

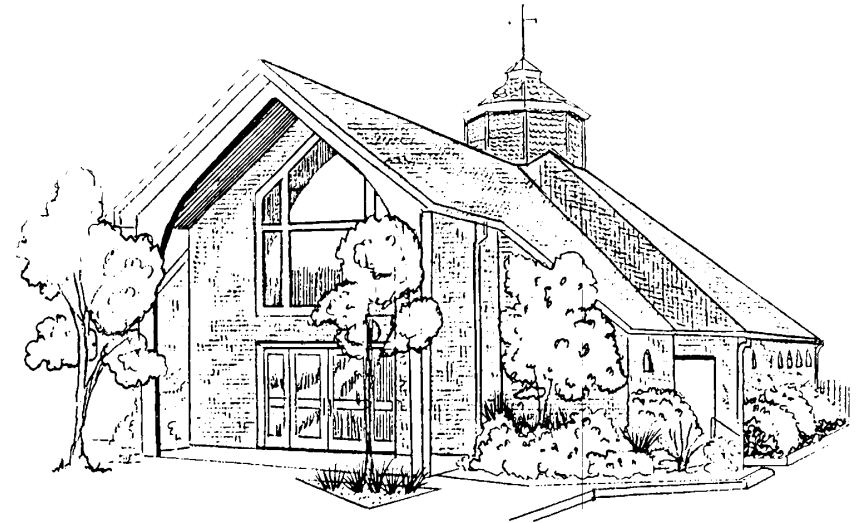
St. Basil Antiochian Orthodox Church
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And Metropolitan of all North America
The Right Reverend Bishop NICHOLAS, Auxiliary Bishop
Of the Diocese of Miami and the Southeast
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St. Basil Antiochian Orthodox Church

The Holy Priestly-Martyr Polycarp, Bishop of Smyrna

Polycarp, this great apostolic man, was born a pagan. St. John the Theologian converted him to the Faith of Christ and baptized him. In his childhood, Polycarp became an orphan and according to a vision in a dream Callista, a noble widow, took him as her own son, raised and educated him. From his childhood Polycarp was devout and compassionate. He strove to emulate the life of St. Bucolus, then the Bishop of Smyrna, as well as the holy Apostles John and Paul, whom he knew and heard. St. Bucolus ordained him a presbyter and before his death, Bucolus designated him as his successor in Smyrna. The apostolic bishops, who gathered at the funeral of Bucolus, consecrated Polycarp as bishop. From the very beginning, Polycarp was gifted with the power of working miracles. He expelled an evil spirit from the servant of a prince and through prayer stopped a terrible fire in Smyrna. Upon seeing this, many pagans regarded Polycarp as one of the gods. He brought down rain in times of drought, healed illnesses, discerned, prophesized and so forth. He suffered during the reign of Emperor Marcus Aurelius. Three days before his death, St. Polycarp prophesized: "In three days, I will be burned in fire for the sake of the Lord Jesus Christ!" And on the third day when the soldiers arrested him and brought him to trial, he cried out: "Let this be the will of the Lord my God." When the judge counseled him to deny Christ and to acknowledge the Roman gods, Polycarp said: "I cannot exchange the better for the worse!" The Jews especially hated Polycarp and endeavored to have Polycarp burned alive. When they placed him bound at the stake, he prayed to God for a long while. He was very old, grey and radiant as an angel. The people witnessed how the flame encircled him but did not touch him. Frightened by such a phenomenon, the pagan judges ordered the executioner to pierce him with a lance through the fire. When he was pierced, so much blood flowed from him that the entire fire was extinguished, and his body remained whole and unburned. At the persuasion of the Jews, the judge ordered Polycarp's lifeless body be incinerated according to the custom of the Hellenes. So, the evil ones burned the dead body of the lifeless one whom they could not burn while alive. St. Polycarp suffered on Great and Holy Saturday in the year 167 A.D.

from: The Prologue from Ochrid



February 23, 2025
The Sunday of Meat Fare

Welcome!

