

**St Ignatios of Antioch
Melkite Greek Catholic Church
1003 Merry Street
Augusta, Georgia 30904
706 364-6219**



**8th Sunday after Pentecost
23 July 2023**

July 20 – The Holy Prophet Elias the Thisbite



The Pillar of the Prophets

THE SCRIPTURES ARE FILLED with writings of the prophets, particularly the fifteen books named after the most celebrated Hebrew prophets. Nevertheless, the one most revered as “*the pillar of the prophets and their leader*” (aposticha) seems to have written nothing, except a letter to King Jehoram of Israel, which was delivered sometime after the prophet had left this world (see 2 Chron 21:10-12).

Elijah (Elias) the Thisbite lived in the ninth century BC, in the northern kingdom of Israel during the reign of King Ahab. Five hundred years had passed since Moses led the Israelites out of Egypt. Several generations had come and gone since David and Solomon ruled in God’s name. Their kingdom had been divided in two and thereby weakened by rivalries among its leaders. The Israelites had grown lax in their conviction that there was but one God. Proximity to and intermarriage with neighboring Canaanites had made them more accepting of these other gods, such as Baal, favorite of the king’s wife, Jezebel. The dramatic story of Elijah’s encounter with the prophets of Baal is recorded in 1 Kings 17-19.

Elijah – whose name means “Yahweh is my God” – personifies the most important characteristic of the Hebrew prophets. He is described repeatedly as consumed by zeal for the LORD, devoted to observing and restoring the worship of the one true God in a spiritually feeble age. The commitment of the Israelites to their God would wax and wane over succeeding

generations and other prophets would rise up to do as Elijah had done in his day to exalt the name of the one true God.

Elijah the Wonderworker

The Scriptures recount several marvels in the life of Elijah for which he is especially revered. The most dramatic involves the drought brought about by the prophet who warned the king, “*There will be no dew or rain except at my bidding*” (1 Kgs 17:1). The three-year long drought was ended at Elijah’s prayer, after the prophets of Baal had failed to do so, bringing about the conversion of the people to the LORD . “*When they saw this, all the people flung themselves on their faces and cried out: ‘THE LORD alone is God! THE LORD alone is God!’*” (1 Kgs 18:39).

A series of wonders took place in Zarephath, a village near Sidon. There Elijah multiplied flour and oil for a poor widow so that “she and her household had food for a long time” (1 Kgs 17:15).

Elijah also restored the widow’s son to life after a fatal illness had claimed him by prostrating himself three times over the child and praying, “*O LORD, let this child’s life return to his body*” (1 Kgs 17:21). St Ephrem the Syrian would see this triple prostration as an image of Christ’s triple descent (to becoming man, to death, and to Hades) in order to bring life to the human race.

Elijah the Ascetic

Monastics in the Christian East have long revered Elijah as a kind of proto-monk, a desert-dweller for the Lord. During the drought God sent Elijah east of the Jordan to Wadi Cherith, a secluded ravine out of Ahab’s reach where “*ravens brought him bread and meat morning and evening, and he drank from the river*” (1 Kgs 17:6). Modern commentators have noted that the original Hebrew text has no vowels and that the same consonants in the word ravens can also be read as Arabs. Perhaps Bedouin tribesmen brought food to Elijah in his wilderness retreat as their descendants would assist hermits in later centuries.

Monastics also identified with Elijah’s forty-day fast on his journey to Mount Horeb (see 1 Kgs 19:8). At the conclusion of this fast the LORD revealed His presence to Elijah in “*a still, small voice*” (1 Kgs 19:12). This they saw as an icon of the monastic life. The monk distances himself from the world through fasting and other ascetic practices to pursue communion with God (*theosis*).

Elijah and Mount Carmel

Several events in the life of the prophet Elijah are connected with Mount Carmel, a promontory on the Mediterranean near the city of Haifa. Christians, Druze, Jews and Muslims all revere this place for its connection with Elijah. Early in the spread of monasticism ascetics settled in the area, often living in caves on the outcropping.

When Western monks came to the Holy Land during the Crusades, they found Eastern hermits settled on Carmel and stayed among them. The Western monks adopted the Easterners' way of life in the spirit of Elijah. When they returned to Europe, however, these "Carmelites" were obliged to adopt a communal way of life. While living as a hermit was considered the summit of monastic life in the East, it was seen as eccentric in the West.

