



March 12<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



### Third Sunday of the Great Lent Sunday of the Holy Cross

الاحد الثالث للصوم العظيم المقدس  
احد الصليب المقدس

### Antiphon Prayer

O Christ God, You chose of your own free will to be raised on the Cross for the sake of mankind. Have mercy on your people called after your name. Grant to the Church, your Mystical Body, to rejoice in your might. Safeguard all the peoples that You reconciled by your crucifixion. As for us, who have been sealed by the sign of your Cross, grant that we may not be proud of anything but of your Cross, bearing at all time in our hearts and our minds, the marks of your Holy Passion. For You are our Light and our Sanctification, O Christ our God, and to You we render glory, and to your Eternal Father, and your All-holy, Good and Life-giving Spirit, now and always and forever and ever.

### Troparion of the Resurrection (7th tone)

You destroyed Death by Your cross. You opened paradise to the thief. You changed the weeping of the myrrhbearers, and commanded Your apostles to proclaim that You, O Christ God, have risen, granting to the world great mercy.

### Troparion of the Holy Cross

"O Lord save your people and bless your inheritance, granting peace to the world; and protect your community by the power of your Cross."

### Troparion of St Basil The Great

Your voice has sounded all over the earth, that accepted your preaching. You gave a divine explanation of doctrine, and made clear the nature of creatures, and set a rule of life for men. Holy Father, and Kingly Priest, intercede with Christ God to grant us great mercy.

### صلاة الأنديفونة

أَيُّهَا الْمَسِيحُ إِلَهِه، يَا مَنْ رُفِعَ عَلَى الصَّليبِ طَوْعاً حَيًّا لِلبَشَرِ، إِزَأْفُ بِشَعْبِكَ الْمُسَمَّى بِاسْمِكَ، وَأَعْطِ الْكَنِيسَةَ، الَّتِي هِيَ جَسَدُكَ، أَنْ تَفْرَحَ بِفِدْرَتِكَ، وَصُنْ جَمِيعَ الشُّعُوبِ الَّتِي سَأَلَمَتْهَا يَوْمَ صَلْبِكَ، وَاجْعَلْنَا نَحْنُ الَّذِينَ وَسَمْنَا بِشَارَةَ الصَّليبِ أَلَّا نَفْتَخِرَ إِلَّا بِه، خَائِمِينَ دَائِمًا فِي قُلُوبِنَا وَأَفْكَارِنَا سِمَاتِ أَلَمِكَ الْمُقَدَّسَةِ لِأَنَّكَ أَنْتَ نُورُنَا وَتَقْدِيسُنَا، أَيُّهَا الْمَسِيحُ إِلَهِه، وَإِلَيْكَ نَرْفَعُ الْمَجْدَ وَالشُّكْرَ وَالسُّجُودَ، وَإِلَى أَبِيكَ الْأَزَلِيِّ وَرُوحِكَ الْقُدُّوسِ، الْآنَ كُلَّ أَوَانٍ وَإِلَى دَهْرِ الدَّاهِرِينَ. الشعب: آمين.

### طروبارية القيامة باللحن السابع

لاشيت بصليبك الموت، وفتحت للصلب الفردوس، وحولت نوح حاملات الطيب الى فرح، وأمرت رسلك أن يكرزوا مبشرين بأنك قد قمت، أيها المسيح الاله، مانحاً العالم عظيم الرحمة.

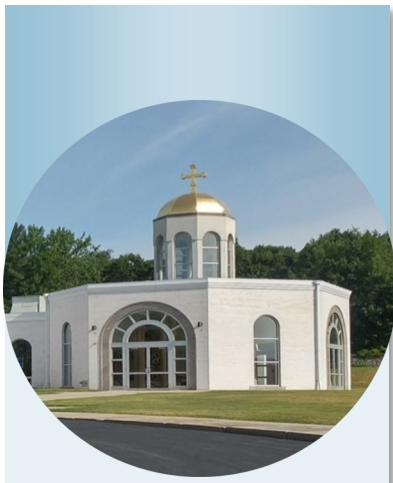
### طروبارية الصليب باللحن الأول

خَلِّصْ يَا رَبُّ شَعْبَكَ وَتَبَارِكْ مِيرَاثَكَ، مَا نَحَا الْعَالَمَ السَّلَامَ، وَاحْفَظْ بِصَلْبِكَ رَعِيَّتَكَ.

### طروبارية القديس باسيليوس

لقد ذاع منطقتك في كل الأرض. فإنها قد قبلت كلامك، الذي به بينت العقائد بياناً إلهياً، وأوضحت طبيعة الكائنات، ونظمت أخلاق البشر. فيا أيها الأب البار ذو الكهنوت الملوكي، اهبتهل إلى المسيح الإله في خلاص نفوسنا.





**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>



**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 the 3rd Sunday of Lent, Hebrews 4:14-5:6, Prokimenon (Tone 6)**

O Lord, save your people and bless your inheritance!  
 Stichon: To you, O Lord, I have called: O my Rock, be not deaf to me!

**Reading from the Epistle of St. Paul to the Hebrews: 4: 14-16; 5: 1-6**

Brethren, since we have a great high priest who has passed into the heavens, let us hold fast our profession of faith. For we have not a high priest unable to pity our weaknesses, but one tried as we are in all things, save sin. Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need. For every high priest taken from among men is appointed for men in matters pertaining to God, so that he may offer gifts and sacrifices for sins. He is able to have compassion on the ignorant and erring, because he himself also is beset with weakness, and therefore must make offerings for sin in his own behalf as in behalf of the people. And no one invests himself with this honor: only one who is called by God takes it, as Aaron was. So also Christ did not glorify himself with the high priesthood, but glorified the One who had spoken to him, "You are my son, I this day have begotten you (Ps. 2:7). "As he says also in another place, "You are a priest forever, according to the order of Melchizedek (Ps. 109:4)."

Alleluia (Tone 6)

Remember your congregation which you have acquired from the beginning: you redeemed the scepter of your inheritance. Stichon: God is our King forever: he brought about salvation in the midst of the earth.

**Gospel of the 3rd Sunday of Lent, Mark 8: 34-9:1 (Taking up the daily cross)**

The Lord said: "If anyone wishes to come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow me. For anyone who would save his life will lose it; but anyone who loses his life for my sake and for the sake of Good News will save it. For what does it profit a man, if he gains the whole world, but suffers the loss of his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul? For whoever is ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him will the Son of Man also be ashamed when he comes with the holy angels in the glory of his Father." And he said to them, "Amen I say to you, there are some of those standing here who will not taste death, till they have seen the kingdom of God coming in power.

فنداق الختام باللحن الثامن  
 نَحْنُ عِبِيدُكَ يَا وَالِدَةَ الْإِلَهِ، تَكْتُمُ لَكَ آيَاتِ الْعَلَنَةِ يَا قَائِدَةَ فَاهِرِهِ. وَتُقَدِّمُ الشُّكْرَ لَكَ وَقَدْ أُنْقَذْنَا مِنَ الشَّدَائِدِ. لَكِنِ يَمَّا أَنْ لَكَ الْوَيْرَةَ الَّتِي لَا تُحَارِبُ، أَعْتَقِينَا مِنْ أَصْنَافِ الْمُخَاطِرِ لِكَيْ نَضْرَحَ إِلَيْكَ: يَا أَفْرَاجِي يَا عَزُوسَةَ لَا عَزُوسَ لَهَا.

**رسالة الاحد الثالث من الصوم  
 مقدمة الرسالة**

حَلِّصْ يَا رَبِّ شَعْبِكَ، وَبَارِكْ مِيرَاثِكَ.  
 إِلَيْكَ يَا رَبِّ أَصْرُحْ، إِلَهِي لَا تَتَصَامَمْ عَلَيَّ.

