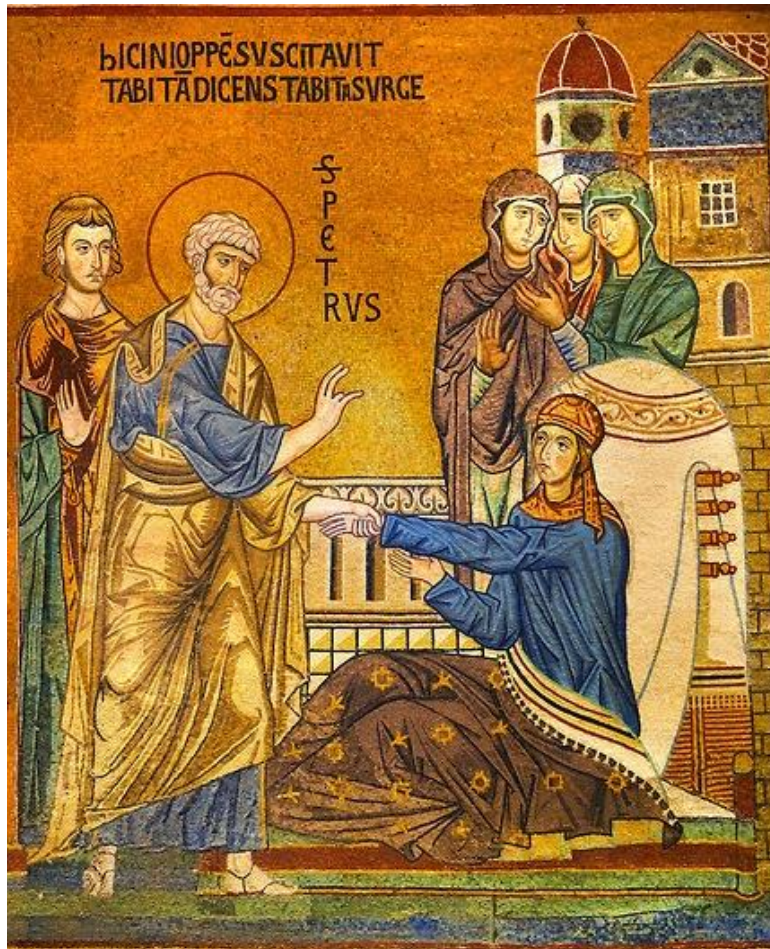


**St Ignatios of Antioch
Melkite Greek Catholic Church
1003 Merry Street
Augusta, Georgia 30904
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**Sunday of the Paralytic
April 30, 2023**

SUNDAY OF THE PARALYTIC



Consecrated Widows: An Order of Women in the Apostolic Church (Acts 9:32-42)

ALL THE WIDOWS STOOD AROUND HIM, crying...” (Acts 9:39). The description of the recently deceased Dorcas or Tabitha does not mention that she was a widow. It does note, however, that those who mourned her were not her relatives but widows. It is likely, then, that Dorcas herself was a widow.

As we know from the institution of deacons, care for widows was one of the first functions that the earliest Christians undertook. It was not long before these women were organized into formal groups with specific responsibilities in the Church.

St Paul’s First Epistle to Timothy, written 20 to 25 years later, includes a chapter devoted to overseeing the formal group of widows in the Church at Ephesus. The epistle indicates that this group should include:

• **Widows Who Had No One to Care for Them** – “Give proper recognition to those widows who are really in need. But if a widow has children or grandchildren, these should learn first of all to put their religion into practice by caring for their own family and so repaying their parents and grand-parents, for this is pleasing to God. The widow who is really in need and left

all alone puts her hope in God and continues night and day to pray and to ask God for help. But the widow who lives for pleasure is dead even while she lives. Give the people these instructions, so that no one may be open to blame. Anyone who does not provide for their relatives, and especially for their own household, has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever” (verses 3-8).

