

ST. JOSEPH THE BETROTHED

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

Contact office: 570.343.6092 † stjosephscranton@gmail.com
♣ www.melkitescranton.org ♣

PRAYER INTENTIONS

P. H. S.: Rev. Dn. Joseph Daratony. Michael Abda. Marie Baron. 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. ✱Cecilia Davidson ✱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.

TWENTY-SIXTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST ENTRANCE OF THE THEOTOKOS INTO THE TEMPLE



Icon of the Entrance of the Theotokos into the Temple -- November 21st

DIVINE LITURGY OF ST. JOHN CHRYSOSTOM

21 NOVEMBER 2021 ♦ TONE 01 EOTHINON 04 † NINTH SUNDAY AFTER HOLY CROSS/ENTRANCE MP

<u>GREAT DOXOLOGY:</u>	<i>Liturgy Book p. 1</i>
<u>ANTIPHONS:</u> <i>Entrance of Theotokos into the Temple</i>	
FIRST:	<i>Liturgy Book p. 29</i>
SECOND:	<i>Liturgy Book p. 32</i>
THIRD:	<i>Liturgy Book p. 36/54</i>
<u>ENTRANCE HYMN:</u>	<i>Liturgy Book p. 38</i>
<u>APOLYTIKIA:</u>	
<i>Resurrection (Tone 1)</i>	<i>Liturgy Book p. 54</i>
<i>Entrance of Theotokos into the Temple</i>	<i>Liturgy Book p. 147</i>
<u>KONDAKION:</u> <i>Entrance of Theotokos into the Temple</i>	<i>Liturgy Book p. 148</i>
<u>TRISAGION:</u>	<i>Liturgy Book p. 50</i>
<u>PROKIMENON:</u> <i>Wednesday Theotokos</i>	<i>Liturgy Book p. 130</i>
<u>EPISTLE:</u>	<i>Hebrews 9:1-7</i>
Brethren, the first tabernacle also had ritual ordinances and a sanctuary, though an earthly one. For there was set up a tabernacle in the outer part of which were the lamp-stand and the table and the show-bread, and this is called the Holy Place. But beyond the second veil was the tabernacle which is called the Holy of Holies, having a golden censer and the Ark of the Covenant, overlaid on every side with gold. In the ark was a golden vessel containing the manna, and the rod of Aaron which had budded, and the tablets of the covenant and above it were the Cherubim of glory, overshadowing the mercy-seat. But of all these we cannot now speak in detail. Such then being the arrangements, the priests always used to enter into the first tabernacle to perform the sacred rites; but into the second tabernacle, the high priest alone entered once a year, not without blood, which he offered for his own and the people’s sins of ignorance.	
<u>ALLELUIA:</u>	<i>(Tone 8)</i>
Listen, daughter, and behold and lend your ear, and forget your people and your father’s house. The rich among the people shall seek your favor.	
<u>GOSPEL:</u>	<i>St. Luke 10:38-42 & 11:27-28</i>
<i>At that time</i> Jesus entered a certain village; and a woman named Martha welcomed him to her house. And she had a sister called Mary, who also seated herself at the Lord’s feet, and listened to his word. But Martha was worried about much serving. And she came up and said, “Lord, is it no concern of yours that my sister has left me to serve alone? Tell her therefore to help me.” But the Lord answered and said to her, “Martha, Martha, you are anxious and troubled about many things; and yet only one thing is needful. Mary has chosen the best part, and it will not be taken away from her.” As he was saying these things, a certain woman lifted up her voice from the crowd, and said to him, “Blessed is the womb that bore you, and the breasts that nursed you!” But he said, “Rather, blessed are those who hear the word of God and keep it.”	
<u>HIRMOS:</u>	<i>Liturgy Book p. 149</i>
<u>KINONIKON:</u>	<i>Liturgy Book p. 47</i>

"THE BISHOP’S APPEAL: At this time of year when we offer thanksgiving for all God’s blessings, Our Lord speaks to us in the Gospel about storing up treasure in Heaven and about being rich in the things of God. Let us give back to the Lord in return for all the blessings He has bestowed upon us. Let us give thanks to God for the precious gift of our Melkite Church and pay a tribute of thanksgiving for the labor and sacrifice of our forebears in the faith who have gone before us. Offer your thanks to God by giving a generous gift to the Bishop’s Appeal. Extra donation envelopes are available in the narthex. Thank you for your generosity. "

Others have thought that Catherine is a fictional person, modeled after the neo-Platonist philosopher Hypatia who, according to the fifth-century Christian writer Socrates Scholasticus, “made such attainments in literature and science, as to far surpass all the philosophers of her own time.” This woman was killed in 415 by a Christian mob in Alexandria who believed she was influencing the city’s prefect against the bishop. This caused a great scandal in the Churches for, as Socrates observed, “Surely nothing can be farther from the spirit of Christianity than the allowance of massacres, fights, and transactions of that sort.”

