

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 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. Niko Mayashairo. Mary McNeilly. Sue Sols-
man. 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.; follow-
ing any service; or by appointment.

HOLY ANOINTING OF THE SICK:

Following services /call the Rectory.

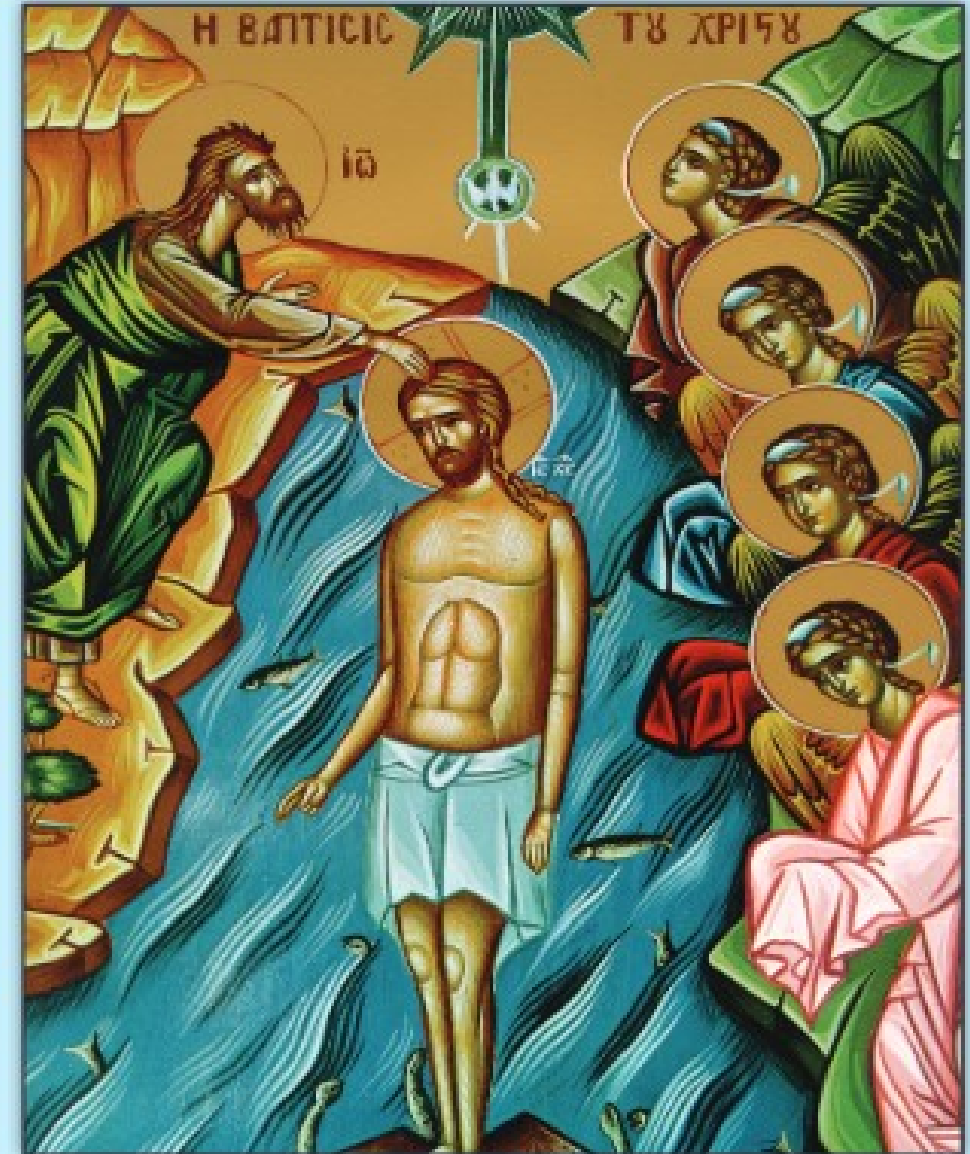
HOLY MYSTERY OF CROWNING:

Call rectory at earliest convenience.

