

Weekly eBulletin
Thursday, December 29, 2016

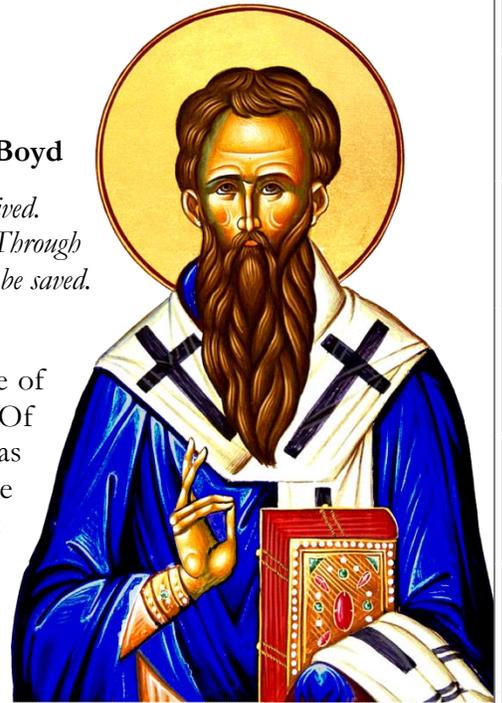
*St. Basil Church members exist to BE Disciples,
MAKE Disciples, and GROW Disciples of Jesus Christ.*

Who Is Saint Basil the Great?

by Fr Allan Boyd

*The sound of your voice has gone throughout the lands and your teachings have been received.
You have divinely explained the nature of beings and have given a rule of life for man. Through
your kindly priesthood Father Basil, intercede with Christ our God, that our souls may be saved.*
~ Hymn to Saint Basil

Among all of the saints, our parish's patron saint, Basil, offers an example of the most innovative ways toward Orthodox discipleship to Jesus Christ. Of course he wasn't innovative with the Church's doctrine, but rather, he was innovative in practical ways of offering love. He stands above the rest as one of Christendom's primary witnesses on how an entire community is taught the way to salvation through a creative and tangible participation with the Holy Spirit, as He dynamically leads us toward a loving expression of the Kingdom of Heaven. How can this be, that an Orthodox Christian saint...steeped in the Church's Tradition...could be such a model for inventiveness? This is one of the things that makes Saint Basil so great!



He was born in the year 330 in Caesarea, which was Cappadocia's governmental center. He descended from a family of nobles, famous for their business expertise, their remarkable wealth...and their unquenchable zeal for the Christian Faith. St Basil spent the first years of his life on a wealthy estate belonging to his parents, being cultured and developed by his mother Emilia and grandmother Macrina (who also later became saints). As a young boy, Saint Basil was homeschooled by his father, a brilliant orator and lawyer. Later, Basil transferred to a school in Constantinople, where he was taught by the city's most eminent orators and philosophers. Finally, he completed his schooling in Athens...the center of the best classical education that money could buy.

After only four or five years in Athens, Basil had mastered everything he studied. "He studied all subjects thoroughly...more than most people would put into studying even a single subject. He studied each science in its very totality, as though nothing else mattered. It was here that he became famously regarded as a philosopher, linguist, speechmaker, attorney, and naturalist...also holding expert understandings of astronomy, mathematics, business and medicine.

After Saint Basil's father died, his mother, Emilia, his oldest sister, Macrina, and several female servants began to live as nuns on the family estate. Inspired by the fervor of their faith, he also now decided to devote himself to the life of an ascetic. He was baptized and was tonsured a Reader. As such...he consistently read the Holy Scriptures to the people, and then explained them.

He was ordained a deacon at 32 years old, and then two years later to the priesthood...preaching daily. When the Bishop of Caesarea died, St Basil was chosen, at 40 years old to replace him as bishop.

Suddenly, he was thrust into enormous political struggles because of a powerful heretical group known as the Arians, who wrongfully taught that God's Son didn't exist from before all time...insisting rather that He was a

created being. Saint Basil, however, overwhelmed the Arians with his powerful public debates against them, and he used his writings to soundly rebuff their poisonous heretical beliefs. The people then nicknamed Saint Basil, "The Bee," because he stung the Church's enemies...yet nourished his flock with the sweet honey of his teaching.

