

# ST. JOSEPH THE BETROTHED

MELKITE GREEK-CATHOLIC CHURCH

130 ST. FRANCIS CABBINI AVENUE ✱ SCRANTON, PA 18504

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## PRAYER INTENTIONS

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

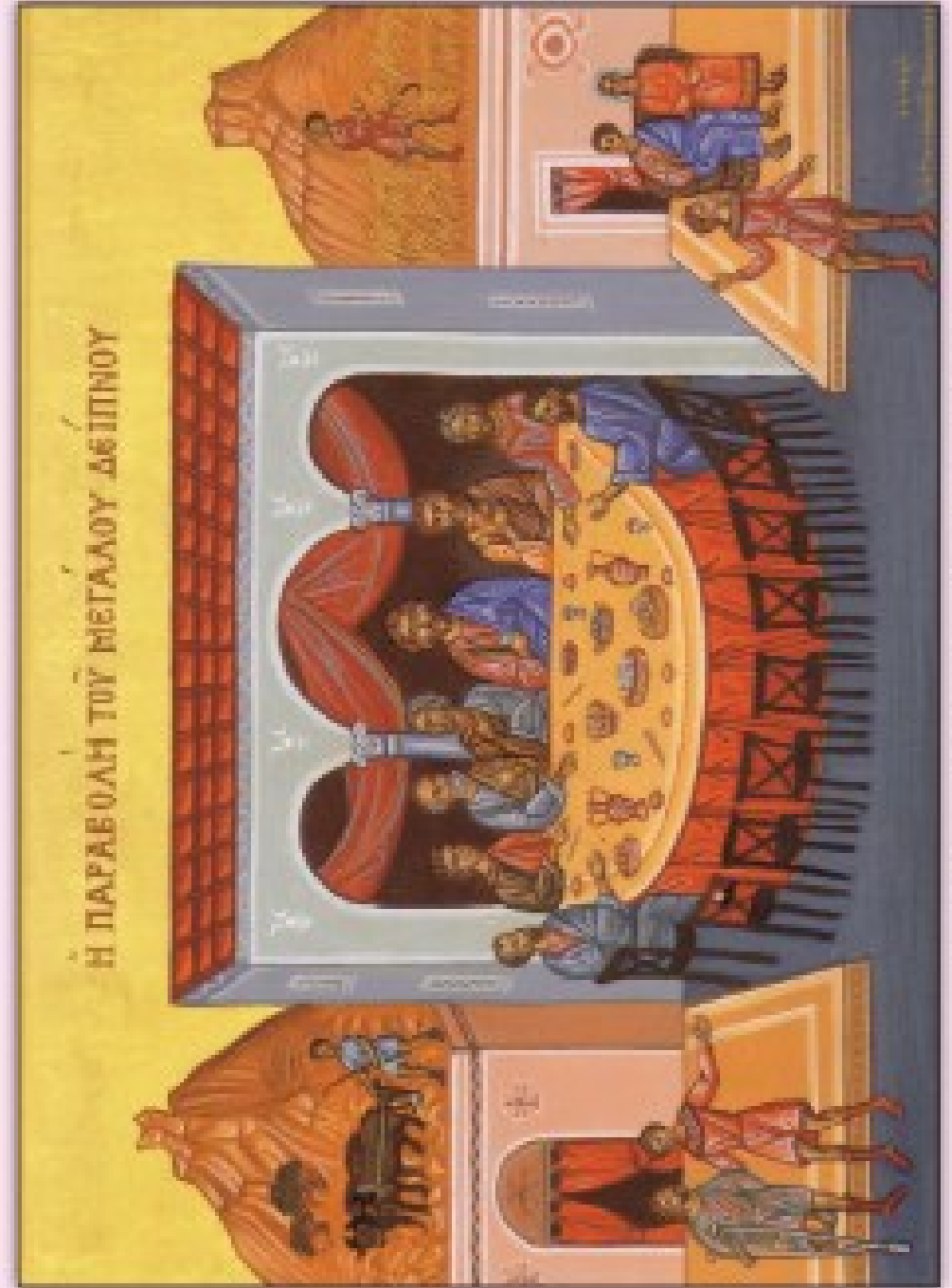
Following services / call the Rectory.

## HOLY MYSTERY OF CROWNING:

Call rectory at earliest convenience.

