

ST. JOSEPH THE BETROTHED

MELKITE GREEK-CATHOLIC CHURCH

130 ST. FRANCIS CABRINI AVENUE ✱ SCRANTON, PA 18504

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PRAYER INTENTIONS

P. H. S.: Mich. Abda. Jos. Bartnicki. Nikki Boudreaux. George Bales Sr. Lucille Bales. Jayne Buckley. Chris Carey. Lois Cianci. James Kane. Maryann Nappi Donahue. Carol Downer. Dav. Fairclough, Sr. Rob. Fairclough, Sr. Sara Gomez. Niko Mayashairo. Mary McNeilly. Charl. & Joe Prezgia. Johanna Simon. 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. Jos. Daratony. ✱Rev. Dn. Jos. Daratony. Dn. John Karam. ✱Marie Abda. ✱Charl. & James Abda. ✱Marie Abda. ✱Nancy Abda. ✱Janice Assaf. ✱Thalia Assaf. ✱Joe & Marie Barron. ✱Paul & Mary Ann Bauman. ✱A.J. Bolus. ✱Veronica Bolus. ✱Jos. Bolus. ✱Gary Bolus. ✱Natey Cheffers. ✱Nich. Cianci. ✱Patricia Cimacosky. ✱Ann & John Coury. ✱Mary Sue Betress. ✱Cecilia Davidson. ✱Joe. & Margt. Dillenburg. ✱Eric Jolly. ✱Joe 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.

CLERGY:

Rev. Christopher Manuele, Presbyter

DIVINE SERVICES:

Tuesday :

Compline0:00 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

SECOND SUNDAY OF THE GREAT FAST



Icon of Saint Gregory Palamas

DIVINE LITURGY OF SAINT BASIL THE GREAT

16 MARCH 2025 ♦ TONE 02 EOTHINON 09 † SECOND SUNDAY OF THE GREAT LENT ♦ SUNDAY OF HOLY RELICS

GREAT DOXOLOGY: *Liturgy Book p. 17*

ANTIPHONS: *Second Sunday of Lent*

FIRST: *Liturgy Book p. 29*

SECOND: *Liturgy Book p. 32*

THIRD: *Liturgy Book p. 36 / p. 40*

ENTRANCE HYMN: *Liturgy Book p. 38*

APOLYTIKIA:

Resurrection (Tone 2) *Liturgy Book p. 40*

Holy Relics *Lenten Supplement p. 2*

Patron *Liturgy Book p. 47*

Glory to the Father....

KONDAKION: *Annunciation* *Lenten Supplement p. 6*

TRISAGION: *Liturgy Book p. 50*

PROKIMENON: (Tone 5) *Liturgy Book p. 58*

EPISTLE: *Hebrews 1:10-14; 2:1-4*

You in the beginning, O Lord, did found the earth, and the heavens are works of your hands. They shall perish, but you shall continue; and they shall all grow old as does a garment, and as clothing shall you change them, and they shall be changed. But you are the same, and your years shall not fail (Ps. 101: 26-28) Now, to which of the angels has he ever said, “Sit at my right hand, until I make your enemies the footstool at your feet” (Ps. 109: 1)? Are they not all ministering spirits, sent for service, for the sake of those who shall inherit salvation? That is why we should all the more earnestly observe the things we have heard, lest perhaps we drift away. For if the word spoken by angels proved to be valid, and every transgression and disobedience received a just punishment, how shall we escape if we neglect such a great salvation? For it was first announced by the Lord and was confirmed to us by those who heard it.

ALLELUIA: (Tone 6)

Your favor, O Lord, I will sing forever; from generation to generation my mouth will proclaim your faithfulness.

For you have said, “My kindness is established forever.” In heaven you have confirmed your faithfulness.

