



March 26<sup>th</sup>, 2023

## ST. BASIL THE GREAT MELKITE GREEK CATHOLIC CHURCH

### Address

15 Skyview Drive  
Lincoln, Rhode Island 02865

Tel (401) 722-1345

### Parish Website

[www.stbasilthegreatchurch.com](http://www.stbasilthegreatchurch.com)

### Facebook

[https://www.facebook.com/  
StBasilTheGreatMelkiteGreek  
CatholicChurchRI/](https://www.facebook.com/StBasilTheGreatMelkiteGreekCatholicChurchRI/)

### YouTube

<https://bit.ly/3gkl2Uk>

### Email

[office@stbasilthegreatchurch.com](mailto:office@stbasilthegreatchurch.com)

### Office hours

Tue-Fri 9:00 am to 4:00 pm

### Divine Liturgies

Sunday Divine Liturgy  
9:00 AM - 11:15 AM

Pastoral Emergencies  
and anointing of the sick  
(401)722-1345

### Holy Mysteries

### Reconciliation

The Sacrament of Reconciliation will  
be available before the Divine  
Liturgy or by appointment

### Baptism

Please arrange with the pastor

### Marriage

A notice of at least 6 months should  
be given to the pastor, before the  
proposed wedding date to arrange  
for the required interview and  
instructions



### Sunday of Mary of Egypt Fifth Sunday of Lent

الاحد الخامس من الصوم العظيم -  
تذكار أمنا البارة مريم المصرية

#### Antiphon Prayer

O Lord God, You examine the inner heart. You know our concerns before they emerge into being. You saved Mary of Egypt from the tribulations of this earth, for she had recourse to You. We implore You to purify our hearts and to make us temples of your Holy Spirit and rich in virtues, so that we may glorify You by hymns of praise and good works. For You are our God and to You are due all glory, honor and worship, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, now and always and forever and ever.

#### Troparion of the resurrection (1st tone)

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, giving 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!"

#### Troparion of our Mother Mary of Egypt, (Tone 8)

In you, O Mother Mary, was restored the likeness of God, for you carried your cross and followed Christ. You taught by your deeds how to spurn the body, for it passes away and how to value the soul, for it is immortal. Wherefore your soul is forever in happiness with the angels.

#### صلاة الأنديفونة

أيها الرب الإله الفاحص أعماق القلوب والعارف  
أمورنا كلها قبل ان تكون، لقد اختطفت من  
اضطرابات الحياة من لجأت اليك. فنضج اليك أن  
تظهر قلوبنا، وتظهرنا هياكل لروحك القدوس،  
وأغنياء بالفضائل، فنعظمك بالتسابيح والأعمال  
الصالحة. لأنك أنت هو إلهنا ولك ينبغي كل مجد  
واكرام وسجود، أيها الأب والابن والروح القدس،  
الآن وكل اوان والى دهر الدهرين.

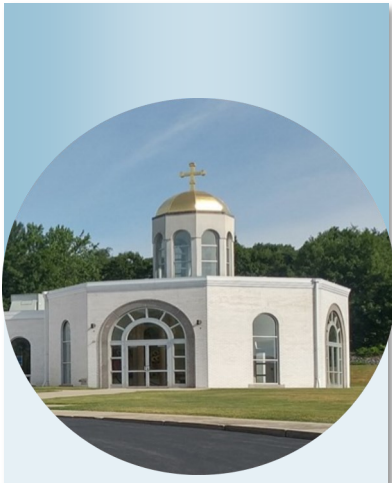
#### طروبارية القيامة باللحن الاول

إن الحجر ختمه اليهود، وجسدك الطاهر حرسه  
الجنود. لكنك قمت في اليوم الثالث، أيها الخالص،  
واهباً للعالم الحياة. لذلك قوا السماوات هتفت  
اليك، يا مُعطي الحياة: المجد لقيامتك أيها  
المسيح. المجد لملكك. المجد لتدبيرك، يا محب  
البشر وحدك.

#### طروبارية للبارة مريم المصرية باللحن الثامن

فيك حُفظت صورة الله بتدقيق أيها الأم مريم.  
فقد أخذت الصليب وتبعته المسيح، وعلمت  
بالعمل إهمال الجسد لأنه زائل، والاهتمام بالنفس  
لأنها خالدة. لذلك تبتهج روحك أيها البارة مع  
الملائكة.





### Our church organizations:

**MAYA:** Organization of Melkite Catholics ages 18 – 26 (and at least 1 year out of high school) under patronage of our bishop, the Most Reverend Nicholas Samra.  
<https://melkite.org/maya>

**MYO:** Provides a common forum for all the young people of St. Basil's Church, and that the Organization initiate, coordinate, and direct religious, social, educational, and humanitarian programs designed to promote the involvement of its membership in the Christian Faith and the Melkite tradition.  
[www.stbasilthegreatchurch.com/myo.html](http://www.stbasilthegreatchurch.com/myo.html)

**NAMW:** Promotes and supports vocations to the priesthood and religious life in the United States.  
<https://melkite.org/namw>



### Troparion of St Basil The Great Kondakion of the Annunciation

Triumphant leader to you belongs our prize of victory! And since you saved us from adversity, we offer you, our thanks. We are your people O mother of God! So, as you have that invincible power, continue to deliver us from danger that we may cry out to you Hail, O Virgin and bride ever pure.

### Epistle of 5th Sunday of Lent, Hebrews 9: 11-14 PROKIMENON (Tone 8)

Make vows to the Lord your God and fulfill them; let all round about bring gifts to the awesome God.

Stichon: God is renowned in Judah; in Israel great is his name.

**Reading from the Epistle of St. Paul to the Hebrews**  
BRETHREN, when Christ appeared as the high priest of the good things to come (Cf. Lv.16: 14; 19: 4), he entered once for all through the greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made by hands (that is, not as a part of the present creation), nor again by virtue of blood of goats and calves, but by virtue of his own blood, into the sanctuary, having obtained eternal redemption. For if the blood of goats and bulls and the sprinkled ashes of a heifer sanctify the unclean for the cleansing of the flesh, how much more will the blood of Christ (Cf. Rv. I: 5), who through the Holy Spirit offered himself unblemished to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God!

ALLELUIA (Tone 8)

Come, let us sing joyfully to the Lord; let us acclaim the Rock of our salvation.

Stichon: Let us greet him with thanksgiving; let us joyfully sing psalms to him.

### Gospel: 5th Sunday of Lent, Mark 10: 32-45 (The greatest in the Kingdom)

At that time Jesus took the Twelve, and began to tell them what would happen to him, saying, "Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be betrayed to the chief priests and the Scribes; and they will condemn him to death, and will deliver him to the Gentiles; and they will mock him, and spit upon him and scourge him, and put him to death; and on the third day he will rise again." And James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came to him, saying, "Master, we want thee to do for us whatever we ask." But he said to them, "What do you want me to do for you?" And they said, "Grant to us that we may sit, one at thy right hand and the other at thy left hand, in thy glory." But Jesus said to them,

"You do not know what you are asking for. Can you drink of the cup of which I drink, or be baptized with the baptism with which I am to be baptized?" And they said to him, "We can." And Jesus said to them "Of the cup that I drink, you shall drink; and with the baptism with which I am to be baptized, you shall be baptized; but as for sitting at my right hand or at my left, that is not mine to give, but it belongs to those for whom it has been prepared." And when the ten heard this, they were at first indignant at James and John. But Jesus called them and said to them, "You know that those who are regarded as rulers among the Gentiles, I lord it over them, and their great men exercise authority over them. But it is not so among you. On the contrary, whoever wishes to become great shall be your servant; and whoever wishes to be first among you shall be the slave of all; for the Son of Man also has not come to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."

### طروبارية القديس باسيليوس

### قنداق الختام باللحن الثامن

نَحْنُ عِبِيدُكَ يَا وَالِدَةَ الْإِلَهِ، نَكْتُبُ لَكَ آيَاتِ الْعَلَبَةِ يَا قَائِدَةَ قَاهِرِهِ. وَنَقْدُمُ الشُّكْرَ لَكَ وَقَدْ أَنْقَذَنَا مِنَ الشَّدَائِدِ. لَكِنْ بِمَا أَنَّ لَكَ الْعِزَّةَ الَّتِي لَا تُحَارَبُ، أَعْيَيْتَنَا مِنْ أَصْنَافِ الْمَخَاطِرِ لِكَيْ نَضْرُجَ إِلَيْكَ: أَفْرَاجِي يَا عَزُوسَةً لَا عَرُوسَ لَهَا.

### مقدمة الرسالة

أَنْذَرُوا وَأَوْفُوا الرَّبَّ إِلَهُنَا، كُلُّ الَّذِينَ حَوْلَهُ يَأْتُونَ بهدايا

الله معروف في يهوذا، واسمته عظيم في إسرائيل

### الرسالة (عبرانيين 9: 11-14)

يا إخوة، إن المسيح الذي جاء خبراً للخيرات الآتية، واجتاز بالمسكن الأعظم والأكمل الغير المصنوع بيد، أي الذي ليس من هذه الخليقة، دخل الأقداس مرة واحدة، ليس بدم ثيوس وعجول، بل بدمه الخاص، فوجد فداءً أبدياً. لأنه إن كان دم ثيران وثيوس وزماد عجله يربس على المنجسين، فيقدسهم لتطهير الجسد، فكيف بالأحرى دم المسيح، الذي قرب بالروح الأزلّي نفسه لله بلا عيب، يظهر ضميركم من الأعمال الميّنة لتعبّدوا الله الحيّ.

هللوا

هلموا نبتهج بالرب، ونهلل لله مخلصنا لنبارك الى وجهه بالاعتراف، وبالمزامير نهلل له.

