

ST. JOSEPH THE BETROTHED

MELKITE GREEK- CATHOLIC CHURCH
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PRAYER INTENTIONS

P. H. S.: Rev. Dn. Joseph Daratony. Michael Abda. Marie Bar-
ron. Nikki Boudreaux. George Bales Sr. Lucille Bales. Jayne
Buckley. Chris Carey. John Coury. Maryann Nappi Donahue.
Carol Downer. David Fairclough, Sr. Robert Fairclough, Sr.
Sara Gomez. William Lass, jr. Niko Mayashairo. Mary
McNeilly. Sue Solsman. Susan Vieselmeyer. Dean & Sherry
Yockey. MEMORY ETERNAL: ✕Rev. Charles Aboody. ✕
Rev. Michael Jolly. ✕Rev. Joseph Francavilla. ✕Rev. Frank
Milienewicz ✕Dn. John Karam. ✕Marie Abda. ✕Charlotte
Abda. ✕James Abda. ✕Marie Abda. ✕Nancy Abda. ✕A.J. Bo-
lus. ✕Nicholas Cianci. ✕Patricia Cimakosky. ✕Ann Coury. ✕
Mary Sue Betress. ✕Margaret Dillenburg ✕Eric Jolly. ✕
Joseph King ✕Blakely Landell. ✕Elaine Manuele. ✕Frank
Milewski, Sr. ✕Frank Milewski, Jr. ✕Mary Lou Mooty. ✕Karen
Murray. ✕Marie Patchoski. ✕Anthony Simon. ✕Bill Simon. ✕
Ruth Sirgany. ✕Mary Ann Walsh. ✕Genevieve Zaydon

CLERGY:

Rev. Christopher Manuele, Presbyter

DIVINE SERVICES:

Wednesday :

Compline 7:30 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: 7:00 P.M.

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

HOLY MYSTERY OF CONFESSION:

Before Vespers at 3:00 P.M.; follow-
ing any service; or by appointment.

HOLY ANOINTING OF THE SICK:

Following services /call the Rectory.

HOLY MYSTERY OF CROWNING:

Call rectory at earliest convenience.

PARISH ADVISORY COUNCIL:

Meetings as scheduled.

SUNDAY OF THE
PRODGIAL SON

DIVINE LITURGY OF ST. JOHN CHRYSOSTOM

31 JANUARY 2021 ♦ TONE 02 EOTHINON 02 † SUNDAY OF PRODIGAL SON/MOTHER XENIA ROMANACCHAE-

GREAT DOXOLOGY:

ANTIPHONS:

FIRST:

SECOND:

THIRD: *Beatitudes*

ENTRANCE HYMN: *Resurrection*

APOLYTIKIA:

Resurrection (Tone 2)

Holy Unmercenary Physicians Cyrus and John

You have granted us the miracles of Your holy martyrs as an invincible rampart. At their prayers, O Christ our God, overthrow the plots of unbelievers and strengthen the orthodox Faith in Your great goodness and love for mankind.

Saint Joseph

KONDAKION: *Prodigal Son*

TRISAGION:

PROKIMENON:

Liturgy Book p. 1

Liturgy Book p. 11

Liturgy Book p. 11

Back of Liturgy Book

Liturgy Book p. 15

Liturgy Book p. 16

Tone 5

Liturgy Book p. 20

Handout

Liturgy Book p. 23

(Tone 2)

My strength and my courage is in the Lord.

The Lord has chastised me through His teaching. Yet He has not delivered me to death

EPISTLE:

Brethren, all things are lawful for me, but not all things are fitting. All things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of anyone. Food is for the belly, and the belly for food, but God will destroy both the one and the other. Now, the body is not for immorality, but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body. For God has raised up the Lord and will also raise us up by his power. Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I then take the members of Christ and make them the members of a prostitute? By no means! Or do you not know that one who cleaves to a prostitute becomes one body with her? For the two, it is said, shall be one flesh. But he who cleaves to the Lord is one spirit with him. Flee immorality. Every sin a man commits is outside the body, but the immoral man sins against his own body. Or do you not know that your members are the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God and that you are not your own? For you have been bought at a great price. Glorify God therefore in your body and in your soul which both are God's.

ALLELUIA: *Psalms 17:48, 50*

(Tone 2)

It is God who avenges me. † Great is the salvation he grants to his king, and the mercy he shows to his anointed.

