



# SAINT BASIL the GREAT Orthodox Church

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*  
*Archpriest Martin Swanson, Dean*  
*Protopriest Radomir Chkautovich*  
*Deacon Ephraim Galloway*  
*Deacon Thomas Nichols*

# September 2021

## Schedule of Services

- **11th Sunday after Pentecost**  
Sat. Sept 4 Vigil 5 P.M.  
Sun. Sept. 5 Divine Liturgy 10 A.M.
- **Meeting of the Vladimir Icon of the Mother of God**  
Wed. Sept. 8 Moleben 9 A.M.
- **Beheading of St John the Forerunner**  
Fri. Sept. 10 Vigil 6 P.M.  
Sat. Sept. 11 Divine Liturgy 9 A.M.
- **12th Sunday after Pentecost**  
**Translation of the Relics of Right-believing Great Prince Alexander Nevsky**  
Sat. Sept. 11 Vigil 5 P.M.  
Sun. Sept. 12 Divine Liturgy 10 A.M.
- **Finding of the Relics of Holy Hierarch Joasaph of Belgorod**  
Thur. Sept. 16 Vigil 6 P.M.  
Fri. Sept. 17 Divine Liturgy 8 A.M.
- **13th Sunday after Pentecost**  
**Right-believing Prince Peter and Princess Fevronia, Wonderworkers of Murom**  
Sat. Sept. 18 Vigil 5 P.M.  
Sun. Sept. 19 Divine Liturgy 10 A.M.
- **Nativity of the Mother of God**  
Mon. Sept 20. Vigil 6 P.M.  
Tue. Sept. 21 Divine Liturgy 8 A.M.
- **14th Sunday after Pentecost**  
Sat. Sept. 25 Vigil 5 P.M.  
Sun. Sept 26 Divine Liturgy 10 A.M.
- **Exaltation of the Precious Cross**  
Sun. Sept. 26 Vigil 6 P.M.  
Mon. Sept. 27 Divine Liturgy 8 A.M.
- **Holy Martyrs Sophia, Faith, Hope and Love**  
Thur. Sept. 30 Moleben 9 A.M.

This year the Orthodox world celebrates 800 years since the birth of Holy Right-Believing Great Prince Alexander Nevsky.

## Honoring the Holy Right-believing Prince Alexander Nevsky

Every year we celebrate the memory of St Alexander twice: on December 6th and September 12th. Since this anniversary year the feast of Translation of his relics (Sept. 12th) falls on a Sunday, it was decided that this day is to be chosen for the universal celebration of the memory of the Right-Believing Great Prince Alexander.

St Alexander is a shining example of a brilliant Christian ruler, a staunch defender of the true faith and a pious and loving family man. God inspired him to make the right decisions as the ruler when the land of Russia was under a dual oppression: a total devastation of the land wrought by the heathen steppe nomadic hordes from the east and the invasion of crusaders from the west, who were on fire with their misplaced missionary zeal to force the Orthodox Christians to bow to the authority of the Pope of Rome.

In his wisdom, St Alexander's vision was not to fight the nomad forces which were

numberless but try to endure under the horde yoke, thus allowing his subjects to regain strength, so that one day they would be able to shake off the marauding invaders (it took 140 years for the land to regain the needed strength and begin to push back the enemy).



During St Alexander's time what the nomads wanted was to loot, while those coming from the west with the papal blessing sought to drive the Orthodox into the very rigid and graceless structure of Roman Catholicism. St Alexander's approach was to give to the enemy from the east the material things which they coveted but not to allow the crusaders to rob the souls of his subjects. Material things can be given away, the faith – never.

