First Things First:

Making Time for what Matters Most
A Six-Week Lenten Study
Join us Wednesday evenings during Great Lent

March 1 First Things First: Worship
   Dinner Sponsored by the Sunday School

March 8 First Things First: Community
   Dinner Sponsored by the Choir

March 15 First Things First: Love
   Dinner Sponsored by the AHEPA/Daughters

March 22 First Things First: Learning
   Dinner Sponsored by the Young at Heart and Welcome Ministry

March 29 First Things First: Service
   Dinner Sponsored by the Philoptochos

April 5 First Things First: Priorities
   Dinner Sponsored by the Young Adults and Bible Studies

Each Wednesday evening Schedule:
6:00 pm Pre-Sanctified Liturgy
7:15 pm Lenten Dinner provided by one of our ministries
7:45 pm Presentation by Father Stavros
8:15 pm Small group discussion
8:45 pm Concluding remarks and closing prayer

Great Lent 2023
St. John the Baptist Greek Orthodox Church
Tampa, FL
WHAT IS SERVICE?
- There are two distinct Greek words in the original text of the New Testament that are both translated as "servant."
  - Diakonia refers to ministry, service, relief, support. It appears 35 times in the New Testament.
  - Doulos refers to a slave or bondservant to the master. We belong to the Lord, not to ourselves.
- The words ministry and service are almost interchangeable. Diakonia is the kind of service that helps someone else. We are called to a life of service to others. There is no small act of service - it all matters to God! Matthew 10:42

JESUS AS SERVANT
- Jesus is the greatest example we have of a servant. He exemplifies the mindset and the attitude of a servant: Jesus was humble and knew that serving came with great sacrifice. Philippians 2:5-8
- Jesus said that He came to serve, not to be served. Mark 10:42-45
- Jesus told His disciples that whoever would be the greatest must be the servant of all. Luke 22:26-27
- In one of His greatest acts of humility and service, Jesus washed the feet of His disciples, even the feet of the one who was going to betray Him. If He, the Lord and teacher, washed the feet of the disciples, we should see it as an example of how we are to serve others. John 13: 12-17

AS FOR ME AND MY HOUSE...
- Service is not just what we do, it is who we are. How, when, where, and who we serve should shape our lives in every way. The primary way we serve the Lord is by serving others. Matthew 25:44
- No one person can serve everyone. However, everyone can serve someone, and when this happens, everyone is served.
- God is more interested in why we serve than in how well we serve. He is always looking at our hearts, and whether we serve others willingly and eagerly out of love. Humility and joy should be the hallmarks of serving. Ephesians 6:6-8
- Serving others gives our lives great purpose, significance, and value. We are called to serve in our homes, relationships, school, jobs. Joshua 24:15

...WE WILL SERVE THE LORD
- We serve the Lord by serving others. In the early church, the disciples were focused on two main things: preaching the word of God and the daily ministry to widows. Acts 6:1-4
- Ministry is a vital part of every church community. The people who participate in the various ministries really should be called "ministers."
- We should be asking ourselves "where can I serve?" in the church. There are a variety of ministries to choose from. Every ability and gift (what you are good at and what you love to do) can be used for God's glory. Ephesians 4:11-12
- If everyone in the church is focused on serving, then everyone is being served! Imagine the strength and power of a church filled with servants.
- We should serve with the intention of building up the Body of Christ. Every act of service matters because we are all dependent on each other to function. 1 Corinthians 12:25-28
- Servants demonstrate the traits of availability, gratitude, faithfulness and generosity. Hebrews 6:10
- We must remember that service to others should be joyful! Servants think of ministry as an opportunity, not an obligation. Psalm 100:2
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1. Read Philippians 2:5-8 with your group. Discuss the magnitude of Jesus' humility and sacrifice when He came to earth. How are we called to have the same mindset as Christ?

2. Think about the abilities, gifts, and talents you have been given. What are you good at and what do you love to do? How do you use them to serve others? Have you thought of your job or vocation as a ministry?

3. What keeps people from serving at church? How can we do better at encouraging others to serve? How could you joyfully tell them how serving others can be so rewarding?

4. How can you better be aware of the opportunities you may have to serve the needs of others this week? What do you think you would notice in your family, church, workplace and/or circle of friends if everyone served each other with joy and humility?