

✠ St. Gregory's Journal ✠

January, 2023 - Volume XXVIII, Issue 1

St. Gregory the Great Orthodox Church
A Western Rite Congregation of the Antiochian Archdiocese
13407 Roxbury Rd., Silver Spring, MD ~ stgregoryoc.org

From a homily of St. Maximus of Turin

d. 465

In the Gospels, scripture reports that the Lord made his way to the Jordan to be baptized, and that he wished himself to be consecrated with heavenly mysteries in the same river.

Reason demands that after the birthday of the Lord, at the same period of the year, even though a space of some years intervened, this festival should follow, which I think ought also to be called a festival of birth.

Then he was born to men, today he is reborn in the sacraments; then he was born of a virgin, today he is generated through a mystery.

Then when he is born in human fashion, his mother Mary fondles him in her bosom; now when he is generated

Inside:

<i>St. Fabian</i>	3
<i>Parish News</i>	4
<i>Calendar</i>	7



according to a mystery, God the Father embraces him with his voice; for he says: “This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased; hear him.” The mother therefore cherishes her offspring in her soft lap, the Father attends on the Son with affectionate witness. The mother, I say, presents him to the Magi for adoration; the Father manifests him to the nations for worship.

Therefore the Lord Jesus came to baptism, and willed to have his body washed with water.

Perhaps some one will say: “He who is holy, why did he wish to be baptized?” Pay attention therefore! Christ is baptized, not that he may be sanctified in the waters, but that he himself may sanctify the waters, and by his own purification may purify those streams which he touches. For the consecration of Christ is the greater consecration of another element.

For when the Savior is washed, then already for our baptism all water is cleansed and the fount purified, that the grace of the laver may be administered to the peoples that come after. Christ therefore takes the lead in baptism, so that Christian peoples may follow after him with confidence.

Understand the mystery: for the column of fire went first through the Red Sea, that the children of Israel might tread the hazardous journey without fear; and it itself, went first through the waters, so that for those coming after it, it might prepare a way to pass. Which event, as the Apostle says, was a symbol of baptism.

Clearly baptism in some sort of way has been carried out when the cloud overshadowed the men, and the wave bore them.

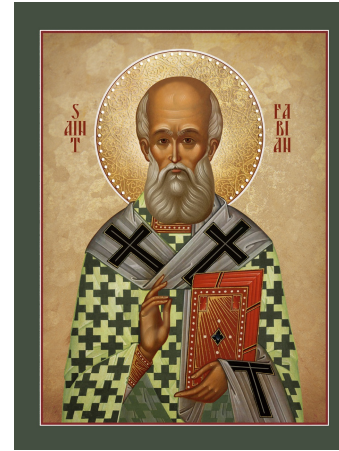
But the one who performed all these things was still the same Lord Christ, who as he then went before the children of Israel in a pillar of fire, now by baptism goes before Christian peoples in the pillar of his body. This is the very pillar I maintain which then supplied light to the eyes of those who followed, and who now furnishes light to the hearts of believers; who then in the waves of the sea made firm the pathway, and now in the laver strengthens the footprints of faith.

St. Fabian, Pope and Martyr

Feast Day ~ January 20

Fabian, a Roman aristocrat who had an estate outside the city (he would be considered a “gentleman farmer” today) came into Rome on an errand in early 236 only to discover that the election of a new pope was in progress. Standing in the crowd of curious onlookers, he was suddenly aware that a dove had landed on his head. As related by the church historian Eusebius (d. 339), those in the crowd cried out that this was a sign from God that Fabian should be the new pope. In an age when “signs and wonders” were still recognized, when people paid attention to dreams, when it was understood that God’s will would be shown to men, this decision was accepted and Fabian was ordained through the lower orders and finally consecrated as pope on January 10 in 236.

This was a fortuitous time for Christians. The sporadic persecutions that had taken place under Emperors Nero and Marcus Aurelius had subsided and Christians now enjoyed a time of relative peace. The new pope took advantage of this to initiate some organizational matters. He divided Rome into seven districts, each under the supervision of a deacon, and appointed subdeacons



under them to record the stories of the martyrs who had died in the earlier persecutions. He made the catacombs, where martyrs had been buried, a priority.

Another historian - St. Gregory of Tours - relates that Pope Fabian sent seven bishops as “apostles to the Gauls” in 245. These bishops were assigned to the major cities of Gaul: Tours, Arles, Narbonne, Toulouse, Paris, Clermont, and Limoges.

The peace that Christians had enjoyed for nearly seventy years came to a end when Decius became Emperor in 249. Persecutions were renewed immediately and the pope was among the first to be made an example. Loyalty to the government was expected to be shown by offering incense to the numerous “deities” of the Roman state. Pope Fabian was called to perform this sacrilege, but refused and was thrown into prison. He died on January 20, in the year 250, probably from the harsh conditions of his imprisonment rather than execution, but he is nonetheless considered a martyr for the faith.

