

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. Elias	Mat. Marion	Sbdn. Joseph	Sbdn. James
Irene	Laurie	Barbara	Tanya	Nina
Nicole & Noelle	Eli	Joshua	Nick	Carol
Charles	Gregory	Ricardo	Nancy	Karen
Peter	Kay	Lydia	Mary	Mikey
Patrick	Maksim	Richard	Kathy	Dolores
John	Jerry	Charlotte	Alexandra	Zina
Faith	Heather	Cheryl	George	David
Elena	Trudy	Sheryl		

Maria and her nb daughter, Tharika and her nb daughter, Arlie and her nb son
Expecting mothers and unborn children: Alexys, Belle, Emma, Elizabeth, Moriah, Kayleigh,
Savannah, Augusta

Prayers of Holy Oblation are offered in Memory of:

Archpr. Stephen (Plumlee; ND) John (Stransky; ND)

February Birthdays:

Michael Kinsella (02/10)	Lois Evancho (02/12)	Travis Lantz (02/12)
Daniel Button (02/17)	Wanda Fussell (02/19)	Joe Ciampa (02/20)
Bill Kosar (02/23)	Alexys Coliane (02/24)	Logan Kulikowski (02/25)
Belle DeNardo (02/29)		

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

Sub-Deacon James Abraham
Sub-Deacon Joseph (Clyde) McKenzie

Parish Phone: (941)-749-7662
Parish Website: Bradentonorthodox.org
www.facebook.com/St.MarkOrthodoxChurch
Parish E-mail: stmarkorector@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

08 Sunday	11:30 AM	Annual Meeting
11 Wednesday	6:00 PM	Vespers/Scripture Reading
12 Thursday	9:30 AM	Divine Liturgy
14 Saturday	3:00 PM	Intro to Orthodoxy
	5:00 PM	Great Vespers
15 Sunday	9:00 AM	Pre-baptismal prayers
	9:30 AM	Divine Liturgy w/Baptisms: Lydia Brooks, Zadok Button, and Layla Reed
	11:30 AM	Church Picnic

Sunday, February 8, 2026 Tone 2
2nd Sunday of Pre-Lent: Prodigal Son
Afterfeast of the Meeting
Prophet Zechariah

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:

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 1 (Feast of the Meeting)

Rejoice, O Virgin Theotokos, Full of Grace!
From thee shone the Sun of Righteousness, ^Christ our God,
enlightening those who sat in darkness.
Rejoice and be glad, O righteous Elder,
thou didst accept in thine arms the ^Redeemer of our souls,/
Who grants us the Resurrection!

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

Kontakion Tone 3 (Lenten Triodion: Prodigal Son)

I have recklessly forgotten Thy glory, O Father;
and among sinners I have scattered the riches which Thou hadst given me.
Therefore I cry to Thee like the Prodigal:
“I have sinned before Thee, O compassionate Father; //
receive me a penitent, and make me as one of Thy hired servants!”

Now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen

Kontakion Tone 1 (Feast of the Meeting)

By Thy Nativity Thou didst sanctify the Virgin’s womb
and didst bless Simeon’s hands, ^O Christ God.
Now Thou hast come and saved us through love.
Grant peace to all Orthodox Christians,/
O only Lover of Man!

Prokeimenon Tone 2 (Resurrection)

The Lord is my strength and my song; / He has become my salvation. (Ps. 117:14)
V. The Lord has chastened me sorely, but He has not given me over to death.
(Ps. 117:18)

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)

1 Corinthians 6:12-20 (Epistle)

All things are lawful for me, but all things are not helpful. All things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any. Foods for the stomach and the stomach for foods, but God will destroy both it and them. Now the body is not for sexual immorality but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body. And

God both raised up the Lord and will also raise us up by His power. Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I then take the members of Christ and make them members of a harlot? Certainly not! Or do you not know that he who is joined to a harlot is one body with her? For “the two,” He says, “shall become one flesh.” But he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit with Him. Flee sexual immorality. Every sin that a man does is outside the body, but he who commits sexual immorality sins against his own body. Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God’s.

