



## SS. PETER AND PAUL ANTIOCHIAN ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN CHURCH

### ANTIOCHIAN ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN ARCHDIOCESE OF NORTH AMERICA

"All Things Are Possible to Him Who Believes" (Mark 9:23)

**Metropolitan SABA**  
Primate of the Antiochian  
Archdiocese

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**SUNDAY, JANUARY 28TH, 2024**  
**TONE 1 / EOTHINON 1; THIRTY-FIRST SUNDAY AFTER**  
**PENTECOST & FOURTEENTH SUNDAY OF LUKE**

**OUR RIGHTEOUS FATHER EPHRAIM THE SYRIAN**

VENERABLE PALLADIOS OF ANTIOCH; VENERABLE  
THEODOSIOS OF TOTMA

**\*\*Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom\*\***

The body can neither love nor hate. A body cannot love a body. The ability to love belongs to the soul. When desire, passion. When the soul loves the soul not in God, it is either rapture or pity. When the soul in God loves the soul, regardless of appearance (beauty, ugliness), this is love. And in love there is life.

*- St. Nikolai Velimirovich*

**Great Vespers:** Saturday 6:00 pm  
(Check the Calendar for possible  
cancellation)

**Matins:** Sundays 9:20am

**Divine Liturgy:** Sundays 10:30am

**Confessions:** By appointment

#### **CHOIR DIRECTOR**

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#### **ASSISTANT CHOIR DIRECTORS**

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#### **CHANTERS**

Amjad Khalil  
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Sam Khalil  
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#### **CHURCH SCHOOL**

**Directors**  
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#### **MEN'S FELLOWSHIP**

Sam Khalil

#### **ANTIOCHIAN WOMEN**

Donna Gavin  
Svitlana Sweat

#### **TEEN SOYO**

**& YOUNG ADULTS**  
Sbdn. Chris Abdelahad  
**President:** Samuel Griffin  
**Vice President:** Kiernan El-Hage

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Paula Massouh

#### **ST. IGNATIUS ORDER**

Jumana Misleh

#### **GIFT SHOP**

Gail Bailey

• We welcome all our guests and visitors worshipping with us at the Divine Liturgy.  
• Please let our ushers know that you are visiting with us today. We would love to stay in touch!  
• Please know that Holy Communion is offered to Orthodox Christians, after preparing themselves through prayers, fasting, & confession.  
• Non-Orthodox visitors are welcome to receive blessed bread at the end of the Divine Liturgy & share food with us at coffee hour.

## THE SYNAXARION

On January 28 in the Holy Orthodox Church, we commemorate our righteous Father Ephraim the Syrian.

### *Verses*

*Ephraim, a Syrian by race and tongue, heard an unknown tongue,  
As the psalm saith, calling him up to the heights.*

*On the twenty-eighth, angels leddest up Ephraim to sing his praises before God.*

Ephraim was born in Syria of poor parents in about 306. He spent his youth rather tempestuously, but suddenly a change took place in his soul, and he began to burn with love for the Lord Jesus. Ephraim was a disciple of St. James, bishop of Nisibis. Due to the great grace of God, wisdom flowed from Ephraim's tongue like a stream of honey, and ceaseless tears flowed from his eyes. Industrious as a bee, Ephraim continually wrote books, orally taught the monks in the monastery and the people of Edessa, and dedicated himself to prayer and contemplation. Numerous are his books and beautiful are his prayers, the most famous of which is his prayer recited during Great Lent: "O Lord and Master of my life, take from me the spirit of sloth, meddling, lust of power, and idle talk. But give rather the spirit of chastity, humility, patience and love to me, Thy servant. Yea, O Lord and King, grant me to see my own sins and not to judge my brother; for Thou art blessed unto ages of ages. Amen." When the people wanted to appoint him a bishop by force, he pretended to be insane, racing through the city, dragging his garment behind him. Seeing this, the people left him in peace. Ephraim was a contemporary and friend of St. Basil the Great. Ephraim is considered the apostle of repentance. Even today, his works soften many hearts hardened by sin, returning them to Christ. Ephraim reposed in 378.

On this day, we also commemorate Venerable Palladios of Antioch; and Venerable Theodosios of Totma. By their intercessions, O Christ God, have mercy upon us. Amen.

### RESURRECTIONAL APOLYTIKION IN TONE ONE

While the stone was sealed by the Jews, and the soldiers were guarding Thy most pure body, Thou didst arise on the third day, O Savior, granting life to the world. For which cause the heavenly powers cried aloud unto Thee, O giver of life. Glory to Thy Resurrection, O Christ, glory to Thy kingdom, glory to Thy providence, O Thou Who alone art the lover of mankind.