**(عبرانيين 4 : 14 الى 5 : 6)**

فَصَلِّ مِنْ رِسَالَةِ الْقُدْسِ بُولَسَ الرُّسُولِ إِلَى الْعِبْرَانِيِّينَ يَا إِخْوَةَ، إِذْ لَنَا رَّبِّيسٌ كَهَنَتِي عَظِيمٌ قَدْ أَجْتَازَ السَّمَاوَاتِ، يَسُوعُ ابْنُ اللَّهِ، فَلَتَتَمَسَّكَ بِالْإِعْتِرَافِ. فَإِنَّ رَّبِّيسَ الْكَهَنَةِ الَّذِي لَنَا لَيْسَ غَيْرَ قَادِرٍ أَنْ يَرْبِي لِمُرَاضَاتِنَا، بَلْ هُوَ مُجَرَّبٌ فِي كُلِّ شَيْءٍ مِثْلَنَا مَا خَلَا الْخَطِيئَةَ. فَلَنُتَقَبَّلْ إِذْنًا بِدَالَةٍ إِلَى عَرْشِ النِّعْمَةِ، لِنَتَّالِ رَحْمَةً وَنَجِدَ نِعْمَةً لِلْإِعَاثَةِ فِي أَوَانِهَا. فَإِنَّ كُلَّ رَّبِّيسٍ كَهَنَتِي مُتَّخِذٍ مِنَ النَّاسِ، يُقَامُ لِأَجْلِ النَّاسِ فِي مَا لِلَّهِ، لِيُقَرَّبَ قَرَابِينَ وَذَبَائِحَ عَنِ الْخَطَايَا، قَادِرًا أَنْ يَرْفِقَ لِلذَّيْنِ يَجْهَلُونَ وَيَضِلُّونَ، لِكُونِهِ هُوَ أَيْضًا مُتَلَبِّسًا بِالضَّعْفِ. وَلِهَذَا يَجِبُ عَلَيْهِ أَنْ يُقَرَّبَ عَنِ الْخَطَايَا لِأَجْلِ نَفْسِهِ، كَمَا يُقَرَّبُ لِأَجْلِ الشَّعْبِ. وَلَيْسَ أَحَدٌ يَأْخُذُ لِنَفْسِهِ هَذِهِ الْكَرَامَةَ، إِلَّا مَنْ دَعَاهُ اللَّهُ كَمَا دَعَا هَارُونَ. كَذَلِكَ الْمَسِيحُ أَيْضًا لَمْ يَمَجِّدْ نَفْسَهُ حَتَّى يَصِيرَ رَّبِّيسَ كَهَنَةٍ، بَلِ الَّذِي قَالَ لَهُ: أَنْتَ ابْنِي، أَنَا الْيَوْمَ وَلَدْتُكَ. كَمَا يَقُولُ أَيْضًا فِي مَوْضِعٍ آخَرَ: أَنْتَ كَاهِنٌ إِلَى الْأَبَدِ عَلَى رُتْبَةِ مَلِكِيصَادَقُ.

هللويا

أَذْكُرُ جَمَاعَتِكَ الَّتِي اقْتَنَيْتَهَا مِنْذُ الْقَدِيمِ، لَقَدْ افْتَدَيْتَ صَوْلَجَانَ مِيرَاثِكَ.

أَمَّا اللَّهُ فَهُوَ مَلِكُنَا قَبْلَ الدُّهُورِ، أَجْرَى الْخَلَاصَ فِي وَسْطِ الْأَرْضِ.

**الانجيل (مرقس 8 : 3 الى 9 : 1)**

قَالَ الرَّبُّ: مَنْ أَرَادَ أَنْ يَتَّبِعَنِي فَلْيَتَّكِرْ نَفْسَهُ وَيَحْمِلْ صَلِيبَهُ وَيَتَّبِعَنِي. لِأَنَّ مَنْ أَرَادَ أَنْ يَحْلُسَ نَفْسَهُ يَهْلِكُهَا، وَمَنْ أَهْلَكَ نَفْسَهُ مِنْ أَجْلِي وَمِنْ أَجْلِ الْإِنْجِيلِ فَذَاكَ يَحْلُسُهَا. فَإِنَّهُ مَاذَا يَنْفَعُ الْإِنْسَانَ لَوْ رِيحَ الْعَالَمِ كُلَّهُ وَخَسِرَ نَفْسَهُ؟ أَمْ مَاذَا يُعْطِي الْإِنْسَانَ فِدَاءً عَنْ نَفْسِهِ؟ لِأَنَّ مَنْ يَسْتَخِي بِي وَيَكْلِمِي فِي هَذَا الْجِيلِ الْفَاسِقِ الْخَاطِي، يَسْتَخِي بِي ابْنُ الْبَشَرِ أَيْضًا. مَتَى آتَى فِي مَجْدٍ أَمِيهِ مَعَ الْمَلَائِكَةِ وَالْقُدِّيسِينَ. وَقَالَ لَهُمْ: الْحَقُّ أَقُولُ لَكُمْ، إِنَّ بَعْضَ الْقَائِمِينَ هَهُنَا لَا يَدُوفُونَ الْمَوْتَ حَتَّى يَرَوْا مَلَكُوتَ اللَّهِ آتِيًا بِقُوَّةٍ. حَقًّا.



**Procession of the Holy Cross after the Divine Liturgy**



# Divine Liturgy Intentions

**SUNDAY, MARCH 12, 2023: SUNDAY OF THE HOLY CROSS.**

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

- + **ANTONIO & PALMYRA MELUCCI** by the Family.
- + **LILLIAN & JAMES L. SALOME** by their children & families.
- + **BRUCE CORRIGAN** by Hon. Thomas Lazieh & Sons.

**11:15 DIVINE LITURGY:**

- + **ROSE & HOUNEIN KHOURY** by Tony & Fadia Kabak.
- + **MICHAEL GEORGE BOUDJOUK (NJ)** by Nelly Kishfy.
- + **VIOLETTE (HAGGAR) SAGGAL (Australia)** by Jim & Mary Briden.
- + **PAUL BESSETT** by Joseph & Yolanda Saggal.
- + **GLORIA RAWAN RAZOOK** by Deacon Gilbert & Mimi Altongy.
- + **JULIA, FRED, ELIAS J. KISHFY** by M/M Norman E. Kishfy.
- + **JOSEPH ABYAD** by Deacon Gilbert & Mimi Abyad.
- + **EVA YOUNES (Lebanon)** by Youakim Family.



## 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 12, 2023: Budgets: \$4,561.00: Envelopes: \$4,450.00, Loose: \$111.00; Candles: \$104.00; Stole Offerings: \$50.00; Fuel: \$472.00; Addit'l Melkite Diocesan Support: \$15.00.

**TODAY, MARCH 12,** there will be a special collection taken up for the **UPKEEP, MAINTENANCE & IMPROVEMENT OF THE CEMETERY.** Please be as generous as you can, and we thank you for your continued support in providing a peaceful resting place for our beloved deceased.

**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.

### **THE SACRIFICIAL JOURNEY TO PASCHA**

What can we do to attempt the imitation of the lives of those whom our Mother, the Church, holds dear? There are lots of things. For starters, we can take advantage of what the Church offers to us during this season of Great Lent. We can:

- ATTEND PRESANCTIFIED LITURGY ON MONDAYS, 7:00 P.M.**
- ATTEND GREAT COMPLINE ON TUESDAYS, 6:30 P.M.**
- ATTEND THE AKATHIST HYMN ON FRIDAYS @ 6:30 P.M**
- FOLLOW THE PRESCRIBED LENTEN FAST**
- PARTICIPATE IN THE "SHEPHERD'S CARE" PROGRAM**
- RENEW OUR PERSONAL LIFE OF PRAYER**
- MAKE A SPECIAL EFFORT AT PERFORMING CHARITABLE ACTS**

### **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.

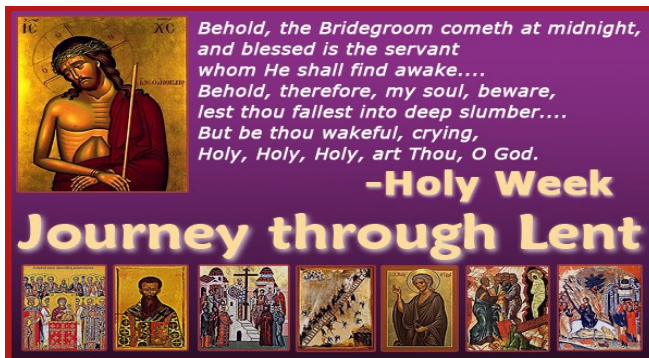
O Jesus, Who has said,  
"Heaven and earth shall  
pass away but My word  
shall not pass away,"  
through the intercession  
of the Theotokos Your  
Most Holy Mother, I feel  
confident that my prayer  
will be granted.





