

THIRTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER THE HOLY CROSS
NOVEMBER 24, 2024

From the Divine Office for the Great-Martyr Catherine of Alexandria (Nov.25)

Let us sing of the illustrious bride of Christ, holy Catherine, the protectress of Sinai, who is our refuge and our help. With the sword of the Spirit, she brilliantly silenced the sophistry of the impious; as a crowned martyr, she forever entreats great mercy for us all. (Troparion)

O Catherine, venerable virgin, glory of martyrs, you strengthen the courage of all women. You rejected as myths and foolishness the thought of philosophers who did not know the true God, for you had as your help the divine and all-pure Mother. (Exapostilarion)



PARABLE OF THE RICH YOUNG MAN

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: fr.bryan.mcneil@melkite.org Cell: (774) 502-8547

Divine Liturgy: Sunday 10:00 AM

Antiphon (Feast)

1- Great is the Lord and wholly to be praised in the city of our God, in His holy mountain

Though the prayers of the Mother of God, O Savior save us!

2- Glorious things have been said of you, O City of God!

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

3- God is within her castle; renowned is He as a stronghold.

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 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!"

Troparion of the Entrance (4th Tone)

Today is the prelude of the benevolence of God, and the announcement of the salvation of men. In the Temple of God the Virgin is seen openly, foretelling to all the coming of Christ. Wherefore let us cry to her in a loud voice, "Hail! O fulfillment of the Creator's plan!"

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 Entrance of the Theotokos in the Temple (4th Tone)

The most pure Temple of our holy Savior, His most precious bridal chamber, the Virgin, sacred treasure of the glory of God, openly appears today in the Temple of the Lord, bringing with her the grace of the most Holy Spirit. Wherefore the angels of God are singing: "This is the heavenly tabernacle!"

To reflect on just how our ego may be tied to the things of this world, consider how difficult it is to fast for any length of time: how much we feel the loss of a favorite food and to what lengths we go to find a pleasing substitute... and how happy we are when the Fast is over.

In addition, "mammon" can also include the non-material wealth of this world: power, prestige or social position. How do we feel when another is promoted over us, receives a bigger bonus or a more lucrative assignment. Serving mammon takes many forms and they all interfere in some way with our relationship to God.

The Fathers on the Power of Mammon

When St John Chrysostom commented on this Gospel passage, he noted that being devoted to the things of this world did not make you free. "The rich man is a slave, being subject to loss, and in the power of everyone wishing to do him harm" (Homily 46 on Matthew). Serving mammon is a form of slavery.

In another place, Chrysostom said, "If you see someone greedy for many things, you should consider him the poorest of all, even if he has acquired everyone's money. Be accustomed to judge poverty and affluence by the disposition of the mind, not by the substance of his possessions. Serving mammon is a kind of poverty. As some people today phrase it, "What you own, owns you."

A century before and on another continent, St Cyprian of Carthage had said much the same thing. "The property of the wealthy holds them in chains... which shackle their courage and choke their faith and hamper their judgment and throttle their souls. They think of themselves as owners, whereas it is they rather who are owned: enslaved as they are to their own property, they are not the masters of their money, but its slaves."

Asceticism and the Pursuit of Perfection

The choice between serving God and mammon is at the heart of Christian asceticism, where making that choice is lived and experienced on a daily basis. It is most intensely observed by monastics, but also by Christians living in this world, married or single. A person living an ascetic life tries to distance himself or herself from being tied to the passing pleasures of the world so as to be more open to following Christ and living the life of God.

People often consider life with God as something of the world to come. It is clear to most people, even in the wider society, that our earthly attachments have no place in heaven. A recent installment in Dan Piraro's widely syndicated cartoon strip, Bizarro! makes this point. Two long-time residents of heaven are observing two younger ones. "Most of the new arrivals seem incapable of conversation," the eldest notes. "They just stare at their hands in despair," trying to text, but there are no electronic devices in heaven!

Yes, there are no cigarettes, no movies, no alcohol in heaven. To be without them would surely frustrate someone who has made enjoying these things the focus of life. Thus some Christian thinkers have observed that to be in heaven without the object of one's passions would actually be to dwell in hell.

But the differences between this age and the age to come are not really the point. Life with God, transformation into the image of God, begins now, with baptism. That life is meant to be experienced in ever deeper ways as we mature in the Christian life here, as well as in the life of the age to come. The Christian seeks to avoid anything which can captivate our minds and, at best, distract us from that relationship to God. Following Christ is meant to be the real source of our joy here on earth, as well as in the world to come. Serving Christ in worship and ministering to Him in the needy should be our joys, rather than obligations to be gotten through as quickly as possible. The Christian life, to paraphrase St Catherine of Siena, is meant to be "heaven all the way to heaven."

