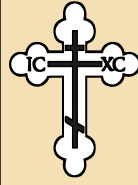




### St. Basil the Great Orthodox Church

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

**December 2017**

## The Entry of the Theotokos into the Temple

by Fr. Panagiotos Carras ([www.pravoslavie.ru](http://www.pravoslavie.ru))

The oikonomia of our salvation began with the very creation of the world. It is not by chance that the fourth Gospel does not commence with a genealogy of our Lord but takes us back to the very beginning. All things from the beginning to the end, from the alpha to the omega are part of God's oikonomia for our salvation, God's providential ordering of our salvation. Man was created that he may participate in the Divinity of his Creator by first participating in his own perfection. We are taught by the Fathers that man was created for perfection. Adam was offered perfection but fell victim to the guile of the serpent. God's plan could not be frustrated and the Lord prepared the world for another Adam who would rescue the offspring of the first Adam.

St. Paul tells us that Adam is a type of the future Adam (Romans 5: 14). All Christians are descendants of both the first Adam and the last Adam. From the first we inherited death, from the last we inherited life. (1 Corinthians 15: 45-50). It is this Apostolic teaching of the two Adams which was developed by the Fathers and formed the nucleus of the Church's teaching on the salvation of mankind.

Mankind, which had its beginning in the first Adam, had to be given a new beginning. A new Adam was needed to become the Head of the New Humanity, the Head of the body, the Church, which is His body (Ephesians 1:22-23). However, just as in the creation of the Old Humanity, mankind was given the freedom to choose sonship; similarly in the creation of the New Humanity, mankind was granted the opportunity to choose. The first Adam was from the earth, a man of dust, the second is from Heaven (1 Corinthians 15: 47). The first could choose sin because he was not yet perfect, the second Adam,

our Lord Jesus Christ, being God by nature, was totally alien to sin. It is because God's oikonomia required a member of the human race who was able to prove himself free from every sin that the time had fully come (Galatians 4:4) for God to send forth His Son, since mankind was able to bring forth the All-Holy Virgin.

This is precisely why Theotokos is the key-word of the Christological teaching of the fourth Ecumenical Council or as St. John of Damascus says, This name contains the whole mystery of the Oikonomia (On the Orthodox Faith, 3, 12). It is for this reason that the traditional Orthodox icon of the Mother of God is an icon of the Incarnation, the Virgin is always with the Child.

The Church's teaching of the Theotokos is an extension of what is believed concerning the person of Christ. The Son of God was born of a woman and in this case the Mother is not just a mere physical instrument but an active participant who has found favour with God (Luke 1, 30). The faith of the Church is aptly expressed in the words of Nicholas Cabasilas in his Homily on the Annunciation: The incarnation was not only the work of the Father and of His Power and His Spirit, it was also the work of the will and the faith of the Virgin (On the Annunciation, 4).

It is the teaching of the Church, attested to from the earliest date, that the Virgin Mother of the Incarnate Lord had found favour with God (Luke 1:30) and that she was chosen and ordained to participate in the Mystery of the Incarnation, in the Oikonomia of Salvation. The ancient Church understood the typological relationship between the first Adam and the last Adam, and by extension it was able to see that the first Eve prefigured the second Eve. We find (continued page 4)

### Special Services & Events for December

12/3 Sun. 6:00 p.m. Vigil for the Entry of the Theotokos into the Temple  
12/4 Mon 8:00 a.m. D. Liturgy for the Entry of the Theotokos into the Temple  
12/6 Wed. 3:00/5:00 p.m. Father Martin's Office Hours--Hall  
12/6 Wed. 6:00 p.m. Vigil for the Great Martyr Katherine  
12/7 Thurs. 8:00 a.m. D. Liturgy for the Great Martyr Katherine  
12/12 Tues. 6:00 p.m. Vigil for Apostle Andrew

12/13 Wed. 8:00 a.m. D. Liturgy for Apostle Andrew  
12/13 Wed. 3:00 p.m. Fr. Martin's Office Hours—Hall  
12/13 Wed. 6:30 p.m. Choir Practice  
12/18 Mon. 6:00 p.m. Vigil for St. Nicholas  
12/19 Tues. 8:00 a.m. D. Liturgy for St. Nicholas  
12/20 Wed. 3:00 p.m. Fr. Martin's Office Hours—Hall  
12/20 Wed. 6:20 p.m. Choir Practice  
12/22 Fri. 6:00 p.m. Vigil for St. Joasaph  
12/23 Sat. 9:00 a.m. D. Liturgy for St. Joasaph  
12/27 Wed. 3:00 p.m. Fr. Martin's Office Hours—Ha;;  
12/27 Wed. 3:00 p.m. Choir Practice

