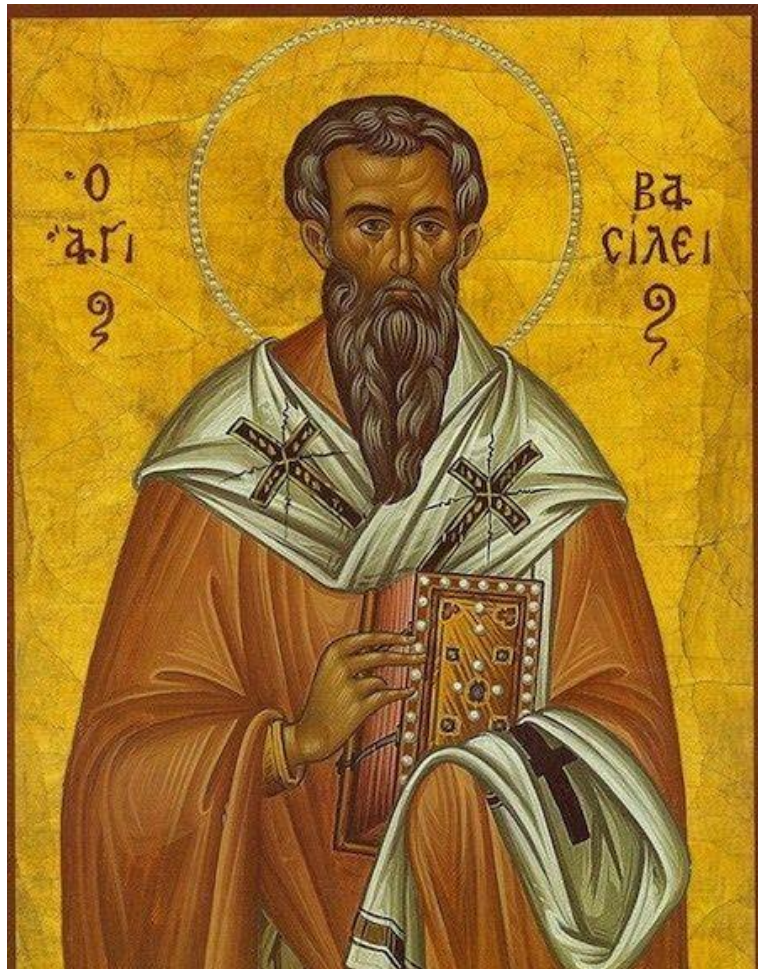


From the Divine Office for the Feast of St. Basil the Great (Jan. 1)

O Basil, in the fullness of your priesthood, you preached the Gospel of the Kingdom joyfully, pouring upon the Church the teachings of true Faith. By these, we learn to speak of godly things and to glorify the One Godhead - Father Almighty, Unique Word of God, and Holy Spirit Divine - three Persons undivided. Intercede with Him that He may enlighten and save our souls! (Vespers)

Mouth of wisdom and pillar of teachings, chalice of purity, O Basil the Great, you shine with spiritual light upon all men. Come, then, let us stand in the house of God, gazing ardently at the miracles which fill us with joy. Illumined by the splendor of his life, warmed by his cleansing breath, let us imitate his faith, his fervor as well as his humility. Through them, he has truly become a dwelling-place for our God. Singing to him, let us say, "O venerable Basil, you reveal Heaven's mysteries. (Orthros)



**Circumcision of our Lord, God and Savior Jesus Christ
Commemoration of our Father among the Saints Basil the
Great Archbishop of Caesarea in Cappadocia
January 1**



Our Lady of Perpetual Help Melkite Catholic Church
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Divine Liturgy: Sunday 10:00 AM

LITURGY OF ST. BASIL

Antiphon (Feast)

1. Shout joyfully to God, all you on earth.

O Son of God, who were circumcised in the flesh, save us who sing to You: Alleluia.

2. Sing to the glory of his name; proclaim his glorious praise.

O Son of God, who were circumcised in the flesh, save us who sing to You: Alleluia.

3. Say to God: "How tremendous are Your deeds! Because of Your great strength, Your enemies fawn upon You."

O Son of God, who were circumcised in the flesh, save us who sing to You: Alleluia.

Entrance Hymn

Priest: Come, let us worship and bow down before Christ.

People: O Son of God, Who are risen from the dead, save us who sing to You, Alleluia!

Troparion of the Resurrection (Tone 5) pg. 40

Let us, O faithful, praise and worship the Word, coeternal with the Father and the Spirit, born of the Virgin for our Salvation, for He was pleased to be lifted in the flesh upon the cross, and to endure death, and to raise the dead by His glorious resurrection.

Troparion of the Circumcision (Tone 1)

O Merciful Lord, who being God, assumed our human nature without undergoing change, You fulfilled the Law by accepting to be circumcised in the flesh, so as to put an end to pre-figurations and remove the veil of our passions. Glory to Your goodness, O Word! Glory to Your compassion! Glory to Your ineffable condescension!

