

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 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

SUNDAY OF THE PUBLICAN AND PHARISEE



Icon of the Publican and Pharisee

DIVINE LITURGY OF ST. JOHN CHRYSOSTOM

21 JANUARY 2024 ♦ TONE 01 EOTHINON 01 † SUNDAY OF PHARISEE & PUBLICAN / S. MAXIMUS THE CONFESSOR

GREAT DOXOLOGY:

Liturgy Book p. 17

ANTIPHNS:

FIRST:

Liturgy Book p. 29

SECOND:

Liturgy Book p. 32

THIRD:

Liturgy Book p.

ENTRANCE HYMN:

Liturgy Book p. 151

APOLYTIKIA:

Resurrection (Tone 1)

Liturgy Book p. 39

Venerable Father Maximus the Confessor

Liturgy Book p. 106

Holy Martyr Neophytos

Liturgy Book p. 99

St. Joseph the Betrothed

Liturgy Book p. 47

KONDAKION: *Pharisee & Publican*

handout

Meeting in the Temple

Liturgy Book p. 163

TRISAGION:

Liturgy Book p. 50

PROKIMENON:

(Tone 1)

Liturgy Book p. 54

EPISTLE:

2 Timothy 3:10-15

My son Timothy, you have followed my teaching, my behavior, my faith, my long-suffering, my love, my patience, my persecutions, my afflictions – such as befell me in Antioch, Iconium and Lystra, skuch persecutions as I suffered: and out of them all, the Lord delivered me. And all who want to live piously in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution. But the wicked and impostors will go from bad to worse, erring and leading into error. As for you, keep on with the things you have learned and which have been entrusted to you, and remember from whom you learned them. For you have known from infancy the Sacred Scriptures which are able to give you instruction for your salvation by the faith which is in Christ Jesus.

ALLELUIA:

(Tone 1)

Liturgy Book p. 59

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 18:10-14

The Lord told this parable: “Two men went up to the temple to pray, the one a Pharisee and the other a publican. The Pharisee stood and began to pray thus within himself: ‘O God, I thank you that I am not like the rest of men, robbers, dishonest, adulterers, or even like this publican. I fast twice a week; I pay tithes of all I possess.’ But the publican, standing far off, would not so much as lift up his eyes to heaven, but kept striking his breast, saying, ‘O God, be merciful to me a sinner!’ I tell you; this man went back to his home justified rather than the other; for anyone who exalts himself shall be humbled, and anyone who humbles himself shall be exalted.

HIRMOS:

Liturgy Book p. 77

KINONIKON:

Liturgy Book p. 83

POST- COMMUNION HYMN:

Liturgy Book p. 89/p. 90

Theophany House Blessings

If you would like your home blessed during this holy season please sign up in the back of the church, call the rectory 570.343.6092 or speak to Fr. Christopher

down his neighbor. First of all, he judged that the publican did not do any of these things. And in that he may have been right but he also judged that he was better than the publican because of these works.

The publican, on the other hand did not reproach the Pharisee for his judgmental words. As St John Chrysostom points out, “*The publican did not say, ‘Who are you to tell me such things? From what source did you learn of my life? You did not live with me. We did not spend time together. Why are you so haughty? ... Why do you praise yourself?’*” (*On Repentance and Almsgiving*, 24) Rather he prayed humbly repenting over his own sins. In one sense the Pharisee was right; the publican was a sinner. Publicans lived by extorting payments for themselves over and above what the Roman governors demanded. But the publican here is shown repenting for his sinfulness while, “The Pharisee totally ruined the righteousness of his deeds” (v. 25) by claiming superiority over the publican.

St Augustine in his Sermon 45 on the New Testament, dramatically recasts this scene in the form of a courtroom trial: “You have heard the case of the Pharisee and the publican; now hear the sentence. You have heard the proud accuser and you have heard the humble criminal; now hear the Judge. ‘Truly I say to you,’ says God the Truth, God the Judge, ‘The publican went down from the temple justified rather than the Pharisee... because everyone who exalts himself shall be abased and he who humbles himself shall be exalted.’” In icons the publican is often represented leaving the temple “justified,” with a halo around his head.

