
St. Michael the Archangel Antiochian Orthodox Church

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Sunday, December 31, 2023

Tone 5 / Eothinon 8

**Sunday before Theophany of Christ, Which Falls on the
Apodosis (Leave-taking) of the Nativity of Christ
Venerable Melania the Younger of Rome**

Hierarchs and Parish Clergy:

His Eminence Metropolitan SABA (Isper)

Antiochian Archdiocese of North America

His Grace Bishop JOHN (Abdalah)

Bishop of the Diocese of Worcester & New England

Father James Irving, Pastor

Celebrant: Fr. John Bacon

Subdeacon Joseph Boruch

LITTLE ENTRANCE WEEKLY VARIABLES

THE EISODIKON (ENTRANCE HYMN): Save us, O Son of God, Who art risen from the dead, who sing to Thee. Alleluia.

RESURRECTIONAL APOLYTIKION IN TONE FIVE: Let us believers praise and worship the Word; coeternal with the Father and the Spirit, born of the Virgin for our salvation. For, He took pleasure in ascending the Cross in the flesh to suffer death; and to raise the dead by His glorious Resurrection.

APOLYTIKION OF THE NATIVITY OF CHRIST IN TONE FOUR: Thy Nativity, O Christ our God, hath given rise to the light of knowledge in the world; for they that worshipped the stars did learn there from to worship Thee, O Sun of justice, and to know that from the east of the Highest Thou didst come. O Lord, glory to Thee.

APOLYTIKION OF SUNDAY AFTER THE NATIVITY IN TONE TWO: Proclaim, O Joseph, to David, the grandparent of God, the amazing wonders; for thou hast seen a Virgin great with child; for with the shepherds thou didst give glory, with the Magi thou didst worship, and by the angel it was revealed to thee. Wherefore, plead thou with Christ God to save our souls.

APOLYTIKION OF ST. MICHAEL THE ARCHANGEL: O ye foremost of the heavenly host, we beseech thee, though we are unworthy. Pray that we may be encompassed with the shadow of thy unearthly glory. Preserving us who kneel and cry endlessly. Deliver us from oppression since Ye are the princes of the highest power.

KONTAKION OF THE NATIVITY OF CHRIST IN TONE THREE: On this day the Virgin beareth the Transcendent in Essence; * to the Unapproachable, * the earth doth offer a small cave; * Angels join in choir with shepherds * in giving glory; * with a star the Magi travel upon their journey; * for our sakes is born a young Child, * He Who existed * before the ages as God.

TRISAGION PRAYER

English: Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, have Mercy on us

Arabic: Qudoos El Laah, Qudoos El Qawi, Qudoos El Lathi La Yamoot, Urhamnah

Greek: Agios O Theos, Agios Ischiros, Agios Athanatos, Eyleison Imas

Slavonic: Svyatij Bozhe, Svyatij Krepkij, Svatij Bessmertnij pomiluj nas

The Mission of St Michael the Archangel Orthodox Church is to love and worship God, to grow closer to Him, and to proclaim and to spread the Good News of the salvation of Jesus Christ to our parishioners, our neighbors and people everywhere. We worship and pray in English. We experience the beauty and joy of living the Holy Orthodox Christian faith – sharing love and fellowship, teaching and leading by example, growing together through service, education, stewardship and forgiveness.

A NOTE REGARDING HOLY COMMUNION: *Since we understand Communion to mean we have all things in common, sharing an identical Faith, only those who are members of the Orthodox Church and who have prepared themselves through prayer, fasting and confession may participate in Holy Communion. We invite all present to partake of the blessed bread distributed at the end of the service. **UNLESS YOU ARE INJURED OR UNABLE, PLEASE REMAIN STANDING DURING COMMUNION***

If you or your loved ones need to contact a member of the clergy in the event of a pastoral emergency, please contact Fr. James Irving, who can be reached by phone or text at (781) 468-8709 or by email at dnjamesirving@gmail.com.

Fr. James is available for confession by appointment.

CHRIST IS BORN! GLORIFY HIM!