That families care for their elderly members is a hallmark of most traditional societies. There are always exceptions, however, due to inability, greed or other circumstances such as upheavals in societies. In 2012 China enacted a law requiring adult children to visit their parents regularly. As Chinese traditional society changes into a modern urban nation, the elderly are often left to their own devices. The new law threatens court action against those who abandon or neglect their parents.

“If any woman who is a believer has widows in her care, she should continue to help them and not let the church be burdened with them, so that the church can help those widows who are really in need” (verse 16).

• **Widows 60 Years of Age and Older** – *“No widow may be put on the list of widows unless she is over sixty, has been faithful to her husband, ... As for younger widows, do not put them on such a list. For when their sensual desires overcome their dedication to Christ, they want to marry. Thus, they bring judgment on themselves, because they have broken their first pledge. Besides, they get into the habit of being idle and going about from house to house. And not only do they become idlers, but also busybodies who talk nonsense, saying things they ought not to. So I counsel younger widows to marry, to have children, to manage their homes and to give the enemy no opportunity for slander. Some have in fact already turned away to follow Satan” (verses 9, 11-15).*

By the time this epistle was written, widows in Ephesus have a recognized status in the Church. Like the bishops and deacons, enrolled widows had to show a certain stability of life before they could be enrolled. They had to be content with their station in life, to be psychologically free to pledge themselves to the service of God and the Church. This is the same principle behind the later regulation that married men could be ordained deacons, but once ordained could not marry.

• **Widows Known for Doing Good** – *“... and is well known for her good deeds, such as bringing up children, showing hospitality, washing the feet of the Lord’s people, helping those in trouble and devoting herself to all kinds of good deeds” (verse 10).*

Dorcas is described in the Scripture as *“always doing good and helping the poor”* (Acts 9:36). We do not know what else she did, but we do know that she made *“robes and other clothing”* (Acts 9:36) because the mourners displayed them to Peter. Handiwork was a preferred occupation for women in the Church for centuries, lay and monastic. In nineteenth-century Britain a “Dorcas Society” was founded to provide clothing and other necessities to the poor. Chapters that continued to exist since then diversified to include other forms of community service.

Widows in Later Centuries

Widows' institutes continued to be a feature of Church life in the second and third centuries. We find references to them in the letters of St. Ignatius of Antioch, in *The Shepherd of Hermas* and in the works of Clement of Alexandria and Origen.

The late second-century *Didascalia* or *Instructions of the Apostles* describes the principles governing enrolled widows in Antioch. Bishops are enjoined to only enroll widows over 50 who are mild and even-tempered. They were to be at the service of the bishop and have one particular occupation. *Didascalia* 15 lays down this precept: "A widow should have no other care save to be praying for those who give, and for the whole Church."

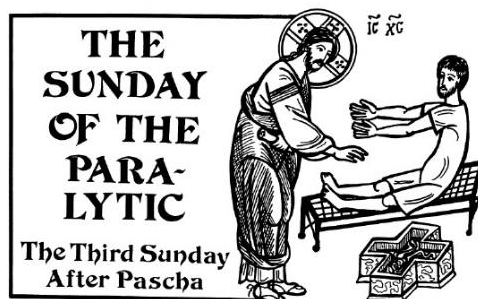
In 1899 the Syriac Catholic Patriarch, Mar Ignatius Ephrem II Rahmani published a fifth-century Syrian work called *The Testament of Our Lord Jesus Christ*. In the Syrian Church at the time widows seem to have served as elders. They are charged with instructing other women, supervising the deaconesses, and visiting sick women, "but in the church let her be silent" (Testament 40). A prayer for instituting widows is given in which the bishop prays that the widow be instituted "for edification and good example." In this prayer the widows are called "those who sit in front" in recognition of their special status within the Church.

In *The Testament's* order for the Oblation (Liturgy), however, the widows are positioned "within the veil" on the left side of the sanctuary, behind the presbyters. The widows are directed to receive the Eucharist after the deacons, but before the readers and subdeacons. This is the last reference to an order of widows that survives from the early Church. It is assumed that this order, like those of virgins and deaconesses, was absorbed in the newer institution of monasticism. Women monastics would exercise many of the same functions as these earlier women both in their monasteries and in the churches of the people.

