

ST BASIL GREEK MELKITE CATHOLIC CHURCH
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Website www.stbasilutica.org

SUNDAY 4th AFTER THE HOLY CROSS EXALTATION
Saturday, October 13 & Sunday, October 14, 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 friends, including Maggy Attalah, Nadia Casab, Nancy Gazzal, Rose Pawlinga, and Lorraine Tedesco. Please notify Fr. Shofany in case of illness.

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**WEEKLY OFFERINGS: THANK YOU!**

**Weekly Collection October 5/6: \$ 384.00**      **Syrian Cheese Sale: \$ 00.00**  
**Memorial Services: \$ 10.00**      **St. Pauly Texile: \$ 56.21**

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† **MEMORIAL MASSES** †

THIS SATURDAY, OCTOBER 13

† **Carol Giannotti**, By Mariellen S'Doia
† **William Chanatry**, By the Community of St. Basil

THIS SUNDAY, OCTOBER 14

† **Jannah Jbarah**, By her Family
† **Lillian Thomas, 4th Year Memorial Anniversary**, By Donald & Carol Thomas

NEXT SATURDAY, OCTOBER 20

NEXT SUNDAY, OCTOBER 21

† **Jannah Jbarah**, By her Family
† **William Chanatry**, By Marcia Reesh

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**\* ANNOUNCEMENTS \***

1. The next **PAC Meeting** is scheduled for Mon Nov 5, 6:30 PM in the Meeting Room.

2. A **PayPal** link is available on our website offering a safe, secure, and confidential option to donate to St Basil, Utica. Please go to [www.stbasilutica.org](http://www.stbasilutica.org), click on the Donation Tab and follow the webpage instructions. Weekly Sunday Bulletins can also be found there; click on the Announcement Tab. Thank you for visiting our page!

**THE PRESENCE OF GOD IN THE WORD**

From its beginning the Church saw itself called to continue the mission of Christ the Sower to evangelize: to sow the seed of the Gospel throughout the world. *“The seed,”* the Lord says, *“is the word of God”* but just what is the core message that we are to proclaim? The New Testament suggests an answer: according to the apostolic writer it is *“That which was from the beginning, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon and our hands have handled concerning the Word of life...that which we have seen and heard we declare to you that you also may have fellowship with us for truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ”* (1 Jn 1:1, 3).

- *“That which was from the beginning”* – Human experience has never imagined the world without the presence of God, everywhere present and filling all things. He is the only truly existing One, from whom all creation has its being.
- *“That which we have seen with our eyes”* – Jesus is that Word, the Messiah awaited by Israel and incarnate of the Virgin Mary, to whose death and resurrection the Apostles testified.
- *“That which we have looked upon and our hands have handled”* – Christians bear witness to continually experiencing Christ in their midst in concrete ways, as He said:
- *“For where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them”* (Mt 18:20) – In the Church at worship – principally at the Eucharist but also in the fullness of the Church year with its feasts, fasts and observances – Christ is physically present to us.
- *“Inasmuch as you did it to the least of my brethren you did it to me”* (Mt 25:40) – By extending hospitality, especially to the poor, we look upon and handle Christ, truly present to us in flesh and blood.
- *“Fellowship with the Father and the Son”* – Our life in the Church is meant to open us to have communion with God the Holy Trinity in this life and in the age to come.

A Parish that Sows the Word of God?

In the West evangelists have generally focused on the first two of these points: the existence of God and the mission of Christ in the world, while minimizing “that which we have handled,” the witness of the worshipping community to whom seekers might be brought. As Eastern Christians we have a unique way of proclaiming the message of Christ: through the life of a community energized by the Liturgy. In the West some have reduced the liturgy to bare bones to focus on a message disconnected from community life; still others have trivialized the liturgy into a kind of feel good community meeting. Eastern communities living their liturgical life to the full are able to proclaim the message “which we have looked upon and our hands have handled” and might thereby speak to some who have outgrown the empty secularism of the day.

For this to happen our experience of a worshipping community must reflect the vision expressed in our Tradition. Fr. Thomas Hopko told the story of encouraging such a seeker to attend the Liturgy to experience the fullness of Orthodoxy. The man did so, and his response was, “Everything you told me was a lie.” The people were physically present, but not participating on any visible level. They ignored him and another visitor at the coffee hour, etc. This incident makes us ask, what would an outsider learn about our parish and its faith on any given Sunday? A brief checklist might help:

Does our parish gathering communicate a sense of fellowship with God? Do people seem eager to stand before the Lord in His holy place, to light candles, venerate icons, etc., or drift in at the last moment and stand in the back? Is the full observance of the Lord’s Day and the feasts and fasts of the Church year central to parish life? Are our parishioners committed to worship and to growing in knowledge and practice of their faith? What does the parish do to encourage such commitment? How many parishioners could answer a visitor’s inquiry about the Church and its faith?

Is our parish a welcoming community: do visitors feel that they are welcome guests, or suspicious outsiders?

*(OctLeaflets2018)*