



SAINT 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

CLERGY

Archpriest Sergii Alekseev, Parish Rector
Archpriest Martin Swanson, Dean
Protopriest Radomir Chkautovich
Deacon Ephraim Galloway
Deacon Thomas Nichols

March 2021

Schedule of Services

- **Memorial Saturday**
Sat. Mar. 6 9 a.m. Panihida
- **Sunday of the Dread Judgment**
Sat. Mar. 6 5 p.m. Vigil
Sun. Mar. 7 10 a.m. Divine Liturgy
- **1st and 2nd Finding of the Head of the Forerunner**
Mon. Mar. 8 6 p.m. Vigil
Tue. Mar. 9 8 a.m. Divine Liturgy
- **Forgiveness Sunday**
Sat. Mar. 13 6 p.m. Vigil
Sun. Mar. 14 9 a.m. Divine Liturgy 10 A.M. followed by Vespers with the Rite of Forgiveness
- **First week of Great Lent**
Mon. Mar. 15 6 p.m. Great Compline with the Canon of St Andrew
Tues. Mar. 16 6 p.m. Great Compline with the Canon of St Andrew
Wed. Mar. 17 8 a.m. 6th Hour, Typika and the Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts
Wed. Mar. 17 6 p.m. Great Compline with the Canon of St Andrew
Thur. Mar. 18 6 p.m. Great Compline with the Canon of St Andrew
Fri. Mar. 19 6 p.m. Vespers with the Blessing of koliva
- **1st Sunday of Lent — The Triumph of Orthodoxy**
Sat. Mar. 5 6 p.m. Vigil
Sun. Mar. 6 9 a.m. Divine Liturgy followed by a Moleben for the conversion of those departed into error
- **Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts**
Wed. Mar. 24 8 a.m. 6th Hour, Typika and the Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts
- **For the Departed**
Fri. Mar. 26 6 p.m. Matins
Sat. Mar. 27 9 a.m. Divine Liturgy and Panihida
- **2nd Sunday of Lent — St Gregory Palamas**
Sat. Mar. 27 5 p.m. Matins
Sun. Mar. 28 10 a.m. Divine Liturgy
- **Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts**
Wed. Mar. 31 8 a.m. 6th Hour, Typika and the Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts

Meeting of the Lord in the Temple

In Orthodox piety, a candle is a symbol of our fervent prayer and hope for the mercy of God. With this prayer and hope we are striving to meet the Lord in our life, as did Righteous Symeon and Prophetess Anna over two thousand years ago. Blessing the candles every year on the feast of the Meeting of the Lord in the Temple in the middle of February, we are asking God to bless us and help us to acquire and keep in our hearts the flame of faith that the Lord Jesus Christ is our Saviour and the Saviour of the world.



On Forgiveness

By Blessed Augustine of Hippo

These holy days which we are devoting to the observance of Lent remind me to speak to you about fraternal agreement, so that whoever has a complaint against another may bring it to an end lest he himself come to an end. Do not despise these words, my brethren. For, by reason of the fact that this mortal and frail life, which is passed amid so many earthly temptations and which prays that it may not be overwhelmed by them, cannot be

lived even by a just person without some sins, we have a remedy by which we can live because our Teacher, God, taught us to say in His prayer: Forgive us our debts, as we also forgive our debtors. We have done what was stipulated and what was pleasing in the eyes of God, and we have signed the agreement for cancelling our debt. If we ourselves forgive, we seek to be forgiven with the utmost confidence; but if we do not forgive, let us not think that our sins are forgiven; let us not deceive ourselves. Let man not deceive himself; God deceives no man. It is

human to get angry: would that we did not have this power! It is human to get angry; but your anger ought not, like a tender young twig, be watered by suspicions and finally grow into a tree of hatred. It has been said: Thou dost see the speck in thy brother's eye, but dost not consider the beam in thy own eye. You censure anger in another, and you nourish hatred in yourself. In comparison with hatred, anger is a mere twig; but, if you cultivate a twig, it will become a tree; if you uproot it and cast it out, it will amount to nothing.

Parishioners, I hope you are all doing well and have made it through the recent nasty winter weather intact. I don't have too much to talk about at this time, but there is one thing that I want to mention because it is topical. Right now is of course every American's favorite time of the year, tax season. For some of us, our tax return preparation is somewhat straightforward and relatively painless. For others it might be somewhat more complicated. One of the major decisions we must make is whether to take the standard deduction or to itemize your deductions. As to which one you chose, that is between you and your CPA (Certified Public Accountant). If you choose to itemize, you will need a statement showing how much you have given to St. Basil's during 2020. This is something I can do with reasonable advance notice on request. Please be aware of a few things. For donations that were made by cash, unless you included some kind of slip of paper with your name on it, I will

Treasury Report

By Parish Treasurer Basil VanRonzelen

not be able to include that in any statement as I have no way of verifying that donation. For any kind of in-kind donation, I will need to be furnished with a receipt detailing the monetary value of the donation. Remember, statements are only needed if you choose to itemize, which depending on your amount of deductions, might not be the best option for you. Always consult a CPA or experienced tax preparer before filing. As always, I am always available for questions or chats after Divine Liturgy.

