

## THE SACRED WATER OF THE JORDAN RIVER

**T**he Baptism of our Lord is closely identified with the Jordan River, a body of water that had great significance for the Israelites long before this mysterious event. After wandering in the wilderness for 40 years, this was the river God's chosen people crossed to enter the "promised land." It was from the banks of the Jordan that the Prophet Elias was taken up into heaven by a chariot of fire. It was also in these waters that Elisha – the successor of Elias – commanded that Naaman the Syrian wash and be cleansed of leprosy. The Second Book of Kings chronicles how Naaman was skeptical of this, claiming that the rivers of Damascus could be used to cleanse him just as well. Nevertheless, he did as Elisha instructed him to do and he was healed.

This was the river to which Christ came to be baptized. It was already "sacred water" for the Israelites, and our Lord's baptism in the Jordan served to reinforce Christ's claim to be the Messiah. There is no doubt that its relevance was not lost on the pious Jews of His time. Nor should its importance be lost on us either.

We cannot cross over into the "promised land" of God's heavenly kingdom unless Christ leads us there, just as Joshua led the Israelites across the Jordan. Only Christ can wash and cleanse us of our spiritual illnesses. He is our only source of spiritual healing – just as Naaman had only one source of assistance for his physical ailments.

As we celebrate the great Feast Day of Theophany, may we remember how the Jordan River was sanctified forever by Christ's baptism in its waters.

*The Orthodox Weekly Bulletin* . . . . . Vestal, Cliffwood, New Jersey . . . . . Litho in U.S.A.

## ABOUT COMMUNION

*We are happy that you have joined us today. Indeed, we pray for the "unity of the Faith" for the day when all of Christianity are united as ONE and can share a common Chalice. However, this is not the case as yet. Please note that Holy Communion, the actual Body & Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, is only for Members of the Orthodox Church who have prepared themselves through prayer, fasting, and confession, & arrived before the Gospel reading. However, everyone is welcome to partake of the blessed bread and receive a blessing from the pastor at the dismissal. If you are interested, you may inquire with the pastor how you can become a member.*

*If you are a guest or otherwise not a regular communicant, please give your baptismal name when receiving.*







# St. Anthony The Great Antiochian Orthodox Christian Church

4031 Aurora Rd.; Melbourne, Florida Mailing address : P.O.Box 267, Melbourne, FL 32902  
Very Rev. Fr. Elia Shalhoub, Pastor & Dean of South Florida Deanery  
Phone: (305) 812-4940 , E-Mail: [elia\\_shalhoub@yahoo.com](mailto:elia_shalhoub@yahoo.com)  
<http://www.stanthonyvorthodoxchurch.com>

## WELCOME TO ST. ANTHONY'S

Where people from around the world come together to serve God and our community.

We are glad you are worshipping with us today! This Church is one community of many in the One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church. The Church of Antioch belongs to two thousand years of evangelization, teaching, history, and tradition which expresses the continued commitment of its members to the Orthodox Christian faith in the Lord Jesus Christ!

St. Anthony Church is a Pan-Orthodox community, under the omophorion of His Beatitude Patriarch JOHN X within the Self-ruled Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America. If you are a first time visitor, please fill out the guest form located on the literature table. We want you to feel at home in prayer and worship. Please submit your names to the ushers and introduce yourself to Fr. Elia at the end of the service so he may welcome you personally. Following services, please join us for sharing of fellowship, coffee, and food.

## FESTAL DIVINE LITURGY VARIABLES ON JANUARY 06

### THE HOLY THEOPHANY OF OUR LORD AND SAVIOR JESUS CHRIST

**\*\*NOTE:** IF THIS FEAST FALLS ON A TUESDAY THROUGH SATURDAY, INCLUSIVE, CELEBRATE THE LITURGY OF ST. JOHN CHRYSOSTOM.

OTHERWISE, CELEBRATE THE LITURGY OF ST. BASIL THE GREAT.\*\*

#### REFRAINS OF THE FIRST ANTIPHON

When Israel went out of Egypt, the house of Jacob from a people of strange language; Judah was in his sanctuary, and Israel his dominion.

**Refrain:** Through the intercessions of the Theotokos, O Savior, save us.

The sea saw it and fled: Jordan was driven back. What ailed thee, O thou sea, that thou fleddest? O thou Jordan, that thou was driven back? **(Refrain)** Glory... Both now... **(Refrain)**

#### REFRAINS OF THE SECOND ANTIPHON

I am well pleased, for the Lord will hear the voice of my prayer. He hath inclined His ear unto me; therefore will I call upon Him as long as I live.

