

**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 Venerable Luke of Hellas**

Luke was born in Castoria. Even as a child, he never desired to taste meat and always conducted his life in chastity and in prayer. At one time, Luke entered a field to sow grains of wheat, but along the way he distributed a greater portion of the grains of wheat to the poor and the lesser portion which was left over, he planted. From that lesser amount of seeds of wheat, God gave him a greater harvest than had previously come from the entire amount. After that, Luke left his widowed mother and entered a monastery. The grieving mother prayed earnestly to God to reveal to her the secret where her son could be found. God heard the prayers of the mother. The abbot of that monastery, where Luke had fled, dreamed on three consecutive nights that a certain woman sharply rebuked him because he took away her only son. The abbot then ordered Luke to immediately return to his mother. Luke went, visited with his mother and once again, parted from her without returning. He atoned on "Mount Johannitsa," near Corinth. At night he prayed to God and during the day he worked in the garden and in the field, not for his sake but for the sake of the indigent and the visitors. However, Luke fed only on bread made of barley. God bestowed upon him the gift of working miracles. Luke died peacefully in the year 946 A.D. From time to time, Chrism [oil] flowed from his relics.

*from: The Prologue from Ochrid*

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



**February 7, 2021**  
**The 16<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost**  
**The 16<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Matthew**

# 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 Corinthians 6:1-10

**Gospel Reading:** St. Matthew 25:14-30, Luke 8:8

## Saints of the Day

Parthenios, bishop of Lampsakos; Venerable Luke of Hellas; New-martyr George of Crete.

## 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, Feb. 6<sup>th</sup> – Great Vespers & Confessions, 5:00 P.M.  
Sunday, Feb. 7<sup>th</sup> – Orthros, 8:30 A.M.; Divine Liturgy, 9:30 A.M.  
Saturday, Feb. 13<sup>th</sup> – Great Vespers & Confessions, 5:00 P.M.  
Sunday, Feb. 14<sup>th</sup> – Orthros, 8:30 A.M.; Divine Liturgy, 9:30 A.M.  
Saturday, Feb. 20<sup>th</sup> – No Great Vespers & Confessions  
Sunday, Feb. 21<sup>st</sup> – Orthros, 8:30 A.M.; Divine Liturgy, 9:30 A.M.  
Saturday, Feb. 27<sup>th</sup> – Great Vespers & Confessions, 5:00 P.M.  
Sunday, Feb. 28<sup>th</sup> – 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

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### ***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:** Greg Lindley. **Next Week:** Mihai Leustean.

**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 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 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 recently that we had some folks in the parish who tested positive with the Covid virus. 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.

The altar candle is sponsored today by **Phil** and **Rose Hrabar** for their health and happiness on the 22<sup>nd</sup> anniversary of their marriage. May God grant you many years.

Prayers are offered today by **Giorgia** for the health of **George, Dimitris, Maria, Giorgia** and **Paraskevas** (many years), and in memory of **Fr. Dimitrios, Maria, Paraskevas** and **Stella** (memory eternal).

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.

As of Feb. 3, 2021, 18 pledges were received for 2021 totaling \$46,364. 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.