



"COME AND SEE"



Our Orthodox Church, after 2000 years, is still a missionary Church. Even in this modern era, it is still our commission to "go and teach all nations," bringing the unchurched to the knowledge of Jesus Christ. As we struggle to bring the truths of Holy Orthodoxy to others, what approach should we take? If we are attempting to share our Faith with a potential convert, what should we EMPHASIZE?

The essence of Orthodoxy is a unique blending of three distinct elements. First, we are a **SCRIPTURAL** Faith. All that we teach ... all that we believe has its basis on God's Word in the Holy Bible. Indeed, we must show others that we "practice what we preach," and what we preach is the same message that our Lord and His Apostles after Him took out to every nation.

We are a **LITURGICAL** Faith. The services of the Orthodox Church readily reveal the doctrines and dogmas that are dear to us. A prospective convert can gain tremendous insight into what Orthodoxy is all about simply by listening to the profound lyrics of our many liturgical hymns.

Finally, we are a **VISUAL** Faith. When Nathanael questioned Philip if "anything good could come out of Nazareth", Philip responded: "COME AND SEE." Perhaps these words offer us the best "plan of attack" in allowing the light of Orthodoxy to shine on others. Through the holy icons and liturgical objects found in magnificent cathedrals and humble parish churches, our Faith comes alive. Invite someone to "come and see" your church. Let their eyes take in the mysteries of our Faith that are revealed in our sacred images and holy places. Many will, no doubt, echo the sentiments of the emissaries of Vladimir the Great when they entered the Church of the Holy Wisdom: "WE KNEW NOT IF WE WERE IN HEAVEN OR ON EARTH."

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

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

WELCOME TO ST. ANTHONY'S

Where people from around the world come together to serve God and our community. We are glad you are worshiping 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 Eminence Metropolitan SABA within 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, FEBRUARY 2, 2025 PRESENTATION (MEETING) OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST

THE FIRST ANTIPHON

My heart hath poured forth a good word; I speak of my works to the king. My tongue is the pen of a swiftly writing scribe.

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

Grace is poured into thy lips: therefore, God hath blessed thee forever. (**Refrain**) Glory... Both now... (**Refrain**)

THE SECOND ANTIPHON

Gird Thy sword upon Thy thigh, O mighty One, in Thy comeliness and Thy beauty. Bend Thy bow, and proceed prosperously, and be king.

Refrain: Save us, O Son of God, Who wast borne in the arms of righteous Simeon; who sing to Thee. Alleluia. Thine arrows are sharp, O mighty One, in the heart of the king's enemies; whereby the peoples fall under Thee. (**Refrain**)

A scepter of uprightness is the scepter of Thy kingdom. (**Refrain**) Glory... Both now... O, only begotten Son and Word of God...

THE THIRD ANTIPHON

Hearken, O daughter, and consider, and incline thine ear; forget also thine own people, and thy father's house. Even the rich among the people shall entreat thy countenance. I shall commemorate thy name in every generation.

~ During the Little Entrance, after the verses of the Third Antiphon, chant the Apolytikion of the Presentation of Christ. Then, the following:

ST. ANTHONY THE GREAT

ANTIOCHIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH

2025 Annual General Meeting Proxy

February 9, 2025

KNOW ALL PERSONS BY THESE PRESENTS:

The undersigned voting member(s) of St. Anthony the Great Antiochian Orthodox Church hereby constitute and appoint

_____ as PROXY with powers of substitution for and in the name and place of the undersigned, to act on my behalf to establish a quorum and vote on any issues that are presented for a vote by the membership at this Special Meeting on Sunday, February 9th, 2025 at St. Anthony the Great Antiochian Orthodox Christian Church located at 4031 Aurora Rd, Melbourne, FL 32934.

Dated: _____

Member

Dated: _____

Member

If you are unable to attend our General Meeting, please sign this form and give it to Fr. Elia prior to the event.

