

From the Divine office for the Holy Martyrs Callistratos and His Companions (9/27)

O martyr Callistratos, having heard the word of Life in your contemplation, you guided those who had been held in death through ignorance toward the True Life. We believe that those who are eager to die for Christ are really alive in Him who is the Resurrection of all. With them, remember us in the presence of the Lord, the Highest Good. (Vespers)

Today the Church honors all of you and sings a hymn of spiritual praise, for you have fought on its behalf, O holy, divine, triumphant and all-wise martyrs. (Kentakion)



FIRST SUNDAY AFTER THE HOLY CROSS SEPTEMBER 27, 2026



MIRACULOUS CATCH OF FISH

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 praise to You: Let it sing praise to Your Name, O Most High!

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

Entrance Hymn

P: Come, let us worship and bow down before Christ,

All: O Son of God, who are risen from the dead, save us who sing to You: Alleluia!

Troparion of the Resurrection (Tone 1, Pg. 38)

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!”

Troparion of the Martyrs (Tone 4)

Your martyrs, O Lord, received the crown of immortality from You, O our God, on account of their struggle. Armed with Your strength, they have vanquished their persecutors, and crushed the powerless arrogance of demons. Through their supplications, O Christ God, save our souls.

Patronal Troparion (Tone 1, Pg. 15)

In giving birth, you have preserved your virginity, and in falling asleep, you did not forsake the word, 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. 15)

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 Gospels record several incidents of healings which caused controversy because they were done on the Sabbath. St Luke tells how Christ asked some lawyers and Pharisees if it was lawful to heal on the Sabbath. When they would not answer, He proceeded to heal a man with dropsy (cf., [Luke 14:1-6](#)). And it was a Sabbath when the Lord Jesus healed the man born blind (cf., [John 9:1-41](#)).

We also read in John how Christ healed a paralyzed man at the Pool of Bethesda saying, “*Take up your bed and walk*” (John 5:8). The Pharisees did not challenge Jesus; rather they confronted the ex-paralytic: “*It is the Sabbath; it is not lawful for you to carry your bed*” (v. 10). The man replied that his healer had told him to do so and, we might add, that was enough for him.

Legalism Is Dangerous

The Sabbath prohibitions were intended to free the Jews from a life which knew nothing but toil. Since they were in the form of bans, some Jews came to feel that extending these exclusions enhanced or honored the Sabbath. The Lord Jesus put forth a different approach, insisting that the Sabbath is honored when we do good on it.

The lawyers and Pharisees whom Jesus challenged were not the first or the last to turn positive precepts into restrictive commands. They turned the joy which should have accompanied the Sabbath into fear of transgressing a prohibition as a particular school of rabbis understood it.

Something similar happens in the Church when we lose sight of the presence of Christ which alone gives meaning to any precept or rubric. When this happens our traditions may become as fruitlessly restrictive as those Christ confronted. Conversely, when we cast them off we may be left, not with renewal but with license.

The Sabbath Today

“*Then God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because in it He rested from all His work which God had created and made*” (Genesis 2:3). This verse is read at the start of Jewish Sabbath eve services to remind worshippers that the Sabbath is a remembrance of God’s rest after the work of creation.

In the Church the Sabbath has given way to Sunday with its memory of the Lord’s resurrection and the resulting new creation. Nevertheless, the Sabbath still has a place on Eastern Church calendars. In some parishes the Liturgy is offered on Saturday as well as on Sunday.

In our Church remembering the original creation is still a focus for our Saturday prayers. The kondakion sung on most Saturdays reflects the connection of the Sabbath with creation: “To You, O Lord, Ordainer and Creator of the world, the universe offers the God-bearing martyrs as the first fruits of nature.

Wherefore through their prayers and through the intercession of the Theotokos preserve Your Church and our country in safety and peace: You who alone are most merciful.”

DIVINE LITURGY INTENTIONS

Today Our friends and families, living and deceased

Next Sunday

This morning's Coffee Hr. is hosted by

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, Joyce Kfoury, Neil Gartner, Linda Gartner, Arthur Hill, Houda Daou, Lauren Abraham, Nicholas Haddad, Elaine Foley, David Ahlin, Elio Kanaan, Susan Bailey, Jacqueline Ventriglia, Joyce Kfoury, 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	\$ 805
Candles	\$ 30
Coffee Hr.	\$ 71
Flowers	\$ 115
Picnic	\$ 520
TOTAL	\$ 1,541

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.