Today, as we in the Antiochian Archdiocese of North America are called upon to nominate a worthy man to be the new Metropolitan and as the Holy Synod of Antioch makes the choice, may all involved be guided by the Holy Spirit to determine what is the will of God for the Church. *Holy Fabian, pray for us.*

Parish News

We begin the new year and the month of January with the celebration of the Feast of the Circumcision of Our Lord on

St. Gregory Orthodox Church
c/o 804 E Randolph Rd
Silver Spring, MD 20904

Address Correction Requested

Sunday, January 1. This will also be commemorated as the Sunday within the octave of Christmas. Our usual service times (9AM Matins, 9:30 Mass) will be observed.

The Feast of the Epiphany (January 6) will be celebrated on the Eve, Thursday, January 5. The Blessing of Water will be at 6:30PM, Mass at 7, and a pot-luck supper will follow.

The special convention of our Archdiocese for the purpose of nominating a new Metropolitan will be in Dallas, Texas, on January 12 and 13.

Despite the Supreme Court's overturning of the Roe vs. Wade decision, the annual March for Life will continue to be held in Washington, DC on the anniversary of that infamous decision. To affirm our church's teaching that life at all stages is a gift from God, Orthodox Christians for Life will join the March on Friday, January 20. For more information, see oclife.org/march.

Our Annual Parish Meeting is scheduled for Sunday, January 22. Coffee Hour that day will be a pot-luck luncheon after which we will hear reports from various aspects of parish life and elect new members to the Parish Council.

After the restrictions of the covid pandemic and our gradual return to normal life, we will have house blessings this year in as many homes as possible. Please see Fr. Nicholas or Fr. Raphael to schedule a convenient time between January 7 and February 18. Marking the entrance and praying for God's blessing on your home is an important way to begin a new year.

O Lord God almighty, bless ✠ this place that here may abide health, purity, victory, strength, humility, goodness, meekness, fulfilment of the Law, and giving of thanks to God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; and let thy blessing remain on this place and on all who dwell here, now and evermore. Amen.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<h1>January 2023</h1>						<i>Sunday services: Matins at 9am Sung Mass at 9:30</i>
1 The Circumcision of Our Lord & Octave Day of the Nativity <i>(New Years Day)</i> <i>W</i>	2 Octave Day of St. Stephen; St. Fulgentius, BC, 533	3 Octave Day of St. John, Ap. Ev.; St. Genevieve, V, 512	4 Octave Day of the Holy Innocents, Mm; St. Titus, BC, c. 96	5 Vigil of the Epiphany; St. Simeon Stylites, C, 460; St. Telesphorus, PM, c. 137 <i>Mass at 7pm</i>	6 The Epiphany of Our Lord <i>W</i>	7 of the Octave of Epiphany; St. Cedd, BC, 664 <i>Vespers at 6pm</i>
8 First Sunday after Epiphany; St. Lucius & comp., Mm, c. 290; St. Severinus, Ab, 482 <i>W</i>	9 of the Octave of Epiphany	10 of the Octave of Epiphany; St. Paul the First Hermit, 342	11 of the Octave of Epiphany; St. Hyginus, PM, c. 142; St. Theodosius, Ab, c. 529	12 of the Octave of Epiphany; St. Benedict Biscop, Ab, 690	13 Octave Day of Epiphany; St. Kentigern, BC, 603	14 St. Hilary, BCD, 367; St. Nina, V, 335; St. Felix of Nola, M, c. 250 <i>Vespers at 6pm</i>
15 Second Sunday after Epiphany; St. Maurus, Ab, 584 <i>W</i>	16 St. Marcellus, PM, 309, St. Honoratus, BC, 429 <i>(MLK Day)</i>	17 St. Anthony, Ab, 356	18 Chair of St. Peter in Rome; St. Prisca, VM, c. 270	19 St. Mark of Ephesus, BC, 1444	20 Ss. Fabian, BM & Sebastian, M, 3rd C.	21 St. Agnes, VM, 304 <i>Vespers at 6pm</i>
22 Third Sunday after Epiphany; St. Vincent, M, 304; St. Anastasius, M, 628 <i>Annual Parish Mtg G</i>	23 St. Emerentiana, VM, c. 304; St. John the Almoner, BC, c. 619	24 St. Timothy, BM, 97	25 Conversion of St. Paul	26 St. Polycarp, BM, 156	27 St. John Chrysostom, BCD, 407	28 The Second Feast of St. Agnes, VM <i>Vespers at 6pm</i>
29 Fourth Sunday after Epiphany <i>G</i>	30 St. Martina, VM, 228; St. Bathildes, QMa, 680	31				