During his time as bishop, there was a terrible drought throughout the land...and thus also a great famine. Many came to the Church in Caesarea seeking help. Our beloved Saint Basil had great compassion and sought to offer them some relief. Thus, outside Caesarea, on largely undeveloped land, Saint Basil began building a charitable new town, beginning with a chapel at its center, staffing various parts of the town with clergy who were especially skilled in various other vocations. These dedicated clergy took the lead in organizing the day-to-day activities of this new town's residents and also in caring for the poor and the sick. This new charitable center became known as Basilius ("the Kingdom," since it reflected the Kingdom of Heaven and its economy...and also because it reflected what can happen when we let God's love and His will rule over our hearts).

This new town of Saint Basil's contained innovative institutions to deal with the challenges of his day, such as a hospital; a leper clinic; residences for travelers and the poor; and small commercial facilities or manufacturing workshops for teaching and practicing trades...such as carpentry or blacksmithing. In this new Basilius, with the Church's liturgical and sacramental life at its center, the poor were put to work and were even trained in trades of various kinds, so that they could become self-sustaining. Projects like these were largely unheard of in the 4th century Cappadocian Church, or anywhere else for that matter. They came from the resourceful imagination of Saint Basil, to offer love to people who were facing the major problems of his day. As the Basilius grew, it attracted poor immigrants from many other places, some rather distant, who upon their arrival were also enrolled in its program of charity and work. In modern estimations, this sounds like it would be a financial disaster, but between the work of the Holy Spirit & Saint Basil's groundbreaking approach to "*Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven,*" it had surprising consequences. His new Basilius project actually flourished, overtaking Caesarea as the "New Caesarea," while the old Caesarea fell into deterioration, eventually becoming a ghost town. Saint Basil's approach (or rather, God's approach of offering love to suffering neighbors in tangible ways) fostered a self-sustaining, blossoming economy for the inhabitants of his metropolis. Yes, Saint Basil and his flock had an interior "spiritual" life...but it was balanced with an Orthodox understanding that such a life must tangibly bear forth the fruit of God's loving Kingdom into the lives of the suffering around us.

On our parish feast day, as we remember our Patron Saint, Basil, let's remember how his life exemplified the very "nature of being" we sing about each Sunday when we sing his hymn. The Orthodox Church was never meant to be a museum where we come to admire our saints as if they were mere fossils. We were never meant to woodenly sing hymns about the saints as though they no longer offered any transformation for our lives. We are meant to follow our saints' holy example...not just passively admire them for their piety. When we sing about "the sound of *Saint Basil's* voice going throughout the lands with teachings that divinely explain the nature of beings...and...that give a rule of life for man"...we need to remember that, following his example (who was actually following Christ's example) we're supposed to be doing that too. In fact, it's a matter of life and death for us...determining whether we flourish like Saint Basil's Basilia...or fall into decay like the old Caesarea. Following the example of his ways, *the sound of our voice must go throughout the lands with teachings that divinely explain the nature of beings...*the Church's teachings. Why else are we here? Otherwise, we've resigned ourselves to merely giving lip service to what we claim to believe. Otherwise we've turned our backs on what it means to love God & love our neighbor.

So, in the spirit of our beloved patron, for the sake of our own souls, let's begin to ponder together, What brings the greatest sorrow to those who are suffering around us? Being led by the Holy Spirit, let's begin to determine how we, as our Lord's Basilius (His Kingdom), can begin to offer tangible love to the particular struggles of our neighbors in San Jose?

"Through your kindly priesthood, father Basil, intercede with Christ our God that our souls may be saved."

GREEK ORTHODOX ARCHDIOCESE OF AMERICA

As the Father has sent me, so I send you. (John 20:21)

January 1, 2017 - Feast of Saint Basil and New Year

To the Most Reverend Hierarchs, the Reverend Priests and Deacons, the Monks and Nuns, the Presidents and Members of the Parish Councils of the Greek Orthodox Communities, the Distinguished Archons of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, the Day, Afternoon, and Church Schools, the Philoptochos Sisterhoods, the Youth, the Hellenic Organizations, and the entire Greek Orthodox Family in America

Beloved Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

As we welcome the new year on the Feast of Saint Basil, we are strengthened and inspired by the mighty acts of God in 2016. One of our tremendous blessings was the gathering in Nashville for the 43rd Biennial Clergy Laity Congress of our Holy Archdiocese. Our theme for the Congress was “You are the Voice of Christ in a Changing World,” and we continue our focus on this theme as we plan our ministry and service in the year to come.



