

From the Fathers (and others):

Holy Baptism is like a door by which those that are baptized enter into the holy Church and become 'fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God' (Eph. 2:19).

- *Saint Tikhon of Zadonsk*

Christ is the artist, tenderly wiping away all the grime of sin that disfigures the human face and restoring God's image to its full beauty.

- *Saint Gregory of Nyssa*

When we become incorruptible and immortal and attain to the blessed state of conformity with Christ, we will be ever with the Lord, gaining fulfillment in the purest contemplations of His visible theophany which will illuminate us with its most brilliant rays, just as it illuminated the disciples at the time of the most divine Transfiguration. This is the light of God, as St. John has said in his Revelation (Rev. 22:5), and such is the opinion of all the saints.

- *St. Gregory Palamas*

If you love God genuinely and you also persevere in His love (cf. Jn. 15:9-10), you will never be dominated by any passion, nor will you be reduced to subjection by any necessity of the body. For since the body cannot be moved to anything apart from the soul, so the soul that is united to God by love cannot be led astray to the pleasures and cravings of the body, nor indeed to any other desires of anything visible or invisible, whether desire or passion. For by the sweet love of God the impulse of its heart or, rather, the whole inclination of its will is bound. When once it has been bound to its Maker, how can it be inflamed by the body or in any way fulfill its own desires? In no way!

- *St. Symeon the New Theologian*

I saw the devil's snares set all over the earth, and I groaned and said, "What can pass through them?" I heard a voice saying, "Humility".

- *St. Anthony the Great*

The evil one hates caution. Not only can he not bear the sound of it, he hates even the very echo of it; the mere mention of caution. For example, if a man proposes to do something, he enquires whether it is profitable before he forms an opinion on whether or not it is the enemy who suggests it, on whether he keeps to what he hears or not (that is what the devil utterly hates); he asks someone else and listens to what those who have to share his life have to say about it. The very sound, the mere echo of such discourse the devil hates and flees away from. And why do I say this? Because the devil knows that his malice is brought to light through this enquiry and discussion about the advantage of doing a thing, and there is nothing he hates and fears so much as to be known, because then he finds himself unable to lay snares as he wishes.

- *St. Dorotheos of Gaza*

St. John Orthodox Church

A Parish of the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America



~ January 28th, 2024 ~

Thirty-First Sunday after Pentecost

Fourteenth Sunday of Luke

Commemoration of Our Righteous Father Ephraim the Syrian

ST. JOHN ORTHODOX CHURCH
1663 TUTWILER AVENUE
MEMPHIS, TN 38107
(901) 274-4119
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His Eminence Metropolitan SABA
Archbishop of New York and Metropolitan of All North America
Antiochian Orthodox Archdiocese of North America

His Grace Bishop NICHOLAS
Auxiliary Bishop of the Diocese of Miami and the Southeast

V. Rev. Fr. Philip Rogers, Pastor

V. Rev. Fr. Basil Cushman, Associate Pastor

V. Rev. Fr. John Troy Mashburn, Jr., Pastor Emeritus

V. Rev. Fr. Donald John Berge, Attached

GREAT VESPERS
Saturday, 6:00 p.m.

ORTHROS
Sunday, 9:00 a.m.

DIVINE LITURGY
Sunday, 10:00 a.m.

Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America
“...the Disciples were called Christians first in Antioch!”
Acts 11:26

Thirty-First Sunday after Pentecost

Epistle: 1 Timothy 1:15-17

Gospel: Luke 18:35-43

The Holy Bread for Eucharist is offered by Anna Pashchinskaya.

Welcome to all those visiting St. John Orthodox Church. We are honored by your presence.

It is our sincere desire that your participation today in the Divine Liturgy will draw you closer to Christ and His Church.

If you are from a non-Orthodox background, you may see new things such as icons, incense, the sign of the cross, the veneration of saints, and a great deal of standing. These can be perplexing to the uninitiated eye. Rest assured that everything we do has a solid biblical foundation and a long history among Christian people. Please feel free to participate where you feel comfortable and feel equally as free only to observe when you prefer.