To Our Guests:

While we are not yet in formal inter-communion with other faith traditions, we have much respect for their rites of worship and sanctuaries of prayer. In our tradition, **Holy Communion is open only to those Orthodox Christians who are in good standing with the Church and have prepared themselves by prayer, fasting and a recent confession.** Please do not be offended by this if you are not an Orthodox Christian or in good standing with the Church. We welcome you to our church and invite you to receive a blessing and partake of the blessed bread at the end of the Divine Liturgy.

In our tradition... *the church temple is a house of prayer. Upon entering it, please refrain from unnecessary conversation before, during and after church services, most especially during the Divine Liturgy from the time of the consecration of the Gifts until the last person has received the Eucharist. At the end of the Divine Liturgy, please come quietly forward to receive a piece of the antidoron and exit the church temple without talking. During coffee hour in the Church Hall is the appropriate place to exchange personal greetings and converse with one another. May God bless your reverence and piety.*

Epistle Reading: 1 Corinthians 8:8-9:2

Gospel Reading: St. Matthew 25:31-46

Saints of the Day

Hieromartyr Polycarp, bishop of Smyrna; Venerable Gorgonia, sister of Gregory the Theologian; Venerable Zebinas, Polychronios, Moses and Damian near Cyrrhus in Syria; Venerable-martyr Damian of Esphigmenou monastery on Mount Athos.

Spiritual Counsels...

“It is better to live in a desert land than with a contentious and fretful woman.” – Proverbs 21:19

Orthodox Thoughts from Theo, the Parish Possum



Orthodox worship and prayer are filled with the recitation of the Psalms. Of all of them, the 50th Psalm stands out. It was composed by King David in about 1,000 B.C. The king had committed adultery with Bathsheba, the wife of one of his military commanders, and she became pregnant with his child. To cover up his sin, he sent the commander into the front lines of a battle where the man was killed. He then married the widow and went on with his life. However, the prophet Nathan confronted him and forced him to recognize that his conduct was reprehensible. David repented and out of this came Psalm 50, one of the most poignant and sincere prayers of contrition. It is recited or chanted during every Orthros, during the prayers of the Third Hour and, in every Divine Liturgy, while the priest censes the altar and icons before the Great Entrance. The Psalm is a heart-felt prayer for pardon. It expresses both a desire for renewal and a trust in the forgiving love of God. For any Orthodox believer, there is perhaps no more powerful vehicle for seeking forgiveness. In the words of the Psalm: “Have mercy upon me, O God. Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity and cleanse me from my sin. Create in me a clean heart, O God: and renew a right spirit in me. O Lord, open thou my lips: and my mouth shall declare thy praise.”—Theo

WORSHIP SCHEDULE

Saturday, Feb. 22nd – Orthros, 9:00 A.M.; Divine Liturgy, 10:00 A.M.

Saturday, Feb. 22nd – Great Vespers & Confessions, 5:00 P.M.

Sunday, Feb. 23rd – Orthros, 8:30 A.M.; Divine Liturgy, 9:30 A.M.

Saturday, March 1st – Great Vespers & Confessions, 5:00 P.M.

Sunday, March 2nd – Orthros, 8:30 A.M.; Divine Liturgy, 9:30 A.M.

Sunday, March 2nd – Forgiveness Vespers, following liturgy

Wednesday, March 5th – Presanctified Divine Liturgy, 6:30 P.M.

Friday, March, 7th – Akathist Hymn, 1st Stasis, 6:30 P.M.

Saturday, March 8th – Great Vespers & Confessions, 5:00 P.M.

Sunday, March 9th – Orthros, 8:30 A.M.; Divine Liturgy, 9:30 A.M.

Wednesday, March 12th – Presanctified Divine Liturgy, 6:30 P.M.

Friday, March, 14th – Akathist Hymn, 2nd Stasis, 6:30 P.M.

Saturday, March 15th – Great Vespers & Confessions, 5:00 P.M.

Sunday, March 16th – Orthros, 8:30 A.M.; Divine Liturgy, 9:30 A.M.

