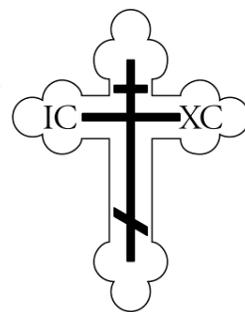
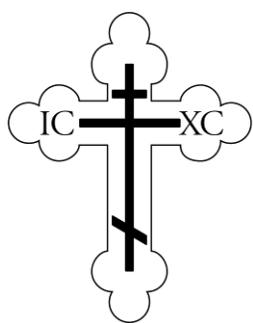


# Protection of the Virgin Mary

## Orthodox Church



Diocese of Chicago  
and the Midwest  
Orthodox Church  
in America



8600 Grand Blvd.  
Merrillville, IN 46410  
(219)947-4748  
www.ptvm.com

Rev. Dr. Jacob Van Sickle  
(219)384-6826 • frjacobvansickle@gmail.com

Great Vespers: 6pm Saturdays

Divine Liturgy: 10am Sundays

Confession is available before or  
after Vespers or by appointment

**Welcome visitors!**  
**Please join us in the**  
**parish hall after Divine**  
**Liturgy for coffee hour.**

## January 1, 2023

# Circumcision of our Lord

## St. Basil the Great

## Sunday Before Theophany

Saint Basil the Great was born about the end of the year 329 in Caesarea of Cappadocia, to a family renowned for their learning and holiness. His parents' names were Basil and Emilia. His mother and his grandmother Macrina (the elder) are Saints of the Church, together with four of his brothers and sisters: Macrina (the Younger), his elder sister, Gregory of Nyssa, Peter of Sebastia, and Naucratus. Basil studied in Constantinople then in Athens, where also he formed a friendship with another Gregory, later called "the Theologian."

Through the good influence of his sister Macrina, he chose to embrace the ascetical life, abandoning his worldly career. He visited the monks in Egypt, in Palestine, in Syria, and in Mesopotamia, and upon returning to Caesarea, he departed to a hermitage on the Iris River in Pontus, not far from Annesi, where his mother and his sister Macrina were already treading the path of the ascetical life; here he also wrote his ascetical homilies.

About the year 370, when the bishop of his country reposed, he was elected to succeed to his throne and was entrusted with the Church of Christ, which he tended for eight years, living in voluntary poverty and strict asceticism, having no other care than to defend holy Orthodoxy as a worthy successor of the Apostles. The Emperor Valens and Modestus, the Eparch of the East, who were of one mind with the Arians, tried with threats of exile and of torments to bend the Saint to their own confession, because he was the bastion of Orthodoxy in all Cappadocia, and preserved it from heresy when Arianism was at its strongest. But he set all their malice at naught, and in his willingness to give himself up to every suffering for the sake of the Faith, showed himself to be a martyr by volition.

Modestus, amazed at Basil's fearlessness in his presence, said that no one had ever so spoken to him. "Perhaps," answered the Saint, "you have never met a bishop before." The Emperor Valens himself was almost won over by Basil's dignity and wisdom. When Valens' son fell gravely sick, he asked Saint Basil to pray for him. The Saint promised that his son would be restored if Valens agreed to have him baptized by the Orthodox; Valens agreed, Basil prayed, and the son was healed. But afterwards, the Emperor had him baptized by Arians, and the child died soon after. Later, Valens, persuaded by his counsellors, decided to send the Saint into exile because he would not accept the Arians into communion; but his pen broke when he was signing the edict of banishment. He tried a second time and a third, but the same thing happened, so that the Emperor was filled with dread, and tore up the document, and Basil was not banished. The truly great Basil, spent with extreme ascetical practices and continual labors at the helm of the church, departed to the Lord on the 1st of January, 379, at the age of forty-nine.

His writings are replete with wisdom and erudition, and rich are these gifts he set forth the doctrines concerning the mysteries both of the creation and of the Holy Trinity. Because of the majesty and keenness of his eloquence, he is honored as "the revealer of heavenly things" and "the Great."

# HYMNS OF THE DAY

## **Tone 4 – Resurrectional Troparion**

When the women disciples of the Lord  
learned from the angel the joyous message of Your resurrection,  
they cast away the ancestral curse  
and elatedly told the apostles:

“Death is overthrown!

Christ our God is risen, //

granting the world great mercy!”

## **Tone 1 – Troparion for the Circumcision**

Enthroned on high with the Eternal Father and Your divine Spirit,  
O Jesus, You willed to be born on earth of the unwedded handmaid,  
^Your Mother.

Therefore, You were circumcised as an eight-day-old Child.

Glory to Your most gracious counsel;

glory to Your ^dispensation; //

glory to Your condescension, O only Lover of mankind!