We see this praise of humility returning again and again in the pages of St Luke’s Gospel. It forms a major part of Mary’s canticle, the Magnificat: “*He has scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts. He has put down the mighty from their thrones and exalted the lowly*” (Lk 1:51-52). *It appears in a warning from Christ on jockeying for the first places at dinners. “He told a parable to those who were invited, when He noted how they chose the best places, saying to them: ‘When you are invited by anyone to a wedding feast, do not sit down in the best place, lest one more honorable than you be invited by him; and he who invited you and him come and say to you, “Give place to this man,” and then you begin with shame to take the lowest place. But when you are invited, go and sit down in the lowest place, so that when he who invited you comes he may say to you, “Friend, go up higher.” Then you will have glory in the presence of those who sit at the table with you. For whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted”* (Lk 14:9-11). As pride is the queen of the passions, so humility is the queen of the virtues.

The parable of the Pharisee and the publican is read as we begin our journey through the Triodion to Pascha as a reminder that, although we may fast more than twice a week during these days, we should not be congratulating ourselves on having earned something. Rather, like the publican we should be ask for God’s mercy since even in doing something good we have the tendency to pervert it as did the Pharisee.

~Every good deed can be made void through foolish pride, while every sin can be cleansed by humility. Let us then embrace humility in faith while we completely turn away from the paths of pride.

~The righteousness of the Pharisee proved useless and was condemned because it was joined to pride. The Publican gained humility, the mother of the virtues which lifts us up on high. Troparia from the Canon

HUMILITY:MOTHER OF THE VIRTUES

WHEN EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITERS FIRST BEGAN to list the deadliest passions that can consume a person they invariably considered pride as the most serious. Gluttony, lust or greed focus on material pleasures which can be tempered by physical conditions such as age or health. Pride, however, that increasing fixation with the self, can be with us to the moment of our death. Pride, called the queen or head of the passions, can egg us on to justify ourselves even before the awesome judgment-seat of Christ.

People rarely put their prideful feelings out there for all to see. We learn to keep those thoughts – “I’m better than you... I’m smarter than you...” – to ourselves. But we have them throughout our life and they can poison our relationships with others and even with God.

Pride here does not mean self-respect or taking satisfaction in one’s legitimate accomplishments. It rather has the idea of arrogance or superiority toward others because of one’s abilities or accomplishments. “I’m cuter than you... I have more toys than you.” Pride uses the circumstances of our life to make us disdain others whom we perceive to be weaker, poorer, less educated than ourselves. While envy, wanting what others have, looks up to others more successful than we, pride is the opposite. We look down on those whom we perceive are less than we are.

The Pharisee in the Lord’s parable (Lk 18:10-14) does put these feelings into words for us. “I do this, I do that, I’m not like him!” This is a particular temptation of religious people. They may be able to eat or drink in moderation. They may not be troubled by sexual enticements or the lure of possessions. But they are often quick to compare themselves with others whom they perceive as less perfect, if not as sinners.

Trusting in Our Own Righteousness

St Luke tells us that Jesus “*spoke this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous and despised others*” (v.9) When we indulge feelings of self-importance and trust in ourselves how can we be trusting in God for our salvation? How can we commit ourselves to any authentic repentance?

The Pharisee saw his actions as guaranteeing his righteousness before God. He did fast twice a week, probably every Monday and Thursday, as was the Jewish custom. He did tithe, giving away ten percent of his income. But he trusted that these actions guaranteed his righteousness before God. Weekly fasting and contributing out of our material resources are excellent practices, commended in both Jewish and Christian traditions. But it is God alone who makes people righteous through Christ. We do not justify ourselves through any acts of devotion we might adopt. As St Paul would clearly teach, righteousness “*...is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast*” (Eph 2:8-9).

