

SAINT MARY ANTIOCHIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH

BEFORE THY CROSS WE BOW DOWN IN WORSHIP,
O MASTER,
AND THY HOLY RESURRECTION WE GLORIFY!



VENERATION OF THE CROSS - SESSIONAL HYMN

No sooner had the wood of Thy Cross been set up, O Christ our Lord, than the foundations of death were shaken. Hell swallowed Thee eagerly, but it led Thee go with trembling. Thou hast shown us Thy salvation, O Holy One, and we glorify Thee, O Son of God; have mercy on us!

Sunday, March 15, 2026

*Third Sunday of Lent:
Veneration of the Holy Cross*

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

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

Email: 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

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, MARCH 15, 2026
TONE 7 / EOTHINON 7
THIRD SUNDAY OF GREAT LENT

VENERATION OF THE PRECIOUS AND LIFE-GIVING CROSS

MARTYR AGAPIOS OF PALESTINE AND THOSE WITH HIM; APOSTLE ARISTOBOULOS OF THE SEVENTY, FIRST BISHOP OF BRITAIN; NEW-MARTYRS MANUEL OF CRETE AND PARTHENIOS

****DIVINE LITURGY OF ST. BASIL THE GREAT****

THE FIRST ANTIPHON

The light of Thy countenance, O Lord, has been signed upon us. Thou hast given to those that fear thee a sign, to flee from the bow.

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

Thou hast ascended on high, Thou hast led captivity captive. Thou hast given an inheritance to those that fear Thy Name, O Lord. (***Refrain***)

Glory... Both now... (Refrain)

THE SECOND ANTIPHON

All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God. Let us worship at the place where His feet have stood.

Refrain: Save us, O Son of God, Who art risen from the dead, who sing to Thee: Alleluia.

God is our King before the ages; He has wrought salvation in the midst of the earth. (***Refrain***)

I will be exalted among the nations; I will be exalted in the earth. (***Refrain***)

Glory... Both now... O, only begotten Son and Word of God...

THE THIRD ANTIPHON

Exalt ye the Lord our God, and worship at His footstool. O Lord, save Thy people and bless Thine inheritance. Feed them, and lift them up forever.

During the Little Entrance, after the verses of the Third Antiphon, chant the Apolytikion of the Holy Cross. The Eisodikon (Entrance Hymn) is “O come, let us worship... save us, O Son of God, Who art risen from the dead...” as on ordinary Sundays. After the Little Entrance, chant these hymns in the following order:

RESURRECTIONAL APOLYTIKION IN TONE SEVEN

Thou didst shatter death by Thy Cross, Thou didst open paradise to the thief; Thou didst turn the sadness of the ointment-bearing women into joy. And didst bid Thine Apostles proclaim a warning, that Thou hast risen O Christ, granting to the world the Great Mercy.

APOLYTIKION FOR THE HOLY CROSS IN TONE ONE

O Lord, save Thy people and bless Thine inheritance, granting to Thy people victory over all their enemies, and by the power of Thy Cross preserving Thy commonwealth.

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 FOR SUNDAYS IN GREAT LENT (AND AKATHIST SATURDAY) IN TONE EIGHT

To thee, the Champion Leader, do I offer thanks of victory, O Theotokos, thou who hast delivered me from terror; but as thou that hast that power invincible, O Theotokos, thou alone can set me free: from all forms of danger free me and deliver me, that I may cry unto thee: Hail, O Bride without Bridegroom.

THE ANTI-TRISAGION HYMN

Before Thy Cross we bow down in worship, Master, and Thy Holy Resurrection we glorify. (*thrice*)

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

And we glorify Thy Holy Resurrection.

Dynamis!

Before Thy Cross we bow down in worship, Master, and we glorify Thy Holy Resurrection.