WORSHIP SCHEDULE CONTINUED

Wednesday, March 19th – Presanctified Divine Liturgy, 6:30 P.M.

Friday, March, 21st – Akathist Hymn, 3rd Stasis, 6:30 P.M.

Saturday, March 22nd – Great Vespers & Confessions, 5:00 P.M.

Sunday, March 23rd – Orthros, 8:30 A.M.; Divine Liturgy, 9:30 A.M.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Our Annual Pledge Drive is currently underway for the calendar year 2025. All adult members of the parish are encouraged to complete and return a pledge form to the church office. Pledge forms may be found in the narthex of the church building. All pledges are held in strict confidence. Only the total number of pledges and the total pledge amount is made available to the public. Your financial support of our church community is your support of yourself and your contribution to help insure you and your family has a place to worship. Thank you and God bless you.

Our **Annual General Parish Meeting** is scheduled for Sunday, March 16, 2025, after Divine Liturgy and shall convene in the Church Hall. All members of the parish are encouraged to attend the meeting. Those adults, who have been a member of the parish for at least one year, have completed the Parish Registration/Pledge Form and returned it to the church office, and are in good sacramental with the Church and good financial standing with the parish, are eligible to vote.

Meatfare Week begins on Monday, Feb. 24. From that date until PASCHA it is our tradition to refrain from eating meat and meat products. From Pure Monday, March 3, we observe the traditional fasting discipline of Great and Holy Lent (no meat, poultry, eggs, dairy, fish, alcohol and oil) during the entire **Great Fast**, which lasts from Pure Monday through Great and Holy Saturday. On Saturdays and Sundays, however, alcohol and oil are allowed, except on Great and Holy Saturday when no oil is permitted. Fish, alcohol and oil are permitted on the Feast of the Annunciation (March 25) and Palm Sunday (April 13).

Lenten potluck meals shall be served after Presanctified Liturgies on Wednesday evenings during Great Lent.

As God so wills, we shall have Orthros and Divine Liturgy for the **Saturday of Souls** at 9 & 10 A.M., respectively, on Saturday, Feb. 22.

The **Sacrament of Holy Confession** is good for the health & salvation of the soul & body. For long-term, good, physical health, regular visits to the family doctor are appropriate. Likewise, care for our souls is a necessity. If it is your desire to receive the Eucharist at Great & Holy PASCHA, then please make every effort to care for your soul & have confession at least once during Great Lent.

The ladies are having their 3rd annual **Breakfast Bonanza** today. Tickets are \$15 for ages 13 & older, \$6 for ages 7-12 & kids 6 years & younger eat free. For more details, please see one of our ladies.

Fr. Peter will meet with the inquirers and catechumens in the church after coffee hour. The discussion is open to everyone.

Our annual **Wine and Cheese Social** shall be held on Cheese Fare Sunday, March 2nd, in the Church Hall after Divine Liturgy. Please bring enough wine, cheese and crackers for yourself and friends.

Parents, please encourage your children to attend the **Creative Arts Festival workshop** to be held following coffee hour on March 9th to allow the children time to work on their projects that will be presented at the Parish Life Conference. For more information, please speak to one of our Church School teachers.

Approximately 100 **Red Carnations** are needed for the veneration of the Holy Cross on Sunday, March 23. If you are interested in donating all or part of these flowers, please fill out one of the envelopes in the narthex and on the “Special Occasion” line, please write, “Red Carnations.” Include your commemorations, donation and turn the envelope in to the church office. Thank you.

The subject of the **availability and pricing of the 3-day candles** was discussed in the Parish Council meeting on Sunday, December 22, 2024. As a result of this discussion, **the Parish Council voted upon and approved a price increase of these candles**. The new price of the 3-day candles, effective January 1, 2025, is **\$5 per candle**. Your assistance in making the adjustment to this price is requested. Thank you and God bless you.

Today's Coffee Hour: Team 4. Thank you. **Next Week:** Team 1.