

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. Veranica. Bolus. Jayne Buckley. Chris Carey. Maryann Nappi Donahue. Carol Downer. Dav. Fairclough, Sr. Rob. Fairclough, Sr. Sara Gomez. Niko Mayashairo. Mary McNeilly. Jos. Ed. Bartnicki. Sue Solsman. Sus. 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 & 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 Lاندell. *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

NINETEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST



Icon of Christ Raising the Widow's Son

DIVINE LITURGY OF ST. JOHN CHRYSOSTOM

08 OCTOBER 2023 ♦ TONE 02 EOTHINON 08 † NINETEENTH PENTECOST/THIRD SUNDAY AFTER HOLY CROSS

<u>GREAT DOXOLOGY:</u>	<i>Liturgy Book p. 17</i>
<u>ANTIPHNS:</u>	
FIRST:	<i>Liturgy Book p. 29</i>
SECOND:	<i>Liturgy Book p. 32</i>
THIRD:	<i>Liturgy Book p. 36/39</i>
<u>ENTRANCE HYMN:</u>	<i>Liturgy Book p. 41</i>
<u>APOLYTIKIA:</u>	
<i>Resurrection (Tone 2)</i>	<i>Liturgy Book p. 40</i>
<i>Venerable Mother Pelagia</i>	<i>Liturgy Book p. 109</i>
<i>St. Joseph the Betrothed</i>	<i>Liturgy Book p. 47</i>
<u>KONDAKION:</u>	<i>Liturgy Book p. 48</i>
<u>TRISAGION:</u>	<i>Liturgy Book p. 50</i>
<u>PROKIMENON:</u> <i>Psalm 31: 11, 1</i>	<i>Liturgy Book p. 55</i>
	<i>(Tone 2)</i>
<u>EPISTLE:</u>	<i>2 Corinthians 11:31-33; 12:1-10</i>
<i>Brethren,</i> , the God and Father of our Lord Jesus, who is blessed forever, knows that I do not lie. In Damascus, the Governor under King Aretas was guarding the city of the Damascenes in order to arrest me, but I was lowered in a basket through a window in the wall, and escaped his hands. (12: 1) It is not fitting for me to boast: but I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord. I know a man in Christ who fourteen years ago (whether in the body, I do not know, or out of the body, I do not know: God knows) was caught up into paradise and heard secret sayings that man may not repeat. Of such a man I will boast; but of myself I will glory in nothing except my weaknesses. For if I do wish to boast, I shall not be foolish, for I shall be speaking the truth. But I give up, lest any man have an idea of me beyond what he sees in me or hears from me. And lest the greatness of the revelation puff me up, there was given to me a thorn for the flesh, a messenger of Satan to buffet me. Concerning this, I begged the Lord three times that it might leave me, but he said to me, “My grace is enough for you, for strength is made perfect in weakness.” Gladly, then, will I glory in my weaknesses, that the strength of Christ may dwell in me.	
<u>ALLELUIA:</u> <i>Psalm 19:1, 10</i>	<i>(Tone 2)</i>
The Lord shall hear you on the day of distress; the name of the God of Jacob shall defend you. O Lord, save your king and listen to us on whatever day we call upon you.	
<u>GOSPEL:</u>	<i>St. Luke 7:11-16</i>
<i>AT that time</i> it came to pass that Jesus went to a town called Naim; and his disciples and a large crowd went with him. And as he drew near the gate of the town, behold, a dead man was being carried out, the only son of his mother, and she was a widow; and a large gathering from the town was with her. And the Lord, seeing her, had compassion on her, and said to her, “Do not weep.” And he went up and touched the stretcher; and the bearers stood still. And he said, “Young man, I say to thee, arise.” And he who was dead, sat up, and began to speak. And he gave him to his mother. But fear seized upon all, and they began to glorify God, saying, “A great prophet has risen among us.” and “God has visited his people.”	
<u>HIRMOS:</u>	<i>Liturgy Book 77</i>
<u>KINONIKON:</u>	<i>Liturgy Book p. 83</i>
<u>POST~ COMMUNION HYMN:</u>	<i>Liturgy Book p. 89 / Liturgy Book p. 90</i>

move and are.’ He it is who has restored the nature of man to that which it originally was; and has set free our death-fraught flesh from the bonds of death. ...

