

# ST. JOSEPH THE BETROTHED

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

Contact office: 570.343.6092 † 570.468.4854  
stjosephscranton@gmail.com ♣ www.melkitescranton.org

## PRAYER INTENTIONS

P. H. S.: Rev. Dn. Jos. Daratony. Mich. Abda. Marie Barron.  
Nikki Boudreaux. George Bales Sr. Lucille Bales. Jayne Buck-  
ley. Chris Carey. John Coury. Maryann Nappi Donahue. Car-  
ol Downer. Dav. Fairclough, Sr. Rob. Fairclough, Sr. Sara  
Gomez. Niko Mayashairo. Mary McNeilly. Jos. Ed. Bartnicki.  
Sue Solsman. SusVieselmeyer. Dean & Sherry Yockey.

MEMORY ETERNAL: \*Rev. Char. Aboody.\*Rev. Mich. Jol-  
ly.\*Rev. Jos. Francavilla.\*Rev. Theo. Leonarczyk\*Rev. Frank  
Milienewicz\*Dn. John Karam.\*Marie Abda.\*Charlotte &  
James Abda.\*Marie Abda.\*Nancy Abda.\*Janice Assaf.\*  
Thalia Assaf\*Paul Bauman.\*A.J. Bolus. \*Jos. Bolus. \*Gary  
Bolos.\*Nich. Cianci.\*Patricia Cimakosky.\*Ann Coury.\*  
Mary Sue Betress.\*Cecilia Davidson\*Margt. 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:

Tuesday :

Compline ..... 0:00 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.

## VICTIM ASSISTANCE COORDINATOR:

Report Sexual Abuse: 1.800.479.5910

## SUNDAY OF CHEESEFARE SUNDAY OF FORGIVENESS



*Icon of the the Ladder of Divine Ascent*

DIVINE LITURGY OF ST. JOHN CHRYSOSTOM

19 FEBRUARY 2023 ♦ TONE 04 EOTHINON 04 † SUNDAY OF FOREGIVENESS/CHEESE-FARE SUNDAY

<u>GREAT DOXOLOGY:</u>	<i>Liturgy Book p. 17</i>
<u>ANTIPHON:</u>	
FIRST:	<i>Liturgy Book p. 29</i>
SECOND:	<i>Liturgy Book p. 32</i>
THIRD: <i>Beatitudes</i>	<i>Liturgy Book p. 125</i>
<u>ENTRANCE HYMN:</u>	<i>Liturgy Book p. 38</i>
<u>APOLYTIKIA:</u>	
<i>Resurrection (Tone 4)</i>	<i>Liturgy Book p. 42</i>
<i>Holy Apostle Archippos</i>	<i>Liturgy Book p. 105</i>
<i>Martyr Philothea of Athens</i>	<i>Tone 5</i>
The far famed city of Athens honors Philothea, the venerable martyr, whose relics it now reverts with joy. While living in asceticism, she exchanged all earthly things for the everlasting life through her great struggles in her martyrdom. And now she entreats the Savior to grant His mercy to us all.	
<i>St. Joseph</i>	<i>Liturgy Book p. 47</i>
<u>KONTAKION: Cheese-fare</u>	<i>Handout</i>
<u>TRISAGION:</u>	<i>Liturgy Book p. 50</i>
<u>PROKIMENON:</u>	<i>Liturgy Book p. 56</i>
<u>EPISTLE:</u>	<i>Romans 13:11-14:4</i>
<i>Brethren</i> , now our salvation is nearer than when we came to believe. The night is far advanced: the day is at hand. Let us therefore lay aside the works of darkness, and put on the armor of light. Let us walk becomingly as in day-time, not in revelry and drunkenness, not in debauchery and wantonness, not in strife and jealousy. But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and as for the flesh, pay no attention to its lusts. But whoever is weak in faith, receive him without arguing about opinion. For one believes he may eat all things but another who is weak, let him eat vegetables. Let not the one who eats despise the one who does not; and let not the one who does not eat judge the one who does, for God has received him. Who are you to judge another's servant? To his own master he stands or falls but he will stand, for God is able to make him stand.	
<u>ALLELUIA:</u>	<i>Tone 4</i>
In you, O lord, I have hoped: let me never be put to shame. In your Justice, save me and deliver me. Be for me a protecting God, a sheltering house to save me.	
<u>GOSPEL:</u>	<i>St. Matthew 6:14-21</i>
<i>The Lord said</i> , "If you forgive men their offenses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men their offenses, neither will your father forgive you your offenses. And when you fast, do not look gloomy like the hypocrites, who disfigure their faces in order to appear to men as fasting. Amen I say to you they have had their reward. But you, when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, so that you may not be seen by men to fast, but by your father, who is in secret; and your Father, who sees in secret, will reward you. Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where worm and rodent consume, and where thieves break in and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither worm nor rodent consumes, nor thieves break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there also will be your heart."	
<u>HIRMOS:</u>	<i>Liturgy Book p. 77</i>
<u>KINONIKON:</u>	<i>Liturgy Book p. 83</i>
<u>POST-COMMUNION HYMN:</u>	<i>Liturgy Book p. 89</i>

