

the Light



JUNE 2022
NEWSLETTER



2022 PARISH LIFE CONFERENCE

Hosted by St. John, Memphis, TN
June 15 - June 18, 2022



CAMP ST. THEKLA 2022

June 26 - July 2, 2022

[REGISTER HERE!](#)

July 3 - July 9, 2022

[REGISTER HERE!](#)

CONNECT WITH US!



DOMSE.ORG



DMCDOMSE



@DOMSE



YOUTUBE

Parish Spotlight

ST. MICHAEL THE ARCHANGEL ORTHODOX CHURCH

CLERGY

The Very Rev. David Bleam,

Proistamenos

The Very Rev. Ernesto M. Obregón,

Ephemerios

Dn. Simeon Spencer

FEAST DAY

St. Michael the Archangel, November 8

EMAIL: frernesto@holyltrinity-holycross.org

WEBSITE: stmichaelchurchdothan.com



All photos this page ©TwillyJane Photography 2022

St. Michael the Archangel Orthodox Church | Dothan, AL

St. Michael the Archangel Antiochian Orthodox Church is located in Dothan, AL. The church began in Fort Rucker, AL, in 1994 to meet the needs of the "Wiregrass Region." Fr. Isaiah Gillette was our first priest. When he was transferred to another post, the church moved to Dothan, AL twenty-five miles away. Currently, we are worshipping in a storefront at 1535 Montgomery

Highway, Dothan, AL, every Sunday at 10:00 am.

Throughout the years, several priests have served the church, including Fr. Michael Keiser, Fr. Andrew Moore, and several others. Fr. David Bleam supervises the parish and is the Proistamenos of St. Andrew in Pensacola. Currently,

Fr. Ernesto Obregón, Ephemerios, has been coming twice a month for several years, slowly building up our community. We have recently been joined by Deacon Simeon Spencer of St. Elias in Atlanta, who will come every other week, which allows us to have a Sunday morning worship service every week. We see increasing

[continued on page 7]



Mission Spotlight

St. Raphael of Brooklyn Mission Fuquay-Varina, NC

CLERGY

V. Rev. Fr. James Guirguis
Dn. Peter Keener

FEAST DAY

Saint Raphael of Brooklyn
The first Saturday in November.
Celebrated with liturgy, fun and games for the children and a shared meal.

WEBSITE: straphaelnc.org

EMAIL: saintraphaelnc@gmail.com

St. Raphael of Brooklyn Mission is located in Fuquay-Varina, NC. We began as a small group of families from All Saints Orthodox Church in Raleigh, NC, who volunteered to help birth a mission. We prayed our first liturgy on January 17th, 2016. Starting off in a golf course clubhouse, we now own our own church building and are already working to expand.

We are overflowing with children and new converts. Our weekly highlights include Tuesday night Vespers with family night and dinner and Thursday morning liturgies. We have growing Teen SOYO, Antiochian Women, AMEN ministries and an active Church School program. Our community is very welcoming and close knit.





FEATURED ORGANIZATION

Orthodox Christian Fellowship

By Dn. Marek Simon | St. Ignatius Orthodox Church | Franklin, TN



Orthodox Christian Fellowship's Real Break program provides college students with the opportunity to engage the Orthodox faith through trips of pilgrimage and service. Students travel during Spring Break to participate in the work of the Church alongside the ministries, monasteries, parishes, and people of each host city. For Evan Roussey, 2021-22 Real Break Student Leader, this experience has been life-changing.

As Real Break Student Leader, Evan planned the details of each Real Break trip. He took the existing Real Break framework, was given the freedom to innovate in planning, and came up with a new idea for Real Break 2022. Rather than solely eating meals out, Real Break teams would cook meals together.

This idea was borne out of both practicality and the desire of fostering a rich community amongst the teams. Evan brought this idea to the OCF staff, who helped refine his

idea for budget and time considerations. Soon, Evan got to experience his idea come to fruition on his own Real Break trip. According to Evan, "The meal idea was planned in detail, but it came to life as we prepared the meal and shared it together."

Evan traveled on Real Break California, and was able to enjoy the reward of his months of planning. Students on Real Break California experienced the beauty of the oldest Orthodox chapel in the lower 48 states at Fort Ross, Holy Assumption Monastery in Calistoga, and venerated the relics of St. John of Shanghai.

