

أهلا بكم!

نرحب بجميع زوارنا الذين يصلون معنا اليوم ونحرص على مشاركتكم في كنوزنا الروحية، وندعوكم للانضمام إلينا لتناول القهوة معنا في قاعة الكنيسة بعد القدس الإلهي. إذا كانت هذه أول زيارة لكم، يرجىأخذ القليل من الوقت لتوقيع سجل الزوار واستكمال بطاقة معلومات الزوار البيضاء والتي توجد في صحن الكنيسة، وإعادتها إلى أحد مُشدي الكنيسة. وكتذكر ودي، يُسمح فقط للمسيحيين الأرثوذكس الذين أعدوا أنفسهم بشكل صحيح من خلال الصوم والصلوة واعتراف من زمـن قـرـيب بالاقـتـارـب من الكـأسـ المـقـدـسـةـ لـتـاـنـالـقـرـيـانـ المـقـدـسـ. ولكن يُسمح للجميع الاقـتـارـب في نهاية القدس لاستلام الخبز المقدس المبارك. ونـنـتـطـلـعـ لـلـقـائـكـ وـلـلـتـرـحـيبـ بـكـمـ شـخـصـيـاـ فيـ كـنـيـسـةـ مـارـ إـلـاـسـ.

يرجى توجيه الأسئلة إلى الأب مايكل مباشرةً.

PRAYER ON LEAVING THE CHURCH

Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word: for mine eyes have seen thy salvation, which thou hast prepared before the face of all people: a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- **Please pray for all the sick** and suffering, hospitalized and shut-ins of our community, especially Gary (Chip) George, Janet Saba, Salwa Makhlof, Elias Shamieh, Nada and Rima Tadros, Evelyn Gabriel.
- **Please pray for all those** who have suffered and lost loved ones in Palestine and the Middle East.



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Sunday: Orthros at 9:30 AM & Divine Liturgy at 10:30 AM
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ST. ELIAS ANTIOCHIAN CHRISTIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH

JANUARY 4, 2026
HIS EMINENCE METROPOLITAN SABA, ARCHBISHOP OF NEW YORK AND
METROPOLITAN OF ALL NORTH AMERICA

HIS GRACE BISHOP ALEXANDER, AUXILIARY BISHOP OF THE DIOCESE OF
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'DISCIPLES FIRST CALLED THEMSELVES CHRISTIANS IN ANTIOCH.' ACTS 11:26

**FOREFEAST OF &
SUNDAY BEFORE THEOPHANY OF CHRIST**
**SYNAXIS OF THE SEVENTY HOLY APOSTLES; VENERABLE
THEOKTISTOS OF SICILY**
TONE 5/ EOTHINON 8

PRAYER ON ENTERING THE CHURCH

I WILL COME INTO THY HOUSE IN THE MULTITUDE OF THY MERCY: AND IN THY FEAR I WILL WORSHIP TOWARD THY HOLY TEMPLE. Lead me, O Lord, in thy righteousness because of mine enemies; make thy way straight before me, that with a clear mind I may glorify thee forever, One Divine Power worshipped in three Persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen.

CHURCH ETIQUETTE

O Lord, sanctify those who love the beauty of your house.

When you enter the church, please remember that the church is a place of worship. Please do not disturb others as they worship God.

PLEASE TURN OFF ALL CELL PHONES.

TROPARION OF THE PATRON SAINT OF THE CHURCH TONE 4:

O Angelic of body the founder and corner stone of the prophets, the second forerunner of the advent of Christ, O Elias, venerable and glorious, thou didst send grace from heaven to thy disciple Elisha to dispel diseases and to purify lepers wherefore he abounds with healing to all those who honor him.

أيها الملائكة بالجسم قاعدة الأنبياء وركنهم، السابق الثاني لحضور المسيح، إلياس المجيد الموقر، لقد أرسلت النعمة من العلي لأليشع ليطرد الأسقام ويظهر البرص، لذلك يُفيض الأشفية بمكرميته دائمًا

THE SYNAXARION (Plain Reading)

On January 4 in the Holy Orthodox Church, we prepare to celebrate the Theophany (Epiphany) of our Lord Jesus Christ, and we celebrate the Synaxis of the holy Seventy Apostles.

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.

Reporting to Valens that Saint Basil was not to be intimidated, Modestus said, "Emperor, we stand defeated by a leader of the Church." Basil the Great again showed firmness before the emperor and his retinue and made such a strong impression on Valens that the emperor dared not give in to the Arians demanding Basil's exile. "On the day of Theophany, amidst an innumerable multitude of the people, Valens entered the church and mixed in with the throng, in order to give the appearance of being in unity with the Church. When the singing of Psalms began in the church, it was like thunder to his hearing. The emperor beheld a sea of people, and in the altar and all around was splendor; in front of all was Basil, who acknowledged neither by gesture nor by glance, that anything else was going on in church." Everything was focused only on God and the altar-table, and the clergy serving there in awe and reverence.

