

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.: Rev. Dn. Joseph Daratony. Michael Abda. Marie Barron. 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 Loss, jr. Niko Mayashairo. Mary McNeilly. Sue Solsman. Susan Vieselmeyer. Dean & Sherry Yockey. **MEMORY ETERNAL:** ✱Rev. Char. Aboody. ✱Rev. Mich. Jolly. ✱Rev. Jos. Francavilla. ✱Rev. Theo. Leonarczyk ✱Rev. Frank Milienewicz ✱Dn. John Karam. ✱Marie Abda. ✱Charlotte Abda. ✱James Abda. ✱Marie Abda. ✱Nancy Abda. ✱Paul Bauman. ✱A.J. Bolus. ✱Nicholas Cianci. ✱Patricia Cimakosky. ✱Ann Coury. ✱Mary Sue Betress. ✱Marg.t Dillenburg ✱Eric Jolly. ✱Jos. King ✱Blakely Landell. ✱Elaine Manuele. ✱Frank Milewski, Sr. ✱Frank Milewski, Jr. ✱Mary L.Mooty. ✱Karen Murray. ✱Marie Patchoski. ✱Anth. Simon. ✱Bill Simon. ✱Ruth Sirgany. ✱Mary A. Walsh. ✱Gen. 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: 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.

PARISH ADVISORY COUNCIL:

Meetings as scheduled.

TENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

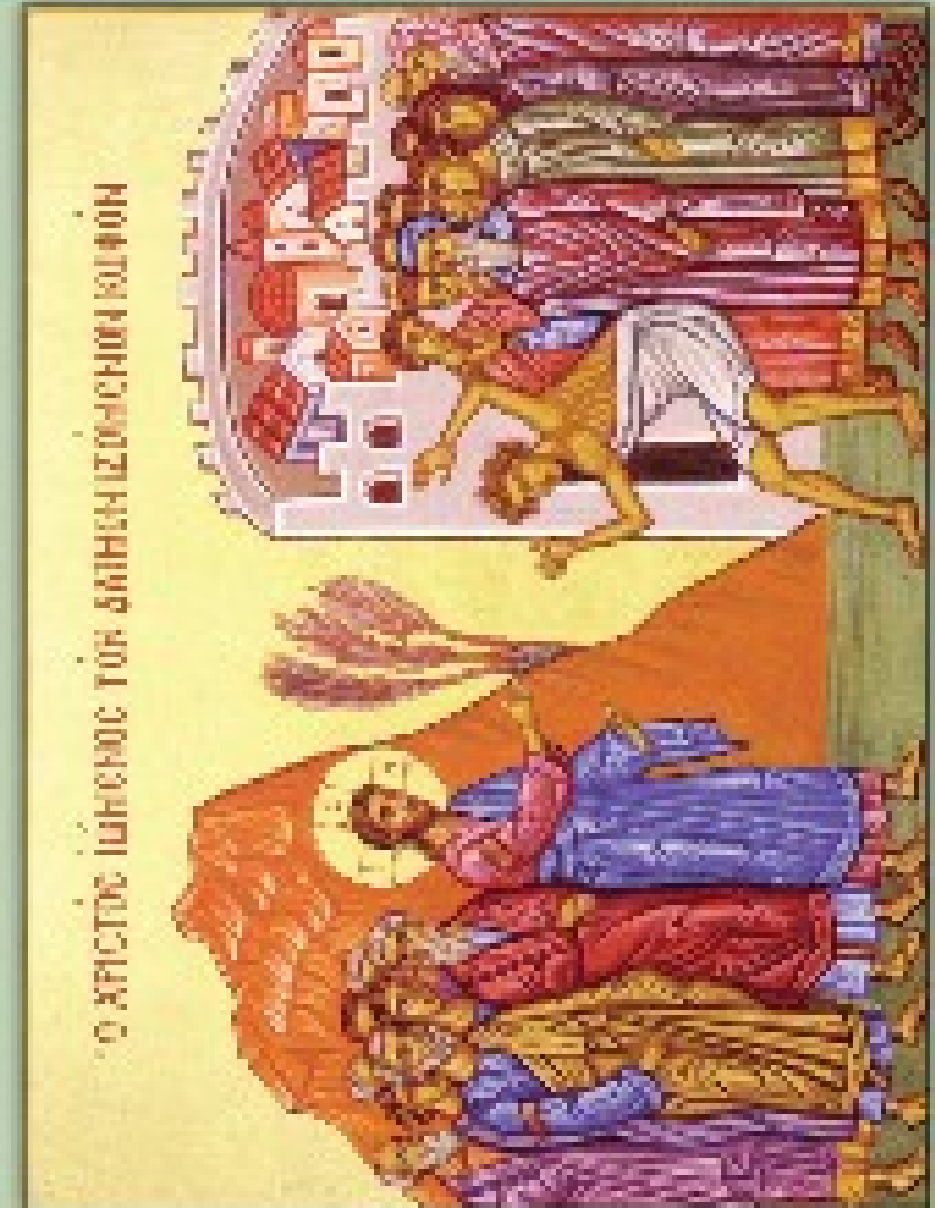


Illustration by the Rev. Christopher Manuele

DIVINE LITURGY OF ST. JOHN CHRYSOSTOM

01 AGUST 2021 ♦ TONE 01 EOTHINON 10 † TEENTH SUNDAY PENTECOST / HEALING OF THE EPILEPTIC BOY

GREAT DOXOLOGY:

ANTIPHONS:

FIRST:

SECOND:

THIRD:

ENTRANCE HYMN:

APOLYTIKIA:

Resurrection (Tone 1)

Steven Holy Maccabee Youths

Let us acclaim the seven Maccabee youths with their mother, the holy Salome, and their teacher Eleazer; for they have fought the good fight as guardians and keeper of the Law. And now, as gloriously triumphant martyrs of Christ, they intercede ceaselessly for the world.

Honorable & Life-giving Cross

St Joseph the Betrothed

KONDAKION:

TRISAGION:

PROKIMENON: *Ps.32: 22, 11*

May your kindness, O Lord, be upon us, for we have hoped in you.

Stichon: Exult, you just, in the Lord; praise from the upright is fitting.

EPISTLE:

Brethren, I think God has set forth us the apostles last of all, as men doomed to death, so that we would become a spectacle to the world, and to angels, and to men. We are fools for Christ, but you are wise in Christ! We are weak, but you are strong! You are honored, but we are without honor! To this very hour, we hunger and thirst, and we are naked and buffeted and have no fixed home. And we labor, working with our own hands. We are reviled and we bless, we are persecuted and we bear with it, we are maligned and we console; we have become as the refuse of this world, the scum of all until this present time. I write these things, not to put you to shame, but to admonish you as my dearest children. For although you have ten thousand tutors in Christ, you have not many fathers. Therefore, I beg you, be imitators of me, as I am of Christ.

ALLELUIA: *Psalms 17:48, 50*

O God, you granted me retribution and made peoples subject to me and saved me from my raging enemies.

Therefore, I will proclaim you, O Lord, among the nations, and I will sing praise to your name.

GOSPEL:

At that time, a man approached Jesus, and threw himself on his knees before him, saying, “Lord, have pity on my son, for he is a lunatic, and suffers severely; for often he falls into the fire, and often into the water. And I brought him to your disciples, but they could not cure him.” Jesus answered and said, “O unbelieving and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you? How long shall I put up with you? Bring him here to me.” And Jesus rebuked him; and the devil went out of him, and from that moment the boy was cured. Then the disciples came to Jesus privately and asked, “Why could we not cast it out?” He said to them, “Because of your little faith; for amen I say to you, if you have faith like a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, ‘Move from here,’ and it will move. And nothing will be impossible to you. But this kind can only be cast out by prayer and fasting.” Now while they were gathering together in Galilee, Jesus said to them, “The Son of Man is to be betrayed into the hands of men, and they will kill him: and on the third day he will rise again.”

HIRMOS:

KINONIKON:

POST-COMMUNION HYMN:

Liturgy Book p. 1

Liturgy Book p. 11

Liturgy Book p. 11

Liturgy Book p. 15

Liturgy Book p. 15

Liturgy Book p. 15

(Tone 4)

Liturgy Book p. 111

Liturgy Book p. 20

Liturgy Book p. 21

Liturgy Book p. 23

(Tone 1)

1 Corinthians 4:9-6

St. Matthew 17:14-23

Liturgy Book p. 40

Liturgy Book p. 47

Liturgy Book p. 52

“Christ who had been radiant in light on the mountain, blinded your bodily eyes; but He allowed your soul to see the Trinity” (from the Canon, Ode 1).

