



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 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)*

August 30, 2015

The Second Day of the Beheading of John the Baptist;
The Commemoration of our Holy Fathers Alexander, John, and Paul,
Archbishops of Constantinople

THE 14TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Parish Advisory & Finance Council:

KEN MONTY (*PRESIDENT*), RICHARD ASHOOH, LUKE ANDERSON, ROBERT ANDERSON,
ROBIN ANDERSON, MARY CULLEN, MARTHA DAGHER, MARYLOU LAZOS, TERRI LEONARCZYK,
MATTHEW LOMANNO, PAUL MANSUR, NAJWA MOUSSOBA, 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

The Troparion of the Resurrection (5th Tone) Page 53

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

Kondakion of the Nativity of the Theotokos (4th Tone):

Through your holy birth, O Immaculate One, Joachim and Anne were delivered from the shame of childlessness, and Adam and Eve from the corruption of death. Your people redeemed from the debt of their sins celebrate your birth crying out to you: The barren one gives birth to the Mother of God, the sustainer of our life.

THE PROKIMENON:

**YOU, O LORD, WILL KEEP US
AND PRESERVE US ALWAYS FROM THIS GENERATION.**

*Save me, O Lord, for there is no longer any holy man,
for truthfulness has vanished from among the children of men.*

Today's Readings: 2 Corinthians 1: 21-2:4 and Matthew 22: 2-14

LITURGY INTENTIONS

Saturday, 4:30 PM:

For the repose of Arthur Wright (43rd), Dorothy Thomas (23rd),
Peter Fawaz (37th), Charlie Stephen (57th), Ruth Sahady (41st), Delia Wetmore (46th),
Nazira Wihby (27th), Daniel Wihby (6th), and Isabel Pellerin (4th)

Sunday, 10:00 AM:

For the repose of Mary Mannon, by Gerard Villemure

Next Saturday, 4:30 PM:

For the repose of Assad Burkush (36th), Norman Ashkar (59th),
and Charles Anton (25th)

Next Sunday, 10:00 AM:

For the repose of John Cullen (10th Anniversary), by his family

Paul speaks as a minister of the Lord, reminding the people that he has had to talk bluntly to them because he cared enough about their well-being to be direct and honest, a form of service. In the Gospel, God sends out His servants to invite everyone to the banquet of salvation in Christ. The servants were to bring all into the presence of the Lord, and help them to prepare for the encounter. These are characteristics desperately needed in our clergy. Please pray that God stir up vocations to the priesthood in our diocese to serve us all in this manner.



**God Invites
Vocations.
You Can Help
Close the Deal.**

Dear parishioners and friends:

I am profoundly grateful for the hard work of so many in the parish who made Mahrajan 2015 such a great success. As you know, Sunday collections don't come close to paying our bills and our mortgage. Each month is a struggle, and so the success of our annual Mahrajan is critical to financial survival of our parish.

It is a sign of the strength and the unity of our parish that so many come together to work hard and long for our church. It is obviously a labor of love, as it is all done without complaint, and in a spirit of joy and family. In fact many visitors told me that they noticed how happy all the workers seemed to be. That is because they - and all of us, in fact, who worked and contributed - see our church as something that is good, worth working for and supporting, and something that should continue for future generations.

And so with thanks to God - and to all of you - I wanted to share with you that Mahrajan 2015 was the most successful Mahrajan that we have ever held (in spite of a rainy washout on Friday)! We garnered much more media attention this year than in the past, we had great attendance, and many people visited, prayed, and attended Divine Liturgy in our church. Finally, it was our most profitable Mahrajan ever. I am estimating that our net profit will be over \$48,000!

Again, I thank all of you. Because of your work and support, the mission, ministry, and presence of our parish will continue. I am greatly blessed to be your pastor!

God bless you all!


Fr. Tom



On Sunday, Sept. 13, we will return to our regular Sunday Liturgy schedule. Sunday Liturgy will be offered at 11:00 AM beginning on that day. The Saturday Liturgy will continue to be offered at 4:30 PM.

