



# 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*

# February 2021

### Schedule of Services

- **Blessed Xenia of St Petersburg**  
Fri. Feb. 5 6 p.m. Vigil  
Sat. Feb. 6 9 a.m. Divine Liturgy
- **New Martyrs and Confessors of Russia**  
Sat. Feb. 6 5 p.m. Vigil  
Sun. Feb. 7 10 a.m. Divine Liturgy
- **Three Holy Hierarchs**  
Thur. Feb. 11 6 p.m. Vigil  
Fri. Feb. 12 8 a.m. Divine Liturgy
- **Martyr Tryphon**  
Sat. Feb. 13 5 p.m. Vigil  
Sun. Feb. 14 10 a.m. Divine Liturgy
- **Meeting of the Lord in the Temple**  
Sun. Feb. 14 6 p.m. Vigil  
Mon. Feb. 15 8 a.m. Divine Liturgy
- **Sunday of the Publican and Pharisee**  
Sat. Feb. 20 5 p.m. Vigil  
Sun. Feb. 21 10 a.m. Divine Liturgy
- **Iveron Icon of the Mother of God**  
Thur. Feb. 25 9 a.m. Moleben for Blessing of Water
- **Sunday of the Prodigal Son**  
Sat. Feb. 27 5 p.m. Vigil  
Sun. Feb. 28 10 a.m. Divine Liturgy

## January Feasts at St. Basil's

The month of January is always a festive and joyous time in the life of the Church. We are blessed, during this exalted month, to celebrate the major feast days of Nativity (1/7) and Theophany (1/19), as well as the feast day of our parish's patron saint, Holy Hierarch Basil the Great (1/14). Below are pictures for each of these January feasts as they were celebrated at St. Basil's.

### Nativity of our Lord

The Nativity of our Lord was celebrated on Thursday, Jan. 7th. Many were in attendance at the Divine Liturgy and to the equally important Vigil which always takes place the night before. Joy and happiness were celebrated by all as the words from the 1st Canon of the Nativity of our Lord echoed in our hearts throughout the festal week.

"Christ is born! Give ye glory! Christ is come from heaven, receive ye Him. Christ is on earth, be ye exalted; sing unto the Lord all ye earth, and sing praises in gladness, O ye peoples; for He hath been glorified!"





## Feast of St. Basil the Great

The parishioners of St. Basil's gathered to celebrate our "second Pascha" on Jan. 14th. Although our ruling hierarch, Archbishop Peter, and many of our friends and parishioners were not able to

travel to St. Louis this year, we were still able to enjoy the feasts and look forward to future celebrations where all can safely participate.



## Theophany

"God the Word appeared in the flesh unto the human race and stood forth to be baptized in the Jordan. And the forerunner said to Him: 'How can I stretch forth my hand and touch the head of Thee

Who holdest all things? Even though Thou art Mary's Child, yet do I know Thee to be the preeternal God, Who art hymned by the seraphim and goest about on the earth. A servant knowest not how to baptize his master. O unapproachable

Lord, glory be to Thee.'"

- Festal Troparion after Psalm 50 from Matins of Theophany

Two catechumens joined the Orthodox Church in January at St. Basil's.

Catechumen Nora Resz was Chrismated on Jan. 2nd and catechumen Jackie Peck was baptized on Jan. 16th. This month, we interviewed Zoë in order to learn more about her and her path to our parish and faith. We wish you both many years!

Where are you from and how long have you been living in Saint Louis?

*Zoë: My husband and I raised our two sons in Western Colorado. I moved to St. Louis in September 2018. My husband came in May and started School at Logan University so this residence was to be temporary all along. We will be moving back to Colorado, Lord willing, this coming April.*

We know your son is Orthodox as well. Would you say that helped you consider joining the Church?

*Zoë: I was called out from the Catholic Church by God. Three years ago while I was waiting to see where God would take me next I started attending the Orthodox Church because Samuel, my son, was investigating Orthodoxy. About two years ago God showed me that I could decide this time which church to join permanently, so having my son already in the Church made my decision easy.*

How would you say your experience learning about the Church differed from your son's experience?

