

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
Sbdcn. James	Irene	Laurie	Barbara	Tanya
Nina	Nicole & Noelle	Eli	Joshua	Nick
Carol	Charles	Gregory	Ricardo	Nancy
Karen	Peter	Kay	Lydia	Mary
Mike	Patrick	Maksim	Richard	Kathy
Dolores	John	Jerry	Charlotte	Alexandra
Zina	Faith	Heather	Nicholas	George
David	Cheryl	Frances	Elena	

Maria and her n.b. daughter

Expecting mothers and unborn children: Arlie, Alexys, Tharika, Emma, Elizabeth, Moriah, Kayleigh, Savannah, and Augusta

Prayers of Holy Oblation are offered in Memory of:

December Birthdays:

Sam Montes (12/01)	Dan Telychks (12/02)	Barb McKenzie (12/03)
Barb McCollum (12/10)	William Chapman (12/11)	Joshua Higgins (12/14)
Ivan Ciampa (12/15)	Michael DeNardo (12/15)	Michael Kulisz (12/15)
Melanie Mirnyi (12/16)	Bob Matzkevich (12/17)	Kim/Karen Moroz (12/17)
Iuliana Vikulin (12/20)	Bryan Ewers, Jr. (12/22)	Daniel Cholcher (12/24)
Michael Pisansky (12/24)	Ambrose Stransky (12/27)	Nicholas Hinkle (12/27)

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.

Financial Donations can now be made via **PayPal** by clicking the link on our parish webpage, or by scanning this **QR code**. 

You may also mail donations to: P.O. Box 1315, Bradenton, FL 34206.

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
Usual Weekly Office Hours:
Wed. 11 AM-1 PM & Fri. 9:00 AM to Noon

This week at St. Mark

4 Sunday	9:30 AM	Divine Liturgy
	11:15 AM	Sunday School
5 Monday	9:00 AM	Royal Hours of Theophany
	11:00 AM	Vesperal Liturgy of St. Basil w/blessing of water (in Church)
6 Tuesday	6:00 AM	Vigil of Theophany
	9:30 AM	Divine Liturgy w/blessing of water (lake)
	4:00 PM	Braden River Blessing (at Jiggs Landing) w/picnic
7 Wednesday	6:00 PM	Vespers & Scripture Reading
8 Thursday	9:30 AM	Divine Liturgy
10 Saturday	3:00 PM	Intro to Orthodoxy
	5:00 PM	Great Vespers

Sunday, January 4, 2026 Tone 5
30th Sunday after Pentecost, Sunday before Theophany
Synaxis of the Seventy Apostle

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.

Hymns after the Entrance with the Gospel:

Tone 5 Troparion (Resurrection)

Let us, the faithful, praise and worship the Word,
co-eternal with the Father and the Spirit,
born for our salvation from the Virgin;
for He willed to be lifted up on the Cross in the flesh,
to endure death,
and to raise the dead//
by His glorious Resurrection.

Tone 4 Troparion (Forefeast)

Prepare, O Zebulon,
and adorn thyself, O Naphtali!
River Jordan, cease flowing,
and receive with joy the Master coming to be baptized!
Adam, rejoice with our first Mother,
and do not hide yourselves as you did of old in Paradise;
for having seen you naked,
He has appeared to clothe you with the first garment.//
Christ has appeared to renew all creation.

Tone 4 Troparion (Saint Mark)

From your childhood the light of truth enlightened you, O Mark,
and you loved the labor of Christ the Savior.
Therefore you followed Peter with zeal
and served Paul well as a fellow laborer,//
and you enlighten the world with your holy Gospel.

Tone 3 Troparion (Apostles)

Holy Apostles of the Seventy
entreat the merciful God //
to grant our souls forgiveness of transgressions!

Tone 5 Kontakion (Resurrection)

Thou didst descend into hell, O my Savior,
shattering its gates as Almighty,
resurrecting the dead as Creator,
and destroying the sting of death.
Thou hast delivered Adam from the curse, O Lover of man,/
and we cry to Thee: “O Lord, save us!”

Tone 2 Kontakion (Apostles)

O faithful, let us praise with hymns
the choir of the seventy disciples of Christ.
They have taught us all to worship the undivided Trinity,//
for they are divine lamps of the faith.

