

# ST. JOSEPH THE BETROTHED

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

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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. Maryann Nappi Donahue. Carol Downer.  
Dav. Fairclough, Sr. Rob. Fairclough, Sr. Sara Gomez. Niko  
Mayashairo. Mary McNeilly. Jos. Ed. Bartnicki. Sue Solsman.  
SusVieselmeyer. Dean & Sherry Yockey. **MEMORY ETER-**  
**NAL:** ✱Rev. Char. Aboody. ✱Rev. Mich. Jolly. ✱Rev. Jos. Fran-  
cavilla. ✱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 Bolus. ✱Nich. Cianci.  
✱Patricia Cimakosky. ✱Ann & John 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. ✱Char. 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.

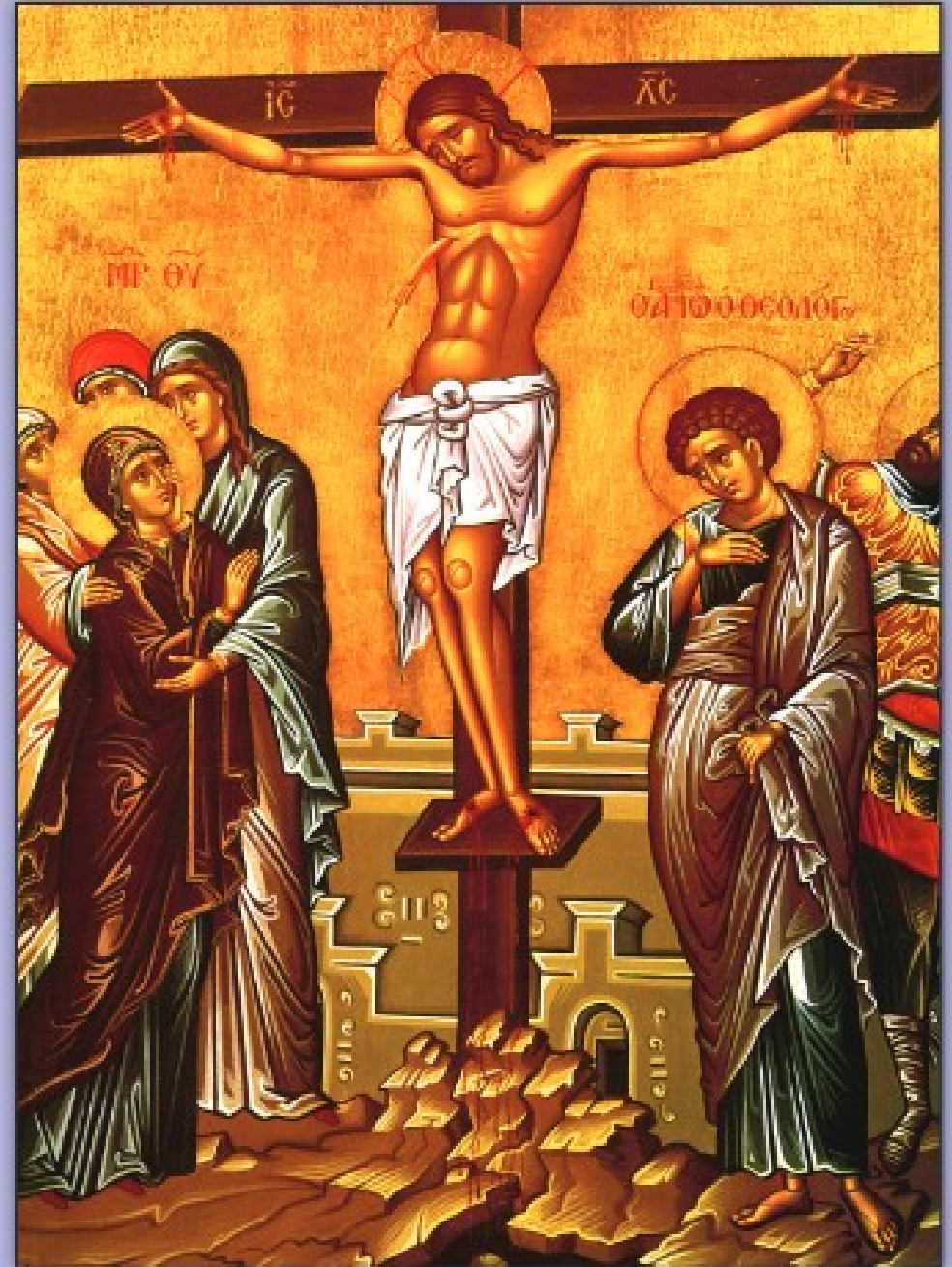
## HOLY MYSTERY OF CROWNING:

Call rectory at earliest convenience.

## VICTIM ASSISTANCE COORDINATOR:

Report Sexual Abuse: 1.800.479.5910

## SUNDAY BEFORE THE EXALTATION OF THE HOLY CROSS



*Icon of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross*

# DIVINE LITURGY OF ST. JOHN CHRYSOSTOM

10 SEPTEMBER 2023 ♦ TONE 06 EOTHINON 04 † FIFTEENTH SUNDAY PENTECOST/SUNDAY BEFORE EXALTATION

## GREAT DOXOLOGY:

ANTIPHONS: *Nativity of the Theotokos*

FIRST:

SECOND:

THIRD/BEATTITUDES

## ENTRANCE HYMN:

### APOLYTIKIA:

*Resurrection (Tone 6)*

*Nativity of the Theotokos*

*St. Joseph the Betrothed*

KONDAKION: *Nativity of Theotokos*

### TRISAGION:

PROKIMENON: *Psalms 27:9, 1*

*(Tone 6)*

### EPISTLE:

**Brethren**, see with what large letters I am writing to you with my own hand! All those who want to please in a human way are forcing you to be circumcised merely to avoid persecution because of the cross of Christ. For not even the circumcised observe the Law: but they want you to be circumcised that they may boast of your subjection to external rites. But as for me, God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through Whom the world is crucified to me, and I to the world. For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision but a new creation is of any account. And whoever follow this rule, peace and mercy be upon them and on God's Israel. From now on, let no man give me trouble, for I bear the marks of the Lord Jesus in my body. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit, brethren. Amen.

ALLELUIA: *Psalms 88:20, 22*

*(Tone 6)*

I have exalted one chosen out of my people. I have found David my servant,  
and anointed him with holy chrism.

For my hand shall support him, and my arm shall make him strong.

### GOSPEL:

-17

**The Lord said**, "No one has gone up into heaven except the One Who has come down from heaven: the Son of Man Who is in heaven. And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the desert, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that those who believe in Him may not perish, but may have life everlasting." For God so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten Son, that those who believe in Him may not perish, but may have life everlasting. For God did not send His Son into the world in order to judge the world, but that the world might be saved through Him.

HIRMOS: *Nativity of Theotokos*

KINONIKON: *Nativity of Theotokos*

POST-COMMUNION HYMN:

*Liturgy Book p. 17*

*Liturgy Book p. 29*

*Liturgy Book p. 32*

*Liturgy Book p. 125*

*Liturgy Book p. 41*

*Liturgy Book p. 43*

*Liturgy Book p. 101*

*Liturgy Book p. 47*

*Liturgy Book p. 140*

*Liturgy Book p. 50*

*Liturgy Book p. 58*

*Galatians 6:11-18*

*St. John 3:13*

*Liturgy Book 141/77*

*Liturgy Book p. 83/83*

*Liturgy Book p. 89 / Liturgy Book p. 90*

*idols, from blood, from things strangled, and from sexual immorality. If you keep yourselves from these, you will do well. Farewell"* (Acts 15:23-29).

