

From the Divine Office for the Feast of the Prophet Elijah (Jul 20)

Blessed Elijah, it is not in an earthquake, but in the coolness of a gentle breeze that you encountered God who brought you light. O God-inspired one, you went up to heaven in a wondrous way, on a chariot drawn by four horses: thus did you become a marvel to us all! (Vespers)

Seeing the great transgressions of the human race and the great love of God for them all, Elijah the prophet was filled with zeal; he became enraged, to the point of speaking unmerciful words to the God of mercy: “O God of justice, arise against those who break Your law!” But in His great compassion, God does not punish those who have offended Him. According to His custom, He seeks the repentance of us all. (Ikos)



**EIGHTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST
FATHERS OF THE FIRST SIX ECUMENICAL COUNCILS
JULY 19, 2026**



Our Lady of Perpetual Help Melkite Catholic Church

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Divine Liturgy: Sunday 10:00 AM

Antiphon (1st)

1: Shout joyfully to the Lord, all the earth, and sing praise to His Name.

Through the prayers of the Mother of God, O Savior, save us.

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

Be shafa'ati Walidatil Eelah, ya Mukhallisu, khallisna.

3: 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 7. Pg.42)

You destroyed Death by Your cross. You opened paradise to the thief. You changed the weeping of the myrrh bearers and commanded Your apostles to proclaim that You O Christ God, have risen, granting to the world great mercy .

Troparion of the Fathers (Tone 8)

O Christ our God, You are infinitely glorified, for You established our Fathers as radiant stars on earth, and through them You have guided us to the true faith. O Most Merciful One, glory to You!

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.

Kontakion (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 theological problem was made even more complex by the political, however. The first Council at Nicaea has decreed that the foremost local Churches in the Empire would be Rome, Alexandria and Antioch. At Chalcedon the 500+ bishops present recalled that “the fathers [at an earlier council in Constantinople] rightly accorded prerogatives to the see of older Rome, since that is an imperial city; and moved by the same purpose the 150 most devout bishops apportioned equal prerogatives to the most holy see of New Rome, reasonably judging that the city which is honored by the imperial power and senate and enjoying privileges equaling older imperial Rome, should also be elevated to her level in ecclesiastical affairs and take second place after her.” Thus Constantinople (New Rome) was accorded the second place in the hierarchy previously held by Alexandria.

The Pope of Rome, St Leo the Great, at first objected to this realignment as contrary to the canons of Nicaea I but he later relented and it became law in the empire. The Churches of Rome, Constantinople, Alexandria, Antioch and – because it was the site of the Lord’s death and resurrection – Jerusalem would be the foremost local Churches in the empire. This group of five sees would be known as the ***pentarchy*** and their ranking is recognized in the Byzantine Churches to this day.

Thus not only was Roman theological terminology deemed more precise than Alexandrian, the Byzantine see was given precedence over that of Alexandria. The Alexandrian bishops at first delayed and finally refused to accept the decrees of this council and the Egyptian Church was divided into Chalcedonian and non-Chalcedonian parts. Those who accepted Chalcedon were called “Melkites” or Royalists; those who did not called themselves “Copts,” i.e. true Egyptians.

The Copts would later be joined by the Armenians and many Syriac-speaking members of the Patriarchate of Antioch. Along with their daughter Churches in Ethiopia and India, the non-Chalcedonians are today known as the “Oriental Orthodox Churches.”

A New Chapter

These divisions were hardened in the thousand years of Islamic rule in the Middle East. Each Christian group – Melkite, Nestorian and non-Chalcedonian – was designated a separate millet (nation), with its own laws, insuring that the Christians remained disunited.

It was only with the end of the Ottoman Empire after World War I that these Churches embarked on a new way of interacting. In 1988 the Coptic Orthodox and the Catholic Churches issued an Agreed Statement on the Incarnation. It said in part, “We believe that our Lord, God and Savior Jesus Christ, the Incarnate-Logos, is perfect in His Divinity and perfect in His Humanity. He made His Humanity One with His Divinity without Mixture, nor Mingling, nor Confusion. His Divinity was not separated from His humanity even for a moment or twinkling of an eye.”

This was followed in 1990 by an Agreed Statement between the Oriental Orthodox and the Eastern Orthodox Churches. “The [Chalcedonian] Orthodox agree that the Oriental Orthodox will continue to maintain their traditional cyrillican terminology of ‘one nature of the incarnate Logos,’ since they acknowledge the double consubstantiality of the Logos which Eutyches denied. The Orthodox also use this terminology. The Oriental Orthodox agree that the Orthodox are justified in their use of the two-natures formula, since they acknowledge that the distinction is ‘in thought alone’.”

Finally, over 1500 years after Chalcedon, the Latin, Greek and Oriental Churches have come to recognize their common faith in the perfect humanity and divinity of Christ, despite the differing terminology they use to express it.

DIVINE LITURGY INTENTIONS

Today HS Entisar Hattar. Requested by her son Elias and family

This morning's Coffee Hr. this morning is hosted by the Anthony Esper family

Next Sunday's Coffee Hr. will be hosted by

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

Weekly	\$ 810
Candles	\$ 41
Coffee Hr.	\$ 56
Stole	\$ 100
Donation	\$ 650
Parking Rent	\$3,000
TOTAL	\$4,657

God bless you for your generosity!

As a reminder, we need \$2,000 per week to meet our expenses.

