



ST. ATHANASIUS ANTIOCHIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH

A Parish of the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America

300 Sumida Gardens Lane, Santa Barbara, CA 93111

Office hours: Tues-Fri. 12:00—5:00 p.m.

His Eminence, Metropolitan SABA

Pastor:

Fr. Symeon Halsell
805-685-5495
frsymeon@stathanasius.org

Priests attached to the parish:

Fr. Nicholas Speier (Pastor Emeritus)
frnicholas@stathanasius.org, 805-685-5400

Fr. John Carrillo 805-770-3749 (retired)
Fr. Jon Braun (retired)
Fr. John Finley (Archdiocese Dept. of Missions)

Deacons:

Dn. Gary Braun
Dn. Scott Jacobs
Dn. John Young (retired)

Subdeacons: Stephen Butler & Michael Easbey

Parish Council 2023-2024

Lara Jacobs, Chair
Glenn Hoppe, Vice Chair
Dan Braun, Treasurer
Asia Ballew, Secretary
Dominic Dopico
Kristin King
Michael Loulias
Velislava Nikolov

Music Director/Administrator:

Valerie Yova
Office phone: 805-685-5400
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**Teen Program & College/Young Adult
Activities Coordinator**

Subdn. Michael Easbey: measbey@gmail.com

DIVINE LITURGY OF ST. JOHN CHRYSOSTOM

December 24, 2023

Tone 4 / Eothinon 7

Sunday before Nativity of Christ
(Sunday of the Genealogy),
which Falls on Paramon (Eve) of
Nativity of Christ

Venerable Martyr Eugenia of Rome and those with her



WELCOME TO OUR VISITORS!

We are glad you are with us this morning
to join our worship of the Father, Son & Holy Spirit!

Please join us on the patio after the Liturgy for
the Agape Meal. We'd love to meet you!

We welcome children of all ages in our worship.

“Let the little children come unto Me for of such is
the Kingdom of Heaven.” Luke 18:16

HOLY COMMUNION

In the Orthodox Church, the sacrament of Communion is offered only to Orthodox Christians who have prepared to receive through prayer and recent Confession. Non-Orthodox believers and others **may approach the chalice for a blessing and the blessed bread.** So that the priest is aware of this, please just say, *“Father, bless” when you get to the chalice.*

At the conclusion of Matins, we sing the Great Doxology followed by the Matins Dismissal Troparion

FIRST ANTIPHON—Psalm verses with refrain

Vs. It is good to give praise unto the Lord, and to chant unto Thy name, O Most High; To proclaim Thy mercy in the morning, and Thy truth by night. [Refrain]

Refrain: Through the intercessions of the Theotokos, O Savior, save us.

Vs. Upright is the Lord our God, and there is no unrighteousness in Him. [Refrain]

Vs. Glory...now & ever...Amen. [Refrain]

SECOND ANTIPHON—Psalm verses with refrain

Vs. The Lord is King, He is clothed with majesty; the Lord is clothed with strength and hath girded Himself.

Refrain: O Son Of God Who rose from the dead, save us who sing to Thee, Alleluia!

Vs. For He hath established the world which shall not be shaken. [Refrain]

Vs. Holiness befits Thy house, O Lord, forevermore. [Refrain]

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

Only begotten Son and immortal Word of God, who for our salvation didst will to be incarnate of the Holy Theotokos and ever-virgin Mary, who without change didst become man and was crucified, O Christ our God, trampling down death by death, who art one of the Holy Trinity, glorified with the Father and the Holy Spirit: save us.

THIRD ANTIPHON—The Beatitudes or “Sermon on the Mount”

In Thy kingdom remember us, O Lord, when Thou comest in Thy kingdom.

Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of Heaven.

Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.

Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled.

Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy.

Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.

Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the sons of God.

Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness sake,
for theirs is the kingdom of Heaven.

Blessed are you when men shall revile you and shall persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil
against you falsely for my sake.

Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven.

HYMNS SUNG AT THE LITTLE ENTRANCE:

Troparion of the Resurrection

Tone 4

Having learned the joyful message
of the Resurrection from the angel,
the women disciples of the Lord cast from them
their parental condemnation,
and proudly broke the news to the disciples
saying death has been spoiled.
Christ God is risen, granting the world great mercy.

Troparion for the Sunday Before the Nativity

Tone 2

Great are the accomplishments of faith,
for the three Holy Youths rejoice in the fountain of flames
as though in the waters of rest;
and the Prophet Daniel appeared
a shepherd to the lions as though they were sheep.
So by their prayers, O Christ God, save our souls!

Troparion for the Eve of the Nativity of Christ (Paramon)

Tone 4

Mary was of David’s seed,
so she went with Joseph to register in Bethlehem.
She bore in her womb the Fruit not sown by man.
The time for the birth was at hand.
Since there was no room at the inn,
the cave became a beautiful palace for the Queen.
Christ is born, raising up the image that fell of old.

Troparion to St. Athanasius**Tone 3**

Holy Bishop Athanasius,
you became a stronghold of Orthodoxy,
strengthening the Church through your divine teachings.
Opposing the heretical opinion of Arius,
you explained and taught that the Son is equal in nature with the Father.
O holy Father, intercede with Christ God
that He may grant us abundant mercy.

Kontakion for the Preparation of Christ's Nativity**Tone 3**

The virgin cometh today to the cave
to give birth, ineffably to bring forth the Word eternal.
Therefore, rejoice, O earth, at the message;
with the angels and shepherds give glory to Him
Who shall appear by His own will as a young child,
He who is from eternity God.

TRISAGION (THRICE-HOLY) HYMN (p. 9 of Liturgy Book)

Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, have mercy on us.

+Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit,
now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

Holy Immortal have mercy on us.

Deacon: With strength!

People: Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, have mercy on us.

Preparatory Psalm Verses before the Epistle (Prokeimenon)**Tone 8**

Chanter: Blessed are You, O Lord, God of our fathers, and praised and glorified is
Your name forever.

Verse: For You are just in all that You have done for us.

**EPISTLE READING
Hebrew 11:9-10, 32-40**

Brethren, by faith Abraham sojourned in the land of promise, as in a foreign land, living in tents with Isaac and Jacob, heirs with him of the same promise. For he looked forward to the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God. And what more shall I say? For time would fail me to tell of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, of David and Samuel and the prophets—who through faith conquered kingdoms, enforced justice, received promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched raging fire, escaped the edge of the sword, won

strength out of weakness, became mighty in war, and put foreign armies to flight. Women received their dead by resurrection. Some were tortured, refusing to accept release, so that they might rise again to a better life. Others suffered mocking and scourging, and even chains and imprisonment. They were stoned, they were sawn in two, they were killed with the sword; they went about in skins of sheep and goats, destitute, afflicted, ill-treated—of whom the world was not worthy—wandering over deserts and mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth. And all these, though well attested by their faith, did not receive what was promised, since God had foreseen something better for us, that apart from us they should not be made perfect.

Preparatory Psalm Verses with Alleluia Refrain Before the Gospel Tone 4

Chanter: Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

People: Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

v: We have heard with our ears, O God, for our fathers have told us. (Ps 43/44:1)

v: For You have saved us from them that oppose us, and have put to shame them that hate us. (Ps 43/44:7)