GOSPEL:

Luke 15:11-32

At that time, The Lord told this parable: "A man had two sons. And the younger of them said to his father, 'Father, give me the share of the property that falls to me.' And he divided his possessions between them. And not many days later, the younger son gathered up all his wealth and traveled to a far country; and there he squandered his fortune in loose living. And after he had spent all, there came a severe famine over that country, and he began to suffer from it. And he went and joined one of the local landowners, who sent him to his fields to feed the pigs. And he longed to fill himself with the pods the pigs were eating, but no one offered to give them to him. But when he had come to his senses, he said, 'How many hired men in my father's house have bread in abundance, while I am perishing with hunger! I will get up and go to my father, and will say to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you, I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me as one of your hired men.'" And he got up and went to his father. But while he was yet a long way off, his father saw him and was moved with compassion and ran and fell upon his neck and kissed him. And the son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you, I am no longer worthy to be called your son.' But the Father said to his servants, 'Fetch quickly the best robe and put it on him, and give him a ring for his finger and sandals for his feet; and bring out the fattened calf and kill it, and let us eat and make merry; because this my son was dead, and has come to life again; he was lost, and is found.' And they began to make merry. Now his elder son was in the field; and as he came close to the house, he heard music and dancing. And calling one of the servants he asked what this meant. And he said to him, 'Your brother has come, and your father has killed the fattened calf, because he has got him back safe.' But he was angered and would not go in. His father, therefore, came out and began to beg him. But he answered and said to his father, 'Look, these many years I have been serving you, and have never disobeyed any of your orders; and yet, you have never given me a kid that I might make merry with my friends. But when this son of yours comes, who has devoured your wealth with prostitutes; you have killed for him the fattened calf!' But he said to him, 'Son you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours; but we were bound to make merry and rejoice, for this your brother was dead, and has come to life; he was lost and is found.'"

HIRMOS:

KINONIKON:

Liturgy Book p. 40

Liturgy Book p. 47

abroad any seating (benches or stalls) was located around the church walls leaving the center of the church free for worshippers. In churches with Western-style pews worshippers often move out into the aisles to make prostrations.

The Great Fast During the Church' fasts we have ample opportunities to glorify God in the body through more frequent church services and through fasting. Eastern Christian fasting incorporates two ways of using our bodies in worship. In ascetic or total fasting we do not eat or drink anything. Period. This kind of fasting is in the spirit of Deuteronomy 8:3, quoted by Christ to the tempter, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God" (Mt 4:4). Traditionally people fast this way before receiving Holy Communion. It is also customary to fast totally for a certain period on all fast days. Thus many fast this way until noon during these seasons.

The second type of fasting, also called abstinence, is fasting from certain foods (typically meat or dairy products). In many Eastern Churches people fast totally until noon and then, when they do eat, they abstain from meat and dairy. Since fish is considered "meat without feet" it is not generally consumed on the stricter fast days. RELIGIOUS PEOPLE ARE OFTEN ACCUSED of having a negative morality. Faithful believers are not to do this or that and there are "temple police" to make sure that they toe the line. Dietary regulations are often cited as examples of this "negative morality." People are not to eat this or that because God has forbidden it. Obeying these rules is seen as a way of glorifying God.

The apostolic Church did not adopt the idea that certain foods were "unclean," based in part on St Peter's vision in Joppa (see Acts 10:9-16). "What God has cleansed," Peter was told, "you must not call common" (v. 15). In the same way it did not adopt the idea taught by some sects at the time that marriage and sexuality were ungodly. Rather the Church espoused the principle stated by St Paul, "All things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any" (1 Cor 6:12).

Being "Under the Power" of Things No authentically Christian exercise of asceticism, such as fasting, is done to avoid something evil but to keep us free from inappropriate control by anything. Fasting is one strategy for minimizing the power of food or drink (gluttony), material possessions (greed) or sex (lust) over us.

It is often noted that many people in our society do not have a healthy relationship with food, drink or sex. Many rely on these things to fix emotional problems they were never designed to address. The resulting addictions are simply the most harmful examples of our disordered passions having power over us. As people today say, "What you own, owns you."

The apostolic Church's teaching that nothing is "unclean" was perhaps too subtle for some early believers. They felt that, if everything was allowed, unlimited consumption was in order. Paul had to remind them that "Nothing is forbidden" does not mean "consume everything you can." Rather, he insisted, "All things are lawful for me, but all things are not helpful" (1 Cor 6:12). The believer's goal in life is to be united to God; unlimited consumption does not help us achieve that goal.

St Paul would likely have agreed with the Pope criticisms of modern prosperity as leading to a "culture of waste." We are prodded by film, TV and advertising into continually buying more and throwing away what we tire of. "Consumerism has led us to become so used to an excess" of food and other material goods, the pope says, that we no longer value our humanity, much less our relationship to God. The Church's answer to consumerism – ancient or modern – is fasting.

How Do We Fast? Most people see fasting as an act of self-denial, but often mistake just what we seek to deny in this observance. Fasting is not so much a denial of food as it is a denial of the ego. In our prosperous society we are used to having whatever we want whenever we want it. Fasting is a means of challenging this impulse to self-satisfaction. When we observe the Church's fast days we are allowing others to determine what we may eat and when we may eat it. We fast when the Church fasts and in the manner that the Church prescribes. There are, of course, always exceptions for health and other reasons but in such cases the tradition would have us seek a blessing from one's spiritual father before mitigating the fast. In that way we would not be determining our own version of the fast; we would still be following the Church, in the person of our confessor.