## **Tone 1 – Troparion for St. Basil**

Your proclamation has gone out into all the earth,  
which was divinely taught by hearing your voice.

You expounded the nature of creatures  
and ennobled the manners of men.

O venerable Father of royal priesthood, //

entreat Christ God that our souls may be saved!

## **Tone 4 – Resurrectional Kontakion**

My Savior and Redeemer, as God,

rose from the tomb and delivered the earth-born from their chains.

He has shattered the gates of hell,

and as Master, //

He has risen on the third day!

## **Tone 4 – Kontakion for St. Basil**

You were revealed as the sure foundation of the Church,

granting all mankind a lordship which cannot be taken away, //

sealing it with your precepts, O venerable Basil, revealer of heaven.

## **Tone 3 – Kontakion for the Circumcision**

The Lord of all accepts to be circumcised,

thus, as He is good, He excises the sins of mortal men.

Today He grants the world salvation,

while light-bearing Basil, high priest of our Creator, //

rejoices in heaven as a divine initiate of Christ.

# SCRIPTURE READINGS

## **Tone 6 – Prokeimenon for the Circumcision (Psalm 27)**

O Lord, save Your people, / and bless Your inheritance!

## **Tone 1 – Prokeimenon for St. Basil (Psalm 48)**

My mouth shall speak wisdom,  
the meditation of my heart shall be understanding!

## **Epistle: 2 Timothy 4.5-8 (Sunday Before Theophany)**

My son: Be watchful in all things; endure afflictions; do the work of an evangelist; fulfill your ministry. For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought the good fight; I have finished the race; I have kept the faith. Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing.

## **Colossians 2.8-12 (Circumcision)**

Brethren: Beware lest anyone cheat you through philosophy and empty deceit, according to the tradition of men, according to the basic principles of the world, and not according to Christ. For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily; and you are complete in Him, who is the head of all principality and power. In Him you were also circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ, buried with Him in baptism, in which you also were raised with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead.

## **Gospel: Mark 1.1-8 (Sunday before Theophany)**

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 Your face, who will prepare Your way before You. The voice of one crying in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the Lord; make His paths straight.'"

John came baptizing in the wilderness and preaching a baptism of repentance for the remission of sins. Then all the land of Judea, and those from Jerusalem, went out to him and were all baptized by him in the Jordan River, confessing their sins. Now John was clothed with camel's hair and with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. And he preached, saying, "There comes One after me who is mightier than I, whose sandal strap I am not

worthy to stoop down and loose. I indeed baptized you with water, but He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.”

### **Luke 2.20-21, 40-52 (Circumcision)**

At that time, the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told them. And when eight days were completed for the circumcision of the Child, His name was called Jesus, the name given by the angel before He was conceived in the womb. And the Child grew and became strong in spirit, filled with wisdom; and the grace of God was upon Him.

His parents went to Jerusalem every year at the Feast of the Passover. And when He was twelve years old, they went up to Jerusalem according to the custom of the feast. When they had finished the days, as they returned, the Boy Jesus lingered behind in Jerusalem. And Joseph and His mother did not know it; but supposing Him to have been in the company, they went a day’s journey, and sought Him among their relatives and acquaintances. So, when they did not find Him, they returned to Jerusalem, seeking Him.

Now so it was that after three days they found Him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the teachers, both listening to them and asking them questions. And all who heard Him were astonished at His understanding and answers. So, when they saw Him, they were amazed; and His mother said to Him, “Son, why have You done this to us? Look, Your father and I have sought You anxiously.”

And He said to them, “Why did you seek Me? Did you not know that I must be about My Father’s business?” But they did not understand the statement which He spoke to them.

Then He went down with them and came to Nazareth, and was subject to them, but His mother kept all these things in her heart. And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men.

## **WE REMEMBER IN PRAYER**

<b>New.Dep.</b> Archpr. Theodore Panchak	<b>Ev.Mem.</b> Nicholas Koleff ('13)
Tony Klassen	Helen Kushner ('21)
Thomas Martin	Mary Lowther ('51)
Donna Chabre	Afanasy Onisenuk ('64)
Jimmy Grosdanis	John Truchan ('68)
Hanna Kostyuk	John Berdy ('72)
	Harry Malinoff ('76)

**Health & Salv.**

Archpr. Peter  
Mat. Cynthia  
Archpr. John  
Mat. Anne  
Dn. Nicholas  
Kevin  
Jon  
Tanya  
Jovan  
Tom  
Jennifer  
Rollie  
Joseph  
Nadia  
Joseph  
Linda  
Claudia  
Carol  
Snezana  
Ryan  
Nathan  
Kara  
Djuro  
Dominic  
Declan  
Hudson  
Ayden  
Hyland  
Jason  
Ted  
James  
Pamela  
Alexander  
Ronald

