

ST BASIL GREEK MELKITE CATHOLIC CHURCH
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Website www.stbasilutica.org



SUNDAY 1ST AFTER THE HOLY CROSS EXALTATION
Saturday, September 22 & Sunday, September 23, 2018

WEEKLY SERVICES

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

SPEEDY RECOVERY

Please continue to pray for all of our convalescing friends, including Fred Ajaeb, Maggy Attalah, Nadia Casab, Nancy Gazzal, Edgar Hallak, Rose Pawlinga, and Lorraine Tedesco. Please notify Fr. Shofany in case of illness

WEEKLY OFFERINGS: THANK YOU!

Weekly Collection September 15/16: \$ 705.00
Memorial Services: \$ 10.00
Casa Too Mucha Event Donation: \$ 10.00
Syrian Cheese Sale: \$ 80.00
St. Pauly Textile: \$ 75.87
Hall Rent Insurance: \$ 150.00

† MEMORIAL MASSES †

THIS SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 22

† **Joseph & Jennie Mardenly**, By their Family Members
 † **Senator John McCain**, By Robert Lalli

THIS SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 23

† **Jannah Jbarah**, By her family

NEXT SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 29

NEXT SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 30

† **Jannah Jbarah**, By her family

*** ANNOUNCEMENTS ***

1. The St Basil **2nd Fall Flea Market & Bake Sale** will be held on **Friday, September 28 (9 to 5) and Saturday, September 29 (9 to 4)** at the Rectory Garage. Beginning on **Saturday, September 1, nearly new or slightly used** items will be accepted at the rectory back door. Virginia Reesh Lynch and Marcia Reesh will co-chair the event and will be contacting parishioners for donations of baked goods. Thank you.

*** ANNOUNCEMENTS ***

2. A **PayPal** link is available on our website offering a safe, secure, and confidential option to donate to St Basil, Utica. Please go to www.stbasilutica.org, click on the Donation Tab and follow the webpage instructions. Weekly Sunday Bulletins can also be found there; click on the Announcement Tab. Thank you for visiting our page!

APOLOGY FOR THE OVERSIGHT

Thank you Mary Nassimos, Julia Nassimos, and Bob Lalli for helping to sell Syrian Braided Cheese at the St George Mediterranean Festival on Sat Sep 8. We apologize that you names were not listed in last week’s Sunday Bulletin. We appreciate your continued hard work for St Basil. Sincerely, Fr. Saba and the Cheese Selling Committee

CHRIST PERSECUTION

The Jewish people at the time of Christ who were waiting for the Messiah pictured him as a victorious warrior who would triumph over the enemies of Israel and restore their nation’s independence. The Messiah, it was believed, would be a figure like David who would restore David’s kingdom. Many felt that the Messiah would gather the scattered Jews from the four corners of the earth, restore the full observance of the Torah, and bring peace to the whole world.

Jesus did not overthrow the Roman Empire or reestablish David’s kingdom. If anything, He was a seemingly defeated wandering preacher who had been put to death in the most humiliating manner and had no effect on the fortunes of Israel. The Messiah was expected to triumph; Jesus had apparently failed.

Presenting Jesus as the Messiah who defeated, not Rome, but sin and Death, would have invited scorn from many of the apostles’ hearers. They became even more scornful when St Paul, the chief spokesman for Christ was himself captured and imprisoned. As Paul wrote from prison to his disciple Timothy, *“Do not be ashamed of the testimony about our Lord or about me his prisoner. Rather, join with me in suffering for the gospel, by the power of God. He has saved us and called us to a holy life—not because of anything we have done but because of his own purpose and grace.”* St Paul insisted, *“this is no cause for shame, because I know whom I have believed, and am convinced that he is able to guard what I have entrusted to him until that day”* (2 Tm 1:8:11).

Afraid of Persecution: Fear for one’s life has caused many believers to abandon Christ, beginning with His most intimate followers. All the disciples abandoned Him when He was arrested. Peter, who followed at a distance, explicitly denied knowing Him, when accused of being one of His followers.

Beginning with the arrest of the Protomartyr St Stephen and the killing of the Apostle James in Jerusalem up to our own day, Christians have often been forced to choose between being faithful to Christ and saving their own lives. At the start of the second century, St Ignatius of Antioch expressed the feelings of many who believed that denying Christ was simply not an option for them: *“No earthly pleasures, no kingdoms of this world can benefit me in any way. I prefer death in Christ Jesus to power over the farthest limits of the earth. He who died in place of us is the one object of my quest. He who rose for our sakes is my one desire”* (To the Romans, 4).

A recent – and ongoing – example of the persecution of Christians has taken place in the Middle East at the hands of radical Islamic groups such as ISIS. Nonetheless, many Christians there are publicly proclaiming their allegiance to Christ despite the danger. An Australian observer on the scene, Steven Kryger, writes of his reaction: *“In the heartland of violent anti-Christian extremism, I was confronted with how openly and unashamedly Christians are displaying their allegiance to Jesus. Crosses are everywhere. They dangle from rear view mirrors. They hang on bracelets around wrists. They stand tall, fixed to the top of houses.*

I encountered the most striking example on my second day. Less than 14km from the merciless armies of ISIS, I drove past a house that was painted inside and out with a mural of Jesus! That’s right – just minutes from people who wouldn’t think twice about burning them alive, Christians were proudly choosing to communicate “I am with Him.

(SeptLeaflets2018)