

From the Fathers (and others):

The first virtue of godliness in Christians is to honor their parents, to requite the troubles of those who begat them, and with all their might to confer on them what tends to their comfort (for if we should repay them ever so much, yet we shall never be able to return their gift of life), that they also may enjoy the comfort provided by us, and may confirm us in those blessings which Jacob the supplanter shrewdly seized; and that our Father in heaven may accept our good purpose, and judge us worthy ' to shine amid the righteous as the sun in the kingdom of our Father.'

St. Cyril of Jerusalem

Since the author of our salvation did not travel by the path of glory and luxury, but by that of dishonor and hardships, we must do likewise without complaining if we are to reach the same place and share in the Divine Glory. But, what honor shall we receive if we refuse to endure sufferings like those of our Master?

St. Cyril of Alexandria

The Lives of the St's are holy testimonies of the miraculous power of our Lord Jesus Christ. In reality they are the testimonies of the Acts of the Apostles, only continued throughout the ages. The St's are nothing other than holy witnesses, like the Holy Apostles who were the first witnesses -- of what?, of the God-man Jesus Christ: of Him crucified, resurrected, ascended into heaven and eternally alive; about His all-saving Gospel which is unceasingly written with evangelical holy deeds from generation to generation, for the Lord Christ, Who is always the same, constantly works miracles by His Divine power through His holy witnesses.

St. Justin Popovich

If, as John says, 'God is love', the devil is necessarily hatred. As he who has love consequently has God, so he who has hate nurtures the devil within himself.

St. Basil the Great

God showed St. Peter the Apostle that he should not consider anyone as common or unclean. Since his heart was sanctified, everyone has been sanctified. For the person whose heart lies in the passions, however, no one has been sanctified, but rather that person considers everyone as in accordance with the passions in his own heart. Even if someone were to say that such and such is a good person, he would immediately become angry in his heart. Therefore, guard yourselves against blaming anyone either by word of mouth or in your heart.

Abba Isaias of Scetis

Curb the excitable part of the soul by love; subdue the desiring by abstinence and give wings to the reasoning part by prayer. Then the light of your mind will never be dimmed.

From the monks Callistus and Ignatius

St. John Orthodox Church

A Parish of the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America



~ December 23, 2018 ~

Sunday before the Nativity of our Lord

ST. JOHN ORTHODOX CHURCH
1663 TUTWILER AVENUE
MEMPHIS, TN 38107
(901) 274-4119

www.stjohnmemphis.org

www.orthodoxtupelo.com

His Eminence Metropolitan JOSEPH
Archbishop of New York and Metropolitan of all 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 Berge, Attached

GREAT VESPERS
Saturday, 6:00 p.m.

ORTHROS and CHURCH SCHOOL
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

Sunday before the Nativity of our Lord

Epistle: Hebrews 11:9-10; 32-40

Gospel: Matthew 1:1-25

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

December 23 - 30

(FAST: Sun & Mon, NO FAST: Tues – Jan.4)

Sunday -Teen Group, 12:30 – 2:30 p.m.

Monday -Royal Hours, 8:00 a.m.
-Vesperal Divine Liturgy, 10:00 a.m. (we will begin at conclusion of Hours)
-Festal Orthros, 9:15 p.m.
-Festal Liturgy, 10:30 p.m.

Tuesday -OFFICE CLOSED

Wednesday -OFFICE CLOSED

-Vespers, 5:30 p.m.

-NO MEAL

Thursday -

Friday -

Saturday -Ninth Hour and Great Vespers, 5:50 p.m.

Sunday -Church School & Orthros, 9:00 a.m.

-Divine Liturgy, 10:00 a.m.

OUT OF OFFICE

Fr. Philip will be out of the office through this week.

DIVINE LITURGY

Monday, December 24, 10:00 a.m.

PRIEST: Fr. John

READER:

HOLY BREAD: Caitlyn Romero

DIVINE LITURGY

Monday, December 24, 10:30 p.m.

PRIEST: Fr. John

READER: John Cameron

USHER: John Sneed

HOLY BREAD: Reem Mansour

ALTAR SERVERS:

DIVINE LITURGY

Sunday, December 30, 10:00 a.m.

