



# 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](http://stbasilutica.org)

**SUNDAY 2nd AFTER PENTECOST**  
**Saturday, June 17 & Sunday, June 18, 2017**

## 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 Cragolin, Edgar Hallak, Mary Machis, & Rose Rawlings.**  
Notify Fr. Shofany in case of illness.

## WEEKLY OFFERINGS: THANK YOU!

**Sunday Collection June 10/11: \$ 238.00      Cheese Sale: \$ 110.00      Memorial Services: \$ 00.00**

## † MEMORIAL MASSES †

### This 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

### This Sunday, June 18, 2017

† **Yousef Marji**, By his Family  
† **Najeeb Ibrahim Barahmeh**, 15th Memorial Anniversary, By Wael & Olga Barahmeh

### Next Saturday, June 24, 2017

† **Antoinette Murad**, By Alex Murad  
† **Salim Ghariba**, 63rd Memorial Anniversary, By Eugene & Doris Hutchinson

### Next Sunday, June 25, 2017

† **Antoinette Murad**, By Alex Murad  
† **Jannah Jbarah**, By her 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 11, 6:30 PM in the Meeting Rm.
3. **Rosary of the Holy Spirit Classes**, by Fr. Shofany, on Tue evenings at 6:00 PM in the Church.

## CONFESSING GOD 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.

**The Saints and Life after Death:** Throughout our country we find memorials to those who have come before us – plaques, statues, even parks and buildings dedicated to their memory. These memorials recall their lives and achievements; in other words, they point to the past. The icons of the saints which we honor in our churches and homes do the same and more. They do not simply point to the past – they affirm that the saints are alive in Christ *today* and with us as we live and worship every day of our lives. By lighting candles or offering flowers and incense before their icons we affirm our faith that the saints are truly with us, witnessing to the reality of eternal life in which they share through Christ's resurrection.

Many Protestants object to the veneration of the saints in the Catholic and Orthodox Churches. Sometimes they have good reason, as when people pay more attention to a favorite saint than to the Lord Himself. They seem to revere the saints as "little gods" like those of pagan religions, without any reference to Christ, the Source of our holiness. As we say in the Liturgy, "One is holy, one is Lord – Jesus Christ..."

Other objections are not so good, denying some basic aspects of the historic Churches' faith. Some people, for example, believe that the dead are asleep (unconscious) until the general resurrection on the last day and that they cannot hear us asking for their prayers. The Scriptures are generally silent about what happens after death, but Catholics and Orthodox espouse St Paul's faith that the faithful who die are with the Lord. He did not fear dying because it would bring him to Christ, as he wrote to the Corinthians, "*We are confident, yes, well pleased rather to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord*" (2 Cor 5:8). He told the Philippians that he wanted to remain with them, but he also wanted to be with the Lord: "*I am hard-pressed between the two, having a desire to depart and be with Christ, which is far better. Nevertheless, to remain in the flesh is more needful for you*" (Phil 1: 23, 24). St Paul clearly believed that after death he would be with his Lord.

(June2017Leaflets)