

Ambo

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Divine Services

Eve Sundays & Feast Days

5:00 PM Confessions

6:00 PM Great Vespers

Sundays and Feast Days

8:40 AM 3rd and 6th Hour

9:00 AM Divine Liturgy

Please check weekly schedule
for specific days (last page).

Previous Ambos on website.

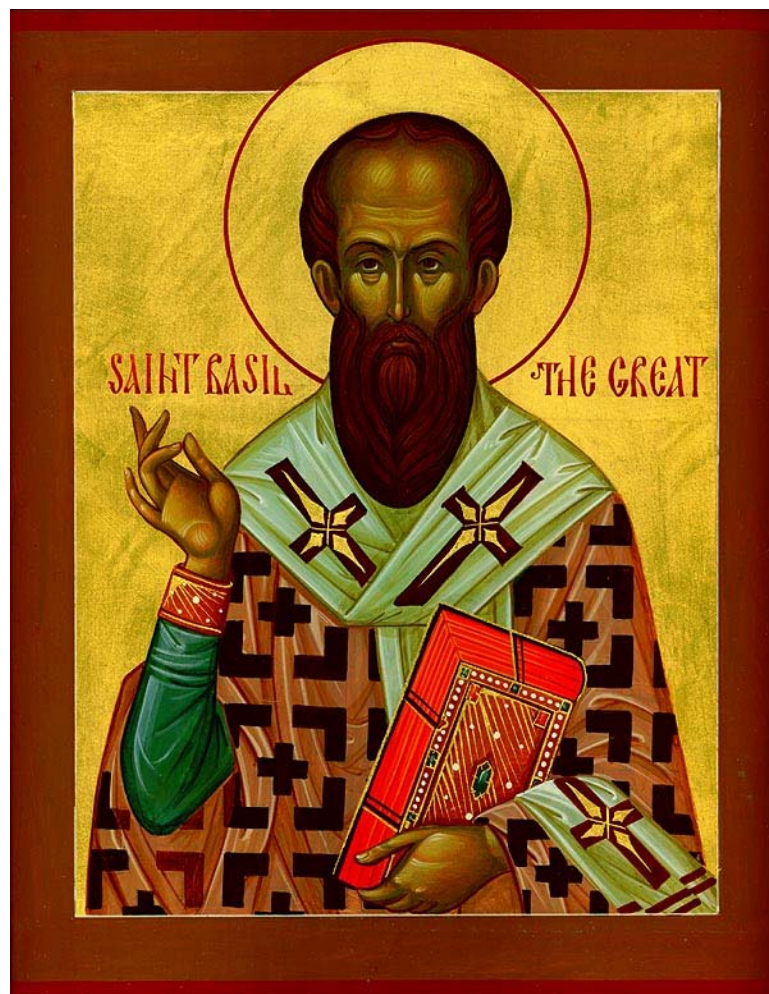
Articles for publication
should be submitted to:

ambo-theodosius@googlegroups.com

DECEMBER 29, 2024

27TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

HOLY RIGHTEOUS ONES: JOSEPH THE
BETROTHED, DAVID THE KING, AND
JAMES THE BROTHER OF THE LORD



side had to hide in the forests of Pontus for seven years during the persecution under Diocletian.

Saint Basil's mother [Saint Emilia](#) was the daughter of a martyr. On the Greek calendar, she is commemorated on May 30. Saint Basil's father was also named Basil. He was a lawyer and renowned rhetorician, and lived at Caesarea.

Ten children were born to the elder Basil and Emilia: five sons and five daughters. Five of them were later numbered among the saints: Basil the Great; [Macrina](#) (July 19) was an exemplar of ascetic life, and exerted strong influ-

Saint Basil the Great, Archbishop of Caesarea in Cappadocia (Jan 1), "belongs not to the Church of Caesarea alone, nor merely to his own time, nor was he of benefit only to his own kinsmen, but rather to all lands and cities worldwide, and to all people he brought and still brings benefit, and for Christians he always was and will be a most salvific teacher." Thus spoke Saint Basil's contemporary, [Saint Amphilochius, Bishop of Iconium](#) (November 23).

