



ST. 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
Protopriest Radomir Chkautovich
Priest Thomas Nichols
Deacon Ephraim Galloway

SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

- **35th Sunday after Pentecost**
 - **New Martyrs and Confessors of Russia**
 - Sat., Feb. 3 Vigil 5 P.M.
 - Sun., Feb. 4 Divine Liturgy 10 A.M.
- **Blessed Xenia of St. Petersburg**
 - Mon., Feb. 5 Vigil 6 P.M.
 - Tue., Feb. 6 Divine Liturgy 8 A.M.
- **36th Sunday after Pentecost**
 - Sat., Feb. 10 Vigil 5 P.M.
 - Sun., Feb. 11 Divine Liturgy 10 A.M.
- **Three Holy Hierarchs**
 - Mon., Feb. 12 Divine Liturgy 9 A.M.
- At St. John's Church at House Springs
- **Meeting of the Lord in the Temple**
 - Wed., Feb. 14 Vigil 6 P.M.
 - Thur., Feb. 15 Divine Liturgy 8 A.M.
- **37th Sunday after Pentecost**
 - Sat., Feb. 17 Vigil 5 P.M.
 - Sun., Feb. 18 Divine Liturgy 10 A.M.
- **Sunday of the Publican and Pharisee**
 - **Holy Hierarch Alexii of Moscow**
 - Sat., Feb. 24 Vigil 5 P.M.
 - Sun., Feb. 25 Divine Liturgy 10 A.M.

THE JOURNEY OF AN ICON

For many parishes in lands where the Orthodox Faith has been planted, but has mostly sprang up in the last century, hand-written icons are few, with framed prints brought out to the middle of the temple on feast days as a matter of course.

Our parish is no exception from this rule: we have a collection of icon prints for all the feasts of the Lord



and the Mother of God, as well as of the most revered saints.

Several years ago, God blessed us with meeting a few iconographers from Odessa on the Black Sea whose work now adorns our temple: Olga Kiriya wrote the icons of Christ and the Mother of God (Smolensk Odegetria) which are placed on the analoys by the amvon, and Sergei Lungu and Ekaterina Kirichenko wrote the icons of Holy Hierarch John of Shanghai and San Francisco —on the semi-pillar to the left of the panihida table— and Virgin Martyr Irene of Aquileia over her precious relics.

About two years ago we commissioned Sergei and Ekaterina to write for us the icon of the Resurrection of the Lord, so that on Pascha — this Feast of feasts — we could have in our temple not a serially produced icon print but an icon hand-written specifically for our parish. This was announced to the parish and a couple of families contributed funds to compensate the iconographers for their labors.

Since then many tragic changes have happened in Odessa (often called Southern Palmyra— St. Petersburg is dubbed Northern Palmyra— due to its beauty) which turned the abundant life of Orthodox Christians there into a struggle to survive. Some

people in our parish have been sending money to the iconographers to help them to get by, but in the recent months this has been made virtually impossible. But Sergei and Ekaterina are praying for the day when they will be able to freely walk the streets of their city and attend the Divine Services, something which is denied to them at the present.

On the day after the feast of Theophany, the mailman brought a 27-pound box to our doors. The box contained the extremely carefully packaged icon already encased in the kiot with glass on the front. The icon and the glassed kiot had reached us undamaged.

The very next day, on the Sunday after Theophany, after the Amvon Prayer, the icon of the Resurrection was blessed in the presence of the entire parish and the triumphant Paschal troparion was sung as the rector blessed the faithful with the holy image.



FATHER SERGII RECEIVES AWARD



The clergy of St. Basil's traveled to Des Plaines, Illinois on the second day of Nativity to celebrate the feast of Protomartyr and Archdeacon Stephen at the Diocesan Cathedral. After celebrating the Divine Liturgy, Archbishop Peter awarded St. Basil's rector, Fr. Sergii, permission to wear a palitsa as a part of his vestments. This award is given to priests after many years of service and dedication for which Archbishop Peter thanked Fr. Sergii.

The palitsa is a diamond-shaped rigid cloth worn over the right knee. The diamond shape represents a sword which priests wield in spiritual battle against disbelief and irreverence.

UPDATE ON PARKING AND HALL EXPANSION

Recently, the parish council was informed that the owner of the lot west of the church property was planning on building luxury homes between the church property and Dougherty Ferry Rd. While we have not yet heard when they intend to start, we need to begin making plans to stop using the land beyond our parking lot. (Church property ends approximately 2 ft. west of our parking lot.) The first step for this is to lay out a parking area on the grass on the southeast side of the church. We hope to get this done in the next few months.

Further, we are planning to present to our civil engineering firm our desire for a scaled down church hall building along with increased paved parking on the south side. Lack of building funds have been and continue to be the primary driver to define a phased approach to the entire process. For example, we envision that a Phase 1 hall plan might be 2,000 sq. ft. rather than 4,000. Phase 2 will likely complete the Phase 1 hall size along with more potential paved parking on the north side of the existing driveway.

