St. Nicholas Antiochian Orthodox Church

a parish of the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America
His Eminence Metropolitan SABA, Archbishop of New York &
Metropolitan of all North America
His Grace Bishop THOMAS, Auxiliary Bishop of the Diocese of Oakland & MidAtlantic
The Very Reverend Father Samuel Haddad, Pastor
Deacon Matthew Benefield
211 South Heber Street ☙ POB 5026 ☙ Beckley, WV 25801
Parish (304) 252-5821 - Cell (304) 541-8550 (*use this to contact Fr. Samuel*)
fr.samuel@att.net **www.orthodoxbeckley.org**

Tone 7 — **March 15, 2026** — Eothinon 7

Third Sunday of Great Lent
Veneration of the Precious and Life-Giving Cross

Martyr Agapios of Palestine and those with him; Apostle Aristoboulos of the Seventy, first bishop of Britain; New-martyrs Manuel of Crete and Parthenios

Today's Reader: Bruce Hamilton

Next Sunday– March 22, 2026

Reader: **Rdr. John Stroud**

Commemorations/Bread Offering for the Holy Oblation: **The Stroud Family**

The Luncheon next Sunday will be prepared by: **The Owens and Stroud Families**

Bread for the Holy Oblation is offered for the Health and Salvation of Westley, Serenity and Solomon and the members of the Shammaa Family.

It is also Given In Loving Memory of the departed members of the Shammaa Family.

"the Disciples were first called Christians in Antioch" (Acts 11:26)

Please note that **Holy Communion is reserved for members of the Holy Orthodox Church** who have prepared themselves through prayer, fasting and confession. However, all are welcome to partake of the blessed bread at the dismissal.

Please join us during our fellowship at the Coffee Hour immediately after the Divine Liturgy.

Important Announcements . . .

As we continue our journey in this blessed season of Great Lent, let us all remember to set aside time to pray, to fast, and to do works of mercy for those who need mercy. Enter into the Fast with joy in your heart, and humility in the face of God. This is a great time of preparation, and part of that preparation is a sincere self-evaluation and heartfelt confession. Fr. Samuel is available to hear your confession during Great Lent, and at the times listed in the coming week's schedule, or by appointment..

Please take a moment to make note of the Divine Services offered during Great Lent and put them on your personal calendar. Check the services in each week's Bulletin as changes can occur . During Great Lent, we offer increased prayers to God, and I hope that you can come to many of the services that are offered. May God bless your Lenten Journey!

The Men's Fellowship of St. Seraphim of Sarov

Meeting

Sunday, March 15th at 1:30 pm (after the Luncheon in the Church)
Plan to attend this very important meeting on the subject of our preparation for Great Lent and Participation in Great and Holy Week

"Blessings Box" Collection Update

Beloved in Christ,
This year, we are collecting non-perishable food for our new BLESSING BOX! PLEASE KEEP BRINGING FOOD so that we may continue to stock our shelves and have food to stock adequately. We need to continue our efforts in providing food for those who are truly Hungry. God bless everyone for your holy efforts!

Tone 7 **THIRD SUNDAY OF GREAT LENT** Eothinon 7

VENERATION OF THE PRECIOUS AND LIFE-GIVING CROSS

MARTYR AGAPIOS OF PALESTINE AND THOSE WITH HIM; APOSTLE ARISTOBOULOS OF THE SEVENTY, FIRST BISHOP OF BRITAIN; NEW-MARTYRS MANUEL OF CRETE AND PARTHENIOS

Troparion of the Resurrection, *in the Seventh Tone*

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.

Troparion for the Cross, *in the First Tone*

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

Troparion of St. Nicholas, *in the Fourth Tone*

Thy righteous acts have manifested thee to thy flock as a model of faith, a reflection of humility, and a teacher of abstinence, O Father Bishop Nicholas. Therefore, through humility thou hast achieved exaltation, and through poverty riches. Intercede thou with Christ to save our souls.

