

JANUARY 1, 2023

**Circumcision of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ  
Saint Basil the Great**

THE CIRCUMCISION OF OUR LORD AND GOD AND SAVIOR  
JESUS CHRIST

On the eighth day following His birth, the Divine Child was presented in the Temple and circumcised according to the Law existing in Israel since the time of Abraham. On this occasion, He was given the name Jesus, which the Archangel Gabriel announced to the Most-Holy Virgin Mary. The Old Testament circumcision was the prefiguring of the New Testament baptism. The circumcision of our Lord shows that He truly received upon Himself the body of man and not just seemingly, as was later taught of Him by heretics. Our Lord was also circumcised because He wanted to fulfill the entire Law, which He Himself gave through the prophets and forefathers. In fulfilling the written Law, He replaced it with Baptism in His Holy Church, as was proclaimed by the Apostle Paul: *For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creation* (Galatians 6:15). (In the cycle of the liturgical calendar of the Church, this Feast of the Lord's Circumcision has neither a Forefeast nor an Antefeast).

SAINT BASIL THE GREAT, ARCHBISHOP OF CAESAREA

Basil was born during the reign of Emperor Constantine. While still unbaptized, he spent fifteen years in Athens, where he studied philosophy, rhetoric, astronomy and all other secular sciences of that time. His colleagues there were Gregory the Theologian and Julian, later the apostate emperor. In his mature years he was baptized in the Jordan River along with Ebulios his former teacher. He was Bishop of Caesarea in Cappadocia for almost ten years and completed his earthly life fifty years after his birth. He was a great defender of Orthodoxy, a great light of moral purity, a religious zealot, a great theological mind, a great builder and pillar of the Church of God.

Basil fully deserved the title "Great." In liturgical services he is referred to as the "bee of the Church of Christ, which brings honey to the faithful and with its stinger pricks the heretics." Numerous works of this Father of the Church are preserved; they include theological,

apologetical, ascetical and canonical writings, as well as the Holy and Divine Liturgy named after him. This Divine Liturgy is celebrated ten times during the year: on the First of January, his feast day; on the eve of the Nativity of our Lord; on the eve of the Theophany of our Lord; all Sundays of Great Lent except Palm Sunday; on Great and Holy Thursday; and on Great and Holy Saturday. St. Basil reposed peacefully on January 1, 379 A.D., and entered into the Kingdom of Christ.

GREAT VESPERS

***LORD I CALL: Three stikhera of the Resurrection in tone 4 (spiral bound Vespers book), followed by two for the circumcision and three for Saint Basil***

***Circumcision, tone 8:***

The Savior was willing to be wrapped in swaddling clothes for the sake of mankind.

He was eight days old on His mother's side but eternal on the side of His Father.

He did not disdain the circumcision of His flesh.

O faithful, let us cry to Him://

“You are our God; have mercy on us!”

The God of all goodness did not disdain to be circumcised.

He offered Himself as a saving sign and example for us all.

He made the Law, and He obeyed His own commands.

He fulfilled the words of the Prophets concerning Himself.

He holds the world in His hands, yet is bound in swaddling clothes.//

Let us glorify Him!

***Saint Basil, tone 4:***

Your very name means "the royal one."

You led Christ's royal people in wisdom and knowledge.

The King of kings and the Lord of all,

the Son, of one essence with the Father,

adorned you with the crown of His Kingdom.//

Pray to Him, O Father Basil, to enlighten and save our souls!

Robed in the vestments of a bishop,  
you preached the Gospel of the Kingdom with gladness.  
You poured out streams of true teaching for the Church,  
illuminated by your words, we have learned how to glorify one

Godhead:

Father Almighty, Divine Word, and Holy Spirit,  
three Persons undivided!!

Pray to Him, O Father Basil, to enlighten and save our souls!

You dwell with the hosts of heaven,

for you imitated their way of life on earth.

You lived with mankind like an earthly angel.

Now pray for us, who delight in your theology!

May Christ our God save us from the darkness of unbelief!!

May He enlighten and save our souls!

### ***GLORY... for Saint Basil, tone 8:***

You became a Lover of wisdom, O righteous father,  
preferring life with God above all earthly delights.

Contemplating death, you abandoned all your wealth.

You stripped away fleshy lusts through rigorous abstinence,  
and studied God's Law, subjecting your flesh to the Spirit.

You were rich in virtues and a conqueror of passions,  
casting away the world, the flesh and the devil.

Now you stand before the throne of Christ.//

Entreat Him to grant us great mercy!

