



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)

Great Vespers: Saturday 6:00 pm
*Check the Calendar
for possible cancellation*
Matins: Sundays 9:20am
Divine Liturgy: Sundays 10:30am
Confessions: By appointment

Metropolitan SABA
Primate of the Antiochian
Archdiocese

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SUNDAY, DECEMBER 1ST, 2024

FOURTEENTH SUNDAY OF LUKE

THE HOLY PROPHET NAHUM; VENERABLE PHILARET THE
ALMSGIVER OF AMNIA; MARTYR ANANIAS THE PERSIAN

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

Those who do not have Christ in them are full of anxiety. But when man grasps the deepest meaning of life, then all his anxiety goes away and the divine consolation comes and heals. And when a man is freed from stress then all kinds of people rest near him. Do not worry about anything. Anxiety is the devil. When you see anxiety, know that it's the devil's work. When we feel anxious in our struggle, let us know that we are not moving in the space of God. God is not a tyrant to drown us.

- St. Paisios the Athonite

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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 December 1 in the Holy Orthodox Church, we commemorate the holy and glorious Prophet Nahum.

Verses

*Longing doth draw me to anoint with the myrrh of discourse
Nahum the Elkoshite, who hath yielded up his spirit.
On the first, Nahum was conveyed out of life.*

Nahum was born of the tribe of Simeon in a place called Elkosh on the far side of the Jordan. He lived about seven hundred years before Christ and prophesied the destruction of Nineveh about two hundred years after the Prophet Jonah had warned the Ninevites. Because of Jonah's preaching, the Ninevites had repented, and God had spared them and not destroyed them. In time, however, they forgot God's mercy and again became corrupt. The Prophet Nahum prophesied their destruction, and since there was no repentance, God did not spare them. The entire city was destroyed by earthquake, flood and fire, so that its location is no longer known. The Prophet Nahum lived for forty-five years and entered into rest in the Lord, leaving us a small book of his true prophecies.

On this day, we also commemorate the Venerable Philaret the Almsgiver of Amnia; and Martyr Ananias the Persian. By the intercessions of Thy saints, O Christ God, have mercy upon us. Amen.

RESURRECTIONAL APOLYTIKION IN TONE SIX

When Mary stood at Thy grave, looking for Thy sacred body, angelic powers shone above Thy revered tomb; and the soldiers who were to keep guard became as dead men. Thou led Hades captive and wast not tempted thereby. Thou didst meet the Virgin and didst give life to the world, O Thou, Who art risen from the dead, O Lord, 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 PREPARATION OF CHRIST'S NATIVITY IN TONE THREE

On this day the Virgin cometh to the cave to give birth to * God the Word ineffably, * Who was before all the ages. * Dance for joy, O earth, on hearing * the gladsome tidings; * with the Angels and the shepherds now glorify Him * Who is willing to be gazed on * as a young Child Who * before the ages is God.

Commemorations

For the Health of these Parishioners

Lily Bitar & family	Showke George	Christo & Mary Christakis
Suad Shammass	Victor, Linda & Family	Hanneh Daoud
Mike & Dorothy Marge	Ibrahim Saah	Vilma Bellone
Michael Shihadi	Joanna Khoury	Sherrie Zachariah & family
Nadim Zarour	Michael Amouri	Nour & Anastasia & Sonny
Qustandi & Nahida Kaibni	Mary Sahouri & Family	Asma Ayoub
Juliana, Metody & family	Yousef & Ghada	Elias, Taylor & Rami
Isabel Threddeh	Ghassan & Zakieh Jweied	Margo, Sam & Family
Shakeh Kerjilian & Family	Sylvia & Selma Habib	Barbara Zamer & Family
Frank & Barbara Ellis	Grace Saah & Family	Edward & Eleanor Husson
Brian, Caroline & Family	Fadia, Rich & family	Elizabeth Albinger & family
Steve, Jennifer & Family	Samantha Guthrie	Joyce & Terri

DEPARTED

Special Prayer this Week for

Timothy Dowse	Elizabeth Carroll	Lilly Cook
Milena Paskaleva & Family	Michael Piechocinski	Gino Michaels & Family
Kera Tomlin & Family	Antoinette Najmeh	Richard & Jamie
	Samuel, Amanda & NB Thomas	

CHURCHING

Thomas Brown (Samuel & Amanda)

**Well-digging in Cameroon
Update and Opportunity!**

Remember how earlier this year we raised money to dig wells in Cameroon so that our fellow Orthodox could access water?

We've had an update. Drilling for the first two wells will occur at the end of this month and early December. Photos to follow.

The Cameroonians would love to have some of our parishioners attend the drilling of the 3rd well, likely to be done between mid-January and early March. What a wonderful way to build relationships with our fellow Orthodox across the globe, and celebrate the Lord's bounty!

If you're interested, please contact Fr Luke.