All of these phased plans are contingent on receiving feedback from the civil engineers, meeting with the city of Des Peres and incorporating their requirements, and getting cost estimates from general contractors. Obviously, affordability will dictate what can be done and how quickly.

We will make an effort to keep you informed regarding the projected costs, timelines, and floor plans being considered. Feel free to bring questions and comments to Michael Orlando and Andrew Johnstone from the building committee.

ICONOGRAPHY UPDATE AT ST. BASIL'S



Iconographers Ivan Storchak and Roman Martynenko have finished writing icons on the entire center dome. Practically every inch of the dome has been brought to life with vivid icons depicting Christ Pantocrator, Cherubim and Seraphim, the Holy Archangels, and now, the four Evangelists.

The iconography will take a brief pause while Roman and Ivan travel to complete other projects across the globe. They plan to return to St. Basil's in the spring when the next phase of iconography will commence. Please keep Roman and Ivan in your prayers as they travel, that the Lord may bring them safely back to St. Basil's.

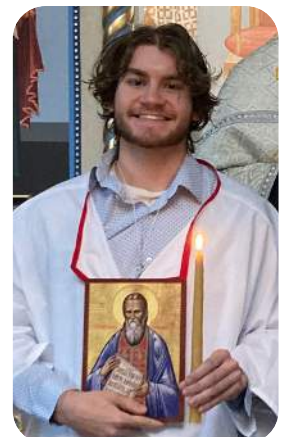
A reminder: the iconography is funded by the generous donations of the faithful which can be deposited in the box specifically allocated for this project near the candle kiosk.

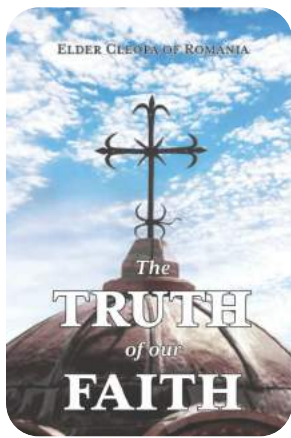
MEETING THE NEWLY ILLUMINED

Newly Illumined Ivan Myskowski, who was baptized in December, shares his experience discovering and joining the Orthodox Church.

I grew up in northern Idaho, but moved around the states with my family quite a bit due to my father's job. Missouri was the most recent move, which happened right as I was graduating from high school. I heard about Orthodoxy first from my older brother Canaan, who had been studying church history by reading the early church fathers. I then started to explore further online before making my first visit to St. Basil the Great Orthodox Church.

After seeing my first Divine Liturgy, I was struck by the beauty and reverence that exist in the church and decided to continue attending to learn more about Orthodoxy from the people actually living out the faith. After receiving guidance from Daniel Simpson, who even comes from the same Protestant tradition in which I was raised, I was convinced that the Orthodox Church was the one established by Christ, and that I needed to become a catechumen and seek refuge there.





Upon learning about the many different choices of great saints that bear the same name as I do, picking a single one was no easy task. However, one of the very first I learned about was St. John of Kronstadt. After reading about his life I decided to choose him as I was struck by his constant humility and dedication to his community and Church.

If I had to recommend a book to anyone coming from a similar background it would be *The Truth of Our Faith* by Elder Cleopa.

FOCUS ON FOCUS

Please remember that we have a sign-up sheet on the church bulletin board if you are interested in helping us serve a Sunday Supper at Holy Archangel Michael OCA parish at 1901 Ann Ave. in St. Louis from 3:45 – 6:00 P.M. Our next supper will be served on February 4th.

This month, we have been asked to supply the following pantry items to FOCUS before February 18th:

- Large Soup Cans w/ pop top (18 oz.)
- Small Soup Cans w/ pop top (10 oz.)

After purchasing your items, please put them in the FOCUS container found in the parish coat closet.

VENERABLE BARSANUPIUS THE GREAT AND JOHN THE PROPHET: PART V

256. Question: Pray for me, my Father, for I am wretched in everything, and I have need of great love of mankind. The thoughts which arise in me say: "Go to a different place and there you will be saved". By your prayers, may God not allow me to be possessed by this thought.