SCHEDULE:

- **Saturday, December 30**
 - No Vespers
- **Sunday, December 31**
 - 10:00 AM Divine Liturgy - Celebrant: Fr. John Bacon
- **Thursday, January 4**
 - 6:00 PM Diocese Hierarchal Liturgy for the Pre-Feast of Theophany at St. George, Lowell
- **Saturday, January 6**
 - 5:00 PM Vespers
- **Sunday, January 7**
 - 9:00 AM Orthros / Church School/ 9:15 AM Bible Study for Kids 10+
 - 10:00 AM Divine Liturgy with Blessing of the Waters
 - Teen SOYO Meeting

*****In case of emergency, there are emergency numbers posted next to the telephones in the coat room and in the kitchen*****

PLEASE JOIN US FOR COFFEE HOUR

It is a great joy to have so many people join us for coffee hour! Please remember that coffee hour is potluck and is successful when we all pitch in by bringing food, serving, helping with set up and clean up or offering donations in the offering box on the counter. Please ask someone in the kitchen how you can help. May God continue to bless our community!

Our People are our Choir! We love to hear you sing with us! WELCOME! We are glad to have you worship with us today!

THE EPISTLE

(For the Sunday before the Theophany)

All those on earth worship thee and sing unto Thee:

Alleluia to God, O all the earth.

The Reading from the Second Epistle of St. Paul to St. Timothy. (4:5-8)

Timothy, my son, always be steady, endure suffering, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry. For I am already on the point of being sacrificed; the time of my departure has come. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the Faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will award to me on that Day, and not only to me but also to all who have loved His appearing.

THE GOSPEL

(For the Sunday before the Theophany)

The Reading from the Holy Gospel according to St. Mark. (1:1-8)

The beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. As it is written in the prophets, "Behold, I send My messenger before Thy face, who shall prepare Thy way; the voice of one crying in the wilderness: Prepare the way of the Lord, make His paths straight." John the Baptizer appeared in the wilderness, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. And there went out to him all the country of Judea, and all the people of Jerusalem; and they were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. Now John was clothed with camel's hair, and had a leather girdle around his waist, and ate locusts and wild honey. And he preached, saying, "After me comes He Who is mightier than I, the thong of whose sandals I am not worthy to stoop down and untie. I have baptized you with water; but He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."



ST. MICHAEL HAPPENINGS

WEEKLY BULLETIN CAN BE VIEWED ON OUR WEBSITE

ALL FOR THE GLORY OF GOD AND HIS CHURCH

THANK YOU FROM FR. JAMES

Thank You to all our parishioners who contributed to and or served in the many projects and collections we held this year. May God continue to bless our work and may we continue to bring the message of Christ to all we serve.

STEWARDSHIP FORM 2024

The Stewardship form 2024 has been mailed out. Please fill it out and return before January 15, 2024. Also, you can find the forms at the back.

JAN 4: Diocese Hierarchical Liturgy For The Pre-Feast Of Theophany

On Thursday, January 4, the Diocese will gather around His Grace Bishop John for the Pre-Feast of Theophany with Divine Liturgy at St. George Church in Lowell. A meal will follow in the parish hall.

USHERS NEEDED

We need ushers to serve one Sunday per month. Please see Soraya if you are interested in greeting guests as they enter church and helping with the flow of the liturgy. This is a fun way to serve and meet people.

OUTREACH COMMITTEE FORMING

Our January outreach project is being planned with scarves for the homeless, thanks for the efforts of Vicky Abodeely who has been knitting all year! We need people to join our committee to help with the planning and execution of this and future projects. Please contact Macrina or Soraya if you are able to help! Thank you for your commitment to St. Michael and for living our Christian Faith by being involved in outreach to the Cape Cod community.

AVAILABLE BOARD POSITIONS

The Ladies of St. Michael and the Parish Council have open leadership positions. You can support St. Michael's Church by serving as a member of the council or as an officer in the Ladies of St. Michael. Please see Fr. James, a member of the Ladies Group, or a Parish Council member for more details.

DECEMBER IS THE ORDER OF SAINT IGNATIUS' MONTH

Through the generosity of our many Governing Council volunteers who give of their time, talents, and treasure, we are thankful to share that only 7.7% and 7.2% of total revenue went to administrative expense in FY 2022 and the last 5 fiscal years, respectively. Together, we were able to support the many ministries of the Archdiocese over the past 7 ½ years in a meaningful way.