GOSPEL: *St. Mark 2:1-12*

At that time Jesus entered Capernaum, and it was reported that he was at home. And immediately many gathered, so that there was no longer room, not even around the door. And he spoke the word to them. And they came, bringing to him a paralytic, carried by four. And since they could not bring him to Jesus because of the crowd, they uncovered the roof where he was, and, having made an opening, they let down the pallet on which the paralytic was lying. And Jesus, seeing their faith, said to the Paralytic, “Son, your sins are forgiven you.” Now some of the Scribes were sitting there and reasoning in their hearts, “Why does this man blaspheme in this way? Who can forgive sins, beside God?” And at once Jesus, knowing in his spirit that they so reasoned within themselves, said to them, “Why are you arguing these things in your hearts? Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, ‘Your sins are forgiven you,’ or to say, ‘Arise, and take up your pallet, and walk’? But that you may know the Son of Man has power on earth to forgive sins” — he said to the paralytic — “I say to you, arise, take up your pallet, and go to your house,” And immediately he arose and, taking up his pallet, went forth in the sight of all, so that they were all amazed, and glorified God, saying, “Never did we see anything like this!”

HIRMOS: *Lenten Supplement p. 17 / Liturgy Book p. 178*

KINONIKON: *Liturgy Book p.83*

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 feastsdays (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 to your confessor.

What other sources of despondency are there? Idleness is one of the mothers of despondency. Idle people who do not work and yet are materially well off, who are satiated with the good things of this life and drowning in luxury, lose the taste for life. They become jaded, everything becomes uninteresting and boring, nothing brings them joy, and their hearts become filled with despondency—the terrible and dangerous enemy of our salvation.

Yet another source of despondency is pessimism. Pessimists tend to see everything in a murky light, to concentrate on the dark and sinful. If a person notices only the dark and the bad in life the despondency that has taken over the mind grows to the point where the person doesn't see anything good, and ends his life in suicide. That is how strong the spirit of despondency is.

The most often-encountered source of despondency is bitterness and sorrowful events that people experience in life. A close one dies, a husband or son, and the mother falls into serious depression. This mother sees nothing good in the world. She thinks only about the deceased one, wanders in thought around his grave, imagines him lying in the coffin, and her depression spirals ever deeper.

How can one be freed of this? One mustn't remember the past and keep shedding tears. The deceased is very, very far away. His soul is standing before God and the angels, rejoicing over his freedom. One has to exert every effort to be carried in thought to that place where the dearly beloved now is. If we concentrate not on the dark and corruptible but on the eternal, the spirit of despondency will go away.

Sometimes serious illnesses can throw one into despondency. There are many people who do not patiently endure illnesses. But there were saints who were sick and bedridden all their lives, and yet they praised God for it. We have to remember such people and know how to accept the illnesses sent by God. We should not refuse the help of a doctor, for the wise son of Sirach says, Honour a physician with the honour due unto him for the uses which ye may have of him: for the Lord hath created him (Eccl. 38:1 KJV). A doctor is God's servant, who can relieve suffering and thereby drive away the spirit of despondency.

Such are the sources and causes of despondency. The main means for struggling with them, tested many years by all the saints, is prayer. There is nothing more effective than prayer, the constant asking for help from God.

When you begin to converse with God, He consoles you, and routes the spirit of despondency. And if you open your heart before a pastor of the Church at confession and then receive the Body and Blood of Christ, you will feel relief and joy, and the spirit of despondency will be driven away from you in disgrace.

Do not concentrate on the dark, sinful, and heavy; ascending on high in spirit, in your heart abide with God, in the heavenly chambers, where the dark spirits have no access.

And what is there to be said about people who practically do not know Christ, who seek the worldly path, who seek joy and consolation from the world? Outwardly they often seem satisfied, cheerful, and happy, as if they have no despondency. Do not think that that is true. In the depths of their souls their consciences do not cease to reprove them, and no one can completely lull his conscience. This is the constant suffering of those who chase after worldly prosperity. The apostle Paul says, For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death (2 Cor. 7:10).

If you don't turn from sorrow for the world to sorrow for God, you will perish! Remember the seriousness of despondency. Remember that the heart of a Christian should be filled with the joy of reaching for the light; it should be foreign to the sadness that fills the hearts of sinners.

