



**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 BEFORE THE EXALTATION OF THE HOLY CROSS  
Saturday, September 9 & Sunday, September 10, 2017**

**WEEKLY SERVICES**

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

**SPEEDY RECOVERY**

Please continue to pray for our convalescing members, including **Carol Chanatry, Lorraine Chanatry-Howell, Edgar Hallak, Mary Machis, Rose Pawlinga, and Donald Thomas.**  
Please notify Fr. Shofany in case of illness.

**WEEKLY OFFERINGS: THANK YOU!**

**Sunday Collection Sept 2/3: \$ 466.00      Memorial Services: \$ 200.00**  
**Baptism: \$ 150.00      Syrian Cheese Sale: \$ 16.00**

**† MEMORIAL MASSES †**

**This Saturday, September 9, 2017**

† **Alfred Chanatry**, 2nd Memorial Anniversary, by his family  
† **Salwa Atallah-Hamati**, by Maggy Atallah

**This Sunday, September 10, 2017**

† **Jannah Jbarah**, by her Family  
† **Dr Anthony Chanatry**, 7th Memorial Anniversary, by Lorraine Chanatry-Howell

**Next Saturday, September 16, 2017**

† **Salwa Atallah-Hamati**, by Maggy Atallah

**Next Sunday, September 17, 2017**

† **Jannah Jbarah**, by her Family  
† **Salwa Atallah-Hamati**, by Maggy Atallah

**\*\* ANNOUNCEMENTS \*\***

1. St Basil's **First Garage Sale** will be held on **Fri Sep 29 10am-5pm & Sat Sep 30 10am-3pm** at the Rectory Garage. **Nearly new** or **slightly used** items will be accepted at the rectory's back door. Cheryl Reesh Kopyt and Virginia Reesh Lynch will co-chair the event.
2. Parish Advisory Council (PAC) will meet next on Mon Sep 11 @ 6:30 PM in the meeting rm.

**THE STORY OF MARY'S BIRTH**

The tradition preserved in the Proto-evangelium is that Mary was the daughter of Joachim and Ann, born to them late in life. The literary embellishment in this work tells how Joachim, although a generous donor to the temple, was mocked for being childless. Recalling how Abraham had been given a child in his old age, Joachim retired to the wilderness to pray for a similar blessing. In response, angels appeared to Joachim and Ann promising that their prayers had been heard and that Ann would conceive. Our feast of the Maternity of St Ann (December 9) recalls her conception of the Virgin Mary.

Then, "When her time was fulfilled, in the ninth month, Ann gave birth. And she said to the midwife: 'What have I brought forth?' And she said: 'A girl'. Then Ann said: 'My soul has been magnified this day.' ... when the days were fulfilled, Ann was purified, and gave her breast to the child, and called her name Mary" (Protoevangelium 5).

**The Place of Mary's Birth:** The Protoevangelium does not identify the place where Mary was born. Different local traditions claim at least two possible locations: the village of Sepphoris, a few miles from Nazareth, and the neighborhood of the "shepherd's pool" in the old city of Jerusalem. Byzantine basilicas were constructed in both places in the fifth century with the Jerusalem basilica designated as "the place where Mary was born."

Mary's birth is celebrated by most of the historic Churches on September 8 (Copts and Ethiopians observe it on May 9). The first mention of this feast is at the beginning of the sixth century when a new church, dedicated to St Ann, replaced the basilica at the Shepherds' Pool. The present Church of St Ann, constructed by Crusaders in the twelfth century, occupies this site today. A shrine in the church's crypt commemorates the conception and birth of Mary.

**Our Celebration of This Feast:** The principal theme of our feast is that "Today grace begins to bear fruit, showing forth to the world the Mother of God, through whom earth is united to Heaven for the salvation of our souls" (Vespers).

Other than the names of Mary's parents, almost none of the narrative details from the Protoevangelium find their way into the hymns of this feast. Rather the focus of our prayer is that now the mystery of our salvation in Christ is beginning to unfold. "Today the barren gates are opened and the Virgin, the Gate of God, comes forth... Today ends our nature's barrenness" (Orthros). Mary will become the one through whom the ancient prophecies will be fulfilled when Christ is incarnate in her. As St Andrew of Crete (650-740) expressed it: "Today's solemnity is a line of demarcation, separating the truth from its prefigurative symbol, and ushering in the new in place of the old... This day is for us the beginning of all holy days. It is the door to kindness and truth. Today an inspired Temple is provided for the Creator of all, and creation prepares itself to become the divine dwelling place of its Creator."

Andrew's contemporary, St John of Damascus (676-749) says, "The day of the Nativity of the Theotokos is the feast of joy for the whole world, because through the Theotokos the entire human race was renewed and the grief of the first mother Eve was changed into joy."

**The Canon of this feast (Third Ode):**

**O LORD, WHO TOOK AWAY OUR SINS on the Cross, strengthen our hearts in Your love and implant a reverence for Your Name in the hearts of those who praise You.**  
~Having lived without reproach before God, the parents of the one who would give birth to our divine Creator have brought forth the salvation of all.  
~The Lord, who makes life pour forth for all, has brought forth the Virgin from a barren woman. In her He takes up His dwelling, preserving her virginity inviolate after childbirth.  
~Today holy Ann offers a fruit, who is Mary, the woman who brought forth the life-giving Cluster; let us sing to her as the Mother of God, the help and protection of all.  
~O only ever-virgin Mother, unwedded, you became the golden censer for Christ, the living Coal. Pour out your fragrance over my soiled heat.

*(Sept2017Leaflet)*