



ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST
 GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH
 303 Cullum Drive
 Euless, TX 76040-4625

NONPROFIT
 ORGANIZATION
 U.S. POSTAGE
 PAID
 EULESS, TEXAS
 PERMIT NO. 18

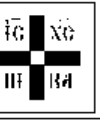
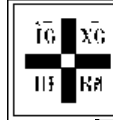
Return Service Requested



Sponsorship for This Month's Forerunner

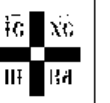
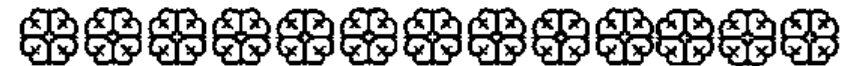
In Remembrance of June 7, 2004
 Psalm 138: 23, 24

Virginia Karegeannes



THE FORERUNNER

VOL. XXIV NO. 6
 June 2008





THE FORERUNNER

Monthly Bulletin of
St. John the Baptist Greek Orthodox Church
303 Cullum Drive ▪ Euless, TX 76040-4625
Church (817) 283-2291 or (817) 545-9644 ▪ Fax (817) 545-0302
Web Site: www.stjohndfw.info ▪ E-mail: parish@stjohn.tx.goarch.org
Volume XXIV ▪ Number 6

June 2008

Schedule of Services at St. John's

- | | | |
|--------------------|---------------|---------|
| ❖ Sunday, June 1: | Holy Liturgy, | 10 A.M. |
| ❖ Sunday, June 8: | Holy Liturgy, | 10 A.M. |
| ❖ Sunday, June 15: | Holy Liturgy, | 10 A.M. |
| ❖ Sunday, June 22: | Holy Liturgy, | 10 A.M. |
| ❖ Sunday, June 29: | Holy Liturgy, | 10 A.M. |

Orthodox Calendar

See enclosed calendar for dates, times, and places for the Special services and other events this month.

Council Capsule

My Fellow Parishioners,

This has been a busy month for the Church Council. We have been briefed by the Planning Committee on their task to develop a concept, specifications, and a rough magnitude of costs for building a new church here on our current property.

The majority of the Council approved the briefing for presentation at the 15 June General Assembly meeting. Also, I will bring you up to speed on the status of the gas lease for our property at that time.

You may have noticed that we have a new trash container on our location. The Council approved our renting it along with a weekly pick up. We absolutely had to do something about the large plastic bags of near the church. Not only was that unsightly, it was a potential health issue for us and the city.

Once we decide where the container will be situated, we will insist that everyone use it. Please do what you can to insure that all trash is placed in a trash container. We have had issues with children and even grown-ups leaving trash on the tables in the hall or on the grounds of our church. It would be a great help if all of us picked up after ourselves.

The golf tournament that was scheduled for 5 May was canceled due to inclement weather. Bill Wright has rescheduled the tournament for 18 August and has done an outstanding job of insuring that this will be our best one ever! Please plan to participate.

The preparation for the annual food festival is moving right along. However, we still need to fill some of the critical chairmanship positions. Please look at the festival information posted in the hall and help us fill those positions.

I will most likely get criticism for my next comment, but I do feel it needs to be addressed. It is extremely distracting to have a constant stream of children going in and out of the Church during the services. This seems to have increased lately. I noticed that the same children come in and out. While everyone understands that some of this traffic is unavoidable, it is disturbing people and does distract from the beauty of the services. Please be sensitive to this in consideration of the holiness of the service and of your fellow parishioners.

Along that line, we have reminded the ushers that no one is to be admitted at certain times of the Liturgy. For example, during the Great Procession, the Creed, The Lord's Prayer, and when Fr. Vasile is giving the sermon. The ushers will stand in the entrance way as a reminder that no one is to enter at that time.

We have recently purchased some great new tables for the hall. I believe that all of you will agree that this has vastly improved the appearance and utility for our various activities. However, someone put several of our new tables outside the hall overnight. We were fortunate that no one stole the tables this time. Please be careful that this does not happen again.

I want to end this on a high note so let me thank Philoptochos, the Sunday School, the Ageless Wonders, and the Council for their sponsorship of the weekly coffee hours. Their efforts have been outstanding!

Harry G. Karegeannes
Council President

Important General Assembly

There will be a very important General Assembly meeting held immediately following church services on Sunday, June 15, 2008.

