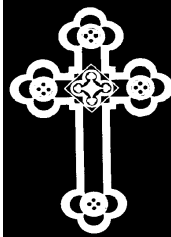


SAINT JOSEPH MELKITE GREEK CATHOLIC CHURCH
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OCTOBER 11, 2009
TONE 2 AND ORTHROS GOSPEL 8

**THE HOLY FATHERS
OF THE 7TH ECUMENICAL COUNCIL**

LITURGY SCHEDULE:

SATURDAY VESPERS 5PM
CONFESSIONS AFTER VESPERS

SUNDAY ORTHROS 9 AM
SUNDAY DIVINE LITURGY 10 AM

LITURGY INTENTIONS:

October 11, 2009

+ Deceased members of the
Shehadi & Barron
Families
by Marie Barron

October 18, 2009

+ Ann Kane
by Atty. & Mrs.
James Zaydon &
Family

SAINT COSMAS THE HYMNOGRAPHER,

Bishop of Maiuma, was a native of Jerusalem. He was raised by the parents of St John of Damascus (December 4) together with their son, and he received a fine education. When St Cosmas came of age, he set out to one of the monasteries of Palestine, where he attained renown for his monastic exploits.

During a time of persecution against holy icons St Cosmas, and the venerable John, came forward to defend Orthodoxy. In the year 743 Cosmas was made Bishop of Maiuma. He died in old age, leaving behind many canons for feast days and a Triodion for four days of Holy Week

The hymns of Cosmas were originally intended to add to the interest of the services at Jerusalem, but through the influence of Constantinople their use became universal in the Eastern Church. It is not certain, however, that all the hymns ascribed to Cosmas in the Greek liturgical books were really his compositions, especially as his teacher of the same name was also a hymn writer. .

THE DIVINE LITURGY OF SAINT JOHN CHRYSOSTOM

TROPARIA:

RESURRECTIONAL TROPARION **TONE 2** **PG. 16**
COUNCIL FATHERS **TONE 8**

O Christ our God, You are infinitely glorified, for You established our Fathers as radiant stars on earth. Through them, You led us to the true Faith. O Most Merciful One, glory to You!

TROPARION OF SAINT JOSEPH **TONE 2** **PG. 20**
KOMTAKION OF ORDINARY TIMES **TONE 4** **PG. 21**

PROKIEMENON DAN. 3: 26, 27

Blessed are you, O Lord, of our fathers, and your name is worthy of praise and glorious forever.
Stichon: For you are just in all you have done to us, and all your works are true and your ways right.

READING FROM THE EPISTLE OF ST. PAUL TO TITUS: 3: 8, 15

My son Titus, this saying is true, and in this matter I want to insist that those who believe in God be careful to excel in good works: these are good and useful to people. But avoid foolish controversies and genealogies and quarrels, and disputes about the Law, for they are useless and futile.

Avoid a factious man after warning him once or twice, knowing that such a man is perverted and sins, since he is condemning himself.

When I send Artemas or Tychicus to you, make every effort to meet me at Nicopolis, for I have decided to spend the winter there. Help Zenas the lawyer and Apollos on their way, taking care that they lack nothing. And let our people also learn to excel in good works, in order to help cases of urgent need so that they may not be unfruitful. All my companions greet you. Greet those who love us in the faith. The grace of God be with all of you. Amen.

ALLELUIA (TONE 7) PS 43: 2; 33: 18

O God, our ears have heard, our fathers have declared to us the deeds you did in their days, in the days of old.
Stichon: The just cried out, and the Lord heard them, and he delivered them from all their trials

