

ST. JOSEPH THE BETROTHED

MELKITE GREEK-CATHOLIC CHURCH

130 ST. FRANCIS CABRINI AVENUE ✱ SCRANTON, PA 18504

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PRAYER INTENTIONS

P. H. S.: Mich. Abda. Jos. Bartnicki. Nikki Boudreaux. George Bales Sr. Lucille Bales. Jayne Buckley. Chris Carey. Lois Cianci. James Kane. Maryann Nappi Donahue. Carol Downer. Dav. Fairclough, Sr. Rob. Fairclough, Sr. Sara Gomez. Niko Mayashairo. Mary McNeilly. Charl. & Joe Prezgia. Johanna Simon. Sue Solsman. Sus. Vieselmeyer. Dean & Sherry Yockey. **MEMORY ETERNAL:** ✱Rev. Char. Aboody. ✱Rev. Mich. Jolly. ✱Rev. Jos. Francavilla. ✱Rev. Theo. Leonarczyk. ✱Rev. Frank Milienewicz ✱Rev. Dn. Jos. Daratony. Dn. John Karam. ✱Marie Abda. ✱Charlotte & James Abda. ✱Marie Abda. ✱Nancy Abda. ✱Janice Assaf. ✱Thalia Assaf. ✱Joe & Marie Barron. ✱Paul & Mary Ann Bauman. ✱A.J. Bolus. ✱Veronica Bolus. ✱Jos. Bolus. ✱Gary Bolus. ✱Natey Cheffers. ✱Nich. Cianci. ✱Patricia Cimacosky. ✱Ann & John Coury. ✱Mary Sue Betress. ✱Cecilia Davidson. ✱Joe. & Margt. Dillenburgh. ✱Eric Jolly. ✱Joe King. ✱Blakely Landell. ✱Elaine Manuele. ✱Frank Milewski, Sr. ✱Frank Milewski, Jr. ✱Mary L. Mooty. ✱Karen Murray. ✱Marie Patchoski. ✱Anth. Simon. ✱Bill Simon. ✱Char. Simon. ✱Ruth Sirgany. ✱Mary A. Walsh. ✱Gen. Zaydon.

CLERGY:

Rev. Christopher Manuele, Presbyter

DIVINE SERVICES:

Tuesday :

Compline0:00 P.M

Saturday:

Great Vespers: 3:15 P.M

Sunday:

Orthros 9:00 A.M.

Divine Liturgy: 10:00 A.M.

Holy Days:

Eve: Great Vespers: 5:30 P.M.

Day: Divine Liturgy ... 5:30 P.M

HOLY MYSTERY OF CONFESSION:

Before Vespers at 3:00 P.M.; following any service; or by appointment.

HOLY ANOINTING OF THE SICK:

Following services /call the Rectory.

