

SEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST



Icon of Healing Two Blind Men

July 27, 2025: Seventh Sunday After Pentecost

Epistle: Rom. 15: 1-7

Gospel: Mt. 9: 27-35

This Weekend	4:00 pm + Joseph & Helen Sembrat (Sharon, Joseph & Jeanne) 10:30 For Our Parishioners
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Mon., July 28	9:00 + Marie F. Piercy (Patricia McCormick McDonnell)
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Tues., July 29	9:00 + Andrew & Dorothy Chezik (Family)
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Wed., July 30	9:00 +Viola Slachtish (Mary Ann Spryn)
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Thurs. July 31	9:00 + Robert “Bob” Zelno (Rosemarie Sember)
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Fri., Aug. 1	9:00 + Leo & Christine Danylak (Leo Danylak)
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Sat., Aug. 2	No Morning Divine Liturgy 2:00 pm Confessions 4:00 pm + John T. Novak (Andrea Novak)
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Sun., Aug. 3	10:30 For Our Parishioners
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ASK THE PASTOR

QUESTION: *Did Mary the mother of Jesus Christ, have other children after Jesus?*

ANSWER: The short answer to this question is “No.” But let’s explore further. Most likely you are asking this question because some Scripture passages seem to suggest that Jesus had brothers and sisters. For example, here are two such passages: Mark 6:3 – Is he not the carpenter, the son of Mary, and the brother of James and Joses and Judas and Simon? And are not his sisters here with us?” Matthew 13:55-56 – Is he not the carpenter’s son? Is not his mother

named Mary and his brothers James, Joseph, Simon, and Judas? Are not his sisters all with us?

So should we conclude from these passages that Jesus had brothers and sisters in a literal way, meaning Mary and Joseph had other children in addition to Jesus? Certainly not. Scripture is quite clear that Mary conceived Jesus in a virginal way – by the Holy Spirit. Additionally, it is the constant teaching of the Church that she always retained her virginity. She had no other children and never engaged in the marital act with Joseph. Sometimes this is confusing

since there are references in the Scriptures to Jesus' brothers and sisters. But this language was commonly used in reference to cousins. So this shouldn't confuse us if we understand the language of the time. In fact this is still a common practice in other cultures of our day.

For example, people from various African countries commonly refer to those within their own village as their brother or sister when they are with them outside of that village. It was God's plan that Mary only have one Son for various reasons. It was especially so because of the fact that we are all called to become brothers and sisters of Christ through spiritual adoption. Therefore,

if Jesus had blood brothers or sisters it would have undermined his spiritual brotherhood with them. It would have made their relationship with Jesus different. But God desires this deeper spiritual relationship with all people. Mary is the only blood relation to Jesus, thus, she shares a special bond with Him that no one else does. But it had to be that way if God was to become true man. Interestingly, though, even Mary's deepest bond with Jesus does not come as a result of her physical blood relationship. It comes, first and foremost, by her spiritual motherhood. She is united with her Son primarily by her perfect faith and obedience. It is this bond that surpasses the natural one.

HOW MUCH IS A MIRACLE?

Tess was a precocious eight year old when she heard her Mom and Dad talking about her little brother, Andrew. All she knew was that he was very sick and they were completely out of money. They were moving to an apartment complex next month because Daddy didn't have the money for the doctor bills and their house. Only a very costly surgery could save Andrew now and it was looking like there was no one to loan them the money. She heard Daddy say to her tearful Mother with whispered desperation, "Only a miracle

can save him now."

Tess went to her bedroom and pulled a glass jelly jar from its hiding place in the closet. She poured all of the change out on the floor and counted it carefully. Three times, even. The total had to be exactly perfect. No chance here for mistakes. Carefully placing the coins back in the jar and twisting on the cap, she slipped out the back door and made her way 6 blocks to Rexall's Drug Store with the big red Indian Chief sign above the door.

She waited patiently for the

pharmacist to give her some attention but he was too busy at this moment. Tess twisted her feet to make a scuffing noise. Nothing. She cleared her throat with the most disgusting sound she could muster. No good. Finally she took a quarter from her jar and banged it on the glass counter. That did it!

