



St. George Melkite-Greek Catholic Church
1617 West State Street Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53233-1246
"An Eastern Church in communion with the Church of Rome"

Rectory and Office: 414-342-1543
The Rt. Rev. Paul G. Frechette, Pastor

Website: byzantinemilwaukee.com
Facebook: fb.me/ByzantineMilwaukee

February 2, 2025 — The Encounter in the Temple



Icon of the Presentation of the Lord

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Divine Liturgy

Hymns

Troparion of the Resurrection (tone 4):
The Women disciples of the Lord heard from the Angels the joyful news of the resurrection, and casting away the ancestral sentence, they announced with pride to the Apostles: Death is vanquished, Christ God is risen! And has bestowed great mercy upon the world.

Troparion of the Encounter: Hail, O Full of grace, Virgin and Mother of God: for from you has arisen the Sun of Justice, Christ our God, enlightening those who

stand in darkness. You too, O just Elder Simeon, rejoice, for you carried in your arms the Redeemer of our souls, our Resurrection.

Kontakion of the Encounter: O Christ our God who through your birth have sanctified the virginal womb and have blessed the arms of Simon, You have come today to save us. When wars prevail, keep your people in peace and strengthen our Public Authorities in every good deed, for You alone are the lover of Mankind.

Prokimenon: My soul magnifies the Lord and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior.

Stichon: Because he has regarded the lowliness of his handmaid, for, behold, henceforth all generations shall call me blessed.

Apostolic Reading: Heb 7:7-17

Brethren, certainly the lower is blessed by the higher. And in one case indeed mortal men receive tithes, while Scripture testifies that this man lives on. And even Levi, the receiver of tithes, was also, so to speak, through Abraham made subject to tithes (Cf.Gn. 14:20), for he was still in his father's loins when Melchisedek met him.

If then perfection was by the Levitical priesthood (for under it the people received the Law), what further need was there that another priest should rise, according to the order of Meichisedek, and said not to be according to the order of Aaron? For when the priesthood is

changed, it is necessary that a change of law be made also.

For the one of whom these things are said is from another tribe, from which no one has ever done service at the altar. For it is evident that our Lord has sprung out of Judah (Cf.Is.1:2), and Moses said nothing at all about priests when referring to this tribe.

And it is yet far more evident if there arises another priest, according to the likeness of Meichisedek, who has become so not according to the law of carnal commandment, but according to a life that cannot end. For it is testified of him, "You

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are a priest forever, according to the order of Meichisedek (Ps.109:4).”

Alleluia: Now you shall dismiss your servant, O Lord, according to your word in peace; because my eyes have seen your salvation.

Stichon: A light of revelation to the Gentiles, and the glory of your people, Israel.

Gospel: Lk 2:22-40

At that time the parents of Jesus took him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord according to the Law of Moses, (as it is written in the Law of the Lord: “Every male that opens the womb shall be called holy to the Lord”) and to offer a sacrifice according to what is said in the Law of the Lord, “a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons.” And behold, there was in Jerusalem a man named Simeon, and this man was just and devout, looking for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was upon him. And it had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he should not see death before he had seen the Christ of the Lord. And he came by inspiration of the Spirit into the temple. And when his parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him according to the custom of the Law, he also received him into his arms and blessed God, saying, “Now you release your servant, O Lord, according to your word, in peace; because my eyes have seen your salvation, which you have prepared before the face of all peoples: A light of revelation to the Gentiles, and a

glory for your people Israel.” And Joseph and his mother were marveling at the things spoken concerning him. And Simeon blessed them, and said to Mary his mother, “Behold, this child is destined for the fall and for the rise of many in Israel, and for a sign that shall be contradicted. And your own soul a sword shall pierce, that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed.” There was also Anna, a prophetess, daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was of a great age, having lived with her husband seven years after she was first married and by herself as a widow to eighty-four years. She never left the temple, with fastings and prayers worshipping night and day. And coming up at that very hour, she began to give praise to the Lord, and spoke of him to all who were awaiting the redemption of Jerusalem. And when they had fulfilled all things prescribed in the Law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, into their own town of Nazareth. And the child grew and became strong in spirit. He was full of wisdom and the grace of God was upon him.

