

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 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. 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.

SUNDAY AFTER THEOPHANY



Christ the Teacher – Pantocrator of Hagia Sophia

DIVINE LITURGY OF ST. JOHN CHRYSOSTOM

09 JANUARY 2022 ♦ TONE 08 EOTHINON 11 † SUNDAY AFTER THEOPHANY / FOURTH DAY OF THEOPHANY

GREAT DOXOLOGY:

ANTIPHONS: *Theophany*

FIRST:

SECOND:

THIRD: *Beatitudes*

ENTRANCE HYMN:

APOLYTIKIA:

Resurrection (Tone 8)

Theophany

Holy Martyr Polyeuctos

Saint Joseph

KONDAKION: *Theophany*

TRISAGION:

PROKIMENON: *(Tone 8)*

EPISTLE:

Brethren, to each one of us the grace was given according to the measure of Christ’s bestowal. Thus, is says, ascending on high, he let away captives; he gave gifts to men (Ps.61:19). Now this ascending, what does it mean but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth? He who descended, he it is who ascended also above all the heavens, that he might fill all things. And he himself gave some men as apostles, and some as prophets, and others as pastors and teachers, in order to perfect the saints for a work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the deep knowledge of the Son of God, to perfect manhood, to the mature measure of the fullness of Christ.

ALLELUIA:

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.

GOSPEL:

At that time, When Jesus heard that John had been arrested, he withdrew to Galilee. He left Nazareth and went to live in Capernaum by the sea, in the region of Zebulun and Naphtali, that what had been said through Isaiah the prophet might be fulfilled: "Land of Zebulun and land of Naphtali, the way to the sea, beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles, the people who sit in darkness have seen a great light, on those dwelling in a land overshadowed by death light has arisen." From that time on, Jesus began to preach and say, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

HIRMOS: *Theophany*

KINONIKON:

COMMUNION

HYMNS AFTER COMMUNION

Liturgy Book p. 17

Liturgy Book p. 29

Liturgy Book p. 32

Liturgy Book p. 125

Liturgy Book p. 38

Liturgy Book p. 46

Liturgy Book p. 157

Liturgy Book p. 99

Liturgy Book p. 47

Liturgy Book p. 158

Liturgy Book p. 50

Liturgy Book p. 61

Ephesians 4:7-13

(Tone 5)

Mark 4:12-17

Liturgy Book p. 158

Liturgy Book p. 160

Liturgy Book p. 87

Liturgy Book p. 89

am and Eve, created in communion with God, are naked and unashamed. The original creation is restored and renewed with the coming of Christ.

“Once You clothed the shameful nakedness of our forefather Adam; now You are stripped naked of Your own will! You covered the roof of heaven with waters; now You wrap Yourself in the streams of Jordan, only merciful Christ.”

In later icons Christ is depicted with a drape around His waist, which represents the winding sheet in which He was wrapped for burial. The river is often depicted in the shape of a cave, suggesting the tomb in which He was laid.

In some icons the water envelops His sacred body which is visible in it. We are thus reminded of the death and resurrection of Christ into which our baptism immerses us.

In other icons Jesus is not submerged into the water at all. He is depicted astride the river as He blesses it. The River Jordan did not cleanse Christ; it is Christ’s presence in its midst which sanctifies the waters.

Other Signs of God’s Presence

The icon of the Theophany, as well as many of its hymns, includes other elements which point to the divine activity present in Christ at His baptism. Among them are:

John the Forerunner: The presence of John the Baptist is an essential part of the story of Jesus’ baptism. In icons, however, the depiction of John is more about Christ than it is about him. In some icons John is showed bowing to the Lord, bent in awe before the One he had come to announce. In other icons John is depicted as gazing up toward heaven, as if beholding the manifestation of the Father and the Spirit. In either case, although he was the focus of all other baptisms which he performed, John was not the center of this one.

