

## From the Fathers (and others):

You do not understand how the saints in heaven can hear us when we pray to them? How do the rays of the sun descend from heaven to us, lighting the whole earth, and everything on it? The saints are in the spiritual world as the rays of the sun in the material world. God is the eternal life-giving sun, and the saints are the rays of the sun. As the eyes of the Lord are constantly looking upon earth, and those upon earth, so also the eyes of the saints cannot but follow the provident gaze of the Lord.

- *Saint John of Kronstadt*

The Lord came to send fire upon the earth (cf. Lk. 12:49), and through participation in this fire He makes divine not just the human substance which He assumed for our sake, but every person who is found worthy of communion with Him.

- *St. Gregory Palamas*

That He [Christ] was anointed in a human manner and is said to have received a share of the Holy Spirit, even though He was Himself the giver of the Spirit, and the sanctifier of creation, is explained where it says: I gave him my Spirit to be upon Him (cf. Is. 3:5). For when He was baptized, the Spirit, says Scripture, descended upon Him in the form of a dove and remained upon Him (cf. Matt. 3:16). If at the time of His baptism He received the Spirit in accordance with the limitations of His humanity, this would be in keeping with other instances. Insofar as He is God He was not sanctified by receiving the Spirit. For He is the one... who is doing the sanctifying. But insofar as He is human He is sanctified in accordance with the dispensation of the Incarnation.

- *St. Cyril of Alexandria*

One of the ancients spoke wisely and simply about thoughts. Judge thoughts, he said, before the judgement seat of the heart, to discern whether they are ours or those of our enemy. Place those which are good and properly our own in the inmost shrine of the Soul, keeping them in this inviolable treasury. But chastise hostile thoughts with the whip of the intelligence and banish them, giving them no place, no abode within the bounds of your Soul. Or, to speak more fittingly, slay them completely with the sword of Prayer and Divine meditation, so that when the robbers have been destroyed, their chief may take flight. For, so he says, a man who examines his thoughts strictly is one who also truly loves the Commandments.

- *St. Theodoros the Great Ascetic*

Without love the works of virtue are not praiseworthy or profitable to the man who practices them, and the same is true of love without works. St. Paul makes this fully clear with reference to works when he writes to the Corinthians, 'If I do this and that, but have no love, it profits me nothing' (cf. I Cor. 13:1-3); and with reference to love the disciple especially beloved by Christ writes, 'Let us not love in word or tongue but in action and truth' (I John 3:18).

- *Saint Gregory Palamas*

# St. John Orthodox Church

A Parish of the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America

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~ September 17<sup>th</sup>, 2023 ~

***Sunday after the Elevation of the Holy Cross***

*Commemoration of Martyrs Sophia and her daughters Faith, Love and Hope*

**ST. JOHN ORTHODOX CHURCH**  
1663 TUTWILER AVENUE  
MEMPHIS, TN 38107  
(901) 274-4119  
www.stjohnmemphis.org

**His Eminence Metropolitan SABA**  
Archbishop of New York and Metropolitan of All North America  
Antiochian Orthodox Archdiocese of North America

**His Grace Bishop NICHOLAS**  
Auxiliary Bishop of the Diocese of Miami and the Southeast

V. Rev. Fr. Philip Rogers, Pastor

V. Rev. Fr. Basil Cushman, Associate Pastor

V. Rev. Fr. John Troy Mashburn, Jr., Pastor Emeritus

V. Rev. Fr. Donald Berge, Attached

**GREAT VESPERS**  
Saturday, 6:00 p.m.

**ORTHROS**  
Sunday, 9:00 a.m.

**DIVINE LITURGY**  
Sunday, 10:00 a.m.

*Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America*  
“...the Disciples were called Christians first in Antioch!”  
Acts 11:26

## ***Sunday after the Elevation of the Holy Cross***

**Epistle:** Galatians 2:16-20

**Gospel:** Mark 8:34-38; 9:1

The Holy Bread for Eucharist is offered by Karen Bell.

Welcome to all those visiting St. John Orthodox Church. We are honored by your presence. It is our sincere desire that your participation today in the Divine Liturgy will draw you closer to Christ and His Church.

If you are from a non-Orthodox background, you may see new things such as icons, incense, the sign of the cross, the veneration of saints, and a great deal of standing. These can be perplexing to the uninitiated eye. Rest assured that everything we do has a solid biblical foundation and a long history among Christian people. Please feel free to participate where you feel comfortable and feel equally as free only to observe when you prefer.