The commemoration of Saint Basil the Great on this day provides us with an example of holiness, leadership, and service that embodies this theme. From his prayerful manner of life and his deep faith and spiritual insight, we see a man who knew Christ and lived in His presence. Through his sermons, theological treatises, and pastoral diakonia he was the voice of Christ. He lived during a time marked by theological controversies and transitions related to Christianity and the Church. Many people had significant physical and spiritual needs. In this very challenging and changing period, Saint Basil offered wisdom, comfort, and guidance by the grace of God.

In following the witness of Saint Basil and many other Fathers of the Church who have been the voice of Christ, we are sent by our Lord into the world and into this new year to share the Gospel of faith and love, to bring comfort and healing with God’s grace, and to help others know Christ and His blessings of peace and life.

He sends us as His voice into a world that continues to change. At the beginning of each calendar year we are reminded of this rapid change as we survey the events of the last twelve months. We are called as Orthodox Christians to meet this change with grace and truth. We do this as we commit to the timeless mission of the people of God to live and proclaim the Gospel. We also do this as seen in the breadth and substance of our ministries and through expanding and adapting our work to meet contemporary needs. We are sent by Christ with a message of hope and life and with the wisdom to navigate a changing and challenging world while sharing His grace in effective ways.

On this Feast of Saint Basil we also share the voice of Christ through our support of our beloved Saint Basil Academy. For over seventy years this has been a place of peace, faith, and nurture for children and youth, offering them love and care in the name and presence of Christ. May we offer our prayers for the directors, benefactors, and residents of the Academy. As we participate in the cutting of the Vasilopeta in our communities, may we respond generously to the call of our Ladies Philoptochos Society to support this vital ministry.

May we also affirm our commitment to be the voice of Christ in all that we do. Certainly, we will be His voice through the witness of our worship; but let us also be His voice through the growth and quality of our ministry to families, children, youth, and senior adults. Let us be His voice through the quality of our educational work and resources. Let us be His voice in our outreach to the unchurched. Let us be His voice in our homes, schools, and workplaces. Let us be His voice in traditional, unique, and inspiring ways so that others will find life and peace in Him.

With paternal love in Christ,
†DEMETRIOS, Archbishop of America

COME, JOIN THE FESTIVITIES!

Our **Parish Feast-day** is THIS Sunday, January 1. We ask that you and your family come join us as we honor our Patron Saint Basil the Great of Cappadocia.

▪ We will begin the festivities with **Great Vespers, on December 31 at 6:30 pm**. His Eminence, Metropolitan Gerasimos, will be joining us along with Clergy and Parishioners from our sister parishes. There will be a Potluck Reception following Vespers.

▪ We will have a **Vasilopita cutting**, during the reception where we NEED a representative from each ministry to be present to receive their slice from His Eminence.

▪ The festivities will continue on **Sunday, January 1 at 8:30 am** with Orthros + Divine Liturgy. We will have His Grace Bishop Apostolos and Fr Matthew Swehla with us to celebrate our Parish Feast and the New Year. Following, we will have a Parish Wide Pot Luck. Please bring your favorite dish to share with everyone.

Sunday's Reading

Click on the link below to read this Sunday's Epistle & Gospel: **The Circumcision of Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.**

Epistle Reading:

http://www.goarch.org/chapel/lectionary_view?type=E&code=174&event=363&date=1/1/2017

Gospel Reading:

http://www.goarch.org/chapel/lectionary_view?type=G&code=376&event=363&date=1/1/2017

For Mediation

The bread which you do not use is the bread of the hungry; the garment hanging in your wardrobe is the garment of him who is naked; the shoes that you do not wear are the shoes of the one who is barefoot; the money that you keep locked away is the money of the poor; the acts of charity that you do not perform are so many injustices that you commit.

~ *St. Basil the Great*

Sunday Service Teams

- **USHER**

January 1: Mark Judge & Evangelos Spyropoulos
Next Sunday: Tony Pettis and John Anhari

- **READER**

January 1: Isaiah Johnson
Next Sunday: Michael Wilson

- **COFFEE HOUR**

January 1: Parish Pot Luck.
Please bring your favorite dish to share.

Next Sunday: D + F + G

- **NOTE:**

- *Coffee Hour teams...*

- *please bring a bottle of Half & Half on Sundays.*

- *please set up & break down tables & chairs.*

**COFFEE
FELLOWSHIP**

Join us!



- **PROSFORA OFFERING**

January 1: Presvytera Danita
Next Sunday: Nitsa Sialaris

- **FLOWER MINISTRY**

January 1: Moriah Condos
Next Sunday: Corina Stancu

Services & Events

- **PARISH FEAST-DAY GREAT VESPERS**

On **Saturday, December 31 at 6:30 pm**. We will be blessed to have among us His Eminence Metropolitan Gerasimos of San Francisco, Bay Area Clergy and Parishioners from other parishes. It will be a blessed evening. There will be a Pot Luck following service.