Saint Basil was born in the year 330 at Caesarea, the administrative center of Cappadocia. He was of illustrious lineage, famed for its eminence and wealth, and zealous for the Christian Faith. The saint's grandfather and grandmother on his father's

ence on the life and character of Saint Basil the Great; [Gregory, afterwards Bishop of Nyssa](#) (January 10); [Peter, Bishop of Sebaste](#) (January 9); and [Theosebia, a deaconess](#) (January 10).

Saint Basil spent the first years of his life on an estate belonging to his parents at the River Iris, where he was raised under the supervision of his mother Emilia and grandmother Macrina. They were women of great refinement, who remembered an earlier bishop of Cappadocia, [Saint Gregory the Wonderworker](#) (November 17). Basil received his initial education under the supervision of his father, and then he studied under the finest teachers in Caesarea of Cappadocia, and it was here that he made the acquaintance of [Saint Gregory the Theologian](#) (January 25 and January 30). Later, Basil transferred to a school at Constantinople, where he listened to eminent orators and philosophers. To complete his education Saint Basil went to Athens, the center of classical enlightenment.

After a four or five year stay at Athens, Basil had mastered all the available disciplines. "He studied everything thoroughly, more than others are wont to study a single subject. He studied each science in its very totality, as though he would study nothing else." Philosopher, philologist, orator, jurist, naturalist, possessing profound knowledge in astronomy, mathematics and medicine, "he was a ship fully laden with learning, to the extent permitted by human nature."

At Athens a close friendship developed between Basil the Great and Gregory the Theologian (Nazianzus), which continued throughout their life. In fact, they regarded themselves as one soul in two bodies. Later on, in his eulogy for Basil the Great, Saint Gregory the Theologian speaks with delight about this period: "Various hopes guided us, and indeed inevitably, in learning... Two paths opened up before us: the one to our sacred temples and the teachers therein; the other towards preceptors of disciplines beyond."

About the year 357, Saint Basil returned to Caesarea, where for a while he devoted himself to rhetoric. But soon, refusing offers from Caesarea's citizens who wanted to entrust him with the education of their offspring, Saint Basil entered upon the path of ascetic life.

After the death of her husband, Basil's mother, her eldest daughter Macrina, and several female servants

withdrew to the family estate at Iris and there began to lead an ascetic life. Basil was baptized by Dianios, the Bishop of Caesarea, and was tonsured a Reader (On the Holy Spirit, 29). He first read the Holy Scriptures to the people, then explained them.

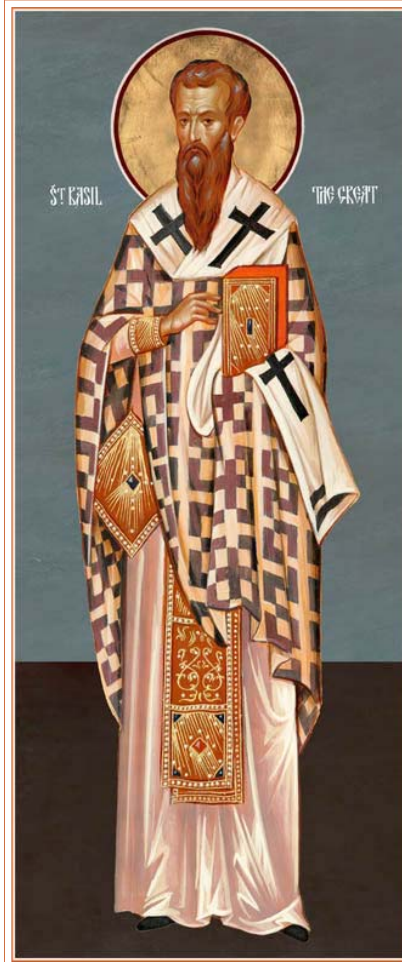
Later on, "wishing to acquire a guide to the knowledge of truth", the saint undertook a journey into Egypt, Syria and Palestine, to meet the great Christian ascetics dwelling there. On returning to Cappadocia, he decided to do as they did. He distributed his wealth to the needy, then settled on the opposite side of the river not far from his mother Emilia and sister Macrina, gathering around him monks living a cenobitic life.