The Orthodox Church understands the Eucharist, or Lord's Supper, to be – among other things – the paramount expression of Christian unity. While it is our deepest hope that Christendom will one day fulfill Christ's desire for true unity among all those who claim His name (John 17:21), the unfortunate reality of our day is that the various segments of Christendom are not unified with the historic Orthodox faith. *Since participation in the Eucharist expresses a unity with all the dogma and practice of the Orthodox Church, non-Orthodox guests do not receive Holy Communion.* The Holy Eucharist is reserved for those members of the Orthodox Church who have prepared themselves by prayer, fasting, and recent confession. All visitors and unprepared Orthodox are invited to partake of the blessed bread as they come forward to venerate the cross at the end of the Liturgy. Thank you for your understanding.

## **ST. JOHN CALENDAR**

**September 17 – 24**

- Sunday** - Orthros, 9:00 am  
- Divine Liturgy, 10:00 am  
- Sons of Thunder Men's Book Club, 6:00 pm
- Monday** - First Hour, 6:45 am
- Tuesday** - Third Hour, 9:00 am  
- Men's Lunch, 12:00 pm  
- Orthodoxy 101, 7:00 pm
- Wednesday** - Third Hour, 9:00 am  
- Women's Teaching, 10:00 am  
- Vespers, 6:00 pm  
- Bible Study, 7:00 pm
- Thursday** - Third Hour, 9:00 am
- Friday** - First Hour, 6:45 am  
- Third Hour, 9:00 am  
- Sixth Hour, 12:00 pm  
- AWSJ Knitting Circle, 6:00 pm
- Saturday** - Byzantine Chant Class, 4:30pm  
- Ninth Hour & Vespers, 5:50 pm
- Sunday** - Orthros, 9:00 am  
- Divine Liturgy, 10:00 am

**Today's Churching – Sept. 17**  
Jackie and George Whatley

**Today's Memorials – Sept. 17**  
Mary Allison Callaway - 25 years  
Mother Nektaria - 40 days

**Upcoming Baptism – Sept. 24**  
Julia VanLandingham

## **Birthdays, Anniversaries, Nameday**

### **Sunday, 9/17**

*Birthday:* Deon Crum, Eliza Elliott  
*St. Sophia:* Sophia Garrison, Sophie Mansour, Sophia Yarbro

### **Monday 9/18**

*Birthday:* Deborah Finley, Max Mendenhall

### **Tuesday, 9/19**

*None*

### **Wednesday, 9/20**

*Birthday:* Julie Sanderlin, Robert Coe  
*Anniversary:* Mike & Meagan Jackson

### **Thursday, 9/21**

*Jonah the Prophet:* Jonah Damon, Jonah Powell

### **Friday, 9/22**

*Birthday:* Thomas Cameron, John Elliott

### **Saturday, 9/23**

*Birthday:* Rod Ratliff  
*Anniversary:* Don & Julie Sanderlin

## Commemorations

**Sept. 17:** Martyrs Sophia and her daughters Faith, Love and Hope; Hieromartyr Herakleidos of Cyprus; Martyr Agathokleia; Venerable Anastasios and Euxiphios.

**Sept. 18:** Eumenios the wonder-worker, bishop of Gortyna; Martyr Ariadne of Phrygia.

**Sept. 19:** Martyrs Trophimos, Dorymedon, Savvatos and Susanna; Hieromartyr Januaros of Benevento and his companions; Theodore, prince of Smolensk, and his sons David and Constantine, wonderworkers of Yaroslav; Theodore of Tarsus, archbishop of Canterbury.

**Sept. 20:** Great-martyr Eustathios and his family; Venerable-martyr Hilarion of St. Anne Skete on Athos; Venerable John of Crete; Martyrs Michael, prince of Chernigov, and his councilor Theodore.

**Sept. 21:** Apostle Quadratos of the Seventy; Prophet Jonah; uncovering of the relics of Demetrios, bishop of Rostov.

**Sept. 22:** Hieromartyr Phocas of Sinope the wonder-worker; New-martyrs Isaac and Martin; Twenty-six Venerable-martyrs of Zographou monastery on Athos; Venerable Cosmas the Bulgarian of Zographou monastery on Athos.

**Sept. 23:** The Conception of the Forerunner; Martyr Raidos; New-martyrs Nicholas and John; Venerable Xanthippa and Polyxena of Spain.

**Sept. 24:** Proto-martyr Thekla, equal-to-the-Apostles; the commemoration of the wonder-working icon of the Theotokos of the Myrtle Tree; New-martyr Ahmed; Venerable Nicander of Pskov; Venerable Silouan of Athos; the synaxis of all saints of Alaska.