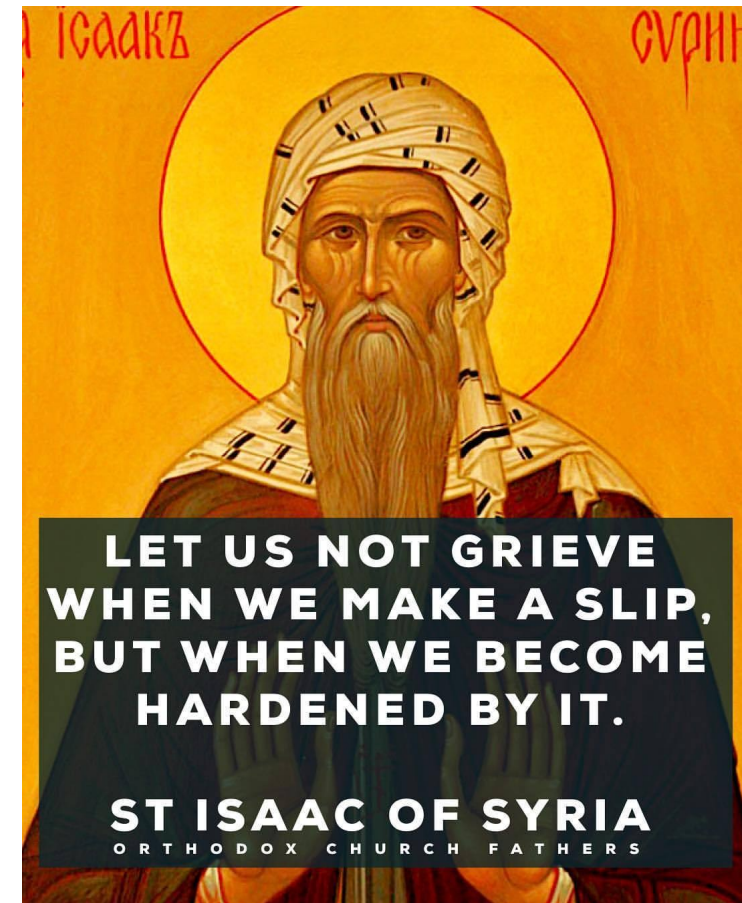


Welcome to any visitors we have with us this morning! We are happy to have you worship with us.

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.

UPCOMING LITURGICAL SCHEDULE

Mon, Jul 20, 6PM - Divine Liturgy for the Feast of the Prophet Elijah followed by the blessing of cars



THE FIRST SIX ECUMDENICAL COUNCILS

ON THREE SUNDAYS EACH YEAR Byzantine Churches commemorate the fathers of the seven great councils of the first millennium. The first ecumenical council (Nicaea I) is remembered on the Sunday after the Feast of the Ascension and the seventh (Nicaea II) on the Sunday nearest to October 11. The first six councils are recalled together on the Sunday following July 13, the feast of the fourth council (Chalcedon).

Many Christian churches in America were founded by a pastor who had a Bible, a microphone and a conviction that God wanted him to preach. So he gathered a few followers (often his own relatives), rented space and scheduled services. Americans see nothing unusual in this – after all freedom of speech and individual initiative are hallmarks of the American way of doing things. Why not in the Church?

The historic Churches (those of the first centuries) saw things differently. Many of these Churches had, in fact, been founded by one of the Apostles or their co-workers. They emphasized that the Church is the Body of Christ, an organic unity of Head and members. Like St Paul, these Churches saw unity as a chief mark of the Church and that an important part of their mission was “*endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.*” (Ephesians 4:3-6).

Still, the first centuries saw a number of teachers with competing doctrines arise in the Church. When they were not accepted by the leaders of a local Church, these teachers or their followers often formed their own rival groups. In some places these groups became more popular than the historic Church. Arians, for example, were prominent in Constantinople through much of the fourth century and in much of the West through the fifth.

The Importance of Councils

The council – whether local, regional or ecumenical – reflects a basic understanding of Church in the Christian East. The Church is the “communion in the Holy Spirit,” a community infused with the life-giving presence of the Spirit of God. Councils reflect this image of the Church as a community. The council is a true image of the Church when it is imbued with and dependent on the grace of the Holy Spirit.

Councils function on every level of Church life in the East. In the local Church, the eparchy, the primary council is the presbyterate which shares in the sacramental ministry of the bishop. Community councils involving deacons and the laity administer the temporal concerns of the eparchy and its parishes. Wider synods govern the life of patriarchates or metropolias. With the establishment of Christianity as the dominant faith in the Roman Empire, the ecumenical council was created.

The Problem of Chalcedon

Like other councils, the Council of Chalcedon dealt with both theological and political issues. The main theological issue was how to express the mystery of Christ’s incarnation in the face of the Monophysitism taught by Eutyches, an influential priest in Constantinople and a disciple of St Cyril of Alexandria. At its second session the Council adopted the concept “two natures in one Person,” employed by Pope St. Leo the Great in a letter to Flavian, the archbishop of Constantinople. When the letter was read to the bishops, they replied, “This is the faith of the fathers! This is the faith of the Apostles! So we all believe! Thus the Orthodox believe! Anathema to him who does not thus believe! Peter has spoken thus through Leo!” Leo’s expression has been used in the Greek and Latin Churches ever since. Unfortunately, this term was the opposite of that used by St Cyril of Alexandria a generation earlier, describing the “one nature of the incarnate Word.”

Prokimenon

Reader: Be glad in the Lord, and rejoice, you just; exult, all you upright of heart.

People: Be glad in the Lord, and rejoice, you just; exult, all you upright of heart.

Reader: Happy are those whose faults are taken away, and whose sins are covered.

People: Be glad in the Lord, and rejoice, you just; exult, all you upright of heart.

Reader: Be glad in the Lord, and rejoice, you just;

People: Exult, all you upright of heart.

Epistle: Titus 3:8-15

Alleluia

O God, our ears have heard, our fathers have declared to us the deeds You did in their days, in the days of old.

Verse: For You saved us from those who afflicted us and have put to shame those who hated us.

Gospel: MT 5:14-19