Kontakion of the Sundays of Great Lent*, in the Eighth Tone*

O Victorious Leader, we thy servants ascribe to thee our victory trophy. And since thou hast saved us from adversity we offer thee our thanks, O Theotokos. So as thou hast that invincible power, continue to deliver us from danger. That we may cry out to thee: Hail O Bride without Bridegroom!

Epistle

Hebrews 4:14-5:6

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

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

Gospel

Mark 8:34-9:1

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

Lenten Synaxarion

Sunday of the Adoration of the Cross

"Let all the earth venerate the Cross, through which it has learned to worship Thee, the Word."

On this third Sunday of the Great Fast we celebrate the Veneration of the precious and life-giving Cross. Since during the forty days of the Fast we are also in a way crucified, mortified to the passions, contrite, abased and despondent, the precious and life-giving Cross is offered to us as refreshment and confirmation, calling to mind the Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ and comforting us. If our God was crucified for our sake, how great should be our effort for His sake, since our afflictions have been assuaged through the Lord's tribulations, and by the commemoration and the hope of the Cross of glory. For as our Savior in ascending the Cross was glorified through dishonor and grief, so should we also endure our sorrows, in order to be glorified with Him. Also, as those who have traveled a long hard road, weighed down by the labors of their journey, in finding a shady tree, take their ease for a moment and then continue their journey rejuvenated, so now in this time of the Fast, this sorrowful and laborious journey, the Holy Fathers have planted the life-giving Cross, for our relief and refreshment, to encourage and make easier the labors that lie ahead. Or as when there is a royal procession, the king's scepter and banners precede him, and then he then himself appears, radiant and joyous in his victory, causing his subjects to rejoice with him. So then our Lord Jesus Christ, desiring to show His sure victory over death and His glory on the day of the Resurrection, sends His scepter before Himself, the sign of His kingship, the life-giving Cross, to gladden and refresh us, as it greatly fortifies and enables us to be prepared to receive the King with all possible strength, and to praise Him in His radiant victory.

This week lies at the middle of the holy Forty Day Fast. The Fast is like a bitter source because of our contrition and the sadness and sorrow for sin that it brings. And as Moses plunged the branch in the bitter waters of Marah, making them sweet, so God, Who has led us through the spiritual Red Sea away from Pharaoh, through the life-giving wood of the precious and life-giving Cross, sweetens the bitterness of the Forty Day Fast, and comforts us as those who were in the wilderness, up until the time when by His Resurrection He will lead us to the spiritual Jerusalem. And since the Cross is called, and indeed is, the Tree of Life, it is the very tree that was planted in the Garden of Eden. So it is fitting that the Holy Fathers have planted the Tree of the Cross in the middle of the Forty Day Fast to commemorate both Adam's tasting of its sweet fruit and of its being taken from us in favor of the Tree of the Cross, tasting of which we shall in no way die, but will have even greater life.

General Rules of the Lenten Fast

The Lenten Fast rules that we observe today were established within the monasteries of the Orthodox Church during the sixth through eleventh centuries. These rules are intended for all Orthodox Christians, not just monks and nuns.

The first week of Lent is especially strict. On Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday, a total fast is kept. In practice, very few people are able to do this. Some find it necessary to eat a little each day after sunset. Many faithful do fast com-pletely on Monday and then eat only uncooked food *(bread, fruit, nuts)* on Tuesday evening. On Wednesday, the fast is kept until after the Presanctified Liturgy.

From the second through the sixth weeks of Lent, the general rules for fasting are practiced. Meat, animal prod-ucts *(cheese, milk, butter, eggs, lard),* fish *(meaning fish with backbones),* olive oil and wine *(all alcoholic drinks)* are not consumed during the weekdays of Great Lent. Octopus and shell-fish are allowed, as is vegetable oil. On weekends, ol-ive oil and wine are permitted.

According to what was done in the monasteries, one meal a day is eaten on weekdays and two meals on weekends of Great Lent. No restriction is placed on the amount of food during the meal, though moderation is always encouraged in all areas of one's life at all times.

