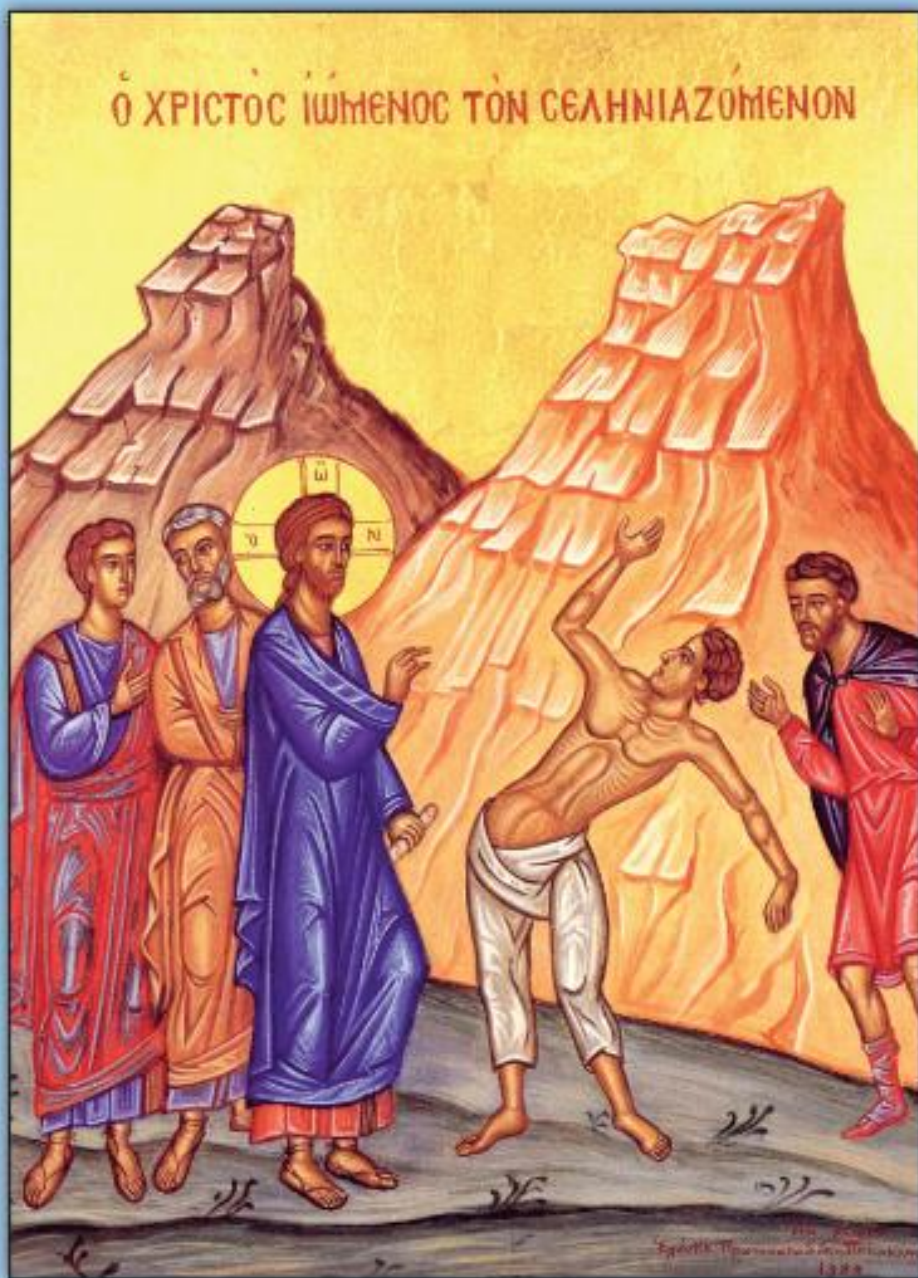


TENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST



Icon of healing the possessed boy (Matthew 17:14-23)

DIVINE LITURGY OF SAINT JOHN CHRYSOSTOM

2 AUGUST 2026 ♦ TONE 01 EOTHINON 10 † TENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST / HEALING THE EPILEPTIC BOY

