

**St. Matthew Orthodox Church
Orthodox Church in America
Diocese of the Midwest**

Father John Thetford

**607 Ravenswood Drive
Green Bay, WI 54302**

From the desk of Father John.....

Christ is in our midst! He is and ever shall be!

We often struggle to know the will of God. We often wonder: What is God's will? What does God want for my life?

When we consider this question, we have to remember that Our Heavenly Father has created us with free will and free choice. He did not make us robots, nor does He want to micromanage us. Rather, He wants us to be free to do the good works that He gives us the opportunity to do. And although our passions and desires might push us one way or another at times, we ultimately do have the freedom to resist those temporary passions and desires, and choose good decisions.

Yet still, this is easier said than done. Knowing what to do, knowing the best decision to make, is not always easy.

When we face such moments of not knowing what to do, as Orthodox Christians, we often find that the best solution is to turn to the lives of the saints, the Christians who have gone before us.

The saints, each and every one, in their own unique way, picked up their cross and followed Christ. As each Saint had a unique personality and unique situation, each exercised his or her free will in a unique way. Some were married, some were celibate, some were humorous, some very serious, some were socially active, and some retreated for prayer.

And so, we read their lives, look at their example and see how they lived their life in their circumstances. We then figure out how to apply their decisions, their thought process, and their Christ-centered example to our own situations. This is not always easy; yet, it is easier than going completely blind, and trying to make our way forward as Christians without any examples at all.

If you would like to begin to read the lives of the Saints more frequently, one of the best resources, which is free online, is on the website of our national Orthodox Church in America. You can visit oca.org, and click on "Feasts and Saints" on the top banner, or you can go to the lives of the saints directly at www.oca.org/saints/lives.

By the example and intercessions of his Saints, may our Lord Jesus Christ always bless and enlighten each and every one of you.

In Christ,

Fr John

September Liturgical Schedule

Wednesday, September 1 - 6:00 pm Daily Vespers
 Saturday, September 4 - 5:00 pm Great Vespers
 Sunday, September 5 - 9:10 Hours, 9:30 am Divine Liturgy
 Tuesday, September 7 - 6:00 pm Vespersal Divine Liturgy (Nativity of the Theotokos)
 Wednesday, September 8 - 6:00 pm Daily Vespers (Joachim and Anna)
 Saturday, September 11 - 5:00 pm Great Vespers
 Sunday, September 12 - 9:10 Hours, 9:30 am Divine Liturgy
 Tuesday, September 14 - 8:30 am Festal Matins, 9:30 am Divine Liturgy (Exaltation of the Cross)
 Wednesday, September 15 - 6:00 pm Daily Vespers
 Saturday, September 18 - 5:00 pm Great Vespers
 Sunday, September 19 - 8:30 am Matins, 9:30 am Divine Liturgy
 Wednesday, September 22 - 6:00 pm Daily Vespers
 Saturday, September 25 - 5:00 pm Great Vespers
 Sunday, September 26 - 8:30 am Matins, 9:30 am Divine Liturgy (John the Theologian)
 Wednesday, September 29 - 6:00 pm Daily Vespers



Greetings from Your Ministry Team!

This month we are asking you to participate in an act of benevolence. Please consider an act of kindness and give a generous gift to our Benevolence Fund. Your benevolent act of kindness will stay right here in our church family and/or our community. Cash or a check made out to St. Matthew with "Benevolence Fund" noted will be greatly appreciated. These may go to treasurer, Tom Julian.

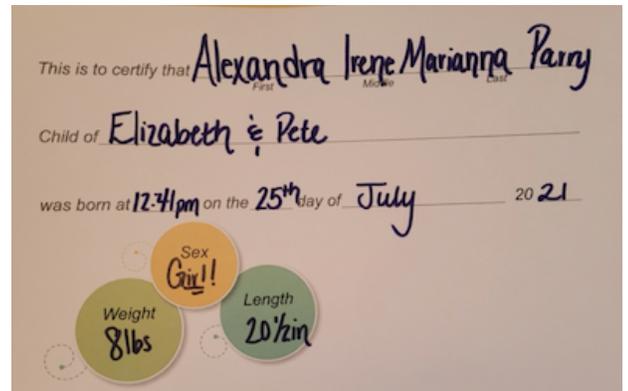
Thank you!

Happy September Birthday's

3rd - Debra Novak
 8th - Alexander Brown
 8th - Evie Pfitzinger
 11th - Mateo Heid
 11th - Pedro Sarsama
 16th - Madison Heid
 19th - Cheryl Julian
 22nd - Angelica Pfitzinger
 26th - Evangelia Zarokostas



**Many
Years!**



Congratulations to Elizabeth and Peter Parry on the birth of their daughter, Alexandra Irene Marianna Parry, on July 25. She joins her sister, Vivian!!! Congratulations and may God bless you all!

Happy September Anniversaries

15th - Gloriya and Timothy Grinsteiner
 18th - Lisa Ocoljich and Paul Greenlaw
 22nd - Oksana and Kevin Brown
 24th - Oksana and Craig Schweiner



Parish Council President's Perspective.....Paul Novak

Hello and I hope you all had a wonderful summer.