The Axe: In some icons we see a tree stump with an axe embedded in it near where John is standing. This recalls John’s prophetic words to the Pharisees, “even now the axe is laid to the root of the trees. Therefore every tree which does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire” (Mt 3:10). The axe ready to cut signifies that the Messiah is at hand.

The Seascape: In some icons Christ is shown standing on one or two rocks, sometimes arranged in the form of a cross. Here we are reminded of the resurrection icon in which the Lord is depicted astride the gates of Death. In that icon the personification of Death often lies bound beneath His feet. In the Theophany icon it is often snakes or a sea creature under His feet. In both cases what is depicted is Christ’s victory over the powers of darkness. “You crushed the heads of the dragons in the water” (Ps 73:14).

“When You bowed Your head to the Forerunner, You crushed the heads of the dragons; and when You stood in the midst of the stream, You let Your light shine upon all creatures, that they might glorify You, Our Savior, who enlighten our souls!”

The Sea: At the bottom of the icon we often find two small figures with astonished looks on their faces, often astride dolphins. They personify these psalm verses, alluding to the Exodus but often heard during the feast of the Theophany: “The sea saw and fled; Jordan turned back... What ails you, O sea, that you fled? O Jordan, that you turned back? O mountains, that you skipped like rams? O little hills, like lambs? Tremble, O earth, at the presence of the Lord, at the presence of the God of Jacob” (Ps 114:3, 5-7).

Today the prophecy of the Psalms swiftly approaches its fulfillment: “The sea looked and fled: Jordan was driven back” before the face of the Lord, before the face of the God of Jacob! He came to receive baptism from His servant, so that our souls washed clean from the defilement of idolatry, might be enlightened through Him!

GOD REVEALED AT THE JORDON: ICON OF THE THEOPHANY

WHAT DO WE CELEBRATE on January 6? Well, it's obvious, isn't it? Just look at the icon: it's Jesus' baptism!

Actually, neither the icon nor the feast celebrates *the fact that* the Lord Jesus was baptized. Rather we remember *what happened at His baptism* and what it represents for us as we live our life in Christ. We do not call this the Feast of Christ's Baptism, focusing on the historical setting. Rather we call it the Feast of the Holy Theophany, or "manifestation of God,"

Manifestation of the Trinity

The troparion of the feast sets the tone for our reflection: "At Your baptism in the Jordan, O Lord, the worship of the Trinity was revealed; for the Father's voice bore witness to You, calling You His beloved Son and the Spirit in the form of a dove confirmed the truth of His word. O Christ God, who have appeared to us and enlightened the world, glory to You!"

The story of this theophany is recorded in the Gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke. In John's Gospel, as we shall see, the Baptist alludes to it as he describes the character and mission of Jesus.

The Father's Voice: Matthew, Mark and Luke all tell of a voice from heaven heard at Jesus' baptism calling Him "My beloved Son" (Mt 3:17; Mk 1:11; Lk 3:22). None of the Evangelists say outright that this was the voice of God, but since their picture of Jesus as the Son of God is clear in the Gospels, we can draw no other conclusion.

In icons of the Theophany this voice is depicted symbolically by the ray of light which originates in a geometric shape – often a semicircle – and rests over the head of Jesus.

The Dove: All the Evangelists, including John, describe the presence of the Holy Spirit in the form of a dove. In John's Gospel the Baptist offers his own testimony: "He who sent me to baptize with water said to me, 'Upon whom you see the Spirit descending, and remaining on Him, this is He who baptizes with the Holy Spirit;' and I have seen and testified that this is the Son of God" (Jn 1:33, 34).

In icons the dove is enclosed in an aureole, symbol of divine glory, in the midst of the ray representing the Father's voice.

St John of Damascus compared the dove which appeared at the end of the flood to the dove at Jesus' baptism. "As, at that time the world was cleansed of sin through the waters of the flood, then the dove brought an olive branch to Noah's Ark announcing the end of the flood, and peace came to the Earth, so, in like manner the Holy Spirit descends as a dove to announce forgiveness of sins and God's mercy on the world. Then [it was] an olive branch, now it is our Lord's mercy."