Nevertheless, good works have their place, an important one in God’s plan for us. St Paul goes on, “*We are His [i.e. God’s] workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them*” (Eph 2:10). The Christian people are “*a new creation*” (2 Cor 5:17), made by God in Christ for a purpose. As a people justified by God’s grace, we exist to perform good works according to God’s plan. While it is God’s grace, not these works that make us holy, we fulfill our new nature by performing them.

Trusting that We Are Superior

The Pharisee is faulted on another score as well. He used his good deeds as clubs to beat

SAINT JOSEPH CHURCH ANNOUNCEMENTS

EVENTS IN JANUARY

Saturday Evening, January 20

Confessions: 3:00 p.m.

Great Vespers: 3:15 p.m.

Divine Liturgy: 4:00 p.m.

Sunday Evening, January 21

PHARISEE & PUBLICAN SUNDAY

Resurrectional Orthros: 9:00 a.m.

Divine Liturgy: 10:00 a.m.

Fast Free Week: No Fasting

Saturday Evening, January 27

Confessions: 3:00 p.m.

Great Vespers: 3:15 p.m.

Divine Liturgy: 4:00 p.m.

Sunday Morning, January 28

PRODIGAL SON SUNDAY

Divine Liturgy: 10:00 a.m.

Weekly Fasting Resumes

EVENTS IN FEBRUARY

Thursday Evening, February 01

Great Vespers: 7:00 p.m.

Friday Evening, February 02

MEETING IN THE TEMPLE

Divine Liturgy: 5:30 p.m.

Saturday Evening, February 03

Confessions: 3:00 p.m.

Great Vespers: 3:15 p.m.

Divine Liturgy: 4:00 p.m.

Sunday Morning, February 04

MEATARE SUNDAY

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

- 20 January: Joseph Bolus
- 21 January: Michael & Carolyn deTar ✕
from M/M Zachary Bateman Family
- 27 January: Joseph Bolus
- 28 January: Christmas Flowers Intentions
- 02 February: Nick & Patrica Peluso
from M/M Daniel Schiller Family
- 03 February: Lois Cianci
- 04 February: Paul & Kathleen Schiller
from M/M Daniel Schiller Family
- 10 February: Joanna Simon
- 11 February: Russell & Kathleen Bateman
from M/M Daniel Schiller Family
- 17 February:
- 18 February: Russell & Kathleen Bateman ✕
from M/M Zachary Bateman Family

2024 First Quarter Financial Report
in the back of the Church

“PLEASE DON’T FAST”

BEGINNING TODAY, the Sunday of the Publican and the Pharisee, the Church calls on us to start preparing for the Great Fast. And how does it tell us to ready ourselves? – by telling us not to fast!

Since the beginnings of the Church Christians have fasted on Wednesdays and Fridays, remembering Judas’ betrayal and Christ’s passion. This coming week, however is one of the fast-free weeks of the Church year, when fasting is not prescribed. The other such weeks are part of a Great Feast – the Nativity, Pascha, and Pentecost. This is the only fast-free week not connected with a feast. What is the reason for not fasting this week?

The answer is found in the verse introducing the parable of the publican and the Pharisee read today: *“To some who were confident of their own righteousness and looked down on everyone else, Jesus told this parable”* (Lk 18.9). Religious people who are “confident of their own righteousness” are complacent, self-satisfied with their level of observance. That level may be minimal – attending church on Sundays or even the greatest observances – or it may be more. The fault is the same whatever the level of observance: the complacent person feels no need to change his or her outlook; and so he allows no place for God to act within him. The complacent person thinks that he has complied with all of the requirements of religion. What more can be asked of him?

By setting aside the regular fasts this week the Church is telling the complacent person that what we do is not as important as the spirit in which we do them. Do you take pride in your fasting? Then don’t fast lest it leave you like the Pharisee.

