



ALL SAINTS ANTIOCHIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH

Antiochian Orthodox Archdiocese of North America

4129 W. Newport Ave., Chicago, IL 60641

773-231-6177

www.allsaintsorthodox.org

Sunday, December 17, 2023

Saturday Vespers, 7pm • Sunday Orthros & Divine Liturgy, 8:30am

Sunday of the Forefathers of our Lord

Prophet Daniel & the Three Holy Youths



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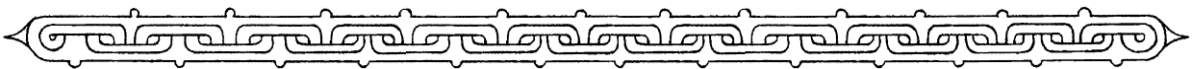


Troparion for the Resurrection (Tone 3): Let the heavens rejoice and the earth be glad, for the Lord hath done a mighty act with His own arm. He hath trampled down death by death, and become the first-born from the dead. He hath delivered us from the depths of Hades, granting the world the great mercy.

Troparion for the Forefathers (Tone 2): Thou hast justified by faith the ancient forefathers, and through them Thou hast gone before and betrothed unto Thyself the Church of the gentiles. Let the saints, therefore, take pride in glory; for from their seed sprouted forth a noble fruit, and it was she who gave birth to Thee without seed. Wherefore, by their pleadings, O Christ God, save our souls.

Kontakion for Advent (Tone 3): Today the Virgin cometh unto the cave to give birth to the Word, who was born before all ages, begotten in a manner that defies description. Rejoice therefore, O universe, if thou should hear; and glorify with the angels and the shepherds, glorify Him who by His will shall become a newborn Babe, and who is our God before all ages!

Troparion of All Saints (Tone 4): Adorned in the blood of Thy martyrs, throughout all the world as in purple and fine linen, Thy Church through them doth cry unto Thee, O Christ God: Send down Thy compassion upon Thy people! Grant peace to Thy habitation and great mercy to our souls.



THE EPISTLE

For the Holy Forefathers

Blessed art Thou, O Lord, the God of our Fathers. For Thou art just in all that Thou hast done for us.

The reading from the Epistle of St. Paul to the Colossians (3:4-11)

Brethren: When Christ, who is our life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory. Put to death therefore what is earthly in you: fornication, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry. On account of these, the wrath of God is coming upon the sons of disobedience. In these you once walked, when you lived in them.

But now put them all away: anger, wrath, malice, slander, and foul talk from your mouth. Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have put off the old nature with its practices and have put on the new nature, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its Creator. Here there cannot be Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free man, but Christ is all, and in all.

THE GOSPEL

For the Holy Forefathers

The reading from the Holy Gospel according to St. Luke (14:16-24)

The Lord spoke this parable: A man once gave a great banquet, and invited many; and at the time for the banquet he sent his servant to say to those who had been invited, ‘Come; for all is now ready.’

But one by one, they all began to make excuses. The first said to him, ‘I have bought a field, and I must go out and see it; I pray you, have me excused.’ And another said, ‘I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to examine them; I pray you, have me excused.’ And another said, ‘I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come.’

So the servant came and reported this to his master. Then the householder in anger said to his servant, ‘Go out quickly to the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in the poor and maimed and blind and lame.’

And the servant said, ‘Sir, what you commanded has been done, and still there is room.’

And the master said to the servant, ‘Go out to the highways and hedges, and compel people to come in, that my house may be filled. For I tell you, none of those men who were invited shall taste my banquet.’ For many are called, but few are chosen.

Announcements and Upcoming Events

For a full calendar of events and services at All Saints, see our website www.allsaintsorthodox.org

Today:

- Orthros and Divine Liturgy, beginning 8:30am
- Baptism of Aisha Pulido. *May God grant her many years!*
- Coffee hour & church school, following Liturgy
- Christmas tree decorating

Tuesday, Dec. 19: First Royal Hour of the Nativity, 9am

Wednesday, Dec. 20: Third Royal Hour of the Nativity, 9am; Pre-Feast Vespers, 7pm

Thursday, Dec. 21: Sixth Royal Hour of the Nativity, 9am

Friday, Dec. 22: Ninth Royal Hour of the Nativity, 9am

Saturday, Dec. 23: Nativity Vespers with Old Testament prophecies, 7pm

Next Sunday, Dec. 24:

- Orthros & Divine Liturgy for Genealogy Sunday, beginning 8:30am
- Coffee hour following Liturgy
- Nativity Orthros & Divine Liturgy, beginning at 10:00pm

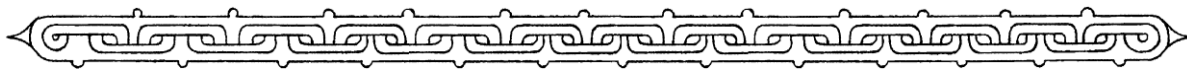
COATS NEEDED: We are collecting warm outer garments and disposable diapers for the many refugees in the city of Chicago. Please donate your un-needed coats, scarves, hats and gloves. Maybe warm socks too? Or find some at a local thrift shop – whatever you can afford. Don't forget the disposable diapers. There are bins under the coat rack downstairs for these donations. Thank you!