Saint Basil celebrated the church services almost every day. He was particularly concerned about the strict fulfilling of the Canons of the Church, and took care that only worthy individuals should enter into the clergy. He incessantly made the rounds of his own church, lest anywhere there be an infraction of Church discipline, and setting aright any unseemliness. At Caesarea, Saint Basil built two monasteries, a men's and a women's, with a church in honor of the Forty Martyrs (March 9) whose relics were buried there. Following the example of monks, the saint's clergy, even deacons and priests, lived in remarkable poverty, to toil and lead chaste and virtuous lives. For his clergy Saint Basil obtained an exemption from taxation. He used all his personal wealth and the income from his church for the benefit of the destitute; in every center of his diocese he built a poor-house; and at Caesarea, a home for wanderers and the homeless.

Sickly since youth, the toil of teaching, his life of abstinence, and the concerns and sorrows of pastoral service took their toll on him. Saint Basil died on January 1, 379 at age 49. Shortly before his death, the saint blessed Saint Gregory the Theologian to accept the See of Constantinople.

Upon the repose of Saint Basil, the Church immediately began to celebrate his memory. Saint Amphilochius, Bishop of Iconium, in his eulogy to Saint Basil the Great, said: "It is neither without a reason nor by chance that holy Basil has taken leave from the body and had repose from the world unto God on the day of the Circumcision of Jesus, celebrated between the day of the Nativity and the day of the Baptism of Christ. Therefore, this most blessed one, preaching and praising the Nativity and Baptism of Christ, extolling spiritual circumcision, himself forsaking the flesh, now ascends to Christ on the sacred day of remembrance of the Circumcision of Christ. Therefore, let it also be established on this present day annually to honor the memory of Basil the Great festively and with solemnity."

Saint Basil is also called "the revealer of heavenly mysteries" (Ouranophantor), a "renowned and bright star," and "the glory and beauty of the Church." His honorable head is in the Great Lavra on Mount Athos.

In some countries it is customary to sing special carols today in honor of Saint Basil. He is believed to visit the homes of the faithful, and a place is set for him at the table. People visit the homes of friends and relatives, and the mistress of the house gives a small gift to the children. A special bread (Vasilopita) is blessed and distributed after the Liturgy. A silver coin is baked into the bread, and whoever receives the slice with the coin is said to receive the blessing of Saint Basil for the coming year.

WELCOME!

We welcome all of our visitors who are praying with us today. We are eager to share with you our spiritual treasures, and invite you to join us for coffee-hour in the Fellowship Hall following the Divine Liturgy. If you are a first-time visitor, please take a few minutes to sign our Guest Registry book and complete the white VISITORS INFORMATION CARD which may be found in the Narthex, and return it to an usher. As a friendly reminder, **only Orthodox Christians who have properly prepared themselves through fasting, prayer and recent Confession may approach the Holy Chalice to receive Holy Communion. However all may come forward at end of Liturgy and receive blessed Holy Bread.** We look forward to meeting you and welcoming you personally to St. Elias. If you have any questions, please see Fr. Michael.

From this time church governance passed over to Basil, though he was subordinate to the hierarch. He preached daily, and often twice, in the morning and in the evening. During this time Saint Basil composed his Liturgy. He wrote a work "On the Six Days of Creation" (Hexaemeron) and another on the Prophet Isaiah in sixteen chapters, yet another on the Psalms, and also a second compilation of monastic rules. Saint Basil wrote also three books "Against Eunomius," an Arian teacher who, with the help of Aristotelian concepts, had presented the Arian dogma in philosophic form, converting Christian teaching into a logical scheme of rational concepts.

Saint Gregory the Theologian, speaking about the activity of Basil the Great during this period, points to "the caring for the destitute and the taking in of strangers, the supervision of virgins, written and unwritten monastic rules for monks, the arrangement of prayers [Liturgy], the felicitous arrangement of altars and other things." Upon the death of Eusebius, the Bishop of Caesarea, Saint Basil was chosen to succeed him in the year 370. As Bishop of Caesarea, Saint Basil the Great was the newest of fifty bishops in eleven provinces. Saint Athanasius the Great (May 2), with joy and with thanks to God welcomed the appointment to Cappadocia of such a bishop as Basil, famed for his reverence, deep knowledge of Holy Scripture, great learning, and his efforts for the welfare of Church peace and unity.

