



St. George Melkite-Greek Catholic Church

1617 West State Street Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53233-1246

"An Eastern Church in communion with the Church of Rome"

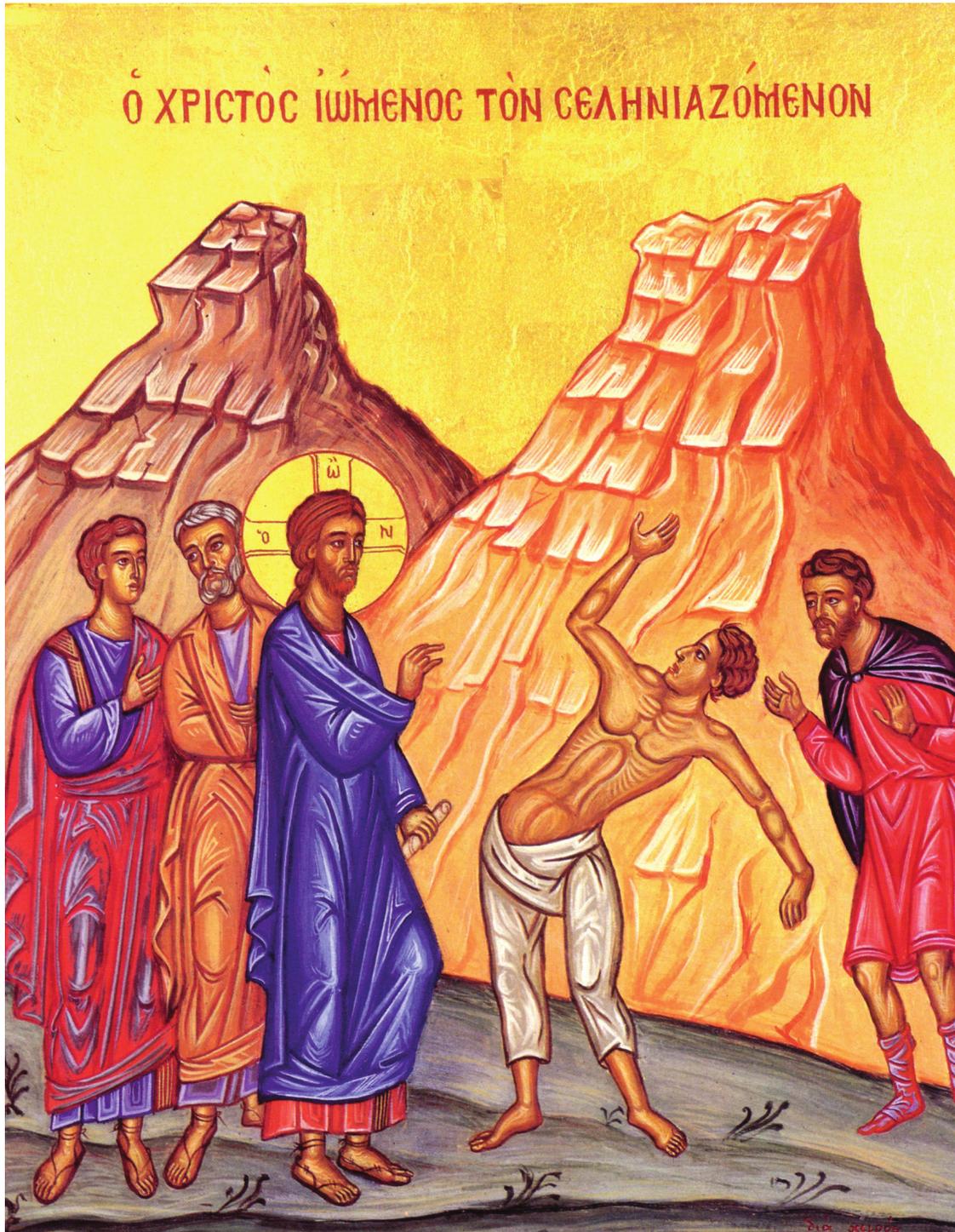
Rectory and Office: 414-342-1543

The Rt. Rev. Paul G. Frechette, Pastor

Website: byzantinemilwaukee.com

Facebook: fb.me/ByzantineMilwaukee

March 15, 2026 — Sunday of St. John Climacus



Icon of Healing the Boy with a Demon

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Winter Weather

Please take care with winter weather. Even if services are not canceled, only come if it is safe for you to travel.

