



# St. Elias Melkite Catholic Church

Proclaiming the Ancient and Orthodox Christian Faith in the Silicon Valley

14263 Mulberry Dr., Los Gatos, CA 95032

[StEliasMelkite.org](http://StEliasMelkite.org) • (408) 785-1212 • [StEliasMelkite@gmail.com](mailto:StEliasMelkite@gmail.com)

**July 23, 2016: 7<sup>th</sup> Sunday After Pentecost – Healing of the Two Blind Men**

## Vespers (evening prayer)

Saturdays 5pm

Feastdays: See website Calendar

## Orthros (morning prayer)

Sundays 10am

Feastdays: See website Calendar

## Divine Liturgy

Sundays: 11am

Feastdays: See website Calendar

## Confession

During Vespers and Orthros, or by appointment

## Bible Study

Wednesdays: 6pm Online

See website for link

(Summer break)

## Sunday School

During Sunday Coffee Social

## Contact the Pastor

Rev. Sebastian Carnazzo

Phone: (831) 229-8350

[SebastianCarnazzo@gmail.com](mailto:SebastianCarnazzo@gmail.com)

## Qurban and Socials

- This Sunday, 7/23  
Qurban: Shihadeh  
Social: Picnic Potluck
- Next Sunday, 7/30  
Qurban: Gomez  
Social: any volunteers?

## Pray for the Servants of God

The Readers Cyril and Romanos

Shihadeh Family (Qurban)

Thomas MaryEllen Kalil

Kamal & Eugenie Neimat

Gary Potter

## Asleep in the Lord in the Hope of the Resurrection

Ernest & Marian Young

Fuad & Renee Kalil

## PRAYER

O You who have granted us to pray together in harmony, and who promised that when two or three are gathered to call upon your name You will give what they ask: do You now fulfill what your servants ask, so far as it is good, granting us in the world to come, eternal life. For You are good, O our God, and You love mankind and we send up glory to You, to the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, now and always and forever and ever. Amen.

## HYMNS

**Troparion of the resurrection (6th Tone):** The angelic powers were around Your tomb, \* and the guards became as dead; \* and Mary stood at the tomb, \* seeking Your spotless body. \* Then You despoiled Hades without being tried by it \* and You met the Virgin, O Bestower of life. \* O Lord, who rose from the dead, \* glory to You!

نشيد القيامة باللحن السادس  
إن القوات الملائكية ظهرت على قبرك، والحراس صاروا كالأموات، ومريم وقفت عند القبر، طالبة جسدك الطاهر.  
فسلبت الجحيم ولم تنلك بأذى، ولافتت البتول واهباً الحياة. فإيا من قام من بين الأموات، يا رب المجد لك.

## READINGS

**Romans 15:1-7** Now, we the strong should bear the infirmities of the weak, instead of catering to ourselves. Let every one of you please his neighbor by doing good for his edification: for Christ did not seek his own pleasure, but as it is written, The reproaches of those who, reproach you have fallen on me. (Ps.6: 10) For whatever has been written has been written for our instruction, that through the patience and consolation afforded by the Scriptures, we may have hope. May then the God of patience and comfort grant you to be of one mind towards one another according to Jesus Christ, so that being one in spirit you may with one mouth glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Wherefore receive one another as Christ has received you, in a manner that gives honor to God.

**Matthew 9:27-35** At that time as Jesus was passing on, two blind men followed Him, crying out and saying "Have pity on us, Son of David" And when He had reached the house, the blind men came to Him. And Jesus said to them, "Do you believe that I can do this to you?" They answered Him, "Yes, Lord." Then He touched their eyes, saying, "Let it be done to you according to your faith." And their eyes were opened. And Jesus strictly charged them, saying, "See that no one knows of this!" But they went out and spread His fame abroad throughout all that district. Now as they were going out, behold, there was brought to Him a dumb man possessed by a devil. And when the devil had been cast out, the dumb man spoke; and the crowds marveled, saying, "Never has the like of this been seen in Israel." But the Pharisees said, "By the prince of devils He casts out devils." And Jesus was going about all the towns and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the Good News of the kingdom, and curing every kind of disease and infirmity in the people.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

**Our Patronal Feast, St. Elias,** was this past Thursday. This Sunday we will celebrate with a Picnic and blessing of cars with Holy Water and the icon of St. Elias at the La Rinconada Park ([151 Granada Way, Los Gatos, CA 95032](http://151GranadaWay.com)).

**Confession:** Remember that the Holy Mystery of Reconciliation is available every Saturday at Vespers (5pm) and every Sunday at Orthros (10am).

### Fulfilled in Your Hearing

When we think of the people who appear in the Gospels we think first of all of Christ and His Mother, then perhaps of John the Forerunner and the apostles. But there is another figure who is more prominent both in the Gospels and in the life of the Church than even some of the apostles – St Mary Magdalene whom the Eastern Churches call the “equal-to-the-apostles.”