Following are the two major issues that will be discussed at this meeting:

- 1) Details of a Gas Lease Offer that has been presented to the church. This offer will bring us a substantial amount of money, rather quickly, if we vote to proceed and sign the lease.
- 2) The Planning Committee will report on their assignment from the last General Assembly which was to develop a concept, specifications and cost estimates for building a church on our existing property. The committee has put a lot of effort into this task and they have come up with some very exciting results.

Please make it a priority to attend this critical meeting. The Parish By-laws state that we **MUST** have a quorum and, in order to approve any proposal, we need to have **two-thirds** of those in attendance **vote** in favor of the proposal. In other words, **you can not sign in and then leave before the vote.** The issues being discussed are monumental to the progress of our church therefore we need every eligible member to attend. Please remember, in order to vote you must be a member in good standing.

Harry G. Karegeannes
Council President

Father Vasile's Message

Orthodox Architecture - making history in America today

Any pilgrimage to the "old" Orthodox countries is not complete if one does not visit some of the historical Churches built with much faith, dedication and love by our forefathers. Who can

Volume XXIV No.6

go to Constantinople and not visit Hagia Sophia, who can go to Thessaloniki and not visit the Church of Saint Demetrios, who can go to Kiev and not visit Lavra Pecerskaya, who can go to Romania and not visit the monasteries of Bukovina? These gems, preserved with many sacrifices through the centuries, continue to attract admirers, not only among the Orthodox, but also from people of other religious beliefs. They have something to say beyond the stone and the crafts, something spiritually deep that transcends their exterior beauty.

Why do I mention all this you may ask? The answer is simple, because living as an Orthodox in America I miss the churches from the old country. With few notable exceptions most of the Orthodox Churches in America do not even remotely resemble with a traditional Orthodox structure. We can invoke the lack of money, we can invoke the lack of engagement of the faithful, but the result is the same, we have started to lose the meaning of a traditional Church sacred space.

Because we live in a soup of thousands of different so called Christian denominations, we, the Orthodox, are in danger of losing our identity that was so dearly preserved across the centuries by generations of martyrs. You hear people asking nowadays: why do we need to build traditional Churches? Why do we need domes, vaults apses and the sort? This is a waste of money; a cheap square building with generous space for pews should be enough to worship God!

Nothing can be more wrong than this. An Orthodox worship space cannot be conceived without these features. The domes, vaults, apses and icons are all intimately and permanently attached to the idea of being Orthodox. They are not just simple architectural elements, stripped of any essential significance like other human creations, but rather they are eternal and true expressions of the One and Holy Spirit of the

Page 5

Orthodox Faith. Nothing in the Orthodox sacred space is done without due consideration, nothing is superficial, but all has a meaning and a distinct purpose.

All the architectural elements are meant to introduce the faithful that enter therein in a state of prayer and heavenly admiration. The domes have been created using the pattern of the heavens that stand above us expressing through their majesty the Byzantine idea that Church has a world-wide mission. The vaults and the apses represent the rainbow, the covenant between God and Noah, but also the loving embrace of Mother Church. This is why in the Apse of the altar you always find represented the Mother of God, spreading her arms toward a humanity in need of her divine love and care. The icons that cover every inch of the walls represent true windows to the Kingdom of Heaven as they reveal to the faithful the transfigured world depicted in them.

Even in the worst times of war and suppression, the Churches were adorned with gold and most precious materials and craftsmanship, because the space of the Church is a representation of the Jerusalem from above, the Kingdom of heaven where even the poorest man on earth, if has faith, can enter and rejoice as a king in union with Christ the King of all! The Church building itself is a promise for a better world where nothing is missing, where everything is fulfilled. We adorn the Churches not for the pride of men, but as a promise of the future life and Kingdom.

Knowing all this we come to understand that the closed space of the Temple opens in fact thousands of doors to the other world above, a world that awaits us to join them into eternal life.

Through our traditional architecture we have something important to communicate. Now, more than ever, the Orthodox architecture is not a simple "nice to have" but is a "must". We are called to make again history today, to be brave and visionary builders like the emperors of
Volume XXIV No.6

Constantinople. Of course we don't have their means, but that does not imply that we need to abandon our traditions. One single person cannot do much, but as a community we can accomplish together so much more. We have to wisely seek the balance between tradition and resources so we can create something that will meaningfully express and preserve our wonderful heritage.