GLORIFY GOD IN YOUR BODY

MANY PEOPLE TODAY EQUATE “SPIRITUALITY” with one’s personal inner life. Spiritual seekers are advised to “listen to their heart” to find peace and clarity, often without any reference to God – or at least to the God revealed in the Scriptures – or to a community such as the Church. Their approach is more individual rather than communal, more mind centered than encompassing one’s entire being, and often more concerned with self-help than with living in union with God.

As Eastern Christians we stand in a tradition that first of all understands spirituality as mankind’s relationship to God through the operation of the Holy Spirit. At its root this relationship is based on an event which joins the material and the spiritual: the Incarnation of Christ. The Word of God took flesh, became human in order to unite us with God. Because He is truly and perfectly man, the risen Christ is now glorified in His body, seated at the right hand of the Father.

The Body in Eastern Thought The body as well as the spirit is important in Christian life. As St Paul says, “Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God’s” (1 Cor 6: 19-20). We are not meant to ignore or belittle the body because we are Christians. The body is not an enemy but a partner and collaborator with the soul in the work of our sanctification. The body, as well as the spirit, is meant to be transfigured in Christ and so we are called to glorify God in it.

Purifying the Body The first way in which we glorify God in the body is by accepting and affirming its freedom from the control of sin and death. United to Christ in baptism, we have already been given a share in that freedom, which will be completely realized in the life of the world to come. As long as we are in this life, however, we must work along with Christin-us to maintain the body’s freedom from the influence of sin.

And so one way in which we glorify God in the body is by the Church’s ascetic tradition, which focuses on freeing the mind and the heart from attachment to the things of the senses. Christian asceticism is not anti-physical but seeks to liberate the body from the lure of the sensual so that the physical may be sanctified.

The Church Fathers considered that the most basic ascetic practices focus on controlling the passions or cravings of the body for food and drink and for sexual release. This is not because they are our greatest inner enemies – pride and vanity have that dubious distinction – but because it is easier to conquer our physical cravings than our spiritual impulses. This is why St Paul, in 1 Corinthians, singles out the power of gluttony and lust as the enemy’s first line of attack on the believer. “Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ?” (v.15) How can you surrender to the first assault the enemy mounts against you? If we cannot put aside fatty foods on Wednesdays and Fridays, much less during the Fasts, how can we even begin to deal with things like spiritual laziness (sloth) or pride that afflict us in our innermost hearts?

Worshipping in the Body We live our life in Christ in our bodies as well as in our spirits and so the Eastern Churches have insisted that the body join the spirit in worshipping the One who created us as both physical and spiritual. We bow, we kneel, we make the sign of the cross, we prostrate, we kiss, we eat and we drink. We glorify God in the body by entering body, soul and spirit in the worship of the Church.

One way we glorify God in our bodies at worship is by standing for prayer. In some churches people are directed to stand or sit at different times during the service. Sitting, however, is the stance taken by an audience rather than a participant, whether it be at the theater or at worship. Worshipers are an “audience” during readings or a sermon; during prayers and litanies they are participants and more fittingly stand rather than sit.

Two bodily gestures in Eastern worship not common in the churches of the West are the metany and the prostration. In the metany we make the sign of the cross and bow from the waist, extending our right hand until our fingers touch the ground. In the prostration we kneel on both knees and bow until our forehead touches the ground. Both gestures indicate our complete submission to the King of all.

Making metanies and prostrations requires a certain amount of free space around the worshipper. In older churches

SAINT JOSEPH CHURCH ANNOUNCEMENTS

EVENTS IN JANUARY

Saturday, January 30th

Great Vespers 3:15 p.m.

Divine Liturgy 4 p.m.

Sunday, January 31st

Divine Liturgy 10:00 a.m.

EVENTS IN FEBRUARY

Monday, February 01st

Great Vespers 5:30 p.m.

Tuesday, February 02nd

ENCOUNTER OF THE LORD

ONE OF THE TWELVE GREAT FEASTS

Divine Liturgy 5:30 p.m.

Monday, 1st – Sunday 7th

Meat fare Week:

Last week to eat meat products

Monday, 8th – Sunday 14th

Cheese fare Week:

Last week to eat dairy products

Sunday February 14th

Ice cream Social after D. L.

Forgiveness Vespers 1:00 p.m.

Monday, February 15th

Beginning of Great Lent

Presanctified D. Liturgy 6:00 p.m.