### THE GREAT AND HOLY TIME OF LENT

Great Lent involves deepening of our prayer life. This includes private prayer as well as the services mentioned below. An important facet of Lent is Almsgiving. The "Shepherd's Care" mandated in our Melkite parishes and missions throughout the United States is one good way to put the Almsgiving into practice. Various Services will be conducted during the weekdays of Lent, thereby making it convenient for more people.



**This week, services will be held on Monday, Tuesday & Friday.**

|                                 |                  |                              |
|---------------------------------|------------------|------------------------------|
| <b>Monday, March 13, 2023:</b>  | <b>7:00 p.m.</b> | <b>Presanctified Liturgy</b> |
| <b>Tuesday, March 14, 2023:</b> | <b>6:30 p.m.</b> | <b>Great Compline</b>        |
| <b>Friday, March 17, 2023:</b>  | <b>6:30 p.m.</b> | <b>Akathist Hymn</b>         |

**COMPLIMENTARY AGAPE LENTEN DINNER** will be served on Friday, March 24<sup>th</sup> after the Akathist Service. You are once again required to register with your name and number of people attending, on the sign-up sheets at both entrances to the Church, to allow for an accurate order of food to be served.

**EASTER FLOWERS:** Many parishioners have followed the long-time tradition of donating lilies to the Church for the Easter Season. If you would like to participate in this tradition, please sign your name on the bulletin board located outside the kitchen area. Since we have a larger sanctuary area to cover, we would appreciate your generosity in this regard to enhance the Church at this most blessed season. Please make your \$10 offering to Christine Durnin.

**REFLECTION:** Think of life as something God has given us to manage or take care of. Everything comes from God. We may use our talent or ability to achieve material goods, but the talent or ability is a gift from God to begin with. Once you look at life this way, as a steward, it becomes clear that we just give of what we are, as well as what we have. It means cultivating an attitude of generous giving and getting into the habit of thinking of others.

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.



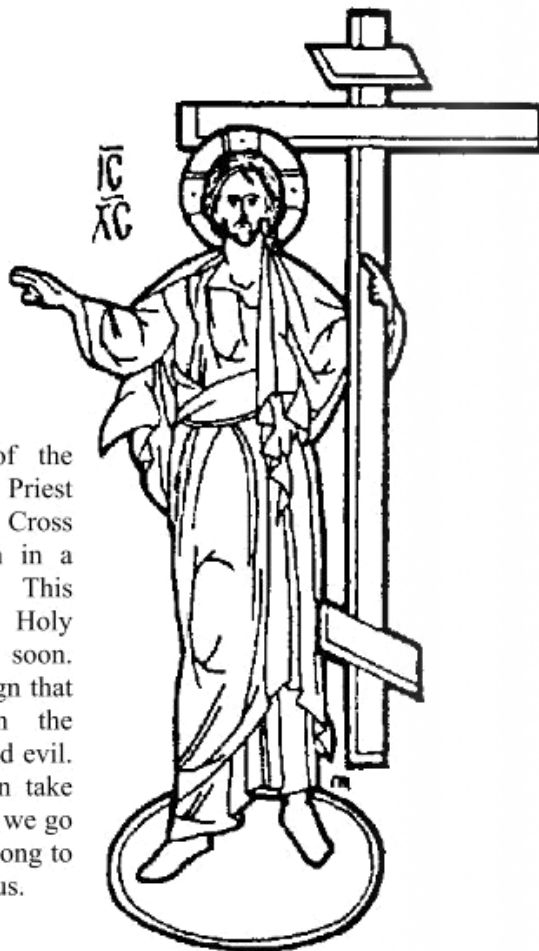
# Following Jesus Kids bulletin



|   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |        |          |         |        |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|--------|----------|---------|--------|
| R | H | T | A | E | D | O | R | C | P | JESUS  | QUESTION | JOHN    | CHRIST |
| A | E | C | N | U | O | N | E | R | H | STRICT | SUFFER   | ELDERS  | DEATH  |
| N | C | W | S | A | T | A | O | A | S | CROSS  | PROPHETS | RENOUCE | LIFE   |
| A | C | R | O | S | S | P | J | E | S |        |          |         |        |
| T | H | H | I | L | H | I | R | S | U |        |          |         |        |
| A | C | R | S | E | L | D | E | R | S |        |          |         |        |
| S | H | I | T | E | E | O | F | E | N |        |          |         |        |
| C | E | S | T | F | S | U | F | F | H |        |          |         |        |
| W | N | O | I | T | S | E | U | Q | O |        |          |         |        |
| O | L | L | O | F | S | U | S | E | J |        |          |         |        |

3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday in Lent - Adoration of the Holy Cross





On the Sunday of the Holy Cross, our Priest carries the Holy Cross around the Church in a special procession. This reminds us that Holy Pascha is coming soon. The Cross is our sign that Jesus Christ won the battle over death and evil. It is a sign we can take with us everywhere we go to remind us we belong to Jesus and He loves 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:  |
|---|---|--|
| <b>Fast - Free Week</b><br><b>JANUARY 29<sup>TH</sup></b>    | <p style="text-align: center;"><i>TRIDION WEEKS</i></p> <b>Publican and the Pharisee</b><br>Epistle: 2 Timothy 3:10-15<br>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. |
| <b>Normal Fast Week</b><br><b>FEBRUARY 5<sup>TH</sup></b>    | <b>The Prodigal Son Returns!</b><br>Epistle: 1 Corinthians 6:12-20<br>Gospel: Luke 15:11-32   | Schedule a Confession. Every morning say, "Today I will be humble." Use up/freeze meats this week.                       |
| <b>Meatfare</b><br><b>FEBRUARY 12<sup>TH</sup></b><br>FAREWELL TO MEAT TODAY   | <b>The Last Judgement</b><br>Epistle: 1 Corinthians 8:8-9:2<br>Gospel: Matthew 25:31-46   | Pray facing East this week. Christ is returning from the East and we wait for Him!<br>Use up/freeze dairy this week.     |
| <b>Cheesefare</b><br><b>FEBRUARY 19<sup>TH</sup></b><br>FAREWELL TO CHEESE TODAY   | <b>Adam and Eve are cast from Paradise!</b><br><i>FORGIVENESS SUNDAY</i><br>Epistle: Romans 13:11-14:4<br>Gospel: Matthew 6:14-21   | Ask each other for forgiveness each evening this week before bed.  |
| <b>1<sup>ST</sup> Sunday of Lent</b><br><b>FEBRUARY 26<sup>TH</sup></b>   | <p style="text-align: center;"><i>GREAT LENT BEGINS WITH FORGIVENESS VESPERS</i></p> <b>SUNDAY of ORTHODOXY</b><br>Epistle: Hebrews 11:24-26, 32-12:2<br>Gospel: John 1:43-51 | Bring an icon to church for a procession.  |
| <b>2<sup>ND</sup> Sunday of Lent</b><br><b>MARCH 5<sup>TH</sup></b>    | <b>ST GREGORY PALAMAS</b><br>Epistle: Hebrews 1:10-2:3<br>Gospel: Mark 2:1-12   | Bring a prayer rope to be blessed today!<br>Use it and pray the Jesus Prayer each day this week.                         |
|  <b>3<sup>RD</sup> Sunday of Lent</b><br><b>MARCH 12<sup>TH</sup></b>  | <b>VENERATION OF THE HOLY CROSS</b><br><i>HALF WAY TO PASCHA!</i><br>Epistle: Hebrews 4:14-5:6<br>Gospel: Mark 8:34-9:1   | Wear your cross to church and kiss the cross each morning with a bow!  |
| <b>4<sup>TH</sup> Sunday of Lent</b><br><b>MARCH 19<sup>TH</sup></b>   | <b>ST JOHN of the LADDER</b><br>Epistle: Hebrews 6:13-20<br>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!                |
| <b>5<sup>TH</sup> Sunday of Lent</b><br><b>MARCH 26<sup>TH</sup></b>   | <b>ST MARY of EGYPT</b><br>Epistle: Hebrews 9:11-14<br>Gospel: Mark 10:32-45  | Ask the Theotokos to offer you and the world pure thoughts and ideas this week.  |
| <b>PALM SUNDAY</b><br><b>APRIL 2<sup>ND</sup></b><br>GREAT WEEK BEGINS   | <p style="text-align: center;"><i>GREAT AND HOLY WEEK</i></p> <b>ENTRY OF OUR LORD INTO JERUSALEM</b><br>Epistle: Philippians 4:4-9<br>Gospel: John 12:1-18                   | Place your palm branches and pussywillows behind an icon at home and in your car!  |
| <b>GREAT AND HOLY FRIDAY</b><br><b>APRIL 7<sup>TH</sup></b>    | <b>GREAT AND HOLY FRIDAY</b><br><i>JESUS DIES ON THE CROSS</i><br>CHECK WITH YOUR PARISH FOR ROYAL HOURS AND VESPERS SCHEDULE   | Refrain from TV, Internet & Phones to honor Christ's Death.  |
| <b>FEAST OF FEASTS!</b><br><b>APRIL 9<sup>TH</sup></b><br>NO FASTING!    | <p style="text-align: center;"><i>BRIGHT WEEK</i></p> <b>HOLY PASCHA! (CHRIST IS RISEN!)</b><br>Epistle: Acts 1:1-8 Gospel: John 1:1-17                                       | Greet everyone with "CHRIST IS RISEN!" & say it before good morning and goodnight!                                       |

