

### Concerning Holy Communion:

1. *If you are a communicant member of an Orthodox parish*, you are welcome to receive Holy Communion at Saint Mark's. If possible, and this is preferred, announce your intention to receive Communion to Fr. Jonathan prior to the Liturgy, or at the Chalice.
2. *If you are not a member of the Orthodox Church*, please refrain from approaching the Chalice for Communion. Instead, you are welcome to receive some of the blessed bread (*antidoron*) from a small side table, and introduce yourself to Fr. Jonathan following the Liturgy.

### Prayers of Holy Oblation are offered for the Health of:

Archpr. Dimitri	Archpr. Stephen	Archpr. Elias	Mat. Marion	Sbdn. Joseph
Irene	Laurie	Barbara	Nicole & Noelle	Tanya
Eli	Joshua	Mark	Nick	Nina
Charles	Gregory	Ricardo	Nancy	Deanna
Peter	Bill	Kay	Lydia	Mary
Mikey	Patrick	Maksim	Richard	Kathy
Dolores	John	Jerry	Charlotte	Alexandra
Zina	Grant	Temple & newborn son	Expecting mothers and	

their unborn children: Wanda, Natalie, Moriah, and Cassia

### Prayers of Holy Oblation are offered in Memory of:

Ronald (ND) Lyubov (ND)

### March Birthdays:

Belle Denardo (3/3)	Michael Blazo (3/6)	Willard Brown (3/09)
Marina Proskurina (3/15)	Carol Skinner (3/28)	Sue Brown (3/29)

### 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.thatmybrick.com/stmarkorthodox](http://www.thatmybrick.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 57<sup>th</sup> 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](http://Bradentonorthodox.org)  
[www.facebook.com/St.MarkOrthodoxChurch](http://www.facebook.com/St.MarkOrthodoxChurch)  
Parish E-mail: [stmarkocarector@gmail.com](mailto:stmarkocarector@gmail.com)  
Fr. Jonathan's Cell: (941)-807-5393  
Office Hours: W, Th, F 10:00 AM – Noon

### This week at St. Mark

9	Sunday	9:30 AM	Divine Liturgy & Synodikon of Orthodoxy
		5:00 PM	Vespers (at Holy Spirit Church, Venice)
11	Tuesday	6:30 PM	Men's Group Meeting
12	Wednesday	6:00 PM	Presanctified Liturgy
14	Friday	6:00 PM	Presanctified Liturgy
15	Saturday	9:30 AM	Memorial Liturgy
		3:30 PM	Intro to Orthodoxy
		5:00 PM	Great Vespers

Sunday, March 9, 2025 Tone 4  
Sunday of Orthodoxy  
Forty Martyrs of Sebaste

**Prokeimenon                      Tone 4                      (Song of the Fathers)**  
*Blessed art Thou, O Lord God of our fathers, / and praised and glorified is Thy Name forever! (Song of the three Holy Children, v. 3)*  
*V. For Thou art just in all that Thou hast done for us! (v. 4)*

**Prokeimenon                      Tone 5                      (Holy 40 Martyrs)**  
*Thou, O Lord, shalt protect us / and preserve us from this generation forever. (Ps. 11:7)*

*Hebrews 11:24-26, 32-12:2 (Epistle, Sun. of Orthodoxy)*

By faith Moses, when he became of age, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin, esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt; for he looked to the reward. And what more shall I say? For the time would fail me to tell of Gideon and Barak and Samson and Jephthah, also of David and Samuel and the prophets: who through faith subdued kingdoms, worked righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, became valiant in battle, turned to flight the armies of the aliens. Women received their dead raised to life again. Others were tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection. Still others had trial of mockings and scourgings, yes, and of chains and imprisonment. They were stoned, they were sawn in two, were tempted, were slain with the sword. They wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented – of whom the world was not worthy. They wandered in deserts and mountains, in dens and caves of the earth. And all these, having obtained a good testimony through faith, did not receive the promise, God having provided something better for us, that they should not be made perfect apart from us. Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

*Hebrews 12:1-10 (Epistle, Martyrs)*

Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy

that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. For consider Him who endured such hostility from sinners against Himself, lest you become weary and discouraged in your souls. You have not yet resisted to bloodshed, striving against sin. And you have forgotten the exhortation which speaks to you as to sons: "My son, do not despise the chastening of the LORD, nor be discouraged when you are rebuked by Him; for whom the LORD loves He chastens, and scourges every son whom He receives." If you endure chastening, God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom a father does not chasten? But if you are without chastening, of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate and not sons. Furthermore, we have had human fathers who corrected us, and we paid them respect. Shall we not much more readily be in subjection to the Father of spirits and live? For they indeed for a few days chastened us as seemed best to them, but He for our profit, that we may be partakers of His holiness.

