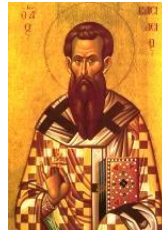


ST BASIL GREEK MELKITE CATHOLIC CHURCH
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SUNDAY 2nd AFTER PENTECOST
Saturday, June 5 & Sunday, June 6, 2021

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**PARISH SERVICES**

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

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HEALING PRAYERS NEEDED

Prayers needed for our friends MaryAnn Astour, Nazmie Barahmeh, Jean Benoit, Nadia Casab, Jeanette Farewege, Nancy Gazzal, Daniel Klockowski, Jean Murad, Rose Pawlinga, John Roth, Brian Sagrestano, and Karen Zalatan. Please notify Fr. Shofany in case of illness.

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**RECENT RECEIPTS**

Weekly Collection May 29/30: \$ 540.00      St. Basil Website Donation: \$ 969.00

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† **MEMORIAL MASSES** †

THIS SATURDAY, JUNE 5

† **Eugene Hutchinson**, By David & Susan Heath
† **Julia Nassimos**, By Rosemary Dougherty
† **John Gazzal**, By George & Penny Kunkel

THIS SUNDAY, JUNE 6

† **Julia Nassimos**, By John & Michelle Roth
† **John Gazzal**, By David & Pamela Williams

NEXT SATURDAY, JUNE 12

† **Eugene Hutchinson**, By David & Susan Heath
† **Julia Nassimos**, By John & Michelle Roth
† **John Gazzal**, By George & Penny Kunkel
† **Arlene Lalli**, 23rd Memorial Anniversary, By Robert Lalli

NEXT SUNDAY, JUNE 13

† **Julia Nassimos**, By Carol Chanatry
† **John Gazzal**, By David & Pamela Williams
† **Deceased members of the Ajaeb Families**, By Robert Lalli

CHRIST DIED FOR US

THE PASSAGE FROM ST PAUL'S Epistle to the Romans read at this Sunday's Liturgy raises a number of questions with which Christians have been wrestling for centuries. We read in verse 6 that "*Christ died for the ungodly*" and in verse 8 that "*Christ died for us.*" Perhaps even more troubling is the statement in verse 10, that "*when we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son.*" What do these assertions mean? How did Christ die "for us"? How were we God's "enemies"? What does it mean to be "reconciled" to God?

Made to Live in God: The early Church Fathers read these texts in a far different light. They saw Christ's death in the context of creation and in light of the incarnation. The book of Genesis teaches that the purpose of our existence is to live in union with God. Humanity was created in God's image (see Gen 1) in order to share in His life. But, as we know, that plan was frustrated. In the story of the Fall, God is depicted as warning our first parents to avoid one tree in the garden: "*God has said, 'You shall not eat it, nor shall you touch it, lest you die'*" (Gen 3:2). While many have seen this as a threat, the fathers interpreted it as a warning. Adam and Eve chose to ignore God's warning and trust the tempter instead: "*For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil'*" (vv. 3-5).

Some commentators saw this passage as a command which Adam and Eve disobeyed and therefore were punished. This is largely because of how the rest of the story was translated. The couple hid from God who confronted Adam: "*And God said to him, 'Who told you that you were naked, unless you have eaten of the tree concerning which I charged you not to eat?'*" (v. 11 also v. 17)

The word translated "*charged*" in these verses is the most faithful rendering of the Scriptural term, although it is not in common use today. This word has been understood to mean *order* or *command* – a matter of authority. In the Greek of the Septuagint, however, it is more accurately rendered *admonish* or *instruct* – an expression of responsibility or concern.

Later Eastern Fathers, following this latter reading, saw the resulting Fall, not as a punishment from God, but as the inevitable consequences of our first parents' actions. God warned them, but they chose to ignore that warning and do things their way instead of God's. As a result, they became trapped in the lifeless cycle of death and sin which we know too well. By substituting their own vision of reality for God's, they were broken and communicated that broken-ness to their descendants. We did not inherit guilt for disobeying a command, but rather the consequence of living apart from God.

Recreated in Christ: The communion with God which our first parents once enjoyed could only be restored to us by One who lived that communion Himself; and the Son of God became one of us, taking on our human nature. Sharing in our humanity, He became like us in everything except sin. Death is an inevitable part of human life, and so because we die, He died.

We can say that in this sense Christ died because He was fully human. Just as He shared our existence in the womb and in the helplessness of infancy, He also shared in death. He died, as many do, suffering innocently at the hands of others; He did so, however, without sinning. His death was characterized by surrender to His Father and compassion for others, not by reacting with anger, hatred or even self-pity for what He suffered. To His last breath He lived in unbroken communion with His Father and thereby fulfills the divine plan for humanity in Himself. By sinlessly sharing in all that we are, He opens a way for us to live as human beings were meant to from the start.

When Eastern Christians say "Christ died for our sins" it is not to see the cross as the payment of a penalty but as the end of a godly life making incarnate God's plan for us. It is in this way that the cross figures in the Creed: we proclaim Christ "who, for us men and for our salvation (1) came down from heaven, was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the Virgin Mary, (2) suffered under Pontius Pilate and was buried, (3) on the third day He rose again, (4) ascended into heaven and (5) is seated at the right..." (June2021Leaflet)