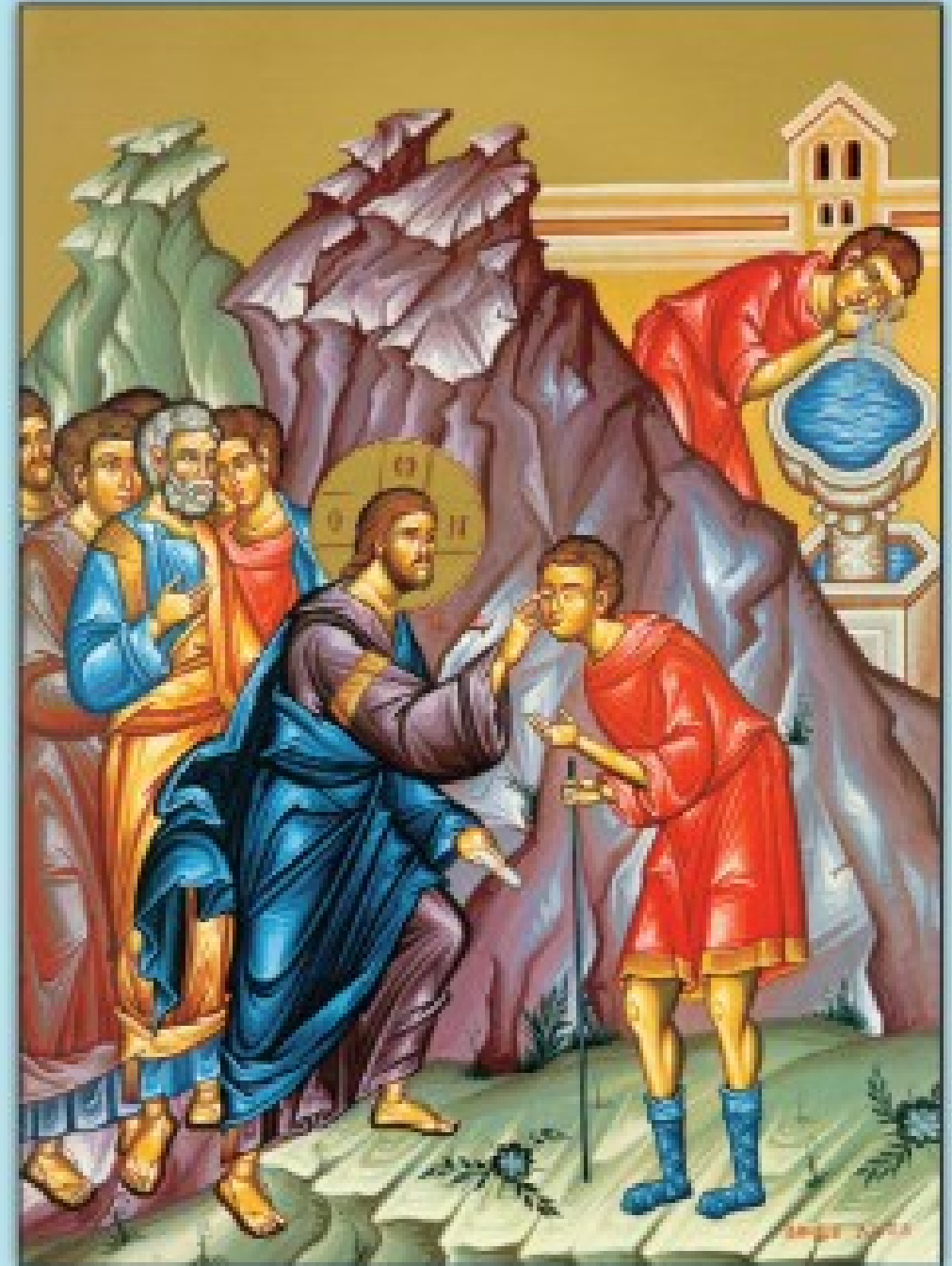
HOLY MYSTERY OF CROWNING:

Call rectory at earliest convenience.

VICTIM ASSISTANCE COORDINATOR:

Report Sexual Abuse: 1.800.479.5910

SUNDAY OF THE MAN BORN BLIND



Icon of the Gospel of the Man Born Blind

DIVINE LITURGY OF SAINT JOHN CHRYSOSTOM		
25 MAY 2025 ♦ TONE 05 EOTHINON 08 † FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER PASCHA ♦ MAN BORN BLIND SUNDAY		
<u>EVLOGITARIA OF RESURRECTION:</u>		
<u>ANTIPHNS:</u>		
FIRST:		
SECOND:		
THIRD:		
<u>ENTRANCE HYMN:</u>		
In the assemblies bless God, the Lord, from Israel’s wellsprings.		
<u>APOLYTIKIA:</u>		
<i>Resurrection (Tone 5)</i>		
<i>Third Finding of the Head of John the Baptist</i>		
"O prophet and forerunner, Christ has revealed to us your head as divine treasure concealed in the earth. Assembled for this discovery we praise Christ with hymns inspired of God. Through your intercessions He saves us from corruption. Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit"		
<i>Saint Joseph</i>		
<i>Glory to the Father...</i>		
<u>KONDAKION: Pascha</u>		
<u>TRISAGION:</u>		
<u>PROKIMENON:</u> Ps. 103: 24, 1		
<u>EPISTLE:</u>		
<i>Brethren</i> , God who commanded light to shine out of darkness, has shone in our hearts, to give enlightenment concerning the knowledge of God’s glory, shining in Christ Jesus’ face. But we carry this treasure in vessels of clay, to show that its superabundant power is God’s, and not ours. In all things we suffer tribulation but we are not destitute, we endure persecution but we are not forsaken, we are cast down but we do not perish: always carrying around in our body the dying of Jesus, so that the life also of Jesus may be made manifest in our bodily frame. For we, the living, are constantly being handed over to death for Jesus’s sake, that the life also of Jesus may be made manifest in our mortal flesh. Thus, death is at work in us, but life in you. But since we have the same spirit of faith, as shown in that which is written, I believed, and so I spoke, (Ps.115:1) we also believed, wherefore we also speak. For we know that the one who raised up the Lord Jesus will raise us up also together with Jesus, and will place us with you. For all things are for your sakes, so that the grace that abounds through the many may cause thanksgiving to abound for God’s glory.		
<u>ALLELUIA:</u> (Ps. 44:5, 8)		
<i>He who dwells</i> in the shelter of the Most High abides in the shadow of the God of heaven. <i>He will say</i> to the Lord, “My wall, my refuge, my God in whom I will trust!”		
<u>GOSPEL:</u>		
<i>At that time</i> as Jesus was passing by, he saw a man blind from birth. And his disciples asked him, “Rabbi, who has sinned, this man or his parents, that he should be born blind?” Jesus answered, “Neither has this man sinned nor have his parents, but the works of God were to be made manifest in him. I must do the works of the one who sent me while it is day; night is coming, when no one can work. As long as I am in the world, I am the Light of the world.” When he had said these things, he spat on the ground and made clay with the spittle, and spread the clay over the man’s eyes, and said to him, “Go, wash in the pool of Siloam (which is interpreted ‘sent’).” So, he went away, and washed, and returned seeing. The neighbors therefore and those who had seen earlier that he was blind began saying, “Is not this the man who used to sit and beg?” Some said, “It is.” But others said, “He only looks like him.” Yet, the man declared, “I am the one.” They therefore asked him, “How were your eyes opened?” He answered and said, “The man who is called Jesus made clay and anointed my eyes, and said to me, ‘Go to the pool of Siloam and wash.’ And I went and washed, and I see.” And they asked him, “Where is he?” He said, “I do not know.” They took the man who had been blind to the Pharisees. Now, it was a Sabbath on which Jesus made the clay and opened his eyes. Again, therefore, the Pharisees asked him: how he received his sight. But he said to them, “He put clay upon my eyes, and I washed, and I see.” Therefore, some of the Pharisees said, “This man is not from God, for he does not keep the Sabbath.” But others said, “How can a man who is a sinner work these signs?” And there was a division among them. Again therefore they said to the blind man, “What do you say of the one who opened your eyes?” But he said, “He is a prophet.” The Jews therefore did not believe of him that he had been blind and had got his sight, until they called the parents of the one who had gained his sight, and questioned them, saying, “Is this your son, of whom you say he was born blind? How then does he now see?” His parents answered them and said, “We know this is our son, and that he was born blind; but how he now sees we do not know, or who opened his eyes we ourselves do not know. Ask him; he is of age, let him speak for himself.” These things his parents said because they feared the Jews. For already the Jews had agreed that if anyone were to confess him to be the Christ, he should be put out of the synagogue. This is why his parents said, “He is of age; question him.” They therefore called a second time the man who had been blind, and said to him, “Give glory to God! We ourselves know this man is a sinner.” He therefore said, “Whether he is a sinner, I do not know. One thing I do know, that whereas I was blind, now I see.” They therefore asked him again, “What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?” He answered them, “I have told you already, but you did not listen. Why would you hear a second time? Would you also become his disciples?” They heaped abuse on him therefore and said, “You are his disciple, but we are disciples of Moses. We know God spoke to Moses; but as for this man, we do not know where he is from.” In answer the man said to them, “Why herein is the marvel, that you do not know where he is from, and yet he opened my eyes. Now we know God does not hear sinners; but if anyone is a worshipper of God, and does his will, him he hears. Not from the beginning of the world has it been heard that anyone opened the eyes of a man born blind. If this man were not from God, he could do nothing.” They answered and said to him, “You were altogether born in sins, and do you teach us?” And they turned him out. Jesus heard they had turned him out, and when he had found him, said to him, “Do you believe in the Son of God?” He answered and said, “Who is he, Lord, that I may believe in him?” And Jesus said to him, “You have both seen him, and he it is who speaks with you.” And he said, “I believe, Lord.” And falling down, he worshipped him.		
<u>HIRMOS: Pascha</u>		
<u>KINONKON:</u>		
<u>COMMUNION HYMN:</u>		

days (apodosis or leave-taking).

