





PARISH INFORMATION BULLETIN

PROGRAM FOR 10—16 NOVEMBER 2019

SUNDAY 10 NOVEMBER	8th SUNDAY OF LUKE, Luke 10: 25- 37 <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 7.30am Orthros and Divine Liturgy
<div> SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASSES FOR ALL AGES (A free voluntary program organised by the Church) Lessons take place in the building behind the church and begin at the time of Holy Communion until Church dismissal. We have classes for ages ranging from 5yrs to teenage years. Lessons are taught in a relaxed, friendly environment. Please bring your children along to learn of their rich Orthodox faith and come close to God and His Love.</div>	
MONDAY 11 NOVEMBER	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 8.45am Service of Holy Unction• 10.00am Meeting of Elderly Citizens in Church Hall.
TUESDAY 12 NOVEMBER	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 7.00pm Parishes of St Vasilios and the Presentation of our Lord, Coburg Youth Group will meet in Coburg Church Hall.
WEDNESDAY 13 NOVEMBER St John Chrysostom	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 7.00am Orthros and Divine Liturgy• 5.00pm Paraklesis to the Theotokos followed by Bible Study
THURSDAY 14 NOVEMBER Apostle St Philip	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 7.00am Orthros and Divine Liturgy• 7.30—8.30pm <div> TEENAGE YOUTH GROUP (Ages 13-19) In Church Hall, upstairs behind the Church <i>* ALL TEENAGERS WELCOME *</i></div>
SUNDAY 17 NOVEMBER	GOSPEL READING: EPISTLE READING: Galatians 2: 16-20



Telephone Contact Numbers

St Vasilios Church
9387 7693

Fr Athanasios
9383 4151

Fr Ephraim
0490 378 215

Website:
stvasiliosbrunswick.com

Fr Athanasios and
Fr Ephraim
are available at the Church
every Monday to Friday
between 4.00 and 6.00pm
for Holy Confession and
any spiritual need.

“Make sure that
you do not limit
your prayer merely
to a particular part
of the day.
Turn to prayer at
anytime.”

St. John
Chrysostom

WISDOM OF THE HOLY FATHERS

“Do you wish to honour the Body of the Saviour? Do not despise it when it is naked.

Do not honour it in church with silk vestments while outside it is naked and numb with cold. He who said, “This is my body,” and made it so by His word, is the same who said, ‘You saw me hungry and you gave me no food. As you did it not to the least of these, you did it not to me.’

Honour Him then by sharing your property with the poor. For what God needs is not golden chalices but golden souls.”
- St. John Chrysostom, *Homily 50, Homilies on the Gospel of St. Matthew*

NATIVITY FAST

For Orthodox Christians, Christmas Advent begins on November 15 and extends through December 25. It is a Lenten period with moderate fasting, prayer, scripture reading and reflection on the coming of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

8th SUNDAY OF LUKE, Luke 10: 25- 37

There are some people who think that worshipping God in beautiful liturgical services distracts us from serving our neighbors and accomplishing His purposes for us in the world. There are those who say that focusing on prayer, fasting, and other spiritual disciplines wastes time and energy that could be better used in helping others. Today we commemorate St. John Chrysostom, whose life and ministry demonstrate that we do not have to choose between liturgical life and practical service, for true worship and prayer enable us to make all dimensions of our life in the world an entrance into the heavenly kingdom through Jesus Christ, our eternal High Priest.

St. John Chrysostom remains famous for his powerful preaching and interpretation of the Scriptures, his doctrinal and moral soundness, and his association with the Divine Liturgy. Originally from the Church of Antioch, he became the Archbishop of Constantinople, where he imposed needed discipline on the clergy and boldly criticized the abuses of the rich and powerful. He died in exile due to the harsh treatment he received for denouncing the corruption of a Byzantine empress. His life of faithfulness was not easy, and his example of holiness shines all the more brightly as a result.

In a society still influenced by pagan traditions that completely disregarded the needs of poor and suffering people, St. John stressed the importance of serving Christ in them. Through his preaching and support of philanthropic ministries, he demonstrated that those commonly viewed as worthless and undeserving were those with whom our Lord identified Himself. He taught that, in the face of unmet need, it was impossible to be in communion with Christ without ministering to His hungry and sick body in daily life. He knew that the Lord calls us all to be neighbors to one another, refusing to pass by on the other side when we can be of help in practical ways.