*Zoë: Thomas, my husband, and I unconditionally supported Samuel,*

*our son, in his decision of becoming Orthodox. Samuel was old enough to make his decision and we could see God's guidance in his life. On the other hand, I had a 30 years "colorful journey" with God as the teacher before He allowed me to decide.*

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

*Zoë: The process was long since I did not want to choose haphazardly and I wanted a mother and a soul-connection with her. I had asked God to show me the saint I was to be named after, but I had not discerned an answer so I compiled a list of about 10 names and narrowed it down to 3, one of them being Eva or Eve. I learned that Zoë was the equivalent to Eve and continued searching further into St. Zoë. I learned about St. Zoë of Attalia, the martyr, and her husband and two sons, who were also martyrs. I fell in love with her instantly. My heart swelled and I knew I had found my name and patron saint. God answered my prayer.*

What do you most look forward to when you attend an Orthodox service?

*Zoë: Celebrating Christ. I go to seek Him, to worship Him, to celebrate Him, to accept His sacrifice and forgiveness of my sins and to partake of the blessed Communion. I look forward to Saturday evening, preparing, praying, meditating, resting.*

Do you have a favorite feast day(s)? If so, which one(s)?

*Zoë: I do not yet. I look forward to*

## New Orthodox Christians Welcomed to St. Basil's

*experiencing/celebrating all of them now as Orthodox. I can say this much: Liturgy is not the same after I was Chrismated. It is an ineffable fact for me. I imagine that the feasts will be yet another awesome encounter with the Holy Trinity yet unknown to me, but not for long!*

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

*Zoë: The yearly, monthly, and weekly cycles. They will make it possible to have a God-centered lifestyle. I also feel at home in the Church and I know that I am an Orthodox Christian and will die one.*

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

*Zoë: Yes. I desire to be of service. I shall talk to Fr. Sergii and see in what capacity I can be of service while I am still here in St. Louis.*

Is there anything else you would like for the parish to know about you?

*Zoë: I want to thank everyone at St. Basil. I am moving away very soon. I was given the option to wait until I was in Colorado to be Chrismated. I prayerfully sought the answer and received a clear answer of being Chrismated here at St Basil. St Basil will always have a special place in my heart.*



## Ask Your Priest

Q: Father Sergii mentions that only Orthodox Christians that have recently confessed are able to receive communion. I've heard some priests say that you must confess every week and others say you can go longer in between. How often should I confess in order to receive communion at St. Basil's? Why do other priests have different requirements? Does the Orthodox Church have a set requirement for this or is it up to the bishop and/or priest to decide?

*A: IF THOU DESIREST O MAN, TO EAT THE BODY OF THE MASTER, APPROACH WITH FEAR, LEST THOU BE BURNT, FOR IT IS FIRE.*

*The Russian Orthodox Church requires, according to the book of Church rules (The Typicon), that when one wishes to receive Holy Communion it is proper for them to; strictly fast during the preceding week, pray and practice sobriety. Those aged 7 and older must receive Holy Confession before partaking of Holy Communion. Holy Confession should be made during the evening service before reception of Holy Communion. Confession in the morning, before Divine Liturgy is allowable only as an extreme exception for those who cannot come on the evening before because of a condition with their health or for another important reason. In the morning, the priest is busy with the preparation of the Holy Gifts and there is little time which means Confession's become hurried and incomplete. Only extreme need is cause enough to pull the priest away from preparation to accommodate morning confessions.*

*Recently, the Holy Synod of the Russian Orthodox Church modified the guidelines for the reception of Holy Communion for the faithful who receive Holy Communion on a frequent basis (usually weekly).*

*Instead of weekly confession, and in the absence of serious sin, they changed "weekly" to "frequent" which has been taken to mean every 1 to 3 weeks. In addition, those who commune "frequently" need only fast in accordance with the normal weekly/seasonal fasting requirements.*

