

**St. Basil Antiochian Orthodox Church**  
**The Most Reverend Metropolitan SABA, Archbishop of New York**  
**And Metropolitan of all North America**  
**The Right Reverend Bishop NICHOLAS, Auxiliary Bishop**  
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**Holy Greatmartyr Anastasia the Deliverer from Bonds & others w/her**

This glorious heroine of the Christian Faith was born in Rome into a wealthy senatorial family of a pagan father and a Christian mother. From her early youth, she clung in love to the Lord Jesus, guided in the teaching of Christ by a devout teacher, Chrysogonus. Anastasia was forced by her father to enter into marriage with a pagan landowner, Publius. Excusing herself on the basis of a female illness, she in no way wished to enter into physical relations with him. For this, her husband tortured her harshly by confinement and starvation. He inflicted even more tortures upon her when he learned of her secret visits to the prisons of the Christian martyrs: bringing them provisions, ministering to them, bathing their wounds and loosening their bonds. But by God's providence she was freed from her wicked husband. Publius was sent to Persia by the emperor, and while sailing on the sea he was drowned. St. Anastasia then began to minister freely to the tortured Christian martyrs and to comfort the poor, giving them alms from her great inheritance. At one time Emperor Diocletian was in the town of Aquileia and ordered that Chrysogonus, the confessor of Christ, be brought to him. St. Anastasia accompanied him on the way. Holy Chrysogonus was beheaded by order of the emperor, and then three sisters, Agape, Chionia and Irene, also suffered (April 16): the first two were cast into fire and the third was shot through with arrows. St. Anastasia took their bodies, wrapped them in white linen, anointed them with many aromatic spices, and honorably buried them. Following this, Anastasia went to Macedonia, where she helped the sufferers for Christ. There she became well known as a Christian, for which she was seized and brought before various judges for interrogation and torture. Desiring to die for her beloved Christ, Anastasia constantly longed for Him in her heart. A certain chief of the pagan priests, Ulpianus, lustfully tried to touch St. Anastasia's body, but he was suddenly blinded and breathed his last. Condemned to death by starvation, St. Anastasia lingered in prison for 30 days without food, nourishing herself only on tears and prayer. Then she was placed in a boat with several other Christians to be drowned, but God delivered her even from this death. She was finally tied by the feet and hands to four wheels over a fire, and she gave up her holy soul to God. She suffered and took up her habitation in the Kingdom of Christ in the year 304.

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

# St. Basil Antiochian Orthodox Church



**December 22, 2024**  
**The Forefeast of, & Sunday before, the Nativity 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:** Hebrews 11:9, 10, 32-40

**Gospel Reading:** St. Matthew 1:1-25

## Saints of the Day

Great-martyr Anastasia of Rome, and her teacher the Martyr Chrysogonos; Martyr Theodota of Bithynia and her children; Martyr Zoilus.

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## Spiritual Counsels...

“When a scoffer is punished, the simple becomes wise; when a wise man is instructed, he gains knowledge.” – Proverbs 21:11

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## WORSHIP SCHEDULE

Saturday, Dec. 21st – Great Vespers & Confessions, 5:00 P.M.  
Sunday, Dec. 22nd – Orthros, 8:30 A.M.; Divine Liturgy, 9:30 A.M.  
Tuesday, Dec. 24th – Royal Hours of the Nativity, 9:00 A.M.  
Tuesday, Dec. 24th – Vespers of the Nativity, 6:30 P.M.  
Wed., Dec. 25th – Orthros, 9:00 A.M.; Divine Liturgy, 10:00 A.M.  
Saturday, Dec. 28th – Great Vespers & Confessions, 5:00 P.M.  
Sunday, Dec. 29th – Orthros, 8:30 A.M.; Divine Liturgy, 9:30 A.M.  
Tuesday, Dec. 31st – Vespers of the Nativity, 6:30 P.M.  
Saturday, Jan. 4th – Great Vespers & Confessions, 5:00 P.M.  
Sunday, Jan. 5th – Orthros, 8:30 A.M.; Divine Liturgy, 9:30 A.M.  
Monday, Jan. 6th – Orthros, 9:00 A.M.; Divine Liturgy, 10:00 A.M.  
Monday, Jan. 6th – Badnjak Service, 6:30 P.M.  
Saturday, Jan. 11th – Great Vespers & Confessions, 5:00 P.M.  
Sunday, Jan. 12th – Orthros, 8:30 A.M.; Divine Liturgy, 9:30 A.M.  
Friday, Jan. 17th – Orthros, 9:00 A.M.; Divine Liturgy, 10:00 A.M.  
Saturday, Jan. 18th – Great Vespers & Confessions, 5:00 P.M.  
Sunday, Jan. 19th – Orthros, 8:30 A.M.; Divine Liturgy, 9:30 A.M.