THE NATIVITY FAST: The Orthodox Nativity Fast (Advent) begins **Wednesday, Nov. 15**, and lasts until **Christmas Eve, Dec. 24**. Let us dedicate ourselves to prayer, fasting, and generosity during this time! If you are able, abstain from meat and dairy products, but please see Fr. Andrew if you have any questions or concerns about keeping the fast. All Orthodox Christians should also make it to confession during this holy season. If you desire to confess to another Orthodox priest outside of our parish, that is generally fine, but let Fr. Andrew know.

CROSS ROAD INSTITUTE is currently accepting applications from high school juniors and seniors for their summer programs. This is an immersive 10-day retreat experience in the Orthodox faith. For more information, please visit www.crossroadinstitute.org.

CAMP ST. GEORGE is the official camp of the Diocese of Toledo and the Midwest and was established in 2001. Camp St. George meets for one week in July (over 4th of July) near Strawberry Point, IA and is for campers ages 9-17. Usually, we get 75-85 campers. Camp St. George did not meet in 2020 or 2021 because of Covid, met in 2022, but did not meet in 2023 because we did not have enough staff.

Specific requests: we need 20 counselors (10 male and 10 female), and one or two more people to take on administrative roles, i.e., programming. The staffing needs should be met before we start accepting campers (in six weeks). The camp needs volunteers (18 and older) who are solid in the Orthodox Faith to consider volunteering their time to fill these roles. Applications will be available in January at csgiowa.org. Contact Fr. Fred Shaheen, Camp Director, with the names of any potential staff at shaheenf@hotmail.com.



THE SAINTS AND US

His Eminence Metropolitan Saba (Ispere)

The holiness of the faithful, according to the Old Testament, is derived from the holiness and sanctity of God. People were to be like their God in their behavior. Their relationship with Him was based on faithfulness. The covenant was established on this condition: If you will indeed obey my voice and keep my covenant, then you shall be my people, and I will be your God (Lev. 26:3, Jer. 30:22). Living according to God's commandments and ordinances is binding for those who consider themselves believers.

In the Old Testament, holiness was defined as separation from impurity. Calls to "*wash yourselves, make yourselves clean, remove the evil of your deeds*" (Isa. 1:16) are synonymous with the verb *sanctify*. Thus, the beginning of the path to sanctification is to distance oneself from sins, their causes, and all those things that defile a person. With the advent of the New Covenant, the concept of holiness broadened and became more positive. Mere abstention from evil was no longer sufficient; it must be complemented by the pursuit of virtue. Thus, when the Lord Jesus Christ fulfilled the Mosaic Law, He asked His disciples to "*be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect*" (Matthew 5:48).

The pursuit of holiness means the pursuit of perfection, and this is the call for every Christian: *"Be holy, for I am holy"* (1 Peter 1:16); *"but as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct"* (1 Peter 1:15).

On this basis, the saints have held a high position in the Church since its inception. The saints are honored by and companions to the believers, serving as role models and examples for all those who love Christ and follow His path. Christians began by honoring the martyrs first, as they willingly gave their lives, enduring suffering with joy for the sake of their faith and never abandoning it. They also observed the virtues embodied by certain individuals around them, which made them beacons of light that illuminated the lives of the believers; and destinations for guidance and advice for building a Christian life of perfection—that is, a life of sanctity.

The saints are God's intercessors and friends. We keep their memory, honor them, and place icons of them in our homes and churches. We ask for their intercession and seek their guidance because they are our brothers and sisters in the family of God, the Church. Moreover, because we believe in eternal life and consider death not a perishing but, rather, a transition and repose in the Lord, we ask for the same from our loved ones who have gone before us and remember them in our prayers, just like our living loved ones. For all are living members of the Church.

The relationship between believers and the saints who preceded them is familial. Just as a child seeks help from, follows the example of, and emulates an older sibling, so does a Christian follow and seek guidance from the saints. They are a living Gospel. Their lives are practical applications of the commandments found in the Gospel.