There is a second collection this weekend for the mortgage.

Attendance Last Week: Sat. 4:30 PM: 46 Sun. 10:00 AM: 132

Last Weekend's Collection: \$ 1,402.⁰⁰

The average Sunday envelope donation: \$43.⁶⁵

The balance remaining on our mortgage is: \$ 291,517.⁰⁴

SERVICES FOR THE WEEK

Wed., Sept. 2	7:00 PM	Divine Liturgy: For the persecuted Christians of the Middle East and throughout the world
Sat., Sept. 5	4:30 PM	Divine Liturgy: The 15th Sunday After Pentecost
Sun., Sept. 6	9:15 AM	Sunday Orthros
Sun., Sept. 6	10:00 AM	Divine Liturgy: The 15th Sunday After Pentecost

Annual Family Picnic



Our Lady of Perpetual Help Melkite Catholic Church, located at 256 Hamilton St., Worcester, MA, will be holding their Annual Picnic on Sunday, September 13, 2015 from 12 noon – 5 PM. The event will feature Entertainment by Mitchell Kaltsunas, Middle Eastern Food, activities for the kids, and free admission. All are welcome.

Wednesday Evening: Divine Liturgy for the persecuted Christians of the Middle East and throughout the world

Let us pray for our brothers and sisters in Christ suffering in the Middle East and throughout the world. The Divine Liturgy will be offered on Wednesday evening at 7:00 PM, for their intention and for the repose of those Christians who have lost their lives particularly in the recent weeks.

Let us also pray of the conversion of the persecutors, remembering that in the Liturgy of St. Basil we pray: “Remember, O God ... those who love us and those who hate us, and those who have begged us, unworthy though we be, to remember them in our prayers. Remember all Your people, O Lord our God, and upon all pour forth Your rich mercies, granting them everything they need for salvation.”



In the fourth century, the Byzantine Empire celebrated New Years Day on September 1st. Since that time, the Church has celebrated her liturgical new year on that same day. Why not use the occasion to make a New Year’s resolution to follow the Lord Jesus more closely every day through the coming year?



Greekfest!

Assumption Greek Orthodox Church, 111 Island Pond Rd.

Sat. Aug. 29, 11:00 AM to 10:00 PM

Sun. Aug. 30, 11:00 AM to 7:00 PM

**Lamb (Souvlaki), Gyro, Chicken, Homemade Greek Cuisine & More
Homemade Greek Pastries**

Fine jewelry, gifts, crafts, ethnic, and religious items

Beginning a Time of Grace

THE GOSPEL PARABLE IN THE MODERN AGE the world has come to accept one civil calendar which originated in Western Europe centuries ago. Many of us are aware that some groups still maintain an attachment to their historic calendars. The Chinese and Vietnamese, for example stage their own New Year's celebrations according to their ancient calendars, usually in late winter. The Islamic New Year may begin anywhere from mid-October to mid-December. And the Jewish New Year, *Rosh Ha-shanah*, regularly begins in September.

Starting in the last half of the fifth century (probably AD 462), the Byzantine Empire designated September 1 as the first day of the New Year. The Byzantine liturgical year was arranged according to that calendar and September 1 remains the first day of our liturgical year. The cycle of the Church's Great Feasts begin in September with the Nativity of the Theotokos (September 8) and conclude in August with the feast of her Dormition (August 15).

Although our contemporary civil calendar begins on January 1, many of our public institutions effectively begin their year in September also. Congress and the courts, the school year, theaters, concerts, fundraisers, and other civic events on hold through the summer start up again only after Labor Day. Perhaps the Jews and the Byzantines got it right after all.

