

THE ULTIMATE "PROTECTIVE PARENTS"

Being a parent can be described as a multi-faceted vocation. A father and mother are called upon to provide for every need of their child - sometimes at great expense and often with greater sacrifice. A child must be taught, nurtured, fed and disciplined. These are just a few parental responsibilities that a father and mother are obligated to meet.

Perhaps the most important duty, however, that every parent must embrace is protecting their child from harm and misfortune. Sometimes lost in the story of our Lord's Nativity is the effort made by Joseph and the Virgin Mary to protect their precious Child from King Herod. He slaughtered scores of innocent children in Bethlehem and its surrounding region in his rage-driven quest to eliminate anyone who would dare be referred to as the "King of the Jews."

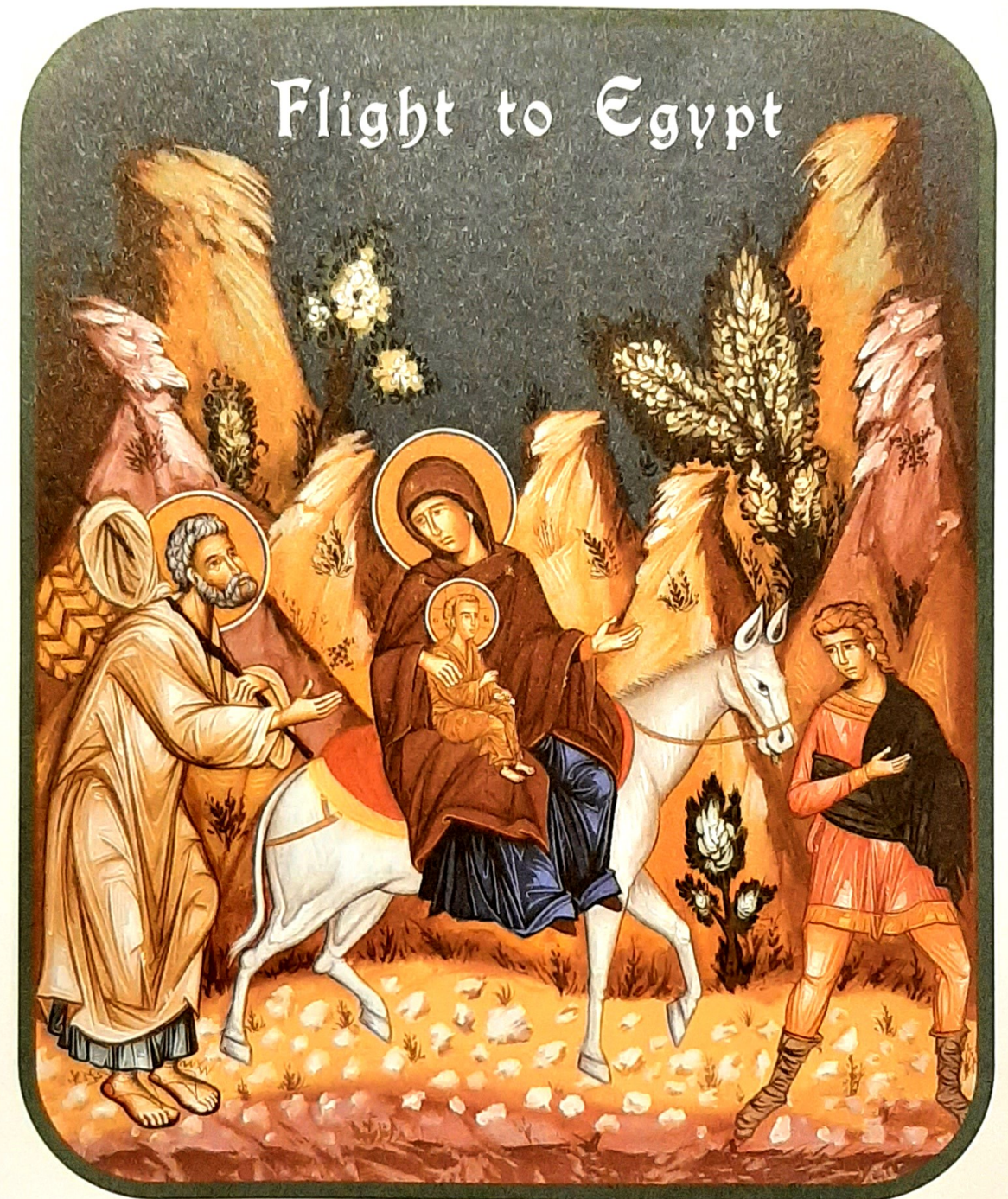
The Gospel of St. Matthew gives us the account of the courageous actions of our Lord's earthly parents. An angel of the Lord warns Joseph in a dream: "Arise, take the young Child and His mother, flee to Egypt, and stay there until I bring you word; for Herod will seek the young Child to destroy Him." (Matthew 2:13) In the dead of night, they fled from their home in Bethlehem and embarked upon a long and dangerous journey, traveling hundreds of miles over rugged, unfamiliar terrain. Somehow, they safely arrived in Egypt, remaining there until Joseph received another heavenly visitor saying: "Arise, take the Child and His mother, and go to the land of Israel, for those who sought the Child's life are dead." (Matthew 2:20) Their stay in Egypt is shrouded in mystery. What we do know is this: Joseph and Mary were the ultimate "protective parents," preserving unharmed the One Who would grow up to be the Savior of the world!