### Mary Magdalene in the Gospels

The Scriptures have little to say about Mary; this has not prevented speculations and often erroneous conclusions to be made from the early centuries up to our own day. The Gospels tell us that:

- a) According to her name *she was from Magdala*, a village on the western shore of the Sea of Galilee, near Tiberias. Because she was known by her hometown rather than by the name of her husband, father or son, it is assumed she was unmarried.
- b) *She was one of the Lord’s traveling companions. “He went through every city and village, preaching and bringing the glad tidings of the kingdom of God. And the twelve were with Him, and certain women who had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities—Mary called Magdalene, out of whom had come seven demons, and Joanna the wife of Chuza, Herod’s steward, and Susanna, and many others who provided for Him from their substance”* (Lk 8:1-3).

From this passage some have deduced that Mary was well-to-do. The Gospel text does not necessarily imply that Mary was one of those who provided for Jesus from their own resources. That phrase may only refer to the unnamed “others.”

The Gospels do not describe Mary’s healing and many have speculated about it. Pope Gregory I (c. 540-604), for example, equated these demons with the spiritual assaults within us: “And what did these seven devils signify, if not all the passions?” He thus put his seal on the opinion that Mary was a great sinner, even a prostitute. This idea came from a mistaken reading of the passage from Luke quoted above. The passage before it tells of an unnamed “*woman in the city who was a sinner*” (Lk 7:37) who washed Jesus feet with her tears. Commentators connected these two passages, believing they were about the same woman, which the Gospel itself does not imply.

- c) *Mary was one of the women who stayed near Jesus at the cross* when His chosen disciples all ran away: “*Now there stood by the cross of Jesus His mother, and His mother’s sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene*” (Jn 19:25).
- d) Most importantly, as all four Gospels relate, *she was present at the tomb*, the first person to whom Jesus appeared after his resurrection and the first to alert the apostles to the news of the resurrection: “*Now on the first day of the week Mary Magdalene went to the tomb early, while it was still dark, and saw that the stone had been taken away from the tomb. Then she ran and came to Simon Peter, and to the other disciple, whom Jesus loved, and said to them, ‘They have taken away the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid Him’*” (Jn 20:1, 2).

As Luke tells it, Mary Magdalene was there with Joanna and Mary (the mother of James) when “*...behold, two men stood by them in shining garments. Then, as they were afraid and bowed their faces to the earth, they said to them, ‘Why do you seek the living among the dead? He is not here, but is risen! Remember how He spoke to you when He was still in Galilee, saying, ‘The Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again.’*” And they remembered His words. Then they returned from the tomb and told all these things to the eleven and to all the rest... And their words seemed to them like idle tales, and they did not believe them” (Lk 24:4-11).

Reflecting on the Resurrection Gospels, Gregory the Great thought it fitting that “because in Paradise a woman offered death to a man, at the tomb a woman announced life to men” (*49th Homily on the Gospels*). Doing the same, the ninth-century archbishop of Mainz, Rabanus Maurus, called Mary Magdalene the “apostle to the apostles.” This title became common in the West during the centuries that followed.

### Mary and the Red Eggs

As was common in the second and third centuries, there were Christian attempts to tell the stories of what happened to the New Testament figures after the events described in the Scriptures. In several of these stories Mary Magdalene is said to have traveled to Rome and shared her witness to Christ with the first believers there. While in Rome she is said to have attended a dinner at which Emperor Tiberius (ad 14-37) was present. When she spoke about Christ’s resurrection, according to one version of this story, Tiberius laughed, saying that a man rising from the dead was no more possible than these eggs turning red before our eyes. The eggs did, in fact, turn red and Eastern Christians have been blessing red eggs on Pascha ever since. Modestos, Patriarch of Jerusalem (630-634) wrote, in his *On the Myrrhbearers*, that Mary Magdalene returned to Jerusalem, where she lived with Theotokos until her dormition. After the death of the Theotokos, Mary Magdalene went to Ephesus where she spent the rest of her life. Her tomb outside the city was described by Gregory of Tours (538-594) in his *De Miraculis*. Gregory had not seen the tomb himself, but was recounting the testimony of an unnamed “Syrian traveler.” Her holy relics were transferred in the ninth century to Constantinople, and placed in the monastery Church of Saint Lazarus. In the era of the Crusader campaigns they were taken to Italy and placed at Rome under the altar of the Lateran Cathedral. Her incorrupt hand is preserved in the Simonopetra Monastery on Mt Athos. According to a later Western tradition Mary Magdalene had gone to the south of France where she was said to have spent her last years alone in the wilderness, fasting and engaging in acts of penitential self-discipline to atone for the “sins” of her early life. Her relics are supposedly kept in Provage, near Marseilles. This tradition is clearly based on the erroneous identification of Mary Magdalene with the sinful woman of Lk 7, described above.

### Mis-directions in the Story of Mary

Besides Mary Magdalene and the Theotokos the Gospels also mention other Marys: Mary of Bethany (the sister of Lazarus and Martha), and Mary the mother of James. This led to a confusion in the West between Mary Magdalen (identified as the sinner of Lk 7) and these other Marys. This identification, which had never been accepted in the East, was finally rejected in the [1969 revision](#) of the [General Roman Calendar](#). In the first centuries after Christ several groups developed their own “gospels” weaving the story of Jesus with their own teachings. Several of these, from gnostic sources, were discovered in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In several of them Mary Magdalen is depicted as Jesus’ favorite companion, making the apostles jealous. These works gave rise to modern pseudo-historical attempts to say that Mary was Jesus’ wife or mistress.