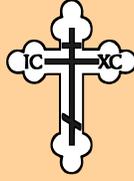


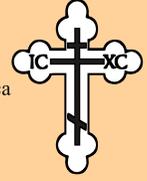


St. Basil the Great Orthodox Church

205 Highland Avenue
Des Peres, MO 63122



A parish of the Diocese of Chicago and Mid-America
Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia



V. Rev. Fr. Martin Swanson, Pastor
Fr. Sergii Alekseev, Associate Pastor
V. Rev. Fr. Radomir Chkautovich, Attached

July 2018

The Holy Apostles Peter and Paul

The divinely-blessed Peter was from Bethsaida of Galilee. He was the son of Jonas and the brother of Andrew the First-called. He was a fisherman by trade, unlearned and poor, and was called Simon; later he was renamed Peter by the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, Who looked at him and said, "Thou art Simon the son of Jonas; thou shalt be called Cephas (which is by interpretation, Peter)" (John 1:42).

On being raised by the Lord to the dignity of an Apostle and becoming inseparable from Him as His zealous disciple, he followed Him from the beginning of His preaching of salvation up until the very Passion, when, in the court of Caiaphas the high priest, he denied Him thrice because of his fear of the Jews and of the danger at hand. But again, after many bitter tears, he received complete forgiveness of his transgression.

After the Resurrection of Christ and the descent of the Holy Spirit, he preached in Judea, Antioch, and certain parts of Asia, and finally came to Rome, where he was crucified upside down by Nero, and thus he ascended to the eternal habitations about the year 66 or 68, leaving two Catholic (General) Epistles to the Church of Christ.

Paul, the chosen vessel of Christ, the glory of the Church, the Apostle of the Nations and teacher of the whole world, was a Jew by race, of the tribe of Benjamin, having Tarsus as his homeland. He was a Roman citizen, fluent in the Greek language, an expert in knowledge of the Law, a Pharisee, born of a Pharisee, and a disciple of Gamaliel, a Pharisee and notable teacher of the Law in Jerusalem. For this cause, from the beginning, Paul was a most fervent zealot for the traditions of the Jews and a great persecutor of the Church of Christ; at that time, his name was Saul (Acts 22:3-4).

In his great passion of rage and fury against the disciples of the Lord, he went to Damascus bearing letters of introduction from

the high priest. His intention was to bring the disciples of Christ back to Jerusalem in bonds. As he was approaching Damascus, about midday there suddenly shone upon him a light from Heaven. Falling on the earth, he heard a voice saying to him, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me?" And he asked, "Who art Thou, Lord?" And the Lord said, "I am Jesus Whom thou persecutest; it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks." And that heavenly voice and brilliance made him tremble, and he was blinded for a time. He was led by the hand into the city, and on account of a divine revelation to the Apostle Ananias, he was baptized by him, and both his bodily and spiritual eyes were opened to the knowledge of the Sun of Righteousness.

And straightway- O wondrous transformation! - beyond all expectation, he spoke with boldness in the synagogues, proclaiming that "Christ is the Son of God" (Acts 9:1-21). As for his zeal in preaching the Gospel after these things had come to pass, as for his unabating labors and afflictions of diverse kinds, the wounds, the prisons, the bonds, the beatings, the stonings, the shipwrecks, the journeys, the perils on land, on sea, in cities, in wildernesses, the continual vigils, the daily fasting, the hunger, the thirst, the nakedness, and all those other things that he endured for the Name of Christ, and which he underwent before nations and kings and the Israelites, and above all, his care for all the churches, his fiery longing for the salvation of all, whereby he became all things to all men, that he might save them all if possible, and because of which, with his heart aflame, he continuously traveled throughout all parts, visiting them all, and like a bird of heaven flying from Asia and Europe, the West and East, neither staying nor abiding in any one place - all these things are related incident by incident in the Book of the Acts, and as he himself tells them in his Epistles.

