

**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 Priest-Martyr Gordius**

Gordius was born in Caesarea of Cappadocia. He was an officer in the Roman army during the reign of Emperor Licinius. When a terrible persecution of the Christians broke out, Gordius left the army and his rank and withdrew to the wilderness of Sinai. Alone on Mount Horeb, Gordius spent his time in prayer and contemplation on the mysteries of heaven and earth. He especially contemplated on vanity and the worthlessness of all over which men strive and fight for on earth, and, finally, he wished to die and to be translated into the eternal and incorruptible life. With this desire he descended into the town at the time of certain pagan races and games. Gordius presented himself to the mayor of that town, declaring that he was a Christian. In vain did the mayor of the town try, through flatteries and threats, to dissuade him from the Faith. Gordius remained unwavering and firm as a diamond, saying: "Is it not sheer folly to purchase with this short-lived life, a life of eternal torment and spiritual death." Being condemned to death, he joyfully hurried to the scaffold and along the way spoke to the executioners about the glorious and sweet teachings of Christ. With the name of Christ on his lips Gordius offered his young body to the sword and his righteous soul to God in the year 320 A.D.

*from: The Prologue from Ochrid*

**St. Basil**  
**Antiochian**  
**Orthodox Church**



**January 3, 2021**  
**The Sunday before the Theophany of Christ**

# 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 without talking. 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:** 2 Timothy: 4:5-8

**Gospel Reading:** St. Mark 1:1-8

## Saints of the Day

Martyr Gordios of Cappadocia; Prophet Malachi, Venerable Thomaidos, wonderworker of Lesbos; Venerable Genevieve of Paris.

## A Message from the Parish Council at Year's End

Dear Parishioners,

As we continue to cope with the Covid virus, we are coming to the end of 2020. We have had a stable year financially even when attendance was lower than usual. The Lord continues to bless our Parish with no outbreaks of the virus. We have a large catechumen class and have visitors who are actively considering joining our Parish. We have also come through several hurricanes without significant damage. As we count our blessings, please remember your pledge to St. Basil. If you are behind in your giving, we would much appreciate it if you could catch up

by the end of the year. May you have a blessed Nativity season—Rob Booms, Chairman of the Parish Council.

## WORSHIP SCHEDULE

Saturday, Jan. 2<sup>nd</sup> – No Great Vespers & Confessions  
Sunday, Jan. 3<sup>rd</sup> – Orthros, 8:30 A.M.; Divine Liturgy, 9:30 A.M.  
Tuesday, Jan. 5<sup>th</sup> – Royal Hours, 8:30 A.M.; Vespers Liturgy, 10:00 A.M.  
Wednesday, Jan. 6<sup>th</sup> – Orthros, 8:30 A.M.; Divine Liturgy, 9:30 A.M.  
Wednesday, Jan. 6 – Badnjak Service, 6:30 P.M.  
Saturday, Jan. 9<sup>th</sup> – Great Vespers & Confessions, 5:00 P.M.  
Sunday, Jan. 10<sup>th</sup> – Orthros, 8:30 A.M.; Divine Liturgy, 9:30 A.M.  
Saturday, Jan. 16<sup>th</sup> – Great Vespers & Confessions, 5:00 P.M.  
Sunday, Jan. 17<sup>th</sup> – Orthros, 8:30 A.M.; Divine Liturgy, 9:30 A.M.  
Saturday, Jan. 23<sup>rd</sup> – No Great Vespers & Confessions  
Sunday, Jan. 24<sup>th</sup> – Orthros, 8:30 A.M.; Divine Liturgy, 9:30 A.M.

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



The possum family under the altar has heard that St. Basil is getting a church bell! We are quite excited about this. Bells were first rung in the Orthodox church at the Hagia Sophia in Constantinople in the year 865. Our Orthodox possum relatives in Russia tell us that churches there have used bells since 988. The largest liturgical bell in the world is there. It weighs 445,000 pounds. Called the “Tsar Bell,” it sits at the Kremlin in Moscow. St. Basil’s bell weighs approximately 600 pounds. Since it is over 100 years old, it will need to be cleaned and a place for it will have to be prepared. Like all church bells in the Eastern church, the dapper strikes a stationary bell (the bell itself does not swing as in the Western church). While Fr. Peter has not decided at what times it will be rung, such a bell is typically used at the beginning and end of the liturgy and when the Holy Gifts are consecrated. Jefferson Parish has no restrictions on when church bells can be rung, but St. Basil will respect its human and animal neighbors early in the morning and late at night. The possums look forward to joining in the making of a joyful noise to the Lord! Blessings to all—Theo

\*\*\*

### ***Spiritual Counsels...***

"A kindly glance gives joy to the heart; good news lends strength to the bones." – Prov. 15:30

**Today's Ushers:** Tania/Sevin Russell. **Next Week:** ?.

**Today's coffee hour:** Team 1. Thank you. **Next Sunday:** Team 2.

### **A-Peal for the Bell...**



The bell was originally used in the National Shrine of St. Anna in the Tremé neighborhood of New Orleans during the 19<sup>th</sup> century and early part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Please consider contributing to the cost of the bell and its installation. Any gifts should be marked "Church Bell". You are also invited to several upcoming fundraising lunches and hope that you can attend. —Rob Booms, Chairman of the Parish Council

### ***The Bookstore Bee***



This month in the bookstore, we would like to bring attention to a variety of items we have in stock for the Nativity season, from Christmas cards and ornaments to beautiful tapestry bookmarks, prayer ropes and children's books. We have something for everyone's gift giving or stocking stuffer needs. Join us in the church hall after liturgy and browse around!

### **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Church calendars, house blessing forms, pledge forms and boxes of offering envelopes for 2021 for each family in the parish are now available in the dining room of the church hall. Please be sure to get yours this Sunday.

Our Annual Pledge Drive is currently underway for the calendar year 2021. All adult members of the parish are encouraged to complete and return a pledge form to the church office. Pledge forms may be found in the narthex of the church building. All pledges are held in strict confidence. Only the total number of pledges and the total pledge amount is made available to the public. Your financial support of our church community is your support of yourself and your contribution to help insure you and your family has a place to worship. Thank you and God bless you.

Our **Annual General Parish Meeting** is scheduled for February 14, 2021, after Divine Liturgy. All members of the parish are encouraged to attend the meeting. Those adults, who have been a member of the parish for at least one year and are in good sacramental and financial standing with the parish, are eligible to vote.

We fast Tuesday and Friday this week.

Please note that face coverings are required to attend the Badnjak service scheduled for Jan. 6 at 6:30 P.M.

The annual blessing of homes shall begin on January 6. Please contact Fr. Peter by text message, phone call or email to schedule the blessing of your home.

The Ladies Guild is scheduled to have their January meeting next Sunday after Divine Liturgy. All ladies of the parish are invited to attend.

As of Dec. 31, 2020, 44 pledges were received for 2020 totaling \$86,950. The donations for December 2020 totaled \$14,278.25. The expenses were \$11,058.08, for an end-of-month balance of \$27,606.19. Thank you.