THE FAST OF GREAT LENT

† On weekdays of Great Lent, Monday through Friday, there are restrictions on both the number of meals taken daily and on the types of food permitted; but when a meal is permitted, there is no limitation to the quantity of food that may be eaten.

† On weekdays, fast is broken [the first meal of the day is taken] at/after the noon hour.

† Throughout Great Lent, the fast excludes the eating of meat and meat products, cheese, milk, butter, fish, olive oil, wine and alcoholic beverages.

† On the Feast of Palm Sunday the eating of fish is permitted.

† Olive oil, as well as wine, is permitted on various feastdays (consult the calendar), as well as on Saturdays and Sundays.

† While the above rules of fasting are to be encouraged, in all things the Christian is called to exercise moderation and charity. The elderly and those in poor health, especially, are urged to be prudent. If in doubt, speak with your spiritual father or confessor.

ets” (Mt 22:36-40).

In order to keep this first great commandment, the Christian must evaluate his or her way of life: Do I have a heart fully devoted to God or do I have other “loves” which distract me from loving Him? Am I so attached to things like my comforts (food, drink, etc.) or entertainment (TV, movies, sporting events) that I cannot put them aside, even for a brief time? Is my mind chiefly devoted to the pursuit of possessions – luxury cars, jewelry, clothing, etc. – that I have no mental energy to consider the things of God? The things to which we are attached may not be sinful in themselves, but they can prevent us from keeping the Lord’s commandment to love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.

It is only by putting aside for a time the good things with which we have been blessed that we can determine how attached to them we may be. Would it be easier for me to do without the Eucharist for forty days than to do without cream in my coffee for the same period? One of the benefits of the Fast is that it teaches us what we love, on what we rely, and how much we love the Lord in comparison.

**What Is the “Armor of Light?”**

From time to time the Church is criticized as being too negative: of focusing on the “shalt nots.” The first passage from Scripture read during the Great Fast helps set the record straight. In the opening passage from the Prophecy of Isaiah we read, *“Wash yourselves, make yourselves clean. Put away the evil of your doings from before My eyes. Cease to do evil, learn to do good. Seek justice, rebuke the oppressor; defend the fatherless, plead for the widow”* (Is 1:16,17).

Refocusing our attention away from our own comforts on to the needs of God’s people is one way to “put on the armor of light,” to become the light for the world as Christ intended us to be. As we sing on the Monday of Cheese-fare Week “Let us hasten to wash away through fasting the filth of our transgressions. Through acts of mercy and compassion to the needy, let us enter into the bridal chamber of Christ the Bridegroom, who grants us His great mercy” (from vespers).

**Triodion Hymns for the Start of the Fast**

*The gateway to divine repentance has been opened. Let us enter eagerly, purified in our bodies and observing abstinence from food and passions, as obedient servants of Christ, who has called the world into the heavenly Kingdom. Let us offer to the King of All a tenth part of the whole year, that we may look with love upon His Resurrection.*

*O faithful, let us joyfully accept the proclamation of God that announces the coming of the Fast, as once did the people of Niniveh, and the prostitutes and publicans who heard John preach repentance. Through abstinence, let us prepare for communion at the Liturgy of the Master on Sion. With tears, let us wash ourselves clean before the washing of the feet. Let us pray that we may behold the fulfillment of the old Passover and the revealing of the new. Let us prepare ourselves to worship the Cross and Resurrection of Christ our God, and let us cry aloud to Him: “Lover of Mankind, put us not to shame, nor deprive us of our hopes!”*