"And what do you want?" the pharmacist asked in an annoyed tone of voice. "I'm talking to my brother from Chicago whom I haven't seen in ages," he said without waiting for a reply to his question.

"Well, I want to talk to you about MY brother," Tess answered back in the same annoyed tone. "He's really, really sick... and I want to buy a miracle."

"I beg your pardon?" asked the pharmacist.

"His name is Andrew, and he has something bad growing inside of his head, and my Daddy says only a miracle can save him now. So how much does a miracle cost?"

"We don't sell miracles here, little girl. I'm sorry but I can't help you," the pharmacist said, softening a little.

"Listen, I have the money to pay for it. If it isn't enough, I will get the rest. Just tell me how much it costs."

The pharmacist's brother was a well-dressed man. He stooped down and asked the little girl, "What kind of

a miracle does your brother need?"

"I don't know," Tess replied with her eyes welling up. "I just know he's really sick and Mommy says he needs an operation. But, my Daddy can't pay for it, so I want to use my money."

"How much do you have?" asked the man from Chicago.

"One dollar and eleven cents," Tess answered barely audibly. "And it's all the money I have, but I can get some more if I need to."

"Well, what a coincidence," smiled the man. "A dollar and eleven cents is the exact price of a miracle for little brothers." He took her money in one hand and with the other hand he grasped her mitten and said "Take me to where you live. I want to see your brother and meet your parents. Let's see if I have the kind of miracle you need."

That well-dressed man was Dr. Carlton Armstrong, a surgeon, specializing in neurosurgery. The operation was completed without charge. And it wasn't long until Andrew was home again and doing well. Mom and Dad were happily talking about the chain of events that had led them to this place. "That surgery," her Mom whispered, "was a real miracle. I wonder how much it would have cost?" Tess smiled. She knew exactly how much a miracle cost... one dollar and eleven

cents... plus the faith of a little child.

A miracle is not the suspension of

natural law, but the operation of a higher

law.

A REMINDER FOR VACATION SEASON

It's that wonderful time of year once again — Vacation Time! A season for rest and relaxation, when we temporarily step away from our daily routines to recharge. Whether we stay at home or venture out to visit friends, explore new destinations, or embark on exciting adventures, vacations offer a much-needed break for the soul. During these moments, it's easy to let our usual obligations slip from our minds.

However, there is one reality we cannot escape: bills and financial responsibilities never seem to take a vacation. This includes the operational costs of our Church, which, paradoxically, often increase during the summer months. Whether it's the upkeep of church facilities or utility bills, these

vital needs continue to require support, even as we are away enjoying time with loved ones.

So, as you pack your bags, finalize travel plans, or settle into your summer routine, please keep your Church in mind. Ensuring that your Sunday Collection envelopes are mailed in while you're away is an easy and thoughtful way to maintain your contributions to the Church's mission. This simple act allows you to fully enjoy your vacation, knowing you have supported the work that continues to uplift our community.

Thank you for remembering your Church during this busy season, and may your summer be filled with joy, relaxation, and renewal!

IMPORTANT REMINDER OF CEMETERY REGULATIONS

The following regulations must be adhered to in an effort to keep our Cemetery in a decent condition and be able to keep it maintained.

- **FLOWERS** may be planted in the ground in front of monuments. **Flower beds** may NOT extend out from the monument more than one

foot and may not extend beyond the width of the monument. Urns or other containers used for planting must be placed close to the monuments in order to allow for grass cutting.

- **FLOWER BEDS MUST BE MAINTAINED** in a reasonable manner. They should not become unsightly.

- **NEW SHRUBS AND TREES ARE NOT PERMITTED.** Existing shrubs **MUST BE TRIMMED OR THEY WILL BE REMOVED.**
- **VIGIL LIGHTS** must be in an enclosed container and must be placed close to the monument.
- **MARBLE CHIPS, GRAVEL OR METAL as a border for monuments are prohibited.** They may cause injury to our caretakers or damage grass cutters. Artificial flowers may not be placed in the ground because they may cause injury to caretakers or damage grass cutters. If any one does place them in the ground, they will be removed.
- **ANY AND ALL OBSTACLES to the cutting of the grass will be removed.**
- **TRASH** should be placed in the cans that are provided.

