

**St. Basil Antiochian Orthodox Church**  
**The Most Reverend Metropolitan SABA, Archbishop of New York**  
**And Metropolitan of all North America**  
**The Right Reverend Bishop NICHOLAS, Auxiliary Bishop**  
**Of the Diocese of Miami and the Southeast**  
**The Very Reverend Father Peter Nugent, Pastor**  
**3916 Hudson St., Metairie, LA 70006**  
**504.888.8114**  
[sbno@att.net](mailto:sbno@att.net)  
[www.stbasilneworleans.org](http://www.stbasilneworleans.org)

**St. Peter the Wonderworker, Metropolitan of Russia**

Peter was born in the province of Volhynia and embraced the monastic life at the age of 12. He was a wonderful ascetic and iconographer. He founded a monastery on the river Rata and became its abbot. Against his will, he was appointed Metropolitan of Kiev and consecrated in Constantinople by Patriarch Athanasius. As metropolitan, he endured much at the hands of the envious and the heretics. He governed the Church for 18 years as a good and zealous shepherd. During his lifetime he built a crypt for himself in the Church of the Dormition, where his holy and miracle-working relics repose even today. He entered into rest in the year 1326 and went to his true homeland.

***from: The Prologue from Ochrid***

**St. Basil**  
**Antiochian**  
**Orthodox Church**



**December 21, 2025**  
**The Sunday before the Nativity of Christ**

# 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.

***As Orthodox Christians** it is always appropriate to stand (still) at the following times: the beginning and ending of all divine services, during a censuring of any kind, when the Holy Gospel is being read or when the homily is given, when others are receiving Holy Communion, during a blessing, e.g., "Peace be to all." Likewise, if you arrive at church during the reading of an epistle, gospel or the homily, please remain in the narthex until the homily is finished, then quietly seat yourself. Of course, if you have physical limitations, exceptions are understood.*

**Epistle Reading:** Hebrews 11:9, 10, 32-40

**Gospel Reading:** St. Matthew 1:1-25

## Saints of the Day

Virgin-martyr Juliana of Nicomedia; Martyr Themistokles of Myra in Lycia; Peter metropolitan of Moscow and all Russia.

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## Spiritual Counsels...

Do not eat the bread of a man who is stingy; do not desire his delicacies; for he is like one inwardly reckoning. "Eat and drink!" he says to you; but his heart is not with you. – Proverbs 23:6, 7

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## Orthodox Thoughts from Theo, the Parish Possum

Visitors to a Holy Orthodox Church liturgy are often surprised by the experience. Not only is it much longer and more elaborate than similar services of most main-line Christian churches, but, to the casual inquirer, it raises more questions than answers. There is none of the usual singing of familiar hymns and a long sermon. Worshippers are venerating icons and lighting candles. There are chants, prayers, calls for repentance and a lot of standing. At the end, only Orthodox people are permitted to receive the Holy Bread and Wine. It seems that more is expected from the visitor than passive attendance. The message of the liturgy is a call to physical and spiritual involvement with God and obedience to His holy will. St. John the Dwarf (Kolobos), one of the great Ethiopian ascetics was told by his spiritual father to plant a dry stick and to water it once a day until it bloomed. The water source was 12 miles away requiring him to leave every evening and return the following morning. After three years, the stick sprouted and grew into a fruitful tree. Its fruit was distributed to the monks as the "fruit of obedience." Orthodox liturgy is likewise a call to obedience—to attend the liturgy regularly, to receive Holy Communion, to confess one's sins, and to observe the fasts. Hard work for those who are interested. In the words of Abba John "Give me strength for the fight!". — Theo

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## WORSHIP SCHEDULE

Saturday, Dec. 20<sup>th</sup> – Great Vespers & Confessions, 5:00 P.M.

Sunday, Dec. 21<sup>st</sup> – Orthros, 8:30 A.M.; Divine Liturgy, 9:30 A.M.

Wednesday, Dec. 24<sup>th</sup> – Nativity Compline, 6:30 P.M.

Thursday, Dec. 25<sup>th</sup> – Orthros, 9:00 A.M.; Divine Liturgy, 10:00 A.M.

Saturday, Dec. 27<sup>th</sup> – Great Vespers & Confessions, 5:00 P.M.

Sunday, Dec. 28<sup>th</sup> – Orthros, 8:30 A.M.; Divine Liturgy, 9:30 A.M.

Wednesday, Dec. 31<sup>st</sup> – Divine Liturgy, 6:30 P.M.

Saturday, Jan. 3<sup>rd</sup> – Great Vespers & Confessions, 5:00 P.M.

Sunday, Jan. 4<sup>th</sup> – Orthros, 8:30 A.M.; Divine Liturgy, 9:30 A.M.

Tuesday, Jan. 6<sup>th</sup> – Orthros, 9:00 A.M.; Divine Liturgy, 10:00 A.M.

Tuesday, Jan. 6<sup>th</sup> – Badnjak Service, 6:30 P.M.

Saturday, Jan. 10<sup>th</sup> – Great Vespers & Confessions, 5:00 P.M.

