

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

SUNDAY OF CHEESEFARE



Icon of the the Ladder of Divine Ascent

DIVINE LITURGY OF ST. JOHN CHRYSOSTOM

11 FEBRUARY 2024 ♦ TONE 04 EOTHINON 04 † SUNDAY OF FORGIVENESS / CHEESEFARE SUNDAY

GREAT DOXOLOGY:

ANTIPHONS:

FIRST:

SECOND:

THIRD:

ENTRANCE HYMN:

APOLYTIKIA:

Resurrection (Tone 4)

Hieromartyr Blaise, Bishop of Sebastea

St. Joseph the Betrothed

KONDAKION: Prodigal Son

TRISAGION:

PROKIMENON:

(Tone 4)

EPISTLE:

Brethren, now our salvation is nearer than when we came to believe. The night is far advanced: the day is at hand. Let us therefore lay aside the works of darkness, and put on the armor of light. Let us walk becomingly as in daytime, not in revelry and drunkenness, not in debauchery and wantonness, not in strife and jealousy. But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and as for the flesh, pay no attention to its lusts. But whoever is weak in faith, receive him without arguing about opinion. For one believes he may eat all things but another who is weak, let him eat vegetables. Let not the one who eats despise the one who does not; and let not the one who does not eat judge the one who does, for God has received him. Who are you to judge another's servant? To his own master he stands or falls but he will stand, for God is able to make him stand.

ALLELUIA:

(Tone 4)

In you, O lord, I have hoped: let me never be put to shame. In your Justice, save me and deliver me.

Be for me a protecting God, a sheltering house to save me.

GOSPEL:

The Lord said, "If you forgive men their offenses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men their offenses, neither will your Father forgive you your offenses. And when you fast, do not look gloomy like the hypocrites, who disfigure their faces in order to appear to men as fasting. Amen, I say to you they have had their reward. But you, when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, so that you may not be seen by men to fast, but by your Father, who is in secret; and your Father, who sees in secret, will reward you. Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where worm and rodent consume, and where thieves break in and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither worm nor rodent consumes, nor thieves break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there also will be your heart."

HIRMOS:

KINONIKON:

POST- COMMUNION HYMN:

Liturgy Book p. 17

Liturgy Book p. 29

Liturgy Book p. 32

Liturgy Book p. 36/p.42

Liturgy Book p. 38

Liturgy Book p. 42

Liturgy Book p. 101

Liturgy Book p. 47

handout

Liturgy Book p. 50

Liturgy Book p. 54

Romans 13:11-14:4

Liturgy Book p. 59

St. Matthew 6:14-21

Liturgy Book p.77

Liturgy Book p.83

Liturgy Book p. 89/p.90

TRADITIONAL FAST OF GREAT LENT

† On weekdays of Great Lent, Monday through Friday, there are restrictions on both the number of meals taken daily and on the types of food permitted; but when a meal is permitted, there is no limitation to the quantity of food that may be eaten. † On weekdays, fast is broken [the first meal of the day is taken] at/after the noon hour. † Throughout Great Lent, the fast excludes the eating of meat and meat products, cheese, milk, butter, fish, olive oil, wine and alcoholic beverages. † On the Feast of Palm Sunday the eating of fish is permitted. Olive oil, as well as wine, is permitted on various feastdays (consult the calendar), as well as on Saturdays and Sundays. † While the above rules of fasting are to be encouraged, in all things the Christian is called to exercise moderation and charity. The elderly and those in poor health, especially, are urged to be prudent. If in doubt, speak with your spiritual father or confessor.

experience. When we simply equate food fasting as the purpose of the season, St John Chrysostom tells us, we belittle the very season we seek to observe:

"Let the mouth fast from disgraceful and abusive words, because, what gain is there when, on the one hand we avoid eating chicken and fish and, on the other, we chew-up and consume our brothers? He who condemns and blasphemes is as if he has eaten brotherly meat, as if he has bitten into the flesh of his fellow man. It is because of this that Paul frightened us, saying: 'If you chew up and consume one another be careful that you do not annihilate yourselves ...

