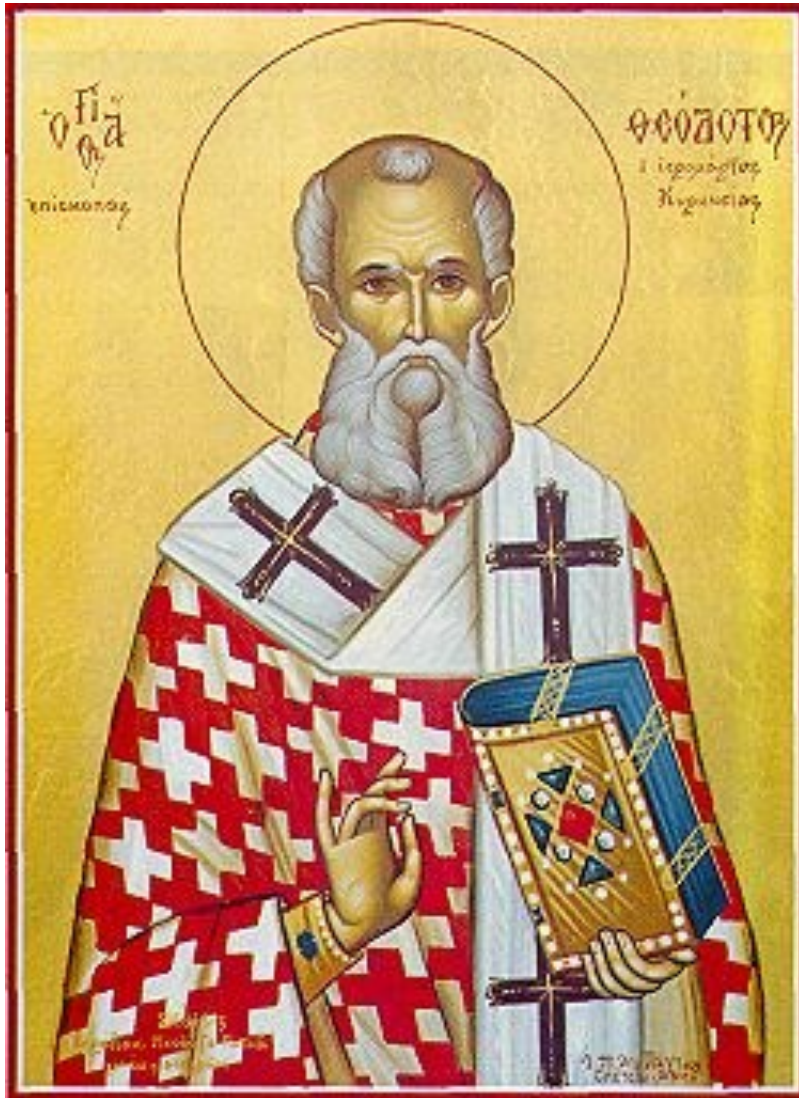


*From the Divine Office for the Commemoration of the Hieromartyr Theodotos (Jun 7)*

*With a joyful heart, you bravely went to your struggles, O holy martyr, fearing neither painful torments nor violent death; thus, O Theodotus, you were crowned with light after fighting the good fight. (Vespers)*

*Ordained to the dignity of a hierarch, you imitated the victories of the martyrs. Thus, O Theodotus, receiving a double crown in Heaven, you exalt with bodiless angels, interceding for our souls in the presence of Christ. (Kontakion)*



**SECOND SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST**

**JUNE 7, 2026**



**JESUS CALLING THE FIRST APOSTLES**

**Our Lady of Perpetual Help Melkite Catholic Church**

**256 Hamilton St.**

**Worcester, MA 01604**

**Rectory: (508) 752-4174 Hall: (508) 755-2199**

**Email: olphmelkite@gmail.com**

**Rev. Bryan McNeil, Pastor**

**Rev. Deacon Elias Bailey**

**Email: fr.bryan.mcneil@melkite.org Cell: (774) 502-8547**

**Website: olphworchester.org**

**Divine Liturgy: Sunday 10:00 AM**

**Antiphon (1st)**

-Shout joyfully to the Lord, all the earth, sing praise to His name.

***Through the prayers of the Mother of God, O Savior, save us!***

- Say to God: "How awesome are Your deeds! So great is Your power that Your enemies cringe before You.

***Through the prayers of the Mother of God, O Savior, save us!***

-Let all the earth worship You and sing praises to You; let it sing praises to Your name, O Most High!

***Through the prayers of the Mother of God, O Savior, save us!***

**Entrance Hymn**

**Priest:** Come. Let us worship and bow down before Christ.

**People:** *O Son of God, who are risen from the dead, who sing to You: Alleluia!*

**Troparion of the Resurrection (Tone 1)**

After the stone was sealed by the Jews and the while the soldiers were watching Your spotless body, You rose, O Savior, on the third day, bestowing life to the world. Therefore, the heavenly powers cried out to You, O Giver of life: Glory to Your resurrection, O Christ! Glory to Your kingdom! Glory to Your economy, O You who alone are the lover of mankind!"