By his letters, Basil drew his good friend Gregory the Theologian to the monastery. Saints Basil and Gregory labored in strict abstinence in their dwelling place, which had no roof or fireplace, and the food was very humble. They themselves cleared away the stones, planted and watered the trees, and carried heavy loads. Their hands were constantly calloused from the hard work. For clothing Basil had only a tunic and monastic mantle. He wore a hairshirt, but only at night, so that it would not be obvious.

In their solitude, Saints Basil and Gregory occupied themselves in an intense study of Holy Scripture. They were guided by the writings of the Fathers and commentators of the past, especially the good writings of Origen. From all these works they compiled an anthology called *Philokalia*. Also at this time, at the request of the monks, Saint Basil wrote down a collection of rules for virtuous life. By his preaching and by his

example Saint Basil assisted in the spiritual perfection of Christians in Cappadocia and Pontus; and many indeed turned to him. Monasteries were organized for men and for women, in which places Basil sought to combine the cenobitic (*koine bios*, or common) life-style with that of the solitary hermit.

During the reign of Constantius (337-361) the heretical teachings of Arius were spreading, and the Church summoned both its saints into service. Saint Basil returned to Caesarea. In the year 362 he was ordained deacon by Bishop Meletius of Antioch. In 364 he was ordained to the holy priesthood by Bishop Eusebius of Caesarea. "But seeing," as Gregory the Theologian relates, "that everyone exceedingly praised and honored Basil for his wisdom and reverence, Eusebius, through



human weakness, succumbed to jealousy of him, and began to show dislike for him.” The monks rose up in defense of Saint Basil. To avoid causing Church discord, Basil withdrew to his own monastery and concerned himself with the organization of monasteries.

With the coming to power of the emperor Valens (364-378), who was a resolute adherent of Arianism, a time of troubles began for Orthodoxy, the onset of a great struggle. Saint Basil hastily returned to Caesarea at the request of Bishop Eusebius. In the words of Gregory the Theologian, he was for Bishop Eusebius “a good advisor, a righteous representative, an expounder of the Word of God, a staff for the aged, a faithful support in internal matters, and an activist in external matters.”

From this time church governance passed over to Basil, though he was subordinate to the hierarch. He preached daily, and often twice, in the morning and in the evening. During this time Saint Basil composed his Liturgy. He wrote a work “On the Six Days of Creation” (Hexaemeron) and another on the Prophet Isaiah in sixteen chapters, yet another on the Psalms, and also a second compilation of monastic rules. Saint Basil wrote also three books “Against Eunomius,” an Arian teacher who, with the help of Aristotelian concepts, had presented the Arian dogma in philosophic form, converting Christian teaching into a logical scheme of rational concepts.

Saint Gregory the Theologian, speaking about the activity of Basil the Great during this period, points to “the caring for the destitute and the taking in of strangers, the supervision of virgins, written and unwritten monastic rules for monks, the arrangement of prayers [Liturgy], the felicitous arrangement of altars and other things.” Upon the death of Eusebius, the Bishop of Caesarea, Saint Basil was chosen to succeed him in the year 370. As Bishop of Caesarea, Saint Basil the Great was the newest of fifty bishops in eleven provinces. [Saint Athanasius the Great](#) (May 2), with joy and with thanks to God welcomed the appointment to Cappadocia of such a bishop as Basil, famed for his reverence, deep knowledge of Holy Scripture, great learning, and his efforts for the welfare of Church peace and unity.

Under Valens, the external government belonged to the Arians, who held various opinions regarding the divinity of the Son of God, and were divided into several

factions. These dogmatic disputes were concerned with questions about the Holy Spirit. In his books *Against Eunomios*, Saint Basil the Great taught the divinity of the Holy Spirit and His equality with the Father and the Son. Subsequently, in order to provide a full explanation of Orthodox teaching on this question, Saint Basil wrote his book “On the Holy Spirit” at the request of Saint Amphilochius, the Bishop of Iconium.