Above all we need to understand that nothing, and especially a Church, can be built without sacrifice, without reassessing our priorities in life. The churches of old were built on the sacrifice of our martyrs; the churches today have to be built on the sacrifice of our frivolous pleasures and the re-channeling of our resources toward what really matters for us today and for our children tomorrow. Only upon this communal sacrificial act we'll be able to build a Church that will endure, uniting us all into Christ our God.

Summer Schedule for Services

Starting on June 22nd we'll switch to the summer schedule for the Sunday Services. We'll start **Orthros at 8:00AM and the Holy Liturgy at 9:00** AM. This we'll allow us to avoid the midday summer heat and to better accommodate the holiday activities. We'll resume our normal schedule on September 7th.

Stewardship News

We are at the end of May and, as you can see, we have not reached our stewardship goal. As of 5/25/08 we have 107 stewards for a total of \$127,135 or 91% of our goal. Our progress has slowed down considerably and we simply can not meet expenses without everyone's help.

If you have not turned in your pledge card as yet, please consider doing so as soon as possible. We need your help to support our church!

Page 6

Our sincere thanks to those who have already become stewards.

2008 Stewards

Alexander, Leo & Teresa
Antahades, Dr. Lou & Judyth
Arlington, Linda
Ball, David
Ballas, Andy & Pat
Basiliadis, Nick & Dr. Margaret
Began, John
Berca, Sorin & Carmen
Bitner, Carol
Blasé, Clarisse
Bogdos, George & Soterra
Bogordos, George & Kasandra
Bokoyas, Chris
Bokoyas, Jim & Kiki
Bouras, Andreas & Ann
Brandon, Roberta
Callesen, John & Kathleen
Chokas, Margaret
Chokas, Mitch & Maretta
Clay, Wayne & Aria
Cline, Tim & Angela
Cramb, Kristina
Dempsey, Walt & Dorothy
DiGiovanni, Greg & Joy
Eftimie, Michael & Tamara
Feichtinger, Pavlina
File, Russell & Hope
Fondulis, Paul
Fox, Mike & Kathy
Geil, Christopher & Sandra
Genovezos, George
Gianulis, Bill & Bertha
Hadjikiriakos, Michael & Persa
Harrison, Daniel & Dena
Henderson, Ecaterina
Henry, Mike & Julie
Hooe, Jane
Huber, Dr. Emery & Stacey
Johnson, Marshall & Velva

Jones, Daniel
Karegeannes, Harry & Ginny
Karidis, George & Delia
Kastalanych, Randy
Katsikas, Constantinos
Kerbow, Joe & Maria
Kindlinger, Phyllis
Kinman, Buck & Karen
Kypreos, Nick & Cindy
Laverty, Connie
Leeders, Stacia
Leeders, Larry
Leimbacher, Jenny
Maayeh, Bishara & Mary
Manos, George & Vicki
Manos, Michael & Debbie
Matheson, Trevor & Sherri
Mavias, John
Mavias, Michael & Mary
McKinnon, Allan
Medvic, Allison
Medvic, Nancy
Mihalakeas, Andreas & Laura
Molhoek, Mike & Tina
Moutafis, George & Khanh
Nahatis, Arthur
Nazzai, Alfred & Sylvia
Nicholas, Tina
Nicholas, Toni
Noulas, Athanasios
Pachares, Tony & Athena
Papadimitriou, Alex & Linda
Papadopoulou, Olga & Theoni
Papalioidis, Georgia
Papalioidis, Louie
Paulos, Angela
Paulos, Sophie
Petercsak, Steve & Esther
Peters, Elpis
Peters, Paun & Lynn
Peters, Tina
Peters, Tommy & Evangeline
Plock, Eleni
Poletes, John
Poletes, Bill & Rena
Poulakos, Kathy

Poulakos, Laurie
Pursley, Peter & Cynthia
Rafailedes, Connie
Ruppel, John & Joanie
Samaras, Johnny
Seals, Lyle & Connie
Sofokidis, Hristaki & Jan
Stancu, Rodica
Stoycos, Ted & Mary Helen
Sullivan, Joe & Nina
Talleos, Peter
Tudora, Fr. Vasile &
Presvytera Mirela
Villanueva, Junior & Maria
Vittas, George & Barbara
Vittas, John
Vittas, Stephanie
Vloitos, Nick & Rayanna
Walenty, Tony & Lisa
Wozniak, Matt & Jamie
Wright, Bill & Christine
Yiantsou, Dr. Chris & Margo
Zingas, Aristides & Olga

enlightening book, ASCENDING THE HEIGHTS.
Thanks to Lynn Peters and Connie Rafailedes and their kitchen crew for a lovely time!

