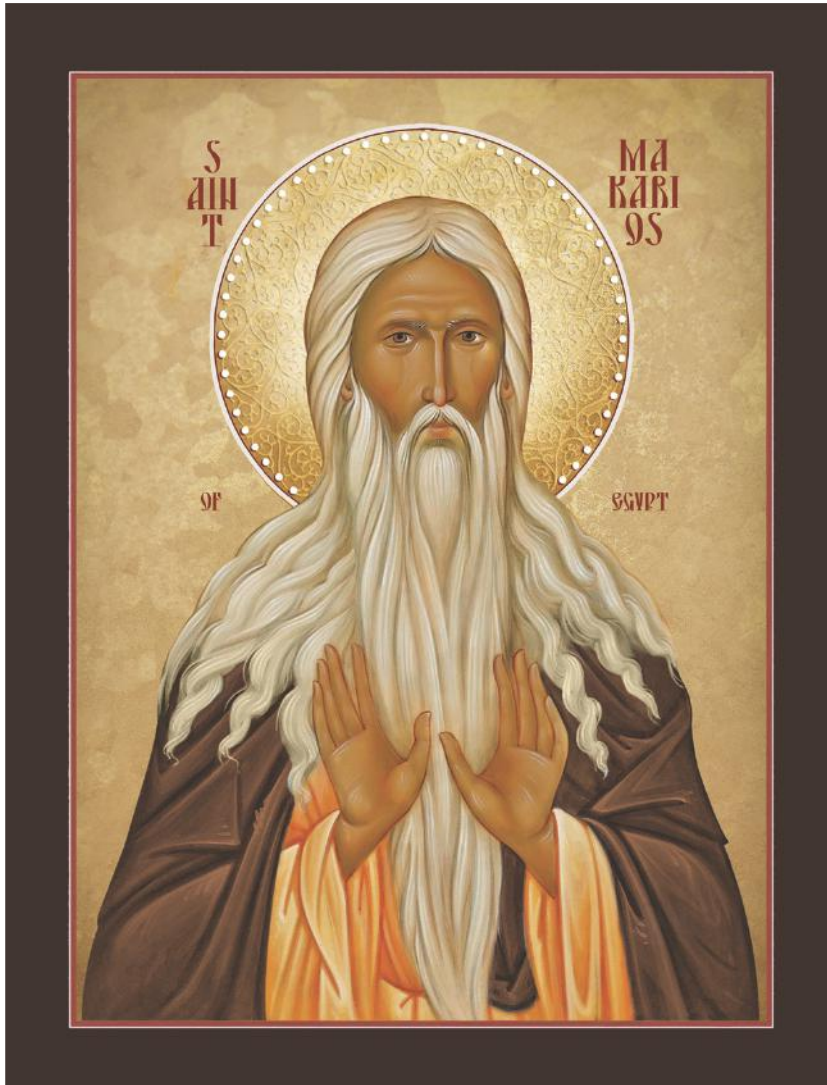


HOLY ANGELS BYZANTINE CATHOLIC CHURCH



January 19, 2025

35th Sunday after Pentecost

Our Venerable Father Macarius the Great, the Egyptian

January 19, 2025

Schedule of services for the week of January 20 – January 26

Saturday, January 25 – *Our Holy Father Gregory the Theologian, archbishop of Constantinople*

- 9:00 AM – Divine Liturgy celebrated by Fr. James Babcock on the occasion of the anniversary of his priestly ordination.
- 4:00 PM – Confessions
- 5:00 PM – Melkite Vespers with Bishop FRANÇOIS (Beyrouti) presiding, followed by a talk by Bishop François and a meal.

Sunday, January 26 – *36th Sunday after Pentecost; Our Venerable Father Xenophon of Constantinople, Mary, his wife, and their sons, Arcadius and John*

- 8:40 AM – 3rd Hour
- 9:00 AM – Divine Liturgy For all parishioners

There is a current listing of registered parishioners available in the Narthex and the Church Hall. Please check your family entry in the directory and make any updates to your information.