His Epistles, being fourteen in number, are explained in 250 homilies by Saint John Chrysostom and make manifest the loftiness of his thoughts, the abundance (continued page 6)

Special Services & Events for July

7/4 Wed. 3:00 p.m. Fr. Martin's Office Hours
7/4 Wed. 6:30 p.m. Choir Practice
7/6 Fri. 6:00 p.m. Vigil for The Nativity of St. John the Baptist
7/7 Sat. 9:00 a.m. D. Liturgy for the Nativity of St. John the Baptist
7/11 Wed. 3:00 p.m. Fr. Martin's Office Hours

7/11 Wed. 6:00 p.m. Vigil for Sts. Peter & Paul
7/12 Thurs. 8:00 a.m. D. Liturgy for Sts. Peter and Paul
7/16 Mon. 6:00 p.m. Vigil for the Royal Martyrs of Russia
7/17 Tues. 8:00 a.m. D. Liturgy for the Royal Martyrs of Russia
7/18 Wed. 3:00 p.m. Fr. Martin Office Hours
7/18 Wed. 6:30 p.m. Choir Practice
7/25 Wed. 3:00 p.m. Fr. Martin's Office Hours
7/25 Wed. 6:30 p.m. Choir Practice

St. Basil the Great Orthodox Church St. Louis, MO

Parish News

Please Support Your Parish Fundraiser, September 29, 2018

To raise money for the parish, we will be having a one-day, multi-family yard sale on Saturday, September 29, 2018 from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Please help us make this event a success.

There are a number of ways that you can get involved. There is a sign-up sheet on the bulletin board in the hall where you can indicate your willingness and availability to help out. If you have been intending to donate items around your house to a charity, please donate them to St. Basil's for the sale.

Please note!! We are unable to accept or store items at the church until after the Sunday liturgy/trapeza on September 23.

During the week prior to the sale, we may need some parishioners to help pick-up and/or deliver larger items to the church. We will need help with advertising/signage, accepting delivery of items at the church in the days immediately before the sale, pricing items, setting up tables, selling items, and cleaning up. Please save the date and if possible, please donate a little time to be at the church helping out on the day of the sale. We'll probably need to start setting up at about 6 a.m. to be ready by 8.

At the end of the sale, all leftover items will be donated to Goodwill (or a similar organization). If you have questions about donating items or if you would like to volunteer to help make the fundraiser a success, please contact parishioner Heather Bailey (Marshall) by phone (217-622-0178) or email (heather131@centurylink.net).

PLEASE NOTE!

It is proper that you remain quiet and refrain from moving about the church from the time following the Gospel until Holy Communion. This is a time of great solemnity when people are trying to concentrate on the most sacred part of the Divine Liturgy. Moving about even to attend to the candle stands can be quite distracting during this time. (If the candle require attention during this time please leave them to the people appointed to such work)

Parish Prayer List

The newly reposed Servant of God Alexander (Julia Sakharova's stepfather). Memory Eternal
Reader Gennady—Health
Boris Artemov—Health
Michele Johnstone (Healing of broken foot)
Hieromonk Seraphim—Health

Keep our parishioners, and those who ask us to pray for them in your prayers this month. Contact Fr. Martin to have yourself

or your loved ones added to the parish prayer list. Let one of the Fathers know if you, a member of your family, or a friend is ill or hospitalized so that appropriate prayers and visits can be arranged. Please note: Hospitals don't notify clergy of patients, even if you list yourself as a parish member.

Contact Your Priest if You are Ill or Hospitalized

Contact Fr. Martin to have yourself or your loved ones added to the parish prayer list. Let one of the Fathers know if you, a member of your family, or a friend is ill or hospitalized so that appropriate prayers and visits can be arranged. Please note: Hospitals don't notify clergy of patients, even if you list yourself as a parish member.

USE eSCRIP

It costs \$0 and benefits the parish. Get Cards at the candle counter. Sign up for the AMAZON rebate program to have a portion of you Amazon purchase donated by them to the parish. Please find sign up instructions next to the stair case in the hall.

SERVERS WANTED!

Boys may begin to serve in the altar at St. Basil's from the time they begin to go to Confession (usually about 9 years old). We encourage all our boys to serve in the altar! For more information please contact Michael Orlando.

St. Basil's Parish Facebook Page:

www.facebook.com/StBasiltheGreatSTLMO

For daily edification and updates of interest, like our Facebook Fanpage! Parishioner Ron Wall brings the best of Orthodoxy to us there everyday! "Like" us to appear in your FB Newsfeed

Correction;

In the June issue, page 3, we inadvertently attributed the following incorrect statement to Archpriest Andre Papkov: "...the First Ecumenical Council in Nicaea in 325 was presided over by whom? St. Athanasius, who at the time was a deacon... ." According to ancient sources it is impossible to determine who presided over the First Ecumenical Council. It is quite possible that it was Constantine himself who presided for most of the sessions or it could have been Ossius of Cordova, Constantine's official ecclesiastical counselor. (L'Huillier, Archbishop Peter: The Church of the Ancient Councils, St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, NY 1996. p. 19.)