### الانجيل للأحد الخامس من الصوم العظيم

### الانجيل (مرقس 10 ك 32 ب – 45)

في ذلك الزمان، أخذ يسوع تلاميذه الاثني عشر، وطفق يقول لهم ما سيعرض له: ها نحن صاعدون إلى أُورشليم، وابن البشر سيُسلم إلى رؤساء الكهنة والكتبة، فيحكمون عليه بالموت ويُسلمونه إلى الامم، فيهزؤون به، ويجلدونه، ويصقون عليه، ويقتلونه، وفي اليوم الثالث يقوم. فتقدم اليه يعقوب ويوحنا ابنا زبدي قائلين: يا معلم، نريد أن تصنع لنا كل ما نسألك. فقال لهما: ماذا تريدان ان اصنع لكما؟ قالا له: هب لنا أن يجلس أحدهنا عن يمينك والآخر عن يسارك في مجدك. فقال لهما يسوع: انكما لا تعلمان ما تطلبان. أنستطيعان أن نشريا كأس التي أشربها أنا، وأن تصطبغان بالصبغة التي اصطبغ بها أنا؟ فقالا له: نستطيع. فقال لهما يسوع أما الكأس التي أشربها فتشربانها، والصبغة التي اصطبغ بها فتصطبغان بها. وأما الجلوس عن يميني أو يساري فليس لي أن اعطيه بل هو للذين أعد لهم. فلما سمع العشرة أخذوا يغضبون على يعقوب ويوحنا. فدعاهم يسوع وقال لهم: تعلمون ان الذين يُعدون أركانهم الامم يسودونهم، وعظماهم يتسلطون عليهم. وأما في ما بينكم فلا يكن هكذا. بل من أراد أن يكون فيكم كبيراً، يكون لكم خادماً. ومن أراد أن يصير فيكم الأول، يكون للجميع عبداً. فإن ابن الانسان لم يأتي ليخدم بل ليخدم، وليبذل نفسه فداءً عن كثيرين.





## St Basil the Great Melkite Greek Catholic Church Holy Week Liturgical Services



### **PALM SUNDAY – April 2**

- 9:00 am † Divine Liturgy on Sunday: The Entrance of Our Lord, God and Savior Jesus Christ into Jerusalem
- 11:15 am † Divine Liturgy on Sunday: The Entrance of Our Lord, God and Savior Jesus Christ into Jerusalem

### **أحد الشعانين – 2 نيسان**

- 9:00 يوم الأحد صباحاً † الإحتفال بالقداس الإلهي-عيد دخول السيد المسيح الى أورشليم (أحد الشعانين)
- 11:15 يوم الأحد صباحاً † الإحتفال بالقداس الإلهي-عيد دخول السيد المسيح الى أورشليم (أحد الشعانين)



### **GREAT AND HOLY WEDNESDAY – April 5**

- 6:30 pm † Blessing of the Oil of the Penitents and the Lord's Last Supper commemoration at Vespers Divine Liturgy of St. Basil the Great with the Solemn Washing of the Feet

### **الأربعاء المقدس – 5 نيسان**

- 6:30 مساءً † الإحتفال بالليتورجية الإلهية للقدس باسيليوس الكبير يليها رتبة تبريك الزيت و مسح المؤمنين بالزيت المقدس ثم خدمة غسل الأرجل



### **GREAT AND HOLY THURSDAY – April 6**

- 8:00 am to 5:00 pm † Vigil at the Foot of the Cross
- 6:30 pm † Matins Service of the Crucifixion with the reading of the Passion Gospels

### **خميس العيد – 6 نيسان**

- 8:00 صباحاً حتى 5:00 مساءً † صلاة سجد و تأمل عند أقدام الصليب
- 6:30 مساءً † قراءة الأناجيل المقدسة مع خدمة الألام الخالسية ورتبة الصلب



### **GREAT AND HOLY FRIDAY – Passion of Our Lord – April 7**

- 6:30 pm † Burial Service of Our Lord, God and Savior Jesus Christ- Matins of Holy Saturday-Procession of Triumph

### **الجمعة العظيمة – 7 نيسان**

- 6:30 مساءً † صلاة السحر و رتبة جناز السيد المسيح تليها خدمة فيض النور ونثر الغار كعلامة إنتصار السيد المسيح على الموت



### **GREAT AND HOLY SATURDAY – The Descent Into Hades – April 8**

- 6:30 pm † Resurrection Matins (Rush Service) and Divine Liturgy of Pascha followed by collation in the Culture Center

### **سبت النور – 8 نيسان**

- 6:30 مساءً † رتبة الهجمة وخدمة القداس الإلهي إحتفالاً بعيد الفصح المجيد يليها تجمع إحتفالي في قاعة الكنيسة



### **EASTER SUNDAY – Resurrection of Our Lord - April 9**

- 10:00 am † Resurrection Matins (Rush Service) followed by the Divine Liturgy of Pascha

### **عيد الفصح المجيد – 9 نيسان**

- 10:00 صباحاً † رتبة الهجمة وخدمة القداس الإلهي إحتفالاً بعيد الفصح المجيد



# Divine Liturgy Intentions

**SUNDAY, MARCH 26, 2023: SUNDAY OF MARY OF EGYPT.**

**9:00 a.m. DIVINE LITURGY:**

- + **JOSEPH & ANGELA KAYATA** by Michael & Barbara O' Rourke & Family.
- + **CHARLES & ANNE O'ROURKE** by Michael & Barbara O' Rourke & Family.
- + **LAYLA ANGELA CHARETTE** by Uncle Michael, Auntie B., Greg & Katie.
- + **M/M LOUIS R. & JOAN AZAR & daughter MAUREEN** by the Family of the late Louis E. Azar..
- + **LILLIAN & JAMES L. SALOME** by their Children & Families.
- + **ELIAS SKAF** by the Community of St. Basil's.

**11:15 DIVINE LITURGY:**

- + **ANNETTE NAJJAR (40 Day)** by the Family.
- + **ANTHONY NAJJAR ( 2<sup>nd</sup> Anniv.)** by the Family..
- + **SAMUEL SABBAGH ( 9<sup>th</sup> Anniv.)** by the Family.
- + **ELIAS SKAF** by the Community of St. Basil's.
- + **YOUSSEF MADOUR (5<sup>th</sup> Anniv.)** by Jim & Mary Briden & Family.
- + **FLORENCE EID (5<sup>th</sup> Anniv.)** by Jim & Mary Briden & Family.
- + **BAHJAT KHOURY ( 9<sup>th</sup> Anniv.)** by Jim & Mary Briden & Fami
- + **MICHAEL GEORGE BOUDJOUK (NJ)** by Nelly Kishfy.
- + **VIOLETTE (HAGGAR) SAGGAL (Australia)** by Joseph Saggal, Patrick Saggal & Pamela Pacheco.
- + **GLORIA RAWAN RAZOOK** by Dr. Jason B. Boudjouk & Miss Jiana Daikh.

## Prayer for the dead

O God of all spirits and of all flesh, who have destroyed death, overcome the devil, and given life to the world: grant, O Lord to the souls of your servants, who have departed from this life, that they may rest in a place of light, in a place of happiness, in a place of peace, where there is no pain, no grief, no sighing. And since You are gracious God and Lover of mankind, forgive them every sin they have committed by thought, or word, or deed, for there is not a man who lives and does not sin: You alone are without sin, your righteousness is everlasting, and your word is true.

For You are the Resurrection and the Life, and the Repose of your departed servants, O Christ our God, and we render glory to You, together with your Eternal Father and your All-holy, Good and Life-giving Spirit, now and always and forever and ever. Amen.







**SACRIFICIAL GIVING:** March 19, 2023: Budgets: \$1,824.00; Envelopes: \$1,778.00, Loose: \$46.00; Candles: \$94.00; Stole Offerings: \$210.00; Addit'l Fuel \$35.00; Cemetery: \$15.00; Building Fund: \$50.00, Additil Melkite Support: \$40.00; Hall Rental: \$200.00.

**PLEASE NOTE:** Before making any **ENGAGEMENT/BAPTISM/MARRIAGE RECEPTION PLANS**, please contact the Church in advance. We would rather not have you disappointed if you've already made commitments without checking our schedule

**GENERAL HOME VISITATIONS, SICK CALLS, HOSPITAL VISITS:** Father Ephrem has been fully vaccinated and is now available for these parish services. Just email him at [office@stbasilthegreatchurch.com](mailto:office@stbasilthegreatchurch.com) and leave him your message. **PLEASE! NO GRATUITIES!** A cup of coffee or tea is just fine. He looks forward to in-person contact.

**2023 ECCLESIASTICAL CALENDARS** are available – free for the taking – at both entrances of the church. By following the liturgical cycle of the church year and remembering the Saints each day is an excellent way to attach yourself more closely to the worshipping community that is the church.

#### **RULE OF FASTING IN THE DIOCESE OF NEWTON**

So as not to burden anyone's conscience, the Holy Synod of the Melkite Church permits each diocesan Bishop to ease the canonical obligations of fasting, while, at the same time, exhorts all the faithful to fast according to the ancient tradition. The minimal rule that Melkites in the Diocese of Newton must observe: *Fasting* from all food and drink from midnight until noon, must be observed on the first day of Great Lent (Monday, February 20<sup>th</sup>), and on the last three days of Holy Week (Holy Thursday, Good Friday, Holy Saturday). *Abstinence*, at least from meat, must be observed on every Friday of Great Lent. These requirements are the minimum. The faithful are encouraged to do more, such as also abstaining from meat every Wednesday or throughout the whole of Great Lent.

O Jesus, Who has said,  
"Ask and you shall  
receive, seek and you  
shall find, knock and it  
shall be opened," through  
the intercession of the  
Theotokos, Your Most  
Holy Mother, I knock, I  
seek, I ask that my prayer  
be granted.

O Jesus, Who has said,  
"All that you ask of the  
Father in My Name, He  
will grant you," through  
the intercession of the  
Theotokos Your Most  
Holy Mother, I humbly  
and urgently ask your  
Father in your name that  
my prayer will be granted.

O Jesus, Who has said,  
"Heaven and earth shall  
pass away but My word  
shall not pass away,"  
through the intercession  
of the Theotokos Your  
Most Holy Mother, I feel  
confident that my prayer  
will be granted.







# Following Jesus Kids bulletin



∞  
THE LIFE OF  
**ST. MARY**  
OF  
**EGYPT**  
∞  
[manymercies.blogspot.com](http://manymercies.blogspot.com)



MARY WAS FROM EGYPT, AND SHE LIVED A LIFE OF SHAME. ONE DAY SHE GOT ON A BOAT TO GO TO JERUSALEM.

SHE WANTED TO GO IN THE CHURCH TO SEE THE LIFE-GIVING CROSS...



...BUT SHE COULDN'T GO IN! SHE SAW AN ICON OF THE MOTHER OF GOD, AND WEPT FOR ALL HER SINS.

SHE HEARD A VOICE FROM THE HEAVENS...