GREAT DOXOLOGY:

Liturgy Book p. 17

ANTIPHNS:

FIRST:

Liturgy Book p. 29

SECOND:

Liturgy Book p. 32

THIRD/BEATTITUDES

Liturgy Book p. 125

ENTRANCE HYMN:

Liturgy Book p. 41

APOLYTIKIA:

Resurrection (Tone 1)

Liturgy Book p. 39

Saint Steven Liturgy

Patron: Saint Joseph

Liturgy Book p. 47

KONDAKION: Transfiguration

Liturgy Book p. 172

TRISAGION:

Liturgy Book p. 50

PROKIMENON:

(Tone 1)

Liturgy Book p. 54

EPISTLE:

1 Corinthian 4:9-16

Brethren, I think God has set forth us the apostles last of all, as men doomed to death, so that we would become a spectacle to the world, and to angels, and to men. We are fools for Christ, but you are wise in Christ! We are weak, but you are strong! You are honored, but we are without honor! To this very hour, we hunger and thirst, and we are naked and buffeted and have no fixed home. And we labor, working with our own hands. We are reviled and we bless, we are persecuted and we bear with it, we are maligned and we console; we have become as the refuse of this world, the scum of all until this present time. I write these things, not to put you to shame, but to admonish you as my dearest children. For although you have ten thousand tutors in Christ, you have not many fathers. Therefore, I beg you, be imitators of me, as I am of Christ.

ALLELUIA:

(Tone 1)

Liturgy Book p. 62

O God, you granted me retribution and made peoples subject to me
and saved me from my raging enemies.

Therefore, I will proclaim you, o Lord, among the nations, and I will sing praise to your name.

GOSPEL:

St. Matthew 17:14-23

At that time, a man approached Jesus, and threw himself on his knees before him, saying, "Lord, have pity on my son, for he is a lunatic, and suffers severely; for often he falls into the fire, and often into the water. And I brought him to your disciples, but they could not cure him." Jesus answered and said, "O unbelieving and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you? How long shall I put up with you? Bring him here to me." And Jesus rebuked him; and the devil went out of him, and from that moment the boy was cured. Then the disciples came to Jesus privately and asked, "Why could we not cast it out?" He said to them, "Because of your little faith; for amen I say to you, if you have faith like a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, 'Move from here,' and it will move. And nothing will be impossible to you. But this kind can only be cast out by prayer and fasting." Now while they were gathering together in Galilee, Jesus said to them, "The Son of Man is to be betrayed into the hands of men, and they will kill him: and on the third day he will rise again."

HIRMOS:

Liturgy Book p. 77

KINONKON:

Liturgy Book p. 83

COMMUNION HYMN:

Liturgy Book p. 87

POST- COMMUNION HYMN:

Liturgy Book p. 89 / Liturgy Book p. 90

Saturdays August 1 and 8: Paraklesis Hymn 3:00 PM

SAINT JOSEPH CHURCH ANNOUNCEMENTS

Events in August

Saturday Evening, August 1

Paraklesis: 3:00 p.m.

Confessions : 3:45 p.m.

Divine Liturgy: 4:00 p.m.

Sunday Morning, August 2

TENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Confessions: 9:45 a.m.

Divine Liturgy: 10:00 a.m.

THE TRANSFIGURATION

Wednesday, August 5, Vespers

Divine Liturgy 5:30 p.m.

ELEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Saturday, August 08

Paraklesis: 3:00 p.m.

Confessions : 3:45 p.m.

Divine Liturgy: 4:00 p.m.

Sunday morning, August 9

Confessions : 9:45 a.m.

Divine Liturgy: 10:00 a.m.

THE DORMITION OF THE MOTHER OF GOD

Friday, August 14, Vespers Divine

Liturgy, 5:30 p.m.