In this respect, our Savior's ministry was clearly made present in St. John's life. Christ refused to allow the lawyer to narrow down the list of people whom he had to love as himself in order to find eternal life, and St. John proclaimed the same message. Even as today's parable criticizes the religious leaders who passed by on the other side, St. John denounced distorted forms of spirituality that separate true faithfulness from how people live in the world, especially in relation to meeting the urgent needs of others.

The character of the good Samaritan is, of course, an image of Christ in many ways. The same religious leaders who rejected and despised Him ignored the true needs of the people before God. Purely out of love for us, Christ came to bind up our wounds as those corrupted by sin and enslaved to death. Out of compassion, He nourishes us back to health with His own Body and Blood and anoints us with holy oil for forgiveness and strength. He makes us members of the Church, the inn where we continue our recovery through His ongoing grace and mercy through the Holy Mysteries. He Himself forgives our sins every time that we humbly repent in Confession. The only limits to our healing are those which we place on ourselves, for there is no boundary to His transforming love for those He created in His image and likeness.

The vocation of a bishop is to manifest the fullness of Christ's ministry. As a bishop, St. John was an icon of Christ mostly obviously in presiding as a high priest over the church's celebration of the Divine Liturgy. Our Lord is the true High Priest Who has ascended into heaven at the right hand of the Father, where He ministers eternally in the Heavenly Temple. We participate mystically in that heavenly worship whenever we celebrate the Divine Liturgy. When we do so, we join ourselves to His one offering through the Cross, by which He conquered death and brought us into the blessed eternal life of the Holy Trinity. In Him, we dine as guests at the Heavenly Banquet when we receive the Eucharist. We truly become participants in and communicants of life eternal in His Body, the Church.

As St. John made clear through his preaching and witness, we must never think that worship, offering, and communion are somehow limited to what we do during the liturgical services of the Church. If we limit them in that way, then we will not truly worship Christ, offer ourselves to Him, or commune with Him for the healing of our souls. If we do so, we will become like the hypocritical religious leaders in today's parable who failed to see that they encounter our Lord in every needy human being, in every neighbor who bears His image and likeness. Perhaps they ignored the victim of the robbers because they were hurrying off to fulfill their religious duties in the Temple. Perhaps we do even worse by ignoring the needs of our spouses, children, parents, and neighbors due to our own self-centeredness or obsession with our work, hobbies, or routines. Perhaps we do even worse by passing by on the other side because we think that people with this or that problem deserve what they get. Perhaps we do even worse by thinking that other people's difficulties are theirs alone and have nothing to do with us. Perhaps we do even worse by becoming so addicted to satisfying our cravings for pleasure that we find it impossible to serve anyone other than ourselves.

By offering Himself on the Cross, rising in glory, and ascending into heaven, our Lord overcame the corruption of the entire creation. He did so as the New Adam Who has made it possible for us all to fulfill our original vocation to become like God, to be perfect as our Heavenly Father is perfect. As the God-Man, He offered every dimension of Himself for our salvation. Through His eternal High Priesthood, He calls us to ever greater participation in eternal life. While the Eucharistic worship of the Divine Liturgy manifests our communion with Him most profoundly, it should be obvious that so great a salvation may not be limited to any sphere or segment of our lives. No, if we are truly in communion with Christ, then we must bring every dimension of our lives into right relationship with Him. We must offer not only bread and wine, but all our blessings back to Him so that we will faithfully play our part in making His salvation present in the world. We must join our time, energy, resources, and relationships to His High Priestly offering so that they will all become signs of His healing of our corrupt humanity.

We must offer not only bread and wine, but ourselves to the Holy Trinity in union with Christ. He is the true High Priest through whom we become participants in the eternal worship of the Heavenly Kingdom. Such eternal glory is made present in the Divine Liturgy, but He also calls us to make present His blessing and healing of this broken world in all our thoughts, words, and deeds. He calls us all to become like the good Samaritan, binding up the wounds of our neighbors and refusing to narrow down the list of those whom we must learn to love as ourselves. We will do so, not by abandoning the services and disciplines of the Church, but by embracing them for our own healing. By repenting of our sins in Confession and communing with Christ in the Eucharist, we will be strengthened to offer ourselves to Him in daily life and to resist any temptation to pass by on the other side of the needs any neighbor. We will gain the spiritual clarity to see that we are always celebrating a liturgy of one kind or another; we are always offering ourselves to something or someone. Like St. John Chrysostom, let us worship our great High Priest in how we live in the world each day of our lives.

- Fr. Philip LeMasters