The Service of Typika may be offered whenever there is no Divine Liturgy, or when one is unable to attend due to illness or incapacity, including weather. The text is available on the parish website: byzantinemilwaukee.com/typica-service/. The text for the readings are included in today's bulletin.

Divine Liturgy

Hymns

Troparion of the Resurrection (tone 7): Through your Cross You destroyed death, You opened Paradise to the thief, and turned into joy the mourning of the ointment bearing women, and You ordered your Apostles to proclaim that You rose, O Christ God, Bestowing great mercy upon the world.

Troparion of St. John Climacus: Your abundant tears made the wilderness to sprout and bloom, and your deep sighs of love made your labors fruitful a hundred-fold; you became a shining star showering miracles upon the world. Holy Father John, pray to Christ God that He may save our souls.

Troparion of St. George: O Great among the saints and glorious martyr, George, since you are a deliverer of captives and a defender of the poor, a doctor for the sick and a noble attendant to kings, intercede

for us to Christ God, that he may save our souls!

Kontakion of the Annunciation: Triumphant leader to you belongs our prize of victory! And since you saved us from adversity, we offer you, our thanks. We are your people O mother of God! So, as you have that invincible power, continue to deliver us from danger that we may cry out to you Hail, O Virgin and bride ever pure.

Hirmos: In you, O full of grace, all creation exults, the hierarchy of angels together with the race of men: in you, sanctified Temple, spiritual Paradise, Glory of virgins of whom God took flesh from whom our God who exists before the world, became a child! For He has made your womb his throne, making it more spacious than the heavens. In you, O Woman full of grace, all creation exults: glory to you!

Prokimenon: The Lord will give strength to his people; the Lord will bless his people with peace.

Stichon: Give to the Lord. You sons of God, give to the Lord glory and praise.

Apostolic Reading: Heb 6:13-20

Brethren, when God made his promise to Abraham, since he had no one greater to swear by, he swore by himself, saying, "I will surely bless you, and will surely multiply you (Gn. 22:14)." And so, after patient waiting, Abraham obtained the promise. For men swear by one greater than themselves, and an oath given as a guarantee is the final settlement of all their disagreements. Hence God, meaning to show more abundantly to the heirs of the promise the firmness of his will interposed an oath, so that by two unchangeable things, in which it is impossible for God to deceive, we may have the strongest comfort—we who have sought refuge in holding fast the hope set before us. This hope, we have as a sure and firm anchor of the soul, reaching even behind the veil where our forerunner Jesus has entered for us, as he became a high priest forever according to the order of Melchisedek.

Alleluia: Bless the Lord, O my soul! You are very great indeed, O Lord my God!

Stichon: To proclaim your kindness at dawn and your faithfulness throughout the night.

Gospel: "I have brought you my son possessed", Mk 9:17-31

At that time one of the crowd came to Jesus and bowed to him saying: "Master, I have brought to you my son, who has a dumb spirit; and whenever it seizes him it throws him down, and he foams and grinds his teeth; and he is wasting away. And I told your disciples to cast it out, but they could not." And he, answering him, said, "O unbelieving generation, how long shall I be with you? How long shall I put up with you? Bring him to me." And they brought him to him; and the spirit, when it saw Jesus, immediately threw the boy in convulsions, and he fell down on the ground and rolled about foaming at the mouth. So he asked his father, "How long is it since this has come upon him?" And he said, "From his infancy. Oftentimes, it has thrown him into the fire and into the waters to destroy him. But if you can do anything have compassion on us and help us." But Jesus said to him, "If you can believe, all things are possible to the man of faith." At once the father of the boy cried out and said with tears, "I do believe; help my unbelief." Now when Jesus saw that a crowd was rapidly gathering, he rebuked the unclean spirit, saying to it, "You deaf and dumb spirit, I command you, go out of him and enter him no more." And crying out and violently convulsing him, it went out of him, and he became like one dead, so that many said, "He is dead." But Jesus took him by the hand, and raised him and he stood up. And when he had come into the house, his disciples asked him privately, "Why could we not cast it out?" And he said to them, "This kind can be cast out in no way except by prayer and fasting." And leaving that place, they were passing through Galilee, and he did not wish anyone to know it. For he was teaching his disciples, and saying to them, "The Son of Man is to be betrayed into the hands of men, and they will kill him; and having been killed, he will rise again on the third day."