I am happy to say that at SMOC we have had a summer full of numerous events and activities. Father John and Mat. Katherine have settled in with a full schedule of services and welcomed the birth of their daughter, Evangeline Maria. Father, along with great support from those that volunteered to help, put on a successful Vacation Church School for our youth. Our educational classes on Tuesday mornings and Wednesday nights started back up, and the audience has been good. A reminder that if you can't attend the Wednesday night discussions, most of them have been recorded and you can find them at <https://www.smocgb.com/educationalaudiorecordings>. Choir practices have resumed. We went back to the baseball game and held our annual Church Picnic! In September, Sunday School will start back up. Thanks to everyone who help make all of this possible.

During the Summer, we have also been blessed with meeting many new inquiries to SMOC and the Orthodox faith. This is truly a blessing for all of us. I know that we all like to welcome those who have joined us for the first time at Coffee hour or after the conclusion of the service. Sometimes our discussion with inquiries are casual in nature: "What brings you to SMOC?"; "Is it your first time to an Orthodox service?"; "Do you live in the Green Bay area?"; these things we might ask as a way to start a conversation. We may also be asked questions about the Orthodox Church. Some we can handle and others might be best left for Father John to discuss with them. Some questions that might be asked are: "*For the past year or so I have been considering conversion to Orthodox Christianity.*"; "*I have read many things on the internet, as well as a number of books about the Church's faith, worship and history.*"; "*What steps would I take to become an Orthodox Christian?*" I was asked a form of these questions recently, and besides saying "let me get Father John," I didn't have a real good reply to the person who asked me these questions. Wanting to have a better reply for the next time I was asked these questions, I did some research. I was happy to find a wonderful answer to these questions on the OCA website. The first paragraph of this article gives us all a simple way to explain the *start* of the journey for one to become Orthodox.

While reading about the Orthodox Christian tradition is certainly important, it is crucial to step—literally—into an Orthodox Christian parish church near you to witness/experience the Church's worship and fellowship. Doing so will make much of what you have read "come alive," in the sense of seeing how that about which you have read is actually "lived." Think of it in the following way. A person can read a dozen books on swimming, but that which he or she has read will not "come alive" until he or she actually gets into a pool. Similarly, a person can read a dozen books on Orthodox Christianity, but that which he or she has read will not "come alive" until he or she actually encounters the Church as the worshipping People of God. The inquiries first—and subsequent visits—will help them to discern that to which the Lord is calling you. As Philip said to Nathaniel, "Come and see" [John 1:46].

I encourage you to read the complete article at <https://www.oca.org/questions/teaching/steps-to-becoming-an-orthodox-christian>.

In Christ,
Paul M. Novak



Church Cleaners....

ZDRALE (week of) 8/29/21 for 9/5
NOVAK (week of) 9/5/21 for 9/12
SCHAHCZAENSKI (week of) 9/12/21 for 9/19
JULIAN (week of) 9/19/21 for 9/26
TOMAC (week of) 9/26/21 for 10/3

Many Thanks!!

From SMOC Treasurer, Tom Julian

What a blessing it is to witness the faithful giving by our church family at SMOC. We are grateful that we have a beautiful place to worship and a place for Orthodox believers and seekers to gather for fellowship. We thank God for that.

Did you know that SMOC has increased our giving to local and international ministries by 250% over the past four years? Your giving is impacting many lives and growing Christ's Kingdom on earth.

Our collective testimony is that as a church we can meet our needs, support our diocese AND the needs of others through sacrificial and steadfast tithing and offerings. I believe we can continue to grow our quarterly gifts to our chosen ministries by year-end 2021 and in the years to come.

Please remember to pray for, and give cheerfully to our missionaries, Food pantries, House of Hope and other seasonal ministry opportunities.

Tom J

September Event Schedule

- **Book Study / Bible Study** is meeting **every Tuesday at 10:30 am.**
- **Adult Education class** is meeting every **Wednesday** after Daily Vespers **at 6:00 pm.**
- **Sunday School** begins on **Sunday, September 12.**
- **Adult Choir practices** will be **Sunday, September 12 and 19.**
- **Parish Council** meeting will be **Tuesday, September 14** via Zoom. If you would like to attend as a guest, please let President, Paul Novak know at paulnovak11@gmail.com.
- **Children's Choir practice** will be held on **Sunday, September 26.**
- **Parish Informational Meeting!** The Parish Council will hold an informational meeting on **Sunday, September 19** during coffee hour. This will allow PC to give updates to the Parish and an opportunity to reply to questions. All are welcome!

Annual Church Picnic

The annual church picnic was held on Sunday, August 22nd at Preble Park. We were blessed with great weather, wonderful attendance and hungry mosquitoes! Thanks to all that brought drinks, salads and desserts. Matt Tomac chaired the picnic again and we thank him for all his efforts for making it another successful church picnic. Thanks to all that came. Let's do it again next year!





