



# 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 31, 2023**

**Saturday Vespers, 7pm • Sunday Orthros & Divine Liturgy, 8:30am  
Leave-Taking of the Nativity • St. Joseph the Betrothed**



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**Troparion for the Resurrection (Tone 5):** Let us believers praise and worship the Word, coeternal with the Father and the Spirit, born of the Virgin for our salvation. For He took pleasure in ascending the cross in the flesh to suffer death, and to raise the dead by His glorious resurrection.

**Troparion of the Nativity (Tone 4):** Thy nativity, O Christ our God, has shown to the world the light of wisdom. For by it, those who worshipped the stars were taught by a star to adore Thee, the Sun of Righteousness, and to know Thee, the Orient from on high. O Lord, glory to Thee!

**Troparion to St. Joseph (Tone 2):** Proclaim, O Joseph, to David, the grandparent of God, the amazing wonders: for thou hast seen a Virgin great with child! With the shepherds thou didst give glory, with the Magi thou didst worship, and by the angel it was revealed to thee. Wherefore, plead thou with Christ God to save our souls.

**Kontakion of the Nativity (Tone 3):** The Virgin brings forth today the omnipotent one, and the earth offers a cave to the unapproachable one. Angels give glory with shepherds, and the magi journey with the star, when for our sakes was born as a new babe, He who is from eternity God.

**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 Sunday before the Theophany*

All those on earth worship thee and sing unto Thee: Alleluia to God, O all the earth.

### **The Reading from the Second Epistle of St. Paul to St. Timothy (4:5-8)**

Timothy, my son, always be steady, endure suffering, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry. For I am already on the point of being sacrificed; the time of my departure has come. I have fought the good fight; I have finished the race; I have kept the Faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the

righteous judge, will award to me on that Day, and not only to me but also to all who have loved His appearing.

## THE GOSPEL

*For the Sunday before the Theophany*

### **The Reading from the Holy Gospel according to St. Mark (1:1-8)**

The beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

As it is written in the prophets, “Behold, I send my messenger before Thy face, who shall prepare Thy way; the voice of one crying in the wilderness: Prepare the way of the Lord, make His paths straight.”

John the Baptizer appeared in the wilderness, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. And there went out to him all the country of Judea, and all the people of Jerusalem; and they were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. Now John was clothed with camel’s hair, and had a leather girdle around his waist, and ate locusts and wild honey. And he preached, saying, “After me comes He who is mightier than I, the thong of whose sandals I am not worthy to stoop down and untie. I have baptized you with water; but He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.”



# Announcements and Upcoming Events

*For a full calendar of events and services at All Saints, see our website [www.allsaintsorthodox.org](http://www.allsaintsorthodox.org)*

## Today:

- Orthros & Divine Liturgy, beginning 8:30am, followed by coffee hour (G-K)

**Wednesday, Jan. 3:** Vespers for Theophany with Old Testament prophecies, 7pm

**Thursday, Jan. 4:** First & Third Royal Hours of Theophany, 9am

**Friday, Jan. 5:** Sixth & Ninth Royal Hours of Theophany, 9am

## Saturday, Jan. 6: Theophany of our Lord Jesus Christ

- Divine Liturgy & Blessing of the Waters, 10am
- Romans Bible Bowl study, after Liturgy
- Great Vespers, 7pm

## Next Sunday, January 7:

- Orthros & Divine Liturgy, 8:30am, followed by coffee hour (L-P)

**THANK YOU FROM THE KISHLERS:** Many thanks to all of you for your Christmas greetings, cards, and thoughtful gifts! We deeply appreciate your generosity and kindness, and we wish you all of God's blessings in the coming year.

**HOUSE BLESSINGS:** It is customary for every Orthodox household to be blessed by a priest between January 6 and the beginning of Great Lent each year. It is not necessary to feed or pay the priest, and you are certainly not required to have his entire family over. Please see Fr. Andrew to set up an appointment. If you would rather wait until after Pascha, that will also be fine.

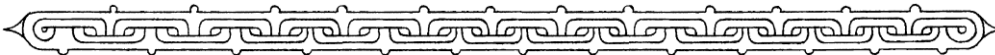
**COATS NEEDED:** We are collecting warm outer garments and disposable diapers for the many refugees in the city of Chicago. Please donate your un-needed coats, scarves, hats and gloves. Maybe warm socks too? Or find some at a local thrift shop – whatever you can afford. Don't forget the disposable diapers.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

**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](http://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](http://csgiowa.org). Contact Fr. Fred Shaheen, Camp Director, with the names of any potential staff at [shaheenf@hotmail.com](mailto:shaheenf@hotmail.com).



## Volunteer Schedule

Date	Reader	Prospora	Greeter	Coffee	Food
<b>Sunday Dec. 31</b>	Joseph L	Cristina P	JoAnne T	Alina S	G-K
<b><u>Sat., Jan. 6</u></b> <i>(Theophany 10am)</i>	Sd Joseph	Sarah S	Azizeh	n/a	n/a
<b>Sun., Jan. 7</b>	Richard C	Dn Walid	James B	Domitille	L-P
<b>Sun., Jan. 14</b>	Michelle C	Sandy A	Nancy L	Lydia A	R-Z
<b>Sun, Jan. 21</b>	Doug J	Debbie K	Domitille	Zach C	A-F
<b>Sun., Jan. 28</b>	Jim K	Pat K	John O	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!*

## A CONTEMPLATION AND A PRAYER

*His Eminence Metropolitan Saba (Isper)*

With the dawn of this New Year, silence strongly draws me to You, and I prostrate in the stillness of the night, gazing toward Your radiant face, O Lord. I cherish silence, O Lord, not as an end in itself, but as the fullness of Your presence, and as a greater opportunity to listen to Your voice and observe Your work in my life.