THE HOLY GOSPEL ACCORDING TO LUKE 8, 5-15

THE Lord told this parable: "The sower went out to sow his seed. And as he sowed, some seed fell by the wayside and was trodden under foot, and the birds of the air ate it up. And other seed fell upon the rock, and as soon as it had sprung up it withered away, because it had no moisture. And other seed fell among thorns, and the thorns sprang up with it and choked it. And other seed fell upon good ground, and sprang up and yielded fruit a hundred-fold." As he said these things he cried out, "He who has ears to hear, let him hear!" But his disciples then began to ask him what this parable meant. He said to them, "To you it is given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God, but to the rest in parables, that 'Seeing, they may not see, and hearing they may not understand.' Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God. And those by the wayside are they who have heard; then the devil comes and takes away the word from their heart, that they may not believe and be saved. Now those upon the rock are they who, when they have heard, receive the word with joy; and these have no root, but believe for a while, and in time of temptation fall away. And that which fell among the thorns, these are they who have heard, and as they go their way are choked by the cares and riches and pleasures of life, and their fruit does not ripen. But that upon good ground, these are they who, with a right and good heart, having heard the word, hold it fast, and bear fruit in patience. 'Having said this, he cried out: "He who has ears to hear, let him hear!"

THE SOWER

In the Parable a sower planting his field would broadcast seed by hand onto the newly tilled ground. Going around the edges of the field, some seed was bound to fall on pathways off the tilled area; this is the wayside. Plows were not as efficient as today and did not turn the soil over, but just broke up the soil. A plow was often just a straight shaft of wood going into the ground that could be pulled by an ox and guided by the tiller. This kind of simple plow was not strong enough to be used on dry ground and farmers had to wait for the early rains to moisten the soil before plowing could begin. As a consequence of this simple plowing, rocks remained in the field, perhaps just below the surface where a seed fell. This seed, then, would have very shallow soil to grow in. Other seed may be blown farther off the field by the wind and may fall in untilled area where thorns and thistles had grown the previous year but had been cut down. Since the thorns hadn't been pulled out by the roots, the seed and the thorns grow up together.

As Jesus explained the Parable, the sower is Himself and the seed is the Word of God (Luke 8:11). In the Parable, He said, "A sower went out to sow" (Luke 8:5). John Chrysostom explains that this was "the Son of God clothing Himself with flesh. For because we could not enter, our sins fencing us out from the entrance, He comes forth to us. Not to destroy the ground containing thorns, nor to take vengeance on the tillers but to till and tend the ground and to sow the Word of godliness. For by seed here He means His teaching; and by land, the souls of men; and by the sower, Himself."

THE WAYSIDE: HARD HEARTED CHRISTIANS

"Some seed fell on the wayside or footpath and was trampled down and the birds of the air devoured it" (Luke 8:5). He didn't say that the sower tried to sow

it on the wayside, but it "fell" there. The footpath is hard due to constant foot traffic; the seed never got a chance to get below the surface. Since the soil is men's souls, the footpath represents those with a hard heart who don't understand the Word and refuse to try. The birds of the air who devoured the seed represent the devil who snatches the word out of their hardened hearts before they can consider it and believe and be saved (Luke 8:12).

Cyril said it this way: "All those, therefore, whose mind is hard and unyielding, and so to speak, pressed together, do not receive the divine seed; for the divine and sacred admonition finds no entrance into them, nor do they accept the words that would produce in



them the fear of God, and by means of which they could bring forth as fruits the glories of virtue. They have made themselves a beaten and trampled pathway for unclean demons, yea, and for Satan himself, such as never can bear holy fruit. Let those awake, therefore, whose heart is sterile and unfruitful; open your mind, receive the sacred seed, be like productive and well-tilled soil, bring forth unto God the fruits that will raise you to an incorruptible life; guard your mind, shut the entrance against the thief, drive away from your hearts the flocks of birds, in order that the seed may abide with you; that you may be ground luxuriant in corn, and very fertile, and rich abundantly in bringing forth fruit."

THE ROCKY SOIL: NOMINAL CHRISTIANS

"Other seed fell on a rock (or stony places - Matthew 13:5); and as soon as it sprang up, it withered away because it lacked moisture" (Luke 8:6). "When the sun was up they were scorched, and because they had no root, they withered away" (Matthew 13:6). In the hot sun, soil begins to dry out first at the surface, then slowly deeper and deeper until rain or irrigation comes. Those plants with deeper roots can withstand a longer drought. The anise plant, for example, has a tap-root that goes straight down three to four feet; it can survive a drought quite well. Wheat doesn't have a single tap-root like anise, but its root system will extend down to over 18 inches in good soil, thus allowing it to survive irregular irrigation.

