Christ died for our sins” it is not to see the cross as the payment of a penalty but as the end of a godly life making incarnate God’s plan for us. It is in this way that the cross figures in the Creed: we proclaim Christ “who, for us men and for our salvation (1) came down from heaven, was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the Virgin Mary, (2) suffered under Pontius Pilate and was buried, (3) on the third day He rose again, (4) ascended into heaven and (5) is seated at the right...”

### **Christ Offers Himself to Destroy Death**

The Fathers saw Christ’s work on our behalf, not as satisfaction demanded by an angry God, but a loving response by the Word. Thus “the mystery hidden from eternity” is the self-emptying of Christ, as St Paul would express it in his epistle to the Philippians: “*Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men*” (Phil 2:5-8). Thus the incarnation, the self emptying of Christ, is the fundamental sacrifice of Christ. The cross follows, as night the day: “*And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross*” (v. 8). Christ’s sacrifice annuls the power of death and provides us with an example to continue His work of defeating death in the circumstances of our lives.

### *From St Athanasius the Great*

*“Because death and corruption were gaining ever-firmer hold on them, the human race was in process of destruction. Man – who was created in God’s image and reflected the very Word Himself in his possession of reason – was disappearing, and the work of God was being undone... what then was God, being good, to do? Was He to let corruption and death have their way with them? ... It was impossible, therefore, that God should leave man to be carried off by corruption, because it would be unfitting and unworthy of Himself. “The Word of the Father alone was both able to recreate all, and worthy to suffer on behalf of all and to be an ambassador for all with the Father. For this purpose, then, the incorporeal, incorruptible and immaterial Word of God entered our world. In one sense, indeed, He was never far from it, for no part of creation had ever been without Him who, while ever abiding in union with the Father, yet fills all things that are. But now He entered the world in a new way, stooping to our level in His love and revealing Himself to us.*

*“Thus, taking a body like our own, because all our bodies were liable to the corruption of death, He surrendered His body to death in place of all, and offered it to the Father. This He did out of sheer love for us, so that in His death all might die, and the law of death thereby be abolished ... This He did that He might turn again to incorruption men who had turned back to corruption, and make them alive through death by the appropriation of His body and by the grace of His resurrection. Thus He would make death to disappear from them as utterly as straw from fire” (St Athanasius, On the Incarnation, II, 6-8).*

## DIVINE LITURGY INTENTIONS

**Today**            **Our Families and Friends, living and deceased**

**Next Sunday**    **Our Fathers, living and deceased**

**This morning's Coffee Hr. is hosted by Eric Ewanco**

**Next Sunday's Coffee Hr. will be hosted by Maria Filewicz**

**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

<b>Weekly</b>	<b>\$2,060</b>
<b>Coffee Hr.</b>	<b>\$ 40</b>
<b>Candles</b>	<b>\$ 55</b>
<b>Rent</b>	<b>\$1,000</b>
<b>Flowers</b>	<b>\$ 10</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$3,165</b>

**God bless you for your generosity!**  
**Just a reminder that we need at least \$2,000 per week to meet our financial obligations.**

### Collection 5/26/2024

<b>Weekly</b>	<b>\$ 1,060</b>
<b>Coffee Hr.</b>	<b>\$ 37</b>
<b>Candles</b>	<b>\$ 20</b>
<b>Flowers</b>	<b>\$ 100</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 1,217</b>

### Collection 5/19/2024

<b>Weekly</b>	<b>\$1,080</b>
<b>Coffee Hr.</b>	<b>\$ 37</b>
<b>Candles</b>	<b>\$ 20</b>
<b>Flowers</b>	<b>\$1,010</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$1,080</b>

**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.**

*Thank You!*

*Thanks to all who helped clean up around the church yesterday. It is very much appreciated. If you weren't able to make it, we'll have another day in the Fall!*

## 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.**



## Undoing the Fall

THE PASSAGE FROM ST PAUL'S Epistle to the Romans read at this Sunday's Liturgy raises a number of questions with which Christians have been wrestling for centuries. We read in verse 6 that "*Christ died for the ungodly*" and in verse 8 that "*Christ died for us.*" Perhaps even more troubling is the statement in verse 10, that "*when we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son.*" What do these assertions mean? How did Christ die "for us"? How were we God's "enemies"? What does it mean to be "reconciled" to God?

It is hard for many of us to read these statements without seeing them in the light of the "judicial" or "penal" interpretation which dominated Western Christian thought in the second millennium. In that view Christ's death is a punishment for our sins. Mankind became God's enemies in Eden when we broke His commandment. Instead of punishing us as we deserve, God decided to punish His Son in our place. His Son became man in order to take our place and receive the punishment which would appease God's wrath. This image of an angry and vengeful God has prompted one commentator to say that we have been shown, not a Father but "the Godfather," a "gangster god," whose wrath needed to be satisfied.

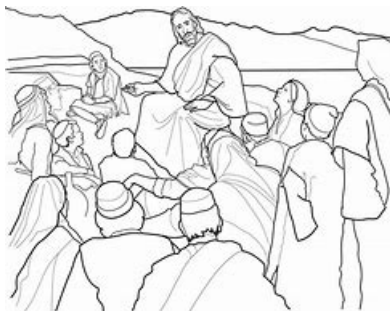
### Made to Live in God

The early Church Fathers read these texts in a far different light. They saw Christ's death in the context of creation and in light of the incarnation. The book of Genesis teaches that the purpose of our existence is to live in union with God. Humanity was created in God's image (see Gen 1) in order to share in His life. But, as we know, that plan was frustrated. In the story of the Fall, God is depicted as warning our first parents to avoid one tree in the garden: "*God has said, 'You shall not eat it, nor shall you touch it, lest you die'*" (Gen 3:2). While many have seen this as a threat, the Fathers interpreted it as a warning. Adam and Eve chose to ignore God's warning and trust the tempter instead: "*For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil'*" (vv. 3-5).

Some commentators saw this passage as a command which Adam and Eve disobeyed and therefore were punished. This is largely because of how the rest of the story was translated. The couple hid from God who confronted Adam: "*And God said to him, 'Who told you that you were naked, unless you have eaten of the tree concerning which I charged you not to eat?'*" (v. 11 also v. 17)

The word translated "charged" in these verses is the most faithful rendering of the Scriptural term, although it is not in common use today. This word has been understood to mean order or command – a matter of authority. In the Greek of the Septuagint, however, it is more accurately rendered admonish or instruct – an expression of responsibility or concern.

Later Eastern Fathers, following this latter reading, saw the resulting Fall, not as a punishment from God, but as the inevitable consequences of our first parents' actions. God warned them but they chose to ignore that warning and do things their way instead of God's. As a result they became trapped in the lifeless cycle of death and sin which we know too well. By substituting their own vision of reality for God's, they were broken and communicated that broken-ness to their descendants. We did not inherit guilt for disobeying a command, but rather the consequence of living apart from God.



### 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: Rom. 5:1-10

### Alleluia

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

**Verse:** O Lord, save Your people and bless Your inheritance.

### Gospel: Mt. 6:22-33

### FINANCIALS

#### May 2024

**Income** \$4,301

**Expenses** \$5,027

**Net** (\$ 726)

#### YTD(10.2023-5.2024)

**Income** \$78,111

**Expenses** \$82,556

**Net** (\$ 4,445)