Fish, oil and wine are allowed on the Feast of the An-nunciation *(March 25)* and on Palm Sunday *(one week before Easter).* On other feast days, such as the First and Second Finding of the Head of Saint John the Baptist *(February 24),* the Holy Forty Martyrs of Sebaste *(March 9),* the Forefeast of the Annunciation *(March 24)* and the Synaxis of the Archangel Gabriel *(March 26),* wine and oil are permitted.

2026 Great Lent ~ Schedule of Services

3/15/26 (Sun)	O,DL	Sunday of the Veneration of the Holy Cross – Procession w/Decorated Cross
3/18/26 (Wed)	6:00 pm	Presanctified Divine Liturgy followed by presentation
3/19/26 (Thu)	6:00 pm	Great Compline
3/182026 (Fri)	6:00 pm	Akathist to the Most Holy Theotokos (4th Stasis)
3/22/26 (Sun)	O,DL	Sunday of St John Climacus
3/23/26 (Mon)	6:00 pm	Little Compline w/Life of St. Mary of Egypt & Full Canon of St. Andrew
3/24/26 (Tue)	5:00 pm 6:00 pm	Festal Orthros for the Feast of the Annunciation Festal Divine Liturgy for the Feast of the Annunciation
3/25//26 (Wed)	6:00 pm	Great Vespers for the Leave-taking of the Feast of the Annunciation
3/26/26 (Thu)	6:00 pm	Presanctified Divine Liturgy followed by presentation
3/27/26 (Fri)	6:00 pm	Akathist to the Most Holy Theotokos (Full)
3/28/2026	11:00 am	Baptisms - The Tomaino Family Reception afterward
3/29/26 (Sun)	O,DL	Sunday of the St. Mary of Egypt
4/1/26 (Wed)	6:00 pm	Presanctified Divine Liturgy followed by presentation
4/2/26 (Thu)	6:00 pm	Great Compline
4/3/26 (Fri)	6:00 pm	Little Compline w/Canon of the Raising of Lazarus
4/4/26 (Sat)	10:00 am	Divine Liturgy (Chrysostom) for Lazarus Saturday Baptisms after Liturgy—Reception afterward
4/4/26 (Sat)	5:00 pm	Festal Great Vespers for Palm Sunday
4/5/26 (Sun)	O,DL	Palm Sunday

Please check the schedule published in the Bulletin each week.

Calendar for the Week of March 15, 2026

Saints of the Day

Sunday—March 15, 2026 Sunday of the Veneration of the Holy Cross
9:25 am - Orthros
9:30 am - High School 10:00 am – Youth Ministry
10:30 am - Divine Liturgy—Procession with Cross
After Liturgy- Junior &Youngsters Church School
1:30 pm - Men's Fellowship Meeting in Church

Holy Martyr Agapios & His Companions

Monday— March 16, 2026 Strict Fast

Martyr Sabine the Egyptian & St. Christodoulos of Patmos

Tuesday—March 17, 2026 Strict Fast

St. Patrick, Enlightener of Ireland; St. Alexis, Man of God; St. Macarius of Kalazin

Wednesday—March 18, 2026 Strict Fast
6:00 pm Presanctified Divine Liturgy
Pot-luck Lenten Dinner/Presentation
"Holy Anaphora of St Basil the Great #3"

St. Cyril, Archbishop of Jerusalem

Thursday—March 19, 2026 Strict Fast
6:00 Great Compline

Holy Martyrs Chrysanthos and

Friday—March 20, 2026 Strict Fast
6:00 Akathist Hymn to the Theotokos w/Little Compline—4th Stasis

Holy Fathers of St. Sabbas Monastery killed by Saracens

Saturday—March 21, 2026 Strict Fast
5:00 pm Great Vespers
Confessions afterward

St. James the Confessor, Bishop of Catania; St. Enda, Abbot

Sunday—March 22, 2026 Sunday of St John Climacus
9:25 am - Orthros
9:30 am - High School 10:00 am – Youth Ministry
10:30 am - Divine Liturgy
After Liturgy- Junior &Youngsters Church School