Saint Basil’s difficulties were made worse by various circumstances: Cappadocia was divided in two under the rearrangement of provincial districts. Then at Antioch a schism occurred, occasioned by the consecration of a second bishop. There was the negative and haughty attitude of Western bishops to the attempts to draw them into the struggle with the Arians. And there was also the departure of Eustathius of Sebaste over to the Arian side. Basil had been connected to him by ties of close friendship. Amidst the constant perils Saint Basil gave encouragement to the Orthodox, confirmed them in the Faith, summoning them to bravery and endurance. The holy bishop wrote numerous letters to the churches, to bishops, to clergy and to individuals. Overcoming the heretics “by the weapon of his mouth, and by the arrows of his letters,” as an untiring champion of Orthodoxy, Saint Basil challenged the hostility and intrigues of the Arian heretics all his life. He has been compared to a bee, stinging the Church’s enemies, yet nourishing his flock with the sweet honey of his teaching.



The emperor Valens, mercilessly sending into exile any bishop who displeased him, and having implanted Arianism into other Asia Minor provinces, suddenly appeared in Cappadocia for this same purpose. He sent the prefect Modestus to Saint Basil. He began to threaten the saint with the confiscation of his property, banishment, beatings, and even death.

Saint Basil said, “If you take away my possessions, you will not enrich yourself, nor will you make me a pauper. You have no need of my old worn-out clothing, nor of my few books, of which the entirety of my wealth is comprised. Exile means nothing to me, since I am bound to no particular place. This place in which I now dwell is not mine, and any place you send me shall be mine. Better to say: every place is God’s. Where would I be neither a stranger and sojourner (Ps. 38/39:13)? Who can torture me? I am so weak, that the very first blow would render me insensible. Death

would be a kindness to me, for it will bring me all the sooner to God, for Whom I live and labor, and to Whom I hasten.”

The official was stunned by his answer. “No one has ever spoken so audaciously to me,” he said.

“Perhaps,” the saint remarked, “ that is because you’ve never spoken to a bishop before. In all else we are meek, the most humble of all. But when it concerns God, and people rise up against Him, then we, counting everything else as naught, look to Him alone. Then fire, sword, wild beasts and iron rods that rend the body, serve to fill us with joy, rather than fear.”

Reporting to Valens that Saint Basil was not to be intimidated, Modestus said, “Emperor, we stand defeated by a leader of the Church.” Basil the Great again showed firmness before the emperor and his retinue and made such a strong impression on Valens that the emperor dared not give in to the Arians demanding Basil’s exile. “On the day of Theophany, amidst an innumerable multitude of the people, Valens entered the church and mixed in with the throng, in order to give the appearance of being in unity with the Church. When the singing of Psalms began in the church, it was like thunder to his hearing. The emperor beheld a sea of people, and in the altar and all around was splendor; in front of all was Basil, who acknowledged neither by gesture nor by glance, that anything else was going on in church.” Everything was focused only on God and the altar-table, and the clergy serving there in

awe and reverence.

Saint Basil celebrated the church services almost every day. He was particularly concerned about the strict fulfilling of the Canons of the Church, and took care that only worthy individuals should enter into the clergy. He incessantly made the rounds of his own church, lest anywhere there be an infraction of Church discipline, and setting aright any unseemliness. At Caesarea, Saint Basil built two monasteries, a men’s and a women’s, with a church in honor of the Forty Martyrs (March 9) whose relics were buried there. Following the example of monks, the saint’s clergy, even deacons and priests, lived in remarkable poverty, to toil and lead chaste and virtuous lives. For his clergy Saint Basil obtained an exemption from taxation. He used all his personal wealth and the income from his church for the benefit of the destitute; in every center of his diocese he built a poor-house; and at Caesarea, a home for wanderers and the homeless.

Sickly since youth, the toil of teaching, his life of abstinence, and the concerns and sorrows of pastoral service took their toll on him. Saint Basil died on January 1, 379 at age 49. Shortly before his death, the saint blessed Saint Gregory the Theologian to accept the See of Constantinople.

Saint Basil is also called “the revealer of heavenly mysteries” (Ouranophantor), a “renowned and bright star,” and “the glory and beauty of the Church.” His honorable head is in the Great Lavra on Mount Athos.

