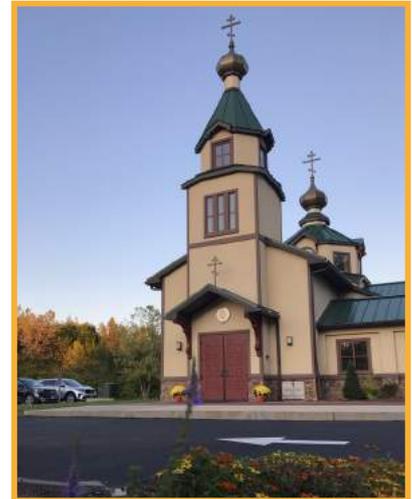


ARCHPRIEST MARTIN SWANSON, PASTOR
PRIEST SERGII ALEKSEEV, ASSOCIATE PASTOR
ARCHPRIEST RADOMIR CHKAUTOVICH, ATTACHED

A PARISH OF THE DIOCESE OF CHICAGO AND MID-AMERICA
RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH OUTSIDE OF RUSSIA

November 2019



St. John Chrysostom - Named Chrysostom

Excerpt from *The Lives of the Three Great Hierarchs*

St. John Chrysostom often delivered his homilies from memory, at which all the inhabitants of Antioch marvelled greatly, praising the blessed one, for until that time, no one had preached the word of God without a book or notebook; John was the first such preacher among them. His homilies were full of such power, that all who listened could not help but delight in them. This is why so many scribes recorded St. John's sermons on parchment, and recopying them, gave them to others. His homilies were read at the banquets and in squares, and those who listened learned his words by heart, like the Psalter. John was such an eloquent orator and teacher dear to all, that in the city there was not one person who did not want to listen to his discourses; and whenever they learned that John would speak, all thronged to the church with joy. The city rulers and judges left off their work, the merchants their trade, the artisans their craft, and went with haste to listen to the teaching of John, taking care that they not miss a single word which issued forth from his lips. All considered it a great loss when they could not manage to listen to the sweet speeches of John. This is why he was given the various laudatory titles. Some called him "the mouth of God and Christ", others "the eloquent one", and still others "the mellifluous".

It happened that the blessed one, especially at the beginning of his priesthood, gave sermons which by their content were not always understood by his listeners, who had little education. Once, a certain woman, on hearing a sermon, yet not understanding what had been said, lifted her voice among the people and said to John: "O spiritual teacher, though I would fain call thee John of the golden tongue: the well of thy holy teaching is deep, but the rope of our minds is short and cannot reach its depths!" Then many of the people said: "God Himself hath given John this name through the mouth of this woman! Let him henceforth be called Chrysostom!" And from that time until the present, the Church has continued to refer to the holy John by this title [Chrysostom, meaning golden-mouthed].

Having reasoned that it was not suitable to speak to the people using words which were beyond their comprehension, St. John thenceforth strove to adorn his speech, not with refined oratory, but rather with simple and morally edifying words, that even the

Special Services & Events

- Fri. Nov. 1 8:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy for Righteous St. John of Kronstadt
- Sat. Nov. 2 4:00 p.m. Demetrius Saturday-Pannyhida
- Fri. Nov. 8 6:00 p.m. Blessing of Water
- Sat. Nov. 16 11:00 a.m. Chrismation
- Sun. Nov. 17 2:00 p.m. Wedding
- Wed. Nov 20 6:00 p.m. Vigil for St. Michael and all the Bodiless Hosts
- Thurs. Nov. 21 8:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy for Archangel Michael and all the Bodiless Hosts
- Thurs. Nov. 28 Beginning of Nativity Fast
- Thurs. Nov. 28 9:00 a.m. Thanksgiving Moleben

Weekly Services:

- Saturday - Vigil 5:00 p.m.
- Sunday - Divine Liturgy 10:00 a.m.

Parish News

Choir Voices Needed

All parishioners are welcome to join the choir, all voices are needed. Choir practice is held every Wednesday evening in the church at 6:30.