Here I am, like all men, bidding farewell to one year and welcoming another. I know well that time moves on with or without me, gripping all of us tightly in its grasp, for we are at the mercy of time even if we try to escape and hide this fact.

Poor is man, O my Lord Jesus, and even poorer when he forsakes You and replaces You with more and more things. Poor and destitute he remains, because without You he is a prisoner of time and space, revolving around them, seeking liberation from their constraints, only to return and find himself once again under their dominion.

In vain, we bid farewell to and welcome the passing times with frivolity and worldly joys. Unless we taste the flavor of eternal life, which You alone bestow, we will not know true liberation. Your words, "For a thousand years in Your sight are but as yesterday when it is past," (Psalm 89:4) will remain incomprehensible to us.

But, my Lord, how can I live in eternity while I am torn between various concerns, confined to an earthly life for years that, however long they may be, will not exceed seventy or eighty, as the psalmist says (89:10)?

In the tumultuous night of welcoming this year, I prostrate in silence to examine and scrutinize myself. I find that I am still seeking You, yet I falter on both sides of the path. At times, I desire You with all my being and sincerity, while at other times, this world ensnares me, causing me to forget You and neglect my true life. It seems that I have not yet broken free from the shackles of this world. As my sins lay before me, they tell me (in the manner of Your Saint Isaac the Syrian) that I still love them, as evidenced by my return to them from time to time.

This world no longer entices me with anything. My heart yearns to be filled with You alone. Everything in this world, from its fleeting joys to its passing pleasures "fades quickly, like the grass of the field," and only Your living and vivifying presence remains.

It is not in vain that Your peaceful saint, John Climacus, placed the virtue of asceticism on the first step of the ladder leading to heaven! How can one who desires eternity remain a captive of the world?

And how can I ask for eternity while being submerged, even to the point of drunkenness, in worldly affairs?

How can I live in renewal while not letting go of the bondage to which I have become accustomed?

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Our world is filled with gossip, complaints, criticizing others, and self-glorification. How can we understand that true peace, to which we aspire, is not achieved by pursuing and drowning in these things?

Your face, which extends through the Church's institutions, remains marred by our shortcomings and those of us who lead them. We often stain it with our desires, knowingly or unknowingly.

And how evident it is in us who bear Your name, that we are not what You truly are. We confine You within our narrow boundaries and veil Your love from everyone, except from those we claim for ourselves and choose according to our desires.

We, O my Jesus, continue to be preoccupied with other beauties, which come from You. We become captivated by beauty, assuming it is from You, and we forget that Your true beauty is only revealed in the soul that adorns itself with You after casting away its sins, to be replaced by everything that comes from You and You alone.

Your people are weary, O Lord. Sins, corruption, and wars have burdened them. They have become so exhausted that they seek joy in whatever is offered to them. Anxiety leads and drives them to indulge in pleasures and to misunderstand true happiness.



# DAILY BIBLE READINGS

## DECEMBER 31-JANUARY 6, 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 & Theophany. Regular sequential readings will resume next week.*

### **SUNDAY, DEC. 31: SUNDAY BEFORE THEOPHANY**

2 Timothy 4:5-8 / Mark 1:1-8

### **Monday, Jan. 1: St. Basil the Great and the Circumcision of our Lord**

Genesis 17:1-14 / Proverbs 8:22-30 / Proverbs 10:31-11:12

John 10:1-9 / Colossians 2:8-12 / Luke 2:20-21, 40-52

### **Tuesday, Jan. 2: Ven. Seraphim, Wonderworker of Sarov**

Joshua 3:6-17 / Acts 13:25-33 / Matthew 3:1-17

### **Wednesday, Jan. 3: Holy Prophet Malachi; Ven. Genevieve of Paris**

4 Kingdoms 2:6-14 / Acts 19:1-8 / Mark 1:1-11

### **Thursday, Jan. 4: Synaxis of the Seventy Apostles**

4 Kingdoms 5:1, 9-14 / Romans 6:3-11 / Luke 3:1-22

### **Friday, Jan. 5: Holy Prophet Micah**

Isaiah 49:8-15 / Titus 2:11-15, 3:4-7 / John 1:19-34

### **SATURDAY, JAN. 6: THEOPHANY OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST**

Isaiah 35:1-10 / Isaiah 55:1-13 / Isaiah 12:3-6

1 Corinthians 9:19-10:4 / Mark 1:9-11

ALL SAINTS IS A PARISH OF THE ANTIOCHIAN ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN ARCHDIOCESE  
HIS EMINENCE METROPOLITAN SABA, ARCHBISHOP OF N. AMERICA  
HIS GRACE BISHOP ANTHONY, DIOCESE OF TOLEDO AND THE MIDWEST  
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