GOSPEL READING

Matthew 1:1-25

The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham. Abraham was the father of Isaac, and Isaac the father of Jacob, and Jacob the father of Judah and his brothers, and Judah the father of Perez and Zerah by Tamar, and Perez the father of Hezron, and Hezron the father of Aram, and Aram the father of Amminadab, and Amminadab the father of Nahshon, and Nahshon the father of Salmon, and Salmon the father of Boaz by Rahab, and Boaz the father of Obed by Ruth, and Obed the father of Jesse, and Jesse the father of David the king. And David was the father of Solomon by the wife of Uriah, and Solomon the father of Rehoboam, and Rehoboam the father of Abijah, and Abijah the father of Asa, and Asa the father of Jehoshaphat, and Jehoshaphat the father of Joram, and Joram the father of Uzziah, and Uzziah the father of Jotham, and Jotham the father of Ahaz, and Ahaz the father of Hezekiah, and Hezekiah the father of Manasseh, and Manasseh the father of Amon, and Amon the father of Josiah, and Josiah the father of Jechoniah and his brothers, at the time of the deportation to Babylon. And after the deportation to Babylon: Jechoniah was the father of Shealtiel, and Shealtiel the father of Zerubbabel, and Zerubbabel the father of Abiud, and Abiud the father of Eliakim, and Eliakim the father of Azor, and Azor the father of Zadok, and Zadok the father of Achim, and Achim the father of Eliud, and Eliud the father of Eleazar, and Eleazar the father of Matthan, and Matthan the father of Jacob, and Jacob the father of Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom Jesus was born, Who is called Christ. So all the generations from Abraham to David were fourteen generations, and from David to the deportation to Babylon fourteen generations, and from the deportation to Babylon to the Christ were fourteen generations. Now the birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way.

When His mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child of the Holy Spirit; and her husband Joseph, being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame, resolved to divorce her quietly. But as he considered this, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, “Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary your wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit; she will bear a son, and you shall call His Name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins.” All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet: “Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and His Name shall be called Emmanuel” (which means, God with us). When Joseph woke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord had commanded him; he took his wife, but knew her not until she had borne a son; and he called His Name Jesus.

Meglynarion—Hymn to the Mother of God

It is truly meet to bless you, O Theotokos, ever blessed and most pure and the Mother of our God. More honorable than the Cherubim, and more glorious beyond compare than the Seraphim. Without defilement you gave birth to God the Word. True Theotokos, we magnify you.

Communion Hymns

Praise the Lord from the heavens, praise Him in the highest! *(Ps 148:1)*

Rejoice in the Lord, O you righteous; praise befits the just! *(Ps. 32:1)*

Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

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 ★ **CELEBRATIONS THIS WEEK** ★
 ★
 ★ **Wedding Anniversaries** ★
 ★ 12/27 Fr. Symeon & Kh.Cayce-Marie Halsell ★
 ★ 12/31 Penny Cocores and Michael Loulias ★
 ★
 ★ **Birthdays** ★
 ★ 12/24 Jared Speier ★
 ★ 12/25 Andriy Moskalyk ★
 ★ 12/26 Jerry Jones ★
 ★ 12/29 Gabriel Aviles, Karen Jacobs, Ruslan Moskalyk ★
 ★
 ★ **Patronal Feast Days** ★
 ★ 12/27 **Protomarty Stephen** Subdn. Stephen Butler, Steve Thomas ★
 ★
 ★*****

ANNOUNCEMENTS

FR. SYMEON AND FAMILY will be away from December 25-29. The daily services this week will be reader services, except for this Thursday's Vespers for the Holy Innocents. Fr. Nicholas will serve Vespers that day.

WE WERE SAD TO HEAR OF the falling asleep in the Lord of Alan Wallerstedt, who was a founding member of our parish and who was part of the team who did the research and writing for the annotated Orthodox Study Bible. Alan had moved back to his home state of Iowa this past year to be near family. Our condolences to Alan's family. May his memory be eternal.

WE WILL BLESS THE GRAVES at Goleta Cemetery next Sunday, December 31st, at 1:00 p.m.

HOUSE BLESSINGS

The priests look forward to this time of year when they bless your homes and have an opportunity to spend time with you. It is a joy for them! Contact one of our priests for an appointment to have your home blessed in January. We traditionally bless homes in January after the Feast of Theophany (January 6), however you can do this at almost any time of the year. If you move into a new home, you may not want to wait until the next time we celebrate Theophany to have your home blessed.

