



# ST. BASIL THE GREAT ORTHODOX CHURCH

*205 Highland Avenue  
Des Peres, MO 63122*

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

## Clergy

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

## SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

- **15th Sunday after Pentecost**
  - **Conception of St John the Baptist**
    - Sat., Oct. 5 Vigil 5 P.M.
    - Sun., Oct. 6 Divine Liturgy 10 A.M.
- **Venerable Sergius of Radonezh**
  - Mon., Oct. 7 Vigil 6 P.M.
  - Tue., Oct. 8 Divine Liturgy 8 A.M.
- **16th Sunday after Pentecost**
  - **Holy Hierarch Michael, First Metropolitan of Kiev**
    - Sat., Oct. 12 Vigil 5 P.M.
    - Sun., Oct. 13 Divine Liturgy 10 A.M.
- **Protection of the Theotokos**
  - Sun., Oct. 13 Vigil 6 P.M.
- Mon., Oct. 14 Divine Liturgy 8 A.M.
- **17th Sunday after Pentecost**
  - **Holy Hierarch Jonah of Manchuria**
    - Sat., Oct. 19 Vigil 5 P.M.
    - Sun., Oct. 20 Divine Liturgy 10 A.M.
- **18th Sunday after Pentecost**
  - **Holy Fathers of the Seventh Ecumenical Council**
    - Sat., Oct. 26 Vigil 5 P.M.
    - Sun., Oct. 27 Divine Liturgy 10 A.M.
- **Righteous John of Kronstadt**
  - Thur., Oct. 31 Vigil 6 P.M.
  - Fri., Nov. 1 Divine Liturgy 8 A.M.

## ICONOGRAPHY AT ST. BASIL'S

Iconographers Roman and Ivan are diligently working to complete the current icons on the northern transept of the nave. The Taking Down of the Lord from the Cross is almost finished, while the Transfiguration of the Lord is well underway. Your generous donations will help us finalize this inspiring

transformation of our temple. Every contribution, big or small, makes a difference! Join us in this meaningful endeavor and help us create a lasting legacy for our parish. Donations can be deposited in the box marked for iconography in the narthex. Thank you for your support!



## NEW CATECHUMENS AT ST. BASIL'S

Three families had the prayers for becoming catechumens read over them before the Divine Liturgy on Sunday, September 19th. The families are pictured to the right: Jonathan and Carolyn (not pictured) Gomez with their children on the left, Zachary and Meagan Pirtle with their children in the center, and Joseph and Vanessa Rameer with their child on the right. These families have been faithfully attending services and catechumen classes with Daniel Simpson, where they continue to learn about the Orthodox faith. Please keep these families in your prayers, that the Lord may continue to guide them to the Church and strengthen them on their journey to Orthodoxy.



## FOCUS ON FOCUS

Thank you to everyone who has donated funds to the FOCUS pantry donation while renovations were occurring at Archangel Michael Parish. We are now returning to our normal procedures for serving the Sunday Suppers and donating goods.

Fr. Matthew McDonald has announced his resignation as director of our local St. Louis area FOCUS chapter. As a parish, we would like to publicly thank Fr. Matthew for all his service at FOCUS. A search is underway for a new director. If you are interested in learning about this role, or know of someone who would be a great candidate, please let Fr. Matthew know: [fr.matt.mcdonald@gmail.com](mailto:fr.matt.mcdonald@gmail.com)

Our next **Sunday Supper** is on **October 20**. Please remember that we have a sign-up sheet on the Church bulletin board if you are interested in helping us serve the supper from 3:45 – 6:00 P.M at Archangel Michael parish, located at 1901 Ann Ave. in St. Louis.

