

# 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

## CLERGY

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

## MARCH 2022

### Schedule of Services

- **Forgiveness Sunday**
  - Sat. Mar. 5 Vigil 5 P.M.
  - Sun. Mar. 6 Divine Liturgy 10 A.M. Followed by Vespers w/ Rite of Forgiveness
- **First Week of Great Lent**
  - Mon. Mar. 7 Great Compline with the Great Canon of St Andrew of Crete 6 P.M.
  - Tue. Mar. 8 Great Compline with the Great Canon of St Andrew of Crete 6 P.M.
  - Wed. Mar. 9 Divine Liturgy of the Pre-Sanctified Gifts 8 A.M.
  - Great Compline with the Great Canon of St Andrew of Crete 6 P.M.
  - Thur. Mar. 10 Great Compline with the Great Canon of St Andrew of Crete 6 P.M.
  - Fri. Mar. 11 Vespers with Blessing of Kolivo 6 P.M.
- **First Sunday of Great Lent**
  - **Triumph of Orthodoxy**
  - Sat. Mar. 12 Vigil 5 P.M.
  - Sun. Mar. 13 Divine Liturgy 10 A.M. Followed by Moleben for return of those who left the true Faith
- **Divine Liturgy of the Pre-Sanctified Gifts**
  - Wed. Mar. 16 at 6 P.M.
- **Memorial Saturday**
  - Fri. Mar. 18 Matins 6 P.M.
  - Sat. Mar. 19 Panihida 9 A.M.
- **Second Sunday of Great Lent**
  - **St Gregory Palamas**
  - Sat. Mar. 19 Vigil 5 P.M.
  - Sun. Mar. 20 Divine Liturgy 10 A.M.
- **Divine Liturgy of the Pre-Sanctified Gifts**
  - Wed. Mar. 23 at 8 A.M.
- **Memorial Saturday**
  - Fri. Mar. 25 Matins 6 P.M.
  - Sat. Mar. 26 Divine Liturgy and Panihida at House Springs 9 A.M.
- **Third Sunday of Great Lent**
  - **Veneration of the Cross**
  - Sat. Mar. 26 Vigil 5 P.M.
  - Sun. Mar. 27 Divine Liturgy 10 A.M.
- **Divine Liturgy of the Pre-Sanctified Gifts**
  - Wed. Mar. 30 at 8 A.M.

## 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 Savior and the Savior of the world.



*Additional pictures from the feast on Page 2*



## PROSTRATIONS DURING THE LITURGY OF THE PRESANCTIFIED GIFTS

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 prostrations during certain moments of the Liturgy.

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.

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## NEW CATECHUMENS AT ST BASIL'S



St. Basil's is happy to see the glory of God and His Church made manifest when an entire family chooses to join hands and together embark upon their journey to join the Orthodox Church. Rob and Melinda Westervelt with their children Abraham, Rosalind and William were made catechumens on Sunday, Feb. 6. Please keep the family in your prayers as they continue to learn about the Church.

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## 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.

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## REMEMBERING NADIA DANETT

On February 15, the feast of the Meeting of the Lord in the Temple, our longtime parishioner Nadezhda Vasilievna Danett, known to many in St Louis as Nadia, passed away in a hospice bed. In a few weeks she would have turned 98 years old.

Born not far from the Dormition Pochaev Lavra, in the region which at that time belonged to Poland and now – to the Ukraine, Nadia has a typical biography for a representative of that pre-WWII generation, and yet her life is so unique that it seems to belong in a book. During the last several years of her life Nadia did write that book (*Then God Said Count to Ten*, published in 2020 and already sold out) hoping that it would tell her granddaughters primarily (and all others, of course) what life can be and what a human being strengthened by faith can go through and still remain a human.



For years, Nadia was our regular parishioner, even though she had to be brought to the church in her wheelchair. Those of us who took it upon themselves to help her in her home or bring her to church will no doubt treasure that experience. She lived almost a century. She did not only witness but was right in the middle of the world tragedies as well as hopes the 20th century was choke-full of.

To us, 21st century Christians, her life is an example of how God helps us when death seems to look us right in the face and hope is no more. May our dear sister in Christ, our dear Nadezhda Vasilievna, our dear Nadia, find rest with the righteous and pray for us.