If you are interested in church music and the choir but are unsure of your abilities, you are invited to join Marushka Royse for sessions to learn about singing, voice, reading the music and choir participation in general. These sessions are held every Wednesday at 6pm before choir practice. Come and see what it is all about. You can come to the 6pm session and stay for choir practice. If you have any questions, please contact Marushka.

Weekly Tours of St. Basil's

Tours of St. Basil's church are conducted by one of the parish clergy every Wednesday between 2:00 and 3:00 p.m., and are designed to acquaint the community with the church, its architecture, traditional design, iconography, and history. No appointments are necessary and the tours will accommodate both individuals and groups. Advance notice would be appreciated for groups over five. For additional information or to schedule a group tour contact Fr. Martin at 314-835-1569.

Parish Prayer List

Archpriest Andrei Popkov—Recovery
Gloria Pappas—Recovery
Brigid Hammer—Recovery
Nadia Danett—Health
Julianna Campbell and Newborn Child—Health
Sisi and JT Surgant and Newborn Child—Health

Keep our parishioners, and those who ask us to pray for them in your prayers this month. Contact Fr. Martin to have yourself or your loved ones added to the parish prayer list. Let one of the Fathers know if you, a member of your family, or a friend is ill or hospitalized so that appropriate prayers and visits can be arranged. Please note: Hospitals do not notify clergy of patients, even if you list yourself as a parish member.

"Ask Your Priest" Column

This new column will answer questions submitted

by you [the parishioners] concerning Orthodoxy. Questions will be submitted to priests anonymously. Submit your questions to StBasilSTLNewsletter@gmail.com

Gardening Help

Parishioner, John Malcolm, welcomes any who are willing to help gardening on the church grounds. John Malcolm will be working at the parish Wednesdays and Saturdays from 9am to noon weather permitting. Tools, gloves, and water will be provided for all who come to help.

Use eScrip and Amazon Smile Rebates

It costs \$0 and benefits the parish. Get cards at the candle counter. Sign up for the Amazon rebate program to have a portion of your Amazon purchase donated by Amazon to the parish. Please find sign up instructions next to the staircase in the hall.

SERVERS WANTED!

Boys may begin to serve in the altar at St. Basil's from the time they begin to go to Confession (usually about nine years old). We encourage all of our boys to serve in the altar! For more information please contact Michael Orlando.

St. Basil's Parish Facebook Page:

Check out <https://www.facebook.com/SaintBasiltheGreatSTLMO/> for daily edification and interesting updates. Like our Facebook Fanpage to have us appear in your Facebook Newsfeed.

October Wordsearch Answers

S	K	K	X	T	W	N	N	R	K	K	K	Y	D	T
E	S	R	V	N	L	N	U	O	U	L	K	N	V	W
R	H	T	O	A	G	S	K	L	F	P	I	L	A	F
G	A	N	J	N	S	O	I	E	A	D	Q	T	P	J
I	S	D	M	I	S	K	S	K	L	R	L	L	X	B
E	H	J	A	H	O	T	I	Z	A	N	I	N	M	R
V	L	N	N	V	I	A	A	D	B	N	O	D	P	L
P	I	I	O	V	L	T	O	D	E	P	L	M	K	M
O	K	N	A	A	N	N	K	M	T	G	B	L	Q	T
S	R	L	L	D	E	Z	L	I	T	D	J	G	B	V
A	R	A	N	Z	X	E	N	D	Y	R	Y	Y	B	R
D	B	B	H	B	P	A	R	K	J	V	G	X	N	G

simplest listener might understand and derive benefit therefrom.