Sunday, Jan. 11<sup>th</sup> – Orthros, 8:30 A.M.; Divine Liturgy, 9:30 A.M.  
Saturday, Jan. 17<sup>th</sup> – Great Vespers & Confessions, 5:00 P.M.  
Sunday, Jan. 18<sup>th</sup> – Orthros, 8:30 A.M.; Divine Liturgy, 9:30 A.M.

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### **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The **Advent Fast** began Saturday, Nov. 15<sup>th</sup>, and is divided into two periods. The first period is Nov. 15–Dec. 19, with the traditional fasting discipline observed (no meat, poultry, dairy, eggs, fish, alcohol and oil). There is an allowance, however, for alcohol and oil on Tuesdays and Thursdays, and an allowance for alcohol, oil and fish on Saturdays and Sundays. The second period is Dec. 20–24, with the traditional fasting discipline observed. There is an allowance, however, for alcohol and oil only on Saturday and Sunday.

Our Annual Pledge Drive is currently underway for the calendar year 2026. All adult members of the parish are encouraged to complete and return a pledge form to the church office. 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. Pledge forms, house blessing forms, 2026 calendars and boxed sets of donation envelopes may be found in the church hall. Thank you and God bless you.

The **Parish Council** shall hold its December meeting on Sunday, Dec. 21, after Divine Liturgy. All Council members please attend.

Our annual **Christmas Pageant** will be held after Divine Liturgy on Sunday, Dec. 21. Parents who are interested in having their children participate in the pageant should see **Pam Nugent**.

God willing, **Nativity Compline** shall be served on Wednesday, Dec. 24<sup>th</sup>, at 6:30 P.M.

God willing, Orthros and Divine Liturgy shall be celebrated on Thursday, Dec. 25<sup>th</sup>, at 9 A.M. and 10 A.M., respectively, for the **Feast of the Nativity of our Lord**.

There is no Catechumen meeting this month.

God willing, Divine Liturgy shall be celebrated on Wednesday, Dec. 31<sup>st</sup>, at 6:30 P.M. for the **Feast of St. Basil the Great**.

God willing, Orthros and Divine Liturgy shall be celebrated on Tuesday, Jan. 6<sup>th</sup>, at 9 A.M. and 10 A.M., respectively, for the **Feast of the Theophany of our Lord**.

God willing, a **Badnjak Service** shall be served on Tuesday, Jan. 6<sup>th</sup>, at 6:30 P.M. for the Old Calendar observance of the **Feast of the Nativity of our Lord**.

Next meeting for **The Art of Myrrh Bearing** will be **January 3<sup>rd</sup>** at 11am. This meeting will be hosted in the church hall here at St. Basil. We will focus on the last four chapters of Part One p. 41-70. **Future meetings will be held on the first Saturday of the month**; the time and place will be announced prior to each meeting. Dates for future meetings are Feb. 7, 2026, and March 7, 2026. Please see **Tania Russell** for more information.

Thank you all for your generous support of our **Christmas Angels Project**. The toys you brought will help the children at Hotel Hope to feel the love of Our Lord during Christmas, despite not having an actual home. Please add your prayers for these little ones and their Moms who are struggling. Gifts should be placed by Dec. 14 (today) in the box in the Hall. If you have any questions or wish to make a donation please see **Yazmin Incaprera, Diana Lindley, or Tania Russell**.

**Bookstore News:** Purchases can now be made using the QR code by the clipboard in the bookstore area. Please see **Kathleen Field** or **Elias Ioup** for more information. (Remember to jot down your items on the clipboard, however you may pay for them.)

**Today's Coffee Hour:** Team 3. Thank you. **Next Week:** Team 4.

### **Our Littlest Members**

Christ said, "Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them; for such is the kingdom of heaven" (Matthew 19:14). In the Orthodox Church, we embrace and welcome our littlest parishioners to join in the Divine Liturgy. They are our future and we want them raised from birth involved in the liturgical experience.

While generally, silence and stillness are valued in worship, the noise of children, especially if they are playfully making noise or expressing themselves, is often viewed as a part of the joyful and vibrant nature of Orthodox worship. It is considered "Holy Noise." The beautiful, resonating sound of our children's cooing or laughter is warming to our hearts.

However, if your child should become fussy, out of control, or inconsolable, please be respectful to those around you and leave the Nave to provide comfort for our little member. They can be brought outside or to St. Basil's Comfort Room. Once consoled and in good spirits, return with our sweet parishioner to resume the liturgy.

Please also remember that there is ***NO FOOD*** allowed in church and that includes baby formula (bottle-feeding) and snacks. If our little one is hungry, please bring them to the St. Basil's Comfort Room to feed them. The exception to that is our breastfed little ones. Breastfeeding during worship services is acceptable, but with a focus on discretion and modesty.

To our parents of little ones, we join you in loving prayer and support as you raise the next generation of Orthodox believers. GOD BLESS YOU!

#### **ST. BASIL-NORTHSHORE ANNOUNCEMENTS**

God being our helper, the Northshore Orthodox community shall have their next worship service at **St. Michael's Episcopal Church today, January 11, at 5:00 P.M.** The address is 4499 Sharp Road, Mandeville, Louisiana, 70471. Everyone is welcome to the occasion, Orthodox Christians as well as non-Orthodox. Food and drinks are welcome for the social hour afterward. The next date of worship is Sunday, Jan. 11, 2026, at St. Michael Church at 5:00 P.M.