

# OUR LADY OF THE CEDARS CHURCH

**A MELKITE CATHOLIC COMMUNITY**

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**REV. DEACON ROBERT SPENCER**

**REV. ROGER BOUCHER - Weekend Ministry**

**REV. DEACON PAUL LEONARCZYK**

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

**February 9, 2014**

**The Leave-Taking of the Feast of the Encounter of the Lord in the Temple**

## **THE SUNDAY OF THE PHARISEE AND THE PUBLICAN**

**Parish Advisory & Finance Council:**

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**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.**

***Please remember to contact the church if a loved one is in the hospital and would like a visit from the priest. The hospitals do not always notify the church!***

# THE ORDER OF TODAY'S LITURGY

## Response to the Antiphon:

O Son of God who were carried in the arms of Simeon the Just, save us who sing to You:  
Alleluia.

## The Troparion of the Resurrection (5<sup>th</sup> Tone) Page 53

### The Troparion of the Encounter of the Lord in the Temple (1<sup>st</sup> Tone) 2X

Hail O full of grace, Virgin and Mother of God! From you has arisen the Sun of Justice Christ our God, enlightening those who stand in darkness. You too, O just Elder Simeon, rejoice for carried in your arms the Redeemer of our souls, who grants us resurrection.

### The Kontakon of Presentation of the Lord in the Temple (1<sup>st</sup> Tone)

O Christ Our God, who through Your birth have sanctified the virginal womb and have blessed the arms of Simeon, You have come today to save us. When wars prevail, keep Your people in peace and strengthen our public authorities in every good, for You alone are the Lover of Mankind.

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### THE PROKIMENON:

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

*God is renowned in Judah; in Israel great is His Name!*

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**Today's Readings: 2 Timothy 3: 10-15 and Luke 18:10-14**

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### The Hirmos of the Feast (3<sup>rd</sup> Tone)

O Mother of our God, hope and strength of all Christians, watch over those who place their hope in you, O Most Pure. Let us, O faithful, glorify the First-born, the Eternal Word of God, born of a Virgin all-pure, for we have seen beyond the shadow and letter of the Law, a sign of Christ in the words: "Every male opening the womb shall be called holy to the Lord."

## LITURGY INTENTIONS

Saturday, 4:30 PM:

For the repose of John Baroody (56<sup>th</sup> Anniversary)

Sunday, 11:00 AM:

For the repose of Lee Ann J. (Werner) Ritchotte,  
who passed to the Lord on Jan. 28, by her father Colin Werner

Next Saturday, 4:30 PM:

For the repose of Joseph Anton (42<sup>nd</sup>), Alice Nassoura (12<sup>th</sup>)  
and Freida Wihby (11<sup>th</sup>)

Next Sunday, 11:00 AM:

For the repose of Fred Kfoury Jr. (1<sup>st</sup> Anniversary), and Fred Kfoury Sr. (14<sup>th</sup> Anniversary),  
by their family





**THE SUNDAY  
OF THE  
PHARISEE  
AND THE  
PUBLICAN**

**The Fourth Sunday  
Before Great Lent**

## The Sunday of the Pharisee and the Publican

marks the beginning Pre-Lent, a time of preparation for the spiritual journey of Lent, which begins on the evening of Sunday, March 2. It is also on this day that the church begins to use the liturgical prayers of the Lenten Triodion, prayers that are gently calling us to repentance. Let us begin now to turn our hearts and minds to the Lord and to plan prayerfully for our Lenten commitment.

**There is no fasting or abstinence during this week.** All foods are allowed on every day of the week, including Wednesday and Friday. This dispensation from fasting is offered as a way of reminding us not take pride in our own efforts like the Pharisee, but to humbly turn to God and place all of our hope in His love and mercy. It also reminds us that Great Lent - and a more intense fasting period - is approaching.

### Prayers from the Lenten Triodion: The Sunday of the Pharisee and Publican

When the Pharisee went up to the temple in his vainglory and the Publican bowed in his repentance, they both stood before You, O Master! The one lost his reward through boasting, while the other won Your blessing through his sighs. Because I too am sighing in Your presence, strengthen me, Christ God, for You are the Lover of Mankind. *(From the sitchera of Vespers)*

Every good deed can be made void through foolish pride, while every sin can be cleansed by humility. Let us then embrace humility in faith while we completely turn away for the paths of pride. *(From orthros, ode 6)*

Let us shun the boastful words of the Pharisee and learn from the Publican humility with sighing; let us cry out to our Savior: "Have mercy on us, You who alone are merciful!" *(Konatkion of Compline)*

**A Lebanese-style turkey dinner** (with hashweh) will be served following the Sunday Divine Liturgy. The cost for the dinner will be \$7.

