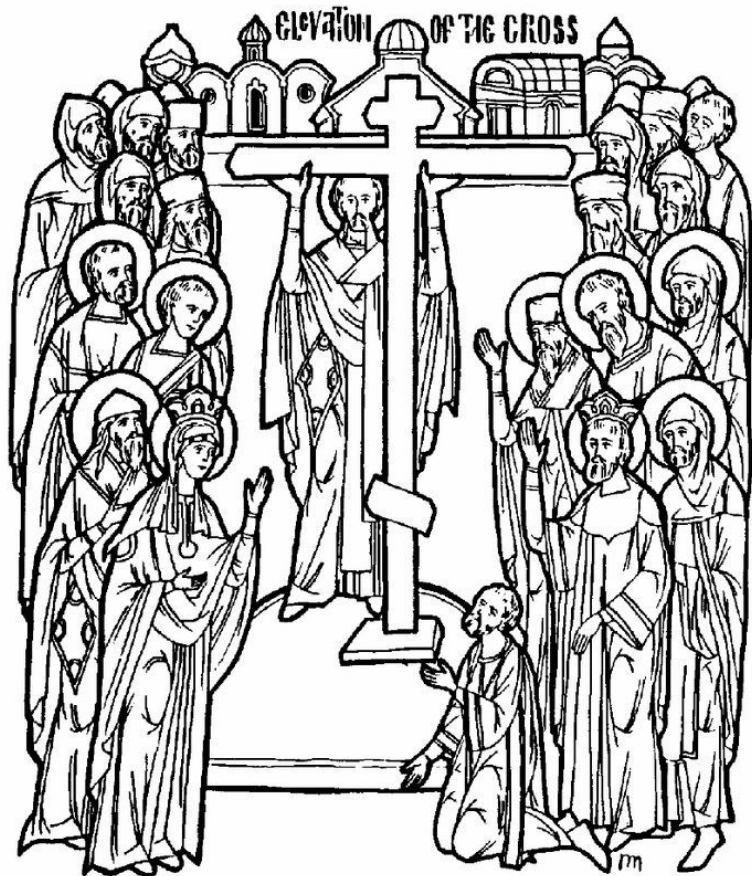


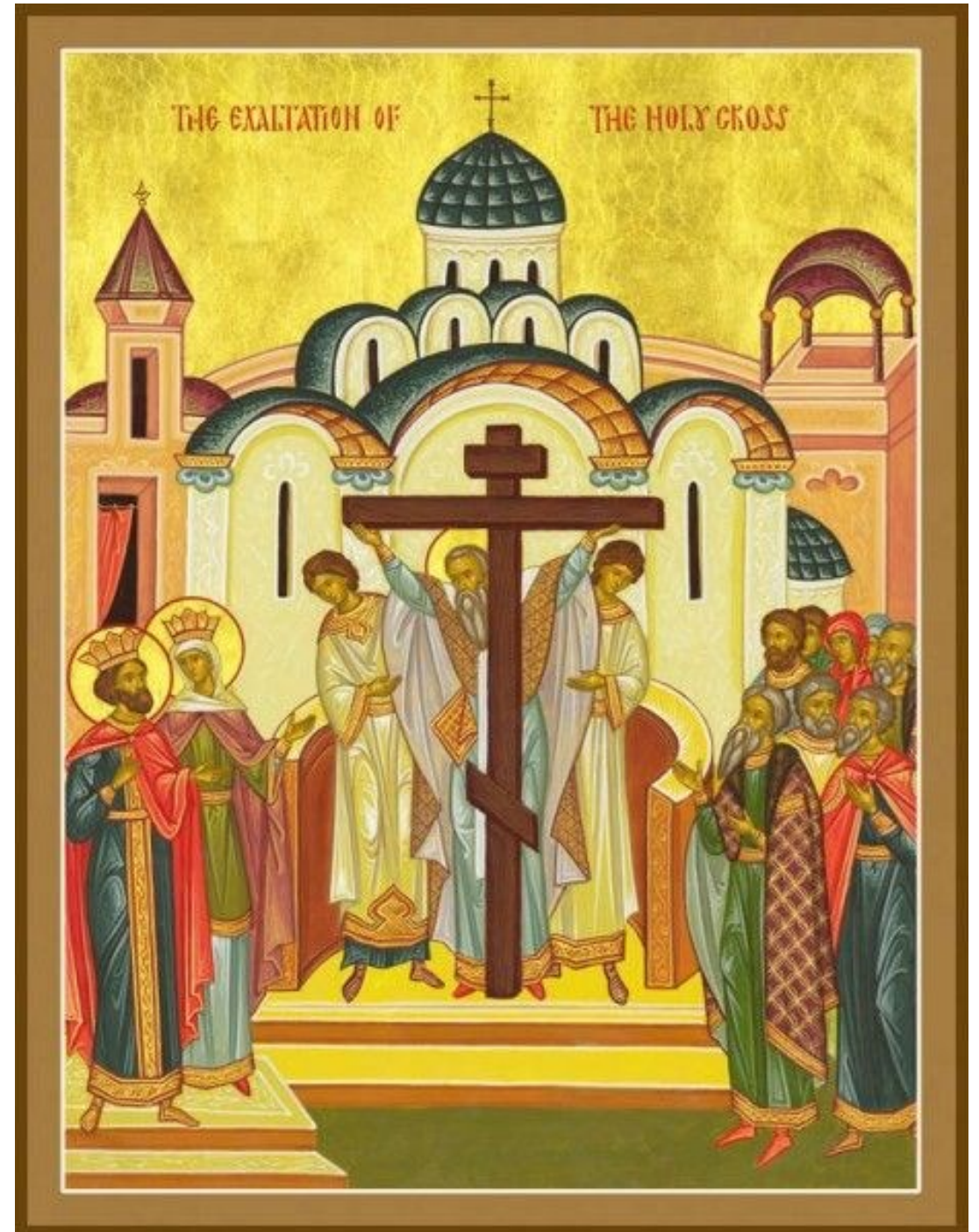
From the Divine Office for the Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross

The Tree of true life was planted in the Place of the skull; and upon it, You, the eternal King, worked salvation in the midst of the earth. Exalted today, it sanctifies the ends of the earth, and the Church is renewed in the Resurrection. Angels in Heaven greatly rejoice and men upon the earth make glad, crying aloud with David and saying, "Exalt the Lord our God and worship at His footstool, for He is holy, granting the world great mercy!" (Vespers)

In Paradise of old, the wood stripped me bare; for by giving its fruit to eat, the enemy brought in death. But now the wood of the Cross that clothes men with the garment of life has been set up in the midst of the earth; and the whole world is filled with boundless joy. Beholding it exalted, O you people, let us with one accord raise in faith our cry to God: "Your Temple is filled with glory!" (Orthros)



SUNDAY AFTER THE HOLY CROSS
SEPTEMBER 15, 2024



Our Lady of Perpetual Help Melkite Catholic Church

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Worcester, MA 01604

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Divine Liturgy: Sunday 10:00 AM

Antiphon (Feast)

1: O God, why have You cast us off forever? Why does Your anger smolder against the sheep of Your pasture?

O Son of God Who were crucified in the flesh, save us who sing to You: Alleluia!

2: Remember Your flock which You built up of old, Your tribe You redeemed as Your inheritance, Mount Sion where You took up Your abode.

O Son of God Who were crucified in the flesh, save us who sing to You: Alleluia!

3: Yet God is our King from all eternity: He has wrought salvation in the midst of the earth

O Son of God Who were crucified in the flesh, save us who sing to You: Alleluia!

Entrance Hymn

Priest: Extol the Lord our God and worship at His footstool for He is Holy.

People: ***O Son of God Who were crucified in the flesh, save us who sing to You: Alleluia!***

Troparion of the Resurrection (Tone 8), Pg. 43

You descended from on high O compassionate One, and consented to burial for three days that You might free us from suffering. O Lord, our life and our resurrection, glory to You!

Troparion of the Holy Cross (Tone 1)

O Lord, save Your people and bless Your inheritance, granting peace to the world. And preserve Your community by the power of Your Cross..

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 Holy Cross (Tone 4)

O Christ God, who chose by Your free volition to be elevated upon the holy cross, grant Your mercies to Your new people who are called by Your name. In Your power gladden the hearts of our public authorities. Strengthen them in every good deed so that Your true alliance may be for them a weapon of peace and a standard of victory.

St Paul on Christ and the Law

St Paul was convinced that Christ had fulfilled the Law as He had promised, teaching that “*Christ is the end* [i.e. completion] *of the Law for righteousness to everyone who believes*” (Romans 10:4) and that therefore “...*by the works of the Law no flesh shall be justified*” (Galatians 2:16).