∞  
"Cross the Jordan to find glorious rest."  
∞



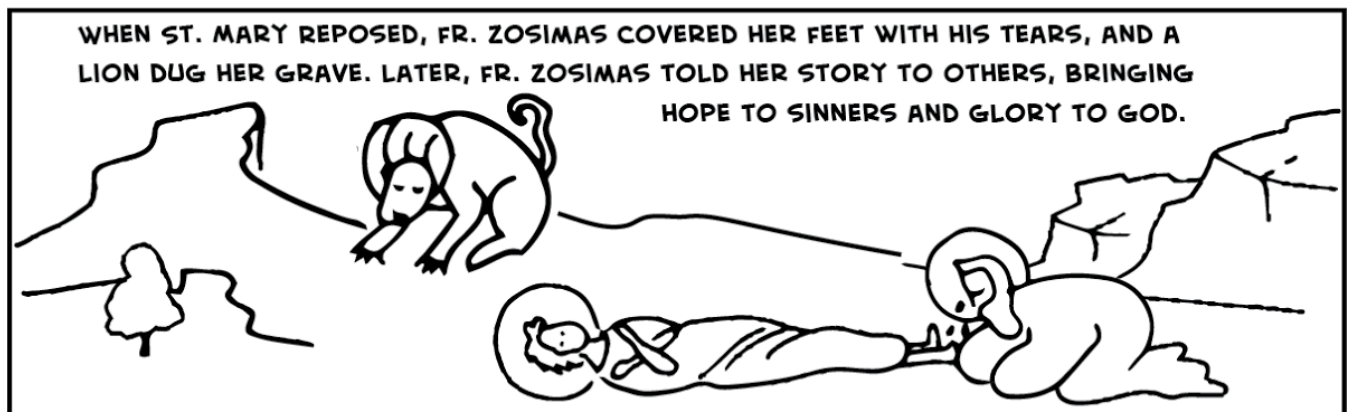
...SO SHE WENT ACROSS THE JORDAN...



...TO THE DESERT TO PRAY FOR 47 YEARS, WITH THE HELP OF THE MOTHER OF GOD.



SHE MET FR. ZOSIMAS IN THE DESERT. WHEN HE BROUGHT HER HOLY COMMUNION SHE WALKED ACROSS THE JORDAN AS ON DRY LAND.



WHEN ST. MARY REPOSED, FR. ZOSIMAS COVERED HER FEET WITH HIS TEARS, AND A LION DUG HER GRAVE. LATER, FR. ZOSIMAS TOLD HER STORY TO OTHERS, BRINGING HOPE TO SINNERS AND GLORY TO GOD.

**HOLY ST. MARY OF EGYPT, PRAY TO GOD FOR US!**



# OUR JOURNEY TO PASCHA! 2023

Created by Fr. Jonathan Bannon (ACROD)

Adapted by Fr Vitalii Stashkevych (BCC) for the Gregorian Calendar

SUNDAYS	THEMES / GOSPEL READING	HOW TO PARTICIPATE:
Fast - Free Week JANUARY 29 <sup>TH</sup>	 <i>TRIDION WEEKS</i> <b>Publican and the Pharisee</b> Epistle: 2 Timothy 3:10-15 Gospel: Luke 18:10-14	Show compassion on the poor and distressed. Trust in God, not yourself and ask for His help before every task this week.
Normal Fast Week FEBRUARY 5 <sup>TH</sup>	 <b>The Prodigal Son Returns!</b> Epistle: 1 Corinthians 6:12-20 Gospel: Luke 15:11-32	Schedule a Confession. Every morning say, "Today I will be humble." Use up/freeze meats this week.
Meatfare FEBRUARY 12 <sup>TH</sup> FAREWELL TO MEAT TODAY	 <b>The Last Judgement</b> Epistle: 1 Corinthians 8:8-9:2 Gospel: Matthew 25:31-46	Pray facing East this week. Christ is returning from the East and we wait for Him! Use up/freeze dairy this week.
Cheesefare FEBRUARY 19 <sup>TH</sup> FAREWELL TO CHEESE TODAY	 <b>Adam and Eve are cast from Paradise!</b> <i>FORGIVENESS SUNDAY</i> Epistle: Romans 13:11-14:4 Gospel: Matthew 6:14-21	Ask each other for forgiveness each evening this week before bed.
1 <sup>ST</sup> Sunday of Lent FEBRUARY 26 <sup>TH</sup>	 <i>GREAT LENT BEGINS WITH FORGIVENESS VESPERS</i> <b>SUNDAY of ORTHODOXY</b> Epistle: Hebrews 11:24-26, 32-12:2 Gospel: John 1:43-51	Bring an icon to church for a procession.
2 <sup>ND</sup> Sunday of Lent MARCH 5 <sup>TH</sup>	 <b>ST GREGORY PALAMAS</b> Epistle: Hebrews 1:10-2:3 Gospel: Mark 2:1-12	Bring a prayer rope to be blessed today! Use it and pray the Jesus Prayer each day this week.
3 <sup>RD</sup> Sunday of Lent MARCH 12 <sup>TH</sup>	 <b>VENERATION OF THE HOLY CROSS</b> <i>HALF WAY TO PASCHA!</i> Epistle: Hebrews 4:14-5:6 Gospel: Mark 8:34-9:1	Wear your cross to church and kiss the cross each morning with a bow!
4 <sup>TH</sup> Sunday of Lent MARCH 19 <sup>TH</sup>	 <b>ST JOHN of the LADDER</b> Epistle: Hebrews 6:13-20 Gospel: Mark 9:17-31	Every time you climb stairs this week ask St. John to help you reach Paradise with the sign of the cross!
5 <sup>TH</sup> Sunday of Lent MARCH 26 <sup>TH</sup>	 <b>ST MARY of EGYPT</b> Epistle: Hebrews 9:11-14 Gospel: Mark 10:32-45	Ask the Theotokos to offer you and the world pure thoughts and ideas this week.
PALM SUNDAY APRIL 2 <sup>ND</sup> GREAT WEEK BEGINS	 <i>GREAT AND HOLY WEEK</i> <b>ENTRY OF OUR LORD INTO JERUSALEM</b> Epistle: Philippians 4:4-9 Gospel: John 12:1-18	Place your palm branches and pussywillows behind an icon at home and in your car!
GREAT AND HOLY FRIDAY APRIL 7 <sup>TH</sup>	 <b>GREAT AND HOLY FRIDAY</b> <i>JESUS DIES ON THE CROSS</i> CHECK WITH YOUR PARISH FOR ROYAL HOURS AND VESPERS SCHEDULE	Refrain from TV, Internet & Phones to honor Christ's Death.
FEAST OF FEASTS! APRIL 9 <sup>TH</sup> NO FASTING!	 <i>BRIGHT WEEK</i> <b>HOLY PASCHA! (CHRIST IS RISEN!)</b> Epistle: Acts 1:1-8 Gospel: John 1:1-17	Greet everyone with "CHRIST IS RISEN!" & say it before good morning and goodnight!



# The Feast of the Annunciation

## The Incarnation of the Word of God

March 25, 2023



ST LUKE'S GOSPEL is the basis of the Great Feast of the Annunciation which our Church celebrates on March 25. In its first chapter this Scripture describes the appearance of the angel Gabriel – one of the few angels actually named in Scripture – to the Virgin Mary. For this story to be factual, its ultimate source could only be the Holy Virgin herself as there were no other eye-witnesses.

According to a tradition documented in the first centuries, “Luke, was born in Antioch, by profession, was a physician. He had become a disciple of the apostle Paul and later followed Paul until his [Paul's] martyrdom” (from a second-century prologue to the Gospel). He was thought to be either a Hellenized Jew or a converted pagan writing in Greek for a Greek-speaking community. This explains the Greek expression used by the angel in the Annunciation narrative, a phrase which has become part of the prayer life of Christians all over the world: “Hail, full of grace.”

### THE ANGEL'S GREETING IN PRAYER

One effect of the Council of Ephesus (431), which affirmed the Virgin Mary as Theotokos, was an increase of devotion to her. St Theodotos of Ancyra, a Father of that council, left us a praise of Mary based on Gabriel's greeting:

*Hail, our desirable gladness;*  
*Hail, O rejoicing of the churches;*  
*Hail, O name that breathes out sweetness;*  
*Hail, face that radiates divinity and grace;*  
*Hail, most venerable memory;*  
*Hail, O spiritual and saving fleece;*  
*Hail, O Mother of unsetting splendor, filled with light;*  
*Hail, unstained Mother of holiness;*  
*Hail, most limpid font of the life-giving wave;*  
*Hail, new Mother, workshop of the birth.*  
*Hail, ineffable mother of a mystery beyond understanding;*  
*Hail, new book of a new Scripture, of which, as Isaiah tells, angels and men are faithful witnesses;*  
*Hail, alabaster jar of sanctifying ointment;*  
*Hail, best trader of the coin of virginity;*  
*Hail, creature embracing your Creator;*  
*Hail, little container containing the Uncontainable (Homily 4:3).*

Later poets would use the same literary device in composing Akathists to the Theotokos and, later, to numerous saints. It is also found in the Greek and Syriac hymns of Severus of Antioch (c. 459-538), Andrew of Crete (650-740), and John of Damascus (c. 675-749).

Appropriately enough, the same device is used in our services on the feast of the Annunciation. Several stichera at vespers are extended forms of the Mary-Gabriel dialogue in the Gospel, such as these:

“Gabriel stood before you, O Maiden, revealing the pre-eternal counsel, greeting you and exclaiming: ‘Rejoice, O earth unsown! Rejoice, O bush unburnt! Rejoice, O depth hard to fathom! Rejoice, O bridge leading to the

heavens and lofty ladder, which Jacob beheld! Rejoice, O divine jar of Manna! Rejoice, annulment of the curse! Rejoice, restoration of Adam: the Lord is with you!”

“You appear to me as a man,” the incorrupt Maiden said to the supreme commander; “yet how is it that you announce words which are beyond man? For you have said that God is with me, and that He will dwell in my womb. Tell me, how shall I become so spacious a dwelling and a place of sanctity which surpasses the cherubim? Deceive me no more with falsehood, for I have not known lust, I have not partaken of marriage, how then shall I give birth to a Child?”

### THE ANGELIC SALUTATION

The most popular prayer to the Theotokos based on Luke is undoubtedly the “Hail, Mary” which exists in different versions in the Greek, Latin and Syriac traditions. In each of these versions Gabriel's greeting (Luke 1:28) is joined to Elizabeth's greeting when she was visited by Mary after the Annunciation (Luke 1:42).

In the Byzantine tradition the text is this: “Hail, O Theotokos, Mary full of grace, the Lord is with you. Blessed are you among women and blessed is the fruit of your womb, for you have given birth to the Savior of our souls.” This troparion is sung at vespers every day during the Great Fast and at other times during the year. It is also used by many people as part of their daily rule of prayer.

The only other tradition which uses this prayer is that of the Syriac Church which has a slightly different version in its book of the hours: “Hail Virgin Mary, full of grace, Our Lord is with you. Blessed are you among women and blessed is the Fruit of your womb, Our Lord. O Saint Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at all times, and at the hour of our death. Amen.” It is often added to the concluding prayers of the daily office, particularly in India.

