

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)*

May 25, 2014

The 5th Sunday after Great and Holy Pascha

**The commemoration of the Third Finding of the Head
of the Prophet and Forerunner John the Baptist**

THE SUNDAY OF THE MAN BORN BLIND

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: Sunday 10 AM & 12:45 PM, 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

The Troparion of the Resurrection (5th Tone) Page 55

The Troparion of the Finding of the Head (4th Tone)

O Prophet and Forerunner, it is Christ who revealed to us a divine treasure: your head that was hidden in the ground. On the occasion of this discovery, we gather to sing inspired hymns of praise to the Savior, who, through your intercession, saved us from corruption.

The Troparion of the Dormition of the Theotokos (1st Tone): Page 16

Kondakion of Pascha (2nd Tone)

Though You went down in the tomb O Immortal One, You overthrew the power of Hades and rose victorious, O Christ God. You greeted the ointment-bearing women saying, "Rejoice!" You gave peace to Your Apostles, and to those who had fallen, resurrection.

THE PROKIMENON:

O LORD, SAVE YOUR PEOPLE AND BLESS YOUR INHERITANCE!

To You, O Lord, I have called: O my Rock, be not deaf to me!

Today's Readings: 2 Corinthians 4: 6-15 and John 9: 1-38

Hirmos of Pascha (1st Tone)

The angel cried out to the one who is full of grace: "Hail, O Immaculate Virgin! Hail again! For your Son is risen from the tomb on the third day!" Shine! Shine, O New Jerusalem, for the glory of the Lord has shown upon you. Rejoice and be glad, O Zion, and you O Pure One, O Mother of God, exalt in the resurrection of your Son.

LITURGY INTENTIONS

Saturday, 4:30 PM:

For the repose of Fred Coriarty (66th), Lamia Solomon (29th), John Jadda (56th), Freda George (23rd), Peter Abood (37th), Ned Kfoury (54th), Roland Archambault (15th), Eassa Maloley (31st) and Michael Baroody (53rd)

Sunday, 11:00 AM:

For the repose of Gertrude Beadle (One Year Anniversary),
by her son Michael Beadle and Family

For the repose of Joseph Nasser, Sr.,
who passed to the Lord on May 15

For a special intention, by Kristin Upasani

For the health, salvation, and speedy release of Miriam Yahya Ibrahim,
sentenced to death in the Sudan for the crime of being a Christian

Next Saturday, 4:30 PM:

For the repose of Matilda Ashooh (50th), Minnie Solomon (42nd),
Alexander Azzi (40th), and John Ganem (26th)

Next Sunday, 10:00 AM:

For the repose of Gerald Ouellette (40 Day Memorial), by his family



TROPARION OF PASCHA

Christ is risen from the dead, and by His death He has trampled upon Death, and has given life to those were in the tombs!

Christos anesti ek nekron thanato thanaton bateesas
keh tis en dees mnimasi zo-een kharisamenos!

Al-Massehu-qama min bayn il-amwat wa wati al-mawta bil-
mawt wa wahab al hayat lil lazeena fil qubor!



Our Sunday Liturgy summer schedule will begin next Sun., June 1.

Throughout the summer, the Sunday Divine Liturgy will be offered at 10:00 AM.

Mahrajan 2014: We're really cooking now!

On Tuesday, May 27, we are making: Baklawa -and we really need your help!
6:00 PM - church hall - Hope to see you there!

The Sunday School Picnic will follow the Sunday Divine Liturgy next Sunday. All parents, teachers, and students, are invited to celebrate the end of the school year.

THE LEAVE-TAKING OF PASCHA

On Tuesday evening at 7:00 PM we will say goodbye to the Holy Season of Pascha with the celebration of the Divine Liturgy for the Leave-Taking of Pascha, the Feast of Feasts.



THE ASCENSION OF THE LORD

On Wednesday evening at 7:00 PM we will commemorate the Feast of the Ascension of the Lord Jesus with the celebration of Divine Liturgy. This is one of the great feasts of the Church year.

This week there will be a second collection for the mortgage.