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 Church

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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

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.

DIVINE LITURGY VARIABLES ON SUNDAY, DECEMBER 29, 2024

AFTER-FEAST OF & SUNDAY AFTER THE NATIVITY OF CHRIST

COMMEMORATION OF JOSEPH THE BETROTHED, DAVID THE PROPHET AND KING,
AND JAMES THE BROTHER OF GOD

THE FIRST ANTIPHON

I will confess Thee, O Lord, with my whole heart; I will tell of all Thy wonders. In the council of the upright, and in the congregation, great are the works of the Lord.

Refrain: Through the intercessions of the Theotokos, O Savior, save us. They are sought out in all the things that He hath willed. Confession and majesty are His work, and His righteousness abideth unto ages of ages. **(Refrain)**

Glory... Both now... **(Refrain)**

THE SECOND ANTIPHON

Blessed is the man that feareth the Lord; in His commandments shall he greatly delight. His seed shall be mighty upon the earth. The generation of the upright shall be blessed.

Refrain: Save us, O Son of God, Who wast born of a Virgin; who sing to Thee. Alleluia.

Glory and riches shall be in his house, and His righteousness abideth unto ages of ages. **(Refrain)**

There hath risen up in darkness a light for the upright; he is merciful and compassionate and righteous. **(Refrain)** Glory... Both now... O, only begotten Son and Word of God...

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25th Anniversary Weekend Schedule

January 16-19, 2025

Thursday January 16

Great Vespers for St. Anthony's Feast Day 5:30 PM
Metropolitan SABA & Bishop NICHOLAS 7:00 PM
Dinner with Visiting Clergy and Parishioners at the church Hall.

Friday January 17

Matins & Divine Liturgy 9:00 AM
Followed by a Luncheon Meeting with AWONA and AMEN. (Church Hall)

Friday January 17

Great Vespers at St. Barbara Mission in Orlando 6:00PM
Followed by a Dinner Meeting.

Saturday January 18

Matins 10:00 AM
Followed by TEEN SOYO
and Sunday School Brunch meeting (Church Hall) 11:00 AM
Great Vespers 5:30 PM
Dinner with Parish Council & Out of Town Guests
(At Church Hall) 7:00 PM

Sunday January 19

Matins 8:45 AM
Hierarchical Divine Liturgy 10:00 AM
Anniversary Banquet at Flames Mediterranean Grille 1:00 PM
Private Dinner 6:00 PM

Monday January 20 Departure of Hierarchs.

THE THIRD ANTIPHON

The Lord said unto my Lord: sit Thou at My right hand, until I make Thine enemies Thy footstool. The Lord shall send Thee a rod of strength out of Zion. With Thee is dominion in the day of Thy power, in the beauties of Thy saints.

~ During the Little Entrance, chant the Resurrectional Apolytikion. The Eisodikon (Entrance Hymn) is "O come, let us worship... save us, O Son of God, Who art risen from the dead..." After the Little Entrance, chant these hymns in the following order:

RESURRECTIONAL APOLYTIKION IN TONE TWO

When Thou didst submit Thyself unto death, O Thou deathless and immortal One, then Thou didst destroy hades with Thy Godly power. And when Thou didst raise the dead from beneath the earth, all the powers of Heaven did cry aloud unto Thee: O Christ, Thou giver of life, glory to Thee.

APOLYTIKION OF THE FOREFEAST 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.

~ Now sing the apolytikion of the patron saint or feast of the temple.

APOLYTIKION OF ST. ANTHONY THE GREAT

Thou didst become like the zealous Elijah in his condition, and followed John the Baptist in his upright ways. Becoming a dweller in the wilderness, and an establisher of the universe by thy prayer O Father Anthony. Wherefore intercede thou with Christ our God to save our souls.

