



ST. MARY ANTIOCHIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH

A PARISH OF THE ANTIOCHIAN ORTHODOX ARCHDIOCESE
OF NORTH AMERICA

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PARISH WEB PAGE ∞ www.stmaryorthodox.com ∞

CLERGY

His Eminence Metropolitan JOSEPH, Archbishop of New York and Metropolitan of all North America

His Grace Bishop THOMAS, Auxiliary Bishop of Charleston, Oakland & the Mid-Atlantic

Very Rev. Fr. George Alberts, Pastor

Very Rev. Fr. Dr. David Hester, Pastor Emeritus ✕ Very Rev. Fr. Herbert Nahas, Pastor Emeritus

Rev. Deacon Joseph Clark (Temporarily Attached)

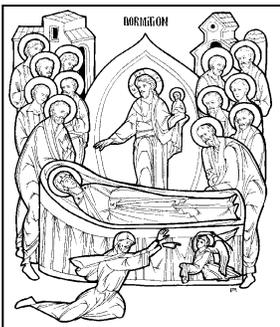
Subdeacon William Obeid + Subdeacon N.D. Namey + Subdeacon John Moses Jr. + Subdeacon Marshall Goodge

WELCOME to the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America. We are the jurisdiction of the Orthodox Christian Church whose roots trace directly back to the first century Antioch, the city in which the disciples of Jesus Christ were first called Christians (Acts 11:26).

The Orthodox Church is the oldest and second-largest Christian group in the world. We are called by God, our Creator, to worship and follow Him and to proclaim to the world His message of love, peace and salvation.

God loves all mankind and desires that all human beings should believe in Him, know Him, abide in Him, and receive eternal life from Him. To accomplish this God Himself came into the world as a man in Jesus Christ --- becoming man that we might become like God. The Parishioners of St. Mary Parish welcome you and are pleased that you have decided to worship Almighty God with our Parish family today. We encourage you to learn about our Orthodox faith and our Parish if you are not yet Orthodox.

Although the non-Orthodox may not receive Holy Communion, which may only be given to the Orthodox faithful, we invite you to come forward at the close of the Liturgy to receive a blessing from the Priest and blessed bread. Please also come downstairs to the Parish Hall join us for our fellowship hour.



Our Patronal Feast is the DORMITION (FALLING-ASLEEP) OF THE THEOTOKOS, which is one of the Twelve Great Feasts of the Orthodox Church and is celebrated each year on August 15. The Theotokos, the Virgin Mary, was “blessed amongst women,” and she was chosen “to bear the Savior of our souls.” Orthodox Christians consider her to be the Queen of all the saints and angels. Knowing she is eternally present at the throne of God interceding for mankind, we pray for her love, guidance, and protection.



PARISH LIFE AT ST. MARY

MARCH IS LADIES MONTH IN THE ARCHDIOCESE

Today We Complete The Procession of the Holy Cross At The Conclusion of the Divine Liturgy

THIS WEEK

- Mon. April 1-- Great Compline at 6:00 pm
- Wed. April 2 - Pre-Sanctified Liturgy at 6:00 followed by Potluck Dinner & Ask Abouna
- Thur. April 4 Spaghetti Dinner 4:00 - 6:00
- Fri. April 5 Akathist Service at 6:00 pm
- Sat. April 6 Confessions from 4:30 - 5:00 & Vespers at 5:00
- Sun. April 7 Matins at 8:50 & Divine Liturgy at 10:00 ** Parish Council Meeting After Liturgy

UPCOMING LENTEN & SPECIAL EVENTS

- Mon. April 8 Great Compline at 6:00 pm
- Wed. April 10 Pre-Sanctified Liturgy at 6:00 followed by Potluck Dinner & Ask Abouna
- Fri. April 12 Akathist Service at 6:00 pm

COMMEMORATIONS

✧ None Today

LENTEN SERVICES AT ST. MARY

The holy season of Great Lent is a time of preparation for Orthodox Christians. The forty days leading up to Pascha call for a concentration on repentance, confession and renewal through increased activity in worship, prayer, fasting, confession, and almsgiving.