*John 1:43-51 (Gospel, Sun. of Orthodoxy)*

The following day Jesus wanted to go to Galilee, and He found Philip and said to him, "Follow Me." Now Philip was from Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter. Philip found Nathanael and said to him, "We have found Him of whom Moses in the law, and also the prophets, wrote – Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph." And Nathanael said to him, "Can anything good come out of Nazareth?" Philip said to him, "Come and see." Jesus saw Nathanael coming toward Him, and said of him, "Behold, an Israelite indeed, in whom is no deceit!" Nathanael said to Him, "How do You know me?" Jesus answered and said to him, "Before Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you." Nathanael answered and said to Him, "Rabbi, You are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!" Jesus answered and said to him, "Because I said to you, 'I saw you under the fig tree,' do you believe? You will see greater things than these." And He said to him, "Most assuredly, I say to you, hereafter you shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man."

*Matthew 20:1-16 (Gospel, Martyrs)*

For the kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire laborers for his vineyard. Now when he had agreed with the laborers for a denarius a day, he sent them into his vineyard. And he went out about the third hour and saw others standing idle in the marketplace, and said to them, 'You also go into the vineyard, and whatever is right I will give you.' So they went. Again he went out about

the sixth and the ninth hour, and did likewise. And about the eleventh hour he went out and found others standing idle, and said to them, ‘Why have you been standing here idle all day?’ They said to him, ‘Because no one hired us.’ He said to them, ‘You also go into the vineyard, and whatever is right you will receive.’ So when evening had come, the owner of the vineyard said to his steward, ‘Call the laborers and give them their wages, beginning with the last to the first.’ And when those came who were hired about the eleventh hour, they each received a denarius. But when the first came, they supposed that they would receive more; and they likewise received each a denarius. And when they had received it, they complained against the landowner, saying, ‘These last men have worked only one hour, and you made them equal to us who have borne the burden and the heat of the day.’ But he answered one of them and said, ‘Friend, I am doing you no wrong. Did you not agree with me for a denarius? Take what is yours and go your way. I wish to give to this last man the same as to you. Is it not lawful for me to do what I wish with my own things? Or is your eye evil because I am good?’ So the last will be first, and the first last. For many are called, but few chosen.”

*Hymns after the Entrance with the Gospel:*

**Troparion    Tone 4            (Resurrection)**

When the women disciples of the Lord  
learned from the angel the joyous message of Thy Resurrection,  
they cast away the ancestral curse  
and elatedly told the apostles:  
“Death is overthrown!  
Christ God is risen, //  
granting the world great mercy!”

**Troparion    Tone 2            (Sunday of Orthodoxy)**

We venerate Thy most pure image, O Good One;  
and ask forgiveness of our transgressions, O Christ our God.  
Of Thine own will Thou wast pleased to ascend the Cross in the flesh  
and deliver Thy creatures from bondage to the Enemy.  
Therefore with thankfulness we cry aloud to Thee:  
“Thou hast filled all with joy, O our Savior, //  
by coming to save the world.”

**Troparion    Tone 1            (Holy 40 Martyrs of Sebaste)**

Through the sufferings which Thy holy Forty Martyrs endured for  
Thy sake, O Lord,  
we beseech Thee, O Lover of ^mankind: //  
“Heal all of our infirmities!”

**Kontakion    Tone 4            (Resurrection)**

My Savior and Redeemer  
as God rose from the tomb and delivered the earth-born from their  
chains.  
He has shattered the gates of hell,  
and as Master, //  
He has risen on the third day!

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

**Kontakion    Tone 6            (Holy 40 Martyrs of Sebaste)**


You have abandoned all earthly armies,  
cleaving to the heavenly Master, O Forty Martys of the Lord.  
Having passed through fire and water, O blessed ones, //  
you have fittingly received heavenly glory and many crowns.