KONTAKION OF PREPARATION OF CHRIST'S NATIVITY IN TONE THREE

(**The original melody**)

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.

THE EPISTLE

(For the Sunday after Nativity of Christ)

God is wondrous in His saints. Bless God in the congregations.

The Reading from the Epistle of St. Paul to the Galatians. (1:11-19)

Brethren, I would have you know that the Gospel, which was preached by me, is not man’s gospel. For I did not receive it from man, nor was I taught it, but it came through a revelation of Jesus Christ. For you have heard of my former life in Judaism, how I persecuted the Church of God violently and tried to destroy it; and I advanced in Judaism beyond many of my own age among my people; so extremely zealous was I for the traditions of my fathers. But when He who had set me apart before I was born, and had called me through His grace, was pleased to reveal His Son to me, in order that I might preach Him among the Gentiles, I did not confer with flesh and blood, nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were apostles before me, but I went away into Arabia; and again I returned to Damascus. Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to visit Cephas, and remained with him fifteen days. But I saw none of the other apostles except James the Lord’s brother.

THE GOSPEL

(For the Sunday after Nativity of Christ)

The Reading from the Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew. (2:13-23)

When the wise men had departed, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, “Rise, take the Child and His mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you; for Herod is about to search for the Child, to destroy Him.” And he rose and took the Child and His mother by night, and departed to Egypt, and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet, “Out of Egypt have I called My Son.” Then Herod, when he saw that he had been tricked by the wise men, was in a furious rage, and he sent and killed all the male children in Bethlehem and in all that region, who were two years old or under, according to the time which he had ascertained from the wise men. Then was fulfilled what was spoken by the prophet Jeremiah: “A voice was heard in Ramah, wailing and loud lamentation, Rachel weeping for her children; she refused to be consoled, because they were no more.” But when Herod died, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt, saying, “Rise, take the Child and His mother, and go to the land of Israel, for those who sought the Child’s life are dead.” And he rose and took the Child and His mother, and went to the land of Israel. But when he heard that Archelaus reigned over Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there, and being warned in a dream he withdrew to the district of Galilee. And he went and dwelt in a city called Nazareth, that what was spoken by the prophets might be fulfilled, “He shall be called a Nazarene.”

Upcoming Events

This Week

Sunday, 12/29

8:45 am: Matins Service

10:00 am: Divine Liturgy

Coffee Hour: *Guests are always welcome!*

Saturday, 1/4

Catechism Class —4:00pm

Great Vespers—5:30pm , Confessions

January

25th Anniversary Celebration

(see schedule on page 10) Please add your name to the list for meals on the bulletin board, if you are planning to attend; RSVP to the invitations.

2025 PLEDGE DRIVE

(Our Goal for 2025 is \$125,000.00)

The Pledge Form for 2025 is available for you.

A copy has been emailed.

Please sign one and turn it in ASAP

Thank you to the following Parishioners who already signed their pledge card:

- Anonymous
- Armstrong, Samuel
- Bobrovsky, Michael & Natalie
- Brown, Kevin
- Carey, Michealle
- Doda, Alina
- Dragu, Ionica & Marcel
- Ferrell, Zachary
- Good, Eric & Marsha
- Hall, Alix
- Holland, Michael & Skylla
- Jackson, William & Sheree
- Lieberman, Michael & Alyssa
- Matos, Subdeacon Adrian & Carry
- Mooney, Michael
- Morales, Tito
- Riter, Tristan & Jennie
- Shalhoub, Fr Elia & Odette
- Singleton, Steven & Traci
- Skaff, Paul & Bobbi
- Thieme, Deborah & John
- Trainham, Jarod
- Vaughn, Isaac

Total from 23 Pledges General Fund \$79,170.00

14,000 INFANTS (HOLY INNOCENTS) SLAIN BY HEROD IN BETHLEHEM

The infant-slaying Herod mentioned here is the same one that ruled at the time of Christ's Nativity. In those days, certain Magi, who were wise and noble men, perhaps even kings, set forth from the East, and came to Jerusalem, seeking the King of the Jews, Who had been born; and they said that in the East, where their homeland was, an unusual and strange star had appeared two years before, which, according to an ancient oracle (Num 24:17), was to signify the birth of some great king of the Jews. "For we have seen His star in the east," they said, "and have come to worship Him" (Matt. 2:2). Hearing these things, Herod was troubled, and the whole city together with him. Then, having inquired and been informed by the high priests and scribes of the people that, according to the prophecies, Christ was to be born in Bethlehem, he sent the Magi thither and ordered them that, when they would find the Child, to inform him, so that he also - as he affirmed - might go and worship Him. But the Magi, after they had worshipped, departed by another way to their own country by a divine command. Then Herod was wroth and sent men to slay all the infants of Bethlehem and the parts round about, from two years old and under, thinking that with them he would also certainly slay the King Who had been born. But this vain man who fought against God was mocked, since Jesus the Child, with Mary His Mother, under the protection of Joseph the Betrothed, fled into Egypt at the command of an Angel. As for those innocent infants, they became the first Martyrs slain in behalf of Christ. But their blood-thirsty executioner, the persecutor of Christ, came down with dropsy after a short time, with his members rotting and being eaten by worms, and he ended his life in a most wretched manner.