THE EPISTLE

(For the Third Sunday of Great Lent)

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

The Reading from the Epistle of St. Paul to the Hebrews. (4:14-5:6)

Brethren, since we have a great High Priest, Who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast the confession. For we do not have a High Priest Who is unable to sympathize with our infirmities, but one Who has been in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore draw near with boldness to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy, and may find grace to help in time of need. For every high priest, being taken from among the people, is appointed on behalf of the people in things pertaining to God, that he may offer up both gifts and sacrifices for sins; who can have compassion on the ignorant and on those who are erring, since he himself also is encompassed with infirmity. Because of this he is bound, as for the people so also for himself, to offer up for sins. And no one takes the honor upon himself, but as being called by God, as was Aaron. So Christ also did not glorify Himself to become a High Priest, but it was by the One saying to Him, "Thou art My Son, today I have begotten Thee." As He says also in another place, "Thou art a Priest forever, according to the order of Melchizedek."

THE GOSPEL

(For the Third Sunday of Great Lent)

The Reading from the Holy Gospel according to St. Mark. (8:34-9:1)

The Lord said, "If any man would come after Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow Me. For whoever would save his life will lose it; and whoever loses his life for My sake and the gospel's will save it. For what does it profit a man to gain the whole world and forfeit his soul? For what can a man give in return for his soul? For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him will the Son of man also be ashamed, when He comes in the glory of His Father with the holy angels." And Jesus said to them, "Truly, I say to you, there are some standing here who will not taste death before they see the kingdom of God come with power."



40-Day Memorial Service



A Forty-Day Memorial Service is being offered for the servant of God *Marie Haddad* and is being offered by her son Dr. Zeyad Morcos & Family. Coffee hour will be held in her memory following Liturgy.

May God grant her peace and may her memory be eternal

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 Gurghigian
Offered by: Salwa Khoury

Paul, Maureen & Mary Gurghigian
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
Bryan Boulis & Family
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



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.

GREAT LENT 2026

February 23rd ~ April 12th (Holy Pascha)



What is Lent?

Prayer † Fasting † Acts of Mercy

Liturgical Supplies and Offerings for Lent

During Great Lent the Church offers an intensified schedule of Divine Services and Prayers. Donations are being sought from the faithful for the many extra Liturgical Supplies needed for the Holy Season. These offerings include candles, wine, oil, incense, bread, service books, music and printed materials. Please earmark your donations and offerings “Liturgical Supplies.” Along with these offerings, bring also yourselves to pray the beautiful Lenten Services.

Food For Hungry People Collection (F.F.H.P.)

“When you see a poor person, remember the words of our Lord Jesus Christ by which He declared that it is He Himself who is fed. For through that which appears to be not Christ, yet in that person’s form, it is Christ Himself who receives and begs.”

~St. John Chrysostom

During the Holy Season of Lent, we collect alms to feed the hungry, as an act of Christian Mercy. Food for Hungry People collection boxes are available in the Vestibule & Church Hall. Take one home, fill it with coins during Lent and return it at Holy Pasha (Easter). Donations will also be accepted. To: St. Mary Orthodox Church earmarked “F F.H.P.”

May we be generous to reach out to those who hunger and who are in need.
This “reaching out” and caring will help us to witness the resurrection.

St. Mary Antiochian Orthodox Church, Pawtucket Schedule of Services: Great Lent 2026

Great Lent began on February 23rd

The Service of Great Compline (St. Mary Church) will be held on Tuesday & Thursday evenings at 6:30 pm

The Liturgy of the Pre-sanctified Gifts will be held on Wednesday evenings at 6:30 pm. *Those wishing to partake of Holy Communion ought to be fasting from 12:00 noon on.*

The service of the Akathyst Hymn or Madeeh (The Salutations to the Virgin Mary) will be held on the first five Friday evenings of Great Lent at 6:30 pm with a pot-luck to follow.

The Divine Liturgy on Lazarus Saturday, April 4th will be celebrated at 10:00 a.m. with a luncheon following Liturgy.

Palm Sunday is on April 5th

Holy Week starts on Sunday evening April 5th with the Bridegroom Service at 6:30 p.m.

Great and Holy Week: Monday, April 6th- Saturday, April 11th

Great and Holy PASCHA (Easter) is April 12th

May the Living God, the Fountain of Wisdom, enlighten our minds, strengthen our bodies, and nourish our souls in the blessing of this holy season, the Lenten Spring.

