

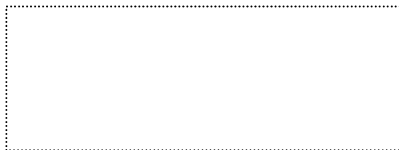


ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST
GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

303 Cullum Drive
Euless, TX 76040-4625

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Sponsorship for This Month's Forerunner

In loving memory of our beloved Mother,
Grandmother, and Great-Grand Mother,
Callie Svokos on her one year memorial,
December 14. May her memory be eternal.
You will always be in our hearts. We Love you.
Your daughters Mary Mavias, Rena Poletes and families.



THE FORERUNNER

VOL. XXIV NO. 11

November 2008



Vo





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 11

November 2008

Schedule of Regular Services at St. John's

v	Sunday,	Nov. 2:	Holy Liturgy,	10 A.M.
v	Sunday,	Nov. 9:	Holy Liturgy,	10 A.M.
v	Sunday,	Nov. 16:	Holy Liturgy,	10 A.M.
v	Sunday,	Nov. 23:	Holy Liturgy,	10 A.M.
v	Sunday,	Nov. 30:	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,

What a month this has been!

It's hard to believe that the annual food festival is now behind us. This year's festival promises to be a record setter for attendance and for the revenue that was raised.

There are so many to thank that I would have to include almost the entire congregation for all the effort that went into making the festival such a resounding success.

I do want to give special thanks to Bill Wright and Larry Leeders, the Co-Chairmen of the festival. I worked alongside these two extraordinary men and cannot describe all the work, coordination, frustration and ultimately, the successes that they went through. This festival would not have achieved anywhere near the level of success if these two dedicated church members had not been in the positions that they held.

The same commendations must be shared with each of the Committee Chairmen who contributed so much to this outstanding achievement. Where would we have been without the wonderful volunteers, dancers, baked goods, coffees, bar, music, concessions, and especially the superb Greek Food! Oh, and let us not forget the petting zoo.

I cannot say enough about Tony Pachares and his long-term contributions to our Festivals. He is the "spark plug" and leader that makes hundreds of tasks come together, everything from the tents to the location of the tables and chairs!

The gas lease was signed on the evening of the 15th of October, and we were given a check for

just over \$73,000. The royalty payments will not start until sometime next year.

It is that time of year again to nominate and elect Council Members. Margaret Chokas is chairperson of the Nomination Committee, and Nina Sullivan has agreed to chair the Board of Elections. Nominations to fill the upcoming five vacancies are due at the 9 November General Assembly with the elections to be held a couple Sundays after the General Assembly.

You have all once again shown that we can accomplish great things when we pull together as a team. The Council wishes to thank you for an outstanding job. WELL DONE!

Harry Karegeannes
Council President

Fr. Vasile's Message

Custom vs. Holy Tradition: the challenges of the past

For a first comer in an Orthodox Church the thing that strikes the most is the richness of traditions that abound in the life of the faithful. It seems that we have a tradition for everything: the way we light the candles, the way we venerate the icons, the way we cross ourselves and so on. All conforms to some unwritten rules that are puzzling and difficult to follow for the casual observer.

Indeed the life of the Orthodox Church is very rich in traditions, some of them centuries old; together they contribute to the un-matching beauty of our faith. But Tradition is not just about form, it is also about purpose. Keeping the Tradition is to preserve the way of our Fathers, is to walk on the path of salvation that was opened in front of us by generations of saints and martyrs. Renouncing Tradition is renouncing the past with repercussions on our future.

The danger however is to keep the form and forget the purpose. Without understanding their theological meaning the traditions become nothing else but sterile repetitions of some dry outward forms, devoid of any function or finality. This is far from the spirit of the Orthodox Church. Our Church is not a collection of empty rituals but is the ship of salvation. Anything we do according the Tradition has a meaning with deep theological roots, and serves the purpose of taking us further ahead on our way to the celestial destination.