We honored our dedicated Acolytes with an appreciation gift, also. Congratulations to Gina Poulakos on receiving the Philoptochos scholarship! We are mightily proud of our St. John's young people.

Youth Ministries has scheduled the 2008-09 planning meeting on July 20 following Divine Liturgy. At this time we review all that happened the previous year in relation to our youth programs and plan ahead with insight and determination to continually improve. It is hoped that next year parents will pitch in to plan/execute the Easter Egg Hunt and the End of Year Picnic. Please see me if you can do this; we need at least 4 people for each event. We need to give Khanh a break!!!

We have a fantastic group of people serving this youth ministry; if you are interested in joining our quarterly meetings, please talk to me about it.

Yours in Christ,
Athena Pachares, Y.M. Coordinator
(pachares@sbcglobal.net)

Philoptochos News

Dear Sisters in Christ,

There will be no articles for the summer months. Have a blessed summer and safe travels to all.

Yours, in Christ

Bertha

Youth Ministries On the Move

It was a pleasure to honor our high school and higher education graduates last month with the lovely luncheon and gifts. The high school students received the new ORTHODOX STUDY BIBLE which includes both the Old and New Testaments and the others received the
Volume XXIV No.6

GOYA



This year our lock-in will be hosted by St. Demetrios on Friday, June 13th. There are 3 parts planned for the evening.

1. We will meet at Presbytrian Night Shelter to serve dinner from 4-6 p.m.
2. The group will continue on to either Main Event or Pizza Palace.
3. We will end up at St. Demetrios for movies, food and conversation with Fr. Michael. Over at 8 a.m.

The lockin is NOT limited to Goyans. If you have friends that you'd like to bring, invite them to join us for any part of the evening. Please let Mrs. Khara Payblas (St. Demetrios) know ASAP.

Our next GOYA meeting will be a pool party at the Sullivan's house on Sunday, June 1st at 3 p.m. Don't forget your suit and towel.

Hope everyone has a fun, safe summer.

Nick Papadimitriou
Vice President

New Parish Directory



We have begun scheduling families to have their pictures taken for our new picture church directory. A reminder that the date Olan Mills will be at church photographing is Tuesday, June 17th between 2:00 and 9:30pm. Please stop by the hall to reserve your time or call Nancy or Barbara to make a reservation. All families who have their photo taken will receive a free directory and a free 8 x 10 photo. We will have information by Sunday June 1 on alternatives if you will be out of town on that date.

Thank you,

Barbara Vittas and Nancy Medvic

Gladsome Light Dialogues

The Gladsome light Dialogues will take a break until September. We would like to thank all of you for the great participation in this program and we're looking forward to seeing you all again in the fall.

2008 Foodfest and Golf Tournament Update

There will be a Greek Fest Meeting for all Chairs held on Saturday, June 21st, at 9AM sharp to discuss details of the Festival. If you cannot attend, please have someone attend in your

place. We want to be sure we are current on all needs and issues.

Our 2008 Greek Fest Dinner Dance has been moved to Saturday, July 12th, starting at 6PM.

Come join us to experience a taste of the Festival including food, wines, live music, and dancing! This event is for all Parishioners! See you there!

The 2008 St. John the Baptist Golf Tournament has been rescheduled to Monday, August the 18th, with a 8AM Shotgun start. We need just a few more teams to have a complete field for the first time ever! Please sign people up as soon as you can. We also need some additional Silent Auction items as well. We will serve a breakfast before we start, and will follow the event with a BBQ Lunch! Please join us for some great fun and competition! Please see Khanh Moutafis or Bill Wright for details

Choir Notes

When Bill Poletes asked me to write the Choir Notes for June I didn't hesitate at all. He said that I could write about anything. I thought it would be easy. I was wrong! When faced with the prospect of writing about "anything" my mind became frozen. Just what did I want to write about? Bill should have given me a topic. Oh, wait a minute, he did suggest a topic...so, here goes.