Public Confession with St. John

Excerpt from *A Spiritual Portrait of Saint John of Kronstadt*

Common (or public) confession, which was practiced by St. John with the permission of the church authorities, due to the impossibility of hearing confession individually from the thousands of people who streamed to him, is a special topic all to itself. Descriptions give but a very faint idea of this great miracle of masses of people being penitently renewed by the power of St. John's prayer and pastoral love. Before beginning confession, St. John would turn to the penitents with this appeal:

"Sinners, similar to myself! You have come to this church so as to offer to the Lord Jesus Christ, Our Savior, repentance for sins and then to partake of the Mysteries. Have you prepared yourselves sufficiently to partake of so great a Mystery? Do you know that I will answer heavily before the Throne of the Most High if you partake without preparation? Do you know that you are confessing not to me, but to the Lord Himself, Who is visibly present here, Whose Body and Blood are at this very moment present upon the altar table?". Having thus prepared the faithful, St. John would himself begin - on behalf of the people and facing them - to read the prayers of penitence - speaking in a slow lengthened tone, at times dividing words into syllables, and sometimes also extending his arm over the heads of the penitents - as if indicating each one of them separately to the Merciful Judge. "O God, Our Savior! Forgive these, thy servants!" - he exclaims in a loud voice. His voice now rises, then falls, passing suddenly from moving prayer to sternly prophetic words. It is as if St. John sees the Just Judge before himself. From reading of the prayer he passes, from time to time, to its interpretation in his own words, striving to drive in to the consciousness of the penitents the prayer's every thought, its every shade of meaning.

"O, my God," - recalls a female participant in such a preparation for confessions. "How the penitent souls would be filled with trepidation at the sight of the good pastor, who at that given moment has taken upon himself the task of conciliator and

intercessor for God's mercy to us sinners!" Having prepared the people in a fitting manner, St. John would announce in a loud voice: "Repent!". Now something unbelievable began to happen. Wailing, shouting, spoken confession of hidden sins. Some strove to shout as loudly as possible, so that Batiushka might hear them and pray for them.

"Repent, repent, the Lord hears you!" - St. John would cry. "Such an uproar would arise that no words can ever describe. This was something whole, mutual or general, gigantic! Individual voices could not be heard, as also individual people could not be separated from this crowd. This was one mass... None noticed his neighbor, each thought only of himself..."

During that time St. John stood, leaning upon the analogion, and prayed. He prayed and wept - wept so much that tears flowed in torrents. Each saw only himself, not noticing anyone else, and fearlessly laid bare the secrets of his sins. Batiushka saw everyone.

Now from somewhere in a corner is heard the cry of a woman possessed by the devil, beginning to sing some wicked song - she quiets down, joining herself to the common confession... Batiushka is still praying... "Over there in that corner, you must yet repent!" - suddenly, unexpectedly he exclaims, straightening up and pointing with his finger toward the western side of the cathedral. And in reply, wails of repentance begin to flow from there with unusual fervor. Sometimes St. John would walk away into the altar and pray there, bowing before the holy table and placing his head upon it. How much time in all passes like this? About fifteen minutes! Finally, Batiushka comes out again to the ambo. Perspiration is pouring forth from his face. Requests for prayers, wails of penance are still directed at him. But now little by little the packed cathedral quietens down. St. John extends his [epitrachil] over the people and reads the prayer of absolution. Sometimes he covers those closest to him with it, makes a sweep with it in a semicircle, first on the ambo, then in the altar.

Confession has ended. From all sides may still be heard subdued sighs, sobs and groans - heat lightning after the breaking and passing of the cleansing thunderstorm.

Festival Revisited

In last month's newsletter, it was not mentioned that Nikolai McKinney was also among our esteemed performers at the parish festival. We are very proud of our young musician for sharing his talents with us. Above is an image of him playing the piano at the festival.



Holy Protection Feast in Chicago

By Reader Daniel Domer

On Sunday, October 13th, Saint Basil's clergy departed to attend the parish feast of the Holy Virgin Protection Cathedral in Des Plaines, IL. Fathers Martin and Sergii, Father Deacon Ephraim, Subdeacon Thomas, and I carpooled and left immediately after Divine Liturgy and trapeza. We drove nonstop towards the Chicago area. Despite cars on the road, traffic flowed well and we arrived in good time to check into our hotel. The hotel clerk had some trouble handling our reservation, but soon all was settled for us to settle into our rooms and get to the cathedral in time for the festal Vigil.

