

ST. JOSEPH THE BETROTHED

MELKITE GREEK- CATHOLIC CHURCH
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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

FOURTH SUNDAY OF THE GREAT FAST SAINT JOHN CLIMACUS



Icon of the Healing of the Deaf Mute — Mark 9:17-31

DIVINE LITURGY OF ST. BASIL THE GREAT

19 MARCH 2023 ♦ TONE 08 EOTHINON 08 † FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT/SUNDAY OF ST. JOHN CLIMACUS

GREAT DOXOLOGY: *Liturgy Book p. 17*

ANTIPHON:
FIRST: *Liturgy Book p. 29*

SECOND: *Liturgy Book p. 32*

THIRD: *Beatitudes Liturgy Book p. 125*

ENTRANCE HYMN: *Liturgy Book p. 38*

APOLYTIKIA:
Resurrection (Tone 8)
Saint John Climacus
St. Joseph

KONTAKION: *Triumphant Leader*

TRISAGION:
PROKIMENON: *Tone 8*
EPISTLE: *Liturgy Book p. 50*

Hebrews 6:13-20

Brethren, when God made his promise to Abraham, since he had no one greater to swear by, he swore by himself, saying, “*I will surely bless you, and will surely multiply you* Gn.22: 14).” And so, after patient waiting, Abraham obtained the promise. For men swear by one greater than themselves, and an oath given as a guarantee is the final settlement of all their disagreements. Hence God, meaning to show more abundantly to the heirs of the promise the firmness of his will interposed an oath, so that by two unchangeable things, in which it is impossible for God to deceive, we may have the strongest comfort — we who have sought refuge in holding fast the hope set before us. This hope we have as a sure and firm anchor of the soul, reaching even behind the veil where our forerunner Jesus has entered for us, as he became a high priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.

ALLELUIA: *Psalm 91: 1. 2* *(Tone 8)*

It is good to give thanks to the Lord, to sing praises to your name, O Most High!

To proclaim your kindness at dawn and your faithfulness throughout the night.

GOSPEL: *St. Mark 9:17-31*

At that time one of the crowd came to Jesus and bowed to him saying: “Master, I have brought to you my son, who has a dumb spirit; and whenever it seizes him it throws him down, and he foams and grinds his teeth; and he is wasting away. And I told your disciples to cast it out, but they could not.” And he, answering him, said, “O unbelieving generation, how long shall I be with you? How long shall I put up with you? Bring him to me.” And they brought him to him; and the spirit, when it saw Jesus, immediately threw the boy in convulsions, and he fell down on the ground and rolled about foaming at the mouth. So he asked his father, “How long is it since this has come upon him?” And he said, “From his infancy. Oftentimes, it has thrown him into the fire and into the waters to destroy him. But if you can do anything have compassion on us and help us.” But Jesus said to him, “If you can believe, all things are possible to the man of faith.” At once the father of the boy cried out and said with tears, “I do believe; help my unbelief.” Now when Jesus saw that a crowd was rapidly gathering, he rebuked the unclean spirit, saying to it, “You deaf and dumb spirit, I command you, go out of him and enter him no more.” And crying out and violently convulsing him, it went out of him, and he became like one dead, so that many said, “He is dead.” But Jesus took him by the hand, and raised him and he stood up. And when he had come into the house, his disciples asked him privately, “Why could we not cast it out?” And he said to them, “This kind can be cast out in no way except by prayer and fasting.” And leaving that place, they were passing through Galilee, and he did not wish anyone to know it. For he was teaching his disciples, and saying to them, “The Son of Man is to be betrayed into the hands of men, and they will kill him; and having been killed, he will rise again on the third day.”

HIRMOS: *Lenten Supplement p. 17 / Liturgy Book p. 178*

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.

Hail, unstained Mother of holiness;

Hail, most limpid font of the life-giving wave;

Hail, new Mother, workshop of the birth.

Hail, ineffable mother of a mystery beyond understanding;

Hail, new book of a new Scripture, of which, as Isaiah tells, angels & men are faithful witnesses;

Hail, alabaster jar of sanctifying ointment;

Hail, best trader of the coin of virginity;

Hail, creature embracing your Creator;

Hail, little container containing the Uncontainable (Homily 4:3).

Later poets would use the same literary device in composing Akathists to the Theotokos and, later, to numerous saints. It is also found in the Greek and Syriac hymns of Severus of Antioch (c. 459-538), Andrew of Crete (650-740), and John of Damascus (c. 675-749).