In this context of ecclesial communion, some saints may feel closer to you than others. You may be drawn to a particular saint who shares similarities with your life or serves as a role model for you. For example, someone who tended more towards pessimism than optimism may have read the life of St. Seraphim of Sarov and saw that he had the same tendencies at first, but fervently prayed for joy until he became known as the saint of Paschal joy for the rest of his life. Such a person will immediately feel a connection to this saint. Another example would be a person who once lived a life with no moral boundaries and later experienced a conversion seeking a life of purity and repentance. Such a person will naturally find resemblance in the life of St. Mary of Egypt, who transformed her life completely from a life of sin to one of absolute purity.

On this basis, the Church asks those approaching baptism to choose a patron saint. When someone is ordained a priest or becomes a monk or nun, they sometimes change their name and take one of the saints as their spiritual patron and friend. This personal relationship with the saints is a living, blessed, and fruitful connection. A bond forms between the individual and the saint, and the believer experiences the presence of the living saint in his life. He experiences the saint's assistance, the efficacy of his prayers, and his intercessions.

I present this information today because many inquiries have reached the Archdiocese Office asking about how a patron saint might be chosen for those who do not know their patron saint from their baptism or were not directed to one by the priest or their parents during their baptism. The answer is very simple: Before you is a vast array of saintly men and women from whom to choose. Pick a patron with whom you find similarities or someone to be a role model in your life. Establish a personal friendship with this patron, just as you do with any close friend or companion. Mention their names in your prayers. Ask them to intercede for you and pray on your behalf. Acquire their icons for your prayer corner. Over time, you will feel the strength of their presence in your life. ...

May God bless all of you and grant you to experience the sweetness of living within God's family, the Church, which consists of the living and the departed, angels and saints, and those who strive on the path of holiness. Thus, we ascend day by day until we become "the household of God" (Eph. 2:19).

Volunteer Schedule

Date	Reader	Prospora	Greeter	Coffee	Food
Sunday Dec. 17	Doug J	Debbie K	Domitille	Lydia A	R-Z
Sunday Dec. 24 <i>(Sunday morning)</i>	Paul K	Pat K	Nancy L	Zach C	A-F
Dec. 24-25 <i>(Sunday 10pm)</i>	Jim K	Domitille	John O	n/a	n/a
Sunday Dec. 31 <i>St. Basil</i>	Joseph L	Cristina P	JoAnne T	Alina S	G-K

For Sunday coffee hour, the church has been divided into four parts alphabetically (A-F, G-K, L-P, and R-Z). On your assigned week, please bring something simple to share with everyone for coffee hour.

*If you have children, please monitor them as they go through the coffee hour line, and help them clean up after themselves. **Weekly clean-up will be the responsibility of those providing coffee hour.** And of course, things go faster when we all pitch in and help!*

Shaded dates are fasting days. No meat or dairy products should be served at the church on these days.



DAILY BIBLE READINGS

DECEMBER 17-23, 2023

ADAPTED FROM THE
LECTIONARY OF THE ANTIOCHIAN ARCHDIOCESE

This week's daily Old Testament, Epistle, and Gospel readings have been selected to prepare us for our celebration of the Lord's Nativity. Regular sequential readings will resume in January, after the holidays.

SUNDAY, DEC. 17: THE ANCESTORS OF OUR LORD

Luke 24:36-53 / Colossians 3:4-11 / Luke 14:16-24

Monday, Dec. 18: Sebastian the Martyr & his Companions

Daniel 7:9-14 / Colossians 1:15-20 / John 1:1-18

Tuesday, Dec. 19: Aglaia the Righteous of Rome

Micah 4:6-7; 5:1-3 [4:6-7; 5:2-4] / Hebrews 1:1-14 / Matthew 1:18-25

Wednesday, Dec. 20: Ignatius the God-Bearer, Bishop of Antioch

Baruch 3:35-4:4 / Galatians 3:23-29 / Luke 2:1-20

Thursday, Dec. 21: Juliana of Nicomedia & her 630 companions

Isaiah 7:10-16, 8:1-10 / Hebrews 2:1-10 / Matthew 2:1-12

Friday, Dec. 22: Anastasia the Great Martyr

Isaiah 9:1-6 [9:1-7] / Hebrews 2:11-18 / Matthew 2:13-23

Saturday, Dec. 23: Nahum of Ochrid

Daniel 2:31-45 / Galatians 3:8-12 / Luke 13:18-29

ALL SAINTS IS A PARISH OF THE ANTIOCHIAN ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN ARCHDIOCESE
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HIS GRACE BISHOP ANTHONY, DIOCESE OF TOLEDO AND THE MIDWEST
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