Over 50 clergy celebrated the hierarchical festal services, beginning with Vigil on Sunday evening. As a first-time attendee, it was a pleasant surprise to see so many clergymen in one service, and to recognize several who I've only seen or heard online. We received a blessing from Archbishop Peter to vest and serve, and we each participated in the services. More experienced clergy were happy to direct the newcomers. The choir sang beautifully throughout the evening, complementing the deacons and priests. After Vigil, clergy enjoyed a light meal provided by the sisterhood of the cathedral, enjoyed fellowship, then retired for the evening.

On Monday morning, we greeted Archbishop Peter and processed into the cathedral for the hierarchical Divine Liturgy. As with the Vigil, all clergy were able to participate in this beautiful celebration commemorating the Protection of the Theotokos. Notable during this Divine Liturgy were several ordinations, of course followed by many exclamations of "Axios!". We were also

pleased to see fellow Saint Basil parishioners Sergey and Yulia (Astafiev) in attendance. After the service, we held a cross procession around the cathedral, then enjoyed lunch, again provided by the sisterhood. During lunch, we listened to an interesting presentation about the history of the Holy Virgin Protection Cathedral as we celebrated its 70th anniversary of being a parish, and 65th anniversary of it being the diocesan cathedral.

Monday evening Vigil and Tuesday morning Divine Liturgy were celebrated by the newly-ordained Father Benjamin Naasko and Hierodeacon Alexei, who will serve at the Saints Sergius & Herman of Valaam Monastery in Houghton, MI. These services were more intimate but just as beautiful and prayerful, with the choir consisting of four or five clergy. Again, the sisterhood provided us with a delicious, filling, and very welcome meal following Divine Liturgy on Tuesday morning.

Following lunch, we held the diocesan meeting. Archbishop Peter and the gathered clergy discussed recent events and topics. The discussion was thoughtful, compassionate, and intelligent. I was struck by the general sense of everyone being "of one mind", their awareness to reference decisions of the early Church, and their recognition of ways the modern world opposes the Orthodox faith.

After the meeting, we received our blessing from Archbishop Peter and got back on the road for Saint Louis. Although rush hour Chicago traffic proved a minor delay, we had much to discuss on the way home and were happy to arrive safely Tuesday evening.

Ask Your Priest

Q: Should I fast on Thanksgiving this year since it is on the beginning of the Nativity fast? How do I handle this?

A: *The Nativity Fast was already known in the Early Church. It was universal by the fifth century, being observed in all the corners of the Christian world. The fast begins on November 15/28, following the feast of Holy Apostle Philip, and is also known as St Philip's Fast. This fast, although not as strict as the Great Lent, has the usual*

dietary aspect which is characteristic to any fasting period. This fast is rather dynamic, since the fasting discipline fluctuates from the great feast of the Entry of the Theotokos into the Temple and the commemoration of the most beloved saints – when fish can be served on our tables – to the days of rather strict fasting, especially the eve of the Nativity, when those who are able abstain from any food. The Church knows no fasting periods which would be interrupted by a “meat day”. If even on the feasts of the Annunciation of the Mother of God during Great Lent or on the Entrance of the Theotokos into the Temple during the Nativity Fast the greatest relaxation for fasting is for us to have fish, why would a civil holiday, although with some religious undertones, tear apart the fabric of the Church Tradition?

Thanksgiving became a national holiday in the USA in 1863, when it was promulgated as a federal holiday by Abraham Lincoln. The Church has always met her children in their pious aspirations. In the U.S., a Thanksgiving Moleben is usually served on that day, just as panihidas may be served at the graves of our departed service men and women on Memorial Day.

When the issue of the compatibility of the Holy Tradition of the Church and the observance of Thanksgiving is brought up, the inquirer most likely has in mind its food component: are we allowed to eat turkey and other rich foods associated with the holiday? The discussion of the fasting practice given in the first paragraph should help arrive at the answer for those who are firmly planted in the vineyard of our Lord.

