



OUR LADY OF THE CEDARS CHURCH

A MELKITE CATHOLIC COMMUNITY

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REV. THOMAS P. STEINMETZ, Pastor

RT. REV. ANDRE ST. GERMAIN (retired)

REV. ROGER BOUCHER - Weekend Ministry

REV. DEACON ROBERT SPENCER

REV. DEACON PAUL LEONARCZYK

*"Enter the Church and repent ... for here is the physician, not the judge.
Here one is not investigated, one receives remission of sins." (St. John Chrysostom)*

March 29, 2015



Palm Sunday



Parish Advisory & Finance Council:

KEN MONTY (PRESIDENT), RICHARD ASHOOH, ROBERT ANDERSON, ROBIN ANDERSON, MARY CULLEN, MARTHA DAGHER, MARYLOU LAZOS, TERRI LEONARCZYK, MATTHEW LOMANNO, PAUL MANSUR, NAJWA MOUSSOBA, JENNA NEHME, PAUL ST. GERMAIN, AND CHRISTELLE SLAYBE

Parish Secretary: ROBIN ANDERSON

Cedars Society President: MARYLOU LAZOS

Sunday School Coordinator: MARTHA DAGHER

N.A.M.Y. Advisor: ROBIN ANDERSON

HOLY MYSTERY OF CONFESSION: Before or after any service, or by appointment;

HOLY MYSTERY OF CHRISTIAN ILLUMINATION: Please contact the clergy in advance to arrange for the required baptismal instructions;

HOLY MYSTERY OF CROWNING: At least six months prior to the proposed wedding, please contact the clergy to arrange for the required interview and instructions;

HOLY MYSTERY OF THE ANOINTING OF THE SICK: Please contact the pastor at any time when this sacrament is needed;

HOLY COMMUNION FOR THE SICK: Anyone too infirm to attend our services may receive Communion in the home. Please advise the clergy whenever this sacrament is needed.

THE ORDER OF TODAY'S LITURGY

Response to the Antiphon:

O Son of God who rode upon a donkey's foal, save us who sing to You! Alleluia!

The Troparion of Lazarus (1st Tone) Twice

O Christ God, when You raised Lazarus from the dead, before the time of Your passion, You confirmed the future resurrection of all. We too, like the children of old, carry before You the symbols of victory and cry out to You, O Conqueror of Death: "Hosanna in the highest! Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!"

The Troparion of Palm Sunday (4th Tone)

We have been buried with You in baptism O Christ our God, and we merited eternal life through Your resurrection. Wherefore we cry out to You, singing a hymn of praise: "Hosanna in the highest! Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!"

Kondakion of Palm Sunday (6th Tone)

O Christ God enthroned in heaven, and on earth riding upon a colt; You have accepted the praise of the angels and the hymns of the children who were crying out to You: "Blessed are You who come to restore Adam."

THE PROKIMENON:

BLESSED IS HE WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD.

GOD IS THE LORD AND HE HAS APPEARED TO US!

Sing to the Lord, for He is good, for His mercy endures forever!

Today's Readings: Philippians 4:4-9 and John 12:1-8

Hirmos of Palm Sunday (4th Tone)

The Lord is God and He has appeared to us. Let us celebrate and rejoice. Come, let us glorify Christ, and with palms and branches, sing to Him canticles of praise: "Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord, our Savior!"

LITURGY INTENTIONS

Saturday, 4:30 PM:

For the health and salvation of all the members of the parish,
and of all our friends, relatives, and loved ones

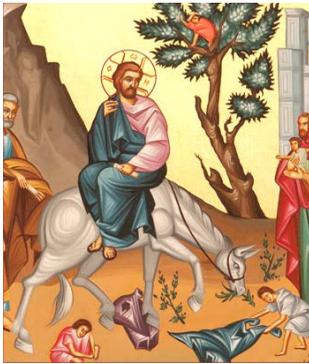
Sunday, 11:00 AM:

For the health and salvation of all the members of the parish,
and of all our friends, relatives, and loved ones

Next Saturday evening and Sunday morning:

For all of the members of the parish, and for our loved ones, living and departed
and of all our friends, relatives, and loved ones





Palm Sunday – The Sunday Before Pascha

Today we cheer Jesus as He enters the city gates, and proclaim that He is the Son of God. But our liturgy is more than a meditation or praise concerning past events. It communicates to us the eternal presence and power of the events being celebrated and makes us participants in those events. It brings us to our own moment of life and death and entrance into the Kingdom of God: a Kingdom not of this world, a Kingdom accessible in the Church through repentance and baptism. As the One who raised Lazarus and entered Jerusalem to go to His voluntary Passion stands in our midst, we are faced with the same question addressed to us at baptism: "Do you accept Christ?" We give our answer by daring to take the palm branches and raise them up signifying our answer: "I accept Him as King and God!"

Saturday Kitchen is cancelled for April for the observance of Holy Saturday.

Calling all cookbook lovers!

We will be putting together a cookbook with traditional Lebanese recipes to sell at church events. If you can help out, please see Rachel Minsinger or contact her by phone at 603-296-5038 or email at rcullen.clarinet@gmail.com. Recipes will start being collected soon!

Special pastries for Pascha will be offered for sale after the Sunday Liturgy.

Sunday School News: There will not be any Sunday School classes next Sunday. Classes will resume at 10 AM the following Sunday, April 12.

Many thanks to Jeanine Notter, Alison Kaladish, Claire St. Germain, Kathy Steinmetz, Bridget Proulx and Family, Jessica Lomanno and Family, Vivian Beadle and Family, John and Kara Siwik, and Sherry Nehme for their work in helping to clean the church.

There will be a second collection this weekend for flowers for Easter.

Attendance Last Saturday 4:30 PM: 21 Sunday 11:00 AM: 122

Last Weekend's Collection: \$ 1,602.⁰⁰

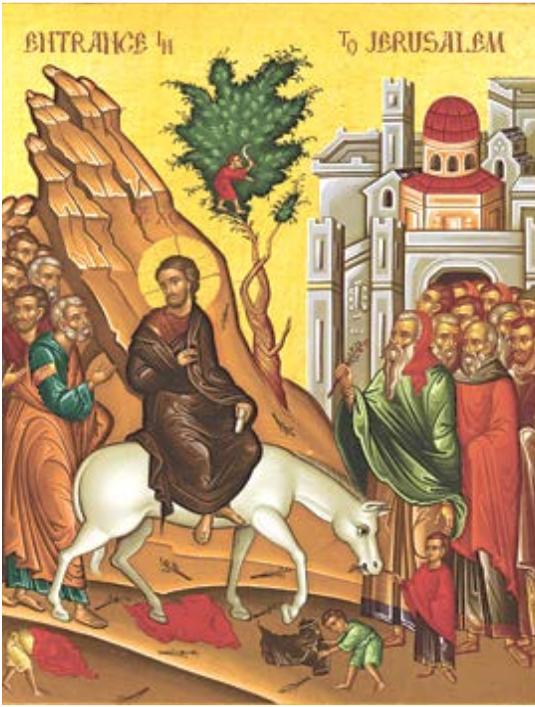
The average Sunday envelope donation: \$42.⁷¹

The balance remaining on our mortgage is: \$ 301,723.⁶³

SERVICES FOR GREAT AND HOLY WEEK

Mon., Mar. 30	7:00 PM	The Bridegroom Service
Tues., Mar. 31	7:00 PM	The Bridegroom Service
Wed., April 1	7:00 PM	Vespers / Holy Anointing / Liturgy of the Last Supper
Thurs., April 2	7:00 PM	The Crucifixion Service
Fri., April 3	3:00 PM	Vespers for the Descent from the Cross
Fri., April 3	7:00 PM	The Burial Service with Lamentations
Sat., April 4	10:00 AM	Vespers / Divine Liturgy & Blessing of New Light
Sat., April 4	9:30 PM	Hajmeh, Matins, & the Divine Liturgy of the Resurrection
Sun., April 5	11:00 AM	The Divine Liturgy of the Resurrection

An Explanation of the Icon of Palm Sunday



In the Icon of the Feast of Palm Sunday, Christ is the central figure, depicted seated upon the colt of a donkey as He enters Jerusalem, a fulfillment of the prophecy found in Zechariah 9:9. Christ is blessing with His right hand, and in His left hand is a scroll, symbolizing that He is the fulfillment of the Old Testament prophecies concerning the Messiah, the Anointed One who has come to redeem us from our sins and break the power of death.

