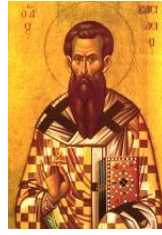


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2nd SUNDAY OF LENT- SUNDAY OF THE HOLY RELICS
Saturday, February 27 & Sunday, February 28, 2021

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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. 20/21: \$ 535.00 Church Ceiling Collections: \$ 50.00

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SPIRITUAL ADVICE OF THE DAY

“And we know that God causes everything to work together for the good of those who love God and are called according to his purpose for them.” (Romans 8:28) “The faithful love of the Lord never ends. His mercies never cease. Great is his faithfulness; his mercies begin afresh every morning.” (Lament. 3:22-23)

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† **MEMORIAL MASSES** †

**THIS SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 27**

† **Eugene Hutchinson**, By David & Janet George  
† **Julia Nassimos**, By Janet Chanatry & Family

**THIS SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 28**

† **Eugene Hutchinson**, By Katherine Cummins  
† **Julia Nassimos**, By Francis Roy  
† **Abdallah Ghryyeb**, By Hesham & Najwa Marji

**NEXT SATURDAY, MARCH 6**

† **Eugene Hutchinson**, By Katherine Cummins  
† **Julia Nassimos**, By Janet Chanatry & Family

**NEXT SUNDAY, MARCH 7**

† **Eugene Hutchinson**, By Ralph & Denise Fusco  
† **Julia Nassimos**, By Francis Roy  
† **Abdallah Ghryyeb**, By Ibrahim & Hanan Barahmeh

**THE WAY OF BELIEVERS**

Jewish nation demanded that Christians focus their attention on the fundamental truth of their existence: they had a unique relationship to God in Christ. Everyone in the world was related to God as the work of His hands; Christians, however, were related to Him as His adopted children, God “*having predestined us to adoption as sons*” (Eph 1:5) in order to make present throughout the world the Gospel of salvation in Christ. It is this reality which should define a Christian’s way of life at this time.

St John Chrysostom, commenting on this passage, says that St Paul “... puts the Resurrection close at hand. For, as time advances, he means, the season of our present life is wasting away, and the life to come approaches. If, then, you are prepared, and have done all that He has commanded, that day is salvation for you; but if you are not ready, it is not so.” That is not some kind of threat for Chrysostom: “It is not to alarm them that he exhorts them in this way, but out of kindness, in order to untie them from their attachment to the things of this present world” (Homily on Romans).

Most of us are quite happy to be attached to the things of this present world and resist parting from them. It is not unusual to find older people, who have moved from a family home to smaller quarters, trying to cram all “their things” into one or two rooms. Few are those who come to realize that, as the saying goes, “what you own, owns you.” For St Paul, our “things” are not something to hold on to, but to leave behind happily, because what waits us is so far superior.

**Wakefulness and Sleep:** St Paul uses a number of contrasting examples in his epistles to represent the difference between the ways of believers and those of non-believers. Christians are told to be awake rather than to sleep, for “*the night is far spent, the day is at hand*” (v.12).

In the ancient world, sleep was frequently an image of death. As a descent into unconsciousness, sleep foreshadows the end of life. Because it is temporary, however, sleep is also an image pointing to the resurrection. At Christ’s resurrection, we are told in the Gospel, “*the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints who had fallen sleep were raised*” (Mt 27:52). To be asleep is, in effect, to be dead. Sleep is also an image of inattention when contrasted to watchfulness. The sentry is awake, alert to any danger. Thus, St Paul wrote to the Thessalonians, “*Therefore, let us not sleep, as others do, but let us watch and be sober. For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk are drunk at night. But let us who are of the day be sober...*” (1 Thess. 5:7, 8). Sleep and drunkenness are equally devastating to a sentry who is supposedly on watch. The need for wakefulness was apparently well known to the Christians of St Paul’s day, Writing to the Ephesians, he cites what seems to have been a popular saying, “*Therefore it is said: ‘Awake, you who sleep, arise from the dead, and Christ will give you light.’ See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil*” (Eph 5:14-16). Believers, like sentries, need to be awake to see the dangers to faith in a godless society and distance themselves from them.

**Light and Darkness:** The images of sleep and night are connected to another set of images, used even longer to contrast the way of God and the ways of this world. We find the image of light in the midst of darkness representing the coming of the Messiah in the Book of Isaiah: “*The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who dwelt in the land of the shadow of death, upon them a light had shined*” (Is 9:2). This passage is quoted in Mt 4:16 as fulfilled when the Lord Jesus began His ministry. And, of course, Jesus is, in His own words, the Light of the world.

**Casting Off and Putting On:** The final pair of contrasts St Paul uses here is that of old and new garments. We are to “*Cast off the works of darkness and let us put on the armor of light*” (Rom 13:12). Armor, of course, suggests a soldier dressed for combat and St Paul develops that aspect of the image in Eph 6:11-18. “*Put on the whole armor of God that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil*” (v. 11). (Feb2021Leaflets)