In the Middle Ages a tradition began to circulate that Hypatia, through her student Synesios the Bishop of Cyrene, became a Christian. According to the local tradition of Denizli in Asia Minor, Bishop Synesios, to show repentance on behalf of Christians for the death of Hypatia, is the one who called a local synod on November 25, 415 after her death, in which he presented a letter of Hypatia saying that she had “a desire to die a Christian” and to be baptized on Holy Saturday of that year. The synod decided to thus honor her memory on November 25th, which became the feast of St. Catherine later on. From this we can deduce that the people of Denizli saw St. Katherine as a baptized version of Hypatia.

A former teacher in Denizli at the end of the nineteenth century wrote that there used to be a church in the village “dedicated to the honor and memory of Hypatia, the philosopher and martyr.” This church celebrated its feast on November 25th “for the Virgin-Martyr Saint Katherine in whose name crowds of believers who lived in the surrounding area would celebrate the wise daughter and rhetor, Hypatia” given a new name by virtue of her “baptism of desire.”

A Woman Philosopher?

Simeon Metaphrastes depicts St Catherine as a highly educated woman, a philosopher skilled in the Alexandrian tradition. Some people think that women emerged into public life only in the modern era. In the Hellenistic culture – and Alexandria was the educational center of the Greco-Roman world – learning and religion were the two fields most open to women. The degree of freedom a woman enjoyed depended largely on her wealth and social status. As the patrician Simeon describes, Catherine would have enjoyed such freedom and opportunity.

A slightly later example of a learned woman is St Macrina the Elder, matriarch of a noble Cappadocian Christian family. Her grandson, St Basil the Great, described her as “the illustrious Macrina, by whom we were taught the words of the most blessed Gregory [the Wonderworker].” That a grandmother would teach her grandchildren religion is not unusual – that a grandmother would pass on to them the deeply philosophical writings of a disciple of Origen is beyond our imagination today.

St. Basil’s sister, Macrina the Younger, was named after her illustrious grandmother. She too was a noted Christian thinker who had considerable influences on her brothers Basil the Great and Gregory of Nyssa. By her time, however, Christian women had a new field of endeavor open to them: monasticism. With another of her brothers, Peter of Sebaste, she devoted her resources to establishing monasteries on the grounds of the family estate.

Like these other learned women, St Catherine is something of a symbol of an age in transition. She lived in great centers of Neoplatonism, a philosophy that was increasingly being mixed with superstition and divination. She died in the last of the great Roman persecutions and, through her relics, became a protectress of monasticism in which the Christian philosophy of theosis would thrive.

NOVEMBER 25: ST. CATHERINE OF ALEXANDRIA

IN THE YEAR 650 THE EMPEROR JUSTINIAN sponsored the building of a monastery at Jebel Moussa on the Sinai Peninsula. It was built to enclose the Chapel of the Burning Bush ordered to be built by St. Helena, the mother of St Constantine the Great, at the site where Moses is supposed to have encountered God at the burning bush. The full, official name of the monastery is the Sacred and Imperial Monastery of the God-Trodden Mount of Sinai, but for centuries it has been known as the Monastery of St Catherine.

Justinian’s monastery still exists. The unique climate of Sinai has preserved in it some of the oldest Christian manuscripts in the world including the fourth century Codex Sinaiticus, a handwritten copy of the Bible. The monastery houses the most important collection of early icons in the world. Many of them look as if they were painted yesterday. The monastery also cherishes numerous relics, the most revered being the head and the hand of St. Catherine of Alexandria which rest in the monastery church.

In the eighth century the relics of St. Catherine were discovered buried in the ground by an ascetic who lived in the vicinity. They were later transferred to the monastery itself and placed in a sarcophagus near the principal altar. The saint’s head and hand remain there to this day, reportedly giving forth a heavenly scent and working countless miracles. Thus the liturgy calls Catherine “the protectress of Sinai” (troparion),

In the eleventh century Simeon of Trier brought a finger of the saint to Rouen. Other relics are found in churches throughout the Mediterranean, in Ethiopia and in India. Devotion to St Catherine thus spread throughout the Christian world.

The relics of Saint Catherine are brought out for the veneration of the faithful on special occasions, at which time each pilgrim is given a silver ring bearing the monogram of the saint. These rings are preserved by pilgrims as a blessing from Saint Catherine. According to one tradition, Catherine had a vision in which she underwent a mystic marriage with Christ, who put a gold ring on her finger. Another version of the tradition says that, when Catherine was praying before a small icon of the Theotokos and Her Son, He turned His head and placed a ring on her finger.