Widows Today

Up to our own day widows and other older women continued to contribute their handiwork and other forms of service to the Church. Many of our churches dating from the nineteenth century were supported by the older women in the community who baked or cooked various foods every week to raise money for their church.

More recently the Church has focused on providing senior citizens (men as well as women) with opportunities to socialize (bingos, trips etc.). Would not some of these seniors find new life devoting themselves to prayer and/or service? The Church might best serve them by reminding them of the words of St. Paul: "The widow who lives for pleasure is dead even while she lives."



Sunday Collections

Attendance	Date	Collection
25	March 5, 2023	1,600.00
22	March 12, 2023	263.00
26	March 19, 2023	10,000.00
26	March 26, 2023	165.00
33	2 April 2023	1,060.00
40	9 April 2023	580.00
28	16 April 2023	10.00
30	23 April 2023	

Syrian Earthquake Relief \$ 775.00

Divine Liturgy Intentions: For the Living:

Bishop Francois, Fr. Eugene Mitchell, Fr. James Graham, David Mangelsdorf, Brian Frank, Maria Barklage, Nookid Graham, Ali de la Vega, Dn. Kent & Diana Plowman, A Special Parish Intention, Mandie, Stephanie, Nick Baiad, Medical Personnel and First Responders

For the Dead:

Announcements

We are live-streaming on our Facebook page at the following days & times:

Friday – 6:00 PM Weekday Vespers

Saturday – 6:00PM Great Vespers

Sunday – 9:00AM Orthros & 10:00AM Divine Liturgy

Vespers for Friday the 28th is cancelled.

Great Vespers for Saturday the 29th is cancelled.

PRAYER OPPORTUNITIES AROUND TOWN – Most Holy Trinity parish will be hosting a Men's Holy Hour every Friday morning from 6-7am. There will also be a coffee hour and reflection time afterwards – Men from all parishes are invited to attend for whatever portion of the time they are available. For the Ladies – St. Joseph's will be hosting a Women's Holy Hour on the first Monday of each month at 7pm.

**National Association of Melkite Youth
NAMY Conference 2023**

Our Melkite Mission: Becoming Disciples, Making Disciples

Who: Melkite Youth throughout the US, ages 13-18

When: Monday July 10th- Friday July 14th, 2023

Where: St. Anselm College in Manchester, New Hampshire

Why: Faith, Fellowship, Fun

For more information:

Please contact Fr. Thomas & Pres. Rebekah Moses at namy@melkite.org



Resurrectional Troparion

(Tone 3)



Let all in Hea - ven re - joice and all on earth



be glad, for the Lord has ex-er-ted po-wer with His



arm, by death He has tram-pled up-on Death, and



has be-come the first-born from the dead. He has de-



- li - ver'd us from the bo-som of Ha - des and has



gran-ted to the world great mer - cy.

Festal Troparion

(Tone 5)



Christ is ri - sen from the dead and by His death



He has tram-pled u-pon Death, and has gi-ven life to those



who were in the tombs.



Al Ma-see-hu qa-ma min bayn il am-wat wa wa - ti al



maw-ta bil mawt, wa wa-hab al ha-yat li - la-dhee-na fil



qu - boor.



Chris-tos a-nes - ti ek ne - kron tha-na - to



tha - na - ton ba - tee - sas, kai tees



en dees mni-ma - si zo - in kha-ri - sa - me-



- nos.

Kondakion of Pascha

(Tone 2)



Though You went down in the tomb, O im-mor - tal



One, You o-ver-threw the po-wer of Ha - des and



rose vic - to - ri - ous, O Christ God, You



gree - ted the oint - ment bear - ing wo - men, say -



- ing: Re-joice! You gave peace to Your a-pos - tles, and to



those who had fal-len, re-sur-rec - tion.

Hirmos of Pascha

(Tone 1)



The an-gel cried out to the one who is full of grace:



Hail, O im - ma - cu - late vir - gin! Hail! a - gain: for your



Son is ri - sen from the tomb on the third day.