The oldest homilies for the feast of the Ascension, celebrated already on the fortieth day after Easter, were delivered by Gregory of Nyssa (d. 394) and John Chrysostom (d. 407). Gregory calls the day “upon which the Lord was taken up from us” – the Salvation, suggesting that, by the ascension into His heavenly glory, our Lord completed the work of our salvation (P.G. Migne, vol. 46, coil. 689-690). And John Chrysostom talks about the feast as well established and universal (*Ibid.*, vol. 50, coil. 441-452). Thus at the end of the fourth or at the beginning of the fifth century the *Apostolic Constitutions* laid down the following rule:

“Count forty days from the first Day of the Lord (meaning Easter) until the fifth day (Thursday) of the sixth week, and celebrate the Feast of the Ascension of the Lord, since on that day He completed all the dispensation and all His work of salvation, and returned to God the Father Who sent Him, and is seated at the right hand of the Father” (Bk. 5, Ch. 19).

The celebration of the Ascension was always connected with a procession. Thus in Jerusalem, as testified by the pilgrim Egeria, the faithful walked in procession to the top of the Mount of Olives. In Antioch, Syria the people went in procession to the suburban church in Romanesia, where John Chrysostom delivered his famous sermon, *On the Ascension of our Lord*. In Constantinople the faithful, according to the testimony of the Church historian Socrates Scholasticus (d. c. 439), used to come together and celebrate the feast in the church of Elaea, just across the harbor of the city (Socrates, *Eccles. History* 7, 26). These processions just enhanced the solemnity of the celebration of the feast.

The solemnity of the feast was greatly increased by inspired hymnographers, whose names are mostly unknown to us. The oldest hymn, "You were born, our God," originally was chanted at Pentecost. But sometime in the fifth century, when the Ascension started to be celebrated as a distinct feast day, this sticheron was transferred to the Ascension. The complete hymn reads:

"You were born, our God, in a manner of Your own choosing. You appeared and suffered in the flesh as You willed. Through Your resurrection You conquered death and ascended into glory, fulfilling all things; You sent down the divine Spirit upon us, therefore in songs we praise Your divinity."

The author of the apolytikion for the feast is unknown, but the kontakion is generally ascribed to the renowned hymnwriter of the sixth century, Romanos the Melodist. There are two Canons for the celebration of Matins. The first was composed by John of Damascus (d. 749), the famous hymnographer of Saint Savvas Monastery near Jerusalem. The other is ascribed to the monk of the renowned Studion Monastery in Constantinople, Joseph the Studite (d. 832), who was persecuted for the veneration of holy icons.

The liturgical hymns for the feast of the Ascension were inspired by Sacred Scripture and by sermons of the prominent Fathers of the Church. They describe in detail not only the Ascension and glorification of our Lord with His human nature in heaven, but also our own glorification together with Jesus. By His glorious ascension our Lord Jesus Christ completed the work of our redemption and reopened the gates of heaven to the whole human race, as attested by John Chrysostom: “And now we, who before were considered unfit to dwell even upon the earth, are being raised up to heaven, ascending with Christ to the heavenly kingdom” (Homily on the Ascension, 1).

Our Lord and Savior, even though He ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of the Father, nevertheless did not forget us. He is, as He said He would, preparing “a place in His Father’s house” for us (Jn. 14:2-3). And He promised to send to us the Holy Spirit, who will illumine us and guide us into our heavenly abode prepared by Christ. Therefore the Church, through one of the festive vesperal stichera, is inviting us:

“Come you, O faithful, and let us climb the Mount of Olives and with the Apostles let us lift up our minds and our hearts on high. Let us behold our Lord as He is taken up to heaven and let us cry out with joy and gratitude: Glory to Your ascension, O most merciful One.”