**Refrain:** Save us, O Son of God, Who wast baptized by John in the Jordan; who sing to Thee. Alleluia.

The sorrows of death compassed me, and the pains of hell took hold of me; I found trouble and sorrow, and I called upon the Name of the Lord. **(Refrain)**

Gracious is the Lord, and righteous; yea, our God is merciful. **(Refrain)**

Glory... Both now... O, only begotten Son and Word of God...

#### REFRAINS OF THE THIRD ANTIPHON

O give thanks unto the Lord, for He is good; for His mercy endureth forever. Let the house of Israel now confess that He is good; for His mercy endureth forever. Let the house of Aaron confess that He is good; for His mercy endureth forever. Let them now who fear the Lord confess that He is good; for His mercy endureth forever. *(Now sing the Festal Apolytikion: "When Thou, O Lord.")*

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ADRIANE & TED

## Affirmation of Potential Candidate for 2024 Election to the Parish Council of

### St. Anthony Antiochian Orthodox Church of Melbourne, FL

I understand and affirm that I am willing to have my name placed in nomination for election to the (St. Anthony) Parish Council for a regular term of three (3) years.

I understand and agree that it is vital for Parish Council members to be active in the liturgical life of the Church, including attendance and participation in the Sunday Divine Liturgies, Saturday Vesper Services, Feast Day Services, and other services, including the Sacrament of Holy Confession, and affirm that I will participate in these services frequently and regularly. I understand that the Parish Council operates according to the theology and practices of the Holy Orthodox Church.

I also understand that Council members must set good examples of Orthodox Christian Stewardship, including the offering of time and talents to the church, as well as sacrificial monetary support.

I understand that the Parish Council holds regular meetings once a month and special meetings as needed, and I affirm that if nominated and elected, or appointed, I will do my utmost to attend every meeting.

Furthermore, if nominated and elected, or appointed, I am willing to assume responsibility of chairing a standing or special committee, and/or making myself available to be elected an officer of the council.

I understand that the typical time commitment of a Council member is approximately ten (10) hours every month.

I understand that my agreement to fulfill the above requirements is a prerequisite for nomination.

In signing this affirmation, I pledge to fulfill the above requirements to the best of my ability, with God's help.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Potential Council Candidate

\_\_\_\_\_  
Print Your Name Here

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## 2024 PLEDGE DRIVE

**The Pledge Form for 2024 is available for you, please sign one and turn it in ASAP**

**Thank you to the following Parishioners**

**who already signed their pledge card**

**Fr. Elia and Kh. Odette Shalhoub**

**Adrian & Carrie Matos**

**Debbie Thieme**

**Ionica Dragu**

**John & Joanne Karas**

**Tristan & Jennifer Riter**

**Dr. Paul Alex & Bobbi Skaff**

**Patricia Smith**

**Subdeacon Michael and Alyssa Lieberman**

**Zach Ferrel**

**Susan Perers**

**Priscilla Spinola**

**Isaac Vaughn**

**Alix Hall**

**Stella White**

**Bill Jackson**

**Yuliya Warner**

**Michealle Carey**

**Olga and Carlos Munoz**

**Ethan Packey**

**Sam and Ceara Jacobs**

**Total Pledges for 2024 from 21 pledges so far is \$62,230**

**(Our Goal for 2024 is \$100,000.00)**

### THE EISODIKON (ENTRANCE HYMN) OF THE THEOPHANY OF CHRIST

Blessed is He that cometh in the Name of the Lord. The Lord is God and hath appeared unto us. Save us, O Son of God, Who wast baptized by John in the Jordan; who sing to Thee. Alleluia.

~ After the Entrance, sing the hymns in the following order below.

### APOLYTIKION OF THE THEOPHANY OF CHRIST IN TONE ONE

When Thou, O Lord, wast baptized in the Jordan, worship of the Trinity wast made manifest; for the voice of the Father bore witness to Thee, calling Thee His beloved Son. And the Spirit in the form of a dove confirmed the truth of His word. O Christ our God, Who hath appeared and enlightened the world, glory to Thee.

~ Do NOT sing the apolytikion of the patron saint or feast of the temple.

### KONTAKION OF THE THEOPHANY OF CHRIST IN TONE FOUR

Today Thou hast appeared to the universe, O Lord, and Thy light hath been shed upon us, who praise Thee with knowledge, saying, Thou hast come and appeared, O unapproachable Light.