Elijah's Return

The last Old Testament prophetic book, Malachi, ends with these words of the LORD : "*Lo, I will send the prophet Elijah before the coming of the awesome, fearful day of the LORD. He shall reconcile parents with children and children with their parents so that, when I come, I do not strike the whole land with utter destruction*" (Mal 3:23-24). Believing Jews saw Elijah's return as a herald of the Messiah's coming. To this day Jews pray every Sabbath: "Elijah the prophet, Elijah the Thisbite – let him come quickly in our day with the Messiah, the son of David."

Christians, of course, believe that the Messiah has come – it is Jesus. Jesus Himself identified John the Baptist as Elijah come again: "*If you are willing to receive it, he is Elijah who is to come*" (Mt 11:14). But Christians also believe that Elijah is "the herald of the Second Coming of Christ" (aposticha): the coming in power at the end of the age.

In 2 Kgs 2:11 we read "*And it came to pass while they [Elijah and Elisha] were walking, speaking together as they walked, behold, a chariot of fire came between the two of them and Elijah was swept up in a whirlwind...*" The current Hebrew text, on which most modern translations are based, says that Elijah was swept up "into heaven." The oldest existing text, however, the Greek Septuagint, says that he was swept up "*as if into heaven.*" This accords with the statement in the Gospel of John, "*No one has ascended to heaven but He who came down from heaven, that is, the Son of Man who is in heaven*" (Jn 3:13).

Jewish commentaries describe heaven as the dwelling place of the angels. Christians, however, see heaven as the state of intimate communion with God: something made possible only after Christ. Thus St Athanasius would write, "Elijah did not ascend into heaven... Heaven was reserved for the Creator, the Author of mankind. Thus, with Enoch and Elijah, God gladdened the people with a promising hope by spreading before them an 'airborne highway' as though for horse-drawn vehicles" (Homily 2 on the Ascension). As St. Gregory mused concerning Enoch and Elijah, "...even he [Elijah] did not go beyond the boundaries of the earth, but who knows what kind of transportation each of these ascensions was, which lifted them off the face of the earth, yet did not remove them from earth altogether" (Homily 1 on the Ascension).

Sunday Collections

Attendance	Date	Collection
31	28 May 2023	431.00
23	4 June 2023	363.00
24	11 June 2023	715.00
39	18 June 2023	1,502.00
50	25 June 2023	5,002.00
31	2 July 2023	\$429.00
38	9 July 2023	1,547.00
34	16 July 2023	1,365.00

Divine Liturgy Intentions:

For the Living:

Bishop Francois, Fr. John Azar, Fr. James Graham, David Mangelsdorf, Brian Frank, Maria Barklage, Nookid Graham, Ali de la Vega, Dn. Kent & Diana Plowman, A Special Parish Intention, Mandie, Nick Baiad, Charlie & Kathleen Barnette, Richie Damici, Medical Personnel and First Responders

For the Dead:

Fr. Basil Samra

Announcements

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

Monday, Wednesday, Friday – 8:00AM, The Third Hour

Friday – 6:00 PM Weekday Vespers

Saturday – 6:00PM Great Vespers

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

WE'VE BEGUN PRAYING the 3rd Hour on Monday, Wednesday and Friday at 8am. This is a short prayer service from our version of the Liturgy of the Hours. It lasts less than 20 minutes or so. Come join us!

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.

MELKITE MUSIC 101

There is nothing like Melkite music. For beginners, the task of learning Byzantine chant can be daunting, however. This three-week series will cover some of the basics of Melkite music and give participants the tools to continue learning in their own communities. Each session will last two hours with a ten-minute break in the middle. Participants will be able to practice music, ask questions and learn where to find essential materials and resources.

Each session will run from 6-8pm (**CDT**) on Thursday July 20, 27 and August 3. Abouna Justin will open the Zoom link at 5:30 pm (CDT) so that those who wish to virtually 'attend' Vespers may do so.