Shine, shine, O new Je - ru - sa - lem! For the glo - ry of the



Lord has shone up - on You. Re - joice and



be glad, O Si - on, and you, O pure one, O Mo - ther of



God, ex - ult in the re - sur - rec - tion of your Son.

Prokimenon

Reader: Sing praise to Our God, sin praise! Sing praise to our King, sing praise!

All: Sing praise to Our God, sin praise! Sing praise to our King, sing praise!

Reader: All you peoples, clap your hands! Shout to God with cries of gladness!

All: Sing praise to Our God, sin praise! Sing praise to our King, sing praise!

Reader: Sing praise to Our God, sin praise!

All: Sing praise to our King, sing praise!

Readings for the Week:

Monday:	Acts 10:1-16	John 6:57-70
Tuesday:	Acts 10:21-33	John 7:1-13
Wed:	Acts 14:6-17	John 7:14-30
Thursday:	Acts 10:34-43	John 8:12-20
Friday:	Acts 10:44-11:10	John 8:21-30
Saturday:	Acts 12:1-11	John 8:31-42

Saints of the Week:

April 30: Holy Apostle James, brother of John the Evangelist
May 1: Holy Prophet Jeremiah
May 2: Transfer of the Remains of St. Athanasios the Great
May 3: Holy Martyrs Timothy and Maura
May 4: Holy Woman Martyr Pelagia of Tarsus
May 5: Holy and Great Martyr Irene
May 6: Commemoration of Job, the Holy and Long-suffering One
May 7: Commemoration of the Apparition of the Cross over Jerusalem during the reign of Emperor Constantius, son of Constantine the Great

Word Search

P	A	E	K	G	M	U	L	T	I	T	U	D	E	G	B
T	A	I	A	Z	V	H	H	N	P	D	Q	Q	T	Y	U
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L	G	Q	S	A	D	C	R	O	W	D	Y	I	E	R	T
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T	A	G	E	N	W	D	C	T	L	N	S	E	S	U	Y
B	W	G	P	C	X	R	Q	Y	P	E	P	N	K	W	E

Angel
Bethesda
Blind
Crowd
Cured
Infirmity
Jerusalem

Lame
Multitude
Pallet
Pool
Porticoes
Rise
Sabbath

Sheep
Sick
Temple
Waiting
Walk
Water

Parish Information:

Rt. Rev. Michael Skrocki, JCD
Pastor

abounamike@aol.com

Knights of Columbus **JFK Council**

1st Wednesday of the month, 7pm.

Odd-numbered months at St. Ignatios

Even-numbered months here at Most Holy Trinity

4th Degree Assembly

2nd Wednesday of the month, 7pm

Odd-numbered months at Most Holy Trinity

Even-numbered months here at St. Ignatios

Publicans Prayer Group

Postponed until Further Notice

New Parishioners:

Please register with Fr. Michael.

Mystery of Holy Confession

Please contact Fr. Michael to set up a convenient time.

Mystery of Christian Initiation

Expectant parents should notify Fr. Michael prior to the birth of the child. Adult converts should contact Fr. Michael so arrangements may be made for any necessary instruction and sacraments.

Mystery of Holy Crowning

Those planning to marry should notify the Fr. Michael at least six months prior to the desired Wedding date.

Mystery of Holy Anointing

Please notify Fr. Michael when you or a family member is in need of anointing.

To report sexual abuse by clergy, parish personnel or volunteers of the Eparchy of Newton, please call the **Victim Assistance Coordinator** at 1-800-479-5910.

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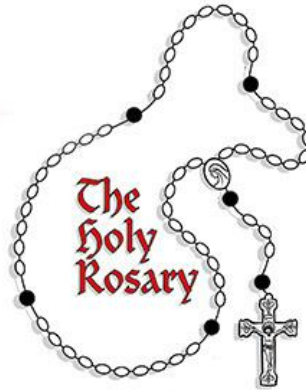
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