- **PARISH FEAST-DAY DIVINE LITURGY**

On **Sunday, January 1 starting at 8:30 am** with Orthros followed by Divine Liturgy. His Grace Apostolos along with Father Matthew Swehla and his family will be joining us for the Liturgy of Saint Basil that morning.

• **YOUNG ADULT ORTHODOX PROFESSIONALS FORUM**



What is Love? Mark your calendars for January 3rd. We currently meet on the 1st Tuesday and the 3rd Friday of each month.

Our next meeting is on January 3rd, where we'll explore and compare the world's definitions of love with the Orthodox Christian one. Whether it's romantic love, brotherly love, or Godly love, how does our Orthodox Christian Faith help to make sense of it all?



• **DIVINE LITURGY & SMALL BLESSING OF THE WATERS**

On Wednesday, January 4 at 7:00 pm.

• **DIVINE LITURGY & GREAT BLESSING OF THE WATERS**

On Thursday, January 5 at 7:00 pm for Theophany.

• **HOUSE BLESSINGS**

House blessings begin on January 6, 2017 and run till Lent begins on Feb 27th. Please fill out the form (available on Maria's desk) and turn in to Fr Allan's mail box **as quickly as possible**.



☩ NOTE: Please don't base the scheduling of your visit on a perceived need to feed Fr Allan, or give him a stipend, or on whether you feel your house is clean enough. He loves you and just wants you and your house to be blessed. ☩

• **DIVINE LITURGY**

On Saturday, January 7 at 8:30 am starting with Orthros + Divine Liturgy for St. John the Baptist.

• **THE WHYS OF ORTHODOX CHRISTIANITY CLASS**

On Wednesday, January 11 at 7:00 pm.

• **TEENS (6TH GRADE & UP) – MARK THE DATE JANUARY 27TH**

Ping-pong, Board games & Hot Chocolate Bar at Tom Guardino's home. Teens will begin meeting for an activity on the last Friday of every month.



• **GODPARENT SUNDAY**

MARK THE DATE! Sponsored by Sunday School



On **Sunday, January 29** we will celebrate Godparent Sunday. Your child will receive more information through their

Sunday School teacher in the next couple of weeks. We encourage families to invite the Godparents of their children to attend Sunday Liturgy. If a Godparent is unable to be there, we encourage kids to adopt someone from our parish for the day.

• **JOY**



On **Sunday, February 5**, following Sunday School, the kids will meet with Presvytera Danita in the hall, where they will learn how to make

koliva. Kids are encouraged to bring names of departed family members and friends. After we've made the koliva, Fr Allan will teach the kids about the Church's tradition of memorials. Then we will have a memorial service together. Parents are welcome to join.

Stewardship 2017

As we come to a close with our 2016 pledges we ask that you begin to consider continuing giving of your time and talents to our parish by filling out the New Stewardship Cards for 2017. They have been printed and made available for us. Offer this tangible sign of love for God and for our beloved Saint Basil parish

Please prayerfully fill out a 2017 Stewardship Pledge Card, to support Saint Basil ministries. As our Lord has blessed each of us so generously...so also be generous toward Him. Together, "as coworkers with Him," our beloved parish will thrive, growing in Christ.

Glorify Him!

2017 Calendars

The 2017 St. Basil Calendars are in and may be picked up from the ledge of the Secretary's desk.

Ministry Opportunities



We have some slots opening up for parish council representatives. If you are interested in helping our Saint Basil Church grow in Christ, and in His ministry, and in outreach to our neighbors...and are willing to offer your skills, leading this parish to accomplish our Lord's work, please submit your name to Aristeia Petis; John Anhari; or Karen Ambus. You may also nominate someone else you feel is particularly suited for such leadership.



We currently have an opportunity for one or more people to offer their skills, planning and implementing the 2017 Saint Basil Gala. This ministry has been vital in helping our parish fulfil its financial obligations.

If you, or a team of people would like to take on this role, serving our parish please contact Fr. Allan.

Bookstore

The St. Basil Bookstore is here for your needs. It is stocked with icons and books which will enhance your spiritual growth along with your families and friends. Besides books, we also carry many other Orthodox items such as sensors, vigil lamps, prayer books, prayer ropes to name just a few for both personal or gift-giving purposes. You are encouraged to browse the bookstore after each service or during the secretary's workdays (Tuesday - Thursday from 9:00 am to 1:00 pm). Feel free to ask questions. Let us know if you can't find something; maybe we can order it for you.