OUR RIGHTEOUS FATHER MARCELLUS, ABBOT OF THE MONASTERY OF THE UNSLEEPING ONES

Saint Marcellus, who was from the city of Apamea in Syria, was born of renowned parents. Adorned with virtue and learning, he succeeded Saint Alexander to the abbacy of the Monastery of the Unsleeping about the year 460. This monastery was so named because the monks there were divided into three ranks, and took turns in succession for the execution of the sacred services both day and night, and thus ceaselessly sent up praise to God, without any lapse. The author of this practice was the aforementioned Alexander. As the biographer of both these Saints writes: "Later, a venerable monastery was established near the mouth of Pontus - that is, the place where the Black Sea tracts into the Bosphorus - and he introduced a rule that, though new, was superior to any found elsewhere; that is, that henceforth they should never be any cessation in the hymnody offered to God, but that through an unbroken succession of those that served in turn, there should be achieved this continuous and unceasing glorification of our Master."

The month of December in our Archdiocese is dedicated to the Order of St. Ignatius of Antioch.

Members of the Order will be reading the Epistles and giving sermons.

We are looking for more people to join the Order During the 25th Anniversary weekend while the Metropolitan is with us.

To know more about the Order please look at the Archdiocese Website or ask Fr. Elia.

Announcements



Epistle Readers

December 29th
January 5th
January 12th
January 19th
January 26th

Tristan Riter
Kiev
Eric Ziems
Roger Davis
Sam Jacobs

St. Paul to the Galatians (4:4-7)
St. Paul to St. Timothy. (4:5-8)
St. Paul to the Ephesians. (4:7-13)
St. Paul to the Colossians. (3:4-11)
St. Paul to St. Timothy. (4:9-15)



THANK YOU TO ALYSSA AND SUBDEACON MICHAEL FOR TODAY'S COFFEE HOUR

PLEASE SIGN UP ON THE CALENDAR IN THE NARTHEX TO CONTRIBUTE FOOD TO A FUTURE COFFEE HOUR

Work Day Saturday, January 11 at 8:30am-Noon

We need to get our Church ready for the Anniversary weekend. Contact Michealle at (301)787-1174



2025 Calendars

They are here with beautiful iconography inside. Please make a donation of \$5 to Sunday School.



Thank you to Skewers Restaurant and Flames Restaurant for sponsoring our calendars!

Dec 29 - Jan 12 Fasting Calendar

Abstain from: meat, dairy, eggs, fish, olive oil & wine: Wed 1/8 & Fri 1/10

Abstain from: meat, dairy, eggs & fish: Sun 1/5

No fast: December 25 – January 4

View calendar at <https://tinyurl.com/AOCfast2025>

December Birthdays

02: Anastasia Gabbasova

03: Nolan Brown

05: Jenny Riter

Spencer Wiltse

08: Oakley Bellinger

09: Maria Munoz

10: Sam Jacobs

14: Zac Ferrell

19: JouJou Najjar

21: Fr. Stephen Adili

Ethan Packey

23: Kathy Hopper

Jeff Bellinger

25: Jesus

30: Marco Lieberman



May God Grant You Many Years!

Teen SOYO Garage Sale February 1st, 2025

All proceeds benefit the Teen SOYO Scholarship Fund for summer camp and bible bowl. **Garage Sale donations are accepted and appreciated.**

Drop off dates to come. Contact Holly for details!