EVENTS IN MARCH

Sunday, March 21 st

Ladies’ Society St. Joseph Breakfast

2021 WEEKLY COLLECTION

January 24

Weekly Offering \$ 800.00

Divine Liturgy \$ 20.00

Total: \$ 820.00

Thank you for your support!

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 Holy Spirit be glorified, now and ever and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

DIVINE LITURGY INTENTIONS

30 January ✕ Philip Elias Sirgany

31 January ✕ Agnes & Ruth Sirgany
From Karin Mille

“This Man Receives Sinners”

EACH YEAR, AS WE PREPARE to embark upon the Great Fast, we hear the Lord’s parable of the Prodigal Son (Lk 15:11-32) read at the Divine Liturgy. Some commentators have said that the story might better be called the Parable of the Forgiving Father as he is the most important character in the story. Actually the parable speaks about the character of God, (the father) and the human condition (both his sons). It thus sets the stage for our Lenten journey of repentance.

The Prodigal Son and Our Human Condition

We are not told the exact age of the young man when he decides to set off on his own, but countless commentators have depicted him as an adolescent. His behavior certainly bears this out. He has the selfish impatience of youth: he wants his inheritance now, even though his father is still alive. He is more interested in what the man’s money can buy than in the man himself.

In that, the young man repeats the choice made by our first parents who preferred the appetizing but forbidden fruit to continued fellowship with the One who provided it. He also images the choices we all make when we focus our attention on the fruits of creation rather than on the Creator who offers us a relationship with Himself. In any such choice we become the petulant adolescent whose first stabs at maturity always seem to require resentment of the parent if not outright rebellion.

On his own the Prodigal’s newfound independence seems to lead him into slavery rather quickly. He begins living what various translations call a “wild,” “reckless,” “loose” “riotous” “foolish,” “notorious,” “dissolute,” “wasteful,” or “prodigal” way of life. We are left to imagine what that might have involved; we certainly know what the result was. He spent everything he had and ended up with nothing. He wanted to be independent but did not understand that being independent does not free a person from being responsible.

No well-balanced person in our world wants to be dependent on another. We often forget, however, that our desire for human self-determination cannot lead us away from God without disastrous results. We inevitably end up spiritually bankrupt and living on the pig’s fodder of a Godless world.

Unlike many people, however, the Prodigal does something about his condition: he returns to his father. He repents. Still thinking of himself and his own needs, he plans to plead for the lowest place in his father’s household. The young man does not know with whom he is dealing.

The Forgiving Father and the Mercy of God

The father does not wait for his son to apologize or beg for forgiveness. He welcomes him

home with open arms and calls for a celebration. He is the image of our heavenly Father who knows when one of His children seeks forgiveness and grants it at once, without demanding any form of penance or satisfaction.

Note that the father does not go in search of his son when the lad is enjoying the wasteful life he has chosen or when he is miserable, but not yet resolved to return home. His mercy would bear fruit only when the son had come to truly desire it and so the father waits for his son to make the first move. But when the son does return, the father does not make him work for forgiveness; he gives it freely.

In this the father is unlike many of us who would want the ungrateful son to squirm before accepting him back home. We might feel justified in “teaching him a lesson,” but this is apparently not God’s way. When repentance truly touches the heart, the “lesson” has already been learned.

The Father’s extraordinary mercy is no excuse for taking advantage of Him: seeking the blessing of His house while not repenting in action as well as in words. As St Isaac the Syrian taught, “But the fact that repentance furnishes hope should not be taken by us as a means to rob ourselves of the feeling of fear, so that one might more freely and fearlessly commit sin” (Isaac the Syrian, First Collection: Homily Ten).

Proclaiming the Mercy of God

Our liturgy continually emphasizes the mercy of God. The beloved Polyeleos psalm sung so frequently in our churches at the most solemn occasions has as its refrain, “For His mercy endures forever, alleluia” The Typica psalms each proclaim the depths of God’s mercy to His People: “*He forgives all your iniquity, he heals all your diseases, he redeems your life from the pit, he crowns you with steadfast love and mercy*” (Ps 102: 3, 4).

The second psalm is even more specific: “*He brings about justice for the oppressed; he gives food to the hungry. The Lord sets the prisoners free; the Lord opens the eyes of the blind. The Lord lifts up those who are bowed down; the Lord loves the righteous. The Lord watches over the strangers, he upholds the widow and the fatherless; but the way of the wicked he brings to ruin*” (Ps 146:7-9).

Is it unreasonable to think that we, who continually sing of God’s mercy in our services, should not be encouraging one another to return to the Father by attending the Church’s Lenten services, by approaching the Mystery of Confession and by embracing the ideas in “The Great Fast in the Home,” available on our eparchy’s web site, www.melkite.org?

As the Lord said in the parables which precede the story of the Prodigal Son in Luke 15, “I say to you that likewise there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine just persons who need no repentance... *Likewise, I say to you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents*” (Lk 15:7, 10).