

May 16, 2021: THE 3RD SUNDAY AFTER EASTER (Of the Myrrh-bearing women)

Epistle: Acts, 6:1-7:

Now in those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplying, there arose a complaint against the Hebrews by the Hellenists, because their widows were neglected in the daily distribution. Then the twelve summoned the multitude of the disciples and said, "It is not desirable that we should leave the word of God and serve tables. Therefore, brethren, seek out from among you seven men of good reputation, full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business; but we will give ourselves continually to prayer and to the ministry of the word." And the saying pleased the whole multitude. And they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and the Holy Spirit, and Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolas, a proselyte from Antioch, whom they set before the apostles; and when they had prayed, they laid hands on them. Then the word of God spread, and the number of the disciples multiplied greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests were obedient to the faith.

Gospel: Mark, 15:43-47:



Joseph of Arimathea, a prominent council member, who was himself waiting for the kingdom of God, coming and taking courage, went in to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. Pilate marveled that He was already dead; and summoning the centurion, he asked him if He had been dead for some time. So when he found out from the centurion, he granted the body to Joseph. Then he bought fine linen, took Him down, and wrapped Him in the linen. And he laid Him in a tomb which had been hewn out of the rock, and rolled a stone against the door of the tomb. And Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Jesus observed where He was laid.

Christ is Risen!

The Scripture readings of this Sunday present to us events from two different times: The Epistle reading (from the Acts of the Apostles) allows us to catch a glimpse into the liturgical life of the first Christian community. It talks about the Agape, the fellowship meals that used to follow the Divine Liturgy (the Breaking of Bread) and also about the ordination of the first 7 deacons (*whom they set before the apostles; and when they had prayed, they laid hands on them*), by the Apostles, who were assigned to organize and oversee this charitable work of the primitive Church.

On this, the Sunday of the Myrrh-Bearing women, the Gospel reading takes us back, to the event of Christ's burial, to which they were eyewitnesses.

In order to dispel any doubt about the reality of Christ's death, St. Mark tells us that, before he released the body of Jesus to Joseph of Arimathea, Pilate summoned *the centurion, he asked him if He had been dead for some time*. Only after he was convinced that Christ had died did Pilate give the body of Jesus to Joseph: *So when he found out from the centurion, he granted the body to Joseph*.

It is also worth noting the special care and piety with which Joseph handled the body of Jesus in spite of the fact that things had to be done quickly: *Then he bought fine linen, took Him down, and wrapped Him in the linen. And he laid Him in a tomb which had been hewn out of the rock, and rolled a stone against the door of the tomb*.

Both of these Scripture readings are about the ministry of serving, which our Lord and Savior emphasized when he washed the feet of His disciples at the Last Supper.

May the risen Lord bless us with wisdom and humility so that we can serve one another and together, our loving God, as liturgical beings!

Fr. George Bazgan

Sunday Service Attendance

Due to the continuing State of Emergency, and the recent measures imposed by the provincial authorities, the maximum number of people attending Church services is 15.

In order to give more people a chance to attend, we ask those who attended last Sunday, to skip this upcoming Sunday, establishing some sort of a rotation system. Also, only one person from the same family, please!

We apologize for this inconvenience and hope that the restrictions will continue to be relaxed in the near future.

Those who attend, are kindly asked to observe the recommendations of the experts, such as: wearing a mask, washing hands, social distancing, etc.

Thank you all and may God keep us safe!

We are live streaming the Liturgy

As we continue to operate under these restrictions, we are live streaming the Divine Liturgy on You Tube.

To access the Sunday Services, [click here](#).

Prayer at the time of pandemic

O Lord, our God, who are rich in mercy and, with Your wise care, guard our lives, listen to our prayer, receive our repentance for our sins, stop this pandemic, as You have ceased the punishment of the people in the days of King David. You who are the Physician of our souls and our bodies, give healing to those contaminated with this disease, hastily raising them from their bed of suffering, to glorify You, the Most Merciful Savior, and protect those who are healthy from any disease.

Bless, strengthen and shield, O Lord, with Your grace, all those who, with love of people and sacrifice, care for the sick at their homes or in hospitals. Remove all disease and suffering from the people and teach us to value life and health as gifts coming from You.

Grant us, O God, Your peace, and fill our hearts with unwavering faith in Your protection, with hope in Your help, and with love towards You and our neighbor.

For Yours is to show mercy and to save us, O our God, and to You we give glorify: Father and Son and Holy Spirit, now and forever. Amen!

MEMBERSHIP

The Board of Directors extends a warm appeal to all supporters of our parish, asking them to pay their membership as soon as possible.

This way we can ensure that we have the necessary funds to fulfill our financial obligations during the Summer months and for the rest of the year as well.

THANK YOU VERY MUCH!