



St. John Chrysostom Melkite Catholic Church



A Parish Community of the Eparchy of Newton

Sunday, April 7, 2024
SUNDAY OF ST. THOMAS

الأحد، 7 نيسان 2024
أحد القديس توما

Christ Is Risen! He is Truly Risen! • Al Maseehu Qam! Haqqan Qam! • Christos Anesti! Alithos Anesti!

SUNDAY: ORTHROS (9:45AM) - DIVINE LITURGY (10:30AM)

Followed by Coffee Hour and Fellowship in the Church Hall

WELCOME VISITORS! Please register on Flocknote to receive e-mails/texts and join us in the Church Hall. If you would like a tour or discussion about the Melkite Church, please let Fr. Elias know so that one can be arranged after coffee hour. Interested in being a catechumen or parishioner? Please send an email to contact@stjohnmelkite.org.

COMMUNION: If you are unable to make Divine Liturgy due to health reasons, and you would like to receive the Holy Eucharist, please e-mail contact@stjohnmelkite.org by Saturday so that clergy may visit you with Communion.

COMMEMORATIONS: Send a commemoration request to contact@stjohnmelkite.org for a family member, friend, or colleague such as: (a) Repose of their soul, (b) health and wellness, (c) commemorate a special event in their life.



----- DIVINE LITURGY COMMEMORATIONS -----

HEALTH & SALVATION

Deacon Joseph Kaiser, Requested by the Eparchy of Newton
Lauren Makhoulf, Requested by the St. John Chrysostom Parish Community
Bill Steiger, Requested by Dcn. Elie & Dk. Dzovag Hanna and Family

REPOSE IN THE HEAVENLY KINGDOM

+Fr. Tom Flynn, Requested by Dcn. Elie & Dk. Dzovag Hanna and Family
+Deacon David Herr, Requested by the Eparchy of Newton
+Jad Jajeh, Requested by St. John Chrysostom Parish Community
+Yvonne Yarid, Requested by Dr. Shajih & Ghada Muhanna
+Diakonissa Joyce Rimmer, Requested by Eparchy of Newton



----- UPCOMING AND IMPORTANT EVENTS -----

SUN, APR 7TH – ST. THOMAS SUNDAY

WED, APR 10TH – NOTE – NO DAILY VESPERS THIS WEDNESDAY

SUN, APR 14TH – SUNDAY OF THE MYRRH BEARING WOMEN

- +FR. THOMAS FLYNN AND +JAD JAJEH – 40 DAY MEMORIAL
- EASTER EGG HUNT

WED, APR 17TH – VESPERS (7PM)

SAT, APR 20TH – GREAT VESPERS (6PM)

SUN, APR 21ST – SUNDAY OF THE PARALYTIC

WED, APR 24TH – VESPERS (7PM)

SAT, APR 27TH – GREAT VESPERS (6PM)

WED, APR 24TH – VESPERS (7PM) - MID-PENTECOST / MID-EASTER SEASON

SUN, APR 28TH – SUNDAY OF THE SAMARITAN WOMAN

THE EPISTLE: ACTS OF THE APOSTLES: 5:12-20 In those days by the hands of the apostles many signs and wonders were done among the people (and with one accord, they all would meet in Solomon's portico; but of the rest, no one dared to associate with them, yet the people made much of them. And the multitude of men and women who believed in the Lord continued to

increase), so that they carried the sick into the streets and laid them on beds and pallets, in order that, as Peter went by, at least his shadow would fall upon some of them. And crowds also came to Jerusalem from neighboring towns, and they brought the sick and those afflicted with unclean spirits — and all of them were healed. But the High Priest rose up, and all his supporters (that is, the members of the Sadducean sect), and being filled with hatred, they laid their hands upon the apostles and threw them into the public jail. But during the night, an angel of the Lord opened the doors of the prison, and led them out, saying: “Go, and standing in the temple, speak to the people all the words of this life.”