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

## Parish News

### A New Railing

In case you haven't noticed the ambon in the church now has a new stair railing coming down the steps on both the north and south sides. The new railing is not only visually pleasing but will assist those who need a little help coming down after communion or going up to go to confession. Michael Petyo, a former parishioner of Fr. Sergei's from Hobart, Indiana and a journeyman carpenter, donated the time and labor to install the railing. The parish is extremely grateful to Michael for this and for several other projects that he has assisted us with.

### Parish Sunday School to sponsor Nativity Play

The parish Sunday School will once again present a play (yolka) for the Feast of the Nativity of our Lord. All the parish children are encouraged to participate. The play will be performed on Christmas Day, January 7th, and parents should contact Matushka Svetlana to have your children participate. Rehearsals will be held on Sundays following D. Liturgy.

### Parish Directory coming in December

The 2018 parish directory will be coming out before Nativity. Please make sure that you are included and that your information is correct. If you are not included in the previous directory or if the information is incorrect, please fill out a directory information form found at the candle stand making required corrections. Deposit the form in the collection box.

### December Prayer list

Reader Gennady Barabtarlo (Health)

Boris Artemov (Health)

Archbishop Peter (Health)

Archimandrite Seraphim of Holy Cross Hermitage (Health)

### 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.

### 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](http://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



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

## Two Articles by Reader Thomas Nichols

### On the Holy Trinity

The Holy Trinity can only be described in relation to the Persons of the Trinity and not according to the unifying principle of Its essence. This is because the essence of God is inscrutable. However, because the Godhead has made Himself known to us through the activities of His Persons, it is possible for us to give a description of Each Person composing the Godhead.

The Father is the fountainhead of the Godhead, and the adjective usually prefixing His name is “unoriginate”. It signifies that He has no cause, derivation, or source. St. Gregory of Nyssa writes: “every operation which extends from God...has its origin from the Father...”. Therefore, everything that the Trinity is, and every action that Each of Its Members take, has its source in the Father. It is important to note, however, that neither the Son nor the Spirit are subordinate to the Father. Although the Father is the source of the Trinity, both Son and Spirit share one, singular essence with the Father so that Each is, properly speaking, God.

The Son, Jesus Christ, as the Only-begotten and Incarnate Word of the Father, is the express image and likeness of the Father — the “visible of the Father’s invisible” (St. Irenaeus of Lyons). Because of this, the Father is only approachable through the Son and is only known to us through the mediation of the Son, “Who hath declared Him” (John 1:18). Indeed, without the Son, there is no access to the Father or to salvation (John 14:6), and full knowledge of the Godhead is not possible. We also must confess that conclusive knowledge of the Trinity would not exist apart from the Son. The source of this knowledge is twofold: the Son candidly speaks about Himself, His Father, and the Spirit throughout the Gospels, and the Son through His actions manifests the Father and the Spirit. At the Son’s baptism, for example, the Son is baptized, the Father’s voice bears witness to the Son’s divinity, and the Spirit’s presence, in the form of a dove, confirms it. While we admit that there were indications of God as Trinity before the Son’s incarnation, the most notable being Abraham’s encounter with the three wayfarers (Angels) (Genesis 18:1-3), these were mere hints and shadows of a more definitive revelation which was to be given through the Son.

The Holy Spirit is the Lord, the Giver of life. He “always existed, and exists, and always will exist... He was everlastingly ranged with and numbered with the Father and the Son” (St. Gregory the Theologian). As such, the Spirit is consubstantial with the Father and the Son and reigns eternally with Father and Son as God. Further, the Spirit, eternally proceeding from the Father, makes the Father and the Son known through the mediation of the Son. The Spirit is without

form and visibly imperceptible, although He has manifested Himself temporarily in the form resembling that of a dove (Luke 3:22) and as tongues of fire (Acts 2:3). While yet invisible, the Holy Spirit permeates and deifies each Orthodox Christian, substantiates and validates the Holy Mysteries of the Church, and leads the Church into all truth.