Welcoming a New Orthodox Christian to St. Basil's

Last month, we shared an interview with Newly Illumined Zoë, and this month, we remember and share pictures from the baptism of Jackie Peck. She was baptised on Jan 26th, 2021 and took the name of the St. Xenia of St. Petersburg. May God grant her many years!



Obedience to Fasting During Lent

Excerpt from *The Lenten Triodion*

Our fasting should not be self-willed but obedient. When we fast, we should not try to invent special rules for ourselves, but we should follow as faithfully as possible the accepted pattern set before us by Holy Tradition. This accepted pattern, expressing as it does the collective conscience of the People of God, possesses a hidden wisdom and balance not to be found in ingenious austerities devised by our own fantasy. Where it seems that the traditional regulations are not applicable to our personal situation, we should seek the counsel of our spiritual father - not in order legalistically to secure a 'dispensation' from him, but in order humbly with his help to discover what is the will of God for us. Above all, if we desire for ourselves not some

relaxation but some piece of additional strictness, we should not embark upon it without our spiritual father's blessing. Such has been the practice since the early centuries of the Church's life:

Abba Antony said: 'I know of monks who fell after much labour and lapsed into madness, because they trusted in their own work and neglected the commandment that says: "Ask your father, and he will tell you."' (Deut. 32:7)

Again he said: 'So far as possible, for every step that a monk takes, for every drop of water that he drinks in his cell, he should consult the gerontes [elder], in

case he makes some mistake in this.'

These words apply not only to monks but also to lay people living in the 'world', even though the latter may be bound by a less strict obedience to their spiritual father. If proud and wilful, our fasting assumes a diabolical character, bringing us closer not to God but to Satan. Because fasting renders us sensitive to the realities of the spiritual world, it can be dangerously ambivalent: for there are evil spirits as well as good.

Prostrations During the Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts

prostrations during certain moments of the Liturgy.

Perhaps the most remarkable feature of the Great Lent is the Divine Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts. The service is structured as the Vespers at which the faithful may receive the Holy Communion. It is important to know that the faithful make

We make a prostration and remain prostrated on the ground for the duration of the reading of the Third Antiphon - at that time when the curtain in the Royal Doors is closed for the first time since the beginning of the service, for it is the moment when the Holy Presanctified Gifts are transferred from the Holy Altar Table to the Table of Oblation.

We make a prostration when the priest comes out on the amvon with a lit candle and the censer and exclaims: "The light of Christ enlighteneth all".

During the singing of "Let my prayer be set forth ..." (when the Royal Doors are open and the priest censes in front of the Holy Altar Table), the order of the service calls for the faithful to prostrate when the reader chants the verse and arise when the choir sings the refrains. However, in the parish practice the faithful remain prostrated during the entire time when the beautiful hymn is sung by the reader and choir.

We make three prostrations for the prayer of Venerable Ephraim (it is read twice in the course of the service, with the exception of the Holy Wednesday when it is said thrice).

We remain prostrated during the signing of "Now the Hosts of Heaven ..." During the Great Entrance with the Holy Presanctified Gifts choir members also prostrate to the ground, as the Entrance takes place in silence.

We make a prostration before the singing of "Our Father..."

We make a prostration when the priest or deacon comes out of the altar with the Holy Gifts and says "With fear of God and with faith, draw nigh".

If, for reasons of age and/or health, you simply cannot make a prostration, then at the times when prostrations are to be made, you should stand with your head bowed low.

P.S. Do not worry, the clergy make even more prostrations in the altar.

Ask Your Priest

Q: My child is young and I am struggling to determine what I should expect from them in terms of behavior during the services. What parts of the Divine Liturgy should I encourage them to stand for? What parts are okay for them to walk around the church? When is it appropriate for me to take them outside if they need a break? What parts of the service should I make sure they are inside the church for? Should I bring them to Vigils and other services besides Divine Liturgy? What if they resist?

A: In answering this question we should keep in mind two premises: a) the church is a place for prayer and those who want to pray should be able to do so without distractions; b) children should learn to consider the church a holy place, unlike any other place they might know, and they should be gradually taught how to behave and what they should be doing in this holy place. Parents should keep both of those principles in mind when they are in church with their children.

Children should learn that they may not run, talk or play while in the nave of the church, because all of those things can distract those who come to pray. Of course, every phase in child development has its own traits and the parents and those around the child need to be aware of them. For example, when the children are in the category of one to two years old they may sit on the floor at their parents' feet and occupy themselves with leafing through a book or some quiet activity. When they get tired and need to walk around, at certain moments of the service it would be fine to take them to venerate the icons or look at the candle. If they get restless, it is best to take them out of the nave into the narthex or outside, weather permitting.