# السُّجود للصليب المقدَّس



مَلَكُوتِكَ". ( لوقا 23: 41-42). ونحن أيضاً ايها الإخوة الأحباء عندما يحيطوننا بالأحزان لنكرر كلمات اللص التي قيمتها هي قيمة الفردوس! أو لنبارك على مثال أيوب الرب المُعاقب إيانا الذي هو في الوقت نفسه إله عادل. " إِنْ خَيْرَ تَقَبَّلَ مِنْ

قال الربُّ لتلاميذه داعياً إياهم من بعده: " مَنْ اراد أن يتبعني فليُكفر بنفسه ويحمل صليبه ويتبعني " كما سمعنا في نصنا الإنجيلي اليوم.

أيها الإخوة الأحباء! نحن أيضاً تلاميذ ربنا يسوع المسيح لأننا

عند الله، وَابْتِئْرَ لَا تَقَبَّلْ؟ فَلَيْكُنْ اسْمُ الرَّبِّ مَبَارَكًا. " (أيوب 2: 10، 1: 21). فليتحقق فينا وعدُ الله الغير الكاذب: " طوبى للرجل الذي يتحمل التَّجْرِبَةَ، لِأَنَّهُ إِذَا تَرَكَى بَتَاكُ إِكْلِيلِ الْحَيَاةِ الَّذِي وَعَدَ بِهِ الرَّبُّ لِلَّذِينَ يُحِبُّونَهُ. " ( يعقوب 1: 12).

**أن نحمل صليبا معنا** أن نخضع للحرمان والجهاد طوعاً وباجتهاد والتي بها تتمنطق الطموحات جسدينا الهمجية ( أي التصرفات البدائية ) وقد لجا إلى صلب لاهواء كهذا أيضاً والرَّسُولُ القُدِّيس بولس: " بَلْ أَمْعَمُ جَسَدِي وَأَسْتَعْبِدُهُ، حَتَّى بَعْدَ مَا كَرَّزْتُ لِلْآخَرِينَ لَا أَصِيرُ أَنَا تَغْسِي مَرْفُوضًا. " ( 1 كورنثوس 9: 27 ). أولئك الذين يعيشون بحسب الجسد أي الذين لا يكبحون أهواءهم بل يسمحون لها أن تسيطر على أنفسهم لا يستطيعون أن يرزوا الله. ولذلك بينما نحن نعيش في الجسد يجب علينا أن ألا نعيش من أجل الجسد! ". لِأَنَّهُ إِنْ عَشِئْتُمْ حَسَبَ الْجَسَدِ فَسَتَمُوتُونَ، وَلَكِنْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ بِالرُّوحِ تُحْيُونَ أَعْمَالَ الْجَسَدِ فَسَيَتَّخِذُونَ. " ( رومية 8: 13، 12، 13 ). إنَّ الجسد حقاً يَمُنطق من قبل الرُّوح لكنَّ الرُّوح يمكنه أن يسيطر على الجسد وأن يقوده فقط عندما يقوم الجسد بالصوم والسهر والسجود وجهادات جسدية أخرى. تفرض عليه باعتدال وبشكل حكيم. يُحَرِّمُ الصَّوْمُ الحَكِيمُ والمعتدل الجسد من البدانة ويزيد من قواه ويدهه دائماً رشيقياً وقادراً على العمل. يقول الرَّسُولُ بولس: " وَلَكِنْ الَّذِينَ هُمْ لِلْمَسِيحِ قَدْ صَلَّبُوا الْجَسَدَ مَعَ الْأَهْوَاءِ وَالشَّهَوَاتِ. " ( غلاطية 5: 25 ).

**ما المقصود بأن نحمل الصليب ، وصليبا الخاص بالذات؟** إنَّ هذا معناه أنه يجب على كل مسيحي أن يحتمل بصبر تلك الأحزان والاضطهادات من العالم بالذات التي تحدث معه وليس آية اضطهادات أخرى. وهذا معناه أنه يتوجب على كل مسيحي أن يتصارع بشجاعة وبشكل مستمر مع تلك الأهواء والأفكار الرديئة التي تظهر في داخله. وأنه يتوجب على كل مسيحي أن يحتمل بكل طاعة وأمانة للمشيئة الإلهية وباعتراف كامل القضاء والرَّحمة الإلهيين وبشكر تجاه الله تلك الأحزان وذلك الحرمان اللذان تسمح بهما العناية الإلهية وليس آية أحزان وحرمان أخرى مخترعة من قبل أمنيات عقله المتمكِّر.

**ما معني أن نتبع المسيح؟** هذا يعني أن ندرس الإنجيل أن يكون الإنجيل مُرشد عمل عقلمنا وقلبنا وجسدينا الوحيد. هذا يعني أن نأخذ منهج تفكيرنا من الإنجيل أن ننبي شعورنا القلبي بحسب الإنجيل وكل تصرفاتنا وكل تحركاتنا الباطنية والعنئية لتكن عبارة عن الإنجيل. إنه لقادر على مثل هذا الإلتع للمسيح نكر فقط ذلك الإنسان الذي رغب متهرباً من الحكمة المخترعة من قبله أن يكتسب الحكمة الحقيقية هناك حيث تسكن هي أي في الإنصات والخضوع لله ( كولوسي 2: 18 ). بعد أن دخل في إنصات لله أي في إنصات مترافق مع إنكار كلي للذات يكون قد قبل صليبه واعترف به وأعلن أنه صليب خاص به.

أيها الإخوة الأحباء! لنكرم صليب المسيح الكريم الذي هو أداة للنصر وراية لمجد المسيح بعد أن يعترف كل واحد بصليبه الخاص به: " لقد نلت استحقاق عمالي! اذكرني يا رب في ملكوتك! لنجعل بإدراك عن خطايانا وبشكر لله وبخضوع للمشيئة الإلهية من صليبا الذي هو أداة العقاب وراية العار. أداة النصر وراية المجد، لنجعله على مثال صليب الرب. إنا بصليبا نفتح أبواب الفردوس. إن نوبة كهذه قد بدت لبعض من الرسل القديسين غريبة ولا تصدق. عندها نادى الرب إليه تلاميذه وقال لهم: " الذي يريد أن يتبعني فليُكفر بنفسه ويحمل صليبه ويتبعني. " أمين.