I started going to Holy Trinity Orthodox Church in Dallas around 1982. I converted when Bishara and I got married in 1984. I still remember how the music affected me from the very first time that I entered the Church. Back then, virtually all of the Hymns were sung in Greek and most of the readings were still done in Greek. I didn't know any Greek at all (not even "Opa"), but the music moved me. It literally spoke to my soul. I started trying to sing the hymns along with the Choir from where I sat. Eventually I thought about joining the Choir, but

I was not very confident since I don't read music. I remember an out of state visitor told me one time not to join the choir. She told me that it was inspiring to those sitting in the congregation to hear me sing.

After Holy Trinity moved to their present location, Bishara and I started coming to St. John's. After a few years, I asked Bill about joining the Choir. He graciously consented. Music has always been an important part of my life. I know that the Church Hymnology played a major role in my conversion to Orthodoxy. At a time when language was somewhat of a barrier to my understanding the Liturgy; the music of the Church filled a huge void in my soul and life. I consider it a privilege to sing those hymns that continue to move me with the fine group of men and women that are St. John the Baptist's Choir.

May God Bless You and Keep You,

Mary Maayeh

Church School News

We had a wonderful End of the Year celebration. We send many thanks to all the parents who provided for the picnic, especially to those who have attended all year round. Without parents' involvement, we cannot have a successful church school program.

This summer, St. Demetrios will host Vacation Bible School for both St. John and St. Demetrios churches. VBS is scheduled for June 16 - 20 from 9:00AM to 12:00PM for ages 4 through adult. If you would like to volunteer your time in helping with this program, please call Khara Payblas at 817-237-4855. Registration forms were sent home with your children. However, if you need a copy, you may pick it up from the church narthex or you may retrieve it from St. John's website (<http://stjohndfw.info/>) in Ministries/Church School/Special Events.

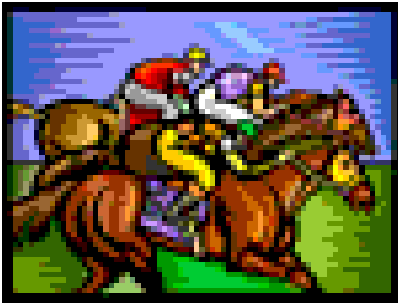
We're still searching for a church school teacher for the 5th & 6th Grade classroom. There are curriculum materials as defined by the Department of Religious Education. Search in your hearts to see if you can contribute and help develop young minds.

Have a safe and wonderful summer. Church School will begin again on September 7, 2008.

May He keep you and Bless you.

Khanh Moutafis

Ageless Wonders



The Ageless Wonders are planning to meet on Saturday, June 14th, 2008 to go to Lone Star Park in Grand Prairie for a day at the Horse Races!! We will car pool from the church to the track around 11:30a.m. The races start about 1p.m. and end about 6p.m. Then on to dinner. Cost for the counter seating is \$11.00 per person and they are reserved. Every one is welcome. Call Margaret Chokas..817 354 7731.. for details and reservations.

Margaret

Websites

The new Parish Website is ready at <http://stjohndfw.info> with improved design and functionality. Also our Greek Fest site is up at <http://midcitiesgreekfest.info>. The sites will be continuously updated with news and information.

Your's in Christ,
Sorin Berca
Website Administrator

Usher Schedule

June 1: George Moutafis, Cynthia Pursley
June 8: Peter Talleos Harry Karegeannes
June 15: Bill Wright, Nancy Medvic
June 22: Barbara Vittas, Larry Leeders
June 29: George Moutafis, Cynthia Pursley

Nursery Attendants Schedule

The Nursery will be closed for the summer. The Nursery will open again September 7Th.

It is great to see new faces and meet new Parishioners. New Parishioners bring more wonderful babies and toddlers. As our Nursery gains new jewels we have a need for more Nursery Attendants. Please thoughtfully consider becoming a Nursery Attendant. It is a great opportunity to get to know the children while the parents focus on the Holy Liturgy.

Have a safe summer and see you in September.