One additional evening stood out as particularly special for Evan, the night the team cooked a meal together. The group ventured out into San Francisco to grocery shop. There they collaborated on a menu. Together they worked to create shrimp pasta and salad. Some students chopped onions, some boiled pasta, some cut a loaf of local artisan bread.

(continued on page 4)

(OCF - continued from page 3)

Evan even shared a recipe for dressing that came from his mother. Big band music filled the room as they laughed and cooked together. Evan described the experience as, "The scene felt like a big family. It looked like that, and felt that way on the inside." In the San Francisco Airbnb the Real Break California students experienced the love of Christ through love of neighbor. Through this simple act of sharing a meal, they shared the love of God with one another, and developed a bond that will last a lifetime.

The trip members still keep in touch, recalling their life-changing experiences through a group chat. Because of the rich community fostered on Real Break California, Christ revealed himself in new and profound ways to each of them. Evan has been transformed through this process. He gained leadership, communication, and logistics skills, but even more so, he encountered Christ through his saints like never before.



KEEP YOUR HIGH SCHOOL GRADS

Connected TO CHRIST AND HIS CHURCH

Orthodox Christian Fellowship is the official collegiate campus ministry program under the Assembly of Canonical Orthodox Bishops of the United States of America.

Simply, OCF is charged with taking care of your students while they are in college.

Visit ocf.net/student-contacts to submit your students' info and get them connected to OCF.



the
Light

AMEN
ANTIOCHIANMEN.ORG

ANTIOCHIAN WOMEN
DOMSEWOMEN
ANTIOCHIAN WOMEN OF DOMSE

YOUNG ADULT
DOMSE YAF

SOYO
DOMSESoyo
DOMSESoyo

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION
DOMSECHRISTIANED



Words from Sayedna Nicholas

It is a tradition of the Ancient Patriarchate of Antioch, to which we belong, not to fast for the forty days after Great and Holy Pascha until the Feast of Ascension, following the statement that our Lord Jesus uttered in the Gospel according to St. Mark:

“And Jesus said to them, Can the friends of the bridegroom fast while the bridegroom is with them? As long as they have the bridegroom with them they cannot fast.”
(Mark 2:19)

The Bridegroom is with us every year between Great and Holy Pascha and the Feast of Ascension. At the Feast of the Ascension He ascends to heaven as we recite in the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed: **“...And [He] ascended into heaven, and sits at the right hand of the Father...”**.

Why do we fast then at other times? There are many reasons for us to fast. It is a choice we make in order to achieve certain goals. It certainly is not compulsory, especially if our health does not allow it or our physician recommends against it. However, we need to be honest with ourselves if we can fast. On the other hand, fasting is supposed to improve our life on many fronts. It is beneficial for us to fast! The first major benefit is to discipline ourselves, which is part of self-control, and give relief to our internal organs from the contents of regular food that may include meat, fat, and other items. Self-control which is a virtue is a cardinal rule of life and Orthodoxy. Without self-control, we may allow ourselves everything that might cause us harm or addiction as St. Paul says:

“All things are lawful for me, but all things are not helpful. All things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any.”
(I Corinthians 6:12)

Another major useful aspect of fasting is the willful obedience to the Church by eating or abstaining from the food groups that the Orthodox Church prescribes. Practicing obedience is a beneficial quality of our spiritual life since it is a virtue and makes us more like God.

There are other benefits to fasting, like saving some money and giving it to those who are less fortunate than us. All these benefits and others help us along in the process of becoming God-like.

In other news, the PLC hosted by St. John Church, Memphis, TN is upon us. It will be held June 15-June 18. However, you are welcome to stay on Sunday, June 19 for the second Hierarchical Divine Liturgy in two days. In addition, Camp St. Thekla is also fast approaching and is planned for June 26-July 2 for session one, and July 3-July 9 for session two. Furthermore, it is worthy to note that Fr. Ernesto Obregón, who pastors the faithful of St. Michael Antiochian Orthodox Church in Dothan, AL twice a month, has been elevated to Archpriest. Congratulations to Fr. Ernesto, his family, and the parishioner of St. Michael's.

May God bless you and may the Holy Trinity protect you all.

