



## GREEK ORTHODOX ARCHDIOCESE OF AMERICA

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To: The Beloved Clergy of the Direct Archdiocesan District

From: Bishop Andonios, Chancellor

Date: November 2016

Re: Christmas Liturgy Rubrics

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As always, I pray this communiqué finds you, your loved ones and your community doing well. No doubt, you are preparing your parish bulletins for the Christmas Season and I wanted to communicate with you regarding the celebration of the Nativity of our Lord which this year falls on a Sunday. As has been the directive in the past within the Direct Archdiocesan District and in accordance with the rubrics outlined by the Typikon of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, my office is providing you with the following guidelines:

1. The Royal Hours are to be celebrated on **Friday morning, December 23<sup>rd</sup>**.
2. On **Saturday, December 24<sup>th</sup>**, the rubrics call for the celebration of the Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom, following the chanting of the Orthros. This Liturgy is to be celebrated in the morning; however, for pastoral reasons since many of our faithful, following the prevailing practice here in the States, prefer to attend Christmas Eve services, you may choose to postpone the celebration until the evening hours. If so, you are to celebrate the Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom (not St. Basil), preceded by the chanting of an Orthros (not Vespers).
3. On **Sunday morning, December 25<sup>th</sup>**, EVERY parish, following the Orthros, MUST celebrate the Divine Liturgy of St. Basil the Great.

I know there are differences amongst the brothers regarding what is considered “the same day”. Some of you consider the day beginning at sunset while for others midnight marks the start. I leave it to your conscience how to implement the above. Those of you who consider sunset as the start will not feel comfortable celebrating both a Christmas “Eve” Liturgy and a Sunday morning Liturgy. If that is the case, and your community wants these two liturgies you should contact my office as soon as possible regarding a second priest. We will do our best to accommodate but you all realize the number of available clergy is limited. Needless to say, in this case the prescribed protocols regarding two liturgies (on the same day) and the Holy Table and Antimension should be observed. Those communities with two or more priests may celebrate the Divine Liturgy on Saturday evening (in addition to the Sunday morning Liturgy) but once again, that Liturgy should be that of St. John Chrysostom.

I trust that all our clergy and parishes will abide by the above as is appropriate to such a directive and so as to avoid confusion within the District. I convey the blessings and paternal love of His Eminence and wish you all a very blessed and spiritually uplifting period of preparation for the great feast of Christmas.

Faithfully in the Service of Our Lord,