Vacation Church School

The Vacation Church School held on July 26-27 was a great success! The first day, we learned about St. Jacob of Alaska, and the second day we learned about St. Panteleimon, as well as learning and discussing the hymn to the Theotokos, "It is Truly Meet." The children prayed and sang together, learned about the sacrament of confession, played games, made crafts, shared a meal, and even watched some Veggie Tales! Some of the older children and teens participated by doing the readings for Divine Liturgy and the prayers of the hours. We also got to celebrate Lydia's birthday together! Not only did the children learn more about our faith, but they formed friendships with others they may not have met before.



Did your child attend Vacation Church School? Here are some questions you can ask them to remind them of what they heard and keep the learning going:

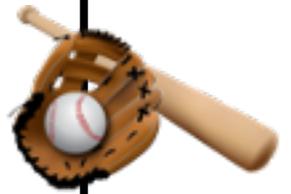
- ~How did St. Jacob of Alaska travel to different parts of Alaska to tell others about Christ? (He used a kayak.)
- ~Why is St. Panteleimon usually depicted in his icons carrying a box? (He was a healer, and that is what he used to carry his tools.)
- ~Why do we sing the words, "It is truly meet"? What does that mean? ("Meet" is an old word that means "correct" or "appropriate"--it's the right thing to do to sing hymns to the Mother of our Lord. She always said "yes" to what God wanted her to do, and we want to follow her example!)
- ~What do you remember about Fr. John's talk about Confession? Why is it important?

Thank you to all the parents who brought their children to Vacation Church School, taking time out of their schedules during the week to bring their kids to church. Thank you also to our adult leaders: Lin Lan, Melissa, Joy, Sarah, and especially Fr. John, who led and organized much of the program. Hopefully, this will be just the first of many such events in years to come!





Timber Rattler game fun on July 30th!!!
Enjoyed a game between the Timber Rattler's
and Cedar Rapids Kernels!



Curried Chicken and Grape Salad

Ingredients

Dressing

- 1/4 cup mayonnaise
- 1/4 cup plain yogurt
- 2 teaspoons curry powder
- 1/2 teaspoon grated lemon zest
- 1/2 teaspoon salt

Salad

- 3 cups cubed cooked boneless, skinless chicken
- 1 cup seedless red grapes
- 8 cups baby spinach
- 1/4 cup sliced almonds, toasted

Thank You.....
Joy Jeffers for the
delicious recipes!.

Preparation

Whisk together: mayonnaise, yogurt, curry powder, lemon zest and salt.

Combine: chicken & grapes in a bowl. Add dressing and toss to coat.

Chill 15 minutes. Add chicken salad and almonds to spinach. Toss and serve.

Shrimp & Dill Rice Salad



Ingredients:

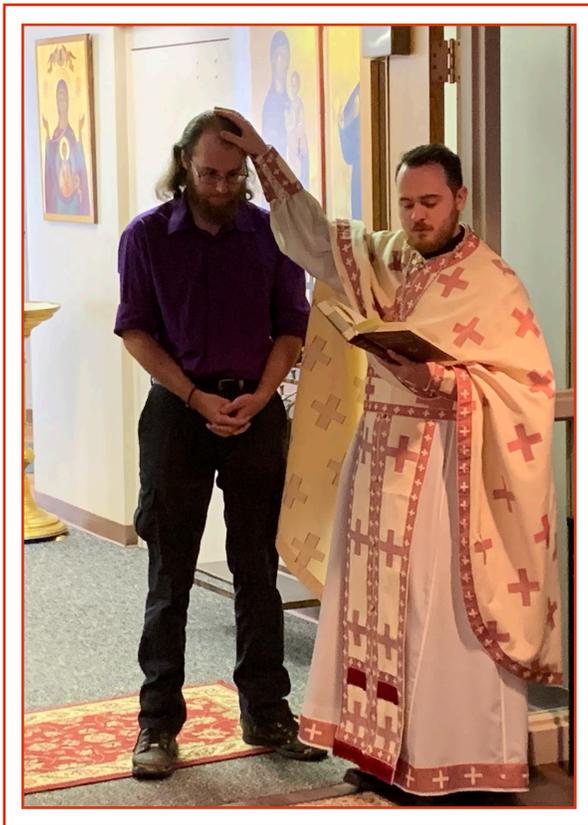
- 3 c. cooked converted/parboiled white rice
- 1 cucumber, seeded, quartered, sliced
- 1 can black olives, halved
- 3 green onions, chopped
- 1 c. shrimp (cut if large)

Dressing:

- 1/3 cup oil
- 1/4 c. fresh lemon juice
- 2-3 cloves garlic
- 1 TBSP dill weed
- 1/4 tsp pepper

Welcomed into the Church....

Kaine Bernarde was Chrismated into the Orthodox faith with the name of Nicholas on Sunday, July 11. Jim Stuck is his sponsor. Many years!



Evangeline Maria Thetford.....

Was received into the Church by Baptism on Saturday, August 28th.
Evangeline's godparents are Father Anthony and Khouria Evangelia Niqula
Her parents are Father John and Matushka Katherine Thetford.
Many years!