“We understand that those persons who were restored to life by the power of Christ are a pledge of the hope prepared for us of a resurrection of the dead: namely, this young man, Lazarus of Bethany, and the daughter of the chief of the synagogue. ...

“For it was by reason of Adam's transgression of the commandment that we, having our faces turned away from God, returned to our dust: for the sentence of God upon human nature was, ‘Dust thou art, and unto dust thou shalt return.’ But at the time of the consummation of this world, the face of the earth shall be renewed: for God the Father by the Son in the Spirit will give life to all those who are laid within it.” (Sermon 36 on Luke).

The Near-Death Experience

In 1975 physician and psychologist Raymond Moody authored *Life After Life*, recounting a number of cases where people were pronounced clinically dead after heart attacks, accidents or other traumas. They regained consciousness after a period of time, anywhere from 10 minutes to several hours, and told of being able to see their physicians working on them or viewing their death from outside their bodies. One accident victim only came to when he felt a pathologist begin to autopsy him!

Most spoke of beatific after death experiences such as a feeling of peace and happiness, meeting spiritual beings and/or dead loved ones and seeing a radiant light. Some – upwards of twenty percent in one study – spoke of frightening experiences: extreme fear, panic or anger, demonic creatures or embittered human-like voices that mock or taunt the subjects.

Many of our otherwise skeptical contemporaries have concluded that near-death experiences prove the existence of an afterlife. Some believing Christians have taken these recorded experiences in our own day as confirmation of the Church’s faith.

In any case, the Lord did not promise to take away death; rather, He died with us and instead of us. He has transformed death into a bridge for us to cross over to paradise in order to await the great Day of the Lord. This is why St Augustine says, “It is more of a miracle that someone rises to live forever than that he rises to die again.”

NDE’s in the Tradition

Today’s near-death experiences in some ways reinforce the experience of the saints. St Bede the Venerable (673-735) reported in his Ecclesiastical History: “There was a certain householder in that district of the Northumbrians which is called Incuneningum, who led a godly life, with all his house. This man fell sick, and his sickness daily increasing, he was brought to extremity, and died in the beginning of the night; but at dawn he came to life again, and suddenly sat up, whereat all those that sat about the body weeping fled away in great terror; only his wife, who loved him better, though trembling and greatly afraid, remained with him. And he comforting her, said, ‘Fear not, for I am now in very deed risen from the death which held me, and permitted again to live among men; nevertheless, hereafter I must not live as I was wont, but after a very different manner.’”

Likewise St Athanasius of the Kiev Caves (+1176) reported retuning to this life after two days in the next world. He refused to discuss what he saw there, saying only, “Even if I were to tell you, you would not believe me or listen to me.” When he was pressed to explain, he would only say “Repent and pray!”

SIGNS OF THE FUTURE RESURRECTION

IF YOU WERE TO WALK DOWN THE STREET of an older Middle Eastern town such as the old city of Jerusalem, do not be surprised if you were to come upon a funeral procession like the one described in St Luke's Gospel. Some people still walk from the home of the departed following the clergy and the bearers carrying the body, perhaps wrapped in a shroud, in an open coffin or on a bier. A Christian funeral procession might stop at the church before continuing on to the cemetery. The body might be placed in the ground simply wrapped in the shroud, particularly in Jewish or Muslim burials.

Christ encounters such a funeral at the Galilean village of Na'in, near Nazareth. *"And when He came near the gate of the city, behold, a dead man was being carried out, the only son of his mother; and she was a widow. And a large crowd from the city was with her. When the Lord saw her, He had compassion on her and said to her, 'Do not weep.' Then He came and touched the open coffin, and those who carried him stood still. And He said, 'Young man, I say to you: 'arise.' So he who was dead sat up and began to speak. And He presented him to his mother"* (Lk 7:11-15).

Resurrection or Resuscitation?

We commonly think of what Jesus did for this young man as "raising him from the dead." Speaking in this way, it is easy to mistake this event as being the same as Christ's own resurrection. This is clearly not the case.

The Lord Jesus rose to the new and eternal life of victory over death. The ways in which He manifested Himself were clearly different from our normal earthly experience. He entered rooms when the doors were closed, appeared in other forms (to Mary Magdalene and the disciples on the road to Emmaus) and ascended to His Father with the promise of a future return.

We know of no such happenings in the life of the young man of Na'in. He resumed the earthly life he had before. As the Gospel says, the Lord gave the young man back to his mother. Speaking precisely we should say that he was resuscitated or revived, rather than resurrected.

