

## ST. JOSEPH THE BETROTHED

**MELKITE GREEK- CATHOLIC CHURCH**  
130 ST. FRANCIS CABBINI AVENUE ✱ SCRANTON, PA 18504

melkite.scranton@gmail.com ✱ www.melkitescranton.org  
Contact office: 570.343.6092 † stjosephscranton@gmail.com

### 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.

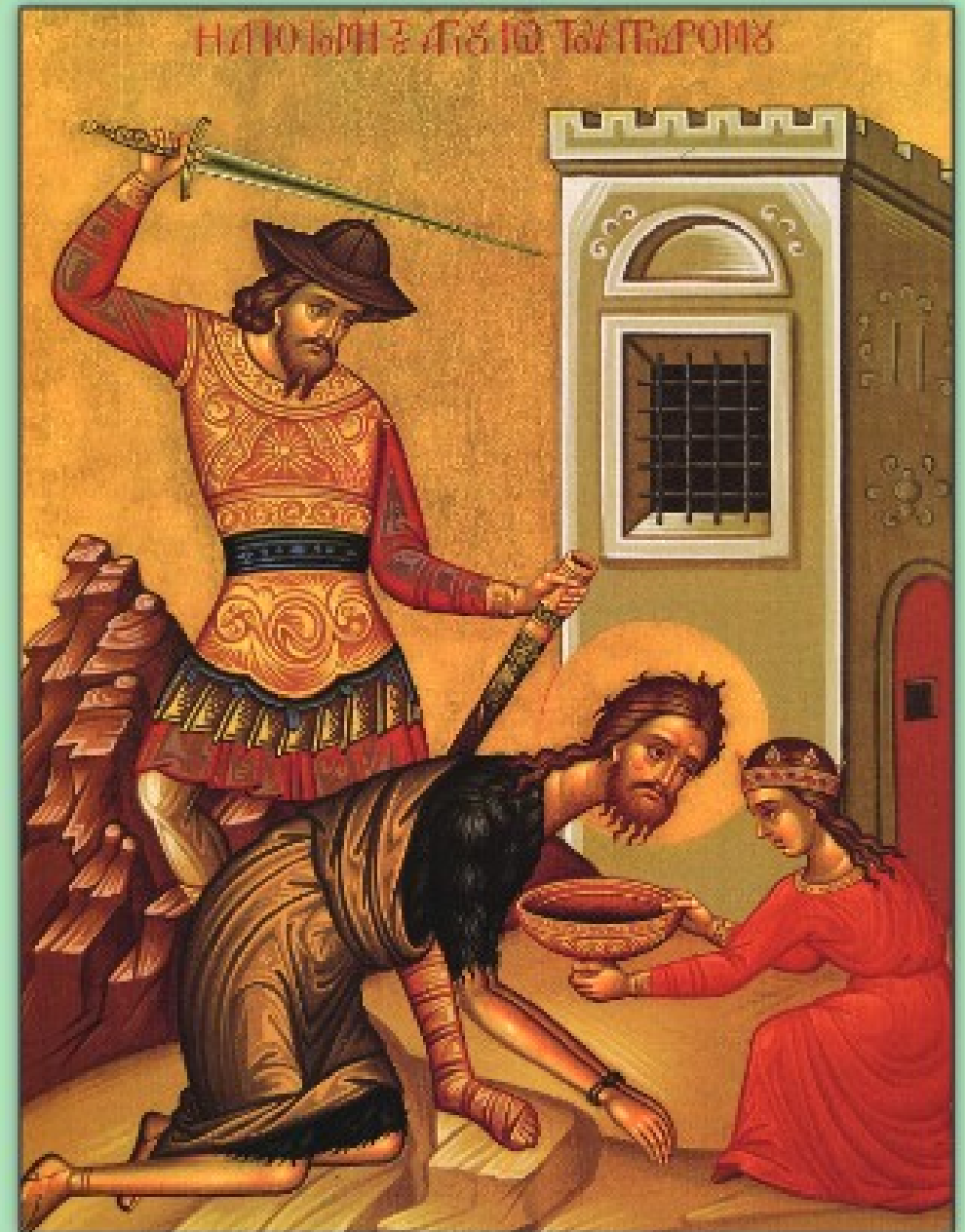
### HOLY MYSTERY OF CROWNING:

Call rectory at earliest convenience.

### PARISH ADVISORY COUNCIL:

Meetings as scheduled.

## FOURTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST BEHEADING OF THE HOLY AND GLORIOUS PROPHET, FORERUNNER AND BAPTIST JOHN



*Icon of the Beheading of John the Baptist*

# DIVINE LITURGY OF ST. JOHN CHRYSOSTOM

29 AGUST 2021 ♦ TONE 05 EOTHINON 03 † FOURTEENTH SUNDAY PENTECOST / BEHEADING OF THE BAPTIST

<u>GREAT DOXOLOGY:</u>	<i>Liturgy Book p. 1</i>
<u>ANTIPHONS:</u>	
FIRST:	<i>Liturgy Book p. 11</i>
SECOND:	<i>Liturgy Book p. 11</i>
THIRD:	<i>Liturgy Book p. 18</i>
<u>ENTRANCE HYMN:</u>	<i>Liturgy Book p. 15</i>
<u>APOLYTIKIA:</u>	
<i>Resurrection (Tone 5)</i>	<i>Liturgy Book p. 18</i>
<i>Beheading of St. John the Forerunner and Baptist</i>	<i>(Tone 2)</i>

The memory of the just is mentioned with praise. As for you, O Forerunner, the Lord’s witness is enough; indeed, you were greater than the prophets since you were found worthy to baptize in the waters the One they could but announce. You have fought for the sake of truth and proclaimed to those in Hades that God who appeared in the flesh taken away the sins of the world and bestowed great mercy upon us.

<i>St. Joseph the Betrothed</i>	
<u>KONDAKION: Nativity of Theotokos</u>	<i>Liturgy Book p. 20</i>
<u>TRISAGION:</u>	<i>Liturgy Book p. 23</i>
<u>PROKIMENON: Psalm 11:8, 2</u>	<i>(Tone 5)</i>

    You, O Lord, will keep us and preserve us always from this generation.  
*Stichon:* Save me, O Lord, for there is no longer any holy man, for truthfulness has vanished from among the children of men.

<u>EPISTLE:</u>	<i>Acts of the Apostle 13:25-33</i>
In those days, when John was coming to the end of his career, he would say, “I am not the one you suppose me to be; but see, there comes one after me the sandals of whose feet I am not worthy to untie. Brethren, children of the race of Abraham, and all among you who fear God, to you the word of this salvation has been sent. For the inhabitants of Jerusalem and its rulers, not knowing him nor the sayings of the prophets which are read every Sabbath, fulfilled them by sentencing him; and though they found no grounds for putting him to death, they asked Pilat’s permission to kill him. And when they had carried out all that had been written concerning him, they took him down from the tree and laid him in a tomb. But God raised him from the dead; and he was seen during many days by those who had come up with him from Galilee to Jerusalem; and they were now witnesses for him to the people. So we now bring you the Good News that the promise made to our fathers, God has fulfilled for our children, by raising up Jesus.”	
<u>ALLELUIA: Psalm 88: 2, 3</u>	<i>(Tone 5)</i>

    Your favor, O Lord, I will sing forever;  
    from generation to generation, my mouth will proclaim your faithfulness.  
    For you have said, “My kindness is established forever.”  
    In heaven you have confirmed your faithfulness.

<u>GOSPEL:</u>	<i>St. Matthew 22:2-14</i>
The Lord told this parable: The kingdom of heaven is like a king who made a marriage feast for his son. And he sent his servants to call in those invited to the marriage feast, but they would not come. Again he sent out other servants saying: ‘ Tell those who are invited, behold. I have prepared my dinner: my oxen and fatlings are killed, and everything is ready; come to the marriage feast.’ But they made light of it, and went off, one to his own farm and another to his business; and the rest laid hold of his servants treated them shamefully, and killed them. But when the king heard of it, he was angry; and he sent his armies, destroyed those murderers, and burned their city. Then he said to his servants, ‘The marriage feast indeed is ready, but those who were invited were not worthy; go therefore to the crossroads, and invite to the marriage feast whomever you shall find.’ And his servants went out into the roads and gathered all those they found, both good and bad; and the marriage feast was filled with guests. Now the king went in to see the guests, and he saw there a man who had not on a wedding garment. And he said to him, ‘Friend, how did you come in here without a wedding garment?’ But he was speechless. Then the king said to the attendants, ‘Bind his hands and feet, take hold of him, and throw him out into the darkness, where there will be weeping and the gnashing of teeth.’ For many are called, but few are chosen.”	