We prepare ourselves through additional prayerful services on the Monday, Wednesday and Friday Evenings of Great Lent, except the first week of Lent during which we have services every night of the week. All of the evening services will begin at 6 p.m.

We enjoy a special additional event each Wednesday through Lent when we host a PotLuck Lenten Dinner with an ASK ABOUNA Session afterwards.

THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT - ADORATION OF THE CROSS

This Sunday commemorates the venerable Cross and Christ's Crucifixion. The Cross takes on meaning and adoration only because Christ was crucified on the Cross. Therefore, whether in hymns or prayers, we understood the Cross has no meaning or place in Christianity without Christ. The adoration of the Cross in the middle of Great Lent also reminds the faithful of the coming Crucifixion of Christ. The passages read today repeats Christ's calling to Christians to dedicate their life, for "If any man would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me (Christ)" (v. 34-35). This verse clearly indicates we must (1) renounce our arrogance and disobedience to God's plan; (2) lift up our personal cross (the difficulties of life) with patience, faith and the full acceptance of the Will of God without complaint that the burden is too heavy; and (3) make the decision to follow Christ.

DIVINE LITURGY VARIABLES ON SUNDAY, MARCH 31, 2019
3RD SUNDAY OF GREAT LENT - VENERATION OF THE PRECIOUS & LIFE-GIVING CROSS
DIVINE LITURGY OF ST. BASIL THE GREAT

RESURRECTIONAL APOLYTIKION IN TONE THREE

Let the heavens rejoice and the earth be glad, for the Lord hath done a mighty act with His own arm. He hath trampled down death by death, and become the first-born from the dead. He hath delivered us from the depths of Hades, granting the world the Great Mercy.

APOLYTIKION FOR THE HOLY CROSS IN TONE ONE

O Lord, save Thy people and bless Thine inheritance, granting to Thy people victory over all their enemies, and by the power of Thy Cross preserving Thy commonwealth.

APOLYTIKION OF THE DORMITION

In giving birth thou didst keep thy virginity and thy repose thou didst not forsake the world O Theotokos, for thou art the mother of life and thou didst pass over into life. And through thine intercessions from death thou dost redeem our souls.

KONTAKION FOR SUNDAYS IN GREAT LENT IN TONE EIGHT

To thee, the Champion Leader, do I offer thanks of victory, O Theotokos, thou who hast delivered me from terror; but as thou that hast that power invincible, O Theotokos, thou alone can set me free: from all forms of danger free me and deliver me, that I may cry unto thee: Hail, O Bride without Bridegroom.

✠ THE EPISTLE ✠

O Lord, save Thy people and bless Thine inheritance. To Thee, O Lord, have I cried, O my God.

THE READING FROM THE EPISTLE OF ST. PAUL TO THE HEBREWS. (4:14-5:6)

Brethren, since we have a High Priest, Who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. For we have not a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but One Who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need. For every high priest chosen from among men is appointed to act on behalf of men in relation to God, to offer gifts and sacrifices for sins. He can deal gently with the ignorant and wayward, since he himself is beset with weakness. Because of this he is bound to offer sacrifice for his own sins as well as for those of the people. And one does not take the honor upon himself, but he is called by God, just as Aaron was. So also Christ did not exalt Himself to be made a high priest, but was appointed by Him Who said to Him, "Thou art My Son, today I have begotten Thee"; as He says also in another place, "Thou art a priest forever, after the order of Melchizedek."

✠ THE GOSPEL ✠

THE READING FROM THE HOLY GOSPEL ACCORDING TO ST. MARK. (8:34-9:1)

The Lord said, "If any man would come after Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow Me. For whoever would save his life will lose it; and whoever loses his life for My sake and the Gospel's will save it. For what does it profit a man, to gain the whole world and forfeit his soul? For what can a man give in return for his soul? For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him will the Son of man also be ashamed, when He comes in the glory of His Father with the holy angels." And Jesus said to them, "Truly, I say to you, there are some standing here who will not taste death before they see the Kingdom of God come with power."