The Orthodox Church understands the Eucharist, or Lord's Supper, to be – among other things – the paramount expression of Christian unity. While it is our deepest hope that Christendom will one day fulfill Christ's desire for true unity among all those who claim His name (John 17:21), the unfortunate reality of our day is that the various segments of Christendom are not unified with the historic Orthodox faith. *Since participation in the Eucharist expresses a unity with all the dogma and practice of the Orthodox Church, non-Orthodox guests do not receive Holy Communion.* The Holy Eucharist is reserved for those members of the Orthodox Church who have prepared themselves by prayer, fasting, and recent confession. All visitors and unprepared Orthodox are invited to partake of the blessed bread as they come forward to venerate the cross at the end of the Liturgy. Thank you for your understanding.

ST. JOHN CALENDAR

January 28 – February 4

- Sunday** - Orthros, 9:00 am
- Divine Liturgy, 10:00 am
- Monday** - First Hour, 6:45 am
- Tuesday** - Third Hour, 9:00 am
- Men's Lunch, 12:00 pm
- Orthodoxy 101, 7:00 pm
- Wednesday** - Third Hour, 9:00 am
- Women's Teaching, 10:00 am
- Vespers, 6:00 pm
- Bible Study, 7:00 pm
- Thursday** - Third Hour, 9:00 am
- Orthros, 5:00 pm
- Divine Liturgy for the Feast of the Presentation, 6:00 pm
- Friday** - First Hour, 6:45 am
- Third Hour, 9:00 am
- Sixth Hour, 12:00 pm
- Saturday** - Byzantine Chant Class, 4:30 pm
- Ninth Hour & Vespers, 5:50 pm
- Sunday** - Orthros, 9:00 am
- Divine Liturgy, 10:00 am
- North American Antiochian Orthodox Medical Professionals Meeting (after Liturgy)

Today's Memorials:
Aleksander Klimkowski – 40 days
Clinton Nash – 18 years
Rose Nash – 24 years

Birthdays, Anniversaries, Nameday

Sunday, 1/28

Birthday: Dr. Fadi Ibrahim
St. Ephraim: Frank Pompa

Monday, 1/29

None

Tuesday, 1/30

Birthday: Adam Sanderlin

Wednesday, 1/31

None

Thursday, 2/1

Birthday: Milana Kumar, Julie Ervin

Friday, 2/2

Birthday: Trish Ratliff, Clover Smith, Paul Finley, Elizabeth Loggins
St. Jordan, the New Martyr: Jordan Smith

Saturday, 2/3

Birthday: Anna Damon
Prophetess Anna: Anna Damon, Anna Pashchinskaya, Trish Ratliff
Simeon, the God-Receiver: JonMark Hetrick, Shiloh Smith
Ia of Ives: Ivy Garrison

Commemorations

January 28: Venerable Ephraim the Syrian; Venerable Palladios of Antioch; Martyr Charita; Venerable Theodosios of Totma; Isaac the Syrian, bishop of Ninevah.

January 29: The translation of the relics of Ignatios the God-bearer of Antioch; New-martyr Demetrios of Chios.

January 30: The three great hierarchs and ecumenical teachers, Basil the Great, Gregory the Theologian and John Chrysostom; Hieromartyr Hippolytos, pope of Rome; Virgin-martyr Chrissa of Rome; New-martyr Theodore of Mitylene; Julian, priest of Aegina.

January 31: Unmercenarys Cyros and John; Martyrs Athanasia of Egypt and her daughters Theodota, Theoktiste and Eudoxia; Martyr Papias of Corinth; New-martyr Elias; Nikita of the Kiev Caves, bishop of Novgorod.

February 1: Martyr Tryphon of Syria; Martyr Perpetua of Carthage and her four companions; Basil the Confessor, archbishop of Thessalonika; New-martyr Anastasios of Anaplos; Venerable David and Simeon; Venerable Bridget of Ireland.

February 2: The Meeting of our Lord, God and Saviour Jesus Christ. Martyr Agathodoros of Cappadocia; New-martyrs Jordan of Trebizond and Gabriel of Constantinople.