The Jewish calendar is also calculated from the biblical account of creation but there is a c. 2000 year difference between the two reckonings. The Byzantine Era was computed using the Septuagint text of the Old Testament, compiled in the 3rd to 2nd century BC. The Jewish dating is calculated according to the Masoretic version, used by Jews since the first century AD.

## Prayer for the Environment

The Genesis story of creation, on which the Byzantine Era was based, has given rise to a new expression in the modern age. In 1989 the late Ecumenical Patriarch Demetrios I designated September 1 as a day of prayer for the protection of the environment. He called for “prayers and supplications to the Maker of all, both as thanksgiving for the great gift of Creation and in petition for its protection and salvation.”

The patriarch noted that modern society has embraced an approach to the world around us, based on a philosophy which denies the existence of God the Creator. Since in this philosophy there is no God, there is no reason to consider creation as a divine gift. And since in this materialistic philosophy there is no higher life than the physical, there is no benefit to ascetic effort: to use the gifts of the earth sparingly and always with an eye to the needs of those who have less. In the patriarch’s words, “Unfortunately, in our days under the influence of an extreme rationalism and self-centeredness, humanity has lost the sense of sacredness of creation and acts as its arbitrary ruler and rude violator. Instead of the eucharistic and ascetic spirit with which the Orthodox Church brought up its children for centuries, we observe today a violation of nature for the satisfaction not of basic human needs, but of man’s endless and constantly increasing desire and lust, encouraged by the prevailing philosophy of the consumer society.”

Christians, the patriarch affirms, should approach the material creation with a eucharistic spirit, that is, with an attitude of thanksgiving, recognizing that it is of God and given to us by His grace. It should be used with an ascetic spirit, that is, according to our real needs rather than from a desire to amass or to out-possess others. An ascetic spirit sees our abundance as given that we may use it in doing good for those in need.

More recently the Pope of Rome, Francis, affirmed similar sentiments, speaking to a crowd in St. Peter’s Square. He identified modern society as a “culture of waste,” as others have spoken of a throwaway society. “This culture of waste has made us insensitive even to the waste and disposal of food, which is even more despicable when all over the world, unfortunately, many individuals and families are suffering from hunger and malnutrition,” the pope said.

“Once our grandparents were very careful not to throw away any leftover food. Consumerism has led us to become used to an excess and daily waste of food, to which, at times we are no longer able to give a just value. Throwing away food is like stealing from the table of the poor and the hungry.”

In 2015 Pope Francis added this commemoration to the calendar of the Roman Church. As we begin the new Church year we can embrace the sentiments of both these hierarchs, by taking a fresh look at the creation in which we live, seeing it as God’s gift to us meant to be used with a spirit of simplicity and love for others.

## September 1: the Indiction

IN THE MODERN AGE the world has come to accept one civil calendar which originated in Western Europe centuries ago. Many of us are aware that some groups still maintain an attachment to their historic calendars. The Chinese and Vietnamese, for example stage their own New Year's celebrations according to their ancient calendars, usually in late winter. The Islamic New Year may begin anywhere from mid-October to mid-December. And the Jewish New Year, Rosh Ha-shanah, regularly begins in September.

Starting in the last half of the fifth century (probably AD 462), the Byzantine Empire designated September 1 as the first day of the New Year. The Byzantine liturgical year was arranged according to that calendar and September 1 remains the first day of our liturgical year. The cycle of the Church's Great Feasts begin in September with the Nativity of the Theotokos (September 8) and conclude in August with the feast of her Dormition (August 15).

Although our contemporary civil calendar begins on January 1, many of our public institutions effectively begin their year in September also. Congress and the courts, the school year, the theater and concert seasons, fundraisers, and other civic events on hold through the summer start up again only after Labor Day. Perhaps the Jews and the Byzantines got it right after all.

### The Indiction

The first day of the Church year is called the Indiction. Originally referring to the start of a tax assessment cycle in the Roman Empire, this word has come to mean the beginning of a cycle in a more general way and may be found in legal or formal documents to this day. Thus in 2011 Pope Benedict XVI issued a formal letter "For the Indiction [i.e. Beginning] of the Year of Faith." And so calling September 1 an Indiction simply means that it is the start of a new cycle of the feasts, fasts and other observances of our Church.