Liturgy Book p. 182
Liturgy Book p. 83
Liturgy Book p. 186

ON THE ASCENSION

The testimony of Christ's glorious ascension into heaven is not only found in the Scriptures but is also supported by history. According to the testimony of Eusebius of Caesarea (d. 339), Helen, the mother of the Emperor Constantine, "raised a stately structure on the Mount of Olives in memory of the Ascension to heaven of Him, Who is the Savior of mankind, by erecting a sacred temple on the very summit of the mountain" (Eusebius, *Life of Constantine*, Bk. 3, Ch. 43).

Unfortunately this memorial basilica on the Mount of Olives was destroyed by the Persians in 614. It was again rebuilt in the eight century only to be destroyed once again by the infidels. In the twelfth century the Crusaders undertook the task of rebuilding the basilica, but before they were able to finish the construction it was once more destroyed by the Saracens, never to be rebuilt again. The only thing that remains to the present time is a small octagonal chapel, covering the exact spot from which, according to tradition, our Lord actually ascended into heaven.

Then we have testimony of Cyril of Jerusalem (d. 386), who in his catechetical instructions quotes in witness of our Lord's Ascension, saying: "From heaven He descended to the earth in Bethlehem, but to heaven He ascended from the Mount of Olives. The Mount of Olives stands to this day, displaying to the eyes of the faithful Him, Who ascended on the cloud. This is the heavenly gate of His ascension" (*Catechetical Lectures* 14, 23). Then again he refers to the Mount of Olives as to that "holy mountain from which Christ ascended to His Father" (*Ibid.*, 10, 19).

The observance of the Ascension feast is of great antiquity. Augustine (d. 430) does not hesitate to admit that the feast is of apostolic origin. (Epistle to Januarius, 118). But in truth we do not have any historical evidence of its celebration as a separate feast until the end of the fourth century.

Shortly thereafter the Holy Ascension was observed by the entire Church as a solemn feast in the East as well as in the West.

The Easter season originally lasted fifty days and ended on Pentecost Sunday. Since the Scriptures associate the descent of the Holy Spirit with the glorious Ascension of our Lord into heaven, up to the middle of the fourth century the mystery of the ascension was commemorated on Pentecost. This is the reason why Church historian, Eusebius of Caesarea (d. 339), testifies that the holy and glorious solemnity of Easter ended after "a period of seven weeks and is being sealed with the great festival of Pentecost on which, according to the Holy Scriptures, the Ascension of our Savior into heaven and the descent of the Holy Spirit among men had taken place" (*Life of Constantine*, 4, 64).

At the end of the fourth century the Ascension began to be celebrated as a distinct festival, separately from Pentecost. It was then that the Easter season was abbreviated to forty days as indicated in the Acts of the Apostles. According to the Acts, Jesus, after His glorious resurrection, continued to appear to His disciples "for forty days, speaking to them about the kingdom of God" (Acts 1:3).

The remaining ten days before Pentecost were then dedicated to the expectation of the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:14). Thus in about 380 A.D. the famous Spanish pilgrim to the Holy Land, Egeria, tells us that in Jerusalem the Ascension was still commemorated on Pentecost Sunday afternoon with a solemn procession to the Mount of Olives, "to the place from which our Lord ascended into heaven."

On that occasion some "passages of the Scriptures were read, hymns, interspersed by prayers, were chanted, and the proper antiphons were also intoned" (Egeria, *Diary of a Pilgrimage*, ch. 43).

But in Bethlehem, according to the testimony of the same Egeria, they already celebrated the Holy Ascension on the fortieth day after Easter, that is on the Thursday of the sixth week (*Ibid.*, ch. 42). There the feast of the Ascension was celebrated with solemn festivity, being preceded by a vigil. Thus, at the end of the fourth century, the Ascension already started to be celebrated separately and, eventually, it became one of the most solemn feasts of the liturgical calendar with its own vigil and post-period of eight

SAINT JOSEPH CHURCH ANNOUNCEMENTS

EVENTS IN MAY

Saturday Evening, May 24

NO LITURGICAL SERVICES

Sunday Morning, May 25

FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER PASCHA:

MAN BORN BLIND SUNDAY

Divine Liturgy: 10:00 a.m.