PARISH ADVISORY COUNCIL:

Meetings as scheduled.

SUNDAY BEFORE THEOPHANY



Icon of Theophany -- January 6th

DIVINE LITURGY OF ST. JOHN CHRYSOSTOM

02 JANUARY 2022 ♦ TONE 07 EOTHINON 10 † SUNDAY BEFORE THEOPHANY / POPE SYLVESTER OF ROME

GREAT DOXOLOGY:

ANTIPHONS:

FIRST:

SECOND:

THIRD: *Beatitudes*

ENTRANCE HYMN:

APOLYTIKIA:

Resurrection (Tone 7)

Forefeast of the Theophany

Make ready Zebulon and prepare Naphtali and you Jordan River, stop your flow and receive with a thrill of joy the Master coming to be baptized. Adam, rejoice with the first Mother, Eve, and hide not as you did of old in paradise: for Christ at the sight of your nakedness has come forth to clothe you with the robe of innocence. Indeed, Christ has come forth to renew the whole creation.

Saint Joseph

KONDAKION: *Paramnony of the Theophany*

Today the Lord has been seen in the waters of the Jordan River. He has cried out to John, saying; “Be not dismayed at having to baptize Me, for I have indeed come to save Adam, the first man to have been created.”

TRISAGION:

PROKIMENON: *(Tone 7)*

EPISTLE:

My son Timothy be watchful in all things, bear with tribulation patiently, work as a preacher of the Good News, fulfill your ministry. As for me, I am already being poured out in sacrifice, and the time of my deliverance is at hand. I have fought the good fight, I have completed the course, I have kept the faith. For the rest, there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the just Judge, will give to me on that day: yet not to me only, but also to those who love his coming.

ALLELUIA:

May God have mercy on us and bless us. † May he let his face shine upon us and have mercy on us.

GOSPEL:

The beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. As it is written in the prophets, “Behold, I send my messenger before thee, who shall prepare thy way, the voice of one crying in the desert, ‘Make ready the way of the Lord, make straight his paths’, there came John in the desert, baptizing and preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. And all the country of Judea went out to him, and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem; and they were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. And John was clothed in camel’s hair, with a leather girdle about his loins, and he ate locusts and wild honey. And he preached, saying, “One mightier than I is coming after me, the strap of whose sandals I am not worthy to stoop down and loose. I have baptized you with water, but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.”

HIRMOS:

KINONIKON:

COMMUNION

HYMNS AFTER COMMUNION

Liturgy Book p. 1

Liturgy Book p. 29

Liturgy Book p. 32

Liturgy Book p. 125

Liturgy Book p. 38

Liturgy Book p. 45

(Tone 4)

Liturgy Book p. 47

(Tone 3)

Liturgy Book p. 50

Liturgy Book p. 60

2 Timothy 4:5-8

(Tone 4)

Mark 1:1-8

Liturgy Book p. 154

Liturgy Book p. 155

Liturgy Book p. 87

Liturgy Book p. 89

Baptism in Christ Jesus

At the beginning of His ministry the Lord Jesus also made use of the baptism of repentance. We read in the Gospel of St John that “...when the Lord knew that the Pharisees had heard that Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John (though Jesus Himself did not baptize, but His disciples), He left Judea and departed again to Galilee” (Jn 4:1-3).

With His death and resurrection, however, baptism became a vehicle for the imparting of the Holy Spirit. Appearing to His disciples in the upper room, the risen Christ had bestowed His Holy Spirit upon His disciples unto the forgiveness of sins. Baptism would no longer be merely an expression of a person’s repentance; it would actually convey the remission of sins by the power of the Holy Spirit. Believers in Christ would be baptized into His death and rise in His resurrection, becoming temples of the Holy Spirit who dwells in Him and in His People.

Before His ascension Christ commissioned His followers to “Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age” (Mt 28:19, 20). The power of the Holy Spirit would enable them to begin a mission which is still being undertaken by the Church all over the world.