Please mark your entry with a ✓ if there are no changes. There is also a selection regarding envelopes. Please mark Yes or No.

If you are not listed, please see Fr. James for a parish registration form.

O Physician of Souls and Bodies, we pray for:

Pope Francis, Barbara Alexander, Maria Amaro, Fr. Deacon Craig Anderson, Janice Andre, Peter Andre, Fr. Christopher Andrews, Harry and Virginia Bowden, Kim Camplisson, Patrick Carmack, Noah Chase, Fr. Andriy Chirovsky, Julia Camberos, Dennis Cline, Amy Cohn, Vivian Corr, Maria Cruz, Joe Danscuk, Fr. Daniel Dozier, Gabriel Espedal, Ana Fandrey, Karen Foto, Christine Galgano, Janet Greenwell, Deborah Harris, Michael Havens, Martha Hill, Doris Huber, Rebecca Huber, Melissa Hunter, Taylor Kessler, Jacob, Jamie Kohanyj, Juan Lopez, Pauli Martin, Mila Mina, Linda Moffit, Maryann Nagrant, Julia Ohnysty, Genevieve Paquette, Sylvia Pasnak, Fr. Lee Perry, Anthony Porrello, Nina Porrello, Peter Porrello, Fr. Robert Rankin, Margaret Raya, Michael Raya Jr. Maha Salazar, Gretchen Sharpe, Karen Simonich, Debbie Stark, Tava Tomc, Hong Truong, Pat Walsh, Maria Zhukova, Mark Zimmer, Gianna, Nicole, Subdcn Eddie and his wife Viane.

Therefore be merciful, even as your Father is also merciful.” Our Lord teaches us how to love one another in today’s Gospel, taking us beyond our human understanding of only being good to those who do good to us. Monasticism and holy orders are special paths to give one’s life to all people.

Is this something that God may have in store for your life? Contact the Vocations Office at 602-861-9778 or email: vocations@ephx.org

House Blessings

It is the custom among many Eastern Christians to have their homes blessed with the holy water sanctified on Theophany. If you would like your home blessed, please put your name on the sign-up sheet in the Narthex.

God With Us ONLINE Programs

Hundreds of hours of **free** live and pre-recorded webinars, series, conferences and lectures for inquirers, the faithful, and catechists in video and audio format.

For more information visit:

godwithusonline.org/online/

Mark you calendars! January 30

Our new bishop,
Kyr ARTUR (Bubnevych)
will be visiting
Holy Angels on January 30.
Accompanying him will be
Bishop Kyr TEODOR (Matsapula)
of the Eparchy of Mukachevo!
There will be a Hierarchical
Divine Liturgy beginning at
6:00PM with the
vesting of our bishop followed
by a festive meal.

**“Now the Lord has spoken who
formed me as His servant from the
womb...”**

– Isaiah 49:5

God has formed each of us as His servants from the womb. He blessed us with unique gifts and He provided us with the talents and skills we would need to do His work. If we do not fulfill the unique vision that God had for us alone, who will do it?



Traffic reminder!

Please remember that there can be automobile traffic behind the church even on Sundays. We request that parents accompany their children from the patio area to the playground (and back) so as to avoid any risk to children who are small and may be “invisible” to any drivers. Drivers are reminded to be doubly vigilant when driving on the church property (and in the neighborhood)!

Valentine’s Fund for Seminarians

Between now and February 9th we continue to collect contributions to benefit our Seminarians. This is to help them cover various expenses such as personal care items and other items not covered by their Eparchies. You can use this QR code to make a donation.