The colt, one of the animals that were considered unclean according to the Law, is symbolic of the inclusion of all peoples of all

nations in the new covenant that will come through the death and Resurrection of Christ (Isaiah 62:10-11). It is also a sign that our Lord has revealed a heavenly and spiritual kingdom that offers true and enduring peace. The city of Jerusalem is shown as the walled buildings, and the temple is depicted as the building with the dome.

On the left, the disciples accompany Jesus in His Triumphal Entry. Depicted on the right are the Jews who greet Him crying “Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord, even the King of Israel!” The word “Hosanna” means “Save, I pray” or “Save now.”

Traditionally, children play a prominent role in the representation of the Entry into Jerusalem. The children are the small people, some of whom are depicted high in a tree cutting the palm branches others are greeting Christ with the palm branches and laying these and their garments on the ground before Christ as tokens of honor for one who is acknowledged as a King. Though the gospels do not specify the children’s presence, the Church sees in them the very embodiment of the biblical reference: “Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings, You have fashioned praise.” (Psalm 8:3). Related to this is the call of Palm Sunday Vespers: “Wherefore, like babes, rejoice, carrying branches in your hands and praise Him singing, ‘Hosanna in the highest! Blessed is He who comes, the King of Israel!’ “



The Seal on Our Repentance

DURING THE FORTY DAYS of the Great Fast the Church urges us to ascetic effort as a preparation for the observances of Holy Week and Pascha. We know that, by His death and resurrection, Christ has achieved the restoration of our human nature in Himself and has enabled us to share in His victory over sin and death by baptism. Like Adam in the Resurrection icon, Christ has taken us by the hand to draw us from the pit of spiritual death. But we know that, like Adam, our feet are still in the grave. It takes a lifelong process of ascetical effort to keep us joined to the redeeming hand of Christ and emerge from the tomb.

The seal on our Lenten striving is participation in the Holy Mysteries. Earlier in the Church's life those who were repenting of serious sins were excluded from the Eucharist during the Fast and reconciled to the Church in Holy Week. In the Byzantine Churches the sacramental climax of our Lenten asceticism is the Mystery of Holy Unction. Anointing the sick was practiced by the Apostles during the lifetime of Christ (see *Mk* 6:13) and by the Church in the apostolic age (see *Jas* 5:14-15). There are occasional references to this mystery in some of the Fathers but the specific practice only reached its present form after the fourteenth century.

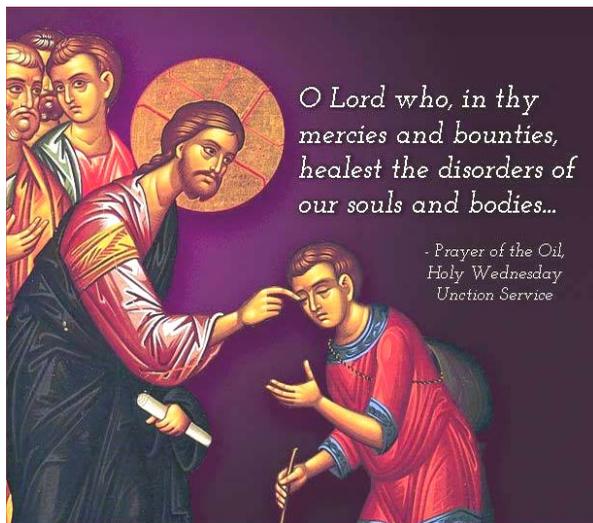
Conferring this mystery to the whole congregation seems to have come about in response to the plagues which struck Constantinople eleven times in the fourteenth century. Then the whole city – and ultimately much of Europe and Asia – seemed to be in danger of death. General anointing services were held to help all the people of the capital in these times of crisis.

