

~::~~ TAKING A LEAP OF FAITH ~::~~

When we read both the Old and the New Testament, we can find example after example of God asking His servants to do some pretty preposterous things! He ordered Noah to build an ark in a region with no water in sight. He commanded Moses to lead the Israelites out of Egypt to the Promised Land, even though they were shackled in the chains of slavery. He instructed Joshua to march around the walled city of Jericho with his troops, guaranteeing that the walls would come crashing down if His instructions were followed to the letter. He revealed to the Virgin Mary that she would give birth to the Savior, even though she had no earthly husband. We can only imagine what went through the minds of these saintly individuals at the time of their encounter with the Lord. We do, however, know with certainty what their ultimate response was: THEY OBEYED. Whatever doubts they may have had, they were still willing to take that "leap of faith" and put their total trust in God.

In our own life, there will be times when we will be called upon to show the strength of our faith. Perhaps we will not be asked to do something as dramatic as Noah, Moses, Joshua and the Theotokos were. Nonetheless, the time will come when our faith will be tested – and God's tests are never easy. But rest assured that God's blessings are bestowed in abundance upon those who remain loyal to Him and are obedient to His commands. We must never be afraid to take a "leap of faith." The strong hand of the Lord is always there to catch us.

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ST. RAPHAEL ORTHODOX CHURCH

Orthodox Church in America, Diocese of the South

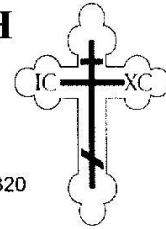
1277 N. Paul Dr., Inverness, FL 34453

Fr. Sergious Gerken, Parish Priest

Warden Barbara Aldunate, Co-Warden Joel Miller, Treasurer Linda Labosky

Please Visit: [www: straphaelchurch.org](http://www.straphaelchurch.org) Church: 352-201-1320

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SUNDAY, DEC. 26, 2021 - 27th SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST – Tone 2.
Sunday after Nativity. Holy Righteous Ones: Joseph, David the King, and James.

HOLY WORSHIP THIS WEEK	Please join us after Divine Liturgy for a Coffee Fellowship in Myrrhbearers Hall Confessions - Ask Fr. Sergious for a time	DAILY SCRIPTURE READINGS
Sat: Great Vespers 4:00 PM		Mon: Acts 6:8-15; 7:1-5; 47-60, Matthew 21:33-42, 2 Timothy 2:20-26, Mark 10:46-52
Sun: Reading of The Hours 9:45 AM Divine Liturgy 10:00 AM Sunday after Nativity		Tue: 2 Timothy 3:16-4:4, Mark 11:11-23 Wed: 2 Timothy 4:9-22, Mark 11:22-26 Thu: Titus 1:5-2:1, Mark 11:27-33 Fri: 1 Timothy 6:11-16, Matthew 12:15-21, Titus 1:15-2:10, Mark 12:1-12
Thu.: Akathist to St. Herman 4:00 PM		Sat: Genesis 17:1-2; 4; 5-7; 8; 9-10; 11-12; 14, Proverbs 8:22-30; 10:31-11:12, John 10:9-16, Colossians 2:8-12, Luke 2:20-21; 40-52; 6:17-23, Hebrews 7:26-8:2, 1 Timothy 3:14-4:5, Matthew 3:1-11

+EPISTLE, *Sunday After*+ (Galatians 1:11-19) Brethren: But I make known to you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached by me is not according to man. For I neither received it from man, nor was I taught it, but it came through the revelation of Jesus Christ. For you have heard of my former conduct in Judaism, how I persecuted the church of God beyond measure and tried to destroy it. And I advanced in Judaism beyond many of my contemporaries in my own nation, being more exceedingly zealous for the traditions of my fathers. But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb and called me through his grace, to reveal His Son in me, that I might preach Him among the Gentiles, I did not immediately confer with flesh and blood, nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were apostles before me; but I went to Arabia, and returned again to Damascus. Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and remained with him fifteen days. But I saw none of the other apostles except James, the Lord's brother.

Choir Practice Sunday at 9 AM (No Choir Practice Monday, Dec. 27)

+GOSPEL, *Sunday After*+ (Matthew 2:13-23) Now when they had departed, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream, saying, "Arise, take the young Child and His mother, flee to Egypt, and stay there until I bring you word; for Herod will seek the young Child to destroy Him." When he awoke, he took the young Child and His mother by night and departed for Egypt, and was there until the death of Herod, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying, "Out of Egypt I called My Son." Then Herod, when he saw that he was deceived by the wise men, was exceedingly angry; and he sent forth and put to death all the male children who were in Bethlehem and in all its districts, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had determined from the wise men. Then was fulfilled what was spoken by Jeremiah the prophet, saying: "A voice was heard in Rahmah, lamentation, weeping, and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children, refusing to be comforted, because they are no more." Now when Herod was dead, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt, saying, "Arise, take the young Child and His mother, and go to the land of Israel, for those who sought the young Child's life are dead." Then he awoke, took the young Child and His mother, and came into the land of Israel. But when he heard that Archelaus was reigning over Judea instead of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there. And being warned by God in a dream, he turned aside into the region of Galilee. And he came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, "He shall be called a Nazarene."

Our **2022 Annual Parish Meeting** has been scheduled for Sunday, January 30, 2022 after Divine Liturgy.

THE GIFTS - DEC. 19		VIGIL CANDLES - DEC. 19
<p>Attendance 33</p> <p>Regular Offerings 553 Candles 194</p>		<p><u>Fr. Sergious</u> - Oh Blessed St. Herman. Intercede for us!</p> <p><u>Lydia O'Dell</u> - Blessed St. Herman of Alaska, guide us as we walk the Orthodox way.</p> <p><u>Zina Juskin</u> - Memory of husband Vladimir.</p> <p><u>Nancy Kinley</u> - Health of Bill, Julianna & Fam., Andrew & Fam., Mary Ann H., Patricia, Joel, Judy, Patty, Pat & Nick.</p> <p><u>Barbara Aldenate</u> - Frank, Debora.</p> <p><u>Nick Borick</u> - Ryan, Olga, Mary Ann H., Eva, Richard, Nick & Pat.</p> <p><u>Dolores Lichatz</u> - Memory of Peter, Olga.</p>
<p><i>We sincerely thank and bless Charles and Lou Ellen Davis for their ongoing generous donations.</i></p>		