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## PRAYING FOR PEACE

Given the current situation in Ukraine, we include statements made by our ruling heirarch, Archbishop Peter, as he reminds us of our duty as Orthodox Christians to pray for peace and to ask our saints, especially Holy Great Prince Vladimir, to intercede on behalf of all affected by the conflict.

"As tensions continue to rise in Ukraine, it is important that we not descend into petty politics, but take the highest and most pious path – the path of prayer for peace. We have countless intercessors in Heaven, but in this internecine war perhaps none closer than the Holy Great Prince Vladimir. The Holy Church teaches us that our saints continue to grow spiritually even after earthly death. St Vladimir loved his country and people, and gave us the richest gift: Christianity. His love only continues to grow. Let us, therefore, all zealously ask his prayers before our merciful Lord for peace in the ancient lands of Rus,

which he ruled so wisely that he was granted the Heavenly Kingdom. He is there now, before the throne of the Lord. Let us ask his intercession for his land – that the crisis will pass quickly, and that the prayers of the Church heard at each Divine Service for peace, will also be heard by the combatants in the present conflict.

I strongly recommend that all the faithful of our Mid-American Diocese, every man, woman, and child, read this prayer before your icons daily, and ask St. Vladimir's prayers before our Lord for a peaceful outcome to the present crisis:<https://tinyurl.com/stvdcmaprayer>"

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## Ask Your Priest

**Q:** I have noticed people have various practices regarding confession and I was hoping to get more instruction as to what is expected. Some will give a bow to the congregation before approaching the priest for confession, some will remain bowed while they confess or confess on their knees? I've also noticed that some will kneel while receiving absolution? What should I do?

**A:** In church, in the House of God, it is only natural that we want to do everything the right way. However, there is **the** right way and **my** right way.

Archpriest Dimitry Smirnov (+2020) commenting on some such practices used to say to the people who come to confession and turn to bow to the people behind them: "What have I done to you that you, having come to me, turn away from me and show me your rear end?" They would excuse themselves by saying that they are asking for forgiveness from the people behind them. To this Fr Dimitry would say: "Did you offend those people? You don't even know them, most of the time. Then why the empty form? But you are offending me by turning your behind to me." These words teach us that there should be a meaningful reason for the things we do in church, not false piety (something we might have seen somewhere but it is out of place and is not productive).



The same Fr Dimitry used to say: "It does not hurt to turn on your brain once in a while". So let us do that and take a look at how we confess.

So we have established that it is good to abandon the empty form and ask for forgiveness from those whom we truly believe we might have offended, hurt or sinned against.

When we come to confession we kiss the Gospel Book and the Cross on the anoly. If the priest does not know us, it is the right time to tell him our baptismal name.

Standing or kneeling. The clergy — when they confess in the altar — kneel (provided their knees still can bend). Some confess bowing their head, while others — on their knees. Either way is fine, as long as the priest can clearly hear you (keep in mind: the older the priest, the harder it is for him to hear). Therefore, kneeling down and whispering might not work. You have to be loud enough for the priest to hear you, even if your lips are ashamed to pronounce the sins you have come to confess. But this is part of therapeutic aspect of confession. So it must be done.

When we confess, we are filled with the spirit of repentance. So either lowering our head or kneeling is quite natural. It is up to you what you do, as long as your confession is sincere and you long for healing of your soul.

At the end of the confession you need to lower your head on the Gospel Book, or bow your head if you are kneeling, and the priest will put the epitrachil on your head and read the prayer of Absolution. After that you again kiss the Gospel Book and the Cross and ask for the priest's blessing to partake of the Holy Communion.

And when we leave, we must be filled with the sense of gratitude to God for His unspeakable mercy and for granting us forgiveness of our sins.

*-Archpriest Sergii Alekseev*

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## NEWSLETTER ACTIVITY

Fill in the blanks for the Prayer of St. Ephraim

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)

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## Parish Prayer List

Archimandrite Seraphim — Health

Nadia Danett — Repose

Jackie (Xenia) Peck — Health

 **Add to your prayer list**

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.