**Attendance Last Saturday 4:30 PM: 15 Sunday 11:00 AM: 128**

**Last Weekend's Collection: \$ 1,037.<sup>00</sup>**

*The average Sunday envelope offering last week was \$25.<sup>03</sup>*

*The balance remaining on our mortgage is: \$ 344,477.<sup>47</sup>*

### SERVICES FOR THE WEEK

*Weekday services will be held in the basement chapel*

Tues., Feb 11	8:30 AM	<b>Divine Liturgy: For the health of Mary Fregeau</b>
Wed., Feb. 12	7:00 PM	<b>Vespers</b>
Thurs., Feb. 13	8:30 AM	<b>Divine Liturgy: For the health of Peter Fregeau</b>
Sat., Feb 15	4:30 PM	<b>Divine Liturgy: The Sunday of the Prodigal Son</b>
Sun., Feb. 16	10:15 AM	<b>Sunday Orthros</b>
Sun., Feb. 16	11:00 AM	<b>Divine Liturgy: The Sunday of the Prodigal Son</b>



**The Sunday of the Publican and the Pharisee** is the first Sunday of a three-week period prior to the commencement of Great Lent. It marks the beginning of a time of preparation for the spiritual journey of Lent, a time for Orthodox Christians to draw closer to God through prayer, fasting, and almsgiving. It is also on this day that the Triodion is introduced, a liturgical book that contains the services from this Sunday, the tenth before Pascha (Easter), to Great and Holy Saturday.

The name for this Sunday is taken from the parable of the Publican and the Pharisee found in Luke 18:10-14. The theme of this parable is repentance. Repentance is the door through which we enter Lent, the starting-point of the journey to Pascha. To repent signifies far more than self-pity or futile regret over things done in the past. The Greek term *metanoia* means “change of mind.” To repent is to be renewed, to be transformed in our inward viewpoint, to attain a fresh way of looking at our relationship with God and with others.

The fault of the Pharisee is that he has no desire to change his outlook; he is complacent, self-satisfied, and so he allows no place for God to act within him. The Gospel depicts him as a man that is pleased only with himself who thinks that he has complied with all of the requirements of religion. But in his pride, he has falsified the meaning of true religion and faith. He has reduced these to external observations, measuring his piety by the amount of money he gives.

The Publican, on the other hand, truly longs for a “change of mind.” He humbles himself, and his humility justifies him before God. He becomes, in the words of the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5:3), “poor in spirit.” He acknowledges that he is a sinner, and he knows that salvation is only found in the mercy of God.

Here we find an example of true humility, an essential aspect of repentance. A “change of mind” and the transformation of our lives can only happen when we humble ourselves before God, acknowledge our willingness to turn from sin, and receive His grace into our lives. Our preparation for Lent thus begins with a prayer for humility, the beginning of true repentance. Through repentance, we can find and return to the true order of things, a restoration of our spiritual vision that will guide us in a very difficult and challenging world. By entering Great Lent in humility and repentance, we can receive His forgiveness and attain deeper communion with God.

The icon of the Sunday of the Publican and the Pharisee shows both men in the manner in which they enter the temple to pray. The Pharisee goes to a very prominent place where others will see him. The positions of his hands indicate that he is addressing God by speaking of his stature and accomplishments. In contrast, the Publican enters and remains in a low place, far from the holiest parts of the temple. His posture shows his openness to God, his humility, and his petition for mercy. The icon also shows the state of both men as they leave the temple. Following the words of Christ in Luke 18:14, the Publican has now been exalted in the Kingdom of God because of his humility. He leaves the temple forgiven, and he shows that he remains open to the will of God. In contrast, the Pharisee leaves the temple unjustified, still in need of forgiveness. *-Edited from goarch.org*

## The Fathers Speak....*On the Pharisee and the Publican:*

An old man much given to simplicity questioned Father Ammonas: “Three thoughts occupy me, either, should I wander in the deserts, or should I go to a foreign land where no one knows me, or should I shut myself up in a cell without opening the door to anyone, eating only every second day?” Father Ammonas replied, “It is not right for you to do any of these three things. Rather, sit in your cell and eat a little every day, keeping the word of the publican always in your heart, and you may be saved.”  
-Sayings of the Desert Fathers

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Mother Syncretiki said: “Imitate the Publican and you will not be condemned with the Pharisee. Choose the meekness of Moses and you will find your heart which is a rock changed into a spring of water.”  
-Sayings of the Desert Fathers