"You did not thrust your teeth into the flesh (of your neighbor) but you thrust bad talk in his soul; you wounded it by spreading dishonor, causing inestimable damage both to yourself, to him, and to many others."

The Prayer of St Ephrem the Syrian ("O Lord and Master of my life..."), which we recite so often during this season, leads us to see the purpose of the season as the acquisition of virtue, particularly in relation to others. We pray to avoid sloth, ambition, inquisitiveness, and vain talking as well the habit of judging others. We ask that we attain patience, love, and humility – virtues that define our relations with others as being in Christ.

Another Lenten experience which seeks to put relationships at the center of our focus during the Fast is the rite of forgiveness held at the end of vespers or the Liturgy on this day. We are enjoined to ask forgiveness and prayers from every other person in the community. In some Churches it is the custom to sing the Paschalia during this rite, pointing toward the kiss we will exchange with everyone in the joy of Christ's resurrection.

Put On the Lord Jesus Christ

St Paul's admonition – and the spirit of the Great Fast – does not exalt deprivation, or giving something up for its own sake. Both see abstinence as a way of making room for something greater: living a life of Christian love. Again, Paul is echoed by Chrysostom who writes, "Whoever limits the fast to the deprivation of food, he is the one who, in reality, abhors and ridicules the fast. Are you fasting? Show me your fast with your works. Which works? If you see someone who is poor, show him mercy. If you see an enemy, reconcile with him. If you see a friend who is becoming successful, do not be jealous of him! If you see a beautiful woman on the street, pass her by." Thus almsgiving is as integral a part of this season as is fasting from food and drink.

St John Chrysostom offers us other helps in understanding the true purpose of this season when he writes: "If you cannot go without eating all day because of an ailment of the body, beloved one, no logical man will be able to criticize you for that. Besides, we have a Lord who is meek and loving (philanthropic) and who does not ask for anything beyond our power. Because he neither requires the abstinence from foods, neither that the Fast take place for the simple sake of fasting, neither is its aim that we remain with empty stomachs, but that we fast to offer our entire selves to the dedication of spiritual things, having distanced ourselves from secular things.

"If we regulated our life with a sober mind and directed all of our interest toward spiritual things, and if we ate as much as we needed to satisfy our necessary needs and offered our entire lives to good works, we would not have any need of the help rendered by the fast. But because human nature is indifferent and gives itself over mostly to comforts and gratifications, for this reason the philanthropic Lord, like a loving and caring father, devised the therapy of the fast for us, so that our gratifications would be completely stopped and that our worldly cares be transferred to spiritual works."

TIME TO WAKE FROM SLEEP

TOMORROW IS THE FIRST DAY of the Great Fast. As a reminder, we hear once more these words of St Paul: “*You know what hour it is, how it is full time now for you to wake from sleep*” (Rom 13:11). Each year the Church calls us to four fasting periods – four wake-up calls to focus more intently on the spiritual life in connection with one of its most important feasts. Since the Great Fast prepares us for Pascha, the “Feast of Feasts,” it is naturally more intense than the other fasting periods. Accordingly, the Church sees St Paul’s admonition as especially appropriate today.

How do we observe this Fast? Again, we take our cue from St Paul: “*Let us then cast off the works of darkness and put on the armor of light; let us conduct ourselves becomingly as in the day, not in reveling and drunkenness, not in debauchery and licentiousness, not in quarreling and jealousy. But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires*” (Rom 13:12-14). In calling the people of his time to take up the challenges of the Gospel the apostle also gives us an outline of how to keep the Fast that is upon us. We are first of all to cast off the Works of Darkness, specifically the two examples which St Paul mentions.

Not in Reveling and Drunkenness

Abstaining from entertainment is the first of St Paul’s examples which has become part of the Church’s Lenten fast. There is a hold on Church parties and celebrations (including marriages) for these forty days. Instead many parishes hold Lenten Dinners with proceeds devoted to charity.

In second-millennium Europe it was customary that theaters and all places of entertainment would be shuttered during the Fast. Religious plays and music on Biblical themes would be offered instead. Perhaps the most famous composition of this type, Handel’s *Messiah*, was premiered at a charity concert in Holy Week, April 1742.

