

# SAINT MARY ANTIOCHIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH



*Sunday, January 4, 2026*

*Sunday Before Theophany of Christ*

# *Saint Mary Antiochian Orthodox Church*

*"A parish of the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America"*

Church Office hours: Monday– Friday 9am-2pm

249 High Street, Pawtucket, RI 02860

Phone (401) 726-1202 Fax: (401) 729-1203

Parish Center Phone (401) 725-5150

Web site: <http://stmarypawtucket.org>

Email: [office@stmarypawtucket.org](mailto:office@stmarypawtucket.org)

**His Eminence Metropolitan SABA, Archbishop of New York  
& Metropolitan of all North America**

**His Grace Bishop JOHN, Auxiliary and Bishop of the  
Diocese of Worcester and New England**

**V. Rev. Father Elie Estephan  
Cell- 1-(240) 205-9079**

**Sub-Deacon Emad Amirhom  
Sub-Deacon Cory Dupont**

## **Schedule of Services**

|                                 |                   |
|---------------------------------|-------------------|
| <i>Sunday: Orthros (Matins)</i> | <i>9:00 a.m.</i>  |
| <i>Sunday: Divine Liturgy</i>   | <i>10:00 a.m.</i> |
| <i>Church School</i>            | <i>11:15 a.m.</i> |

*Enter in Quietness, Rest in Prayer,  
Worship in Reverence, Depart in Peace to Serve*

**We welcome our Visitors & Guests:** Please take a moment to fill out a Visitor Card.

**Receiving Communion:** Only those Orthodox Christians who have prepared themselves may approach the chalice for Holy Communion. Everyone is welcome to partake of the Holy Bread after the Liturgy.



## **Prayer Line**

St. Mary ~ Internet Prayer Line

Prayer requests can be sent to us via the internet at

**[office@stmarypawtucket.org](mailto:office@stmarypawtucket.org)**

All requests must be received by Wednesday noon to be included in that week's bulletin.  
Any requests received after that time will be included in the following week's bulletin.

**DIVINE LITURGY VARIABLES**  
**SUNDAY, JANUARY 04, 2026**  
**TONE 5 / EOTHINON 8; FOREFEAST OF &**  
**SUNDAY BEFORE THEOPHANY OF CHRIST**

SYNAXIS OF THE SEVENTY HOLY APOSTLES; VENERABLE THEOKTISTOS OF SICILY

*During the Little Entrance, chant the Resurrectional Apolytikion. The Eisodikon (Entrance Hymn) is “O come, let us worship... save us, O Son of God, Who art risen from the dead...” After the Little Entrance, sing these hymns in the following order:*

**RESURRECTIONAL APOLYTIKION IN TONE FIVE**

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.

**APOLYTIKION OF THE FOREFEAST OF THEOPHANY IN TONE FOUR**

(\*\**Joseph was amazed*\*\*)

Be thou ready, Zabulon; prepare thyself, O Nephthalim. \* River Jordan, stay thy course and skip for gladness to receive \* the Sovereign Master, Who cometh now to be baptized. \* O Adam, be thou glad with our first mother, Eve; \* hide not as ye did of old in Paradise. \* Seeing you naked, He hath appeared now \* to clothe you in the first robe again. \* Christ hath appeared, for He truly willeth to renew all creation.

**TROPARION OF THE DORMITION IN TONE ONE**

In giving birth, Thou didst keep Thy virginity and in thy repose, Thou didst not forsake the world, O Theotokos, for Thou art the mother of life, and Thou didst pass over into life; and through thy intercession from death Thou dost redeem our souls.

**KONTAKION OF THE FOREFEAST OF THEOPHANY IN TONE FOUR**

(\*\**On this day Thou hast appeared*\*\*)

In the running waters of \* the Jordan River, \* on this day the Lord of all \* crieth to John: Be not afraid \* and hesitate not to baptize Me, \* for I am come to save Adam, the first-formed man.

## **THE EPISTLE**

(For the Sunday before the Theophany of Christ)

*O Lord, save Thy people and bless Thine inheritance.  
Unto Thee will I cry, O Lord my God.*

### **The Reading from St. Paul's Second Epistle 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, and 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**

(For the Sunday before the Theophany of Christ)

### **The reading 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 Isaiah the prophet, "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 strap 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."

**PRAYERS ARE BEING OFFERED FOR  
GOOD HEALTH AND BLESSING OF:**

Mark Hashway  
Barbara Samra  
Sandra Conca  
Offered by: Elaine Wilbur



Victoria Hallal  
Offered by: Ron Hallal

Jacob, Maria, Sofia & Emilia Khoury  
Nouhad Kardous  
Linda Dvelis  
Kristen Silva  
Paul, Maureen & Mary Gurchigian  
Fr. Elie & Rouba Estephan  
Chadi & Christina Estephan  
Tala, Peter & Sophia Giannikopoulos  
Offered by: Salwa Khoury

Paul, Maureen & Mary Gurchigian  
Cindy Hayes & Family  
Mack and Louise Megalli  
Mother Xenia Minihan  
Jacob Muller  
Ronald Muller  
Victoria Muller  
Michelle Saliba  
Kristen Anne Silva  
Phil Spenard  
Madison Tucker  
Offered by: Michael & Nancy Muller

