

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 Seven Priestly-Martyrs in Cherson: Basil, Ephrem, Eugenius, Elpidus, Agathadorus, Aetherius and Capito

All of them were bishops in Cherson at different times. All suffered and were martyred at the hands of unbelievers, whether they were Jews, Greeks or Scythians, except Aetherius, who died peacefully. All of them were sent by the Patriarch of Jerusalem as missionaries to bring the light of the Gospel to these wild and uncivilized areas. They were tortured and suffered for their Lord. In Cherson, Basil raised the son of a prince from the dead, which embittered the Jews and they, in turn, brought an accusation against him. He was tied and bound by the feet and dragged through the streets until his soul departed him. Ephrem was beheaded. Eugenius, Elpidus and Agathadorus were beaten with rods and stoned until they gave up their souls to God. Aetherius lived during the reign of Emperor Constantine the Great. He governed the Church in freedom and peace, erected a large church in Cherson, and died peacefully. When the last of them, Capito, was appointed bishop for the wild and savage Scythians, they sought a sign from him that they may believe. They suggested that he enter into a fiery furnace and, if he was not consumed, they would all believe in Christ. With fervent prayers and hope in God, Capito placed his episcopal pallium over his shoulders, signed himself with the sign of the cross, and entered into the flaming hot furnace, keeping his heart close to God. He remained in the flames for about an hour without any injury or damage, either to his body or to his vesture. He came out in good health. Then, at once, all of them cried out: "One is God, the God of the Christians, great and mighty, Who protects His servant in the flaming furnace." The entire city and all the vicinity were then baptized. This miracle was spoken of at length at the First Ecumenical Council [Nicaea, 325 A.D.]. The participants in the Council all glorified God and praised the steadfast and solid faith of St. Capito. It happened that while Capito was traveling along the Dnieper River, he was captured by the pagan Scythians and was drowned. All these seven priestly-martyrs suffered during the early years of the fourth century.

St. Basil Antiochian Orthodox Church



March 7, 2021
The Sunday of Meatfare/Last Judgment

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 Corinthians: 8:8-13; 9:1-2

Gospel Reading: St. Matthew 25:31-46

Saints of the Day

The Hieromartyrs of Cherson: Basil, Ephraim, Eugene, Kapiton, Elpidios, Agathodoros and Aetherios; Venerable Laurence; Venerable Paul the Simple, disciple of Venerable Anthony the Great.

A Late Winter Message from the Parish Council

Dear Parishioners,

We are now well into the new year. We continue to do well financially although there are still quite a few outstanding pledges. We have seen some positive cases of the Corona Virus in our midst. As we see an increase in the number of people who have developed antibodies and in persons who have been vaccinated, we hope to see an easing of concerns over infection. At the same time, we must be wary of new virus strains that could delay the end of the epidemic. Please wear your masks and observe social distancing as you participate in our services. Our pro-

grams will go forward including another air-conditioning upgrade and the installation of St. Anna's Bell. Please pray that we will continue to thrive and that we may soon return to our social time after the Liturgy. Thank you and God bless our Parish—Rob Booms, Chairman of the Parish Council.

WORSHIP SCHEDULE

Saturday, Mar. 6th – Orthros, 9:00 A.M.; Divine Liturgy, 10:00 A.M.

Saturday, Mar. 6th – Great Vespers & Confessions, 5:00 P.M.

Sunday, Mar. 7th – Orthros, 8:30 A.M.; Divine Liturgy, 9:30 A.M.

Saturday, Mar. 13th – Great Vespers & Confessions, 5:00 P.M.

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

Wednesday, Mar. 17th – Presanctified Liturgy, 6:30 P.M.

Friday, Mar. 19th – Presanctified Liturgy, 9:00 A.M.

Friday, Mar. 19th – Akathist Hymn (1st Stasis), 6:30 P.M.

Saturday, Mar. 20th – Great Vespers & Confessions, 5:00 P.M.

Sunday, Mar. 21st – Orthros, 8:30 A.M.; Divine Liturgy, 9:30 A.M.

Wednesday, Mar. 24th – Great Vespers, 6:30 P.M.

Thursday, March 25th Orthros, 9:00 A.M.; Divine Liturgy, 10:00 A.M.

Friday, Mar. 26th – Presanctified Liturgy, 9:00 A.M.

Friday, Mar. 26th – Akathist Hymn (2nd Stasis), 6:30 P.M.

Saturday, Mar. 27th – Orthros, 9:00 A.M.; Divine Liturgy, 10:00 A.M.

Saturday, Mar. 27th – Great Vespers & Confessions, 5:00 P.M.

Sunday, Mar. 28th – Orthros, 8:30 A.M.; Divine Liturgy, 9:30 A.M.

Orthodox Thoughts from Theo, the Parish Possum



My cousin Pogo lives on the grounds of St. Clement of Rome Catholic Church. He asked me the other day if I went to church on Ash Wednesday for the imposition of ashes. I had to tell him that Orthodox people, except for the Western Rite, do not observe Ash Wednesday and do not receive an ash cross. I could not explain why until I researched it.

Father Thomas Hopko writes that Orthodox Lent is quite different from that of the Roman Catholic Church. We begin Lent on “Clean Monday”, the Monday after Cheesefare or Forgiveness Sunday. While our Great Lent is a time of penitence, it is not a season of morbidity and gloominess. The Orthodox are more focused on preparation for Pascha, the Feast of the Resurrection. We are called to joyfulness and purification. We fast from passions, food and ordinary delights and perform good works instead of engaging in the mortification of the

flesh. We are not supposed to flaunt our observance of Lent by outward signs. In the words of the Gospel for Cheese-fare Sunday: "When you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, that your fasting may not be seen by men, but by your Father Who is in secret and your Father Who sees in secret will reward you". 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 Yordonov. **Next Week:** Mihai Leustean.

Today's coffee hour: SUSPENDED. **Next Sunday:** SUSPENDED.

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 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. 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 Church Hall is **CLOSED** except for restroom use.

Per Metropolitan JOSEPH'S directives, no indoor functions or gatherings are allowed in the church hall. This includes coffee service associated with any church service. Lenten meals are not allowed during Great Lent this year.

God willing, Divine Liturgy for our departed loved ones will be offered on the following Saturdays: March 6, March 27, and April 10.

The Akathist Hymn to the Mother of God will be sung on Friday evenings during Great Lent, God willing. The first, third, and fifth Friday evenings will be in English. The second and fourth Friday evenings will be in English and Greek.

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 rescheduled for Sunday, March 28 in the church. Face masks and social distancing are required.

As of March 2, 2021, 25 pledges were received for 2021 totaling \$59,894. The donations for February 2021 totaled \$18,750.00. The expenses were \$8,647.49 for an end-of-month balance of \$34,349.55. Thank you.