### THE IMPORTANCE OF THE ANNUNCIATION

*The meaning of this feast is well expressed in the hymns of vespers and orthos, such as this one sung at the aposticha of vespers.*

Today is the joy of the annunciation, the triumph of virginity! Those below are united to those above! Adam is restored, and Eve is freed from her primal grief. The tabernacle of our nature, mingled with divinity, has become the temple of God! O the mystery! Incomprehensible is the image of His abasement, and ineffable the richness of His goodness! An angel serves the miracle, and the Virgin's womb receives the Son. The Holy Spirit is sent down from on high, and the Father is well pleased. The covenant is enacted by common consent. Saved thereby, let us cry out together with Gabriel to the Virgin: Rejoice, O joyous one, from whom Christ God, our salvation, is come, assuming our nature and elevating it in Himself! Entreat Him, that our souls be saved.

# صلاة الأكاثستوس "هللوياس"

## (مديح والدة الإله)



اللازمة الأخرى "هللوياس".

إذا لم يكن هذا نشيد حرب، ولم تكن فيه أصلاً أي إشارة لجهاد أو معركة أو حصار. لكن تلك الايات المهمة، التي تضمنت أمجل ما ابتكره الشعور المسيحي من مديح للعدراء والدة الإله، كانت في ساعات الخطر تندفع طوعاً على شفاه المؤمنين وتصعد الى السماء متوسلة خاشعة.

وإذا بصفوف الاعداء تتحرك تحت جناح الظلام. وعبثاً انتقلت ابصار المؤمنين المحاصرين الى مياه البوسفور لعلها تبصر في ظلام الليل سفن الملك هرقل تحمل النجدة للعاصمة. وعبثاً نظر البطريك الى ما تبقى من الجيوش المسيحية، وقارتها بجيوش الفرس الوثنيين... ولم يبق له من ملجأ إلا السماء...

وإذا بالأعجوبة المرتقبة تتم. فظهور في السماء سيدة عظيمة جميلة ترفع يدها وتدفع الجيوش البربرية الى الوراء. وإذا يحافظ الفرس تتخاذل وتراجع، وإذا بما تتخطى في الظلام وتتحارب، وإذا بغوغاتها يملأ الفضاء.

وما تطلع الشمس حتى تبيد الرؤيا، ويبيد معها الاعداء المحاصرون. ففرح الشعب الى الكنائس، واملأ الساحات والشوارع. وارتفعت اصوات المزمين تنشد من جديد "نشيد مدائح والدة الإله". ولهذا المناسبة وضع البطريك لهذا النشيد التقليدي مقدمة جديدة تشير الى اعجوبة انقاذ العاصمة، وتعلن للعدراء الطاهرة "قائدة لا تغلب" وسلطانة المدينة المالكة، فكان القديس الشهير: "نحن عبيدك يا والدة الإله...". وقد جاء في أصله اليوناني: "انا مدينتك يا والدة الإله"...

هذا المديح عبارة عن تاريخ حياة السيد المسيح مع الإشارة الى بعض الحوادث التي رافقتها.

**القسم الأول:** يحتوي على إعلان الملك لمريم خبلها من الروح القدس وخيرة العذراء من هذا الكلام الغريب. ثم ذهابها الى نسيبتها أليصابات وأخيراً تعجب يوسف من هذا الجبل.

**القسم الثاني:** يشتمل قصة ولادة المخلص وسجود الرعاة وتقديم الجوس للهدايا ثم عودتهم الى بلدهم. وهرب مريم ويوسف بالطفل إلى مصر ورجوعهم منها ثم على تسليم الطفل إلى سمعان الشيخ.

**القسم الثالث:** يصف بصورة شعرية متميزة تجديد الطبيعة البشرية من جزاء ولادة المسيح الفادي وينصح الشاعر المؤمنين بأن يرفعوا عقولهم من الأرض إلى السماء، من حيث نزل الإله وصار على الأرض إنساناً مثلنا ليخلص الإنسان.

**القسم الرابع:** والأخير فكله مديح لائق بالعدراء مريم التي استحققت أن تكون أما خالق الكل ثم يحتتمه الشاعر بالدعاء إليها لتشفع فينا لدى ابنها كي يعيد عنا كل الضيقات والمصائب.

وهناك كلمة تتردد كثيراً في هذا التسييح هي كلمة "افرحي" أو "السلام عليك" وهي مأخوذة من قول الملاك جبرائيل ساعة بادر بالتحية المعروفة للسيدة العذراء لوقا ١: ٢٨.

### علاقة المديح بالصوم

يسهر المؤمن، كالعداري الحكيمات، في الأيام الأولى من الأسبوع في التوبة والصلاة والصوم، ليؤهل ذاته للاتحاد بالعرس الرب يسوع في المناولة، يومي السبت والأحد. لذلك فإن ليلة الجمعة - السبت هي ليلة الزفاف الليتورجي، والزبانة لاستقبال الرب.

يقوم المديح ليتورجياً بالدور الذي أدته العذراء في التجسد. فالعدراء هي الصلة بين الله والإنسان في التجسد، هنا المديح يصير أداة الوصل الليتورجية بين أيام الصوم، أيام الحزن البهيم، ويوم الزفاف الإلهي للمؤمن.

نزل في المدائح للبتول قائلين "افرحي يا مزينة النفوس بزينة العرس"، وهذا ما يحققه المديح. إنه يوشحنا برداء العرس حين ينظر المؤمن في العذراء وحين ينشد مرثماً للعرس الأم، تقوده ترانيم المديح الى طهارة النفس وتنقله من الحزن البهيم الى فرح الخدر البتولي.

إننا في المديح نأمل في محبة، وتواضع، وطهارة العذراء. ونعاين في ترانيمه صورة العروس الحقيقية المدعويين جميعنا الى الاقتداء بمثلها. في المديح تتم أيضاً شفاعنة العذراء، وما فينا من غير استحفاق تطهرو شفاعنة العروس التي لا عروس لها.

## افرحي يا عروساً لا عروس لها

المديح هو قصيدة طويلة من القصائد الكنسية. المرجح أن ناظمه هو القديس رومانوس المرمم. المدائح مؤلفة من صلاة النوم الصغرى ثم تسبحات للعدراء ثم المديح. للمديح مقدمة صغيرة تعرف اليوم بالقديس (ترنيمه مختصرة) وتبدأ "نحن عبيدك يا والدة الإله...". ثم أربع أقسام أو أدوار، كل دور مؤلف من ستة مقطوعات وتسمى أيضاً أبيات. المصدر الذي استقى منه الشاعر هذا المديح الرائع هو إنجيل لوقا، حيث الكلام عن بشارة رئيس الملائكة جبرائيل للعدراء مريم (لوقا ١: ٢٦-٥٦).

وأكاثستوس كلمة يونانية وقد أطلق هذا الاسم على مدائح العذراء لأن الاكليروس وجمهور الشعب القسطنطيني ترنموا بها علناً ولأول مرة، في أيام الملك هرقل سنة ٦٢٦، وهم واقفون لإجلالاً للسيدة الطاهرة وطلباً لنصرتها وحمايتها واستعداداً لحما السلاح بأسرع ما يمكن، عند أول إشارة، لصعد هجمات الاعداء المحيطين بالمدينة المالكة، على نحو العبرانيين لدى بنائهم أسوار أورشليم في أيام النبي نحمايا. وما أن لغتنا العربية تفتقر الى كلمة واحدة تعبر عن اللفظة اليونانية، فقد لجأ مترجمو كتبنا الطقسية الى هذه العبارة: نشيد لوالدة الإله "لا يجلس فيه".

عدد الايات الذي يتألف منه نشيد المدائح ٢٤، على عدد الاحرف اليجدية اليونانية. فيبتدئ كل بيت بحرف من هذه الاحرف المجاتية. وتتوالى كل اسرار حياة العذراء واعياها بدءاً من بشارة الملك جبرائيل. وفي القرن الثامن وضع الشاعر الكنسي "يوسف المنشي" قانوناً حذا في تأليفه حلو القديس يوحنا الدمشقي، يرثم به على اللحن الرابع قبل بيوت المدائح التي نظمها القديس رومانوس.

وضع نشيد الأكاثستوس في الأصل لعيد البشارة بحسب رأي النقاد العصريين. إن محور الكلام فيه عن التجسد الإلهي، سبب امتيازات والدة الإله كلها وسبب مجدها. أما عيد الأكاثستوس (أو عيد تدخل العذراء ونجاة المملكة في عهد هرقل) فلم يحتفل به أصلاً في سبت ثابت أي السبت الخامس من الصوم كما هي الحال اليوم، بل كان لبطريك القسطنطينية الحرية أن يحتفل به في السبت الرابع أو الخامس من الصوم بحسب التقويم الطقسي القديم يعود الى القرن التاسع. وعندما أصبح عيد البشارة عيداً ثابتاً في ٢٥ آذار، فصل عنه الاحتفال بعيد الأكاثستوس، وجعل في سبت من أيام الصوم، وهو السبت الخامس في أيامنا الحاضرة "إن رتبة الأكاثستوس أو المدائح عزيزة على قلب المؤمنين التابعين للطقس البيزنطي، فيتسابقون كثيرين الى حضور هذه الصلاة التي تذكروهم بسر المحبة العظيم، سر تجسد الكلمة يوم عيد البشارة، وتعلن على مسامعهم الألقاب المجيدة التي خص بها الكتاب الكريم الأم السماوية، وكل رموز العهد القديم التي أشارت إليها".

أما ارتباطها بتاريخ الحماية المسيحية، فكانت المملكة البيزنطية المسيحية مهددة من كل جهة، وإذا بالحضارة المسيحية التي كانت تلك المملكة تتقلها وتحميها، أصبحت معرضة لغزوات الامم الغربية من فرس وآبار وعرب وغوط وصقالية ومجر. وفي سنة ٦١٤ اجتاح الفرس بلاد المشرق، فدمروا انطاكية ودمشق، واستولوا على اورشليم وقتلوا فيها في يوم واحد أكثر من مئة ألف مسيحي، وهدموا مزارعها المقدسة، وسبوا رهباها وكهنتها واساقفتها وبطريقتها، وانتزعوا عود الصليب المكرم من على هيكل الجلجلة، وعادوا به الى بلادهم غانمين. فنار عليهم هرقل ملك الروم وكسرهم، واسترجع الاسرى وعود الصليب. ولكن الفرس ما لبثوا ان اعادوا الكرة في سنة ٦٢٦، فهاجموا البلاد المسيحية وبلغوا اسوار القسطنطينية، وشددوا في حصارها، حتى قنط الشعب المسيحي فيها. وبالجهد استطاع الملك هرقل ان يخرج من المدينة ويجتاز صفوف المحاصرين لكي يذهب الى الاقاليم ويجمع الجيوش ويقودها لفلح الحصار عن العاصمة.

