



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 14TH, 2024 LEAVE-TAKING OF & SUNDAY AFTER THE THEOPHANY

HOLY FATHERS SLAIN AT SINAI AND RAITHU;
HOLY MARTYR AGNE

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

Each day examine yourself: What have you sown for the age to come: wheat or weeds? Having tested yourself, arrange to become better the next day, and spend the rest of your life in that manner. In the event that you spent today badly, did not honestly pray to God, did not feel even once contrition in your heart, did not become humble in thought, gave no alms and did no act of charity, but instead did not refrain from anger, from words, from food and drink, or if you sank your mind in unclean thoughts, honestly examine all of this, condemn yourself for it, and firmly resolve that tomorrow you will be more careful to do good and to avoid evil.

- St. Moses of Optina

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

Matins: Sundays 9:20am

Divine Liturgy: Sundays 10:30am

Confessions: By appointment

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Donna Gavin

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& YOUNG ADULTS**
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President: Samuel Griffin
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George Rados
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Denise Bolus

**CHARITIES
COORDINATOR**
Stephen Zolnerowich
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 14 in the Holy Orthodox Church, we take leave of the Feast of Theophany, and we commemorate the holy Forty Fathers that were slain on Mount Sinai in the reign of Diocletian, and those slain in the days of Neilos the Wise.

Verses

*It was swords that have wrought here the many murders,
And the men which suffered were lovers of virtue.
On the fourteenth, bronze killed the Fathers.*

In the fourth century, Ammonios, an Egyptian monk, witnessed the first martyrdom. He tells of how the Saracens attacked his monastery and would have killed all the monks, if God had not intervened. A fire appeared on the summit of the peak, and the whole mountain smoked. The barbarians were terrified, and fled, while the surviving monks thanked God for sparing them. The second massacre occurred nearly one hundred years later, and was also recorded by an eyewitness, St. Neilos the Wise, who miraculously escaped. The attackers permitted some of the monks run for their lives. They also thanked God for sparing them and glorified God for glorifying their departed brethren.

On this day, we commemorate the holy Forty Fathers that were slain at Raithu.

Verses

*As Rachel once anciently wept for her children,
Now Raithu weepeth for her sword-sundered Fathers.*

On the same day of the first attack at Sinai, the Blemmyes martyred forty Fathers at Raithu on the shores of the Red Sea. Igumen Paul exhorted his monks to endure their suffering with courage and pure hearts.

On this day, we also commemorate the holy Martyr Agnes. By the intercessions of Thy saints, O Christ our God, have mercy on us. Amen.

RESURRECTIONAL APOLYTIKION IN TONE SEVEN

Thou didst shatter death by Thy Cross, Thou didst open paradise to the thief; Thou didst turn the sadness of the ointment-bearing women into joy. And didst bid Thine Apostles proclaim a warning, that Thou hast risen O Christ, granting to the world the Great Mercy.

APOLYTIKION OF THE THEOPHANY OF CHRIST IN TONE ONE

When Thou, O Lord, wast baptized in the Jordan, worship of the Trinity wast made manifest; for the voice of the Father bore witness to Thee, calling Thee His beloved Son. And the Spirit in the likeness of a dove confirmed the truth of His word. O Christ our God, Who hast appeared and enlightened the world, glory to Thee.

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 THEOPHANY IN TONE FOUR

On this day Thou hast appeared * unto the whole world, * and Thy light, O Sovereign Lord, * is signed on us who sing Thy praise * and chant with knowledge: Thou hast now come, * Thou hast appeared, O Thou Light unapproachable.

For the Health of these Parishioners

John & Lily Bitar	Showke George	Christo & Mary Christakis
Suad Shammam	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

DEPARTED

Bob Neri
 Julian John El-Hage
 Shawky & Odette El-Hage
 Barbara Mullin
 Susan Shahade
 Adma Shakhshiri
 Michel Nassif

MEMORIAL

Michel Nassif (40 Days)

Special Prayer this Week for

Maria Zacharias	Wyne-Hareg	Hind, Habib Debs & family
Thomasine, Everett Alvarez & Family		Foutni, James, Rachael, Miriam
Ruby Maggard	Jeannine & family	Joyce, Lynn & family
Gino Michaels & family	Robert & Joyce	Aristidis & Kaliopi & family
Olivia Azat	Ann Marie, Lorna	Stephen, Nicole, Isabel & Luis
Michael, Nadia El -Hage & Family		Denise Bolus & Family
Maha Shakhshiri		Madeleine Nassif & Family
Elie, Gisele Moukarzel & Family		Alaa, Zeina Kallas & Family
Maha, Flavio & family		

CHURCHING

Luis Hadley (Stephen & Nicole)

Holy Bread is offered by **Giselle Moukarzel & Dear Friends** in memory of the late **Michel Nassif**.

