

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 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. *Veronica 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

TWENTY-THIRD SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST



Icon of the Healing of Jarius' Daughter

DIVINE LITURGY OF ST. JOHN CHRYSOSTOM

05 NOVEMBER 2023 ♦ TONE 06 EOTHINON 01 † TWENTY-THIRD PENTECOST/FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER CROSS

GREAT DOXOLOGY:

ANTIPHONS:

FIRST:

SECOND:

THIRD:

ENTRANCE HYMN:

APOLYTIKIA:

Resurrection (Tone 6)

Holy Martyrs of Galaction & His wife Episteme

Venerable Father Abramios

St. Joseph the Betrothed

KONDAKION:

TRISAGION:

PROKIMENON: Ps. 103: 24, 1

(Tone 6)

EPISTLE:

Brethren, God, who is rich in mercy, by reason of his very great love with which he has loved us even when we were dead by reason of our sins, brought us to life together with Christ, and you have been saved by grace. [God] raised us up together, and enthroned us together in heaven in Christ Jesus, so that he might show in future ages the overflowing riches of his grace, through his kindness to us in Christ Jesus. For by grace you have been saved through faith: and that, not on your own, for it is God's gift, and not the result of work which might have been a pretext for anyone to boast. For we are his workmanship, we who were created in Christ Jesus through good works which God has pre-planned so that we could walk in them.

ALLELUIA: (Tone 6)

He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High abides in the shadow of the God of heaven.

He will say to the Lord, "My wall, my refuge, my God in whom I will trust!"

GOSPEL:

At that time, when Jesus came to the country of the Gerasenes there met Him a certain man who for a long time was possessed by a devil, and wore no clothes, and lived in the tombs, not in a house. And when he saw Jesus, he fell down before Him, and crying out with a loud voice said, "What have I to do with Thee, Jesus, Son of the most high God? I pray Thee, do not torment me." For he was charging the unclean spirit to go forth from the man. For many times it had laid hold of him; and he was bound with chains and fetters, and kept under guard, but he would break the bonds asunder, and be driven by the devil into the deserts. And Jesus asked him, saying, "What is thy name?" And he said, "Legion," because many devils had entered into him. And they entreated Him not to command them to depart into the abyss. Now a herd of many swine was there, feeding on the mountainside. And they kept entreating Him to give them leave to enter into them. And He gave them leave. And the devils came out from the man and entered into the swine; and the herd rushed down the cliff into the lake and were drowned. And when the swineherds saw what had happened, they fled and reported it in the town and in the country; and people came out to see what had happened. And they came to Jesus, and found the man from whom the devils had gone out sitting at His feet, clothed and in his right mind; and they were afraid. And those also who had seen it reported to them how he had been saved from Legion. And all the people of the Gerasene district besought Him to depart from them; for they were seized with great fear. And He got into a boat and went back. But the man from whom the devils had gone out prayed Him that he might remain with Him. But Jesus sent him away, saying, "Return to thy house, and tell all that God has done for thee." And he departed, proclaiming throughout the whole town all that Jesus had done for him.

This feast was first observed in a church at the thermal baths of the Emperor Arcadius in Constantinople and spread from there throughout the Christian East as the principal commemoration of the incorporeal powers.

Another feast of St. Michael is kept on September 6 remembering the miraculous spring at Chonae in Asia Minor. A sanctuary dedicated to the Archangel had been erected by local Christians. Pagans sought to destroy it by diverting a stream from a nearby gorge against it; however a lightning strike split a massive rock diverting the stream again and preserving the shrine. Believers attributed the lightning to St Michael and considered the diverted waters forever sanctified.

Other Angels in the Tradition

There are a number of other angels named in Christian tradition, not to mention those in Jewish or Islamic lore. The Book of Tobit, found in the Greek Septuagint, but not in the Hebrew Masoretic text, speaks of the angel Raphael, who identifies himself as "one of the seven angels who enter and serve before the glory of the Lord" (Tob 12:15). Thus seven angels are often depicted in icons wearing priestly vestments.