The apostles thus freed Gentiles from observing circumcision and most of the Jewish dietary regulations. The other prohibitions continued to be observed in the East for centuries, enshrined in the Apostolic Canons. This collection, chiefly of Syrian origin, was accepted as binding throughout the East by the seventh-century Trullan Council. Its sixty-third canon reads in part, "If any Bishop, or Presbyter, or Deacon, or anyone else on the sacerdotal list at all, eat meat in the blood of its soul, or that has been killed by a wild beast, or that has died a natural death, let him be deposed. For the Law has forbidden this."

This prohibition is based on the idea, common in the ancient world, that blood carries the essence of the soul. By consuming the blood of an animal we make a part of ourselves the passionate nature of the animal just as we partake of Christ's nature by receiving the Eucharist. Properly slaughtered meat would not have substantial quantities of blood, unlike the other cases mentioned in the canon.

Paul himself continued to observe many ceremonial works of the Law but did not see any of them as a cause of our justification. Christ, he insisted, is the only way to God and it is only through faith in Him that we can attain union with the Father.

### **The Call to Work**

It seems contradictory that the same Paul who was so adamant against being justified by the works of the Law would later tell the Philippians, "*Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure*" (Phil 2:12-13).

For St Paul justification is not a one-time event in life. We do not simply say a prayer or make our baptismal vows once and that does it! Salvation, or justification (to use St Paul's term) comes through faith, but faith is a lifelong process!

Life-long Christians know that there are periods of life in which spiritual zeal is strong, when we are as fervent in our faith as anyone could wish. They also know that there are periods of dryness – times when we may wonder whether we believe anything at all.

There are also degrees of awareness which are meant to deepen as our Christian life progresses. St Paul uses the image of milk vs. solid food to illustrate the progress of Christian understanding in our lives: "*For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the first principles of the oracles of God; and you have come to need milk and not solid food. For everyone who partakes only of milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness, for he is a babe. But solid food belongs to those who are of full age, that is, those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil*" (Heb 5:12-14).

The process of growing discernment enables us to appropriate the righteousness of Christ in an ever-deepening way as our Christ life develops. As we make the teachings in Scripture more our own through reflection and assimilation we become more able to put them into practice in our lives. We thus "work out our salvation" by cooperating with the grace of God working within us – a synergy between God who calls and we who respond to His saving love.

# WHEN GOD WORKS IN US

POLITICIANS ARE OFTEN ACCUSED of committing doublespeak: contradicting themselves as occasion demands. St Paul seems to do the same thing in his teaching on justification. He seems to contradict himself in teaching how we are justified. On one occasion he teaches that we are justified by faith; on another occasion he encourages people to work out their salvation. Is this doublespeak or do these teachings complement each other?

## Faith over Works

In Gal 2:16 St Paul writes, “... knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the Law but by faith in Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, that we might be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the Law; for by the works of the Law no flesh shall be justified.” The term “works of the Law” refers to regulations prescribed in the Torah which were the subject of debate by first-century Jews of different schools. Opinions of the Qumran school came to light in the twentieth century with the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls. One of these documents, *Some Pertinent Works of Torah*, illustrates the enormous preoccupation on the part of many first-century Jews with these regulations.

When St Paul says that no one is justified by works of the Law, he seems to be referring to the ceremonial regulations which were so important to contemporary Jews: the dietary laws, the Sabbath and holyday observances, and especially circumcision, which was deemed essential for numbering a man into the People of God.

In St Paul’s day most Christians were, in fact, Jews who had come to accept the Lord Jesus as the Messiah. Some of them were insisting on the necessity of circumcision if a Gentile were to be admitted into the Church. St Paul opposed them and pointed out earlier in Galatians that his practice was not rejected even in Jerusalem.

In Gal 2 he tells of visiting the Holy City with Barnabas and Titus: “After fourteen years I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, and also took Titus with me... Yet not even Titus who was with me, being a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised” (Gal 2:1, 3). St Paul says that the chief apostles, Peter, James and John supported his outreach to the Gentiles and “desired only that we should remember the poor, the very thing which I also was eager to do” (v. 10).