كان في اثناء غيابه قد سلم القيادة والحكم للبطريك المسكوني سرجيوس، الذي توكل على الله ولم يهمل وسائل الدفاع الحربي. وكانت ليلة السابع من آب سنة ٦٢٦ الموعد الذي حذده الفرس للهجوم على المدينة. فأمر البطريرك، وإذا بالجيش والشعب كله يجتمع فوق اسوار العاصمة يقضون الليل ساهرين، وقوفاً، شاكي السلاح. وعلت من صفوف المؤمنين ابيات "نشيد المدائح لوالدة الإله" الذي كان وضعه رومانوس الشاعر الحمصي، وإذا بالشعب كله يردد بعد كل بيت تلك اللازمة الرائعة: "افرحي يا عروساً لا عروس لها، او



## اقتربوا إلى الله فيقترب إليكم

ان لا ننسى رحمة الرب اعظم. ومحبة لا تدرك ولكي نحصل عليها فلا سبيل الى ذلك الا بتوبة صادقة ودموع وتواضع وحمل الصليب واتباع يسوع.

مريم المصرية من اكثر القديسين الذين احبهم واثروا في بتوبتها الصادقة وبساطة ايمانها وقوته في ذات الوقت نسكت الصحراء وهي من اعتادت الرفاهية ولم تكتس بشيء وهي التي اعتادت ان تلبس الحرير والحلى. ابتعدت عن حياة الزنى والشهوة عند اقتراب الفصح.

لذا يجب علينا ونحن على مقربة من عيد الفصح وايضا لمن لم يستفيد من الصوم والصلاة ولم يغير الصوم مسلكه وحياته نحو الفضيلة، عليه ان يتخذ موقفا مثل موقف مريم المصرية الحاسم والمصري، اي ان ينتقل من ضفة الموت الى ضفة الحياة والخلص.

ليس المطلوب منا ان نتنكس في الصحراء لكي نخلص، ليس المطلوب ان نكون لنا امتيازات لكي نخلص ونجلس الى يمين السيد وعن يساره، كما طلب الرسل اليوم في الانجيل الذي سمعناه، ليست الكرامة وحسب الرئاسة هي تجعلنا قريين من الرب يسوع .

يقول القديس افرام السرياني في صلاة التوبة: "... اعتقني من روح البطالة والفضول وحب الرئاسة..." نعم حب الرئاسة او السلطة. هي اصعب واخطر صعوبة تواجه الانسان المسيحي هي التخلي عن حب السلطة والتسلط والاتانية والكبرياء.

نعتقد كلنا ان قربنا من الرب يسوع يعطينا الحق ويمنحنا حقوق وامتيازات. نعتقد اذا كنا معلمين ومرشدين يمكننا ان نطلب من المسيح ان يفعل لنا كل ما نطلبه وهذا غير صحيح ابدا.

قال يسوع لتلاميذه الذين كانوا يسعون الى حب الرئاسة والظهور اذ قال لهم: " انتم تعلمون ان الذين يحسبون رؤساء الامم يسودونهم وان عظماءهم يتسلطون عليهم. فلا يكون هكذا فيكم، بل من اراد ان يصير فيكم عظيما يكون لكم خادما، ومن اراد ان يصير فيكم اولاً، يكون للجميع عبداً، لان ابن الانسان ايضا لم يات ليخدم بل ليخدم ويبذل نفسه فدية عن كثيرين" هذا هو المطلوب من كل انسان مسيحي مؤمن حقيقي.

النص الانجيلي لهذا اليوم يعلمنا ويعلمنا ويجعلنا نفهم ويجعلنا ندرك ان قضية خلاصنا واكتساب الامتيازات ليس في السلطة والتسلط. ان الامر حقيقة هو بالخدمة، اخلاء الذات والعودة الى الذات، هو الصليب هو التواضع، من اراد ان يصير فيكم اولاً يكون للجميع عبداً (مرقس 10-44) .

هذه هي الامتيازات التي تؤهلنا ان نكون مرافقين ليسوع في ملكوته.

احبائي عليكم ان تعيدوا النظر بالاتجاه الصحيح وان تقبلوا الموازين والمفاهيم، اي تحولوا سعيكم وحياتكم نحو السلطة الى سعي نحو الخدمة واخلاء الذات وعطاء بلا حدود ان تكونوا على الصليب على صورة المسيح . مثل ما فعلت قديستنا العظيمة مريم المصرية.

اذا بدأت تحويل حياتها حياة الزنى الى حياة القداسة عندما سجدت امام الصليب في يوم عيده اثناء رحلتها الى اورشليم .

"اقتربوا إلى الله فيقترب إليكم" (يع 4:8). إذا قمنا بخطوة نحو الله فهو سيبدارنا بخطوات، الجحيم ليس للخطاة بل لغير التائبين، هو لهؤلاء الذين لا يشعرون بقيمة أمام الله وللذين لا يعرفون قيمة المسامحة وللذين يرفضون الفردوس ومحبة الله وللذين لا يحيون الرجاء والإيمان.

يمكن للكنيسة أن تقول لكل واحد: لا تخف من شيء ولا تحزن، حالما تتوب سيغفر لك الله كل شيء، ولا يمكن أن يحدث بأن لا يغفر الله للذين يتوبون حقيقة. ولا يوجد خطيئة مهما كبرت لا يمكن لله أن يغفرها بمحبته.



رتبت الكنيسة في الأحد الخامس من الصوم تذكارة امرأة هي الأم البارة مريم المصرية التي بدأت من حياة الرذيلة وانتهت لحياة الجهاد. حياتها كانت نسكية لحد بعيد، تشبه عري آدم في الفردوس، فيها لا مبالاة بالحياة الطبيعية غير مهتمة بالحاجات البشرية والضرورية للحياة ومحاولة إعادة الجسد والنفس لعذريتهما الأولى قبل السقوط، فيها انغماس في نعمة الله الغير محدودة. غاية هذا الترتيب، أي أحد القديسة مريم المصرية، في أواخر الصوم الكبير هو بسبب ترمدها العميق والكبير ضد الخطيئة، فكلنا يعرف أن مريم المصرية عاشت الخطيئة في أقصاها واكتشفت المعنى الحقيقي للتوبة فعاشت سبع وأربعين سنة في صحراء الأردن، وفيها عاشت محبة الله الغير المحدودة للخطاة والضعفاء، وكشفت لنا كيف أن الله يكشف طرقاً لا تُحصى ويضعها أمامنا في حياتنا اليومية تودي بنا للخلاص، وأوضحت لنا مقدار التواضع والوداعة والصبر التي نحتاجها للوصول للتوبة الحقيقية.

التوبة تفتح ابواب السماء تأخذ الانسان الى الفردوس تتجاوز الشيطان واعماله

اخجل عندما تخطئ ولا تجعل عندما تتوب، فان الخطيئة هي الجرح والتوبة هي العلاج.

القديس يوحنا الذهبي الفم

ايها الاحباء: ها نحن نقرب من الصعود الى اورشليم حتى نعيد الفصح. اليوم المحطة الاخيرة في مسيرة الصوم الكبير قبل دخولنا في الاسبوع العظيم والفصح.

الكنيسة تضع لنا اليوم تذكارة لقديسة البارة مريم المصرية. اختارت الكنيسة ان تجعل عيد مريم المصرية في هذا الاحد الخامس من الصوم الكبير. لتقدمها لنا نموذجاً حياً للتوبة وللنسك بلا حدود . كما فعلت في بداية الصوم بمثل الفريسي. والعشار ومثل الابن الشاطر، اللذان يذكرونا بان نتوب واليوم تذكرونا الكنيسة المقدسة بان التوبة بامكاننا ان نعيشها وتصير حياة حية .

فمريم سلكت وانغمست في الخطيئة فعاشت حياتها في اقصى دركات الخطيئة، اخطأت الى الحد الاقصى. بحيث لم يكن ممكناً ان يخطئ كائن بشري اكثر منها. لقد وصلت الى ذروة الخطيئة وإلى اعماقها، لكن الرب انتشلها بواسع رحمته وايقظها من خلالها واعاد اليها رشدها فقبلت التوبة مدى عمرها الباقي.

وبمقدار اكبر من المقدار الذي مارست فيه الخطيئة مارست التوبة. وبشوق ملتهب اكثر من الشوق الذي احييت فيه الخطيئة. فكانت مريم ايقونة التوبة، ايقونة اعادة للعودة الى الذات، فانقلبت مريم من ضفة الخطيئة الى ضفة المسيح، من ضفة الخطاة الى ضفة القديسين القائمين على الفضيلة، اي عبرت الى الطريق الصحيح الذي يؤدي الى التوبة والاهتداء والخلص.

لهذا تضع الكنيسة المقدسة اليوم مريم المصرية نموذجاً يجب ان يتمثل به المؤمنون كي يبلغوا الى ما بلغت اليه القديسة مريم . هذا ما اكدته صلاتنا لها اليوم، اذ قرأنا في صلاة السحر "يا مريم المصرية بما انا حويناك نموذجاً للتوبة توسلي الى المسيح ان يمنحنا اياها في اوان الصيام ."

اذا مريم هي نموذج حي عن الانسان الخاطئ الذي اذا سعى الى التوبة يجد ذراعي الله مفتوحين لاستقباله كما استقبال الأب ابنه الضال في المثل الشهير.

مريم المصرية هي مثال ونموذج لنا نحن الخطاة كي لا نياس من امكانية التوبة فمهما بلغت ضخامة الخطيئة علينا ان نعرف تمام المعرفة ان الله ينتظرنا ليضمنا الى مختاريه.

لا خلاص بدون توبة . التوبة تعني تحولا في الانسان تغييرا من حالة الى حالة ، فحياة المسيحي حياة توبة دائمة بهذا المعنى انها سعي نحو الله لا ينقطع. سعي مستمر كل الايام اي رجوع متواصل الى الله. لا تعني التوبة انها فترة او مدة محددة من الحياة. التوبة نأخذها حياة، حياة مع الله اي حياتنا كلها توبة.

سيرة مريم المصرية مليئة بالعبور والدوروس فهي توجه لنا دعوة لكل واحد منا، دعوة لتوبة عن خطايانا مهما كانت وهي برهان لرحمة الله العظيمة، فمهما كانت الخطيئة عظيمة علينا



# Only When We Descend in Humility Can We Ascend to Heaven

Where shall I begin to weep for the actions of my wretched life? What first-fruit shall I offer, O Christ, in this my lamentation? But in Thy compassion grant me forgiveness of sins." (The Canon of St. Andrew, Canticle 1, vs. 2.)