### On the Formation of the Old Testament Canon of Scripture

The very fact that we speak of the formation of the Old Testament Canon of Scripture and not a singular Old Testament Canon indicates that the list of books included in the Old Testament have, over the millennia, changed. The ultimate source of this canonical development is twofold. First, the production of Scripture was a process. Even if, for example, we were to entertain the fundamentalist notion that Moses wrote every word of the Pentateuch — even the final chapter of Deuteronomy in which his death is described — reason dictates that certain books of the Pentateuch, and indeed, of the rest of what is considered Scripture, must have been written before others. Therefore, logically, we must assume that the Canon of Scripture is directly contingent upon the production of Scripture itself. If God was inspiring Scripture over the course of several centuries, one would have to admit that the Canon of Scripture, by necessity, was in the process of development. The vast timespan over which the books of the Old Testament were composed is evidence of the fact that the Old Testament Canon, even before the Lord’s incarnation, must have been in a state of flux.

The sporadic, but continuous, production of Scripture over the course of the first millennium or so before Christ was not itself solely responsible for the fluctuation of the Old Testament Canon of Scripture. It goes without saying that God did not visibly manifest Himself, in order to validate a particular book or group of books as inspired Scripture. Neither did Moses descend from Mount Sinai with a list of all the books from God that would compose the Canon of Scripture. As a consequence of this, the confirmation of books as inspired Scripture is the prerogative of the Church. The Church, by its very nature as the mystical Body of Christ, cannot promulgate false teaching. Therefore, the general consciousness of the Church, aided by the Holy Spirit, naturally has intuited what is genuinely inspired Scripture and what is not. Often the Church’s articulation of what it considered Scripture was a process and took centuries of time. Such is the case with the Canon of the Old Testament Scripture, and such is the reason why the Canon has changed.

Although from its inception, the Church has always treasured and used the Septuagint translation of the Hebrew Bible, there



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

### Articles by Reader Thomas Nichols (cont'd)

was discrepancy among the early Church Fathers about the nature of some of the books included within it.[1] Certainly, there was never any doubt about the status of the most important and universally revered texts of the Old Testament, such as those books constituting the Pentateuch, those eponymously named after major prophets and the Psalms. Indeed, there was never any doubt about most of the books now composing the Orthodox Old Testament Canons. However, some early Fathers and local councils of the Church include or exclude other, perhaps more peripheral, books from their Canon. Therefore, one finds St. Athanasios, in his Third Canonical Epistle, excluding from his Canon books such as the Wisdom of Solomon, the Wisdom of Sirach, and Judith. Conversely, the Council of Carthage includes the Wisdom of Solomon and Judith in its Canon. This lack of canonical uniformity continues in the Church to this day and so there exist certain disagreements even to this day about what precisely constitutes the Canon of the Old Testament. That the Church has never felt the need to unequivocally define a singular Canon indicates that the Head of the Church, Jesus Christ, does not deem the formulation of one necessary. I would submit that the lack of a uniform Canon, instead of detracting from the splendor of the Church, enhances Her majesty. For, it reminds one of the necessity of putting one's faith in, and entrusting one's salvation to, the Church, and testifies to the fact that the Church, and not Scripture, is "the

pillar and foundation of truth" (I Timothy 3:15).

This is not to imply that the Canon of Scripture is inconsequential. It must be stressed that, despite the fact that the Church does not possess a completely uniform Biblical Canon, the books or portions of books in question are very few and make up a small fraction of the Old Testament. Further, even those books or portions of books which are not universally accepted represent a venerable part of the Tradition of the Church, as a whole, and are, therefore, authoritative in their own right. The authority of these Canons of Scripture is derived from the fact that, encapsulated within them, are absolute, infallible truths concerning God and His will for mankind. It is ultimately Scripture's unique, inerrant revelation of God and His relationship with man that gives it its significance.

[1] With the advent of Christianity and the destruction of the Temple, the leaders of what was to become rabbinical Judaism convened at the Council of Jamnia at which, or shortly after which, they repudiated the 'non-canonical' books, otherwise known as the 'Apocrypha' or 'Deuterocanonical' books, which had been included in the Septuagint translation. It is this edited, mutilated version of the Old Testament that most Jews and Protestants currently use.

