

# St. Basil the Great Orthodox Church

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D e s   P e r e s ,   M O   6 3 1 2 2

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

## Clergy

Archpriest Sergii Alekseev, Parish Rector  
Protopriest Radomir Chkautovich  
Priest Thomas Nichols  
Deacon Ephraim Galloway  
Deacon Ivan Alekseev  
Deacon Daniel Simpson



## Schedule of Services

- **Seventh Sunday of Pascha**
  - **Holy Fathers of the First Ecumenical Council**
    - Sat., May 31 Vigil 5 P.M.
    - Sun., June 1 Divine Liturgy 10 A.M.
- **Holy Trinity Memorial Saturday**
  - Sat., June 7 Divine Liturgy 9 A.M. *at House Springs*
- **Pentecost**
  - **Feast of the Holy Trinity**
  - **Descent of the Holy Spirit on Apostles**
    - Sat., June 7 Vigil 5 P.M.
    - Sun., June 8 Divine Liturgy 10 A.M.  
Followed by the Vespers with the  
Kneeling Prayers
- **First Sunday after Pentecost**
  - **Sunday of All Saints**
    - Sat., June 14 Vigil 5 P.M.
    - Sun., June 15 Divine Liturgy 10 A.M.
- **Second Sunday after Pentecost**
  - **Sunday of All the Saints of Russia**
    - Sat., June 21 Vigil 5 P.M.
    - Sun., June 22 Divine Liturgy 10 A.M.
- **Third Sunday after Pentecost**
  - **Sunday of All the Saints of America**
    - Sat., June 28 Vigil 5 P.M.
    - Sun., June 29 Divine Liturgy 10 A.M.

# Fortieth Anniversary of St. Basil the Great Orthodox Church in St. Louis

On the Fifth Sunday of Pascha, His Eminence Gabriel, Archbishop of Montreal and Canada, visited St. Basil the Great Orthodox Church, thus marking the 40th anniversary of the parish.

The initial plan was for the archbishop to arrive earlier on Saturday, May 17th, but his flight got canceled and he was able to arrive at St. Basil's only towards the end of the Vigil.

On Sunday morning, upon Archbishop Gabriel's arrival he was presented flowers by the children and was greeted by the parish warden Andrew Johnstone with the traditional bread and salt.



Since our parish has not witnessed the Hierarchical Divine Liturgy for several years, many of our parishioners saw it for the first time. And there were

things to see: the Meeting of the Hierarchy, with the priests lined up in the narthex in their rhyasas, the deacons all in a row censuring the hierarchy and reciting the prescribed prayers for all to hear, and the choir singing majestically, thus enveloping the deacons' words with the hymnody.

Then Archbishop Gabriel entered the nave and proceeded to the amvon where he and the priests listened to the Entrance Prayers read by the cathedral Protodeacon Alexander Kichakov. After this, our archpastor took his place on the kathedra – a small platform in the middle of the church. There we all could see him being vested by the protodeacon and the altar servers, while



another protodeacon was reading the Vesting Prayers, St. Basil's Deacon Ephraim was censuring, and two junior deacons flanked them with dikiri and trikiri.

During the Sixth Hour, Seth Williams, the parish warden of St. Justin's Mission in Cape Girardeau, was led up to the archbishop and was tonsured by him a Reader and subsequently ordained a Subdeacon for St. Justin's Mission.



Celebrating the Divine Liturgy alongside of Archbishop Gabriel were Archpriests John Whiteford (rector of St. Jonah's parish in Spring, TX) and Sergii Alekseev (St. Basil's rector), Priests



Zachary Rose (rector of Sts. Peter and Fevronia parish in Kansas City, KS) and Thomas Nichols (St. Basil's Church), Protodeacons Alexander Kichakov (Holy Virgin Protection Cathedral, Des Plaines, IL) and Nikifor Franklin (Nativity of the Mother of God parish in Albany, NY), Deacons Ephraim Galloway (St. Basil's Church), Stephen Zelesnik (St. John the Theologian Mission in New Roads, LA) and Ivan Alekseev (St. Basil's Church).

As we all were praying at the Liturgy, we could see how some parts of the Hierarchical Liturgy differ from what we are used to. The archpastor remains in the middle of the nave from the beginning of the Liturgy until the Small Entrance. The senior priest took a blessing from him to begin the Liturgy, entered the altar and gave the exclamation: "Blessed is the Kingdom of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit always, now and ever and unto the ages of ages!" After the Litany of Peace, the hierarch blessed the second priest to enter the altar and to proclaim the exclamation after the first Small Litany. During the singing of the second Antiphon, the remaining priests received a blessing to enter the altar.

During the Small Entrance, the clergy proceeded out of the altar, lined up on either side of the hierarch and entered the altar following him and singing the Entrance Hymn, which the choir repeated as the clergy sang it for the second time already in the altar.

It is worth noting that during the Hierarchical Liturgy the Royal Doors remain open for a long time and are closed only after the singing of the Lord's Prayer.