Ivanka  
Karen  
Sandra  
Linda  
Jim  
John  
Martha  
Mark  
Michelle  
Irene  
Michelle  
Erika  
Luke  
Jo  
Stephanie  
Mary Ann  
Robb  
Desiree  
Jaroslava  
Andrew  
Andrew  
Vadim  
Hanna  
Alex  
Carl  
Laura  
Chrisan  
Gerald  
Olga  
Janie  
David  
Sharon  
Tanya  
Renee  
Carissa

Ashton  
Doris  
Laura  
Duane  
Elizabeth  
Karen  
Alexa  
Miriana  
Olga  
Richard  
Klaudia  
Nicodemus  
Nada  
Mark  
Catherine  
Aaron  
Dale  
Ebony  
Peggy  
Sue  
Victoria  
Janet  
Tom  
Wilma  
Jerry  
Penelope  
Cora  
Brandi  
Joyce  
Paul  
Galina  
Helen  
Kathleen  
Terry  
N.Ill. John

\*If you know someone who needs prayer, please give their name to Fr Jacob

**Special Petitions at the Augmented Litany:**

We pray, O Lord our God, for all those who suffer from acts of war, especially for the victims in Ukraine. We pray for Your peace and Your mercy in the midst of the great suffering of Your people. Vouchsafe to accept the prayers of the Church, so that by Your goodness, peace may return to all peoples; O Lord, hear us and have mercy.

We also pray You, O Lord our God, to remember and have mercy on our Orthodox brothers and sisters in Russia and Ukraine, who are involved in violent conflict. Remove from their midst all hostility, confusion and hatred. Lead everyone along the path of reconciliation and peace, we pray You, hear us and have mercy.

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

For **Bible Study** tomorrow night, read **Wisdom of Solomon 16-19**.

The **Great Blessing of Water** will take place at Vespers for the Feast of Theophany on the evening of January 5, as usual. All are encouraged to **bring containers to fill with the new year's Holy Water** from that service through the next two Sundays.

The original trip to **visit Fr Peter and Cynthia in Missouri** was postponed because many of those who were planning to go in December got sick. The new dates are January 23-25. If anyone who was not already planning to come along would like to join the group, please let Fr Jacob know.

### **Mark your calendars:**

Jan 5: **Royal Hours of Theophany @ 10am**  
**Theophany Vespers with the Great Blessing of Water @ 6pm**

Jan 6: **Divine Liturgy for Theophany @ 10am**

Jan 12: **Women's Book Club @ 6pm**

Jan 27: **Blood Drive 12 - 6pm**

Feb 12: **Annual Parish Meeting after Divine Liturgy**

**Last week's gifts to the Lord: \$4,635**

# **A Statement on Peace**

**from His Beatitude, our Metropolitan Tikhon**

My beloved children in the Lord,

The Lord Jesus Christ "is our peace, who has made us both one, and has broken down the dividing wall of hostility." He, our King and Master, Savior and God, "came and preached peace to you who

were far off and peace to those who were near” (Eph. 2:14, 17). As the time of his Nativity comes close, as he draws nigh “in the midst of the years” to “renew” the fruits of his Incarnation (Hab. 3:2), he calls all of us Orthodox Christians, and indeed all who dwell upon the earth, to the peace that is found in him, the Peace that he is: peace with God the Father, peace with our brethren, peace with our neighbors, peace with enemies, peace with ourselves, peace with all.

But as long as, due to human sin, peace continues to elude the world, we nevertheless dedicate ourselves to peace through prayer, self-renewal, and wise words and actions. In particular, on behalf of the Orthodox Church in America, we assure His Beatitude Metropolitan Onufriy and the suffering Ukrainian Orthodox Church, all Ukrainian Christians and the entire suffering Ukrainian people, of our prayers during this most difficult time.

As your primate, I urge you, the clergy, monastics, and faithful of the Orthodox Church in America, to renew your fasting and prayers for the sake of peace during these final days of the Nativity Fast. Pray especially for peace in Ukraine, for the well-being of the Orthodox Church in both Russia and Ukraine, and for Orthodox Christians living in both countries.

I ask those responsible for celebrating divine services in the churches and chapels of the Orthodox Church in America to continue to pray in particular for the victims of the war in Ukraine, both living and departed, at litanies and other appropriate times. While their form is no longer obligatory, the special petitions included in my February 24, 2022 Statement on War in Ukraine may be used for this purpose.

As we approach the manger where our God and King lies, let us join the Magi from the East with three gifts of our own: fasting and prayers for peace and justice in Ukraine, together with alms for those affected by the war. Doing this, we will present our Lord and Savior with a truly fitting gift for the day of his Birth.

+ Tikhon  
Archbishop of Washington  
Metropolitan of All America and Canada

# Glory to God for all things!