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249 HIGH STREET, PAWTUCKET, RI 02860

Holy Week 2026 Schedule of Services

Saturday, April 4th

Lazarus Saturday

10:00 a.m. — Divine Liturgy
followed by luncheon hosted by
Church School

Sunday, April 5th

Palm Sunday

8:50 a.m. — Orthros
10:00 a.m. — Divine Liturgy and
Procession with Palms
6:30 p.m. — Bridegroom Service

Monday, April 6th

Great and Holy Monday

6:30 p.m. — Bridegroom Service

Tuesday, April 7th

Great and Holy Tuesday

6:30 p.m. — Bridegroom Service

Wednesday, April 8th

Great and Holy Wednesday

6:30 p.m. — Sacrament of Holy
Unction

Thursday, April 9th

Great and Holy Thursday

10:00 a.m. — Divine Liturgy
6:30 p.m. — Service of the Twelve
Passion Gospels

Friday, April 10th

Great and Holy Friday

10:00 a.m. — Royal Hours
11:00 a.m. — Great Vespers of the
Taking Down of the Cross
6:30 p.m. — Service of the
Lamentations and Procession

Saturday, April 11th

Great and Holy Saturday

10:00 a.m. — Divine Liturgy
11:00 p.m. — Rush Service

Sunday, April 12th

Great and Holy Pascha

12:00 a.m. — Divine Liturgy
followed by Agape Breakfast
6:00 p.m. — Agape Vespers



**Great Lent and Holy Pascha 2026
Easter Flowers (Holy Friday and Pascha)**

*Please make a donation to help decorate the Church for Holy Week and
Easter.*

For Good Health and Blessing of:

In Loving Memory of:

Your name:

Donation:

To all those who would like to contribute for the Easter Flowers; checks should be made out to St. Mary Orthodox Church and earmarked "Easter Flowers".

All donations should be received by March 29th





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).

◆ **NO CHURCH SCHOOL TODAY**

◆ **Saturday, April 4th:**

Lazarus Saturday Retreat and Church School hosting:

Potluck Luncheon-(*everyone invited to attend*)

10am-2pm-Church School Lazarus Saturday Lenten Retreat



THE SYNAXARION (Plain Reading)

Every hard and strenuous work is accomplished with great difficulty, which appears especially in the middle of such work; for the effort in this performance brings with it fatigue which makes the accomplishment of the rest difficult. Having arrived with God's grace at the middle of the Fast, our compassionate Mother—the Holy Orthodox Church—thought fit to reveal to us the Holy Cross as the joy of the world and power of the faithful to help us carry on the struggles of the divine Fast. By its power, O Christ God, preserve us from the crafty designs of the evil one and account us worthy to worship Thy divine Passion and life-giving Resurrection, as we achieve the course of the Forty Days with ease, and have mercy on us, as Thou alone art good and the Lover of mankind. Amen.

The Orthodox Liturgy: Its Theology and Spirituality, Part 3

By His Eminence Metropolitan Saba (Isper)

The Liturgy is concerned with the sanctification of time and of life, so that every act in the life of the world may become a blessed and holy act. In this way, the Liturgy draws the world toward the Kingdom and urges it to realize that Kingdom, for it is the very purpose of its existence. The Orthodox liturgical year begins on September 1, the Church New Year, which coincides with the beginning of the new agricultural seasons. On this day, the Church asks God, the All-Merciful, to grant good seasons and abundant rains. The Church blesses eggs at Pascha, grapes at the Transfiguration, and wheat, wine, and oil at every Great Vespers (in the *Litia-Artoklasia*) for a great feast or for a beloved saint. Palm branches are blessed on Palm Sunday. More recently, in a natural expression of the Orthodox Liturgy's role in sanctifying creation and educating and refining the faithful, a special liturgical service for the environment has been introduced. Its texts speak about the Christian's faithful stance toward the environment, asking God to grant us a good and proper use of His creation. At the same time, it reminds those gathered for prayer that environmental degradation is one of the signs of humanity's fall and the deepening of sin. Therefore, it calls us to repentance. This service is celebrated on Orthodox Environment Day, which coincides with the beginning of the liturgical year on September 1. It is important to note that the Orthodox Liturgy engages the believer's five senses in worship. It makes use of melodies, icons, candles, incense, special vestments for the clergy, distinct garments for altar servers, the holy table, and the sanctuary curtains. The liturgical colors change according to the feasts and seasons. The sign of the Cross, prostrations, standing, and other gestures may appear, to an outside observer, excessively material. Yet, if we return to the Old Testament and study the temple rites commanded by God, we find them in harmony with this same vision especially when we consider the description of the heavenly liturgy in the Book of Revelation.