In the past entertainment was, for most people, a relatively rare respite from work. Today it often seems that work is a respite from entertainment, which is available to us day and night at the click of a button. Many people cannot imagine doing without their TV or computer for forty days. Are we called to fast from these devices at least for part of the time during the Fast?

Abstinence from rich food and drink is the signature exercise of spiritual discipline during this period. The specific way this activity is practiced varies from eparchy to eparchy and even from individual to individual. These general principles are universal:

Fasting, the abstinence from all food and drink, is observed prior to receiving the Eucharist and on every weekday (Monday through Friday) during the Great Fast, usually until noon. *Abstinence* is the avoidance of specific foods. During the Great Fast abstinence from “meat” (i.e. all animal products, including poultry, fish, eggs, dairy) as well as wine and, in some traditions, oil is practiced daily for the forty days in most Eastern Churches. This is also the root of the Western practice of “giving up something for Lent.”

The Fast is a time for simplifying our physical life, but should it be seen as a time of “giving-up”? The Prodigal did not feel that he was giving something up when he set out for his father because he saw the reality of the life he was living. If we see fasting as “giving-up,” we may have forgotten the first lesson we learned in Sunday school: that the real aim of our life is communion with God.

Not in Quarreling and Jealousy

As long as there has been a Great Fast there have been voices warning against misusing the

SAINT JOSEPH CHURCH ANNOUNCEMENTS

EVENTS IN FEBRUARY

Saturday Evening, February 10

Confessions: 3:00 p.m.

Great Vespers: 3:15 p.m.

Divine Liturgy: 4:00 p.m.

Sunday Morning, February 11

SUNDAY OF FORGIVENESS:

CHEESE FARE SUNDAY

Divine Liturgy: 10:00 a.m.

Potluck Brunch - Ice-cream Social

Sunday Afternoon, February 11

FORGIVENESS VESPERS: 3:00 p.m.

Greg. Great Academy 4:45 p.m.

Monday, February 12

CLEAN MONDAY

Beginning of the Great Lent

Monday Evening, February 12

Pre-sanctified Liturgy: 7:00 p.m.

Tuesday Evening, February 13

Pre-sanctified Liturgy: 6:00 p.m.

Thursday Evening, February 15

Pre-sanctified Liturgy: 6:00 p.m.

Friday Evening, February 16

Akathist Hymn: 6:00 p.m.

Sunday Morning, February 18

FIRST SUNDAY OF GREAT LENT:

2023 WEEKLY COLLECTION

February 04

Weekly Offering:	\$ 1,510.00
Monthly:	\$ 30.00
Holydays:	\$ 65.00
Candles:	\$ 25.00
Total:	\$ 1,630.00

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

10 February: Joanna Simon
11 February: Russell & Kathleen Bateman
from M/M Daniel Schiller Family
17 February: Joseph Viola
18 February: Russell & Kathleen Bateman✕
from M/M Zachary Bateman Family

LENTEN SERVICES

Monday, Wednesday: **Presanctified Liturgy:**
Gregory Great Academy: 5:00 p.m.
Tuesday & Thursday: **Presanctified Liturgy:**
St. Joseph: 6:00 p.m.
Friday: **Presanctified Liturgy:**
Gregory Great Academy: 11:00 a.m.
Friday: **Akathist Hymn: St. Joseph: 6:00 p.m.**

FORGIVENESS VESPERS

A GREAT WAY TO DEAL WITH OUR EGO is to ask forgiveness of others before we presume to begin the Fast. In the rite of forgiveness at the first service of the Great Fast, Sunday evening vespers, everyone in the church asks forgiveness of everyone else. The lesson is clear: even if I'm not conscious of having offended you, I want to clear up any thing I may have done, even in ignorance.

