

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. 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.

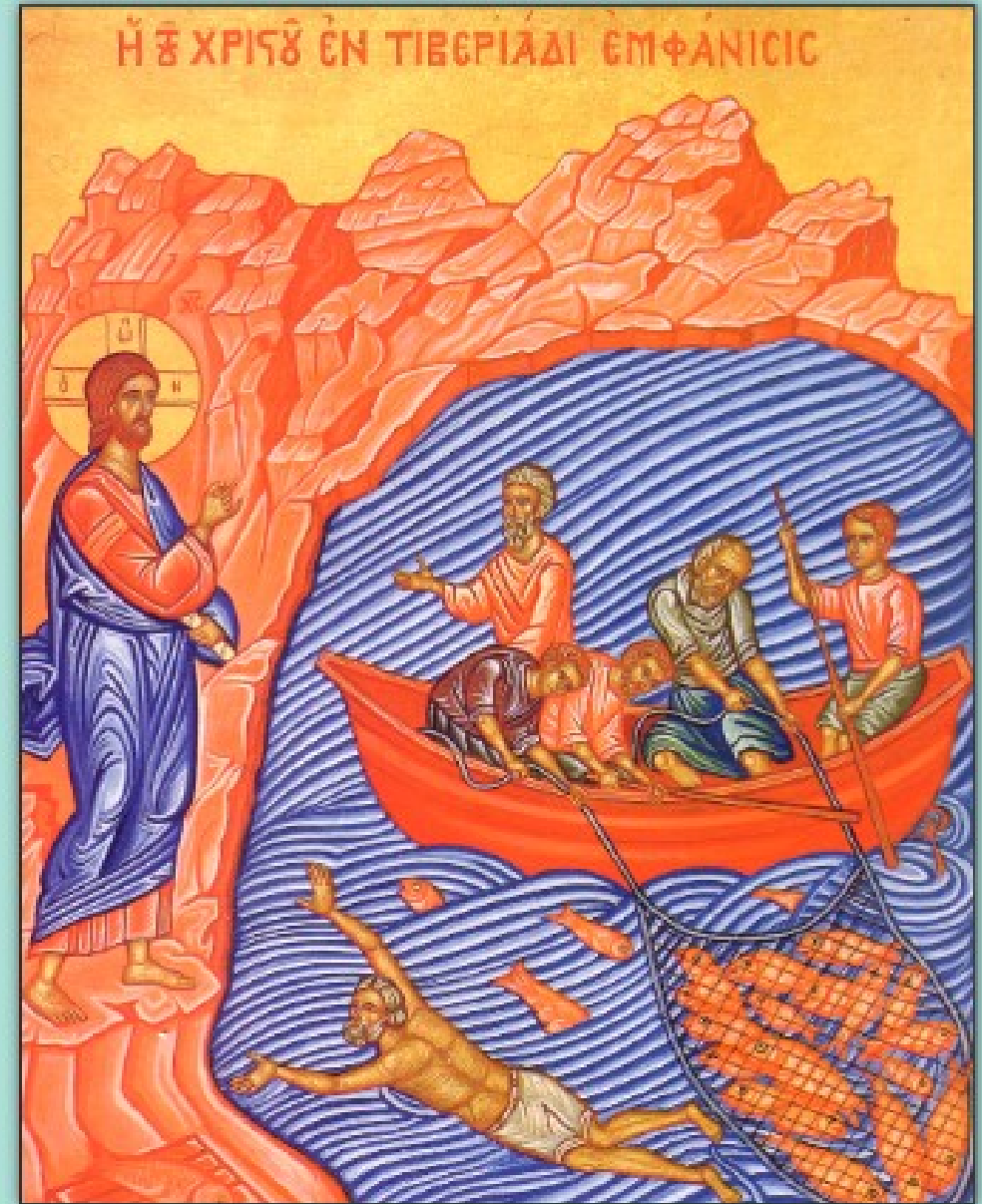
HOLY MYSTERY OF CROWNING:

Call rectory at earliest convenience.

