



**St. George Antiochian Orthodox Church**  
**Weekly Newsletter**  
**Sunday, January 3, 2021**

**Sunday before Epiphany**

2 Timothy 4:5-8

Mark 1:1-8

**2021 Offering Envelopes**

Offering envelopes for 2021 are now available in the narthex for pickup. If you have already requested a box, you may pick it up while at church for a service, or you can contact the church office at [office@saintgeorgeupperdarby.org](mailto:office@saintgeorgeupperdarby.org) to coordinate a time to pick it up outside of services. If you do not have a box number assigned to you but would like a box of offering envelopes, please contact the church office.

**Upcoming Meetings**

- Fellowship of St. Moses the Black  
Monday 1/4, 7pm  
Contact [Dn. Joseph](#) for Zoom link
- Choir practice - Tuesday 1/5, 7pm  
Contact [Matt Gordon](#) for Zoom link

**Philly OCF**

- Bible study - Tuesday 1/5, 11am  
[Zoom link](#)  
Mtg ID #880 5713 0161  
Password: Scripture
- Regular meetings will resume in January after winter break – check back here for the date

**If you attend a service, you must wear a mask/face covering out of care for ourselves, our brothers and sisters in Christ, and our neighbors.**

- The following services will be held in the church and streamed on the [website](#):
  - **Thursday 12/31** – 3<sup>rd</sup> Hour, 9:30am
  - **Friday 1/1** – Orthros and Liturgy, 9:30am
  - **Saturday 1/2** – Vespers, 5pm
  - **Sunday 1/3** – Orthros and Liturgy, 9:30am
  - **Tuesday 1/5** – Royal Hours, 9:30am
  - **Tuesday 1/5** – Vespertine Liturgy, 3pm
  - **Wednesday 1/6** – Orthros and Liturgy, 9:30am
- To attend one of the services listed above at the church, please sign up via Sign Up Genius ([December services](#)) ([January services](#)). When doing so, please keep in mind the following:
  - reserve the number of slots for family members attending (For example, if there are 3 household members attending, reserve 3 slots.)
  - those who are elderly, have pre-existing conditions, or currently are not feeling well are asked to remain home.
  - children who are too young to keep a mask on are asked to remain home.
- To set up a time to receive communion, please sign up via the [Sign Up Genius](#). Please reserve only one slot per household unit. Prior to arriving at the church for communion, please say the [Morning Prayers](#) and the [Prayers of Preparation before Communion](#).
- Confession is also being scheduled by appointment. To set up an appointment, please email the church office and provide a few dates/times you are available. The office will email you to confirm your appointment time.

**Troparion of St. George**

O liberator and deliverer of captives, helper of the poor and needy, a healing physician of the sick, a contender for kings, O great among Martyrs, the victory-clad George; intercede with Christ our God for the salvation of our souls.

## SUNDAY SCHOOL

The 2020-21 Sunday School year curriculum focuses on the 12 Great Feasts of the church. Classes rotate through an activity each week, and everything is done remotely. The schedule for January is listed below. Parents whose children are registered will receive additional information for the upcoming week from the church office by Thursday each week.

**January Feast:** Theophany (1/6)

### January 3

- Elementary school: Ask Abouna
- Middle school: At home resources
- High school: Class (via Zoom)

### January 10

- Elementary school: At Home Resources
- Middle school: Class (via Zoom)
- High school: Ask Abouna

### January 17

- Elementary school: Class (via Zoom)
- Middle school: Ask Abouna
- High school: At home resources

### January 24

Family Ask Abouna

### January 31

No Sunday School

## 2021 Home Blessings

Due to the current situation and at the urging of Bishop THOMAS (and barring the widespread availability of a vaccine by February), there will be a modified schedule for home blessings in 2021. You may have your home blessed prior to Lent, but it will be a blessing only (no meals, visiting, etc). You may also opt to wait and have your home blessed after Pascha. To sign up for a time to have your home blessed, please complete the form linked here:

<https://forms.gle/Duy8KewHKYdZkYjU8>. Thank you for your understanding.



