



OUR LADY OF THE CEDARS CHURCH

A MELKITE CATHOLIC COMMUNITY

140 MITCHELL STREET, MANCHESTER, NH 03103

TEL # (603) 623-8944 FAX # (603) 645-6017

Email: oloc.church@comcast.net

Website: www.olocnh.org

REV. THOMAS P. STEINMETZ, Pastor

RT. REV. ANDRE ST. GERMAIN (retired)

REV. ROGER BOUCHER - Weekend Ministry

REV. THEOPHAN LEONARCZYK, Eparchial Chancellor

"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 28, 2016

**The Commemoration of our Father Moses, the Ethiopian
and of our Father Augustine, Bishop of Hippo**

THE 15TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

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, 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 (6th 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:

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 Matthew 22: 35-46

LITURGY INTENTIONS

Saturday 4:30 PM:

For the repose of Abraham Dagher,
by his parents, Jamil and Rosemonde Dagher and Family

For the repose of Esther Sanschagrin (24th), Minerva Lajoie (9th),
Joseph George (46th), Arthur Wright (44th), Dorothy Thomas (24th),
Peter Fawaz (38th), Charlie Stephen (58th), Ruth Sahady (42nd),
and Delia Wetmore (47th)

Sunday, 10:00 AM:

For the repose of the deceased members of our parish

Next Saturday (Sept. 3), 4:30 PM:

For the repose of Nazira Wihby (28th), Daniel Wihby (7th),
Isabel Pellerin (5th), Assad Burkush (37th), Norman Ashkar (60th),
Charles Anton (26th), and Jack Cullen (11th)

Next Sunday (Sept. 4), 10:00 AM:

For the repose of Rebecca Moulds (40 Day Memorial), by Vince and Christine Williams



Congratulations to the winners of the Mahrajan Raffle: First Prize of \$1,000 went Jeanne Monty of Manchester, Elias Haddad of Merrimack won the 2nd Prize of \$250, and Bobby Stephen of Manchester won the Third Prize of \$100. *Special thanks to Elias Haddad, who immediately returned the entire prize money to the church!*

Congratulations also to Jeanine Notter! Because of her efforts in soliciting ads for the Mahrajan souvenir book, she is the winner of the \$200 gift certificate to Barmakian Jewelers.

Dear parishioners and friends:

I want to express my deepest gratitude for the hard work of so many in the parish who made Mahrajan 2016 a great success. It was a moving experience to see the parish come together and work in love, joy, and unity. It is a reminder to me of how lucky I am to be pastor of this parish where parishioners see our church as something that is good, worth working for and supporting, and as something that should continue for future generations.

Because of all of your efforts – and God's blessings – thousands came to our church grounds and enjoyed hours of food, fun, and fellowship, and many people visited, prayed, and attended Divine Liturgy in our church. The event was a great financial success: I am estimating that our net profit will be over \$45,000!

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. 11, 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.



Wednesday is New Year's Eve! Wait, What?

New Years Day brings thoughts of new beginnings and fresh starts. 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. Divine Liturgy for the new liturgical year will be offered on Wednesday Evening at 7:00 PM

Attendance - Last Saturday 4:30 PM: 28 Sunday 11:00 AM: 88

Last Weekend's Collection: \$1,247.⁸⁷

The average Sunday envelope donation: \$47.⁷¹

The balance remaining on our mortgage is: \$ 83,551.³⁴

SERVICES FOR THE WEEK

Wed. August 31	7:00 PM	Divine Liturgy for the New Liturgical Year
Sat., Sept. 3	4:30 PM	Divine Liturgy: The Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost
Sun., Sept. 4	9:15 AM	Sunday Orthros
Sun., Sept. 4	10:00 AM	Divine Liturgy: The Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost

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.

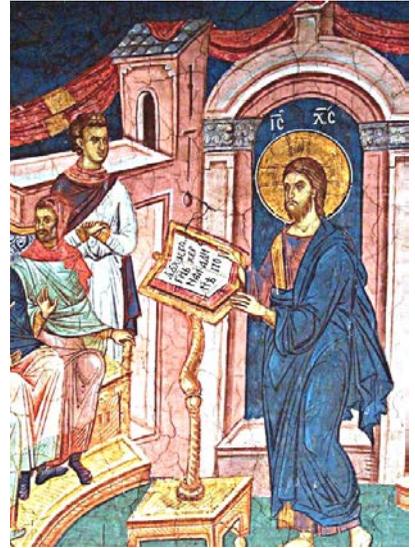
The Indiction

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 2016 is the first day of AM 7525! 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.