The “Uncreated Light” of God

In the Gospels we find two seemingly contradictory understandings of our ability to know God. On the one hand we are told, “No one has seen God at any time” (Jn 1:18). On the other hand we hear, “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God” (Mt 5:8). In the fourth century, St. Gregory of Nyssa showed how both statements are true. He taught that the essence of God was unknowable. Like the sun in the imagery cited above, God in His deepest being is unapproachable. The energies of God – His “Light” and “Warmth” – have been made known to us and we can truly know God in His energies. In the fourteenth century, St Gregory Palamas applied this teaching to the Transfiguration. He explained that when the Apostles witnessed the Transfiguration of the Lord on Mount Tabor, that they were seeing the actual uncreated light of God.

Reflecting the Divine Light

We too, Palamas insisted, can experience God’s divine energies even though we can never know His essence: “for those who love each other all nature is filled with the light which seems to radiate from the other.” Many saints who have loved deeply have reflected this light. Perhaps the first was the Protomartyr St. Stephen who witnessed to Christ before the council of Jewish elders in Jerusalem. “And looking steadfastly on Stephen, they saw his face as it had been the face of an angel” (Acts 6:15).

St Simeon the New Theologian, writing in the eleventh century, described his own experience in similar words: “He gives Himself totally to me, unworthy as I am, and I am filled with His love and beauty. I am sated with pleasure and divine tenderness. I share in the Light. I participate also in the glory. My face shines like that of my beloved and all my members become bearers of Light.”

The most compelling witness to such an experience comes from Nicholas Motovilov. In 1831 he wrote of seeing St Seraphim of Sarov transfigured with the divine light. They had been discussing how a person can acquire the grace of the Holy Spirit but Motovilov was puzzled: “I do not understand how I can be certain that I am in the Spirit of God.” Finally, as he described it, “Father Seraphim took me very firmly by the shoulders and said: ‘We are both in the Spirit of God now, my son. Why don’t you look at me?’

“I replied: ‘I cannot look, Father, because your eyes are flashing like lightning. Your face has become brighter than the sun, and my eyes ache with pain.’

“Father Seraphim said: ‘Don’t be alarmed, your Godliness! Now you yourself have become as bright as I am. You are now in the fullness of the Spirit of God yourself; otherwise you would not be able to see me as I am.’

“Then, bending his head towards me, he whispered softly in my ear: ‘Thank the Lord God for His unutterable mercy to us! You saw that I did not even cross myself; and only in my heart I prayed mentally to the Lord God and said within myself: ‘Lord, grant him to see clearly with his bodily eyes that descent of Your Spirit which You grant to Your servants when You are pleased to appear in the light of Your magnificent glory.’ And you see, my son, the Lord instantly fulfilled the humble prayer of poor Seraphim. How then shall we not thank Him for this unspeakable gift to us both?’”

For a moment the apostles on Tabor saw the light of God which is Christ’s by nature. Likewise for a moment Nicholas Motovilov saw the light of God indwelling by grace in the person who is in Christ.

Transfiguration: In Your Light we shall see Light

“I AM THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD” (JN 8:12).

These familiar words of the Lord Jesus reflect one of the most popular images in the Scriptures, but what do they mean? How is Jesus the light of the world?

The rest of this verse (pardon the expression) ‘sheds light’ on what is meant here. “I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life.” Here and in a number of other places Jesus is portrayed as a beacon: one who guides along the right path, who illumines the way for us. He is the “Giver of light,” the One bringing light to our hearts. To say He is light in this way is to talk about what He does.

But there is another way to see Christ as light. He is light, not only because of what He does for us but because of what He is. “God is light and in Him is no darkness at all” (1 Jn 1:5). God is not described here as light illumining our minds and hearts, but as He is in Himself: Light in His innermost being.

Based on the Gospel message, the Church proclaims the Lord Jesus as “Light from Light” (Nicene Creed), the “Joyful Light of the holy glory of the Immortal Father, the Heavenly, the Holy, the Blessed: Jesus Christ” (third century vespers hymn). As God is Light in Himself, so too the incarnate Christ is the Light of the Father. “I and the Father are one” (Jn 10:30).

As far back as the third century the Fathers used our experience of the sun to illustrate this mystery. Like others before him, St. Cyril, the teacher of the Slavs, reflected, “Do you see in the heavens the brilliant sphere of the sun and how from it light is begotten and warmth proceeds? God the Father is like the sphere of the sun, without beginning or end. From Him is eternally begotten God the Son, like light from the sun; just as there comes warmth together with light from the sun, the Holy Spirit proceeds. Each one is distinguished separately: the sphere of the sun and the light and the warmth — these are not three suns, but one sun in the heavens. So also, in the Holy Trinity: there are three Persons, but God is one and indivisible.”

