



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)*

July 26, 2015

**The Commemoration of the Holy Hieromartyr Hermalaus & his companions
and of the Holy Venerable Martyr Parasceva**

THE NINTH 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 (8th Tone) Page 54

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

Kondakion : "O Never Failing Protectress of Christians": Page 17

THE PROKIMENON:

MAKE VOWS TO THE LORD YOUR GOD AND FULFILL THEM;
LET ALL ROUND ABOUT HIM BRING GIFTS TO THE AWESOME LORD!

God is renowned in Judah! In Israel, great is His Name!

Today's Readings: I Corinthians 3: 9-17 and Matthew 14: 22-34

LITURGY INTENTIONS

Saturday, 4:30 PM:

For the repose of George Saffy (44th), Charles Barody (26th), Lucille Holt (30th),
Joseph Tutundgy (4th), and John McHugh (1st)

Sunday, 10:00 AM:

For the repose of the five members of our military
killed in Chattanooga, TN on July 16:
Thomas Sullivan, Skip Wells, Carson Holmquist,
David Wyatt, and Randall Smith,
and for the peace and consolation of their loved ones



Next Saturday, 4:30 PM:

For the repose of Theresa Lawrence (12th), William Barody (35th),
and Salem "Sam" Solomon (2nd)

Next Sunday, 10:00 AM:

For the repose of the deceased members of our parish



In the Epistle St. Paul explains that he is in the line of those who ministered before him, and that he is handing on what came from God for His people. In the Gospel, Jesus calls upon someone to follow and serve in this manner – but the young man, unlike Paul, is not able to make the great decision to give his life to that vocation. Let us be mindful of our obligation to encourage and support those in our midst whom the Lord may be calling to the ordained ministry through our prayers and actions.

Mahrajan 2015, August 21-23: Some Ways to Help:

- Please consider placing your message or memorial in the Mahrajan 2015 souvenir book – only \$100 per page!
- Consider making a cash donation so that we can buy foodstuffs that we need for this event. There are sign-up sheets for this in the church hall.
- Please purchase the raffle tickets you will receive in the mail.
- Remember to invite your friends, neighbors, and family to the Mahrajan!

August 1 to 14: the Fast of the Dormition

The Feast of the Dormition is preceded by a two-week fast, referred to as the Fast of the Dormition. From August 1 to August 14 (inclusive) Eastern Christians fast from red meat, poultry, meat products, dairy products (eggs and milk products), fish, oil, and wine. The Dormition Fast is a stricter fast than either the Nativity Fast (Advent) or the Apostles' Fast, with only wine and oil (but no fish) allowed on weekends. As with the other Fasts of the Church year, there is a Great Feast that falls during the Fast: The Transfiguration (August 6), on which fish, wine and oil are allowed.

Fasting, of course, is not holiness itself, but a tool to use on the path to holiness. How else might we supplement our work of fasting? Try spending ten minutes with the Lord in prayer every day. Call on the Holy Spirit to empower you to live a renewed life in Christ. Read a little from the Bible each day. Make an effort to extend love and forgiveness to someone. Let us resolve as a parish to seek God together during these coming days, and to ask His blessing upon our community.

Sunday School News: If you have children of Sunday School age (K-8) that you would like to enroll in our Sunday School program for the first time, please contact Martha Dagher at 603-622-2290.

***Please don't give your foreign currency to the church.
The banks doesn't take it from us, either!***

There is a second collection this weekend for the mortgage.

Attendance Last Week: Sat. 4:30 PM: 12 Sun. 10:00 AM: 84

Last Weekend's Collection: \$ 813.⁷⁹

The average Sunday envelope donation: \$31.²⁹

The balance remaining on our mortgage is: \$ 293,616.⁰⁸

SERVICES FOR THE WEEK

Weekday services are held in the chapel in the Sunday School area

Tues., July 28 8:30 AM **Weekday Orthros**

Wed., July 29 7:00 PM **Divine Liturgy: For the sick of the parish**

Thurs. July 30 8:30 AM **Weekday Orthros**

Sat., Aug. 1 4:30 PM **Divine Liturgy: The Tenth Sunday After Pentecost**

Sun., Aug. 2 9:15 AM **Sunday Orthros**

Sun., Aug. 2 10:00 AM **Divine Liturgy: The Tenth Sunday After Pentecost**

August 1 to 14: The Fast of the Dormition

Q. What is the purpose of the Fast of the Dormition?

Every Orthodox Christian is aware and generally knows the reason behind the fasts for Pascha and Christmas. But while they may know of the Dormition Fast, there remain more than a few questions about why it is there and what the purpose of this fast is.