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Grumbling is caused by misery and it can be put aside by doxology (giving praise). Grumbling begets grumbling and doxology begets doxology. when someone doesn’t grumble over a problem troubling him, but rather praises God, then the devil gets frustrated and goes off to someone else who grumbles, in order to cause everything to go even worse for him. You see, the more one grumbles, the more one falls into ruin. Sometimes the devil deceives us and makes us unable to be pleased with anything; however, one can celebrate all things in a spiritual manner, with doxology, and secure God’s constant blessing.

– Elder Paisios
Spiritual Counsels,
Volume 4 - Family Life

ST MACARIUS THE GREAT OF EGYPT

Saint Macarius the Great of Egypt was born in the early fourth century in the village of Ptinapor in Egypt. At the wish of his parents he entered into marriage, but was soon widowed. After he buried his wife, Macarius told himself, "Take heed, Macarius, and have care for your soul. It is fitting that you forsake worldly life."

The Lord rewarded the saint with a long life, but from that time the memory of death was constantly with him, impelling him to ascetic deeds of prayer and penitence. He began to visit the church of God more frequently and to be more deeply absorbed in Holy Scripture, but he did not leave his aged parents, thus fulfilling the commandment to honor one's parents.

Until his parents died, Saint Macarius used his remaining substance to help them and he began to pray fervently that the Lord might show him a guide on the way to salvation. The Lord sent him an experienced Elder, who lived in the desert not far from the village. The Elder accepted the youth with love, guided him in the spiritual science of watchfulness, fasting and prayer, and taught him the handicraft of weaving baskets. After building a separate cell not far from his own, the Elder settled his disciple in it.

The local bishop arrived one day at Ptinapor and, knowing of the saint's virtuous life, ordained him against his will. Saint Macarius was overwhelmed by this disturbance of his silence, and so he went secretly to another place. The Enemy of our salvation began a tenacious struggle with the ascetic, trying to terrify him, shaking his cell and suggesting sinful thoughts. Saint Macarius repelled the attacks of the devil, defending himself with prayer and the Sign of the Cross.

Evil people slandered the saint, accusing him of seducing a woman from a nearby village. They dragged him out of his cell and jeered at him. Saint Macarius endured the temptation with great humility. Without a murmur, he sent the money that he got for his baskets for the support of the pregnant woman.

The innocence of Saint Macarius was manifested when the woman, who suffered torment for many days, was not able to give birth. She confessed that she had slandered the hermit, and revealed the name of the real father. When

her parents found out the truth, they were astonished and intended to go to the saint to ask forgiveness. Though Saint Macarius willingly accepted dishonor, he shunned the praise of men. He fled from that place by night and settled on Mt. Nitria in the Pharan desert.

Thus human wickedness contributed to the prospering of the righteous. Having dwelt in the desert for three years, he went to Saint Anthony the Great, the Father of Egyptian monasticism, for he had heard that he was still alive in the world, and he longed to see him. Abba Anthony received him with love, and Macarius became his devoted disciple and follower. Saint Macarius lived with him for a long time and then, on the advice of the saintly abba, he went off to the Skete monastery (in the northwest part of Egypt). He so shone forth in asceticism that he came to be called "a young Elder," because he had distinguished himself as an experienced and mature monk, even though he was not quite thirty years old.

Saint Macarius survived many demonic attacks against him. Once, he was carrying palm branches for weaving baskets, and a devil met him on the way and wanted to strike him with a sickle, but he was not able to do this. He said, "Macarius, I suffer great anguish from you because I am unable to vanquish you. I do everything that you do. You fast, and I eat nothing at all. You keep vigil, and I never sleep. You surpass me only in one thing: humility."

When the saint reached the age of forty, he was ordained to the priesthood and made the head of the monks living in the desert of Skete. During these years, Saint Macarius often visited with Saint Anthony the Great, receiving guidance from him in spiritual conversations. Abba Macarius was deemed worthy to be present at the death of Saint Anthony and he received his staff. He also received a double portion of the Anthony's spiritual power, just as the prophet Elisha once received a double portion of the grace of the prophet Elias, along with the mantle that he dropped from the fiery chariot.