July 20...Session 1: Introduction and Definitions, How to learn Melkite Music.
Divine Liturgy Music,
Learning the Eight Tones (part 1: Tones 7, 8, 1 and 2)

July 27...Session 2: Learning the Eight Tones (part 2: Tones 3, 4, 5 and 6), Praying Vespers

August 3...Session 3: Praying Orthros, Feast Day Music

Those interested should email Abouna Justin at protosouth@stgeorgebham.com with "MELKITE MUSIC" in the subject line of the email. He will send out a Zoom link and any further details.

Calling all single Catholics! August 25th-27th, 2023 - Join 400+ singles coming from all parts of the US (and beyond!) at the 22nd National Conference for Single Catholics at St. John's Resort, in Plymouth, MI *OR participate virtually and engage with others via the online socials and small group discussions.* This is your chance to connect with like-minded singles (of all ages). The weekend includes talks by dynamic speakers, music, social events, Mass, adoration, fellowship and more. (If joining us in-person, use the promo code (**PARISH23**) when you register to get \$50 off! *Discount for the first 50 sign ups nationwide to use this code.*) Visit NationalCatholicSingles.com for more information and to register. (Can't find your question answered on the website? Call 512-766-5798.)



Upcoming Calendar

July 23 – Blessing of cars in honor of St. Elijah

Aug 6 – Sunday, Feast of the Transfiguration of our Lord

Aug 14 – Monday, Vespers, Feast of the Dormition – 7pm

Aug 15 – Tuesday, Divine Liturgy, Dormition – 7pm

Feast of the Nativity of Mary – Sept. 8th

Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross – Sept. 14

Resurrectional Troparion

(Tone 7)



You des-troyed Death by Your Cross, You o-pened Par-a-



- dise to the thief. You changed the weep-ing of



the Myrrh-bear-ers, and com-man-ded Your A-pos-tles to



pro-claim that You, O Christ God have ri-sen



gran-ting to the world great mer - cy.

Prokimenon

Reader: The Lord will give strength to His people; the Lord will bless his people with peace!

All: The Lord will give strength to His people; the Lord will bless his people with peace!

Reader: Give to the Lord, you sons of God, give to the Lord glory and praise.

All: The Lord will give strength to His people; the Lord will bless his people with peace!

Reader: The Lord will give strength to His people;

All: The Lord will bless his people with peace!

Readings for the Week:

Monday:	1 st Cor 11:31-12:6	Matt 18:1-11
Tuesday:	1 st Cor 12:12-26	Matt 18:18-19:15
Wednesday:	1 st Cor 13:4-14:5	Matt 20:1-6
Thursday:	1 st Cor 14:6-19	Matt 20:17-28
Friday:	1 st Cor 14:26-40	Matt 21:12-20
Saturday:	Rom 14:6-9	Matt 15:32-39

Saints of the Week:

July 23: Transfer of the Remains of the Hieromartyr Phocas; the Prophet Ezekiel
July 24: The Great woman martyr, Christina
July 25: Dormition of St. Ann
July 26: Holy Hieromartyr Hermolaos and his companions; and the woman martyr Parasceva
July 27: Great-martyr and Unmercenary Physician Panteleimon
July 28: the Holy Apostles, the Deacons Prochor, Nicanor, Timon and Parmenas
July 29: Holy Martyr Callinicos and the holy woman martyr Theodota
July 30: Holy Apostles, Silas and Sylvan and their companions

Word Search

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

Ate
Blessed
Boat
Bring
Broke
Buy
Compassion
Crowd
Cured

Desert
Disciples
Evening
Five Loaves
Five Thousand
Food
Gave
Grass
Heaven

Hour
Late
Satisfied
Sick
Twelve Baskets
Two Fish
Villages
Yourselves

Parish Information:

Rt. Rev. Michael Skrocki, JCD
Pastor

abounamike@aol.com

Knights of Columbus
JFK Council

1st Wednesday of the month, 7pm
Most Holy Trinity

4th Degree Assembly
2nd Wednesday of the month, 7pm
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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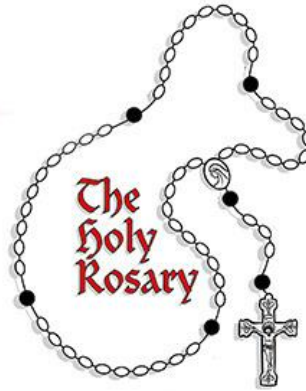
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