

**SAINT BASIL THE GREAT  
ORTHODOX CHURCH**

**St. Basil's Celebrates the Nativity of Our Lord**

Many people packed into St. Basil's on Tuesday morning to celebrate the birth of our Lord. As usual, Vigil was served the night before. Following the Divine Liturgy on Jan. 7th, the children of the parish performed a very special and tender reenactment of Christ's Nativity. Narrated by Phontini Mills, the children, dressed as angels, shepherds, sheep, and wise men, came to adore the newborn Christ. After the play and some caroling, everyone sat down to the Nativity luncheon. The next Saturday morning, parishioners and many visitors gathered for the traditional Yolka in the church hall. The main event was a children's play called "Busy Fly" or "Myxa Цокотуха". After the play, Father Frost and his Snow Maiden also came to watch the children play games and gave gifts to all the children there.



**205 Highland Avenue  
Des Peres, MO 63122**

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

**Archpriest Martin Swanson, Pastor**  
**Priest Sergii Alekseev, Associate Pastor**  
**Archpriest Radomir Chkautovich, Attached**

**Weekly Services:**

Saturday - Vigil 5:00 p.m.

Sunday - Divine Liturgy 10:00 a.m.



**Special Services & Events**

- **Blessed Xenia of St. Petersburg**  
Wed. Feb. 5 6 p.m. Vigil  
Thurs. Feb. 6 8 a.m. Divine Liturgy
- **Three Holy Hierarchs**  
Tue. Feb. 11 6 p.m. Vigil  
Wed. Feb. 12 8 a.m. Divine Liturgy
- **Meeting of the Lord in the Temple**  
Fri. Feb. 14 6 p.m. Vigil

Sat. Feb. 15 9 a.m. Divine Liturgy

- **Memorial Saturday**  
Fri. Feb 21 6 p.m. Vespers and Matins  
Sat. Feb 22 9 a.m. Divine Liturgy followed by panihida

- **Forgiveness Vespers**  
Sun. March 1 6 p.m. Vespers with the Rite of Forgiveness

**Parish Prayer List**

Archpriest Andrei Popkov–Recovery  
 Gloria Pappas–Recovery  
 Brigid Hammer–Recovery  
 Nadia Danett–Health  
 Albert Salsich–Health  
 Malcolm Royse–Recovery from surgery

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 do not notify clergy of patients, even if you list yourself as a parish member.

**Gardening Help Cancelled**

Due to personal injury, Parishioner, John Malcolm, is cancelling all Wednesday gardening work for the foreseeable future. Stay tuned to learn when gardening work will resume.

**Weekly Tours of St. Basil's**

Tours of St. Basil's church are conducted by one of the parish clergy every Wednesday between 2:00 and 3:00 p.m., and are designed to acquaint the community with the church, its architecture, traditional design, iconography, and history. No appointments are necessary and the tours will accommodate both individuals and groups. Advance notice would be appreciated for groups over five. For additional information or to schedule a group tour contact Fr. Martin at 314-835-1569.

**Choir Voices Needed**

All parishioners are welcome to join the choir, all voices are needed. Choir practice is held every Wednesday evening in the church at 6:30.

If you are interested in church music and the choir but are unsure of your abilities, you are invited to join Marushka Royse for sessions to learn about singing, voice, reading the music and choir participation in general. These sessions are held every Wednesday at 6pm before choir practice. Come and see what it is all about. You can come to the 6pm session and stay for choir practice. If you have any questions, please contact Marushka.

**Use eScrip and Amazon Smile Rebates**

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 your Amazon purchase donated by Amazon to the parish. Please find sign up instructions next to the staircase 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 nine years old). We encourage all of our boys to serve in the altar! For more information please contact Michael Orlando.

**St. Basil's Parish Facebook Page:**

<https://www.facebook.com/SaintBasiltheGreatSTLMO>  
 Check out our Facebook Fanpage for daily edification and interesting updates. Like our page to have us appear in your Facebook Newsfeed.

**January Wordsearch Answers**



## Feast Day at St. Basil's

The parish feast began with Vigil on Monday night, Jan. 13th. Serving with Archbishop Peter and the parish clergy - Archpriest Martin Swanson, Priest Sergii Alekseev and Deacon Ephraim Galloway - were our guests: Archimandrite Seraphim and hieromonk Macarius (both of the Holy Cross Monastery, Wayne, WV), priest Daniel Marshall (St George's Church, Cincinnati, OH), while rymasaphor monk Nicholas (Holy Cross Monastery) and Subdeacon Adam Gedney (Christ the Saviour Church, Wayne, WV) helped during the service. Before the canon at Matins, Vladyka Peter said a homily about Holy Hierarch Basil the Great, stressing the saint's love for the splendid and majestic Divine Services.