Obedying the precepts of the Law because they are the will of God is the heart of a righteous observance of the Torah. And so, by submitting Himself completely to the Father’s will, Christ totally fulfilled the moral precepts of the Law. In the Garden before His arrest Christ prayed, “*O my Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as You will*” (Matthew 26:39). He accepted even “this cup” (His approaching passion) if it were His Father’s will.

Christ is also the fulfillment of the ritual precepts of the Law in that He replaces the temple and its cult as the authentic worship of God. When Jesus entered the temple, He drove out those selling the animals needed for sacrifice. People often see this as an attack on commercialism in religion, but this was not Jesus’ point. Asked for a sign to explain His actions, He replied: “*Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.*’ *Then the Jews said, ‘It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and will You raise it up in three days?’ But He was speaking of the temple of His body.*

Therefore, when He had risen from the dead, His disciples remembered that He had said this to them; and they believed the Scripture and the word which Jesus had said” (John 2:19-22). The Temple would be “rebuilt” as the risen body of Christ. Its offerings would be fulfilled in Christ’s offering of Himself, the eternal sacrifice, in which we share at the Divine Liturgy.

Not an Easy Out

St Paul’s insistence that a person is not made righteous by observing the Law led some people to conclude that they could do whatever they wanted. St Paul never taught that. The point of his teaching is that a person does not **earn** righteousness by observing the Law. He saw that observing the Commandments or following the lead of the Church was a way of sacrificing our own will in union with Christ who did the same. Thus the believer can say with St Paul, “*I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me*” (Galatians 2:20). Uniting ourselves with Christ is the way to attain righteousness according to the New Covenant. We do so in the sacrifice of praise which is the Liturgy and in the crucifying of our own will by keeping His precepts and those of His Church.

To Be Crucified with Christ

“The True Life of a Monk” is an icon often found in Greek and Slavic monasteries, not for veneration but for reflection on what it means to be crucified with Christ.

The monk on the cross is not a recognized saint, not even a particular individual. He personifies the person (monk) who seeks to live in Christ. This is why the schema he wears on his chest is inscribed with the concluding phrase of today’s epistle reading, “I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me.” Instead of Roman soldiers it is demons we see assaulting the monk with the passions of our fallen humanity, which our ego pushes us to gratify: vanity, lust, gluttony and the like. The monk repels their assaults by surrendering his ego to the will of God expressed in the precepts of the Gospel and his monastic rule.

DIVINE LITURGY INTENTIONS

Today For Peace in Ukraine & the Middle East. Requested by Maria Filewicz
Jeannine McNeil, Linda Gartner. Requested by Fr. Bryan & family
+Steven McNeil. Requested by Fr. Bryan & family

Sep 22 +William & Bertha Rahall, Habib & Miriam Rahall, James (JR) Rahall.
Requested by Nick Rahall & Family

This morning's Coffee Hr. is hosted by Maria Filewicz

Next Sunday's Coffee Hr. will be hosted Nick Rahall

Please remember in your prayers: George Arraj, Jr., Peter Abraham, Mark Bashour, 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, Jeannine McNeil, Linda Gartner, Billy Rahall, Dan Rahall, Lauren Abraham, Nicholas Haddad, Nicholas Halal, Elaine Foley, David Ahlin, Elio Kanaan, Susan Bailey, Jacqueline Ventriglia, those affected by the natural disasters throughout the world, the people of Gaza, and for peace in Ukraine & 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	\$ 1,134
Candles	\$ 36
Coffee Hr.	\$
Stole	\$ 100
TOTAL	\$ 1,270

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.

THANK YOU

Dear Parish Family:

Christ is among us! He is and always will be!

Last Sunday's Middle Eastern Picnic was a great success! The weather was beautiful, the food delicious, the music great, and the fellowship outstanding! The raffle is always fun!

Thank you so much to all who made the Picnic a success. There are too people to thank individually! If you cooked, baked, served, setup, cleaned up, sold raffle tickets, hung up signs, did the marketing, or provided some other necessary service that I have forgotten, please know that your efforts are much very appreciated! It is impossible to do this without you!

If you were unable to attend, you were missed! If you attended and were unable to help, please consider doing so next year. There is always room for another pair of hands!

In addition to being a great afternoon, the Picnic was also a financial success. To date, our gross revenue was \$23,428 and our expenses were \$4,415. That gives us a net profit of \$19,013! I think that is excellent for a six hour festival!!