DIVINE LITURGY INTENTIONS

Today +Elias Tembenis (17th). Requested by Harry & Gina Tembenis
Dec 1 +Antonio Solitro (40 Day). Requested by Karen Solitro & Family

This morning's Coffee Hr. is hosted by the Dumont Family
Next Sunday's Coffee Hr. will be hosted by Karen Solitro & 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, Thomas Houde, 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, Thomas Houde, 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	\$1,883
Candles	\$ 32
Coffee Hr.	\$ 65
Xmas Flowers	\$ 55
Memorials	\$ 25
Xmas Donations	\$ 50
Stole	\$ 150
TOTAL	\$2,260

FINANCIALS

<u>10.2024</u>		<u>YTD (10.2024-10.2024)</u>	
Income	\$7,856	Income	\$7,856
Expenses	-\$9,373	Expenses	-\$9,373
Net	-\$1,517	Net	-\$1,517

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 UPDATE

The "camel" through the eye of a needle" refers to Jerusalem in Jesus' time. The main gates were locked at eventide. The only possible entrance to the city for safety at night was a narrow side gate. You could enter, but your camels, possessions, etc. would not be able to enter. Your choice: enter alone and be safe or stay outside with your possessions at the mercy of thieves and criminals. Where is safety: the city or the possessions? If we seek God first above all and in all, we shall have all that is needed.

The Bishop's Appeal helps us to see our priorities as a Church and center and conduct our lives accordingly. *Our parish has raised \$3,600.14 and our goal is \$8,000.* Appeal envelopes and reply cards are available in our parish. Thank you for your continued generosity to our parish and to the Diocese of Newton. You may also donate online at: melkite.org/appeal or scan the QR code below:



ST. NICHOLAS POTLUCK

We will have our St. Nicholas potluck on Sunday December 8 after the Divine Liturgy. Please bring a dish to share with the community!

THE RICH YOUNG MAN

THE THREE SYNOPTIC GOSPELS – Matthew, Mark and Luke – all record Christ’s meeting with a rich young man who sought His guidance. The young man (Luke calls him a “ruler”) seeks to know what to do to have eternal life. Christ responds by telling him to keep the commandments. When pressed to be more specific, the Lord begins by listing the Ten Commandments. Then He quotes the Great Commandment from Leviticus, “*You shall love your neighbor as yourself.*”

The young man says that he has kept all these commandments from his youth and presses the Lord to tell him what more he should do. The Lord Jesus then attempts to lead him from a stage of merely being obedient to God’s commandments, to one of being in a relationship of love with God.

Christ tells the young man what must happen “*If you want to be perfect*” (v. 21): he must give his wealth to the poor and follow Jesus as He went from place to place proclaiming the kingdom of God. The Lord offered this inquirer the chance to join the company of His disciples, to show that he preferred life with Christ to enjoying his possessions. The young man declined.

What Does It Mean to Be Perfect?

The Lord has held out this goal of “perfection” before, in the Sermon on the Mount. Being “perfect” seems an impossible task if we think it means absolute perfection without any fault or stain. In the Greek of the New Testament (and our Liturgy), however, to be “perfect” or to be “complete” might best be translated “to be all that we were meant to be:” living in the light of the Lord, walking in His way. Jesus pushed His hearers to go beyond the commandments to arrive at a more godly way of life.

The Lord then contrasted regard for God with attachment to one’s belongings. They will ever be competing for a person’s devotion; as Christ tells His listeners, “*Where your treasure is there your heart will be also*” (Matthew 6:21).

The path to perfection, as Christ teaches, begins with making a choice between following Him and devoting oneself to enjoying the things of the world. As He said so clearly, “*No one can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon*” (Matthew 6:24).

Do I Serve Mammon?

Most of us do not think that we are “serving mammon.” We may even look down on the obviously greedy or on people driven by addictions. Yes, there are people who “serve” money, drugs or sex. They may be slaves to alcohol or tobacco. We don’t believe that we are controlled like that.

We may not be overly driven to making inordinate amounts of money, but we should consider that dependency on mammon takes many forms. We should become more conscious of how many of this world’s riches we feel that we “need,” that we “can’t do without,” from our morning coffee to the latest smart phone. We don’t physically need these things; it is our ego that requires them. Is this not another form of serving mammon?

To reflect on just how our ego may be tied to the things of this world, consider how difficult it is to fast for any length of time: how much we feel the loss of a favorite food and to what lengths we go to find a pleasing substitute... and how happy we are when the Fast is over.

In addition, “mammon” can also include the non-material wealth of this world: power, prestige or social position. How do we feel when another is promoted over us, receives a bigger bonus or a more lucrative assignment. Serving mammon takes many forms and they all interfere in some way with our relationship to 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: Eph 6:10-17

Alleluia

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

Verse: O Lord, save your king and listen to us on whatever day we call upon you.

Gospel: Lk 18: 18-28 – The Rich Young Man

Hirmos of the Feast (Tone 4)

The angels were stunned as they saw the Virgin coming in, How has she entered into the Holy of Holies!” O Mother of God, you are the precious Ark of God: no profane hand may touch you. But the lips of the faithful will never cease to sing your praise, repeating with joy the angel’s words: “O pure Virgin, you are indeed raised above all creatures!”

Kinonikon

I will take the chalice of salvation and call upon the name of the Lord. Alleluia!

PARISH COUNCIL

We will have a Parish Council meeting on Tuesday December 3 at 6:30pm.