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### DAILY SCRIPTURE READINGS

Sunday	Galatians	2:16-20	Mark	8:34-38; 9:1
Monday	Galatians	4:28-31; 5:1-10	Luke	3:19-22
Tuesday	Galatians	5:11-21	Luke	3:23-38, 4:1
Wednesday	Ephesians	6:10-17	Luke	21:12-19
Thursday	Ephesians	1:1-9	Luke	4:16-22
Friday	Ephesians	1:7-17	Luke	4:22-30
Saturday	Galatians	4:22-27	Luke	1:5-25
Sunday	2 Timothy	3:10-15	Luke	5:1-11

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### Remember in Your Prayers

**Our catechumens:** Jeff Bennett; Mitchell, Alicia, & Lily Schaftlein; Ben Haag; Grant Hunter; Sandra Curry; Thomas & Christy Potts; Eric Iverson; Andrew Potts; Brian, Danielle, Luree, John, & River Pfeister

**Prayer Requests:** Mother Raphaela; Mary Elliott & family; Mike & Joyce Grossman; Chris Hodges; Mickey Hodges; St. Nicholas Orthodox Church; St. Paul Orthodox Mission; Samuel Brownlow; Elizabeth Turner (Jack's mother); Aleksandra & Aleksander Klimkowski; Emma & Katelyn Coe; Janan Heisig & family; Shawn McClenny (Miriam Redmond's brother-in-law); Kimberly Castrillon (Dianna Hildebrand's niece); Charles Pugh (Madeleine Boiles's brother); the Bowick family; those suffering in the Middle East, most especially the Christians.

**Expecting:** Carole Sneed Spearman, Ashley Powell, Madison Dey, Katherine Verbist, Marija Pavlovic

**Diocesan Seminarian:** Caleb McGee



## ST. JOHN COMMUNITY



**Orthodoxy 101** will next meet on Tuesday, September 19th, at 7pm. The topic will be *St. John Specifics – What Makes Our Parish Unique*. All are welcome to attend either in person or via Zoom.

**Parish Council Update** – The Parish Council met on September 12. The new members were able to get some background on the parish council. General maintenance was discussed and preparations will begin on our annual pledge drive and budget for 2024. There was a lively and productive discussion on the growth of the parish and growing pains involved. A more robust update on that will be sent out in the coming weeks. May God guide our council and the work of the Church!

**The Sons of Thunder Men's Book Club** will meet at 6pm at the church this evening to discuss *The Genesis of Gender* by Abigail Favale. All men are welcome. Please bring a dish and drinks to share.

### Byzantine Chant Class

Our next Byzantine Chant class is this Saturday, September 23, at 4:30pm. This will be a kick-off class for Tone 5, so if you have not joined us yet and would like to do so, please join now! All are welcome! Please reach out to Ted (ted@stjohnmemphis.org) if you have any questions! We hope you can join us!

**DOMSE Fall Retreat** – The DOMSE Fall Retreat will be held this coming weekend, Sept. 22-23, at St. Elias Orthodox Church in Atlanta, GA. For more information, please check the weekly emails or visit: <https://domse.org/fallretreat2023/>

**Patronal Feast Potluck Next Sunday** – The Feast of St. John is Tuesday, September 26. To celebrate, we will have a Potluck Feast next Sunday, September 24, after Divine Liturgy. Bring a dish to share and come enjoy the fellowship with your brothers, sisters, and visitors of St. John!

**Feast of St. Thekla – Campers, Staff, Alumni, and Families old and new of Camp St. Thekla** – Join us next Sunday, September 24, from 4:30-8pm for a celebration for the Feast of St. Thekla at the Labonte's home. We will begin with a short Supplication service followed by a cookout and some fellowship time with our whole youth group, but also to celebrate with all members of our parish who have been part of the Camp St. Thekla community. Food and soda provided. Please contact Ted (ted@stjohnmemphis.org) for more info. We hope to see you there!

### Blini Brunch!

Saint George Orthodox Church invites you to a fundraiser event on Saturday, September 30, from 10am-1pm. Delicious crepes will be served for brunch with your choice of filling (sweet or savory)! For more information, please see the insert or check the weekly emails.

**Telos Parish Workshop October 7th** – The Telos Project is offering a free, 3-hour, parish-wide "wake up" workshop - a time for participants to remember what they love about their parish and help make sure young adults know they are loved by God and welcomed in the Church. Mark your calendars for Saturday, October 7, from 2-5pm. All are encouraged to attend. Dinner will be provided before Vespers. Please see the weekly parish emails to RSVP through SignUpGenius.