## VICTIM ASSISTANCE COORDINATOR:

Report Sexual Abuse: 1.800.479.5910



SUNDAY OF THE FOREFATHERS

Icon of the Parable of the Great Feast (Liber 14:16-24)

# DIVINE LITURGY OF SAINT JOHN CHRYSOSTOM

15 DECEMBER 2024 ♦ TONE 05 EOTHINON 8 † SUNDAY OF ANCESTORS OF CHRIST ♦ SECOND BEFORE NATIVITY

GREAT DOXOLOGY:

ANTIPHONS:

FIRST:

SECOND:

BEATITUDES

ENTRANCE HYMN:

APOLYTIKIA:

*Resurrection (Tone 5)*

*Forefathers*

Through faith, You have justified Your Ancestors, O Christ our God, and through them You have espoused in advance the Church set apart from the Gentiles. The saints rejoice in glory because, from the seed of these Ancestors, has come forth the glorious fruit, who gave You birth without seed. Through their intercession, O Christ God, save our souls

*Patron: St. Joseph*

*Glory to the Father....*

KONDAKION: Preparation for the Nativity

TRISAGION:

PROKIMENON:

EPISTLE: Forefathers

*Brethren*, when Christ, our life, appears, then you too shall appear in glory. Put to death whatever in your members is of the earth: immorality, uncleanness, lust, evil desire, covetousness, which is a form of idol-worship. Because of these passions, God's wrath comes upon the sons of disobedience and you yourselves once walked in them when they were your (way of) life. But now, you too put them all away; anger, wrath, malice, abusive language and foul-mouthed utterances. Do not lie to one another. Strip off the old man with his deeds and put on the new, one that is being renewed toward perfect knowledge according to his creator's image (Cf. Gn. 1:26). Here there is no Gentile and Jew, no circumcised and uncircumcised, no Barbarian and Scythian, no slave and freeman, but Christ is all things, and in all.

ALLELUIA: PSALM 98:6; 33:18

*(Tone 5)*

Moses and Aaron were among His priests, and Samuel among those who called upon His name.

The just cried out, and the Lord heard them, and He delivered them from all their trials.

GOSPEL:

*The Lord told this parable*, "A certain man gave a great supper, and he invited many. And he sent his servant at supper time to tell those invited to come, for everything is now ready. And they all with one accord began to excuse themselves. The first said to him, 'I have bought a farm, and I must go out and see it; I pray you hold me excused.' And another said, 'I have bought five yokes of oxen, and I am on my way to try them; I pray you hold me excused.' And another said, 'I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come.' And the servant returned, and reported these things to his master. Then the master of the house became angry and said to his servant. 'Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in here the poor, and the crippled, and the lame, and the blind.' And the servant said, 'Sir, your order has been carried out, and still there is room.' Then the master said to the servant, 'Go out into the highways and hedges, and make them come in, so that my house may be filled. For I tell you that none of those who were invited shall taste of my supper.' For many are called but few are chosen." And as he said these things, all his adversaries were put to shame; and the entire crowd rejoiced at all the glorious things that were done by him.

HIRMOS:

KINONKON:

COMMUNION HYMN:

POST-COMMUNION HYMN:

*Liturgy Book p. 17*

*Liturgy Book p. 29*

*Liturgy Book p. 32*

*Liturgy Book p. 125*

*Liturgy Book p. 38*

*Liturgy Book p. 43*

*(Tone 2)*

*Liturgy Book p. 47*

*Liturgy Book p. 150*

*Liturgy Book p. 50*

*Liturgy Book p. 58*

*Colossians 3:4-11*

*Liturgy Book p. 59*

*St. Luke 14:16-24*

*Book p. 77*

*Liturgy Book p. 83*

*Liturgy Book p. 87*

*Liturgy Book p. 89 / Liturgy Book p. 90*

the master of his eunuchs, to bring some of the children of Israel and some of the king's descendants and some of the nobles, young men in whom there was no blemish, but good-looking, gifted in all wisdom, possessing knowledge and quick to understand, who had ability to serve in the king's palace, and whom they might teach the language and literature of the Chaldeans. And the king appointed for them a daily provision of the king's delicacies and of the wine which he drank, and three years of training for them, so that at the end of that time they might serve before the king. Among those who were chosen were some from Judah: Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah. The chief official gave them new names: to Daniel, the name Belteshazzar; to Hananiah, Shadrach; to Mishael, Meshach; and to Azariah, Abednego" (Dan 1:3-7). The book uses these names indiscriminately, which sometimes confuses readers.