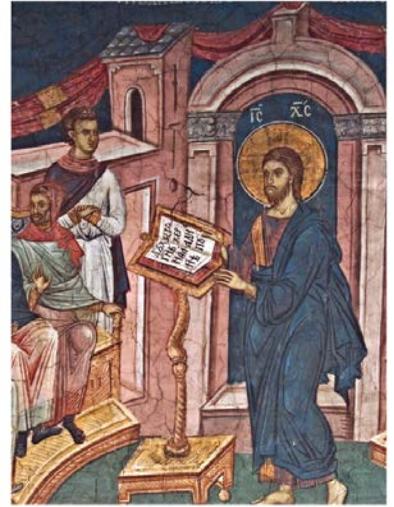
The Indiction

The first day of the Church year is called the *Indiction*. Originally referring to the start of a tax assessment cycle in the Roman Empire, this word has come to mean the beginning of a cycle in a more general way and may be found in legal or formal documents to this day. Thus in 2011 Pope Benedict XVI issued a formal letter "For the Indiction [i.e. Beginning] of the Year of Faith." And so calling September 1 an Indiction simply means that it is the start of a new cycle of the feasts, fasts and other observances of our Church.

On this day Byzantine churches read the Gospel of the beginning of Christ's public ministry as recorded in Luke 4:16-22. After reading the Messianic prophecy in Isaiah 61:1-2 the Lord tells His listeners, "*Today this Scripture is fulfilled in your hearing.*" The Messiah is at hand: God's plan is on the move.

The "Year of the World"

A lesser-known aspect of the Byzantine calendar is that September 1, AD 2015 is the first day of AM 7524! From AD 691 to 1728 the Byzantine Churches followed a system dating years from the creation of the world according to the calculations in the Book of Genesis (AM, *Anno Mundi*, the "Year of the World"). In 1700, during his westernization of Russia, Tsar Peter the Great replaced the Byzantine Era in his realm with the Western Christian Era. A few years later the Patriarchate of Constantinople and all the Churches in the Ottoman Empire followed suit. Formal documents of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, Mount Athos and some other Eastern Church bodies may still indicate the Byzantine Era date along with that according to the Christian Era.



Dominating or Leading from Within?

A FEW YEARS AGO an Orthodox priest quipped, on being ordained a bishop, that his spiritual life had been challenged as never before. “You put me on a throne, dress me up like the Emperor, call me ‘Master’ and expect me to be humble!”

When the Ottoman Turks conquered Constantinople in the fifteenth century they named the Ecumenical Patriarch as “Ethnarch” of the Greek *millet* or nation. Each non-Muslim group under Ottoman rule (eg Armenians, Copts, Jews, etc.) was considered a subject “nation” and had its own national leader. It was at that time that the Ecumenical Patriarch took on some of the old emperor’s regalia. In time other patriarchs, metropolitans and bishops did the same. They started wearing crowns, being called “most eminent lord” and assuming all the trappings of state still used today. One temptation confronting Church leaders, then, was to see themselves as civil rulers rather than churchmen.

When St Paul was writing to the Christians of Corinth in the first century such magnificent trappings were unknown. This did not prevent some Christian leaders and their followers from putting on airs. In the Apostle’s *First Letter to the Corinthians* he criticizes the divisiveness in their community: “...there are quarrels among you,” he wrote. “What I mean is this: one of you says, ‘I follow Paul’; another, ‘I follow Apollos’; another, ‘I follow Cephas’; still another, ‘I follow Christ’” (1 Cor 1:11-12).

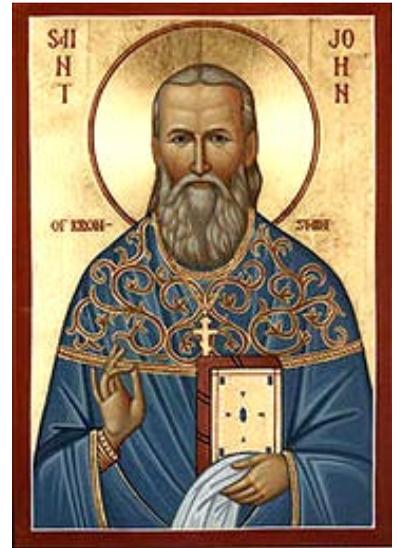
Christians – both clergy and laity – still succumb to this temptation when they attach themselves to one or another important person to show themselves as superior to others, confusing greater responsibility with higher status and honor.

