

## 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 OF THE PRODIGAL SON



*Icon of the Prodigal Son*

# DIVINE LITURGY OF ST. JOHN CHRYSOSTOM

13 FEBRUARY 2022 ♦ TONE 05 EOTHINON 05 † **PRODIGAL SON SUNDAY** / HOLY FATHER MARTINIAN

GREAT DOXOLOGY:

ANTIPHONS:

FIRST:

SECOND:

THIRD:

ENTRANCE HYMN:

APOLYTIKIA:

*Resurrection (Tone 5)*

*Holy Father Martinian*

Blessed Martinian, you appeased the flames of passion with streams of tears; you calmed the waves of the sea and stopped the wild beasts’ assault saying, “Glorified are You, O God Almighty: You saved me from the fire and storm.”

*Saint Joseph*

KONDAKION: *Prodigal Son*

TRISAGION:

PROKIMENON: *(Tone 5)*

EPISTLE:

*Brethren*, all things are lawful for me, but not all things are fitting. All things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of anyone. Food is for the belly, and the belly for food, but God will destroy both the one and the other. Now, the body is not for immorality, but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body. For God has raised up the Lord and will also raise us up by his power. Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I then take the members of Christ and make them the members of a prostitute? By no means! Or do you not know that one who cleaves to a prostitute becomes one body with her? For the two, it is said, shall be one flesh. But he who cleaves to the Lord is one spirit with him. Flee immortality. Every sin a man commits is outside the body, but the immoral man sins against his own body. Or do you not know that your members are the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God and that you are not your own? For you have been bought at a great price. Glorify God therefore in your body and in your soul which both are God’s.

ALLELUIA: *Psalm 17:48, 50*

O God, you granted me retribution and make 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*, The Lord told this parable: “A man had two sons. And the younger of them said to his father, ‘Father, give me the share of the property that falls to me.’ And he divided his possessions between them. And not many days later, the younger son gathered up all his wealth and traveled to a far country; and there he squandered his fortune in loose living. And after he had spent all, there came a severe famine over that country, and he began to suffer from it. And he went and joined one of the local landowners, who sent him to his fields to feed the pigs. And he longed to fill himself with the pods the pigs were eating, but no one offered to give them to him. But when he had come to his senses, he said, ‘How many hired men in my father’s house have bread in abundance, while I am perishing with hunger! I will get up and go to my father, and will say to him, “Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you, I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me as one of your hired men.”’ And he got up and went to his father. But while he was yet a long way off, his father saw him and was moved with compassion and ran and fell upon his neck and kissed him. And the son said to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you, I am no longer worthy to be called your son.’ But the Father said to his servants, ‘Fetch quickly the best robe and put it on him, and give him a ring for his finger and sandals for his feet; and bring out the fattened calf and kill it, and let us eat and make merry; because this my son was dead, and has come to life again; he was lost, and is found.’ And they began to make merry. Now his elder son was in the field; and as he came close to the house, he heard music and dancing. And calling one of the servants he asked what this meant. And he said to him, ‘Your brother has come, and your father has killed the fattened calf, because he has got him back safe.’ But he was angered and would not go in. His father, therefore, came out and began to beg him. But he answered and said to his father, ‘Look, these many years I have been serving you, and have never disobeyed any of your orders; and yet, you have never given me a kid that I might make merry with my friends. But when this son of yours comes, who has devoured your wealth with prostitutes; you have killed for him the fattened calf!’ But he said to him, ‘Son you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours; but we were bound to make merry and rejoice, for this your brother was dead, and has come to life; he was lost and is found.’”

*Liturgy Book p. 17*

*Liturgy Book p. 29*

*Liturgy Book p. 32*

*Liturgy Book p. 43*

*Liturgy Book p. 38*

*Liturgy Book p. 43*

*Tone 8*

*Handout*

*Liturgy Book p. 57*

*Liturgy Book p. 58*

*1 Corinthians 6:12-20*

their condition and seek to make amends. We may recognize the similarity of an addict to the Prodigal, but fail to see the comparison with ourselves.