The issue was far from settled, however. Peter reversed his view at a later time. “Now when Peter had come to Antioch, I withstood him to his face, because he was to be blamed; for before certain men came from James, he would eat with the Gentiles; but when they came, he withdrew and separated himself, fearing those who were of the circumcision. And the rest of the Jews also played the hypocrite with him, so that even Barnabas was carried away with their hypocrisy” (vv. 11-13).

Paul’s position would eventually be upheld when the issue was discussed in Jerusalem (see Acts 15). The apostles then sent this letter with their decision: “The apostles, the elders, and the brethren to the brethren who are of the Gentiles in Antioch, Syria, and Cilicia: Greetings. Since we have heard that some who went out from us have troubled you with words, unsettling your souls, saying, ‘You must be circumcised and keep the law’—to whom we gave no such commandment— ... it seemed good to the Holy Spirit, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things: that you abstain from things offered to

# SAINT JOSEPH CHURCH ANNOUNCEMENTS

## EVENTS IN SEPTEMBER

Saturday Evening, September 09

Confessions 3:00 p.m.

Great Vespers: 3:15 p.m.

Divine Liturgy: 4:00 p.m.

Sunday Morning, September 10

Divine Liturgy: 10:00 a.m.

Wednesday, September 13, 2023

Vespertal Divine Liturgy: 5:30 p.m.

Saint Joseph Church, Scranton PA

Thursday, September 14, 2023

Divine Liturgy: 10:00 a.m.

GREAT FEASTS: EXALTATION OF THE HOLY CROSS

Gregory the Great Academy,

Elmhurst Township, PA

Saturday Evening, September 16

Confessions 3:00 p.m.

Great Vespers: 3:15 p.m.

Divine Liturgy: 4:00 p.m.

Sunday Morning, September 17

Baptism of James Henry Cheffers

8:15 a.m.

Divine Liturgy: 10:00 a.m.

## 2023 WEEKLY COLLECTION

August 27

Weekly Offering: \$ 510.00

Candles: \$ 25.00

Total: \$ 535.00

Thank you for your support!

## 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

09 September: ✱ Salvatore De Nucci  
from Steve Bartnicki

10 September: Joseph Viola Family

16 September: ✱ John Coury  
from M/M Michael Milewski

17 September: Andrew Pendrak✱  
from M/M David Michaels

40th Day Memorial Charlie Simon

23 September: ✱ Charles Simon  
from Joseph Zaydon Family

24 September: ✱ John Coury  
from Joseph Zaydon Family



# CONFESSING OUR FAITH THROUGH WORKS

THE APOSTLES INVARIABLY BEGAN their preaching ministry in a foreign city at the Jewish synagogue. They sought to show both the Jews and the “God-fearing Gentiles” who worshipped with them that Jesus was the Messiah foretold by the prophets. It was usually after forming a nucleus from among these believers that they approached other Gentiles.

This attempt to integrate Jews and Gentiles into one community of faith prompted the controversy over the place of circumcision and the works of the Law (the Torah) that recur again and again in the apostolic writings. The New Testament teaching, spearheaded by St Paul, is that these “works” – circumcision, sacrifices, etc. – do not save. Salvation is the work of Christ alone which we appropriate by faith.

In the Middle Ages, when entire nations in the West had become Christian, everyone was assumed to believe. Their verbal confession of faith – the Creed – was recited daily by everyone. Personal faith was stimulated less by words than by what was called “works of supererogation” – pilgrimages, prescribed prayers and devotions – going beyond what was necessary to obtain God’s grace. Donations were often tied to these “works” in support of the shrines, churches or religious orders which promoted them. Though most of these practices were rooted in the mystery of Christ and His Church, it seemed to many that their power came from the “works” themselves. Reaction against this kind of spirituality was an important impetus of the Protestant Reformation.