Of course not everything that comes from the past is of equal value; antiquity alone is not a proof of the truth. A distinction should be carefully made between the Holy Tradition, the very source of our Orthodox Faith, and the traditions or local customs. Both can be old and respectable but they are, or at least they should be, treated differently. Fr. Pavel Florovsky made this distinction clear: *“The Holy Tradition is not merely the continuity of human memory through the permanence of rites and habits. Ultimately, tradition is the continuity of divine assistance, the abiding presence of the Holy Spirit. The Church is not bound by the letter. She is constantly moved forth by the spirit.”*

The true tradition is not forced on us from outside, it is not something that we do mechanically like a magic ritual, but it should spring from within, from the true and complete understanding of the life in Christ. Only in this way the tradition comes to life becoming what Vladimir Lossky calls *“the life of the Holy Spirit in the Church.”* In the light of the Holy Spirit the outward forms come to life and serve their salvific purpose.

It makes no sense for anyone to keep the letter of the law as an empty shell devoid of any significance; it is harsh and illogical. Without the inner meaning the tradition dries out and in times is either ignored or can take new forms, perverted forms that may grow contrary to the initial purpose.

Let’s take Christmas as an illustrative example. For Christians Christmas season should be about

Nativity, about the Incarnation of the Son of God in human form, the visible beginning of the salvation of mankind. In the Tradition of the Church the Great Feast of Nativity is preceded by a period of spiritual preparation through fasting and amplified prayer life gradually leading to the great joy announced by the star of Bethlehem. The prescribed lent is not just an antiquated custom but is part of our understanding of joy as Christian. We don’t prepare like this only for Christmas, but for all the feasts, it is part of our overall great expectation of the second Coming of Christ. Through fasting and prayer we prepare both physically and spiritually to fully partake in the communion of the saints, in the joyful dance of salvation. By giving up the weight of the material world, represented by the renunciation of food and pleasures of life, our souls are liberated to roam free and rejoice with the Lord. Regarded in this way fasting is not anymore about giving something up but about being able to receive beyond imagination. The Christians that continue to keep this tradition are doing it not because it is imposed to them but because the need for this period of preparation comes from within, from their burning desire to partake in the renewal of the whole world through the incarnation of the Logos.

A lack of understanding of this background, by the more and more secular society rejecting all its Christian roots, led to the development of the new “Christmas Spirit”. In this materialistic era moderation was transformed in opulence, spiritual preparation in a feast of the stomach, renunciation into greed and so on. The watchful expectation of Christmas has been altered and turned into an opulent food festival, which leaves no place for spiritual advancement. Christ Himself is not expected anymore but a generic Santa that fulfills even the wildest dreams of the rotten spoiled young generation. And when the day of Nativity finally comes, there are churches that don’t even have services, because nobody comes anymore to meet Christ, ironically everybody is either out to celebrate or to tired

from it. So Christ comes in the world once again in a too distant manger, forgotten by most, awaited and surrounded by a shrinking flock of faithful sheep in search for salvation.

Christmas is just an example among many; we can also address Halloween and the modern rediscovery of its bloody pagan roots, the equally pagan Easter-bunny, Valentine's Day and the propaganda for overt sexuality and the list can go on and on. But the intent is not to start a crusade against the new secular tradition but to launch an appeal to spiritual discernment, to filter out from our lives what is perverted and preserve what is genuine.

Because we live in a world of mixed traditions and assorted backgrounds, we need to understand more our true Tradition as the genuine expression of the Holy Spirit in the Church. Living the Tradition is a dynamic event that is not casting us into the prison of some old ritualistic forms, but allows us to express our faith in ways that reveal ourselves as true followers of Christ.

The true and Holy Tradition is our faith lived, our faith transformed into reality, is the language in which we communicate our faith to the world. But this language is not only about form, is not about semantics: is about meaning. The Tradition should make sense to us, otherwise we will see no need for it. Tradition should spring out of our love for Christ, out of our free-will to follow in His footsteps.

We should therefore seek deeper into Tradition and reach beyond the surface in a quest to attain a new level of understanding, a new level of faith, a new level of life in Christ that will allow us to comprehend the holy origin of the Traditions of the past and make them part of our present in the hope of the future Life and Kingdom.