The Church has always spoken of spiritual and physical sickness in the same breath. Our misplaced strivings for “life” (greed, lust, power, and the rest) have the opposite effect, doing damage to our bodies as well as our spirits. Thus prayers for healing often join intercession for spiritual as well as bodily health.

It should not strike us as odd that the mystery of Holy Unction replaced the reconciliation of penitents as the sacramental seal on the Great Fast. Our broken human nature is always in need of healing. Since the Wednesday of the Great Week includes the memorial of Christ's anointing by Mary, the sister of Lazarus, in Bethany six days before the Passover (see *Jn* 12:1-8), it became the customary day for offering this mystery to those preparing for Pascha.

Confronting Our Infirmities

In the “Trisagion Prayers,” which occur in many of our services, we pray the following: “All-holy Trinity, have mercy on us; Lord, forgive our sins; Master pardon our transgressions; Holy One, visit and heal our infirmities for Your name's sake.” In this prayer we affirm that we commit *sins* (deliberate rejections of what we know to be God's way) and also *transgressions*



(unrecognized or intended offenses). Many people say that if you didn't mean it, then it's not a sin. True, but does that then mean I am not responsible? The children whose ball breaks their neighbor's window didn't mean it, but the window is still broken; is no one responsible? The godly person accepts responsibility for transgressions as well as sins.

The prayer continues by requesting healing for *infirmities*, and it is here that the mystery of Holy Unction is important in our Christian life. Whenever we strive to deal with our passions, as during the Great Fast, we discover how unable we are to live God's way by our own power. We need to throw ourselves at Christ's feet and implore Him as did the blind man on the roadside, "*Son of David, have mercy on me*" (Mt 9:27). It is with this disposition that receiving Holy Unction bears the most fruit.

Exploring the Service

In its fullest form, the Holy Unction service consists of two parts. The first is a kind of paraklisis or moleben in which we read psalms and sing troparia along with a canon and stikhera seeking God's help.

In the second part of the service oil is brought forth and, in some Churches, mixed with wine to recall the similar mixture used by the Good Samaritan in Christ's parable (see *Lk* 10:25-37). The oil is blessed; then seven prayers are read, each with an epistle and Gospel. These prayers are offered by seven priests in succession, a reminder of the time when people would be anointed seven days in a row, each day by a different priest. In practice the service may be conducted with as few as one priest and one set of prayers and readings.

At the final prayer the assisting clergy hold the open Gospel book over the head of the people while the presiding priest prays, "I do not lay my sinful hand on the heads of those who come to You in sins, asking for the remission of sins through us, but Your mighty and powerful hand, which is in this, Your holy Gospel...Accept Your servants who are repenting of their sins, overlooking their transgressions."

The priest then anoints the people on the forehead and hands (and sometimes on other parts of the body) saying, "Holy Father, Physician of souls and bodies, forgive, heal and save Your servant" or simply "For the healing of soul and body."

A Communal Rite

From its beginnings in the apostolic Church, Holy Unction has always been a solemn and communal rite, rather than a private prayer, even when the recipient is seriously ill. Thus the Byzantine practice of having seven priests officiate hearkens back to St James' injunction, "*Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer of faith will save the sick, and the Lord will raise him up. And if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven*" (*Jas* 5:14-15).

Even when a parish priest goes to anoint a sick parishioner he does well to take some of the un-ordained "elders" of the community along to offer their prayers and encouragement to their ill neighbor. In some parishes groups of people have been trained to accompany the priest on these occasions and to pray the mystery together, showing the sick that they are not alone in their time of trial and assuring them of the love of Christ at a most important time in their life.

