

Holy Cross Orthodox Church

2365 South Olga Drive

Fort Myers, Florida

Very Rev. George Volkovinsky (440) 319-5519

Website & Directory Information.

www.HolyCrossFtMyers.Org

11th Sunday After Pentecost - Tone 2. Holy Prophet Zachariah and Righteous Elizabeth, parents of St. John the Baptist (1st c.). *Martyrdom of Ven. Athanasius, Abbot of Brest (1648). Martyrdom of the Holy Passion bearer Gleb (in holy Baptism David—1015).*

Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom

1 Cor. 9:2-12 Matthew 18: 23-35

Liturgical Schedule:

Sundays - 9:30 am - Divine Liturgy

Sept. 7 – Tuesday – 5:00 pm Vespers

Sept. 8 – Wednesday - 9:00 am - Nativity of the Holy Lady Theotokos

Sept. 11 – Saturday – 5:00 pm Great Vespers

Sept. 13 – Monday – 5:00 pm Great Vespers/Litya

Sept. 14 - Tuesday - 9:00 am - Divine Liturgy - Exaltation of The Life-Giving Cross

Holy Prophet Zachariah and Righteous Elizabeth, parents of St. John the Baptist

The Holy Prophet Zachariah and the Righteous Elizabeth were the parents of the holy Prophet, Forerunner and Baptist of the Lord, John. They were descended from the lineage of Aaron. Saint Zachariah, son of Barach, was a priest in the Jerusalem Temple and Saint Elizabeth was the sister of Saint Anna, the mother of the Most Holy Theotokos. The righteous spouses, “walking in all the commandments of the Lord” (Luke 1:6), suffered barrenness, which in those times was considered a punishment from God.

Once, during his turn of priestly service in the Temple, Saint Zachariah was told by an angel that his aged wife would bear him a son, who “will be great in the sight of the Lord” (Luke 1:15) and “will go before Him in the spirit and power of Elias” (Luke 1:17).

Zachariah doubted that this prediction would come true and for his weakness of faith he was punished by becoming mute. When Elizabeth gave birth to a son, through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, she announced that his name was John, although no one in their family had this name.

They asked Zachariah and he also wrote the name John down on a tablet. Immediately the gift of speech returned to him and inspired by the Holy Spirit, he began to prophesy about his son as the Forerunner of the Lord.

When King Herod heard from the Magi about the birth of the Messiah, he decided to kill all the infants up to two years old at Bethlehem and the surrounding area, hoping that the new-born Messiah would be among them.

Herod knew about John’s unusual birth, and he wanted to kill him, fearing that he was the foretold King of the Jews. But Elizabeth hid herself and the infant in the hills. The murderers searched everywhere for John. Elizabeth, when she saw her pursuers, began to implore God for their safety, and immediately the hill opened up and concealed her and the infant from their pursuers.

In these tragic days Saint Zachariah was taking his turn at the services in the Temple. Soldiers sent by Herod tried in vain to learn from him the whereabouts of his son. Then, by command of Herod, they murdered this holy prophet, having stabbed him between the temple and the altar (MT 23: 35). Elizabeth died forty days after her husband, and Saint John, preserved by the Lord, dwelt in the wilderness until the day of his appearance to the nation of Israel.

Announcements

Holy Cross Orthodox Church invites you to join us for Bible study at the church beginning Thursday, September 9th at 07:30 a.m. Our Bible Study is a time of fellowship, learning, and growing through the sharing and understanding of God’s word. All are welcome!

Prayer Request for the sick/recovering

Nicholas Maas

Megan - David & Phyllis Bartos' daughter

Matthew - the late Fr. Timpko's grandson

Jazmine - Friend of Sergius

Please let us know if there is anyone else you would like added to the Prayer List.