Challenging Our Religious Complacency

In addition, religious complacency invariably sets us against others. When we take pride in our level of religious observance our next thought is often “I come to church regularly, not like him.... They’re not here for every lenten service ... She’s half my age – why does she have to sit down when everyone else is standing?” and the like. We may not make these comments aloud but we don’t have to. They have already sullied our heart. As St Cyril of Alexandria reminds us: “What profit is there in fasting twice in the week, if your so doing serves only as a pretext for ignorance and vanity, and make you supercilious and haughty, and selfish?” (*On the Gospel of Luke*, Sermon 120)

Religious complacency also sets us against God, as odd as that may seem. When we see our acts of religion as our passport to heaven we are telling God we have no need of Him. We are saving ourselves. Blessed Theophylact of Ochrid, in his Explanation of the Gospel of St Luke, says that there are many offshoots of self-love. “Presumption, arrogance, and vainglory all stem from this root. But the most destructive of all these kinds of self-love is pride, for pride is contempt of God. When a man ascribes his accomplishments to himself, and not to God, this is nothing less than denial of God and opposition to Him.”

The error of the Pharisee is to confuse the means with the end. Acts of virtue or piety are meant to dispose our hearts towards communion with God, not turn us in on ourselves. As the late Metropolitan Anthony Bloom wrote, “From the [Pharisee] learn his works, but by no means his pride; for the work by itself means nothing and does not save.” We may – and should – do good things as responses to God’s love for us. We should not think that fasting, churchgoing or Bible reading automatically bring us to communion with God, merely because they are outwardly observed. Even when we practice religious observances from the best of motives, we can find them emptied of virtue through pride. In the words of St Gregory Palamas, “The un-

seen patron of evil ... can bring down the roof of good works after its construction, by means of pride and madness.”

Humility Transforms Us

The antidote to the boastfulness of the Pharisee is humility which is nothing less than a return to the genuine order of things, the restoration of a realistic view of ourselves and of God. Only He can transform us by granting us a share in His divine life. Of ourselves we can do nothing to earn God’s love or to share in His holiness. We can only respond to His eternal love for us by embarking on the path of repentance – that dying to self-love and egocentricity which leads us to life in the kingdom.

Humility – authentic self-understanding – doesn’t come easily at any time. It is deeply opposed to the values of the world. The late Father Alexander Schmemmann saw how humility has no place in our secular culture. He wrote: “If there is a moral quality almost completely disregarded and even denied today, it is indeed humility. The culture in which we live constantly instills in us the sense of pride, self-glorification, and self-righteousness. It is built on the assumption that man can achieve anything by himself and it even pictures God as the one who all the time ‘gives credit’ for man’s achievements and good deeds. Humility – be it individual or corporate, ethnic or national - is viewed as a sign of weakness, as something unbecoming a real man. ...”

Our culture also teaches us to feel superior when others fall. As a rule, the newspapers, TV and other media don’t tell us about the positive things people do – that doesn’t sell papers. A steady diet of looking at other people’s failings leads us to imitating the Pharisee’s “I’m not like that that.”

A more helpful approach comes from the nineteenth century Russian Saint, John of Kronstadt. He writes: “When the foolish thought of counting up any of your good works enters into your head, immediately correct your fault and rather count up your sins, your continual and innumerable offences against the All-Merciful and Righteous Master, and you will find that their number is as the sand of the sea, whilst your virtues in comparison with them are as nothing.”

In the vision of the Gospel, repentance and humility are more important and higher than all of the other virtues, continuing until the end of our life. Today’s kondakion sums up the Church’s prayer for all of us: “Let us shun the boastful words of the Pharisee and [Type text] learn from the Publican humility with sighing; let us cry out to our Savior: ‘Have mercy on us, You who alone are merciful!’”

Troparia from the Canon

Vainglory disperses the treasures of righteousness, but humility scatters the multitude of passions. Then grant that we may seek humility, O Savior, and bestow on us the portion of the Publican. (From Ode 3)

Though he was rich in virtues, foolish pride brought the Pharisee to poverty, but in his great need the Publican was justified through humility. Let us also gain this humility. (From Ode 4)

The Pharisee thought to drive swiftly in the chariot of the virtues; but on foot the Publican outran him, for he yoked humility with compassion. (From Ode 5)

Faithful, let us avoid the pride of the Pharisee: Let us not say We are pure! as he did; but rightly follow the Publican in his humble thoughts which gained for him God’s mercy. (From Ode 8)