Building Committee

The Building Committee has been formed and members include: Joe Sullivan, Mirela Tudora, Ted Stoycos, Stacia Leeders, George Moutafis, Volume XXIV No. 11

Mitch Chokas, Buck Kinman, and Taki Sofokidis.

Planning meetings have begun with short term goals to select a design team for implementing the detailed design of the Church Building based upon the existing building concept plan and to establish an overall budget and schedule for the detailed design effort. We are planning to present this information for review and approval at next month's General Assembly meeting.

If you are interested in keeping up with the latest developments of the Building Committee, all published meeting minutes will be posted on our website under "New Church / Documents".

Joe Sullivan

Building Committee Chairman

Food Festival Update

Results of the Festival, and plans for next year will be discussed at this month's General Assembly.

In the meantime, THANKS to all for our best and biggest Festival to date. There are items for sale in the Church Hall, please see Bill Wright for pricing and availability.

Chairmen are needed for next Year's Festival; please see Council President Harry Karegeannes.

Bill Wright

Stewardship News

As of 10/19/08 we have **121 stewards** for a **total of \$139,373** or **99.6%** of our goal. We are just **\$627 short**. Please help us make it!!

Turn in your pledge card today to become a part of our growing community or submit a revised

card showing an increased amount. Let's make this the year we meet or even exceed our goal!

Our sincere thanks to those who have already become stewards and who are faithfully making their contributions.

Also, a special thank you to those who have increased their pledge in response to our request. Your generosity is truly a sign of your commitment to our church.

2008 Stewards

Alexander, Leo & Teresa
Anderson, Matthew
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
Chrestopoulos, Alex & Diane
Clay, Wayne & Aria
Cline, Tim & Angela
Coston, Kathryn
Cramb, Kristina
Demetriades, Gus & Andi
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
Gianulis, Demi
Grumbos, Mary
Grumbos, Dr. Peter
Hadjikiriakos, Michael & Persa
Harrison, Daniel & Dena
Henderson, Ecaterina
Henry, Mike & Julie
Hooe, Jane
Howton, Lucille
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
Nazzal, Alfred & Sylvia
Nicholas, Tina
Nicholas, Toni
Noulas, Athanasios

Pachares, Tony & Athena
 Papadimitriou, Alex & Linda
 Papadopoulou, Olga & Theoni
 Papaliodis, Georgia
 Papaliodis, Louie
 Paulos, Angela
 Paulos, Sophie
 Petercsak, Steve & Esther
 Peters, Elpis
 Peters, Paun & Lynn
 Peters, Tina
 Peters, Tommy & Dolly
 Plock, Eleni
 Poletes, John
 Poletes, Bill & Rena
 Poriotis, Terry & Gail
 Poulakos, Kathy
 Poulakos, Laurie
 Poulos, Presvytera Alexandra
 Pursley, Peter & Cynthia
 Rafailedes, Connie
 Ruppel, John & Joanie
 Russo, Athena
 Samaras, Johnny
 Seals, Lyle & Connie
 Shah, Raj & Kirsten
 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
 Vizirv, Victor & Dusanka
 Vloitos, Nick & Rayanna
 Walenty, Tony & Lisa
 Wiginton, Michael & Athena
 Wozniak, Matt & Jamie
 Wright, Bill & Christine
 Yiantsou, Dr. Chris & Margo
 Zingas, Aristides & Olga

Philoptochos News

Ladies,
 Happy Thanksgiving to all!
 Below is a list of --

“Philoptochos Dates to Remember”

- **November 2 , 2008** – St. Cosmas & Damianos NAMEDAY - Collection
- **November 9, 2008** – Thanksgiving Basket Deadline (See Theresa Alexander for details)
- **November 16, 2008** – Philoptochos Meeting in the Paulos Center after coffee fellowship

Thank you to those parishioners who so graciously supported our Exaltation of the Cross collection in October. Proceeds from this collection benefit Holy Cross School of Theology. We were able to provide HC a check in the amount of \$250, which will assist the many young men and women attending who have financial hardships.

Once again this year we are seeking your support for the Thanksgiving Basket Program. We are requesting items be donated to fill our baskets which are delivered to those in need for Thanksgiving. Please see Theresa Alexander for additional details.