Kristen Silva & Family  
Jacob Khoury & Family  
Salwa Khoury & Family  
Offered by: Linda Dvelis

Salwa Khoury  
Jacob, Maria, Sophia, Emilia Khoury  
Offered by: John & Anita Chamoun

Elizabeth Edes  
Offered by: Fred Elliott

**PRAYERS ARE BEING OFFERED FOR  
IN LOVING MEMORY OF:**

Janice Hallal  
Offered by: Her Loving Husband Ron

Mary Hallal  
Offered by: Her Loving Son Ron

Fred Hashway  
Kevin Hashway  
Lorice Hallal  
Robert Laffey  
Offered by: Elaine Wilbur

Fred & Adele Shwaery  
Offered by: Linda Dvelis & Family

Nabil Khoury  
George Kardous  
Offered by: Salwa Khoury

Matilda Josephs  
Offered by: Bill & MaryLou Catelli

Matilda Josephs  
Offered by: George & Lois Kilsey  
Leon & Judith Josephs



## **Coffee Hour**

Coffee Hour is being offered by Yuliia & Michael Raposa for the Baptism of their baby Gabriel. Coffee Hour will be held at the Parish Center following Liturgy.



## **THE SYNAXARION (Plain Reading)**

In addition to the twelve Great Apostles, the Lord chose seventy other, lesser apostles and sent them to preach to the Jews. He sent them out two by two before His face, to each town and place, saying: “Behold, I send you as sheep among wolves” (Luke 10:1-5). But as Judas, one of the Twelve, fell away from the Lord, so some among these Seventy withdrew from Him, not with the intention of betraying Him but from human weakness and lack of faith (John 6:66). The apostles elected new ones to take the fallen apostles’ places. These Seventy labored in the same way as the twelve Great Apostles; they were the assistants of the Twelve in the spreading and strengthening of the Church of God in the world. They suffered much torture and malice, from men and from demons, but their firm faith and burning love for the risen Lord made them conquerors of the world and heirs of the Kingdom of Heaven. On this day, we also commemorate Venerable Theoktistos of Sicily. By the intercessions of Thy saints, O Christ God, have mercy upon us. Amen.

Please remember that in our Orthodox Christian Tradition, the Great Feast of the Nativity is a 12 day observance that is linked directly to the Great Feast of Theophany, The Baptism of Christ, held on January 6th.

During the 12 days of Christmas there is no fasting, not even on Wednesday and Fridays. This is the true “Time of the Feast”, when visitations and family celebrations should occur.

The season of the Feast ends on January 6.

**Monday, January 5, 2026:** 6:00 P.M.– Liturgy for Epiphany Feast  
Blessing of the Waters



## **Holiday Liturgical Schedule**

- ♦ **Monday, January 5, 2026:** 6:00 P.M.– Liturgy for Epiphany Feast  
Sanctification of the Waters



### **Arabic Liturgy**

Arabic Liturgy is being offered the first Saturday of each month at 6:00 P.M. All are welcome and encouraged to attend.

### **Donation Made to the Charitable Gift Program by Jacob Muller**

One of our endowment fund's youngest supporters fulfills his commitment within 9 months.

We are proud to share that Jacob Muller has fulfilled his commitment to Saint Mary's Charitable Gift Program, just nine months after making it in March 2025.

This achievement is remarkable not only for its timeliness, but also because Jacob is one of the youngest parishioners in our Church's history to complete his gift so quickly. Rather than making a future bequest, Jacob chose to give now—accelerating the growth of our Church's endowment fund and increasing its long-term impact.

A lifelong member of Saint Mary's and an alumnus of our Sunday School, Jacob continues to lead by example. His commitment ensures that the Church he grew up in will remain strong for future generations.

May God grant him many years!

~ Charitable Gift Program Committee





**HAPPY**  
*New Year*

MAY YOUR 2026 BE  
FILLED WITH  
MOMENTS THAT  
TURN INTO BEAUTIFUL  
MEMORIES.







## St. Mary Church School & Teen SOYO News

**Attention All Parents:** Please bring your children to the Liturgy before Church School. Church School starts every Sunday following communion (Approx. 11:15am).

- ♦ **Sunday School classes will resume on Sunday, January 11, 2024**
- ♦ Sunday School will have a Bake Sale on Sunday, January 25th during the General Assembly Meeting. Please support their fundraiser.

### Fundraiser for the Ladies Society Outreach Program “Souper Bowl of Caring”

**February 1, 2026**



### **Cemetery survey/data form reminder**

The Cemetery Committee is reminding everyone to please return your completed survey/data form to the church. If anyone needs one, there are some available on the candle stand.