The graphic presence of the Father (by His voice), the Son (in the flesh) and the Holy Spirit (in the form of a dove) is the first such manifestation of the Holy Trinity in the New Testament. The second such revelation is at the Holy Transfiguration of Christ as His ministry is drawing to a close.

The Lord Jesus: God and Man

Christ is clearly Lord in icons of this feast. Several signs of His divinity and preeminence are found in the way He is shown. In Western depictions of His baptism Jesus is often shown with His head bowed and hands folded in prayer. That is never the case in our icons. He is shown standing erect, often with His hand raised in blessing.

In some older icons Christ is depicted naked. We are back in the Garden of Eden when Ad-

SAINT JOSEPH CHURCH ANNOUNCEMENTS

EVENTS IN JANUARY

Saturday, January 8th

Confessions: 3:00 p.m.

Great Vespers: 3:15 p.m.

Divine Liturgy 4:00 p.m.

Sunday, January 9th

Resurrectional Orthros 9:00 a.m.

Divine Liturgy 10:00 a.m.

Saturday, January 15th

Confessions: 3:00 p.m.

Great Vespers: 3:15 p.m.

Divine Liturgy 4:00 p.m.

Sunday, January 16th

Resurrectional Orthros 9:00 a.m.

Divine Liturgy 10:00 a.m.

Potluck Brunch

2021 Nativity Play

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

January 02

Weekly Offering:	\$ 1,105.00
Monthly:	\$ 10.00
Holydays:	\$ 785.00
Envelops:	\$ 25.00
Candles:	\$ 25.00
Total:	\$ 1,950.00

Thank you for your support!

DIVINE LITURGY INTENTIONS

08 January: Nathan Cheffers ✕
09 January: Ann T. Radgowski
from James & Betsy Zaydon
23 January: ✕Genevieve Zaydon
from Anne Clarice Zaydon

2021 Bishop's Appeal
St Joseph, Scranton PA
Donated \$ 6,435.00
May the Lord God bless
your generosity!

2022 Theophany House Blessing

Please talk to or call Fr. Christopher
to set up a date and time
570.343.6092

THE GREAT BLESSING OF WATER

THE GREAT FEASTS OF THE EASTERN CHURCHES are all observed with special hymns, special icons, and often, special rites. We may think immediately of the blessing of palms on Palm Sunday, the blessing of foods on Pascha, the exaltation of the Holy Cross on that feast or the blessing of grapes on the feast of the Transfiguration. The most solemn of these festal blessings, however, is the Great Sanctification of Water on the Feast of the Theophany.

Church orders actually prescribe two such blessings on the Theophany. At the end of the Vesper-Liturgy on the eve of the feast a vessel of water is sanctified in the church and the water given to the faithful to drink and to take to their homes. After the Liturgy on the feast itself the same rite is performed over a nearby body of water (ocean, river, lake or stream). Parishes that do not observe the full order may only have one such blessing.

Blessed Water in East and West

Holy Water is commonly used in all Eastern and Western Churches but with some difference in their meanings and purposes. In the West holy water is chiefly for purification. It is placed at the doors of churches for worshippers to bless themselves with it on entering the church as a kind of purification. At the principal Sunday Mass the entire congregation is so purified as the priest goes through the church sprinkling the worshippers. These practices recall the Old Testament tradition of having pools or basins of water at the entry to the temple for the same purpose.

In the Eastern Churches purification is more commonly associated with incense. In the Eastern Churches the sanctification of water has a different connotation. It is first of all connected with transformation. At baptism water is transformed that it may be a vehicle for the transformation of the person baptized in it into communion with the Holy Trinity. By being buried in the water and then raised out of it, the new Christian experiences his or her own Pascha by being connected to the death and resurrection of Christ, thus becoming a partaker in the divine nature.

