

ST BASIL GREEK MELKITE CATHOLIC CHURCH
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SUNDAY OF THE PRODIGAL SON
Saturday, February 8 & Sunday, February 9, 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 and Jean Benoit. Please notify Fr. Shofany in case of illness.

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**WEEKLY OFFERINGS: THANK YOU!**

**Weekly Collection Feb. 1/ 2: \$ 525.00**      **Oneida Outreach: \$ 307.00**  
**Syrian Cheese Sale: \$ 120.00**      **Memorial Offering: \$ 70.00**

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† **MEMORIAL MASSES** †

THIS SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 8

† **Joseph Nassimos**, By the Astour Family
† **Wadia Gariba**, 63rd Memorial Anniversary, By Doris Hutchinson

THIS SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 9

† **Joseph Nassimos**, By David & Janet George
† **Eugene Hutchinson**, By Eddie & Carmella Nassimos

NEXT SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 15

† **Joseph Nassimos**, By the Anthony & Sandra Showa
† **Michael Klockowski**, By Eddie & Carmella Nassimos

NEXT SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 16

† **Joseph Nassimos**, By Julia & Mary Nassimos
† **Patrick Parmentier**, 1st Memorial Anniversary. By Robert Lalli

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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 PRODIGAL SON

EVERY YEAR ON THIS SECOND SUNDAY of the Triodion we hear the Lord's story which we call the Parable of the Prodigal Son in Luke 15: The Prodigal, the loving Father and the older brother. Some commentators feel that the older brother is the most important figure in the story because of the occasion on which the Lord told this parable. To find this context we must look at the first verses of the chapter which precede it, which are not read this Sunday: "*Now the tax collectors and sinners were all drawing near to hear Him. And the Pharisees and the scribes murmured, saying, 'This man receives sinners and eats with them.'*" So He told them this parable..." (Lk 15:1-3).

The Lord then tells not one but three parables about the joy over a repentant sinner: the parables of the lost sheep and the lost coin and the story of the Prodigal. The Lord's aim in each of them is to confront the self-righteousness of the Pharisees and scribes who saw themselves as properly observant Jews in contrast to those who collaborated with the Roman occupiers (the tax collectors) or those who ignored the precepts of the Law (the sinners). Thus, each of the characters in the parable represents one of the figures in the above three verses. We have the Rebel son, who represents the sinners, the Conformist son, who embodies the respect for the Law and tradition which characterizes the scribes and Pharisees, and the welcoming Father who is Christ Himself. The Rebel is truly a prodigal, disrespecting his father by demanding what would come to him at his father's death – in effect, saying "I wish you were dead." As we know, he goes off and eventually loses everything. Finally, he decides to return to his father, who receives him with love.

The Second Brother: The focus of the tale now turns to the Conformist brother who has done everything by the book but is every bit as lost as his brother ever was. As Fr Henri Nouwen tells us in his reflection, *The Return of the Prodigal Son*, (1992, p. 71): "Outwardly the elder son was faultless. But when he confronted his father's joy at the return of his younger brother, a dark power erupts in him and boils to the surface. Suddenly there becomes glaringly visible a resentful, proud, unkind selfish person, one that had remained deeply hidden." Without realizing it, the older brother has gone off to a "strange land" just like the Rebel. He was no longer the faithful son of his father everyone thought he was. As his father's eldest son, his place would be at the center of the festive gathering, seeing that everyone was welcomed and cared for. Hospitality was – and remains to this day – one of the most important activities in a Middle Eastern household. Refusing to take part made the Conformist the exact opposite of what he appeared to be: the faithful image of his father. He had no cause to look down on his brother; he too had fallen victim to "the tyranny of the passions" (St. Maximos the Confessor) and publicly insulted his father by his actions. He not only refused to stand at his father's side before the guests; he even caused his father to leave them in order to deal with his son's feelings. (*FebLeaflets2020*)