

ST BASIL GREEK MELKITE CATHOLIC CHURCH
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SUNDAY 14TH AFTER PENTECOST
Saturday, September 5 & Sunday, September 6, 2020

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**WEEKLY SERVICES**

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

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SPEEDY RECOVERY

Please continue to pray for our convalescing friends, including Archdeacon George Yany, Rt. Rev. Edward Kakaty, Maggy Atallah, Jean Benoit, Nancy Gazzal, Diane Kakaty, Sandra Kakaty, Daniel Klockowski, Rose Pawlinga, Brian Sagrestano, and Karen Zalatan.
Please notify Fr. Shofany in case of illness.

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**WEEKLY OFFERINGS: THANK YOU!**

**Weekly Collection August 29/30: \$350.00      Funeral & Memorial Masses: \$950.00**  
**Candle Donations: \$ 221.62**

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SPIRITUAL ADVICE OF THE DAY

“My son keep your father's commandment, and forsake not your mother's teaching. Bind them on your heart always; tie them around your neck. When you walk, they will lead you; when you lie down, they will watch over you; and when you awake, they will talk with you.” (Proverb 6, 20-23)

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**† MEMORIAL MASSES †**

**THIS SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 5**

† **Eugene Hutchinson**, By Doris Hutchinson & Family  
† **Louis Chanatry, 47<sup>th</sup> Memorial Anniversary**, By Doris Hutchinson & Family  
† **Norma Chanatry, 3<sup>rd</sup> Memorial Anniversary**, By Doris Hutchinson & Family  
† **Julia Nassimos**, By the Community of Saint Basil

**THIS SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 6**

† **Eugene Hutchinson**, By Gloria Shaheen  
† **Julia Nassimos**, By Alex Murad

**NEXT SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 12**

† **Eugene Hutchinson**, By Doris Hutchinson & Family  
† **Julia Nassimos**, By Alex Murad

**NEXT SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 13**

† **Eugene Hutchinson**, By Gloria Shaheen  
† **Julia Nassimos**, By Robert Lalli

**EVERYONE INVITED TO BE WITH CHRIST**

THE GOSPEL PARABLE READ at today's Divine Liturgy is two stories with two different points. The first concerns those invited to the banquet and those who finally came. The second is the issue of the so-called “wedding garment.” The Gospel of Matthew depicts Christ as encountering increasing opposition the closer He came to the center of the Jewish establishment, Jerusalem. In Mt 21:1-17, Jesus enters the Holy City, ejects the moneychangers from the temple and confronts the chief priests. Then we read four vignettes, each criticizing the Jewish leadership in the harshest of terms. The first such condemnation is the episode of the withered fig tree (Mt 21:18-22). Then, in Mt 21:28-32, we read about the two sons: one who professed obedience to his father, but in words only – a veiled criticism of the Pharisees, who claimed to know the will of God – and the second who actually did the father's will.

In the words of St Hilary of Poitiers, the religious leaders “...put their faith in the Law and despised repentance from sin, glorying instead in the noble prerogative that they had from Abraham (*Homily on Matthew* 21:13).

The second son recalls the sinners who repented at the preaching of John the Baptist: the tax collectors and harlots who enter the kingdom of God before “the righteous,” because one can repent of greed and lust, but not for the denial of the need for repentance. Finally, in verses 33-46, we read the parable of the wicked vinedressers, whose infidelity leads the owner of the vineyard to lease it to others. And, as the Gospel reminds us, “*When the chief priests and Pharisees heard His parables, they perceived that He was speaking of them*” (Mt 21:45).

**The Royal Wedding:** The story of the wedding banquet is in many ways an echo of the parable of the vinedressers. In each story, an important person reaches out to his people; he is rebuffed and finally turns to others. The vineyard owner in the first parable and the king in the second both represents God. The disdainful tenants and the invited guests signify the people of Israel. The new tenants of the first story and the new guests of the second represent the Gentiles, who would respond in faith.

It may be hard for us to imagine the reaction of the invited guests to the banquet. An invitation to such an occasion would be esteemed, even coveted. “*But,*” as the Gospel says, “*they made light of it and went their way: one to his own farm, another to his business*” (Mt 22:5). It is as if Matthew were describing our own day rather than his. This is the way that Many Christians – our own friends and relatives sadly among them – react to their invitation to the Eucharistic banquet week after week. But how could an invitation to a royal wedding be dismissed so easily?

Couching this parable in terms of a royal wedding is a way of saying that the initiative of God in sending to Israel the prophets who announced the coming Messiah was at least as compelling as an invitation to a kingly gala. One after another, prophets came and were recognized in some way as foretelling what was to come. At last the Forerunner came and proclaimed, “Everything is ready – this is the Lamb of God” but was ignored by many who heard him. Those invited had so lost themselves in the concerns of the everyday world that they treated the king's invitation like junk mail.

**Those Who Accept the Invitation:** The messengers seek out – not the pillars of society at their farms and businesses –but the insignificant on the highways, representing the Gentiles. According to the Jewish opinion of the day, the Gentiles were inferior in God's eyes to the Chosen People. Nevertheless, they respond to the king's invitation while the “important people” did not.

Pope Francis of Rome has repeatedly pushed Catholics to focus their efforts on the poor, without ignoring the leaders of society. In fact, he notes, what generally happens in our world is generally the opposite. “If investments in the banks fail, ‘Oh, it's a tragedy.’” He said at a Pentecost vigil in Rome; “but if people die of hunger or don't have food or health, nothing happens. This is our crisis today.” In the language of Matthew 22, Pope Francis might be called “the bishop of the highways.” *(SeptembertLeaflets2020)*