2026 WEEKLY COLLECTION

July

Weekly Offering: \$ 450.00

Candles: \$ 4.00

Total: \$ 454.00

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

2 August: Susan Vieselmeyer, by Karen Kane

✠ Dr. John Abda, by Parish Community;

✠ James Kane, by Parish Community

9 August: Heath and Salvation, St Martha's Academy teachers, by Annie Lefler

✠ Dr. John Abda, by Parish Community;

✠ James Kane, by Parish Community

2026 FOOD FESTIVAL NEWS

Friday, August 07, Saturday August 8, Sunday August 9, 2026

FOOD PREPARATION:

August 01, 2026: Kibbeh

A PRAYER OF FAITH

WHEN THE LORD'S DISCIPLES ASKED why they could not cast out the demon from the epileptic in today's Gospel reading, He responded, *"Because of your unbelief"* (Mt 17:20). This statement raises several questions, such as the following, which are answered by referring to other Scripture passages:

Were the Disciples Without Faith?

The Gospels show us glimpses of the apostles' mindset during the Lord's public ministry, during His passion, after His resurrection and as a result of the descent of the Holy Spirit upon them. At the beginning of Christ's preaching, they are depicted as devout Jews who were drawn to Him, *"astonished at His teaching, for His word was with authority"* (Lk 4:32) and amazed at the signs He worked. Incidents during the next three years show that their faith in Him was limited, but developing. Even after witnessing numerous signs, including the Transfiguration on Mt Tabor, the leading disciples were still jockeying for position (see Lk 9: 46-48), jealous of competition (see Lk 9: 49-50), and seeking revenge on hostile Samaritans (see Lk 9: 51-55). When James and John asked Jesus *"Lord, do You want us to command fire to come down from heaven and consume them, just as Elijah did?"* But He turned and rebuked them and said, *"You do not know what manner of spirit you are of. For the Son of Man did not come to destroy men's lives but to save them"* (vv. 54, 55).

The Gospels portray the disciples as falling asleep when the Lord asked them to keep watch, fleeing when He was arrested, and doubting the myrrhbearers' report of His resurrection. It was only when He *"opened their understanding, that they might comprehend the Scriptures"* (Lk 24:45) and when they received the gift of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost that they became His faith filled witnesses to the ends of the earth.

Prayer, the Art of Believing

To many people, faith is simply agreeing that certain concepts are true: there is a God, Jesus is His Son, Jesus saves, and the like. In his general epistle, St James, the Lord's Brother, puts such an idea to rest in no uncertain terms: *"You believe that there is one God. You do well. Even the demons believe—and tremble!"* (Jas 2: 19). Faith that stays in the mind is not faith at all. Faith must prove itself in the actions it inspires.

In Matthew's telling of this miracle, Jesus privately explains what He means by unbelief: faith must show itself in prayer and fasting (see Mt 17:19-21). Prayer is faith that shows itself in humble supplication; evidence that we actually do put our trust in God. Fasting is prayer that is more than just talk.

Many of us frequently assure people of our prayers for their intentions. This may mean little more than putting names on a prayer list. "Prayer and fasting" suggests intense prayer, as does the amount of time or the number of prostrations accompanying our prayer. Enlisting others to prayer with us for such-and-such a result is another example of intense prayer, particularly before the age of social media.

The Truest Prayer

The Gospels frequently tell us that the Lord went off by Himself to pray. The content of His prayer is only reported once: His sorrowful prayer to the Father in the garden after the Last Supper (see Mt 26; Mk 14; and Lk 22). In Matthew's Gospel we are told that Jesus *"... fell on His face, and prayed, saying, 'O My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as You will'... Again, a second time, He went away and prayed, saying, 'O My Father, if this cup cannot pass away from Me unless I drink it, Your will be done'"* (Mt 26:39-42). The "cup" of which He spoke was, of course, the suffering He was about to undergo. He

was not eager to undergo it, but He submitted it, like all things, to the will of His Father. “What prayer could be more true before God the Father than that which the Son, who is Truth, uttered with His own lips?” This is Saint John Chrysostom’s comment: for our prayer to be true, it should always include the act of submission to God’s will as expressed in Christ’s own prayer.

This should hardly surprise us, as these same words – “*Your will be done*” – are at the heart of the Lord’s Prayer which we say so often. This prayer teaches us what to ask for, according to Christ. After teaching us to pray that God be glorified and His kingdom come, He continues, “*Your will be done.*”

While we might prefer to skip this whole first part of the Prayer and focus on “give us...,” that is not Christ’s way. Rather He teaches us by word and example to offer our requests only in submission to the Father’s will.