During Great Lent we remember and venerate Saint Mary of Egypt both on April 1 and the Fifth Sunday of Lent. With the Canon of St. Andrew, read in many churches during the first and fifth weeks of Lent, we uphold her as an icon of repentance, an example for every Orthodox Christian to emulate. Yet for many years, she lived a life of bondage to sexual passions. If St. Mary of Egypt were alive today, would we welcome her into our assembly?

"I confess to Thee, O Savior, the sins I have committed, the wounds of my soul and body, which murderous thoughts, like thieves, have inflicted inwardly upon me." (The Canon of St. Andrew, Canticle 1, vs. 12.)

While we don't know about the very early years of her life, we do know that she lost her virginity at age twelve and ran away from home. For the next seventeen years she was a slave to her insatiable appetite for sexual perversions, including sexual encounters with "young men," even against their will. This sounds very much like a victim of pedophilia who recoils and continues in her victimization by taking on the role of a predator herself, victimizing others in the process. Many adults who fall into the bondage of pedophilia are victims of sexual abuse as children. In a futile attempt to reconcile the horror of their own victimization, they try to regain control of their lives through exploitation, continuing to inflict wounds on their own souls and bodies.

"Like David, I have fallen into lust and I am covered in filth; but wash me clean, O Savior, by my tears." (The Canon of St. Andrew, Canticle 2, vs. 54.) "O Lady, thou hast brought forth our Joy: Grant me the spirit of mourning that in the coming Day of Judgment I may be comforted by God." (The Canon of St. Andrew, Canticle 9, vs. 327.) "For all have sinned and fall short of the Glory of God." (Romans 3:23)

For seventeen years, Saint Mary of Egypt lived a lifestyle that isolated her from the community and God. Covered with filth amassed over the years, her heart yet longed for union with God. People in prison feel ostracized too, isolated from God and society, as they sit in shame in prison cells longing for the same tears of repentance that lead to joy and reconciliation.

"Christ became man, calling to repentance thieves and harlots. Repent, my soul: the door of the kingdom is already open, and Pharisees and publicans and adulterers pass through it before thee, changing their lives." (The Canon of St. Andrew, Canticle 9, Vs. 342)

The healing of the venerable Saint Mary of Egypt was not instantaneous but required a rigorous and lengthy spiritual journey. Being led by the Holy Spirit, she retreated to the wilderness where she lived the life of a hermit for seventeen years, seeking freedom from bondage of the passions. She spent a further thirty years in the wilderness having obtained the true gifts of repentance, healing and freedom from the enslavement of sin.



During Great Lent, each of us seeks repentance, turning from our own vices and passions and setting our minds and hearts on God. Through the intercessions of the most Holy Theotokos, God grants us the gift of compunction to turn from our wounds and sins to find healing and comfort in Him.

Only when we submit to God do we find true freedom. Only when we descend in humility can we ascend to the Heavens. It's only when we die to ourselves do we truly live. And we should not be afraid! Our spiritual life should not be wrought with anxiety, with fear and with doubt. After venerating the relic of the true cross, St. Mary of Egypt returned to the church to give thanks, and heard a voice telling her, "If you cross the Jordan, you will find glorious rest." And then, as St. Zosimas tells us, St. Mary spent 47 years in the desert alone, taking nothing with her but three loaves of bread, and once they were gone, she lived only on what she could find in the wilderness.

We marvel at this, as we, I think, almost write this story of, thinking, "Oh, this was a great saint in the olden days. This is all beyond our capability." But this is not true at all, and this is precisely why we hear the life of St. Mary of Egypt in church and on this week in Lent. Human nature has not changed in all the years from then until now. St. Mary was once an exceedingly sinful person and far from God. But she repented. She had a change of heart. She found humility, and in giving her whole life and her whole will entirely to God, she found the "glorious rest" to God promised her. Now we look to her – this former harlot and sex addict – as a great saint whom we must emulate, and to whom we pray so that she may intercede for us at the throne of God. And so, there is hope. There is hope for us, and we must not despair!

On this final Sunday of Great Lent, it would do well for us to take stock of where we are. Have we left our fallen city? Have we exited the gate? Have we travelled for miles, only to retrace our steps? Have we followed the way of the Pharisee, relying on our own efforts and perceived righteousness? Or have we learned to follow the way of the Publican and St. Mary of Egypt, crying out with a contrite heart and humility: "Lord, have mercy on me, a sinner!" Far too often we find ourselves at Holy Week, and even at the very night of Pascha, looking back to Lent wondering: "Where did Lent go? All this time... and I've wasted it!" All this time is given to us – is a gift to us – to use for our repentance, and don't we so often squander it in anxieties, trivialities, bickering, distractions, sins and passions. And when the trumpet sounds and we find ourselves at the Dread Judgment, will we look back and ask, "Where did the time go? How have I wasted my life?" Yet it does not have to be this way. Let us heed the words of the St. Paul who said: 'Awake, you who sleep, Arise from the dead, And Christ will give you light.' See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil... be filled with the Spirit, speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord. (Ephesians 14-16, 19)

Let us rejoice, then, in the Lord in these remaining days of Lent as we look towards Christ's Holy Passion and glorious Resurrection, and let us never cease to have the words of St. Anthony the Great on our lips: "Today I will make a good beginning!" May God grant us strength and perseverance, not just to make a good beginning, but to finish the race set before us. Amen.





## St. Ephrem Prayer

O Lord and Master of my life,  
take from me the spirit of sloth,  
despair, lust of power,  
and idle talk.

But give rather the spirit of  
chastity, humility, patience, and  
love to Thy servant.

































Yea, O Lord and King, grant me  
to see my own transgressions,  
and not to judge my brother, for  
blessed art Thou, unto  
ages of ages. Amen.







# LITURGICAL CALENDAR



MARCH	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
 <p>آذار - مارس 2023</p> <p>FEBRUARY 2023</p> <p>S M T W T F S 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28</p> <p>APRIL 2023</p> <p>S M T W T F S 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30</p>				<b>1</b>  St Eudocia  2 Corinthians 6:16 - 7:1 Matthew 5:20-26	<b>2</b>  St Theodotos of Cyrene  1 Corinthians 10:5-12 Matthew 5:27-32	<b>3</b>  2 <sup>nd</sup> Akathist المدائح الثمانية Romans 12:6-14 Matthew 5:33-41	<b>4</b>  St Gerasimos  Hebrews 3:12-16 Mark 1:35-44
	<b>5</b>  St Gregory of Palamas Sunday of Holy Relics أحد الذخائر المقدسة Hebrews 1:10-2:3 Mark 2:1-12	<b>6</b>  The 42 Martyrs of Amorion	<b>7</b>  Martyrs of Cherson	<b>8</b>  St Theophylactos of Niomedia  Ephesians 4:1-7 Matthew 7:1-8	<b>9</b>  Forty Martyrs of Sebastea  Hebrews 12:1-10 Matthew 20:1-16	<b>10</b>  3 <sup>rd</sup> Akathist المدائح الثالثة Ephesians 5:1-8 Matthew 6:22-33	<b>11</b>  St Sophronios of Jerusalem  Hebrews 10:32-38 Mark 7:14-17
	<b>12</b>  Veneration of Holy Cross أحد المسجود للصليب الكريم Hebrews 4:14-5:6 Mark 8:34-9:1	<b>13</b>  Remains of Nicephoros	<b>14</b>  St Benedict  1 Corinthians 1:18-24 Matthew 13:36-43	<b>15</b>  St Agapios and his companions  Galatians 2:16-20 Luke 7:36-50	<b>16</b>  St Sabinos the Egyptian  Galatians 5:22-6:2 Matthew 25:14-30	<b>17</b>  4 <sup>th</sup> Akathist المدائح الرابعة 2 Timothy 3:10-15 Matthew 25:1-13	<b>18</b>  St Cyril of Jerusalem  Hebrews 6:9-12 Mark 7:31-37
	<b>19</b>  Sunday of St John Climacos أحد القديس يوحنا السلمى Hebrews 6:13-20 Mark 9:17-31	<b>20</b>  The 796 Martyred at St Sabas  Romans 12:1-3 Luke 6:31-36	<b>21</b>  St James of Catania  Ephesians 4:14-17 Luke 6:24-30	<b>22</b>  St Basil of Ancyra  Ephesians 4:17-25 Luke 7:36-50	<b>23</b>  Thursday of Great Canon خميس القانون الكبير Ephesians 4:25-32 Luke 13:1-9	<b>24</b>  5 <sup>th</sup> Akathist المدائح الخامسة 2 Corinthians 5:10-15 Luke 12:42-48	<b>25</b>  Annunciation عيد البشارة Hebrews 2:11-18 Luke 1:24-38
	<b>26</b>  Sunday of Mary of Egypt أحد مريم المصرية Hebrews 9:11-14 Mark 10:32-45	<b>27</b>  St Matrona of Salonica  Colossians 3:12-16 Luke 11:34-41	<b>28</b>  Sts Stephen and Hilarion  1 Thessalonians 5:14-23 Mark 8:30-34	<b>29</b>  St Cyril and his companions  Ephesians 4:7-13 Luke 12:16-21	<b>30</b>  St John Climacos  Galatians 4:4-7 Luke 18:18-27	<b>31</b>  St Hypatios of Gangra  Ephesians 2:4-10 Matthew 4:1-11	