GOSPEL: JOHN 20: 19-31 (Skeptic Thomas) When it was late, that same day, the first of the week, though the doors where the disciples gathered had been closed for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in the midst and said to them, “Peace be to you!” And when he had said this, he showed them his hands and his side. The disciples therefore rejoiced at the sight of the Lord. Jesus said to them again, “Peace be to you! As the Father has sent me, I also send you.” When he had said this, he breathed upon them, and said to them, “Receive the Holy Spirit; whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them; and whose sins you shall retain, they are retained.” Now Thomas, one of the Twelve, called the Twin, was not with them when Jesus came. The other disciples therefore said to him, “We have seen the Lord.” But he said to them, “Unless I see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the place of the nails, and put my hand into his side I will not believe.” And after eight days, his disciples were again inside, and Thomas with them. Jesus came, the doors being closed, and stood in their midst, and said, “Peace be to you!” Then he said to Thomas. “Bring here your finger, and see my hands; and bring here your hand, and put it into my side; and be not unbelieving, but believing.” Thomas answered and said to him, “My Lord and my God!” Jesus said to him, “Because you have seen me, Thomas, you have believed. Blessed are those who have not seen, and yet have believed.” Many other signs also Jesus worked in the sight of his disciples, which are not written in this book. But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in his name.



----- **PARISH LIFE UPDATE** -----

BISHOP FRANÇOIS PASCHAL LETTER: A Paschal letter from Bishop François is being distributed. In it, Sayedna shares that, “Every time we repeat “Christ is Risen. He is Truly Risen. Almaseeh Qaam. Haqqan Qaam. Christos Anesti. Alethos Anesti” may we affirm the past, live our faith in the present, and prepare with joy for all that the Lord has prepared for us.”



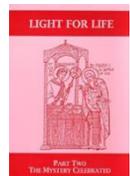
SURVEY ON SYNODALITY: FROM THE EPARCHY: Please take a few minutes to complete our online survey to share your perspectives on the common life of the Melkite Catholic Diocese of Newton and the dimensions of "communion, participation, and mission!" Complete by May 1, 2024 and we will share the results at the upcoming Melkite Catholic Convention July 4-7, 2024 in Boston, MA! [CLICK HERE FOR SURVEY](#)

PAC AND FINANCE/BUILDING MEETINGS: The monthly meetings will resume the week of April 15th, as Abouna Elias and family are traveling during the week of April 8th. If you have any needs, please reach out to contact@stjohnmelkite.org and the deacons will get back to you as soon as possible.

THANK YOU! THANK YOU! THANK YOU!: **Thank you** to the Yarid family for donating Palm Sunday bake sale items and Easter Lilies for Pascha. **Thank you** to the Ghawi family decorating and donating all the flowers for Epitáphios/kouvouklion (Tomb of Christ). **Thank you** to Atlanta Scapes for the donation of the mulch and accompanying landscaping services. **Thank you** to all who have participated in and/or attended Holy Week services and all that you did to make them memorable. God bless all!

RED ALTAR SERVER ROBES: Thank you to those who contributed, as we have reached our fundraising goal to purchase the new red altar server robes. God bless those who gave... “for God loves a cheerful giver.” (2 Corinthians 9:7)

ADULT CATECHISM: Our online Adult Catechism class on the Light for Life Series Part One: The Mystery Believed has concluded. We will resume after Bright Week with Part Two: The Mystery Celebrated, as we spend time learning more about the liturgical life of the Church. The Light for Life Series is an overview of the faith, worship, and spiritual life of the Eastern Church. Drawing on various aspects of Holy Tradition, it expresses the historical proclamation of the Gospel. Books are available at the table in the parish hall.



MOVIE NIGHT: A Double Feature of the movie, **Sacred Alaska**, with the Feature Film, **Amphilochios**. Tuesday, April 9 at 7:00pm at The Tara Atlanta. Tickets will be available on The Tara site soon. Hosted by Greek Orthodox Annunciation Cathedral.

MID-DAY MOMS: Thank you to those moms that attended the April event. The next Mid-Day for Moms will be held on Wednesday, May 29, 2024, from 10am to 1pm.

