

St. Basil the Great Orthodox Church

S e p t e m b e r 2 0 2 5

2 0 5 H i g h l a n d A v e n u e
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

- **13th Sunday after Pentecost**
 - **Apostles Bartholomew and Titus**
 - Sat., Sept. 6 Vigil 5 P.M.
 - Sun., Sept. 7 Divine Liturgy 10 A.M.
- **Beheading of St. John the Baptist**
 - Wed., Sept 10 Vigil 6 P.M.
 - Thur., Sept 11 Divine Liturgy 8 A.M.
- **Right-believing Great Prince Alexander Nevsky**
 - Fri., Sept. 12 Brotherhood Moleben 6 P.M.
- **14th Sunday after Pentecost**
 - **Church New Year**
 - **Right-believing Prince Peter and Princess Fevronia**
- Sat., Sept. 13 Vigil 5 P.M.
- Sun., Sept. 14 Divine Liturgy 10 A.M.
- **15th Sunday after Pentecost**
 - **Nativity of the Theotokos**
 - Sat., Sept. 20 Vigil 5 P.M.
 - Sun., Sept. 21 Divine Liturgy 10 A.M.
- **Exaltation of the Precious Cross**
 - Fri., Sept. 26 Vigil 6 P.M.
 - Sat., Sept. 27 Divine Liturgy 9 A.M.
- **16th Sunday after Pentecost**
 - **Afterfeast of the Exaltation**
 - Sat., Sept. 27 Vigil 5 P.M.
 - Sun., Sept 28 Divine Liturgy 10 A.M.
- **Holy Martyrs Sophia and her daughters Faith, Hope and Love**
 - Tue., Sept. 30 Moleben 9 A.M.

Annual Parish Meeting

Our annual parish meeting will take place on **Sunday, September 28th**, following the Divine Liturgy. The parish council will present reports, and we will discuss important matters concerning the life of our parish. All parishioners are encouraged to comment, ask questions, and

Sunday School Plans

Sunday School will begin on September 7th!

With Fr. Sergii's blessing, we will have three classes: Meagan (Mary) Pirtle teaching ages 0-5, Photini Mills teaching ages 6-11, and Adam Stiller teaching ages 12-18, and we thank Danielia Waller for her faithful service in previous years. All three classes will meet in the narthex after Communion and conclude just before the final blessing (which the children

vote on decisions that will strengthen our community. If you have topics to raise beforehand, please reach out to Fr. Sergii. This is an important opportunity to reflect on the past year and look ahead to the future. Your presence is greatly valued.

should attend), lasting about 15-20 minutes. During this time, we ask parishioners in the narthex to help maintain a focused atmosphere by avoiding unnecessary conversation. Please encourage your children to attend and let the appropriate teacher know if your child will participate so teachers can prepare. The **Moleben Before the Beginning of the Instruction of Children** will be served after Liturgy on **Sunday, August 31st**.

Festival Preparations

Mark your calendars for the Russian Festival on **Sunday, October 12th**. As we prepare for this joyful day, we encourage everyone to begin

thinking about ways they can support the Sisterhood of St. Macrina in making the festival a success. If you would like to participate or lend a hand, please reach out to Matushka Svetlana.

St. Basil's Youth Gathering

The St. Basil youth will host a fall gathering for middle and high school students on **Sunday, September 21st**. We'll meet at Castlewood State Park after Liturgy, from 1:30-4:00 pm. The park offers a playground, a creek, and a large field for soccer, frisbee, and other activities. Snacks and drinks will be provided.

St. Basil's Orthodox Co-op

We are excited to share that our supplemental Co-op program begins **Monday, September 8th**, running weekly from 9am-12pm. Guided by the liturgical calendar, our children will grow in love for God, the Church, and each other through scripture, hymns, saints, and icons. Classes are offered for **Nursery (0-2)**, **Early Childhood (3-6)**, and **School Age (7-18)**, with a rhythm of morning prayers, Orthodox studies, outdoor learning, and shared lunch. Families are asked to stay on premises, bring snacks and notebooks (for ages 7+), and join us in building a faithful, supportive community. Enrollment forms and welcome binders will be distributed soon.



Baptism At St. Basil's

We are happy to announce that on Saturday, August 16th, the Holy Mystery of Baptism was celebrated for Ilia and Eliso, children of Tornike

Proskophora and Commemoration of Orthodox Christians

We all are familiar with the significance of the Mystery of the Eucharist for our salvation. But the Divine Service in which we receive the greatest gift of all has a component which might escape our attention.

