

St. Basil the Great Orthodox Church

October 2023



205 HIGHLAND AVENUE | DES PERES, MO 63122

*A parish of the
Diocese of Chicago
and Mid-America
Russian Orthodox
Church Outside of
Russia*

CLERGY

Archpriest Sergii Alekseev, Parish Rector
Protopriest Radomir Chkautovich
Priest Thomas Nichols
Deacon Ephraim Galloway

SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

- **17th Sunday after Pentecost**
 - **Afterfeast of the Exaltation of the Cross**
 - Sat., Sept. 30 Vigil 5 P.M.
 - Sun., Oct. 1 Divine Liturgy 10 A.M.
- **40th Day since Matushka Katherine's Repose**
 - Mon., Oct. 2 Panihida 9 A.M.
- **18th Sunday after Pentecost**
 - **Venerable Sergius of Radonezh**
 - Sat., Oct. 7 Vigil 5 P.M.
 - Sun., Oct. 8 Divine Liturgy 10 A.M.
- **Apostle John the Theologian**
 - Mon., Oct. 9 Moleben 9 A.M.
- **19th Sunday after Pentecost**
 - **Blessed Andrew, Fool-for-Christ**
 - Sat., Oct. 14 Reader Vespers 5 P.M.
- Sun., Oct. 15 Divine Liturgy 10 A.M.
- **20th Sunday after Pentecost**
 - **Apostle James, Son of Alphaeus**
 - Sat., Oct. 21 Vigil 5 P.M.
 - Sun., Oct. 22 Divine Liturgy 10 A.M.
- **Iveron Icon of the Mother of God**
 - Thur., Oct. 26 Moleben 9 A.M.
- **St. Demetrius Memorial Saturday**
 - Sat., Oct. 28 Divine Liturgy followed by Panihida 9 A.M. (At House Springs)
- **21st Sunday after Pentecost**
 - Sat., Oct. 28 Vigil 5 P.M.
 - Sun., Oct. 29 Divine Liturgy 10 A.M.
- **Righteous John of Kronstadt**
 - Tue., Oct. 31 Vigil 6 P.M.
 - Wed., Nov. 1 Divine Liturgy 8 A.M.

FESTIVAL AT ST. BASIL'S

The Sisterhood of St. Macrina hosted the parish's second festival following a few years' break from the first festival in 2019. Food, beverages, and desserts were prepared by parishioners in the weeks leading up to the festival and kebabs and pilaf were cooked on the day of. The kids' corner was busy with children decorating paper kokoshniks (traditional Russian crowns), getting their faces painted, and petting the small animals in the petting zoo. The stage set up outside the church hall had a continuous stream of talent performances by various groups and individuals from the parish.

Thank you to everyone that participated in the event and helped in any way to make it a great success! We look forward to sharing our faith and fellowship with the community through future festivals.



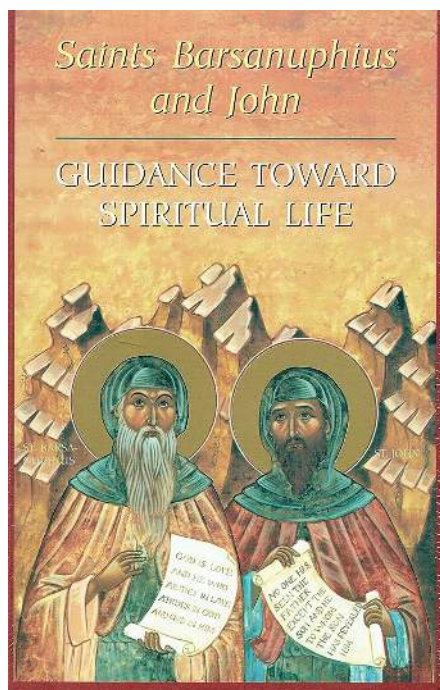


FOCUS ON FOCUS

Thank you for your faithful service in providing boxed cereal, oatmeal packets, and shelf-stable milk this month. The pantry shelves at FOCUS were nearly empty when we arrived with the donations in September, so your giving is very much appreciated by the ministry. We have been asked to supply the same goods for the pantry for October: **10-14 oz. boxed cereals** (sugary kinds like Frosted Flakes, Fruity Pebbles, etc. that are easy on damaged teeth), **boxes of oatmeal packets, and 32 oz. containers of shelf-stable milk.** Please donate these items in the large plastic container in our parish coat closet sometime before **October 22.**

We will serve the Sunday Supper on location at FOCUS on **October 8.** If you are interested in helping, either by providing food for or helping cook it with the Sisterhood, or by distributing the meal and pantry items at Archangel Michael's parish in the city, please notify Fr. Sergii or Joseph Steineger.