- Provides reassurance to our clergy during their golden years from funding of the Retired Clergy Fund.
- Helps plant seeds of Orthodoxy, the true faith, throughout North America with the Order's support of the Department of Missions and Evangelism.
- Supports youth programs that strengthen the faith and prepare the future leaders of our parishes and Archdiocese.
- Provides summer camp scholarships for children that would not otherwise be able to attend camp due to financial reasons.

The Order of Saint Ignatius of Antioch
what is The Meaning Behind The Order Logo?



3 Hearts
The three hearts represent the three persons of the Holy Trinity: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The hearts are interlocking, symbolizing the unity and love between them. The hearts are also a reference to the three nails that were used to crucify Jesus Christ.

Cross
The cross is a symbol of the Christian faith, representing the sacrifice of Jesus Christ on the cross for the redemption of humanity. The cross is also a reference to the cross that Saint Ignatius carried with him during his journey to Rome.

ICXC Inscription
The inscription 'ICXC' is a reference to the Greek letters for 'Jesus Christ' (Iesou Christos). The letters are arranged in a way that they can be read as 'ICXC' when the logo is viewed from the front and 'XPI' when viewed from the back.

Color Red
The color red is a symbol of the blood of Jesus Christ, which was shed for the redemption of humanity. The red color is also a reference to the red robes that Saint Ignatius wore during his journey to Rome.

The Order of Saint Ignatius of Antioch
The Order of Saint Ignatius of Antioch is a lay organization of the Catholic Church, dedicated to the promotion of the faith and the service of the community. The Order was founded in 1954 by Fr. Ignatius of Antioch, a member of the Society of the Holy Cross.

3V3 INDOOR BASKETBALL TOURNAMENT: JAN 6 @ ST. GEORGE WORCESTER

St. George Cathedral in Worcester invites youth to participate in a 3 on 3 indoor basketball tournament on Saturday January 6 beginning at 11 am (check-in and warm-ups at 10 am). The cost is \$20 per person (\$60 per team). There will be two brackets: grades 8 and below and grades 9 and above. All age groups, including adults, are allowed to play.

**ST. GEORGE'S ANNUAL
3 V 3 INDOOR
BASKETBALL
TOURNAMENT**

GAME SCHEDULE:
Saturday, January 6th
11am Start Time
Team Check-in

**SIGN UP
BEFORE
JANUARY 4TH
HERE!!!**

ADMISSION:
\$20 per person

LOCATION:
30 Anna Street
Worcester MA, 01604

**PRIZES FOR
WINNING TEAM!**

FOR MORE INFO, CALL 774-834-1161

THE SYNAXARION

On December 31 in the Holy Orthodox Church, we take leave of the Nativity of Christ, and we commemorate our Venerable Mother Melania the Younger of Rome.

On the Sunday after the Nativity of Christ, we commemorate the holy and just Ancestors of God: Joseph the Betrothed of the Holy Virgin, our Lady the Theotokos; James the Brother of the Lord and the First Bishop of Jerusalem; and David the Prophet and King.

Verses

I honor Joseph, the Betrothed of the Virgin, who to be her protector was alone chosen. Thou art a carpenter's son, but also the brother of the Lord that built all with a word, O blest James. What shall I say, seeing that the Lord testifieth, as a man after Mine own heart, I have found David.

David committed adultery and murder, yet God forgave him and glorified him above all the kings of Israel. He gave him the great grace to compose the most beautiful penitential prayers (the Psalms) and to prophesy the coming of Christ. Thus, God was not ashamed to take upon Himself flesh from David's seed. God designated Joseph to protect the Most-holy Virgin, and imparted to him great honor in the plan of the salvation of mankind. Although Joseph was of the royal lineage of David, he was a humble carpenter in Nazareth. At the age of 80, Joseph took the Most-holy Virgin from the Temple in Jerusalem and into his home. He entered into rest at the age of 110. The Apostle James is called the "Brother of the Lord" because he was the son of the righteous Joseph the Betrothed. James greatly loved Jesus and, according to tradition, he traveled to Egypt with the Most-holy Virgin and Joseph, when Herod sought to slay the newborn King.

By their holy intercessions, O Christ our God, have mercy upon us and save us. Amen.