Prayer Request

Are you sick or will be having surgery? If so, please let the office know and we can include your name on the prayer request list.

Please keep in your prayers:

Maria Anagnostos	Megan Ng
John Anhari	Giovanni Nitis
Samira Bahous	Nicholas Manis
Levi Blain	Voula Papadatos
Elaine Bracket	Georgia Photopoulos
Maria Davis	Paul Rousseve
Andrew Froumis	Mary Sarcone
Philip Gosvener	Joanne Smith
Otto Hampel	Anna Stavaridis
Elaine Honjas	Kristos Stavropoulos
Alyssa Jimenez	Nicholas Steely
Ron Jimenez	Nicholai Taranin
Shamiram Joseph	Thanasis Theologides
Lillian Kawar	Vickie Wilson
Vasso Koffas	Lena Xydes
Athena Lofaro	Nectarios
May Louie	George Zambos
George Nicholas	Suzanna Zeitler

Bay Area Events

• STS. PETER AND PAUL MISSIONS MINISTRY

Each January the St. Nicholas Missions Ministry holds a Vasilopita Fellowship with a guest speaker. This year they are most fortunate to have a "double feature" of speakers. They are a couple who serves in the third world and from a young English teacher who is becoming a full time missionary.

Greg and Nan Howland, youthful grandparents will tell us of their years of returning to Haiti to help in medical facilities. Their primary function while there is to train the nurses and care takers in skills of care, procedures and communication with patients.



Ms. Jennifer Rice is a young missionary preparing to serve in Guatemala for two years. She has been there on short term mission trips and feels called to a long-time commitment. She is a graduate of the Master of Theological Studies program at Hellenic College Holy Cross School of Theology and, completed coursework at the Boston Theological Institute in Missions and Ecumenism. Jennifer also holds a MS degree from Drexel University, a teaching credential and a BA in Studio art. Most recently, she has been teaching English at the high school level.

Plan to attend the vasilopita cutting, inspiring speakers, and a buffet of special treats. Bring a friend! If you have a schedule conflict checks can be made out to Sts. Peter and Paul Missions Ministry with OCMC in memo and mailed to c/o St. Nicholas Church 986 Chapman St., San Jose, CA 95126.

WHEN? January 21, 2017 from 2-5 PM
WHERE? St. Nicholas 1260 Davis St.
 San Jose, CA small hall

• **SUMMER CAMP**



Saint Nicholas Ranch, Summer Camp registrations usually fill up by the end of January. So, don't delay, get your kids registered

ASAP. You can easily register your kids online by going to the following link:
<http://www.youth.sanfran.goarch.org/editor/summer-camp/>

Let Maria Know...



Let Maria know...

- 1) if you no longer wish to receive the eBulletin.
- 2) if you would like to be added to our weekly eBulletin distribution list. Please provide me with your first & last name and email address.
- 3) if we have your current contact information: name, address, phone number(s) and email address.

You can send an email to Maria at: stbasilchurch@sbcglobal.net or call 408-268-3214 on Tuesday – Thursday from 9:00 am to 1:00 pm.

Thank you!

Now Enrolling



Safari Kid has over 30 locations in USA, Canada, Hong Kong, Malaysia and India for Preschool and Pre-K Programs. They have an ability-based learning program committed to helping all students become lifelong learners:

- Creative Arts & Literacy
- Imaginative Explorations
- Phonics & Math
- Stem Program
- Social/Emotional Development
- Music & Movement
- Customized Curriculum

Call 408-600-6031 or visit www.safarikidUSA.com or www.facebook.com/safarikidalmaden to enroll your child today!

Church Directory



We have begun to develop a new church directory as the current one is so out of date. Please help us update our records.

We would like to obtain:

- The name of each family member
- Home address
- Home phone number
- Cell & email address

Email it to: stbasilchurch@sbcglobal.net
or call the office 408-268-3214.

It is important to inform the Church Office when you have an address change. In this way, we are able to keep our files current and avoid unnecessary charges from the Post Office.

Bulletin Deadline

All announcements and articles must be written as you would like them to appear in the bulletin(s). Changes and edits might be made. They must be emailed to: stbasilchurch@sbcglobal.net **BY WEDNESDAY MORNING, 10:00 AM.** Thank you for your cooperation and understanding.

Christ is Born! ~ Glorify Him!