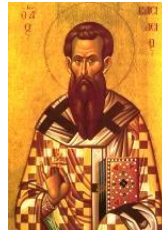


ST BASIL GREEK MELKITE CATHOLIC CHURCH
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SUNDAY 3rd AFTER PENTECOST
Saturday, June 12 & Sunday, June 13, 2021

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, Nazmie Barahmeh, Jean Benoit, Nadia Casab, Jeanette Farewege, Nancy Gazzal, Daniel Klockowski, Jean Murad, Rose Pawlinga, John Roth, Brian Sagrestano, and Karen Zalatan. Please notify Fr. Shofany in case of illness.

RECENT RECEIPTS

Weekly Collection June 05/06: \$ 679.00
St. Pauly Textile: \$ 372.46
Memorial Services: \$ 10.00
Fuel Contribution: \$ 25.00

SPIRITUAL ADVICE FOR THE DAY

The steadfast love of the LORD never ceases; his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness. (Lamentations 3:22-23)

† MEMORIAL MASSES †

THIS SATURDAY, JUNE 12

† **Eugene Hutchinson**, By David & Susan Heath
† **Julia Nassimos**, By John & Michelle Roth
† **John Gazzal**, By George & Penny Kunkel
† **Arlene Lalli**, 23rd Memorial Anniversary, By Robert Lalli

THIS SUNDAY, JUNE 13

† **Julia Nassimos**, By Carol Chanatry
† **John Gazzal**, By David & Pamela Williams
† **Deceased Members of the Ajaeb Families**, By Robert Lalli

NEXT SATURDAY, JUNE 19

† **Julia Nassimos**, By Carol Chanatry
† **John Gazzal**, By George & Penny Kunkel
† **Albert Casab**, By daughter Shirley Casab

NEXT SUNDAY, JUNE 20

† **Julia Nassimos**, By Carol Chanatry
† **John Gazzal**, By David & Pamela Williams

FROM SLAVERY TO SIN TO SANCTITY OF LIFE

Slavery to Sin: Calling himself a “*slave of Christ Jesus*” (Rom 1:1), St Paul says that the godless present themselves as “*obedient slaves*” to “*sin, which leads to death*” (v. 16). He is speaking here of a spiritual slavery which results in spiritual death. Like slavery, sin can possess a person exclusively – we need only think of some examples of addictions which take over people’s lives in our own day. But there are other sinful acts, less harmful to our physical life, to which people can become enslaved. Habits of sin, such as cursing or gossiping become as much part of us through repetition as addictions. They are simply other forms of slavery to sin.

Culture can play an important part in this kind of slavery. When a behavior, which the Gospel portrays as sinful, is accepted in the wider culture as “normal,” people become more easily enslaved to it. We may think of sexual or reproductive practices which our society finds acceptable, but the Church does not approve. Christians who decide there is “nothing wrong” with these practices do so because the wider (secular) society has accepted them.

There are other, less controversial examples of socially acceptable contradictions of the Gospel. Does anyone in our society, for example, take seriously these words of Christ: “*But I say to you, whoever is angry with his brother will be liable to judgment, and whoever says to his brother, ‘Raga,’ [an insult] will be answerable to the Sanhedrin, and whoever says, ‘You fool,’ will be liable to fiery Gehenna*” (Mt 5:22).

Most if not all Christians pay scant attention to this teaching. But if people habitually look down on others in the Church, how able are they to keep Christ’s commandment: “*Love one another. As I have loved you so you also should love one another. This is how all will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another*” (Jn 13: 34, 35).

Slavery to Righteousness: Twice in this passage St Paul notes an alternative to the slavery of sin. In v. 19 he calls believers “*slaves of righteousness*” while in v. 22 he uses the expression “*slaves of God.*” Righteousness was used throughout the Old Testament to describe a life pleasing to God. It was equated with a life lived in accordance with the Commandments.

By this standard St Joseph, the spouse of the Theotokos, and St Simeon, who received the infant Christ in the temple, are both called “righteous” in the Gospels (see Mt 1:19 and Lk 2:25). The supreme example of righteousness is, of course, the Lord Jesus Himself. As the centurion testified on seeing the manner of His death, “*Certainly this was a righteous Man!*” (Lk 23:47)

Our liturgy describes Christ in the same way. In both the troparion of His Nativity and that of His Encounter with Simeon and Anna we praise Him as “*the Sun of righteousness.*” This term, prophesied in Malachi 4:2, suggests that the Lord Jesus is the One shining the light of authentic righteousness into the world.

The term is used twice in the Beatitudes: “*Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness*” and “*Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake*”. Living the Godly life is clearly of paramount importance to Christ. By using “*slaves of righteousness*” interchangeably with “*slaves of God*” St Paul is clearly following His lead. “*Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness,*” the Lord advised, and you will have everything you need.

The Result of a Righteous Life: This term – *dikaiosyne* in the Greek of the New Testament – is sometimes translated as *justice*, but that word in Western society has a legal or even penal connotation absent from its meaning in Scripture. This becomes clear when we look at the intended result of the righteous life as St Paul describes it here. He asks his readers, “*What fruit did you have then in the things of which you are now ashamed? For the end of those things is death*” (v. 21). The sin to which the Roman Christians had once been enslaved had only one ultimate result – death. In contrast, living as slaves to God brings about sanctification with its end, everlasting life (see v. 22).

(June2021Leaflet)