After the Great Entrance, Deacon Stephen Zelesnik was brought up into the middle of the nave and from there was escorted into the altar where Archbishop Gabriel ordained him to holy priesthood to guide St. John the Theologian Mission in New Roads, LA. We could see how the man who was living his last minutes as a deacon was led thrice around the Holy Altar Table by his



Dean, Fr. John Whiteford, accompanied by the singing of the clergy and the choir. He was stripped of his deacon's orarion and vested in priestly vestments, with every article, before being put on him, being presented to the faithful by the hierarch who proclaimed "Axios" ("worthy" in Greek), which again was sung by the clergy and then the choir. Once ordained, Fr. Stephen took his place with other priests around the Holy Altar Table.

After the Consecration of Gifts, Subdeacon Daniel Simpson was brought to the middle of the nave and was escorted into the altar to be ordained to the diaconate. The ordination to the diaconate is very similar to the ordination to the priesthood. It also includes being led around the Holy Altar Table, this time by the cathedral protodeacon. Newly-ordained Deacon Daniel was vested in diaconal vestments, with every



new article being accompanied by "Axios". Finally, he was given the liturgical fan and positioned on the north side of the Holy Altar Table to fan the Holy Gifts. It goes without saying that this ordination was experienced quite differently by the clergy and the faithful of St. Basil's, since it is *our* Daniel, and he will be serving as a deacon in *our* church.

After this ordination, the Divine Liturgy continued in a familiar fashion. It is worth noting that our choir sang beautifully under the leadership of Carol Surgant. During communion of the clergy, our youth choir, under direction of Melinda Westervelt, sang the Exapostilarion of Pascha. Holy Communion was administered



from three chalices (it must have been the first instance of this at St. Basil's), with Archbishop Gabriel distributing Communion from the center of the amvon.

At the end of the Divine Liturgy, a Gramota from the First Hierarch of the Russian Church Abroad (read by Protodeacon Alexander) was presented to St. Basil's choir director Carol Surgant for her "noteworthy efforts on behalf of St. Basil the Great parish in St. Louis ... and the worldwide



Orthodox Christian English-speaking community." Metropolitan Nicholas stresses in the Gramota, that the recipient has been "an unending font of Liturgical information for clergymen, singers, and the laity ... first at St. John Chrysostom parish and now for many years at St. Basil the Great parish."

Another Gramota, this time from the Diocese of Chicago and Mid-America, signed by Archbishop Gabriel, was presented to St. Basil's parish.

After the Divine Liturgy, the festivities spilled into the parish hall and outdoors – under our huge tent, where the tables were set for the clergy and the faithful. We were blessed with beautiful weather – a rare treat for St. Basil's community during major celebrations. The parish Sisterhood and the trapeza team prepared a great variety of delicious dishes, while a small choir treated the guests to a choice selection of church hymns and folk songs, sung in English, Georgian, and Russian.

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Many hours of work were put into preparation of this celebration, with some elements of planning changing at the last moment. The church and the narthex were scrubbed, candlestands were polished, wax drops were ironed out of the carpets, mulch was spread under the tent to prevent the appearance of muddy puddles, the tent was put back in shape after a major storm, and so on and so forth. We are grateful to all our hard workers and benefactors.





## Deacon Ordained for St. Basil's

Subdeacon Ivan Alekseev was ordained to the holy diaconate by Archbishop Gabriel on May 6th at St. George Russian Orthodox Church in Cincinnati, Ohio. Several parishioners from St. Basil's traveled to Cincinnati to witness the ordination, which took place during the patronal feast services of St. George's parish. The celebration was filled with joy and reverence, marking a meaningful moment in the life of the newly ordained. Ivan is the son of Fr. Sergii, the rector of St. Basil's, and his ordination is a blessing not only for his family but for the entire parish of St. Basil's. We pray that God will grant him many years of faithful service in his new ministry.



## Thanksgiving Gramota Text

We have become aware of the truly noteworthy efforts of the St. Basil the Great parish family since the founding of your parish forty years ago.

The Ever-Memorable Archpriest Martin Swanson, having labored zealously to find the Truth, and having found it, worked tirelessly for the glory of God and the service of those made in His Image. Today we especially remember Fr. Martin, his wife Katherine, and all the founders of the St. Basil community – both those still with us striving for the Heavenly Kingdom, and those who have gone to their reward there. May the Lord grant everlasting rest and joy with Him for their labors on this earth to establish and strengthen your parish, and may He grant those still with us the zeal and fortitude to finish the race of this life firmly grounded in the True Faith, that they too might find a place in His Kingdom!

