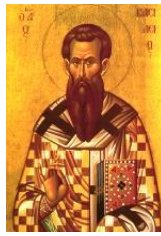


ST BASIL GREEK MELKITE CATHOLIC CHURCH
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LIFE OF THE CHURCH

ON THREE SUNDAYS EACH YEAR Byzantine Churches commemorate the fathers of the seven great councils of the first millennium. The first ecumenical council (Nicaea I) is remembered on the Sunday after the Feast of the Ascension and the seventh (Nicaea II) on the Sunday nearest to October 11. The first six councils are recalled together on the Sunday following July 13, the feast of the fourth council (Chalcedon).

The Importance of Councils: The council – whether a local or regional synod or an ecumenical assembly – reflects a basic understanding of Church in the Christian East. The Church is the “communion in the Holy Spirit,” a community infused with the life-giving presence of the Spirit of God. Councils reflect this image of the Church as a community. The council is a true image of the Church when it is imbued with and dependent on the grace of the Holy Spirit.

Councils function on every level of Church life in the East. In the local Church, the eparchy, the primary council is the presbyterate which shares in the sacramental ministry of the bishop. Community councils involving deacons and the laity administer the temporal concerns of the eparchy and its parishes. Wider synods govern the life of patriarchates or metropolias. With the establishment of Christianity as the dominant faith in the Roman Empire, the ecumenical council was created.

The first ecumenical council, Nicaea I (AD 325) was called by the Emperor Constantine the Great to assure religious unity in the empire (the “oecumene”). All the bishops of the empire were called to participate in this and subsequent councils as successors of the Apostles, entrusted with the teaching ministry by Christ. Together the bishops speak to and for all the local Churches. The agreement of the bishops, ratified by the “Amen” of the faithful, expresses the voice of the Holy Spirit in the Church.

The seven councils we commemorate liturgically are particularly remembered for their role in clarifying the Church’s teaching on the Trinity and the Incarnation, the basis of all other doctrines, in the face of numerous controversies in the now free Churches of the Roman Empire. The councils sought to render the teachings of these mysteries scattered through the New Testament in the precise terms of Greek philosophy current in the empire. They succeeded in doing so, but were not as successful in expressing these teachings in ways accessible to those Churches outside that culture. Thus the fifth-century Councils of Ephesus and Chalcedon contributed to lasting divisions in the Churches of the East.

The Problem of Chalcedon: Like other councils, the Council of Chalcedon dealt with both theological and political issues. The main theological issue was how to express the mystery of Christ’s incarnation in the face of the Monophysitism taught by Eutyches, an influential priest in Constantinople and a disciple of St Cyril of Alexandria. At its second session the Council adopted the concept “two natures in one Person,” employed by Pope St. Leo the Great in a letter to Flavian, the archbishop of Constantinople. When the letter was read to the bishops, they replied, “*This is the faith of the fathers! This is the faith of the Apostles! So we all believe! Thus the Orthodox believe! Anathema to him who does not thus believe! Peter has spoken thus through Leo!*” Leo’s expression has been used in the Greek and Latin Churches ever since. Unfortunately this term was the opposite of that used by St Cyril of Alexandria a generation earlier, describing the “one nature of the incarnate Word.”

The theological problem was made even more complex by the political, however. The first Council at Nicaea has decreed that the foremost local Churches in the Empire would be Rome, Alexandria and Antioch. At Chalcedon the 500+ bishops present recalled that “*the fathers [at an earlier council in Constantinople] rightly accorded prerogatives to the see of older Rome, since that is an imperial city; and moved by the same purpose the 150 most devout bishops apportioned equal prerogatives to the most holy see of New Rome, reasonably judging that the city which is honored by the imperial power and senate and enjoying privileges equaling older imperial Rome, should also be elevated to her level in ecclesiastical affairs and take second place after her.*” Thus Constantinople (New Rome) was accorded the second place in the hierarchy previously held by Alexandria. (*July Leaflets*2013)

SUNDAY 8TH AFTER PENTECOST Saturday, July 25 & Sunday, July 26, 2020

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 continue to pray for our convalescing friends, including Archdeacon George Yany, Maggy Atallah, Jean Benoit, Nancy Gazzal, Daniel Klockowski, Julia Nassimos, Rose Pawlinga, Brian Sagrestano. Please notify Fr. Shofany in case of illness.

WEEKLY OFFERINGS: THANK YOU!

Weekly Collection July 18/19: \$ 819.00 **Syrian Cheese Sale: \$ 140.00**
Memorial Offerings: \$ 100.00 **St. Pauly Textile: \$ 576.29**

ONGOING FUNDRAISER TO SUPPORT ST BASIL CHURCH

Please spread the word regarding St Basil’s ongoing fundraiser/sale of our homemade Syrian Braided Cheese. Sales continue throughout the year; 2 braids for \$10, approximately 1 lb in weight. Please call the Rectory at 315-732-4662. Thank you so much. Fr. Saba

† MEMORIAL MASSES †

THIS SATURDAY, JULY 25

† **Eugene Hutchinson**, By Richard & Joanne Tehan
† **Elvira Chanatry, 18th Memorial Anniversary**, By Doris Hutchinson
† **Regina Machis**, By Jack & Claire Murad and Daughter Mimi

THIS SUNDAY, JULY 26

† **Eugene Hutchinson**, By Barbara Dunlevy

NEXT SATURDAY, AUGUST 1

† **Eugene Hutchinson**, By Franco & Charon Caparello

NEXT SUNDAY, AUGUST 2

† **Eugene Hutchinson**, By Gloria Shaheen

SPIRITUAL ADVICE OF THE DAY

Blessed is the one who perseveres under trial because, having stood the test, that person will receive the crown of life that the Lord has promised to those who love him. (James 1, 12)