Saint Macarius worked many healings. People thronged to him from various places for help and for advice, asking his holy prayers. All this unsettled the quietude of the saint. He therefore dug out a deep cave under his cell, and hid there for prayer and meditation.

Saint Macarius attained such boldness before God that, through his prayers, the Lord raised the dead. Despite attaining such heights of holiness, he continued to preserve his unusual humility. One time the holy abba caught a thief loading his things on a donkey standing near the cell. Without revealing that he was the owner of these things, the monk began to help tie up the load. Having removed himself from the world, the monk told himself, "We bring nothing at all into this world; clearly, it is not possible to take anything out from it. Blessed be the Lord for all things!"

Once, Saint Macarius was walking and saw a skull lying upon the ground. He asked, "Who are you?" The skull answered, "I was a chief priest of the pagans. When you, Abba, pray for those in hell, we receive some mitigation."

The monk asked, "What are these torments?" "We are sitting in a great fire," replied the skull, "and we do not see one another. When you pray, we begin to see each other somewhat, and this affords us some comfort." Having heard such words, the saint began to weep and asked, "Are there still more fiercesome torments?" The skull answered, "Down below us are those who knew the Name of God, but spurned Him and did not keep His commandments. They endure even more grievous torments."

Once, while he was praying, Saint Macarius heard a voice: "Macarius, you have not yet attained such perfection in virtue as two women who live in the city." The humble ascetic went to the city, found the house where the women lived, and knocked. The women received him with joy, and he said, "I have come from the desert seeking you in order to learn of your good deeds. Tell me about them, and conceal nothing."

The women answered with surprise, "We live with our husbands, and we have not such virtues." But the saint continued to insist, and the women then told him, "We married two brothers. After living together in one house for fifteen years, we have not uttered a single malicious nor shameful word, and we never quarrel among ourselves. We asked our husbands to allow us to enter a women's monastery, but they would not agree. We vowed not to utter a single worldly word until our death."

Saint Macarius glorified God and said, "In truth, the Lord seeks neither virgins nor married

women, and neither monks nor laymen, but values a person's free intent, accepting it as the deed itself. He grants to everyone's free will the grace of the Holy Spirit, which operates in an individual and directs the life of all who yearn to be saved."

During the years of the reign of the Arian emperor Valens (364-378), Saint Macarius the Great and Saint Macarius of Alexandria was subjected to persecution by the followers of the Arian bishop Lucius. They seized both Elders and put them on a ship, sending them to an island where only pagans lived. By the prayers of the saints, the daughter of a pagan priest was delivered from an evil spirit. After this, the pagan priest and all the inhabitants of the island were baptized. When he heard what had happened, the Arian bishop feared an uprising and permitted the Elders to return to their monasteries.

The meekness and humility of the monk transformed human souls. "A harmful word," said Abba Macarius, "makes good things bad, but a good word makes bad things good." When the monks asked him how to pray properly, he answered, "Prayer does not require many words. It is needful to say only, 'Lord, as Thou wilt and as Thou knowest, have mercy on me.'" If an enemy should fall upon you, you need only say, "Lord, have mercy!" The Lord knows that which is useful for us, and grants us mercy."

When the brethren asked how a monk ought to comport himself, the saint replied, "Forgive me, I am not yet a monk, but I have seen monks. I asked them what I must do to be a monk. They answered, 'If a man does not withdraw himself from everything which is in the world, it is not possible to be a monk.' Then I said, 'I am weak and cannot be as you are.' The monks responded, 'If you cannot renounce the world as we have, then go to your cell and weep for your sins.'"

Saint Macarius gave advice to a young man who wished to become a monk: "Flee from people and you shall be saved." That one asked: "What does it mean to flee from people?" The monk answered: "Sit in your cell and repent of your sins."

