



ST BASIL GREEK MELKITE CATHOLIC CHURCH

901 Sherman Drive, Utica NY 13501

Fr Saba Shofany, Pastor

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SUNDAY 5th AFTER PENTECOST

Saturday, July 8 & Sunday, July 9, 2017

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

SPEEDY RECOVERY

Please pray for our convalescing members: **Mary-Ellen Busa, Carol Chanatry, Lorraine Chanatry-Howell, Anne Cragnolin, Edgar Hallak, Mary Machis, Rose Rawlings, & Donald Thomas.** Notify Fr. Shofany in case of illness.

WEEKLY OFFERINGS: THANK YOU!

Sunday Collection July 1/2: \$ 304.00 Cheese Sale: \$ 130.00 Memorial Services: \$ 00.00

† MEMORIAL MASSES †

This Saturday, July 8, 2017

† **Jannah Jbarah**, By her Family

This Sunday, July 9, 2017

† **Jannah Jbarah**, By her Family

† **Yousef Marji**, By his Family

Next Saturday, July 15, 2017

Next Sunday July 16, 2017

† **Jannah Jbarah**, By her Family

† **Yousef Marji**, By his Family

**** ANNOUNCEMENTS ****

1. St Basil Syrian Braided Cheese Sale is underway! Spread the word to your family, friends, coworkers, & neighbors! Contact the rectory at 315.732.4662 to place your orders. One braid for \$6, or two for \$10.
2. Our next Parish Advisory Council Meeting will be held on Mon Sep 11, 6:30 PM in the Meeting Rm.

PRAYING FOR THE NATION

Christians have always prayed for their country, even when its leadership was persecuting them. The Lord Jesus was displayed on the cross as an anti-Roman revolutionary (the “King of the Jews”), yet He never advocated revolt as many Jewish zealots did. His approach was rather, “Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s, and to God the things that are God’s” (Mk 12:17).

The apostolic writings, composed when Roman officials began repressing Christians, still insisted, “Let every soul be subject to the governing authorities” (Rom 13:1). St Paul here offered his most elaborated statement on supporting the civil authority by prayer “For there is no authority except from God, and the authorities that exist are appointed by God. Therefore whoever resists the authority resists the ordinance of God, and those who resist will bring judgment on themselves. For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to evil. Do you want to be unafraid of the authority? Do what is good, and you will have praise from the same. For he is God’s minister to you for good. But if you do evil, be afraid; for he does not bear the sword in vain; for he is God’s minister, an avenger to execute wrath on him who practices evil. Therefore you must be subject, not only because of wrath but also for conscience’ sake. For because of this you also pay taxes, for they are God’s ministers attending continually to this very thing. Render therefore to all their due: taxes to whom taxes are due, customs to whom customs, fear to whom fear, honor to whom honor” (Rom 13:1-7).

The main points in this passage would be repeated frequently in the apostolic writings and by the early Christian defenders of Christianity. The ultimate source of civil power is God and therefore it is God who has placed rulers in authority.

The power of earthly rulers is legitimate, if limited to the temporal order. As St Justin the Philosopher (100-165) explained, “Whence to God alone we render worship, but in other things we gladly serve you, acknowledging you as kings and rulers of men, and praying that with your kingly power you be found to possess also sound judgment... as Christ intimated when He said, ‘To whom God has given more, of him shall more be required’” (Justin, *First Apology*).

From the start, the Church rejected the Empire’s idolatry and emperor-worship. It condemned many of its cultural values as well and as a result it suffered greatly at the hands of the Empire’s leaders, but in principle it respected the God-given place of the Empire and its Emperor.

In St Paul’s view civil authorities have a place in God’s purposes: to insure “that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence” (1 Tm 2:2). When the state is at peace then believers are free to live godly lives, raising up their praises to God without hindrance. This passage is the inspiration for our prayer for civil authorities to this day. In the anaphora of the Divine Liturgy of St John Chrysostom the priest prays, “...for our civil authorities, for the government and the armed forces. O Lord, grant them peaceful rule that we too in their tranquility may lead a calm and quiet life in all virtue and honor.”

In the Liturgy of St Basil our prayer is similar, but with an added note. “Remember, Lord, this country and all those in public service whom You have allowed to govern on earth. Grant them profound and lasting peace. Speak to their hearts good things concerning Your Church and all Your people that through the faithful conduct of their duties we may live peaceful and serene lives in all piety and holiness. Sustain the good in their goodness; make the wicked good through Your goodness.” We recognize that, while rulers may be legitimate, they may not always be godly. In 313AD, and after the Edict of Milan the state came to be seen as a **servant of God**. At the height of this development the Emperor was seen as a kind of secular deacon, wearing a sticharion and orarion as part of his imperial regalia and receiving Communion at the holy table. There were also Christians who felt that God did not desire a “Christian state.” The North African philosopher Lactantius viewed history this way in his synopsis of Christian thought, the *Divine Institutes*: “God might have bestowed upon His people both riches and kingdoms, as He had given previously to the Jews, whose successors and posterity we are. (July2017Leaflets)