February 3: Holy and Righteous Simeon the God-receiver and Anna the Prophetess; New-martyrs Nicholas, Stamatios and John of Spetson; Anschar, enlightener of Denmark and Sweden; Nicholas, equal-to-the-Apostles, bishop and evangelizer of Japan; James, archbishop of Serbia, Ia of Ives.

February 4: Venerable Isidore of Pelusium; Venerable Nicholas the Confessor of Studion; New-martyr Joseph of Aleppo; George, prince of Vladimir; Venerable Cyril, wonder-worker of Novoezersk.

DAILY SCRIPTURE READINGS

Sunday	1 Timothy	1:15-17	Luke	18:35-43
Monday	Hebrews	10:32-38	Mark	9:33-41
Tuesday	Hebrews	13:7-16	Matthew	5:14-19
Wednesday	1 Corinthians	12:27-31; 13:1-8	Matthew	10:1, 5-8
Thursday	Romans	8:28-39	Luke	10:19-21
Friday	Hebrews	7:7-17	Luke	2:22-40
Saturday	Hebrews	9:11-14	Luke	2:25-38
Sunday	1 Timothy	4:9-15	Luke	19:1-10

Remember in Your Prayers

Our catechumens: Jeff Bennett; Ben Haag; Thomas & Christy Potts; Eric Iverson; Andrew Potts; Brian, Danielle, Luree, John, & River Pfeister; Billy & Stacey Murray; Leighann Pompa; John & Lisa Weaver; Hannah Gibson; Richard & Lucas Luper; Michael Pritchett; Taylor Tawbush; Kyle, Jane, Isla & Lachlan Esposito; Eric Iverson

Prayer Requests: Mother Raphaela; Cathy & Adam van Drimmelen & family (Cathy's mother, Wilma West, fell asleep in the Lord on Nov. 13); Ken Alvis (Dianna Hildebrand's brother); Mary Elliott & family; Mike & Joyce Grossman; Chris Hodges; Mickey Hodges; St. Nicholas Orthodox Church; St. Paul Orthodox Mission; Samuel Brownlow; Elizabeth Turner (Jack's mother); Aleksandra Klimkowski & family; Emma & Katelyn Coe; Janan Heisig & family; Shawn McClenny (Miriam Redmond's brother-in-law); Charles Pugh (Madeleine Boiles's brother); the Bowick family; those suffering in the Middle East, most especially the Christians.

Expecting: Marija Pavlovic, Ioana Rustom, Heather Hetrick

Diocesan Seminarian: Caleb McGee



ST. JOHN COMMUNITY



Sunday School will meet today as a make-up from being cancelled last week.

General Assembly Meeting – On Sunday, February 18, we will have our annual general assembly meeting. In the meeting, we will have the final financial reports for the year as well as hear about any upcoming projects for 2024. Please bring a side dish or dessert to share and we will have lunch meat for sandwiches to enjoy during the meeting. Please plan to attend!

Orthodoxy 101 will next meet this Tuesday, January 30th, at 7pm. The topic will be *The Saints*. All are welcome to attend either in person or via Zoom.

A New Verbist!

Many years to the Verbist family! Calen and Katherine Verbist welcomed new baby Abigail Summers Verbist into the world on Thursday, January 25th. Thanks be to God, mom and baby are doing well. Please keep the Verbist family in your prayers. If you would like to provide a meal for the family, please use the sign-up link on the parish emails.

Medical Professionals Meeting – Next Sunday, February 4th

By the blessing and direction of Metropolitan SABA, a new fellowship is forming: The North American Antiochian Orthodox Medical Professionals. The first meeting of the local chapter will be next Sunday, February 4th (please note the new date) in the library following the Divine Liturgy, in order to discuss the goals and interests of the group. Box lunches will be served to those who RSVP on the parish emails. There will be a national Zoom meeting in March with Dr. Daniel Hinshaw as the keynote speaker.

Theophany House Blessings – It is time to schedule your House Blessing! Please sign up on the printed sheets in the parish hall for the times and days which are most convenient for your family to have your home blessed by one of our priests. Fr. Philip will follow up with you with a specific date and time.