The Light of Mt. Tabor

Christ was concretely manifested as light at His transfiguration: “His face shone like the sun, and His clothes became as white as the light” (Mt 17:2) – “white and glistening” (Lk 9:29), “such as no launderer on earth can whiten them” (Mk 9:3). For a moment the disciples glimpsed what had been hidden since the Incarnation: the Word of God, radiant with divine glory, in the person of Jesus.

In icons of the Transfiguration, this radiance is depicted by a geometric figure behind the representation of the Lord called a mandorla. While depictions of Christ during His earthly ministry show His head surrounded by a cross and a halo, icons representing Him in moments beyond time and space (the Transfiguration, the Resurrection, the Dormition) envelop His whole body in this light of glory.

This same figure is found in icons of the conversion of St. Paul. Christ, the “Radiant Light” was manifested to Saul of Tarsus (St. Paul) on the road to Damascus as “a light from the sky brighter than the sun” (Acts 26:13). While this Light briefly blinded Saul by its brilliance, it enabled him to see ever more clearly “the mystery which has been hidden from ages and from generations, but now has been revealed” (Col 1:26).

In the Church the light experienced by Saul has been identified with the light that shone on Tabor, the Radiant Light of the Father, Jesus Christ. As we sing on the feast of Saints Peter and Paul,

SAINT JOSEPH CHURCH ANNOUNCEMENTS

EVENTS IN JULY

Saturday, July 31 st

Confessions 3:00 p.m.

Great Vespers 3:15 p.m.

Divine Liturgy 4:00 p.m.

EVENTS IN AUGUST

Sunday, August 01

Resurrectional Orthros 9:00 a.m.

Betrothal of David Michaels

& Stephanie Pendrak

Divine Liturgy: 10:00 a.m.

Beginning of the Dormition fast.

Paraclesis: 4:00 p.m.

Mon. August 02 - Fri. August 06

Paraclesis: 4:00 p.m.

Saturday, August 07

Paraclesis 10:00 a.m.

Saturday, August 07

Holy Crowning Michaels & Pendrak

Holy Ghost Church at

Jessup, PA 1:00 p.m.

Saturday, August 07

Divine Liturgy 4:00 p.m.

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.

2021 WEEKLY COLLECTION

July 25

| | |
|-----------------|-----------|
| Weekly Offering | \$ 655.00 |
| Monthly | \$ 45.00 |
| Divine Liturgy | \$ 20.00 |
| Candles | \$ 25.00 |
| Total: | \$ 715.00 |

Thank you for your support!

Fast of the Dormition

(This two-week fast is as during Great Lent, except for the fasting un til noon.)

Monday-Friday: Strict fast.

“Strict fast” excludes the eating of meat and meat products, cheese, milk, butter, fish, olive oil, wine and alcoholic beverages.

Saturday/Sunday: Wine and oil permitted. *On Transfiguration:* fish, wine & oil are permitted.

DIVINE LITURGY INTENTIONS

| | |
|-----------|---|
| 31 July | A.J. Bolus |
| 01 August | *Christine Michaels and *Elizabeth Pendrak |
| 31 July | A.J. Bolus |
| 07 August | *David & Stephanie Michaels |
| 08 August | *Christopher Michaels and *Stephen Pendrak |
| 14 August | *The Martin Family from Timothy Sica |
| 15 August | *St. Joseph Church |

PREPARATION FOR THE TRANSFIGURATION

Towards the end of Jesus’ public ministry He began preparing His disciples for His approaching death and resurrection. We find that both St. Clement of Lyons and Clement of Alexandria taught that Christ had descended into Hades. . In Mt 16 this scene concludes with the following prophecy: “*Assuredly, I say to you, there are some standing here who shall not taste death till they see the Son of Man coming in His kingdom*” (v. 28). This is immediately followed by a fulfillment of this prophecy: the holy transfiguration of Christ. As St Gregory Palamas says in his homily on this feast, “It is the light of His own forthcoming transfiguration which He terms the Glory of His Father and of His Kingdom.”

At Christ’s transfiguration “*some standing here*” – Peter, James and John – witnessed the Lord in the glory of His kingdom, if only for a moment. He was not changed – they were. They were able to see what is always there but which they could not imagine before: that God dwelt in man.

St Gregory Palamas describes it this way: “Christ was transfigured, not by the addition of something He was not, nor by a transformation into something He was not, but by the manifestation to His disciples of what He really was. He opened their eyes so that instead of being blind they could see. While He Himself remained the same, they could now see Him as other than He had appeared to them formerly. For He is ‘*the true light*’ (Jn 1:9), the beauty of divine glory, and He shone forth like the sun.”

