

BASIL GREEK MELKITE CATHOLIC CHURCH

Sherman Drive, Utica NY 13501

Saba Shofany, Pastor

: 315-732-4662 Cell: 315-664-6734

Page: stbasilutica.org

SUNDAY OF THE CHEESE FARE

Saturday, February 10 & Sunday, February 11, 2018

WEEKLY SERVICES

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

SPEEDY RECOVERY

Please continue to pray for our convalescing members, including Lorraine Chanatry-Howell, Nancy Gazzal, Edgar Hallak, Daniel Klockowski, and Rose Pawlinga. Please notify Fr. Shofany in case of illness

WEEKLY OFFERINGS: THANK YOU!

Weekly Collection Feb 03/04: \$ 00.00 Funeral & Memorial Services: \$ 00.00
Syrian Cheese Sale: \$ 00.00 Fuel: \$ 00.00

† MEMORIAL MASSES †

THIS SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 10

† **Ida McHarris**, By Rose Ellen M Mattson
† **Mary Machis**, By Mr & Mrs William Chanatry

THIS SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 11

† **Ida McHarris**, By Rose Ellen M Mattson
† **Father Julien Eliane**, By Robert Lalli
† **Pierre Kawam, 15th Memorial Anniversary**, By his wife Lorraine Kawam

NEXT SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 17

† **Ida McHarris**, By Rose Ellen M Mattson
† **Mary Machis**, By Mr & Mrs Henry George Murad and Family

NEXT SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 18

† **Ida McHarris**, By Robert & Ann St. Jermain
† **Bernadette Schultz**, By Robert Lalli
† **Pierre Kawam, 15th Memorial Anniversary**, By his wife Lorraine Kawam

*** ANNOUNCEMENTS ***

- 1. Please join us for the St Basil Palm Sunday Luncheon, immediately following 11:00 AM Holy Liturgy on Sunday, March 25. St Basil’s original founders will be recognized during the festivities. Marcia Reesh will chair the event, and may be reaching out to you regarding set up, or food/beverage donations.
- 2. Our Syrian Braided Cheese is now available for purchase. Spread the word to all family and friends of St Basil. One braid for \$6, or two braids for \$10. Please call the Rectory at 315.732.4662.

*** ANNOUNCEMENTS CONTINUED ***

3. St Basil Parish Advisory Council will meet on Monday, March 5 @ 6:30 PM in the Rectory.

THE GLORY OF THE GREAT FAST

WE HAVE COMPLETED THE FIRST WEEK of the Great Fast. Hopefully, we have met the goals which have set for ourselves: the degree of fasting and almsgiving appropriate to our station in life, or the participation in the services which our schedule of responsibilities allows. Whether we did or did not do so, we should realize that taking part in such practices is not the ultimate purpose of the fasting season. The final goal of the Great Fast – and of our entire life as Chris-tians – is our ultimate transfiguration in Christ.

St Paul – who had seen the transfigured glory of the risen Christ appear to him on the road to Damascus – insisted that we will share in this transformation and that this change is already taking place: “*But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord*” (2 Cor 3:18). He daringly asserts that we are being trans-formed to be the mirror image of the risen Christ. Our human nature, he proclaims, is being renewed after the model who is Christ. This is what our later tradition calls *Theosis* (deification), being “*partakers of the divine nature*” (2 Pt 1:4): given a share through Christ in the very life of God.

How Can This Be? We may try to imitate Christ, to pattern our actions on the way of life which Christ has proposed to us; but the change described in the Scripture demands more than our striving to make it so. It demands an *ontological change*, something that affects us at the heart of our being and turns the water of our human nature in the wine of God. This transformation is what St Paul calls “*the mystery decreed before the ages for our glory*” (1 Cor 2:7). The first transformation in this mystery is **the incarnation** of the Word of God Himself. He assumes our human nature without putting aside His divinity. His glory was concealed – except for the moment of His transfiguration on Mt. Tabor – but He did not cease being the eternal Son of God. His incarnation was complete: “*in all things He had to be made like His brethren*” (Heb. 2:17) so that He would transform our entire human nature. St Gregory the Theologian expressed it concisely, “**That which He has not assumed He has not healed; but that which is united to His Godhead is thereby saved.**” In other words, if there is an aspect of our being which the Son did not assume in the Incarnation, then that aspect of our humanity would be beyond the reach of Christ’s redeeming work.

The second transformation is ours: we are **incorporated into Christ**. When we are baptized into Christ we experience an ontological change, we have “put on Christ.” We have been taken into His family and His Divine Father by nature is now ours, as we are “*adopted as sons by Jesus Christ in himself, according to the good pleasure of his will*” (Eph. 1:5). Body and soul, we have become the dwelling place of “*Christ in you, the hope of glory*” (Col 1:27) and “*the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you*” (1 Cor 6:19).

This ontological change working in our baptism is not abolished when we take off our baptismal garment. Our deification is reaffirmed whenever we partake of the Eucharist. Christ’s body mystically becomes one with ours, confirming our incorporation into Him. Our entire life becomes a matter of “becoming what you are.” We are called to become consciously and actively what we are mystically through our baptism: to strive for a loving awareness – and even perhaps vision – of the indwelling glory of Christ in the Spirit. In words attributed to St Gregory of Sinai, “Become what you already are, find Him who is already yours, listen to Him who never ceases speaking to you, own Him who already owns you.”

What Will It Be Like? For most of us, our deification, begun sacramentally, blossoms in our spirits when we live with a conscious awareness of God’s life in us. Rarely is it manifested in our bodies before the life of the age to come. At the end of this age, however, our bodies will share in our transformation, according to the Scriptures. St. Paul in his, 1 Corinthians describes the destiny of our bodies: “Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.

(FebLeaflets2018)