St. Basil the Great Orthodox Church St. Louis, MO

Diocesan Assembly - Des Plaines, IL - 2018

Parish Delegation Attends Clergy/Laity Conference

A delegation of clergy and parishioners attended the Tri-Annual Diocesan Clergy and Laity Conference held at the Cabrini Retreat Center in Des Plaines, Illinois from June 12 through June 16th.

The delegation included Frs. Martin and Sergei as well as Carol Surgant. John Surgant attended as a representative from the Orthodox Christian Development Association. The Clergy and laity from throughout the 16-state diocese gathered to hear reports on the various activities of the diocese since the last assembly in 2015, to elect officers to serve on the diocesan Council and Diocesan Auditing Committee, to share fellowship and learn best practices from throughout the diocese, and – perhaps most importantly – to celebrate the Divine Services daily. Each morning began with the celebration of Matins and the Divine Liturgy just as each day ended with the celebration of Vespers.

A highlight of the Assembly was hearing a presentation by Archpriest Josiah Treham, rector of St. Andrew's Orthodox Church in Riverside, California, on "The Forming of

Catechumens". Fr. Josiah's parish currently has twenty (20) catechumens and over five hundred active parishioners.

During the deliberations of the assembly reports were heard on the work of the following Diocesan wide committees: Monastic Communities, Youth, Building, Military Chaplaincy, and Music. In addition, the Diocese Financial Report was read. Elections to various Diocesan bodies were also held. Fr. Martin was once again elected to the Diocesan Council and Fr. Sergei was returned as secretary of the Diocesan Spiritual Court. St. Basil's was honored by having Carol Surgant elected as a delegate to the Diocesan Council.

On Friday, June 15 and Saturday, June 16 the Divine Services were in honor of the New Martyrs of Russia, given the significant commemorations of the centenary of the Royal Martyrs this year. His Eminence, Archbishop Peter, who presided over the Diocesan Assembly as the ruling hierarch of the diocese also served the Hierarchical Divine Liturgy.. The Myrrh Streaming Hawaiian Icon of the Mother of God was present at the Vigil on June 15 and Liturgy on June 16, which was a source of great consolation and joy for the assembly delegates and all who were present at these services.

Picture: Circled on the left - parishioners John and Carol Surgant; circled left center - Fr. Sergii (top) and Fr. Martin (below)



St. Basil the Great Orthodox Church St. Louis, MO

Diocesan Resolution 2018

Diocesan Resolution

"Holy Father, keep through Thine own name those whom Thou hast given Me, that they may be one, as We are." (John 17:11)

In the God-protected city of Des Plaines, under the spiritual leadership of His Eminence Archbishop Peter of the Diocese of Chicago and Mid-America, the triennial Diocesan Assembly convened from June 12 to June 16, 2018.

The assembly resolves:

- With gratitude to Fr. Josiah Trenham for his lecture about his approach to catechism at St. Andrew Antiochian parish in Riverside, CA, we are inspired to provide a more thorough catechism of new members and lifelong catechism for ourselves, both clergy and laity. We must strive to deepen our faith in pursuit of holiness. Having more fully 'put on Christ,' we will be better equipped to fulfill Christ's command to teach all nations, bringing them the healing Grace He has so generously bestowed upon us.
- We lament the drastic decline in faith within our society and the resulting societal costs: depression, addiction, suicide and a loss of a clear moral compass. These problems most acutely affect our youth, the future leaders of the Church. We rededicate ourselves to support, nurture and pray for these valuable, but often under-appreciated, members of our parishes.
- To that end, we call on the clergy of our diocese to better educate themselves on the growing problems of addiction and suicide. The Pastoral School of the Diocese of Chicago and Mid-America will create continuing education programs on

these and other topics of concern. The diocese will establish guidelines for responding to mental health issues to aid the clergy.