### APOLYTIKION OF ST. EPHRAIM THE SYRIAN IN TONE THREE

Out of Paradise, a river floweth, \* flooding all the earth with joy unending, \* cheering souls with compunction and saving fear: \* Ephraim, the wine bowl of gladness inspired of God, \* from all eternity chosen to light the Church \* with his sacred hymns, his sermons, his shining canticles, \* whereby he filleth faithful souls with godliness.

### APOLYTIKION OF SS. PETER AND PAUL IN TONE FOUR

O foremost in the ranks of Apostles, and teachers of the world, Peter and Paul, intercede with the Master of all to grant peace unto the world, and to our souls the Great Mercy.

### KONTAKION OF THE PRESENTATION OF CHRIST IN TONE ONE

Thou, O Christ God, Who by Thy Birth, didst sanctify the Virgin's womb, and, as is meet, didst bless Simeon's arms, and didst also come to save us; preserve Thy fold in wars, and confirm them whom Thou didst love, for Thou alone art the Lover of mankind.

Commemorations

**For the Health of these Parishioners**

John & Lily Bitar	Showke George	Christo & Mary Christakis
Suad Shammas	Edward & Rima Rizkallah	Hanneh Daoud
Mike & Dorothy Marge	Ibrahim Saah	Vilma Bellone
Michael Shihadi	Joanna Khoury	Sherrie Zachariah & family
Nadim Zarour	Michael Amouri	Ziad, Leila Deeb & family
Qustandi & Nahida Kaibni	Tagreed Tawil & Family	Nour & Anastasia & Sonny
Nuha & family	Yousef & Ghada	Asma Ayoub
Isabel Threded	Ghassan & Zakieh Jweied	Elias, Taylor & Rami
Shakeh Kerjilian & family	Shirley Neri & family	Margo, Sam & family
Steve, Jenn & family	Fred & Grace Saah	Barbara Zamer & family
Brian, Caroline & family	Fadia, Rich & family	Edward & Eleanor Husson

**Special Prayer this Week for**

Maria Zacharias	Wyne-Hareg	Hind, Habib Debs & family
Ruby Maggard	Maha, Flavio & family	Jeannine & family
Gino Michaels & family	Olivia Azat	Joyce, Lynn & family
Theodore Mike	Jean Yousef & family	
Jamil, Nicole & family	Nancy Dahir & family	Gibran, Paul, Linda, Larry, Kathy

**DEPARTED**

- Abdallah G Dahir
- George A Daher
- Alida Daher
- Emil Daher
- Mounira Haje
- Gabriel Haje
- Ellis Daher
- Bassem & Sonja Daher
- Eli Daher
- Henny Daher
- Eldon Long
- Amina Long
- Evelyn Mary Zacharia
- \* Nicole Fakhoury Kyriakos
- \* Hugo Paez

**MEMORIAL**

Abdallah G. Dahir (40 days)

**Coffee Hour, Holy Bread, & Memorial Wheat** are offered by **Nancy Dahir** in loving memory of her husband, **Abdallah George Dahir**, on his 40-day Memorial.

If you want to offer Holy Bread or host Coffee Hour please use the codes on the side to do so.

**Coffee Hour Available Dates**

- March 10                      April 7
- March 24                     April 28
- March 31                     May 5

Host Coffee Hour



Offer Holy Bread



## Coming Up @ Ss. Peter & Paul

Thursday, February 1st, **Forever Young!** 11-2. Guest Speaker Fr. Timothy Barkley.

Friday, February 2nd, **Feast of the Presentation of our Lord to the Temple.** Matins 6:30, Divine Liturgy 7:30.

Saturday, February 3rd, **Village at Home**, 9:30- 5:45

Saturday, February 3rd, **Young Adult & AV Alumni Gathering**, 5:00 pm

Saturday, February 24th, **Young Adults & Teen SOYO A Day of Service, Prayer & Meditation at the Monastery of St. Nina.** More details to come.

## Book Club

Thursday 8:30 pm - 9:30 pm

February 15, 29  
March 14, 28



**1st & 3rd Tuesday  
Bible Study  
(8:30 pm/Zoom)**

REGISTER HERE



## Teen SOYO Meeting

On the first Sunday  
of every month

## Antiochian Orthodox Women's Retreat & Tea

March 9, 2023



## Village at Home

For Campers in Grades 3-12

**Saturday  
February 3, 2024**

9:30 AM-5:45 PM



There is a box at the candle stand to donate coins or small bills to the **Orthodox Christian Mission Center**

We are grateful for your generosity!

