

St. Basil the Great Orthodox Church

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D e s P e r e s , M O 6 3 1 2 2

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
Deacon Ivan Alekseev
Deacon Daniel Simpson



Schedule of Services

• 17th Sunday after Pentecost

- **Apostle Quadratus and Hieromartyr Phoca**
 - Sat., Oct. 4 Vigil 5 P.M.
 - Sun., Oct. 5 Divine Liturgy 10 A.M.

• Venerable Sergius of Radonezh

- Tue., Oct. 7 Vigil 6 P.M.
- Wed., Oct. 8 Divine Liturgy 8 A.M.

• 18th Sunday after Pentecost

- **Uncovering of the relics of Holy Hierarch John of Shanghai and San Francisco**
 - Sat., Oct. 11 Vigil 5 P.M.
 - Sun., Oct. 12 Divine Liturgy 10 A.M.

• Protection of the Mother of God

- Mon., Oct. 13 Vigil 6 P.M.
- Tue., Oct. 14 Divine Liturgy 8 A.M.

• 19th Sunday after Pentecost

- **Apostle Thomas**
 - Sat., Oct. 18 Vigil 5 P.M.
 - Sun., Oct. 19 Divine Liturgy 10 A.M.

• Synaxis of the Venerable Fathers of Optina Monastery

- Thur., Oct. 23 Moleben 9 A.M.

• 20th Sunday after Pentecost

- **Holy Fathers of the Seventh Ecumenical Council**
 - Sat., Oct. 25 Vigil 5 P.M.
 - Sun., Oct. 26 Divine Liturgy 10 A.M.

Festival Preparations

We warmly encourage everyone to attend our Russian Festival on **Sunday, October 12th**, and to invite your friends, neighbors, and extended family to share in this joyful day. The Sisterhood of St. Macrina has been working hard to prepare a wonderful celebration with delicious traditional food, homemade desserts, refreshing drinks, and games including face painting for children to enjoy. It will be a day filled with fellowship, laughter, and the joy of being together as a parish family, while at the same time supporting the Sisterhood in their efforts to fund important projects that benefit our church community.

The festival will begin immediately after the Divine Liturgy and promises to be a highlight of our parish life this fall. To make the day a success, we kindly ask for your help with preparations. Volunteers will be needed for setting up on Saturday, assisting throughout the festival on Sunday, and, most importantly, helping with cleanup afterward. By giving our time and energy, we can ensure that this event is both beautiful and memorable.

Good Stewardship of What God Has Given Us

Help us keep the candlestands clean: if you notice that a burning candle is about 2 inches tall, please blow it out and place it in the bucket for candle stubs.

If you are the last person sitting outside, please close and tie down the umbrellas.

Do not throw anything into the trash can once it has been emptied.

Keep the doors closed when the air conditioner or heat is on (and teach your children to do the same).

Shut off the faucet when not in use – please be frugal with our resources.

Do not leave food or unfinished sweet drinks (soda, juice, etc.) in the trash or anywhere near the church to avoid pest infestation.

If you do not finish a bottle of water, do not throw it away. Instead, bring it to the kitchen so



Please come, bring a friend, and join us in making this festival a true offering of love, fellowship, and support for our parish.

the water can be used for watering plants. Teach your children not to leave trash on the playground, in the outdoor dining area, or near the church, but to place it in the trash can. If someone spills something in the church hall, or if a child has an accident, please help to clean it up.

If you change your child's diaper at the end of the day, do not leave the diaper in the restroom trash (and never put it in the hygiene box), since the trash may not be emptied until the following Sunday.

All cleaning supplies and trash bags are located in the kitchen under the sink. Please do not take trash bags from the kitchen supply closet.

Let us be good stewards of what God has given us. The best way to teach our children proper behavior is by example.

Baptisms at St. Basil's

Our parish was filled with joy on Sunday, September 21st, as the Holy Mystery of Baptism was celebrated following the Divine Liturgy. On this blessed day, Ethan and Allison Ballinger with their two daughters, Ryan Melton, Rachel Rukavina, Eythan Westcott, and Jacob and Ashley Wertheimer were joined to Christ and His Holy Church. Surrounded by the prayers of the faithful, they were illumined by the grace of the Holy Spirit and sealed as members of the Body



of Christ.