The seven are named in 1 Enoch 20, a book highly esteemed by first-century Christians and still regarded as canonical Scripture in the Ethiopian Church. Besides Michael, Gabriel and Raphael it lists Uriel, Remiel (Jeremiel), Sariel (Selaphiel) and Raguel. Uriel and Remiel are also mentioned in 2 Esdras 4, another early work held to be canonical in some Churches. Uriel and Remiel were sent to explain to Ezra the signs of the times in which he lived. The presence of the archangels in our world was generally thought to indicate an approaching apocalyptic age.

Hail, Gabriel, announcer of the Incarnation of God! Hail, Michael, chief Captain of the bodiless hierarchies, who cry aloud, "Holy, holy, holy are You, O our Mighty God!"

From the Canon, November 8

Dionysius and the Angels In the late sixth century a certain Dionysios, thought to be a Syrian pupil of the Greek philosopher Proclus, composed a number of works systematizing Scriptural teaching in a philosophical framework. For centuries he was confused with Dionysius the Areopagite, an Athenian convert of St Paul, and even St Denys of Paris. Since the nineteenth century he has been called by scholars Pseudo-Dionysius.

Dionysios' Celestial Hierarchies arranged the Scriptural names for the incorporeal powers in a specific order, the nine "ranks" of spiritual beings in three "choirs": those closest to God (thrones, cherubim and seraphim), those closest to us (angels, archangels and principalities) and those in between (authorities, dominions and powers). The names are found in Scripture:

- Cherubim (Gen 3; Ps 80 & 99; Ez 10)
 - Seraphim (Is 6)
- Archangels (1 Thess 4; Jude)
 - Angels (Rom 8; 1 Pt 3)
- Thrones, Authorities, Principalities and Dominions (Eph 1, 3; Col 1)
 - Powers (Rom 8; Eph 1).

Dionysios felt that this list was far from exhaustive. "How many ranks of heavenly beings there are, what their nature is and how the mystery of holy authority is ordered among them only God can know in detail.... All that we can say about this is what God has revealed to us through them themselves."

NOVEMBER 8: SYNAXIS OF THE CHIEF COMMANDERS

THE ARCHANGELS MICHAEL, GABRIEL, AND OF THE OTHER BODILESS POWERS

A FEW YEARS AGO a Greek pilot had this harrowing experience. In mid-air his plane experienced system failure. The instruments disengaged, the engines cut out and there was nowhere to go but down. Suddenly the pilot saw the holy archangel Michael appear beneath the wings, holding them aloft. He couldn't believe it. St. Michael guided the plane to safety, then vanished.

In our culture there is no room for incorporeal powers such as angels. We class them as myths, along with Santa Claus and the Tooth Fairy. Their tales may provide pleasantly distracting entertainment, but we "know" that only the corporeal, the physical is real.

The Church, based on the witness of the Holy Spirit in the Scriptures, insists that incorporeal powers – angels – are very real, although generally unseen. They are created, as we are, but with none of the limitations our physical nature imposes on us. The angels are the invisible creation we mention in the Nicene Creed; yet they are not faceless forces: they are individuals differing according to their rank and function.

The great number of human beings who inhabit only this planet is nothing compared to the number of angels who inhabit the universe. As St Cyril of Jerusalem writes, "Imagine how great in number is the Roman people. Imagine how great in number are the other peoples who now exist and how many more must have died! Imagine how many have been buried in a century or in a thousand years. Imagine all mankind from Adam to the present day. Great is their number, but it is small in comparison with the angels."

We find the presence of angels recorded throughout the Old and the New Testaments. The prophet Isaiah saw seraphim before God's throne (Is 6:2) and the prophet Ezechiel saw the cherubim (Ez 10:8). The prophet Daniel saw a thousand thousand ministering to God with ten thousand times ten thousand standing before God (Dan 9 and 10). As we say in the Divine Liturgy, "There stand before You thousands of archangels and myriads of angels, cherubim and seraphim... singing, proclaiming, shouting the hymn of victory and saying 'Holy!'"