24TH ANNUAL LEBANESE-AMERICAN FOOD FEST

Event Overview

Join us for the 24th Annual Lebanese-American Food Fest, where the vibrant flavors of Lebanon meet the warmth of Scranton's community spirit. Savor authentic Lebanese dishes, delightful pastries, and your favorite picnic classics, all while enjoying fellowship and festivities in a welcoming setting.

Dates:

- Friday, August 8, 2025 — 4:00 PM to 9:00 PM
- Saturday, August 9, 2025 — 4:00 PM to 9:00 PM
- Sunday, August 10, 2025 — 1:00 PM to 7:00 PM

Location

St. Joseph Melkite Greek-Catholic Church

130 N. St. Frances Cabrini Ave (off lower Jackson St), West Scranton, PA

What to Expect

- Great Lebanese Food and Pastries: Indulge in homemade specialties from savory shawarma and kibbeh to sweet baklava.
- Local Picnic Favorites: Enjoy familiar classics that everyone in the family will love.

More Information

- Website: melkitescranton.org
- Facebook: facebook.com/melkitescranton
- Menu: Check back in August for the full menu announcement!
- Contact: Email melkite.scranton@gmail.com or call the rectory at 570-343-6092 for more information.

WHY COOK WEDNESDAY DINNER

Saints Peter & Paul Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church will hold the 3rd and last of their “Why Cook Wednesday Dinners” for the Summer with an a La Carte, Ukrainian Festival Food, Take-Out Dinner on Wednesday, August 13th. Order from a menu of festival foods including; holubtsi (piggies)...\$3/each, pyrohy (pierogies)...3 for \$3.00, kovbasa with kapusta (kielbasa with sauerkraut)...\$6.00, halushki (cabbage & noodles)...\$4.00/pint and Pagash (potato

pizza)...\$2.00/cut. Pick-Ups from 4:00 to 7:00 pm in their school hall on the corner of North River and West Chestnut Streets, near the General Hospital Parkade in Wilkes-Barre. Take-Out Only and Pre-Orders are strongly encouraged. Place your order by calling the School Hall Kitchen (570) 829-3051. Bake Sale items available and tickets will also be sold for a Basket Raffle. Remember... When Baba Cooks, Eveybody’s Happy!

COLLECTION PROCESSING TEAM

The Collection Processing Team for the month of July 2025 is Team #3: Mar-

lene Zelno, Cheryl Matuszewski, and Carol Zadarosni.

Sunday Collection for July 19 & 20, 2025: \$

Sincere thanks to all of you for your kindness and generosity.

A TIME TO CELEBRATE...

Happy Birthday and Mnohaya Leeta to the following Parishioners who celebrated their birthdays in July:

Joseph Budnovitch, Jr.

Allison Carey-Wehrenberg

Happy Anniversary and Mnohaya Leeta to the following Parishioners who celebrated their Wedding Anniversaries during July:

Mark & Allison Wehrenberg

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Rev. Nestor Iwasiw, Pastor

They Saw Because They Believed

At that point, two blind men follow the Lord as He was passing by. But if they could not see, how could the blind men know of the Lord's departure as well as His name? Moreover, they called him "Son of David" and asked to be made well. In the two blind men, the entire earlier pre-figuration is complete.

To these unknowing persons the law gave evidence as to the one from whom they sought a cure. It indicated to them that their Savior in the flesh was of the line of David. It also introduced light to the minds of those who were blind from past sins. They could not see Christ but were told about Him.

The Lord showed them that faith should not be expected as a result of health but health should be expected because of faith. The blind men saw because they believed; they did not believe because they saw. From this we understand that what is requested must be predicated on faith and that faith must not be exercised because of what has been obtained. If they should believe, He offers them sight. And He charges the believers to be silent, for it was exclusively the task of the Apostles to preach.

St. Hilary of Poitiers