ZOE for Life![®]

ZOE for Life! is once again offering an Akathist to our Sweet Lord Jesus with special prayers for the Unborn. This will

be held at **St Matthew Orthodox Church in North Royalton on January 26 at 6:00pm.** Fr. Andrew Harmon will be the speaker at the coffee hour immediately following the service. Please join us for this special event. Thank you.

+Very Rev. Fr. Fred Shaheen



THE LAMENT OF RACHEL

Coffee Hour Sign-Up

Questions/Concerns: Cathy Weber (412-215-1928)

October 6	Mat. Jana	December 8
Cathy and Tammy	November 10	Mat. Jana
October 13	Mat. Cindy and Nikol	December 15
Sarah and Mike Brennan	November 17	Mary Swit
October 20	Georgi and Lina	December 22
Gayle and Wayne	November 24	Shawna Whitlock and
October 27	Joyce Tabeling and Judy	Cathy
Joyce Tabeling and Judy	Schwind	December 29
Schwind	December 1	Shawna Whitlock
November 3	Dan and Lavinia	



Orthodox Church in America
DIOCESE OF THE MIDWEST

Wednesday, 25 December 2024

The Nativity of our Lord God and Savior Jesus Christ

No. 200

ARCHPASTORAL GREETINGS OF
THE MOST REVEREND DANIEL
ARCHBISHOP OF CHICAGO AND THE MIDWEST

ON THE RADIANT FEAST OF OUR LORD'S NATIVITY - 25 DECEMBER 2024

Make ready, O Bethlehem!
Let the manger be prepared!
Let the cave show its welcome!
The Truth comes and the shadow flees.
God is born of a Virgin and is revealed to men.
He is clothed in our flesh and makes it divine.
Therefore Adam is renewed and cries out with Eve:
"Thy favor has appeared on earth, O Lord,
for the salvation of the human race."

(from the Royal Hours of the Nativity of Christ)

Very Reverend and Reverend Fathers, Venerable Monastics, and Beloved Faithful,

"God is born of a Virgin and is revealed to men": as we sing these words, we recall the great mystery of the Incarnation of the Son of God. Gathering in these holy days to celebrate in the churches and chapels throughout our Diocese, to reflect upon this great mystery, let us also turn our thoughts to the one who was instrumental in fulfilling God's plan for our salvation: Mary, the "One who gave birth to God the Word" and "truly Theotokos."

We are first introduced to Mary of Nazareth at the beginning of the Gospel of Luke when, just after having spoken her "yes" to the angel in the moment of the Annunciation, she begins her trip "in great haste" from her hometown of Nazareth to the hill country of Judah, to be with her elderly relative Elizabeth in her time of need. The angel Gabriel had revealed to Mary that Elizabeth was in her sixth month of pregnancy (Luke 1:26-38). This explains why Mary, who carried within her an even greater mystery, goes to see Elizabeth and stays with her for three months, until Elizabeth gives birth to John, the Forerunner and Baptizer of Christ.

In the meeting between these two women, it is the young one, Mary, who offers the first greeting. The Gospel tells us: "she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth" (Luke 1:40). After this greeting, Elizabeth feels enveloped in great wonder as she is filled with the Holy Spirit. This wonder and joy is echoed in her response to Mary: "And why is this granted me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me?"

In celebrating the Nativity, we ourselves are called to recognize the moments of the miraculous which are part of our daily lives. And what are these miraculous moments in everyday life? The first place is in *the other*, in those around us, in whom we recognize a brother or sister, because since the birth of Jesus occurred, every human face is marked with the image of the Son of God. Above all, we encounter this miraculous presence of Christ in the

face of the poor, because God Himself entered the world poor, and it was to the poor, in the first place, that He revealed Himself.

Another place in which we recognize the miraculous is within history, the chronicle of human life and experience. However, we run the risk of reading history backwards and outside of its Christian context. For example, we generally think that history is defined by the rise and fall of governments, wars and conflicts, regulated by business and finances, and dominated by the powers of this world. But it is God, the God of Creation who entered human life, who defines and rules over human history. As Mary sings in the *Magnificat*, it is the Lord who puts down the mighty from their thrones and exalts those of low degree, who fills the hungry with good things and sends the rich away empty (Luke 1:52-53).