**Now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen**

**Kontakion    Tone 8            (Sunday of Orthodoxy)**

No one could describe the Word of the Father;  
but when He took flesh from thee, O Theotokos, He accepted to be  
described,  
and restored the fallen image to its former state by uniting it to divine  
beauty. //  
We confess and proclaim our salvation in words and images.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Our Parish website is [www.bradentonorthodox.org](http://www.bradentonorthodox.org). See also [www.facebook.com/St.MarkOrthodoxChurch](https://www.facebook.com/St.MarkOrthodoxChurch).
  - **A COFFEE HOUR SPONSOR SHEET** is located on the glass bookstore case in the Narthex. Please consider sponsoring Coffee Hour in 2024. Speak with Cathy Johns 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.**
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- Architectural drawings and an artist's rendition of a **proposed fellowship hall** for St. Mark Church are on display in the Narthex. Join us in seeking God's will for the realization of this project.
  - **Quarterly Charity (Jan.-Mar.): Orthodox Christian Fellowship (OCF)**, an organization of Orthodox student groups on college and university campuses throughout the country. You can give by designated check or marked envelope.
  - **ST. MARK'S MEN'S GROUP** will meet this Tuesday evening, March 11, at the Church beginning at 6:30 PM. All men are invited and encouraged to attend.
  - **During this 2025 Lenten Season**, both the Wednesday and Friday evening **Presanctified Liturgies will begin at 6:00 PM**. The Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts is the service of Vespers with prayers for receiving Holy Communion, the Body and Blood of Christ having been sanctified the previous Sunday and kept on the Altar for participation of the faithful during the week.
  - **SUNDAY OF ORTHODOXY VESPERS – this evening at 5:00 PM at Holy Spirit Orthodox Church in Venice** (700 Shamrock Blvd., 34293). All are invited to celebrate the Triumph of Orthodoxy with prayer and fellowship. [We alternate each year between our church and theirs.]
  - **LENTEN PROJECT 2025:** new coverings for the icon and Confession stands in the Nave of the Church, specifically, new blue, gold, and purple coverings. You may donate towards this goal by designating so on the memo line of a check or envelope: "2025 Lenten Project." Thank you!
  - **Cart for Nspresso and Tea** – please note that a separate cart for the Nspresso and Tea has been placed by the Children's and Library

books in the Narthex (SE corner). The change will free up the space by the Coffee Hour food table for easier movement.

- **Bank Mortgage Debt Reduction Thermometer** – we have embarked on a concerted effort to reduce our Mortgage Debt within the next five years, hopefully much sooner. The *thermometer* in the Narthex provides a visual gauge of our progress. Please consider giving regularly and generously in this important work.



### Sunday of Orthodoxy/Restoration of the Icons

On the first Sunday of Lent in the year 843, after a century of bloody conflict in the Church, the essential place of Icons in the Church was finally secured and the heresy of Iconoclasm (lit., icon-smashing) put to rest. That observance became known as the Sunday of Orthodoxy, or The Restoration of the Icons. Sometimes called the Triumph of Orthodoxy, the confession of the theology of Icons defines the Orthodox Faith, grounding it in the Incarnation of the Son of God Himself.

The Son of God, Jesus Christ, is "the image (Gk., *eikon*) of the invisible God," and "in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily" (Col. 1:15 [2 Cor. 4:4]; 2:9). We are created in the image (Gk., *eikon*) and likeness (Gk., *homoiosis*) of God (Gen. 1:26; 1 Cor. 11:7; Jam. 3:9); therefore, we human beings are icons of the Icon. The Son of God who became flesh is the Head of the Church, and the Church is His Body. Just as this heavenly reality was depicted in the Old Testament Tabernacle and Temple, even more so now in the Church, this divine-human participation is necessarily depicted in the lives of the Saints and the iconography attesting to this truth in Christ.

As stated in the Decree of the Second Council of Nicea (787; the Seventh Ecumenical Council): "We keep unchanged all the ecclesiastical traditions handed down to us...one of which is the making of pictorial representations (i.e., icons, crosses, embroidery, vestments)...so the incarnation of the Word of God is shown forth as real and not merely phantastical...To these should be given due salutation and honorable reverence (i.e., *veneration*), not indeed that true *worship* of faith which pertains alone to the divine nature...For the honor which is paid to the image (icon) passes on to that which the image represents," ultimately to Christ who makes us holy.

"No one could describe the Word of the Father; but when He took flesh from you, O Theotokos, He accepted to be described, and restored the fallen image to its former state by uniting it to divine beauty. We confess and proclaim our salvation in word and images." (Kontakion [hymn], 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of Lent)