Saint Macarius sent him to a cemetery to rebuke and then to praise the dead. Then he asked him what they said to him. The young man replied, "They were silent to both praise and reproach." "If you wish to be saved, be as one dead. Do not become angry when insulted, nor

puffed up when praised.” And further: “If slander is like praise for you, poverty like riches, insufficiency like abundance, then you shall not perish.”

The prayer of Saint Macarius saved many in perilous circumstances of life, and preserved them from harm and temptation. His benevolence was so great that they said of him: “Just as God sees the whole world, but does not chastise sinners, so also does Abba Macarius cover his neighbor’s weaknesses, which he seemed to see without seeing, and heard without hearing.”

The monk lived until the age of ninety. Shortly before his death, Saints Anthony and Pachomius appeared to him, bringing the joyful message of his departure to eternal life in nine days. After instructing his disciples to preserve the monastic Rule and the traditions of the Fathers, he blessed them and began to prepare for death. Saint Macarius departed to the Lord saying, “Into Thy hands, O Lord, I commend my spirit.”

Abba Macarius spent sixty years in the wilderness, being dead to the world. He spent most of his time in conversation with God, often in a state of spiritual rapture. But he never ceased to weep, to repent and to work. The saint’s profound theological writings are based on his own personal experience. Fifty Spiritual Homilies and seven Ascetic Treatises survive as the precious legacy of his spiritual wisdom. Several prayers composed by Saint Macarius the Great are still used by the Church in the Prayers Before Sleep and also in the Morning Prayers.

Man’s highest goal and purpose, the union of the soul with God, is a primary principle in the works of Saint Macarius. Describing the methods for attaining mystical communion, the saint relies upon the experience of the great teachers of Egyptian monasticism and on his own experience. The way to God and the experience of the holy ascetics of union with God is revealed to each believer’s heart.

Earthly life, according to Saint Macarius, has only a relative significance: to prepare the soul, to make it capable of perceiving the heavenly Kingdom, and to establish in the soul an affinity with the heavenly homeland.

“For those truly believing in Christ, it is necessary to change and transform the soul from its present degraded nature into another, divine

nature, and to be fashioned anew by the power of the Holy Spirit.”

This is possible, if we truly believe and we truly love God and have observed all His holy commandments. If one betrothed to Christ at Baptism does not seek and receive the divine light of the Holy Spirit in the present life, “then when he departs from the body, he is separated into the regions of darkness on the left side. He does not enter into the Kingdom of Heaven, but has his end in hell with the devil and his angels” (Homily 30:6).

In the teaching of Saint Macarius, the inner action of the Christian determines the extent of his perception of divine truth and love. Each of us acquires salvation through grace and the divine gift of the Holy Spirit, but to attain a perfect measure of virtue, which is necessary for the soul’s assimilation of this divine gift, is possible only “by faith and by love with the strengthening of free will.” Thus, the Christian inherits eternal life “as much by grace, as by truth.”

Salvation is a divine-human action, and we attain complete spiritual success “not only by divine power and grace, but also by the accomplishing of the proper labors.” On the other hand, it is not just within “the measure of freedom and purity” that we arrive at the proper solicitude, it is not without “the cooperation of the hand of God above.” The participation of man determines the actual condition of his soul, thus inclining him to good or evil. “If a soul still in the world does not possess in itself the sanctity of the Spirit for great faith and for prayer, and does not strive for the oneness of divine communion, then it is unfit for the heavenly kingdom.”

The miracles and visions of Blessed Macarius are recorded in a book by the presbyter Rufinus, and his Life was compiled by Saint Serapion, bishop of Tmuntis (Lower Egypt), one of the renowned workers of the Church in the fourth century. His holy relics are in the city of Amalfi, Italy.