(continued from page 1) that as early as the Second Century St. Justin and St. Irenaeus had a developed teaching of the Theotokos as the second Eve who through her obedience remedied the disobedience of the first Eve. And so the knot of Eve's disobedience received its unloosing through the obedience of Mary; for what Eve, a virgin, bound by unbelief, that, Mary, a Virgin, unloosed by faith (Against Heresies, III, 22, 4.) Mary... by yielding obedience, became the cause of salvation, both to herself and the whole human race. (Against Heresies, III, 22, 4). Mary alone cooperating with the economy (Against Heresies, III, 21, 7).

The Church has proclaimed this great Mystery of our salvation not only through the teaching of the Fathers but also through the festal celebration of the acts which worked our salvation, chief of which is the Holy Resurrection of our Lord. On the 21st of November the Church celebrates the Feast of the Entry of the Theotokos into the Temple. It is at this time that the faithful chant Today is the prelude of God's Good-Will and the heralding of the salvation of mankind. Throughout the whole service the hymns proclaim the exalted place which the Entry has in the history of Salvation. The Entry marks the closing of the Old Covenant, whereas the Annunciation marks the beginning of the New...

Like other human beings the Holy Virgin was born under the law of original sin but the sinful heritage of the fall had no mastery over her. She was without sin under the universal sovereignty of sin, pure from every seduction and yet part of a humanity enslaved by the devil. This is the victory which the Feast of the Entry joyfully celebrates. St. Photius praises the Holy Virgin as the great and God-carved ornament of human kind" who "made her whole soul a holy shrine of meekness... never allowing any of her wares as much as to touch for a moment the brine of evil. (On the Annunciation, 4). This theme constantly appears in the hymns of the Feast of the Entry...

The sinlessness and purity of the Theotokos along with the fact that the Lord was preparing Her to become His chamber overshadowed the sanctity of the Old Testament temple. The All-Pure Virgin is allowed to enter the Holy of Holies precisely because she is to become the living temple of God. St. Tarasios in his Homily of the Entry has Saint Anne exclaiming: Receive Zacharias, the pure tabernacle; receive O priest, the immaculate chamber of the Word ... have her dwell in the temple made by hands, she who has become a living temple of the Word (Migne, 98:1489)...

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

## Children in the Church



### Nine Points of Etiquette for Children in an Orthodox Church

*Guidelines for parents with young children in the parish.  
Reprinted from a 1999 CrossRoads, written by Kh. Frederica.*

Father Gregory and the Sisterhood (St. Elizabeth's Convent), as well as individual parishioners and parents, have been chatting about what standards of behavior we want children to meet in church. In one way it's harder having no pews; to a child, that expanse of carpet looks a lot like the space in front of the TV at home.

But this is a sacred place, a place at which we are constantly told to "Attend!", and these are skills children need to learn. Every child is moving toward being able to stand throughout the service, behaving reverently and attentively. Let's do our best to discourage any behavior that leads in another direction.

Father and I brainstormed some suggestions the other night to be used as guidelines according to your child's age and capabilities:

1. Stand on the carpet, sit in a chair or sit quietly (perhaps at an adult's feet) on the carpet. Do not lie on the carpet at any time (except for babies). Sleepy children can be held in the arms of a parent until they fall asleep. When they are asleep, they can be placed on the floor (preferably facing the altar).
2. Toes toward the altar. Teach the child to keep his or her toes pointed toward the altar at all times. Always face the altar, never turn your back on it (even when facing the procession during the Great Entrance, turn back counterclockwise rather than turn directly toward the back.) No large muscle motions — a child standing and facing the altar should not be waving

arms, swiveling, etc.

3. Stay in one place. A child should "stake out" an area and stick to it, and not move around the church. Exception: there is an age during which wiggly babies demand to be put on the floor, and once there take off crawling rapidly. You pick them up and the cycle immediately begins again. This phase doesn't last too long, so we should be patient with these little explorers. If a baby crawls by you, pick him up, maybe even hold him and help him focus on the service before returning him to his parents.

4. Help other out. In general, adults not caring for their own children should help our swamped young parents watch over their kids. In many cases, these parents are outnumbered by their kids! If you feel drawn to a particular child, ask her parents if you can help them mind her during church.