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Stewardship

Last Sunday: candles=\$16.00; donations=\$442.25; ordinary collections=\$397.00. 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.

Donate with PayPal



Palm Sunday Breakfast

Sunday, March 29th, noon-1:30pm

Adults: \$15

Children (under 12):
donations gratefully accepted

Pancakes, Eggs, Tater Tots, Fresh Fruit, Juice, Coffee Pastries and More

Bakery table: We need your tempting sweet treats and savory items. Syrian-Lebanese especially appreciated. Please include a note with a description of donated bakery item and suggested sale price (round dollars only). Just drop off your bakery at the table before Liturgy that Sunday. Please let Sarah Brickus know if you can help.

Prayer List

Please remember—All those who are sick and in need: Natalie Herder, Walter Lourdes Najera Herder (family of Katerina Lessard), Nick Lagendfield, Barb Moden (sister of Jan Taylor), Edin Najera, Sandy Rabuse (godmother of Katerina Lessard), the Rebholz family, Eva Saseen (Theresa and Janelle Herro's niece), Geri Spankowski, Kathy Tomaz and John Zambo. For those who have died: Rose Ernst (aunt of Benjamin Neumann). For the people of the Middle East.

Schedule for this Week

Wednesday 6pm Great Compline

Thursday *Thursday of Repentance*

Friday 6pm Akathist
After Akathist, Potluck

Saturday: *Saturday of the Akathist Hymn*

Sunday *Sunday of Mary of Egypt*
10:30am Divine Liturgy

Congratulations and Happy Birthday to Alison McShane (3/16). May God grant you many years!

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Saturday of the Akathist

Troparion (Three Times): As soon as the Archangel understood what he had been told in secret, he hastened to the house of Joseph and said to the Virgin all pure: “behold the One who made the heavens bow as He came down, He will be contained in

you, whole and without undergoing change. As I see Him in your womb, in the likeness of a servant, I am bewildered and cry out. ‘Hail, O Bride and Maiden ever-pure!’”

Kontakion: Triumphant leader...

Coming Up

March 25th *The Annunciation of the Mother of God*
6pm Divine Liturgy for the Annunciation

March 28th *Lazarus Saturday*
TBD Hall Preparation for Brunch

March 29th *Palm Sunday*
After Liturgy, Pancake Brunch

April 5th *PASCHA*

The Great Canon of St. Andrew of Crete and the Thursday of Repentance

Excerpts from melkite.org/faith/sunday-scriptures/great-canon-of-st-andrew-of-crete

Bible stories have long been a favorite means of keeping the Word of God fresh in our minds. They appeal to all ages, from pre-schoolers to mature adults. In our age they have been retold in comic books, films and even video games. They have been rewritten in regional dialects and recast in cultures very different from those of the Bible lands themselves. During the Great Fast we encounter “Bible stories” in an ancient and unique medium, the Great Canon of St. Andrew of Crete.

St Andrew’s longest work of Church poetry is the Great Canon, which consists of 250 verses. It may have been composed as a personal meditation rather than a liturgical text. Nonetheless, it was soon included in the monastery typikon. It was later adopted in Constantinople and then in all the Byzantine Churches.

The canon is made up of nine odes, each containing reflections on various characters in the Old and New Testaments allowing us to discover in them the way of repentance. In the Great Canon St Andrew recalls a Biblical story then compares or contrasts it to the state of his soul. He focuses on the weaknesses these characters display and applies them to himself. He also contrasts himself with the examples of the righteous. In either case he concludes with an appeal to God’s mercy which can overshadow all our weaknesses.