Stewardship

Last Sunday: donations=\$91.16; candles=\$7.00; ordinary collections=\$392.00. Thanks for your generosity!

Owed to eparchy (assessment, retirement and medical insurance; last updated January 12, 2025): \$25,828.49.

Want to automate donations? One-time or monthly payments via **PayPal**: byzantinemilwaukee.com/donate. Use your bank’s **online billpay** (payee information): St. George’s Syrian Congregation · 1617 W State St · Milwaukee, WI 53233-1246; phone: (414) 342-1543; email: info@byzantinemilwaukee.com.

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2024 Tax Letters

Donation acknowledgment letters for tax purposes have been sent out. Please contact Benjamin Neumann with any questions.

Prayer List

Please remember—All those who are sick and in need: Barb Moden (sister of Jan Taylor), Sandy Rabuse (godmother of Katerina Lessard), the Rebholz family, Eva Saseen (Theresa and Janelle Herro's niece), Jan Taylor, Kathy Tomaz and John Zambo. For those we have been asked to pray for: Justin & Krysten Hager (Jan Taylor). For the people of the Middle East.

Schedule for This Week

Sunday: *Sunday of Pharisee and Publican*
10:30am Divine Liturgy

Coming Up

- Sunday, February 23rd: Meatfare
- Sunday, March 2nd: Cheesefare
- Monday, March 3rd: Start of Great Lent
- March 10th: Start of Daylight Saving Time

Practical Suggestions for Fasting

Fasting, like prayer, is something we can grow into. If you are not accustomed to fasting, it can be helpful to begin at one level and deepen your practice as you grow in your life in Christ. The following plan might be helpful.

Beginning level: On Wednesdays and Fridays do not eat any meat and offer a brief prayer several times throughout the day. During the fasting seasons of Great Lent and the Dormition Fast, attend at least one Lenten Service each week. Before the Presanctified Liturgy during Great Lent, do not eat anything for several hours.

A deeper level: In addition to the above, on fast days, do not eat anything before noon and no meat thereafter. Keep additional fast days during the fasting seasons. During Great Lent, in addition to avoiding meat on Wednesdays and Fridays, also avoid dairy products. Attend two Lenten Services weekly and preform some act of charity each day.

A further level: In addition to the above, keep each day in the fasting seasons as a fast day. Attend all the Divine Services during the fasting seasons. Replace entertainments such as TV, movies, shopping, etc. with prayer, spiritual reading and acts of charity.

Feast of the Presentation of the Lord

Our lighted candles are a sign of the divine splendor of the one who comes to expel the dark shadows of evil and to make the whole universe radiant with the brilliance of His eternal light. Our candles also show how bright our souls should be

when we go to meet Christ. The Mother of God, the most pure Virgin, carried the true light in her arms and brought Him to those who lay in darkness. We too should carry a light for all to see and reflect the

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radiance of the true light as we hasten to meet Him.

The true light has come, the light that enlightens everyone who is born into this world. Let all of us, my brethren, be enlightened and made radiant by this light. Let all of us share in its splendor, and be so filled with it that no one remains in the darkness. Let us be shining ourselves as we go together to meet and to receive with the aged Simeon the light whose brilliance is eternal. Rejoicing with Simeon, let us sing a hymn of thanksgiving to God, the Father of the light, who sent the true light to dispel the darkness and to give us all a share in His splendor.

Through Simeon's eyes we too have seen the salvation of God which He prepared

for all the nations and revealed as the glory of the new Israel, which is ourselves. As Simeon was released from the bonds of this life when he had seen Christ, so we too were at once freed from our old state of sinfulness.

By faith we too embraced Christ, the salvation of God the Father, as He came to us from Bethlehem. Gentiles before, we have now become the people of God. Our eyes have seen God incarnate, and because we have seen Him present among us and have mentally received Him into our arms, we are called the new Israel. Never shall we forget this presence; every year we keep a feast in His honor.

St. Sophronius

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