



Parish Information Bulletin

Program for 12—18 NOVEMBER 2023

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.

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| SUNDAY 12 NOVEMBER | 8TH SUNDAY OF LUKE, Luke 10: 25-37 • 7.30am Orthros and Divine Liturgy |
| 2023 SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASSES FOR ALL AGES - 2023 (A free voluntary program organised by the Church) Lessons take place in the building behind the church and begin at 10.30am 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. | |
| MONDAY 13 NOVEMBER <i>St John Chrysostom</i> | • 7.30am Orthros and Divine Liturgy • 10.00am Meeting of Elderly Citizens in Church Hall |
| TUESDAY 14 NOVEMBER <i>Apostle St Philip, St Gregory Palamas</i> | • 7.30am Orthros and Divine Liturgy |
| WEDNESDAY 15 NOVEMBER | • 5.00pm Paraklesis to the Theotokos • 7.00pm Divine Liturgy in ENGLISH |
| THURSDAY 16 NOVEMBER | • 8.00—9.00pm ➡ TEENAGE YOUTH GROUP 2023 ALL TEENAGERS WELCOME Join the group and learn about your faith, make friends, enjoy refreshments, in a friendly, relaxing environment. * In Church Hall, upstairs behind the Church |
| SUNDAY 19 NOVEMBER | GOSPEL READING: Luke 12: 16-21 EPISTLE READING: Ephesians 2: 14-22 |

We make known to all that a Greek Language School operates in our Parish.

- Primary school classes: every Saturday, from 9.00am to 12.30pm
- High School classes: every Monday, from 5.00 to 8.30pm.

For inquiries and enrolments : 0401 051773

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.

The Christmas Fast Begins

Once again we have reached a very busy time of year—many Christmas festivities are organised and vacations are planned. The Church seeks to prepare us for the true meaning of Christmas. Beginning 15th November, for forty days we anticipate and prepare for the coming of Christ into the world and into our lives. How will we prepare for Christmas this year? As part of our preparation for Christmas we can resolve to give closer attention to the Word of God by reading, for example, one chapter a day from the Gospels for the next forty days. Getting to know more about the life of Christ will make us appreciate more deeply the significance of His coming which we celebrate on Christmas.

Source: *A Year of the Lord*—Theodore Stylianopoulos

Saint John Chrysostom is one of the Three Hierarchs, born in Antioch and fatherless from a young age. His mother, Saint Anthousa, saw to the raising of her son in a pious manner. Saint John studied under the finest philosophers and rhetoricians, but found no joy in these vain pursuits, and thus turned to the study of the Holy Scriptures.

After the death of his mother, Saint John pursued monasticism, which he called the “true philosophy”. Having been elected as a candidate for bishop, the holy one withdrew to the wilderness to avoid the episcopal rank out of humility. In the wilderness, Saint John wrote many great works on pastoral theology and against heresy. He eventually had to return to Antioch because of his ill health, and was then ordained deacon, where he wrote many more works. Some years later, Saint John was ordained to the priesthood where he gave splendid sermons that moved all. Thus, he was given the epithet “Golden-Mouthed” (i.e. Chrysostom). He soon undertook the task of composing exegetical commentaries on books of the Holy Bible, especially on Genesis and the Epistles of the Apostle Paul. As well as this, Saint John provided food and provisions to over 3,000 virgins and widows, as well as the homeless and the sick. The fame of the holy one grew and with the death of the Archbishop of Constantinople, Saint John was elevated to this See. In this position, he perfected his role in the priesthood while also spreading the Christian faith with zeal to many countries, including the Slavs, Goths, Asia Minor, Persia, and many other places.

Because of his intense zeal, much jealousy arose for the saint, even leading to hatred. He was deposed of his See and exiled three times. Each time, he was brought back and re-elevated to his position. On his last journey to exile, Saint John fell sick and never arrived. Just before he died, Saint Basiliscus appeared to him saying, “Despair not, brother John! Tomorrow, we shall be together”. Having received Holy Communion, the Hierarch reposed in the Lord on September 14, 407 with the words, “Glory to God for all things!”. Because of the great feast day of the Elevation of the Holy Cross, the celebration of Saint John’s memory was transferred to this day. He is also celebrated on January 27, the translation of his holy relics, and January 30, together with the two other Hierarchs, Basil the Great and Gregory the Theologian.



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

The Good Samaritan

Metropolitan Sotirios of Pisidia

All of humanity lives in community. On the basic level, we have the family. From there we move up to the village/town, and then to cities. Over all of that is the nation-state. Because a person belongs to a particular community, it is natural for everyone to be concerned first with the prosperity of their own country, their own city and their own family. If something happens to one of their compatriots, they will rush to help. Alternatively, if they are far from home and they meet another person from their homeland, they will feel a connection and do for them as best they can.

The key question is: What if in my life I meet an unknown person, someone who is a total stranger? Perhaps they are from a different country, or another religion. This person may be ill or hungry, and they ask for my help. Do I give it?

Our Lord answered this question today with the parable of the Good Samaritan. We know that the Jews regarded the Samaritans as enemies and did not want to have any dealings with them. They also saw them as heretics to be shunned. Here we see the Samaritan travelling, and he sees a Jewish man, fallen and badly wounded by thieves. He didn’t think about their differences. The fact that he was a Jew was not on his mind. He got off his animal, treated his wounds, and put the wounded man on his animal to take him to the nearest Inn. He told the innkeeper to care for him, and gave money to do this. The Samaritan left with the promise that he would pay for any extra care that should become necessary.

This is what the Good Samaritan did. Why did Jesus tell us this parable?

Because when we speak of others, we usually distinguish between “Us” and “Them.” We say “our people” and “foreigners” or “friends” and “enemies.” If the other person is “one of us,” my friend and my compatriot, we will express love and help in whatever way they need. But if they are from another race, another country or another religion, we avoid them. We do this even if we see them in a great deal of need.

Christ teaches us with this parable how thinking in this way must be corrected. It is completely wrong. We can’t just love our own people and our friends. When we do this, we show ourselves to be bad Christians. Let’s learn to love all people, without distinguishing between friend or foe, compatriot and foreigner. A Christian who loves only their friends is no Christian at all. To be a Christian means to love everyone and is devoted to helping those who need it. A Christian is one who smiles at strangers, forgives enemies and does so without expecting anything in return.

This is why we have as a model the Good Samaritan. For our sake, our Lord Jesus Christ taught us love to all. Not only in his perfect words, but above all in his supreme example! Christ came to earth and found humanity, mortally wounded and fighting against God. He brought them to Himself in His Church, and redeemed humanity from the tyranny of Satan. And all of this, with the sacrifice of His life on the Cross. This example of His love to everyone can also inspire us in our interactions with others, to all people. Amen.