We have been asked to supply the following **pantry items before October 20**:

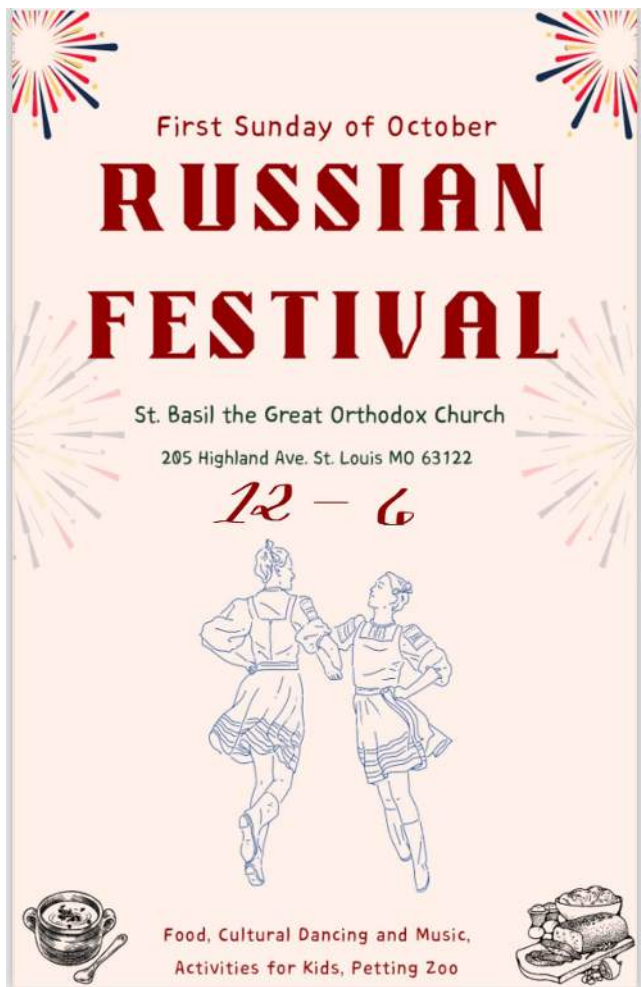
- Large Soup Cans w/ pop tops (18 oz.)
- Small Soup Cans w/ pop tops (10 oz.)

Please supply only these goods as FOCUS doesn't have enough room in their facilities to store additional pantry goods from month to month. After purchasing your items, please put them in the FOCUS container of the parish coat closet. If you prefer, you may donate money for pantry items to FOCUS directly, using the following link or QR code.

<https://interland3.donorperfect.net/weblink/WebLink.aspx?name=E334599&id=86>







## FESTIVAL PREPARATIONS

The Sisterhood of St. Macrina is hard at work preparing for the upcoming parish festival on **Sunday, October 6th**. Food preparations are underway, and performances are being perfected for their showcase. It's not too late to get involved! We welcome anyone who can help with setup and cleanup for the event. Volunteers are needed to serve food and sell tickets, among other tasks. Please reach out to Matushka Svetlana if you can assist or would like more information.

## BAPTISM AT ST. BASIL'S

The newborn infant, Julia, was baptized on Saturday, September 14th at St. Basil's. Julia is the fifth child born to catechist Daniel Simpson and his wife, Elizabeth. Friends and family gathered to celebrate the newest handmaiden of God receiving the gift of the Holy Spirit through the sanctifying waters of Baptism.



## ANNUAL PARISH MEETING SUMMARY

The Annual Parish Meeting was held on September 29, 2024, led by Fr. Sergii. The rector's report, given by Fr. Sergii, highlighted 29 baptisms and several weddings from the past year. He mentioned the successful fundraising for Archpriest Martin and Matushka Katherine Swanson's tombstone, as well as a matching gift donation that further funded the iconography project.

Treasurer William VanRonzelen IV reported significant increases in donations compared to the previous year and announced his resignation, recommending Andrew Barr as his successor. The Building Committee, led by Michael Orlando, provided updates on maintenance tasks and explained ongoing projects, including plans for new parking and pavilion spaces while addressing potential challenges from a sewer project.