### THE ANTI-TRISAGION HYMN (Sung in place of "Holy God")

As many as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. Alleluia. (THRICE)

lory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit; both now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

Have put on Christ. Alleluia. **Dynamis!** As many as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. Alleluia.

### THE EPISTLE

*Blessed is He that cometh in the Name of the Lord.*

*O give thanks unto the Lord, for He is good; for His mercy endureth forever.*

**The Reading from the Epistle of St. Paul to Titus. (2:11-15; 3:4-7)**

My son Titus, the grace of God has appeared for the salvation of all men, training us to renounce irreligion and worldly passions, and to live sober, upright, and godly lives in this world; awaiting our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, Who gave Himself for us to redeem us from all iniquity and to purify for Himself a people of His own who are zealous for good deeds. Declare these things; exhort and reprove with all authority. Let no one disregard you. When the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, He saved us, not because of deeds done by us in righteousness, but in virtue of His own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal in the Holy Spirit, which He poured out upon us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that we might be justified by His grace and become heirs in hope of eternal life.

### THE GOSPEL

**The reading from the Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew. (3:13-17)**

At that time, Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to John, to be baptized by him. John would have prevented Him, saying, "I need to be baptized by Thee, and Thou dost come to me?" But Jesus answered him, "Let it be so now; for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness." Then he consented. And when Jesus was baptized, He went up immediately from the water, and behold, the heavens were opened and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and alighting on Him; and lo, a voice from heaven, saying, "This is My beloved Son, with Whom I am well pleased."

### MEGALYNARION OF THE THEOPHANY OF CHRIST IN TONE TWO

*Magnify, O my soul, her who is more honorable and more exalted in glory than the heavenly hosts.*

Verily, all tongues are at a loss to praise thee properly; and every mind, even though transcending the world, is distracted in thy praise, O Theotokos. But because thou art good, accept our faith, having known our divine longing. Wherefore, since thou art the helper of Christians, we do magnify thee.

### KOINONIKON (COMMUNION HYMN) OF THEOPHANY IN TONE EIGHT

The grace of God our Savior hath appeared to all men. Alleluia.

~ After Communion, instead of singing "We have seen the true light", sing the Festal Apolytikion: "When Thou, O Lord."



## Announcements



January 7th  
January 14th  
January 21st  
January 28th

*Epistle Readers*  
Samuel Jacobs  
Ionica Dragu  
Tristan Riter  
Olga Munoz

St. Paul to the Ephesians. (4:7-13)  
St. Paul to the Colossians. (3:4-11)  
St. Paul to St. Timothy. (1:15-17)

*No Sunday School lesson today, we want children to witness blessing of the water.*

**Team George** ❤️

**Thank you Uncle George**  
**for sponsoring our Children Retreat.**  
**It was so much fun**  
**and the food was delicious.**  
**We Love You!**



*Happy Anniversary*  
*to our beloved*  
*Fr. Elia and Kh. Odette!*  
*May God grant you*  
*many more*  
*Happy and Healthy*  
*years together!*

**Mark your Calendars (2024)**  
**January 7 - Parish Council Meeting**  
**January 14 - AWO Meeting**  
**January 16 - Feast of St. Anthony the Great Tuesday**  
**Evening Vigil at 5PM with the service of 5 loaves.**  
**Followed by a Potluck Dinner Celebration.**  
**January 21 - General Meeting**  
**January 28 - Teen SOYO Meeting**



**2023 Parish Calendars**  
*They are here with beautiful iconography inside.*



*Special thanks to this year's sponsors: Skewers and Flames Mediterranean Grills, who helped to cover the cost. You can leave a Donation to Sunday School, when you get yours. Give one to the friend or family so they know about our Church. Your support is greatly appreciated.*

**FOOD FOR THE NEEDY (Basket in the Foyer)**  
**Please remember to bring non-perishable food items for the basket.**  
**(no uncooked beans or rice, many people have no way of cooking)**  
**Also, socks and warm clothes will help in cold weather <3**



**Please pray for the healing of** Adriana Theodoropoulos, Lori Sorensen, Ethan Packey, Michealle and Tyrone Carey, Beverly Delida, Alix Hall, Nina and Diogo Penas, Beth Manzini, John Archambeau, Alex & Soula.

