

**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**  
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### **The Eunuch of Queen Candace**

The Apostle Philip baptized this ... man, a eunuch. Following his baptism, the eunuch returned to his home and began to preach Christ. He was the first Apostle of Faith among the blacks in Ethiopia. "Then the angel of the Lord spoke to Philip, get up and head south on the road that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza, the desert route. So, he got up and set out. Now there was an Ethiopian eunuch, a court official of the Candace, that is, the queen of the Ethiopians, in charge of her entire treasury, who had come to Jerusalem to worship, and was returning home. Seated in his chariot, he was reading the Prophet Isaiah. The Spirit said to Philip, 'Go and join up with the chariot.' Philip ran up and heard him reading Isaiah the Prophet and said, 'Do you understand what you are reading?' He replied, 'How can I, unless someone instructs me?' So, he invited Philip to get in and sit with him. This was the scripture passage he was reading: 'Like a sheep he was led to the slaughter, and as a lamb before its shearer is silent, so he opened not his mouth. In his humiliation justice was denied him. Who will tell of his posterity? For his life is taken from earth.' Then the eunuch said to Philip in reply, 'I beg you, about whom is the prophet saying this? About himself, or about someone else?' Then Philip opened his mouth and, beginning with this scripture passage, he proclaimed Jesus to him. As they traveled along the road they came to some water, and the eunuch said, 'Look, there is water. What is to prevent my being baptized?' Then he ordered the chariot to stop, and Philip and the eunuch both went down into the water, and he baptized him. When they came out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord snatched Philip away, and the eunuch saw him no more, but continued on his way rejoicing. Philip came to Azotus, and went about preaching the good news to all the towns until he reached Caesarea" (Acts of the Apostles 8: 26-40). The eunuch died a martyr and became worthy of the Kingdom of God.

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

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



**January 4, 2026**  
**The Sunday before the Theophany 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:** 2 Timothy 4:5-8

**Gospel Reading:** St. Mark 1:1-8

## Saints of the Day

The synaxis of the Seventy Holy Apostles; the Eunuch of Queen Candace; Venerable Theoktistos of Sicily; Venerable-martyrs Euthymios and his 12 companions of Vatopedi monastery on Athos; Venerable-martyr Onouphrios the deacon of Hilandar monastery on Athos; Eustathios, archbishop of Serbia.

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## Spiritual Counsels...

Do not waste words on a fool, he will not appreciate the shrewdness of your remarks. – Proverbs 23:9

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## Orthodox Thoughts from Theo, the Parish Possum

It is difficult to avoid the daily news stories about the destruction of almost every building in Gaza. Less publicized is the fate of Gaza's Orthodox Christian community, one of the oldest in the world. It is part of the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Jerusalem. Christians settled in Gaza in the third century. However, paganism prevailed until St. Porphyrius converted the population in the fifth century through his healing ministry and by miraculously ending a drought. He persuaded Emperor Heraclius to allow Christian churches and, by the end of the sixth century, Christians were predominant in Gaza. But, over the years, Gaza became increasingly Muslim. After Hamas took control in 2007, many Christians left Gaza. During the current war with Israel, the death toll has further reduced their number. Even though the Christian community was active in sheltering and providing relief to non-Christian Gazans, their churches were bombed by Israeli Defense Forces. The historic church of St. Porphyrius, in which the saint is buried, was damaged in 2023. In 2024, a missile penetrated the roof of the church hall when it was full of people. Miraculously, it failed to detonate. At this time in 2026, there are fewer than 1,000 Orthodox in Gaza and they are at risk of extinction. It is sad to see the demise of this historic Orthodox community. Pray to St. Porphyrius for the safety and salvation of Orthodox Christian Gazans. May the Lord yet preserve their ministry. — Theo

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## WORSHIP SCHEDULE

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> – Orthros, 9:00 A.M.; Divine Liturgy, 10:00 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.

Saturday, Jan. 24<sup>th</sup> – Great Vespers & Confessions, 5:00 P.M.

Sunday, Jan. 25<sup>th</sup> – Orthros, 8:30 A.M.; Divine Liturgy, 9:30 A.M.

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### **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

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.

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**.

The **Ladies Guild** shall hold its January meeting on Sunday, Jan. 11, after Divine Liturgy. All ladies of the parish are invited to attend.

God willing, Orthros and Divine Liturgy shall be celebrated on Saturday, Jan. 17<sup>th</sup>, at 9 A.M. and 10 A.M., respectively, for the **Feast of St. Anthony the Great**.

**LADIES SOCIAL** Saturday **January 17** at 1:30pm in Church Hall  
**All ladies** of the Parish are invited to participate in the Annual Gift Exchange game (also known as “dirty santa”).

This will be held in the Church Hall on Saturday, Jan. 17 at 1:30pm. **Bring a gift** (valued around \$15) **and a snack** or beverage to share.

**LET’S RELAX AND HAVE FUN!**

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.

**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 1. Thank you. **Next Week:** Team 2.

### **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.