ST. ANTHONY ANTIOCHIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH
2025 PARISH COUNCIL NOMINATIONS

It is time for us to begin developing our Parish Council for the year 2025. Please consider nominating someone from the parish who would serve the community well. You could also consider nominating yourself.

Remember that the qualifications for election to the Parish Council are:

- **That the candidate is 18 years of age or older.**
- **That the candidate has been a voting, pledging member of the parish for at least the last six months of 2024.**
- **That the candidate has fulfilled the canonical requirements of the Orthodox Faith.**
- **That the candidate has completed a pledge form for the year 2025.**

In addition, it is required that the nominees’ 2024 pledges, as well as Archdiocesan dues, be paid and up to date.

The Following Parish Council members’ term is up:

Alex Paul Skaff, who has already served 1 term. He is eligible for another Term.
Zachary Ferrell who completed Olga Munoz term, he is eligible. He can be elected for another Term.

Being a Parish Council member means more than just attending a monthly meeting. This responsibility also requires the member to chair or be on committees when called upon, throughout the years of Parish Council membership. In addition, participation at functions and work days is also required. The nominating committee will arrange a meeting with each candidate to ensure their qualifications and willingness to serve.

Please turn in or mail completed nomination forms to Susan Perers (Chairman of the Nominating Committee) or Fr. Elia.

Thank you for your consideration.

Nominating Committee are Susan Perers, Anonymous & Fr. Elia.

St. Anthony Antiochian Orthodox Church

PARISH COUNCIL NOMINATION FORM

After filling out the form, give it to Fr. Elia or Susan Perers:

I would like to nominate _____ to serve on the Parish Council of St. Anthony Church. I understand that the nomination is subject to the qualifications for election that are stated in the Constitution of St. Anthony Church. I also understand that the person nominated must accept the nomination in order to be elected. Elections will take place on February 9, 2025 at the General Assembly Meeting of the parish.

THE EISODIKON (ENTRANCE HYMN)

The Lord hath made known His salvation; He hath revealed His justice in the sight of the Gentiles. Save us, O Son of God, Who art risen from the dead; who sing to Thee. Alleluia.

RESURRECTIONAL APOLYTIKION IN TONE SEVEN

Thou didst shatter death by Thy Cross, Thou didst open paradise to the thief; Thou didst turn the sadness of the ointment-bearing women into joy. And didst bid Thine Apostles proclaim a warning, that Thou hast risen O Christ, granting to the world the Great Mercy.

POLYTIKION OF THE PRESENTATION OF CHRIST IN TONE ONE

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.

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

KONTAKION OF THE PRESENTATION OF CHRIST IN TONE ONE

Thou, O Christ God, Who by Thy Birth, didst sanctify the Virgin’s womb, and, as is meet, didst bless Simeon’s arms, and didst also come to save us; preserve Thy fold in wars, and confirm them whom Thou didst love, for Thou alone art the Lover of mankind.

THE EPISTLE

My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Savior.

For He hath regarded the humility of His servant.

The Reading from the Epistle of St. Paul to the Hebrews. (7:7-17)

Brethren, it is beyond dispute that the inferior is blessed by the superior. Here tithes are received by mortal men; there, by one of whom it is testified that he lives. One might even say that Levi himself, who receives tithes, paid tithes through Abraham, for he was still in the loins of his ancestor when Melchizedek met him. Now if perfection had been attainable through the Levitical priesthood (for under it the people received the law), what further need would there have been for another priest to arise after the order of Melchizedek, rather than one named after the order of Aaron? For when there is a change in the priesthood, there is necessarily a change in the law as well. For the one of whom these things are spoken belonged to another tribe, from which no one has ever served at the altar. For it is evident that our Lord was descended from Judah, and in connection with that tribe Moses said nothing about priests. This becomes even more evident when another priest arises in the likeness of Melchizedek, who has become a priest, not according to a legal requirement concerning bodily descent but by the power of an indestructible life. For it is witnessed of him, “Thou art a priest forever, after the order of Melchizedek.”