FINANCIAL UPDATE

November 2023

	<u>Actual Income</u>	<u>Budget Goal</u>
Tithes received in November	\$ 48,767	\$ 57,461 (includes \$20,555 for mortgage)
Tithes received Jan.-Nov.	\$566,228	\$632,071 (includes \$266,101 for mortgage)
November Temple donations	\$ 4,265	
Jan.-Nov. Temple donations	\$ 176,740	
Temple Fund Balance	\$ 697,523	(includes Golf Tournament proceeds)
Total General Operating expenses Jan– Nov.		\$ 702,466
Total General Operating income Jan.– Nov.		<u>\$ 654,904</u>
DEFICIT for first 11 months		\$ 47,562

UPCOMING SCHEDULE DECEMBER & JANUARY

Matins & Liturgy for the Feast of the Nativity	Sunday, December 24 at 10:00 p.m.
Slaughter of the Holy Innocents	Thursday, December 28, Vespers at 5:30 p.m. We will commemorate infants who have died in childbirth or as a result of miscarriage, premature birth or abortion.
Circumcision of Christ & St. Basil the Great	Sunday, December 31st transferred from Monday, January 1st We will follow our regular weekend schedule of services. On Sunday, we will bless the graves at Goleta Cemetery at 1p.m.
Theophany	Friday, January 5, 2024 Royal Hours at 9:00 a.m. Matins at 4:30 p.m. Divine Liturgy & Reception of Converts at 5:30 p.m. Sunday, January 7, 2024 OUTDOOR BLESSING OF WATER at the Santa Barbara Harbor with St. Barbara Greek Orthodox Church
St. Athanasius the Great	Wednesday, January 17—PARISH FEAST DAY Vespers at 5:30 p.m./Liturgy at 6:30 p.m.

Commemoration of the Holy Innocents at Vespers Thursday, December 28th at 5:30 p.m.

The souls of infants who have died in childbirth or shortly after, or through abortion, will be commemorated at Daily Vespers on Thursday, December 28th at 5:30 p.m.

If you have submitted names to be remembered in past years, they will be commemorated again. If you have a name(s) to be added to the list, you can add them to the list when you enter Vespers that evening, or email to the office at: office@stathanasius.org and we will make sure the name(s) are added.

Beloved Brother and Sisters,

The Nativity of our Lord is the revelation in the flesh of the Son and Word of God. It is the Light Himself entering the darkness of our human nature to illumine us, that we may enter the Heavenly Kingdom. It is the unveiling of the great acts of love He fashions for us. On December 24 in the dark of night we will begin our celebration with the Nativity Orthros and Divine Liturgy. We will enter yet again that awesome mystery.



We behold this mystery by our act of worship. We see the Ever-Virgin, who is as God's throne of cherubim and the gate through which only God passes, give birth to God in a cave, swaddle Him, and lay Him in a feeding trough. We become those Shepherds to whom the angels appeared and who run to behold Him. We become those Magi who offer their adoration, veneration, and gifts in awe of the mystery of the uncontainable God contained in the body of this little one, of the Creator become a creature. He who is the Word of God, Who will grow in wisdom and stature to teach, heal, suffer the passion, enter death, rise from the dead, and ascend to sit at the right hand of the Father in Heaven for our salvation, is laying in the place where mute animals feed. When we see the infant boy born in worldly obscurity in a stable cave in Bethlehem, we see those loving acts of God embodied in Him. **What a glorious mystery!**

We have endeavored these last forty days to keep a quieter life, to live in ascetic preparation for the glorious light of this season. When the Sacred Chalice containing the very same Lord Jesus Christ who was laid in that trough is brought out and offered we are united to Him and saved by His acts. The Chalice is the place from which our souls are fed and salvation comes into the world. It is the vessel of the great mystery! We approach and commune with great joy. With thanksgiving we begin our season of feasting!