***NOW & EVER... the Dogmatikon in tone 4 (spiral bound  
Vespers book)***

### ***Three Old Testament Readings***

**The Reading from Genesis.** When Abram was ninety-nine years old, the LORD appeared to him and said, “I am God Almighty ; walk before me and be blameless. I will confirm my covenant between me and you and will greatly increase your numbers.” Abram fell facedown, and God said to him, “As for me, this is my covenant with you: You will be the father of many nations. No longer will you be called Abram ; your name will be Abraham, for I have made you a father of many nations. I will make you very fruitful; I will make nations of you, and kings will come from you. I will establish my

covenant as an everlasting covenant between me and you and your descendants after you for the generations to come, to be your God and the God of your descendants after you. Then God said to Abraham, “As for you, you must keep my covenant, you and your descendants after you for the generations to come. This is my covenant with you and your descendants after you, the covenant you are to keep: Every male among you shall be circumcised. You are to undergo circumcision, and it will be the sign of the covenant between me and you. For the generations to come every male among you who is eight days old must be circumcised, including those born in your household or bought with money from a foreigner —those who are not your offspring. Any uncircumcised male, who has not been circumcised in the flesh, will be cut off from his people; he has broken my covenant.” *Genesis 17:1-2, 4, 5-7, 8, 9-10, 11-12, 14*

**The Reading from Proverbs.** "The LORD brought me forth as the first of his works, before his deeds of old; I was appointed from eternity, from the beginning, before the world began. When there were no oceans, I was given birth, when there were no springs abounding with water; before the mountains were settled in place, before the hills, I was given birth, before he made the earth or its fields or any of the dust of the world. I was there when he set the heavens in place, when he marked out the horizon on the face of the deep, when he established the clouds above and fixed securely the fountains of the deep, when he gave the sea its boundary so the waters would not overstep his command, and when he marked out the foundations of the earth. Then I was the craftsman at his side. I was filled with delight day after day, rejoicing always in his presence. **8:22-30**

**The Reading from Proverbs.** The mouth of the righteous brings forth wisdom, but a perverse tongue will be cut out. The lips of the righteous know what is fitting, but the mouth of the wicked only what is perverse. The LORD abhors dishonest scales, but accurate weights are his delight. When pride comes, then comes disgrace, but with humility comes wisdom. The integrity of the upright guides them, but the unfaithful are destroyed by their duplicity. Wealth is worthless in the day of wrath, but righteousness delivers from death. The righteousness of the blameless makes a straight way for them,

but the wicked are brought down by their own wickedness. The righteousness of the upright delivers them, but the unfaithful are trapped by evil desires. When a wicked man dies, his hope perishes; all he expected from his power comes to nothing. The righteous man is rescued from trouble, and it comes on the wicked instead. With his mouth the godless destroys his neighbor, but through knowledge the righteous escape. When the righteous prosper, the city rejoices; when the wicked perish, there are shouts of joy. Through the blessing of the upright a city is exalted, but by the mouth of the wicked it is destroyed. A man who lacks judgment derides his neighbor, but a man of understanding holds his tongue. (10:31-11:12)

***APOSTIKHA: all stikhera of the Resurrection in tone 4 (spiral bound Vespers book)***

***GLORY... for Saint Basil, tone 6:***

Most blessed Basil,  
you were filled with heavenly grace,  
and your theology exposes the errors of false teachers.  
You are the pride of pastors,  
the cornerstone of bishops,  
and the example of fathers.  
Since you possess favor with Christ,//  
pray that He may save our souls!

***NOW & EVER... for the circumcision, tone 8:***

The God of all goodness did not disdain to be circumcised.  
He offered Himself as a saving sign and example for us all.  
He made the Law, and He obeyed His own commands.  
He fulfilled the words of the Prophets concerning Himself.  
He holds the world in His hands, yet is bound in swaddling clothes.//  
Let us glorify Him!

## TROPARIA

**Resurrection, tone 4**

When the women disciples of the Lord  
learned from the angel the joyous message of Your Resurrection,  
they cast away the ancestral curse  
and elatedly told the apostles:  
“Death is overthrown!

Christ God is risen,//  
granting the world great mercy!”

**Saint Basil, tone 1**

Your proclamation has gone out into all the earth,  
which was divinely taught by hearing your voice.  
You expounded the nature of creatures  
and ennobled the manners of men.  
O venerable Father of royal priesthood,//  
entreat Christ God that our souls may be saved!

**Circumcision, tone 1**

Enthroned on high with the Eternal Father and Your divine Spirit,  
O Jesus, You willed to be born on earth of the unwedded handmaid,  
^Your Mother.  
Therefore You were circumcised as an eight-day-old Child.  
Glory to Your most gracious counsel;  
glory to Your ^dispensation;//  
glory to Your condescension, O only Lover of man!

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