First, given the pervasive misunderstanding of the purpose of fasting itself, a refresher on its purpose is always a good idea. There is a perception that we should fast when we want something, as though the act of fasting somehow appeases God, and seeing us “suffer” gets Him to grant our request. Nothing can be further from the truth. It is not our fasting that pleases God, it is the fruits of our fast (provided we fast in the proper mind set, and do not merely diet) that please Him. We fast, not to get what we want, but to prepare ourselves to receive what God wants to give us.

The purpose of fasting is to bring us more in line with another Mary, the sister of Lazarus, and away from their sister Martha, who in the famous passage was “anxious and troubled about many things.” Fasting is intended to bring us to the realization of “the one thing needful.” It is to help us put God first and our own desires second, if not last. As such it serves to prepare us to be instruments of God’s will, as with Moses in his flight from Egypt and on Mt. Sinai, as well as our Lord’s fast in the wilderness. Fasting turns us away from ourselves and toward God. In essence it helps us become like the Theotokos, an obedient servant of God, who heard His word and kept it better than anyone else has or could.

So why do we fast before Dormition? In a close-knit family, word that its matriarch is on her deathbed brings normal life to a halt. Otherwise important things (parties, TV, luxuries, personal desires) become unimportant; life comes to revolve around the dying matriarch. It is the same with the Orthodox family; word that our matriarch is on her deathbed, could not (or at least should not) have any different effect than the one just mentioned. The Church, through the Paraklesis Service, gives us the opportunity to come to that deathbed and eulogize and entreat the woman who bore God, the vessel of our salvation and our chief advocate at His divine throne. And as, in the earthly family, daily routines and the indulgence in personal wants should come to a halt. Fasting, in its full sense (abstaining from food and desires) accomplishes this. Less time in leisure or other pursuits leaves more time for prayer and reflection on she who gave us Christ, and became the first and greatest Christian.

In reflecting on her and her incomparable life, we see a model Christian life, embodying Christ’s retort to the woman who stated that Mary was blessed because she bore Him: blessed rather are those who hear His word and keep it. Mary did this better than anyone. As Fr. Thomas Hopko has stated, she heard the word of God and kept it so well, that she of all women in history was chosen not only to hear His Word but give birth to it (Him). So while we fast in contemplation of her life, we are simultaneously preparing ourselves to live a life in imitation of her. That is the purpose of the Dormition Fast.



She Who Had Been Named for Grace



AT EVERY DIVINE LITURGY as well as at Vespers and Matins (Orthros) the priest mentions in the dismissal “the holy ancestors of God Joachim and Anne.” They are Christ’s ancestors because they are the parents of the Theotokos: not just His ancestors but His only grandparents – the mother and father of the Theotokos.

The Gospels make no mention of the Virgin’s mother and father, so where do we first hear about them? Their story is told in the second-century *Protoevangelium of James*, sometimes called the *Birth of Mary*, the *Gospel of James* or his *Infancy Gospel*. According to the text itself, this work was

authored in Jerusalem by James, the Brother of the Lord (cf. *Protoevangelium* 25:1). Many commentators, however, beginning with Origen, have seen it as a later composition. A number of scholars today feel that the version we have was written around AD 120-145.

Widely known in the early Church, the *Protoevangelium of James* is a kind of prequel to the infancy narratives in Matthew and Luke. It describes the birth of the holy Virgin, her perpetual virginity and her betrothal to Joseph, the father of James and his brothers, as well as offering some explanations of the annunciation, the birth of Christ and the massacre of the innocents not found in the canonical New Testament. Like the Gospel infancy narratives it contains midrashic devices designed to teach dogmatic truths through stories.

The Conception of Mary

The *Protoevangelium* begins by citing “the histories of the twelve tribes of Israel” (1:1) which tell about a certain Joachim who was reproached by another Jew for not having children. To this day Orthodox Jews are expected to have children in order to continue their lineage and also on the chance of giving birth to the Messiah. Joachim was troubled and fasted in the desert for forty days and nights, saying: “I will not go down either to eat or drink until the Lord my God visits me. Prayer shall be my food and drink” (1:2).