The Orthodox Liturgy: Its Theology and Spirituality, Part 3

By His Eminence Metropolitan Saba (Isper)

The purpose of all these arrangements is to allow the faithful to participate in worship with all their senses, to help the human person enter fully into worship with his entire being. Through the five senses, the whole person is engaged. At the same time, the believer is constantly reminded of his calling to restore the transfigured beauty of creation and to share in its splendor. It is also worth noting that art in Orthodox worship is not used as it is in the world, but only after it has been purified and sanctified after it has been spiritualized. Thus, in the Orthodox Church, we do not find a “religious painting,” but an icon depicting the saint or the sacred event in a state of deification. Likewise, church music does not rely on musical instruments which are human inventions, but on the human voice, which is created by the Creator Himself: “Thine own of Thine own, we offer unto Thee, in behalf of all and for all.”

In speaking about the Orthodox Liturgy, we must not forget that it is profoundly biblical. It is entirely formed by Holy Scripture. The Psalms constitute its fundamental structure, and each service has its appointed psalms forming its basic framework. Every feast also has its own festal psalms and hymns. Readings from the Gospels and the Epistles are distributed daily throughout the liturgical year, covering the four Gospels and all the Epistles. From the Old Testament, passages are read at every Great Vespers for a great feast of the Lord or His Mother, or for a beloved saint, linking the event to the prophecies concerning it and teaching us to read the Old Testament in a Christian way, in the light of the New Testament. During Great Lent, almost the entire books of Isaiah, Genesis and Proverbs are read, along with passages from Job and other books, especially during Holy Week. Moreover, many liturgical texts are written in a biblical spirit and incorporate scriptural language in their composition. We should also remember that the Holy Gospel always remains upon the holy altar in the sanctuary, and the priest carries it in procession, calling the faithful to its wisdom at every Divine Liturgy.

The Orthodox Liturgy: Its Theology and Spirituality, Part 3

By His Eminence Metropolitan Saba (Isper)

Finally, the Orthodox Liturgy teaches the believer that he lives not merely because he eats, but because he is preserved by the grace of God. It does not only teach this truth – it helps him to live it. The Church provides prayers for nearly every occasion in a person’s life: for the blessing of a home; for a child at birth and at his or her first entrance into the church; for the first day of school; before and after meals; before and after travel; before and after study; the blessing of a new car; and many others.

Orthodox liturgical services may appear long to an outside observer, but their length is not measured, in Orthodox understanding, by the number of hours they last, but by their spiritual benefit. Perhaps this story captures the Orthodox view of worship and its spirituality: After a Western monk visited Mount Athos and spent time among its monasteries, he asked an Orthodox monk there: “What do you do during this long time in church? Why are the services so long? What is the purpose? Would it not be better to do some work instead of remaining in church for such extended periods?” The monk replied: “What does a child do in its mother’s womb during the nine months it remains there? Can we grow, be formed, and become living beings in whom the Holy Spirit dwells, without this long abiding?” One practical matter remains to be mentioned. There exists a complex organizational system, built upon experience and developed over time by the Holy Tradition, in order to celebrate worship in the best and most spiritually beneficial way. This includes the appointment of readers and chanters, the distribution of chanting between slower and faster tempos, and many other details that require special study. If this order is not always manifested in all its beauty in our churches, then the question of why must be directed to each one of us.

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.