On this day Byzantine churches read the Gospel of the beginning of Christ's public ministry as recorded in Luke 4:16-22. After reading the Messianic prophecy in Isaiah 61:1-2 the Lord tells His listeners, "Today this Scripture is fulfilled in your hearing." The Messiah is at hand: God's plan is on the move.

### The "Year of the World"

A lesser-known aspect of the Byzantine calendar is that September 1, AD 1000 is the first day of AM 7522! From AD 691 to 1728 the Byzantine Churches followed a system dating years from the creation of the world according to the calculations in the Book of Genesis (AM, Anno Mundi, the Year of the World"). In 1700, during his westernization of Russia, Tsar Peter the Great replaced the Byzantine Era in his realm with the Western Christian Era. A few years later the Patriarchate of Constantinople and all the Churches in the Ottoman Empire followed suit. Formal documents of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, Mount Athos and some other Eastern Church bodies may still indicate the Byzantine Era date along with that according to the Christian Era.

## SAINT JOSEPH CHURCH ANNOUNCEMENTS

### EVENTS IN AUGUST

Sunday, August 29

*Resurrectional Orthros 9:00 a.m.*

*Divine Liturgy: 10:00 a.m.*

*Parish Meeting  
after Divine Liturgy*

### EVENTS IN SEPTEMBER

Saturday, September 4

*Confessions: 3:00*

*Great Vespers 3:15 p.m.*

*Divine Liturgy 4:00 p.m.*

Sunday, September 5

*Resurrectional Orthros 9:00 a.m.*

*Divine Liturgy: 10:00 a.m.*

Tuesday, September 7

*Great Vespers 7:00 p.m.*

Wednesday, September 8

*Divine Liturgy 5:30 p.m.*

Tuesday, September 13

*Divine Liturgy 5:30 p.m.*

Wednesday, September 14

*Divine Liturgy 10:00 a.m.*

*Gregory the Great Academy  
Elmhurst Township, PA 18444*

### DIVINE LITURGY INTENTIONS

28 August ✠Anthony Joseph Bolus  
29 August ✠Rev. Anthonasius Simon ✠Mary Betress;  
✠Peter Betress, ✠Mary Sue Betress ✠Sadie Betress ✠  
Murad Betress ✠Mary Petrochko, ✠John Petrochko ✠  
Anastasia Billek

### 2021 WEEKLY COLLECTION

August 22

Weekly Offering: \$ 630.00; Monthly: \$ 30.00

Holydays: \$ 30.00; Candles: \$ 25.00 Total: \$ 715.00

### 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.

### BENEFACTORS

#### OF OUR FOOD FESTIVAL BASKET RAFFLE

St Joseph Women's Society  
St. Vladimir Ukrainian Church  
Electric City Trolley Museum Alicia Patchoski  
Gerrity's; Granteeds Pizza, Scranton  
Honesdale National Bank  
Lahey Family Fun Park  
Price Chopper; Price Rite Supermarket  
SWB Railriders  
Jean Sluck, Taylor Public Library  
Mike & Liz Zaydon Dessoye  
Eve Fitzpatrick; Marie Fagan Jolly  
Jim & Karen Kane  
Mike & Bertha Milewski  
Helen Pagnotti, Karen Lilik & et.al. St. Vladimir  
Katie Patchoski  
Danielle Pusateri in Memory: Anthony Romiti  
Deb Pusateri & Phyllis  
Cathryn Rocco; MaryLou Vandorick  
Anne Clarice Zaydon; Jim & Betsy Zaydon  
Michael & Karen Zaydon; Salvatore Zaydon



# The Forerunner in Hades

The Gospels depict St John the Baptist as the “forerunner” or herald announcing the immanent coming of God’s saving work in Jesus Christ. In the Gospel of Mark, for example, we read, “*There comes One after me who is mightier than I, whose sandal strap I am not worthy to stoop down and loose. I indeed baptized you with water, but He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit*” (Mk 1:7, 8).

The coming of the Messiah was the focus of John’s message about the kingdom of God. “*In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judea, ‘Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand’*” (Mt 3:1). This “kingdom” is none other than Jesus in whom the will of His Father governed His every action. Thus He is the kingdom personified.

## The Story of John’s Struggle

We read the story of John’s final fight “for the sake of truth” in Mark’s Gospel. “*For Herod himself had sent and laid hold of John, and bound him in prison for the sake of Herodias, his brother Philip’s wife; for he had married her. Because John had said to Herod, ‘It is not lawful for you to have your brother’s wife’*” (Mk 6:17, 18).