*If you fast from food, my soul, but do not cleanse yourself from passions, you will rejoice in vain over your abstinence. If your intention is not turned to amendment of life, you will be as hateful as a liar in the sight of God, and you will resemble the evil demons who never eat at all. Do not make the Fast worthless by sinning, but firmly resist all evil impulses. Imagine that you are standing by the crucified Savior, or rather, that you are crucified with Him who was cruci-fied for you. Cry out to Him: “Remember me, O Lord, when You come into Your Kingdom!”*

*From the Triodion*

# THE JOURNEY BEGINS

IF YOU WERE TO ASK a fitness devotee to describe Clean Week, you would hear about a seven-day nutrition and exercise program involving eating and lifestyle changes designed to “create the healthy habits you need for lifelong health and fitness.”

If you were to ask a committed Eastern Christian to describe Clean Week, you would hear about the first week of the Great Fast with its eating and lifestyle changes, its workouts (prostrations), and its programs for accountability (confession) and support (daily services).

Both approaches invite participants to put aside self-indulgence for a higher goal. The bodybuilder seeks health and fitness; the Christian seeks another kind of transformation, one described in the Scriptures as leading to something far greater: *“If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth. For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory”* (Col 3: 1-4).

## “Cast Off the Works of Darkness”

Because our human nature has been scarred by the fall, pursuing the spiritual life does not come easily to us. It is necessary that we take pains to pursue it. We must make a concerted effort to change our focus from earthly things and to set our minds “on things above.” In the Great Fast the Church provides us with an opportunity to make such an effort.

The first step in this program for spiritual health is to distance ourselves from that which is harmful: what St Paul calls “the works of darkness.” In the Epistle to the Romans he offers a catalogue – by no means an exhaustive one – of such works: *“Let us walk properly, as in the day, not in revelry and drunkenness, not in lewdness and lust, not in strife and envy”* (Rom 13:13). These things were recognized as destructive long before Christ or even before Moses. They are the stuff of the “shalt nots” in the Ten Commandments, and yet they appeal to people of all ages and places. Their appeal is proof of the brokenness of our nature.

Traditionally the days immediately preceding the Great Fast are devoted to separating ourselves from earthly pleasures. Most such attempts should be personal, determined by a believer and his or her elder. Some practices are communal, meant to remind us of our need to enter fully into the spirit of the Fast.

One such practice in Greece and the Middle East takes place on the Thursday before Meat-fare Sunday when any meat remaining in the house is eaten. In Lebanon this day is called khamis al-sakara (Drunkard’s Thursday), because not only meat but also alcohol must be consumed as well. A similar observance is the Slavic custom known as Maslenitsa. In the week before the Fast, all the dairy products in the house are consumed, usually in the form of crepes (blini) and other cheese or cream-filled treats. Such events, however, notably the Carnivals in Europe and America, quickly became occasions of excess, as people give feasting a rousing send-off.

## “Let Us Put On the Armor of Light”

Besides distancing ourselves from what is harmful, the committed Christian sees the Great Fast as an opportunity to evaluate the strength of his or her commitment to Christ. When the Lord was asked, *“Which is the great commandment in the Law?”* He answered by quoting the Book of Deuteronomy: *“‘You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.’ This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like it: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’* On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Proph-

# SAINT JOSEPH CHURCH ANNOUNCEMENTS

## EVENTS IN FEBRUARY

### CHEESE-FARE WEEK

*last week for eating dairy products*

Saturday, February 18th

*Confessions: 3:00 p.m.*

*Great Vespers: 3:15 p.m.*

*Divine Liturgy: 4:00 p.m.*

Sunday, February 19th

### CHEESE~FARE SUNDAY

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

*Parish Potluck & Religious Education*

*Ice-cream Social*

*Forgiveness Vespers: 2:00 p.m.*

Monday, February 20th

### GREAT LENT BEGINS

**DAY OF STRICT FAST & ABSTINENCE**

*Pre-sanctified. D. Liturgy: 7:00 p.m.*

Saturday, February 25th

*Confessions: 3:00 p.m.*

*Great Vespers: 3:15 p.m.*

*Divine Liturgy: 4:00 p.m.*

Sunday, February 26th

### SUNDAY OF ORTHODOXY

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

*Procession of the Holy Icons*

*Please bring icons for the procession.*

## LENTEN SERVICES

Monday, Wednesday, Friday: Pre-sanctified:

Gregory Great Academy: 5:00 p.m.