From the first these young Jews refused to violate the Law. They would not eat the meats given them and would only eat vegetables. Nevertheless they rose to positions of responsibility in the Babylonian Empire.

When Nebuchadnezzar erected a golden idol on the plain of Dura, the three young men refused to worship it as the king had commanded, even though he had stipulated: "whoever does not fall down and worship shall be cast immediately into the midst of a burning fiery furnace" (Dan 3:6).

When confronted by the king the three Jews insisted, "Our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and He will deliver us from your hand, O king. But if not, let it be known to you, O king, that we do not serve your gods, nor will we worship the gold image which you have set up" (Dan 3:17-18). They knew that God could deliver them and believed that He would. But if that was not His will, they would not lose faith: they still were not going to worship the idol.

"And these three men, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego, fell down bound into the midst of the burning fiery furnace. Then King Nebuchadnezzar was astonished; and he rose in haste and spoke, saying to his counselors, 'Did we not cast three men bound into the midst of the fire?' They answered and said to the king, 'True, O king.' 'Look!' he answered, 'I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire; and they are not hurt, and the form of the fourth is like a Son of God'" (Dan 3: 23-25).

The angel of God who protected these young Jews is seen by the Church as a type of Christ, the One who walks among His people at all times, in the midst of every circumstance, even when God seems absent. It is He whose coming in the flesh we are about to celebrate.

## Troparion and Kontakion (Dec. 17)

*Faith can accomplish great things! Through it the three holy young men rejoice in the flames as if they had been in refreshing water; and Daniel in the midst of lions is like a shepherd among his sheep. Through their intercession, O Christ God, save our souls.*

*Armed with God's invisible power, you shunned the adoration of man-made idols, O thrice-blessed young men. Strengthened with this power beyond words, you stood in the midst of a devouring fire and called upon God, saying: "Hasten, O merciful One, and speed to our help, for You are good and have the might to do as You please."*

## December 17: Holy Prophet Daniel & Three Young Men

IN OUR FIRST TONE TROPARION of the resurrection, sung repeatedly throughout the year, we chant these words: “Glory to Your economy, O You who alone are the Lover of mankind.” Our secular society uses the word economy for financial matters exclusively; the term has other meanings in the Church, particularly in the East.

“Divine economy” is the traditional way we refer to the way God interacts with the world, particularly in achieving the restoration of humanity to communion with Himself. Sometimes the term is paraphrased as *plan of salvation or dispensation*. The creation itself, and all the events connected with our redemption in Jesus Christ are included in the Church’s term economy. They are the way God “manages” His creation.

The highpoint of God’s plan for us is the Incarnation of the Word. Everything in the divine economy leading up to the coming of Christ is in some way a preparation for this event. The saga of Abraham and his descendants, the Israelites in Egypt, their exodus to the promised land and their subsequent history are all aspects of this plan which St Paul calls “*the mystery, which from the beginning of the ages has been hidden in God who created all things through Jesus Christ*” (Eph 3:9).

One particular moment in the story of Israel figures prominently in our celebration during the Nativity Fast: the exile of the Jews to Babylon and the experience of three of them in the fiery furnace. These three young men are remembered along with the prophet Daniel on December 17 each year. They are also specifically invoked on the two Sundays before the Nativity because of the accomplishments of their faith.

### The Babylonian Exile and the Book of Daniel

In 605 BC the Babylonian king Nebuchadnezzar besieged Jerusalem and made its king a vassal. Responding to several rebellious incidents the Babylonians pillaged the city in 597 BC and destroyed the temple built by Solomon. The Jewish king, his court and many prominent Jews were taken captive and deported to Babylon. Their exile would end in 538 BC when the Persian king Cyrus the Great defeated the Babylonians and allowed the Jews to return home.

The story of the exile and captivity of the Jews forms the background of the Book of Daniel. Its present form, written in Hebrew and Greek, dates to the mid-second century BC, but contains some original Aramaic tales dating from the exile as well. It is generally considered an apocalyptic book, offering its readers consolation that their present troubles (Greek and Roman occupation) would one day end as the Babylonian exile had ended: with the liberation of the Jews and the restoration of true worship.