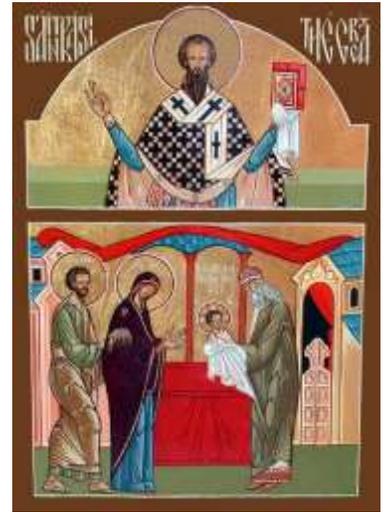
## Circumcision of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ (Jan. 1)

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].

After this ritual, the Divine Infant was given the name Jesus, as the Archangel Gabriel declared on the day of the Annunciation to the Most Holy Theotokos [Luke 1:31-33, 2:21]. The Fathers of the Church explain that the Lord, the Creator of the Law, underwent circumcision in order to give people an example of how faithfully the divine ordinances ought to be fulfilled. The Lord was circumcised so that later no one would doubt that He had truly assumed human flesh, and that His Incarnation was not merely an illusion, as certain heretics had taught.

## Saint Basil the Great, Archbishop of Caesarea in Cappadocia (Jan. 1)

Saint Basil the Great was born about the end of the year 329 in Caesarea of Cappadocia, to a family renowned for their learning and holiness. His parents' names were Basil and Emily. His mother Emily (commemorated July 19) and his grandmother Macrina (Jan. 14) are Saints of the Church, together with all his brothers and sisters: Macrina, his elder sister (July 19), Gregory of Nyssa (Jan. 10), Peter of Sebastia (Jan. 9), and Naucratius. Basil studied in Constantinople under the sophist Libanius, then in Athens, where also he formed a friendship with the young Gregory, a fellow Cappadocian, later called "the Theologian." Through the good influence of his sister Macrina (see July 19), he chose to embrace the ascetical life, abandoning his worldly career. He visited the monks in Egypt, in Palestine, in Syria, and in Mesopotamia, and upon returning to Caesarea, he departed to a hermitage on the Iris River in Pontus, not far from Annesi, where his mother and his sister Macrina were already treading the path of the ascetical life; here he also wrote his ascetical homilies.



About the year 370, when the bishop of his country reposed, he was elected to succeed to his throne and was entrusted with the Church of Christ, which he tended for eight years, living in voluntary poverty and strict asceticism, having no other care than to defend holy Orthodoxy as a worthy successor of the Apostles. The Emperor Valens, and Modestus, the Eparch of the East, who were of one mind with the Arians, tried with threats of exile and of torments to bend the Saint to their own confession, because he was the bastion of Orthodoxy in all Cappadocia, and preserved it from heresy when Arianism was at its strongest. But he set all their malice at nought, and in his willingness to give himself up to every suffering for the sake of the Faith, showed himself to be a martyr by volition. Modestus, amazed at Basil's fearlessness in his presence, said that no one had ever so spoken to him. "Perhaps," answered the Saint, "you have never met a bishop before." The Emperor Valens himself was almost won over by Basil's dignity and wisdom. When Valens' son fell gravely sick, he asked Saint Basil to pray for him. The Saint promised that his son would be restated if Valens agreed to have him baptized by the Orthodox; Valens agreed, Basil prayed, and the son was restored. But afterwards the Emperor had him baptized by Arians, and the child died soon after. Later, Valens, persuaded by his counsellors, decided to send the Saint into exile because he would not accept the Arians into communion; but his pen broke when he was signing the edict of banishment. He tried a second time and a third, but the same thing happened, so that the Emperor was filled with dread, and tore up the document, and Basil was not banished. The truly great Basil, spent with extreme ascetical practices and continual labours, at the helm of the church, departed to the Lord on the 1st of January, in 379. at the age of forty-nine.

### *Apolytikion of the Circumcision*

*Our human form hast Thou taken on Thyself  
without change, O greatly-compassionate Master,  
though being God by nature; fulfilling the Law,  
Thou willingly receivest circumcision in the flesh,  
that Thou mightest end the shadow and roll away  
the veil of our sinful passions. Glory be to Thy  
goodness unto us. Glory be to Thy compassion. Glory,  
O Word, to Thine inexpressible condescension.*