

## 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	Dn. Michael
Sbdn. Joseph	Irene	Laurie	Barbara	Tanya
Galina	Nicole & Noelle	Eli	Joshua	Mark
Nick	Nina	Charles	Gregory	Ricardo
Nancy	Deanna	Karen	Peter	Bill
Kay	Lydia	Mary	Mikey	Patrick
Maksim	Richard	Kathy	Dolores	John
Jerry	Charlotte	Alexandra	Zina	Grant
Faith	Patricia	Carolyn	Temple & newborn son	

Expecting mothers and unborn children: Wanda, Natalie, Moriah, and Cassia

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

Lyubov (ND)

### March Birthdays:

Belle Denardo (2/29)	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

24 Monday	6:00 PM	Great Vespers
25 Tuesday	8:15 AM	Matins
	9:30 AM	Divine Liturgy (Annunciation)
26 Wednesday	6:00 PM	Presanctified Liturgy
28 Friday	6:00 PM	Presanctified Liturgy
29 Saturday	9:30 AM	Memorial Liturgy
	3:30 PM	Intro to Orthodoxy
	5:00 PM	Great Vespers

**Sunday, March 23, 2025 Tone 6**  
**Veneration of the Cross**

**Prokeimenon      Tone 6      (Cross)**

*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)*



**Hebrews 4:14-5:6 (Epistle)**

Seeing then that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need. For every high priest taken from among men is appointed for men in things pertaining to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins. He can have compassion on those who are ignorant and going astray, since he himself is also subject to weakness. Because of this he is required as for the people, so also for himself, to offer sacrifices for sins. And no man takes this honor to himself, but he who is called by God, just as Aaron was. So also Christ did not glorify Himself to become High Priest, but it was He who said to Him: “You are My Son, today I have begotten You.” As He also says in another place: “You are a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek”;

**Mark 8:34-9:1 (Gospel)**

When He had called the people to Himself, with His disciples also, He said to them, “Whoever desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake and the gospel’s will save it. For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul? For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him the Son of Man also will be ashamed when He comes in the glory of His Father with the holy angels.” And He said to them, “Assuredly, I say to you that there are some standing here who will not taste death till they see the kingdom of God present with power.”

**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.** 
- 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.
- **The Choir practices every Sunday after Liturgy (and brief Coffee Hour snack) in preparation for Holy Week and Pascha. Please join the practice especially if you plan to sing in the Choir during those services.**
- **FEAST OF ANNUNCIATION – March 25:** Vespers for the Feast begins at 6:00 PM this Monday, March 25; 8:15 AM Matins and 9:30 AM Divine Liturgy for the Feast will be served this Tuesday. “Today is the beginning of our salvation, the revelation of the eternal mystery: The Son of God becomes the Son of the Virgin...” (Troparion).
- **Debt Reduction Thermometer:** our goal in five years, and hopefully much sooner, is to eliminate our mortgage debt and build a fellowship hall. *Please consider giving toward this on a regular basis, and every gift helps.* The “thermometer” in the Narthex shows our progress. 
- You are invited to an **Afternoon of Fellowship next Sunday, March 30, at Bryan Ewer’s house**, from 12:30 to 5:00 PM. His address is 5111 19<sup>th</sup> St. W, Bradenton 34207. Please RSVP to Bryan (941-744-7704) if you plan to attend.
- **2025 Lenten Project:** new blue, red, purple, and white covers for the icon stands at Church. Please give as you are able.

*Hymns after the Entrance with the Gospel:*

**Troparion Tone 6 (Resurrection)**

The Angelic Powers were at Thy tomb;  
the guards became as dead men.

Mary stood by Thy grave,  
seeking Thy most pure body.

Thou didst capture hell not being tempted by it.

Thou didst come to the Virgin, granting life.

O Lord, Who didst rise from the dead, //  
glory to Thee.

**Troparion of the Cross Tone 1**

O Lord, save Thy people,

and bless Thine inheritance!

Grant victories to the Orthodox Christians

over their adversaries;

and by virtue of Thy Cross, //

preserve Thy habitation!

**Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, Now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen**

**Kontakion Tone 7 (Cross)**

Now the flaming sword no longer guards the gates of Eden;

it has been mysteriously quenched by the wood of the Cross.

The sting of death and the victory of hell have been vanquished;

for Thou, O my Savior, hast come and cried to those in hell://

“Enter again into Paradise!”

+ + +

*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.*

(Galatians 6:14)

“No one was ever reconciled with God except by the power of the Cross.

“The first mystery of the Cross is flight from the world, and parting from our relatives according to the flesh, if they are a hindrance to piety and a devout life, and training our body, which Paul tells us is of some value (1 Tim. 4:8).

In these ways the world and sin are crucified to us, once we have fled from them. According to the second mystery of the Cross, however, we are crucified to the world and the passions, once they have fled from us. It is not

of course possible for them to leave us completely and not be at work in our thoughts, unless we attain to contemplation of God.

“When, through action, we approach contemplation and cultivate and cleanse our inner man, searching for the divine treasure which we ourselves have hidden, and considering the kingdom of God within us, then it is that we crucify ourselves to the world and the passions. Through meditation of this a certain warmth is born in our heart, which chases away evil thoughts like flies, instills spiritual peace and consolation in our soul, and bestows sanctification on our body.

“To follow Christ means to live according to His Gospel and to give proof of every virtue and of true piety. The fact that anyone wishing to follow Him must deny himself and take up his cross means he must not spare himself when the moment comes, but be ready to die a dishonorable death for the sake of virtue and the truth of holy doctrines...But in the Lord there is hope even for those who have died, if their death was in defense of what is sacred. To His followers who were daring in battle the Lord gives the reward of eternal life.

“Crucifying the flesh with its passions and longings means stopping all activity which is displeasing to God. Although our body may pull us down and exert pressure on us, we must still lift it up urgently to the height of the Cross. What am I trying to say? When the Lord was on earth He lived a life of poverty, and not just lived but preached poverty, saying, ‘Whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple’ (Lk. 14:33).

“This is the wisdom and power of God: to be victorious through weakness, exalted through humility, rich through poverty. Not only the word and the mystery of the Cross are divine and to be revered, but so also is its sign. For it is a holy, saving, and venerable seal. Able to hallow and perfect all the good, marvelous, and indescribable things which God has done for the human race...the Lord’s Cross discloses the entire dispensation of His coming in the flesh, and contains within it the whole mystery of this dispensation.

“Surely we should honor and use this divine trophy of the freedom of the whole human race. Its appearance alone puts the serpent, the originator of evil, to flight, triumphs over him and disgraces him, proclaiming him defeated and crushed. It glorifies and magnifies Christ, and displays His victory to the world.” (St. Gregory Palamas, from a *Homily on the Precious and Life-giving Cross*)

