

St. Anthony the Great Orthodox Church

A Parish of the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America

7202 FM 2920 ~ Spring, TX 77379 ~ (281) 251-6000

www.StAnthonyTheGreat.org

OFFICE HOURS: Tuesday-Friday 9:00a-3:00p ~ Office is closed on Mondays

Rev. Anthony Baba, Priest	(281) 995-0582	FrAnthonyBaba@gmail.com
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31 December 2017

WELCOME TO OUR VISITORS AND GUESTS If you would like to receive our weekly email of events and services, please complete the Welcome Card located in the pew pocket, and place it in the offering tray or give it to one of the ushers. You are welcome to join us next door for coffee and fellowship following the service.

RECEIVING COMMUNION While only Orthodox Christians who have spiritually prepared themselves by fasting, prayer and confession may receive Holy Communion, all are welcome to venerate the Cross and receive the blessed bread at dismissal.

CELL PHONES and all other electronic devices should be shut off during Divine Liturgy.

BULLETIN DEADLINE To include information in the bulletin, please notify the Church Office by 9:00AM Wednesday at OfficeOfStAnthony@gmail.com.

PRAYER REQUESTS To be included on the prayer list, or to join the parish prayer chain, please contact the Church Office.

TODAY'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

BREAD OF OBLATION is offered by Mark Enterline

COFFEE HOUR is sponsored by the Kokkinis Family, Rachael Chaney and Janet Brundage

DEADLINE FOR PARISH PHOTO DIRECTORY is today! Forms are available in the narthex and in the hall.

COFFEE HOUR/HOLY BREAD SIGN-UP CHART FOR 2018 is in the hall on the information table.

CHURCH OFFICE will be closed Monday, January 1st. Regular office hours will resume Tuesday, January 2nd (Tuesday through Friday, 9:00 AM to 3:00 p).

SPAGHETTI LUNCHEON starts January 11th! Please feel free to take information cards and share them with your friends, family and neighbors! Cards are on the information tables in the narthex and in the hall.

SCHEDULE OF THIS WEEK'S DIVINE SERVICES

Wednesday, Jan. 3	~	No Services
Friday, Jan. 5	5:30 p 6:30 p	Orthros Divine Liturgy for Feast of Theophany followed by Blessing of the Waters
Saturday, Jan. 6	4:30 p 5:00 p	Confession (or by appointment w/Fr. Anthony) Great Vespers
Sunday, Jan. 7	8:45 AM 10:00 AM	Orthros Divine Liturgy

UPCOMING MEETING AND ACTIVITIES

SERVICES FOR THE FEAST OF THE THEOPHANY will be served on Friday, January 5th, with Orthros at 5:30p, followed by Divine Liturgy and the Blessing of the Waters at 6:30p.

SPAGHETTI LUNCH COMMITTEE If you would like to volunteer your time for our weekly Spaghetti Luncheons, please join us for our preliminary meeting on Tuesday, January 9th at 10:30AM. Please call the Church Office (281-251-6000) if you plan to attend this meeting.

FIRST SPAGHETTI LUNCH will be Thursday, January 11th from 11 AM to 2 p. Come and join us for great food and fellowship!

PARISH COUNCIL MEETING is scheduled for Thursday, January 11th, at 7:15p.

NOTICES & ANNOUNCEMENTS

STRIVE TO TITHE Our General Pledge Fund Drive for the coming year has commenced. The goal is for each of us to offer the Biblical tithe (or 10%) of our income. Understandably, giving a tithe can be difficult, financially burdensome and maybe even impossible, but we can certainly strive for it little by little. Pledge forms are available in the narthex and on the information table in the Hall. As of December 3rd there are 29 pledging families for 2018.

ADULT EDUCATION AND CATECHISM CLASS led by Deacon Photios begins after everyone has received Holy Communion and meets in the old Fellowship Hall.

YOUTH & YOUNG ADULT NEWS AND EVENTS

WINTER CAMP January 12-15, 2017 at Camp St. Raphael. Registration is open. Please register here:

<https://www.eventbee.com/v/wamp2018#/tickets>. There are less than 5 spots left for male campers, and a wait list has begun for female campers.

Every Thursday 11 am - 2 pm

Spaghetti Luncheon

\$ 8.00

The graphic features a plate of spaghetti with meat sauce and a fork twirling a piece of spaghetti. The text is in a mix of cursive and bold sans-serif fonts.

Our parish is partnering with Italian Café (19620 Kuykendahl) to provide our community with a weekly luncheon every Thursday from 11-2 beginning on January 11th. It will be open to the public, and to you and your friends! While it will not be our responsibility to do any cooking, it is a great opportunity for you to provide our parish with your time. We will need greeters and helpers to volunteer. Please call the Church Office to sign up!

Why Should I Have My Home Blessed?