## PROJECT MEXICO HOMEBUILDING

**May 24th through August 14th**

Week-long or multiple week construction teams  
Great for teens and tweens, adult team leaders!

Contact Svitlana Sweat, Ss P&P missions committee



## January Charity Drive

### Will You Give The Water of Life?

#### Digging Wells for Orthodox Missions in Cameroon

We are partnering with Fr. Anastasios Yaounde to raise approximately \$15,000 to dig wells that will radically improve life for hundreds of people and help spread Christianity in the region. As we think about Christ and the waters of Theophany, please consider if you are able to help our sisters. Thank you!

To donate online, kindly choose "Charity Drive" from the drop-down list (no in-kind donations, please).



## Alumni & Young Adult Gathering

February 3, 2024

Camp style Vespers at 5:00 PM

Gathering & Pizza  
Q&A with  
Fr. Chris Shahid  
& Fr. Luke Toumi



For online donations, use your phone's camera to scan this code and follow the link to our secure donation portal.



## THE EPISTLE

*Let Thy mercy, O Lord, be upon us. Rejoice in the Lord, O ye righteous.*

### **The Reading from the First Epistle of St. Paul to St. Timothy. (1:15-17)**

Timothy, my son, the saying is sure and worthy of full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners. And I am the foremost of sinners; but I received mercy for this reason, that in me, as the foremost, Jesus Christ might display His perfect patience for an example to those who were to believe in Him for eternal life. To the King of Ages, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory to the ages of ages. Amen.

## THE GOSPEL

### **The Reading from the Holy Gospel according to St. Luke. (18:35-43)**

At that time, as Jesus drew near to Jericho, a blind man was sitting by the roadside begging; and hearing a multitude going by, he inquired what this meant. They told him, "Jesus of Nazareth is passing by." And he cried, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!" And those who were in front rebuked him, telling him to be silent; but he cried out all the more, "Son of David, have mercy on me!" And Jesus stopped, and commanded him to be brought to Him; and when he came near, Jesus asked him, "What do you want me to do for you?" He said, "Lord, let me receive my sight." And Jesus said to him, "Receive your sight; your faith has made you well." And immediately he received his sight and followed Him, glorifying God; and all the people, when they saw it, gave praise to God.

### ***Forever Young! New Dates***

***First Thursday of the Month: Feb 1st, March 7th, April 4th, May 2nd, June 6th***

Forever Young is a fellowship for our retired parishioners and their friends, or anyone who can attend!

We will pray together, have lunch and enjoy fellowship (maybe games) and some good speaker/topic/activity!

Bring a friend or two even if they are not parishioners.

Please sign up to attend as many of these meetings as you can.

***Feb 1st speaker is Fr. Tim Barkley, a lawyer, who will talk to us on how to get our legal matters in order. On March 7th, a physical therapist will teach us how to take care of our balance and avoid falls.***



## **On Frequent Holy Communion, Part One**

***By Metropolitan Saba (Isper)***

Until the 1970s, the Orthodox did not practice frequent Communion for many reasons, including the liturgical stagnation caused by a long history of continuous persecution. Education ceased and ignorance prevailed, so the prevailing concept was to limit participation in the holy things to a few times a year, such as great feasts. The believers were convinced that man is not worthy to partake of this fearful mystery.

There is no doubt that this conviction among the believers stemmed from their intense reverence for the divine mystery and the realization that they were sinners. The personal piety that the believers had in the last century or so contributed to their conviction that they were unworthy. This prompted the believers to prepare with utmost seriousness to participate in the Holy Sacrament. Since the believers cannot carry out such preparation continuously, they refrained from approaching the holy chalice, rather than approaching when they were not properly prepared.

Added to this is ignorance of the mystery of the Eucharist and its place in the life of the faithful and their spiritual journey, in addition to general ignorance about the church, the community of believers.

In the second half of the 20th century, the understanding of the Holy Eucharist started to deepen under the influence of education and preaching, especially from theologically educated clergy. We have now witnessed a more frequent participation in Holy Communion among believers. But we are also witnessing great complacency in preparing for the great mystery.

There is no doubt that moving the faithful from one practice to another required enormous efforts, but unfortunately, these efforts did not emphasize the importance of preparedness. The focus was placed on the sound ecclesiastical understanding of frequent communion without paying much attention to the importance of the personal preparation and the effort it deserves.

The new teaching gave all attention to the theological aspect of frequent Communion, citing its necessity, based on the theology of the Eucharist and the texts of the Divine Liturgy which declare that the sacrifice is offered for the sake of everyone present. Living a life of repentance was neglected, and now we see crowds coming forward to receive Communion at every liturgy, even though the vast majority of them do not practice the sacrament of Confession at all, even once a year.