 Church Major Feasts

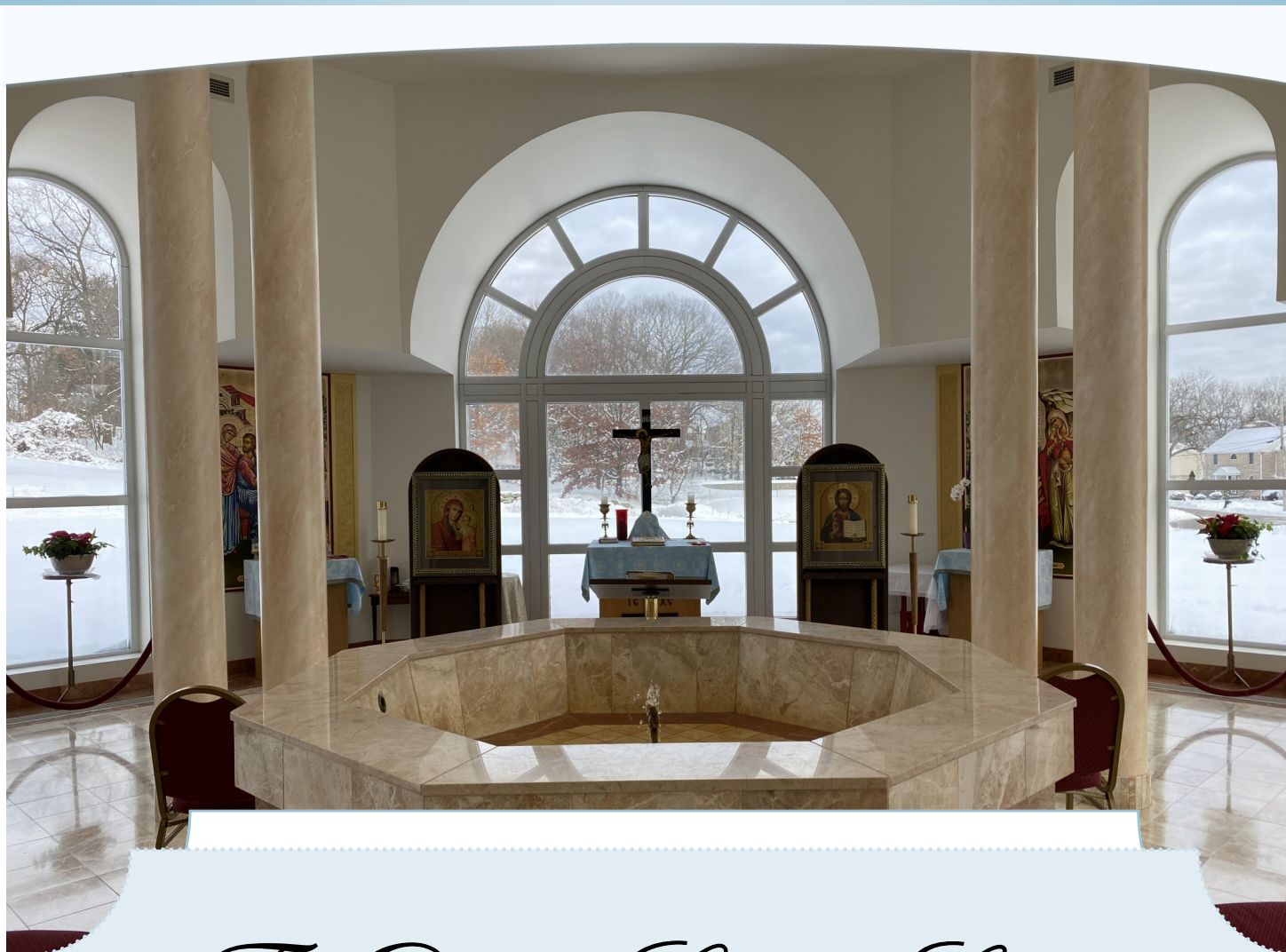
 Abstain from Meat

 Fast from midnight until noon

 Lenten Season



# Weekly Divine Liturgy Schedule



## *The Divine Liturgy Schedule*

Sunday Divine Liturgy

- **9:00 am**
- **11:15 am**

The Sacrament of Reconciliation is available  
Tuesday to Friday before or after the Divine Liturgy.

# ANNOUNCEMENTS



*Welcome to*

## **St. Basil The Great Melkite Greek Catholic Church**

**Check our website  
for Church news and updates at**  
[www.stbasilthegreatchurch.com](http://www.stbasilthegreatchurch.com)

**On Facebook**  
<https://www.facebook.com/StBasilMelkiteChurchRI/>

**YouTube**  
<https://bit.ly/2VJgvnS>

**Contact us for information and ideas**  
[office@stbasilthegreatchurch.com](mailto:office@stbasilthegreatchurch.com)



# "GOD LOVES THE CHEERFUL GIVER" 2 COR 9:7

Donations are greatly appreciated especially during this pandemic crisis. Please click on the link below to donate.  
Thank you and God bless you and yours.





# SHEPHERD'S CARE Associated Charities Great Lent 2023

"There is no sin that alms cannot cleanse. Charity is a medicine suitable for any wound."

*St. John Chrysostom*

Almsgiving is an essential pillar of Great Lent. Owing to your love and faithful support, the diocese has been able to help orphans, the hungry, the homeless, addicted, destitute, runaway teens, victims of war, victims of disease and disaster, and so many others through Shepherd's Care Associated Charities.

Shepherd's Care is much more than simply raising funds for charity. It is a guide to assist us in living a holy Lent through understanding and practicing the cornerstones of prayer, fasting and almsgiving. As Great Lent begins please pick up a brochure and a coin box when you come to church. Put it on your dining table or in your icon corner, anywhere you will see it and be inspired to remember the needy. Throughout Lent place your offerings in the box. At the end of Great Lent simply bring the proceeds of your mite box to the church as your offering for Shepherd's Care.

This year, due to the recent tragic earthquake in Turkey and Syria, all proceeds from Shepherd's Care 2023 will be given to alleviate their suffering. If you would like to make a donation to assist those who have lost loved ones, have been injured, or had their property damaged or destroyed, you may mail a donation to the address below. The check may be made out to: "Diocese of Newton" with the memo: "Shepherd's Care Earthquake Relief." Mail to Diocese of Newton Shepherd's Care, 3 VFW Parkway, W. Roxbury, MA 02132. You may also make online donations through your parish's online portal, or at: [www.melkite.org/donate](http://www.melkite.org/donate). Please specify: "Earthquake relief."

**Thank you and God bless you for your generosity on behalf of those less fortunate.**

## Weekends of March 6 and 20, 2022

Shepherd's Care Associated Charities 2022. To help those in need, the Shepherd's Care Associated Charities of the Eparchy of Newton is sponsoring this 40-day Lenten giving program to provide for the less fortunate. Local parish charities, as well as eparchial charities, international charities, and our seminarians, will benefit from your generous alms-giving during Great Lent. Program brochures and Giving (Mite) Boxes are available in the church. Please be generous with your contributions. Thank you for all you do to help the needy among us. Thank You!

### Shepherd's Care Associated Charities

Shepherd's Care began in 1988 at the request of the faithful and clergy who saw a need for a united effort among all Melkite Catholic Parishes in the United States to reach out to people in need. By means of this initiative, our eparchy reaches out in love through financial assistance to people in need here in the United States and abroad. Over the years Shepherd's Care has raised more than \$250,000.

Through your love and faithful support, the diocese has been able to help orphans, the hungry, the homeless, drug addicted, the destitute, runaway teens, victims of war, victims of disease and disasters, and so many more.

Donations are distributed to local parish charities such as soup kitchens, food pantries, homeless shelters, eparchial charities, world charities, and offers tuition assistance to seminarians of the Eparchy.

But Shepherd's Care is much more than raising funds for charitable causes. More importantly, it is a guide to assist us in living a Holy Lent through understanding and practicing the Lenten cornerstones of prayer, fasting and almsgiving.



**Shepherd's Care  
Associated Charities  
Eparchy of Newton  
3 V.F.W. Parkway  
West Roxbury, MA 02132-7727**



### SHEPHERD'S CARE Associated Charities Great Lent

**"There is no sin that  
alms cannot cleanse.  
Charity is a medicine  
suitable for any wound."**

*St. John Chrysostom*

### The Widow's Mite

Each year during the Great Fast, the Church encourages us with the example of the "widow's mite". We receive a little box — a "mite box" which we take home. This box symbolizes the offerings (alms) we give during Lent, together with our increased prayers, fasting, and abstinence.

*"When He looked up, he saw some wealthy people putting their offering into the treasury, and He noticed a poor widow putting in two small coins. He said, "I tell you truly, this poor widow put in more than all the rest; for those others have all made offerings from their surplus wealth. But she, from her poverty, has offered her whole livelihood"*



Our Lord, in His infinite wisdom, recognized that the widow's mite was so very valuable. The poor widow gave from her need. She gave to God everything she had.



### Lenten Gift Box

Each family, indeed every person, is invited to take home a Lenten gift (mite) box. Put it on your dining table, or in your icon corner, anywhere you will see it and be inspired to remember the needy. Throughout Lent place your offerings in the box. Some people try to put in the amount they save by abstaining from certain foods. Children find it especially fun to use a coin calendar.

At the end of Great Lent bring the proceeds of your mite box to the church as your offering for Shepherd's Care. If you are presenting a check please make it payable to **SHEPHERD'S CARE ASSOCIATED CHARITIES**. You may also

make donations by check directly to the Eparchial Office. Address is on the back. Together our eparchial family can help alleviate the sufferings of God's people.

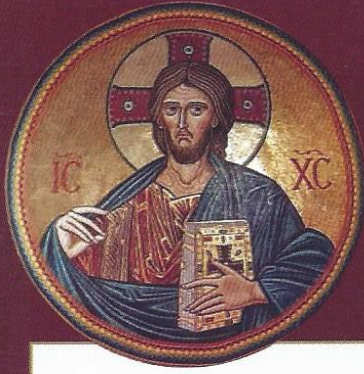
All proceeds from Shepherd's Care Associated Charities go directly to the charities. The Bishop, together with his advisors, insures that 100% of the money is given to the needy at home and abroad.

Your tax-deductible contributions are greatly appreciated by all who will benefit from them. The Fathers of the Church encourage us to always be humbly grateful and remember those in need. In helping others, we are doing the will of God.

*"The bread you do not use is the bread of the hungry. The garment in your wardrobe is the garment of the person who is naked. The money you keep locked away is the money of the poor."*

*St. Basil the Great*





MELKITE CATHOLIC  EPARCHY OF NEWTON

# VOCATION PLAN

*Christ Calls All to Serve*

FEBRUARY 2023

## ***Bishop François forms New Vocation Team***

*The goal is to create a “Culture of Service & Vocations” within the Melkite Catholic Church*

As Bishop François Beyrouti begins his episcopal ministry, he is emphasizing the Lord’s invitation to “serve one another humbly in love” (Gal 5:13). In this spirit, one of his key priorities is to strengthen our focus on vocations throughout the Melkite Catholic Eparchy of Newton.

Thanks be to God, over the past few years, the Melkite Catholic Church in the United States has been blessed with many new vocations to the priesthood and diaconate. Looking toward the future, we can also see that many parishes have aging clergy who have been faithfully serving for so many years. Thus, there is a serious need to ensure uninterrupted pastoral care for our 50 churches and communities and to respond to the needs of our faithful who are asking us to establish new parishes.

Thus Bishop François has convened a new Vocation Team, headed by Fr. John Mefrige and composed of four other priests from each region of the eparchy. The challenge for the team is threefold.

The first task is to re-organize our efforts, both by standardizing the formation of priests and deacons, as well as establishing a clear process for men to discern God’s call.