**Coffee Hour
Available Dates**

- December 22 January 26
- December 29 February 2
- January 12 February 9

Host Coffee Hour



Offer Holy Bread



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

Coming Up @ Ss. Peter & Paul

Friday, December 6th, *Forever Young* meeting @ 11 AM

Christmas Market, December 7th, 11-5. Bring a neighbor or a friend.

Metropolitan Saba will visit us the weekend of December 14-15. Mark your calendar now to welcome him in our midst.

2025 Church Calendars Are Now Available

Pick up from the literature display stands or ask one of the ushers

St. Raphael's Table

The First Saturday of the Month

Preparing and distributing meals and toiletries to our neighbors in need.

To join in preparation/distribution use this QR code



Amazon Wishlist for Toiletry Bags is available here.

If you are interested in joining the **Order of St Ignatius**, this will be a great opportunity to be inducted while His Eminence is with us.

www.OrderOfStIgnatius.org

Submit your interest in the Order here.

**YOU CAN MAKE
A LASTING
DIFFERENCE**



DONATIONS FOR THE POINSETTIAS

As we approach the Christmas Season, the **Ladies Auxiliary** will be collecting donations for the Poinsettias Project.

Donations are offered for the health of or in memory of your family and/or friends.

Scan QR Code to fill out the form and make your donation.

Prefer a paper form?

Please see Thomaseena Cox or Leila Ayoub.



December Charity Drive

During this month, we will be raising funds for **Bethesda Cares**. Their mission is to prevent, ease, and end homelessness in our community.

For more information, please visit bethesdacares.org.

For Online Donations, choose "Charity Drive".



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

REGISTER HERE



Forever Young!

First Friday of the Month

REGISTER HERE



Teen SOYO Christmas Card DEADLINE TODAY

Scan QR Code
To Contribute



Antiochian Women Christmas Luncheon

Saturday, December 14 at 1:00 pm

Ss. Peter & Paul

Kogok Banquet Hall

Guest Speaker Metropolitan Saba
Lenten Lunch, Art Silent Auction,
Door Prizes, and Games

Scan QR Code to
Purchase Tickets



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



THE EPISTLE

O Lord, save Thy people and bless Thine inheritance.

To Thee, O Lord, have I cried, O my God.

The reading from the Epistle of St. Paul to the Ephesians. (2:4-10)

Brethren, God, Who is rich in mercy, out of the great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead through our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), and raised us up with Him, and made us sit with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, that in the coming ages He might show the immeasurable riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. For by grace you have been saved through faith; and this is not your own doing, it is the gift of God—not because of works, lest any man should boast. For, we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

THE GOSPEL

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

At that time, when 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 Jesus, glorifying God; and all the people, when they saw it, gave praise to God.

**Stay Up-to-date By Joining
Ss. Peter & Paul WhatsApp Community**

An Opportunity to
Stay Connected
Join a Variety of Chat Groups
And Receive Parish Announcements



Scan QR Code to Join

The Holy Scriptures: Nourishment of the Faithful, Part Two

By His Eminence Metropolitan Saba (Isper)

What, in reality, is this book?

The Bible is, first and foremost, a theological book, presenting the mystery of God to humanity in a practical, not theoretical, manner. God, whose mystery cannot be comprehended, reveals Himself to humanity little by little, progressively. God accompanies humans with astonishing patience to open their minds to understand Him as He is, not as they imagine Him to be. Often, people misunderstood Him (and still do), attributing their whims and perceptions to Him, distorting and desecrating His image. The perpetual sin of mankind is to restrict God according to its measure, instead of raising itself to the measure of God. Therefore, God chose to reveal Himself by using those whom He designated, those to whom we refer as prophets and apostles. However, He began to practically reveal Himself through accompanying the people to whom He chose to reveal Himself. From Abraham, the father of the fathers and the father of many nations, to Jesus Christ, God patiently waited over eighteen centuries for His image to be truly revealed to humanity – yet people still want to perceive Him in their own image and superimpose onto Him their ideas and interpretations.

The Bible is, therefore, a divine book, gradually unveiling the truth of God using the style that is understood by those to whom He reveals Himself. If the book speaks of history, it is to show God's work within it, thus revealing His nature. Let us use the following image as an example of this:

According to the understanding of the peoples of the Near East, when two ancient peoples confronted each other in war, their respective gods were believed to take part in the war alongside them – isn't this what we see in the religious thinking of people even today? So, when one people is victorious, their god is deemed as the strongest; thus, the defeated people worship him, while the victorious offer him thanks. In this manner, the believers of the Old Testament believed that God fought on their side when they won; but when they were defeated, unlike all of the other ancient peoples (and herein lies the divine work in the holy scriptures), they understood it that their God abandoned them because they had sinned. Therefore, they had to repent and return to obeying their God's commandments to win and be liberated.

Thus, God revealed Himself as the Master of history. God used history as a stage to reveal His attributes. When the holy scriptures narrate a historical event, they do so not historically but theologically – meaning that the purpose is not a historical record of the event, but a religious perspective on the God Who is revealed through it. The protagonist of the event is not the prophet or the king or the leader, but God, Who is hidden behind what is happening in history, or rather, moves the strings of history while holding them all in His hands.