As you gather in your various homes, celebrate knowing that you bring this joyful revelation of our salvation with you. See this mystery. Offer your praise and your gifts in worship. Go forth into the world bringing joy to all.

From Christmas Day to January 4th enjoy the feast. Chant Nativity Hymns! Sing Christmas Carols! Fill the house with the music of joyful praise! Exchange gifts! Speak of good things to one another! Crack open the eggnog or that mulled wine! Bake those sweet breads! Roast that ham! Feast with the joy of the Lord. Share your feasting with the poor, your neighbors, and all you meet. Spread the joy of our Lord's Birth with the splendid greeting and proclamation of these twelve days!

Christ is Born! Glorify Him!

+ Fr. Symeon

PRAYER REQUESTS

Prayer requests received through the parish office will be printed in the bulletin and will be prayed for during the litanies at the daily services. Prayer requests received in the box at the church will be prayed for quietly at the altar at all services. Prayer requests remain for 40 days unless requested otherwise.

**Send prayer requests for the bulletin to: office@stathanasius.org.
Please pray for the health of:**

His Beatitude, Patriarch John X
Metropolitan SABA
Mother Victoria
Met. Paul & Abp. John
Fr. Markos
Fr. Jon B.
Fr. John & Kh. Diane C.
Fr. Nicholas & Jan
Audrey C.
Greg & Margaret Y.
Hoppe Family in Albania
Joseph Wm. B. in Kenya
Duane F.
Richard and Susan B.
Bob N.
Kh. Melissa H.
Jeremiah & Sarah H. (military)
Lauren & Fernando J. (military)
Chase K. (military)
Nick & Kristine J. (military)
Connor V. (military)
Julianna & Zaron D. (military)
P. Speier (military)

Subdn. Matthew W. (seminary)
Steve T.
Abp. Benjamin
Temmo K.
Sarah B..
Dn. John & Fay Y.
Zachary B.
Samantha & Chris N. & Family
Kevin D. & Family
Stephan & Rosa K.
Ethan K.
Erik L.
Matthew
Nina & Erik Sr.
Anthony & Christina and Family
Hannah Rose
Leticia B.
Kari H.
Carol J.
Suzy W.
Adam and Family
Madison E.
Susan W.
David W.

Dave D.
Roman N.
Eloise G.
Jim M.
Wade
Amanda Catherine
Darcy

For the local agencies and their leaders who are working to fight human trafficking.

The Ethiopian Orthodox Church

All those suffering and in danger in Ukraine, Africa, and the Middle East

Please pray for the raising up and support of long-term missionaries from our parish.

For repose of the souls of: Alan W., Fr. Michael O., Cathy, Euphemia, Eliana, Svetlana

ST. ATHANASIUS CHURCH BOOKSTORE

The church bookstore is located in the foyer of our building. The tables and two enclosed cabinets contain items that are FOR SALE. One cabinet holds icons, crosses, incense, prayer ropes, etc. The bookshelf has books for sale, arranged alphabetically by book title. Children’s books are on the bottom shelf. See Terri Speier if you are looking for jewelry such as a cross or chain. You can contact Terri at: bookstore@stathanasius.org.

Payment should be made at time of purchase and placed in the brown lockbox on wall next to Fr. Symeon’s office. Make checks payable to **S.A.O.C. Bookstore**.

The pamphlets in the rack are FREE, as are the 12-month liturgical calendars.)

All proceeds go to the parish Temple Fund.

