

To Our Guests and Visitors about Receiving Holy Communion:

1. **In Orthodox churches, Holy Communion is given to and received only by members of the Orthodox Church (the baptized and chrismated who strive to live in repentance, faith, and godliness).**
2. **If you are non-Orthodox, please refrain from approaching the Chalice, but speak with Fr. Jonathan after the Liturgy. If you are Orthodox and unfamiliar to the Priest, please introduce yourself to Fr. Jonathan prior to the Liturgy, otherwise at the Chalice.**
3. **Please approach the Chalice in the following order: children first; then row-by-row from the front of Church, going to the Chalice on the side you are positioned (if there are two Chalices), returning to your place by the outside aisle past the table with the *antidoron* (bread and wine).**

Prayers of Holy Oblation are offered for the Health of:

Archprst. Dimitri	Archprst. Stephen	Archprst. Elias	Mat. Marion	Irene
Laurie	Barbara	Tanya	Nicole & Noelle	Eli
Joshua	Mark	Nick	Nina	Charles
Gregory	Ronald	Ricardo	Nancy	Deanna
Bill	Kay	Lydia	Mary	Mikey
Patrick	Maksim	Richard	Kathy	Dolores
John	Jerry	Sbdcn. Joseph	Charlotte	John
Olwin	Tharika & newborn daughter			

Prayers of Holy Oblation are offered in Memory of:

Tatiana (ND)

September Birthdays:

Will Bortins (9/3)	Jessie Insley (9/7)	Bryan P. Ewers (9/17)
Laurie Kohanik (9/20)	Warren Caterson (9/23)	Larissa Ciampa (9/26)
George Cordero (9/27)		

TO SPONSOR COFFEE HOUR, please sign up on the calendar book on the glass case. COFFEE HOUR.

St. Mark is a Parish of the OCA Diocese of the South under the leadership of Metropolitan Tikhon and Archbishop Alexander. Our mission is to be a spiritual home to all who enter; to be a Christ-like community of Orthodox Christians; to be active in worship, fellowship, and witness, through participation in the Sacraments to come into close union with God.

If you are unable to attend services, but wish to continue your Stewardship contributions, send them to PO Box 1315, Bradenton FL, 34206.

Memorial Bricks for the St. Mark Memorial Garden can be ordered at www.thatsmybrick.com/stmarkorthodox. You can order a 4"x 8" or 8"x8" brick with or without an Orthodox Cross, the number of characters vary accordingly. If you have any questions about the ordering process, see Fr. Jonathan.

St. Mark Orthodox Church

1517 57th Street E
Bradenton, FL 34208

"The Messenger"

V. Rev. Fr. Jonathan Cholcher
Rector

V. Rev. Fr. Stephen Plumlee
Attached

Sub-Deacon James Abraham

Parish Phone: (941)-749-7662

Parish Website: Bradentonorthodox.org
www.facebook.com/St.MarkOrthodoxChurch
Parish E-mail: stmarkocarector@gmail.com

Fr. Jonathan's Cell: (941)-807-5393
Office Hours: W, Th, F 10:00 AM – Noon

This week at St. Mark

11	Wednesday	6:00 PM	Vespers/Faith & Life Class (Rev. 21/22)
12	Thursday	9:30 AM	Divine Liturgy
13	Friday	6:00 PM	Vigil (Exaltation of the Cross)
14	Saturday	9:30 AM	Divine Liturgy (Exaltation of the Cross) w/Baptism/Chrismation of Alexys Siagel, Michael Coliane, and James Bovienzo
15	Sunday	9:30 AM	Divine Liturgy

Sunday, September 8, 2024 Tone 2
10th Sunday After Pentecost
Nativity of the Theotokos
Sunday Before the Exaltation of the Cross

Prokeimenon **Tone 6** *(Sunday Before)*
O Lord, save Thy people, / and bless Thine inheritance! (Ps. 27:9a)
V. To Thee, O Lord, will I call. O my God, be not silent to me! (Ps. 27:1a)