2022 Parish Life Conference

June 15-18
St. John Orthodox Church | Memphis, TN

GENERAL SCHEDULE

Time	Function	Room Location
Wednesday, June 15, 2022		
3:00 PM	8:00 PM Registration	Lobby Annex
5:00 PM	6:00 PM Vespers	Tennessee B
6:00 PM	8:30 PM Kids' Club (CLERGY KIDS)	Director 1
6:00 PM	8:30 PM Clergy and Wives Dinner with Bishop Nicholas/Mtg.	Director 6
7:00 PM	8:00 PM Clergy Wives Dessert	Director 3
7:00 PM	8:00 PM Teen Welcome	TBD
11:00 PM	11:30 PM Compline/Ask Abouna	Tennessee B
Thursday, June 16, 2022		
8:30 AM	10:00 AM Divine Liturgy	Tennessee B
10:00 AM	5:00 PM Registration	Tennessee B Foyer
10:00 AM	12:30 PM Kids' Club	Director 1
	Antiochian Women's Brunch/Meeting/Retreat (Including young adult women) Speaker: Mother Beth Freeman - Mary, Martha, and friendship with Christ: sharing His yoke	
10:15 AM	12:30 PM	Director 6
	Antiochian Men's Brunch / Meeting / Retreat (Including Young Adult men) Speaker: Fr. Stephen Freeman	
10:15 AM	12:30 PM	Tennessee C
	SOYO Brunch / Meeting / Retreat Speaker: Fr. Joseph Aboud - Matthew 18:3	
10:15 AM	12:30 PM	Tennessee D-E
1:00 PM	4:30 PM SOYO Service Project	off-site
2:30 PM	4:30 PM Kids' Club	Director 1
2:30 PM	4:30 PM Antiochian Women's Book Club - "Mary as the Early Christians Knew Her" by Fredrica Mathews Green Young Adult Fellowship / Discussion	off-site
2:30 PM	4:30 PM Speaker: Protodeacon David Keim - Orthodoxy in the Workplace	Director 3
2:30 PM	3:00 PM Antiochian Men Book Club: "God Is A Man of War"	Tennessee C
3:00 PM	4:30 PM Antiochian Men Bible Study with Fr. Stephen De Young	Tennessee C
5:00 PM	6:00 PM Vespers	Tennessee B
	Dinner Buffet with speaker Speaker: Fr. Stephen Freeman - "Like a Weaned Child with Its Mother": Caring for the soul in a world of shame	
6:00 PM	8:00 PM	Tennessee C-E
7:00 PM	9:00 PM Kids' Club	Director 1
8:00 PM	10:30 PM Evening Fellowship/Entertainment	Tennessee C-E
11:00 PM	11:30 PM Compline/Ask Abouna	Tennessee B
Friday, June 17, 2022		
8:30 AM	10:00 AM Divine Liturgy	Tennessee B
10:00 AM	5:00 PM Registration	Tennessee B Foyer
10:00 AM	11:00 AM Brunch Buffet	Tennessee A
11:00 AM	12:30 PM Oratorical Festival	Tennessee B
12:30 PM	1:00 PM Creative Arts Festival Awards Presentation	Tennessee B
1:30 PM	4:00 PM Kids' Club	Director 1
1:30 PM	4:00 PM Diocesan Ministry Council meeting	Tennessee B
	Christian education workshop Speaker: Anna-Sarah Farha - Special Needs Resources for Sunday School Teachers	
4:00 PM	5:00 PM	Director 2
4:00 PM	5:00 PM Order of St. Ignatius Reception	Director 6
4:00 PM	5:00 PM Deanery Meetings	TBD
5:30 PM	6:30 PM Great Vespers Service	Tennessee B
6:30 PM	7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal	Tennessee B
6:30 PM	8:00 PM Dinner Buffet	Tennessee C-E
7:30 PM	8:00 PM Bible Bowl Team Check-in	Tennessee A
8:00 PM	10:30 PM Bible Bowl	Tennessee A
11:00 PM	11:30 PM Compline/Ask Abouna	Tennessee B
Saturday, June 18, 2022		
8:00 AM	9:00 AM Orthros (Matins)	Tennessee B
9:00 AM	11:00 AM Hierarchical Divine Liturgy	Tennessee B
12 PM	Young Adults - Doctrine on Draft	offsite

Upcoming Events

JUNE

2022 PARISH LIFE CONFERENCE

St. John Orthodox Church
Memphis, TN
June 15 - June 18, 2022

CAMP ST. THEKLA 2022 (SESSION 1)

June 26 - July 2, 2022

[CLICK HERE TO REGISTER!](#)

JULY

CAMP ST. THEKLA 2022 (SESSION 2)

July 3 - July 9, 2022

[CLICK HERE TO REGISTER!](#)



AUGUST

AMEN LEADERSHIP AND LOCAL CHAPTER PRESIDENTS MEETING

Zoom

August 9

8:00 pm - 9:00 pm EDT

IF YOU HAVE ARTICLES OR SUGGESTIONS FOR THE LIGHT NEWSLETTER, PLEASE EMAIL THEM TO DOMSENEWSLETTER@GMAIL.COM

Fr. Nathaniel Trembley, Theology Editor
Deborah Abdo, Editor and Manager
Chelsea Beazley, Graphic Designer
Sh. Shell Keim
Bishop Nicholas

(St. Michael - continued from page 1)

growth and expect it to continue.