Please pray for the healing of Father Elia and Kh. Odette, Debbie Thieme, Adriana Theodoropoulos, Michealle and Tyrone Carey, Beverly Delida, Alix Hall, Nina and Diogo Penas, Beth Manzini, John Archambeau, Alex & Soula, Nicholas Elliott, William Snell, Vasilika Yardines, Gregory Warner, Max and Felix Jacobs



SUNDAY AFTER NATIVITY

14,000 INFANTS (HOLY INNOCENTS) SLAIN BY HEROD IN BETHLEHEM

BELOVED IN CHRIST

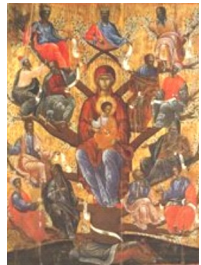
The Feast of the Nativity is not a mere remembrance of Jesus' birth in a cradle from the Virgin Mother of God; it was meant to be the feast of His birth in us, a birth that can only occur if we seek the purity that distinguished the Virgin Mary. The Birth of Jesus in us will invite us to renew our commitment to His Teachings, and our struggle to become His unblemished church, A Church that is free of weaknesses, pure in everything, and shining with the Holy Spirit. Together we shall be aware that the church of Christ is our mother. And that the shepherds and the believers are called to be Christ's messengers inviting their brethren in the world to reconciliation and to rejection of violence so that His peace may Prevail.

In Christ,
Fr. Elia Shalhoub
Very Rev. Fr. Elia Shalhoub, Pastor

SAINTS AND FEASTS

SUNDAY AFTER NATIVITY OF OUR LORD AND SAVIOR, JESUS CHRIS

On the Sunday that falls on or immediately after the twenty-sixth of this month, we make commemoration of Saints Joseph, the Betrothed of the Virgin; David, the Prophet and King; and James, the Brother of God. When there is no Sunday within this period, we celebrate this commemoration on the 26th.



Saint Joseph (whose name means "one who increases") was the son of Jacob, and the son-in-law - and hence, as it were, the son - of Eli (who was also called Eliakim or Joachim), who was the father of Mary the Virgin (Matt. 1:16; Luke 3:23). He was of the tribe of Judah, of the family of David, an inhabitant of Nazareth, a carpenter by Trade, and advanced in age when, by God's good will, he was betrothed to the Virgin, that he might minister to the great mystery of God's dispensation in the flesh by protecting her, providing for her, and being known as her husband so that she, being a virgin, would not suffer reproach

when she was found to be with child. Joseph had been married before his betrothal to our Lady;

they who are called Jesus' "brethren and sisters" (Matt. 13:55-56) are the children of Joseph by his first marriage. From Scripture, we know that Saint Joseph lived at least until the Twelfth year after the birth of Christ (Luke 2:41-52); according to the tradition of the Fathers, he reposed before the beginning of the public ministry of Christ.

The child of God and ancestor of God, David, the great Prophet after Moses, sprang from the tribe of Judah. He was the son of Jesse, and was born in Bethlehem (whence it is called the City of David), in the year 1085 before Christ. While yet a youth, at the command of God he was anointed secretly by the Prophet Samuel to be the second King of the Israelites, while Saul - who had already been deprived of divine grace - was yet living. In the thirtieth year of his life, when Saul had been slain in battle, David was raised to the dignity of King, first, by his own tribe, and then by all the Israelite people, and he reigned for forty years. Having lived seventy years, he reposed in 1015 before Christ, having proclaimed beforehand that his son Solomon was to be the successor to the throne.

The sacred history has recorded not only the grace of the Spirit that dwelt in him from his youth, his heroic exploits in war, and his great piety towards God, but also his transgressions and failings as a man. Yet his repentance was greater than his transgressions, and his love for God fervent and exemplary; so highly did God honour this man, that when his son Solomon sinned, the Lord told him that He would not rend the kingdom in his lifetime "for David thy father's sake" (III Kings 12:12). Of The Kings of Israel, Jesus the Son of Sirach testifies, "All, except David and Hezekias and Josias, were defective" (Ecclus. 49:4). The name David means "beloved."

His melodious Psalter is the foundation of all the services of the Church; there is not one service that is not filled with Psalms and psalmic verses. It was the means whereby old Israel praised God, and was used by the Apostles and the Lord Himself. It is so imbued with the spirit of prayer that the monastic fathers of all ages have used it as their trainer and teacher for their inner life of converse with God. Besides eloquently portraying every state and emotion of the soul before her Maker, the Psalter is filled with prophecies of the coming of Christ. It foretells His Incarnation, "He bowed the heavens and came down" (Psalm 17:9), His Baptism in the Jordan, "The waters saw Thee, O God, The waters saw Thee and were afraid" (76:15), His Crucifixion in its details, "They have pierced My hands and My feet They have parted My garments amongst themselves, and for My vesture have they cast lots" (21:16, 18). "For My thirst they gave Me vinegar to drink" (68:26), His descent into Hades, "For Thou wilt not abandon My soul in Hades, nor wilt Thou suffer Thy Holy One to see corruption" (15:10) and Resurrection, "Let God arise and let His enemies be scattered" (67:1). His Ascension, "God is gone up in jubilation" (46:5), and so forth.

As for James, the Brother of God, see October 23.