Two new members were elected to the Parish Council: Andrew Barr, who will be stepping in as the new treasurer, and Daniel Simpson, who will also join the council. May God bless the new council members in their roles as they lead the parish toward future success.





## BROTHERHOOD MEETING

The Brotherhood of St. Alexander Nevsky held its annual meeting following the moleben served for their patron on September 12th. It was a joyful gathering, bringing together members to celebrate faith and fellowship. The Brotherhood leadership shared updates on the Brotherhood's activities and discussed plans for the coming year. There was a warm sense of unity as the brothers prayed together, honoring their patron saint and reaffirming their commitment to serve the church in whatever way possible. Please contact the Brotherhood president, Jacob Lasseter, if anyone from the parish needs assistance from the Brotherhood.



ST. HERMAN  
CONFERENCE 2024

# Save the Date!

12/26/24 - 12/30/24  
Cincinnati Ohio

Registration Deadline: 12/1/24



Topic: Being an  
everyday Saint

## ROCOR YOUTH CONFERENCE

The St. Herman Youth Conference is taking place in Cincinnati this coming December. This is a wonderful opportunity for fellowship, learning, and spiritual growth among our youth. Registration closes on **December 1st**, and if your child or children would like to attend the conference but you need financial help with the registration fee or coordinating transportation, the parish will rally together to make sure any youth that wants to attend can do so. Please contact Fr. Sergii for further information.

## THESE DAYS A TRULY CHRISTIAN MARRIAGE IS A MIRACLE

BY SERGEI KOMAROV, A WRITER,  
JOURNALIST, CATECHIST

Marriage is established by God, commanded by Him even before the Fall. Life in marriage according to God's commandments is a great joy on earth and a preparation for the Kingdom of God.

After the Fall, everything that pertains to marriage was affected, as was all human life. The biblical ideal became difficult to achieve. The devil realized that if he struck the family, then everything would be destroyed: society and morals in general, the Church (as God's presence on earth), and even monasticism. And he began to strike—with might, cunning, and confidence.

How does he strike? Through the propaganda of lust and passions, the implantation of false concepts of love and happiness, and the confusion of male and female identities. Men become increasingly weaker and more infantile, while women become stronger and more independent. People are corrupted from childhood, absorbing all the filth of modern Western civilization. It is becoming increasingly difficult to create a normal, strong marriage and maintain it for life.

Men chase internet images, often overlooking good, pious girls. It is difficult for girls to humble themselves, serve their husbands, love their homes and children, and find happiness in this.

To enter into a Christian marriage means to declare war on passions, to become a responsible person, and to be a laborer, not a consumer. By now, we have very little strength for this. What was once the norm—a family with many children and a father and mother who lived together all their

lives—is now a great rarity, a kind of miracle.

But "all things are possible to him that believeth." God will help as long as we have the desire and are ready for spiritual and moral work and prayer. Strong marriages still exist, thank God, but more of them are needed. Creating a family today is the most important part of the economy of our salvation.

## CHRISTIANS AND PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION

Priests hear an array of imagined sins when they hear confessions. Even neutral activities become unbelievably sinful if one picks up certain books or turns to the Internet and reads or watches some very serious looking people (and who present themselves as great zealots of Orthodoxy) preaching nonsense. Apostle Paul called this phenomenon "Zeal not according to knowledge," while His Holiness Patriarch Aleksii II (†2008) used to say that such *immature elders'* preaching is based on the "wind in their heads."



One of such imagined sins is voting at elections. It goes without saying that whether to vote or not to vote is one's personal decision. Moreover, it is one's personal decision for whom one should vote.

In the recent years marked by great polarization of our society, the Church hierarchy have consistently been reminding the faithful that we should not seek to deepen the divisions among the people but try to facilitate unity. In our parishes there is a rule: when on church grounds or at a parish-wide gathering we do not talk about politics.

Is it sinful to vote? To answer this question we can turn to those pages of the history which witness to the involvement of the saints and Christian leaders in the life of the society in the 20th century, in the age when there were elections similar to ours.