May the Lord God have mercy on you, and may St. Ephraim assist you in your prayers!

PRAYER OF ST. EPHREM-III

By St. Luke, Archbishop of Simferopol and All Crimea

"Lord and Master of my life, give me not a spirit of despondency."

What is the spirit of despondency? It is what they call falling in spirit. People who have no understanding of Christianity look at monks wearing black clothing and with lowered heads, fingering their prayer ropes, and think that all religion is depressing. But that's not how it is at all. That would contradict the spirit with which all of Christianity is permeated; for, tell me, can a depressed person possess the spiritual strength and energy needed to walk the narrow path, indefatigably warring with the sinfulness of life and ascending from strength to strength? Of course not!

Our religion is not the religion of depression, but cheerfulness, energy, strength of will and character, which has as its fruit not depression but something absolutely opposite—what the holy apostle Paul spoke of: But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law (Gal. 5:22–23).

This is the true spirit and essence of our religion—not depression, but righteousness and peaceful joy in the Holy Spirit. Could anyone who possesses this joy be depressed? Of course not!

People are often mistaken when they evaluate a person's appearance. The true Christian does not have an appearance that would betray his joy of life. He is always peaceful, often apparently deeply immersed in thought, betraying his contemplation.

His thoughts are concentrated on the eternal, on the Kingdom of God, turned to the Lord Jesus Christ—and therefore he is always serious. It can happen that a Christian [ascetic] becomes despondent from time to time. This happens to those who, having travelled far on the path to Christ, the path of renouncing the temptations of the world, sometimes return to their former path; it seems to them that they were wrong to leave that path, the path that most people follow. Then they fall into despondency.

The devil tempts them, legions of demons stop their movement and hinder them along their path of Christ, presenting them pictures of family happiness and blessed friendships, and pull them back from this great path to that former path. And not rarely do the demons succeed in their aim—the ascetic falls in spirit and loses his zeal for the Lord Jesus Christ. Despondency is a great danger that waylays a Christian on his path to Christ. It is a diabolical temptation.

All the saints were subjected to these attacks from the spirits of darkness, and in the vast majority of cases, by prayer, fasting, and vigils Christians have conquered the spirit of despondency brought on by the devil.

But there were also those in whose souls the spirit of despondency simply grew, and they departed from the path of Christ. And when they left it, they felt abandoned by God, the emptiness and heaviness of life became unbearable to them and they often ended their own lives with suicide. This is why all the saints considered despondency to be a great danger and misfortune, and directed all their forces to battle against the spirit of despondency.

Sometimes, when a person has attained to a lofty life, he can get a high opinion of himself—and then God's grace leaves him for a time. Then he falls into a heavy, unbearable state of spirit—his heart immediately becomes empty. Instead of warmth and joy there is deep despondency. The Lord does this in order to remind the ascetic that he walks the path of Christ not through his own strength but by the grace of God. This is one source of despondency.

SAINT JOSEPH CHURCH ANNOUNCEMENTS

EVENTS IN MARCH

Saturday Afternoon, March 15

Mystery of Repentance:

Confessions: 3:00 p.m.

Great Vespers: 3:15 p.m.

Divine Liturgy: 4:00 p.m.

Sunday Morning, March 16

SECOND SUNDAY OF GREAT FAST

SUNDAY OF THE HOLY RELICS

Divine Liturgy: 10:00 a.m.

Saturday Afternoon, March 22

Mystery of Repentance:

Confessions: 3:00 p.m.

Great Vespers: 3:15 p.m.

Divine Liturgy: 4:00 p.m.

Sunday Morning, March 23

THIRD SUNDAY OF GREAT FAST

SUNDAY OF THE HOLY CROSS

Divine Liturgy: 10:00 a.m.

Saint Joseph Breakfast

9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

Monday Evening, March 24

Great Vespers: 7:00 p.m.

Tuesday Evening, March 25

FEAST OF THE ANNUNCIATION

Divine Liturgy: 5:30 p.m.