Early Christians recognized the difference between the baptism of John and baptism in Christ. We read in the Acts of the Apostles, “...it happened, while Apollos was at Corinth, that Paul, having passed through the upper regions, came to Ephesus. And finding some disciples, he said to them, ‘Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?’ So they said to him, ‘We have not so much as heard whether there is a Holy Spirit.’ And he said to them, ‘Into what then were you baptized?’ So they said, ‘Into John’s baptism.’ Then Paul said, ‘John indeed baptized with a baptism of repentance, saying to the people that they should believe on Him who would come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus.’ When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. And when Paul had laid hands on them, the Holy Spirit came upon them...” (Acts 19:1-5).

This passage also witnesses to the complementary element in baptism, the laying-on of hands, which we call chrismation.

The Baptism of John Today

Around the year 1290, an Italian Dominican, Fra Ricoldo Pennini, encountered a small group of people in Mesopotamia who called themselves Sabaeans, whom he described as “A very strange and singular people... Their writing is a sort of middle way between Syriac and Arabic. They detest Abraham because of circumcision and they venerate John the Baptist above all.” In the sixteenth century Portuguese Jesuits came upon a similar group in Bahrain. Like the disciples St Paul met in Ephesus, this latter group of Sabaeans accepted baptism in Christ.

A tiny fragment of this people still exist called Mandaean, who appear to have incorporated Gnostic beliefs into their tribal lore. They practice the baptism of John every Sunday at their worship service which has elements in common with Christian liturgy. No one is sure when this community came into being. Nor is it certain whether they will survive the current destruction of their homeland in northern Iraq.

The voice of one crying in the wilderness has gone forth: “O mountains, rejoice! Exult with joy, all mankind! For the eternal Word took flesh and is coming to be baptized in the Jordan by hands that He created, in order to take away the sin of the world!”

Exapostilarion of the Fore-feast

REPENTANCE AND BAPTISM OF JOHN

Lord Jesus on the banks of the Jordan River. Its first verses introduce us to the figure of St John the Baptist whom it proclaims to be the fulfillment of two prophecies. The first prophecy is “Behold, I send My messenger before Your face, who will prepare Your way before You” (Mal 3:1). In this prophecy three characters are mentioned. The speaker is God who promises to send His messenger, whom the New Testament says is John the Baptist, and who prepares the way for the third person, the Messiah, the Lord Jesus.

The second prophecy quoted is Isaiah 40:3. “The voice of one crying in the wilderness: ‘Prepare the way of the LORD; Make His paths straight.’” The verses that follow describe John as a dweller in the wilderness, a kind of ascetic singularly dedicated to preparing for the One who would come to usher in the Kingdom of God. The Precursor coming before the One sent by God is a sign in the Old Testament that the Messiah is at hand. All four Gospels cite this prophecy as fulfilled in John who sets the stage for the appearance of the Lord Jesus.

John prepares for the coming of Christ by calling people to repentance. He was specific in identifying the faults of his hearers. He confronted the Jewish religious elite, the Pharisees and Sadducees, who felt that they did not need to repent: “Brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Therefore bear fruits worthy of repentance, and do not think to say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham as our father.’ For I say to you that God is able to raise up children to Abraham from these stones” (Mt 3:8-10). It is not enough, John told them, to be physically descended from Abraham; one must trust in God whole-heartedly as Abraham did.

The call to repentance continues in Luke’s Gospel as people ask John, “‘What shall we do then?’” He answered and said to them, ‘He who has two tunics, let him give to him who has none; and he who has food, let him do likewise.’ Then tax collectors also came to be baptized, and said to him, ‘Teacher, what shall we do?’ And he said to them, ‘Collect no more than what is appointed for you.’ Likewise the soldiers asked him, saying, ‘And what shall we do?’ So he said to them, ‘Do not intimidate anyone or accuse falsely, and be content with your wages’” (Lk 3:10-14). To be ready for the Messiah people in authority could not bully those over whom they had power, and no one could ignore the poor and needy.

