



*Jesus Christ, our
Saviour and Redeemer*

Holy Protection Orthodox Church

Greetings on this blessed Lord's Day! Please take a green information sheet if this is your first time here. You can put in any collection basket or hand to greeter

IN EMERGENCY CALL/TEXT 813-406-2620 (Fr.'s cell). If in middle of night and no answer, call 813-659-0123 or 813-451-9829 (Pani's cell). If they are off duty please call Parish Council President below

Schedule

Tone 8

Sunday, August 18
9th Sunday after
Pentacost

10 am Divine Liturgy
Blessing Flowers & Herbs
11:15am Fellowship
Reader: Andy
Altar: Vasilij & Vladislav
Counters: Pani, Ilya

Sunday, August 25
10th Sunday after
Pentacost

10 am Divine Liturgy
11:15am Fellowship
Reader class with Andy
Reader: Brian
Altar: Jefferson
Counters: Pani, Marijean

Sunday, Sept. 1
11th Sunday after
Pentacost

10 am Divine Liturgy
11:15am Fellowship
Reader: Joseph
Altar: Vasilij & Vladislav
Counters: Tom, Katie D

Sunday, Sept. 8
12th Sunday after
Pentacost

10 am Divine Liturgy
11:15am Fellowship
Reader: Brian
Altar: Jefferson
Counters: Tom, Mike D

ANNOUNCEMENTS

On September 27 and 28 at St. Nicholas Orthodox Church in Tarpon Springs there is a woman's retreat with Sylvia Leontaritis to talk about her book "Songs of Praise" Information is at this link: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/st-nicholas-cathedral-womens-retreat-tickets-63539651809>
The retreat includes a copy of her book.

Next week Andy will have another class for reading the Epistle for all those interested.

We are starting a new visitation ministry to visit parishioners in need. We will focus on those who are sick, elderly and shut ins. If you interested in being part of this ministry, please speak to Rebecca.

If you would like to serve on the parish council, please submit your name to a council member. The elections committee will review all names and we will elect members on September 8 at the General Assembly.

The general parish assembly is scheduled for Sept 8. Please join us for updates and discussion on the future and the election of parish council members.

Please review the calendar on the side of the bulletin and notice if you are scheduled to be a counter with a parish council member.

Sign up for fellowship! It can be as simple as bagels or donuts. Please see the board in the hall, or a council member if you have any questions. Please refer to the Fellowship guidelines when it is your Sunday to do fellowship.

Christian Education will resume on September 15. Pani will still print out the Children's Word weekly for the youth. If you are interested in helping out, please see Scottie. We would like to begin a rotation schedule.

As you take your summer vacations, please remember to keep your pledge, the church's expenses don't take a vacation.

Reminder...Father's days off are Monday and Saturday.

If you are coming to confession, please be in line by 9:50 am on a normal Sunday. On a Sunday there is a Memorial scheduled, please be in line by 9:35 am. Please line up down the center isle of the church.

Parish council contacts: Scottie (President): 813-629-6027, Brian (Vice President): (813) 763-5226, Rebecca (Treasurer): (813) 763-5225, Paula (813) 838-4554 (Secretary) Tom Moore Financial Secretary

If you have someone who needs to be added to the prayer list, please see Cynthia Brown, beginning next week. You can contact Cynthia during the week at cynthiaann36@live.com or on Facebook Messenger. We will update the list monthly.

Prayer Corner: Please pray for the ailing: Alexander, Kathy, William, Walter, Helen, Neila, Olexander, Anna, John, Carol, Mat. Mary, SD. John, Randee, John, Ryan, Olga, Paul, Katy, Joy, Will, Michael, Dan, Vilma, Alexander, Virginia, Marjorie, Darla, Pirkko, Freda, John, Joan, Amy, Travis, Logan, Joshua, Brian, Jacob, George, Sally

Saint John of Rila, the great spiritual ascetic of the Bulgarian Orthodox Church and Heavenly Protector of the Bulgarian nation, was born in the year 876 in the village of Skrino in the Sredets district [now Sofia].

After he had been orphaned, the boy became a cowherd in order to avoid people. Once the rich man beat him for losing a cow with its calf. The boy cried long and he prayed, that God would help him. When he found the cow with the calf, the water at that time flowed high and strong in the River Struma. The young cowherd prayed, he placed his own tattered shirt on the water, made the Sign of the Cross over it, took up the calf in his arms and went with it, as though on dry land, to the other bank of the river where the cow was.