Hieromartyr Basil, Presbyter of Ancyra; Holy New Martyr Euthymios of the Holy Mountain Athos

Please note that Confessions are heard at the time noted above in the coming week's schedule, or by appointment by calling Fr. Samuel at: ((304) 541-8550

St. Nicholas Orthodox Church

2026 Presentations

Given after the Presanctified Divine Liturgy during Great Lent

It is our tradition, following each of the six Presanctified Divine Liturgies during Great Lent (each Wednesday at 6:00 pm) to have a Lenten Pot-luck Dinner and a spiritual presentation.

"The Holy Anaphora of St. Basil the Great"

One writer once said that the "Eucharistic celebration is the sublime expression of the Christian Faith." Without a doubt, all Faithful Orthodox Christians know this to be true and the core of their spiritual life in Christ and His Holy Church. On the Sundays of Great Lent, we will experience what is, for the most part, the same Divine Liturgy we know so well yet called by a different name: **The Divine Liturgy of St. Basil the Great** – and in it, we find some very noticeable differences. One of these differences is the reading of long, beautiful prayers by the Priest, one of which is "**The Holy Anaphora of St. Basil the Great**". This series of Presentations will examine this rich set of prayers so that we can glean all that we can from the Divine Liturgy celebrated during the Holy Season of Great Lent.

Presentation III (3/18/2026): In this session we will study what is perhaps the most distinctive prayer in the Anaphora of St. Basil the Great:

5. *Postsanctus* (confession of Trinity's divine economy of salvation)

Presentation IV (3/26/2026): We continue our study with the following prayers of the Anaphora:

6. Institution Narrative ("take, eat . . . Drink this all of you . . ."; 7. Anamnesis (remembrance of Christ, with parallels to second article of Creed); 8. Offering of sacrifice; 9. Epiklesis (invocation of Holy Spirit to 'consecrate' both people and offering)

Presentation V (3/26/2026 – Thursday): In this session we will briefly review what has occurred so far in the Anaphora, up until the Epiklesis, and will continue to the end with the following prayers:

10. Intercessions for Church and world (stemming from Epiklesis); 11. Doxology of the Holy Trinity 12. Conclusion of the study of the Anaphora of St. Basil the Great. We will consider how our worship been impacted by the knowledge of all that we have learned in these presentations.

General Rules of the Lenten Fast

The Lenten Fast rules that we observe today were established within the monasteries of the Orthodox Church during the sixth through eleventh centuries. These rules are intended for all Orthodox Christians, not just monks and nuns.

The first week of Lent is especially strict. On Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday, a total fast is kept. In practice, very few people are able to do this. Some find it necessary to eat a little each day after sunset. Many faithful do fast com-pletely on Monday and then eat only uncooked food *(bread, fruit, nuts)* on Tuesday evening. On Wednesday, the fast is kept until after the Presanctified Liturgy.

From the second through the sixth weeks of Lent, the general rules for fasting are practiced. Meat, animal prod-ucts *(cheese, milk, butter, eggs, lard),* fish *(meaning fish with backbones),* olive oil and wine *(all alcoholic drinks)* are not consumed during the weekdays of Great Lent. Octopus and shell-fish are allowed, as is vegetable oil. On weekends, ol-ive oil and wine are permitted.

According to what was done in the monasteries, one meal a day is eaten on weekdays and two meals on weekends of Great Lent. No restriction is placed on the amount of food during the meal, though moderation is always encouraged in all areas of one's life at all times.

Fish, oil and wine are allowed on the Feast of the An-nunciation *(March 25)* and on Palm Sunday *(one week before Easter).* On other feast days, such as the First and Second Finding of the Head of Saint John the Baptist *(February 24),* the Holy Forty Martyrs of Sebaste *(March 9),* the Forefeast of the Annunciation *(March 24)* and the Synaxis of the Archangel Gabriel *(March 26),* wine and oil are permitted.