Appropriately enough, the same device is used in our services on the feast of the Annunciation. Several stichera at vespers are extended forms of the Mary-Gabriel dialogue in the Gospel, such as these:

“Gabriel stood before you, O Maiden, revealing the pre-eternal counsel, greeting you and exclaiming: ‘Rejoice, O earth unsown! Rejoice, O bush unburnt! Rejoice, O depth hard to fathom! Rejoice, O bridge leading to the heavens and lofty ladder, which Jacob beheld! Rejoice, O divine jar of Manna! Rejoice, annulment of the curse! Rejoice, restoration of Adam: the Lord is with you!’”

“You appear to me as a man,” the incorrupt Maiden said to the supreme commander; “yet how is it that you announce words which are beyond man? For you have said that God is with me, and that He will dwell in my womb. Tell me, how shall I become so spacious a dwelling and a place of sanctity which surpasses the cherubim? Deceive me no more with falsehood, for I have not known lust, I have not partaken of marriage, how then shall I give birth to a Child?”

The Angelic Salutation

The most popular prayer to the Theotokos based on Luke is undoubtedly the “Hail, Mary” which exists in different versions in the Greek, Latin and Syriac traditions. In each of these versions Gabriel’s greeting (Lk 1:28) is joined to Elizabeth’s greeting when she was visited by Mary after the Annunciation (Lk 1:42).

In Byzantine practice, the text is this: “Hail, O Theotokos, Mary full of grace, the Lord is with you. Blessed are you among women and blessed is the fruit of your womb, for you have given birth to the Savior of our souls.” This troparion is sung at vespers every day during the Great Fast and at other times during the year. It is also used by many people as part of their daily rule of prayer.

The oldest version in the West is that of Pope Gregory the Great (590-604) who used the following text as the offertory chant on the Fourth Sunday in Advent: “Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with you. Blessed are you among women and blessed is the fruit of your womb.” The second part of the prayer developed after the twelfth century and was fixed by Pope Pius V in 1568.

The only other tradition which uses this prayer is that of the Syriac Church which has a slightly different version in its book of the hours: “Hail Virgin Mary, full of grace, Our Lord is with you. Blessed are you among women and blessed is the Fruit of your womb, Our Lord. O Saint Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at all times, and at the hour of our death. Amen.” It is often added to the concluding prayers of the daily office, particularly in India.

THE DAY GOD TOOK FLESH

ARCHBISHOP JOSEPH RAYA of blessed memory tells how, as a student, he visited his village priest during school breaks. On one visit he noted the Gospel book in the priest's icon corner opened to the story of the Annunciation (Lk 1:26-38). Returning on his next break a few months later, the young Joseph saw the Gospel opened to the same page. When Joseph asked the priest why he kept reading the same story, the priest answered that one could read this passage every day and never exhaust its meaning.

The Gospel passage tells of Gabriel's message from God to the Virgin Mary and her response, "Let it be so according to your word." With her acceptance, the eternal Word of God was conceived in her womb. It has been said that this event, the conception of Christ, even more than His birth changed the course of the planet. When the Word of God assumed human nature it was not at His birth but at His conception, when He took our nature in the form of a fetus in the womb of the Theotokos. His birth revealed the mystery of His incarnation to the world, but it was at His conception that this mystery was accomplished.

The Angel's Greeting

According to a tradition documented in the first centuries, "Luke, was born in Antioch, by profession, was a physician. He had become a disciple of the apostle Paul and later followed Paul until his [Paul's] martyrdom" (from a second-century prologue to the Gospel). He was thought to be either a Hellenized Jew or a converted pagan writing in Greek for a Greek-speaking community. This explains the Greek expression used by the angel in the Annunciation narrative, a phrase which has become part of the prayer life of Christians all over the world: "Hail, full of grace."

In the Gospel, the angel greets Mary with the Greek word *chaire* rather than with the Hebrew/ Aramaic salutation, *shalom*. While each of these expressions has a different literal meaning, both are idiomatic forms of greeting, expressing good will between people. Some translations use the literal meaning, Rejoice, while others use the idiomatic meaning, *Hail*.