VENERABLE BARSANUPIUS THE GREAT AND JOHN THE PROPHET: PART V



223. If you desire a testament from me unto salvation and for your life: acquire extreme humility and obedience in everything, for they are the uprooters of all passions and the sowers of every good thing. There is no need to write to you separately concerning every passion, for I have assigned you the treatment for them in one word: the Lord saith: “I will come to dwell in the humble” (Isaiah 57:15). What, then? Do you think that any kind of evil from the enemy can come to dwell where the enemy sees the living Lord? Know that an evil-doer cannot appear in the place where is the judgment seat of the Ruler.

229. Question: How can one be saved in the present times?

Answer: In every time, if a man can cut off his own will in everything and have a humble heart and death always before his eyes – he can be saved, by God’s grace; and wherever he might be, fear does not take possession of him, for such a one is *forgetting the things that are behind and stretcheth forth to those that are ahead* (Phil. 3:13). Act thus, and you will be saved by God without sorrow.

231. Question: Pray that I might place a beginning to salvation.

Answer: The beginning is humility and the fear of God. *The fear of God is the beginning of wisdom* (Prov. 1:7). And what is the beginning of wisdom, if it is not to remove oneself from everything hateful to God? And how does one remove oneself from this? Do nothing without questioning and counsel; likewise, say nothing unfitting, and at the same time acknowledge oneself to be senseless, unsalted, and degraded, and in general insignificant.

234. Question: Forgive me, my lord abba, for the Lord’s sake. I bring to my memory that the fathers say: “Let us enter our cell and remember our sins”; but when I remember them, I do not have pain of heart over them. Likewise, many times I desire contrition, but it does not come. Tell me, what hinders it from coming?

Answer: Brother! You are mocking when you say: “I desire”, and in actual fact do not desire, because you do not desire truly. For to enter into one’s cell refers to the soul and means to examine it and remove our thought from every man, and then we will be broken in spirit and feel contrition. But what hinders you from entering into contrition is your own will; for if a man will not cut off his own will, he cannot acquire pain of heart. And what prevents you from cutting off your own will is unbelief, and unbelief proceeds from the fact that we desire human glory; but the Lord said: *How can ye believe, who receive glory from one another, and the glory which is from God alone ye do not seek?* (John 5:44). Many times I have forbidden water from entering your belly through your mouth,

but you draw it in with the nose: I mean by this fierce self-justification, which leads a man down to hell. Wherefore also the evil demons revile you, and what is convenient becomes for you inconvenient. If you wish to ask questions of me, then either leave off your own will, self-justification and the pleasing of men, or else I will leave you; for if you will not labor to cut off your own will, even against the inclination of your heart, then what benefit will there be from your asking questions? [...] Behold, your previous transgressions are already forgiven, and yet you strengthen yourself by the wisdom of self-justification to enter into worse ones. Leave off, brother; this path does not lead to good. Mother Sarah said: "If I shall desire to please all men, I must repent at their doors". And the apostle says: *If I even to this day pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ* (Gal. 1:10). If in truth you wish to weep over your sins, pay heed to yourself and die for every man. Brother! Without labor a man cannot be saved. Cut off these three things: will, self-justification, pleasing of men; and in truth contrition will come to you and God will protect you from every evil. Brother! I repeat: pay heed to yourself, rejoice when you are beaten, accursed, slandered, punished. Leave off the slyness of the serpent but not his wisdom; keep the gentleness of the dove together with wisdom and the Lord will help you. Behold the path of salvation. If this path is pleasing to you, go on it, and God will give you a helping hand. [...]

242. Question: Tell me, Father, is irritability natural or unnatural and what difference is there between these?

Answer: There is a natural irritability and there is an unnatural irritability. The natural one opposes the fulfillment of lustful desires, and it does not need treatment, being sound. The unnatural one rises up if lustful desires are not fulfilled. The latter one requires means of treatment which are more powerful than the desire. He who gives the warrior strength is greater than he, and if he ceases to give strength, the warrior – no longer finding strength – becomes inactive.

To be Continued

MEETING THE NEWLY ILLUMINED

Below, we include an interview with newly illumined Barbara Westervelt who was baptized with her family in August.

Where did you grow up?

I was born and raised in Southern California.

What brought you to the St. Louis area?

My husband and I moved to Oregon in 2010, to be close to our first grandchild, Abraham, and we were blessed with two more grandchildren, Rosalind and William. In January 2017, my husband passed away shortly after William was born. I followed my son, Rob, daughter-in-law Melinda and grandchildren to St. Louis when they moved here for Rob's job in 2020.

How did you hear about the Orthodox Church and what made you want to convert?

Rob told me he attended an Orthodox church and one day I invited myself to go to church with him since Melinda and the grandkids were out of town. I was happy to visit Rob's new church with him, but had no intentions of leaving the Presbyterian church I had just started attending.

I was amazed by how different it was from the protestant churches I attended. I watched and listened and was so impressed by how kind everyone was towards me and felt like this was a close community that not only loved God, but put Him first in their lives. I also liked the fact that there was more than one culture.