THE GOSPEL

The Reading from the Holy Gospel according to St. Luke. (2:22-40)

In those days, the parents of Jesus brought Him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord (as it is written in the law of the Lord, “Every male that opens the womb shall be called holy to the Lord”), and to offer a sacrifice according to what is said in the law of the Lord, “a pair of turtledoves, or two young pigeons.” Now there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon, and this man was righteous and devout, looking for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was upon him. And it had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he should not see death before he had seen the Lord’s Christ. And inspired by the Spirit he came into the Temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him according to the custom of the law, he took Him up in his arms and blessed God and said, “Lord, now lettest thou Thy servant depart in peace, according to Thy word; for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation, which Thou hast prepared in the presence of all peoples, a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and for glory to Thy people Israel.” And His father

and his mother marveled at what was said about Him; and Simeon blessed them and said to Mary His mother, “Behold, this child is set for the fall and rising of many in Israel, and for a sign that is spoken against (and a sword will pierce through your own soul also), that thoughts out of many hearts may be revealed.” And there was a prophetess, Anna, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher; she was of a great age, having lived with her husband seven years from her virginity, and as a widow until she was eighty-four. She did not depart from the temple, worshiping with fasting and prayer night and day. And coming up at that very hour she gave thanks to God, and spoke of Him to all who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem. And when they had performed everything according to the law of the Lord, they returned into Galilee, to their own city, Nazareth. And the child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom; and the favor of God was upon Him.

MEGALYNARION OF THE PRESENTATION IN TONE THREE

*O Theotokos, * thou hope of all Christians; * keep and shelter and preserve * them that set their hope in thee.*

In the shadow and letter of the Law, let us the faithful contemplate a prefiguring: Every male child that openeth the womb is holy unto God. Therefore, do we magnify the first-born Word, the Son of the Father Who is without beginning, the first-born Child of a Mother who hath not known wedlock.

KOINONIKON (COMMUNION HYMN) OF THE FEAST IN TONE EIGHT

I will receive the cup of salvation, and call upon the Name of the Lord. Alleluia.
~ *Post-Communion Hymn: “We have seen the true light.”*

Upcoming Events

<p><u>This Week</u> Sunday, 2/1 8:45 am: Matins Service 10:00 am: Divine Liturgy Coffee Hour: <i>After Liturgy, all are welcome</i> Parish Council monthly meeting Wednesday, 1/29 5:30pm: Great Vespers 6pm: Choir Practice Saturday, 2/1: 4:00 pm: Catechism Class 5:30 pm: Great Vespers <i>followed by Confessions</i> February Sunday, 2/9 at 12pm—Annual Parish Meeting</p>	<p><u>Upcoming Sunday Calendar</u> Below lists the upcoming Sundays from January 26th until Holy Pascha, which falls on April 20th this year. We invite you to join us each week for Sunday Liturgy to celebrate this special commemoration of Jesus’ life, death, and Resurrection. <i>Please mark these special dates on your calendar.</i></p> <p>January 26: Sunday of Zacchaeus February 2: Presentation of Our Lord February 9: Pharisee & Publican February 16: Prodigal Son February 23: Meatfare Sunday (Last Judgement) March 2: Cheesefare Sunday (Forgiveness Sunday) March 3: Beginning of Great Lent March 9: 1st Sunday of Lent (Sunday of Orthodoxy) (Bring your Icon to Church for the procession) March 16: 2nd Sunday of Lent March 23: 3rd Sunday of Lent</p>
---	---

ST. ANTHONY THE GREAT ANTIOCHIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH

4031 Aurora Rd., Melbourne, FL. 32934
www.StAnthonyOrthodoxChurch.com
Very Rev. Fr. Elia Shalhoub
Cell: [\(305\) 812-4940](tel:3058124940)
Elia_shalhoub@yahoo.com

Follow us on “FACEBOOK” <https://www.facebook.com/st.anthonyorthodox>

2025 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.
PLEASE GIVE DIRECTIONS TO YOUR HOME AS WELL.
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 AS SOON AS POSSIBLE

EPIPHANY 2025 – 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.

