

ST BASIL GREEK MELKITE CATHOLIC CHURCH  
901 Sherman Drive, Utica, New York 13501  
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Website [www.stbasilutica.org](http://www.stbasilutica.org)

2nd SUNDAY OF LENT - SUNDAY RELICS &  
ST GREGORY PALAMAS  
Saturday, February 24 & Sunday, February 25, 2018

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**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

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**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

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**WEEKLY OFFERINGS: THANK YOU!**

**Weekly Collection Feb 17/18: \$ 00.00      Funeral & Memorial Services: \$ 00.00**  
**Syrian Braided Cheese Sale: \$ 00.00      Fuel: \$ 00.00**

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† **MEMORIAL MASSES** †

**THIS SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 24**

† **Ida McHarris**, By Robert & Ann St. Jermain  
† **Mary Machis**, By Mr. Alex Murad

**THIS SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 25**

† **Ida McHarris**, By Robert & Ann St. Jermain  
† **Mary Machis**, By Mr. & Mrs. Henry George Murad and Family

**NEXT SATURDAY, MARCH 3**

† **Ida McHarris**, By Robert & Ann St. Jermain  
† **Mary Machis**, By Mr. Alex Murad

**NEXT SUNDAY, MARCH 4**

† **Ida McHarris**, By Robert & Ann St. Jermain  
† **Mary Machis**, By Mr. & Mrs. Henry George Murad and Family

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**\* 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.

**\* ANNOUNCEMENTS CONTINUED \***

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.  
3. St Basil Parish Advisory Council will meet on Monday, March 12 @ 6:30 PM in the Rectory.

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**THE HOLY RELICS**

**Theosis Reflected in Holy Relics:** Since the early days of the Church, Christians have celebrated the holiness of those who have gone before them by honoring their relics: their remains or objects associated with them during their lives. During times of persecution, Christians treasured these mementos secretly in their homes; when circumstances allowed, they erected shrines to house these relics and celebrate the memory of these saints whose lives reflected the divine presence within them.

Moderns, used to the highly sanitized treatment of death and burial in our day, might be shocked at the idea of kissing skulls and other body parts. Even in our churches, where the last kiss is a traditional part of the funeral service, we find people put off by the idea of kissing a dead body.

In earlier periods, where death was not considered something to be hidden away behind cosmetics and canned music, such contact was a normal consequence of the relationship one has with deceased family or friends. In that context, reverence for the physical remains of the martyrs and other saints may be considered an act of faith that the entire physical creation does have the potential for being transfigured and that the human body in particular participates in the restoration of humanity.

**Incorrupt and Healing Remains:** The bodies of some saints remain, at least for a time, without any of the usual signs of decay, even though they have not been chemically preserved in any way. Their bodies were so sanctified by divine grace during their lives that, even after death, they were preserved from decomposing. In many cases these relics would even exude myrrh or emit a sweet fragrance, physically witnessing to the saint's holiness. As St John of Damascus attested, "The Lord Christ granted us the relics of the Saints to be fountains of salvation for us, pouring forth manifold blessings, and abounding in sweetly fragrant oil." The second-century martyr, St Cecilia, is perhaps the first to manifest this gift of incorruptibility. When her body was exhumed at the end of the sixteenth century, it was found to be incorrupt. Her relics still lie in the Church of St Cecilia in Rome, Italy, reputedly the site of her own home. Sometimes these manifestations ceased once the Church took steps to glorify the saint. The body of St Charbel, the Lebanese hermit who died in 1898, was exhumed after a bright light was seen surrounding his grave for 45 nights after his burial. His body was found to be in perfect condition, although it was floating on mud in the rain-soaked grave. Examined again in 1927 and 1950, the body was found to be free of corruption. When he was beatified in 1965, the phenomenon was found to have ceased. Healing through the relics of the Saints is perhaps best illustrated in the case of St Nectarios of Aegina, a saintly hierarch who died of prostate cancer in an Athens charity hospital in 1920. In the next bed, was a man who had been paralyzed for many years? As soon as the Metropolitan expired, a nurse and a nun who had cared for him began preparing his body for burial. They removed the old sweater he was wearing and placed it on the bed of the paralyzed man to get it out of the way. As they continued preparing the saint's body, the paralyzed man began gaining strength and arose from his bed, healthy, glorifying God who had healed him in this way, the first of countless healings attributed to the intercession of St Nectarios. The room where he died was filled with such a powerful fragrance that it could not be used for patients. It is now a shrine to the saint. Many churches have fragments of relics from the bodies or garments of the Saints. They may be encased in reliquaries or embedded in icons for veneration. Icons are also encased in the holy tables of consecrated churches, a reminder of the first centuries when the Liturgy was frequently served at martyrs' graves. In the Byzantine Churches, such relics are sewn into each antimention placed under the chalice and diskos during the Divine Liturgy. Thus, every Liturgy is served over the remains or belongings of a saint.

*(FebLeaflets2018)*