As St Ephrem the Syrian expressed it, “They saw two suns; one in the sky, as usual, and one unusually; one visible in the firmament and lighting the world, and one, His face, visible to them alone” (*Sermon on the Transfiguration*, 8). In one sense we can say that Christ was not transfigured; it was the apostles’ ability to see Him which was transfigured.

“What He Really Was”

For a moment Christ was revealed to the disciples as what He really was: God incarnate in our human flesh. “We believe that at the transfiguration He manifested not some other sort of light, but only that which was concealed beneath His fleshly exterior. This Light was the Light of the Divine Nature, and as such, it was Uncreated and Divine” (St Gregory Palamas, *Homily on the Transfiguration*).

This Light was manifested to the disciples in the radiance of His face and garments: “*His face shone like the sun, and His clothes became as white as the light*” (Mt 17:2). As Mark describes it, “*His clothes became shining, exceedingly white, like snow, such as no launderer on earth can whiten them*” (Mk 9:3). The immaterial divine nature of the Son of God in manifested in the physical sign of a shining face and garments because this was all that the disciples could absorb. As we sing in the troparion of this feast, Christ was “showing Your disciples as much of Your glory as they could behold.”

Over succeeding centuries the Church deepened its understanding of the incarnation, but not without disagreement. It took several hundred years and several Ecumenical Councils for the Church to articulate its faith in Christ as the incarnate Word of God. By the fourth century the Church was calling Christ “Light from Light, true God from true God... of one essence with the Father” but it took several more centuries and councils to grasp the implications of that statement.

As iconography developed it settled on one particular form to represent the divine nature of the

light perceived by the disciples. The *mandorla* is a design made up of overlapping geometrical shapes which surrounds the image of Christ in icons of the transfiguration. The basic mandorla – an Italian word meaning *almond* – contains three round or oval concentric circles, in shades of blue or gold, representing the Trinity. The innermost circle is of the deepest shade representing the unseen Father. Other geometrical shapes represent the energy of the divine light shining upon the disciples. The mandorla is generally used in icons representing the glorified Christ at His transfiguration and resurrection and when receiving His Mother at her dormition.

What We Are Meant to Become

In the mystery of Christ’s transfiguration the Church has caught a glimpse of what those who are in Christ are meant to be: persons who in their humanity can have God dwelling in them, reflecting that presence as light. The Lord Himself tells us that at His second coming “*the righteous will shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father*” (Mt 1:43). The custom of depicting saints and angels with haloes derives from this prophetic statement of Christ.

Becoming “righteous” is our task in this life, in preparation for the glory to come. In both the Old and New Testaments we are frequently instructed how we may become righteous. In the New Testament, however, these instructions are phrased in terms of God dwelling in us. “*Christ in you, the hope of glory*” (Col 1:27) is the One whose presence within us guarantees our righteousness before God. This is the “*mystery hidden from eternity*” (Col 1:26), which the Greek Fathers called *theosis*, the process of our transformation by the presence of God within us.

This process of *theosis* begins with our baptism. As we sing so often in our services, “*As many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ*” (Gal 3:27). God dwells within us but requires that we “put on Christ” by the way we live. “*We were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life*” (Rom 6:4). Our cooperation with God dwelling in us to transform us is called *synergy* by the Fathers: the life-long task of consciously becoming God-like in our thoughts, words and actions in order to radiate the presence of God within us by baptism.

Despite all our best efforts, none of us – not even the saints – can so unwaveringly combat our passions that we realize our potential on our own. And so Christ has given us an outward sign of His love in the mystery of the Eucharist to which we can return again and again. By sharing in this holy mystery we can reinforce our awareness of His saving presence in us and derive the strength we need for our daily ascent to God.

Through the holy mysteries and our striving to live like Christ we can attain a likeness to God and union with Him so far as possible. We who are not holy by nature can become holy, and become partakers of glory.

Looking to the Last Day

In the Second Epistle of St Peter we read his eye-witness account of the transfiguration (2 Pt 1:16-18). This is what follows: “*And so we have this sure prophetic word, which you do well to heed as a light that shines in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts*” (v.19). The transfiguration is thus a prophetic anticipation of Christ’s glorious second coming when the “morning star” (Christ) will fill us with His light.

The transfiguration, then, symbolizes the life to come and thus the goal of every Christian pursuit. As St Gregory the Theologian expressed it in his Third Oration *On the Son*, the holy transfiguration of Christ initiates us “into the mystery of the future”.