Daniel was a highly placed Jew, highly regarded for his faithfulness to the Law in an era when the Law was largely neglected. The prophet Ezechiel, who lived through the Babylonian exile, puts Daniel in the highest company in this prophecy: “*The word of the LORD came again to me, saying: ‘Son of man, when a land sins against Me by persistent unfaithfulness, I will stretch out My hand against it; I will cut off its supply of bread, send famine on it, and cut off man and beast from it. Even if these three men, Noah, Daniel and Job, were in it, they would deliver only themselves by their righteousness,’ says the Lord GOD*” (EZ 14:14).

The first part of the book includes three dramatic and prophetic scenes concerning Daniel and three other young Jewish nobles. When they were taken captive, they were impressed into their captor’s service and given Babylonian names. “*Then the king instructed Ashpenaz,*

## SAINT JOSEPH CHURCH ANNOUNCEMENTS

### EVENTS IN DECEMBER

Friday Evening, November 15

*Beginning of Philip Fast:*

Saturday Morning, December 14

*Mother-Daughter*

*Day of Recollection: 9:00 a.m.*

Saturday Evening, December 14

*Confessions: 3:00 p.m.*

*Great Vespers: 3:15 p.m.*

*Divine Liturgy: 4:00 p.m.*

Sunday Morning, December 15

**SUNDAY OF THE FOREFATHERS**

*Divine Liturgy: 10:00 a.m.*

*Christmas Decorations set-up*

Saturday Evening, December 21

*Confessions: 3:00 p.m.*

*Great Vespers: 3:15 p.m.*

*Divine Liturgy: 4:00 p.m.*

Sunday Morning, December 22

**SUNDAY OF THE GENEALOGY**

*Resurrection Orthros: 9:00 a.m.*

*Divine Liturgy: 10:00 a.m.*

Tuesday Evening, December 24

**PARAMONY OF THE NATIVITY**

*Royal Hours: 10:00 a.m.*

*Confessions: following until 1:00 p.m.*

*Vesper Vigil Divine Liturgy:*

*Great Vespers: 5:30 p.m.*

*Divine Liturgy: 6:00 p.m.*

Wednesday Morning, December 25

**NATIVITY OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST**

*Festal Orthros: 9:00 a.m.*

*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.

### 2024 WEEKLY COLLECTION

December 08 24

Weekly Offering:	\$ 920.00
Monthly:	\$ 30.00
Nativity Flowers:	\$ 15.00
Holyday:	\$ 15.00
<b>Candles:</b>	<b>\$ 25.00</b>
<b>Total:</b>	<b>\$1,005.00</b>

### DIVINE LITURGY INTENTIONS

- 14 December: ✽Robert Jeanotte  
from Sandra Abda King
- 15 December: ✽Charles Lefler
- 21 December: ✽Shirley Baldauff  
from Steve Bartnicki
- 22 December: ✽James & Charlotte Abda  
from James, Ron & Richard Abda
- 04 January: ✽Robert Jeanotte  
from Sandra Abda King



## LUKE 14:16-24: THE ULTIMATE COMING OF CHRIST

THE SCRIPTURES DO NOT DEPICT CHRIST'S BIRTH as the ultimate point in the story of God's dealings with us. Instead we are told to look ahead to that final stage in history. In the imagery of Luke's Gospel, there shall be a great banquet – the triumph of the Messiah – and many shall be invited to share in that feast. St Paul is a bit more direct: "Christ shall appear, and when He does, you also will be revealed in glory with him" (Col 3: 4).

### **Banquet: Sign of the Kingdom**

The Gospel passage read at the Divine Liturgy on the Sunday of the Forefathers is always St Luke's version of the great banquet to which many are invited. The banquet in Jewish thought of the biblical era was an image of the kingdom of God ushered in by the Messiah. Thus the prophet Isaiah foretold, "*On the mountain the Lord of hosts will make for all peoples a feast of fat things, a feast of wine on the lees. And He will destroy on this mountain the covering that is cast over all peoples, the veil that is spread over all nations. He will swallow up death forever*" (Is 25:6-7). The banquet will be for all peoples, not just Israel, and the cover or veil separating Jew from Gentile would be destroyed. At the feast people would receive the sacrificial food in which the temple priests partook – the feast would have a liturgical character. Most importantly the feast will mark the death of Death: the renewal of life, which the Messiah would accomplish.