*Those who receive Holy Communion infrequently are subject to the previous guidelines.*

*In the guidelines, prayer and sobriety mean continued conscientiousness throughout the week that one is preparing to partake of the most precious Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ; wherever possible be present and participate in the evening service before the day of Holy Communion; read at home the Prayers in Preparation for Holy Communion; ask and give forgiveness to those you have offended or who have offended you; all over 7 years of age fast from all food and beverage from midnight; arrive at Divine Liturgy before the beginning of the service and listen to the reading of the Hours; women cover their heads and remove lipstick while men uncover your heads while in Church; remain in church until the Divine Liturgy ends and listen to, or read at home the Thanksgiving Prayers; venerate the cross following the Thanksgiving prayers and refrain from kissing the priest's hand. Following reception of Holy Communion return home and remain calm, peaceful and prayerful for the remainder of the day.*

*As in all things love should prevail and we should discuss any difficulties we have in keeping these guidelines with our father confessor. We should follow any direction or mitigation which he provides. Practices in preparation for Holy Communion often differ between Orthodox Jurisdictions and even among priests. Generally, all Orthodox Churches require valid baptism, self-examination (confession), discernment (understanding that the Eucharist is the Body and Blood of*

*Christ), and reconciliation with our neighbors in order to be admitted to Holy Communion. These requirements are found in the Epistles of Sts. Paul and James as well as in the Didache (A first century book on the teaching of the Church as given by the Apostles). The manner of application of these practices evolved in the various Churches throughout the course of history.*

*Sometimes, a priest who is required to protect the Lord's Body and Blood from defilement and, out of love to protect the communicant from receiving Holy Communion unto their condemnation, will determine preparation requirements such as the frequency of Confession at their church.*

*At St. Basil's frequent confession is required preceding Holy Communion. If one communes weekly one should confess, in the absence of serious sin, at least once every 1 to 3 weeks, if one does not commune frequently one should confess on the evening before receiving Holy Communion.*

*It is good to promote piety and fear of God among our people by encouraging proper preparation before partaking in the awesome Mysteries of Christ, but we must take into account the spiritual strength that they have been given and not prevent them from receiving the medicine needed to treat their spiritual illness.*

*We must remember that the true preparation for Holy Communion takes place in our hearts to the end that we may truly approach the Holy Chalice "In fear of God, with faith and with love..."*

Reminder that anyone is welcome to submit questions to [stbasilstnewsletter@gmail.com](mailto:stbasilstnewsletter@gmail.com) and that all questions are presented anonymously to the priests for answering.

## St. Basil's New Catechumen

Baxter Eaves was made a catechumen on Sunday Jan. 24th before Divine Liturgy. Although he has been studying and learning about the Church over the last several months, this small catechumen service

officially joins him to the Church as a Catechumen with the intent of being received into the Church at the conclusion of his instruction. Please continue to pray for the servant of God, Baxter, as he continues to prepare for his life as an Orthodox Christian.



### March Name that Psalm

From which Psalm is the phrase below?

Bless the Lord, O my soul,  
blessed art Thou, O Lord.  
Bless the Lord, O my soul,  
and all that is within me, bless His Holy name.  
Bless the Lord, O my soul,  
and forget not all that He hath done for thee,  
Who is gracious unto all thine iniquities,  
Who healeth all thine infirmities,  
Who redeemeth thy life from corruption,  
Who crowneth thee with mercy and compassion,  
Who fulfillleth thy desire with good things;  
thy youth shall be renewed as the eagles.

*Hint: This Psalm is sang towards the beginning of Divine Liturgy.*

### House Blessings After Theophany

Those who desire to have their home blessed should contact Father Sergii in order to schedule a time that is mutually convenient for the blessing. The blessing of a home, especially with the waters of Theophany, endows one's home with the special Grace of God.

### 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](mailto: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.

### 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 Евангелиемъ)
- Чтенія Евангелія и проповѣди
- Великаго входа

### 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.