As it was already announced, the first surgery for Sofia was scheduled for November 12th. Hopefully soon Sofia's parents will receive an invitation from the Children's Hospital to come to the US for treatment. Once they have the invitation in their hands, they will have to obtain US Visas. To do this they will have to travel to Novosibirsk (8-hour bus ride), then fly to Moscow or St Petersburg (4.5 to 5-hour flight) and then fly to Kazakhstan (3.5 hour flight) to the US Embassy in Nur-Sultan (originally a Russian cossack settlement Akmolinsk, renamed in 1961 Tselinograd, renamed Akmola in 1994 and with the capital of the newly-created State of Kazakhstan moved there, then it was

renamed Astana in 1998 and finally renamed Nur-Sultan in 2019 (if the thought occurred to you that Kazakhstan, like most other made-up republics which appeared on the historical Russian Imperial lands are hard pressed to find out what to do with their independence, you would not be far from truth)), since neither US Embassy nor US consulates in Russia issue US Visas at this time. Although the town where the Rovnovs live is very close to Kazakhstan border, because of COVID restrictions, only Kazakhstan citizens can enter the country through land crossings. All others have to fly into it. This is an incredibly long detour which is going to eat up a great chunk of what they were

## Helping Sofia Rovnova

able to raise for Sofia in Russia, but there is no other way Sofia's family can obtain US Visas at the moment.

As of now, thanks to your generosity the parish was able to collect \$7,353.00 for Sofia's surgeries. The time is getting short and more funds are needed. This is not some huge fundraiser where our alms could be lost in the multitude of other donations. Sofia's treatment will be made possible almost entirely through our parish's input. And remember: no dollar you give will go unnoticed by God.

## Ask Your Priest

Q: Why are the renderings of Icons referred to as "written"? Some background on this would be interesting to learn also.

A: *What is the word? Iconography, that is 'image-writing' in Greek, or Ikonopis' – 'icon writing' in Slavonic. So, the word itself points in the direction where we find our answer. Another word which is used, although less frequently, is Isography – 'exact writing', i.e. exact reproduction or copying from the original.*

*Iconography has its own canon, or rule, for writing icons. In canonical icons there is nothing accidental but everything, including minor elements of scenery or background, are symbolic and every symbol has a meaning. Iconography is known as "Gospel in color" or "Theology in color", thus making the word "write", in reference to icons, more appropriate. Some people say that the word should be "paint", since iconographers use*

*brushes and paints, hence 'paining'. This sounds very logical. But what would we say about traditional Chinese writing? Aren't they using brushes and paints to write? Or they are painting their texts?*

*'Icon painting' proponents say that if we say 'icon writing' we torture our English language. We, the Orthodox Christians living in the West, are used to the fact that English sometimes cannot organically convey all phenomena in the Church. So we use Greek or Slavonic words for certain things and we feel quite comfortable doing it. It enriches our world and those who seek to enter the Church find this aspect of Orthodoxy in the West appealing. A modern pseudo-missionary approach which brings secular cultural language into the Church is alien to us.*

*P.S. Those who would like to know more about iconography are encouraged to read "Theology of the Icon" by Leonid Ouspensky.*

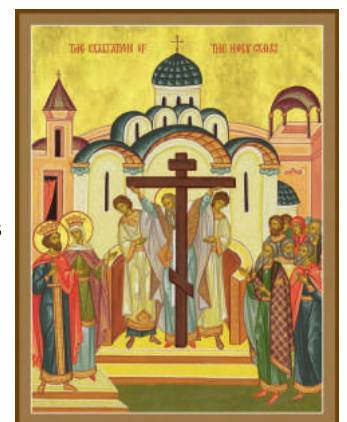
## The Exaltation of the Cross

*Excerpt from Icons and Saints of the Eastern Orthodox Church*

To erase all memory of the places of Christ's Passion venerated by the first Christians, the Roman emperor Hadrian had a temple dedicated to Venus built upon Golgotha. The bishop of Jerusalem, Marcarius, later asked Emperor Constantine - to whom the Cross had appeared before the victorious battle of the Milvian Bridge in 312- to raze the temple so they could look for the

sepulchre of Christ. Leading the excavations was Helen, Constantine's mother. In 326, Helen found the Holy Sepulchre and, nearby, the remnants of the three crosses, the nails, and the inscription of the crucifix. On this site arose the Basilica of the Resurrection (or the Holy Sepulchre), consecrated on September Sept. 13/26, 335. The following day, the feast of the Exaltation of the Cross was established, one of the twelve great feasts of the Orthodox calendar. The icon of the Exaltation of the Cross represents the moment when