The celebration of these baptisms was not only a moment of profound grace for those received into the Church, but also a source of great consolation and encouragement for the entire parish. Together we witnessed the rebirth of our brothers and sisters in Christ, and together we welcomed them with love into the life of the Church. May the Lord strengthen them in faith, grant them perseverance in virtue, and bless them with many years in His service.



Sophia Rovnova Update

In the fall of 2021, with the blessing of His Eminence Metropolitan Nicholas, the First Hierarch of the Russian Church Outside of Russia, our parish helped nine-year-old Sophia Rovnova (from the Altai Region in Russia) undergo surgery at St. Louis Children's Hospital. Due to a severe birth defect, Sophia had been diagnosed with cerebral palsy. At that time, the hospital had a world-renowned surgeon, Dr. Park, who had developed his own method of surgical intervention designed to help children with cerebral palsy. Sophia was one of many of Dr. Park's international patients. The surgery was deemed successful, but a very laborious recovery and rehabilitation had to follow.

A few years passed, and now teenage Sophia required another surgery—this time orthopedic. With her body's growth, the bones in her legs had begun to deform. In May, Sophia underwent osteotomy surgery: in each leg, three bones were cut, realigned, and reinforced with titanium plates. For two months, she



remained in a cast from the groin to her toes.

The cast was removed on August 5th. For several weeks afterward, Sophia was not allowed to stand; she could only sit and move her knees.

On September 15th, Sophia stood on her feet for the first time since May. She shared that her legs still do not hold her well and there is pain. Yet she must do her

required exercises on the stationary bicycle and treadmill. At present, Sophia is at the Sakura Rehabilitation Center in Chelyabinsk, Russia.

When asked about the expectations for rehab, Ludmila, Sophia's mother, wrote: *"The goal for Sophia is to get on her feet and to walk with assistance."*

Please remember our heroic Sophia in your prayers.

St. Basil's Activates Homeschool Co-Op

We are blessed far beyond expectation. Attendance at Liturgy is nearly at capacity, filled with young families and scores of children. And now, a second blessing: St. Basil's has launched a homeschool co-op. Sixteen families gather on Mondays, bringing 25–35 children for instruction. Father Thomas leads liturgical training, and Theophan Helbig provides a preview of the Saints, Feasts, and Scripture for the upcoming services. John Leber, Meagan Buchanan, and Zachary Pirtle teach the youngest with Bible readings, crafts, outdoor learning, and more.



The blessings continue as older students and parents seek further enrichment in Orthodoxy while engaging the world in which we live. Our

Focus on FOCUS

A very special thanks to everyone who helped out at the September 14th Sunday Supper! We appreciate your help! We will serve our next FOCUS Sunday dinner on **December 7th**. Please sign up with the following QR code:



For October, we have been asked to supply the FOCUS Pantry with **16-18 oz. containers of peanut butter, 30-32 oz. containers of jelly, and 16 oz. boxes of saltines**. A flier is posted in



prayers have been answered most richly—and we invite you to continue with us in prayer. Though our space and resources are modest, the generosity and glad willingness to work alongside one another has been inspiring for all.

We are off to a good start! May God continue to bless the Orthodox formation of our children!



the trapeza with tear-away tabs for reminders. Please donate these items in the large plastic container in our parish coat closet. We would like to supply a healthy donation by **October 19th**.

For those who are interested, FOCUS is now **looking for volunteers to help prepare the Wednesday morning breakfast materials on the TUESDAY night prior**. If you are interested in helping on these Tuesday prep nights, please contact Matushka Christine McDonald at 417.861.6649

Meeting the Newly Illumined

Last November, our parish was blessed to welcome the Leber family into the Orthodox Church through the Holy Mystery of Baptism. Since that time, they have become an active part of our parish life, growing together with us in faith and fellowship. We are grateful for their presence among us and are pleased to share this interview, in which they reflect on their journey to Orthodoxy and their experiences within the Church.



Has your family always been in the St. Louis area?

Mika was born in Tennessee, but our family has always been in St. Louis.