PRIEST: Fr. John

READER: Matt Spinolo

USHER: Matt Spinolo

HOLY BREAD: Karen Bell

ALTAR SERVERS: Max, Elijah B., Brody, Paul

COFFEE HOUR:

COMMEMORATIONS

December 23: Ten martyrs of Crete; New-martyr Nicholas; Venerable Nahum of Ochrid, enlightener of the Bulgarians.

December 24: Venerable-martyr Eugenia of Rome and those with her; Martyrs Achaikos and Basillia; New-martyr Ahmed of Constantinople.

December 25: The Nativity in the Flesh of our Lord, God and Saviour Jesus Christ.

December 26: Commemoration of Joseph the Betrothed, David the Prophet and King, and James the Brother of the Lord. The Synaxis of the Theotokos; Euthymios the Confessor, bishop of Sardis; Hieromartyr Constantios the Russian of the Great Lavra on Athos.

December 27: Proto-martyr Stephen the archdeacon; Venerable-confessor Theodore the Branded.

December 28: The twenty thousand martyrs of Nicomedia; Hieromartyr Glykerion; Venerable Simon the myrrh-streaming, founder of Simonopetra monastery on Athos.

December 29: The fourteen thousand infants slain by Herod in Bethlehem; George, bishop of Nicomedia; Venerable Markellos of the monastery of the “Unsleeping Ones”; commemoration of all Orthodox Christians who died from hunger, thirst, the sword and freezing.

December 30: Virgin-martyr Anysia of Thessalonika; Martyr Philetairos of Nicomedia; Venerable Leon; Venerable-martyr Gideon of Karakallou monastery on Athos; Makarios, Metropolitan of Moscow.



DAILY SCRIPTURE READINGS

December 23-30

Sunday	Hebrews	11:9-10; 32-40	Matt	1:1-25
Monday	Hebrews	1:1-12	Luke	2:1-2-
Tuesday	Galatians	4:4-7	Matt	2:1-12
Wednesday	Hebrews	2:11-18	Matt	2:13-23
Thursday	Acts	6:8-15; 7:1-5, 47-60	Matt	21:33-42
Friday	James	2:1-3	Luke	14:25-35
Saturday	1 Timothy	6:11-16	Matt	12:15-21
Sunday	Galatians	1:11-19	Matt	2:13-23



Pray for our catechumen: Frank Pompa, Sharon Woelm-Taylor

Please remember in your prayers – Sister Olga, Mary Clark, Ann Hicks (Dianna Hildebrand’s mother), Nicholas Hill, Leah Shull (pregnant), Ashley Powell (pregnant), Ernestine Pruitt (Nicholas Hill’s mother), Dot Lawson (Pam Bowick’s mother & Lawson’s grandmother), Lisa Catlett (Fr. Don & Kh. Martha’s daughter), Sharon (Larry Ichniowski’s mother), Chris Hodges, Heather Donohue, those suffering in the Middle East, most especially the Christians.



ST. JOHN COMMUNITY



Chrismation – Sharon Woelm-Taylor will be chrismated this morning. Many years, Sharon!

Bible Study – The bible study on Ephesians led by Dn. Sidney will resume on Jan. 12, at 4:30 p.m..

Book Reading – Judy Terry will be holding a book reading on the 12 Days of Christmas on Dec. 30th during coffee hour! This is sure to be a fun event complete with books, singing and cookies! All are welcome!

Vollentine Elementary School Supply Drive – St. John is participating in VECA’s school supply drive benefitting Vollentine Elementary from now until January 6. Donations may be left downstairs in the classroom.

Welcome Team – The Welcome Team is reorganizing! If you are interested in the vital ministry of welcoming our visitors and new faces during coffee hour, please contact Gary Karnaghon for more information on how you can help.

SAVE THE DATE: Annual Parish Business Meeting, Sunday, January 13 following liturgy.

Sons of Thunder Men’s Book Club – The men will meet at 6pm on Sunday, January 13th at Dn. James's home to discuss *The Aviator* by Eugene Vodolazhkin. All men are welcome.