Under Valens, the external government belonged to the Arians, who held various opinions regarding the divinity of the Son of God, and were divided into several factions. These dogmatic disputes were concerned with questions about the Holy Spirit. In his books Against Eunomios, Saint Basil the Great taught the divinity of the Holy Spirit and His equality with the Father and the Son. Subsequently, in order to provide a full explanation of Orthodox teaching on this question, Saint Basil wrote his book "On the Holy Spirit" at the request of Saint Amphilius, the Bishop of Iconium.

Saint Basil's difficulties were made worse by various circumstances: Cappadocia was divided in two under the rearrangement of provincial districts. Then at Antioch a schism occurred, occasioned by the consecration of a second bishop. There was the negative and haughty attitude of Western bishops to the attempts to draw them into the struggle with the Arians. And there was also the departure of Eustathius of Sebaste over to the Arian side. Basil had been connected to him by ties of close friendship. Amidst the constant perils Saint Basil gave encouragement to the Orthodox, confirmed them in the Faith, summoning them to bravery and endurance. The holy bishop wrote numerous letters to the churches, to bishops, to clergy and to individuals. Overcoming the heretics "by the weapon of his mouth, and by the arrows of his letters," as an untiring champion of Orthodoxy, Saint Basil challenged the hostility and intrigues of the Arian heretics all his life. He has been compared to a bee, stinging the Church's enemies, yet nourishing his flock with the sweet honey of his teaching.

The emperor Valens, mercilessly sending into exile any bishop who displeased him, and having implanted Arianism into other Asia Minor provinces, suddenly appeared in Cappadocia for this same purpose. He sent the prefect Modestus to Saint Basil. He began to threaten the saint with the confiscation of his property, banishment, beatings, and even death.

Saint Basil said, "If you take away my possessions, you will not enrich yourself, nor will you make me a pauper. You have no need of my old worn-out clothing, nor of my few books, of which the entirety of my wealth is comprised. Exile means nothing to me, since I am bound to no particular place. This place in which I now dwell is not mine, and any place you send me shall be mine. Better to say: every place is God's. Where would I be neither a stranger and sojourner (Ps. 38/39:13)? Who can torture me? I am so weak, that the very first blow would render me insensible. Death would be a kindness to me, for it will bring me all the sooner to God, for Whom I live and labor, and to Whom I hasten."

The official was stunned by his answer. "No one has ever spoken so audaciously to me," he said.

"Perhaps," the saint remarked, "that is because you've never spoken to a bishop before. In all else we are meek, the most humble of all. But when it concerns God, and people rise up against Him, then we, counting everything else as naught, look to Him alone. Then fire, sword, wild beasts and iron rods that rend the body, serve to fill us with joy, rather than fear."

THE EPISTLE

Priest: Let us attend.

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

Reader: 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.

خَلَصْ يَا رَبُّ شَعْبَكَ وَبَارِكْ مِيرَاثَكَ.

إِلَيْكَ يَا رَبُّ أَصْرُخَ إِلَهِي.

فَصَلْ مِنْ رِسَالَةِ الْقَدِيسِ بُولُسَ الرَّسُولِ الثَّانِيَةِ إِلَى تِيمُوْثَاوِسَ. (8-5:4)

يَا وَلَدِي تِيمُوْثَاوِسَ، تَيَقَّظْ فِي كُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَاحْتَمِلِ الْمَشَقَّاتِ، وَاعْمَلْ عَمَلَ الْمُبِشِّرِ، وَأَوْفِ خَدْمَتَكَ. أَمَّا أَنَا فَقَدْ أُرِيقَ السَّكِيْبُ عَلَيَّ وَوَقَّتْ اِنْحِلَالِيَ قَدْ اِقْتَرَبَ. وَقَدْ جَاهَدْ الْجَهَادَ الْحَسَنَ، وَأَتَمَّتْ شَوْطِيَ، وَحَفَظْتُ الْإِيمَانَ. وَإِنَّمَا يَبْقَى مَحْفُوظًا لِي إِكْلِيلُ الْعَدْلِ الَّذِي يَجْزِينِي بِهِ فِي ذَلِكَ الْيَوْمِ الرَّبُّ، الْدَّيَانُ الْعَادِلُ، لَا إِيَّاهِي فَقَطْ، بَلْ جَمِيعَ الَّذِينَ يُحْبُّونَ ظُهُورَهُ أَيْضًا.

GOSPEL

Priest: 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."