March 30: 4th Sunday of Lent
April 6: 5th Sunday of Lent
April 13: PALM SUNDAY
April 18: GOOD FRIDAY
April 20: HOLY PASCHA
April 27: THOMAS SUNDAY

Annual General Meeting Our Annual Meeting will take place on Sunday, February 9th immediately after the Divine Liturgy. Father Elia has sent an E-Mail with the Last meeting Minutes, the Financial Report for the year 2024 and the proposed budget for 2025 and the Proxy Form for those who can't attend personally. **Please fill out the Proxy Form if you cannot attend.**

Announcements



February 2nd
February 9th
February 16th
February 23rd

Epistle Readers

Jeffrey Dick
Carrie Matos
Bill Jackson
Jennifer Riter

St. Paul to the Hebrews. (7:7-17)
St. Paul to St. Timothy. (3:10-15)
St. Paul to the Corinthians. (6:12-20)
St. Paul to the Corinthians. (8:8-9:2)



THANK YOU TO OUR COFFEE HOUR SPONSORS FOR TODAY'S MEAL

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

Feb 2– Feb 16 Fasting Calendar

**Abstain from: meat, dairy, eggs, fish,
olive oil & wine: Wed 2/5 & Fri 2/7**

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

Blessing of Homes 2025
Fr. Elia is doing House Blessings by request, only if you fill the Request Form. Please keep in Mind that Fr. Elia is available only on the weekend.

February Birthdays & Anniversaries

02: Isaac Vaughn
04: Alyssa Stumpf (Karas)
06: Stuart Zolton
Samuel Brown
Marsha Good
10: Yuliya Warner
11: Adrian Matos
14: Jeffrey and Holly Dick Wedding Anniversary
15: Susan Perers
17: Lilly Munoz
23: Mike and Janet Gorczynski Wed. Anniversary
24: Clay (Richard) Gardenhire

May God Grant You Many Years!



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



THE PRESENTATION OF OUR LORD AND SAVIOR IN THE TEMPLE
BELOVED IN CHRIST

The Virtue of Hope

Hope is the assurance of the good outcome of our lives lived by faith in God. Hope is the power of certain conviction that the life built on faith will produce its fruits. Hope is the confidence that, despite all darkness and sin, the light of the loving forgiveness of God is upon us to do with us and for us what we ourselves cannot do. The opposite of hope is despondency and despair. According to the spiritual tradition of the Church, the state of despondency and despair is the most grievous and horrible condition that a person can be in. It is the worst and most harmful of the sinful states possible for the soul. The loss of hope is the worst possible state because without hope, nothing else is possible; certainly not faith. If a person is faithless, he can be chastised and convinced. If a person is proud, he can be humbled; impure, he can be cleansed; weak, he can be strengthened; wicked, he can be made righteous. But if a person is despondent and despairing, the very condition of his sickness is such that his heart and soul are dead and unresponsive to the grace of God and the support of his brothers.

The only remedy for despair is humility and patience, the steadfast holding to the life of faith, even without conviction or feeling. It is the simplification of life by going through each day, one day at a time, with the continual observances, however external, of scriptural reading, liturgical worship, fasting, prayer, and work. In the advice of +Saint Benedict, it is to "remain stable in one's place, and to "do what you are doing" as well as you can, with all possible attention." +Saint Seraphim of Sarov teaches that it is to "visit with spiritual friends, with those who are hopeful, merciful, joyful and strong. It is to stand fast to the end until the light of blessed hope and comfort are found."