Yet another miraculous encounter is within the Church. To perceive the Church as miraculous means not limiting oneself to consider it only as a religious institution, but to embrace the Church as a mother who, despite any blemishes and wrinkles, allows the features of the beloved Bride of Christ the Lord to shine through—a Church that is able to recognize the signs of faithful love that God continuously sends her. This is the Church that always has her doors open wide, and her arms open to welcome everyone. Moreover, the Church, our Mother, goes out from her own doors to seek with a loving smile and warm embrace all those who are far off in order to bring them to the mercy of God. The Church herself provides this miraculous moment which we are invited to experience in these holydays of light and love.

God has given us all of Himself by giving His Only Son, who is all His joy. It is only with the heart of Mary, the humble and poor daughter of Zion, who became the Mother of the Son of the Most High, that it is possible to rejoice and be glad for the great gift of God and for His unpredictable surprise. Through the birth of Jesus, may she help us to perceive the miraculous which surrounds us every day—in our brothers and sisters, in the lived experience of history, and within the Church. In the birth of Jesus may we recognize the Gift of Gifts, the undeserved Gift who brings us His salvation.

In the spiritual atmosphere of joy and peace of the Nativity of Christ, I greet all of you with the joy of the Feast. Once again, I state my prayerful wish for peace: peace in families and homes, peace in parishes, peace in the ministry of our clergy and faithful, and peace for those who are suffering the horrors of war throughout the world, especially our brothers and sisters in Ukraine and in the Middle East.

As you gather with family, with your parish communities, and with all your loved ones, I send you my sincere fatherly greetings and archpastoral blessings. May the Lord grant you a bright and blessed celebration of the Birth of Christ and a New Year filled with an abundance of heavenly blessings.

CHRIST IS BORN! GLORIFY HIM!

With love in the Incarnate Son of God,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Daniel". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

DANIEL

Archbishop of Chicago and the Midwest

PRAYER REQUESTS

as of 12/29/2024



Deceased

James Timko (*Lauren Eppel's uncle*)

Special Intentions:

Archpriest Jason Kappanadze

Subdeacon Theodore Lentz

Subdeacon Roger Pinta

Subdeacon Leon Felon

Reader Frank Tkacz

Reader Daniel Morris

Stephan Chwalyk

Horia Dascalescu (*Lavinia's brother*)

Janice Tkacz

Eleanor Wachovec (*friend of Karen Felon*)

Rachel Ohlin (*relative of Tatiana*)

Erin Zawolowycz

Jeffrey Parhamovich (*brother of Karen Felon*)

Margaret Parhamovich

(*sister-in-law of Karen Felon*)

Jean Woycitzky Thompson (*Frank's cousin*)

Anna Marie Luvison (*daughter of Matthew & Katie (Ellis) Luvison*)

Debra Parhamovich (*sister of Karen Felon*)

Grace Mary Parhamovich

(*mother of Karen Felon*)

Lonnie Ellis

(*Husband to Debra Ellis*)

Robert Martin Prock

Valentina Zawolowycz (*mother of Paul Z*)

Child McKenna Kranek

Elizabeth and **Michael** Prendergast and their **unborn child**

Betty Balasz

Jeremy, Yvonne, and Unborn Child

Herman Leslie Levin

Russell Schafer

Sonia Vorell

Ivan Lavr isiuk

Elisabeth Lavr isiuk

Elena Rich

Beth Carson

Gregory Jakubisin

Phyllis Gindlesper ger

Daniela Raisovich

Please submit names to the Prayer List by emailing them to **Fr. Jan Cizmar**
st.theodosiuscathedral@gmail.com

Or calling at 1 (440) 732-8182

Names remain on the list for 30 days unless requested otherwise.