While at baptism a person is sanctified by being placed in the water, the reverse happens at the Theophany. It is the water which is sanctified by the One who entered into it. At the Great Sanctification of Water on the Theophany a cross, representing Christ, is immersed in the water three times, liturgically re-enacting the baptism of Christ and sanctifying the water. This sanctification of water at the Theophany represents the transformation of creation, begun with the incarnation and intended to touch all creation. As St. Paul writes, “the creation itself also will be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groans and labors with birth pangs together until now” (Rom 8:21-22).

The rite continues, representing the extension of the blessing of the Jordan to all creation. The priest goes through the church sprinkling everyone and everything with the newly-sanctified water. In Eastern countries this procession may go through the entire neighborhood or village as the people sing the troparion of the Theophany. People would open their doors and the priest would go into their homes, passing from one to another with the blessing of the Jordan. This rite witnesses to the ongoing transfiguration of creation begun at the Jordan. In contemporary society this aspect of the rite has morphed into a scheduled appearance of the priest to bless the home, visit with the family, collect donations, discuss the parish, etc. Something has been lost.

Is Blessed Water Really Holy?

The twentieth century Russian Orthodox saint, John Maximovich, taught: “On Theophany, the Day of the Lord’s Baptism, every year a great miracle is performed. The Holy Spirit, coming down upon the water, changes its natural properties. It becomes incorrupt, not spoiling, remaining transparent and fresh for many years. This Holy Water receives the grace to heal illnesses, to drive away demons and every evil power, to preserve people and their dwellings from every danger, to sanctify various objects whether for church or home use. Therefore, Orthodox Christians with reverence drink Holy Water ... People who drink a little Holy Water daily, before eating any kind of food, do well. It strengthens the powers of our soul—if it is done with prayer and reverence, and one does not merely expect a mechanical result from it.”

The prayer for the sanctification of water certainly supports the idea that a “great miracle” is expected when we sanctify the water. The priest chants:

“... Great are You, O Lord, and wonderful your works, and no word is adequate to sing the praise of your wonders (3 times). “... Therefore, O King, Lover of mankind, be present now too through the visitation of your Holy Spirit, and sanctify this water. (3 times) And give to it the grace of redemption and the blessing of Jordan. Make it a source of incorruption, a gift of sanctification, a deliverance from sins, an averting of diseases, unapproachable by hostile powers, filled with angelic strength. That all who draw from it and partake of it may have it for cleansing of souls and bodies, for healing of passions, for sanctification of homes, for every suitable purpose. ... And now, Master, do You yourself sanctify this water by your Holy Spirit” (3 times).

This prayer is an epiclesis – a plea for the sending of the Holy Spirit – asking that God effect a transformation. In this it is similar to the prayer said by the bishop when he sanctifies the Holy Chrism and to the Eucharistic epiclesis in the Divine Liturgy itself.

The current order for the Great Sanctification of Water is attributed to St. Sophronius, the Patriarch of Jerusalem (634-638) but the above prayer is much older. In the fourth century St Basil the Great speaks of this rite as a “mystical tradition” (On the Holy Spirit, 27: 66) which shows that it was practiced even before his time. It is also mentioned in the fourth century Apostolic Constitutions, a Syrian work, and in the treatise On the Holy Spirit by St. Ambrose of Milan (died 397). All these sources attribute the sanctification of water to the Holy Spirit.

Partaking at Home

Many people drink a little blessed water and eat a piece of antidoron (blessed bread) as part of their regular Morning Prayers, before eating or drinking anything else. In this way they express their union with the worshipping Church and with the Lord who is transforming us and all creation as well.

This Prayer is often said before partaking:

O Lord my God, may this partaking of antidoron and holy water be for the health and strength of my soul and body, for the control of my passions and infirmities and for the enlightening of my physical and spiritual faculties in Your boundless loving-kindness, through the prayers of Your most pure Mother and of all the saints. Amen.