"For in hope we are saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what he sees? But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience." (Romans 8.24-25) - **'The Virtues' by Fr. Thomas Hopko**

Your servant in Christ,
Fr. Elia Shalhoub
Very Rev. Fr. Elia Shalhoub, Pastor

Please support our sponsors



PERI KIROS
321-432-1993
perikiros@gmail.com
WWW.MYGREEKAGENT.COM



Address: 144 Fifth Ave Indialantic FL 32903
Phone #: 321-727-8944
Website: Skewersgrille.com



Mario J. Mandese D.C.
Address
1300 Pine Tree Dr #7
IHB, FL 32937
Phone: (321) 257-7593
Fax: (321) 420-1762

If you would like to promote your business, and support our bulletin, place your ad here. Only \$100 a year - that's less than \$2 per ad. To place your ad in our weekly bulletin call or email Yuliya: (321) 960-9564 or



FERGUSON PEST MANAGEMENT
321-258-8311

140 Tomahawk Dr. #M57
Indian Harbour Beach, FL 32937
Georges Ferguson
Certified Operator



FLAMES
Modern Mediterranean Grill
Live Entertainment Tuesday thru Saturday
Flames kitchen reignites the Mediterranean flare in today's culinary world of inventions. We honor our traditional recipes with a new take on old favorites. Our scratch kitchen adds culmination to our passion for good food.
1270 N Wickham Rd - Ste 40 - Melbourne, FL 32935
(321) 777-6677 ♦ www.flamesgrille.com



Florentine Jewelers
3RD GENERATION JEWELERS SINCE 1928
321-777-0093
1270 Highway A1A
Satellite Beach, FL 32937
f t i p e
FlorentineJewelry.com



Crochet In The Shade
Handcrafted Dragons, Aliens and other Fantastic Creatures
MESSAGE QUESTIONS TO
Chris (727) 857-9351
Nan (321) 961-6150
crochet.in.the.shade@gmail.com

diverse ministry. He was a blessed man, freed by Christ from the various bonds of this world, soaring ever toward the divine realm and making the earth a reflection of that heavenly reality. He sought to fulfill the Lord's Prayer: "Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven." He was not a mere theorist or sophist but a living example of his faith and teachings. He was a light on this earth, living the Resurrection and naming all his new projects after it, including the magnificent Cathedral of the Resurrection in Tirana. His faith in and experience of the Resurrection fill us with hope as we bid him farewell, confident that he will intercede from above for the Church and the world he loved so fervently. May God hear his voice in eternity and have mercy on us through his prayers.

2025 PLEDGE DRIVE
(Our Goal for 2025 is \$125,000.00)
Thank you to the following Parishioners
who already signed their pledge card:

Anonymous
Armstrong, Samuel
Bobrovsky, Michael & Natalie
Brown, Kevin Carey, Michealle
Dick, Jeffrey & Holly
Doda, Alina
Dragu, Ionica & Marcel
Ferrell, Zachary Good, Eric & Marsha
Hall, Alix
Holland, Michael & Skylla
Jackson, William & Sheree
Jacobs, Sam & Ceara
Lieberman, Michael & Alyssa
Matos, Adrian & Carrie
Mooney, Michael
Morales, Tito Perers, Susan
Riter, Tristan & Jenny
Shalhoub, Fr. Elia & Odette Singleton, Steven & Traci
Skaff, Paul & Bobbi Smith, Patricia
Thieme, Deborah & John
Trainham, Jarod
Vaughn, Isaac
Ziems, Eric

Total from 28 Pledges General Fund \$199,060.00

TODAY'S FEAST:
THE PRESENTATION OF OUR LORD AND SAVIOR IN THE TEMPLE

When the most pure Mother and Ever-Virgin Mary's forty days of purification had been fulfilled, she took her first-born Son to Jerusalem on this, the fortieth day after His birth, that she might present Him in the temple according to the Law of Moses, which teaches that every first-born male child be dedicated to God, and also that she might offer the sacrifice of a pair of turtle-doves or two young pigeons, as required by the Law (Luke 2:22-24; Exod. 13:2; Lev. 12:6-8). On this same day, a just and devout man, the greatly aged Symeon, was also present in the temple, being guided by the Holy Spirit. For a long time, this man had been awaiting the salvation of God, and he had been informed by divine revelation that he would not die until he beheld the Lord's Christ. Thus, when he beheld Him at that time and took Him up into his aged arms, he gave glory to God, singing: "Now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace, O Master. . ." And he confessed that he would close his eyes joyfully, since he had seen the Light of revelation for the nations and the Glory of Israel (Luke 2:25-32). From ancient times, the Holy Church has retained this tradition of the churching of the mother and new-born child on the fortieth day and of the reading of prayers of purification.