Now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

Tone 4 Kontakion (Forefeast)

Today the Lord enters the Jordan and cries out to John:
“Do not be afraid to baptize Me.//
For I have come to save Adam, the first-formed man.”

Tone 6 Prokeimenon (Sunday Before Theophany)

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)

2 Timothy 4:5-8 (Epistle, Sunday before Theophany)

But you be watchful in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry. For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing.

Mark 8:1-18 (Gospel, Sunday before Theophany)

The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. As it is written in the Prophets: “Behold, I send My messenger before Your face, Who will prepare Your way before You. The voice of one crying in the wilderness: ‘Prepare the way of the LORD; make His paths straight.’” John came baptizing in the wilderness and preaching a baptism of repentance for the remission of sins. Then all the land of Judea, and those from Jerusalem, went out to him and were all baptized by him in the Jordan River, confessing their sins. Now John was clothed with camel’s hair and with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. And he preached, saying, “There comes One after me who is mightier than I, whose sandal strap I am not worthy to stoop down and loose. I indeed baptized you with water, but He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.”

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

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Our Parish website is www.bradentonorthodox.org. See also 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 2025. 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.
- Quarterly Charity (Oct.-Dec.): Solve Maternity House (in Bradenton), providing necessary services for at-risk mothers before, during, and after giving birth. You can give by designated check or marked envelope.
- **Debt Reduction Thermometer** – on the back wall of the Narthex, tracking our progress in eliminating our building mortgage debt. Consider how God is leading you to contribute to reducing our debt!
- **Brokerage Account at Fidelity** – Saint Mark Church has established a brokerage account at Fidelity services. Contact Michael Kulisz (Church Treasurer) or Bob Matzkevich (Parish Council Warden/President) for additional information, or with questions regarding the donation of securities.
- **This coming week** no services will be served at Saint Mark's as Fr. Jonathan will be out-of-town, returning next Sunday, January 4.
- **Thank you Fr. John (Stefero)** for serving today in Fr. Jonathan's absence. Fr. John is a retired Priest who served parishes in the Orthodox Church in America (OCA) and as a chaplain. He resides in the Tampa area.
- **Membership Directories** are available in the Narthex for your use.
- **Pledge Letters and Cards** are in the Narthex on the shelf at the back in marked envelopes per family or household. If your name is not on an envelope, please take a blank envelope containing a Pledge Letter and Cards. If you have not taken and returned your Pledge Card by today, please do so by next Sunday, January 11.
- **Saint Mark's Annual Meeting** will take place on Sunday, February 8, following the Divine Liturgy. During the Annual Meeting, we consider the past year's activities in review, consider our parish budget and plans for the coming year, and select persons to serve on the Parish Council. All are encouraged to attend; persons eligible according to our Parish Bylaws are called upon to vote for the various official actions taken during the meeting.



Feast of Theophany Schedule of Services

Monday, January 5

9:00 AM	Royal Hours of Theophany
11:00 AM	Vesperal Liturgy of St. Basil w/blessing of water (in Church)
6:00 PM	Vigil of Theophany

Tuesday, January 6

9:30 AM	Divine Liturgy w/blessing of water (lake behind the Church)
4:00 PM	Braden River Blessing (at Jiggs Landing; 63 rd St. E, south of SR 70/53 rd Ave. E) w/picnic to follow in the pavilion [<i>please bring a salad or dessert to share as you are able</i>]

2026 House Blessing Schedule

See the sign-up sheets in the Narthex of the Church.

January 7-10 (Wed. – Sat.): East Bradenton/Lakewood Ranch

January 12-15 (Mon. – Thurs.): Sarasota (South)

January 16-17, 19-20 (Fri./Sat.; Mon./Tues.): West Bradenton

January 21-23 (Wed. – Fri.): Palmetto/Ellenton/Parish

Checklist for House Blessings:

1. On a table or counter-top in the center of the home, prepare an Icon, a lit candle (or oil lamp), and bowl for Holy Water.
2. Write a list of names of family members, living and departed, to be included in the prayers.
3. If darkness is imminent, turn lights on in rooms to be blessed.
4. Some people prepare food to share after the Blessing; this is certainly welcome but not absolutely necessary.
5. Secure any troublesome pets prior to the Blessing.