**Patronal Troparion (Tone 1, pg. 15)**

In giving birth you preserved your virginity, and in falling asleep, you did not forsake the world, O Mother of God. You have passed to life being the Mother of Life. Through your intercession, save our souls from death.

**Kondakion (Tone 2, pg. 16)**

O never failing Protectress of Christians, and their ever-present Intercessor before the Creator, despise not the petitions of us sinners, but in your goodness extend your help to us who call upon you with confidence. Hasten, O Mother of God, to intercede for us, for you have always protected those who honor you.

**The Kingdom of God**

All through Jesus' ministry the preaching of Jesus was filled with "kingdom talk." The Lord's Prayer, the parables, and even His final word to Pilate, "*My kingdom is not of this world*" (John 18:36), all use this term drawn from Jewish experience and expectation.

In Jewish history the kingdom of God was a worldly entity, the kingdom of David. This kingdom was short-lived. It was divided on the death of David's son, Solomon, and then destroyed by the Babylonians in the sixth century BC. From then until the coming of Christ the Jews largely lived under foreign rule, but always looked for the restoration of "God's kingdom," meaning their independence.

By announcing that the kingdom of God was at hand the Lord was dismissing the ideas that the kingdom was a matter of political independence and therefore something in the material future. For Jesus the "kingdom" was something of the spirit. With the incarnation it is "at hand." With the spread of Christ's public ministry through the ministry of the apostles it "has come near to you" (Luke 10:9) because the kingdom of God is inner communion with Him. It was already realized in Christ and would become possible for anyone with His death and resurrection which occasioned the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. As St Paul writes, "*For it pleased the Father that in Him all the fullness should dwell, and by Him to reconcile all things to Himself, by Him, whether things on earth or things in heaven, having made peace through the blood of His cross*" (Colossians 1:19,20).

Thus the kingdom of God is life in and with God, which is now ours mystically through our sharing in the life of the Church and in the ways we make Christ's teachings the basis of our life. The kingdom will come in power at the end of the age when "*Christ who is our life appears*" and those who are in Him will share in His glory (cf., Colossians 3:1-4).

**Jesus' "Good News"**

The message preached by both Jesus and the Forerunner was that the kingdom of heaven is at hand. In Mark's Gospel a comment is added: "*Now after John was put in prison, Jesus came to Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the gospel"*" (Mark 1:14,15).

We associate the term "gospel" with the four New Testament texts which speak of the life and message of Christ. In the Roman Empire a "gospel" was an imperial proclamation heralded with fanfare – "good news," as it is often translated. By adopting that word the apostles were saying that Jesus was the "real news" in our world.

***"The kingdom of heaven has no price tag on it: it is worth as much as you have. For Zacchaeus it was worth half of what he owned, because the other half that he had unjustly pocketed he promised to restore fourfold. For Peter and Andrew it was worth the nets and vessel they had left behind; for the widow it was worth two copper coins; for another it was worth a cup of cold water. So, as we said, the kingdom of heaven is worth as much as you have."***

**St. Gregory the Great. Forty Gospel Homilies, 5.2**

### DIVINE LITURGY INTENTIONS

**Today**                      **Our Friends and Families, living and deceased**

**Next Sunday**

**The Coffee Hr. this morning**

**Next Sunday's**

Please remember in your prayers: Zenon Tencza, Robert Ghiz, Sadie Mirante, Richard Abraham, Sr., Frank Boyda, Carol Boyda, Bob Lynch, Michael Mooradian, Dennis Desplaines, Thomas Houde, Ken Jordan, Mary Rizk, Michael McNeil, Jeff McNeil, Jeannine McNeil, Neil Gartner, Linda Gartner, Arthur Hill, Houda Daou, Lauren Abraham, Nicholas Haddad, Elaine Foley, David Ahlin, Elio Kanaan, Susan Bailey, Jacqueline Ventriglia, those affected by the natural disasters throughout the world, the people of Gaza, and for peace in Ukraine & the Middle East. Let us also pray for the repose of the souls of Zakeya Assaf, Genvieve Hatem, Hanna Francis, Saddalh Alkateb. If there are people for whom you would like me to pray, please reach out and give me their names. Part of our vocation as Christians is to pray for each other, especially when someone is sick or suffering in any way.