Troparion of St. Basil the Great (Tone 1)

Your voice has sounded all over the earth, that accepted your preaching. You gave a divine explanation of doctrine, and made clear the nature of creatures, and set a rule of life for men. Holy Father and kingly priest, intercede with Christ God to grant us great mercy.

Patronal Troparion (Tone 1) Pg. 15

In giving birth, you have preserved your virginity and in falling asleep you did not forsake the world, O Mother of God. You have passed to life being the Mother of Life. Through your intercession, save our souls from death.

Kondakion of the Circumcision (Tone 3)

Today, the Lord of All endures Circumcision, circumcising the sins of men, for He is good and merciful. And He grants today salvation to the whole world, while Basil, the High Priest of the Creator, Christ's mystic and shining star, rejoices now in heaven.

The surgery of ascetic labors is the way we deal with our pride, our greed, our lust and the like: often particularly painful as it is a surgery we face daily. St. Paul described this dynamic as "... the circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the sins of the flesh" (Col 2:11). Elsewhere he catalogued these sins as "...your members which are on the earth: fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry" (Col 3:5). Lest we feel too confident in our "sinlessness," he continues the list with "anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy language" and lying (Col 3:8-9). Of these we continually need to be circumcised.

What Is "The Flesh"?

When speaking of "the sins of the flesh" St Paul uses a Greek word, *sarx*. This is not the Greek word for body – *soma* – which shows that the Apostle is not equating the body with sin. As the fourth-century Egyptian ascetic Poemen said, "*We were taught, not to kill the body, but to kill the passions.*" *Sarx* has been described as "*the complex of sin, death and futility into which humanity has imprisoned itself...*" (John S. Custer, *The Apostolic Writings*, p. 78). The term "flesh," then, includes anything including mental attitudes and even religious practices which are opposed to the kingdom of God.

Circumcising the flesh, in fact, involves dealing more with our motivations, our imaginations and the whole range of our conscious and subconscious thoughts. It is a refocusing of all our attitudes as well as our actions on God and the godly way of life. Asceticism, then, is the means by which we restore the natural hierarchy of body and spirit. The body is meant to serve the spirit; not the other way around, as is the case in the fallen world. Human nature in its fallen, sinful condition finds the spirit enslaved to the flesh, and to the need to gratify the appetites of the flesh. Insofar as the spirit remains in this state of bondage, it is rendered incapable of communing with God.

Spiritual circumcision, then, is an indispensable part of our progress toward union with God. It is an aspect of what we are urged to do continually in our liturgical services: "Let us commend ourselves, one another and our whole life to Christ God."



BISHOP'S APPEAL

The Bishop's Appeal is in full swing. You should have received your letter from Bishop Francois. The Appeal makes it possible to grow the diocese by helping to establish new outreaches and missions as well as train candidates for the diaconate and priesthood.

Bishop Francois' motto is: *Becoming Disciples, Making Disciples.*

Let us become disciples and help make disciples. Let each of us share our time, talents, and treasure to build up the Diocese of Newton.

DIVINE LITURGY INTENTIONS

Today +Alice & George Joseph. Requested by Marilyn & Zenon Tencza & family
+Diane Moossa
+Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI

This week's Coffee is hosted by Marilyn & Zenon Tencza
Next week's Coffee Hr. will be hosted by Ryan and Tina Dumont & family

Please remember in your prayers: George Arraj, Jr., Ron Abraham, Peter Abraham, Vi Gazal, Robert Ghiz, Sadie Mirante, Archie Opatka, Anthony Poti, Katherine Thomas, Charlotte Stockhaus, Ruth Welsh, Richard Abraham, Sr., Daneil Sarrouf, Bob Lynch, Michael Mooradian, Michael McNeil, Jeff McNeil, Wyatt Willian Rahall, and the people of Ukraine.

If there are people for whom you would like me to pray, please reach out and give me their names. Part of our vocation as Christians is to pray for each other, especially when someone is sick or suffering in any way.

CALENDARS

The 2023 calendars are at the rear of the church. Please take only one until we're sure everyone has gotten one. We will not do a general mailing of calendars. If you know someone who would like a calendar and can't get to church, please let me know and I will send them one.

Last Week's Collection

Weekly	\$1,912
Candles	\$ 32
Christmas Flowers	\$ 180
Christmas Offerings	\$1,236
Memorials	\$ 125
TOTAL	\$3,485

God bless you for your generosity!



Welcome to any visitors we have with us this morning! We are happy to have you worship with us.

Please join us downstairs in the church hall for the coffee hour so that we can get to know each other better and answer any questions you may have about the parish or the Melkite Church.

MEMORY ETERNAL

Our sister, Diane Moossa, fell asleep in the Lord this past week. Her wake will be Tuesday, January 3 from 10-11AM followed by the Funeral Service. Both are in the church.

Our condolences go out to the family!

May she rest in a place where there is no pain, no grief, no sighing, but everlasting life!

THANK-YOU

Thanks for all the Christmas good wishes, prayers, cards and gifts! They are much appreciated. I am truly blessed to serve you as Pastor!