We will have a wrap-up meeting on Tuesday September 24 at 6:30pm to discuss what went well and where there are opportunities to make the Picnic even better.

Again, thank you for all you did to make our Picnic a success!

In Christ,

Fr. Bryan

“I HAVE BEEN CRUCIFIED WITH CHRIST”

WHAT MAKES A PERSON RIGHTEOUS before God? It is a question that religious people continually ask of themselves and their spiritual leaders. Sometimes the answers they receive seem to come from “*the god of this age*” (2 Corinthians 4:4). Thus over-zealous people of all backgrounds have come to believe at one time or another that they fulfill “God’s will” by destroying the religious monuments of others. But what do the Scriptures tell us bring us closer to God?

The Torah

Jews consider the Torah (the Law) as the cornerstone of their experience of God. Just as Christians see the Gospels as the heart of the New Testament, Jews see the Torah, the first five books of the Bible, as the core of the Hebrew Scriptures. The Torah contains the Commandments which God gave through Moses; observing them is what makes someone an “observant” Jew, obedient to the expressed will of God. “*You shall observe My judgments and keep My ordinances, to walk in them: I am the Lord your God. You shall therefore keep My statutes and My judgments, which if a man does, he shall live by them: I am the Lord*” (Leviticus 18: 4, 5).

When we think of the precepts of the Law which Moses received from God we think of the Ten Commandments. In fact, there are many other precepts in the five Old Testament books of Moses which Jews call the Torah and Christians call the Pentateuch. Later Jews came to see 613 commandments as prescribed in the Torah, including ritual and other precepts in addition to the moral laws. Various Jewish traditions number these precepts differently but all see the observance of the Law of Moses as the way to righteousness before God.

Christ and the Law

In the Gospels Christ is not depicted as critical of the Law but as endorsing it. He was critical of people who abused the precepts of the Law, using it to look down on others or control them. Thus, in the parable of the Publican and the Pharisee Christ says that the Pharisee, who observed the precepts of the Law, did not attain righteousness through his actions because he made of them a way to look down upon his neighbor, the Publican. Observing the precepts of the Law was good, but not enough to make a person godly. The same is true today. As the twentieth-century Greek elder St Porphyrios observed, some people “... make prostrations and cross themselves in church and they say, ‘we are unworthy sinners’, then as soon as they come out they start to blaspheme everything holy whenever someone upsets them a little.”

Jesus taught that the ceremonial precepts of the Torah were good, but that there was something most important. He confronted the Pharisees for insisting on these precepts while neglecting its more humane counsels: “*Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you pay tithes of mint and anise and cumin, and have neglected the weightier matters of the law: justice and mercy and faith. These you ought to have done, without leaving the others undone*” (Matthew 23:23).

Christ also pointed towards more than mere observance of the various precepts of the Torah. He directed people to see that the Law was to be fulfilled through Him. “*Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill*” (Matthew 5:17). He did not explain how this was to happen; it was the apostolic Church, directed by the Holy Spirit which came to see that there was a way for people of all kinds to be righteous before God. It was not by assiduously observing the precepts of the Torah but by living in Christ, who perfectly fulfilled the Father’s will for Him on earth.

Instead of Trisagion: We bow in worship before Your Cross, O Master, and we give praise to Your Holy Resurrection. (three times)

Prokimenon

Reader: How great are your works, O Lord! In wisdom you have wrought them all.

People: How great are your works, O Lord! In wisdom you have wrought them all.

Reader: Bless the Lord. O my soul! You are very great indeed, O Lord my God!

People: How great are your works, O Lord! In wisdom you have wrought them all.

Reader: How great are your works, O Lord!

People: In wisdom you have wrought them all.

Epistle: Gal 2: 16-20

Alleluia

String your bow, go forth, reign for the sake of truth, meekness and righteousness, and your right hand shall lead you wonderfully.

Verse: You loved righteousness and hated iniquity: therefore God, your God, anointed you with the oil of joy above your companion

Gospel: Mark 8:34-9:1 Sunday after the Holy Cross

Hirmos of the Feast (Tone 8)

O Mother of God, you became a mystical paradise when without tilling you brought forth Christ our God by whom the life-giving tree of the Cross was planted on earth. Wherefore we deeply bow before this Cross which is exalted today, and we magnify you.

Kinonikon

Let the light of Your countenance shine upon us, O Lord. Alleluia.

After Communion: Troparion of the Feast (Holy Cross)