The angel describes Mary in Lk 1:28 as *kecharitomeni*, another word which has proven difficult to translate. When St Jerome rendered the Bible into Latin he translated this term literally as *gratia plena*, *full of grace*. This would create a problem centuries later when Western theology began using *gratia* as a technical term to mean the holiness bestowed by God. They interpreted Gabriel's greeting as an indication that Mary was immaculately conceived.

During the Reformation, many Protestants rejected both this doctrine and St Jerome's translation, pointing to the angel Gabriel's own explanation of the term in v. 30: "*Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor [charis] with God.*" Modern Catholic translations of Luke generally favor this interpretation as well, rendering *kecharitomeni* as "highly favored one."

The Angel's Greeting in Prayer

One effect of the Council of Ephesus (431), which affirmed the Virgin Mary as Theotokos, was an increase of devotion to her. St Theodotos of Ancyra, a Father of that council, left us a praise of Mary based on Gabriel's greeting:

*Hail, our desirable gladness;
Hail, O rejoicing of the churches;
Hail, O name that breathes out sweetness;
Hail, face that radiates divinity and grace;
Hail, most venerable memory;
Hail, O spiritual and saving fleece;
Hail, O Mother of unsetting splendor, filled with light;*

SAINT JOSEPH CHURCH ANNOUNCEMENTS

EVENTS IN MARCH

Saturday, March 18th

Confessions: 3:00 p.m.

Great Vespers: 3:15 p.m.

Divine Liturgy: 4:00 p.m.

Sunday, March 19th

SUNDAY OF JOHN OF THE LADDER

Divine Liturgy: 10:00 a.m.

St. Joseph Breakfast: 9 a.m.- 1 p.m.

Adults \$12.00 / Children \$ 6.00

Friday, March 24th

Vespers Divine Liturgy: 5:00 p.m.

Final Akathist Hymn: 7:00 p.m.

Saturday Morning, March 25th

TWELVE GREAT FEASTS: ANNUNCIATION

Divine Liturgy: 1:00 p.m.

Gregory the Great Academy: Mass

Saturday Evening, March 25th

Confessions: 3:00 p.m.

Great Vespers: 3:15 p.m.

Divine Liturgy: 4:00 p.m.

Sunday, March 26th

SUNDAY OF ST. MARY OF EGYPT

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

18 March: Edward & Dorothy Abda
from children & grandchildren
19 March: Deceased Members of Bolus
Family from Barbara Albert
25 March: Joseph Edward Bartnicki
from Steve Bartnicki
26 March: Rosemary Brown
from M./M. James Hanisch

LENTEN SERVICES

Monday, *Latin Rite Liturgy in honor of St. Joseph*
Wednesday: *Pre-sanctified:*

Gregory Great Academy: 5:00 p.m.

Tuesday & Thursday: *Pre-sanctified Liturgy:*

St. Joseph: 7:00 p.m.

Friday: *Pre-sanctified: Gregory Great Academy:*
11:15 a.m.

Friday: *Akathist Hymn: St. Joseph: 5:00 p.m.*

2023 WEEKLY COLLECTION

March 12

Weekly Offering:	\$ 450.00
Divine Liturgy:	\$ 20.00
Candles:	\$ 25.00
Total:	\$ 495.00

THE PRESENCE BEHIND THE VEIL

THE NEW TESTAMENT DEPICTS the mystery of Christ in terms of the rituals of sacrifice in the Jerusalem temple. It describes Christ's sacrifice based on the manner in which animals were sacrificed there. First, the animal was killed, usually by the donor, in the outer court of the temple. Similarly, Jesus was crucified outside the holy city of Jerusalem.

The same pattern is found in our Divine Liturgy, illustrating the connection between the temple, the Cross, and our worship. Thus, the Eucharistic bread, which we call the Lamb, is prepared at the Prothesis, originally in another chapel, but at least at a distance from the Holy Table.

In the temple, the slain animal was taken by the Levites to the priests, who placed it on the altar and offered it to God. In contrast, Christ – being both victim and priest – offered Himself to the Father eternally in the heavenly sanctuary. In our Liturgy, the Lamb and the cup are brought to the holy table and offered “in all and for the sake of all.”

Finally, the sacrificial meat was divided: part was portioned out for God (by immolation), and part for the priests. The greater part was returned to the donor to be shared with the poor or in a festive meal. In our Liturgy the sanctified Lamb and the cup are shared first by the priests and then by the people in the mystical supper of the Eucharist.