THANK YOU

Thank you to all who helped make our annual Middle Eastern Picnic a success!

The rain dampened our feet but not our spirit!

There are so many people who made the Picnic happen: those who cooked, those who set up and broke down, those who served, and those who donated. We cannot do without all of you!

Our preliminary report shows a net profit of \$22,784!

God bless you for all your hard work!



CHALLENGE OF THE SABBATH

MODERN MEDICINE HAS FOUND treatments for a number of diseases that had plagued mankind for centuries. Some have even been eradicated, at least in the developed world. This is not the case with scoliosis (curvature of the spine), such as afflicted the woman in St Luke’s Gospel. To this day no one knows the cause of this affliction in most cases.

The Gospel says she had been afflicted with this condition for eighteen years, but since scoliosis often manifested at puberty, she was probably not old by our standards. Treatments available in our day such as wearing braces, surgery, physical therapy and pain medication, were unknown in the first century AD. They must have been eighteen long years indeed.

The Gospel tells us that the ruler of the synagogue was indignant *“because Jesus had healed on the Sabbath; and he said to the crowd, ‘There are six days on which men ought to work; therefore come and be healed on them, and not on the Sabbath day’”* (Luke 13:15).

The Sabbath in Judaism

One of the hallmark Jewish practices for millennia has been the observance of the Sabbath, the seventh day of the week, as a day set apart for God. We read in the Book of Exodus, *“And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, ‘Speak also to the children of Israel, saying: ‘Surely My Sabbaths you shall keep, for it is a sign between Me and you throughout your generations, that you may know that I am the Lord who sanctifies you. You shall keep the Sabbath, therefore, for it is holy to you. Everyone who profanes it shall surely be put to death; for whoever does any work on it, that person shall be cut off from among his people’”* (Exodus 31:14).

According to Exodus, a person profanes the Sabbath by doing any work on it. In traditional Jewish practice, maintained by observant Orthodox Jews in our own day, work is defined as “constructive labor” – whatever is done to benefit our life in this world. The Talmud – the traditional compendium of Jewish interpretation – lists 39 activities prohibited on the Sabbath, including all kinds of farm or household labor including lighting or extinguishing a fire and moving things about from one place to another. The only exception to these rules would be activity which helps save a life, which is why Jewish health care workers may be employed on the Sabbath.

Later commentators have understood these 39 prohibitions as categories, thereby expanding the list of prohibitions. Thus some rabbis teach that, since chaff cannot be picked from wheat on the Sabbath, it follows that one cannot pick the bones from fish as well. Gefilte fish (pre-ground boned fish) became a popular Sabbath food as a result.

In their zeal to preserve the Sabbath some rabbis have gone to what even many Jews perceive as extremes. Thus in some Jewish communities it is forbidden to ride a bicycle on the Sabbath because, if the chain breaks, you might be tempted to fix it. In a similar case a man was forbidden to drive his handicapped mother to the synagogue as it violated the Sabbath; the rabbi suggested that she move within walking distance. Then she would be welcome. The ruler of the synagogue in Luke seems to have been of like mind.

Christ on the Sabbath

Christ was frequently in conflict with more observant Jews over Sabbath-related issues. He was not opposed to the Sabbath itself – He is depicted in the Gospel as a regular worshipper in the synagogue on the Sabbath (cf., [Luke 4:16](#)). Rather He was opposed to the elaboration of prohibitions favored by the Pharisees. Instead, He favored expanding the traditional exemption. In addition to work involved with saving a life, Christ saw doing good as an appropriate Sabbath activity: *“There was a man who had a withered hand. And they asked [Jesus], saying, ‘Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath?’—that they might accuse Him. Then He said to them, ‘What man is there among you who has one sheep, and if it falls into a pit on the Sabbath, will not lay hold of it and lift it out? Of how much more value then is a man than a sheep? Therefore it is lawful to do good on the Sabbath’”* (Matthew 12:10-12).

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,

People: For we have hoped in You.

Epistle: 2Cor 9:6-12

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: Lk 5:1-11