Luke 15:11-32 (Gospel)

Then He said: “A certain man had two sons. And the younger of them said to his father, ‘Father, give me the portion of goods that falls to me.’ So he divided to them his livelihood. And not many days after, the younger son gathered all together, journeyed to a far country, and there wasted his possessions with prodigal living. But when he had spent all, there arose a severe famine in that land, and he began to be in want. Then he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country, and he sent him into his fields to feed swine. And he would gladly have filled his stomach with the pods that the swine ate, and no one gave him anything. But when he came to himself, he said, ‘How many of my father’s hired servants have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger! I will arise and go to my father, and will say to him, “Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you, and I am no longer worthy to be called your son. Make me like one of your hired servants.”’ And he arose and came to his father. But when he was still a great way off, his father saw him and had compassion, and ran and fell on his neck and kissed him. And the son said to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and in your sight, and am no longer worthy to be called your son.’ But the father said to his servants, ‘Bring out the best robe and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand and sandals on his feet. And bring the fatted calf here and kill it, and let us eat and be merry; for this my son was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.’ And they began to be merry. Now his older son was in the field. And as he came and drew near to the house, he heard music and dancing. So he called one of the servants and asked what these things meant. And he said to him, ‘Your brother has come, and because he has received him safe and sound, your father has killed the fatted calf.’ But he was angry and would not go in. Therefore his father came out and pleaded with him. So he answered and said to his father, ‘Lo, these many years I have been serving you; I never transgressed your commandment at any time; and yet you never gave me a young goat, that I might make merry with my friends. But as soon as this son of yours came, who has devoured your livelihood with harlots, you killed the fatted calf for him.’ And he said to him, ‘Son, you are always with me, and all that I have is yours. It was right that we should make merry and be glad, for your brother was dead and is alive again, and was lost and is found.’”



Immediately following each Divine Liturgy as we venerate the Cross, we pray the Post-Communion Prayers. Please maintain quiet until the prayers are completed.

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.
- **Quarterly Charity (January-March): Orthodox Christians for Life**, a national Orthodox organization promoting the sacredness of life from conception to grave. 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.
- The Myrrbearers are planning a **baby shower for Belle DeNardo** at the home of Natalie Aluzzo (15335 Searobin Dr. Lakewood Ranch, 34202) on Saturday, February 21 from 10:00 AM-12:30 PM. RSVP to Natalie at 908-477-5711.
- **Today following Divine Liturgy**, we gather for our **Annual Parish Meeting**. All are welcome to attend, and qualified members may vote on various actions (e.g., adoption of the 2026 budget, election of Parish Council members, official resolutions). We consider the past year in review and address the challenges and opportunities going forward as a Church in preaching the Gospel and living in Christ.
- **CHURCH PICNIC** – next Sunday (**meatfare**), Feb. 15, following Liturgy. Please bring a salad, side dish, or dessert to share.
- **2025 giving statements** are available on the back shelf in the Narthex. If you have any questions concerning your statement, speak with Michael Kulisz, Treasurer.
- **MEN'S GROUP** will meet at Church at 6:30 PM on Tuesday, February 17. All men are invited and welcome for food and fellowship.



Saint Mark Book Club

will meet twice monthly, probably at the Barnes & Noble Café in UTC on Tuesday evenings;



First Book: *The 21 A Journey into the Land of Coptic Martyrs*, by Martin Mosebach (2019)

Copies of the book are \$15, available by speaking with Bart McDougal; or, you can order your own.

If interested in joining the Book Club, sign-up in the Narthex at Church. The Club will begin meeting this coming Lent in early March.

THE ORTHODOX LENTEN SEASON

Today we begin the 2nd week of Pre-Lent, the Sunday of the Prodigal Son (Lk. 15:11-32). As God's children, how can we remain faithful to our heavenly Father in joyful obedience, and when we selfishly squander our inheritance, how can we return to God in true repentance? The love of God the Father is our true treasure and wealth!

The following Sunday, February 15, is the Sunday of the Last Judgment (Matt. 25:31-46). We commemorate All the Faithful Departed the day before as we consider our final end in this life. After this 3rd Sunday of Pre-Lent we begin fasting from meat (*meatfare*) until Pascha.

The final day of Pre-Lent is the Sunday of the Expulsion of Adam from Paradise, or Forgiveness Sunday (Feb. 22). Because of their sin, Adam and Eve and all of us who now willingly share that sin stand outside of Paradise hoping in faith to return. "Open to me the doors of repentance," we sing. Through forgiveness in Christ our Lord we are renewed to pursue life in the eternal Kingdom of God. After this Sunday we begin also fasting from cheese and dairy products (*cheesefare*) until Pascha.

The forty days of Great Lent begin this year with Forgiveness Vespers on Sunday evening, Feb. 22, ushering in the first day, Monday, Feb. 23. The forty days of Lent are completed before Holy Week (Apr. 4-11) culminating in the Feast of feasts, Pascha (lit., *Passover*) on Sunday, April 12.