Protestants, particularly among the “Free Churches” completely rejected spiritual “works” such as rituals, sacraments, images, or relics. Their worship services focused on prayer and preaching. To emphasize the need for interior faith, external expressions were discouraged and even forbidden.

This was not the teaching of the apostles who did not forbid the “works of the Law.” They did not discourage their Jewish followers from observing them nor did they impose these practices on the non-Jewish believers. Only faith in Christ, rather than the observance of any practices, would save. External practices were useful if they expressed and stimulated faith; they simply could not replace it.

The New Testament itself attests to practices such as Baptism, the Eucharist, the Laying-on of Hands and the Lord’s Day. Documents from the next generation of believers show their use of the sign of the cross and fasting on Wednesdays and Fridays. Practices such as a cycle of daily services arose in all the local Churches. Other external expressions of faith arose over the centuries, sometimes in one Church or another. The value of any such practice for us is according to our faith in the Lord to whom they point.

## Faith Expressed in Works

For centuries Christians in the historic or apostolic Churches of East and West proclaimed their faith publicly whenever possible through external works. They built shrines, erected crosses and images on their lands, placed icons on the outside of their homes and in their places of work. In our culture such practices are often carried out by recent immigrants, who will display images of their hometown patrons in their stores or the windows of their homes.

Our contemporary secular society discourages such expressions as inappropriate in the world outside the home or church. Religious expression, they say, should be private, especially as our society is equally for people of every religion and of none. By and large people have gone along with this viewpoint. Churches have gradually abandoned or minimized outdoor processions. Believers generally don’t pray before meals in public places or express preferences for fasting foods on the appointed days when dining with others. We quietly agree to activities scheduled to conflict with the Sunday Liturgy. We rarely see icons in shops or restaurants, aside from some Greek-owned diners. When asked our religion we are likely to respond as did one Middle Eastern shopkeeper, “I am what you are.”

Of late, however, secularists have become more aggressive in their drive to keep religion – and Christianity in particular? – out of the public sector. People have been disciplined, for example, and even fired for wearing a cross or religious medallion in the workplace. Some businesses demand that employees refrain from making any public statements anywhere that do not accord with company aims.

Believers in some places have challenged such policies and in some places won legal victories on constitutional grounds for the right to express their faith visibly in such ways. Perhaps these controversies can serve to remind us of the words of Christ in the Gospel, “*Whoever is ashamed of me and my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him the Son of Man also will be ashamed when He comes in the glory of His Father with the holy angels*” (Mk 8:38).

Many of us can place an icon above the door of our home or a cross in our yard. Each of us can wear a cross or medal around our neck or in our lapel. We can share colored eggs at Pascha with our neighbors or blessed water, fruit and artoklasia bread on the appropriate feast days. Seeing how elaborately people decorate their homes to celebrate Halloween or welcome Santa, can believers not use palms, greens or banners to publicly observe the Gospel mystery?

Works such as these surely do not save, but they can wordlessly express our faith in Christ incarnate, crucified, risen and wondrous in His saints. They can simply but clearly affirm that we are not ashamed of the Son of Man, the Source of our life.

O Master, infinite in Your divine nature, You condescended in these latter days to become incarnate and finite: for in assuming our body, You accepted all its properties. Wherefore, we represent Your likeness and embrace it with the Model in mind.

We go up to Your love, and, following the divine tradition set by the Apostles, we draw from it the grace of healing.

*(Stichon at the Lamplighting of Vespers, Sunday of Orthodoxy)*

O Lord, by exposing Your bodily image for veneration, we proclaim the great mystery of Your saving Economy. O Christ, You have manifested Yourself to our eyes, not by a mere apparition, as the Manicheans wrongfully believe, but in the reality of the flesh, whose nature leads us to love You.

*(Stichon at the Praises of Matins, Sunday of Orthodoxy)*