VICTIM ASSISTANCE COORDINATOR:

Report Sexual Abuse: 1.800.479.5910

SEVENTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST



Icon of the Catch of Fish

DIVINE LITURGY OF ST. JOHN CHRYSOSTOM

24 SEPTEMBER 2023 ♦ TONE 08 EOTHINON 06 † SEVENTEENTH PENTECOST/FIRST SUNDAY AFTER CROSS

GREAT DOXOLOGY:

Liturgy Book p. 17

ANTIPHNS:

FIRST:

Liturgy Book p. 29

SECOND:

Liturgy Book p. 32

THIRD/BEATTITUDES

Liturgy Book p. 125

ENTRANCE HYMN:

Liturgy Book p. 41

APOLYTIKIA:

Resurrection (Tone 8)

Liturgy Book p. 46

Protomartyr Thekla, the Equal of the Apostles

Liturgy Book p. 100

St. Joseph the Betrothed

Liturgy Book p. 47

KONDAKION:

Liturgy Book p. 144

TRISAGION:

Liturgy Book p. 50

PROKIMENON: *Psalm 76: 11, 1*

(Tone 8)

Liturgy Book p. 61

EPISTLE:

2 Corinthians 6:16-18

Brethren, you are the temple of the living God, as God says, *I will be their God and they shall be my people. (Lv.26: 11.2) Ct. Jer. 31:1) Wherefore, come out from among them, be separated, says the Lord, and touch not an unclean thing; Is. 52: 1, and I will welcome you in, and will be a Father to you, and you shall be my sons and daughters, says the Lord almighty, (CL Hos. 1:10; Is 43:6) Having therefore these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all defilement of the body and of the spirit, perfecting sanctity in the fear of God.*

ALLELUIA: *Psalm 95:1, 2*

(Tone 8)

Come; let us rejoice in the Lord! Let us sing joyfully to God our Savior!

Let us greet His presence with thanksgiving; let us joyfully sing psalms to Him.

GOSPEL:

St. Luke 5:1-11

At that time Jesus was standing by the Lake of Gennesaret. And he saw two boats moored by the lake, but the fishermen had left them and were washing their nets. And getting into one of the boats, the one that was Simon's, he asked him to put out a little from the land. And sitting down, he began to teach the crowds from the boat. But when he had stopped speaking, he said to Simon, "Put out into the deep, and lower your nets for a catch." And Simon answered and said to him, "Master, the whole night through we have toiled and have taken nothing; but at your word I will lower the net." And when they had done so, they caught a great number of fishes, but their net was breaking. And they called to their comrades in the other boat to come and help them. And they came and filled both the boats, so that they began to sink. But when Simon Peter saw this, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord," For he and all who were with him were amazed at the catch of fish they had made; and so also were James and John, the sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon. And Jesus said to Simon, "Do not be afraid; from now on you shall catch men." And when they had brought their boats to land, they left all and followed him.

HIRMOS:

Liturgy Book 77

KINONIKON:

Liturgy Book p. 83

POST~ COMMUNION HYMN:

Liturgy Book p. 89 / Liturgy Book p. 90

on her way to and from Jerusalem. On her second visit, she writes, "When I had arrived in the name of God, prayer was made at the [saint's] memorial and the whole of the Acts of Saint Thekla had been read, I gave endless thanks to Christ our God, who deigned to fulfill my desires in all things, unworthy and undeserving as I am. Then, after a stay of two days, when I had seen the holy monks and ascetics who were there, both men and women, and when I had prayed and made my Communion, I returned to Tarsus and to my journey." St

Thekla and the Defile

Stories of St Thekla often tell how she was protected from being defiled by "a defile". "To defile" means to debase or render impure, but "a defile" is a narrow crevice affording passage through mountains. In a number of stories about St Thekla it is said that she was pursued by people intending to defile her. In some versions her pursuer is a would-be lover frustrated by her commitment to chastity. In other versions pagans, resenting her success at proclaiming the Gospel, pursue her in order to silence her. In all versions Thekla flees into the mountains where a defile opens up allowing her to pass through it unharmed. Churches or shrines to St Thekla were often placed near mountain crevices, such as the monastery in Ma'loula, whose name in Aramaic means entry.