The next morning for the hierarchical Divine Liturgy the clergy who served the night before were joined by Archpriest Radomir Chkautovich. The Divine Liturgy gained even greater significance when the parish subdeacon and recent graduate of the Diocesan Pastoral School Thomas Nichols was ordained deacon. Archbishop Peter's exclamation "Axios" was



echoed by some of the faithful even before the clergy could repeat the acclamation in chorus from within the altar. The Divine Service culminated with many of the faithful partaking of the Holy Communion. Following the amvon prayer the customary Cross Procession around the temple took place. The Divine Liturgy was completed with Vladyka Peter's greetings to the clergy, to the newly-ordained deacon Thomas and the parishioners of St Basil's on their feast day.



After the Divine Liturgy a sumptuous banquet was held in the parish hall, which could barely accommodate all those gathered. As the honorable guests and the faithful were enjoying the food, they were treated to choicest pieces of music: first, Julia Smith played a couple of numbers on her flute and then violinist Julia Sakharova, accompanied by her husband Clay on cello.

Whenever Archbishop Peter visits St Basil's the faithful are ready to hear his words and ask him questions. This time Vladyka was asked about his childhood. In his response, Vladyka painted for those present a verbal picture of Russian Orthodox San Francisco in the 1950's and 1960's, paying special tribute to the hierarchs and

clergy he met in the years of his youth.

For the last several months, the youth of the parish have been gathering after each Sunday Divine Liturgy for the so-called "Young Adult Talk". Taking advantage of having our ruling hierarch in our midst, the youth – those ranging from those in their teens to those in their 30's – asked the archpastor to give them a few minutes of his time. Vladyka talked about the challenges the youth are facing, making a special note of the fashionable tattooing and body piercing, gender games and abortion.



We thank God for providing us with this great opportunity of having our archpastor in our midst and are looking forward to the next feast of Holy Hierarch Basil the Great, archbishop of Caesarea in Cappadocia.



## The Feast of Theophany

The most recent great feast celebrated at St. Basil's was the feast of Theophany. This feast celebrates the baptism of Jesus Christ in the Jordan river and the subsequent revelation of God as Trinity--Christ is revealed as the Son of God, the Father reveals Himself by His declaration that Jesus Christ is His Son, and the Holy Spirit, hovering above Christ, reveals Himself in the form of a dove. Royal Hours were celebrated Friday and Vigil was served Saturday night, followed by the Great Blessing of the Waters. Sunday morning, Divine Liturgy was served and a second Blessing of the Waters followed. Many people brought containers to take Holy Water home with them.



## Newly Illumined Orthodox Christians

Not only did we celebrate the Birth of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we also celebrated the spiritual rebirth, through baptism, of newly illumined Lazarus (Harrison) Elfrink, David Peck, and Romanos (Clay) and Alexander McKinney. As has become a custom, we like to interview the newly baptized and the new members of our church. This month, we focused on Lazarus and have his interview on the next page.

Where are you from?

*I am from St. Louis, Missouri. I have lived here for most of my life up to this point.*

What brought you to Orthodoxy?

*Without going into a long-winded story, it came from a series of dialogues with people who have converted to Orthodoxy, including one man I met while I was in high school in 2006, who converted about a year after I met him. I've also considered it since my late teens, but did not seriously inquire until I was 29. First, I had to wrestle with three different belief systems...Roman Catholicism, Sunni, and then Shi'a Islam during my early adult life.*

Who is your patron saint and why did you choose him?

*My patron saint is Lazarus, who rose again. He was not my first choice as a patron saint. I have tried different names: Andrew, Hubert, Herman--and I stuck with George for a while. Then I ultimately decided on Lazarus the four-days-dead. The name just stuck and I like the name. The saint also has an interesting profile, being a man who was risen from the dead and went on to become a bishop, leader and teacher of men.*

What is your favorite thing about being Orthodox?

*I feel more at peace in the Orthodox Church. There are no dietary restrictions (save for fasting, which I understand serves an important purpose). Prayers are more convenient, as far as timing, preparations for them, and bodily motions (although I fully understand that prostration is done at certain times). Another thing I like about Orthodoxy, that brings me a lot of peace, is that there isn't this obsession over theology or scholasticism as there are in my previous three religions. I rather like the idea of leaving some things as mysteries.*

What are you most excited about in your new Orthodox life?