The Apodosi of the Feast of the Meeting in the Temple is usually on the 9th of February. This, however, may vary if the Feast falls within the period of the Triodion. Should this occur, the Typicon should be consulted for specific information concerning the Apodosi of the Feast.

PREPARING FOR GREAT LENT by Fr. Alexander Schmemmann

Little by little since the Sunday of Zaccheus we have been preparing ourselves for Great Lent, which in turn is the movement towards the Feast of Feasts, the Pascha, Easter. The first Sunday of this preparatory period, the Sunday of the Pharisee and the Publican, has as its theme: Christianity as humility. The second Sunday, the Sunday of the Prodigal Son, has the theme: Christianity as return or conversion. The third Sunday has the theme: Christianity as judgment. The fourth Sunday has the theme: Christianity as forgiveness. These four themes are essential in our preparation for Great Lent.

Let us approach Lent with a proper understanding of this period. Let us not reduce this Lent to giving up something for Lent: for this idea fills man with such pride that he loses all the benefit he was supposed to achieve and even more. Let us not reduce Lent to our personal problem.

Lent is a time for slowing-down, for taking ourselves to account, in order that we may be spiritually prepared for the feast to come. Lent is the time when the Church withdraws from the New Testament into the Old Testament. Lent is the time when we become nostalgic for communion.

In a larger sense, Lent is a permanent dimension of Christianity. It is not a spiritual bath. Lent expresses the church as pilgrimage, as movement, as exodus. Lent opens our eyes to the things that we do not see. Let us remember the idea of Church as fast and feast, as expectation and fulfillment, as humility and glory.

The history of our salvation began when God told Abraham to go from Ur in Chaldaealand to the land of Canaan. Later on the Exodus from Egypt was the first Great Passover or Pascha. This Exodus is the first image of the Church as the Sons of Israel, the People of God. This Exodus has given us the symbol for the 40 days fast. The idea of the 40 is that the goal of those who went into the desert was the Promised Land. And so for us Christians the first spiritual dimension of Lent is 40 days. The Christian goal is the new Promised Land, the Kingdom of Heaven. Yet in the very desire for the Kingdom of Heaven, we somehow already possess it.

Lent means not only externals as fasting and doing without, but a change in our lives, and a renewal of our baptismal vows, and a new dedication to serve God, a decision for Christ. Above all, let us not misunderstand Lent. Our hymns clearly indicate the true purpose of Lent:

Let us begin the Fast with joy! Let us prepare ourselves for spiritual efforts! Let us purify and cleanse our flesh! Let us abstain from passion, as we abstain from food!

Let us rejoice in the Spirit and persevere with love! and another hymn: Brethren, while fasting physically, Let us also fast spiritually! Let us loosen every bond of injustice!

Let us destroy the strong fetters of violence! Let us tear up every unjust writing!

Let us give bread to the hungry, and Let us welcome the homeless poor to our homes.

That from Christ God we may receive great mercy!

Man of Resurrection

By His Eminence Metropolitan SABA (Isper)

Anastasios Yannoulatos, Archbishop of Tirana and All Albania, stands as a unique and extraordinary contemporary witness of the Orthodox faith. His approach to life was always grounded in the principles of faith, which shaped his every decision. A man of knowledge and action, prayer and evangelism, tradition and openness, he exemplified a rare combination of humility and courage. He preserved the treasure of faith while loving God’s creation.

Despite facing immense challenges, he remained steadfast in bearing and transmitting the Christian witness until his last breath. He preserved this witness with a joyful demeanor and genuine smile radiating from the peace of his soul which was indwelled by the Holy Spirit.