We know that the word 'Liturgy' means *work of the people*: the Holy Gifts are offered by the local Christian community, on behalf of not only this community but of all to whom our love is directed, both living and departed. Most visibly this liturgical aspect is present in the service of Proskomedie which takes place in the altar before the Liturgy, as the public worship, begins. During the Proskomedie not only the bread and wine – which through the descent of the Holy Spirit will be sanctified into the Body and Blood of Christ – are prepared, but prayerful commemorations are made for all who are glorified by God in His Kingdom and for those whose sins, we beseech, are washed away by His precious Blood.

As five loaves were offered to Patriarch Abraham by the mysterious high priest Melchizedek, so five loaves, or proskophoras, are used in Proskomedie: one from which the Lamb is cut out; another one is used to cut out a triangular particle in honor of the Mother of God; the third – for the Forerunner and Baptist John, the prophets, the apostles, the holy hierarchs, the martyrs, the venerable Fathers and Mothers, the unmercenary physicians, for some specific saints including the saint of the temple and of the day (all of them the priest mentions by name), and finally for the saint whose Liturgy is celebrated (either John Chrysostom or Basil the Great); and two more proskophoras: one for the living and one for the departed. Thus, the diskos becomes an icon of

and Nona. We ask the Lord to grant them many years as they grow in faith and love within the Church.

the Divine Logos surrounded by all those redeemed by His precious Blood.

Now, more about the

commemoration of the living and departed. Only Orthodox

Christians may be commemorated at

the Proskomedie. The priest commemorates the Orthodox Christians whom he wishes. But the rest of the community may participate in this commemoration by sending into the altar the lists of the names of the Orthodox Christians they would like to be commemorated (both living and departed). These lists are accompanied by small proskophoras which are returned to the faithful once the commemorations are made (multiple commemorations can be made from one proskophora). The faithful partake of the proskophoras either after the Liturgy or, which is a common practice, as the first thing that they eat the following morning (or later during the week), accompanied by a sip of Holy Water. The following prayer can be said at that time: "O Lord my God, may Thy holy gift: the proskophora and Thy Holy Water be unto forgiveness of my sins, unto enlightenment of my mind, unto strengthening of my spiritual and bodily powers, unto health of my soul and body, unto vanquishing of my passions and weaknesses, by Thy boundless merciful kindness, through the prayers of Thy Most-pure Mother and all Thy



Saints. Amen". One may not partake of the prosphora and the Holy Water in the morning when he is preparing to commune.

Now back to the altar. The priest takes this small prosphora into his hand and, with a special liturgical spear, removes a particle from the prosphora for each person on the list, saying "Save and have mercy on Thy servants ..." or "Remember, O Lord, the souls of Thy departed servants ...", and deposits the particles on the diskos next to the Lamb. This takes place before the Liturgy or during it but before the Great Entrance.

After the communion of the faithful, the particles, which were taken for the living and the departed, are lowered into the Holy Cup containing the Blood of Christ, while the deacon says: "Wash away, O Lord, the sins of those

An Old Photograph

What you see is a photo (shared with us by probably our most senior parishioner, Madeline Pisani) taken in 2007 at the "old" St. Basil's location, when the Divine Services were held in a tiny temple in which our parish had its beginning.



In the photo, from left to right (due to the quick growth of the parish, this explanation will be useful for many of our faithful): Hieromonk Seraphim (later Archimandrite Seraphim and then, finally, Schema-archimandrite Panteleimon – a member of the brotherhood of the Holy Cross Hermitage, first founded in House Springs, MO, and then relocated to the hollers of West

commemorated here with Thy precious Blood through the prayers of Thy saints".

A Note Regarding Commemoration Lists

Only names of baptized Orthodox Christians may be written on commemoration lists

either for the living or the departed. If you would like to include clergy in your list, write them first in the hierarchical order (Patriarch *name*, Metropolitan *name*, Archbishop *name*, Bishop *name*, Archimandrite *name*, Archpriest *name*, Igumen *name*, Priest / Hieromonk *name*, Deacon / Hierodeacon *name*, Subdeacon *name*, Reader *name*, Monk / Nun *name*). When praying for a priest, write, for example, "Priest Thomas", not "Fr. Thomas". Only baptismal names in their full forms should be written: not Alex but Alexander or Alexandra, not Steve but Stephen, not Mike but Michael, etc.

Virginia in 2000, with Fr. Seraphim becoming its abbot in 2015); Archpriest Martin Swanson (the founder and long-time rector of St. Basil's parish); His Grace Peter, Bishop of Cleveland, administrator of the Diocese of Chicago and Mid-America (in 2016 Bishop Peter was elevated to the rank of archbishop and appointed the ruling hierarch of our diocese); and Archimandrite George, the Economos of Holy Trinity Monastery in Jordanville, NY (in 2008 he was consecrated Bishop of Mayfield, the following year appointed Abbot of Holy Cross Hermitage in West Virginia, in 2014 Bishop of Canberra—administrator of the Diocese of Australia and New Zealand, in 2022 the ruling hierarch of that diocese, and the following year elevated to the rank of archbishop).