Who Was St. Catherine?

Despite the universal reverence for this saint in all the Churches, important questions about her identity remain unanswered. The first mention of her by name is in the Menologium Basilianum, a collection of saints’ lives compiled for Emperor Basil II who died in 886, over 500 years after her death. A longer life, by Simeon Metaphrastes, was written in the tenth century and is the source of all later compositions, including the hymns for her feast.

According to Simeon, Catherine was an extremely learned young girl of noble birth who protested the persecution of Christians under the Roman emperor Maxentius —whose wife and several soldiers she converted — and defeated the most eminent scholars summoned by Maxentius to oppose her. The spiked wheel by which she was sentenced to be killed broke, and she was then beheaded.

In the eighteenth century the Maronite scholar, Joseph Simon Assemani (1687-1768), seeking an earlier mention, identified Catherine with a young Christian noblewoman of Alexandria mentioned in Eusebius’ history of the Church, written less than 20 years after the persecutions of Diocletian and Maximinus. This woman was banished for refusing the solicitations of the emperor and suffered the confiscation of her estates.

SAINT JOSEPH CHURCH ANNOUNCEMENTS

EVENTS IN NOVEMBER

Sun. November 15 – Fri. December 24

Philip’s Fast

Saturday, November 20

Confessions: 3:00

Great Vespers 3:15 p.m.

Divine Liturgy 4:00 p.m.

Sunday, November 21

ENTRANCE OF THEOTOKOS INTO TEMPLE
ONE OF THE TWELVE GREAT FEASTS

Divine Liturgy: 10:00 a.m.

Thursday, November 25

Divine Liturgy 9:00 a.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 the Holy Spirit be glorified, now and ever and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

2021 WEEKLY COLLECTION

November 14

Weekly Offering:	\$ 52000
Monthly:	\$ 15.00
Missions:	\$ 15.00
Candles:	\$ 25.00
Total:	\$ 575.00

Thank you for your support!

2021 RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Beginning Sunday, November 21, 2021

*Please bring a Lenten dish
to share for the brunch beforehand.*

DIVINE LITURGY INTENTIONS

20 November: Nathan Cheffers ✕
21 November: ✕ Angela Scavo
from A. Clarice Zaydon
09 January: Ann T. Radgowski

Philip Fast: Advent:

November 15 through December 24 inclusive:

Fasting Guidelines

The strict fast includes fasting from all meat and meat products, poultry, eggs, dairy products, fish, oil, and wine.
Tuesday and Thursdays: oil and wine are allowed.
Saturdays and Sundays: fish, wine and oil are allowed.
On certain feast days: fish, and/or wine and oil are per-mitted: St. Spiridon (Dec. 12), St. Ignatius (Dec. 20), etc. While the Nativity Fast is not as severe as the Fast of Great Lent or the Dormition Fast, Christians will refrain from needless entertainment.

The sick, the very young, the elderly, and nursing mothers are exempt from fasting. Individuals should confer with their confessor regarding exemptions from the fasting rules, and should never place themselves in physical danger.

The Paramony of the Nativity (Dec. 24) is a strict fast day, on which no solid food should be eaten until the first star is seen in the evening sky (or until after the Vespers Divine Liturgy that day).

NOVEMBER 21: ENTRANCE OF THEOTOKOS INTO THE TEMPLE

IT IS PROBABLY SAFE TO SAY that most people would prefer to read a story than an academic treatise. Both forms might be conveying the same point, but a narrative is likely to be more compelling – and more memorable – than a dissertation.

The Entrance of the Theotokos into the Temple, the Great Feast we celebrate today, rests on such a narrative. The story is found in The Protoevangelion of James, a second-century telling of the birth and infancy of the Theotokos. We know that in the first and second centuries AD a number of books were written about Christ and His Mother. Some were accepted by all the local Churches as presenting a true portrait of the Messiah. Others were rejected because the Christ they portrayed was not the one who had been preached by the apostles. In some He was a Gnostic philosopher, in other a magician. We call these “apocryphal gospels” and do not see them as the voice of the Holy Spirit to us. Still other books, The Protoevangelion of James among them, were revered by the Christians of their day but not considered canonical Scriptures because their content was not at the heart of the apostolic proclamation or the early Creeds. Their subject matter treated things like Jesus’ physical appearance or the early periods of Christ’s life not covered in the Gospels. They may be true but not central to our faith.