The First Woman Martyr?

In the Christian East St Thekla is considered the first woman martyred for Christ, much as St Stephen was among men. Yet, as we have seen, Thekla lived a long life and died in peace. How, then is she a martyr?

Thekla was first described as protomartyr among women by St Isidore of Pelusium, a fifth century Egyptian ascetic and friend of Ss Cyril of Alexandria and John Chrysostom. Known for his letters (over 2000 have survived), Isidore wrote to some women ascetics in Alexandria who were facing expulsion from the city for supporting the exiled Athanasius. He extolled "the all-praiseworthy Thekla" as "an eternal monument of purity" and the "head of all women victors and trophy-bearers" (Letter 87). Her "martyrdom" was considered to be all the sufferings she endured for giving herself to Christ. St Thekla thereby became the principal model for Egyptian women ascetics.

Early writers saw the life-long struggle of ascetics such as more intense than the more transient pains of actual martyrs. Their daily struggle with temptation and physical affliction became the "spears and swords" of their martyrdom. Hence St Thekla, as the model for women ascetics was the protomartyr of their kind.

O Lord, Thekla followed in the footsteps of the Apostle in chains, casting off the chains of earthly passions; captivated by the power of Your love, she was firmly bound to You, O Savior of our souls.

O Lord, Your spotless Protomartyr Thekla was delivered over to the fire, but was not burned since she possessed You as a refreshing dew. She remained safe in the midst of wild beasts, protected as she was by Your hand, O Savior of our souls. As an athlete in your struggles, you overcame the enemy, O blessed Thekla; in martyrdom, you destroyed his schemes. You fled far from Thamyris in order to be espoused to Christ, your true Love. You were the companion of Paul and imitated Stephen in his trial. As the first woman to bear witness to Christ, you have boldness before Him: save our souls from all danger as, in faith, we festively celebrate your sacred memory

SEPTEMBER 24: ST. THEKLA, THE FIRST WOMAN MARTYR

FROM SEPTEMBER, 2013 TO APRIL, 2014 government and rebel forces struggled for control of the ancient Christian town of Ma'loula, Syria, a UNESCO World Heritage site and home to a number of shrines and monasteries. One of them is the ancient Orthodox women's monastery of St Thekla from which 12 nuns were abducted and held by rebel forces for three months.

Almost unknown in the West today, St Thekla was held in great esteem in the early Church and is still revered in the Christian East. Her festival, on September 24, has attracted pilgrims since at least the fourth century. Today both Christians and Muslims pray at her shrine in this venerable town.

Who Was St Thekla?

The story of St Thekla is told in the *Acts of Paul and Thekla*, a late first or early second century work written in the lifetime of the apostle John the Theologian but not by him. It is considered apocryphal, chiefly because its teachings are not consistent with those of St Paul in the canonical Scriptures.

In this work Thekla is said to be a daughter of an aristocratic family in Iconium (modern Konya in Asia Minor) who heard St Paul preaching during his stay there (see Acts of the Apostles 14:1-7). She was so captivated by Paul's preaching that her mother and fiancé denounced him to the authorities and he was jailed. Thekla bribed the guards to gain entry to the prison and spent the night listening to Paul. When she was discovered, she too was arrested and condemned to death so that "all the women who have been taught by this man may be afraid."

Thekla was convinced of the truth of the Gospel and was ready to renounce everything she had for its sake. She was taken to the outdoor theater and placed on a pyre. Then, as the *Acts of Paul and Thekla* tells it, "They lighted the fire. And though a great fire was blazing, it did not touch her. For God, having compassion upon her, made an underground rumbling and a cloud full of water and hail overshadowed the theater from above" (§ 22). In the storm which followed the earthquake the pyre was overturned and Thekla was saved.

In the Scriptural Acts of the Apostles we are told that, when St Paul left Iconium he went to Lystra. In the apocryphal Acts we are told that he went to Antioch, taking Thekla with him. In any case, Thekla spent the rest of a long life near Seleucia (modern Silifke, in southern Turkey) where she "enlightened many and died in peace." Because of the many people Thekla brought to Christ in that pagan region the Church accords her the title "Equal to the Apostles."