**القُدِّيس إغناطيوس برياتشانيوف—من كتاب " موعظة نسكية "**

نحن أيضاً مدعوون أمام حضرة الربِّ في هذا الهيكل المقدس كي ننبصت إلي تعليمه. نحن الآن واقفون أمام حضرة الربِّ وأنظاره موجهة إينا. إن نفوسنا معرَّاة أمامه وأفكارنا السرية وشعورنا الباطني مكشوفة لديه. إنه يرى جميع نوايانا ، إنه يرى الأعمال الصالحة والخطايا التي عملناها منذ حدثنا وبرى كل حياتنا الماضية والمستقبلية والعمل الذي لم نفعله بعد هو مكتوب في سيره. إنه يعلم ساعة انتقلنا إلى الأبدية التي لا مقياس لها ويخبرنا من أجل خلاصنا بصوته الكلية القداسة:

مَنْ اراد أن يتبعني فليُكفر بنفسه ويحمل صليبه ويتبعني

لنرفع عيننا الروحية بقوة إيماننا الحيِّ إلى الربِّ وسوف نراه سنراه هو الإله الأزلي والحاضر هنا معنا! لنفتح قلبنا مزيجين من مدخله جحر القسوة الثقيل ولنسمع ولنرى ولنقبل ولنستوعب تعليم ربنا من أجل أنفسنا

**ما المقصود بأن نحمل الصليب؟** لقد كان الصليب أداة لعقاب مذلل للناس المحتقرين والأسرى المحرومين من الحقوق المدنية. يحرم العالم المتكبر المعادي للمسيح تلاميذ المسيح من الحقوق التي ينتفع بها أبناء هذا الدهر. يقول الربُّ لاتباعه: " إن كنتم من العالم لأحب العالم خاصته لكن بما أنكم لستم من العالم لكي اختربكم من العالم لهذا العالم أيعضكم. سيطردونكم من المجمع حتى أنه يأتي زمنٌ عندما يطن كل واحدٍ فيقولكم أنه يُقدِّم خدمة لله. " ( يوحنا 15: 19، 16: 2 ).

**أن نحمل صليبا معنا** أن نحتمل بثقل السخرية والتجديف التي يغمر بها العالم أتباع المسيح، وتلك الأحزان والاضطهادات التي بها يلاحقه هذا العالم المُحب للخطيئة. يقول القُدِّيس بطرس الرَّسُول: " لِأَنَّ هَذَا فَضْلٌ، إِنْ كَانَ أَحَدٌ مِنْ أَجْلِ ضَمِيرٍ نَحْوِ اللَّهِ، يَحْتَمِلُ أَجْزَاءً مَثَالِيًا بِالظُّلْمِ. " ( 1 بطرس 2: 19-21 ). ولذلك دعيتم من قبل الربِّ الذي سبق فخر أعباءه: " يكون لكم في العالم حزن ولكن تشجعوا فإنني قد غلبت العالم. " ( يوحنا 16: 33 ).

أن نحمل صليبا معنا أن نحتمل بشجاعة نبرنا الثقيل والغير المرئي العذاب و الشهادة الغير المرئيين من أجل الإنجيل أثناء جهادنا ضد شهواتنا الخاصة وضد الخطيئة الساكنة في داخلنا وضد أرواح الشرِّ التي ستثور علينا بعضب وستفقد ضدينا بشدة عندما سنقرر إسقاط نير الخطيئة من أنفسنا والخضوع لنير المسيح. قال القُدِّيس بولس الرَّسُول: " إِنْ مَصَارِعْتَنَا لَيْسَتْ مَعِ دِمٍ وَلَحْمٍ، يَلْ مَعَ الرَّؤُسَاءِ، مَعَ السَّلَاطِينِ، مَعَ وِلَاةِ الْعَالَمِ عَلَى ظُلْمَةِ هَذَا الدَّهْرِ، مَعَ أَجْنَادِ الشَّرِّ الرُّوحِيَّةِ فِي السَّمَاوِيَّاتِ. " ( أفسس 6: 12 ). إن أسلحة حربنا الروحية هي جسدية لكنَّ بعون الله فهي قادرة على تدمير معاقلي: فنحن ندمر بهم أفكاراً وكلَّ تعالٍ يقف عائقاً أمام معرفة الله ونأسر كلَّ عقلٍ كي يكون مطيعاً للمسيح ( 2 كورنثوس 10: 4-5 ). صاح الرَّسُولُ بولس مقيماً النصر في هذه الحرب الغير المرئية والصعبة جداً: " حَاشَا لِي إِنْ أَفْتَحَرُ إِلَّا بِصَلِيبِ رَبَّنَا يَسُوعِ الْمَسِيحِ، الَّذِي بِهِ قَدْ صُلِبَ الْعَالَمُ لِي وَأَنَا لِلْعَالَمِ. " ( غلاطية 6: 14 ).

**أن نحمل صليبا معنا** أن نخضع للكروب والمجاعات الآنية بكلِّ نواضع وطاعة التي حُسن للعناية الإلهية أن تسمح بها لتطهير خطايانا. عندها يصير الصليب بمثابة سلمٍ يقودنا من الأرض إلى السموات لقد صدع على هذا السلم اللص المذكور في الإنجيل الذي صعد من أرض أقيح الجرائم إلى المجمع مساكن الفردوس: فمن صليبه نلفظ اللص بالكلمات المملوءة بالحكمة والتواضع: فبالحكمة دخل إلى معرفة الله وبالمعرفة الإلهية إكتسب السموات. لقد قال اللص: " لأننا تَتَاكَ اسْتِحْقَاقٌ مَا فَعَلْنَا أَذْكَرُنِي يَا رَبَّ مَتَى جِئْتَ فِي



# The Precious and Life-Giving Cross of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ

On the Third Sunday of Great and Holy Lent, the Orthodox Church commemorates the Precious and Life-Giving Cross



of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Services include a special veneration of the Cross, which prepares the faithful for the commemoration of the Crucifixion during Holy Week.

The commemoration and ceremonies of the Third Sunday of Lent are closely parallel to the feasts of the Veneration of the Cross (September 14) and the Procession of the Cross (August 1). Not only does the Sunday of the Holy Cross prepare us for commemoration of the Crucifixion, but it also reminds us that the whole of Lent is a period when we are crucified with Christ.

As we have “crucified the flesh with its passions and desires” (Galatians 5:24), and will have mortified ourselves during these forty days of the Fast, the precious and life-giving Cross is now placed before us to refresh our souls and encourage us who may be filled with a sense of bitterness, resentment, and depression. The Cross reminds us of the Passion of our Lord, and by presenting to us His example, it encourages us to follow Him in struggle and sacrifice, being refreshed, assured, and comforted. In other words, we must experience what the Lord experienced during His Passion - being humiliated in a shameful manner. The Cross teaches us that through pain and suffering we shall see the fulfillment of our hopes: the heavenly inheritance and eternal glory.

As they who walk on a long and hard way and are bowed down by fatigue find great relief and strengthening under the cool shade of a leafy tree, so do we find comfort, refreshment, and rejuvenation under the Life-giving Cross, which our Fathers “planted” on this Sunday. Thus, we are fortified and enabled to continue our Lenten journey with a light step, rested and encouraged.

Or, as before the arrival of the king, his royal standards, trophies, and emblems of victory come in procession and then the king himself appears in a triumphant parade, jubilant and rejoicing in his victory and filling those under him with joy, so does the Feast of the Cross precede the coming of our King, Jesus Christ. It warns us that He is about to proclaim His victory over death and appear to us in the glory of the Resurrection. His Life-Giving Cross is His royal scepter, and by venerating it we are filled with joy, rendering Him glory. Therefore, we become ready to welcome our King, who shall manifestly triumph over the powers of darkness.

The present feast has been placed in the middle of Great Lent for another reason. The Fast can be likened to the

spring of Marah whose waters the children of Israel encountered in the wilderness. This water was undrinkable due to its bitterness but became sweet when the Holy Prophet Moses dipped the wood into its depth. Likewise, the wood of the Cross sweetens the days of the Fast, which are bitter and often grievous because of our tears. Yet Christ comforts us during our course through the desert of the Fast, guiding and leading us by His hand to the spiritual Jerusalem on high by the power of His Resurrection.