Seeking Volunteers for Room in the Inn for Winter

St. John's is signed up to host Room in the Inn this winter on Monday nights, to help families with children who continue to find themselves homeless in Memphis each week. Please use the sign-up link on the weekly parish emails to see if there is a task you can help with. Feel free to contact Thea at thea.wallace@yahoo.com or 404-408-3292 if you have any questions.

Save the Date for our Pre-Lenten Retreat! – Fr. Jeremy Davis, author of *Welcoming Gifts: Sacrifice in the Bible and Christian Life*, will be with us Feb. 9-11, offering a retreat on “Saved by Sacrifice: What is the Cross All About?” The Cross of Christ is the perfect sacrifice, fulfilling the missed potential of the offerings in the Old Law. Today many people focus on the violence and suffering endured by Jesus, but for ancient Christians these were merely the backdrop for His self-offering to the Father. The joyful and positive idea of sacrifice in the Bible and throughout the ancient world will give us a renewed appreciation for our salvation in Christ. All are welcome to attend the retreat and be encouraged as we prepare for Great Lent! Reserve your spot today by registering on the sign-up link in the weekly parish emails.

The Sons of Thunder Men's Book Club will meet at the church at 6pm on Sunday, February 18, to discuss *The Power and the Glory* by Graham Greene. Please bring food and drink to share.

Photos on Bulletin Board – Is your family pictured on the bulletin board leading into St. Raphael Hall? If not, please see Mr. Trent Terry! He will take your picture and add you to our photos. There are so many new people and it is great to have a tool to put a name to a face.

2024 Calendars can be found in the bookstore and hall.

Daily Lives, Miracles, and Wisdom of the Saints & Fasting Calendar (spiral bound) is \$20.

Icon Wall Calendars are free, but please limit to one copy per family.

St. John Youth

Today:

Sunday, 1/28 - Service Project – Winter Kits and Discussion & Donuts
(Lunch Provided), 12:30-2:30pm

Next Week:

Saturday, 2/3 - Memphis Tigers Game, 12:00-2:00pm (Tickets will be covered.)
Sunday, 2/4 - Lunch or Dinner at Someone’s Home (TBD)

Looking Ahead:

Friday & Saturday, 2/9-2/10 Free Parish Retreat with Fr. Jeremy Davis (Please register on the link in the Youth Group email.)

Sunday, 2/11 - TBD

Sunday, 2/18 - Parish Meeting (No Sunday School or Youth Group)

Sunday, 2/25 - Service Project (TBD)

Women of St. John Calendar

1/31 (Wed.) AWSJ Teaching, 10am – Women’s Teaching will meet via Zoom this week to discuss *A Voice for Our Time* by Fr. Alexander Schmemmann.

2/5 (Mon.) AWSJ Book Club, 7pm – The Women’s Book Club will meet on Monday, Feb. 5 at Kh. Pamela Mashburn’s home at 7pm. We will be discussing *Quilt of Souls* by Phyllis Lawson (or Phyllis Biffle Elmore). All are welcome to join, even if you have not read the book! Please RSVP to Kh. Pamela if you are planning to attend. We would love to see you! Bring a snack to share!

Third Hour Prayer & Fellowship (Fridays), 9am – Each Friday a group of moms and kids are gathering at the church to attend Third Hour prayers followed by a time of fellowship. Any and all are welcome to join us! Please reach out to Heather Hetrick with any questions.

LIBRARY LINES

Several times a day throughout Lent we repeat the prayer of St. Ephraim the Syrian (1/28). He was a contemporary of St. Basil the Great who wanted to ordain him to the priesthood. Ephraim, considering himself unworthy, refused. In his youth he had a reputation for fighting because of his quick temper. He turned his life around and went to live with the hermits, becoming a disciple of St. James of Nisibis. The saint saw promise in the young man and took him with him to the First Ecumenical Council in 325. St. Ephraim was given the gift of teaching. He became a strict ascetic and continually studied the Scriptures. Besides his famous Lenten prayer, he wrote a commentary on the Pentateuch and prayers to the Holy Trinity, the Son of God and the Most Holy Theotokos. He also composed hymns for the Twelve Great Feasts of the Lord and funeral hymns. Look

in St. John Library for his *Hymns on Paradise* and *A Spiritual Psalter*; both have the same spine code (PAT EPH).