## Orthodox Vocabulary

### Holy Theophany

"Epiphany" means appearance. "Theophany" means the appearance of God. After Pascha and Pentecost, Theophany is considered the third greatest feast of the Orthodox Church, greater than Christmas. It commemorates Jesus' baptism in the Jordan River by Sr. John the Baptist. St. Cyril states that the beginning of the world was water; the beginning of the Gospel was the Jordan, when the Holy Trinity was revealed to the senses. The Father spoke, saying, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." The Holy Spirit was seen in the form of a dove hovering over the waters, and St. John the Baptist bore witness, saying, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." Jesus took on the sin of the world and symbolically died by being immersed in the Jordan, then rose again out of the Jordan.

*Blessed is the person who has consented to become the close friend of faith and of prayer: he lives in single-mindedness and makes prayer and faith stop by with him. Prayer that rises up in someone's heart serves to open up for us the door of heaven: that person stands in converse with the Divinity and gives pleasure to the Son of God. Prayer makes peace with the Lord's anger and with the vehemence of His wrath. In this way too, tears that well up in the eyes can open the door of compassion.*



### Website update

Many thanks to *Keith Marshall* for updating our website!

Visit the website to see the great work Keith has done-  
***[www.stmarypawtucket.org](http://www.stmarypawtucket.org)***

You are now able to access each week's bulletin on the website, see pictures from events, make your donation through the website, and much more!

 *Thanks*

## **Coffee Hour Update**

Contact Ghassan Alarmani (Gus) to sponsor a coffee hour- (781)414-1091

For those who are sponsoring a coffee hour, the contribution is \$200, including food, paper goods and beverage.

### **Memorial coffee hour:**

Family providing food ,we kindly request a contribution of \$250.00. All necessary supplies will be provided at no extra cost to you. Your contribution will be greatly appreciated. Thank you for your understanding and cooperation.

## **Coffee Hour Sponsorships**

### **Date:**

### **Sponsored by:**

### **Sponsored for:**

|                   |  |                                      |
|-------------------|--|--------------------------------------|
| January 4, 2026   | Yuliia & Michael Raposa                | For the Baptism of our baby Gabriel  |
| January 11, 2026  | <i>available for sponsorship</i>       |                                      |
| January 18, 2026  | Fred Kilsey & Family                   | Memory of Michelle Kilsey (15 years) |
| January 25, 2026  | <i>not available</i>                   | Annual General Assembly              |
| February 1, 2026  | Ladies Society                         | “Souper Bowl of Caring” Fundraiser   |
| February 8, 2026  | Maen, Diana, Mariana & Adam Albatarseh | Health of Family                     |
| February 15, 2026 | Church School                          | Pasta Luncheon (Camp Fundraiser)     |
| February 22, 2026 | Walid & Mirna Nakhoul                  | Health of Family                     |
| March 1, 2026     | Saliba, Robin, Bianca & Michelle       | Health of Family                     |
| March 8, 2026     | <i>available for sponsorship</i>       |                                      |
| March 15, 2026    | <i>available for sponsorship</i>       |                                      |
| March 22, 2026    | <i>available for sponsorship</i>       |                                      |
| March 29, 2026    | <i>available for sponsorship</i>       |                                      |
| April 5, 2026     | <i>not available</i>                   | Palm Sunday                          |
| April 12, 2026    | <i>not available</i>                   | PASCHA                               |
| April 19, 2026    | Lindsey’s Birthday                     |                                      |

## **Cemetery**

**Please note:** All real wreaths need to be removed from the cemetery by January 10th.

Thank you,  
Cemetery Committee



# CHURCH CALENDAR

**Sunday, January 4, 2026:** Sunday Before Theophany

No Sunday School– children will stay in church

**Monday, January 5, 2026:** 6:00 P.M.– Liturgy for Epiphany Feast

Sanctification of the Waters

**Sunday, January 11, 2026:** Sunday After Theophany

Sunday School classes resume

**Tuesday, January 13, 2026:** 7:00 P.M.– Parish Council Meeting

**Sunday, January 18, 2026:** Athanasios & Cyril, Patriarchs of Alexandria

**Sunday, January 25, 2026:** Sunday of Zacchaeus

Annual General Assembly

Sunday School Bake Sale to benefit campers this summer

**Sunday, February 1, 2026:** Ladies Society “Souper Bowl of Caring” Fundraiser

**Saturday, February 7, 2026:** 6:00 P.M.– Arabic Liturgy

**Sunday, February 8, 2026:** Sunday of Publican & Pharisee

**Tuesday, February 10, 2026:** 7:00 P.M.– Parish Council Meeting

**Sunday, February 15, 2026:** Judgement Sunday (Meatfare)

Church School Pasta Lunch (Camp Fundraiser)

**Sunday, February 22, 2026:** Forgiveness Sunday (Cheesefare)

**Monday, February 23rd, 2026:** Lent Begins

**Sunday, March 1, 2026:** Sunday of Orthodoxy

**Saturday, March 7, 2026:** 6:00 P.M.– Arabic Liturgy



## Epiphany 2025- Blessing of Homes

With the up-coming celebration of The Feast of Epiphany and the Great Sanctification of the Water, house blessings are starting for the new year. If you would like to have your house blessed, please contact Fr. Elie and schedule an appropriate time. While it is traditional to begin house blessings following Epiphany, homes may be blessed throughout the year. May the Blessing of the Jordan River sanctify and protect each and every home and family in our community.