Moreover, as the Holy Cross is called the Tree of Life, it is placed in the middle of the Fast, as the ancient tree of life was placed in the middle of the garden of Eden. By this, our Holy Fathers wished to remind us of Adam’s gluttony as well as the fact that through this Tree has condemnation been abolished. Therefore, if we bind ourselves to the Holy Cross, we shall never encounter death but shall inherit life eternal

## Icons Of The Commemoration

The most common icon associated with the Veneration of the Cross is the same icon used on the Feast of the Veneration of the Cross on September 14. In the icon, Patriarch Macarius is standing in the pulpit elevating the Cross for all to see and venerate. On each side of the Patriarch are deacons holding candles. The elevated Cross is surrounded and venerated by many clergy and lay people, including Saint Helen, the mother of Emperor Constantine.

In the background of the icon is a domed structure that represents the Church of the Resurrection in Jerusalem. This church was one of the churches constructed and dedicated by Emperor Constantine on the holy sites of Jerusalem.

Another icon related to this feast depicts the actual service of veneration that is conducted in the churches on the Third Sunday of Lent. In the center of the icon is the Cross (1). It is on a table surrounded by flowers (2). Above the Cross is the image of Christ in a partial mandorla representing His glory (3). He is blessing those who have gathered to venerate the Cross, the rulers, clergy, monastics, and laity.



## 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.

To emphasize the theme of this prayer--changing our lives--we accompany it with **Great Prostration**, kneeling and touching the forehead to the floor, then standing and making the sign of the cross. When we pray "O God, be gracious to me a sinner, and have mercy on me" 12 times, we make **Small Prostration**, bowing very low, touching the floor with

the fingertips of the right hand, then standing and making the sign of the cross. The bows represent the twelve hours of the day, and our awareness of the sins and shortcomings we suffer throughout each day of our life.

The Prayer of St Ephrem is one of the main components of Lenten services in the Byzantine Church. It signifies our awareness of our sins and of temptations, it proclaims our faith in the all-merciful God, and it asks for the gifts and graces we need to lead a holy life. During Lent, it is a good practice to recite the prayer of St Ephrem when you get up in the morning and before you go to bed at night.

Both privately and publicly, the Prayer of St Ephrem the Syrian is the characteristic prayer of Great Lent. It reminds us that God is the Master of our lives, and asks God to free us from the sins of everyday life, like pride and gossip and laziness and greed. In it we ask God to give us humility and love of our neighbor,

# When you fast

*Jesus said, 'and when you fast, do not look dismal, like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces that their fasting may be seen by men. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward. But when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, that your fasting may not be seen by men but by your Father who is in secret; and your father who sees in secret will reward you:'*

*Matthew 6: 16-18 (Gospel of Cheesefare Sunday)*



When people think of the word "Lent," the word "fasting" is one of the first things that comes to mind. The cornerstone of Lent is not fasting, but repentance and growing in our faith. Fasting is a tool that is used to assist in spiritual growth. Fasting is also mischaracterized as a form of deprivation, rather than a spiritual discipline. Because fasting is so misunderstood, it is many times done incorrectly.

In the Orthodox world, we use the word "passions" to describe tendencies that each person has that lead us to sin. Each of us has a "passion" for anger, lust, power, greed, ego, etc. We do not get through life without wrestling with each of these, sometimes on a daily basis. The most basic "passion" is hunger. While we can go a day without a lustful thought or an angry thought, we can't go more than a few hours without a hungry thought. So, if we can tame our passion for eating, we can hopefully tame our other passions. If we can discipline ourselves to go without certain kinds of food, we can hopefully discipline ourselves so that we can go without certain kinds of behavior that are spiritually destructive. Thus, fasting is not about giving up something only to get it back. Fasting is about getting control of our passions, maintaining control over them, and ultimately giving control of ourselves to God.

If you've never fasted before, I would not recommend doing a strict fast. Try fasting from meat on Wednesdays and Fridays of Lent (and then throughout the year), then next year try fasting Wednesdays and Fridays plus all of the first week of Lent and all of Holy Week. Then work up from that.

Below is a guide of some levels of fasting:

- Level one -- Fast from meat on Wednesdays and Fridays and during Holy Week
- Level two -- Fast from meat and fish on Wednesdays and Fridays and during Holy Week
- Level three -- Fast from meat the entirety of Lent and Holy Week
- Level four -- Fast from meat and fish the entirety of Lent and Holy Week
- Level five -- Level four and eliminate dairy products during Holy Week
- Level six -- Level four and eliminate dairy products on Wednesday and Fridays and during Holy Week.
- Level seven -- Level four plus eliminate dairy products during all of Lent and Holy Week
- Level eight -- Level seven plus eliminate oil and wine during Holy Week
- Level nine -- The strict fast - no meat, fish, dairy products, wine or oil during the entirety of Great Lent

*\*\*Fish is allowed on March 25 (Annunciation) and Palm Sunday; oil and wine are allowed on Saturdays and Sundays, except for Holy Saturday.*

After a few years at one level, challenge yourself to go up a level.

More important, however, than fasting from food, is fasting from the behaviors that are spiritually destructive. We need to fast from things that get us in trouble - perhaps the television, alcohol, inappropriate materials on the computer and in movies, foul language, etc. Fasting also does not mean "looking" deprived, complaining about what you can't eat, or making a show of your fasting. In fact, if you are fasting and you are invited to someone's home for dinner and they serve meat, eat the meat, don't make a big deal out of your fasting. Also, do not pass judgment on others who are not fasting to the degree you are. Saint Paul reminds us in Romans 14:3-4: "Let not him who eats despise him who abstains, and let not him who abstains pass judgment on him who eats; for God has welcomed him. Who are you to pass judgment on the servant of another? It is before his own Master that he stands or falls." As Christ tells us, our fasting is seen by our "Father who is in secret," and He will reward us for our efforts.

**Again, Lent is not a season of deprivation, nor should we "give up" something only to get it back once Lent is over. Lent is about repentance, and making small and permanent changes to bring us closer to the Lord, changes that will last long after Lent is over. This is the purpose of the Lenten journey. Fasting is an aid to help us in this.**

*The time has come - the start of our spiritual contests, the victory over demons, the full armor of self-control the angels' dignity, the confidence before God. Thereby did Moses become conversant with the Creator, and heard the invisible voice. Lord, through fasting make us worthy to worship Your Passion and Holy Resurrection, as You love humanity. (Doxastikon of Orthros, Cheesefare Sunday, Trans. by Fr. Seraphim Dedes)*

**Give some thought to your fasting plan for Lent today!**

# افرحي يا عروسة لا عروس لها

العاصمة يقضون الليل ساهرين، وقوفاً، شاكي السلاح. وعلت من صفوف المؤمنين آيات "نشيد المدائح لوالدة الإله" الذي كان وضعه رومانوس الشاعر الحمصي، وإذا بالشعب كله يردد بعد كل بيت تلك اللازمة الرائعة: "افرحي يا عروسة لا عروس لها"، أو اللازمة الأخرى "هللوا".

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

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

وإذا بالأعجوبة المرتقبة تتم. فتنظر في السماء سيدة عظيمة جميلة ترفع يدها وتدفع الجيوش البربرية إلى الوراء. وإذا بجحافل الفرس تتخاذل وتراجع، وإذا بها تتخبط في الظلام وتتحارب، وإذا بغوغائها يملأ الفضاء.

وما تطلع الشمس حتى تبديد الرؤيا، ويبديد معها الاعداء المحاصرون. فهرع الشعب إلى الكنائس، وملا الساحات والشوارع. وارتفعت اصوات المرمنين تنشد من جديد "نشيد مدائح والدة الإله". ولهذه المناسبة وضع البطريرك لهذا النشيد التقليدي مقدمة جديدة تشير إلى اعجوبة انقاذ العاصمة، وتعلن العذراء الطاهرة "قائدة لا تغلب" وسلطانة المدينة المالكة، فكان القنداق الشهير: "نحن عبيدك يا والدة الإله...". وقد جاء في أصله اليوناني: "انا مدينتك يا والدة الإله...".

القسم الأول: يحتوي على إعلان الملاك لمريم حبلها من الروح القدس وحيرة العذراء من هذا الكلام الغريب. ثم ذهابها إلى نسيبتها اليسانبات وأخيراً تعجب يوسف من هذا الحبل.