Bishop Marcarius goes to the central point of the church and, aided by two deacons, elevates the Cross a hundred or so times toward the four cardinal points as the faithful reply, "Lord, have mercy on us". In some icons it is Saints Constantine and Helen who raise up the Cross.



# Feasts at St. Basil's

## 7th Sunday after Pentecost



## Dormition of the Mother of God



## 6th Sunday after Pentecost



## Feast of St. Panteleimon



## Moleben for the beginning of the Dormition fast



## Transfiguration of the Lord

Thou wast transfigured on the mountain, O Christ our God, showing to Thy disciples Thy glory as each one could endure, shine forth Thou on us, who are sinners all, Thy light ever-unending through the prayers of the Theotokos.

O Light-giver, glory to Thee

-Troparion of the feast



We recently renewed our mortgage, so I felt it was a good opportunity to fill some of our newer parish members in on one of our larger financial obligations. One of the largest single cash outlays I make on a repeated basis on behalf of the parish as treasurer is our mortgage payment. It may come as a surprise to some that the parish makes these payments. The mortgage itself is quite straightforward. Like a standard residential mortgage, it comes with a fixed term, principal amount, and rate of interest. The loan is through a local bank known as Bank Star. The loan was originated at the Bank of Hillsboro,

which was acquired by Bank Star in 2018. When we originated the loan, in December of 2012, the original principal amount was \$500,000.00. The term was a 30-year fixed rate with a rate of 3.50%. We were able to secure the same interest rate for our most recent renewal. On a monthly basis, I will write a check for a little over \$2250. This amount is broken down approximately in half between principal and interest. Currently, the remaining balance on the loan approximates \$406,000. The fact that we are paying a mortgage puts our parish in an advantage to own our facilities once

## Treasury Report

*Parish Treasurer Basil VanRonzelen*

the debt is paid, giving us equity to potentially help finance future expansion. However, it is the responsibility of our parish to ensure the principal and interest is paid down and that these payments are made in a timely fashion. If you ever have any questions, please feel free to reach out to me. Please note I will be unavailable for questions from September 10th through September 21st as I will be out of the country.

## St. Basil's Icon Corner

This month, we discuss the two icons hanging on

either side of the double doors when entering the nave (inner part) of the church. The icons are of St. Vladimir the Great and St. Alexander Nevsky. Both saints were princes of Russia and were glorified by God as His faithful co-laborers. Below we learn more about their lives.

Holy Great Prince Vladimir, Equal of the Apostles, and Enlightener of Rus' was born in 963 and is known for expanding the borders of Rus' and united various slavic tribes into a one Russian Land. He is also known for the baptism of Rus' as accounted from the Prologue of Ochrid below.



"Vladimir was the son of Prince Svyatoslav, and grandson of Igor and Olga, and was at first completely pagan in faith and life. Learning of the existence of various faiths, he began to examine them, to decide which was best. He therefore sent envoys to Constantinople. When they returned, they told the Prince that they had been at a service in the Church of the Wisdom of God [Hagia Sophia], and that they had been 'out of ourselves, not knowing if we were on earth or in heaven'. This inspired Vladimir to be baptised, receiving the name Vasilii [Basil], and to baptise his people."