Today is also the commemoration of St. Isaac the Syrian (1/28). He longed for a solitary life but reluctantly agreed to become the Bishop of Ninevah. He left his position and returned to the desert after five months because of the disobedience and crudeness of the inhabitants of the city. Old age and poor eyesight forced him to leave the desert and live in a monastery in Mesopotamia. Little was known about this 6th century saint until a biography of him was written in 1719. Read more by and about him in *Daily Readings with St. Isaac of Syria* (PAT COM ISA) and *St. Isaac the Syrian: Man, Saint, and his Teaching* (PAT COM ISA).

Three of the Holy Unmercenaries are commemorated this week. All of these men were physicians or pious men who were given the gift of healing. They never charged anyone and healed many people of physical, mental and spiritual illnesses. Whenever we sing their hymns, we repeat the words, “Freely ye have received; freely give.” One of my favorite stories of them is about St. Tryphon, (2/1) the gooseherd. After he cast a demon out of the Emperor Gordian’s daughter he was rewarded with many gifts which he gave away. Afterwards, he returned to his village, tended his geese and lived a life of prayer. He was beheaded in 250, and his intercessions are asked for people and their animals. Several years ago, our homeschoolers wrote and illustrated a book about him, *Saint Tryphon* (KID STS TRY).

Nearly everyone at St. John knows St. Brigid (2/1) is the patron of our food pantry. She was the daughter of an Irish chieftain and his slave. Her father put her in charge of his sheep and of his dairy and kitchen. God blessed her pantry, causing it to overflow so she could give bread, butter and milk to the poor. She became a nun and her monastery was the first in Ireland for women. Stories are told of her weaving crosses from rushes to comfort the sick. She died peacefully in 525 and was said to be buried in the same grave as Sts. Patrick and Columba of Iona. She is venerated in Ireland, Wales, Italy and France, as well as St. John. Read more about her in *A Staff to the Pilgrim: Meditations on the Way with Nine Celtic Saints* (HAG---ROC) and *The Life of Saint Brigid: Abbess of Kildare* (KID STS BRI).

Friday is the Feast of the Presentation of Christ in the Temple (2/2), and we remember St. Simeon’s words to the Theotokos, “...Yea, a sword shall pierce through your own soul also, that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed.” We commemorate also this day the *Softener of Evil Hearts* icon which shows the heart of the Theotokos pierced by seven arrows. You’ll find this icon on the bulletin board along with an excerpt of the *Akathist to the Mother of God, Softener of Evil Hearts*. See also *Icons of the Most Holy Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary and Prayers for Her Intercession* (ART ICO KHO). And, take a look at these children’s books about this feast: *Mary, the Mother of Jesus* (KID STS MAR), *Illustrated Life of the Theotokos for Children* (KID STS MAR), *Story of Mary: the Mother of God*, (KID STS MAR) and *The Meeting of Our Lord*, (KID CHU ELA).

Saturday we commemorate two saints who lived in the land of the Rising Sun and the other from the homeland of Hans Christian Anderson. St. Nicholas (2/3), born and ordained as a priest in Russia in the 19th century, was sent to Japan by his own request. He spent eight years studying the language and customs of the people because, he said, “the Japanese of the time looked upon foreigners as beasts, and on Christianity as a villainous sect...” His flock numbered 20 in 1877 and by 1911 there were 33,000 Christians in Japan. He founded schools and a seminary, compiled an Orthodox theological dictionary in Japanese and built the Cathedral of the Resurrection in Tokyo. Read more about his life in *Saint Nikolai Kasatkin and the Orthodox Mission in Japan* (HAG NIK VAN) and *New Apostles of Christ* (HAG - - - HAT). St. Anshar (2/3) was called the apostle to the North because he spread the Gospel in the ninth century in Jutland, now Denmark, and Sweden. There, he introduced the use of bells which the native people considered magical instruments. He founded hospitals and persuaded the king to relax the slave-trade in the land. Little of his writings remain; however his introduction to the life of St. Willehad, the first bishop of Bremen, is considered a masterpiece for that age. St. Anshar’s desire for martyrdom was never granted.