How has your experience been learning about Orthodoxy alongside your son and his family?

It has been a great blessing to be with Rob, Melinda and the grandchildren together each Sunday and throughout the week. They have helped me in understanding the Orthodox faith and we have shared many discussions which have been very helpful. What a great blessing it was to be baptized together



last July!

Who is your patron saint and why did you choose her?

My patron saint is Saint Barbara. I was encouraged to choose her because of my name, and I'm happy with that.

What has been your favorite thing about being Orthodox so far?

My favorite thing so far about being Orthodox is that in the later years of my life, I feel that I'm growing closer to the Holy Trinity and in my love and gratitude.

What do you most look forward to as an Orthodox Christian?

I look forward to continuing to learn the Orthodox faith and to serve.

Do you have a favorite feast or liturgical service so far?

I don't have a favorite feast or liturgy yet. I'm still learning about them.

Is there anything else you would like to share with the parish?

I feel so very blessed to have such wonderful fathers, church leaders and a community of love and support.

ASK YOUR PRIEST

The Ask Your Priest section of the newsletter gives an opportunity for parishioners to ask any questions to the clergy anonymously. Anyone can send their questions to stbasilstnewsletter@gmail.com and the answers will be included in future newsletters as space allows.

Below are a few questions that have been answered by Father Thomas.

In many (all?) of the canons, such as "Canon in Preparation for Holy Communion", "Canon of Repentance", etc. there is no second ode. Why is it not in the prayer books? Is it in another service book?

Following the pattern of the way the canon during Vigil is sung, and consistent with the tradition established by St. John of Damascus, the second ode, which thematically reflects the second biblical ode given in Deuteronomy 32, is always omitted outside of Great Lent because of its somber and penitential character. The second ode is sung during the penitential season of Great Lent on Tuesdays with the reading of the Triodion and during the singing of the Great Canon of St. Andrew of Crete.

Through the years, I have seen a variance in the wording of our Creed/Symbol of Faith. Why do some versions include the word "again" and some omit it when we pray "...and the third day He rose AGAIN, according to the Scriptures...". Why do we say that He rose again?

Various church jurisdictions translate the Nicene Creed in slightly different ways. The translation of the line in question "...and rose again on the third day" is the standard in ROCOR. *Rose again* is the translation of the Slavonic воскреснаго (voscrosshago). This word in Slavonic carries the sense of "resurrected" and is used to mean precisely this during the paschal season, when the faithful greet each other with the exclamation Христосъ воскресе (Christos voscrese)--Christ is risen! That Christ is risen/resurrected reflects the fact that He was alive, that He died in the Flesh, and then that He resumed His life in the Flesh through His bodily resurrection--hence He rose *again*.

Who is the guardian angel of North America?

Each person and nation has a guardian angel, but guardian angels do not have specific names. Thus, the angel who watches over the people of North America is also unnamed. Guardian angels can be appointed to watch over specific events and actions, as mentioned in the Moleben for the Beginning of Every Good Work, and they can be appointed to watch over such things as vehicles, as mentioned in the Service for the Blessing of a Vehicle.

BAPTISMS AT ST. BASIL'S

Peter Simpson and his infant son, Elijah, were baptized on Saturday, September 30th, after the moleben to Saints Faith, Hope, Love, and their mother, Sophia. Peter and his son have been attending divine services and



catechumen classes throughout the year and have now been baptized into the Orthodox Church. May God grant the newly illumined many years!

NEW CATECHUMENS AT ST. BASIL'S

Father Sergii read the prayers for the making of a catechumen over brothers, Chad (right) and Ryan (left). The brothers have been attending catechumen classes given by Father Deacon Ephraim and will continue to learn about the Orthodox Faith. Please keep these brothers in your prayers that our Lord may continue to guide them in their Orthodox journey.



Praying for catechumens is a very important responsibility of an Orthodox Christian. So important, that a special litany or series of petitions in the Divine Liturgy is completely dedicated to asking the Lord to have mercy on all catechumens preparing for illumination. *"Let us the faithful pray for the catechumens, that the Lord will have mercy on them."*

Let us fulfill the words of the litany and pray for our fellow brothers and sisters:

Doc
Jill
Ricardo

Christiano
Ivan
Chad

Ryan

CATECHUMEN CORNER

PARISH PRAYER LIST

Archimandrite Seraphim — Health
Archpriest Moses Berry — Health
Reader Symeon Campbell — Health
Photini Mills — Health
Tatiana Zyryanova — Health
Julianna Campbell — Health
Dimitry Johnson — Health

Inna Dagaeva — Health
Mark Wiebenga — Health
Daniel Simpson — Health
Cheryl (Xenia) Light — Health
Archpriest Martin Swanson — Repose
Katherine Swanson — Repose
Gloria Pappas — Repose

Keep our parishioners, and those who ask us to pray for them, in your prayers this month. Contact Fr. Sergii 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.