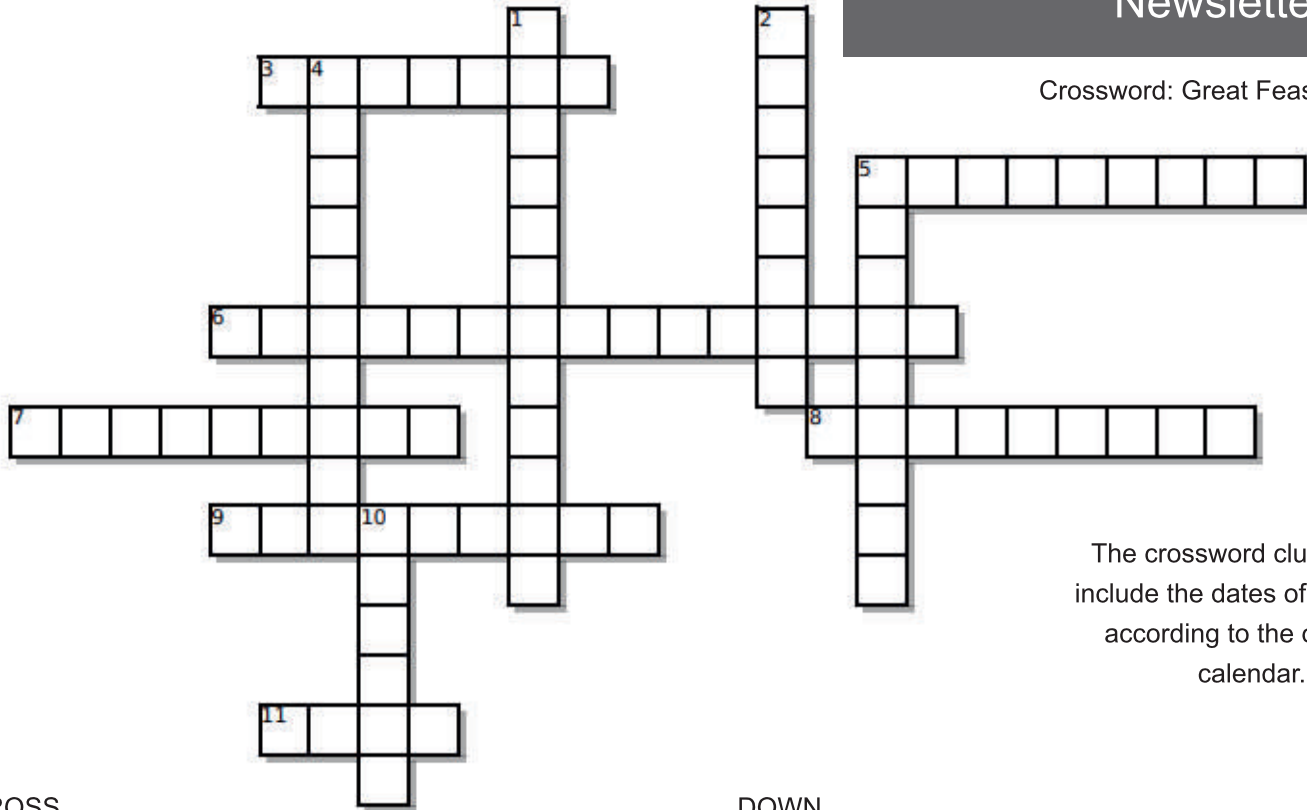
After this conversion, St. Vladimir devoted himself and his labors to promoting the faith by tearing down idols across the Russian Land and building churches in their stead.

Holy Right-believing Great Prince Alexander was born in 1220 and was a son of Prince Yaroslav and Princess Theodosia (who towards the end of her life became a nun with the name Euphrosinia and was canonized a saint). He was tonsured a knight (an ancient ritual in military families) at a very young age and received a blessing from Holy Hierarch Simon of Suzdal