- We urge parishes to consciously nurture their youngest members so that they receive from their elders the vital spark of faith which will help to light their path through this increasingly dark world in which we live. We ask families to develop the 'first Church', the home, so that all family members pray daily at home, read Holy Scripture and spiritual books, and devote themselves to good works.
- We note the spiritual significance of the Assembly gathering in the week after the Feast of All Saints of Russia and concluding with the diocesan celebration of the New Martyrs and Confessors of Russia, in the 100th year anniversary of the start of the godless persecution in Russia and of the martyrdom of the Royal Family, who are preeminent examples of pious family life. We appeal to the faithful of the diocese to ask for their continued intercessions on our behalf before the Throne of God!
- As stewards of the gifts of God, we understand that tithes and alms are a concrete expression of our love for God. It is our prayer that the faithful will more fervently support the financial needs of their parishes, so that they may more diligently fulfill their financial obligations to the diocese in a more timely manner.
- We know that Our Savior is "the Way, the Truth and Life." Lamentably, the world only offers us confusion, deception, and death. Christ's Church is indeed a spiritual hospital, providing a healing and a listening presence in the world. By the prayers of the Royal Family and all the the New Martyrs and Confessors of Russia, may God help our diocese to fulfill our high calling.

On the Holy Mystery of the Divine Commandments by St. Maximus the Confessor ca. 580-662

Jn. 14:23 Jesus answered him, "If anyone loves me, he will keep My word, and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him."

1 Jn. 3:24 Whoever keeps His commandments abides in God, and God in him. And by this we know that he abides in us, by the Spirit whom He has given us.

God the Word of God the Father is mystically present in each of His own commandments. God the Father is by nature completely inseparable in the whole of His Word. Therefore the one who receives the divine commandment and accomplishes it receives in it the Word of God. The one who

has received the Word through the commandments has received along with Him the Father Who is in Him by nature. For the Scripture says, "Amen I say to you, the one who receives the one who sent me." Therefore the one who has accepted a commandment and performed it has received in mystical possession the Holy Trinity. (Chapters on Knowledge, Second Century 71)

On the Agreement of Holy Scripture

by Patriarch Gennadios Scholarios 1400-1473

[T]he Scriptures of our faith are in agreement in all things because those who wrote them had a common Teacher: the grace of God. Were it other than this they might disagree. (The Truth of Our Faith)

St. Basil the Great Orthodox Church St. Louis, MO

Entry, Vesting and Proskomedia of the Divine Liturgy

Unknown Part of the Divine Liturgy

Perhaps the phrase which you are going to read right now will sound unbelievable, but here it is: the Divine Liturgy on any given Sunday morning at Saint Basil the Great Orthodox Church in St Louis does not begin at 10 A.M. but at 9A.M. or even earlier. You: “What?! You gotta be kidding!”

And yet it is true. What begins at 9:40 A.M. with the reading of the Hours or at 10:00 A.M. with the “Blessed is the Kingdom ...” is the public portion of the Divine Liturgy, the portion in which all the faithful participate. So, what precedes the public worship? What is there that we do not know?



Entrance into the Altar

When some of us are still in bed, the priest enters the temple, goes up upon the Amvon, stands before the Royal Doors, makes three bows and begins the Entrance Prayers. These prayers consist of the usual beginning “Blessed is Our God ...”, followed by the familiar “Heavenly King ...”, Trisagion prayers through “Our Father ...”, and then the priest reads the three troparia which we read on the first pages of our Evening Prayers. After this the priest turns to the

local icon of Christ (the icon to the south of the Royal Doors), recites a troparion “We bow down before Thy most pure image ...”, makes a bow and venerates the small icon of Christ located on the south column of the Royal Doors. Then he turns left and reads a troparion to the Mother of God “As thou art a well-spring of compassion ...”, bows and venerates the small icon of the Theotokos on the north column by the Royal Doors. After this he either bows his head low or prostrates before the Royal Doors and prays, asking God “to stretch forth” His “hand” and “strengthen” the priest for His “appointed service” of “the bloodless holy ministry”. Then he turns towards the nave, bows to the left and to the right, thus asking forgiveness from the people who are either present or will be present soon in the temple, and reverently enters the holy altar reciting the second half of Psalm 5 beginning with the words “I shall go into Thy house, I shall worship towards Thy holy temple ...”. Once in the altar, the priest makes three prostrations before the holy altar table, venerates the Gospel, the cross and the holy table and makes the final prostration.



Vesting

Now the priest puts on the vestments in which he is going to serve, reciting the appointed verses from the Psalter for each item and kisses them before they are put on. After this he washes his hands

reciting the second half of Psalm 25 beginning with the words: “I will wash my hands in innocence and I will walk around Thine altar, O Lord ...”