Many early writers in both East and West revered St Thekla as a model for devout women, particularly ascetics. Thus other notable women such as St Macrina and St Melany the Roman were described as "second Theklas" by eminent Church Fathers St Gregory of Nyssa and St Jerome.

The Tomb of St Thekla

The cave near Silifke, in which Thekla reputedly lived as an ascetic and was buried, was revered locally during the time of the Roman persecutions. As St Gregory the Theologian wrote (Oration 31), the fame of this shrine spread and by the fourth century a church had been built around the cave. This church, as well as the ruins of the more prominent church, built over it in the fifth century, may still be seen at the site. This church, as its ruins attest, was the largest in the region. Monasteries for both men and women grew up surrounding it which attracted pilgrims from all over the empire.

The fourth-century Spanish pilgrim nun Egeria wrote about visiting this shrine twice,

SAINT JOSEPH CHURCH ANNOUNCEMENTS

EVENTS IN SEPTEMBER

Saturday Evening, September 23

NO DIVINE SERVICES

Sunday Morning, September 24

Divine Liturgy: 10:00 a.m.

Saturday Evening, September 30

Confessions 3:00 p.m.

Great Vespers: 3:15 p.m.

Divine Liturgy: 4:00 p.m.

Sunday Morning, October 01

Divine Liturgy: 10:00 a.m.

2023 WEEKLY COLLECTION

September 17

Weekly Offering:	\$ 755.00
Holyday:	\$ 75.00
Monthly:	\$ 130.00
Candles:	\$ 25.00
Total:	\$ 985.00

Thank you for your support!

Annual Pasta Dinner
St. Joseph Melkite Church
Thursday, October 19, 2023
4:00 - 6:00 p.m.
Adults \$10.00/Children

Chicken Bar-B-Que
St. Mary's Byzantine Church
Linden Street, Scranton PA
September 24, 2022
Noon – 5:00 p.m. \$13.00

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

- 23 September: ✱ Charles Simon
from Joseph Zaydon Family
24 September: ✱ John Coury
from Joseph Zaydon Family
30 September: ✱ Lori Ann Stanko Goetz
from Steve Bartnicki
01 October: ✱ Holy Souls
from M/M Michael Brodowicz
07 October: ✱ Joseph Viola Family
08 October: ✱ Joseph Viola Family

2023 Food Festival
Expenses & Profit Report
available in back of the Church

THE GOSPEL CYCLE OF ST. LUKE

THE FEAST OF THE EXALTATION OF THE CROSS is the occasion for us to begin the reading of St. Luke's Gospel. As we have seen, Pascha begins the reading of John and with Pentecost we start to read Matthew. At the same time we continue the cycle of Epistle readings begun at Pentecost without interruption.

Luke, whom St Paul describes as "*the beloved physician*" (Col 4:14) is thought to have been a Greek-speaking native of Antioch, probably a Gentile, possibly a Jewish proselyte. Luke may have been one of the multitudes who came to Jerusalem that Passover, was attracted by the teaching of Jesus and then encountered the risen Christ on the road to Emmaus (Luke 24:12-35).

Luke may have returned to Antioch as one of the first members of the Church there, as he recalls with pride that "*the disciples were first called Christians in Antioch*" (Acts 11:26). He later became the companion of St Paul, who was himself a missionary sent out by the Church of Antioch to preach Christ. In Acts Luke describes how he traveled with St. Paul on his journeys to Macedonia (Acts 16:10-17; 20:5-15), how he returned with him to Syria and went from there to Jerusalem to report to the Eleven.

Luke composed both the Gospel which bears his name and the Acts of the Apostles as a kind of diptych. While the Gospel sets forth God's call to mankind in Christ, Acts shows the response of the first disciples, both Jews and Gentiles, to the message of salvation.