The rocky ground represents those who hear and receive the Word with joy; but they have no root. They believe for a while; but in time of temptation (or tribulation and persecution because of the Word - Matthew 13:21), they fall away or stumble (Luke 8:13). This is the kind of person who is shallow or superficial toward the Kingdom of God. Nominally, they are Christians; but there is no depth of willingness to

pursue it. Note that it is not the heat of the day that withers the seed on stony soil; it is the lack of root. The heat does not wither the seed on good ground because there is a good depth of root.

Cyril commented as follows: "For there are truly men whose faith has not been proved, depending on words simply, and not applying their mind to the examining of the mystery; of such the piety is sapless and without root. For when they enter the churches, they feel pleasure often in seeing so many assembled, and joyfully receive instruction in the mysteries from him whose business it is to teach, and laud him with praises. But this they do with no discretion or judgment, but with unpurified wills; and

when they have gone out of the churches, at once they forget the sacred doctrines, and proceed in their customary course; not having stored up within them any thing for their future benefit. And if the affairs of Christians go on peacefully, and no trial disturb them, they even then scarcely maintain in them the faith, and that, so to speak, in a confused and tottering state. But if persecution trouble them, and the enemies of the truth attack the churches of the Savior, their heart loves not the battle, and their mind throws away the shield and flees, being devoid of zeal, and destitute of love towards God, and ready for desertion.”

The Apostle Paul stated: “No temptation has overtaken you except as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it” (1 Corinthians 10:13).

THE THORN PATCH: RICH CHRISTIANS

“And some seed fell among thorns, and the thorns sprang up with it and choked it” (Luke 8:7) “and it yielded no crop” (Mark 4:7). The seed started on ground that it could grow in. However, thorn roots (or seeds) were there also and grew up with it. Since the thorns grow taller and compete for the same nourishment of the ground, the seed that was sown slowly gets choked out.

The thorns represent “the cares of this world, the deceitfulness of riches and the desire for other things” (Mark 4:19); because of this and “the pleasures of life, no fruit is brought to maturity” (Luke 8:14). It is not because of the thorns, Chrysostom said, that the Word gets choked, but because of the ground that allows the thorns to spring up. “Let us not blame the things, but the corrupt mind. For it is possible to be rich and not to be deceived; and to be in this world, and not to be choked with its cares. For indeed riches have two contrary disadvantages:

(1) care, wearing us out, and bringing a darkness over us;

(2) luxury, making us effeminate.”

Cyril put it this way, “In order, therefore, that the divine seed may blossom well in us, let us first cast out of the mind worldly cares, and the unprofitable anxiety which makes us seek to be rich, for we brought nothing into the world, nor can we take anything out (1 Timothy 6:7). For what profit is there in possessing superfluities? Treasures profit not the wicked, as Scripture says, but righteousness delivers from death (Proverbs 10:2). For immediately upon the possession of affluence, there run up, and, so to speak, hem us in, the basest wickednesses; profligate banquets, the delights of gluttony, and carefully prepared foods; music, and drunkenness, and the pitfalls of wantonness; pleasures and sensuality, and pride hateful to God. But as the disciple of the Savior has said, everything that is in the world is the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eye, and the pride of the world, and the world passes away, and its lust. But he that does the will of God abides forever (1 John 2:16, 17).

THE GOOD SOIL

The seed that fell on good ground sprang up and yielded a crop a hundred fold (Luke 8:8), and some sixty fold and some thirty fold (Matthew 13:8). Not every stalk of wheat contains the same number of grains; neither does every tree produce the same number of fruits. In U.S. agriculture today, a stalk of wheat in good soil will produce an average of 50 kernels; that is fifty kernels are produced by one seed, or fifty fold.

The good soil represents those “who having heard the Word with a noble and good heart (who understand it - Matthew 13:23) hold fast to it and bear fruit with patience” (Luke 8:15). But everyone doesn’t produce the same amount of fruit. Paul stated that “each one has his own gift from God, one in this manner and another in that” (1 Corinthians 7:7). And “each one will receive his own reward according to his own labor” (1 Corinthians 3:8). How much is produced

depends greatly on the soil (cultivation, fertilizer, etc.) where using this analogy, the gift is part of the soil, not part of the seed.

