



ST BASIL GREEK MELKITE CATHOLIC CHURCH

901 Sherman Drive, Utica NY 13501
Fr Saba Shofany, Pastor
Tel: 315-732-4662 Cell: 315-664-6734
Web Page: stbasilutica.org

SUNDAY 1st AFTER PENTECOST
Saturday, June 10 & Sunday, June 11, 2017

RIVERS OF LIVING WATER

WHEN WE HEAR THE WORDS *confess* or *confession* we naturally think it refers to the confession of sins in the Mystery of Repentance. In this Mystery, to confess one’s sins means to publicly admit them in the presence of a priest. The term *confession* has a similar meaning outside this Mystery. It means to acknowledge something publicly, to declare or profess outright what we have in our heart. It does not refer only to sins or faults, but to any aspect of our inner life we choose to reveal publicly.

It is in this sense that we make a public confession at the Divine Liturgy when we say: “I believe, Lord, and profess that You are the Christ, the Son of the Living God, come to this world to save sinners, of whom I am the greatest.” We profess or confess in a public way our inner conviction that Christ is our incarnate Savior. We may believe something without stating it publicly, but when we confess something before others there can be no doubt where we stand.

It is in this sense that the Lord Jesus uses the word in the Gospel passage heard today at the Liturgy: “*Whoever confesses Me before men, him I will also confess before My Father who is in heaven. But whoever denies Me before men, him I will also deny before My Father who is in heaven*” (Mt 10: 32, 33). He promises to acknowledge as His followers those who publicly confess their faith in Him before the world and to reject those who claim to follow Him but keep their faith a secret, perhaps under pressure.

The Lord’s promise in the Gospel is part of a passage in which He warns that His disciples will be hounded to their deaths, even by their friends and relatives. He applies to their time a warning of the Prophet Micah during the exile of the Jews in Babylon “*a man’s enemies will be those of his own household*” (v.36).

Confessing Under Fire: The first disciple in whom this prophecy was fulfilled was the protomartyr, St Stephen, who was slain after professing his faith before the Jewish leadership (see Acts, chapters 6 and 7). There, and in many places since then, to confess one’s faith in Christ before hostile civil or religious authorities was like confessing to a crime, often at the instigation of relatives, or acquaintances. The result was generally death.

It sometimes happened that people condemned for their faith suffered, but did not die of their wounds. The fourth-century Church historian Eusebius described some who survived a persecution in Lyons in AD 177 in this way: “They were also so zealous in their imitation of Christ ... that, though they had attained honor, and had borne witness, not once or twice, but many times—having been brought back to prison from the wild beasts, covered with burns and scars and wounds—yet they did not proclaim themselves martyrs, nor did they suffer us to address them by this name. If any of us, in letter or conversation, spoke of them as martyrs, they rebuked him sharply ... And they reminded us of the martyrs who had already departed, and said, ‘They are already martyrs whom Christ has deemed worthy to be taken up in their confession, having sealed their testimony by their departure; but we are lowly and humble confessors’” (*Ecclesiastical History* 5, 1).

The term **Confessors**, then came to be used for those who suffered for their faith but did not die as a result. Thus, we speak of saints like Maximos the Confessor, who was tortured during the sixth-century controversies over the nature of Christ. He was exiled for his faith, but was not directly martyred. These confessors joined the martyrs as being the first to be venerated as saints by the Church in the place where they suffered.

Many local figures – ascetics and hierarchs as well as sufferers – would later be recognized as saints by their Churches and assigned feast days on their calendars. Some of them would be added to the calendars of other Churches as well. On the Sunday of All Saints we honor them as well as all those glorified by God whether recognized by any Church on earth or not.

(June2017Leaflets)

WEEKLY SERVICES

Daily Liturgy: Monday-Friday at 8:30AM **Holy Confession:** Every Monday at 4-6PM
Holy Liturgy: Saturday at 4:30PM, Sunday at 11:00AM **Vespers:** Every Saturday at 3:00PM
Matins/Orthos: Every Sunday at 9:00AM **Holy Rosary:** Every Sunday at 10:30AM

SPEEDY RECOVERY

Please pray for our convalescing members: **MaryEllen Busa, Carol Chanatry, Lorraine Chanatry-Howell, Anne Cragnolin, Edgar Hallak, Mary Machis, & Rose Rawlings.**
Notify Fr. Shofany in case of illness.

WEEKLY OFFERINGS: THANK YOU!

Sunday Collection June 3/4: \$ 000.00 Cheese Sale: \$ 00.00 Memorial Services: \$ 00.00

† MEMORIAL MASSES †

This Saturday, June 10, 2017

This Sunday, June 11, 2017

† **Jannah Jbarah**, By her Family
† **Arlene Lalli, 19th Memorial Anniversary**, By Robert Lalli

Next Saturday, June 17, 2017

† **James Edward Astour, 53rd Memorial Anniversary**, By the Astour Family
† **Andrew Astour, 15th Memorial Anniversary**, By the Astour Family
† **Agnes Astour, 7th Memorial Anniversary**, By the Astour Family

Next Sunday, June 18, 2017

† **Yousef Marji**, By his Family

**** ANNOUNCEMENTS ****

1. St Basil **Syrian Braided Cheese Sale** is underway! Spread the word to your family, friends, coworkers, and neighbors! Contact the rectory at 315.732.4662 to place your orders. One braid for \$6, or two for \$10.
2. Our next **Parish Advisory Council Meeting** will be held on Mon Sep 4 at 6:30 PM in the Meeting Rm.
3. **Rosary of the Holy Spirit Classes**, by Fr. Shofany, resume on Tue Jun 13 at 6:00 PM in the Church.