#### Last Week's Collection

<b>Weekly</b>	<b>\$ 1,333</b>
<b>Candles</b>	<b>\$ 44</b>
<b>Coffee Hr.</b>	<b>\$ 132</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 1,509</b>

**God bless you for your generosity!**



**Welcome to any visitors we have with us this morning! We are happy to have you worship with us.**

**Please join us downstairs in the church hall for the coffee hour so that we can get to know each other better and answer any questions you may have about the parish or the Melkite Church.**

### FAMILY FUNDAY

**Due to tomorrow's weather forecast, the Ladies Sodality Family Funday has been postponed until June 21 Divine Liturgy. It will be a Father's day celebration together with the Family Funday. We will have music, bouncy house, face painting and more! The menu is hamburgers, hot dogs, chicken, potato salad, macaroni salad, watermelon, dessert and drinks.**

**Tickets are \$15 for adults, \$10 for children over 12. Children under 12 are free.**



## FISHERS OF MEN

ON THE FIRST Sunday that occurs during the Apostles' Fast our Church regularly reminds us of the call of the leaders of these apostles by the Lord. The Gospel passage read at the Divine Liturgy is Matthew 4:18-23, the call of the fishermen. Mark and Luke also tell of this incident, at the effective beginning of Christ's public ministry. The call of these disciples seems unusually abrupt to many readers. Jesus approaches some fishermen and says "Follow me," and they do. In the Gospel of John we read of a previous encounter that may make this prompt response a bit less jarring.

### Meeting Jesus at the Jordan

John describes both Jesus and some of those who would become His followers among those around John the Baptist at the Jordan. While Jesus and the apostles mentioned in John were from Galilee, they may have first met in Judea, where John was baptizing. John the Baptist had acquired a reputation for radical holiness and had drawn people from even farther away than Galilee (cf., [Mark 3:8](#)). It is not unreasonable than religious Galileans like Jesus and His future followers would have traveled to Judea as well.

In John we read: "Again, the next day, John stood with two of his disciples. And looking at Jesus as He walked, he said, 'Behold the Lamb of God!' The two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus. Then Jesus turned, and seeing them following, said to them, 'What do you seek?' They said to Him, 'Rabbi' (which is to say, when translated, Teacher), 'where are You staying?' He said to them, 'Come and see.' They came and saw where He was staying, and remained with Him that day (now it was about the tenth hour). One of the two who heard John speak, and followed Him, was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. He first found his own brother Simon, and said to him, 'We have found the Messiah' (which is translated, the Christ). And he brought him to Jesus" (John 1:35-42).

The disciples' question, "Where are you staying?" implies that Jesus was not at home; He was a visitor in lodgings. His fellow Galileans were thus doubly attracted to Him. He had John's endorsement and He was from their own native region. It is also in light of this passage that the Byzantine Churches call Andrew the First-Called of the apostles.

Next called of the apostles, according to John, would be Philip and Nathaniel. As John tells it, "The following day Jesus wanted to go to Galilee, and He found Philip and said to him, 'Follow Me.' Now Philip was from Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter. Philip found Nathanael and said to him, 'We have found Him of whom Moses in the law, and also the prophets, wrote—Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.' And Nathanael said to him, 'Can anything good come out of Nazareth?' Philip said to him, 'Come and see'" (John 1:43-46).

### Back in Galilee

The Gospels do not dwell on Jesus' return from the Jordan. Matthew outlines it in a few words: "Now when Jesus heard that John had been put in prison, He departed to Galilee. And leaving Nazareth, He came and dwelt in Capernaum... From that time Jesus began to preach and to say, 'Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.'" (Matthew 4:12,13,17). This was the same message that John was spreading around Judea (cf., [Matthew 3:1](#)) – it is as if Jesus was continuing John's work in Galilee.

The Gospel of John reports how, soon after returning to Galilee, Jesus "and His disciples" (John 2:2) attended a wedding at Cana. This is the first we hear that Jesus has disciples. When did they begin to follow Him? Once Jesus began His own ministry He quickly surrounded Himself with local followers, some of whom had been attracted to John the Baptist.

When Jesus approached Andrew and Peter as they were fishing, He invited them to follow Him, but with a promise. "Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men" (Matthew 4:20). This image becomes clearer at the end of Matthew's Gospel when Jesus tells His eleven foremost disciples, "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations" (Matthew 28:19). Ultimately these former fishermen would be catching their fish in Asia Minor and Europe.

### Prokimenon

**Reader:** May Your kindness, O Lord, be upon us, for we have hoped in You.

**People:** May Your kindness, O Lord, be upon us, for we have hoped in You.

**Reader:** Exult, you just, in the Lord; praise from the upright is fitting.

**People:** May Your kindness, O Lord, be upon us, for we have hoped in You.

**Reader:** May Your kindness, O Lord, be upon us, for we have hoped in You.

**People:** For we have hoped in You.

### Epistle: Rom 2:10-16

### Alleluia

O God, You granted me retribution and made peoples subject to me, and saved me from my raging enemies.

**Verse:** Therefore, I will proclaim You, O Lord, among the nations, and I will sing praise to Your name

### Gospel: Mt 10:32-38 & 19:27-30