Three Resuscitations

The Gospels contain three reports of resuscitations, each one being slightly different. Both Mark and Luke report the revival of Jairus' daughter. Her father, *"a ruler of the synagogue"* (Lk 8:40) told Jesus that his daughter was dying. By the time they got to the man's house they were told that the girl had died. *"Now all wept and mourned for her; but [Jesus] said, 'Do not weep; she is not dead, but sleeping.' And they ridiculed Him, knowing that she was dead. But He put them all outside, took her by the hand and called, saying, 'Little girl, arise.' Then her spirit returned, and she arose immediately. And He commanded that she be given something to eat"* (Lk 8:52-55).

Unlike the girl, who had just died, the young man in Lk 7 had been dead for at least some hours. Customarily in the Middle East people would be buried on the day that they died. The third and even more amazing revival is, of course, that of Lazarus who had died four days before Jesus called him from the tomb (see Jn 11). While each of these people were returned to the same earthly life which they had before, the Fathers saw them as indications of the true resurrection to come. St Cyril of Alexandria, for example, teaches:

"Christ is the Destroyer of death and of corruption: He is the One 'in whom we live and

SAINT JOSEPH CHURCH ANNOUNCEMENTS

EVENTS IN OCTOBER

Saturday Evening, October 07

Confessions 3:00 p.m.

Great Vespers: 3:15 p.m.

Divine Liturgy: 4:00 p.m.

Sunday Morning, October 08

Divine Liturgy: 10:00 a.m.

Saturday Evening, October 14

Confessions 3:00 p.m.

Great Vespers: 3:15 p.m.

Divine Liturgy: 4:00 p.m.

Sunday Morning, October 15

Divine Liturgy: 10:00 a.m.

**Donations sign-up sheet
for the 2023 Pasta Dinner
Fall Fundraiser
in the back of the Church**

2023 WEEKLY COLLECTION

October 01

Weekly Offering: \$ 840.00

Candles: \$25.00

Total: \$ 865.00

**Annual Pasta Dinner
St. Joseph Melkite Church
Thursday, October 19, 2023
4:00 - 6:00 p.m.
Adults \$10.00/Children \$5.00**

**Fr. Christopher
will be away at the 2023
Fall Clergy Conference
October 8 - 13, 2023 in Michigan.
Sacramental Emergency:
Fr. Leonard Martin 570.342.8429**

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

07 October: ✱ Holy Souls
from M/M Michael Brodowicz
08 October: ✱ John Coury
from Joseph & Jemille Zaydon
14 October: ✱ Mark John Stanko
& Lori Ann Stanko Goetz
from Steve bartnicki
15 October: ✱ deceased members of
Barron & Shehadi Families
from Marie Barron
21 October: ✱ deceased members of
Barron & Shehadi Families
from Marie Barron
22 October: ✱ John Koury
from Al & Sonia ElGhazal

TRANSFORMING HARDSHIPS INTO GOOD

ST. PAUL THE APOSTLE IS THE MOST TOWERING FIGURE Of the first century Church. Much of the Acts of the Apostles is devoted to telling his story and his own writings account for more than 30% of the entire New Testament. He was directly involved in Christian communities throughout the Mediterranean world. It was those communities which collected his writings and preserved his memory for generations to come.

Paul wrote little about himself but what he did write gives an insight into not only his own development but the spiritual life of countless saints in the Church throughout its history. In 2 Corinthians chapters 11 and 12 we see the way Paul looked at important events of his life. He introduces this section by giving us his understanding of what he personally contributed to these events: *“If I must boast,”* he writes, *“I will boast of the things which concern my infirmity”* (2 Cor 11:30).

The Thorn in the Flesh

Paul does not boast of his mystical experiences, however; he boasts of something quite opposite, *“A thorn in the flesh was given to me, a messenger of Satan to buffet me...”* (2 Cor 12:7), from which he at first sought to be delivered. Christians have speculated ever since as what this thorn might have been. The answers suggested have ranged from recurring physical, mental or spiritual afflictions to the constant opposition of the Jewish leadership to his ministry.

It seems to have been a chronic physical infirmity, but of what kind we are not told. Paul asked to be delivered from it – God said “No” and then gave the reason: *“My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness.”* (12:9).