When the children get older they

should stand with their parents, to be taken out into the narthex or outside when they reach the limit of their attention span. For the three-year-old and beyond the rule is this: let them be in church while they can stay focused or at least stay still. Once they grow fidgety they should be taken outside and be brought back when they can pay attention again. When you are taking them outside do not be cross with them for their not being able to stand still. It is normal for most children at that age to have a rather short attention span. Just tell them: "Let's go outside for a while". The children should not feel that they are punished when they are either taken outside or brought back into the temple.

We pray standing up. Therefore, the children should be encouraged to stand while in the nave just like their parents and others do.

The children should definitely be in the nave before the service or in the beginning of it when they can go through the temple venerating icons and lighting candles. As the service progresses, the children should be in the nave when the focus of the liturgical action "spills" out of the altar unto the amvon or the middle of the church (but of course, their presence in the nave should not be limited only to such occasions). This will help the children to feel involved in the service, which the adults should feel all the time. However, if during the Gospel Reading, Great Entrance or the homily (especially if it is said after the Gospel Reading) the children cannot remain quiet, they should be taken outside. This should teach them that when the Gospel is read or the priest is talking we must remain silent.

To introduce the children to the Vigil service it is best to bring them into the church about 45 minutes into the service, when the reading of the Six Psalms is over and the service is moving towards the polielei, at which point the focus of the services moves

to the center of the church. Then the children can see how the service unfolds around them. You could help the children by explaining to them what is happening. Soon the children will be familiar with the central point of the Vigil when the Magnification is sung by the clergy, the whole church is censed, the Gospel is solemnly brought to the middle of the church and then a resurrectional passage from the Gospel is read, followed by the deacon asking for intercessions from a long list of saints (whose names the children in due time will be able to recognize and remember) and our veneration of the Gospel and the festal icon and the anointing with the blessed oil. After the focus of the service moves back into the altar, the children can witness how people go to confession, while the little ones can venerate the icons and get ready to go home.

It is the parents' task to make going to church desirable to the children. This can be achieved by slowly prolonging the periods that children are in the nave, by them hearing how the parents discuss what happens in church or what feast the Church is celebrating this day (or by speaking at home about what feast we are looking forward to), or by having them do something while in church (lighting candles, kissing icons, blowing out the burning candles which are only two inches long).

You are the parent. Parenting is an art. This means you have to be creative in achieving your goal, which is making your child a church-loving Christian. Do not be too strict with the children. Children need discipline but this discipline should be permeated with love and this love should be felt by the children.

Reminder that anyone is welcome to submit questions to stbasilstnewsletter@gmail.com and that all questions are presented anonymously to the priests for answering.

Fill in the Blanks: Prayer of St. Ephraim

NEWSLETTER ACTIVITY

O Lord and Master of my _____, a spirit of idleness, _____, ambition, and idle talking give me not.
(Prostration)

But rather a spirit of _____, humble-mindedness, patience, and love bestow upon me Thy _____.
(Prostration)

Yea, O Lord and King, grant me to see my failings and not _____ my brother; for blessed art Thou unto the ages of ages. Amen.
(Prostration)

O God, _____ me a _____. (12 times, each time with a bow from the waist)

O Lord and Master of my life, a spirit of _____, despondency, ambition, and idle _____ give me not. But rather a spirit of chastity, humble-mindedness, _____, and _____ bestow upon me Thy servant. Yea, O Lord and _____, grant me to see my _____ and not condemn my brother; for blessed art Thou unto the _____ of ages. Amen.
(Prostration)

March Name that Psalm Answer

Psalm 102

Psalm 102 begins and ends with, Bless the Lord (versus 1 and 22). Versus 2-14, and 19 give us many reasons why the Lord should be blessed, and versus 15-21 explain who is to bless Him. Man is to bless Him and His angels as well. Man is to bless Him for His covenant and the angels, for the privilege to be His ministers.

This psalm is the fifth of the six Matins psalms. It is often used in the First Antiphon of the Divine Liturgy. Verses 20 and 21 are also used on days when angels are honored in the Church.

We Want to Hear From You!

Do you have a favorite newsletter activity? Is there additional content you would like to see added to St. Basil's newsletter? We welcome any feedback and suggestions anyone might have to make the newsletter more resourceful to our readers. Please reach out to stbasilstnewsletter@gmail.com with any thoughts you would like to share.

Choir Practice

All parishioners are welcome to join the choir. All voices are needed. Choir practice takes place weekly on Wednesdays at 6:30 pm at the church. However, in order to uphold diocesan policy and in keeping with the St. Louis county ordinances issued to restrict Coronavirus spread, the people attending choir practice should practice social distancing.

Parish Prayer List

Archimandrite Seraphim — Health
Archpriest Andrei Papkov — Recovery
Nadia Danett — Health
Jackie (Xenia) Peck — Health
Sophia Shipton and family — Health

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