The founders of temples are commemorated at each Divine Liturgy served in the temples they founded. This is done to remember them most certainly. But also to invigorate the rest of us to follow in their footsteps and serve the Lord according to the talents He has given us. It is my wish for all of you, in this fortieth year of your parish life, that you reflect seriously on this question: are you serving God using the talents He has given you? And if you are, thank Him with love that He has guided you to this good place. And if you are not, ask Him to help you to use your talents for His glory. If this service to God and man can be adopted as a gift from the founders of the parish to future generations as a call to action, we have great hope that in sixty years the ruling hierarch of this diocese will present you a similar gramota on your one hundredth anniversary. May the merciful Lord grant it!

Gabriel, Archbishop of Montreal & Canada

Locum Tenens, Diocese of Chicago & Mid-America



## Orthodox Studies for Children

Many families here at St. Basil's have begun to coordinate a schooling co-op that will begin next year, as a one day a week program. Our zeal has been fortified by Archbishop Gabriel's recent visit and his letter to our parish which encouraged us to embrace our Godly calling and to grow our faith community. In that spirit, we ask all who have children ages 0 to 18, and also all who could contribute or participate in a growing school, as teacher, aid, or faculty, to fill out this brief noncommittal survey. This necessary information will allow us to move forward and provide what is needed for our families. Through humble beginnings, it is our prayer to develop an Orthodox school in the next five years. May our labor now bear great fruit for our children's future. For more information or to fill out a print survey, please see or contact John Leber, Meagan Pirtle, or Theophan Helbig.

This QR code to the right is a link to the survey.



## Church Sale Success

The parish church sale was a great success, thanks to the generous support and hard work of our parishioners. We are especially grateful to everyone who donated items and gave their time to help. A heartfelt thank you goes to the Brotherhood for their strength and effort in moving the heavier pieces. All proceeds from the sale will go toward purchasing and building new playground equipment for the children of our parish, a gift that will bring joy for years to come. If you are interested in helping the Sisterhood with the construction or planning of the playground, please reach out to Fr. Sergii to be connected with the appropriate people.



## Weddings at St. Basil's

Alexander and Shannon (Brigid) Zverev (pictured below and to the left) were married on May 4th. Although their wedding did not take place at St. Basil's, they were baptized and brought into the Orthodox Church here at St. Basil's, and we joyfully celebrate their marriage with them.

Gage (Gabriel) and Gabrielle Harris (pictured below and to the right) were married at St. Basil's on Sunday, May 25th.

Both were baptized last April, making this occasion especially meaningful. We rejoice with them as they begin their life together through the holy sacrament of marriage.





## Focus on FOCUS

The Fellowship of Orthodox Christians United to Serve (FOCUS) is a national organization that seeks to provide Orthodox Christians the opportunity to serve our neighbors by distributing food, clothing, and warm meals on Sundays and Wednesdays throughout the month. Our local chapter serves from Holy Archangel Michael OCA parish under the administration of Matushka Christine MacDonald.

We will serve our next FOCUS Sunday dinner on **June 15th**. If you are interested in helping, either by providing food or helping cook it, or by distributing the meal and pantry items on location, then please sign up through the following Sign-Up Genius website:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0945ABAC2FA7F9C70-56029142-sunday#/>

## Parish Prayer List

**Schema-Archimandrite Panteleimon — Repose**

**Reader Symeon Campbell — Health**

**Photini Mills — Health**

**Julianna Campbell — Health**

**Inna Dagaeva — Health**

**Mark Wiebenga — Health**

**Deacon Daniel Simpson — Health**

**Barbara Westervelt — Health**

**Ruth Bradley — 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.

There is also a sign-up sheet on the trapeza bulletin board along with this Sign-Up Genius link. If you have any questions, please contact Fr. Sergii or Joseph Steineger.



For June, we have been asked to supply the FOCUS Pantry with **small hand towels (not the large bath towels), men's underwear, men's short-sleeved dress or polo shirts (medium and large), and men's jeans and khakis (medium and large, tall and short)**.

A flier is posted in the trapeza with tear-away tabs for reminders. Please donate these items in the large plastic container found in our parish coat closet. We would like to supply a healthy donation by **June 22nd**.

Thank you for your continued service to our Lord and God Jesus Christ through your service to those less fortunate. *"For I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink; ... Naked, and ye clothed me."* Matthew 25.35-36

## Catechumen Corner

Praying for catechumens is a very important responsibility of an Orthodox Christian. So important, that a special litany or series of petitions in the Divine Liturgy is completely dedicated to asking the Lord to have mercy on all catechumens preparing for illumination. *"Let us the faithful pray for the catechumens, that the Lord will have mercy on them."*

Let us fulfill the words of the litany and pray for our fellow brothers and sisters:

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|-------------------|--------------------------|
| • <b>Zachary</b>  | • <b>Shiloh</b>          |
| • <b>Theodore</b> | • <b>Ethan, Allison,</b> |
| • <b>Evan</b>     | • <b>and children</b>    |
| • <b>Ryan</b>     | • <b>Jacob</b>           |
| • <b>Eythan</b>   | • <b>Rachel</b>          |
| • <b>Tyler</b>    |                          |