The Good News on the Move

Luke's Gospel is based largely on Mark, which commentators think was the first Gospel written in the form we know it. Luke made a significant change, however, to illustrate his theology. Luke rearranges several of the passages in Mark to depict Jesus' ministry as a purposeful journey from Galilee to Jerusalem, to the confrontation with the Jewish leaders, the cross and the tomb. He does this to say that Jesus' knowingly and freely embraced the passion. He "*steadfastly set His face to go to Jerusalem*" (Luke 9:51) i.e. to the offering of Himself for the sake of the human race.

The Gospel ends in Jerusalem and the Acts of the Apostles picks up there with the early activities of the disciples after the Lord's ascension. But Acts does not remain in Jerusalem – it leads us through Asia Minor to Rome, the capital of the empire, the heart of the Mediterranean world. The Christian community, Luke tells us, was not simply a local Jewish sect – it was the Body of Christ spread throughout the world.

First Saturday of St Luke

IN MOST OF OUR PARISHES the Divine Liturgy is served only on Sunday and some feast days. In some parishes the Liturgy is also served every Saturday. Is this because some people are available on Saturdays or is there another reason?

We know from the New Testament that the first believers in Christ were Jews and that they continued to observe the Sabbath (Saturday), the day of rest and worship according to the Ten Commandments: "*Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the LORD your*

God" (Ex 20:8-10). They also met on "*the first day of the week...to break bread*" (Acts 20:7).

As the Church developed, the custom of sanctifying both days, Saturday and Sunday, became common in Syria, Asia Minor, and Constantinople. The Eucharist (the breaking of the bread) was celebrated on both days. Sunday was most important because it was the day of Christ's resurrection – the day on which His tomb was found to be empty. But Saturday was observed as well: both as the memorial of the original creation (see Gen 2:2-3) and recalling the "rest" of Christ in the tomb, the "Great Sabbath." As St Gregory of Nyssa observed in the fourth century: "With what eyes can you behold Sunday if you desecrate the Sabbath? Don't you know that these days are brethren? He who elevates one disregards the other" (*On Reproof*).

We find two effects of this practice in our liturgy today. The first concerns our lectionary: the cycle of Scripture readings appointed for the year. Our readings chosen for Sunday follow one continuous cycle, the passages for Saturday often follow another and those for the rest of the week may follow a third. When the lectionary was compiled – by the eighth century – Saturdays as well as Sundays were clearly special days, set apart from the rest of the week.

The second effect concerns our practice of fasting. Saturdays, like Sundays, are not fast days (except for Great Saturday). Even during the Great Fast the Liturgy would be celebrated on Saturday, often for the departed. In the controversies between the Eastern and Western Churches of the first millennium it was often noted that Westerners fasted on Saturdays but Easterners did not. The Sabbath was for celebration because it was a Eucharistic day.

Speaking with Authority

After the Exaltation of the Holy Cross we begin to read the Gospel of St Luke at the Divine Liturgy. The first and second chapters of Luke relate the conception of John the Baptist, the annunciation and visitation of the Theotokos, and the birth and infancy of Christ. Chapter three begins by telling us of the ministry of John the Baptist. All these passages are read on the corresponding feast days. We begin the "cycle of St Luke" with Luke 3:19 – the imprisonment of John the Baptist.

On the First Saturday of St Luke we read Luke 4:31-36 which tells how Christ, at the beginning of His ministry, would go to Capernaum, a fishing village on the shore of the Sea of Galilee. It was there that He called and began to form His first followers, the fishermen Peter and Andrew, James and John. Luke says that He would teach in the synagogue on the Sabbath. "... *and they were astonished at His teaching, for His word was with authority*" (v. 32).

The Gospel passages read on Saturday often recount events that happened on the Sabbath. In this passage we see the Lord confronted by a man with an unclean spirit. As often happens in the Gospels, this spirit senses the holiness in Jesus and that His mission is to annul the power of Death: "*Did You come to destroy us? I know who You are — the Holy One of God!*" (v. 34) The Lord rebukes this spirit and expels it prompting the people to wonder, "*What a word this is! For with authority and power He commands the unclean spirits, and they come out*" (v. 36).