Food Festival Meeting

Wednesday Evening, May 28

Great Vespers: 5:30 p.m.

ONE OF TWELVE GREAT FEASTS:

ASCENSION THURSDAY

Thursday Evening, May 29

Divine Liturgy: 5:30 p.m.

Saturday Evening, May 31

Confessions: 3:00 p.m.

Great Vespers: 3:15 p.m.

Divine Liturgy: 4:00 p.m.

EVENTS IN JUNE

Sunday Morning, June 01

SIXTH SUNDAY AFTER PASCHA:

NICAIA COUNCIL FATHERS SUNDAY

Divine Liturgy: 10:00 a.m.

Saturday Evening, June 09

Confessions: 3:00 p.m.

Great Vespers: 3:15 p.m.

**Father Christopher
will leave on a pilgrimage
May 27, 2025**

**Parish Emergencies:
Father Kenneth Sherman
570.977.6342**

PRAYER TO ST. JOSEPH

O St. Joseph, chaste spouse of the Lady Theotokos, head of the Holy Family, we again place ourselves under your patronage. † Through your powerful intercession, bestow up on us every good thing both spiritual and temporal. † Protect this your parish from all spiritual harm and renew in us the spirit of repentance and a fervent desire for the kingdom of heaven. † Make this vineyard flourish with new souls and by an increase of faith, hope and love; may forgiveness, peace and joy reign within our holy fellowship. † In all we do, may the Name of God, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit be glorified, now and ever and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

DIVINE LITURGY INTENTIONS

24 May: Aziz Simon✙
from M/M Francis Hall
25 May: Aziz Simon✙
from M/M Francis Hall
29 May: Aziz Simon✙
from M/M Hall
31 May: Aziz Simon✙
from M/M Hall
01 June: Aziz Simon✙

2025 WEEKLY COLLECTION

May 18

Weekly Offering:	\$ 730.00
Monthly:	\$ 25.00
Candles:	\$ 25.00
Total:	\$ 780.00

Thank you for your support!

MAY 25: THIRD UNCOVERING OF THE HEAD OF JOHN BAPTIST

THE PRINCIPAL FEASTS in our liturgical year commemorate some event in the life of Christ or of the Theotokos. A second category of feasts honors the memory of saints, often on the day of their repose. A third category of feasts recalls significant events in the history of the Church, such as the discovery and exaltation of the holy Cross or the seven Ecumenical Councils of the first millennium.

In this last category the Byzantine Churches observe two feasts concerning the head of St John the Forerunner. On February 24 the “First and Second Uncovering” of his head are recalled, On May 25 the “Third Uncovering” of this relic is observed.

The Gospel account of John’s death and burial is found in Mt 14:3-12. There we are told that John was beheaded, that his head was given by Salome to her mother, and that “Then his disciples came and took away the body and buried it, and went and told Jesus” (v. 12). What became of John’s head was not mentioned.

The Fate of John’s Body

According to a very early local tradition, John’s disciples took his body to Samaria, outside Herod’s jurisdiction, and buried it in Sebastiya, near the tomb of the Prophet Elisha.

The adornment of the holy places and the spread of monasticism in the fourth century saw the rise of interest in the Holy Land and the establishment of monasteries on the holy sites. Monastics, who revered John as a kind of proto-monk because of his life in the wilderness, settled in Sebastiya at the site of John’s tomb.

According to Rufinus of Aquileia, who lived in Jerusalem at the time, pagans, during the reign of Emperor Julian the Apostate (361-363), desecrated the tombs of both John and Elisha and burned their bones. Some of the remains were rescued by monks who brought them to their monastery in Jerusalem.

After Julian’s brief reign the shrine was restored and at least some of the relics presumably returned. In 512 St John of Maiuma in Gaza visited Sebastiya, describing what he saw: “This site, in fact, was a particular chapel of the church, enclosed within gates because it contains two urns covered in gold and silver, in front of which burn perennial lamps: one is John the Baptist’s, the other is Prophet Elisha’s.” The church was destroyed, probably by an earthquake, in the ninth century.