The Eastern spiritual tradition, as expressed in the Great Canon and elsewhere, focuses on the heights to which we have been called: our creation in the image of God, union with Christ in baptism and our status as temples of the Holy Spirit called to “*be partakers of the divine nature*” (2 Peter 1:4). When we reflect on the sharing in God’s own life (*theo-*



sis) to which we are invited, we cannot but see how far our actual life falls short of that goal and how much we need the loving mercy of God.

Images from the Old Testament

Adam and Eve – “Instead of the first Eve I have the Eve of the mind.” Adam was persuaded to eat the forbidden fruit by Eve. I do not need another to tempt me. I have my passionate thoughts to tempt me, “showing me sweet things, yet ever making me taste and swallow bitter things” (Ode 1).

“I have torn the first garment that the Creator wove for me in the beginning, and now I lie naked” (Ode 2).

Cain and Abel – While Abel sacrificed the firstborn of his flock to God, Cain’s offering was some of “the fruit of the ground” (i.e. not the first or the best?). “O Jesus, I have not been like Abel in his righteousness. Never have I offered You acceptable gifts or godly actions, a pure sacrifice or a life unblemished....Like Cain I have offered defiled actions and a polluted sacrifice” (Ode 1).

Jacob – To gain Rachel as his wife Jacob labored seven years for his father-in-law. He was given Leah instead. It took another seven years of toil to acquire Rachel. “By the two wives, understand that one is action and the other is spiritual understanding... Without labor, O my soul, neither action nor contemplation will succeed” (Ode 4).

Moses – “The great Moses dwelt in the wilds, my soul. So go and imitate his life, that you too may attain by contemplation to the vision of God in the bush” (Ode 5).

“I have reviewed all the people of the Old Testament as examples for you, my soul. Imitate the God-loving deeds of the righteous and shun the sins of the wicked” (Ode 8).

Images from the New Testament

Good Samaritan –The man in the parable was attacked by robbers, but I am beset by my passions. “Murderous thoughts, like thieves, have wounded me inwardly” “I am the man who fell among thieves, my own thoughts. They have covered my whole body with wounds and I lay beaten and bruised. Come to me, O Christ my Savior, and heal me” (Ode 9).

Repentant Sinners – “Zacchaeus was a publican, but yet was healed. The Pharisee was disappointed, but the harlot received the release of full forgiveness from Him who has power to forgive sins. Obtain His forgiveness yourself, my soul” (Ode 9).

The Good Thief – “A robber accused You, and a robber confessed You to be God, when both were hanging on a cross with You. But open even to me, O most compassionate Savior, the door of Your glorious Kingdom as You did to the faithful robber who acknowledged You to be God” (Ode 9).

Journeying to Pascha

Jesus continues today his work of healing and exorcism, and that is appropriate for this time of Lent, because Lent is a time for healing and exorcism. It is a time for us to

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heal the wounds of our souls—self-inflicted wounds due to our complacency and laziness and self-indulgence. It is time to get rid of those demons of our own sinful habits and anything that keeps us away from God and from living that abundant life that Christ came to give us.

We start to make our way toward Jerusalem. At the end of today's Gospel already there is the prediction of the passion, the death and the resurrection of Christ, giving a little hint in the Gospel that the course of Lent is moving now towards Jerusalem. We have gone through several weeks now of spiritual preparations, Scripture texts, prayers and activities. Now our focus is starting to turn towards Jerusalem. That will be made more

explicit in next Sunday's Gospel, but we are already getting a hint of it now.

There are only three weeks now until Easter, two weeks until Palm Sunday, when we are really liturgically accompanying Christ into the mystery of His Passion.

So it is coming soon, and we have to start turning towards Jerusalem. We have to get focused, we have to get recollected, we have to really revive our Lenten prayer and fasting so that we can make the rest of this journey and be fruitful and overcome the demons and find healing for the wounds of our souls—and go with Christ to his Passion and, through the mystery of His Cross, come to that great, transfiguring, glorious celebration of His Resurrection.

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PO Box 3909 – Fairfax, VA 22038-3909
www.ecbulletin.com – Ph: 703-691-8862 – Fax: 703-691-0513