## St. John Youth

### Today:

Sunday, 9/17 -

*\*Parent Meeting During Sunday School in Library*

Full Value Contract & Teen Room Revamp (Lunch provided),  
12:45-2:45pm

### Next Week:

Sunday, 9/24 -

Feast of St. Thekla (Food and soda provided), 4:30-8:00pm  
We'll gather together at the Labonte's home for a short Supplication service, cookout, and fellowship time! Please contact Ted (ted@stjohnmemphis.org) for more info.

### Looking Ahead:

Saturday, 9/30 -

7<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> Grade Youth Retreat w/Guest Speaker Katrina Bitar!  
(Lunch provided), 10:30am-3:30pm

## Women of St. John Calendar

**9/20 (Wed.) AWSJ Teaching, 10am** – Women's Teaching will meet via Zoom this week to discuss *A Voice for Our Time* by Fr. Alexander Schmemmann.

**9/22 (Fri.) AWSJ Knitting Circle, 6pm** – Knitting Circle will next meet on Friday, September 22, at 6pm at Miriam Redmond's home. Bring your projects (any handwork, not just knitting!) and a snack! All knitters working on prayer blankets, please bring your portion (whether you are through or not) to the meeting. If you are done before the meeting, you can drop off your portion to Margaret or Miriam.

### LIBRARY LINES

Today we honor St. Sophia (9/17). She endured the greatest pain a mother can endure. Her three daughters, Faith, Hope and Love were tortured and beheaded in her sight. She buried them and stayed by their graves for three days and then gave her soul to God. Believers buried her beside her children. Their icon is on the center of the balcony wall. After you venerate them, take your children to the library so they can read her story in *Christina's Favorite Saints* (KID STS KHO), p.22 and in *Let the Little Children Come to Me* (HAG - - SAI), p. 27.

Monday we commemorate a Georgian icon of the Mother of God, "the Healer" (9/18). St. Demetrius of Rostov tells us a story about the inspiration for this icon. A clergyman had a great devotion to the Theotokos. Upon daily venerating her icon, he prayed, "Hail virgin Theotokos full of grace, the Lord is with thee. Blessed is the womb which bore Christ, and the breasts which nourished the Lord God, our Savior." At some point later, he began to suffer a painful abscess on his tongue. After reciting his daily prayer, he saw his guardian angel beseeching the Theotokos for his healing. She granted his petition and the man recovered immediately. Learn more about icons in *Icons of the Most Holy Theotokos and Ever Virgin Mary* (ART ICO KHO).

Thursday we commemorate a 20<sup>th</sup> century saint. John of Georgia (9/21) was born into a peasant family and learned all kinds of handiwork. He entered a monastery in his teens where he excelled in humility and simplicity. Children especially loved him. It was said that they surrounded him and tried to pat his head while he was sprinkling the church with holy water on a feast day. Their parents reprimanded them but the saint excused their joyous behavior because of the feast. He had many secret supporters within the Soviet government who protected him and the monks as "guardians of a national cultural monument."

Occasionally a story from the lives of the saints makes its way into our everyday vocabulary. This week's *whale of a tale* has tremendous theological significance for us all, and it appeals especially to children, sailors, gardeners, and zoologists! We commemorate the Holy Prophet Jonah (9/21). God called him to bring His message to the wicked city of Nineveh. He fled God's presence on a storm-tossed ship, and the sailors threw him overboard. (Hence another oft-heard term, a *Jonah*, meaning a person believed to bring bad luck to those around him.) He was swallowed by a great fish and remained in his belly for three days. God heard his cries and caused the whale to vomit him up on land. Jonah traveled on to Nineveh and prophesied destruction of the city because of the people's wickedness. Unexpectedly to Jonah, they repented. He had looked forward to their punishment and when it didn't happen, he sulked in the desert under a vine of gourds which God created solely for his shelter. God then created a worm to eat the plant. Jonah grieved for the vine, and God chided Jonah for his folly in grieving for a plant and in wishing for punishment of "human beings, who do not know their right hand or their left hand-and also much cattle..." Read about Jonah and how this event is a picture of Pascha in *The Book of Jonah* (KID STS JON) and *Jonah's Journey to the Deep* (KID STS JON).

How appropriate it is that we honor men who humbly work the earth to bring forth food, herbs and flowers for sustenance for our bodies and beauty for our souls. Friday we, especially the plant-lovers among us, remember St. Phocas the Gardener of Sinope (9/22). He aided the poor with his produce. When he accidentally happened upon men sent to arrest him for being a Christian, he gave them hospitality, made arrangements for his possessions to be given to the needy, and dug his own grave. When his captors saw this, they tried to spare him, but he refused and was beheaded.