فَصَلْ شَرِيفٌ مِنْ بِشَارَةِ الْقَدِيسِ مَرْقُسَ الْإِنْجِيلِيِّ الْبَشِيرِ وَالْتَّلْمِيْدِ الْطَّاهِرِ. (8-1:1)

بَدْءُ إِنْجِيلِ يَسُوعَ الْمَسِيحِ ابْنِ اللَّهِ كَمَا هُوَ مَكْتُوبُ فِي الْأَنْبِيَاءِ: "هَاءَنَا مُرِسَّلٌ مَلَكِيٌّ أَمَامَ وَجْهِكَ يُهَبِّي طَرِيقَكَ قَدَّامَكَ". صَوْتُ صَارِخٍ فِي الْبَرِّيَّةِ: أَعْدُوا طَرِيقَ الرَّبِّ وَاجْعَلُوا سُبُّلَهُ قَوِيمَةً. كَانَ يُوحَنَّا يُعْمَدُ فِي الْبَرِّيَّةِ وَيَكْرِزُ بِمَعْمُودِيَّةِ التَّوْبَةِ لِغُفَرَانِ الْحَطَايَا. وَكَانَ يَخْرُجُ إِلَيْهِ جَمِيعُ أَهْلِ بَلْدِ الْيَهُودِيَّةِ وَأُورُشَلَيمِ فَيَعْنَمِدُونَ جَمِيعَهُمْ مِنْهُ فِي نَهْرِ الْأَرْدَنِ، مُعْتَرِفِينَ بِحَطَايَاهُمْ. وَكَانَ يُوحَنَّا يَلْبُسُ وَبَرَّ الْإِلَبِ وَعَلَى حَقْوَنِهِ

مِنْطَقَةٌ مِنْ جِلْدٍ، وَيَأْكُلُ جَرَادًا وَعَسْلًا بَرِّيًّا. وَكَانَ يَكْرُزُ قَائِلًا: إِنَّهُ يَأْتِي بَعْدِي مَنْ هُوَ أَقْوَى مِنِّي، وَأَنَا لَا أَسْتَحِقُ أَنْ أُنْهَنِي وَأَحْلُّ سَيْرَ حَذَائِهِ. أَنَا عَمَدْتُكُمْ بِالْمَاءِ، وَأَمَّا هُوَ فَيُعِمِّدُكُمْ بِالرُّوحِ الْقُدْسِ.

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.

فُنْدَاقٌ تَقْدِيمَةُ الظُّهُورِ الإِلَهِيِّ بِاللَّهِنِ الْرَّابِعِ

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الْيَوْمِ حَضَرَ الرَّبُّ فِي مَجَارِيِ الْأَرْدُنِ، هَاتِقًا نَحْوَ يَوْحَنَّا قَائِلًا: لَا تَجْرُّعْ مِنْ تَعْمِيَدِي، لَأَنِّي أَتَيْتُ لِأَخْصَصِ
آدَمَ الْمَجْبُولَ أَوْلًَا.

SAINT BASIL THE GREAT, ARCHBISHOP OF CAESAREA IN CAPPADOCIA

COMMEMORATED ON JANUARY 1

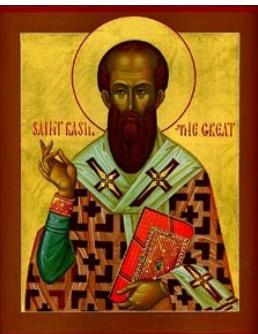
Saint Basil the Great, Archbishop of Caesarea in Cappadocia, "belongs not to the Church of Caesarea alone, nor merely to his own time, nor was he of benefit only to his own kinsmen, but rather to all lands and cities worldwide, and to all people he brought and still brings benefit, and for Christians he always was and will be a most salvific teacher." Thus spoke Saint Basil's contemporary, Saint Amphilius, Bishop of Iconium (November 23).

Saint Basil was born in the year 330 at Caesarea, the administrative center of Cappadocia. He was of illustrious lineage, famed for its eminence and wealth, and zealous for the Christian Faith. The saint's grandfather and grandmother on his father's side had to hide in the forests of Pontus for seven years during the persecution under Diocletian.

Saint Basil's mother Saint Emilia was the daughter of a martyr. On the Greek calendar, she is commemorated on May 30. Saint Basil's father was also named Basil. He was a lawyer and renowned rhetorician, and lived at Caesarea.

Ten children were born to the elder Basil and Emilia: five sons and five daughters. Five of them were later numbered among the saints: Basil the Great; Macrina (July 19) was an exemplar of ascetic life, and exerted strong influence on the life and character of Saint Basil the Great; Gregory, afterwards Bishop of Nyssa (January 10); Peter, Bishop of Sebaste (January 9); and Theosebia, a deaconess (January 10).