Usually, Thanksgiving day is outside of Nativity Fast. However, this year, 2019, Thanksgiving falls on the first day of the fast, and is preceded by Wednesday. But if all we want is to thank God for his benevolent acts and have a heart-warming family dinner, why can't we do this without the turkey? Why can't we celebrate the holiday with a variety of fasting food on the table? Or why can't we transfer the Thanksgiving dinner from Thursday (a fasting day this year) to Tuesday – a non-fasting day?

If your non-Orthodox family customarily gets together around the Thanksgiving table, you can bring along your contribution to the feast – a

succulent salmon fillet, shrimp with cocktail sauce or some other fasting dishes. This way you will be celebrating with your family who might not even know that you are fasting while sharing in the fellowship with your relatives and friends. Is not this the true goal of such gatherings? Then the goal would be accomplished.

Interview with Anna

September was a busy month for St. Basil's but among the various parish activities, St. Basil's also welcomed a new member to the Orthodox Church: Anna Roth. Those who have already met Anna are always greeted with a soft smile and a warm welcome. But in order for us all to get to know Anna, we sat down with her after trapeza one Sunday afternoon to discuss her life and her journey to Orthodoxy. Below are her answers to our inquiries. May God grant her many years!

Where are you from?

I am from St. Louis and I have lived here my entire life.

What brought you to Orthodoxy?

I've been around Orthodoxy for a long time, about 20 years, mostly because of my uncle, Father Seraphim [Archimandrite Seraphim of Holy Cross Monastery]. I was raised Lutheran and had been hesitant to convert to Orthodoxy because of a misconception I had with the Orthodox concept of Confession. In the Lutheran church, we had general confessions which were mainly where the pastor states to the entire congregation that their sins are forgiven. There is no concept of having an intimate Confession between the priest and the penitent. I thought the private Confession was more of a way for the priest to know what was going on in a person's life, which I now realize that these were just thoughts that the devil was using to deceive me. When I understood the significance and meaning of Confession as it is practiced in the Orthodox Church, I felt much more comfortable. Another important factor was that my mother was baptized shortly before her passing, and that also helped guide me to the Church.

Is anyone else in your family Orthodox?

Only my uncle [Archimandrite Seraphim of Holy Cross Monastery].

Who is your patron saint and why did you

choose them?

St. Anna [Mother of the Theotokos] is my saint and Anna is also my middle name. I was really inspired by the life of St. Anna and by how long she waited patiently to have a child which was ultimately the Virgin Mary. And then after she gives birth to the Theotokos, she offers her only child to the church at the Entrance of the Theotokos to the Temple. It is so powerful to think about a mother's love for a child, and in the case of Anna, to have that love and furthermore such a strong devotion to God that she presents her [the Virgin Mary] to Him. God of course blesses both mother and child for their devotion by choosing Mary to be the Mother of God. That is such an inspiring thing for me about St. Anna.

What is your favorite thing about being Orthodox?

The peace. Everyone is so full of joy and peace that you can feel it when you enter the church. I feel that I am closer to God now that I am Orthodox. I am so grateful and honored that God has allowed me to be here and that, in my personal life, He has allowed me to share indescribable peace and calm when I am taking care of someone, especially when they are unable to take care of themselves [hospice care]. I find that I feel most fulfilled in God's purpose for my life when I am able to help and care for others.

What are you most excited about in your new Orthodox life?

To continue to grow in the faith and to be able to help others with God's Grace.

Do you have any plans to serve the church in some capacity?

Yes, I am already on a trapeza team and I enjoy singing along with the choir during the services from below in the church.

Is there anything else you would like for the parish to know about you?

If anyone needs a caregiver, I am happy to help. Or if anyone just needs some level of care and would just like company to sit with, I can also be that person.

Below are pictures of Anna's baptism with her sponsors, Olga and Archimandrite Seraphim, who traveled from Holy Cross Monastery for his niece's baptism. Please join us in welcoming the newly illumined Anna!



November Icon Hunt

The picture on the right is a small clip of a larger Icon in the church. Can you identify the Icon in the Church?