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And just as a ship, after having run through innumerable surges, and having escaped many storms, then in the very mouth of the harbor having been dashed against some rock, loses the whole treasure which is stowed away in her— so truly did this Pharisee, after having undergone the labors of the fasting, and of all the rest of his virtue, since he did not master his tongue, in the very harbor underwent shipwreck of his cargo. For the going home from prayer, whence he ought to have derived gain, having rather been so greatly damaged, is nothing else than undergoing shipwreck in harbor.  
-St. John Chrysostom

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If repentance is too much for you, and you sin out of habit even when you do not want to, show humility like the publican; this is enough to ensure your salvation.  
-St. Peter of Damascus

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Repentance and humility are more important and higher than all of the other virtues, continuing until the end of our life. Referring to the words of the Prophet David, Saint John Climacus writes, “I did not fast, I did not keep vigil, I did not sleep on the bare earth, but I humbled myself and the Lord saved me.”  
-Elder Ambrose of Optina

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**Please pray for the release** of Greek Orthodox Archbishop Paul Yazigi and Syriac Orthodox Archbishop Yohanna Ibrahim who were abducted on April 22 when gunmen stopped their vehicle near the battleground northern city of Aleppo, where both are based. Please pray also for their deacon who was driving their car and was shot and killed in the attack.



## 6<sup>th</sup> Annual St. Francis of Assisi Parish Penny Sale

Held at Sacred Heart Church 265 Main Street in Manchester Sat. Feb 22 8:00am to 7:00pm Sun. Feb 23 9:30am to 5:00pm Over 300 prizes including iPad mini, 12ft Snark Sailboat, Gas Cards, Baskets of Cheer, 50/50 Drawings, *Instant Winner Games, Theme baskets, and Fun for all Ages.* Grand Prize Raffle \$1000, \$500, \$250. Saturday evening Baked chicken dinner. Saturday and Sunday Breakfast, Snack Bar, and Baked Goods.



# Being Strong in Christ

THE GREATEST JOY OF EVERY PRIEST or other mentor may be seeing a pupil follow in his footsteps. St Paul was no exception. He traveled with several disciples at one time or another: Barnabas, John Mark, Silas (all of whom we honor as saints). His favorite, the one he called his “*true son in the faith*” (1 *Tm* 1:2), was Timothy.

According to Acts 16:1-9, Timothy was a believer, the son of a pagan father and a Jewish mother in the Anatolian town of Lystra. St Paul had first visited Lystra with Barnabas in c. AD 48 and preached the Gospel in the surrounding area. Possibly Timothy’s mother, Eunice, and his grandmother, Lois, became believers at that time (see 2 *Tm* 1:5).

When Paul returned to Lystra three years later he proposed taking Timothy along on his travels. Although Eunice was Jewish, her husband was not and Timothy

had not been circumcised. Paul arranged for that to be done (see *Acts* 16:1-5) and the two set off together.

For several years Timothy accompanied Paul on his travels in Europe and Asia Minor. Timothy worked with Paul as he evangelized Galatia, Philippi, Thessalonika, Corinth and Macedonia, sometimes visiting churches on his own as Paul’s emissary. In witness to their relationship, Timothy is listed along with Paul as the author of several New Testament epistles: 2 Corinthians, Philippians, Colossians, 1 Thessalonians, 2 Thessalonians, and Philemon. “*He served with me in the gospel,*” Paul would write, “*as a son with his father*” (*Phil* 2:22).

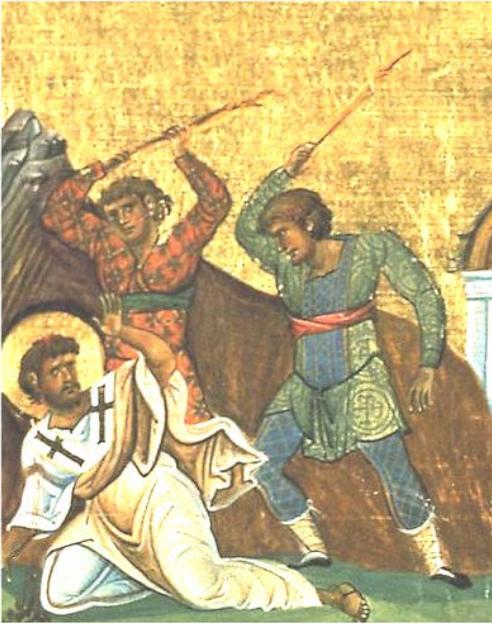
## Timothy in Ephesus

In the early 60s Paul sent Timothy to Ephesus to personally oversee that community where doctrinal speculation was rife. St Paul’s two Epistles to Timothy offered his former companion guidance in shepherding the Ephesian Christians.