Prokeimenon **Tone 3** *(Song of the Theotokos)*
My soul doth magnify the Lord, / and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Savior.
(Lk. 1:46-47)

Galatians 6:11-18 (Epistle, Sunday Before)

See with what large letters I have written to you with my own hand! As many as desire to make a good showing in the flesh, these would compel you to be circumcised, only that they may not suffer persecution for the cross of Christ. For not even those who are circumcised keep the law, but they desire to have you circumcised that they may boast in your flesh. But God forbid that I should boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world. For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision avails anything, but a new creation. And as many as walk according to this rule, peace and mercy be upon them, and upon the Israel of God. From now on let no one trouble me, for I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus. Brethren, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen.

1 Corinthians 9:2-12 (Epistle)

If I am not an apostle to others, yet doubtless I am to you. For you are the seal of my apostleship in the Lord. My defense to those who examine me is this: Do we have no right to eat and drink? Do we have no right to take along a believing wife, as do also the other apostles, the brothers of the Lord, and Cephas? Or is it only Barnabas and I who have no right to refrain from working? Who ever goes to war at his own expense? Who plants a vineyard and does not eat of its fruit? Or who tends a flock and does not drink of the milk of the flock? Do I say these things as a mere man? Or does not the law say the same also? For it is written in the law of Moses, "You shall not muzzle an ox while it treads out the grain." Is it oxen God is concerned about? Or does He say it altogether for our sakes? For our sakes, no doubt, this is written, that he who plows should plow in hope, and he who threshes in hope should be partaker of his hope. If we have sown spiritual things for you, is it a great thing if we reap your material things? If others are partakers of this right over you, are we not even more? Nevertheless we have not used this right, but endure all things lest we hinder the gospel of Christ.

Philippians 2:5-11 (Epistle, Theotokos)

Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross. Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given

Him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

John 3:13-17 (Gospel, Sunday Before)

No one has ascended to heaven but He who came down from heaven, that is, the Son of Man who is in heaven. And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life. For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.

Matthew 18:23-35 (Gospel)

Therefore the kingdom of heaven is like a certain king who wanted to settle accounts with his servants. And when he had begun to settle accounts, one was brought to him who owed him ten thousand talents. But as he was not able to pay, his master commanded that he be sold, with his wife and children and all that he had, and that payment be made. The servant therefore fell down before him, saying, 'Master, have patience with me, and I will pay you all.' Then the master of that servant was moved with compassion, released him, and forgave him the debt. But that servant went out and found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred denarii; and he laid hands on him and took him by the throat, saying, 'Pay me what you owe!' So his fellow servant fell down at his feet and begged him, saying, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you all.' And he would not, but went and threw him into prison till he should pay the debt. So when his fellow servants saw what had been done, they were very grieved, and came and told their master all that had been done. Then his master, after he had called him, said to him, 'You wicked servant! I forgave you all that debt because you begged me. Should you not also have had compassion on your fellow servant, just as I had pity on you?' And his master was angry, and delivered him to the torturers until he should pay all that was due to him. So My heavenly Father also will do to you if each of you, from his heart, does not forgive his brother his trespasses."

Luke 10:38-42; 11:27-28 (Gospel, Theotokos)

Now it happened as they went that He entered a certain village; and a certain woman named Martha welcomed Him into her house. And she had a sister called Mary, who also sat at Jesus' feet and heard His word. But Martha was distracted with much serving, and she approached Him and said, "Lord, do You not care that my sister has left me to serve alone? Therefore tell her to help me." And Jesus answered and said to her, "Martha, Martha, you are worried and troubled about many things. But one thing is needed, and Mary has chosen that good part, which will not

be taken away from her.” And it happened, as He spoke these things, that a certain woman from the crowd raised her voice and said to Him, “Blessed is the womb that bore You, and the breasts which nursed You!” But He said, “More than that, blessed are those who hear the word of God and keep it!”

