

**St. Basil Antiochian Orthodox Church**  
**His Eminence Metropolitan JOSEPH, Archbishop of New York**  
**And Metropolitan of all North America**  
**His Grace Bishop NICHOLAS, Auxiliary Bishop**  
**Of the Diocese of Miami and the Southeast**  
**The Very Reverend Father Peter Nugent, Pastor**  
**3916 Hudson St., Metairie, LA 70006**  
**504.888.8114**  
[sbno@att.net](mailto:sbno@att.net)  
[www.stbasilneworleans.org](http://www.stbasilneworleans.org)

### **The Holy Martyr Nicephorus**

The biography of this martyr Nicephorus clearly demonstrates how God rejects pride and crowns humility and love with glory. There lived in Antioch two close friends, the learned priest Sapphirus and the simple ordinary citizen Nicephorus. Somehow, their friendship turned into a terrible hatred for each other. The God-fearing Nicephorus attempted on many occasions to make peace with the priest. However, at no time did Sapphirus desire to be reconciled. When the persecution of Christians began, the presbyter Sapphirus was condemned to death and brought to the place of execution. The sorrowful Nicephorus followed after Sapphirus beseeching him along the way to, at least, forgive him before his death that they might depart in peace. "I beseech you, O martyr of Christ," said Nicephorus, "forgive me if I have sinned against you!" Sapphirus did not even want to look at his opponent but quietly and arrogantly walked toward his death. Upon seeing the hardness of the priest's heart, God did not want to accept the sacrifice of his martyrdom and to crown him with a wreath but He mysteriously withheld His grace. At the last moment, Sapphirus denied Christ and declared before the executioners that he would bow down before the idols. So it is with blind hatred! Nicephorus implored Sapphirus not to deny Christ saying: "O my beloved brother, do not do that; do not deny our Lord Jesus Christ; do not forfeit the heavenly wreath!" But, all was in vain. Sapphirus remained adamant. Then, Nicephorus cried out to the executioners: "I, also, am a Christian; behead me in place of Sapphirus!" The executioners informed the judge of this and he ordered the release of Sapphirus and, in his place, beheaded Nicephorus. Nicephorus joyfully lowered his head on the block and was beheaded. Thus, he was made worthy of the kingdom and was crowned with the immortal wreath of glory. This occurred in the year 260 A.D. during the reign of Gallienus.

***from: The Prologue from Ochrid***

# St. Basil Antiochian Orthodox Church



**February 9, 2020**

**Sunday of the Pharisee & the Publican, & the Leave-taking of the Presentation of our Lord in the Temple**

Sunday, March 8<sup>th</sup> – Orthros, 8:30 A.M.; Divine Liturgy, 9:30 A.M.

# Welcome!

## To Our Guests:

While we are not yet in formal inter-communion with other faith traditions, we have much respect for their rites of worship and sanctuaries of prayer. In our tradition, **Holy Communion is open only to those Orthodox Christians who are in good standing with the Church and have prepared themselves by prayer, fasting and a recent confession.** Please do not be offended by this if you are not an Orthodox Christian or in good standing with the Church. We welcome you to our church and invite you to receive a blessing and partake of the blessed bread at the end of the Divine Liturgy.

**In our tradition...** *the church temple is a house of prayer. Upon entering it, please refrain from unnecessary conversation before, during and after church services, most especially during the Divine Liturgy from the time of the consecration of the Gifts until the last person has received the Eucharist. At the end of the Divine Liturgy, please come quietly forward to receive a piece of the antidoron and exit the church temple. During coffee hour in the Church Hall is the appropriate place to exchange personal greetings and converse with one another. May God bless your reverence and piety.*

**Epistle Reading:** II Timothy 3:10-15

**Gospel Reading:** St. Luke 18:10-14

## Saints of the Day

Martyr Nikephoros of Antioch; Hieromartyrs Markellos, bishop of Sicily, Pankratios, bishop of Taormina, Philagrios, bishop of Cyprus; translation of the relics of Innocent, first bishop of Irkutsk.