(+1226) for military service to protect the Holy Orthodox Church and the Russian Land in the name of God. St. Alexander would fervently pray to God before battle and would empower his troops with the following words: "The power of God is not in military strength, but in truth. Some come with their weapons, while others on horses, but we shall call upon the Name of the Lord God!". With his great faith, St. Alexander was victorious over the adversaries and saved the Russian Land and the Orthodox Faith from their enemies on multiple occasions. His saintly kinsmen Holy Right-believing Princes Boris and Gleb (+1015), in a miraculous omen, were seen sailing in aid to St. Alexander before battling the Swedes (who came as part of the Second Swedish Crusade blessed by the Pope of Rome) on the river Neva in 1240. In this miracle St. Boris was heard saying to his brother, "Brother Gleb, let us help our kinsman Alexander." Consequently, St. Alexander, being 20 years old, defeated the Swedes, wounding their leader Prince Birger, and from then on was known by the name "of the Neva" or Nevsky. (Later, on the banks of the Neva River where the battle took place, the city of St Petersburg was founded). In 1242 St. Alexander famously defeated the Teutonic knights on the frozen lake Chud known throughout history as the Great Battle of the Ice. The holy prince had to defend his people not only from the threat from the west but also from the cruelty of the Mongol invaders who had overrun Russia, destroyed most of its numerous cities, levied taxes and continued to pillage the land. St Alexander had to travel first to Mongolia and later to the horde's new capital Sarai on the Volga River to plead for more humane treatment of his subjects by the invaders. It is believed that on one such trip in 1263 the prince was poisoned by the Mongols, just like his father Prince Yaroslav before him, for he died soon after leaving Sarai. Before his death Alexander was tonsured a monk with the name Aleksii.



Crossword: Great Feasts of the Church



The crossword clues below include the dates of the feasts according to the old style calendar.

## ACROSS

- 3 Feb. 15: The \_\_\_\_\_ of Our Lord Jesus Christ in the Temple
- 5 Jan. 19: The \_\_\_\_\_ of Our Lord God and Savior Jesus Christ
- 6 Aug. 19: The \_\_\_\_\_ of Our Lord God and Savior Jesus Christ
- 7 40 days after Pascha: The \_\_\_\_\_ of Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ
- 8 Aug. 28: The \_\_\_\_\_ of the Most Holy Theotokos
- 9 50 days after Pascha: The Descent of the Holy Spirit
- 11 Sunday Before Pascha: \_\_\_\_\_ Sunday

## DOWN

- 1 Apr. 7: The \_\_\_\_\_ to the Most Holy Theotokos
- 2 Jan. 7: The \_\_\_\_\_ of Our Lord God and Savior Jesus Christ
- 4 Sept. 27: The Universal \_\_\_\_\_ of the Life-Creating Cross
- 5 Sept. 21: The Nativity of the Most Holy \_\_\_\_\_
- 10 Dec. 4: The Entrance (Presentation) of the Theotokos into the \_\_\_\_\_

It is a great mercy of God to be allowed to serve or to help serve in Church, to enter into the earthly heaven - the altar, to approach the holy Mysteries, to sing or intone church prayers. That is why those who have earned that mercy must fulfill their work with reverence, remembering the words of the Psalmist: "Serve the Lord with fear and rejoice with trembling" Ps. 2:11, as well as those other terrible words: "Cursed be the one who does the Lord's work negligently" Jer. 48:10

**-St. John of Shanghai and San Francisco**

## ATTENTION: Choir Practice Update

All parishioners are welcome to join the choir. All voices are needed. Choir practice will take place on Wednesday evenings, for the month of September, at 6:30 pm at the church. Please note that there will be no choir practice on Sept. 22nd.

## Support The Parish Through Amazon

You can support St. Basil's by choosing the parish as your charity of choice when you shop online through Amazon at no additional cost. Simply go to [Smile.Amazon.com](https://www.smile.amazon.com), sign in, select "St. Basil the Great Orthodox Church" as your charity and start shopping! Amazon will donate a portion of eligible purchases directly to the church.

## Parish Prayer List

- Nadia Danett — Health
- Jackie (Xenia) Peck — Health
- Nora (Zoe) Resz — Health

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.