The Baptism of John

John contrasts his own ministry with that of the Messiah in several ways. One of them concerns baptism: “I indeed baptized you with water, but He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit” (Mk 1:8). Matthew and Luke have the same words but add, somewhat cryptically, “and fire.”

Baptism in water was not unknown to first-century Jews. The Torah prescribes it for ritual purification in a number of cases such as contact with a corpse, discharge of blood or other fluids, or eating meat improperly slaughtered. Some people regularly immersed themselves before the high holydays. Converts to Judaism were also required to immerse themselves on joining the worshipping community. Orthodox Jews still practice these immersions today.

John had given a new twist to the ritual cleansing. His baptism was not concerned with ritual impurity but with repentance for moral failings like the faults mentioned in Mt and Lk quoted above. Also, people accepting this baptism did not immerse themselves; the rite was administered by John. Submission to the hand of the Baptizer was an act of humility expressive of whole-hearted repentance.

SAINT JOSEPH CHURCH ANNOUNCEMENTS

EVENTS IN JANUARY

Saturday Evening, January 1st

Confessions: 3:00 p.m.

Great Vespers: 3:15 p.m.

Divine Liturgy: 4:00 p.m.

Sunday, January 2nd

Resurrectional Orthros: 9:00 a.m.

Divine Liturgy: 10:00 a.m.

Wednesday, January 5th

Great Vespers: 7:00 p.m.

Tuesday, January 6th

Theophany of Our Lord J. Christ

Festival Orthros: 9:00 a.m.

Divine Liturgy: 5:30 p.m.

Great Blessing of the Waters

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.

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.

DIVINE LITURGY INTENTIONS

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

2021 WEEKLY COLLECTION

December 26

Weekly Offering:	\$ 200.00
Monthly:	\$ 20.00
Holydays:	\$ 100.00
Candles:	\$ 25.00
Total:	\$ 345.00

Thank you for your support!

ONE FEAST OR TWO?: SUNDAY BEFORE THEOPHANY

WHAT’S WITH THE ARMENIANS? Every other Church – whether on the Julian or Gregorian Calendar – celebrates Christ’s Nativity on December 25 and His Theophany on January 6. The Armenian Church observes both feasts together on the same day, January 6. So, what’s with them?

The Ancient Practice

The oldest practice documented in Christian history is that of a single celebration of the manifestation of God in the world in Jesus Christ: it included the celebration of Christ’s birth, the adoration of the Magi, all the events of Christ’s childhood recorded in the Scriptures, as well as His baptism by John in the Jordan and His first miracle, at the wedding feast of Cana. St Cyril of Alexandria writes about it at the beginning of the third century.

In the next century, St Gregory the Theologian writing in the year 380, refers to this practice, still observed in his Church in Asia Minor: “Now if the feast of the Theophany, and so also of the Nativity, for it is called both, since two names are ascribed to one reality... The name is Theophany, since He has appeared, and Nativity, since He has been born” (Oration 38, On the Theophany, or the Nativity of Christ 3).

Scholars today believe that a single feast of the Manifestation of God was observed in the West as well, but on December 25. In both cases, the date was determined by the date believed to be the date of the crucifixion. In the ancient world it was commonly believed that the date of a truly great person’s death coincided with the date of his conception or birth. Some rabbis still teach that a righteous person is entrusted with a mission on the day of his conception or birth. In one who completes his mission in the most perfect way possible, this perfection is expressed in the fact that his mission ends on the same day that it was begun.

In the East it was believed that April 6 was the date of Christ’s conception and crucifixion; consequently, January 6 marked the celebration of His birth. In the West the corresponding dates were March 25 and December 25.

After the First Ecumenical Council in AD 325, Christians in East and West became more aware of the practices of one another’s Churches. The East adopted the Roman date of December 25, dedicating it to the events of Christ’s birth. According to St John Chrysostom, this happened at Antioch in approximately 378. Preaching there in 388 on the Feast of the Nativity, he states that its observance was not yet quite ten years old. It quickly spread to the other Churches in the East. The East then devoted January 6 to the commemoration of His baptism.