The highest in rank of the heavenly powers who minister among us are the holy archangels Michael and Gabriel. Mentioned in several books of the Bible, they are referred to in our Church as the "captains" or "commanders" of the heavenly hosts. In the apocalyptic Book of Daniel Gabriel is described as coming to Daniel "in rapid flight at the time of the evening sacrifice" (Dan 9:21). He prophesied that in the last days Michael, "the guardian of your people" (Dan 12:1) would defend and deliver from their enemies "everyone who is found written in the book." Thus in icons Gabriel is usually depicted as winged while Michael is clothed in a military uniform.

The angel Gabriel appears before Zechariah to announce the birth of John the Forerunner and before the Theotokos to announce the birth of Christ. There are angels at His birth in Bethlehem and at His tomb in Jerusalem. Angels populate the garden in the Book of Genesis (Gen 3:24) and the heavens in the Book of Revelation. We call on them in the psalms to protect and help us and to lead us in blessing the Lord.

A Synaxis for the Heavenly Powers

On November 8 the Byzantine Churches celebrate a synaxis (assembly) in honor of the commanders of the heavenly hosts, Michael and Gabriel, along with all the heavenly powers.

SAINT JOSEPH CHURCH ANNOUNCEMENTS

EVENTS IN NOVEMBER

Saturday Evening, November 04

Confessions 3:00 p.m.

Great Vespers: 3:15 p.m.

Divine Liturgy: 4:00 p.m.

Sunday Morning, November 05

Divine Liturgy: 10:00 a.m.

Saturday Evening, November 11

Confessions 3:00 p.m.

Great Vespers: 3:15 p.m.

Divine Liturgy: 4:00 p.m.

Sunday Morning, November 12

Divine Liturgy: 10:00 a.m.

Parish Religious Education

Potluck Brunch: Church Hall

Wednesday, November 15

Traditional Beginning

of the Nativity Fast

Sunday Morning, November 19

Divine Liturgy: 10:00 a.m.

40 Memorial Service for Bonnie Bolus

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

- 04 November: Michael Kondash Family*
from M/M William Patchoski
- 05 November: *Veronica Bolus
from St. Joseph Womens Society
- 11 November: *Veronica Bolus
from M/M Anthony Barrett
- 12 November: *Veronica Bolus
from M/M James Kane
- 18 November: *Veronica Bolus
from St. Joseph Parish
- 19 November: *Veronica Bolus
from M/M Thomas Bolus

2023 WEEKLY COLLECTION

October 29

Weekly Offering:	\$ 925.00
Monthly:	\$ 25.00
World Mission:	\$ 5.00
Candles:	\$25.00
Total:	\$ 955.00

Thank you for your support!

THE “HEAVENLY REALM” IN EPHESIANS

THE EPISTLE TO THE EPHESIANS is one of the most beautiful in the New Testament. It was probably written at the end of St. Paul’s life or compiled from his writings shortly after his death. Although it is addressed (in most manuscripts) to the Church in Ephesus, it does not deal with any local problems like some other Pauline epistles. Rather it speaks of the Church in a more general or universal sense, stressing its mission to make the Gospel known throughout the world. This has led some scholars to suggest that it was a kind of circular letter sent to first-century Churches as a summary of St Paul’s teaching.

The epistle begins with a prayer of praise and thanksgiving: “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places... He destined us in love to be His sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of His will, to the praise of His glorious grace which He freely bestowed on us in the Beloved... He has made known to us in all wisdom and insight the mystery of His will, according to His purpose which He set forth in Christ as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in Him, things in heaven and things on earth” (Eph 1:3-10).

This theological hymn celebrates the mystery of God’s will, described later in the epistle as “the mystery hidden for ages in God” (Eph 3: 8, 9). It describes this mystery as the Father’s plan to unite all things in Him [Christ], things in heaven and things on earth.” In this way, the vision of Paradise set forth in the beginning of creation would at last be fulfilled.

The Heavenly Places

Several times in this epistle (e.g. 1:3, 20; 2:6) St Paul uses the Greek term *en tois epouraniis*, literally “the heavenlies” and translated here as “the heavenly places.” Other English translations, such as “the heavenly sphere” or “the heavenly realm,” suggest that St Paul is not talking about geography here – a place up above – but about the condition of eternal life in communion with God.