Saint Basil spent the first years of his life on an estate belonging to his parents at the River Iris, where he was raised under the supervision of his mother Emilia and grandmother Macrina. They were women of great refinement, who remembered an earlier bishop of Cappadocia, Saint Gregory the Wonderworker (November 17). Basil received his initial education under the supervision of his father, and then he studied under the finest teachers in Caesarea of Cappadocia, and it was here that he made the acquaintance of Saint Gregory the Theologian (January 25 and January 30). Later, Basil transferred to a school at Constantinople, where



he listened to eminent orators and philosophers. To complete his education Saint Basil went to Athens, the center of classical enlightenment.

After a four or five year stay at Athens, Basil had mastered all the available disciplines. "He studied everything thoroughly, more than others are wont to study a single subject. He studied each science in its very totality, as though he would study nothing else." Philosopher, philologist, orator, jurist, naturalist, possessing profound knowledge in astronomy, mathematics and medicine, "he was a ship fully laden with learning, to the extent permitted by human nature."

At Athens a close friendship developed between Basil the Great and Gregory the Theologian (Nazianzus), which continued throughout their life. In fact, they regarded themselves as one soul in two bodies. Later on, in his eulogy for Basil the Great, Saint Gregory the Theologian speaks with delight about this period: "Various hopes guided us, and indeed inevitably, in learning... Two paths opened up before us: the one to our sacred temples and the teachers therein; the other towards preceptors of disciplines beyond."

About the year 357, Saint Basil returned to Caesarea, where for a while he devoted himself to rhetoric. But soon, refusing offers from Caesarea's citizens who wanted to entrust him with the education of their offspring, Saint Basil entered upon the path of ascetic life.

After the death of her husband, Basil's mother, her eldest daughter Macrina, and several female servants withdrew to the family estate at Iris and there began to lead an ascetic life. Basil was baptized by Dianios, the Bishop of Caesarea, and was tonsured a Reader (On the Holy Spirit, 29). He first read the Holy Scriptures to the people, then explained them.

Later on, "wishing to acquire a guide to the knowledge of truth", the saint undertook a journey into Egypt, Syria and Palestine, to meet the great Christian ascetics dwelling there. On returning to Cappadocia, he decided to do as they did. He distributed his wealth to the needy, then settled on the opposite side of the river not far from his mother Emilia and sister Macrina, gathering around him monks living a cenobitic life.

By his letters, Basil drew his good friend Gregory the Theologian to the monastery. Saints Basil and Gregory labored in strict abstinence in their dwelling place, which had no roof or fireplace, and the food was very humble. They themselves cleared away the stones, planted and watered the trees, and carried heavy loads. Their hands were constantly calloused from the hard work. For clothing Basil had only a tunic and monastic mantle. He wore a hairshirt, but only at night, so that it would not be obvious.

In their solitude, Saints Basil and Gregory occupied themselves in an intense study of Holy Scripture. They were guided by the writings of the Fathers and commentators of the past, especially the good writings of Origen. From all these works they compiled an anthology called Philokalia. Also at this time, at the request of the monks, Saint Basil wrote down a collection of rules for virtuous life. By his preaching and by his example Saint Basil assisted in the spiritual perfection of Christians in Cappadocia and Pontus; and many indeed turned to him. Monasteries were organized for men and for women, in which places Basil sought to combine the cenobitic (koine bios, or common) lifestyle with that of the solitary hermit.

During the reign of Constantius (337-361) the heretical teachings of Arius were spreading, and the Church summoned both its saints into service. Saint Basil returned to Caesarea. In the year 362 he was ordained deacon by Bishop Meletius of Antioch. In 364 he was ordained to the holy priesthood by Bishop Eusebius of Caesarea. "But seeing," as Gregory the Theologian relates, "that everyone exceedingly praised and honored Basil for his wisdom and reverence, Eusebius, through human weakness, succumbed to jealousy of him, and began to show dislike for him." The monks rose up in defense of Saint Basil. To avoid causing Church discord, Basil withdrew to his own monastery and concerned himself with the organization of monasteries.

With the coming to power of the emperor Valens (364-378), who was a resolute adherent of Arianism, a time of troubles began for Orthodoxy, the onset of a great struggle. Saint Basil hastily returned to Caesarea at the request of Bishop Eusebius. In the words of Gregory the Theologian, he was for Bishop Eusebius "a good advisor, a righteous representative, an expounder of the Word of God, a staff for the aged, a faithful support in internal matters, and an activist in external matters."