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



On December 20, the Holy Orthodox Church commemorates the death of St. John of Kronstadt. He was born in 1829 in a village in Siberia and died in 1908. From his childhood, he exhibited a deep religious faith which led him to the priesthood. He served the church in a town outside of St. Petersburg, Russia, home to the Russian Navy. Located on an island, it was a place of great poverty and a place of exile for criminals. He was tireless in visiting the sick and the poor, often returning home without coat or shoes because he had given them away. He performed so many healing miracles that thousands attended his daily Divine Liturgy. Unable to hear the confessions of all that asked him for them, it became necessary to have parishioners confess sins to each other, followed by a communal absolution. He foresaw the Russian revolution, the coming wave of atheism and the death of thousands of Orthodox Christians. His down-to-earth teachings are available in the book “Spiritual Counsels” by St. Vladimir’s Seminary Press. One of his prayers follows:  
[Lord] Your name is love: do not shun me, a person who has gone astray. Your name is strength: strengthen me, who am exhausted and falling down. Your name is light: enlighten my soul which is darkened with earthly passions. Your name is peace: calm my restless soul. Your name is mercy: do not cease to have mercy upon me. —Theo

### **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Advent Fast began Friday, November 15th, and is divided into two periods. The first period is Nov. 15–Dec. 19, with the traditional fasting discipline observed (no meat, poultry, dairy, eggs, fish, alcohol and oil). There is an allowance, however, for alcohol and oil on Tuesdays and Thursdays, and an allowance for alcohol, oil and fish on Saturdays and Sundays. The second period is Dec. 20–24, with the traditional fasting discipline observed. There is an allowance, however, for alcohol and oil only on Saturday and Sunday.

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ, With great joy, the **Ladies Guild** would like to invite you to participate in our traditional **Christmas Angels Project 2024**, to benefit the students and their siblings of five families in great need from Bissonet Plaza Elementary School in Metairie. Like previous years, we offer this chance to give and give generously. Now through December 15th, parishioners may contribute to the effort of making these young children's happy and joyful holiday season. As an organization, we reach out into community during the end of each year to say WE CARE.

Please, make checks payable to St. Basil Ladies Guild. In memo, please write Angels Project 2024. Donations can be given to Tania Russell, Yazmin Incaprera, Diana Lindley or Paulina Kocic. Thank you and God bless.

**Middle Eastern pastries** are available for purchase through the Christmas holidays. Please see **Nadia Khashou** or **Therese Dagher** for more information.

Boxed sets of donation envelopes for 2025, along with calendars, pledge forms and house blessing forms are in the dining room of the Church Hall for each household in the parish. Please get yours today. Additional forms and calendars are available.

The **Parish Council** is scheduled to hold their December meeting today after Divine Liturgy. All Council members please attend.

Our annual **Christmas Pageant** is scheduled for today after Divine Liturgy. Those parents who wish to have their children participate in the pageant should see Pam Nugent.

The **Royal Hours for the Feast of the Nativity of Christ** will be served, God willing, on Tuesday, Dec. 24, at 9:00 A.M.

**Christmas vespers** will be served at 6:30 P.M. on Tuesday, Dec. 24, at 6:30 P.M.

God willing, Orthros and Divine Liturgy for the **Feast of the Nativity of Christ** is scheduled for Wednesday, Dec. 25, at 9:00 A.M. and 10:00 A.M., respectively.

A **Vespertine Divine Liturgy for the Feast of St. Basil the Great**, is, God willing, scheduled for Tuesday, Dec. 31, at 6:30 P.M. The Vasilopita will be offered in the Church Hall afterward.

God willing, Orthros and Divine Liturgy for the **Feast of Theophany** is scheduled for Monday, Jan. 6, at 9:00 A.M. and 10:00 A.M., respectively.

God willing, a **Badnjak Service** will be served for Old Calendar Christmas on Monday, Jan. 6, at 6:30 P.M.

God willing, Orthros and Divine Liturgy shall be celebrated for the **Feast of St. Anthony the Great** at 9:00 A.M. and 10:00 A.M., respectively, on Friday, Jan. 17.

**Today's Coffee Hour:** Team 4. Thank you. **Next Week:** Potluck.