The rich man, hidden in the forest, was frightened upon seeing this miracle. He rewarded the youth generously, then sent him away from his home. Having given away his things, the boy left his village. Where and when the saint took monastic tonsure is unknown.

At the very first he pursued asceticism on a high and barren hill, eating only wild plants. His hut was of brushwood. After a short while robbers fell upon him by night, beat him, and drove him off from there. Then he found a deep cave and settled in it. Soon, his nephew Saint Luke also settled there.

The place was quite unpopulated, so that Saint John at first considered the appearance of Luke a demonic trick, but learning that the youth sought the salvation of his soul, he lovingly accepted him. Not for long, however, did they live together. Saint John's brother found the ascetics, and forcibly took away his son. Along the way home the youth died from the bite of a snake. The brother repented and asked forgiveness of the monk. The wanderer went frequently to the grave of the righteous youth; his beloved place of rest was there.

Saint John spent twelve years in the desolate cave, and then he went into the Rila wilderness and settled in the hollow of a tree. He fasted and prayed a great deal, wept incessantly, and ate only grass. Seeing such endurance, God caused beans to grow, which he ate for a long time. The beans and his exploits made him known to people.

Once a flock of frightened sheep ran along the hilly steep paths, and did not stop until the place where the monk lived. The shepherds, following after the flock, with astonishment saw the hermit, who amicably greeted them: "You arrive here hungry. Pick some of my beans and eat." All ate and were satisfied. One gathered many beans in reserve. Along the way home he offered them to his comrades, but there were no beans in the pilfered pods. The shepherds turned back penitent, and the Elder stood there, saying with a smile: "See, children, these fruits are appointed by God for subsistence in the wilderness."

From that time they began to bring to the monk the sick and those troubled by unclean spirits, which he healed by prayer. Fleeing celebrity, the monk went from his beloved tree-hollow and settled on a high and rocky crag difficult of access, where he dwelt for seven years under the open sky. Reports about the great ascetic reached even the Bulgarian king Peter (927-969), who wanted to meet him. Saint John wrote a letter, refusing such a meeting out of humility.

Later on Saint John accepted under him the guidance of monks, who built a monastery with a church in the cave where Saint John formerly lived. He wisely tended his flock and died on August 18, 946 at 70 years of age.

Five years before his end he wrote in his own hand "A Testament to Disciples," one of the finest creations of Old Bulgarian literature. The holy life of the ascetic and the remarkable mercies of God through his prayers were a fine preaching of the Christian Faith in the newly-baptized Bulgarian land. In the uneasy time of struggle of Bulgaria with Byzantium, under the west Bulgarian king Samuel (976-1014), Saint John appeared to his disciples, commanding them to transfer his relics to Sredets (Sofia), where the Bulgarian Patriarch Damian (927-972) was hiding. It is presumed that the transfer of relics took place in the year 980.

Somewhat later, the right hand of Saint John of Rila was transferred to Russia (presumably to the city of Rila, where a church was constructed in the name of Saint John of Rila, with a chapel dedicated to the martyrs Florus and Laurus, on the day of their commemoration (August 18) on which he died).

The name of Saint John was known and loved by the Russian people from antiquity. Data about the death of the saint is preserved, especially in Russian sources (the MENAION for August in the twelfth century, in the Mazurinsk Chronicle).

In the year 1183, the Hungarian king Bela II (1174-1196), during a campaign against the Greeks, seized the chest with the relics of Saint John, together with other booty, and took it to the city of Esztergom.

In the year 1187, after he embellished the reliquary, he sent back the holy relics with great honor. On October 19, 1238 the relics of Saint John were solemnly transferred to the new capital, Trnovo, and put in a church dedicated to the saint. On July 1, 1469 the holy relics of Saint John of Rila were returned to the Rila monastery, where they rest to the present day, granting grace-filled help to all the believers.

Troparion — Tone 1 St. John Rila

Your life was a foundation of repentance / and a model of compunction, / an image of consolation and spiritual perfection, / equal to the angels, O venerable one. / You persevered in prayer, fasting and tears, O Father John; / intercede with Christ God for our souls.

Troparion Resurrection Tone 8

You descended from on high, O Merciful One! You accepted the three day burial to free us from our sufferings! O Lord, our Life and Resurrection: glory to You!

Kontakion — Tone 2 Leavetaking of Dormition

Neither the tomb, nor death could hold the Theotokos, / Who is constant in prayer and our firm hope in her intercessions. / For being the Mother of Life, / She was translated to life by the One who dwelt in her virginal womb.