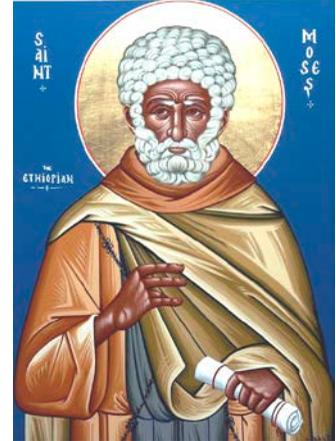


St. Moses was an Ethiopian by birth and by profession, at first, a robber and leader of a band of robbers and, after that, a penitent and great ascetic. As the slave of a master, Moses escaped and joined the robbers. Because of his great physical strength and arrogance, the robbers chose him as their leader.

Suddenly, St. Moses was overcome with pangs of conscience and repentance for the misdeeds, which he had committed. He left the group, entered a monastery and gave himself completely in obedience to his spiritual father and to the monastic rule. He benefited much from the teachings of Saints Macarius, Arsenius and Isidore. Later, he withdrew to solitude in a cell where he was tormented and tempted by demons. However he learned to overcome them through ascetical practices of fasting, physical labor, prayer, vigils and godly-thoughts.

St. Moses was ordained a priest in old age. He founded his own monastery and had seventy-five disciples and lived in this life for seventy-five years. He foresaw his death and, one day, he told his disciples to flee for the barbarians were going to attack the monastery. When the disciples also urged him to flee with them, Moses said that he must die by violence for, at one time, he himself committed violence and, according to the words: "For all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword" (St. Matthew 26:52).

He remained there with six brethren and the barbarians came and slew them. One of the brethren, hidden in the vicinity, saw seven shining wreaths as they descended upon the seven martyrs. His body is now located at Virgin Mary's Coptic Orthodox Monastery of El-Baramous in Egypt.



St. Anne's Melkite Catholic Church

41 Cross Rd., Waterford Ct.

Sunday, August 28, 11 AM - 5 PM

Featuring Nada Hawa and his ensemble

MAHAJAN



Greekfest!

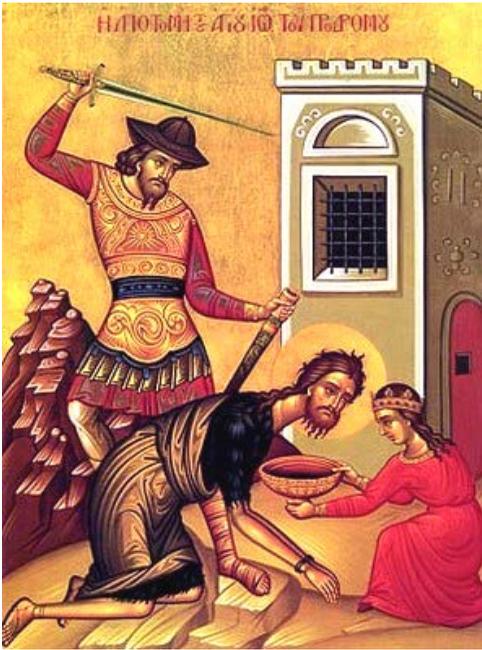
**Assumption Greek Orthodox Church,
111 Island Pond Rd.**

Sat. Aug. 27, 11:00 AM to 10:00 PM

Sun. Aug. 28, 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



August 29
The Beheading of
St John the Forerunner
The Forerunner
in Hades

THE GOSPELS DEPICT St John the Baptist as the “forerunner” or herald announcing the immanent coming of God’s saving work in Jesus Christ. In the Gospel of Mark, for example, we read, *“There comes One after me who is mightier than I, whose sandal strap I am not worthy to stoop down and loose. I indeed baptized you with water, but He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit”* (Mk 1:7, 8).

The coming of the Messiah was the focus of John’s message about the kingdom of God. *“In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judea, ‘Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand’”* (Mt 3:1). This “kingdom” is none other than Jesus in whom the will of His Father governed His every action. Thus He is the kingdom personified.

The Story of John’s Struggle

We read the story of John’s final fight “for the sake of truth” in Mark’s Gospel. *“For Herod himself had sent and laid hold of John, and bound him in prison for the sake of Herodias, his brother Philip’s wife; for he had married her. Because John had said to Herod, ‘It is not lawful for you to have your brother’s wife’”* (Mk 6:17, 18).

John languished in prison because Herod had a superstitious fear of the prophet. He revered John as a holy man but could not bring himself to follow the Baptist’s teachings.

“Then an opportune day came when Herod on his birthday gave a feast for his nobles, the high officers, and the chief men of Galilee. And when Herodias’ daughter herself came in and danced, and pleased Herod and those who sat with him, the king said to the girl, ‘Ask me whatever you want, and I will give it to you.’ He also swore to her, ‘Whatever you ask me, I will give you, up to half my kingdom’” (Mk 6:21-23).