Tuesday & Thursday: Pre-sanctified Liturgy:

St. Joseph: 7:00 p.m.

Friday: Akathist Hymn: St. Joseph: 7:00 p.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

18 February: Deceased Members of Bolus Family from Barbara Albert  
19 February: Thomas & Regina Luckey Family  
25 February: Deceased Members of Bolus Family from Barbara Albert  
26 February: Ruth Kress

## 2023 WEEKLY COLLECTION

February 12

Weekly Offering:	\$ 707.00
Holyday:	\$ 50.00
Monthly:	\$ 23.00
Candles:	\$ 25.00
Total:	\$ 805.00

*Thank you for your support!*



# FASTING FROM MYSELF

THE LAST SUNDAY BEFORE THE GREAT FAST has several descriptive names. It is called the *Sunday of the Expulsion*, remembering the sin of Adam and Eve and their expulsion from the Garden. It is also Cheesefare Sunday, the last day for eating dairy products. Finally it is the *Sunday of Forgiveness*. On this day we are expected to ask forgiveness from anyone we have offended. Perhaps it is a good idea to give this day yet another name, one which includes the meaning of the others. Let's call it *Ego-fare Sunday*.

## The Expulsion from Paradise

The story of Adam and Eve – really the story of any sin – is about ego. In Genesis we read that God said, "...if you eat of it [the tree] you will surely die." But Eve said, "Gee, it looks good. I'd like to see for myself." And we know the rest.

Sin is about ego: someone (Eve or me) decides that they will ignore someone else (God or my spouse) and do what I want. I prefer my will to the will of another, to God's word in the Scriptures or to the Tradition of the Church. And so the remembrance of the original sin on this Sunday is a call for us to see that our ego is at the heart of our own sins and to resolve to hold it in check. This struggle is at the heart of any profitable Fast.

## Fasting with the Mind of the Church

Cheesefare Sunday is traditionally the last day for eating dairy products until Pascha, as the Great Fast begins tomorrow. This poses a problem in our society where meat and dairy are the substance of every meal. Some people say that they cannot do without meat and so they only fast sporadically. By this they may mean they need protein and are not aware of other sources of protein, such as beans, peas, soy products (tofu), as well as seeds and nuts. But it is perhaps more likely that people miss the taste of meat, fish or dairy products more than their protein content.

As a result many people replace these foods, not with vegetables and grains, but with meat and dairy substitutes made to taste like meat and dairy products. Technically these foods are not meat or dairy – they only taste like them – so they don't break the Fast. Or do they?

Christian fasting is not based on an avoidance of any foods because they are unclean or taboo in any way. Neither do we abstain from meat or dairy during the Fast for health reasons, out of respect for the creatures that produce them or for environmental concerns, legitimate as they may be. We do not even fast during this season to lament Christ's suffering and death. As St John Chrysostom wrote, "The Passion is not a reason for fasting or mourning but one for joy and exultation" (Sixteenth Homily on Matthew).

Fasting in the Eastern Churches is a tool for retraining the ego. It is a way of curbing the "I crave" in each of us and doing it together as a community. Fasting is a type of self-denial, an imitation of Christ's own emptying Himself in order to share our human condition. The liturgy expresses this poetically: "The flower of abstinence grows for the entire world from the tree of the Cross. Let us then accept the Fast with love and take pleasure in the fruit of Christ's divine commandments" (Orthros, First Wednesday of the Fast). The self-emptying of the cross bears fruit in us when we strive to empty ourselves through fasting.

While we strive to control our greed, lust or pride, ego does not take a break. Fasting (and actually any Church practice) can become focused on my will. One example is what we fast from. Before children are old enough to actually fast, they are often encouraged to "give something up for Lent," to decide what they want to do in observance of this season. Unfortunately many people don't progress beyond this age spiritually. They still try to decide what they want to do. Ego again! When we fast we are called to follow the Church's way of fasting, not to decide for ourselves how or when to fast. We fast, for example on most Wednesdays and Fridays, not Tuesdays and Thursdays. We may need to lessen the amount of fasting because of our health or the rigors of our work, but we should be wary of letting what we want to do turn our fasting into an ego trip. We may feel the need of more protein than some fasting foods provide while conveniently forgetting that some pulses (e.g. lentils) contain more protein than some meats. This is why making any changes in the traditional practice should be done with the blessing of one's spiritual father who can help us distinguish a real need from the promptings of our ego.