John languished in prison because Herod had a superstitious fear of the prophet. He revered John as a holy man but could not bring himself to follow the Baptist’s teachings.

“*Then an opportune day came when Herod on his birthday gave a feast for his nobles, the high officers, and the chief men of Galilee. And when Herodias’ daughter herself came in and danced, and pleased Herod and those who sat with him, the king said to the girl, ‘Ask me whatever you want, and I will give it to you.’ He also swore to her, ‘Whatever you ask me, I will give you, up to half my kingdom’*” (Mk 6:21-23).

What followed has been frequently retold in literature, music, painting and sculpture. Prompted by her mother, Salome asks for the head of John: “*I want you to give me at once the head of John the Baptist on a platter*” (v. 25). Because of the oath he had sworn in the presence of his guests, Herod agreed and had John beheaded, making possible the prophet’s ministry in Hades.

John’s work as herald of our salvation was not limited to announcing the beginning of Christ’s ministry in Galilee. Our troparion for today’s commemoration mentions that John baptized the Lord Jesus. Then, it continues, “You have fought for the sake of truth and proclaimed to those in Hades that God who appeared in the flesh has taken away the sins of the world and bestowed His great mercy upon us.” John’s ministry continued after death as he announced to the dead in Hades that Christ’s coming was close at hand.

## Did John Witness in Hades?

As the Gospels affirm, Jesus was still alive when John was executed. But the New Testament does not teach that John witnessed to Christ in Hades. How and when did this concept enter our tradition?

Origen of Alexandria, foremost commentator on the Scriptures in the third century, explained that John the Baptist had died before Christ, “so that he might descend to the lower regions and announce His coming. For everywhere the witness and forerunner of Jesus is John, being born

before and dying shortly before the Son of God, so that not only to those of his generation but likewise to those who lived before Christ should liberation from the death be preached, and that he might everywhere prepare a people trained to receive the Lord” (Origen, *Homily on Luke* 4).

Those in Hades would “receive the Lord” upon His death as we read in the New Testament: “*Christ also died for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive in the spirit; in which he went and preached to the spirits in prison, who formerly did not obey...*” (1 Pt 3:18, 19). A number of the apostolic Fathers such as Saints Polycarp of Smyrna, Ignatius of Antioch, Irenaeus of Lyons, and Clement of Alexandria all taught that Christ had descended into Hades. We find the same teaching in the Syriac Fathers Jacob of Sarouj, Aphrahat the Persian and Ephrem the Syrian as well as the Greek Fathers Athanasius the Great, Basil the Great, Gregory Nazianzen, John Chrysostom, Cyril of Alexandria, Maximus the Confessor and John of Damascus.

Our most common icon of the resurrection depicts Christ emerging from Hades leading out by the hand Adam and Eve (and, by implication, the human race). In many icons John the Forerunner is beside Him, at the head of those who had died before Christ and were now brought to eternal life by Him.

## Our Observance of John’s Death

Because John, whom the Lord Himself had called the greatest man born of woman, was killed as a result of Herod’s birthday revels, the Byzantine Churches observe today as a strict fast: no parties, no luxury foods, no drink. We see where these things can lead.

A number of popular local customs have arisen to mark this day among various Eastern Christians. In various places people may:

Avoid eating anything on round plates, instead use bowls, since Salome asked for John’s head “on a platter”.

Avoid eating any round fruits or vegetables (they resemble a head).

Avoid eating anything that requires use of knives or anything that cuts.

Avoid eating or drinking anything red (they remind us of blood).

A contemporary way to observe this commemoration might be to fast and pray for those who have died senselessly at the hands of others through terrorism, armed conflicts or senseless violence. Think of them as John’s “companions in suffering.

## John’s Witness in Our Liturgy

Come, you people, let us praise the prophet and martyr, the baptizer of the Savior; for, as an angel in the flesh, he denounced Herod, condemning him for committing most iniquitous fornication. And thanks to iniquitous dancing, his precious head is cut off, that he might announce in Hades the glad tidings of the resurrection from the dead. He prays earnestly to the Lord, that our souls be saved. ***Liti Sticheron***

The beheading of the Forerunner was an act of divine providence: the occasion for him to announce the coming of the Savior to the souls in Hades. Let then Herodias lament and weep, for she has asked for murder, preferring the present life and its pleasures to eternal life & God’s law.