This life is, first of all, the communion of the Father with the Son and the Holy Spirit. It is in the Trinity that the mystery hidden from the ages finds its home. It is God’s plan to extend to us, who are created in the divine image, a share in this communion. Not even “*the principalities and powers in the heavenly places*” are aware of this; it is “through the church [that] the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known to the principalities and powers in the heavenly places” (Eph 3:10).

This teaching is the inspiration for this theotokion sung frequently at vespers and orthros in Byzantine Churches: “The mystery which was hidden from eternity and unknown to the angels has been revealed through you, O Theotokos, to those on earth; for God took flesh...” It is through the incarnation of Christ – in which the Theotokos played an essential role – that the principalities and powers came to discover the eternal plan of God.

The divine plan, according to St Paul, is centered on Christ crucified and risen from the dead, whom the Father raised Him from the dead “... *and made Him sit at His right hand in the heavenly places* far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in that which is to come; and He has put all things under His feet and has made Him the head over all things for the Church, which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all” (Eph 1:20-23).

We are reminded of this teaching every time we enter a Byzantine church building and see the icon of Christ “in the heavenly places” (the dome), often surrounded by saints and angels. Thus He is depicted as head of the heavenly Church and of the Church on earth, namely us

who are gathered in the church to worship Him.

Adopted into God’s Household

St Paul uses another image to describe our place in this eternal plan of God. We are “chosen” and destined” to be “His sons.” In the Greek original, we are destined “*eis huiotēsian*” (for adoption as sons). As Christ is Son of God by nature, we who are united to Christ are God’s sons by adoption, a free gift bestowed on us who could never earn such a status by our own efforts.

This brings us to the portion read at today’s Liturgy: “*But God, who is rich in mercy, out of the great love with which He loved us even when we were dead through our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), and raised us up with Him, and made us sit with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus...*” (Eph 2:4-6). In Christ, human nature is found for the first time in the heavenly realm. There is a human body – the risen Christ – glorified by the divine nature to which it is united not for Himself alone but as “*the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep*” (1 Cor 15:20), “*the firstborn of many brethren*” (Rom 8:29). We celebrate this on the Feast of the Holy Ascension of Christ, singing hymns such as this: “Ascending in glory today from the Mount of Olives, in Your great love You lifted up our fallen nature and placed in on God the Father’s throne” (doxastikon at vespers).

St Paul teaches that therefore we too are enthroned in the heavenly sphere with Christ but that this full deification of believers will happen only “*at his coming ... when he delivers the kingdom to God the Father after destroying every rule and every authority and power ... [and] the last enemy to be destroyed is death*” (1 Cor 15:23-26). It is this vision of the future which we proclaim at the end of the Nicene Creed: “I look for the resurrection of the dead and the life of the age to come.”

Where Do We Come In?

St Paul concludes his thought in Ephesians 2 by repeating an idea mentioned in v. 5 cited above. “*For by grace you have been saved through faith; and this is not your own doing, it is the gift of God — not because of works, lest any man should boast*” (vv. 8, 9). No one can earn the gift of God – it is freely given, not a response to our merits. Yet there is a place for our works and St Paul mentions them in v. 10: “*For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared before-hand that we should walk in them.*” We are meant to devote ourselves to doing good, but not in order to earn what is a free gift of God. Rather our good works, whatever they may be, are done in response to God, our thanksgiving for giving us both our life on earth and our future in the heavenly realm. In this the Fathers saw a synergy of God’s initiative and our response. Neither one alone brings about our salvation; both together bring us to eternal life.

“... [Salvation] comes not by any effort of ours, nor of any good works, but out of God’s love; and yet not by His love alone, but of our virtue also. For if it was by His love alone, it would follow that all must be saved. If salvation were the result of our virtue alone, then His coming was needless, and the whole plan of God would be unnecessary. But it is the result neither of His love alone, nor yet of our virtue, but of both. He chose us, says the Apostle; and He who chooses, knows what it is that He chooses. That on our coming near unto Him, He should vouchsafe us such a great privilege, as to bring us at once from a state of enmity, to the adoption of children, this is indeed the work of a really transcendent love.”

(St John Chrysostom on Ephesians 1)