People with real health issues will always receive a blessing to eat meat or dairy during the Fast but for most people, their reluctance to avoid these foods – and for forty days, at that – is because they don't want to give up the taste. If we look to the Fast in the way that the Church does, as an exercise in curbing our ego, we may well decide to avoid meat and dairy "look-alikes" as well.

## Taking Pride in Fasting

Another way fasting can become an ego trip for the unwary is the way we take pride in it, be it our personal fasting or that of our Church. "We don't fast just one day – our 40 days is 40 days!" As Christ indicated in Mt 6:16-18, there are always people who fast with fanfare – another manifestation of the ego. This is something we must be on our guard against as it is so easy to fall into this trap. If you are having lunch with friends or colleagues avoid saying things like, "I can't eat that, I'M FASTING!" It would be more in the spirit of a true Fast to say something like, "I'll just have a salad, I've been watching my diet lately." This is a verbal way of anointing one's head and washing one's face, to use Christ's imagery, lest we appear to be broadcasting our fast to one and all.

As we prepare to intensify our fasting during this season, let us examine the spirit in which we fast. Let us begin the Fast with this understanding: not measuring our fasting by what we eat and how much, but of the effect it has on us, whether our fasting makes us free or whether we become slaves of fasting itself.

The Great Fast is a time to struggle with our ego, our self-centered self-love. Our fasting is truly effective in this regard when we pay less attention to ourselves, to our wants to our needs and increase our love for others. Find someone who is hungry for food and feed them, or someone who is spiritually hungry and nourish help them. To do that, we must be able to see and pay attention to the needs of another. And we can't do that if we are constantly focused on ourselves. It is easier to observe the Church's fasting rules, attend its additional services, and contribute to its charitable programs in a formal way without struggling against our ego. To do so empties our Fast of any worthwhile result as the following hymn from the Triodion indicates: *In vain do you rejoice in not eating, O my soul! For you abstain from food, but from passions you are not purified. If you persevere in sin, you will perform a useless fast.*

## Fasting and Compassion

The teaching on fasting in the Sermon on the Mount, read at today's Liturgy, concludes with the admonition, "*Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal*" (Mt 6:19). Fasting is a school in which we try to live by this precept. In our affluent society most of us have some "treasures on earth" which we are reluctant to give up. Fasting helps us learn that we can in fact live without some of the things on which we base our way of life.

In the Gospel Christ admonishes us to avoid making a show of our fasting. In ancient Israel people often manifested their sorrow or repentance by tearing their garments or wearing sackcloth and smearing their faces with ashes. Christ taught the opposite: "*But you, when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, so that you do not appear to men to be fasting*" (Mt 6:17-18).

The Church encourages us to do the same, and specifies the ointment we should use: "Let us anoint the head of our soul with the oil of loving compassion" (Canon, First Monday of the Fast). In Greek the words for *oil and mercy* are virtually identical, giving rise to the idea that the joy of the season is to be found in extending compassion to the needy. "When you give, give generously, your face lit up with joy. And give more than you were asked for..." (Isaac the Syrian, *Ascetic Treatises*, 23). The frequency of Lenten charity suppers or alms boxes in our churches are expressions of this sentiment.

Compassion has been defined as "the deep awareness of the suffering of others coupled with the desire to relieve it." It is much more personal than writing a check or dropping off a donation to the local thrift store. Compassion is what motivates the coming of Christ in the flesh. "If He came down to earth, it was out of compassion for the human race. He suffered our sufferings before suffering the cross, even before taking our flesh. If He had not suffered, He would not have come down to share our life with us" (Origen, *Sixth Homily* on Ezekiel 6,6). Imitating the compassion of Christ, then, means becoming personally involved with those you seek to help, even to the extent of sharing their condition. For most of us, learning to do so might take a lifetime of Lents.

It has long been the custom to speak of the Corporal and Spiritual Works of Mercy, ways of showing compassion that are within the reach of every believer.

They are: *Corporal (physical) Works of Mercy*: Feeding the hungry Giving drink to the thirsty Sheltering the homeless Clothing the naked Visiting the sick Visiting the imprisoned Burying the dead

*Spiritual Works of Mercy*: Admonishing the sinner Instructing the ignorant Counseling the unsettled Comforting the sorrowful Bearing wrongs patiently Forgiving all injuries, and Praying for the living and the dead.

Can at least one of these form part of your exercise of the Great Fast?