Fr. Bryan

LITURGICAL SCHEDULE FOR THE THEOPHANY

THU 1/5, 6PM Great Vespers—Feast of Theophany

FRI 1/6, 6PM Divine Liturgy-Feast of Theophany followed by the Great Blessing of Water

Come celebrate the Baptism of the Lord and the manifestation of the Trinity!



January 1 – Feast of the Circumcision of Our Lord

OUR CELEBRATION OF CHRIST’S NATIVITY draws to a close today with the Feast of His Circumcision. Many primitive cultures have traditions of marking the body in some way to distinguish the recipient as a member of the tribe, a warrior, or a member of the ruling class. In the Middle East circumcision has been practiced as a sign of belonging at least since the time of Abraham. To this day it is a defining rite among both Jews and Muslims.

In the book of Genesis we read God’s requirement: *“This is my covenant with you and your descendants after you that you must keep: every male among you shall be circumcised. Circumcise the flesh of your foreskin, and that shall be the mark of the covenant between you and me. Throughout the ages, every male among you, when he is eight days old, shall be circumcised, including house-born slaves and those acquired with money from any foreigner who is not of your blood. Yes, both the house-born slaves and those acquired with money must be circumcised. Thus my covenant shall be in your flesh as an everlasting pact. If a male is uncircumcised, that is, if the flesh of his foreskin has not been cut away, such a one shall be cut off from his people; he has broken my covenant...”* (Gen 17:10-14).

In accordance with this law the Lord Jesus was circumcised eight days after His birth. It was also the time that He was formally given the name Jesus. At first glance we see that in this Jesus’ family was simply doing what was customary among Jews. They were making the infant a part of God’s People, the people of the Covenant. By His incarnation the Word of God became a human being, one of us by nature. By His circumcision He became a member of a specific people, a Jew. He would observe the Sabbath, study Torah and observe the festival pilgrimages to Jerusalem (see Lk 2:41-52). He would observe the traditions of Israel because it was through Israel that the world would be saved. As we sing at vespers on this feast: *“The most merciful God did not disdain circumcision in the flesh. He offered Himself instead as a symbol and example of salvation to all. He made the Law, and yet submitted Himself to its commands and to what the prophets had foretold of Him. O our God, who hold all things in Your hands, and yet were wrapped in swaddling clothes: O Lord, glory to You!”*

The Church, reflecting on His circumcision, looked at it from other vantages as well. St. Cyril of Alexandria, for example, in his third homily on the Gospel of St. Luke, noted: *“It seems to me that circumcision achieved three distinct ends. In the first place, it separated the descendants of Abraham by a sort of sign and seal and distinguished them from all other nations.*

“Second, it prefigured in itself the grace and efficacy of divine baptism. Formerly a male who was circumcised was included among the people of God by virtue of that seal; nowadays a person who is baptized and has formed in himself Christ the seal becomes a member of God’s adopted family.

“Third, circumcision is the symbol of the faithful when they are established in grace, as they cut away and mortify the tumultuous rising of carnal pleasures and passions by the sharp surgery of faith and by ascetic labors. They do this, not by cutting the body but by purifying the heart. They do this by being circumcised in the spirit and not in the letter.”

Our Spiritual Circumcision

A circumcision is a cutting of the flesh; circumcision according to the letter, as St Cyril describes it, is also a cutting, but of the heart. It is the removal of something, often painful, so that we can be fitting members of Christ by “the sharp surgery of faith and by ascetic labors.”

The sharp knife of faith removes from our hearts its reliance on whatever we trust for our security other than the true God. In the Roman Empire Jews trusted in the Law of Moses and pagans trusted in the gods and goddesses of the state. In our day it may be our family, our job, our culture or our political and economic systems that we feel will take care of us. People continually find that any of these can fail them drastically if they put the confidence in them that is due to God alone.

Prokimenon

Reader: My mouth shall speak wisdom, prudence shall be the utterance of my heart.

People: My mouth shall speak wisdom, prudence shall be the utterance of my heart.

Reader: Hear this, all you peoples; hearken, all who dwell in the world.

People: My mouth shall speak wisdom, prudence shall be the utterance of my heart.

Reader: My mouth shall speak wisdom, .

People: Prudence shall be the utterance of my heart.

Epistle: Col. 2:8-12

Alleluia

Listen, O Shepherd of Israel, O Guide of Joseph’s flock!

Verse: The mouth of the just tells of wisdom, and his tongue says what is right.

Gospel: Lk 2:20-21 & 40-52

Hirmos of Saint Basil (Tone 3)

In you, O Full of Grace, all creation rejoices, the orders of angels and the human race as well: O Sanctified Temple, Spiritual Paradise, and Glory of Virgins, from whom our God, who exists before all eternity, took flesh and became a little Child! He has taken your womb as His throne, making it more spacious than the heavens. Therefore, Full of Grace, in you all creation rejoices: glory to you!

Kinonikon

Praise the Lord...

After Communion

Troparion of the Circumcision