Palestine: the First Uncovering

Nicephorus and Symeon Metaphrastes (in accordance with Josephus) say that Herodias had John’s head buried in the fortress of Machaerus where he had been slain. Other writers say that it was interred on the tetrarch’s property in Jerusalem where it was discovered by two pilgrim monks during the restoration of the city under Constantine the Great. For several years it was kept by local Christians as a treasured relic.

Syria: The Second Uncovering

A Syrian visiting Jerusalem acquired the head from some monks and brought it home to Emesa (Homs) where it came into the possession of another monk who buried it in his cave. A contemporary chronicle relates that in 452 St. John the Baptist appeared to Marcellus, the archimandrite of this monastery, and indicated where his head was hidden. The head was discovered and enshrined in a newly-built church which was then dedicated to St John.

This discovery was widely celebrated at the time and a feast and procession established in Constantinople on February 24 to commemorate it. Before long, the Forerunner’s head was

brought to Constantinople where it remained until the iconoclast period (730-842). The head was then secretly taken and hidden in Comana (Abkhazia today) for safekeeping.

Constantinople: The Third Uncovering

Around the year 850, with the final defeat of iconoclasm, the head of the Forerunner was solemnly returned to Constantinople where major portions were enshrined at the Studion Monastery and the Monastery of the Forerunner. The upper portion remained in Constantinople until the disastrous sack of the city during the Fourth Crusade in 1204. Crusaders took the relic to Amiens in northern France where it was enshrined in the new cathedral.

In 1793 revolutionaries sacked the cathedral and seized its valuables. They took the reliquary but the mayor of Amiens hid the actual relic until 1816 when it was returned to the cathedral where it remains.

This relic was actually the upper portion of the face. The lower jaw was thought to be in Verdun in eastern France. In 1958 the two sections were subjected to anatomical study and found to come from different skulls. The Amiens portion was more ancient than the Verdun bone which was dated to the Middle Ages. In fact, portions of the lower jaw had been sent before the Fourth Crusade to Mount Athos and other monasteries.

In 2010 skeletal remains were discovered in a case inscribed with John’s name in Greek which was found beneath the altar in the ruins of an ancient Bulgarian church. DNA and radiocarbon testing showed that the remains likely belonged to a Middle Eastern man who lived in the first century AD!

What About Damascus?

In the center of Damascus’ Umayyad Mosque stands an imposing shrine said to contain the head of the Forerunner which is venerated by both Christians and Muslims.

In AD 379 Emperor Theodosius I converted Damascus’ temple of Jupiter, the largest Roman temple in Syria, into a Christian cathedral which, in the sixth century, was dedicated to St John the Baptist. The church was rebuilt as a mosque in 706. The Arab historian, Ibn al-Faqih, reported that Zayd Ibn al-Waqid, who directed the work on the mosque, discovered the skull of “Prophet Yahia” (John the Baptist) in a nearby cave.

From the Services of these Feasts

February 24:

This is the head of the one who pointed out the Lamb of God manifested in the flesh, and who called us to the saving ways of repentance by following the precepts of God. This is the head which reproached the iniquity of Herod, and for this was separated from its body. Remaining hidden under the ground for a long time, it has dawned like a radiant sun to say to us, “Repent! In the compunction of your hearts, become once more friends of the Lord, who grants the world great mercy!”

O Forerunner, your head, divinely preserved, has risen from the bosom of the earth as a treasury of the graces of God. Having received it, we bow down in reverence, O glorious prophet of Christ. Through you, we have been given wondrous miracles and have obtained the remission of our sins.

May 25:

Your holy head, blessed Forerunner, poured out abundant grace. It was shown without his foreknowledge to the priest who was wise in God. He quickly went with faith and grace and openly brought about its sanctified return with the emperor and the divinely wise people who fervently maintain the Orthodox faith.

We celebrate the third revelation of your precious head. When it was severed, O glorious one, the Trinity crowned it for your godly zeal. The ranks of angels, the company of martyrs, the apostles of God and all the prophets rejoice in its discovery. Together with them, ever remember us, O Forerunner of the Lord.