Fr. Anthony Baba

The title of this article is one of the questions I usually ask the children who are at the homes I go to bless. The basic question is pointing to the icon of Jesus and the Virgin and asking them who those people are. For me, seeing the children is the best part of blessing a home. In fact, when I was a child, my favorite time of year was when my priest was coming to bless our home. Besides the fact that my mother used to make me and all my siblings clean every square inch of the house, I anticipated his arrival with such joy and eagerness.

Among the many things I learned from him was his ability to connect with children. He too would ask questions, and one of the questions he would ask us was, “Do you take showers?” Not to be disrespectful but the first thought was, “What?” followed by, “Are you serious, Father?” Of course we shower. Then he’d ask, “What do you use when you shower?” And the response followed, “Umm, well Father, we use shampoo, conditioner, and body soap...” hoping that that was the answer he was looking for, but unfortunately it wasn’t. “What else do you use?”

Of course, water. It’s what we use to cleanse ourselves. It’s no different when we have our homes blessed. We use water, Holy Water, to sprinkle and cleanse our homes from the spiritual sins that stain not just the carpet on our living room floors, but the sins that lurk there and in every room. Do we have arguments? Do we quarrel with our siblings? Do we let the “sun set on our anger?” Even if we live in a peaceful and perfect home, sin infiltrates. As Americans, we’re accustomed to showering at least once a day. Can you imagine showering once a year? Or even worse, never showering?

The season of Theophany, when our Lord and Savior was baptized and through His baptism sanctified the waters and all of creation, is the time of year when we are all called to participate in this mystery. If you’ve never had your home blessed, I encourage you to. If you’re accustomed to having your home blessed every year, don’t stop! And if you need to have your home blessed “out of season”, as the old Jackson Five song goes, “just call my name, and I’ll be there.”

HOME BLESSING SEASON

Begins in January

Fr. Anthony and Fr. John will be blessing homes this in January.

If you would like to have your home blessed, please fill out this form and give it to either Fr. Anthony or Fr. John

Name: _____

City: _____

Cell Phone: _____

Preferred time of visit (circle one): **Morning** or **Evening**

SUNDAY AFTER THE NATIVITY OF CHRIST

LEAVE-TAKING OF THE NATIVITY

Entrance Hymn of the Leave-taking of the Nativity of Christ

Before the morning star, I begot thee from the womb. The Lord hath sworn and will not repent. Thou art a priest forever, after the order of Melchizedek, O Son of God, Who was born of the Virgin, save us who sing unto Thee, Alleluia.

Troparion of the Resurrection (Tone 5)

Let us believers praise and worship the Word; coeternal with the Father and the Spirit, born of the Virgin for our salvation. For, He took pleasure in ascending the Cross in the flesh to suffer death; and to raise the dead by His glorious Resurrection.

Troparion of the Nativity (Tone 4)

Thy Nativity, O Christ our God, hath given rise to the light of knowledge in the world, for they who did worship the stars did learn from them to worship Thee O Sun of Justice and to know that Thou didst come from the East of the Highest. Glory to Thee, O Lord.

Troparion of the Sunday After the Nativity (Tone 2)

Proclaim, O Joseph, to David, the grandparent of God, the amazing wonders; for thou hast seen a Virgin great with child; for with the shepherds thou didst give glory, with the Magi thou didst worship, and by the angel it was revealed to thee. Wherefore, plead thou with Christ God to save our souls.

Troparion of St. Anthony, our Patron (Tone 4)

Thou didst become like the zealous Elijah, and didst follow John the Baptist in his upright ways, as a dweller in the wilderness, thou didst steady the world by prayer, O Father Anthony, intercede with Christ our God for our soul’s salvation.

Kontakion of the Nativity of CHRIST (Tone 3)

Today the Virgin gives birth, to the transcendent One, and the earth offers a cave to the Unapproachable One. Angels, with shepherds glorify Him. The wise men journey with the star. Since for our sake the Eternal God was born as a little child!

THE EPISTLE

(For the Sunday before the Theophany)

All those on earth worship thee and sing unto Thee: Alleluia to God, O all the earth.

The reading is from the Second Epistle of St. Paul to Timothy. (4:5-8)

Timothy, my son, always be steady, endure suffering, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry. For I am already on the point of being sacrificed; the time of my departure has come. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the Faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will award to me on that Day, and not only to me but also to all who have loved His appearing.

THE GOSPEL

The reading is from the Holy Gospel according to St. Mark. (1:1-8)

The beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. As it is written in the prophets, “Behold, I send My messenger before Thy face, who shall prepare Thy way; the voice of one crying in the wilderness: Prepare the way of the Lord, make His paths straight.” John the Baptizer appeared in the wilderness, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. And there went out to him all the country of Judea, and all the people of Jerusalem; and they were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. Now John was clothed with camel’s hair, and had a leather girdle around his waist, and ate locusts and wild honey. And he preached, saying, “After me comes He Who is mightier than I, the thong of whose sandals I am not worthy to stoop down and untie. I have baptized you with water; but He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.”