CALENDAR FOR THE WEEK

Sunday, December 24-EVE OF NATIVITY OF CHRIST

9:00 a.m. Matins
10:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy
11:45 a.m. Agape Meal
10:00 p.m. **NATIVITY Matins**
followed by Liturgy

Monday, December 25-FEAST OF NATIVITY

NO SERVICES

Tuesday, December 26-Synaxis of the Theotokos

5:30 p.m. Daily Readers Vespers

Wednesday, December 27-St. Stephen

7:00 a.m. Daily Reader's Matins
12:00 p.m. St. Xenia Prayer Ministry at the church

Thursday, December 28

7:45 a.m. St. Xenia Prayer Ministry by Zoom
10:00 a.m. Showers of Blessing
5:30 p.m. Vespers for the Holy Innocents
6:00 p.m. Youth Group Christmas Party

Friday, December 29

7:00 a.m. Daily Readers Matins

Saturday, December 30

5:30 p.m. Great Vespers/Confession

Sunday, December 31

Transfer of Feasts of Circumcision & St. Basil

9:00 a.m. Matins
10:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy
11:45 a.m. Agape Meal
1:00 p.m. Blessing of the Graves
at Goleta Cemetery

SUNDAY MORNING MINISTRIES SCHEDULE

EUCCHARIST BREAD

December 24 Fr. Nicholas (morning)
December 24 Kern (evening)
December 31 Jacobs
January 7 Meyer
January 14 Hoppe

READERS

December 24 Butler (morning)
December 24 Lange (evening)
December 30 Kern (Vespers)
December 31 Alexander
January 6 TBA
January 7 TBA
January 14 TBA

GREETERS

December 24 H. Lange (morning)
December 31 M. Loulias
January 7 L. Baker
January 14 K.P. King

USHERS

December 24 D. Meyer/D. Alexander (morning)
December 31 K.L. King/D. Washburn
January 7 P. King/J. King
January 14 C. Speier/S. Speier

AGAPE MEAL HOSTS

December 24 S. Wiley & helpers
December 31 Team Kawahara
January 7 Team King
January 14 Team Speier

Please continue to pray for all of our catechumens, that their minds and hearts will be illumined as they continue their journey towards baptism and/or chrismation.

Rebecca Beech	Kevin Duke
Cameron Bobro	Adam English
Natasha Carr	Mark Gross
Paul Carr	Anthony Salcedo
Connor Clements	Ethan, Dominic Jennifer Salcedo

Recommended listening from Fr. Symeon

YouTube Channels

- Antiochian Archdiocese – <https://www.youtube.com/@antiochianorthodoxchristia9331/>
- AMEN (Men’s Ministry of the Diocese of Miami and the South) – <https://www.youtube.com/@AMENDOMSE/>
- Patristic Nectar Films (Fr. Josiah Trenhams’s online work) – <https://www.youtube.com/@PatristicNectarFilms/>
- The Royal Path (Fr. Turbo Qualls’ group podcast) – <https://www.youtube.com/@TheRoyalPath/>
- Orthodox Wisdom – <https://www.youtube.com/@OrthodoxWisdom/>
- Orthodox Teaching of the Elders – <https://www.youtube.com/@otelders/>
- Trisagion Films – <https://www.youtube.com/@Trisagionfilms/>
- Protecting Veil – <https://www.youtube.com/@ProtectingVeil/>
- Symbolic World – <https://www.youtube.com/@JonathanPageau/>
- Lives of Saints from Trisagion Films called “Saints of the Orthodox Church”
- Lives of Saints from Bible Illustrated called "The Reliquary"
- Lives of Saints from Orthodox Meme Squad

Podcasts

ANCIENT FAITH RADIO PODCASTS: (<https://www.ancientfaith.com/>)

- “The Path” where Fr. Thomas Soroka reads the daily scripture readings and thoughtful commentary by the Fathers.
- “Saint of the Day” is a reading of the life of a saint commemorated that day.
- "The Whole Counsel of God" by Fr. Stephen De Young offering a verse by verse Bible study.
- "Lord of Spirits" where Fr. Andrew Damick and Fr. Stephen De Young have a topical discussion about lesser known parts of scripture and tradition.
- “In a Certain Kingdom” by Dn. Nicholas Kotar retelling Russian fairy tales with commentary at the end.
- “As Iron Sharpens Iron” is a collection of teaching geared toward men.