Hymns after the Entrance with the Gospel:

Troparion Tone 2 (Resurrection)

When Thou didst descend to death, O Life immortal,
Thou didst slay hell with the splendor of Thy Godhead.
And when from the depths Thou didst raise the dead,
all the powers of heaven cried out://
“O Giver of life, Christ our God, glory to Thee!”

Troparion Tone 4 (Feast*)

O Thy nativity, O Virgin,
has proclaimed joy to the whole universe!
The Sun of righteousness, Christ our God,
has shone from thee, O Theotokos.
By annulling the curse,
He bestowed a blessing.//
By destroying death, He has granted us eternal life.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit

Kontakion Tone 2 (Resurrection)

Hell became afraid, O almighty Savior,
seeing the miracle of Thy Resurrection from the tomb!
The dead arose! Creation, with Adam, beheld this and rejoiced with Thee.//
and the world, my Savior, praises Thee forever.


Now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen

Kontakion Tone 4 (Feast)

By thy nativity, O most pure Virgin,
Joachim and Anna are freed from barrenness,
Adam and Eve — from the corruption of death.
And we, thy people, freed from the guilt of sin, celebrate and sing to thee://
“The barren woman gives birth to the Theotokos, the nourisher of our Life.”

* Today, September 8, is the Feast of the Nativity (Birth) of the Theotokos, Virgin Mary; it is also the Sunday before the Feast of the Exaltation (Elevation of the Cross, Sept. 14), and a normal Sunday, the Resurrection of Christ. Therefore, we have the three Epistle and Gospel readings for these three “occasions,” and the various Prokeimena and Hymns in order of importance.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Our Parish website is www.bradentonorthodox.org. Please check it out and give any feedback you might have to Fr. Jonathan or a Council member. You can also find Saint Mark online at www.facebook.com/St.MarkOrthodoxChurch.
- **Quarterly Charity (July-September): FOCUS North America (Fellowship of Orthodox Christians United to Serve)**
- **A COFFEE HOUR SPONSOR SHEET** is located on the glass bookstore case in the Narthex. Please consider sponsoring Coffee Hour in 2024. Speak with Marsha Blazso for more information.
- **Immediately following each Divine Liturgy as we venerate the Cross, we pray the Post-Communion Prayers. Please maintain quiet until the prayers are completed.** 
- Anyone interested in helping count the Sunday collections, please see a Parish Council member.
- Our Lenten Project was the **lift station** needed to tie into the Manatee County sewer system, as required by the County with any new construction. Due to a sizeable, anonymous donation, we have reached this goal.
- Architectural drawings and an artist’s rendition of a **proposed fellowship hall** for St. Mark Church are on display in the Narthex. Please join us in prayer seeking God’s will for the realization of this project.
- **Jaron Schultz**, a catechumen at Saint Mark’s, is looking for new living accommodations. If anyone has any resources available they are willing to share with Jaron, please speak with him after Liturgy or contact him at jaron Schultz2@gmail.com, or 585-415-3964. Thank you!
- Serving this weekend for Fr. Jonathan is **Fr. Brendan Dougherty**, a Priest attached to Holy Spirit Church (OCA) in Venice, FL. Thank you, Fr. Brendan, for your service this weekend, and welcome to Saint Mark Church!
- Fr. Jonathan will return to Bradenton tomorrow, September 9, after a week away with Mat. Diane.
- This coming Saturday, September 14, is the **Feast of the Exaltation (Elevation) of the Cross**. Vigil for the Feast will be served Friday evening at 6:00 PM. During the Liturgy on the Feast, Alexys Siagel will be baptized and then chrismated along with her fiancé, Michael Coliane, and Dr. James Bovienzo. We welcome Alexys, Michael, and James fully into the Orthodox Church. God grant them many years!
- **SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASSES for our children resume today following liturgy.** We have three classes: 1) 4-7 yr.-olds w/Belle Hudson (SW corner of Nave); 2) 8-12 yr.-olds w/Siobhan Awad and Jessie Insley (north room); and 3) Teens w/Subdn. James Abraham (south room).

ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN GIVING: TITHING

Should I give money to Church? If so, how much should I give? Am I required to give a certain amount to Church to be considered a member of the Parish, or even a Christian?

Here are some basic principles of Orthodox Christian Giving:

1. We give to Church because we're thankful to God who dwells in the Church (the People of God), and thankfulness is required of Christians!

“And now, Lord, we give thanks to You, and we praise Your glorious name. But who am I, and who are my people, that we are able to be zealous in offering to You? For all things are Yours, and of Your own we give to You” (1 Chr. 29:13-14). “So let each one give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver...For the administration of this service not only supplies the needs of the saints, but also is abounding through many thanksgivings to God...” (2 Cor. 9:7, 12).

Every week the Church assembles in the Divine Liturgy, also known as the Eucharist. *Eucharist* is a Greek word (*evcharistia*) literally meaning “thanksgiving.” Therefore, we give to Church because *thanksgiving* to God defines what we do as the People of God assembled in Christ and the Holy Spirit. We give because what we do as the Church of God is the most important activity in our life as human beings created by God.

2. The normal, or standard, amount of giving to Church is the Tithe, which means Ten Percent (10%).

“[Melchizedek, king and priest of Salem] blessed Abram and said, ‘Blessed be Abram of God Most High, Creator of heaven and earth; and blessed be God Most High, who delivered your enemies into your hands.’ Then Abram gave him a tithe (10%) of all” (Gen. 14:19-20).

“Then Jacob made a vow, saying, ‘If the Lord God will be with me, and keep me in this way I am going, and give me bread to eat and clothing to put on, and bring me back in safety to my father’s house, then the Lord shall be my God. And this stone I set as a pillar shall be

God’s house to me, and of all You give me I will surely give a tithe (10%) to You” (Gen. 28:20-22).

“Now all the tithe (10%) of the land, whether seed of the land or fruit tree, is the Lord’s. It is holy to the Lord...Now concerning the tithe (10%) of the oxen or the sheep, of whatever passes in the numbering under the rod, the tenth one shall be holy to the Lord” (Lev. 27:30, 32).

“Will a man insult God? Yet you have insulted Me! But you say, ‘In what way have we insulted You?’ You kept back your tithes and offerings...Return now in this, says the Lord Almighty, and see if I will not open for you the floodgates of heaven and pour out for you a blessing until it is overflowing” (Mal. 3:8, 10).

“Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you pay tithe (10%) of mint and anise and cummin, and have neglected the weightier matters of the law: justice and mercy and faith. These you ought to have done, without leaving the others undone” (Matt. 23:23).

“What did they of old do? They gave tithes, and tithes again upon tithes for orphans, widows, and strangers; whereas some one was saying to me in astonishment at another, ‘Why, such a one gives tithes!’ What a load of disgrace does this expression imply, since what was not a matter of wonder with the Jews has come to be so in the case of the Christians? If there was danger then in omitting tithes, think how great it must be now” (St. John Chrysostom, *Homily 4 on Ephesians*).

Note Well: If every household at Saint Mark gave a tithe (10%) of their income, we would far exceed our current budgetary needs and be able to accomplish much more work, for instance, building a Fellowship Hall. Consider: [\$68,000 (Median Household Income, Manatee Co.) x 50 (no. of households at Saint Mark)] x 0.10 (10%) = \$340,000.00 (double our current budget).

3. Giving to Church focuses on what God has already given to us for essential Gospel purposes, not on what we don’t have, or what is left over after we spend on ourselves.

God gathers us as Church for two essential purposes: Communion with God (worship; providing for the Priest, liturgical needs, and missions), and Communion with each other (nurture; education, encouragement, care of the needy, fellowship). We give truly to live!