**There will be a meeting of the Parish Council
on Monday, May 26, at 7:00 PM.**

Attendance: Last Sunday 11:00 AM: 136

Last Weekend's Collection: \$ 1,120.⁰⁰

The average envelope donation: \$33.²⁵

The balance remaining on our mortgage is: \$ 338,818.²²

SERVICES FOR THE WEEK

Tues., May 27	7:00 PM	Divine Liturgy: <i>The Leave-Taking of Pascha</i>
Wed., May 28	7:00 PM	Divine Liturgy: <i>The Feast of the Ascension</i>
Sat., May 31	4:30 PM	Divine Liturgy: <i>The Sunday of the Fathers of Nicaea I</i>
Sun., June 1	9:15 AM	Sunday Orthros
Sun., June 1	10:00 AM	Divine Liturgy: <i>The Sunday of the Fathers of Nicaea I</i>

The Feast of The Ascension of the Lord



The Feast of the Ascension of our Lord God and Savior Jesus Christ is celebrated each year on the fortieth day after the Great and Holy Pascha, always a Thursday. Since the date of Pascha changes each year, the date of the Feast of the Ascension also changes.

The story of the Ascension of our Lord, one of the Twelve Great Feasts of the Church, is found in the book of the Acts of the Apostles 1:3-11. It is also mentioned in the Gospels of Mark (16:19) and Luke (24:50-53).

Christ made His last appearance on earth, forty days after His Resurrection from the dead. The Acts of the Apostles states that Jesus appeared before His disciples and commanded them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the "Promise of the Father". He stated, "You shall

be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now" (Acts 1:5).

After Jesus gave these instructions, He led the disciples to the Mount of Olives. Here, He commissioned them to be His witnesses "in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth" (Acts 1:8). It is also at this time that the disciples were directed by Christ to "go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit" (Matthew 28:19). Jesus also told them that He would be with them always, "even to the end of the world" (Matthew 28:20).

The moment of the Ascension is told in one sentence: "He was lifted up before their eyes in a cloud which took Him from their sight" (Acts 1:9). As the disciples watched, Jesus lifted up His hands, blessed them, and then was taken up out of their sight (Luke 24:51; Acts 1:9). Two angels appeared to them and asked them why they were gazing into heaven. Then one of the angels said, "This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as you have seen Him going into heaven" (Acts 1:11).

"We who seemed unworthy of the earth, are now raised to heaven," says St. John Chrysostom. "We who were unworthy of earthly dominion have been raised to the Kingdom on high, have ascended higher than heaven, have come to occupy the King's throne, and the same nature from which the angels guarded Paradise, stopped not until it ascended to the throne of the Lord."

By His Ascension the Lord not only opened to man the entrance to heaven, not only appeared before the face of God on our behalf and for our sake, but likewise "transferred man" to the high places. "He honored them He loved by putting them close to the Father." God quickened and raised us together with Christ, as St Paul says, "and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus" (Ephes. 2:6). Heaven received the inhabitants of the earth. "The First fruits of them that slept" sits now on high, and in Him all creation is summed up and bound together. "The earth rejoices in mystery, and the heavens are filled with joy."

-edited from www.goarch.com and www.johnsanidopoulos.com

“A Divine Treasure Hidden in the Ground”

THE PRINCIPAL FEASTS in our liturgical year commemorate some event in the life of Christ or of the Theotokos. A second category of feasts honors the memory of saints, often on the day of their repose. A third category of feasts recalls significant events in the history of the Church, such as the discovery and exaltation of the holy Cross or the seven Ecumenical Councils of the first millennium.

In this last category the Byzantine Churches observe two feasts concerning the head of St John the Forerunner. On February 24 the “First and Second Uncovering” of his head are recalled, On May 25 the “Third Uncovering” of this relic is observed.

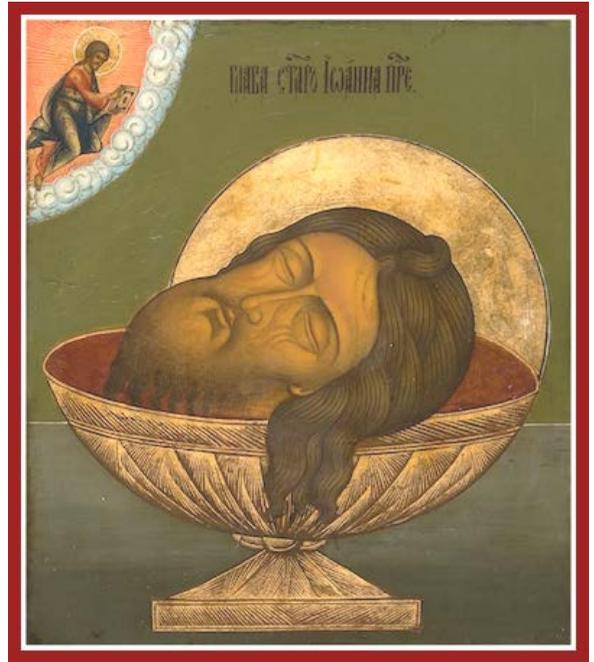
The Gospel account of John’s death and burial is found in *Mt* 14:3-12. There we are told that John was beheaded, that his head was given by Salome to her mother, and that “*Then his disciples came and took away the body and buried it, and went and told Jesus*” (v. 12). What became of John’s head was not mentioned.