The Source of This Feast

The prayers and icon of this Feast focus on two elements of the Protoevangelion story. In the first, Mary at the age of three is presented to God in the temple at Jerusalem accompanied, as the text reads, “by the daughters of the Hebrews that are undefiled.” There “the priest received her, kissed her and blessed her.”

After describing the scene, the Protoevangelion continues: “And Mary was in the temple of the Lord like a dove that is being nurtured: and she received food from the hand of an angel” (8:1). The image of the Virgin receiving food from an angel, often represented in our icon of the Feast, points to the spiritual environment in which Mary was raised and which would prepare the holy Virgin for her future role as Theotokos.

The second vignette is shown in the upper right hand corner of this icon. There Mary sits in the innermost sanctuary of the temple, the Holy of Holies, ministered to by an angel. According to Jewish Law, no one entered the Holy of Holies: “only the high priest entered the inner room, and that only once a year, and never without blood, which he offered for himself and for the sins the people had committed in ignorance” (Heb 9:8). It is unthinkable that a child would be not only allowed there but actually live there as the Protoevangelion avows.

In the Epistle to the Hebrews we are given a reason why no one was allowed into the Holy of Holies: “The Holy Spirit was showing by this that the way into the Most Holy Place had not yet been disclosed as long as the first tabernacle was still functioning” (Heb 9:9). By placing Mary in the Holy of Holies, the Protoevangelion is saying that the way into the Holy Place – the presence of God – now is disclosed. It is Christ, who would be incarnate in the womb of this same Mary the Theotokos. For this reason the story and its celebration have been embraced by the Tradition as affirmations of the Gospel.

Mary’s coming into the temple is portrayed as an “Entrance” on this feast in the Christian East rather than as a “Presentation” as in the West. This term puts us in mind of things like the “Great Entrance” at our Divine Liturgy or the Entrance Procession in the Western rites. Her

coming is not the blessing of an insignificant child given in a “side chapel,” as it were, but a festive “prelude” or “overture” inaugurating the main event, the New Testament itself.

Our celebration of this feast focuses on Mary as the temple of the incarnate God, the one for whom the Jerusalem temple was only a prefiguration. After their entry with Christ into Jerusalem His disciples came up to Him to call His attention to the temple and the buildings in its compound. Jesus replied, ““Do you see all these things?” he asked. ‘Truly I tell you, not one stone here will be left on another; every one will be thrown down’” (Mt 24:2). This feast celebrates the fulfillment of His prophecy. God’s people will no longer reach heaven via Jerusalem; rather the heavens have been opened to us and God’s temple, the Theotokos, is become for us the way to heaven through her childbearing.

“Hail, Full of Grace”

Perhaps the most popular hymn of this feast is the kontakion, O katharotatos naos, which summarizes in a few lines the theology we have been presenting. It reads: “The most pure Temple of the Savior, the most precious and bright bridal chamber – the Virgin, sacred treasury of the glory of God – enters today into the Temple of the Lord, bringing with her the grace of the Most Holy Spirit. Wherefore, the angels of God are singing: “This is the heavenly Tabernacle!” In this hymn two teachings are affirmed. Mary is proclaimed by the angels as “the heavenly tabernacle.” The tabernacle, we know, was the portable holy place which the Hebrews brought with them in the desert until they reached the promised land. It was rendered into a more permanent form as the temple. She, not any building, is the holy place where God dwelled.

Secondly we are told that Mary entered the temple “bringing with her the grace of the Most Holy Spirit.” People went to the temple to encounter God, to receive His blessings. Mary, instead, brings God’s grace with her. She is proclaimed as “full of grace,” even as a child, by the angels themselves. This feast is thus for the Eastern Churches what the Immaculate Conception is to the West: a celebration of the holiness of Mary, sanctified from her earliest days by the Most Holy Spirit who dwelt in her.

As we have said it was unthinkable that a child, or anyone for that matter, should enter the Holy of Holies. But it is Mary’s rightful place as the woman full of grace who would contain within the Platytera between earth and heaven, the foremost worshipper of the Lord whom she bore.

Mary at Work

Icons of the annunciation often show the Holy Virgin weaving when the angel appeared to her. This vignette, too, is drawn from the Protoevangelion, which describes Mary as weaving a curtain for the Jerusalem temple with several other girls. The temple veil was like a giant patchwork quilt with each girl assigned by lots to weave a portion, each using different colors. The Virgin was given the most precious colors, scarlet and true purple.

Our iconography designates these colors to represent divinity. Christ wears a scarlet or purple tunic with a blue cloak over it. This symbolizes that His divinity (scarlet) put on His humanity (blue) in the incarnation. In icons of the Theotokos the colors are reversed. Her humanity (a blue tunic) took on divinity (a scarlet cloak) when she conceived the Lord.