There is a necessary distinction between theoretical teaching and the practical methods to apply this teaching in the person's life. Having knowledge of something does not mean living it on an existential level. Knowing, for example, what the Bible says about forgiveness does not mean that I have practiced forgiveness. The same applies to all other virtues. I must then gradually train myself until I reach the level of Christian forgiveness.

Many of us have neglected or forgotten the importance of practical education. We say that we are children of God and that we are free in Christ, and this is a true gospel teaching. But the love of God

that we are discussing did not lead us to act as children of God Almighty, as we exclude the fear of God from our hearts with no deterrent to sin that prevents it from taking hold of us. Therefore, today we are witnessing a decline in morals and the collapse of the home.

The Apostle Paul says: "When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child; when I became a man, I gave up childish ways" (1 Cor. 13:11). Neglecting this basic verse in our churches has led us to superficial spirituality, to the point where we now know how to talk about virtue, but we are indifferent on how to practice it.

No one possesses virtues simply by knowing them theoretically. And practicing repentance is no exception to this rule. We must be vigilant to the importance of preparing our souls and bodies to fully participate in the Eucharist. This preparedness relates to each person's life of repentance. There is no set of rules in this regard that applies to all faithful everywhere, but it is rather related to the personal spiritual life of the believer. The mystery of repentance and confession plays a great role here.

The spiritual father of each believer determines when the spiritual child should or should not approach Communion. This spiritual father may sometimes resort to disciplining the believer by withholding the Eucharist for a period of time in order to raise the believer's spiritual awareness, help him to recognize his sins, and urge him to repent. The father confessor may prevent the believer because he is indifferent to his sin, he does not obey the gospel commandments, etc. Therefore, there is no standard set of rules that applies to everyone. Rather, rules are exercised pastorally in the relationship between the spiritual father and the believer.

## ***Great Litany***

After the opening proclamation, the Great Litany is chanted. This litany begins every liturgical service of the Orthodox Church, as well as virtually all sacraments and special services. It is the all-embracing prayer of the Church for everyone and everything. It consists of petitions to which the people respond: Lord have mercy.

The Great Litany begins with prayers “in peace” and “for peace.” The people then proceed in the litany to pray for their eternal salvation; for the welfare of God’s churches and for the union of all; for the faithful and God-fearing of the particular community; for the bishops, priests, deacons and all the people of the Church; for the nation and its institutions for which all are responsible: the president, civil authorities and armed forces; for the given city and country and for all cities and countries; for good weather and abundant crops; for travelers, for the sick, the suffering and those in captivity.

Finally, after asking God for the deliverance from everything harmful and negative and for his divine help, salvation, mercy and protection, the people remember the Theotokos and all the saints and commend themselves and each other and all their life to Christ their God.

The Great Litany then ends with a doxology proper to the Holy Trinity to whom are due all glory, honor and worship forever. Once more the prayer is completed by the Amen of the people.

## ***Antiphons***

After the Great Litany, psalm verses are chanted proper to the particular occasion. These psalm verses are called the antiphons because they were, and sometimes still are sung by the people in two choirs, each responding antiphonally to the other. There are three sets of antiphons at each Divine Liturgy.

Historically the antiphons were chanted by the people in solemn procession to the church where the Divine Liturgy of the day was to be celebrated. Today, although they are now part of the service itself, they still form the joyful preparation for entrance into the worship of Christ through the Word of the Gospel and the offering and receiving of Holy Communion.

The psalms normally sung as the antiphons at the Divine Liturgy of the Lord’s Day are Psalms 103 and 146. On feast days other psalms are used with particular relevance to the special celebration. To these psalm verses, refrains are added proper to the occasion.

Following the second antiphon, a hymn by the Emperor Justinian, Only-begotten Son, is always sung. It is a hymn of faith in the divinity of Christ and his incarnation, crucifixion, and resurrection as “one of the Holy Trinity” for the salvation of men.

In addition to the two sets of antiphons and the singing of Only-begotten Son, which belong to every Divine Liturgy, a third antiphon is chanted which on normal Sundays in most Orthodox Churches is the Beatitudes of Christ’s Sermon on the Mount according to the Gospel of Saint Matthew (Mt 5.3–12). The Beatitudes are sung with the refrain taken from the words of the Good Thief on the Cross: Remember us, O Lord, when Thou comest in Thy Kingdom (Lk 23.42). On festal occasions special psalm verses with the singing of the Troparion of the day constitute the third antiphon at the Divine Liturgy.