Coffee Hour is offered by **the El-Hage, the Moukarzel & the Kallas Families** in loving memory of **Michel Nassif** on this 40th 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

- January 21
- February 4
- February 18
- March 3
- March 10
- March 17

Host Coffee Hour



Offer Holy Bread



Coming Up @ Ss. Peter & Paul

Sunday, January 14th, *Young Adults & Professionals Post Liturgy Brunch, 1-3 PM @ Silver* (7150 Woodmont Ave, Bethesda)

January 19th, **Psalmody Concert**, 7:30 PM (Hosted at Our Church)

Sunday, January 21st, ***Make & Distribute Sandwiches***. Following the Divine Liturgy.

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

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

Make & Distribute Sandwiches With Love

*Sunday, January 21st
After the
Divine Liturgy*



Psalmody Concert

*January 19th
7:30 pm*



**Please Scan
QR Code to Purchase Tickets**

Save the Date

March Antiochian Orthodox
Women's Month
Spiritual Retreat and Tea
March 9, 2023

Teen SOYO Meeting

On the first Sunday
of every month

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

Book Club

Thursday 8:30 pm - 9:30 pm

January 11, 25

February 15, 29

March 14, 28



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).



1st & 3rd Tuesday

Bible Study

**(8:30 pm/
Zoom)**

REGISTER HERE



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 Epistle of St. Paul to the Ephesians. (4:7-13)

Brethren, grace was given to each of us according to the measure of Christ's gift. Therefore, it is said, "When He ascended on high He led a host of captives, and He gave gifts to men." (In saying, "He ascended," what does it mean but that He had also descended into the lower parts of the earth? He who descended is He who also ascended far above all the heavens, that He might fill all things.) And His gifts were that some should be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.

THE GOSPEL

The Reading from the Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew. (4:12-17)

At that time, when Jesus heard that John had been arrested, he withdrew into Galilee; and leaving Nazareth he went and dwelt in Capernaum by the sea, in the territory of Zebulon and Naphtali, so that what was spoken by the prophet Isaiah might be fulfilled: "The land of Zebulon and the land of Naphtali, toward the sea, across the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles—the people who sat in darkness have seen a great light, and for those who sat in the region and shadow of death light has dawned." From that time Jesus began to preach, saying, "Repent, for the kingdom of Heaven is at hand."

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



Village at Home

For Campers in Grades 3-12

*Saturday, February 3,
2024*

9:30 AM-5:45 PM



On Epiphany, Part Two

By Metropolitan Saba (Isper)

This feast is an occasion for the believers to examine themselves about the activation of the grace of baptism in their personal lives. The day of our baptism is the day of our true birth, in which we have acquired the sonship of God, and we have put on Christ, as the famous hymn says: “You who are baptized in Christ, in Christ you have been clothed” (see Gal. 3:27). After baptism, the baptized person becomes Christ-like, and must therefore preserve this grace, keep it, and even develop and grow in it, in order to reach the stature of the fullness of Christ.

Saint Gregory Palamas says: “Just as a child takes from his parents the possibility of becoming a man, inheriting parental property upon reaching the appropriate age, but loses it if he dies in the process, so the Christian obtains, by baptism, the ability to become a child of God, an heir of eternal goods, if he (she) does not die spiritually in the course of his (her) life, which is sin.” Sin causes us to lose the graces that we received through baptism.

Use this teaching to reflect on the greatness of the sacrament of baptism and its importance to Christians. This feast invites us to review ourselves and our behavior, in two ways. The first is to preserve the graces of baptism and to cultivate them in us, lest we lose them. It is an occasion to return to the meaning of baptism, to prove the mettle, to preserve it in us, and to live it in its fullness.

The second is the evaluation of our practice of the fulfillment of the sacrament of baptism. The first of these evaluations is to stop choosing the godfather or godmother because of kinship, friendship, or the desire to maintain social graces. We must choose a godly believer who will take this responsibility seriously and be truly a spiritual father or mother. Evaluating the completion of this sacrament means removing it from the prevailing folklore in the way we deal with it and considering it a very serious and important work. We prepare for it by prayer and fasting, and we complete it in a spirit of piety and reverence. We do not consider it a social occasion, nor do we delay it for social or personal reasons. It is an event in which our son or daughter takes the most important thing that a person can receive: the grace to be clothed in Christ and become a son or daughter of God.