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In response to requests to be able to donate electronically, we have set up a Tithe.ly account so people can donate either regularly or for special occasions online. Click here to see: <https://www.sttheodosius.org/donate>



BIWEEKLY SCHEDULE 2024-2025

Sunday, December 29

27th Sunday after Pentecost

Holy Righteous Ones: Joseph the Betrothed, David the King, and James the Brother of the Lord

Afterfeast of the Nativity of Christ

Sunday after Nativity

8:40 AM 3rd and 6th Hours

9:00 AM Divine Liturgy

Coffee Hour

FOCA Meeting to follow

Monday, December 30

Afterfeast of the Nativity of Christ

Virgin Martyr Anysia at Thessalonica (285-305)

Tuesday, December 31

Leavetaking of the Nativity

“Unfading Flower” Icon of the Mother of God at Ardatov

6:00 PM Thanksgiving Akathist

Wednesday, January 1

THE CIRCUMCISION OF OUR LORD AND SAVIOR JESUS CHRIST

St. Basil the Great, Archbishop of Cæsarea in Cappadocia (379)

8:40 AM 3rd and 6th Hours

9:00 AM Divine Liturgy

Thursday, January 2

Forefeast of the Theophany

Repose of Ven. Seraphim, Wonderworker of Sarov (1833)

Friday, January 3

Forefeast of the Theophany

Holy Prophet Malachi (400 B.C.)

Saturday, January 4

Forefeast of the Theophany

Saturday before Theophany

Synaxis of the Seventy Apostles

4:45 PM Church School

6:00 PM Great Vespers

Sunday, January 5

28th Sunday after Pentecost

Eve of Theophany

Sunday before Theophany

Hieromartyr Theopemptus, Bishop of

Nicomedia, and Martyr Theonas (303)

8:40 AM 3rd and 6th Hours

9:00 AM Divine Liturgy

Coffee Hour

6:00 PM Great Vespers & Blessing of Water

Monday, January 6

THE HOLY THEOPHANY OF OUR LORD AND SAVIOR JESUS CHRIST

Ven. Macarius of Mt. Athos (1431)

8:40 AM 3rd and 6th Hours

9:00 AM Divine Liturgy

Tuesday, January 7

Afterfeast of the Theophany

Synaxis of the Holy Glorious Prophet, Forerunner and Baptist John

Afterfeast of the Theophany

Afterfeast of the Theophany

Wednesday, January 8

Afterfeast of the Theophany

Ven. George the Chozebite, Abbot (6th c.)

6:00 PM Akathist to St. Theodosius

Thursday, January 9

Afterfeast of the Theophany

Martyr Polyeuktos of Melitene in Armenia

(259)

Friday, January 10

Afterfeast of the Theophany

St. Gregory, Bishop of Nyssa (4th c.)

Saturday, January 11

Afterfeast of the Theophany

Saturday after Theophany

Ven. Theodosius the Great, the

Cenobiarch (529)

6:00 PM Great Vespers

Sunday, January 12

28th Sunday after Pentecost

Afterfeast of the Theophany

Sunday after Theophany

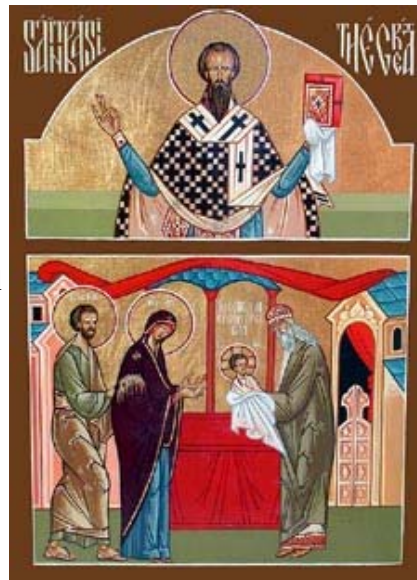
Martyr Tatiana of Rome and those who suffered

with her (226-235)

8:40 AM 3rd and 6th Hours

9:00 AM Divine Liturgy

Coffee Hour



On the eighth day after [His Nativity](#), our Lord Jesus Christ was circumcised in accordance with the Old Testament Law. All male infants underwent circumcision as a sign of God’s Covenant with the holy [Forefather Abraham](#) and his descendants [Genesis 17:10-14, Leviticus 12:3].