St Paul confronts such attitudes with the principle he spells out in 2 *Corinthians* 1:24. “Not that we lord it over your faith, but we work with you for your joy, because it is by faith you stand firm.” He contrasts “lording over” others in the Church with “working with” others to assure a joyful spirit in the community. Church leaders are not meant to dominate from above but to lead from within the community they serve.

Clericalism and Laicism

A frequently cited example of domination in the Church is clericalism, where all responsibility in the parish is in the hands of the clergy while the laity is expected to simply “pray, pay and obey.” Similarly parish clergy complain that people from the bishop’s office tell them how to run their parish while bishops point their finger at higher-ups who interfere in their diocese! There is often the feeling among Christians that leadership in the Church means domination rather than cooperation.

The troublemakers in Corinth were not the Apostles, Paul or Cephas; they were the followers who stirred up antagonisms in their name. Similarly many Churches have suffered from what has been called “laicism,” where groups of parishioners attempt to dominate the parish and



exclude others or limit their participation, perhaps on ethnic lines. Sometimes the parish “elite” have felt that the priest is merely their employee, supposed to do their bidding. Others have resented the bishop for enforcing diocesan policies (particularly financial ones) on their parish. How often do parish bigwigs pressure the priest to bend the rules for them or their relatives? It is not only clergy who may try to dominate the Church.

Church life as envisioned in our Tradition calls for a model different from either clericalism or laicism. It presumes that laity working together with clergy of all ranks –bishop, priest, deacons, chanters, etc. – each fulfilling their proper function. None of these roles is simply an honorific. Each of them is, first and foremost, a service to the Body of Christ, the Church, and therefore to the Lord Himself.

In the past the parish clergy were the only educated members of the community, particularly in villages and rural areas – perhaps the only parishioners who could read! They were the leaders in the community, the keepers of good order. In the parish their word was law.

Today, in many if not most parishes, the priest is not the most educated person in the community, except in religious matters. The laity are recovering their rightful place in the life of the Church. In an attempt to involve more laypeople in Church life, however, some clergy have put men and women in leadership positions without proper training. A parish council member or a catechist, who has not been trained in the Tradition or in the vision of our Church, will not be able to contribute positively to the Church’s mission. Their secular education may make them leaders in their own fields, but they may remain children in their understanding of the Church and its ways. A yearling lamb does not make a good shepherd.

The Smell of the Sheep

Since becoming Bishop of Rome Pope Francis has encouraged important churchmen to lead from within rather than remaining at a distance from their flock. He told an archbishop whom he had just appointed papal almoner (charity director) not to sit in an office writing checks but to go out to the streets and serve the needy found there. Shepherds, he insists, should smell of their sheep because they are in their midst.

The Pope’s injunction forces Church leaders to ask, “Where are the sheep to be found?” In some places they may congregate in coffee houses or the local pub – the shepherd’s place would be there with them. In many parts of our society the sheep rarely stray from in front of the TV or the computer. Shepherds have gone there as well, whether by visiting homes or making a presence for Christ in the media. Some suburban churches have opened chapels or stalls in their local shopping malls because that’s where the people may be found.

A Model Shepherd

St John of Kronstadt served as a priest in a big city parish near St Petersburg in Russia from 1855 to 1908. He came to be known throughout the Russian Church for his devotion to the holy mysteries. He served the Divine Liturgy daily, unusual outside monasteries, and often heard confessions for hours on end. It was the witness of his prayer life that made people throughout Russia recognize him as “their” shepherd. One observer described the effect of serving the Liturgy on St John: “An extraordinary spiritual joy, extraordinary peace and heavenly rest, extraordinary strength and power were now reflected in each trace of his features. His face was as if glowing, was as if giving off some sort of light.” As St John said, “I die when I am not celebrating the Liturgy.”

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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**MAHRAJAN 2015
 is coming!**
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 2015!**

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