I was fortunate to accompany him for five days during his visit to the Patriarchate of Antioch in 2000. Though I did not know him previously, his humility, joy, and profound connection with people left a lasting impression. My admiration for him grew as I learned more about his remarkable service, including stories shared by his bishop, John, who accompanied him on that visit.

Archbishop Anastasios believed that Christ is the Head of the Church and regarded himself as merely the servant of the Lord and His Church. This profound humility allowed him to utilize the abundant gifts God had granted him to achieve extraordinary miracles. In Albania, he literally resurrected a church from near extinction, building it from the ground up and transforming it into a vibrant and organized church.

During his earlier missionary work in Africa, he ordained 62 readers and catechists from eight African tribes, translated the Divine Liturgy into four local languages, organized 150 Orthodox parishes and missions, and built several churches, school, and health centers.

In Albania, where the government had issued a decree declaring Albania a religion free state as of 1967, Archbishop Anastasios revived a church that had virtually ceased to exist. There were no churches, no monasteries, no heritage, and not even bishops. Only eighteen elderly priests had remained. Over the 33 years of his service as Archbishop, from 1992 to 2025, he built 150 new churches, reconstructed

160 others, restored 60 monasteries and churches, and established 70 ecclesiastical facilities, including schools, youth and medical centers, guesthouses, workshops, dormitories, soup kitchens, a theological academy, a seminary, a school for ecclesiastical music, and more. He also educated and ordained 168 priests. May his remarkable footsteps touch and inspire our blessed Archdiocese. This is a call from me to all capable and faithful members of our Archdiocese.

Through his extensive initiatives, Archbishop Anastasios brought the Albanian Church to financial self-sufficiency after starting with nothing. The Orthodox faithful of North America were blessed to contribute to many of his ecclesiastical and social projects through organizations such as IOCC and OCMC.

His efforts extended beyond ecclesiastical matters, as he worked to establish the Church’s presence in society and the state. He contributed to the development of Albania’s infrastructure, including three hydroelectric power projects, the construction of roads and bridges, and the renovation of public schools, among other initiatives that are too numerous to list in a single article.

He launched publications in Albania, including Resurrection for adults, Joy for children, and Bells for youth, in addition to a radio station. He established projects that included a publishing house, a candle factory, carpentry and iconography workshops, and restoration facilities. He also fought tirelessly for the restitution of Church properties.

Archbishop Anastasios combined theological knowledge and research in the history of religions with missionary and pastoral service, all while remaining acutely aware of social needs. He authored 24 books and delivered hundreds of lectures. His work presented a radiant and courageous face to non-Orthodox Christians, as he contributed to modern Christian witness, inter-Christian understanding, interfaith dialogue, and peaceful coexistence among peoples and religions. His presence at the World Council of Churches was as influential as that of great Orthodox leaders of the past, such as St. Nicholas Velimirovich and Fr. Georges Florovsky.

He departed this life on the morning of the feast of St. Gregory the Theologian, a saint who similarly labored to strengthen and revive the faith. When St. Gregory became Patriarch of Constantinople, nearly all the city's churches were in Arian hands, except for one small chapel. After a few years of his leadership, nearly all the churches had returned to Orthodoxy. Known for his love of hesychasm and poetic spirit, St. Gregory eventually retired to a hermitage after completing his mission. In contrast, righteous Archbishop Anastasios continued his labors, enduring all kinds of hardships until the Lord called him home.

In his later years, Archbishop Anastasios was deeply grieved by the lack of unity in the Orthodox world. He was profoundly pained by the divisions that affected the Church and issued a prophetic call reminiscent of the Old Testament prophets. In his message, he emphasized the need for Orthodox consensus and warned against unilateral decisions, earning him the well-deserved title of "The Wise Man of Contemporary Orthodoxy." For him, Christ was always the priority—above all things, no matter how great—in service to Christ, not the other way around. He left us bearing the sorrow of a fractured Orthodox reality, but he also left behind a pure theology and a vision of the Church untainted by worldly passions.

His uniqueness was based on living his theology and embodying it both in his personal life and in his