THE SYNAXARION

On March 31 in the Holy Orthodox Church, we commemorate of our father among the saints Hypatios the wonderworker, bishop of Gangra; Venerable Akakios the Confessor, bishop of Melitene; and the Prophet Joel; and the repose of Innocent, metropolitan of Moscow, enlightener of the Aleuts and apostle to America; and Jonah, metropolitan of Moscow.

On this same day, the Third Sunday of the Fast, we keep the feast of the Veneration of the honorable and life-creating Cross.

Let the whole world entire worship the Cross through Which it truly knew to worship Thee, O Word.

Every hard and strenuous work is accomplished with great difficulty, which appears especially in the middle of such work; for the effort in this performance brings with it fatigue which makes the accomplishment of the rest difficult. Having arrived with God's grace at the middle of the Fast, our compassionate Mother—the Holy Orthodox Church—thought fit to reveal to us the Holy Cross as the joy of the world and power of the faithful to help us carry on the struggles of the divine Fast.

By its power, O Christ God, preserve us from the crafty designs of the evil one and account us worthy to worship Thy divine Passion and life-giving Resurrection, as we achieve the course of the Forty Days with ease, and have mercy on us, as Thou alone art good and the Lover of mankind. Amen.

On the Third Sunday of Great and Holy Lent, the Orthodox Church commemorates the Precious and Life-Giving Cross of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Services include a special veneration of the Cross, which prepares the faithful for the commemoration of the Crucifixion during Holy Week. The commemoration and ceremonies of the Third Sunday of Lent are closely parallel to the feasts of the Veneration of the Cross (September 14) and the Procession of the Cross (August 1). Not only does the Sunday of the Holy Cross prepare us for commemoration of the Crucifixion, but it also reminds us that the whole of Lent is a period when we are crucified with Christ.

As we have “crucified the flesh with its passions and desires” (Galatians 5:24), and will have mortified ourselves during these forty days of the Fast, the precious and life-giving Cross is now placed before us to refresh our souls and encourage us who may be filled with a sense of bitterness, resentment, and depression. The Cross reminds us of the Passion of our Lord, and by presenting to us His example, it encourages us to follow Him in struggle and sacrifice, being refreshed, assured, and comforted. In other words, we must experience what the Lord experienced during His Passion - being humiliated in a shameful manner. The Cross teaches us that through pain and suffering we shall see the fulfillment of our hopes: the heavenly inheritance and eternal glory.

As they who walk on a long and hard way and are bowed down by fatigue find great relief and strengthening under the cool shade of a leafy tree, so do we find comfort, refreshment, and rejuvenation under the Life-giving Cross, which our Fathers “planted” on this Sunday. Thus, we are fortified and enabled to continue our Lenten journey with a light step, rested and encouraged.

Or, as before the arrival of the king, his royal standards, trophies, and emblems of victory come in procession and then the king himself appears in a triumphant parade, jubilant and rejoicing in his victory and filling those under him with joy, so does the Feast of the Cross precede the coming of our King, Jesus Christ. It warns us that He is about to proclaim His victory over death and appear to us in the glory of the Resurrection. His Life-Giving Cross is His royal scepter, and by venerating it we are filled with joy, rendering Him glory. Therefore, we become ready to welcome our King, who shall manifestly triumph over the powers of darkness.

The present feast has been placed in the middle of Great Lent for another reason. The Fast can be likened to the spring of Marah whose waters the children of Israel encountered in the wilderness. This water was undrinkable due to its bitterness but became sweet when the Holy Prophet Moses dipped the wood into its depth. Likewise, the wood of the Cross sweetens the days of the Fast, which are bitter and often grievous because of our tears. Yet Christ comforts us during our course through the desert of the Fast, guiding and leading us by His hand to the spiritual Jerusalem on high by the power of His Resurrection.