Anne (in Hebrew Hannah or “grace”), lamenting her childlessness and seeming widowhood, isolated herself from her neighbors. Then “an angel of the Lord appeared, saying unto her: ‘Anne, Anne, the Lord has heard your prayer. You shall conceive and bear a child who shall be spoken of in the whole world’” (4:1). Joachim was also visited by an angel who sent him home with the news that Anne was going to conceive a child. When Joachim arrived Anne “ran and hung upon his neck, saying: ‘Now I know that the Lord God has greatly blessed me: for behold, I am no longer a widow or childless’” (4:4).

This picture of Joachim and Anne embracing at the door of their house is the source of our icon for the feast of the Maternity of St Anne (December 9) as well as for many prayers of this feast, such as the following troparion: “Today the bonds of barrenness are loosed; God has heard



the prayers of Joachim and Anne. He has promised against all hope the birth of the Maiden of God from whom the Infinite Himself is to be born as a man – He who had ordered the angel to cry out to her: ‘Hail, Full of grace, the Lord is with you!’”

Entrance of the Theotokos into the Temple

The *Protoevangelium* is also the source of the story that Mary was presented to God as a young child. After describing the scene, the *Protoevangelium* continues: “And Mary was in the temple of the Lord like a dove that is being nurtured: and she received food from the hand of an angel” (8:1).

This passage is the source of our Great Feast of her Entrance into the Temple (November 21). The image of the Virgin receiving food from an angel, often represented in our icon of the Feast, points to the spiritual environment in which Mary was raised and which would prepare the holy Virgin for her future role as Theotokos.

Joachim and Anne do not figure in the remainder of the *Protoevangelium* which is concerned with the betrothal of the Virgin to Joseph when she was twelve years old, the annunciation, the birth of Christ and the flight into Egypt. These passages focus on the holiness of the Virgin and her unique status as the Mother of God.

One such vignette describes Mary as weaving a curtain for the Jerusalem temple with several other girls. Icons of the annunciation often show the Holy Virgin weaving when the angel appeared to her. The temple veil was like a giant patchwork quilt with each girl assigned by lots to weave a portion, each using different colors. The Virgin was given the most precious colors, scarlet and true purple.

Our iconography designates these colors to represent divinity. Christ wears a scarlet or purple tunic with a blue cloak over it. This symbolizes that His divinity (scarlet) put on His humanity (blue) in the incarnation. In icons of the Theotokos the colors are reversed. Her humanity (a blue tunic) took on divinity (a scarlet cloak) when she conceived the Lord.

The Feasts of St Anne

Our liturgical calendar includes three feasts of St. Anne. On December 9 we celebrate the Maternity of St Anne, recalling her conception of the Theotokos. On September 9 the day after Mary’s Nativity, we observe a *synaxis* (liturgical gathering) in honor of her parents. The second day of a Great Feast often celebrates those closely associated with the event remembered on the feast itself. On July 25 we recall the Dormition (or falling asleep) of St Anne. We sometimes associate the word *Dormition* with the Virgin Mary exclusively, but this is a misunderstanding. Most saint’s days are observed on the day of their death (dormition) because it is their “heavenly birthday,” the day on which they entered eternal life. The term dormition usually occurs in the title of the feast only when the saint has a number of commemorations during the year.

The Feast of St. Anne’s Dormition dates from the fifth century when a shrine was built in her honor in Constantinople. The feast became popular in the West beginning in the thirteenth century. There it is kept on July 26, because the feast of St James the Apostle was already observed on the 25th.

Saint Basil Seminary

*30 East Street
Methuen, MA*



مهرجان عيد الرب (التجلي)

*Celebrate the Feast of the Transfiguration
with a Summer Outdoor Family Festival 2015*

Saturday, August 8, 3:00 PM to Midnight

Cash bar, food, children's activities and music by George Maalouf



Greekfest 2015

Assumption Greek Orthodox Church

111 Island Pond Road – Manchester, NH

(603) 623-2045

www.assumptionnh.org

Find us on Facebook

Saturday August 29, 11:00 AM to 10:00 PM

&

Sunday August 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

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!**
**August 21, 22, 23,
 2015!**

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