Cyril’s comment on this was: “For when the Divine Word falls upon a mind pure and skillful in cleansing itself from things hurtful, it then fixes its root deeply, and shoots up like an ear of corn, and, so to speak, being strong in blade and well flowered, brings its fruit to perfection.” Chrysostom’s comment was: “Great is His mercy to man, that He does not require one measure of virtue (i.e. the hundred fold); but while He receives the first, and casts not out the second (the sixty fold), He gives also a place to the third.”

RECEIVING THE PARABLE IN HUMILITY

The sower does not sow His seed just once, but continually. Receiving it once with a good heart is good, but if this hardens our heart into thinking the task is over, we may miss it the next time. Most people have times when they need to deal with the wayside, stony soil and thorn patch at various stages in their lives depending on when the Word comes to them.

Chrysostom wrote: “It is not enough to be freed from (the deceit) of riches only, but we must cultivate also the other parts of virtue. For what if you are free indeed from riches, yet are soft and weak? And what if you are not indeed weak but are careless about the hearing of the Word? No one part is sufficient for our salvation, but there is required first a careful hearing and a continued recollection; then fortitude; then contempt of riches and deliverance from all worldly things.”

We need to continually break up the fallow (unplowed) ground of our hearts to be ready to receive the seed when it comes. As Hosea said: “Sow with a view to righteousness, reap in accordance with kindness; break up your fallow ground, for it is time to seek the Lord until He comes to rain righteousness on you” (Hosea 10:12).

DEVOTIONS AND READINGS FOR THIS WEEK

Mon 10/12	Holy Martyrs Probos, Tarachos & Andronicos	Phil 2:12-16a	Lk 7:36-50
Tues 10/13	Holy Martyrs Carpos, Papyas & their companions	Phil 2:16b-23	Lk 8:1-3
Weds 10/14	Holy Martyrs Nazarios, Gervasios, Protasios and Celsus & our Holy Father Cosmas the Poet, Bishop of Maiuma	Phil 2:24-30	Lk 8:22-25
Thurs 10/15	Holy Martyr Lucian, Priest of Antioch	Phil 3:1-8	Lk 9:7-11
Fri 10/16	Holy Martyr Longinos the Centurion, who stood at the foot of the Cross	Phil 3:8-19	Lk 9:12-18a
Sat 10/17	Holy Prophet Hosea & the Holy Martyr Andrew of Crete	2 Cor 1:1-11	Lk 6:1-10



Annual Saint Joseph Spaghetti Dinner



Thursday, October 22,
2009.

4-8 p.m.
4 p.m. take outs begin
5 p.m. sit down dinners begin

Attention:



The side door is temporarily **closed** due to structural instability and is presently under construction.

The bathroom key is located in the back of the church, behind the bulletins / candles on the top

THE ARCHBISHOP'S APPEAL:

The annual Archbishop's Appeal is an important way in which our parish fulfills its duty to our larger Melkite family throughout the U.S. Our Father and Shepherd, Archbishop Cyril has asked every Melkite household in the U.S. to give at least \$100 each year in support of our Eparchy in America. By contributing to the Appeal, each of us responds to Christ's call to support the Church and helps fund its vital works such as: publishing *SOPHIA* magazine; supporting our seminarians for the Priesthood and Diaconate; providing for our elderly priests; and educating our children and young adults. Cannot every member of our parish respond to his call? Please send your gift today.

The Seventh Ecumenical Council

Disputes concerning the Person of Christ did not end with the sixth Council in AD 681, but continued through the eighth and ninth centuries. This time, the controversy focused on icons—pictures of Christ, the Theotokos, the saints, and holy events—and lasted for 120 years, starting in AD 726. Icons were kept and venerated in both churches and private homes. The two groups in the controversy were:

Iconoclasts

also called "icon-smashers," they were suspicious of any art depicting God or humans; they demanded the destruction of icons because they saw icons as idolatry.

Iconodules

also called "venerators of icons," they defended the place of icons in the Church.

