

From the Divine Office for Feast of the Conception of St. John the Baptist (Sept. 23)

As an angel, you came forth from the grief of a barren woman, O holy John. On leaving your swaddling clothes, you went to the desert, becoming the seal of all the prophets. For the One whom they had seen in manifold ways, whom they had announced in hidden signs, you were worthy to baptize in the Jordan. You understood the voice of the Father from Heaven bearing witness to His divine sonship; and you saw the Spirit, in the form of a dove, bearing that message over the One baptized. As you surpassed all the former prophets, intercede ceaselessly for us who celebrate your memory with faith. (Vespers)

The glorious conception of the Forerunner announces the King who will be born of a Virgin, for he himself is the offspring of Elizabeth, barren and without fruit, and a holy old man, the great priest Zechariah. By their prayers, those of the Baptist and the Mother of God, save us, O Lord, and have mercy on us. (Orthros)



**FIRST SUNDAY AFTER THE EXULTATION OF THE HOLY CROSS
SEPTEMBER 22, 2024**



THE GREAT CATCH OF FISH (LK 5:1-11)

Our Lady of Perpetual Help Melkite Catholic Church

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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. Therefore, 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.

Kontakion (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.

Chapters one and two of Luke are not simply a prelude to the story of the adult Jesus. These chapters are, as it were, a Gospel of its own. In them Luke presents us with the figure of John as the Forerunner, whose conception and birth begin the long-awaited Messianic age. In Byzantine Churches the conception of the Forerunner is celebrated on September 23, introducing both the figure of John and the Cycle of Luke. In previous centuries many Byzantine Churches began the liturgical year with the celebration of this event.

The angel Gabriel, who tells John's father of what is to come, announces that "*Your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you are to call him John ... he will be filled with the Holy Spirit even before he is born. He will bring back many of the people of Israel to the Lord their God. And he will go on before the Lord, in the spirit and power of Elijah... to make ready a people prepared for the Lord*" (Luke 1:13-17). Here we see John described as "*filled with the Holy Spirit,*" as "*in the spirit and power of Elijah,*" and as making ready "a people prepared for the Lord." John's essential characteristics, told in narratives throughout the four Gospels, are expressed here in a few words.

The Gospels' portraits of Jesus are drawn to show us how His disciples came to see Him as Messiah and Lord over their time with Him, both before and after His death and resurrection. A climactic moment in Matthew, for example, comes when Jesus asks His closest followers, "*Who do people say the Son of Man is?*" They replied, "*Some say John the Baptist; others say Elijah; and still others, Jeremiah or one of the prophets.*" "*But what about you?*" He asked. "*Who do you say I am?*" Simon Peter answered, "*You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.*" Jesus replied, "*Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by flesh and blood, but by my Father in heaven*" (Matthew 16:13-17).

Not only are the disciples depicted as coming to learn over time who Jesus was; others, too, arrive at a similar conclusion. Thus the story of the Samaritan woman reaches its climax when her neighbors proclaim, "*we know that this man really is the Savior of the world*" (John 4:42). They come to this realization when they see the Lord at work in their midst. Luke, on the other hand shows us Jesus as proclaimed "*the Son of the Most High*" (Luke 1:32) "*the Son of God*" (Lk 1:35) in each incident of his infancy narrative. Zachariah, in the canticle he sings at his son's birth, prophesies, "*you will go on before the Lord to prepare the way for him*" (Luke 1:76). Calling Jesus "the Lord" ascribes to Him the divine name revealed to Moses on Mount Sinai. It is the same name ascribed to Him by the angel announcing His birth to the shepherds (see Luke 2:11).

The entire first book of Luke's trilogy climaxes with two proclamations in the Jerusalem temple. When the Infant encounters the righteous Simeon, the prophet proclaims Christ as savior of the world: "*my eyes have seen your salvation, which you have prepared in the sight of all nations: a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and the glory of your people Israel*" (Luke 2:30-32). Finally, when the young Jesus is found "*in my Father's house,*" among the temple elders, we see Him taking His place at the head of God's people, as the ascended Christ will be depicted in the midst of the heavenly host at His ascension. Thus Luke twice tells the story of Jesus as the Christ, the Son of the living God: first, through stories of His infancy and childhood and secondly, in the narrative of His public ministry, death and resurrection.

Elizabeth was freed from barrenness, while the Virgin remained still a virgin, when at Gabriel's voice each of them conceived in the womb; but the Forerunner John leapt in the womb when he recognized beforehand his God and Master incarnate in a virgin womb for our salvation.