5. Noise, noise, noise. Each parent needs to determine at what point their child has become too noisy. Occasional noise is fine, but continual noise can be very distracting. Some parents have found that taking the child out for making noise results in more noise because the child wants a change of scenery, or wants to play with toys. Some children also view this time alone with Mom as a victory. If any of these scenarios become a problem, the child could be taken out by Dad or an adult "helper."

6. Refrain from playing and talking. Children should not play with each other or talk to each other. Adults bending down to explain the service to children is fine, and may help them not be bored. The bookstore has a couple of good child-level guides to the church and the liturgy. Aim to convey to your children that church is a place you want to be because you find love and joy there, and you want them to share in these good things.

7. No food in church, though bottles and sippy-cups are OK when necessary for babies and toddlers. At some point children need to begin fasting before communion, like adults do.

8. Toys should be kept to an absolute minimum — a necessary favorite teddy bear is one thing, dressing up Barbies is another. If toys are brought into the service, they should be selected for their "quiet" qualities — i.e. they don't make noise when dropped and they don't encourage the child to supply noises for them. Especially beware of provoking resentment in children whose parents don't allow them to play in church, or undermining their discipline. "So and so does it, why can't I?"

9. Think of those around you. Remember that behavior that doesn't seem distracting to you could be distracting to the

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

## Serving God

people behind you — particularly the choir, which has a birds-eye view of everything anyone does.

The key to success in all this is practice at home. Have an evening prayer time at your icon corner where children learn to stand and be quiet and reverent. Explain that your home icon corner is like a “branch” from the main altar at church, and that that altar deserves even more respect. There are relics embedded in the wooden cross under our altar, and it has been consecrated by our Bishop, who told us that an angel stands there constantly in worship. Adults, as well as children, need to treat the church and especially the altar area with great respect.

Children will object to these expectations, but they learn to do many things they don't want to because parents insist on them:

brushing teeth, having a regular bedtime, not eating cookies before dinner. When parents have a firm reverence for the church and insist on these standards, children will meet them.



### **Please Support Your Parish - Our Witness of Christ to the World!**

Mortgage payments, utility bills, maintenance expenses, insurance premiums, and the list goes on and on! Imagine what it would be like if you didn't have an income to pay your bills?

The Church faces the same kind of expenses each month and relies on your donations to provide the income it needs to survive. Our church cannot rely on candle and prosphora sales alone to pay its bills, it must depend on regular contributions from its members to stay financially

healthy. We are all members of the church and we all share in the responsibility to pay its expenses if we wish to continue to have a place to worship. Don't depend on other parishioners to bear your burden! We ask that everyone regularly contribute to the Church whether that be on a weekly, monthly or quarterly basis. Give what you can on a regular and consistent basis, but give even if it is only \$5.00 or \$10.00 a week. We are all members of the Body of Christ and we are all responsible to maintain the church which houses us.

**STEWARDSHIP IS ALL OF OUR RESPONSIBILITY!**

### **Opportunity to Participate in St. Basil's Gardening Project**

Those of have a green thumb now have an opportunity to participate in the process of beautifying the Church grounds. Horticultural plans have been made for the oval area in the driveway circle. The plans call for a beautiful flower garden to be planted and maintained and if you would like to participate please contact Theodore Mills. We are looking for perennials to plant in the area. If you have any at your home garden that you would like to transplant to the church garden please let us know. If you would like to donate money so we could buy some from a local nursery that would be welcome also. Your prayers, your labor, your flowers and your love are welcome

We welcome your participation but please do not do any gardening unless you contact the gardening committee. For example do not plant anything, or use any herbicides or pesticides in the area. This will be an organic garden, safer for the children. Also please do not pull any weeds, you may be pulling up plants we sowed from seeds. Also do not sow any seeds in the area.

Below is a list of some of the plants and bulbs we are looking for. They are all deer resistant and tolerate full sun and some drought.

Black-eyed Susan	Hibiscus (already donated)	Marigolds
Purple cone flower	Cardinal Flower	Hyacinths
Red Valerian	Irises	Shasta Daisies
Coreopsis	Buddlei	Zinnias
Butterfly weed	Daffodils	Grape Hyacinths
Bee Balm	Snow drops	Narcissus
Speedwell	Penstemon beard tongue	Veronica