The issue of blessing our homes and dedicating them to God comes after the festal liturgy. It is an authentic, honorable Christian tradition. Holy water is a way to bring divine blessing to the home, and we must not lose this practice. Today, this authentic tradition is subject to many obstacles, especially in cities, due to their expansion, living conditions and the schedules of the family. It is imperative for both faithful and priests to strive to find the best way to schedule house blessings. For example, the faithful take the initiative to contact the priest, in order to determine the appropriate time for both, to complete the blessing of the house, and the priest urges the faithful to complete this matter, by pursuing them and communicating diligently with them.

It is necessary for the priest to wear his epitrachelion (stole) while blessing homes with water, treating this as a sacramental act. The epitrachelion symbolizes God's grace descending through the sprinkling of holy water and prayer. When putting it on, the priest says, just like he vests in preparation for the Divine Liturgy: “Blessed be God who pours out His grace upon His priests like the oil of myrrh upon the head, descending upon Aaron's beard, down to the fringe of his raiment.”

Then, the priest chants, with the people of the household that he blesses, the apolytikion of Epiphany, “By Your baptism, O Lord, in the Jordan River...” Children should learn to recite it for the sake of the household. Let us not allow these holy days to pass without taking advantage of them spiritually. This is why we have them.

Prothesis #2

After having poured wine mixed with water into the chalice, the priest then places a piece of bread on the diskos next to the Lamb in remembrance of the Theotokos.

Then pieces of bread are placed on the diskos in memory of John the Baptist, the prophets, apostles, hierarchs, martyrs, monastic saints, healers, and the whole company of the righteous with special mention of the saints commemorated on that particular day. Finally a piece of bread is placed on the diskos in memory of the saint whose liturgy is being celebrated.

In addition, pieces of bread are placed on the diskos for the bishop of the given church, for the civil authorities of the country and for all the faithful both living and dead, once more with particular mention by name of those particularly remembered by the local community.

The diskos and the chalice are then covered with special covers. While the priest recites Psalm 93, and other psalm verses with the offering of incense.

He finally recites in conclusion the following prayer:

O God, our God, who didst send down the Heavenly Bread, the Food for the whole world, our Lord and God Jesus Christ, to be our Savior, Redeemer, and Benefactor, blessing and sanctifying us; Bless this offering, and accept it upon Thy heavenly altar. Remember those who offer it and for whom it is offered, for Thou art good and lovest mankind. Preserve us blameless in the celebration of Thy divine mysteries. For sanctified and glorified is Thy most honorable and majestic name; of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

The small dismissal and benediction follow this prayer, thus ending the service of the prothesis. The prothesis is a rather late development in the history of the Divine Liturgy. It signifies the fathering of the entire Church of God into one great assembly: Christ the Head, together with the Theotokos and all the members of his Body, those already glorified with him in the presence of the Father, together with all of the faithful disciples on earth. The prothesis clearly shows that the eucharistic liturgy is always the action of the entire Church, with its head Jesus Christ, and is always offered "on behalf of all and for all."

Make & Distribute Sandwiches with Love

Can we count on you to make a difference on Sunday, Jan 21st?

Here's the plan:

* **On Sunday**, we will gather after the Divine Liturgy to put together a number of sandwiches and other food items to be distributed to the homeless within our circles of movement.

* **Everyone** is invited to participate, regardless of their age.

* To decide on how many bags we should put together, **WE NEED YOUR COMMITMENT!**

* **Think of how many homeless or needy people** you encounter on a daily basis while going about your life. Include on this form the number you will commit to deliver that week (preferably in the beginning of the week of Jan 21 so food will not perish).

* **One thing we ask you to do** when delivering these bags: Connect with the recipient on a personal level: look them in the eye, ask for their name, (if safe while driving) ask for their story... ***in short, show them the face of Christ, be Christ to them for a minute!***

* **If you are not able to stay to prepare** the bags with us, but you still want to take a few bags with you, we will have some ready for you. Let us know below!

Thank you for letting Christ work through you in our broken world!



Valentine's Married Couples Dinner

Saturday, February 10th @ 6:00 pm at Congressional Country Club.

Child Care will be provided. \$120 Per Couple.

Secure your tickets here/**VERY LIMITED.**



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!

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



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

Details about speakers/activities for these meetings are forthcoming!

Young Adults & Professionals Brunch

TODAY in Bethesda