Three of the four pictured have since passed away: Schema-archimandrite Panteleimon only four months ago, Archpriest Martin in 2022, and Archbishop Peter in November of 2024.

Two of the four were natives of the St. Louis area: Archbishop George was born in Belleville, IL, while Schema-archimandrite Panteleimon was born in St. Louis. The other

two—Archbishop Peter and Archpriest Martin—were born in California.

A handful of our parishioners still remember the event which the photo captures.

It is remarkable that this photograph reached us in the very year when the parish celebrates its

40th anniversary.

May our Lord grant eternal rest to His faithful servants Archbishop Peter, Schema-archimandrite Panteleimon, and Archpriest Martin, and many more years of service in the Holy Church to Archbishop George!

Focus on FOCUS

We will serve our next FOCUS Sunday dinner on **September 14th**. Please sign up with the QR code.

For September, we have been asked to supply the FOCUS Pantry with **10-14 oz. boxed**



cereal, (the sugary kinds that are easy on damaged teeth), **12 oz. boxed oatmeal**, and **32 oz. shelf stable milk**. A flier is posted in the trapeza with tear-away tabs for reminders. Please donate these items in the large plastic container in our parish coat closet. We would like to supply a healthy donation by **September 28th**.

Adopting Normal Parish By-Laws

In 1951 the Synod of Bishops accepted the Normal Parish By-laws as the standard by-laws to be used in every parish of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad.

Life is always larger than any set of rules, but the By-laws serve as a very useful set of guidelines. Adopting the By-laws does not change anything in the life of our parish, nor in our relationship to the diocese.

When St. Basil's parish was formed, its founder, Fr. Martin, put together his own version of by-laws. Many changes have taken place in the parish since that time, and we now need to adopt the Normal Parish By-laws used by all other parishes. This should be done at the parish annual meeting on Sunday, September 28th.

We are all invited to familiarize ourselves with the Normal Parish By-laws, which can be found online either by typing "Normal Parish By-laws ROCOR" and opening the link to the Synod web page, or by visiting:

https://synod.com/synod/engdocuments/enov_normparishbylaws.html. A few printed copies will also be available in the narthex. However, paragraph 56 has been changed. Therefore, in order for our parish to be on the same page with the rest of the diocese, we need to accept not only the By-laws but also the change to paragraph 56. At the meeting we will be asked if everyone is in favor of adopting the Normal Parish By-laws.

Previous text of paragraph 56:

"The closing of the parish can take place only subject to the method set forth in Par. 54 of these By-Laws, while the entire personal and real estate of the parish shall be turned over to the direct management and disposition of the Diocesan Authorities as per the direction of the Ruling Bishop."

New text of paragraph 56:

"The closing of the parish can take place only subject to the method set forth in Par. 54 of these By-Laws. The assets of the parish shall be distributed to the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia, Diocese of Chicago & Mid-America or its successor organization, provided that the Diocese is and remains

organized exclusively for charitable, religious education, and scientific purposes, including, for such purposes, the making of distributions to organizations that qualify as exempt organizations described under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or corresponding section of any future federal tax code. If assets cannot be distributed to the Diocese or its successor organization, then assets shall be distributed to the Synod of Bishops of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia, or its successor organization, provided that said organization is organized for exempt purposes within the meaning of Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or corresponding section of any future federal tax code. If the Synod of Bishops of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia, or its successor

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

Tatiana Zyryanova — Health

Matrona Leber — 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.

organization no longer exists, then assets shall be distributed to any Eastern Orthodox Christian organization which is organized for exempt purposes within the meaning of Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or corresponding section of any future federal tax code. If no such organizations exist, then assets shall be distributed to any not-for-profit institution which is organized exclusively for charitable, religious education, and scientific purposes, including, for such purposes, the making of distributions to organizations that qualify as exempt organizations described under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or corresponding section of any future federal tax code, provided those purposes are not opposed to the moral, theological, and dogmatic tradition of the Russian Orthodox faith, and for a public purpose. Any such assets not disposed of shall be disposed of by a court of competent jurisdiction in the county in which the principal office of the organization is then located, exclusively for such purposes or to such organization or organizations, as said Court shall determine, which are organized and operated exclusively for such purposes."

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:

- | | | |
|-------------------|-----------------|------------------|
| • Doc | • Tyler | • Jacob |
| • Zachary | • Shiloh | • Rachel |
| • Theodore | • Ethan, | • Justin |
| • Evan | Allison, | • Zachary |
| • Ryan | and | • Ashley |
| • Eythan | children | |