All of us are far from home, perhaps not because of addiction but because of sin. The sin of Adam – seeking to live independently of God – is replicated in the lives of each of us in one way or another. Mankind wants the inheritance – all that we receive from God – but does not value a relationship with the Father. The difference is that while a recovering addict, like the Prodigal, has a clear sense of his addiction, we may be unaware of our loss because we have not hit bottom. We may not realize that being away from the Father’s house is in fact to be in exile.

### The Forgiving Father and the Mercy of God

Still thinking of himself and his own needs, the son in the parable plans to plead for the lowest place in his father’s household. The young man does not know with whom he is dealing. The father does not wait for his son to apologize or beg for forgiveness. He welcomes him home with open arms and calls for a celebration. He is the image of our heavenly Father who knows when one of His children seeks forgiveness and grants it at once, without demanding any form of penance or satisfaction. Note that the father does not go in search of his son when the lad is enjoying the wasteful life he has chosen or when he is miserable, but not yet resolved to return home. His mercy would bear fruit only when the son had come to truly desire it and so the father waits for his son to make the first move. But when the son does return, the father does not make him work for forgiveness; he gives it freely.

In this the father is unlike many of us who would want the ungrateful son to squirm before accepting him back home. We might feel justified in “teaching him a lesson,” but this is apparently not God’s way. When repentance truly touches the heart, the “lesson” has already been learned.

The Father’s extraordinary mercy is no excuse for taking advantage of Him: seeking the blessing of His house while not repenting in action as well as in words. As St Isaac the Syrian taught, “But the fact that repentance furnishes hope should not be taken by us as a means to rob ourselves of the feeling of fear, so that one might more freely and fearlessly commit sin” (Isaac the Syrian, First Collection: Homily Ten).

### Proclaiming the Mercy of God

Our liturgy continually emphasizes the mercy of God. The beloved Polyeleos psalm sung so frequently in our churches at the most solemn occasions has as its refrain, “For His mercy endures forever, alleluia” The Typica psalms each proclaim the depths of God’s mercy to His People: “He forgives all your iniquity, he heals all your diseases, he redeems your life from the pit, he crowns you with steadfast love and mercy” (Ps 102: 3, 4).

The second psalm is even more specific: “He brings about justice for the oppressed; he gives food to the hungry. The Lord sets the prisoners free; the Lord opens the eyes of the blind. The Lord lifts up those who are bowed down; the Lord loves the righteous. The Lord watches over the strangers, he upholds the widow and the fatherless; but the way of the wicked he brings to ruin” (Ps 146:7-9). Coincidentally it is precisely these psalms, so familiar to the faithful of our Church, which Pope Francis cited in the letter opening his “Year of Mercy.”

Is it unreasonable to think that we, who continually sing of God’s mercy in our services, should not be encouraging one another to return to the Father by attending the Church’s Lenten services, by approaching the Mystery of Confession and by embracing the ideas in “The Great Fast in the Home,” available on our eparchy’s web site, [www.melkite.org](http://www.melkite.org)?

As the Lord said in the parables which precede the story of the Prodigal Son in Luke 15, “I say to you that likewise there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine just persons who need no repentance... Likewise, I say to you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents” (Lk 15:7, 10).

# LOOKING FOR THE WAY HOME

ON THE FIRST FEW SUNDAYS of the Triodion Psalm 137 is chanted before the Gospel at Orthros. Describing the plight of Jewish exiles in the seventh century BC, it begins with this verse: “By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down, yea, we wept when we remembered Zion.”

When the Babylonians conquered Jerusalem in 597 BC they deported the defeated Jewish king along with nobles and important craftsmen to Babylon. In response to successive revolts the Babylonians destroyed the temple and deported even more people.

The forced exile ended in 538 BC after the fall of Babylon to the Persian king Cyrus the Great, who gave the Jews permission to return to Judea and to rebuild the Temple in Jerusalem.

This theme of exile comes to the fore today as the Church asks us to consider that we too are exiles, not from the Kingdom of Judah but from the Kingdom of God. The difference is that, while the deported Jews knew that they were exiles, we are largely unaware of it or unconcerned about it. We are doing reasonably well, our lives are satisfying and we are confident that things are getting better and better every day. But the Church holds up before us this image of exile so that we may realize that we are far from home, we are not where we are meant to be. This realization is the first step in the Lenten journey to find our way back to God.