Blessings,
Marsha Arapis

2008 Golf Tournament Sponsored By



August 18, 2008
at



Great Southwest Golf Club
612 East Avenue J • Grand Prairie
972-647-0114

Benefiting
St. John the Baptist
Greek Orthodox Church

Schedule of Events:
12:00 am - 1:30 pm Registration & Lunch
12:00 am - 1:15 pm Putting Contest
1:30 pm Shotgun Start
6:00 pm Award Dinner and Silent Auction
Team of four: \$400 Individual Play: \$125

Register on-line using the church website:
stjohndfw.info

Acolyte Schedule

June 1 : Patrick Sullivan, Phillip Sullivan, Peter Pursley, John Molhoek
June 8: James Seals, Ovidiu Berca, Patrick Sullivan, Philip Sullivan
June 15: Jackson Wright, Joey Basiliadis, Nick Chrestopoulos, Danny Peters
June 22: Bennett Kerbow, Ovi Berca, James Seals, Danny Peters
June 29 : Patrick Sullivan, Phillip Sullivan, Peter Pursley, John Molhoek

Coffee Hour Schedule

June 1: Mr. & Mrs. Joseph Kerbow
June 8: Philoptochos
June 15: Ageless Wonders
June 22: Parish Council
June 29: Parish Council

Duties For Hosts of Coffee Hour

SETUP

- Arrange pastries/food in a desirable manner on the appropriate tables in the parish hall.
- You are responsible for making the coffee. Make two pots: one regular, one decaf. Plug in before going into church. The instructions are in the kitchen.
- Prepare a tray with sugar, creamer, sugar substitute, mixing straws, a few spoons. Set with trash bucket.
- Put donation basket out with appropriate sign.

CLEAN UP

- Wash all dishes soiled, including coffee pots.
- Return sugar tray to kitchen and replenish it.
- Wash off hall tables and kitchen counters.

- Donation money will be collected by the Parish Council.

▪ ***THANK YOU VERY MUCH.***

Deadline for The Forerunner and Weekly Bulletin

The deadline for information for the Forerunner is the 18th of each month, and Thursday for the Weekly Bulletin. To defray the cost of the printing and postage of *The Forerunner* we are looking for monthly sponsors. We currently mail *The Forerunner* to 240+ families throughout the Metroplex. This would be a good way to expose your business to our families. If you have a special event you would like to commemorate (i.e., birthday, anniversary, name day, memorial, etc.) let us know through the bulletin. Please contact Greg DiGiovanni (mrdigio@sbcglobal.net) if you are interested in sponsoring one month. The cost is \$150.00 and the sponsorship will be acknowledged on the back cover.

Practical Faith

What's all this commotion?

For a first comer in an Orthodox Church the first contact with an Orthodox service may be a little bit peculiar. During the early part of the service the church may seem to be in a hubbub, with people walking up to the front of the church, praying in front of the iconostasis (the standing icons in front of the altar), kissing things and lighting candles, even though the service is already going on. In fact, when you came in the service was already going on, although the sign outside clearly said "Divine Liturgy, 10:00." You felt embarrassed to apparently be late, but these people are even later, and they're walking all around inside the church. What's going on here?

Volume XXIV No.6

In an Orthodox church there is only one Eucharistic service (Divine Liturgy) per Sunday, and it is preceded by an hour-long service of Matins (or Orthros) and several short preparatory services before that. There is no break between these services—one begins as soon as the previous ends, and posted starting times are just educated guesses. Sometimes the "official" 10:00 o'clock start of the Liturgy could actually be 10:10 or 10:15, based on the length of the hymns chanted during Orthros. These Hymns vary from Sunday to Sunday; therefore the starting times of the Liturgy are only approximate. Altogether, the priest will be at the altar on Sunday morning for over three hours, "standing in the flame," as one Orthodox priest put it.

As a result of this state of continuous flow, there is no point at which everyone is sitting quietly in a pew waiting for the entrance hymn to start, glancing at their watches approaching 10:00. Orthodox worshippers arrive at any point from the beginning of Matins through the early part of the Liturgy, a span of well over an hour. No matter when they arrive, something is sure to be already going on, so Orthodox don't let this hamper them from going through their private prayers when entering a church. This is distracting to newcomers, and may even seem disrespectful, but soon you begin to recognize it as an expression of a faith that is not merely formal but very personal.

Of course, there is still no good excuse for showing up after 10:00, but punctuality is unfortunately one of the few virtues many Orthodox lack...but we're working on it!