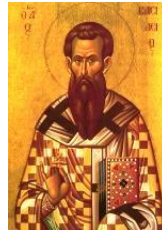


ST BASIL GREEK MELKITE CATHOLIC CHURCH
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SUNDAY 5TH AFTER EASTER
Saturday, May 8 & Sunday, May 9, 2021

PARISH SERVICES

Holy 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

HEALING PRAYERS NEEDED

Prayers needed for our friends MaryAnn Astour, Jean Benoit, Nadia Casab, Jeanette Farewege, Nancy Gazzal, Daniel Klockowski, Jean Murad, Rose Pawlinga, Brian Sagrestano, and Karen Zalatan. Please notify Fr. Shofany in case of illness.

RECENT RECEIPTS

Weekly Collection April 24/25: \$ 800.00 Memorial Services: \$ 240.00

† MEMORIAL MASSES †

THIS SATURDAY, MAY 8

† **Eugene Hutchinson**, By Cynthia Buck
† **Julia Nassimos**, By Bruce & Sally Hodsoll
† **John Gazzal**, By Edward & Carmela Nassimos
† **Margaret Casab**, By her daughter Shirley Casab

THIS SUNDAY, MAY 9

† **Eugene Hutchinson**, By Cynthia Buck
† **Julia Nassimos**, By Bruce & Sally Hodsoll
† **John Gazzal**, By David & Pamela Williams

NEXT SATURDAY, MAY 15

† **Eugene Hutchinson**, By Cynthia Buck
† **Julia Nassimos**, By John Anthony Kawam
† **John Gazzal**, By Edward & Carmela Nassimos
† **Kathleen Zelesnikar**, One Year Memorial Anniversary, By Robert Lalli

NEXT SUNDAY, MAY 16

† **Eugene Hutchinson**, By Cynthia Buck
† **John Gazzal**, By David & Pamela Williams

ASCENSION AND ENTHRONEMENT

The Great Feast of Christ's Holy Ascension on the fortieth day after Pascha is actually a two-fold observance. First of all it commemorates His ascension proper as observed by the apostles and recorded in the Scriptures: "And He led them out as far as Bethany, and He lifted up His hands and blessed them. Now it came to pass, while He blessed them, that He was parted from them and carried up into heaven" (Lk 24:50-51).

The feast also observes what was unseen: Christ enthroned at the Father's right hand. The two aspects of the mystery are invariably paired in the hymns of the feast: "You were taken up in glory from the Mount of Olives, Christ our God, in the presence of Your disciples, and took Your seat at the Father's right hand, filling the universe with Your Godhead..." (apostikhon at vespers).

Our celebration further distinguishes another aspect of the mystery. On the one hand the eternal Word of God has always been at the Father's right hand with the Holy Spirit in the Godhead. And so we fittingly pray: "Jesus the Giver of life, taking those He loved, ascended the Mount of Olives and blessed them and, riding on a cloud, He came to the Father's bosom, which He had never left" (from the canon at orthros).

The Word of God, incarnate in the Virgin's womb, was at the same time with the Father in His divinity. This is also expressed in this familiar troparion from the Divine Liturgy: "Being God You were present in the tomb by Your body and yet in Hades by Your soul, in Paradise with the thief, and on the throne, O Christ, with the Father and the Holy Spirit, filling all things but encompassed by none."

With the Incarnation Christ is now the God-become-man who brings His deified human nature to the glory of the Father. He does not return as the pre-incarnate Word but with the human nature which He had assumed, now risen and transformed: "When You came down from heaven to things on earth and as God raised up with You Adam's nature which lay below in Hades' prison, You brought it to heaven at Your ascension, O Christ, and made it sit with You on Your Father's throne, as You are merciful and love mankind" (kathisma at orthros). "Christ, the Giver of life, who rose in His two natures with glory to heaven and is now seated with the Father, you priests praise, you people highly exalt to all the ages" (from the canon at orthros). "Our nature, which of old had fallen, has been raised above the Angels and beyond understanding established on God's throne. Come, let us keep festival and let us cry out, 'You His works, praise the Lord, and highly exalt Him to all the ages' (from the canon at orthros). "The majesty of Him who became poor in the flesh has been raised above the heavens and our fallen nature honored by sitting with the Father. Let us keep festival and all cry aloud with one accord, and gladly clap our hands" (from the canon at orthros).

The Word of God, truly incarnate in Jesus the Son of Mary, is inseparably joined to our humanity. As such He has enthroned our human nature at the Father's right hand.

This new and unique reality is expressed in the icon of the feast. The throne of the eternal Trinity is often depicted as three concentric circles. In the midst of them, upborne by angels, is Christ in His humanity. It is this detail from the ascension icon which we find in the dome of our churches as the Pantokrator, the Almighty One, the Head of His Body which is the Church.

The feast of Christ's Ascension, then, is also the glorification of our human nature and the seal of Christ's ministry on earth. As the Fathers expressed it, the Son of God became human that humans might become divine.

Ambo Prayer, Feast of the Ascension: Master, lift up our minds towards heaven as we worship Your might, and draw up our understanding from earthly cares to Yourself. For You have lifted our lowly nature in Yourself and enthroned it in the highest with the Father. Make us worthy here in this world, as in heaven, to be citizens who seek that which is on high, where You are seated on the right hand of God. We await Your glorious and fearful coming, which You revealed through the angels to the blessed Apostles, the spectators of Your Ascension into heaven. Number us with those who will be taken up into the clouds to meet You when You come to judge the world in righteousness, that with them we may be full of joy forever. By the good will and love of mankind of Your eternal Father, with Whom You are blessed and glorified together with Your all-holy, good, and life-creating Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages.

(May2021Leaflet)