In any case, knowing the specific nature of this thorn would be like knowing the length of Jesus’ nose. It is no more central to the meaning of Paul’s teaching than Jesus’ physiognomy mattered to His life and work. The Scripture ponders, not the nature of the thorn, but what it meant in Paul’s life. It additionally suggests what such an affliction might mean in ours.

We see the meaning Paul drew out of this affliction in the last phrase of this verse, *“...lest I be exalted above measure.”* Here was a man marked out by God for a special service. Christ appears to him, he sees with the eyes of the heart the depths of the wisdom of God in re-making us according to His image. He successfully makes disciples wherever he goes. He has what we might call a most fulfilling ministry. Yet there’s this thorn that keeps popping up.

People who attract a following – preachers, politicians, personalities – are often thwarted by their own sense of self importance. Pride leads them up a pinnacle of material or emotional highs – “my work, my memorial, my status” – before casting them down to disgrace. Once we believe that we are the source of our strength or success, we have taken the first step toward the cliff edge. Paul was spared that by his thorn. He saw himself as a person harassed by something he could not control. He was not tempted to make himself an idol.

Yet Paul did not believe that God was chastising him. He did not see his thorn as God’s doing – it was “a messenger of Satan” – but it was his occasion for seeing the presence of God as overriding and eclipsing the pain of the thorn.

Recreating Our Thorns

People pray, sometimes for years, that their recurring problems be taken away. “No matter what I do, this thing keeps coming back. What am I doing wrong? Maybe there’s something else I should be doing.” So we pray for healing or deliverance from this thorn and nothing happens. We are not healed or delivered and we don’t know why.

At first Paul prayed, as we often do, that the thorn be taken away. The Lord Jesus likewise prayed in the garden that the cup of His suffering be taken away. In both cases God’s answer was “No! – my grace is sufficient for you” (see v. 9). Paul expresses this response as a clear leading from God and builds his understanding of God’s work on it. Paul approaches suffering and hardship from his understanding of Christ as Messiah and transforms our reaction to it. In the Old Testament suffering was often seen as God’s punishment for failure to do His will. This was the understanding of the apostles before the resurrection. When confronted with a man born blind their query was, *“Who sinned – this man or his parents – that he should be born blind?”* (Jn 9:2) Jesus’ response was swift – none of them sinned, but God would be glorified.

Many Jews understood that when the Messiah came He would take away all the hardships and sufferings we endure as children of Adam. That did not happen with Jesus so, they reasoned, He was not the Messiah.

Our apostolic faith, however, is that the Messiah did not come to free us from our human condition but to assume it and transform it. Christ did not eliminate death. He first assumed it and then emptied it of its power. Christ assumed our human nature and transfigured it in His own person. Now He extends that transfiguration to those who are united to Him in His Body, the Church. His Holy Spirit, dwelling within us, enables us to transform our circumstances, manifesting signs of His presence and purpose for us.

Paul’s thorn in the flesh became his way of seeing God freeing him from pride. God did not take away this thorn but emptied it of its power, using this “messenger of Satan” to bring Paul to a deeper level of spiritual maturity, Satan notwithstanding.

God Works in All Things

The teaching Paul drew from his experience is best expressed in his Epistle to the Romans. *“We know that all things work together for the good of those who love God, who are called according to His purpose”* (Rom 8:28). People of faith trust that God’s love is stronger than any hardship, and that awareness of His love works together with our hardships to bring about good. We often do not see the good, but those who truly love God trust Him to make it known to them in time.

Many believers have looked back over their lives and seen that God was at work even in their sins to bring them to Him. They may have put aside a static or rote relationship with God for life in “the real world” only to come to God in a more mature way later on.

Sometimes we never see the good that results from our thorns; yet the person of deep faith trusts that God is at work nonetheless. The following prayer from an edition of the spiritual classic, Unseen Warfare, expresses something of that sentiment. “I thank You that You have often, even without my knowledge, saved me from catastrophes which threatened me and delivered me from the hands of my unseen enemies.” I may want something, even something good, and not see that it’s dangerous to my spiritual life.

Paul saw that Christ’s work in the world is not to remove thorns but to enable us to meet them with the loving presence of God. When we are more aware of that divine presence than of our hardships, we can understand how Paul – beset as he was by his thorn in the flesh – could say, *“Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, in everything give thanks, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you”* (1 Thess 5:16-18).