The Fate of John’s Body

According to a very early local tradition, John’s disciples took his body to Samaria, outside Herod’s jurisdiction, and buried it in Sebastiya, near the tomb of the Prophet Elisha. The adornment of the holy places and the spread of monasticism in the fourth century saw the rise of interest in the Holy Land and the establishment of monasteries on the holy sites. Monastics, who revered John as a kind of proto-monk because of his life in the wilderness, settled in Sebastiya at the site of John’s tomb.

According to Rufinus of Aquileia, who lived in Jerusalem at the time, pagans, during the reign of Emperor Julian the Apostate (361-363), desecrated the tombs of both John and Elisha and burned their bones. Some of the remains were rescued by monks who brought them to their monastery in Jerusalem.

After Julian’s brief reign the shrine was restored and at least some of the relics presumably returned. In 512 St John of Maiuma in Gaza visited Sebastiya, describing what he saw: “This site, in fact, was a particular chapel of the church, enclosed within gates because it contains two urns covered in gold and silver, in front of which burn perennial lamps: one is John the Baptist’s, the other is Prophet Elisha’s.” The church was destroyed, probably by an earthquake, in the ninth century.



Palestine: the First Uncovering

Nicephorus and Symeon Metaphrastes (in accordance with Josephus) say that Herodias had John's head buried in the fortress of Machaerus where he had been slain. Other writers say that it was interred on the tetrarch's property in Jerusalem where it was discovered by two pilgrim-monks during the restoration of the city under Constantine the Great. For several years it was kept by local Christians as a treasured relic.

Syria: The Second Uncovering

A Syrian visiting Jerusalem acquired the head from some monks and brought it home to Emesa (Homs) where it came into the possession of another monk who buried it in his cave. A contemporary chronicle relates that in 452 St. John the Baptist appeared to Marcellus, the archimandrite of this monastery, and indicated where his head was hidden. The head was discovered and enshrined in a newly-build church which was then dedicated to St John.

This discovery was widely celebrated at the time and a feast and procession established in Constantinople on February 24 to commemorate it. Before long, the Fore-runner's head was brought to Constantinople where it remained until the iconoclast period (730-842). The head was then secretly taken and hidden in Comana (Abkhazia today) for safekeeping.

Constantinople: The Third Uncovering

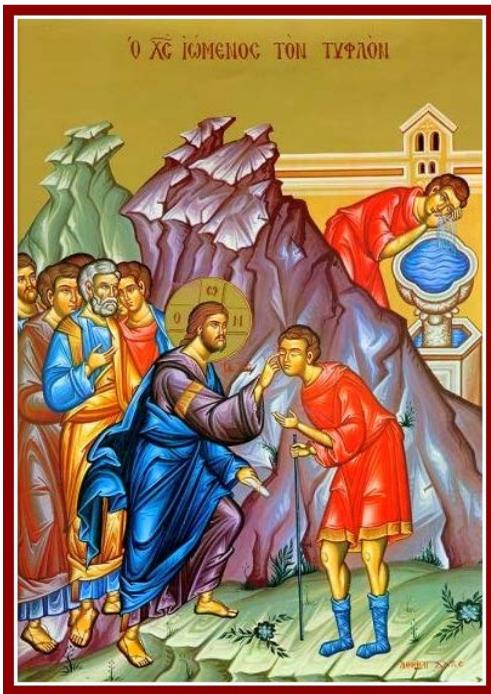
Around the year 850, with the final defeat of iconoclasm, the head of the Forerunner was solemnly returned to Constantinople where major portions were enshrined at the Studion Monastery and the Monastery of the Forerunner. The upper portion remained in Constantinople until the disastrous sack of the city during the Fourth Crusade in 1204. Crusaders took the relic to Amiens in northern France where it was enshrined in the new cathedral.

In 1793 revolutionaries sacked the cathedral and seized its valuables. They took the reliquary but the mayor of Amiens hid the actual relic until 1816 when it was returned to the cathedral where it remains.

