

ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST ORTHODOX CHURCH

ORTHODOX CHURCH IN AMERICA

A PARISH OF THE DIOCESE OF NEW YORK AND NEW JERSEY

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Department of
CHRISTIAN EDUCATION
ORTHODOX CHURCH IN AMERICA

Happy New Year!

On the first day of the year the Church commemorates Saint Basil the Great. He died on January 1, 379, having been born in 330. His few decades of life were packed full of remarkable achievements.

Both a theologian and lover of prayer, he wrote the Liturgy that we celebrate during Great Lent and on various feast days. He also actively cared for the poor, and his care extended to everyone, not just fellow Christians. No person was turned away from the soup kitchens and places of respite that he established.

As a bishop, Saint Basil had to resolve thorny Church issues and heal divisions, and was required to practice delicate diplomacy with government officials who were not always friendly to the Church. He dealt with the personal and spiritual problems of priests and parishioners. In addition, he wrote rules for monastic communities that have shaped their lives ever since.

At least once, Saint Basil described in writing the toll that all these efforts took on him. In a letter to Bishop Eusebius of Samosata he wrote that he was exhausted from physical weakness and from "a continuous illness, a rigorous winter, and the piling up of business..." Despite this, however, Saint Basil continued throughout his life to serve God and to do hard things.

With the new year, many of us will make resolutions. A recent book encourages teenagers to resolve to serve God in an intriguing way. Its title is "Do Hard Things" (Multnomah Books, 2008).

The book's subtitle is "A Teenage Rebellion Against Low Expectations," and the authors, brothers Alex and Brett Harris, urge fellow teens to join a "rebellion" against a culture that promotes comfort and encourages teens to remain childish for

Intercessory Prayers

We pray for all our fellow parishioners, and we pray especially for those who are incapable of being with us in church. Please keep in your prayers our Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

Genevieve Bobenko, Mary Fechisin, Andrew Fabian, Edward Fedush, Mary Hadginske, Helen Kurnewitz, Margaret Lawler, Kathleen Lazorzcyk, Marian Nagel, MaryAnn Rabakozi, Helen Rahnefeld, Anna Rozanovich, Nadia Sojka, Maryann Stagen, Eva Stashitsky, Ann Velebir.

too many years. This culture, they contend, assumes that teens are unwilling and unable to take on challenging tasks, to read deep and thought-provoking books, or to use their freedom for "huge accomplishments." But the Harris brothers believe that teens can do all these things. As they told an interviewer, "The teen years are not a vacation from responsibility. They are the training ground of future leaders who dare to be responsible now."

The authors describe "hard things" that teens have done, such as making a personal effort to pray and read Scripture regularly. Other examples are public things, for example working for a political candidate with admirable views, even when this requires overcoming a fear of speaking to groups.

Without being preachy, the authors liberally mix Biblical verses into their text. Here is Saint Paul on stepping out of one's comfort zone: "God did not give us a spirit of timidity, but a spirit of power, of love and of self-discipline" (2 Timothy 1:7).

They also cite Lamentations 3:27: "It is good for a man that he bear the yoke in his youth." Saint Basil, who must have taken on the yoke early to accomplish as much as he did in less than fifty years of life, probably liked that verse too.

Schedule of Services

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SATURDAY, JANUARY 7 – Synaxis of St. John the Baptist

9:00am - Divine Liturgy
6:00pm - Great Vespers

SUNDAY, JANUARY 8, 2017

9:00am - Divine Liturgy & Panikhida in memory of Joseph Korin, on the 40th day of his Repose

Birthday Greetings

Happy Birthday to **Stephen Fabian**, who celebrates his birthday this Tuesday, **Helen Kurnewitz**, whose 98th Birthday is this Wednesday, and **Joyce Cifaldi**, this Friday. May God grant all of you good health and happiness for Many Years!

Announcements

◆ **House blessings** will start on the Feast of Theophany on January 6. The schedule was posted in the last issue of "The Enlightener". If you would like to make changes, or if you are not included in the schedule but would like to have your house blessed this year, please call Fr. Igor to arrange or rearrange it.

◆ Save the date: On **Saturday, January 14, 2017 at 2:00pm** in our church there will be a **Healing service** to the Mother of God in front of her icon "Queen of All". This service is open for everyone and is for the healing from any disease (this icon is especially known for the healings that occurred of those who suffered with cancer).

◆ **Wall calendars for 2017** are available in the narthex. Many thanks to the calendar sponsor – J.C.Fila Lexington Memorial Home.

◆ **Envelopes for 2017** are available in the candle room. Please pick up your set and continue to support our parish, that does rely on your support! May the Lord bless you hundredfold for your generosity!



January 1, 2017

THE CIRCUMCISION OF OUR LORD AND SAVIOR JESUS CHRIST
Sunday Before the Theophany
St. Basil the Great

• **9:00am** – Divine Liturgy of St. Basil, followed by Molieben for the beginning of Civil New Year and blessing of Vasilopita

Epistles: 2Tim. 4:5-8(Sun. Before)

Col. 2:8-12 (Circumcision)

Gospels: Mk. 1:1-8 (Sun. Before)

Lk. 2:20-21,40-52 (Circumcision)

• **Coffee Hour** – everyone is invited for a fellowship following the service.

Schedule of Services

THURSDAY, JAN. 5 – EVE OF THEOPHANY

6:00pm - Vigil & Blessing of Waters

FRIDAY, JAN. 6 – THEOPHANY OF THE LORD

9:00am - Divine Liturgy

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