

ST BASIL GREEK MELKITE CATHOLIC CHURCH
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SUNDAY 15TH AFTER PENTECOST
Saturday, September 12 & Sunday, September 13, 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 9/5: \$707.00**      **Memorial Masses: \$ 555.00**  
**St Pauly Textile: \$ 370.18**      **Maintenance Donations: \$ 30.00**

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SPIRITUAL ADVICE OF THE DAY

“Dear brothers and sisters, when any kind of trouble comes your way, consider it an opportunity for great joy. For you know that when your faith is tested, your endurance has a chance to grow. So, let it grow, for when your endurance is fully developed, you will be perfect and complete, needing nothing.” (James 1:2-4)

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**† MEMORIAL MASSES †**

**THIS SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 12**

† **Eugene Hutchinson**, By Doris Hutchinson & Family  
† **Julia Nassimos**, By Alex Murad  
† **Alfred Chanatry**, 5<sup>th</sup> Memorial Anniversary, By Doris Hutchinson & Family

**THIS SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 13**

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

**NEXT SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 19**

† **Eugene Hutchinson**, By Doris Hutchinson & Family  
† **Julia Nassimos**, By Anthony & Sandra Showa

**NEXT SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 20**

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

**POSTING OUR FAITH IN CHRIST**

BOASTING IS NOT SOMETHING we expect to find promoted in religious writing. We see it's very definitely something of this world, of egos and the very worldly habit of stroking them. Yet in both Old and New Testaments, believers are encouraged to specific kinds of boasting.

Several centuries before Christ, the prophet Jeremiah wrote, “*Let not the wise boast of their wisdom or the strong boast of their strength, or the rich boast of their riches, but let the one who boasts boast about this: that they have the understanding to know Me*” (Jer. 9:23, 24). Knowing God was the greatest pride of the Israelite people, something of which they boasted before the other nations. They knew the only true God, who had revealed Himself to them.

Centuries later, the Israelites' boast of intimacy with God had been transformed by many into pride in keeping the Law. Christ's parable of the publican and the Pharisee demonstrates that boasting about one's love for God can easily become a reason to glorify oneself. In that story the Pharisee seems to be thanking God: “*God, I thank You...*” he begins, but quickly moves to boasting of his religious observance: he is not “*like other people – robbers, evildoers, adulterers. I fast twice a week and give a tenth of all I get*” (Lk 18:11, 12).

Like Jeremiah, St Paul seems to say, “Let not the pious boast of their piety, but boast instead about the saving power of the cross.” It is, after all, not our acts of religious devotion that bring us life, but the gift of Christ's life, offered for us on the cross. St Paul was especially disturbed by those among the early Christians who were insisting on one Jewish practice, as if accepting the saving death of Christ was not enough. Some believers were insisting that converts needed to be circumcised according to the Law of Moses to be numbered among the Christians. Paul strenuously denied this, insisting that these Old Testament practices had lost their obligatory character because Christ's self-offering was sufficient to unite us to God.

**Boasting in the Cross:** Still, boasting is not the first thing that comes to mind when we consider the cross of Christ. Some people are no doubt saddened by the thought of it, grieving at the sight of Christ suffering His passion. Some will be thankful that the Son of God offered Himself for us. But what does it mean to “boast” in the cross?

When we think of people boasting of their accomplishments, their children, or their vacations, we know that, these aspects of their lives are frequently in their thoughts and in their conversation. It may seem that they talk of nothing else. A person first boasts in his heart, then publicly for all to hear. No one can doubt how proud the boaster is of his life's joys.

How often are our thoughts focused on the cross? Our almost incessant making of the sign of the cross suggests that the cross is often on our Church's mind. There are other indicators as well. Every Wednesday and Friday, in the hymns appointed for the daily services, our Church “boasts” liturgically about the cross in words such as these: “The precious cross of the Savior is our unshakable wall, for all of us who put our hope in it will be saved”. The Church encourages us to fast on most Wednesdays and Fridays precisely because Christ was betrayed on a Wednesday and crucified on a Friday. Participating in these fasts is another opportunity to “boast” in the cross, acknowledging that Christ's death on the cross witnesses to an unparalleled display of divine love.

The Divine Liturgy is our opportunity to be mystically present at the cross. While the deacon lifts up the holy gifts crosswise, the priest prays, “Remembering ... everything that was done for our sake: the cross, the tomb... we offer You Your own...” By joining Christ in this offering, we are exalting the saving power of His cross. If these traditions are central to our personal spirituality, we would find it natural to boast about the cross in other ways as well. Publicly boasting about the cross can take many forms. The easiest is to publicly display the cross on our person or in our homes. Many people do this, however, without thinking about the meaning of the cross they are exhibiting.

(SeptembertLeaflets2020)