The Synaxarion read at orthros on the feast of the Nativity notes that the day is devoted to all the events of Christ’s birth: “On the twenty-fifth of this month we commemorate the nativity according to the flesh of Our Lord, God and Savior Jesus Christ... On this day we commemorate the veneration of the Magi... On this day we commemorate the shepherds who beheld the Lord.” To this day we read Luke’s story of Jesus’ birth and the visitation to the shepherds at the evening Vesper-Liturgy and the story of the Magi from Matthew’s Gospel at the morning Liturgy.

In the West, the division was slightly different, with January 6 dedicated to the visit of the Magi, as well as the baptism of Christ, as the following antiphon from vespers on the Roman feast of the Epiphany shows: “We keep this day holy in honor of three miracles: this day a star led the Wise Men to the manger; this day water was turned into wine at the marriage feast; this

day Christ chose to be baptized by John in the Jordan, for our salvation, alleluia.”

At first the Armenian Church adopted this arrangement. In the sixth century, when the division between Chalcedonian and non-Chalcedonian Churches became fixed, the Armenians reverted to their older practice.

Manifestation to Israel

The original single feast of the Nativity-Theophany celebrated the first revelations of His divinity, His incarnation, and the beginning of His ministry as Lord and Savior of mankind. It put forth a number of themes which we now find spread out throughout the festal season. On the feast of the Nativity (and of Christ’s circumcision, on January 1) we celebrate God becoming man in a particular place and time. Jesus is born in the heart of God’s chosen people, Israel, and He is adored by them in Mary and Joseph and the shepherds who came to the cave. These feasts celebrate the particular revelation of God to the nation of Israel in terms of its sacred history, as we proclaim in this verse from vespers: “Rejoice, O Jerusalem, and celebrate all you lovers of Zion; for the temporal bonds with which Adam was condemned have been loosed; paradise hath been opened for us, and the serpent has been annihilated, having beheld now that the one deceived by her of old hath become a Mother to the Creator. O, the depth, richness, wisdom and knowledge of God, that the instrument of death which brought death to all flesh, has become the first-fruit of salvation to all the world, because of the Theotokos. The all-perfect God has been born from her as a babe; and by His birth He has sealed her virginity; by His swaddling clothes He has loosened the chains of our sins; and by His babyhood He has healed the pains and sorrows of Eve. Let all creation, therefore, exchange glad tidings and rejoice; for Christ has come to recall it and to save our souls.”

Manifestation to the Gentiles

Our vision of Christ’s coming work is widened as the Magi, pagan astrologers, arrive “from the East” to worship Him. The gifts they bring represent kingship (gold), priesthood (frankincense) and a self-emptying death (myrrh). In them Christ’s kingship over all nations is revealed. He is to be “a light of revelation to the Gentiles and the glory of Your people Israel” (Lk 2:32).

“You have shone forth from the Virgin, O Christ, supersensual Sun of righteousness. And a star pointed to You, O uncontainable One, contained in a cave, and the Magi were led to worship You. Wherefore, with them, we magnify You. O Giver of life; glory to You!”

Manifestation to All Creation

On the feast of the Theophany another aspect of Christ’s incarnation is celebrated. His coming transforms, not only humanity, but all creation. In His baptism He sanctifies the waters, a primordial element of creation in Genesis, representing the ultimate transfiguration of all things in the Kingdom of God. As we hear at the great blessing of water on the feast of the Theophany, “Today land and sea divide between them the joy of the world, and the world is filled with rejoicing. The waters behold You, O Lord: the waters behold You and they fear. The Jordan turns back its course, and the mountains shout with glee as they behold God in the flesh.”

“Of old, the prince of this world was named king of all that was in the waters; but by Your baptism he is choked and destroyed, like Legion in the lake. With Your mighty arm, O Savior, You have granted freedom to Your creation, which he had enslaved” (Canon at Compline on the Fore-feast of the Theophany).