Our church is made up of families from all over the world, including Romania, Ukraine, Mexico, India, and Cuba. Although we have under 30 people in attendance most Sundays, our community is exciting and vibrant. We have many military representatives as well from the nearby Fort Rucker, and long time locals to the area.

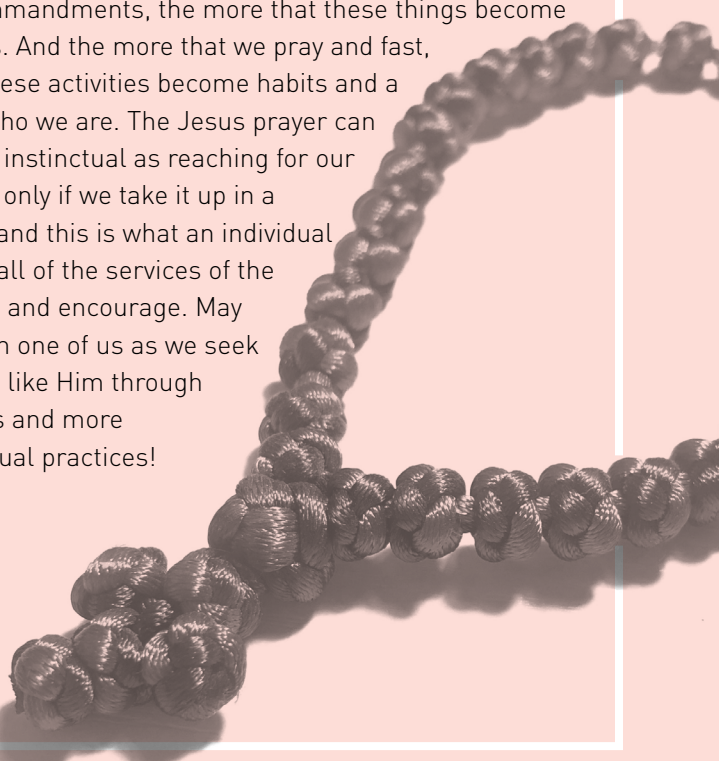
Recently, the church has been looking outward to the needs of our community and the less fortunate. We have planted a large vegetable patch out on a farm, which is cared for by our members. We hope to donate a significant percentage of the harvest to organizations that serve those in need.



Theology Editor's Corner

A few months ago, while I was driving in the car, I reached into my pocket at a stoplight in order to pull out my prayer rope. Sometime earlier, I had decided that I would make the most of my time on the road by praying the Jesus prayer as a Lenten practice. However, as soon as I lowered my hand into my pocket, I forgot whether I was reaching for my prayer rope or for my cell phone, and as I hesitated, my mind seemed to go blank. What happened here? Hadn't I decided beforehand to devote myself to prayer? Why weren't my good intentions enough?

This experience highlights the fact that our Orthodox Christian life is about so much more than what we believe, what we decide to do, or even our own best intentions. Instead, our faith involves a complete transformation – we are called to turn away from our own selfish impulses in order to become like God. According to some, the Greek philosopher Aristotle held that “we are what we repeatedly do,” so that “excellence is not an act, but a habit.” And this is something that sheds light on our life in Christ, since the only faith that is living and active is the faith that becomes faithfulness through constant exercise, effort, and practice. Indeed, the more that we love God and our neighbors through keeping the commandments, the more that these things become automatic for us. And the more that we pray and fast, the more that these activities become habits and a settled part of who we are. The Jesus prayer can truly become as instinctual as reaching for our cell phones, but only if we take it up in a consistent way, and this is what an individual prayer rule and all of the services of the Church promote and encourage. May God be with each one of us as we seek to become more like Him through repeated actions and more consistent spiritual practices!



©Twilly Jane Photography 2022