**St. Anthony Antiochian Orthodox Church**  
**4031 Aurora Rd, Melbourne, FL. 32934**  
**Notice of the 2024 General Assembly Meeting**  
**December 20, 2023**

Dear Parishioner:

In compliance with St. Anthony Antiochian Orthodox Church's Constitution, I, as the Parish Council Recording Secretary, am required to notify you of the Annual General Assembly meeting. This Annual General Assembly meeting will be held on **Sunday, January 21, 2024**, immediately following the 10:00am Divine Liturgy in the St. Anthony Church, located at 4031 Aurora Rd., Melbourne, FL 32934.

The Agenda is as follows:

1. Opening Prayer and Roll Call
2. Reading the Minutes of the 2023 Annual General Assembly Meeting
3. Pastor's Message (Appointment of 1 Member)
4. Election of two (2) Members of the Parish Council (Nominations will be accepted through January 11, 2024)
5. Update on the Church Property
6. Chairman's Report
7. Treasurer's Report
8. Organizations' Reports
9. Old Business
10. New Business
11. Approving the 2024 Budget
12. Adjournment

2/3 of the Total members in good standing shall constitute a quorum. As you enter the Church, the Treasurer and the Pastor will check your name. **Please fulfill your 2023 pledge before the end of the year (if you have not already done so.) According to our constitution, ONLY MEMBERS IN GOOD STANDING (i.e. who have fulfilled their 2023 pledge and have turned in their 2024 pledge card) WILL BE ALLOWED TO VOTE/PARTICIPATE in the meeting.**

The following documents will be available one week before the annual meeting in the Narthex of the church: 1) The 2023 financial report. 2) The 2023 General Assembly meeting minutes. 3) The 2024 budget.

We encourage you to submit in writing any questions on the documents so that the Parish Council can prepare accurate and complete responses. **Anyone wishing to include any topic on the agenda MUST submit it in writing to the attention of Fr. Elia no later than January 11<sup>th</sup> so that it may be appropriately considered for inclusion and the proper preparations made.**

We look forward to your presence and participation.  
Sincerely,  
St. Anthony Antiochian Orthodox Church Parish Council

x *Debbie Thieme*  
Debbie Thieme, Parish Council Secretary

# ST. ANTHONY THE GREAT ANTIOCHIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH

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Very Rev. Fr. Elia Shalhoub

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[Elia\\_shalhoub@yahoo.com](mailto:Elia_shalhoub@yahoo.com)

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## 2024 HOUSE BLESSING

## FORM



IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO HAVE YOUR HOUSE BLESSED,  
PLEASE COMPLETE THE FOLLOWING FORM ASAP.

CHOOSE THREE ALTERNATE DATES AND TIMES, AND GIVE DIRECTIONS TO YOUR HOME AS WELL.

**When the priest comes to bless your home please make sure to have an Icon; a candle ready and your list of the names (Living & Deceased) to be prayed for.**

Thank you, V. Rev. Fr. Elia Shalhoub, Pastor

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

(PLEASE PRINT)

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

TELEPHONE: \_\_\_\_\_

(HOME)

(OFFICE)

(CELL)

DATES/TIMES REQUESTED (Please list three date/time options):

*(Please let me know if you are available or not during the day on Saturday & Sunday only from 12:00 Noon to 5:00 p.m. or if you prefer an Evening Visit.)*

Option #1: \_\_\_\_\_

Option #2: \_\_\_\_\_

Option #3: \_\_\_\_\_

### DIRECTIONS & EXACT ADDRESS

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

PLEASE RETURN THIS FORM TO FATHER ELIA NO LATER THAN JANUARY 28, 2024.



JANUARY 7<sup>TH</sup>

## THE THEOPHANY OF OUR LORD AND SAVIOR, JESUS CHRIST

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Christ is Born! Glorify Him!

Are you making New Year's Resolutions? Here are a 10 all of us can consider for 2024:

1. Pray daily. Set aside some time each day to pray, in particular asking God's will be done in your life.
2. Read the Scripture every day. You can use as a guide the 2024 Church Calendars are available at the church Narthex.
3. Attend Church Services. Not just Sunday morning, but make time to attend as many of the Vespers and Feast Day Services as possible.
4. Volunteer. You may have a talent the church can use.
5. Invite someone to church (a co-worker, neighbor, friend, family member). You would be surprised how many people would come to church services if asked.
6. Practice hospitality.
7. Pledge to the church—whether it is a weekly offering or a tithe. Your heart is where your treasure is (Matthew 6:21).
8. Love. Do not be judgmental. We are all created in God's image and likeness.
9. Take time each day to express gratitude, first towards God for His abundant blessings, and then to others.
10. Strive to fill your mind each day with something that is "true, noble, just, pure, lovely, holy" (Philippians 4:8).