Coffee Hour Sponsorships

<u>Date:</u>	<u>Sponsored by:</u>	<u>Sponsored for:</u>
March 15, 2026	Dr. Zeyad Morcos & Family	Marie Haddad (40 Day Memorial)
March 22, 2026	Her Loving Family	Elizabeth McNeil (40 Day Memorial)
March 29, 2026	Ladies Society	Luncheon for the NAB Project, “Endowment Fund for our Beloved Widow Clergy Wives”
April 5, 2026	<i>not available</i>	Palm Sunday
April 12, 2026	<i>not available</i>	PASCHA
April 19, 2026	Lindsey Chammas	Thankful for the Church Community
April 26, 2026	Church School	Pancake Breakfast (Camp Fundraiser)
May 3, 2026	Her Loving Family	Memory of Doha Geha Chamas
May 10, 2026	No Coffee Hour	
May 17, 2026	Charitable Gift Program	Charitable Gift Participants
May 24, 2026	Sean & Kayla Joaseus	The Catechumens
May 31, 2026	Emile Sarkis & Family	The Health of Family
June 7, 2026	Will Small	Memory of Fr. Isaac
June 14, 2026	<i>available for sponsorship</i>	
June 21, 2026	Salwa Khoury	Memory of Dr. Nabil Khoury
June 28, 2026	<i>available for sponsorship</i>	
July 5, 2026	<i>available for sponsorship</i>	
July 12, 2026	<i>not available</i>	Family Day at Buttonwoods Park
July 19, 2026	<i>not available</i>	(raindate for Family Day)
July 26, 2026	Dr. Zeyad & Norma Morcos	my son, (ST Elias) & dad
August 2, 2026	<i>available for sponsorship</i>	
August 9, 2026	<i>available for sponsorship</i>	
August 16, 2026	<i>available for sponsorship</i>	
August 23, 2026	<i>available for sponsorship</i>	
August 30, 2026	<i>available for sponsorship</i>	
September 6, 2026	<i>available for sponsorship</i>	
September 13, 2026	<i>not available</i>	
September 20, 2026	<i>available for sponsorship</i>	
September 27, 2026	<i>available for sponsorship</i>	
October 6, 2026	<i>available for sponsorship</i>	

CHURCH CALENDAR

Sunday, March 15, 2026: Veneration of the Cross

Tuesday, March 17, 2026: 6:30P.M.- Service of the Great Compline

Wednesday, March 18, 2026: 6:30 P.M.– Liturgy of the Pre-sanctified Gifts

Thursday, Marcy 19, 2026: 6:30P.M.- Service of the Great Compline

Friday, March 20, 2026: 6:30P.M.- Service of the Akathyst Hymn & Pot-Luck to follow

Sunday, March 22, 2026: John of the Ladder

Tuesday, March 24, 2026: 6:30P.M.- Service of the Great Compline

Wednesday, March 25, 2026: 6:30 P.M.– Liturgy of the Pre-sanctified Gifts

Thursday, March 26, 2026: 6:30P.M.- Service of the Great Compline

Friday, March 27, 2026: 6:30P.M.- Service of the Akathyst Hymn & Pot-Luck to follow

Sunday, March 29, 2026: Mary of Egypt

Luncheon for the NAB Project, “Endowment Fund for our Beloved Widow Clergy Wives”

Tuesday, March 31, 2026: 6:30P.M.- Service of the Great Compline

Wednesday, April 1, 2026: 6:30 P.M.– Liturgy of the Pre-sanctified Gifts

Thursday, April 2, 2026: 6:30P.M.- Service of the Great Compline

Saturday, April 4, 2026: 10:00am– Divine Liturgy on Lazarus Saturday

10am-2pm- Lazarus Saturday Church School Retreat & Luncheon (all invited to attend)

6:00 P.M.– Arabic Liturgy

Sunday, April 5, 2026: Palm Sunday

Sunday, April 12, 2026: Great & Holy PASCHA

Tuesday, April 14, 2026: 7:00 P.M.– Parish Council Meeting

Sunday, April 19, 2026: Second Sunday of Pascha (Thomas)

Sunday, April 26, 2026: Third Sunday of Pascha (Myrrh-bearers)

Church School Pancake Breakfast Camp Fundraiser

Saturday, May 2, 2026: 6:00 P.M.– Arabic Liturgy

Sunday, May 3, 2026: Fourth Sunday of Pascha (Paralytic)

Sunday, May 10, 2026: Fifth Sunday of Pascha (Samaritan Woman)

Sunday, May 17, 2026: Sixth Sunday of Pascha (Blind Man)

Sunday, May 24, 2026: Fathers of 1st Ecumenical Council

Sunday, May 31, 2026: Holy Pentecost

Saturday, June 6, 2026: 6:00 P.M.– Arabic Liturgy