Proskomede

At this time begins a very important part of the Divine Liturgy which we do not usually see. It is called Proskomede, or



Proskomedia, which means “offering for sacrifice” in Greek. This portion of the service is rather complex and it may take a young priest awhile to learn to serve it with confidence enshrined in the fear of God. We are going to give here only a basic outline of the service.

The priest sets forth on the proskomede table, also known as table of oblation (which is located against the north wall of the altar) the following: the holy cup, or chalice, the diskos, the star, the veils, the spear, the spoon and five prosphoras. (These items are used in the Divine Liturgy and most of us have never seen them and have no idea what they are. When we are going to talk in more detail about the service, we shall discuss each item and have appropriate illustrations).

From the priest’s point of view, the service of the Proskomede consists of three parts: preparation of the Lamb, commemoration (or rather asking intercessions) of the Mother of God and different ranks of saints, and finally the commemoration of both living and departed member of Christ’s Holy Church. The Lamb, that is Christ Who is “sacrificed for the life of the world and its salvation”, in the context of the Divine Liturgy is the central portion (cube in shape) of the lamb prosphora – the liturgical loaf of bread, baked according to strict specifications, which has a square imprint of the cross with the letters IC XC NI KA on its top. During the most important part of the Divine Liturgy which is called the Eucharistic Canon, or Anaphora, this Lamb by the action of the Holy Spirit becomes the Body of Christ, of which both the clergy and the laity partake with fear and trembling.

St. Basil the Great Orthodox Church St. Louis, MO

Entry, Vesting and Proskomedie of the Divine Liturgy

In the course of the Proskomedie, with each holy action of the priest accompanied by his reciting appointed verses of the psalms, the Lamb is prepared and the holy cup is filled with wine, which will become the Blood of Christ during the Eucharist Canon. After this, the priest asks for intercessions of the Mother of God and the saints, and for each such intercession he cuts out a small pyramid-shaped particle of a prosphora and places them on the diskos around the Lamb. Finally, the priest prays by name for those whom he wishes to commemorate, or those who have asked him to do so by supplying him with the names and prosphoras. For every name he utters he removed a tiny particle from the prosphora, so that in the end of the Divine Liturgy, after the communion of the

faithful, these particles would be reverently immersed into the Holy Blood of Christ by the deacon with the words: "Wash away, O Lord, the sins of all those commemorated here (meaning the people for whom particles lying on the diskos were taken out) through Thy precious Blood, through the prayers of Thy saints".

This, in a nut shell, is what constitutes the first part for the Divine Liturgy, which is in fact a preparation for the eucharistic sacrifice but it is so vital that without it the Eucharist cannot be accomplish. All described above takes significant time, effort and prayer of the priest on behalf all of us. Proskomedie will be discussed in more detail in the upcoming issues of the newsletter.



(continued from page 1) of the revelations made to him, the wisdom given to him from God, wherewith he brings together in a wondrous manner the Old with the New Testaments, and expounds the mysteries thereof which had been concealed under types; he confirms the doctrines of the Faith, expounds the ethical teaching of the Gospel, and demonstrates with exactness the duties incumbent upon every rank, age, and order of man. In all these things his teaching proved to be a spiritual trumpet, and his speech was seen to be more radiant than the sun, and by these means he clearly sounded forth the word of truth and illumined the ends of the world. Having completed the work of his ministry, he likewise ended his life in martyrdom when he was beheaded in Rome during the reign of Nero, at the same time, some say, when Peter was crucified.

The Icon of the Holy Apostles Peter and Paul

The Orthodox Church has a beautiful presentation of the importance and prominence of the Apostles Peter and Paul with the icon that shows both Apostles standing together holding an image of the Church.

Both Apostles, being chosen by our Lord, were instrumental in

the establishment and growth of the early Church through their boldness, spiritual strength, and wisdom. Thus they are recognized as "pillars" of the Church, having offered all even unto death for the sake of the Gospel of Christ.

In the icon, the Apostle Paul, the great missionary of the early Church, is holding a Gospel book, while the Apostle Peter offers a blessing with his right hand. At the top of the icon is the is a semicircle, representing the divine realm. Rays extend in the semicircle representing the blessings and presence of God upon His two chosen heralds of the True Faith.