This relic was actually the upper portion of the face. The lower jaw was thought to be in Verdun in eastern France. In 1958 the two sections were subjected to anatomical study and found to come from different skulls. The Verdun bone which dated to the Middle Ages. However the facial part, called the head of St. John the Baptist from Amiens, is a very ancient object dated at between 500 BC and 1000 AD. The man's age could not be determined precisely due to the absence of teeth. But based upon the fact that the alveolar [tooth] sockets are fully developed and are slightly worn at the edges, it can be supposed that the man was an adult (between 25 and 40 years old).

General characteristics of the head in the form of inadequate elements can be determined, but with great permissible variation. The facial type is Caucasoid (that is, not Negroid or Mongoloid). The small measurements of the subject from Amiens and the development of the lower eye sockets lead to the supposition that it could correspond to a racial type called "Mediterranean" (a type to which modern Bedouins belong).

But there is still more: In 2010 skeletal remains were discovered in a case inscribed with John's name in Greek which was found beneath the altar in the ruins of an ancient Bulgarian church. DNA and radiocarbon testing showed that the remains likely belonged to a Middle Eastern man who lived in the first century AD!



The Sunday of the Blind Man

This day commemorates the miracle of Christ healing the man who was blind since birth. The event is recorded in the Gospel of Saint John 9:1-41.

The Lord Jesus was coming from the Temple on the Sabbath, when, while walking in the way, He saw the blind man mentioned in today's Gospel. This man had been born thus from his mother's womb, that is, he had been born without eyes (see Saint John Chrysostom, Homily LVI on Matthew; Saint Irenaeus, Against Heresies, Book V:15; and the Second Exorcism of Saint Basil the Great).

When the disciples saw this, they asked their Teacher, "Who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind?" They asked this because when the Lord had healed the paralytic at the Sheep's Pool, He had told him, "Sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee" (John 5:14); so they wondered, if sickness was caused by sin, what sin could have been the cause of his being born

without eyes. But the Lord answered that this was for the glory of God.

Then the God-man spat on the ground and made clay with the spittle. He anointed the eyes of the blind man and said to him, "Go, wash in the Pool of Siloam." Siloam (which means "sent") was a well-known spring in Jerusalem used by the inhabitants for its waters, which flowed to the eastern side of the city and collected in a large pool called "the Pool of Siloam." The blind man believed in Jesus' words, obeyed His command, went and washed himself, and returned, no longer blind, but having eyes and seeing.

This was the greatest miracle that our Lord had yet worked; as the man healed of his blindness himself testified, "Since time began, never was it heard that any man opened the eyes of one that was born blind," although the Lord had already healed the blind eyes of many.

Because he now had eyes, some even doubted that he was the same person (John 9:8-9); and it was still lively in their remembrance when Christ came to the tomb of Lazarus, for they said, "Could not this man, who opened the eyes of the blind man, have caused that even this man should not have died?"

The icon of the Sunday of the Blind Man depicts the biblical story of Christ healing the man who was blind since birth. Our Lord is shown placing the clay on the eyes of the man. He is with his disciples who are questioning Christ about the source of the man's affliction. The blind man is shown with his hand outstretched toward Christ expressing his faith and willingness to receive healing and grace from the Son of God. Our Lord has in His hand a scroll, which directs us to His statements, "I am the light of the world," (John 9:5), and "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed," (Luke 4:18). -edited from www.goarch.com

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, Anthony Blando, Helena Burkush, Danielle Caron, Meghan Connors, Lucy Corriveau, Theresa Cullen, Jamileh Dagher, Lynn Dargie, Marie Dargie, Sher Farrow, Declan Finn, Julie Fregeau, Mary Fregeau, Peter Fregeau, Christine Freitas, Bernadette Ganem, Loretto Gauvin, Nick Haddad, Jean Hannoush, Lucille Harper, Peggy Hunt, Howard Jabaley, Laura Jorba, Virginia Kearney, Shirley Lanoue, Roger Lawrence, Sadie Grace McCallum, Miriam McCallum, James McCloskey, Susan Merrill, Margaret Mitchell, Alfred Nasr, Afef Nasr, Blaise Notter, Steven O'Leary, Denis O'Keefe, Helen Baroody Payne, Josephine Paquette, Virginia Pichette, Jean Poleatewich, Sheila Quinn, Deborah Roberts, Adam Rubin, Robert Siwik, Nassim Sleiman, Salwa Sleiman, Tarrant Smith, Catherine Waldron, 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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