### We Are the Prodigal Son

We are not told the exact age of the young man when he decides to set off on his own, but countless commentators have depicted him as an adolescent. His behavior certainly bears this out. He has the selfish impatience of youth: he wants his inheritance now, even though his father is still alive. He is more interested in what the man’s money can buy than in the man himself.

In that, the young man repeats the choice made by our first parents who preferred the appetizing but forbidden fruit to continued fellowship with the One who provided it. He also images the choices we all make when we focus our attention on the fruits of creation rather than on the Creator who offers us a relationship with Himself. In any such choice we become the petulant adolescent whose first stabs at maturity always seem to require resentment of the parent if not outright rebellion.

On his own the Prodigal’s newfound independence seems to lead him into slavery rather quickly. He begins living what various translations call a “wild,” “reckless,” “loose” “riotous” “foolish,” “notorious,” “dissolute,” “wasteful,” or “prodigal” way of life. We are left to imagine what that might have involved; we certainly know what the result was. He spent everything he had and ended up with nothing. He wanted to be independent but did not understand that being independent does not free a person from being responsible.

No well-balanced person in our world wants to be dependent on another. We often forget, however, that our desire for human self-determination cannot lead us away from God without disastrous results. We inevitably end up spiritually bankrupt and living on the pig’s fodder of a Godless world.

Unlike many people, however, the Prodigal does something about his condition. First, the Prodigal saw his situation for what it was. He came to realize that he was at the bottom and things couldn’t get much worse. Secondly he thought about the home he had forsaken. Finally he made the decision and acted upon it: “I will arise and go to my father” (Lk 15:18). He repents.

Like the deported Jews the Prodigal came to see himself as exiled. But while the Jews had been forcibly deported to Babylon and could not return home, the Prodigal had exiled himself from his true home. He was therefore able to pick himself up and embark on the journey back. He rightly saw his need to admit his wrongdoing and express his sorrow. “I will say to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you, and I am no longer worthy to be called your son. Make me like one of your hired servants’” (Lk 15: 18-19).

Many people addicted to alcohol, drugs or other self-destructive behaviors come to the same realization when they bottom out. Their recovery process begins when they accept responsibility for

# SAINT JOSEPH CHURCH ANNOUNCEMENTS

### EVENTS IN FEBRUARY

Saturday, February 12th

*Great Vespers 3:15 p.m.*

*Divine Liturgy 4 p.m.*

Sunday, February 13th

*Divine Liturgy 10:00 a.m.*

*Parish Potluck & Board Game Party*

Sunday, 13th – Sunday 19th

*Meatfare Week:*

*Last week to eat meat products*

Sunday, 20th – Sunday 27th

*Cheese fare Week:*

*Last week to eat dairy products*

Sunday, February 27th

*Divine Liturgy 10:00 a.m.*

*Parish Potluck*

*Ice Cream Social*

*Forgiveness Vespers 2:00 p.m.*

Monday, February 28th

*Beginning of Great Lent*

*Presanctified D. Liturgy 6:00 p.m.*

### EVENTS IN MARCH

Sunday, March 20th

*Ladies’ Society St. Joseph*

*Take out Breakfast*

### 2021 WEEKLY COLLECTION

**February 06**

Weekly Offering:	\$ 890.00
Holydays:	\$ 30.00
Divine Liturgy:	\$ 20.00
Candles:	\$ 25.00
Total:	\$ 965.00

### 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 the Holy Spirit be glorified, now and ever and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

### DIVINE LITURGY INTENTIONS

- 12 February: ✠George C. Selden  
from Steve Bartnicki
- 13 February: David & Stephanie Michaels  
from Stephen Pendrak
- 19 February: St. Joseph Parishioners  
from Judith Manuele
- 20 February: ✠Elizabeth Pendrak  
from David & Stephanie Michaels
- 26 February: Joseph Viola Family
- 27 February Joseph Viola Family

# GLORIFY GOD IN YOUR BODY

MANY PEOPLE TODAY EQUATE “SPIRITUALITY” with one’s personal inner life. Spiritual seekers are advised to “listen to their heart” to find peace and clarity, often without any reference to God – or at least to the God revealed in the Scriptures – or to a community such as the Church. Their approach is more individual rather than communal, more mind-centered than encompassing one’s entire being, and often more concerned with self-help than with living in union with God.