## **WORSHIP SCHEDULE**

Saturday, Feb. 15<sup>th</sup> – Great Vespers & Confessions, 5:00 P.M.

Sunday, Feb. 16<sup>th</sup> – Orthros, 8:30 A.M.; Divine Liturgy, 9:30 A.M.

Saturday, Feb. 22<sup>nd</sup> – Great Vespers & Confessions, 5:30 P.M.

Sunday, Feb. 23<sup>rd</sup> – Orthros, 8:30 A.M.; Divine Liturgy, 9:30 A.M.

Saturday, Feb. 29<sup>th</sup> – Great Vespers & Confessions, 5:00 P.M.

Sunday, March 1<sup>st</sup> – Orthros, 8:30 A.M.; Divine Liturgy, 9:30 A.M.

Wednesday, March 4<sup>th</sup> - Presanctified Liturgy, 6:30 P.M.

Friday, March 6<sup>th</sup> – Akathist Hymn, 6:30 P.M. (1<sup>st</sup> Stasis)

Saturday, March 7<sup>th</sup> – Great Vespers & Confessions, 5:00 P.M.

## **Orthodox Thoughts from Theo, the Parish Possum**



While our possum family lives under the altar, sometimes we peek through some cracks and watch what happens on Sunday morning. We had the idea that the altar area behind the Iconostasis must be a very special place. Only the priest and the Bishop are allowed to go through the doors in the middle (the Royal Doors) since they represent Jesus Christ. The doors are closed sometimes and there are also curtains that are drawn from time to time. We went to the Parish library and learned that the doors are closed to emphasize the sacred prayers that take place at the altar such as the Ektenias. The doors are opened to facilitate the Little Entrance and the procession (Great Entrance) after the Cherubic Hymn is sung. Just before the Ektenia that precedes the consecration, the doors are closed and the curtains are drawn to emphasize the great mystery that is about to take place. The curtains, but not the doors, are opened for the Creed but are closed again after the priest says, “Holy things are for the Holy.” The doors and curtains remain closed while the priest receives the consecrated bread and wine. Finally, everything is opened up for the Communion of the people. Many years ago, and in some Orthodox churches, the doors and curtains remain closed most of the time. We follow the Antiochian tradition in which we can see what the priest is doing most of the time. But, the books tell us that our participation and focus on the Liturgy is much more important than what we see through the Royal Doors. Let us attend!—Theo, the Orthodox possum

\*\*\*

## **Spiritual Counsels...**

“Hard work always yields its profit, idle talk brings only want.” – Prov. 14:23

**Today’s Ushers:** Rose Hrabar. **Next Week:** Mihai Leustean.

**Today’s coffee hour:** Team 5. Thank you. **Next Sunday:** Team 1.

As of Feb. 4, 2020, 25 pledges were received for 2020 totaling \$64,300.00. The collections for January 2020 totaled \$22,506.40, for an adjusted balance of \$40,989.60. The expenses were \$9,004.32 for an end-of-month balance of \$31,985.28.

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The **altar candle** is sponsored today by **Therese Dagher** for the health of **Leanna**. May God grant you many years.

Our **Annual General Parish Meeting** is scheduled for Sunday, February 9, 2020, after Divine Liturgy. All parishioners are encouraged to attend.

Lentil soup sales begin today. Support the Ladies Guild charities and eat the BEST lentil soup you will ever have. \$8 each or 2 for \$15 (16 oz container). Thank you.

The **Parish Council** shall hold their February meeting next Sunday, Feb. 16, after Divine Liturgy. All Council members please attend.

Please contact Fr. Peter if you wish to have your home blessed.

His Grace Bishop **NICHOLAS** shall, God willing, visit us March 6-8, 2020, the first Sunday of Great Lent, the Sunday of Orthodoxy.

An **Orthodoxy 101/Inquirers' Class** shall be offered on the first Tuesday of each month. Our next gathering is postponed until further notice. A potluck meal shall be served followed by a presentation and discussion. Everyone is welcome!