One Last Condition

The Epistle of St James gives us one last condition for a successful “prayer of faith:” After describing how to pray for and anoint the sick, he writes: “*The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much*” (Jas 5:16). He then cites the Prophet Elias as an example of what he means by a righteous man!

Elias was revered by the Jews – and is revered that way in our Church as well – as the greatest of the prophets. If we need to be as righteous as Elias to pray for the sick, then we should give up all hope of effective prayer! Fortunately, our prayers can always be accompanied by those of “other Eliases” – the saints, those proven intercessors before God.

Since the apostolic era, healing miracles have been recorded in connection with saints, either while they were alive, or through their relics and their prayers after death. Today such healings can be medically verified as never before, giving an impartial testimony to the effective prayers of the truly righteous.

In 1949 construction worker Giovanni Savino was working at the friary where Roman Catholic ascetic Padre Pio lived. For three days Padre Pio unaccountably assured Giovanni of his prayers: “*Courage, Giovanni, I’m praying to the Lord that you might not be killed.*” On the third day Giovanni was seriously injured while attempting to dynamite a boulder. He was taken to a hospital here it was found that his face had been severely damaged, shrapnel from the blast had penetrated the cornea of his left eye and his right eye was found to be completely destroyed. For the next three days Padre Pio and his parishioners prayed for Giovanni. He was heard to say, “Lord, I offer You one of my eyes for Giovanni, because he’s the father of a family.”

The next morning Giovanni sensed that someone was standing near his bed. He believed it was Padre Pio. Later that morning the ophthalmologist came to examine Giovanni Savino’s left eye. When the doctor took the bandages off Giovanni immediately said “*I can see you!*” After further examination, it was clear that Savino was blind in the eye from which the shrapnel had been removed, but he was seeing perfectly from the eye that had been shattered to a bloody jelly. Completely astounded, the ophthalmologist, who up to that time had been an atheist, exclaimed, “Now I too believe, because this has happened right before me.”

Similar healings in the lives of Maronite St Charbel Makhlouf, Greek Orthodox St Nectarios of Pentapoulos, and the Russian Orthodox Archbishop of San Francisco, St John Maximovich, attest that the prayer of the righteous is truly effective.

WHY PRAY VESPERS AND ORTHROS AT HOME?- 2

By Rt. Rev. Philip Raczka, PhD & Deacon John Moses

This type of petitionary prayer by the leader of the congregation is found in the 4th Century tradition of Jerusalem. In her travel diary, Egeria of Spain (ca. 382 AD) states in chapters 24-25, describing the daily services in Jerusalem, how the bishop “says a prayer for all” at Vespers, Matins and other services. He might mention names, and the people would say, *Lord, have mercy*, after each name. Our Byzantine Melkite Tradition has something like this at the end of Compline in the prayer: *O Most Merciful Master, Lord Jesus Christ our God, through the intercession of our Lady all-pure, the Mother of God and ever-virgin Mary...* and the corresponding “Amen” of the congregation. The Apolysis Prayer at the end of the Memorial Service is also a presbyteral prayer wherein the congregations join with several “Amen.” However, the main prayers of intercession of our Tradition are the litanies of the deacon or priest at Vespers, Orthros and the Divine Liturgy, to which we answer, *Lord, have mercy, or Grant this, O Lord.*

What the priest or deacon says in the litany is the idea or intention, while the actual prayer is the response of the congregation. If there is no response, there is no prayer. That is why elaborate musical settings for the responses are avoided so that everyone joins in the prayer. Currently, we have the Litany of Peace in the Divine Liturgy, Vespers and Orthros wherein we pray for the whole world. This litany echoes the intent of 1 Timothy 2:1-4 quoted above. There is also the Aitesis or Angel of Peace Litany that asks for the sanctification of our lives, and to which we respond, *Grant it, O Lord.* This Litany seeks the sanctification of our lives and corresponds in intention with the Lord’s Prayer. Third, we have the Ecumenic or Insistent Litany to which we respond with a triple *Lord, have mercy.* This litany repeats some of the content of the Litany of Peace, and is also the place for special petitions, and the insertion of particular names for prayer. We have the petitionary Lord’s Prayer in the Trisagion Prayers at the beginning and end of Vespers and Orthros.

