

ST BASIL GREEK MELKITE CATHOLIC CHURCH
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SUNDAY OF THE PRESENTATION OF JESUS TO THE TEMPLE
SUNDAY OF THE PHARESEE & THE PUBLICAN
Saturday, February 1 & Sunday, February 2, 2020

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**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

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SPEEDY RECOVERY

Please continue to pray for our convalescing friends, including Archdeacon George Yany, Nadia Casab, Wael and his son Jordan Barahmeh, Eugene Hutchinson, Maggy Atallah, Nancy Gazzal, Rose Pawlinga and Jean Benoit. Please notify Fr. Shofany in case of illness.

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**WEEKLY OFFERINGS: THANK YOU!**

**Weekly Collection Jan. 25/ 26: \$ 560.00**      **Fuel Donation: \$ 00.00**  
**St. Pauly Textile: \$ 00.00**      **Memorial Offering: \$ 220.00**

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† **MEMORIAL MASSES** †

THIS SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 1

† **Joseph Nassimos**, By the Astour Family
† **Michael Klockowski**, By the Zaloom Family

THIS SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 2

† **Joseph Reesh**, By Virginia Lynch & her Family
† **Michael Klockowski**, By David & Janet George

NEXT SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 8

† **Joseph Nassimos**, By the Astour Family
† **Wadia Gariba**, 63rd Memorial Anniversary, By Eugene & Doris Hutchinson

NEXT SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 9

† **Joseph Nassimos**, By David & Janet George

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**\* ANNOUNCEMENT \***

The next Parish Pastoral Council meeting will be held on Mon February 3, 6:30 PM, Rectory Meeting Rm

**THE BISHOP'S APPEAL**

The annual Bishop's Appeal is an essential way in which our parish fulfills its duty to our larger Melkite family throughout the U.S. Our Father and Shepherd, Bishop Nicholas asks every Melkite household in the U.S. to give **at least \$100-\$200 each year** to support our Eparchy in America. By contributing to the Appeal, each of us responds to Christ's call to support our Church and helps to fund its vital works, such as: publishing *SOPHIA* magazine; supporting our seminarians for the Priesthood and Diaconate; providing for our elderly priests; teaching the Faith to our children and young adults; establishing/supporting new missions and outreaches.

**Those who give a gift of \$1000 or more will be automatically enrolled in the Order of Saint Nicholas, the charitable society of our Eparchy.** It is the holy obligation of every member of our parish to support our Church as you are able. Please send your gift today. May God bless your generosity.

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PRESENTATION OF JESUS TO THE TEMPLE

EASTERN CHRISTIANS LOVE TO THINK in terms of forty days. The Great Fast and its echo, the forty days between the feasts of the Transfiguration and the Exaltation of the Holy Cross, the churching of an infant forty days after birth and the memorial service forty-days after death are the most obvious examples. This pattern is ultimately drawn from the Scriptures where significant events are regularly placed in this time frame. In the Old Testament, the great flood lasted for 40 days and 40 nights (Gen 7). Moses was on Mount Sinai for 40 days and 40 nights when he received the Ten Commandments (Ex 24). In Deuteronomy 9 we read that Moses interceded on Israel's behalf for 40 days and 40 nights. The Israelite spies took 40 days to spy out Canaan (Num 13). Goliath taunted Saul's army for 40 days before David arrived to slay him (1 Sam 17). When Elijah fled from Jezebel, he traveled 40 days and 40 nights to Mt. Horeb (1 Kings 19). It was after a 40-day fast that the Tempter came to test Jesus (Mt 4: 1-11).

There is another 40-day period mentioned in the New Testament, and also observed in the life of our Church: the 40 days between Christ's nativity and the day when His parents brought Him to the temple, "*to do for Him according to the custom of the Law*" (Lk 2:27). While there the Lord encountered the elderly Simeon and Anna, who recognized God's decisive presence in this Child. Through them Christ encounters for the first time those who were awaiting the Messiah's coming. We celebrate this event on February 2 (the 40th day after Christmas) as the Hypapante, or Encounter, of the Messiah with His people, personified by Simeon and Anna.

What Did the Law Prescribe? Jewish custom at the birth of a child was that **a mother must be purified** after 40 days. "*She must not touch anything sacred or go to the sanctuary until the days of her purification are over*" (Lev 12:4). In Jewish law any participation in the intimate experiences of life and death, including the spilling of blood – the carrier of life – makes a person ritually unclean, that is, incapable of performing ceremonial acts such as temple worship. Ceremonial uncleanness is not a question of moral impurity but a recognition that the worship of God transcends the earth and its ways. Someone touched by childbirth or death required purification in specified ways. There was an additional prescription according to the Torah: **the redemption of the firstborn son.** "*Every firstborn of man among your sons, you shall redeem*" (Ex 13:13). The first of everything (crops, animals, etc.) was to be offered to God in sacrifice: an acknowledgement that everything comes from Him and is His. Children could be "redeemed" by offering a gift to the temple in exchange for the child. Orthodox Jews still observe this rite today, exchanging five silver shekels (or their equivalent in local currency) for the child. (*JanLeaflets2020*)