*"You came into the world to save sinners; therefore You came to save Me also? You came to find and to save him who was lost; therefore You came to seek me too, for I am one of the lost. O Lord, O my God and Creator!" +Saint Tikhon of Zadonsk*

May the coming New Year be filled with health, happiness and the furtherance of all that is Good!

***Kh. Odette and I wish each of you and your families  
a very blessed and prosperous year in 2024!***

In Christ,

*Fr. Elia Shalhoub*

Very Rev. Fr. Elia Shalhoub, Pastor





## TODAY'S FEAST SUNDAY, JANUARY 7<sup>TH</sup> 2024 SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY

About the beginning of our Lord's thirtieth year, John the Forerunner, who was some six months older than Our Saviour according to the flesh, and had lived in the wilderness since his childhood, received a command from God and came into the parts of the Jordan, preaching the baptism of repentance unto the remission of sins. Then our Saviour also came from Galilee to the Jordan, and sought and received baptism though He was the

Master and John was but a servant. Whereupon, there came to pass those marvellous deeds, great and beyond nature: the Heavens were opened, the Spirit descended in the form of a dove upon Him that was being baptized and the voice was heard from the Heavens hearing witness that this was the beloved Son of God, now baptized as a man (Matt. 3:13-17; Mark 1:9-11; Luke 3:1-22). From these events the Divinity of the Lord Jesus Christ and the great mystery of the Trinity were demonstrated. It is also from this that the present feast is called "Theophany," that is, the divine manifestation, God's appearance among men. On this venerable day the sacred mystery of Christian baptism was inaugurated; henceforth also began the saving preaching of the Kingdom of the Heavens.

### SYNAXIS OF JOHN THE HOLY GLORIOUS PROPHET, BAPTIST, & FORERUNNER

Today we celebrate the Synaxis in honour of the most sacred Forerunner, since he ministered at the Mystery of the Divine Baptism of our Lord Jesus Christ.



#### HOUSE BLESSINGS ARE IN PROGRESS

Fr. Elia would like to bless each of the homes of all of the parishioners of St. Anthony. House Blessing form is available in the bulletin and at the Display table for your convenience.

#### **Offering Holy Bread**

It is the tradition of the Orthodox Church to offer Holy Bread for a Divine Liturgy for the health of a loved one; in memory of one who has fallen asleep in the Lord; a feast day, anniversary, birthday or other special occasion.

The customary donation is \$25.00 per offering.

Please fill out the form at the information table, and hand it to Yuliya.



### EPIPHANY 2024 – BLESSING OF HOMES

The central sign of our acceptance of God's sanctification of the creation is the blessing of the homes of faithful Orthodox Christians.

We bless homes:

- a. To reveal the home as what God created it to be, a way to heaven.
- b. To rid the home of every evil.
- c. To know that the family is a small church unit in Christ, to consecrate the home and all activity in it to God.
- d. To have the home and all who live in it with the fullness of God.

Only the Church reveals what life is, and she alone is the Kingdom of God on earth. The Church lives within Christ, revealing Him to us. As the Church, we sprinkle blessed water throughout the home, as we chant, ***"When you, O Lord, were baptized in the Jordan, the worship of the Trinity was made manifest. For the Fathers voice bore witness to you and called you His Beloved Son, while the Holy Spirit, in the form of a dove, confirmed these words. O Christ our God, who has appeared to us and has enlightened the world, Glory to you."***

The priest consecrates the home to the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit in this act, the Church blesses, reveals and sanctifies.

#### **When the priest comes for the house blessing, please adhere to these guidelines:**

1. Have as many family members there as possible.
2. Setup a place for prayer, in the dining room or kitchen, with an icon and a candle.
3. Print the first names of those for whom specific prayers are to be offered, including all family members on a sheet of paper, making a clear distinction between living and departed.
4. Take this time to get to know Father Elia better, asking any questions you may have.
5. If a child needs some time to talk to Father, respect his/her privacy and make the opportunity.
6. Make Father Elia aware of any special needs you may have.
7. Tell Father Elia about any family members who are in nursing homes or in need of a visit

*Please remember that Father Elia will be making many visitations. A lengthy social visit may not be possible at this time. If you would prefer a visit outside the Epiphany season, please let Father know.*