The use of litanies is clearly recorded in the *Constitutions of the Apostles* (ca. 380 AD), which comes from the area around Antioch, then the capital of the Roman Province of Syria, and the seat of the Melkite Patriarch. They were used at Vespers, Matins and the Eucharistic Liturgy, as they still are today in the Melkite Rite. John Chrysostom (+407), in some of his writings and sermons, also refers to these litanies, and even gives some of the wording that was used at his time, which is close to what we use today.

The intercessions of the Christian believers for themselves, and the whole world, are made at every Divine Liturgy, and the celebration of Vespers and Orthros. We are a royal priesthood (1 Peter 2: 5 & 9), and the adopted children of the Heavenly Father (John 1:12), thus it is our sacred duty to intercede with our Heavenly Father for ourselves, and the whole world.

Added Elements

In the early centuries some elements were added to the original service of Psalms/hymns and intercessions. These are the symbolism of Christ as the Light of the World, and hymns of repentance. These elements have remained until our present time, they are pre-

sented below.

Christ the Light

In the ancient world the growing darkness of the evening called for the lighting of a lamp so that people could see. It did not take long for the Christians to associate the light of the evening with Christ who is the Light of the World (John 8:12). John the Evangelist also wrote: *This life was the light of the human race; the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not over come it* (John 1:4-5).

The welcoming of the evening light developed two elements, one was a prayer in thanksgiving for the light, and the other was a hymn celebrating Christ as the light. When it comes to the prayer it appears in various ancient documents. *The Apostolic Tradition* (25) gives directions for the bishop's prayer over the lamp. There is a famous passage by Gregory of Nyssa wherein he describes his dying sister, Macrina, giving thanks for the evening light. She was no longer able to speak, but prayed with the moving of her hands. This shows that the thanksgiving for the light was performed at home as well as the in the church. In all probability it migrated from the domestic setting to the church building.

The Blessing of the Light is maintained in the Holy Saturday Paschal Vigil of the Melkite Catholic Church, where it is prayed at the beginning of the service immediately before Vespers. This ceremony is unique to the Melkite Catholic Church, and is the survival of an ancient Syrian liturgical custom. The solemn blessing of the light is also maintained in the Roman Church at the beginning of the Paschal Vigil.

The hymn of Vespers in celebration of the Light clearly refers to the end of the day, and Christ the Light of the World. The text of this ancient hymn is:

***O Joyful Light of the holy glory of the Father immortal,
Heavenly holy blessed Jesus Christ,
since we have come to the setting of the sun,
and have seen the evening light
we praise God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.
It is proper for You to be praised at all times by fitting melodies,
O Son of God, Giver of Life,
Therefore, the world glorifies You.***

Saint Basil the Great (+379) writing about this hymn in his book *On the Holy Spirit* (29) 73, saying that it is so old no one knows who composed it.

The theme of light, and Christ the Light, also appears in Orthros, or Morning Prayer, from an early date. The *Letter of Pliny the Younger to Trajan the Emperor* (X.xcvi) written around 111 AD describes the beliefs and practices of the Christians of Asia Minor. Pliny, the Governor of the province, asks Trajan, the Roman Emperor, what to do about the members of the Christian sect. In his letter he describes the Christian practices:

They customarily gathered before dawn on a fixed day to sing in alternation a hymn to Christ, as if to a god, and they bound themselves by an oath, not in a criminal conspiracy, but to refrain from robbery, theft, or adultery, from breaking their word, from reneging on a deposit. After this they usually dispersed, reassembling later on in order to take food of a common and harmless kind.

ST. JOSEPH THE BETROTHED

Melkite Greek-Catholic Church

130 St. Francis Cabrini Avenue ☩ Scranton, PA 18504

Contact office: 570.343.6092 † 570.468.4854

stjosephscranton@gmail.com ♣ www.melkitescranton.org