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

القسم الثالث: يصف بصورة شعرية ممتازة تجديد الطبيعة البشرية من جرّاء 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 لخالق الكل ثم يختتمه الشاعر بالدعاء إليها لتشفع فينا لدى ابنتها كي يبعد عنا كل الضيقات والمصائب.

وهناك كلمة تتردد كثيراً في هذا التسبيح 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، ليوهل ذاته للاتحاد بالعريس الرب يسوع في المناولة، يومي السبت والأحد. لذلك فإن ليلة الجمعة - السبت هي ليلة الزفاف الليتورجي، والزينة لاستقبال الرب.

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

نرتل في المدائح للبتول قائلين "افرحي يا مزينة النفوس بزينة العرس"، وهذا ما يحقّقه المديح. إنّه يوشحنا برداء العرس حين ينظر المؤمن في العذراء وحين ينشد مرثماً للعروس الأمّ، تقوده ترانيم المديح إلى طهارة النفس وتنقله من الحزن البهّي إلى فرح الخدر البتولي.

إنّنا في المديح نتأمل في محبة، وتواضع، وطهارة العذراء. ونعاين في ترانيمه صورة العروس الحقيقيّة المدعويين جميعنا إلى الاقتداء بمثلها. في المديح تتم أيضاً شفاعنة العذراء، وما فينا من غير استحقاق تطهّره شفاعنة العروس التي لا عروس لها.



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

وأكثستوس كلمة يونانية وقد أطلق هذا الاسم على مدائح العذراء لأن الأكليريوس وجمههور الشعب القسطنطيني ترنّموا بها علناً ولأول مرّة، في أيام الملك هرقل سنة ٦٢٦، وهم واقفون إجلالاً للسيدة الطاهرة وطلباً لنصرتها وحمايتها واستعداداً لحما السلاح بأسرع ما يمكن، عند أول إشارة، لصّد هجمات الاعداء المحيطين بالمدينة المالكة، على نحو العبرانيين لدى بنائهم أسوار أورشليم في أيام النبي نحميا. وما أن لغتنا العربية تفقّر إلى كلمة واحدة تعبر عن اللفظة اليونانية، فقد لجأ مترجمو كتبنا الطقسية إلى هذه العبارة: نشيد لوالدة الإله "لا يجلس فيه".

تضاربت الآراء حول وضع هذا النشيد المريمي الرابع. فالعالم اليوناني بابادوبولوس كيراميفس ١٩٠٤ نسبته إلى البطريرك فوتيوس (القرن التاسع)، وهذا زعم لا يسلم به أحد اليوم. ونسبه آخرون إلى بطريرك القسطنطينية سرجيوس الأول (٦١٠-٦٣٨) وآخرون إلى جورج بيزيدس أمين مخطوطات كنيسة أجيا صوفيا في عهد الملك هرقل (كورسيوس). على أن النقد العلمي الحديث يرجّح انتسابه إلى القديس رومانوس الحمصي المنشأ إمام الشعراء والمنشدين الكنسيين. ولد هذا القديس في أواخر القرن الخامس في حمص عاصمة سوريا الوسطى من عائلة يهودية الأصل وكان شماساً انجيلياً، خدم في كنيسة القيامة في بيروت، وانتقل بعد ذلك إلى القسطنطينية في أواخر عهد الملك أنسطاسيوس الأول (٤٩١-٥١٨) على الأرجح. وقد ظهرت له العذراء في الحلم في كنيسة منطفة كيروس المشيدة على اسمها ودفعته إلى نظم الشعر والكتابة. توفي حول سنة ٥٥٦ تاركاً ما يربو على ألف نشيد ديني لم يبق من هذه الأناشيد اليوم سوى مئتين، بعضها معتبر في رتب الفرض الإلهي.

أما قنداق "نحن عبيدك يا والدة الإله" الذي يُرتّم به قبل بيوت المديح فقد وضعه البطريرك المسكوني سرجيوس الأول (٦١٠-٦٣٨) عقب إنقاذ القسطنطينية بأعجوبة من يد الفرس والأفاريين، وفيه تلميح صريح إلى تدخل البتول العجيب يوم ٧ آب من سنة ٦٢٦. ونختم صلاة الأكاثستوس بتقبيل أيقونة السيدة العذراء ونشيد "إن جبرائيل" من تأليف القديس العبري يوحنا الدمشقي المتعبّد الكبير للبتول الطاهرة.

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. أمّا 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 لبطريرك القسطنطينية الحرية أن يحتفل به في السبت الرابع أو الخامس من الصوم بحسب التقويم الطقسي القديم يعود إلى 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، فينسابون كثيرين إلى حضور هذه الصلاة التي تذكرهم بسر المحبة العظيم، سرّ تجسد الكلمة يوم عيد البشارة، وتعلن على مسامعهم الألقاب المجيدة التي خصّ 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 بالحصارة المسيحية التي كانت تلك المملكة تمتلأها وتحميها، أصبحت معرضة لغزوات الأمم الغربية من فرس وآبار وعرب وغوط وصقالية ومجر. وفي سنة ٦١٤ اجتاح الفرس بلاد المشرق، ودمروا انطاكية ودمشق، واستولوا على أورشليم وقتلوا فيها في يوم واحد أكثر من مئة ألف مسيحي، وهدموا مزاراتها المقدسة، وسبوا رهبانها وكهننتها وأساقفتها وبيتريركها، وانتزعوا عود الصليب المكرّم من على هيكل الجلجلة، وعادوا به إلى بلادهم غانمين. فنار عليهم هرقل ملك الروم وكسرهم، واسترجع الأسرى وعود الصليب. ولكن الفرس ما لبثوا أن عادوا الكرّة في سنة ٦٢٦، فهاجموا البلاد المسيحية وبلغوا أسوار القسطنطينية، وشدّوا في حصارها، حتى قنط الشعب المسيحي فيها. وبالجهد استطاع الملك هرقل أن يخرج من المدينة ويجتاز صفوف المحاصرين لكي يذهب إلى الأقاليم ويجمع الجيوش ويقودها لفتح الحصار عن العاصمة.

كان في أثناء غيابها قد سلّم القيادة والحكم للبطريرك المسكوني سرجيوس، الذي توكل على الله ولم يهمل وسائل الدفاع الحربي. وكانت ليلة السابع من آب سنة ٦٢٦ الموعد الذي حدّده الفرس للهجوم على المدينة. فأمر البطريرك، وإذا بالجيوش والشعب كله يجتمع فوق أسوار