FAITH. FAMILY. FORMATION. A family evening of faith, liturgy, fellowship, and more was held on Friday, April 5th. Next Date in May is TBD.

----- WHY DO WE READ THE GOSPEL IN MULTIPLE LANGUAGES? -----

Paschal or Agape Vespers (al-Baouth): The Ninth Resurrection Gospel – or at least part of it – is read in a unique way at vespers on the evening of Pascha. The passage, Jn 20:19-25, tells of Christ’s appearance to His disciples “the same day at evening, being the first day of the week” (v.19). And so this selection is read at the same time as the events it describes. Thomas, who was not present when Christ appeared, did not believe the others and uttered rashly, “Unless I see in His hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and put my hand into His side, I will not believe” (v.25). The reading stops here to be picked up next Sunday when the end of the story (vv. 26-29) took place.

In the southern Byzantine Churches this passage is read in several languages, sometimes in as many languages as there are people able to read them. In some parishes the readers are stationed all around the church turning the nave into a world being evangelized by the apostles. The reading is followed by a procession which, whenever possible, goes outside the church through the neighborhood and into the cemetery while the Paschalia (stichera of Pascha) are chanted. Both the reading and the procession represent how the Church has carried out the apostolic commission to preach the Gospel to all nations.

In Slavic Churches this reading takes place at the Divine Liturgy instead. In some places the Gospel is read in many languages at both the Liturgy and at Paschal vespers. In some parishes the procession and/or prayer in the cemetery is postponed until after the Liturgy on Bright Monday.

Now that we have seen the resurrection of Christ, let us adore the all-holy Lord Jesus, the only sinless one. We bow in worship before Your cross, O Lord, and we praise and glorify Your resurrection; for You are our God and we have no other. We magnify Your name. All you faithful, come, let us adore the holy resurrection of Christ for, behold, through the cross joy has come to the world. Let us always bless the Lord, let us sing His resurrection for by enduring for us the pain of the cross He has crushed death through His death. (Oikos of Pascha)

Note: In the past, since we have not had the Agape Vespers service at St. John Chrysostom, the transferring of the practice of reading the gospel in multiple languages has been moved to St. Thomas Sunday.

----- CHURCH FINANCIALS -----

ONGOING GIVING PATTERNS: If you are not giving regularly weekly or monthly, please re-consider your pattern of giving. Our finance committee has identified the main challenges of long-term health of our parish community to include inconsistent giving, a mismatch between increased giving and inflation, and fewer new members. Thank you for your consideration.

2024 FINANCIALS: (MONTHLY - MAR 2024 and Q1 2024):

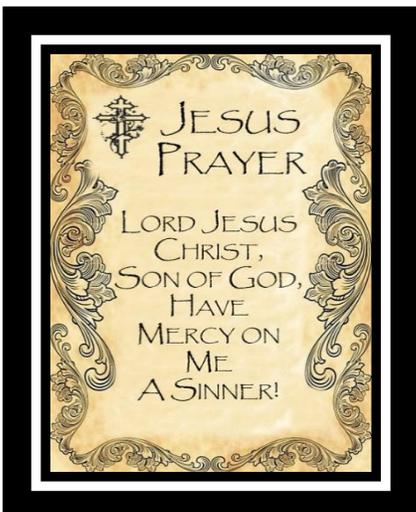
*Total Income:	\$20,674 (O.C. \$10,987)	\$44,533 (O.C. \$29,709)
**Expenses:	\$95,840	\$167,447
Net Income (Loss):	(\$75,166)	(\$122,913) * O.C. – Ordinary Collections,



**** Q1 2024 RENOVATION & MAINT. EXPENSES: \$105,776 – NOTE: The high expenses are due to the roof project.**

----- PRAYER IS A WAY OF LIFE -----

COMMEMORATIONS: Commemorations can be made for a community member, family member, friend, or colleague such as: (a) Repose of their soul, (b) health and wellness, (c) commemorate a special event in their life.



PRAYER LINE: Please keep in your prayers...