Isaiah's image of the Messianic Banquet was taken up by many Old Testament and other Jewish writers. The Lord Jesus Himself used the same image to describe the Kingdom, but warned the Pharisees that they would be cast out, "sons of the kingdom" though they be. "*I tell you: many will come from east and west and sit at table with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the Kingdom of heaven, while the sons of the kingdom will be thrown into the outer darkness; there men will weep and gnash their teeth*" (Mt 8:11-12).

This passage is particularly appropriate as we prepare for the Nativity of Christ because Christ's coming inaugurates the Messianic Kingdom. Christ calls together all peoples ("from east and west") and joins us to God through Himself. He is the annihilation of death and the Source of life for all who believe in Him. Commemorating the Forefathers, we recall Christ's promise that those united to Him will sit at table with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the Kingdom, a sign of our union with the saints of all ages in the Body of Christ.

### **Banquet: Sign of Communion**

The banquet image points to a number of characteristics which speak to us of the Kingdom of God. A banquet is a sign of *lavish hospitality*, a quality so prized in the Middle East. God displays His hospitality to us by opening His Kingdom to us with the most loving gift of all: the grace of His Christ. The banquet is also a sign of the participants' *joy and gladness* at being at the host's table. To use the Psalmist's words, they delight at taking the chalice of salvation and calling upon the name of the Lord.

The most important dimension to the image of a banquet is that of *fellowship*. The banquet is a place of communion with others, of sharing together in the hospitality of the Master. As such it is a preeminent sign of the Kingdom of God, our sharing in His divine life through Christ.

The coming of Christ has nothing to do with being alone. If anything, it is the opposite.

The Incarnation took place so that we would not be alone, left to ourselves, out of communion with God. Christ is born into the world so that, as was intended from the beginning, humanity could be in communion with God.

### **To Sin is to Be Alone**

The Scriptures describe aloneness as the consequence of sin. In the Genesis story of the fall Adam hides from God after eating from the Tree – a sign that their communion was broken. In its planning and in its effect, sin is about isolating oneself from God and others. It hardens us to see isolation from others as something good. We find the challenge of relationship with others too demanding and may react as did Cain, the mean-spirited son of Adam, "*Surely I am not my brother's keeper!*" (Gen 4:19).

Christmas and the Messianic Banquet are about communion because God is communion personified. "*God is love*" (1 Jn 4:9). God-as-love is what the Church means by calling God the Holy Trinity. Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are one in divinity but three persons in a loving relationship. According to the book of Genesis this loving communion was extended to Adam and Eve, created after the image, according to the likeness of this God who is love. By seeking to live apart from God Adam and Eve lost this vital link, getting exactly what they desired.

### **To Live in God is to be in Communion**

By His incarnation the Word of God – the One who was in perfect communion with the Father and the Holy Spirit – came to restore that communion with humanity. He lived in His person what Adam could not, remaining in constant communion with the Father while remaining like us in all things except for sin. His coming was not simply to show that communion with God was possible for man, but to make it possible for us to have such a relationship "*Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God— children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God*" (Jn 1:12-13).

What is Christ's by nature could become ours through faith, by God's gracious will. As the Fathers tirelessly repeated, "God became man so that man might become god."

### **The Eucharist and Communion**

The Divine Liturgy in which we regularly share has been described as a prophetic sign of the Messianic Banquet. Everything we look to experience in heaven is found in the Liturgy by anticipation. We gather with the entire Body of Christ – Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and all the saints as well as people from every race and nation – to share in the priestly gifts of the Body and Blood of Christ. We respond to the lavish hospitality of our Host with the joy and gladness of people who "*taste the heavenly bread and the cup of life and see how good the Lord is.*"

The great banquet is the final triumph of Christ which we proclaim in the Creed: "He will come again with glory to judge the living and the dead..." and the revelation of those who are in Christ as well. "I look for the resurrection of the dead and the life of the age to come." And so our celebration of Christ – whether spread out throughout the liturgical year or experienced in each Divine Liturgy – always directs us to look ahead to "His glorious second coming."