The Safe Haven (Women's Shelter) needs your help. All year long hundreds of women are abused by their husband or boyfriend. These women go to women's shelters around Tarrant County with their children possessing only what they have on their backs. The “Havens” need our help in providing these women and children with items needed while at the shelter. I am asking for everyone to bring at least one bag of items monthly to the church to help these shelters. A list can found in the church or by the shelter tote placed by the door as you are going out of the Hall. If you cannot find the list please see me and I will make sure that everyone has one. I want to thank you in advance for your help and May God Bless you and your Families. This is a wonderful way for us to help those

women who are making healthy changes in their lives and have no means of assistance.

Thank you Kath Fox, Chairman

Let's try to be faithful about bringing our supplies to church for this worthwhile cause.

With Christ's Love,
Bertha

Youth Ministries On the Move

Could you believe the numbers of parish youth who participated in our Food-Fest? If they are an indicator or what the future of our parish, our cities and yes, our country have as their leaders, they we can breathe a bit easier!

The RUNNERS were unbelievable.....not one of them knew how to walk to carry out their responsibilities.....they RAN true to their title! ! Please thank them when you see them.

Our DANCERS were tireless also.....all those costume changes and smiles as they performed! Each year they amaze us more and more with their developing skills and dedication. A big pat on the back to their instructors and to the seamstresses, too. The costumes were as beautiful as the children themselves.

Time now to get serious about Church School attendance....let's keep that parent participation going in helping our children develop their spiritual lives. Instead of asking "Do you want to go today?" substitute "Get in the car!" with a smile, of course.

Athena Pachares, Y.M. coordinator
(pachares@sbcglobal.net)

GOYA

Thank you to all the GOYANS who volunteered their time at the festival to help make it a success. Whether you danced, were runners or served in the food lines, your help was very much appreciated. Also, Kay Anderson, our liaison with City of Euless, was very pleased with our recycling project. The City provided our supplies and we accumulated over 45 large bags of glass, aluminum cans and plastic to be recycled.

The next few months we will be busy raising money to help defray the cost for the GOYANS to attend the January basketball tournament in Albuquerque, NM. Our next fundraiser will be a luncheon on November 2nd. We will hold our annual turkey raffle in November to be followed by Christmas caroling in December. Thank you to all the parishioners who continue to support us in our efforts!

If you are between the ages of 12-18 and would like to be a part of GOYA, please contact one of our officers. Patrick, Jenna, Maggie or myself about joining.

Nick Papadimitriou

Officers:

Patrick Sullivan, President

Nick Papadimitriou, Vice President

Jenna Wright, Treasurer

Maggie Molhoek, Secretary

New Blog for the Gladsome Light Dialogues

We are happy to announce everyone our newest program, the online continuation of our Wednesday night Dialogues. You can now read materials and participates in discussions at the following address <http://dialogues.stjohndfw.info>

Archbishop Iakovos Library and Learning Center.]

Musically yours,
Bill Poletes.

Church School News

Dear Students and Parents,

These next couple of months will be a busy time for us all with the chaotic schedules we keep during the holidays. As we begin planning our festivities, please remind our children the focus of the holidays is our Lord.

We are participating in the Thanksgiving Food Basket Program organized by the Philoptohos. Church School has started collecting items. Please send something with your children so that they may contribute to the basket themselves. This is a valuable lesson for our children to learn as they prepare these baskets.

Godparent's Sunday and Open House is November 9th. Invite your children's Godparents to visit so that your children can show them off to their classmates as well as share what they've learned in Church School.

Don't forget to register your children for church school. There are extra registration forms in the church hall in the Church School mail slot. Also, you can download the registration form and church school calendar from www.stjohndfw.info.

There will NO church school on November 30th due to Thanksgiving Break.

Thank you and God Bless,

Khanh Moutafis

Ageless Wonders

Our current Cycle of dialogues concentrates on the various aspects of marriage, parenting and family life in general. On November 12 we will be moving unto the next cycle: "*Christ in the Bible*" that will continue through the Lenten period until Nativity. We'll also continue our successful Evening Film dialogues series with another projection on Nov. 26.