On Yom Kippur, there was another step. The blood of the animal was taken into the Holy of Holies by the High Priest and sprinkled there. Finally, the High Priest would emerge from the Holy of Holies and bless the people. Christ was placed in the tomb by Joseph and Nicodemus, but emerged from the tomb at His resurrection, sharing with those in the tombs the blessing of eternal life.

The Presence behind the Veil

Describing Christ's sacrifice in terms of the temple ritual, the Epistle to the Hebrews speaks of Christ entering “*the Presence behind the veil*” (Heb 6:19). This depicts heaven in terms of the Jerusalem temple, where the Holy of Holies – which no one could enter except the High Priest on Yom Kippur – was separated from the rest of the temple by a curtain or veil. We see an allusion to this image at the Great Entrance of our Liturgy, when the priest brings the offered bread and wine behind the iconostasis.

To enter “*the Presence behind the veil*” alludes to Christ's return to the Father, where He eternally offers His sacrifice for us and it is eternally accepted by the Father. Because His sacrifice is offered and accepted beyond human time, it is possible for us to partake of it continually in the Divine Liturgy. The Liturgy, then, is not a “new” sacrifice but the one sacrifice of Christ, eternally offered and accepted.

In this passage, Christ is called “*the forerunner*” (v. 20), meaning the One who goes before, to prepare a place for us. Christ has entered the presence of the Father offering the sacrifice of His blood for us who follow behind Him. The same reality is depicted elsewhere in agricultural terms when Christ is called “*the first-fruits of those who sleep*” (1 Cor 15:20).

The Promise of Christ's Return

At His ascension Christ's disciples are told by an angel, “*This same Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will so come in like manner as you saw Him go into heaven*” (Acts 1:11). Ever since, the members of the Church have been waiting for the return of Christ: “*To those who eagerly wait for Him He will appear a second time, apart from sin, for salvation*” (Heb 9:28).

This promise of a second appearance, or second coming, energized the preaching of the apostles, who placed it at the heart of our faith. As the Nicene Creed professes, we believe that Christ “... shall come again with glory to judge the living and the dead and of His Kingdom there shall be no end.” And this faith gives us hope.

Our Hope for Eternal Life

Another dimension is added to this teaching in the First Epistle of St Peter, where God is praised in these words: “*Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you*” (1 Pt 1:3, 4).

Putting these images together, we can say that our hope for eternal life in the company of the saints is not wishful thinking, but is solidly based on the reality of Christ's sacrificial death and its acceptance by the Father. It is confirmed by Christ's resurrection and becomes ours through our sharing in the Divine Liturgy. As forerunner and first fruits, Christ stands at the head of an endless procession, leading those united to Him beyond the veil into the eternal Holy of Holies.

This Is Our Hope

In popular speech hope is equated with wishing or feeling that something might be true, or might happen. There is nothing wishful about Christian hope, however. It is based on the witness of the apostles to Christ's death and resurrection and their understanding that we are meant to share in the eternal life He had purchased for us by His blood. In St Paul's words, “*If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men the most pitiable*” (1 Cor 15:19).

Christian hope, then, is a firm confidence in the witness of the apostles affirmed by the Church ever since.

The Fear of Eternity

Strange as it may seem, many people are afraid of endless life. Apeirophobia – the fear of eternity – afflicts more people than we can imagine. The thought of an impersonal existence that goes on forever amounts to torture. It appears to some to resemble life in prison without parole.

As we know from studying Christ's sacrifice and the Divine Liturgy, there is no earthly time with God, no succession of tomorrows, only an eternal now. In Christ's words, “*Now this is eternal life: that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent*” (Jn 17:3). The Christian faith depicts eternity as an endless now, knowing the truly existing One, the inexhaustible cup of life. The life we now share is but a shadow of life in and with God; if earthly time went on forever it would be something to fear. But our hope is not that earthly time would stretch out endlessly, but that an eternal now in the presence of Christ would truly transform us in ways we can but imagine. “... *it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is*” (1 Jn 3:2).

Temple, Cross and Altar

Of old, celebrating the dedication of the Temple, the wise Solomon offered to God sacrifices and holocausts of brute animals. Now that the God of grace and truth has come upon earth, He has completely fulfilled these sacrifices. Offering Himself as a sacrifice for our salvation, the Lover of Mankind has sanctified His Church, making it unshakable forever. He alone is Lord, and is glorified in the assembly of His saints. Ikos, December 9