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

We considered ourselves Christians and wanted our children to grow up in the right church. I entrusted Mika to research and find the right church for our family. When she came across Orthodoxy, and St. Basil's in particular, she knew it was the right place and the true Church. After a few services and sincere prayer, I also knew it would be our spiritual home.

What was something memorable about the first time your family attended an Orthodox service?

I remember being in awe at the deep, heartfelt reverence I witnessed in the venerating of the icons, the crossing of oneself, and the stamina and strength everyone displayed by standing upright for two hours straight. As soon as we got into the car, Mika told me she knew this was the place for our family.

Who are your patron saints, and why did you choose them?

Neon has a love of languages and chose St. Clement of Ohrid, who helped translate writings into Slavonic.

Tyler's middle name is James, and so he chose St. James the Brother of the Lord.

Josiah shares the name of King Josiah the tenderhearted.

Devina's name means "beloved," and Father Sergii therefore recommended St. Agape for the similar meaning.

Mika chose St. Matrona of Moscow because she demonstrates how the power and love of God can be found and held onto in the most dire of circumstances.

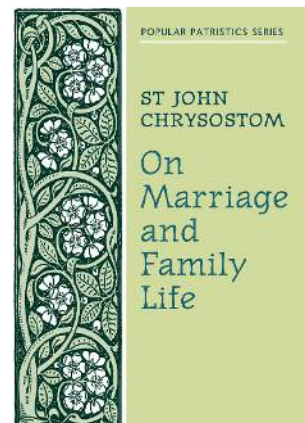
John chose St. John Chrysostom for several reasons, one being his connection with St. Basil the Great as one of the Three Holy Hierarchs.

What was one of the most interesting things you learned during your catechumen classes?

Learning about *prelest* (spiritual deception) was eye-opening for both Mika and me. We both had a past in new-age circles and often felt something was amiss and largely self-serving. To learn about demonic attacks and influences against monks and saints alerted us to how vulnerable we are if we stray from Christ and His Church.

Do you have any favorite book or resource you found most spiritually helpful during your catechumenate?

Not that I read all of it, but the Google Drive we received for class is a treasure trove on nearly every topic we covered. Mika really enjoyed *On Marriage and Family Life* by St. John Chrysostom.



Does your family have a favorite feast or liturgical service so far?

We really enjoy the Great Canon of St. Andrew. It helps us enter and prepare for the Lenten season both physically and spiritually.

What advice would you give to someone who is contemplating becoming an Orthodox Christian?

Have patience and participate in the life of the Church. You can only discover the sanctity of prayer and fasting by doing it. God will see you through it.

If you could have tea with a saint, with whom would it be and why?

This question began a heated debate at the dinner table, with St. Seraphim of Sarov, St.

Parish Prayer List

Schema-Archimandrite Panteleimon — Repose

Reader Symeon Campbell — Health

Photini Mills — Health

Julianna Campbell — Health

Inna Dagaeva — Health

Mark Wiebenga — Health

Deacon Daniel Simpson — Health

Barbara Westervelt — Health

Ruth Bradley — Health

Tatiana Zyryanova — Health

Matrona Leber — 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.

Gregory of Palamas, and Tsar Martyr Nicholas all receiving consideration. We might reach a consensus in the future!

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

We are extremely grateful for your kindness and love. So many of you are inspirations to us by your quiet piety and reverence for God.

Willowick Farm Open House

On **Saturday, October 25th**, from 12 noon to 4 p.m., the Campbell family warmly invites their church family to Willowick Farm (900 Coal Bank Road, St.



Louis, MO 63138) to celebrate the end of the growing season. A whole goat will be roasted for everyone to enjoy, with self-guided farm tours and plenty of space for children to play and interact with nature. If anyone would like to bring a dish to share, you are welcome to do so, though it is by no means necessary. Parking will be available along the driveway in the field. For more information, please call 314-766-5405, email willowickfarmstl@gmail.com, or visit www.willowickfarmstl.com

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:

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|-------------------|-----------------|------------------|
| • Doc | • Evan | • Justin |
| • Zachary | • Tyler | • Zachary |
| • Theodore | • Shiloh | |