[https://www.oca.org/saints/lives/
2024/01/19/100226-venerable-macarius-the-
great-of-egypt](https://www.oca.org/saints/lives/2024/01/19/100226-venerable-macarius-the-great-of-egypt)

FROM THE CATECHISM “CHRIST OUR PASCHA”

WE ARE CREATED FOR INTIMACY AND COMMUNION WITH GOD

331 God created human beings in his image and likeness. He thus called them to enter into communion with him. The Lord revealed to his people his desire to communicate with them, and his desire is to hear them respond to his Word. He longs for his people to come to know him in love; he wants to fill them with his love.

332 The entire Old Covenant is the expression of God’s desire to raise human beings to intimacy with him. The Old Testament law and commandments, the temple and sacrifices, the holy days—all these had as their goal the creation of appropriate conditions for human intimacy with God.

333 In the New Covenant, God makes humankind worthy to enter into full communion with himself. This is accomplished through Christ in the Holy Spirit. Indeed, the New Covenant was realized in Christ, the incarnate Son of God. Christ inseparably united in himself the life of God and the life of humankind. Our life in Christ—our prayer—is the deepening of this gift of communion.

334 Humankind grows in communion with God within the community of the faithful, the Church. The Church is Christ’s Body. Thus, the fullest expression of prayer is ecclesial, liturgical prayer, that is, Divine Services. In these Services, we are united to God and one another, and “with one heart and one voice” form the family of God.

GOD’S COFFEE

From an anonymous source

Recently a friend sent me an email that grabbed my attention. It was about a group of college alumni, well established in their careers, who began talking at a reunion about the impact that a professor of theirs had made on each of their lives. They decided to go visit their old professor, who was now retired. During their visit their conversation turned into complaining about the stress in their work and lives.

Offering his guests coffee, the professor went to the kitchen and returned with a large pot of coffee and an assortment of cups - porcelain, plastic, glass, crystal, some plain looking, some expensive, some exquisite - telling them to help themselves to the coffee.

When all the alumni had a cup of coffee in hand, the professor said, “Notice that each of you took one of the nicer looking cups. You didn’t take any of the plain ones. While it is normal for you to want the best for yourselves, that has become the source of your problems and stress. The cup itself adds nothing to the quality to the coffee. What all of you really wanted was coffee, not the cup, but you consciously went for the best cups...and then you began eyeing each other’s cups. You compared the quality of your cup with the quality of a friend’s cup.”

The professor continued, “Now consider this: Life is the coffee; your job, money and position in society are the cups. They are just tools to hold and contain life. The style of cup one has does not define or change the quality of life an individual lives. Sometimes, by concentrating only on the cup, we fail to enjoy the coffee God has provided us. The happiest people don’t have the best of everything. They just make the best of everything.”

Here is the lesson for today: God brews the coffee, not the cups. Enjoy your coffee! Live simply. Love generously. Care deeply. Speak kindly. Joyfully give thanks to the Father. Spend time with God...over coffee.

“Being strengthened with all power according to his glorious might so that you have great endurance and patience, and joyfully giving thanks to the Father.” (Col 1:11-12a)

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Al Aparicio, Fr. Deacon Jonathan Deane, Bob Greenwell, Paul Washicko

Bless, O Lord, the worship and Stewardship of your faithful servants:

Adult tithes: \$1005.00; Seminary Fund: \$444.00; Theophany: \$330.00; Loose Change: \$832.00;
Non-Parishioner: \$40.00; **Total: \$1902.00**

Vocation Icon: This week: Sepulveda Family
Next week: Bitsko Family

THE BYZANTINE CATHOLIC EPARCHY OF PHOENIX

SUBSCRIBES TO THE
*Charter for the Protection of
Children and Young People*

adopted by the United States Catholic Conference of Bishops.

The Eparchy, within all its parishes, institutions and programs, is committed to assuring a safe environment in ministry for its children and vulnerable adults that conforms to the Charter for Protection of Children and Young People.

For additional information regarding the eparchial Safe Environment Program or to report any incidents of concerns, please contact:

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