Please find bellow the discussion topics for November:

Healing the wounds: conflict resolution in an Orthodox marriage 11/5/2008

Christ in the Bible Who wrote the Bible and how do we read it 11/12/2008

New vs. Old Testament: which one to follow? 11/19/2008

Evening Film Dialogues 11/26/2008

Choir Notes

NATIONAL CHURCH MUSIC SUNDAY was October 5th, a day set aside every year to honor the contributions of local choir members, psaltai, and music educators who serve their churches through the hymnology of our Orthodox Church.

Thank you to our parishioners for honoring the choir and psalti and for your generous contributions to the **NATIONAL CHURCH MUSIC MINISTRIES FUND**, which supports the national music education projects of the NATIONAL FORUM and the Metropolis Church Music Federations. [Note, previous donations totaling \$425,000 were used to establish the Visiting Scholars Program in Church Music at Holy Cross School of Theology and the Liturgical Music Room at the

The Ageless Wonders will meet on Friday, November 7th, 2008 at 6:30 PM. at the clubhouse of Lou and Judyth Antahades for our annual Food and Wine Pairing!!! You will be notified of all the details !! I want to take this opportunity to thank Esther Petercsak for the fabulous job she did getting all the local seniors to our festival. She deserves a big "Hurrah" Thanks to all who volunteered. They couldn't have done it without us!! We have 19 people from our parish who are going on the "OPA" cruise in February. If you would like some details, Call me.....Margaret Chokas, 817-354-773

Website

The new Parish Website is updated weekly with parish news at <http://stjohndfw.info> Visit us soon for an enhanced spirituality section and updates on the New Church construction.

Also Don't forget to participate in our newest blog at <http://dialogues.stjohndfw.info>

Your's in Christ,
Sorin Berca
Website Administrator

Usher Schedule

1st Sunday: George Moutafis, Cynthia Pursley
2nd Sunday: Harry Karegeannes, Taki Sofoklidis
3rd Sunday: Bill Wright, Tim Cline
4th Sunday: Barbara Vittas, Larry Leeders
5th Sunday: Nancy Medvic, Lou Antahades

Nursery Attendants Schedule

The Nursery is accepting children 3 years old and under. Attendants will be ready and waiting to take care of your little ones. The attendants

will leave and go to the service if children do not arrive by 10:30.

In His Service,
Marsha Arapis

Nursery Attendants Schedule

Oct. 5: Marsha Arapis
Oct. 12: Elizabeth Popescu
Oct. 19: To Be Announced
Oct. 26: To Be Announced

Please thoughtfully consider becoming a Nursery Attendant. Contact Marsha Arapis marshaarapis@yahoo.com

Acolyte Schedule

1st Sunday : Patrick Sullivan, Phillip Sullivan, Peter Pursley, John Molhoek
2nd Sunday : James Seals, Ovidiu Berca, Patrick Sullivan, Philip Sullivan
3rd Sunday : Jackson Wright, Joey Basiliadis, Ovi Berca, Alex Shah
4th Sunday : Bennett Kerbow, Ovi Berca, James Seals, Alex Shah
5th Sunday: Patrick Sullivan, Phillip Sullivan, Jackson Wright, Ovi Berca

Coffee Hour Schedule

1st Sun.: Mr. & Mrs. Michael Eftimie
2nd Sun: Bill & Bertha Gianulis
3rd Sun: Parish Council
4th Sun: Ageless Wonders
5th Sun: Parish Council (If Applicable)

Let's Make Father See "RED"

Support the Philoptochos by purchasing a Poinsettia in honor of, or in memory of a loved one. For \$15.00 the steps of the Altar can look beautiful and you will have the pleasure of enjoying the plant in your home for the

Holidays. Order by November 30th using the enclosed order form.

Coffe Hour

Due to the rising cost of food and the decline in donations, the church has decided to supply only bagel's and cream cheese/jelly instead of sweets for Sunday coffee hour. Also, only coffee, juice and punch will be served instead of sodas. Groups or individuals hosting the coffee hour may supplement with additional items if they so choose.

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.