



**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 4th AFTER THE EXALTATION OF THE HOLY CROSS**

**Saturday, October 14 & Sunday, October 15, 2017**

**SAINT DEMETRIOS**

One of the more popular saints in the Byzantine Churches, the Great Martyr Demetrios. The oldest written life of this saint dates to the ninth century, some 700 years after his lifetime! Earlier witnesses to this saint include the seventh-century *Miracles of St Demetrios*, a testimony to the protection afforded to that city by its patron, St Demetrios. The *Miracles* consists of two books: the first is a compilation of homilies by Archbishop John of Thessaloniki praising the saint for his intercession for the city. The second is a slightly later account of the Slavic invasion of the Balkans in which the saint once again protected his city from destruction.

**LIFE OF ST DEMETRIOS:** St Demetrios is said to have been born in Thessaloniki in about AD 260 to an aristocratic family. The oldest icons we have (7th century) depict him in upper class dress. He is said to have been an officer in the Roman army and many icons portray him in a military uniform. During the Great Persecution of the early fourth century Demetrios was appointed pro-consul of the city, charged by Emperor Maximian with exterminating the Christians there. When it became known that Demetrios himself was a Christian, he was seized and imprisoned in the bathhouse complex at the Roman forum.

Demetrios was executed when his influence over the martyr Nestor became known. Nestor had accepted a challenge to fight the gladiator Lyaeos, a favorite of the emperor. Blessed by Demetrios, Nestor defeated the gladiator but was himself slain by the military commander. Soldiers sent to the prison impaled Demetrios on their lances and disposed of his body. Demetrios' servant Lupos dipped his garment in the saint's blood and preserved it along with the earth soaked in the martyr's blood.

**THE GREAT CHURCH IN THESSALONIKI:** The Great Church of St Demetrios is part of the World Heritage site incorporating the Roman forum, palace, temple, hippodrome, and a bathhouse used by the athletes competing there. This was the place where the Saint had been imprisoned and martyred. The complex was excavated by archeologists in 1966.

A church incorporating the old Roman bathhouse was constructed in the early fifth century, by the prefect Leontios, in gratitude for a healing received through the saint's intercession. This church was enlarged several times over the centuries and attained its present form as a major basilica in 629-634.

By then the ground had so risen that the Roman era bathhouse was actually underground. The basilica was built over the site of the saint's martyrdom, which was now housed in a crypt. Over the centuries the church and its surroundings experienced major changes. From 1493-1912, under the Ottomans, the church was used as a mosque. The crypt was filled in with dirt and forgotten. In 1912, when Thessaloniki was joined to the Greek state, the structure became a church again. In 1917 a house fire spread unchecked and destroyed two-thirds of the city, severely damaging the Church of St Demetrios. Archaeological work in the church over the next few decades unearthed the forgotten crypt and a Roman-era well where, scholars believe, soldiers disposed of the saint's body after his martyrdom.

**THE RELICS OF ST DEMETRIOS:** The life of St Demetrios described how his servant had dipped his garment into the saint's blood. This was confirmed in the twentieth century restoration of the church and crypt. The first chapel built over the place of the saint's martyrdom was discovered. Its Holy Table was found to contain an earthen vessel containing earth impregnated with human blood.

When the Great Church was built, its shrine contained only a carved bed, a classical architectural device. When a body reported to be that of St Demetrios was put forth for veneration in the seventh century, the archbishop dismissed its authenticity. The body was proclaimed to be that of the saint after it started exuding perfumed myrrh. The relics were placed in the shrine where they are venerated to this day. This is why St Demetrios is known as the Myrobelite (Exuder of Myrrh).

For centuries, these relics have been exuding this fragrant myrrh and have been the occasion of many healings. Every year around the feast of the saint (October 26), the reliquary chest is opened and the fragrance of the myrrh can be detected for blocks around.

*(Oct2017Leaflet)*

**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, & Donald Thomas.**  
Please notify Fr. Shofany in case of illness.

**WEEKLY OFFERINGS: THANK YOU!**

**Sunday Collection Oct 7/8: \$ 292.00      Memorial Services: \$ 20.00**  
**Funeral Service : \$ 200.00      Cheese Sale: \$ 120.00**

**† MEMORIAL MASSES †**

**This Saturday, October 14, 2017**

† **Salwa Atallah-Hamati**, By Maggy Atallah  
† **Albert & Margaret Casab**, By their children  
† **Rose Marie Korrie, 1st Memorial Anniversary**, By her husband John & Children

**This Sunday, October 15, 2017**

† **Salwa Atallah-Hamati**, By Maggy Atallah  
† **Anne Cragnolin**, By her children

**Next Saturday, October 21, 2017**

† **Anne Cragnolin**, By her children  
† **Salwa Atallah-Hamati**, By Maggy Atallah

**Next Sunday, October 22, 2017**

† **Salwa Atallah-Hamati**, By Maggy Atallah  
† **Anne Cragnolin**, By her children

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

1. The next Parish Advisory Council Meeting will be held on Mon Nov 6 at 6:30 PM in the Meeting Room.
2. Special thanks to Shirley Casab for her assistance with the Basket Raffle Sale during St Basil First Annual Garage Sale. Sorry we left your name off the recognition list in last week's announcement.