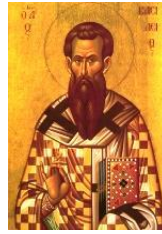


ST BASIL GREEK MELKITE CATHOLIC CHURCH  
901 Sherman Drive, Utica New York 13501  
Phone 315.732.4662 Email [stbasilutica@gmail.com](mailto:stbasilutica@gmail.com)  
Website [www.stbasilutica.org](http://www.stbasilutica.org)



SUNDAY OF THE CHEESE FARE  
Saturday, February 13 & Sunday, February 14, 2021

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**WEEKLY SERVICES**

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

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**SPEEDY RECOVERY**

Please continue to pray for our convalescing friends, including Maggy Atallah, Jean Benoit, Nadia Casab, Jeanette Farewege, John & Nancy Gazzal, Daniel Klockowski, Rose Pawlinga, Brian Sagrestano, and Karen Zalatan. Please notify Fr. Shofany in case of illness.

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**WEEKLY COLLECTIONS. THANK YOU!**

Weekly Collection Feb. 6/7: \$ 400.00  
St. Pauly Textile: \$ 218.00  
Fuel Contribution: \$ 45.00  
Candle Collections: \$ 231.00

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**SPIRITUAL ADVICE OF THE DAY**

“Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be frightened, and do not be dismayed, for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go.” (Joshua 1:9) “And my God will supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus.” (Philippians 4:19)

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† **MEMORIAL MASSES** †

**THIS SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 13**

† **Eugene Hutchinson**, By Kevin & Ameena Copeland  
† **Julia Nassimos**, By Janet Chanatry & Family

**THIS SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 14**

† **Eugene Hutchinson**, By Ralph & Denise Fusco  
† **Julia Nassimos**, By Francis Roy  
† **Abdallah Ghryeb**, By Hesham & Najwa Marji

**NEXT SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 20**

† **Eugene Hutchinson**, By Kevin & Ameena Copeland  
† **Julia Nassimos**, By Janet Chanatry & Family

**NEXT SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 21**

† **Eugene Hutchinson**, By Ralph & Denyse Fusco  
† **Julia Nassimos**, By Francis Roy  
† **Abdallah Ghryeb**, By the Hesham & Najwa Marji

**ARE WE ALL SCRIBES AND PHARISSES?**

EVERY YEAR ON THIS SECOND SUNDAY of the Triodion we hear the Lord’s story which we call the Parable of the Prodigal Son. In fact, there are three important characters in this parable, recorded in Luke 15: the Prodigal, the loving Father and the older brother. Some commentators feel that the older brother is the most important figure in the story because of the occasion on which the Lord told this parable. To find this context we must look at the first verses of the chapter which precede it, which are not read this Sunday: “Now the tax collectors and sinners were all drawing near to hear Him. And the Pharisees and the scribes murmured, saying, ‘This man receives sinners and eats with them.’ So, He told them this parable...” (Lk 15:1-3).

The Lord then tells not one but three parables about the joy over a repentant sinner: the parables of the lost sheep and the lost coin and the story of the Prodigal. The Lord’s aim in each of them is to confront the self-righteousness of the Pharisees and scribes who saw themselves as properly observant Jews in contrast to those who collaborated with the Roman occupiers (the tax collectors) or those who ignored the precepts of the Law (the sinners). Thus, each of the characters in the parable represents one of figures in the above three verses. We have the Rebel son, who represents the sinners, the Conformist son, who embodies the respect for the Law and tradition which characterizes the scribes and Pharisees, and the welcoming Father who is Christ Himself.

The Rebel is truly a prodigal, disrespecting his father by demanding what would come to him at his father’s death – in effect, saying “I wish you were dead.” As we know, he goes off and eventually loses everything. Finally, he decides to return to his father, who receives him with love.

**The Second Brother:** The focus of the tale now turns to the Conformist brother who has done everything by the book but is every bit as lost as his brother ever was. As Fr Henri Nouwen tells us in his reflection, *The Return of the Prodigal Son*, (1992, p. 71): “Outwardly the elder son was faultless. But when he confronted his father’s joy at the return of his younger brother, a dark power erupts in him and boils to the surface. Suddenly there becomes glaringly visible a resentful, proud, unkind selfish person, one that had remained deeply hidden.”

Without realizing it, the older brother has gone off to a “strange land” just like the Rebel. He was no longer the faithful son of his father everyone thought he was. As his father’s eldest son, his place would be at the center of the festive gathering, seeing that everyone was welcomed and cared for. Hospitality was – and remains to this day – one of the most important activities in a Middle Eastern household. Refusing to take part made the Conformist the exact opposite of what he appeared to be: the faithful image of his father. He had no cause to look down on his brother; he too had fallen victim to “the tyranny of the passions” (St. Maximos the Confessor) and publicly insulted his father by his actions. He not only refused to stand at his father’s side before the guests; he even caused his father to leave them in order to deal with his son’s feelings. Like the Pharisee in last week’s Gospel parable, the Conformist brother represents the scribes and Pharisees who are outwardly faultless. They observe all the precepts of the Law but look down on those who do not. The Lord Jesus does not tell them to ignore the Law, but to complete it with mercy and compassion. Elsewhere we find Him berating the Pharisees for this very reason: “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for you tithe mint and dill and cumin, and have neglected the weightier matters of the law, justice and mercy and faith; these you ought to have done, without neglecting the others” (Mt 23:23).

**Are We Scribes and Pharisees?** The brothers in this parable represent two types found in our society today. There are independent individualists who are determined to “fulfill themselves,” to make their own way according to their own lights. There are also people who conform to the expectations of their family or society, seeking to earn the approval of their peers or the powers-that-be. (Feb 2021 Leaflets)