What followed has been frequently retold in literature, music, painting and sculpture. Prompted by her mother, Salome asks for the head of John: *“I want you to give me at once the head of John the Baptist on a platter”* (v. 25). Because of the oath he had sworn in the presence of his guests, Herod agreed and had John beheaded, making possible the prophet’s ministry in Hades.

John’s work as herald of our salvation was not limited to announcing the beginning of Christ’s ministry in Galilee. The troparion for the feast mentions that John baptized the Lord Jesus. Then, it continues, *“You have fought for the sake of truth and proclaimed to those in Hades that God who appeared in the flesh has taken away the sins of the world and bestowed His great mercy*

upon us.” John’s ministry continued after death as he announced to the dead in Hades that Christ’s coming was close at hand.

Did John Witness in Hades?

As the Gospel s affirm, Jesus was still alive when John was executed. But the New Testament does not teach that John witnessed to Christ in Hades. How and when did this concept enter our tradition?

Origen of Alexandria, foremost commentator on the Scriptures in the third century, explained that John the Baptist had died before Christ, “so that he might descend to the lower regions and announce His coming. For everywhere the witness and forerunner of Jesus is John, being born before and dying shortly before the Son of God, so that not only to those of his generation but likewise to those who lived before Christ should liberation from the death be preached, and that he might everywhere prepare a people trained to receive the Lord” (Origen, *Homily on Luke 4*).

Those in Hades would “receive the Lord” upon His death as we read in the New Testament: “*Christ also died for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive in the spirit; in which he went and preached to the spirits in prison, who formerly did not obey...*” (1 Pt 3:18, 19). A number of the Apostolic Fathers such as Saints Polycarp of Smyrna, Ignatius of Antioch, Irenaeus of Lyons, and Clement of Alexandria all taught that Christ had descended into Hades. We find the same teaching in the Syriac Fathers Jacob of Sarouj, Aphrahat the Persian and Ephrem the Syrian as well as the Greek Fathers Athanasius the Great, Basil the Great, Gregory Nazianzen, John Chrysostom, Cyril of Alexandria, Maximus the Confessor and John of Damascus.

Our most common icon of the Resurrection depicts Christ emerging from Hades leading out by the hand Adam and Eve (and, by implication, the human race). In many icons John the Forerunner is beside Him, at the head of those who had died before Christ and were now brought to eternal life by Him.

Our Observance of John’s Death

Because John, whom the Lord Himself had called the greatest man born of woman, was killed as a result of Herod’s birthday revels, the Byzantine Churches observe today as a strict fast: no parties, no luxury foods, no drink. We see where these things can lead.

A number of popular local customs have arisen to mark this day among various Eastern Christians. In various places people may:

- Avoid eating anything on round plates, since Salome asked for John’s head “on a platter” (*Mk 6:25*). Use bowls instead.
- Avoid eating any round fruits or vegetables (they resemble a head).
- Avoid eating anything that requires use of knives or anything that cuts.
- Avoid eating or drinking anything red (they remind us of blood).

A contemporary way to observe this commemoration might be to fast and pray for those who have died senselessly at the hands of others through terrorism, armed conflicts or senseless violence. Think of them as John’s “companions in suffering.

Please remember to pray for the health and protection of Genevieve Allen, Olivia Aragon, Elizabeth Ashooh, Elsie Ashooh, Al Auclair, Alice Auclair, Erin Baroody, Michael Baroody, Anthony Blando, Helena Burkush, Fr. Michael Carl, Danielle Caron, Michael Cavanaugh, Meghan Connors, Sarah Cullen, Theresa Cullen, Jamileh Dagher, Sher Farrow, Declan Finn, Janet Drake, Julie Fregeau, Mary Fregeau, Peter Fregeau, Christine Freitas, John Gallagher, Loretto Gauvin, Bonnie Gomez, Gail Fisher, Nick Haddad, Jean Hannoush, Lucille Harper, Laura Jorba, Virginia Kearney, Shirley Lanoue, Susan Latvis, Roger Lawrence, Diana Lebel, Peggy Leclar, Sadie Grace McCallum, Miriam McCallum, Susan Merrill, Alfred Nasr, Afef Nasr, Blaise Notter, Steven O'Leary, Denis O'Keefe, Ellen Osgood, Josephine Paquette, Sheila Quinn, Deborah Roberts, Adam Rubin, Fr. Andre St. Germain, Deniese Sherburne, 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.



State Farm

Joe Ashooh, Agent
 297 S Willow Street
 Manchester, NH 03103
 Bus: 603-624-1000
 joe@joesthere.com



State Farm, Bloomington, IL
 1211999

**NORTH HILLS
 REALTY GROUP, LLC**
Residential Real Estate Brokers
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Chuck Stephen
 814 Elm Street, Suite 503
 Manchester, NH 03101
 Tel # 603.606.3391
 Toll Free 866.491.9675
chuck@glenwoodinvestment.com
www.glenwoodinvestment.com

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