Secondly, Bishop François’ vision is that new vocations will flow organically from active ministry in local parishes. Put simply, the men who will one day serve as priests and deacons must now be serving generously in other capacities. A campaign is planned to identify these men—both single and married—and invite them to discern a potential role as reader, subdeacon, deacon, or priest.



Finally, the Vocation Team aims to dramatically improve communications about vocations within the eparchy. For example, the Melkite Catholic community in the United States needs to see the joys of married clergy with families, as well as the blessing of men who serve celibately or enter monastic life. We have a number of digital and print projects planned for 2023 and beyond.

In summary, the Vocation Team is preparing to enter a multi-year process of organizing, inviting, and communicating a “pro-vocations” message throughout the eparchy. The overall vision is to build upon the core message that *Christ calls all to serve*—in all sorts of capacities—to make us a true *ecclesia*, a living Church. Every vocation is vital, including marriage and family, nuns, monks, and the clergy who lead our liturgical worship. ☀

INSIDE

### ***Three Key Areas of the New Vocation Plan***

1. Organization
2. Invitation
3. Communication





# Organization



**BEGAN NOVEMBER 2022**

## *Vocation Team Roles*

Fr. John Mefrige in San Antonio, Texas, is the director of our new Vocation Team. He is joined by representatives from various regions:

- Fr. Dimitri Saliba - Western Region
- Fr. Elias Dorham - MidAtlantic Region
- Fr. Philip Raczka - New England
- Fr. Bryan McNeil - Deacon Formation

In addition to representing a region of the eparchy, each member will also take on specific roles, including:

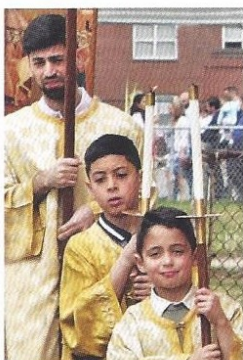
- Vocation promotion and communications
- Interviewing potential candidates
- Handling the application process
- Overseeing the formation of seminarians



**SPRING 2023**

## *Clergy & Candidate Databases*

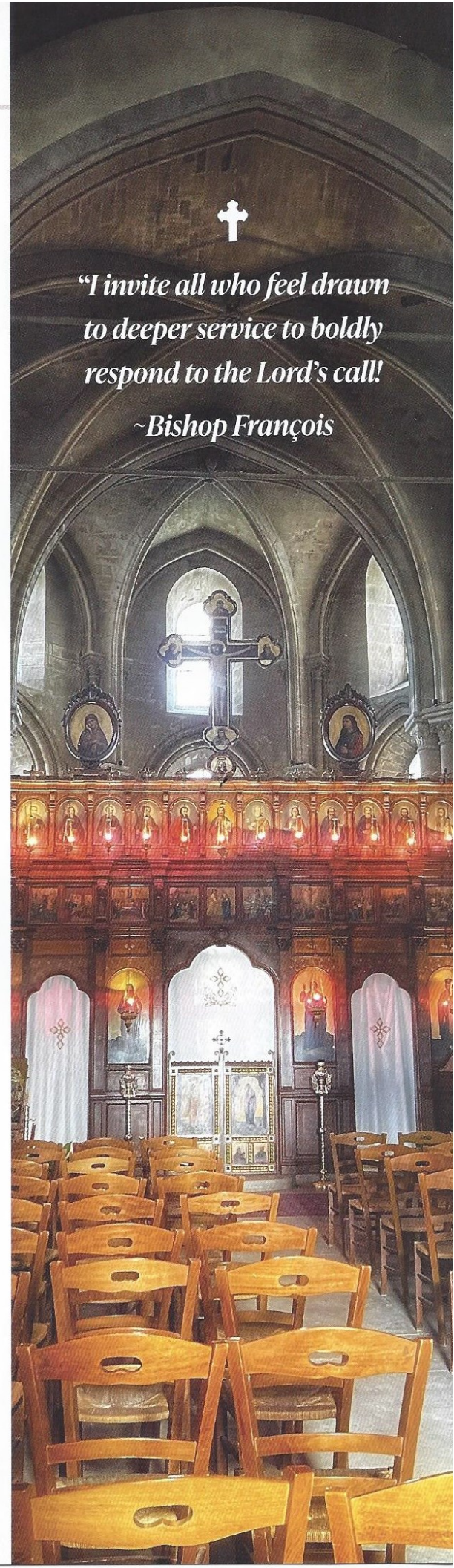
One essential task is to update the biographical information of all our clergy. This will help Bishop François to review the assignments of each deacon and priest and plan for future transitions and retirements. For example, simply knowing the birth dates of all priests allows us to project retirement dates and estimate how many new men we need in formation to serve our growing communities. Similarly, our Vocation Team is streamlining the way we keep track of prospects with a new database of candidates.



**2023-2024**

## *Standardizing the Application & Formation Process*

We have had a wealth of excellent candidates, but their paths to ordination have been widely varied. Our plan is to standardize the entire process, for both priests and deacons, beginning with a new, more rigorous application process, and continuing with well-defined tracks for both married and celibate seminarians.



*“I invite all who feel drawn to deeper service to boldly respond to the Lord’s call!”*

*~Bishop François*



# Invitation

## *Becoming Fishers of Men*

A call to deeper service is always a call from Christ himself. Experience shows, however, that the call is most often mediated by parish priests. Over the next three years, the role of priests as “inviters” will be a recurring theme in our regular Clergy meetings and annual Clergy Conference. We will also be sending resources to equip priests to be mentors to men in their parishes. The goal is to encourage priests to be true “fishers of men.”



FALL 2023

## *Called by Name* ✠

*Will You Help Identify Future Clergy?*

Perhaps the most exciting part of our Vocation Plan is a campaign to identify candidates for readers, subdeacons, deacons, and priests. “Called by Name” will be an eparchy-wide process in which clergy and laity can submit the names of men in our parishes who may

be called to these ministries. Importantly, candidates should be longstanding, faithful members who have demonstrated stability of life and a heart for service. As Jesus told us: “If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another’s feet. For I have given you an example, that you also should do as I have done to you” (John 13:14-15).

WINTER 2023-2024

## *Online Discernment Meetings*

Men who are submitted in the Called by Name campaign will be invited to begin the discernment process through a series of online meetings with Bishop François and the Vocation Team. The purpose is to open dialogue and offer guidance for listening to God’s call.

SPRING 2024

## *Discernment Retreat*

Those who have faithfully participated in the online meetings will be invited to an in-person Discernment Retreat. This is an opportunity for talks, personal prayer, and Liturgical Prayer. The goal is that after the retreat, we will have a good sense of the next cohort of men who will advance into formation, either toward diaconate or priesthood.





# Communication



SPRING AND FALL, 2023-2024

## *Vocations Bulletin*

In the coming months, keep your eyes open for our Vocations Bulletin! It will be similar in format to this Vocation Plan and will include articles and photos highlighting our new seminarians, readers, subdeacons, deacons, priests, monks, and nuns. We will also focus on their families who nourish them and also highlight couples who are in ministry together. The overall goal is to show that living out one's baptism is the path to holiness—and that responding to God's call begins with faithful service and an open heart.

APRIL AND NOVEMBER, 2023-2024

## *Bi-annual Vocation Days*

Twice a year, in Spring and Fall, the Vocations Team will prepare resources for parishes to place special emphasis on vocations, by preaching as well as in children's catechesis and youth ministry. This will align with the readings and Feast days in our Melkite Catholic liturgical calendar.

## *New Online Presence for Vocations*

We will include robust vocation pages on the Melkite Catholic Eparchy of Newton's website, Melkite.org. This will refresh our online presence, and provide a platform for our Called by Name program and other Vocation resources.

## *Other Communication Efforts*

In Year Two of our Vocation Plan, we would like to re-energize our social media presence, specifically with a series of videos on priests, deacons, and seminarians. We will also work on an e-newsletter with tips and encouragement for young people to live out their baptism and discern their vocations.



## *All Have a Role to Play*

The Vocation Plan is not just the work of the Vocation Team. It requires the enthusiastic support of clergy, educators, and those who work with youth. Above all, it requires families who make their home a true domestic church. All are encouraged to find some role to play. Keep in mind that our Melkite Catholic Eparchy of Newton's Vocation Plan is open to your feedback and creativity. Feel free to be creative in your parish and to share with us your ideas and most importantly begin to develop a culture of ministry that encourages Vocations in your family and parish. It is never too early to reply personally or to keep your eyes open to send us names of those you feel should be encouraged to serve in this way. 🌟

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# ANNOUNCEMENTS

As of 12/30/2022



## St. Basil the Great Melkite Greek Catholic Church

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### Campaign Facts:



**Campaign Goal:** \$1,000,000



**Outstanding Goal:** \$340,000



**Contribution Ranges:** \$20 to \$50,100

### Parish Community Facts:



**Total Registered Families:** 415



**Active Families:** 250



**% of Active Families Participation:** 51%

*"It's not about how much we give, but how much love we put into giving"*  
-Mother Teresa

### Current & Future Projects:



**Church Roof Repair:** Project completed, estimated cost of \$400,000...final cost \$321,000.



**Rectory Roof Repair:** Proposals received, estimated cost \$18,000, pending review.



**Church Window Repairs:** Proposals received, estimated cost \$9,000, pending review.



**HVAC & Boiler Replacement:** Proposals received, estimated cost \$196,000.



**Flooring Upgrades:** Proposal received, estimated cost \$50,000 (carpeting for Church, Cultural Center, office & hallway), pending review.



**Parking Lot Sealing:** Project complete at both Rectory & Church...final cost \$14,000.



**Interior Repairs, Expand Storage & Vent Cleaning:** Partial proposals received. Vent cleaning estimated cost \$9,000.



**Exterior/Masonry /Walkway Repairs:** Awaiting proposals.



**Security Cameras/Door Upgrades:** Camera system complete, final cost \$10,500. Door proposal received, pending review.

### Important Highlights

- We are extremely grateful to all of those who have contributed and supported the campaign thus far.
- The finance committee has begun strategy planning on maximizing the return of current financial reserves for future projects. God willing, this will prevent the need for another capital campaign and *allow for a more spiritual focus!*
- As reflected above, donations have varied in amounts, we do not expect everyone to support with the same amount...*However, we do pray that everyone will support this important campaign!*
- This is an open and transparent campaign, if you have any questions, suggestion, or concerns Fr. Ephrem or any of the committee members would be more than happy review/discuss during coffee hour or feel free to call them at the numbers listed below.



For more information contact any of the committee members, [click here](#), or scan this code with your Smartphone Camera!

Jeff Boudjouk: 401-441-2737

Ann Sabbagh: 508-243-1190

Kyle Mardo: 401-578-5369



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