The controversy, however, was more than a struggle over different views of Christian art. Deeper issues were involved, and it is these the Council addressed:

- The character of Christ's human nature
- The Christian attitude toward matter
- The true meaning of Christian redemption and the salvation of the entire material universe

The controversy falls into two periods:

1. From AD 726 when Leo III began his attack on icons until AD 780 when Empress Irene ended the attacks
2. Again from AD 815 through AD 843 when Empress Theodora stamped out the attacks permanently

The iconoclasts had support from both inside and outside the Church. Outside the Church, there may have been influence from Jewish and Muslim ideas, and it is important to note that just prior to the iconoclast outbreak Muslim Caliph Yezid ordered the removal of all icons with his territory. Inside the Church there had always existed a "puritan" outlook which saw all images as latent idolatry.

Largely through the work of St. John of Damascus (AD 759-



826), who, ironically, was housed in Muslim-controlled lands and therefore outside the reach of the Empire, the iconodules' position won out. He addressed the charges of the iconoclasts thus:

Concerning the charge of idolatry: Icons are not idols but symbols, therefore when an Orthodox venerates an icon, he is not guilty of idolatry. He is not worshipping the symbol, but merely venerating it. Such veneration is not directed toward wood, or paint or stone, but towards the person depicted. Therefore relative honor is shown to material objects, but worship is due to God alone.

We do not make obeisance to the nature of wood, but we revere and do obeisance to Him who was crucified on the Cross... When the two beams of the Cross are joined together I adore the figure because of Christ who was crucified on the Cross, but if the beams are separated, I throw them away and burn them.

—St. John of Damascus

The Decision of the Council

Concerning the teaching of icons

Venerating icons, having them in churches and homes, is what the Church teaches. They are "open books to remind us of God." Those who lack the time or learning to study theology need only to enter a church to see the mysteries of the Christian religion unfolded before them.

Concerning the doctrinal significance of icons

Icons are necessary and essential because they protect the full and proper doctrine of the Incarnation. While God cannot be represented in His eternal nature ("...no man has seen God", [John](#) 1:18), He can be depicted simply because He "became human and took flesh." Of Him who took a material body, material images can be made. In so taking a material body, God proved that matter can be redeemed. He deified matter, making it spirit-bearing, and so if flesh can be a medium for the Spirit, so can wood or paint, although in a different fashion.

I do not worship matter, but the Creator of matter, who for my sake became material and deigned to dwell in matter, who through matter effected my salvation...

—St. John of Damascus

The seventh and upheld the iconodules' position in AD 787. They proclaimed: *Icons... are to be kept in churches and honored with the same relative veneration as is shown to other material symbols, such as the 'precious and life-giving [Cross](#)' and the Book of the Gospels.* The 'doctrine of icons' is tied to the Orthodox teaching that all of God's creation is to be redeemed and glorified, both spiritual and material.

Prayer

Requests



Rt. Rev. John Azar
Rev. Father Philip Azoon
Rev. Deacon James Solomon
Rev. Deacon John Karam
Rev Titus Fulcher
Hieromonk Angelus Ferrara
Rev Seraphim Michalenko

Dorothy Abda Dr. Frances Colie
Marie Abda John Colie
Marie Abda Margaret Dillenburg
Madeline Abood Joseph Freer
Marie Barron Niko Mayashairo
Emma Betress Lorraine McCallum
Mary Sue Betress Dr. Thomas Zaydon

All those Serving in our Armed Forces

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Thanks to Carl Serkland 08-13-1999

JUST ANOTHER BEAR WE HAVE TO CROSS

Parish Calendar

October

22 Annual Spaghetti Dinner
25 Youth Group Meeting

Sacrificial Giving

	9/27/2009
Candles	\$ 4.25
Weekly	\$ 692.00
Monthly	\$ 10.00

The Weekly Quiz

Solomon judged a dispute between two mothers about whose baby boy had died. What did one mother say had caused the death of the child?

- He had suffocated.
- His mother had lain on him.
- He fell from a window.
- His brother had slain him.

Last Week's Question:

Q. Who "looked up steadfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God?"
A. Stephen