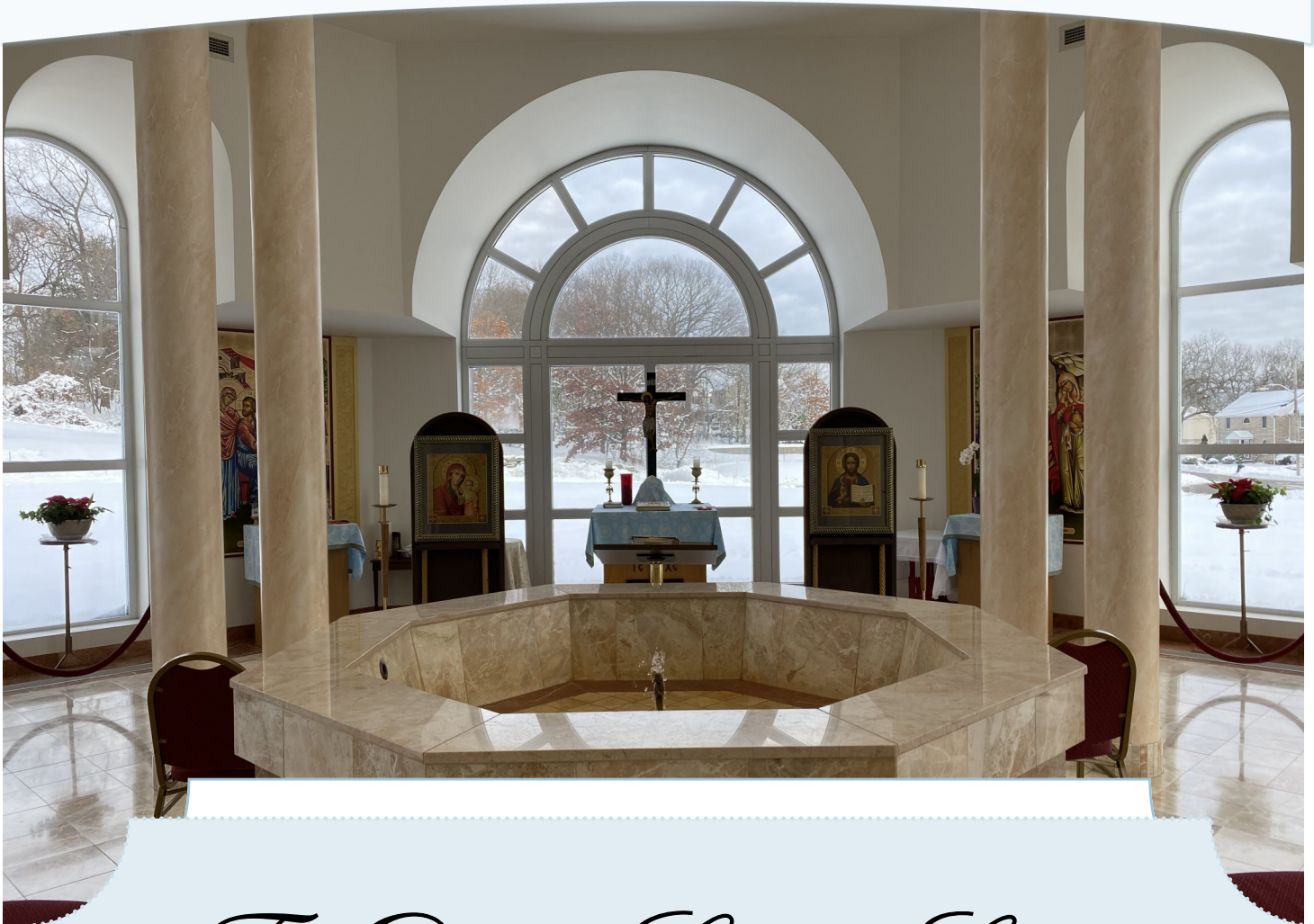


# LITURGICAL CALENDAR



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

# 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**

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



THE LORD SAID: "THEY TELL YOU THIS  
POOR WIDOW HAS PUT IN MORE THAN ALL  
OF THEM, FOR THEY ALL CONTRIBUTED  
OUT OF THEIR ABUNDANCE, BUT SHE GAVE  
OF HER POVERTY PUT IN ALL THE LIVING  
THAT SHE HAD." Luke 21:4-5

# "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

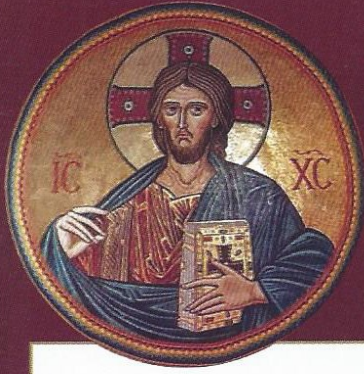
make donations by check directly to the Eparchial Office. Address is on the back. Together our eparchial family can help alleviate the sufferings of God's people.

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:

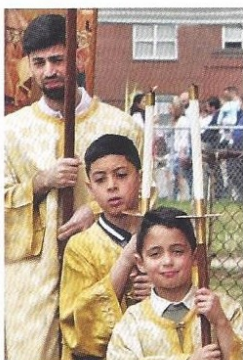
- Vocation promotion and communications
- Interviewing potential candidates
- Handling the application process
- Overseeing the formation of seminarians



**SPRING 2023**

## *Clergy & Candidate Databases*

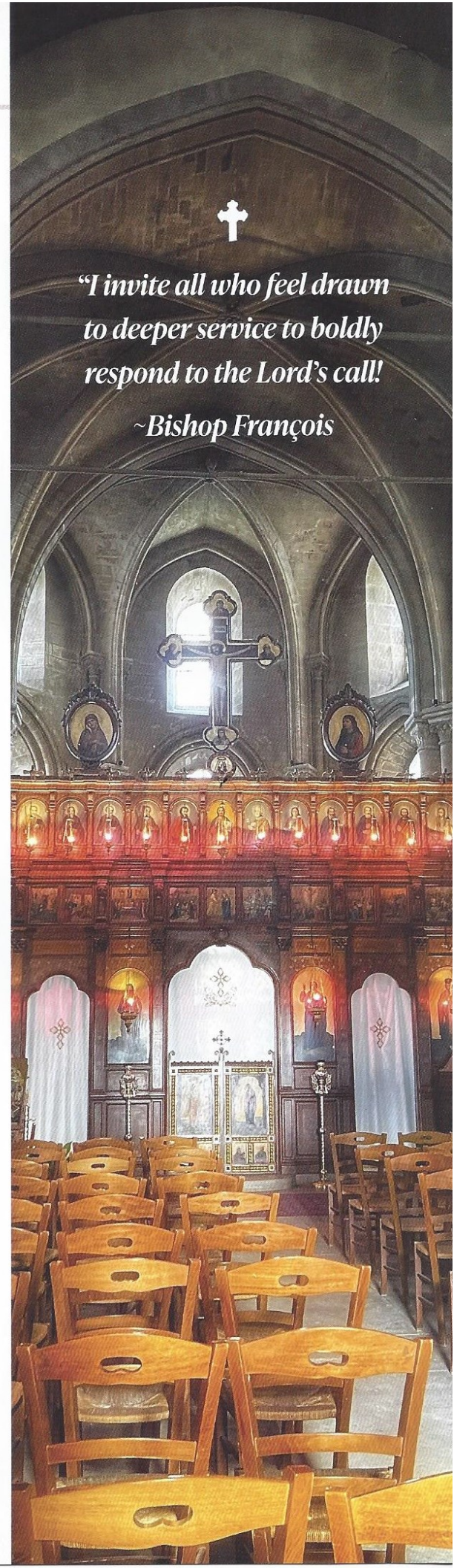
One essential task is to update the biographical information of all our clergy. This will help Bishop François to review the assignments of each deacon and priest and plan for future transitions and retirements. For example, simply knowing the birth dates of all priests allows us to project retirement 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](http://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. 🌟

MELKITE CATHOLIC



EPARCHY OF NEWTON

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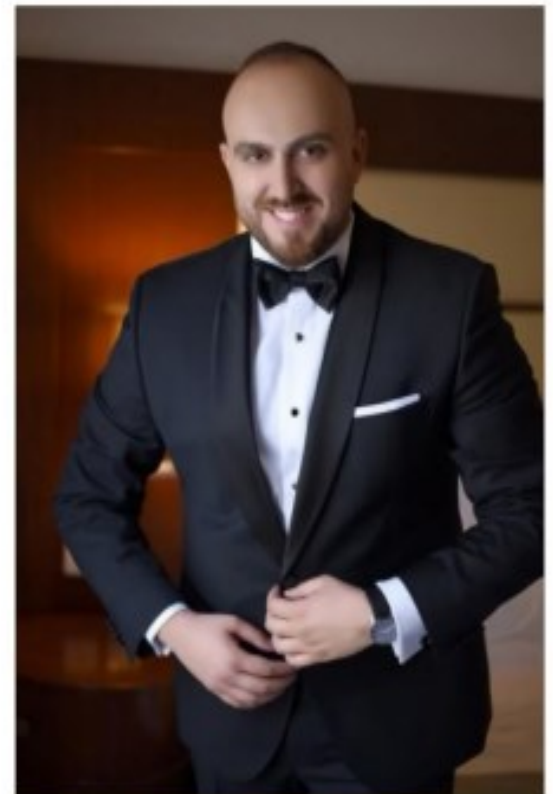
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# ANNOUNCEMENTS

As of 12/30/2022



## St. Basil the Great Melkite Greek Catholic Church

15 Skyview Drive Lincoln, RI 02865

Sharing our Faith  
SECURING OUR FUTURE



### 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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