“We too, like the children of old, carry before You the symbols of victory”

Towards the end of the fourth century the Spanish nun Egeria, on pilgrimage to the newly-adorned holy places of Palestine, described what she saw on that Palm Sunday:

“As the eleventh hour draws near ... all the children who are [gathered at the top of the Mount of Olives], including those who are not yet able to walk because they are too young and therefore are carried on their parents’ shoulders, all of them bear branches, some carrying palms, others, olive branches. And the bishop is led in the same manner as the Lord once was led. ... From the top of the mountain as far as the city and from there through the entire city ... everyone accompanies the bishop the whole way on foot, and this includes distinguished ladies and men of consequence.” The scene Egeria witnessed has been repeated ever since.

In 326-28 the Empress Helena, mother of the Roman Emperor Constantine the Great, traveled to Palestine at the behest of her son to mark the places where Christ lived and died by constructing shrines and churches. According to Eusebius of Caesarea she was chiefly responsible for two churches, the Church of the Nativity, in Bethlehem (still in existence), and a church on the Mount of Olives, the site of Christ’s ascension. Jerusalem. She also took part in the excavations at the site of the Lord’s death and burial where the Great Church of the Resurrection stands today. It soon became the practice for great celebrations to take place at these sites, particularly when the events which took place there were observed. It was at these shrines that historical commemorations of the events of the Lord’s passion were first conducted. In time, local Churches throughout the Mediterranean world began to imitate the appealing Jerusalem practices, developing the historical observances of Holy Week as we know them today.



East Coast Byzantine Catechetical Conference Presents:

Living Christ:

Reclaiming the Church in our Homes and Lives

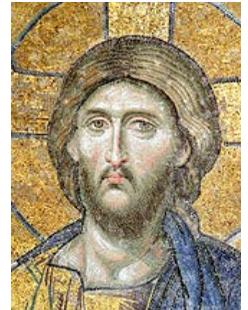
Saturday, May 2, 9:00 A.m. – 3:00 p.m.

St. Basil Melkite Catholic Church

15 Skyview Drive, Lincoln, Rhode Island 02865

& via live broadcast at: www.Melkite.org/Live-Broadcast

No registration required



For too long we have experienced the Church as a place we go on Sunday. Our Eastern tradition offers us something more. By restoring our lives in Christ, we learn to live our Christian calling in our daily lives, and renew it when we return to our parish family each week. Join us as we explore possibilities of restoring our lives in Christ and the fullness of our Christian calling. Fr. Mark Melone, Deacon Sabatino Carnazzo, and Deacon Paul Leonarczyk will be the featured speakers.

Please remember to pray for the health and protection of Genevieve Allen, Elizabeth Ashooh, Elsie Ashooh, Ernie Ashooh, Louise Ashooh, Al Auclair, Alice Auclair, Erin Baroody, Michael Baroody, Ted Baroody, Sarah Beadle, Anthony Blando, Helena Burkush, Fr. Michael Carl, Danielle Caron, Michael Cavanaugh, Meghan Connors, Theresa Cullen, Jamileh Dagher, Sher Farrow, Declan Finn, Janet Drake, Julie Fregeau, Mary Fregeau, Peter Fregeau, Christine Freitas, Loretto Gauvin, Nick Haddad, Jean Hannoush, Lucille Harper, Howard Jabaley, Laura Jorba, Virginia Kearney, Shirley Lanoue, Roger Lawrence, Sadie Grace McCallum, Miriam McCallum, Susan Merrill, Margaret Mitchell, Alfred Nasr, Afef Nasr, Blaise Notter, Steven O'Leary, Denis O'Keefe, Helen Baroody Payne, Josephine Paquette, Russell Pond, Sheila Quinn, Deborah Roberts, Adam Rubin, Fr. Andre St. Germain, Nassim Sleiman, Salwa Sleiman, Tarrant Smith, Mary Stephen, Catherine Waldron, Laura Weingast, and Iris Angelina Velasquez.

If you are visiting our church, our parish family is delighted to welcome you here! Please give us the chance to get to know you by joining us for some coffee, pastry, and conversation in the church hall following the Divine Liturgy. If you would like to know more about the Melkite Catholic Church, check out the brochure entitled **“Welcome to this Holy House,”** located on the table in the back of the church.



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