Parish Council Update – ~~At the council meeting on Tuesday evening, the parish council approved the cost of repairing the speaker system to the basement and adding an additional speaker to the nursery area. In addition, the budget for 2019 was approved as well as a shift to new accounting and directory software. Lord willing, these new programs will help to continue to streamline our financial system. The annual parish meeting will be Sunday, January 13, mark your calendars and be sure to attend this important meeting for our community.~~

Birthdays, Anniversaries, & Namedays

Sunday, 12/23: *Righteous Sarah: Sarah Finley*
Joseph, the Patriarch: Joe Hodges

Tuesday, 12/25: Kristina Romero,
St. Christina: Christine McGee, Lavinia Dumitrache,
Kristina Romero

Wednesday, 12/26: Anniversary: Tom & Roz Ashworth
Joseph, the Betrothed: Deon Crum, J. Morgan Harter

Thursday, 12/27: *St. Stephen: Stephen Sanderlin*

Friday, 12/28: Fr. Philip

Saturday, 12/29: Gary Karnaghon, Claire van Drimmelen



Nativity Celebration

Following Divine Liturgy on December 24 (early morning of the 25th) St. John will continue the Nativity Celebration in St. Raphael hall with food and fellowship.

The church will provide: deli trays for sandwiches, tea, and champagne. Side items and desserts will be potluck. Please keep contributions simple and in containers that can be disposed of if left. *Let's have an enjoyable celebration with as little set up and clean up as possible!*

Special Services for the remainder of the fast & the Nativity season through Theophany

Monday, December 24

Royal Hours, 8:00 AM
Divine Liturgy, 10:00 AM
Orthros for Nativity, 9:15 PM
Divine Liturgy, 10:30 PM

Saturday, December 31

Great Vespers for St. Basil, 6:00 PM

Friday, January 4

Royal Hours, 9:00 AM

Saturday, January 5

Orthros, 9:00 AM
Divine Liturgy, 10:00 AM
Followed by the blessing of the MS River
Lunch at church following the blessing

Sunday, January 6

Divine Liturgy, 10:00 AM
Great Sanctification of Water

Library Lines

During Advent we have commemorated several events in the life of the Theotokos. Her Entrance into the Temple (11/21), her Conception (12/9) and the Nativity of Christ (12/25). These and others are depicted in one of St. John Library's most popular books. *The Story of Mary the Mother of God* (KID STS PAP) by Dorrie Papademetriou is a beautifully illustrated book for young children. The first half of the short book is devoted to Sts. Anna and Joachim, their desire for a child and the early life of the Theotokos. The book continues with the Annunciation, birth, and life of Christ. The life of the Theotokos is shown to us in much greater detail in another one of our most informative books, *The Life of the Virgin Mary, the Theotokos*. This reference book gives us icons, hymns and commentary from the fathers on her life, her significance in the Kingdom of God and her place in the Church. Since she is the Mother of God in the flesh and is pivotal in our salvation, every event, person and aspect of Jesus's life, death, resurrection and events before and after Pentecost are referenced. It's user friendly because it is arranged chronologically and the table of contents is very detailed.

Do you and your children enjoy singing, "Good King Wenceslaus went out on the Feast of Stephen" at Christmastime? The ruler in this well-loved, 19th century Christmas carol was embroiled in Czech political intrigue since from birth in 907. Read about his life in *Good King Wenceslaus* (KID STS WEN) and in *Orthodox America*, #45 Nov.-Dec. 1984, p. 8. King Wenceslaus's feast day is September 28.

Thursday, we commemorate St. Stephen (12/27). His martyrdom mirrors that of the last days of Christ. The Jews accused the saint of blasphemy. Appearing before the Sanhedrin, he accused them of killing the Prophets and the Messiah. He was sentenced to death by stoning in the presence of the Theotokos and the Apostle John. Stephen prayed for his executioners and asked God to not charge them for their sin. His body was secretly buried by the Jewish teacher Gamaliel who later confessed Christ and was baptized. St. Stephen is also commemorated on August 2 and September 15.

On the bulletin board this week you will see icons and the stories of two groups of unnamed martyrs, the Holy Innocents (12/29) slain by Herod and the 20,000 martyrs of Nicomedia (12/28). We also remember all Orthodox Christians who died from hunger, thirst, the sword and freezing. It gives us great hope and comfort to know that our Holy Mother Church remembers those numerous ones who were so insignificant in the world's eyes that their names were never recorded.

Women of St. John Calendar

Monday, 1/7

AWSJ Book Club – 7:00 p.m., Kh. Pamela's home.
We will be discussing *Holiness* by Monk Moses

Thursday, 1/10

Women's Teaching - 10:00 a.m.,
We are studying "Prayer: Encounter with the Living God" by Metropolitan Hilarion Alfeyev

Saturday, 1/26

Save the date! Baby Shower for Leah Shull! More details to come.