2024 WEEKLY COLLECTION

March 09

Weekly Offering:	\$ 1220.00
Candles:	\$ 25.00
Total:	\$ 1,245.00

Thank you for your support!

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

15 March: Aziz Simon✱
from M/M Francis Hall
16 March: Aziz Simon✱
from M/M Hall

LENTEN SERVICES

GREGORY GREAT ACADEMY:
Monday & Wednesday: **Presanctified: 5:00 p.m.**
Friday: **Presanctified: 11:15 a.m.**
ST. JOSEPH THE BETROTHED:
Tuesday: **Presanctified: 7:00 p.m.**
Thursday: **Presanctified: 7:00 p.m.**
Friday: **Akathist Hymn: 6:00 p.m.**

Sunday Afternoon, March 30

*All Parish Meeting: 2025 Food Festival:
Parish Hall after the Divine Liturgy*

THE AKATHIST HYMN - 1

by Fr. Emmanuel Hatzidakis

O ALL-HYMNED AND PRAISED MOTHER,
who did bear Him who is holier
than all the saints: the most holy Logos:
In receiving our offering now,
do safeguard and rescue from all ills all of us
and do redeem and spare from future punishment
those crying out to you: Alleluia!

The hymn provides an explanation as to the reasons for which the holy Theotokos was addressed *Κεχαριτωμένη*, Full of Grace, by the Archangel Gabriel, as for example with verses,

- “Rejoice, for you are the Throne of the King”
- “Rejoice, for you prepare a port for our souls” and
- “Rejoice, for the heavenly realm rejoices with the earthly one”

Other verses express metaphorically her special place as the Mother of God:

- “Rejoice, Star revealing the Sun”
- “Rejoice, heavenly Ladder by which God descended”
- “Rejoice, mother of the Lamb and the Shepherd” and
- “Rejoice, tabernacle of God and Word”

Still other verses declare the results on humankind of such special place:

- “Rejoice, opener of the gates of Paradise”
- “Rejoice, access of mortals to God” and
- “Rejoice, through you we have been covered with glory”

Other images are taken from the Old Testament, and matched fittingly to the Theotokos, as for example,

- “Rejoice, fertile field growing a bounty of mercies”
- “Rejoice, sea who drowned the invisible Pharaoh” and
- “Rejoice, promised land”

The Akathist contains poetic images of incomparable beauty, but also of deep theological meaning. The holy Virgin through her “Yes,” her “Let it be to me according to your word,” through her acceptance of God’s will, became the instrument through which salvation for the human kind became possible. The recurrent images of the Hymn point to this reality:

- She is the Branch which produces the GRAPE
- She is the Field on which grows the WHEAT
- She is the Tree that bears the FRUIT
- She is the Altar on which lays the FOOD
- She is the Rock from which springs the WATER
- She is the Promised Land where we find the MILK & HONEY
- She is the baptismal Font in which we find the baptismal GRACE
- She is the Fold which keeps the LAMB
- She is the Treasury in which is found the TREASURE
- She is the Throne on which sits the KING
- She is the Chariot ridden by the RIDER
- She is the Candle which shines the LIGHT
- She is the Dawn announcing the DAY
- She is the Key which opens PARADISE
- She is the Gate leading to the KINGDOM
- She is the Ladder through which we climb to HEAVEN
- She is the Bridge that carries us to SALVATION
- She is the Dwelling where dwells the LORD
- She is the Bridal Chamber where awaits the BRIDEGROOM

In her womb took place the mystical and incomprehensible union of humanity and divinity. It is in her as well, where the union of our soul with our Creator is consummated. It is in her that our salvation is accomplished. How can we have the Fruit without the Tree? How can we have the Light without the Candle? That is why we honor and praise her: because, although she is not the Good News, she is definitely the Book on which the Good News was written. Although she is not the Joyful News of our salvation, she most definitely is the Bearer of such News.

May you deem us worthy, O holy Theotokos, to celebrate your Salutations in good health, for as many years as Your Son and our God grants to us. Amen.