

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
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The Holy-Priest Martyr Babylas

Babylas was a priest in Sicily. He suffered for Christ with two of his disciples in the third century.

from: The Prologue from Ochrid

St. Basil
Antiochian
Orthodox Church



January 24, 2021
The 31st Sunday after Pentecost
The 14th Sunday of Luke

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: 1 Timothy: 1:15-17

Gospel Reading: St. Luke 18:35-43

Saints of the Day

Hieromartyr Babylas of Sicily; Venerable Xenia the merciful of Rome; Venerable Philonos, bishop of Karpason; Venerable Neophytos the recluse of Cyprus; Venerable Dionysios of Olympos, abbot of Philotheou monastery on Athos; Venerable Philotheos, founder of Philotheou monastery on Athos; Hieromartyr Felician, bishop of Foligno in Umbria, Italy; Blessed Xenia of St. Petersburg, fool for Christ.

A Message from Father Peter and Parish Council Chairman, Rob Booms, on the Corona Virus

Dear Parishioners,

St. Basil has been blessed in having no deaths or serious illnesses from the corona virus in our parish family. However, recent positive findings of the virus in two parish families is concerning.

In addition, recent increases in infections and deaths in Jefferson Parish are worrisome. We do not want anyone to get sick as a result of us not taking more proactive steps to avoid infection. Therefore, we are asking all persons except the choir and those serving at the altar, to wear facemasks in church and to observe proper social distancing with non-family members. In the Parish Hall, everyone should wear masks and keep a six-foot distance except when eating. Some of you will object to what we are asking but this procedure is preferable to shutting down the church completely as many Orthodox churches have done. If you are not feeling well, are coughing or running a temperature, please get tested and do not come to church until you have a negative test result. We will have a limited supply of facemasks if you did not bring your own. Thank you for cooperation.

A Message from the Parish Council at Year's End

Dear Parishioners,

We look forward to a better year than the last given the pandemic and hurricanes. Nevertheless, we should be grateful that St. Basil did not suffer any financial hardship in 2020 and grew in membership and catechumens. At our upcoming annual meeting in February, we will be approving a budget which will need to include approximately \$10,000 for upgrades to an air conditioning condenser in the Parish Hall. We also hope to provide for the proper placement of the new bell in the courtyard and for updates to the parish hall bathrooms. Please consider these items as you make your pledge for 2021. If you are unable to provide financial support, we are also looking for volunteers to serve on the Parish Council, to do minor repairs and part-time secretarial help for Father Peter. May you have a blessed New Year—Rob Booms, Chairman, Parish Council.

WORSHIP SCHEDULE

Saturday, Jan. 23rd– Great Vespers & Confessions, 5:00 P.M.
Sunday, Jan. 24th – Orthros, 8:30 A.M.; Divine Liturgy, 9:30 A.M.
Saturday, Jan. 30th – Great Vespers & Confessions, 5:00 P.M.
Sunday, Jan. 31st – Orthros, 8:30 A.M.; Divine Liturgy, 9:30 A.M.
Tuesday, Feb. 2nd – Orthros, 9:00 A.M.; Divine Liturgy, 10:00 A.M.
Saturday, Feb. 6th – Great Vespers & Confessions, 5:00 P.M.
Sunday, Feb. 7th – Orthros, 8:30 A.M.; Divine Liturgy, 9:30 A.M.
Saturday, Feb. 13th – Great Vespers & Confessions, 5:00 P.M.

Sunday, Feb. 14th – Orthros, 8:30 A.M.; Divine Liturgy, 9:30 A.M.

Orthodox Thoughts from Theo, the Parish Possum



While we cannot catch the Corona virus, the possum family under the altar has been worried that parishioners might get sick. We are glad that so many of you are wearing masks and are keeping proper distance during the Liturgy. We were listening to Father Peter's sermon recently on our Lord's parable about the king who invited many people to his son's wedding banquet. All the invited guests came up with excuses for why they could not attend. One had to look after new oxen. One had to inspect land he had just purchased. Another was celebrating his own wedding. The king was furious that they should reject a royal invitation. He then ordered his servants to gather "the poor, the crippled, the blind and the lame" from the streets until the banquet hall was filled. Sadly, we all make excuses for the choices we make. Like the king's invited guests, our priorities are often misplaced. Our Lord's parable equates the king's banquet with the heavenly banquet that awaits us if we would just accept the invitation. The poor in body and spirit ended up at the royal table. The lesson for us is that Orthodox living should not be focused on earthly cares, possessions or even about our relationships. As Father Peter said, it is really all about the banquet. Thanks be to God! —Theo

Spiritual Counsels...

"Obey your leaders and submit to them: for they are keeping watch over your souls, as men who will have to give account. Let them do this joyfully, and not sadly, for that would be of no advantage to you." – Hebrews 13:17

Today's Ushers: Yordan Yordanov. **Next Week:** Pam Nugent.

Today's coffee hour: SUSPENDED. **Next Sunday:** SUSPENDED. The Church Hall is closed except for restroom use.

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 19th century and early part of the 20th 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 St. Basil's bookstore we would like to bring attention to the beautiful icons we have for sale. We offer a variety of icons in many sizes. For your traveling purposes, we also have small triptych and diptych icons. These are also a great addition to an icon corner in your home. If you are looking for a particular icon, we can also order those.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Dear Parishioners, we reported to you last week that we had some folks in the parish who tested positive with the Covid virus. For this reason, we cancelled last week's services. Meanwhile, recent data from Jefferson Parish indicate alarming increases in people who have become sick. We have a moral, civil and legal obligation to protect one another and our parishioners from the infection.

For the time being, we must ask that you **do not attend services** unless you are wearing a face mask. We have a limited supply of masks for those who do not have one. Inside the church, unless you are in a family, please distance yourself at least 6 feet from others. The reception of Holy Communion is encouraged, but, as always, is optional.

We understand that some of you object to wearing masks in church. However, we are people under authority. After consulting His Grace Bishop NICHOLAS and reviewing His Eminence Metropolitan JOSEPH'S directives, we must comply with Jefferson Parish regulations, which require masks and social distancing. Our Dean is also directing us to take these steps. Most Orthodox parishes are following more stringent requirements than we are asking for at this time.

At the present, our choir is restricted to the choir director and three choir members. There is no coffee hour or church school. The Parish Council will not meet this month. With the blessings of His Grace Bishop NICHOLAS, our annual Parish meeting scheduled for February is postponed at least until March. We will continue to evaluate our response to the Covid virus on a weekly basis. Please pray for the Parish and the health of all parishioners.

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** has been postponed with the blessings of His Grace Bishop NICHOLAS. More information about a rescheduled date is forthcoming.

We fast Wednesday and Friday this week.

The altar candle is offered today by **Therese Dagher** for the health of **Bruno and family, Toufic and family, Ayman, Lily and Therese** (many years), and for the repose of **Mado, Samir, and Roger** (memory eternal).

The **Parish Council** meeting is postponed.

As of Jan. 4, 2021, 10 pledges were received for 2021 totaling \$21,900. The donations for December 2020 totaled \$16,669.90. The expenses were \$16,722.52, for an end-of-month and end-of-year balance of \$27,553.57. Thank you.