*I love the feasts. I like how the parish comes together and works as a community. I especially like the Feast of St. Basil, and I really enjoyed the Hierarchical Liturgy. I look forward to continued fellowship with our community.*

Do you have any plans to serve the church in some capacity?

*Yes, when I have time and ability, I will contribute to the works at our church. I am also making plans to support the Church financially, by whatever means I can. I will find a way to do so. I would like to see our parish and church flourish in its entirety.*



### Message From the Priests

No moving about, buying or lighting candles is allowed during:

- Small Entrance (with the Gospel)
- Reading of the Gospel and during the Sermon
- Great Entrance

Нельзя ходить по храму, покупать и возжигать свѣчи во время:

- Малаго входа (съ Евангеліємъ)
- Чтенія Евангелія и проповѣди
- Великаго входа

## Deacon Thomas Graduates from Pastoral School

Deacon Thomas Nichols, at the time Subdeacon Thomas, graduated from the Pastoral School of the Diocese of Chicago and Mid-America on January 2nd in Chicago. Deacon Thomas first had to pass the final examination where the school board members, consisting of Archbishop Peter, our own Archpriest Martin, Archpriest Andrei Popkov from Chicago, Father Gregory Joyce from Michigan, and Father John Whiteford from Texas, all took turns asking him questions spanning the breadth of his studies. He also had to defend his thesis, *A Patristic Reading of Thomas Aquinas' Teaching on the Essence of God*. Deacon Thomas passed all aspects of the examination and did so with Honors. Pictured to the right, from left to right, are fellow graduate Priest Matthew Floyd from Oklahoma City, Archpriest Gregory Joyce, Archbishop Peter, Priest Valery Vovkovskii (behind), Archpriest Martin Swanson, Archpriest John Whiteford (behind), and Deacon Thomas.



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## Ask Your Priest

**Q:** How should we address Archbishop Peter?

**A:** *The hierarchical structure of the Church is threefold: deacon, priest and bishop. Representatives of each step can have honorific titles which are given as awards, or indicators of greater responsibility. For example, a deacon can be elevated to the rank of protodeacon as an award for many years of faithful service to the Church, especially if he is the senior deacon in a cathedral; priest can be awarded with the title of archpriest, or protopriest. The same principle, more or less, is applied to bishops: they can be elevated to the rank of archbishop, metropolitan, or even patriarch — and, yet, they would possess the same episcopal grace, i.e. they are still bishops.*

*Greeting a bishop is similar to greeting a priest: we come before Archbishop Peter, make a half-bow from the waist, hold our hands as we do when greeting a priest (both hands with palms up, the right hand resting on the left), say “Master, bless”, or “Vladyko [pronounced Vla-dee-ka], bless” (if we want to use some Slavonic), and venerate (i.e. kiss) the hand which imparts the blessing upon us.*

*When speaking to Archbishop Peter we refer to him as “Your Eminence”, “Master” or “Vladyko”. When in the bishop’s presence, we do not ask for a blessing from a priest. After all, priests receive the gift of their priestly grace from the bishop. So we should go to the source, to him who imparted the priestly grace to the priest.*

*Perhaps, a more obvious reminder could be due: remember not to address the clergy with “Hey!”, “You guys”, etc. What is accepted in modern society is not always worth appropriating by a Christian.*

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## House Blessings

*Adapted from Bishop Irinei of Great Britain and Western Europe*

House blessings are given by a priest in the days and weeks after the Feast of Theophany. The priest completes the participation of the feast by blessing a home or dwelling place with the water that was made holy on the feast. Every person in the parish should contact their priest in order to schedule a date for a house blessing. Parishioners should place a clean bowl on a small table or flat surface so that the priest can use it to sprinkle holy water throughout the house. The table should also have a Cross (if you do not have one, the Priest will also have one) and a commemoration list with the names of Orthodox family living there (you can also include any other Orthodox family you would like included as well). All doors in the home should be open, including garages, cellars, or closets but excluding lavatories. It is customary for families to provide tea or a small meal for the priest when he finishes. This provides an opportunity for Father to visit with you at home, converse about your life and offer a spiritual word. It is customary to give the Priest a small monetary donation as he departs, as a small offering of sacrifice – and in practical terms this assists the Priest with the costs of making such visits.

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## February Name That Psalm

From which psalm is the phrase on the right?

*Turn Thy face away from my sins, and blot out all mine iniquities. Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from Thy presence, and take not Thy Holy Spirit from me.*