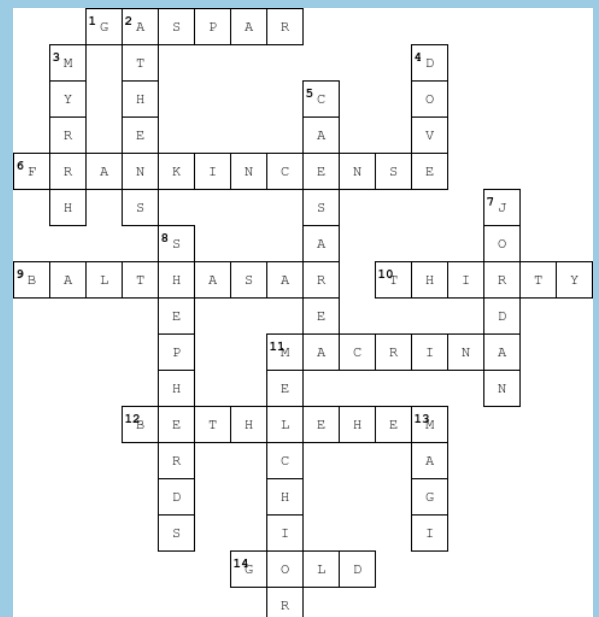
Answer: Brother! May he be cursed who has sowed in your heart such thoughts of leaving this place because of the transgression of commandments here. This is the devil. He presents this to you under an appearance of truth, so that, having mocked you, he might make you an object of scandal for many, so that you might bear condemnation from them also. Besides, you are being subjected to this for your negligence and vainglory. You say: "If I go away to a different place, there I will endure dishonor." But why is it that now, just soon as you hear that your brother has said something against you, your heart is disturbed, and you do not wish that anyone should know of your transgression? To negligence and vainglory the demons also join their nets so as to cause your soul to perish. Be assured in the Lord, that if it were not

NEW CATECHUMENS AT ST. BASIL'S

The prayers for the making of a catechumen were read over William, Medea, and George Molloy before the Divine Liturgy on Sunday, January 21st. The family will soon start catechumen classes with parishioner Daniel Simpson where they will learn about the Orthodox Faith. Please keep the family in your prayers that our Lord may continue to guide them in their Orthodox journey.



JANUARY ACTIVITY ANSWERS



for the help of God and the prayers of the true slaves of God who are here, you could not remain even a year in the monastery. But just as a blind man sees nothing, so also you do not see the benefactions which God has shown you and continues to show by the prayers of the saints and blessed Abraham, who said to you and your brother: "If you remain in this place, you will have me as an intercessor." Brother! Pay careful heed to yourself; labor against thoughts so as not to fall into negligence and vainglory, not to do anything according to your own will, and not to accept the thoughts of self-justification which arise in you; otherwise, you will be subjected to a powerful fall. Know for sure that wherever you might go, though you might go over the whole earth from end to end, nowhere will you receive such benefit as in this place. What an anchor is for a boat, such will be for you the prayers of the fathers here. Acquire firmness, and it will remove from you familiarity in your relation with your close ones, which is the cause of all evil in man. Leave off all outward care, and then you will freely serve God. Become dead to every man – this is what it means to be a stranger on earth. Consider yourself as nothing and your thoughts will not be disturbed. Do not think that you have done anything good and your reward will not perish. Above this, remember that your life on earth is not endless, therefore, strive so that you might be able to say with boldness at your last hour: *I prepared myself and was not disturbed* (Ps. 118:60).

Brother! One cannot live without labor and no one is crowned without struggling. Force yourself to struggle for your salvation, and God will help you, *Who wisheth that all men be saved and come to the knowledge of truth* (1 Tim. 2:4). May He have mercy on you, my son, so that with fervor you might enter upon pleasing Him. For His is the mercy and power and glory unto the ages of ages. Amen.

To be continued

NEWSLETTER ACTIVITY

G T I M Z H F Y O W M X H S I	Turtle Doves
R B U X F L E E V H M E I U B	Pharisee
E I A R I C S O R I J N E R Y	Martyrs
G V L L T H O Y B F G I R R J	Symeon
O E F Z P L R N M W F A A E X	Confessors
R P K J I H E Q F E Y F R K X	Gregory
Y S U M E M A D Q E O G C E J	Temple
H V Z A B R R R O N S N H E O	Xenia
Z A L R A G X A I V B S S B H	Hierarchs
I N O T S B U O L S E A O F N	Basil
B N F Y I L Y I W E E S O R F	Publican
T A Z R L P Q V A S X E X Z S	John
U Z I S G M W H V B T I P S G	Alexii
P U B L I C A N D I T W I S T	Anna
X L L U S W B Z T E M P L E I	

PARISH PRAYER LIST

Archimandrite Seraphim — 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
 John, Xenia, and Faith — Recovery
 Christopher — Recovery
 Katherine Swanson — 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.

CATECHUMEN CORNER

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:

<i>Doc</i>	<i>Anthony</i>
<i>Ricardo</i>	<i>Veronica</i>
<i>Christiano</i>	<i>Brandon</i>
<i>Chad</i>	<i>Russell</i>
<i>Ryan</i>	<i>Christian</i>
<i>Gage</i>	<i>William</i>
<i>Gabrielle</i>	<i>Zachary</i>
<i>Shannon</i>	<i>Matthew</i>
<i>Andrew</i>	<i>William, Medea, and George</i>