According to the fourth-fifth century *Acts of Timothy*, this disciple remained in Ephesus even after Paul’s death. Timothy himself was slain by a mob during a pagan festival in AD 97. Based on his own experience Paul warned Timothy that, “*all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution*” (2 *Tm* 3:12). Paul himself was one of the first to persecute Christians when he was an observant Jew. This persecution began as soon as the Apostles started proclaiming Jesus as the risen Messiah.

The Romans, who cared nothing about Jewish messiahs, feared the Christians, who preferred the Kingdom of God to the Roman Empire. They refused to honor the Roman gods – considered a civil duty – or to venerate the emperor as a god himself. They appeared to be a divisive force and they continued to grow.

All the Apostles except for John died at the hands of either Jews or Romans intent on eradicating this new sect. Paul himself would suffer death for his faith, beheaded in Rome



in c AD 68. Sometimes Christians suffered in sporadic attacks of random mobs. In the second and third centuries it was the state itself which was responsible for many deaths. It is thought that, before the Roman persecutions ended in the early fourth century, upwards of 100,000 believers had lost their lives or been deprived of their possessions.

In the face of persecution St Paul proposes what may at first seem an inadequate, if not strange, response: a two-pronged fidelity to the teachings that Timothy has learned and from whom he learned them. The Word of God and the living witness of the believers who mentored them, Paul affirms, should be the most compelling supports for committed Christians under threat of persecution.

### **What Scriptures Does Paul Recommend?**

“...from childhood,” St Paul reminds Timothy, “*you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.*”

“*All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work*” (2 Tim 3:15-17).

Just which Scriptures could Timothy have known from his childhood? When St Paul first met Timothy’s family in c. AD 48, and for decades afterwards, not all of the New Testament books had yet been written. In the next 50 years the Gospels and most of the epistles were being circulated but it took some time for all the local Churches to become aware of them or to accept them as inspired. For most of this time – and certainly while Paul was writing to Timothy – when Christians spoke of “the Scriptures,” they meant the Old Testament. St. Paul is encouraging Christians under persecution to resort to Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms. As St Clement of Alexandria wrote in his *Exhortation to the Heathens*, “These books are truly holy as they sanctify and deify.”

In this Paul echoes the witness of Abraham in the parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus (*Lk* 16:19-31). When asked to send an emissary from paradise to the rich man’s brothers, Abraham replies, “*They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them*” (v. 29). When the rich man protests, Abraham answers, “*If they do not hear Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rise from the dead*” (v. 31). Spectacular wonders amaze us but don’t necessarily lead us to faith; the Scriptures speak to truly believing hearts and strengthen the gift of faith within them. This is why St John Chrysostom would comment, “One single word from the divine Scriptures is more effective than fire! It softens the cruelty of the soul and prepares her for every good work” (*Ninth Homily on 2 Tim*).

### **Witness of the Saints**

Besides the Scriptures, St Paul commends to Timothy “*the things which you have learned and been assured of, knowing from whom you have learned them*” (v.14). Timothy had worked with Paul for several years and knew his teaching, which, earlier in the chapter, he called “*my gospel*” (2 Tim 2:8), the saving mystery of Christ which would later be put in writing in the four Gospels. He also knew how Paul lived out his faith in daily life and how he behaved under trials and persecution. The living witness of Timothy’s mentor would be a source of strength for him when he too suffered for his faith in Christ. Over the centuries until today, the encouragement of believing parents and spouses as well as teachers and fellow Christians would provide the support from which martyrs drew the strength to face the suffering they endured for Christ.

**Please remember** to pray for the health and protection of Genevieve Allen, Elizabeth Ashooh, Elsie Ashooh, Louise Ashooh, Al Auclair, Alice Auclair, Erin Baroody, Michael Baroody, Ted Baroody, Betty Bilodeau, Anthony Blando, Helena Burkush, Danielle Caron, Meghan Connors, Lucy Corriveau, Julie Cullen, Theresa Cullen, Jamileh Dagher, Nicholas Daniak, Lynn Dargie, Marie Dargie, Sher Farrow, Declan Finn, Julie Fregeau, Mary Fregeau, Peter Fregeau, Christine Freitas, Anne Gallagher, Loretto Gauvin, Nick Haddad, Jean Hannoush, Lucille Harper, 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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