Lauren Makhoulf	The Yarid Family
Julian and Nadia Muhanna	Deacon Sami and Family

Those looking for employment	Those preparing for marriage
Victims of natural disasters	The homeless and poor
Areas of War and Violence, Including Holy Land, Ukraine, Syria, Lebanon	

May the Divine Physician of our souls and bodies extend His healing hand over His servants and handmaids.

For those in need of prayer and to keep us up to date on everyone’s condition, please share at contact@stjohnmelkite.org.

April Birthdays & Anniversaries



Note: We apologize IN ADVANCE for anyone who is missing or any information which is mistaken. Please send corrections to contact@stjohnmelkite.org so we can update our database.

BIRTHDAYS

Kareem Atalla	Aemah Badri
Nicholas Curry	Josephine Elia
Michael Incata	Elias Maalouf
Selia Madanat	Janice Peterson
Evelyn Whalen	

ANNIVERSARIES

Mr. & Mrs. Eric & Marie Hansen

--- THE CONFESSION OF THOMAS ---

THE SUNDAY AFTER PASCHA is informally called Thomas Sunday because of the Gospel read on this day, Jn 20:19-31. Many people assume this means that Thomas Sunday is the feast of St Thomas. In fact, St Thomas is remembered in the Byzantine calendar on October 6. What we remember today is rather St Thomas' confession of faith upon seeing the risen Christ, "*My Lord and my God!*" (v. 28).

The meaning of this event is spelled out for us by the Lord in the following verse: "*Jesus said to him, 'Thomas, because you have seen Me, you have believed. Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed'*" (v.29). And if we did not see the implications of that statement for ourselves, the Gospel concludes this passage by saying, "*And truly Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name*" (vv. 30, 31).

THOMAS' CONFESSION

In our culture the exclamation "My Lord and my God!" sounds like a rather banal exclamation of surprise. Sadly, we are used to hearing casually "Oh, God!" or even the Holy Name, "Jesus Christ!" taken in vain. Yet, in first-century Judea – and among many Orthodox Jews today – saying the name of God even in prayer would be considered presumptuous. Since the third century BC Jews have refrained from using the name of God even when reading the Torah. Only the high priest was permitted to read the name of God as written in the Torah, and only on Yom Kippur. Many Jews today simply say HaShem (the Name) when reading such passages or referring to God.

Claiming to be the Son of God was blasphemy in the eyes of the Sanhedrin, the Jewish council of elders in Jerusalem. The Gospel indicates that Jesus was condemned to death precisely for making this claim. "And the high priest answered and said to Him, 'I put You under oath by the living God: Tell us if You are the Christ, the Son of God!' Jesus said to him, 'It is as you said... Then the high priest tore his clothes, saying, 'He has spoken blasphemy! What further need do we have of witnesses? Look, now you have heard His blasphemy! What do you think?' They answered and said, 'He is deserving of death'" (Matthew 26:63-65).

Claiming to see Christ in glory caused the death of the first martyr, St Stephen, as well. Brought before the Sanhedrin he spoke of God's mercy toward Israel, and the elders listed. But then he said, "'Look! I see the heavens opened and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God!' Then they cried out with a loud voice, stopped their ears, and ran at him with one accord; and they cast him out of the city and stoned him" (Acts 7:56-58).

Clearly Thomas' exclamation is presented in the Gospel as an act of faith in Jesus as Lord.

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FlockNote: <https://stjohnmelkiteatl.flocknote.com/register>

Parish Clergy and Staff

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Rev. Deacon Sami Jajeh, Administrator and Finance Chair
deaconsami@stjohnmelkite.org

Rev. Deacon Elie Hanna, Administrator and PAC Chair
deaconelie@stjohnmelkite.org

Church Hall - Jerome Hagley (jerome.hagley@gmail.com)

--- DONATIONS ---

All checks should be made to "St. John Chrysostom Melkite Church" except for diocesan collections, made out to "Eparchy of Newton." Identify in memo field purpose of any Zelle donation given at donate@stjohnmelkite.org. You may give via Flocknote. Register or update registration via QR code.



--- VICTIM ASSISTANCE COORDINATOR ---

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.