

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



SUNDAY OF THE CHEESE FARE
Saturday, February 22 & Sunday, February 23, 2020

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**WEEKLY SERVICES**

**Daily Liturgy:** Monday-Friday at 8:30AM      **Holy Confession:** Every Monday at 4-6PM  
**Holy Liturgy:** Saturday at 4:30PM, Sunday at 11:00AM      **Vespers:** Every Saturday at 3:00PM  
**Matins/Orthos:** 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 Archdeacon George Yany, Nadia Casab, Wael and his son Jordan Barahmeh, Maggy Atallah, Nancy Gazzal, Rose Pawlinga, Julia Nassimos, Jean Benoit and Brian Sagrestano. Please notify Fr. Shofany in case of illness.

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**WEEKLY OFFERINGS: THANK YOU!**

**Weekly Collection Feb. 15/ 16: \$ 387.00**      **Fuel Donation: \$ 25.00**  
**Syrian Cheese Sale: \$ 20.00**      **Memorial Offering: \$ 750.00**  
**St. Pauly Textile: \$ 300.71**

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† **MEMORIAL MASSES** †

THIS SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 22

† **Joseph Nassimos**, By Janet Chanatry and her Family
† **James Tebsherany**, By Anthony & Sandra Showa

THIS SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 23

† **Joseph Nassimos**, By Julia & Mary Nassimos
† **Eugene Hutchinson**, By Debbie Gillihan

NEXT SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 29

† **Joseph Nassimos**, By Janet Chanatry and her Family
† **Eugene Hutchinson**, By Anthony & Sandra Showa

NEXT SUNDAY, MARCH 1

† **Eugene Hutchinson**, By Debbie Gillihan

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**\* ANNOUNCEMENT \***

The next Parish Pastoral Council meeting will be held on Mon Mar. 2, 6:30 PM, Rectory Meeting Rm

**THE BISHOP'S APPEAL**

The annual Bishop's Appeal is an essential way in which our parish fulfills its duty to our larger Melkite family throughout the U.S. Our Father and Shepherd, Bishop Nicholas asks every Melkite household in the U.S. to give **at least \$100-\$200 each year** to support our Eparchy in America. By contributing to the Appeal, each of us responds to Christ's call to support our Church and helps to fund its vital works, such as: publishing *SOPHIA* magazine; supporting our seminarians for the Priesthood and Diaconate; providing for our elderly priests; teaching the Faith to our children and young adults; establishing/supporting new missions and outreaches.

**Those who give a gift of \$1000 or more will be automatically enrolled in the Order of Saint Nicholas, the charitable society of our Eparchy.** It is the holy obligation of every member of our parish to support our Church as you are able. Please send your gift today. May God bless your generosity.

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THE GREAT FAST

TOMORROW IS THE FIRST DAY of the Great Fast, the forty days of preparation for the observances of Great Week and Pascha. On this, the eve of the Fast, our Church always reads these words from St Paul's Epistle to the Romans, "*Now it is high time to awake out of sleep... let us cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light*" (Rom 13:11, 12).

In our lectionary, the Epistle to the Romans is read during the first weeks after Pentecost. Why is this section appointed for this Sunday? ... because "*the day is at hand.*" The Great Fast begins this evening with "Forgiveness Vespers." We have the opportunity to be untied from "our attachment to the things of this present world," to "*cast off the works of darkness, and ... put on the armor of light*" (v. 13), through the observances of the Fast.

In St Paul's days there was no Great Fast: commentators believe that St Paul's sense of urgency derived from the portentous events in the Roman Empire of his day. The persecution of the Church had begun. Jewish unrest was intensifying, and a full-scale revolt would be mounted in a few short years, bringing about the destruction of the temple in Jerusalem. Many Jews believed that the Messiah would be coming soon; many Christians believed that He (Jesus) would be returning soon. The "Day of the Lord" was at hand. For St Paul, this critical time in the history of the Church and the Jewish nation demanded that Christians focus their attention on the fundamental truth of their existence: they had a unique relationship to God in Christ. Everyone in the world was related to God as the work of His hands; Christians, however, were related to Him as His adopted children, God "*having predestined us to adoption as sons*" (Eph 1:5) in order to make present throughout the world the Gospel of salvation in Christ. It is this reality which should define a Christian's way of life at this time.

St John Chrysostom, commenting on this passage, says that St Paul "... puts the Resurrection close at hand. For, as time advances, he means, the season of our present life is wasting away, and the life to come approaches. If, then, you are prepared, and have done all that He has commanded, that day is salvation for you; but if you are not ready, it is not so." That is not some kind of threat for Chrysostom: "It is not to alarm them that he exhorts them in this way, but out of kindness, in order to untie them from their attachment to the things of this present world" (Homily on Romans). Most of us are quite happy to be attached to the things of this present world and resist parting from them. It is not unusual to find older people, who have moved from a family home to smaller quarters, trying to cram all "their things" into one or two rooms. Few are those who come to realize that, as the saying goes, "what you own, owns you." For St Paul, our "things" are not something to hold on to, but to leave behind happily, because what waits us is so far superior.

(FebLeaflets2020)