As Eastern Christians we stand in a tradition that first of all understands spirituality as mankind’s relationship to God through the operation of the Holy Spirit. At its root this relationship is based on an event which joins the material and the spiritual: the Incarnation of Christ. The Word of God took flesh, became human in order to unite us with God. Because He is truly and perfectly man, the risen Christ is now glorified in His body, seated at the right hand of the Father.

## **The Body in Eastern Thought**

The body as well as the spirit is important in Christian life. As St Paul says, “Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God’s” (1 Cor 6: 19-20). We are not meant to ignore or belittle the body because we are Christians. The body is not an enemy but a partner and collaborator with the soul in the work of our sanctification. The body, as well as the spirit, is meant to be transfigured in Christ and so we are called to glorify God in it.

## **Purifying the Body**

The first way in which we glorify God in the body is by accepting and affirming its freedom from the control of sin and death. United to Christ in baptism, we have already been given a share in that freedom, which will be completely realized in the life of the world to come. As long as we are in this life, however, we must work along with Christ-in-us to maintain the body’s freedom from the influence of sin.

And so one way in which we glorify God in the body is by the Church’s ascetic tradition, which focuses on freeing the mind and the heart from attachment to the things of the senses. Christian asceticism is not anti-physical but seeks to liberate the body from the lure of the sensual so that the physical may be sanctified.

The Church Fathers considered that the most basic ascetic practices focus on controlling the passions or cravings of the body for food and drink and for sexual release. This is not because they are our greatest inner enemies – pride and vanity have that dubious distinction – but because it is easier to conquer our physical cravings than our spiritual impulses. This is why St Paul, in 1 Corinthians, singles out the power of gluttony and lust as the enemy’s first line of attack on the believer. “Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ?” (v.15) How can you surrender to the first assault

the enemy mounts against you? If we cannot put aside fatty foods on Wednesdays and Fridays, much less during the Fasts, how can we even begin to deal with things like spiritual laziness (sloth) or pride that afflict us in our innermost hearts?

## **Worshipping in the Body**

We live our life in Christ in our bodies as well as in our spirits and so the Eastern Churches have insisted that the body join the spirit in worshipping the One who created us as both physical and spiritual. We bow, we kneel, we make the sign of the cross, we prostrate, we kiss, we eat and we drink. We glorify God in the body by entering body, soul and spirit in the worship of the Church.

One way we glorify God in our bodies at worship is by standing for prayer. In some churches people are directed to stand or sit at different times during the service. Sitting, however, is the stance taken by an audience rather than a participant, whether it be at the theater or at worship. Worshippers are an “audience” during readings or a sermon; during prayers and litanies they are participants and more fittingly stand rather than sit.

Two bodily gestures in Eastern worship not common in the churches of the West are the metany and the prostration. In the metany we make the sign of the cross and bow from the waist, extending our right hand until our fingers touch the ground. In the prostration we kneel on both knees and bow until our forehead touches the ground. Both gestures indicate our complete submission to the King of all.

Making metanies and prostrations requires a certain amount of free space around the worshipper. In older churches abroad any seating (benches or stalls) was located around the church walls leaving the center of the church free for worshippers. In churches with Western-style pews worshippers often move out into the aisles to make prostrations.

## **The Great Fast**

During the Church’ fasts we have ample opportunities to glorify God in the body through more frequent church services and through fasting. Eastern Christian fasting incorporates two ways of using our bodies in worship. In ascetic or total fasting we do not eat or drink anything. Period. This kind of fasting is in the spirit of Deuteronomy 8:3, quoted by Christ to the tempter, “Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God” (Mt 4:4). Traditionally people fast this way before receiving Holy Communion. It is also customary to fast totally for a certain period on all fast days. Thus many fast this way until noon during these seasons.

The second type of fasting, also called abstinence, is fasting from certain foods (typically meat or dairy products). In many Eastern Churches people fast totally until noon and then, when they do eat, they abstain from meat and dairy. Since fish is considered “meat without feet” it is not generally consumed on the stricter fast days.