Righteous John of Kronstadt (†1909) was an honorary member of the Union of the Russian People (a grassroots organization supporting the Monarch and the Orthodox foundations of the nation) and spoke out in favor of the Russian Monarchist Party, prophetically foreseeing that, if the people of good will do not stop the rise of evil, the godless would plunge the country into a bloodbath of terror.

The First Hierarchy of the Russian Church Abroad Metropolitan Anthony (Khrapovitsky) (†1936), when he was the Bishop of Volyn and Zhitomir, founded in 1905 (during the first revolution in Russia) a local chapter of the Union of the Russian People in Zhitomir.

Metropolitan Evlogy (Georgievsky) (†1946), a notable figure in the history of the Russian Church in diaspora in the first half of the 20th century, when he was the Bishop of Kholm (the area also known as Kholm Rus' — now part of Poland) was elected and served two terms as the provincial representative for the area at the Duma – the Russian Parliament. (N.B. The canons forbid clergy to occupy civil administrative seats, but in the beginning of the 20th century the Holy Synod allowed it.)

If in the Russian Empire ruled by the pious Orthodox

## SEPTEMBER ACTIVITY ANSWERS

O Lord, save Thy **PEOPLE**,  
And bless Thine **INHERITANCE**.  
Grant **VICTORIES** to the  
Orthodox Christians  
Over their **ADVERSARIES**.  
And by **VIRTUE** of Thy Cross,  
**PRESERVE** Thy habitation.



Sovereign – the future passion-bearer and martyr – it was clear whom the people should support, in the 21st century US the situation has not been that clear.

Archpriest John Whiteford, the rector of St. Jonah of Manchuria parish in Houston, TX, in his blog

<https://fatherjohn.blogspot.com/2024/08/should-orthodox-christians-vote-two.html>

cites Venerable Paisios of Mt. Athos and Elder Ephraim of Arizona who offered helpful advice to Christians in regards to voting.

Venerable Paisios said: *"Vote for the one you believe is best; the one who loves God and our country."*

*But when he would hear the answer: "They are all the same, Father," he would reply:*

*"Well, look here. All olive trees are the same; all of them are affected by the same disease called dakos. However, some are affected 100% by it, others 80% and others 50%. Since we are in need of olive trees, we have to look for the ones that are affected the least. When we go to vote, we should always bear in mind two things: a) how much the candidate loves God and is thus a conscious member of the Church, and b) how much he loves his country and looks solely after its interests and not his own. If someone uses another criterion to vote, he is acting out of self-interests and is not behaving like a true Christian. Later on, divine justice will allow him to pay for his mistake."*

Now, let us turn to Elder Ephraim. Fr. John writes in his blog: *Back during the 2008 presidential election, a group of people asked him how they should vote. A person who knew the Elder (whom I know well and consider a trustworthy source) said that the Elder told them that they should vote for John McCain. Several people became very indignant because they favored Obama, and so they began to point out all the bad things John McCain had done. Then he said:*

*"Look, they both have horns, you have to vote for the one with the smaller horns."*

*John McCain was a very flawed candidate. He was a neocon who supported many wars that brought death and devastation to many people around the globe. However, he did have a pro-life record in terms of his votes related to abortion, and that is perhaps why the Elder considered his horns to be smaller. The choice in that election was certainly not a slam dunk question, but the Elder taught people to vote, and what criteria they should use.*

*Not everyone is going to agree who has the smallest horns in an election, but we should pray that God would give us the wisdom to make discerning choices, concludes Fr. John.*

## 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  
Carol Surgant — 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.

## 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:

- *Doc*
- *Ricardo*
- *Zachary*
- *Kimberly and August*
- *Nathan*
- *Landon*
- *Harrison*
- *Adam*
- *Zachary and Kailey*
- *Theodore*
- *Ron*
- *Jonathan, Carolynn, and children*
- *Zachary, Meagan, and children*
- *Joseph, Vanessa and child*