Some people balk at this rite, feeling that they really haven't done anything that needs to be forgiven (that ego again). After all, no one is mad at me. Father Alexander Schmemmann often pointed out that the rite of forgiveness is so important precisely because it makes us acknowledge – be it only for one minute – that our entire relationship to others is inadequate. As Adam and Eve hid from God in the Garden, so we hide from one another, routinely erecting a wall around ourselves, avoiding any real concern for other people. We make sure that we are polite and “friendly” to others, while we are actually indifferent to them, unconcerned with their real needs.

Another secret way by which we offend others is by judging them in our hearts. In words that seem particularly modern, St Macarios the Great writes, “Christians ought not to pass judgment of any kind on anyone, not on the prostitute nor on sinners nor on disorderly persons. But they should look on all persons with a single mind and a pure eye so that it may be for such a person almost a natural and fixed attitude never to despise or judge or abhor anyone or to divide people and place them into boxes” (Homilies 5.8). We know that, as we look around the church, we constantly pigeonhole people. “She's always talking about her ailments... he's always bragging about his latest acquisition.” We need to confess our judgmental attitudes to acquire the “pure eye” of the true Christian.

So it does not matter whether we have publicly failed that person directly when asking for forgiveness, because whenever we fail to follow the Gospel, we become less than we can be and inevitably affect each other. This is why we need to ask forgiveness of all people on this day.

Sad to say, there are sincere believers who come to confession because they feel it is easier to repent before God than it is to apologize to people they have hurt! After all, God always forgives and the priest doesn't try to make you feel embarrassed.

On the contrary, a sincerely repentant encounter with Christ, whether in confession or in the Eucharist, assumes that penitents have already repented to those whom they have offended. There is no greater sign of the authenticity of a person's repentance than the willingness to do something concrete about it. Similarly there is no greater sign that a “penitent” is deceiving himself when he tries to apologize to God while avoiding the person he offended.

Back in the 1970s teenager Michael Goodman mugged another youth, Claude Soffel, on a New York City street and stole his bus pass. Memory of the incident never left Goodman's conscience. Thirty-five years later he recognized his victim's name on a Facebook posting and expressed his repentance online.

“You may not remember this (about 1976 or '77),” Goodman wrote, “but a long, long time ago... trying to look like a tough guy... I walked up to you and mugged you for your bus pass. I have never forgotten the incident or your name. Finally I can say I'm very sorry.”

Some time later, the victim, Mr Soffel, replied: “Clearly you're a bigger man today. I recognize your name now as well. So, apology accepted. So let us now, jointly put this in its proper place, behind us.”

We do not know whether either of these men are believers, but since their story went viral they have become role models for repentance and forgiveness in the cyber world.

Repenting in Our Liturgy

Repenting to one another has an important place in our liturgical tradition, based on the injunction of Christ that wrongs should be righted before coming to worship God: “Therefore if you are bringing your gift to the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar, and go your way. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift” (Mt 5:24).

In the Divine Liturgy, having brought our gift before the altar, we are reminded, “Let us love one another that with one mind we may confess the Father, the Son...” At this point the greeting of peace would be exchanged: priests with priests, deacons with deacons and laypeople with one another. These days, the greeting is generally exchanged only among the clergy. In some churches you may still see people moving without ostentation through the congregation, asking forgiveness before approaching the holy mysteries! In other churches the greeting “Christ is in our midst – He is and ever shall be!” is exchanged without any accompanying gesture.

A moving response to Christ's injunction is observed as we begin the Great Fast every year. The first service of the season climaxes with the rite of forgiveness. People approach the priest one at a time and each asks the other's forgiveness for any way they may have offended each other during the year. The worshippers then ask one another's forgiveness, forming a large a circle around the church until all the members have expressed their repentance to one another. Not surprisingly, this service has come to be known as “Forgiveness Vespers.”

Repentance Calls for Forgiveness

As difficult as directly expressing our repentance might be, extending forgiveness to others may be even more demanding for even committed church members. Offenses, whether real or imagined, can prey on one's mind for years; grudges nursed for decades. Yet the words of Christ in the Gospel could not be clearer, “For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses” (Mt 6:14, 15).

“Yes,” you may say, “but you don't know what she did to me!” Other people's sins may seem unforgivable, but once we take a step toward forgiving them, well who knows what might happen.