DIVINE LITURGY INTENTIONS

Today +William & Bertha Rahall (40yr.), Habib & Miriam Rahall, James (JR) Rahall. Requested by Nick Rahall & Family
+Charles Forss

This morning's Coffee Hr. is hosted by Nick Rahall

Next Sunday's Coffee Hr. will be hosted by David & Kelly Johnson and family

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	\$ 763
Candles	\$ 42
Coffee Hr.	\$ 71
Flowers	\$ 20
Picnic Donations	\$ 880
Other	\$1,626
TOTAL	\$3,402

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.



BISHOP'S APPEAL

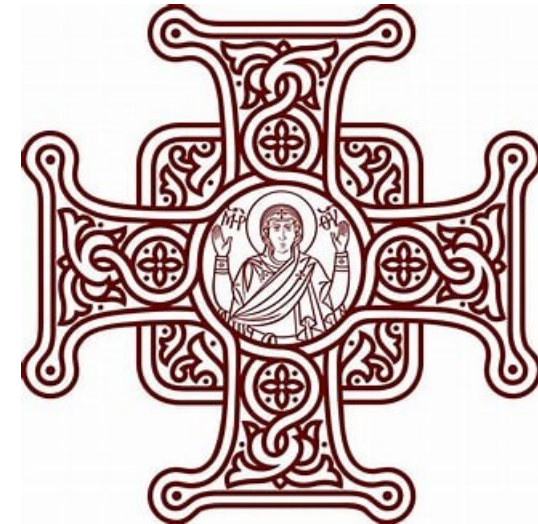
Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

This year's Bishop's Appeal will officially kick off the weekend of October 5-6. There will be more details next Sunday. The funds raised from the Appeal allow the Diocese to support Deacon and Priest candidates, help struggling parishes and missions and continue to publish our award winning diocesan magazine, Sophia.

I urge you to prayerfully consider making a donation to this year's Bishop's Appeal !

In Christ,

Fr. Bryan



THE GOSPELS OF ST. LUKE

IN THE BYZANTINES CHURCHES all four Gospels are read at the Divine Liturgy in the course of the year. St John's Gospel is read from Pascha to Pentecost. On the day after Pentecost we begin reading the Gospel of St Matthew. Selections from this Gospel are read every day for the next eleven weeks. From the twelfth week after Pentecost, this Gospel is read on Saturdays and Sundays while St Mark's Gospel is read on the other days of the week.

We interrupt the reading of these Gospels on the Monday after the Exaltation of the Holy Cross, when we begin to read the Gospel of St Luke. This interruption is called the "Lukan Jump" in Byzantine terminology. St Luke's Gospel (along with other passages from Mark) is read until the beginning of the Triodion.

In our liturgical books, both the epistles and the Gospels from Pentecost to the feast of the Exaltation are described as "after Pentecost." With the Lukan Jump, the designations change. The epistles continue to be numbered "after Pentecost" while the Gospels are titled "of St Luke."

In popular use, Slavic Churches tend to call the entire period up to the beginning of the Triodion as "after Pentecost." In contrast, Greek Churches number these days after the Gospel being read (e.g. Fourth Sunday of St Matthew or Luke). The Melkite Church popularly follows the practice used in the Syriac Churches of the Middle East, numbering the days or weeks "after the Holy Cross."

The Gospel of St Luke

Longest of the four Gospels, Luke is thought to have been written in a Greek Christian environment, possibly in Antioch or Asia Minor. Traditionally Luke has been identified with the friend and traveling companion of St Paul (see 2 Timothy 4:11). He is thought to have been born in Antioch and trained as a physician (see Colossians 4:14). He is thought to have become a disciple of Christ during the Lord's public ministry and to have been numbered among the seventy disciples mentioned in Luke 10. He is traditionally identified as the companion of Cleopas, who encountered the risen Christ on the road to Emmaus (see Luke 24).

It is believed that Luke's Gospel – and its companion work, the Acts of the Apostles – was written after the destruction of Jerusalem in ad 70. It is also thought that his intended audience consisted of Greek-speaking believers, based on his use of the Septuagint, the Greek version of the Old Testament, and patterns familiar to readers of contemporary Greek literature. A fragment from the late second century ad is the oldest manuscript evidence of this Gospel.

The Gospel, of course, tells the story of Christ while Acts tells us about the presence of the Holy Spirit in the apostolic Church. Numerous commentators have pointed out that Luke's work should be considered a trilogy. The first "volume" in this trilogy would be chapters one and two of the Gospel, what some have called an "infancy narrative." This section begins by telling of the conception of St John the Forerunner, then narrates the Annunciation to the Theotokos, the nativity of John, followed by the nativity of Christ. The stories of Christ's circumcision, His encounter with Simeon in the temple and His experience in the temple as a twelve-year old complete this section.

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: 2 COR 9:6-12

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: Lk 5:1-11