In this way, we should read the holy scriptures as a message from God addressed to us personally – a message telling us that we are loved by Him; that the meaning of our lives and

existence is in Him, with Him, and through Him; and that we are called to remove the dirt of sins accumulated on us to see the truth of God as He is.

Anyone who has experienced the extent to which his sins conceal him from God realizes well the way in which human beings pollute and distort the image of God. God's continuous work in the holy scriptures was to constantly reveal Himself each time to the extent that people could understand and comprehend until "the fullness of time" arrived, when God fully revealed Himself to them in the person of His only begotten Son, Jesus Christ. "And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father" (John 1:14).

God did not complete this revelation independently, apart from man. That is to say, God was not solely the actor and man solely the receiver. Man needed to grow in the knowledge of God so that God could reveal Himself more and more. Thus, an educational program was initiated by God for the benefit of man. This divine program required the gradual elevation of man's spiritual level until it could rightly come to the knowledge of God. The fallen, sinful man, enslaved to Satan and incapable of enjoying the grace of God – whose mind was darkened and divided against himself, his brother, and nature – longed for his origin but did not know it and could not reach it; he could not begin to walk the right path. The solution was in God's hands, and the initiative came from Him.

His first call went to Abraham. Thus, Abraham knew a God Who makes and fulfills His promises, as when He promised him that Sarah would conceive. He is a God Who does not accept human sacrifices, but as seen in the narrative of the sacrifice of Isaac, instead asks for animal sacrifices (Gen. 22:1-19). He is a God different from other gods. Abraham's righteousness lies in his loyalty to God. God did not change much about Abraham's habits and moral concepts, but was content to be Abraham's God, and for Abraham to be merely loyal to Him and His teachings. Thus, God was first known as the God of Abraham. Then, with the descendants of Abraham, He became the God of Abraham and Isaac, and later Jacob was added. Thus, He was known as the God of our fathers.

This was not strange to the concepts of those days. Each tribe had its god, each clan had its deity, and often a clan had more than one. However, the God of our fathers was different because He did not accept any other god beside Him. He is a jealous God, restricted by nothing: no idol, no image, no place. He initiates and commands, and He is obeyed. He is the God Who makes a covenant with man and remains loyal to this covenant, so long as man reciprocates this loyalty. When man breaks God's covenant, as he often did and still does today, God's response is to leave him until he repents and returns to Him – then He accepts him quickly and resumes His commitments. Even in God's temporary abandonment of man, there is an educational objective. Such a dynamic and vital relationship is unknown in the history of religions: A God calls, and a man responds. Man often falters and disrupts this covenantal relationship, yet God waits for His creation to recommit to the terms of that covenant and resume the journey with Him towards the completion of its salvation. Ours is a God who endured for eighteen hundred years the harshness of man, his narrow-mindedness and his ignorance. Such a God could not be the creation of human beings because humanity was not capable of contemplating such a God.

Church History - Fourth Century **Constantine (Part Two)**

Excerpts from the Edict of Milan

When with happy auspices I, Constantinus Augustus, and I, Licinius Augustus, had arrived at Milan, and were enquiring into all matters that concerned the advantage and benefits of the public, among the other measures directed to the general good, or rather as questions of highest priority, we decided to establish rules by which respect and reverence for the Deity would be secured, i.e, to give the Christians, and all others, liberty to follow whatever form of worship they chose, so that whatsoever divine and heavenly powers that exist might be enabled to show favor to us and to all who live under our authority. . . . we have given the said Christians free and absolute permission to practice their own form of worship. . . .

With regard to the Christians, we also give this further ruling. In the letter sent earlier to Your Dedicatedness, precise instructions were laid down at an earlier date with reference to their places where earlier on it was their habit to meet. We now decree that if it should appear that any persons have bought these places either from our treasury or from some other source, they must restore them to these same Christians without payment and without any demand for compensation, and there must be no negligence or hesitation. . . . All this property is to be handed over to the Christian body immediately, by energetic action on your part, without any delay.

And since the aforesaid Christians not only possessed those places where it was their habit to meet, but are known to have possessed other places also, belonging not to individuals but to the legal estate of the whole body, i.e., of the Christians, all this property, in accordance with the law set forth above, you will order to be restored without any argument whatever to the aforesaid Christians.

The Orthodox Faith
Volume III - Church History

Ss. Peter & Paul Christmas Market

Sunday, December 7 (11:00 AM - 5:00 PM)

- * 30+ local artisans and small business
- * Kids fun activities (craft station open all day; face painting 12-2 pm)
- * Santa's visit and family photos (1-2 pm & 4-5 pm)
- * Live music performances (Christmas Carols 2:30 pm; 2 music bands; DJ)
- * Sweet and Savory food vendors (Mediterranean cuisine and more...)
- * Church tours (all day)

Admission is free

Christmas Market **Volunteer Opportunities**

- Church Tours
- Kids Corner
- Setup
- Tear Down
- Welcome Table
- Church Bookstore Table
- Teens Table

