



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



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Seek first His kingdom and His righteousness and all these things shall be yours as well.
Matthew 6:33



PART FIVE: *Service*

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. **Psalms 100:2**



SCRIPTURE REFERENCES

MATTHEW 10:42	<i>And whoever gives to one of these little ones even a cup of cold water because he is a disciple, truly, I say to you, he shall not lose his reward."</i>
PHILIPPIANS 2:5-8	<i>5 Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, 6 Who, though He was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, 7 but emptied Himself, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. 8 And being found in human form He humbled Himself and became obedient unto death, even death on a cross.</i>
MARK 10:42-45	<i>42 And Jesus called them to Him and said to them, "You know that those who are supposed to rule over the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great men exercise authority over them. 43 But it shall not be so among you; but whoever would be great among you must be your servant, 44 and whoever would be first among you must be slave of all. 45 For the Son of Man also came not to be served but to serve, and to give His life as a ransom for many."</i>
LUKE 22:26-27	<i>26 But not so with you; rather let the greatest among you become as the youngest, and the leader as one who serves. 27 For which is the greater, one who sits at table, or one who serves? Is it not the one who sits at table? But I am among you as one who serves.</i>
JOHN 13: 12-17	<i>12 When He had washed their feet, and taken His garments, and resumed His place, He said to them, "Do you know what I have done to you? 13 You call Me Teacher and Lord; and you are right, for so I am. 14 If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. 15 For I have given you an example, that you also should do as I have done to you. 16 Truly, truly, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master; nor is he who is sent greater than he who sent him. 17 If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them.</i>
MATTHEW 25:44	<i>Then they also will answer, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not minister to You?'</i>
EPHESIANS 6:6-8	<i>6 not in the way of eye-service, as men-pleasers, but as servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart, 7 rendering service with a good will as to the Lord and not to men, 8 knowing that whatever good any one does, he will receive the same again from the Lord, whether he is a slave or free.</i>
JOSHUA 24:15	<i>15 And if you be unwilling to serve the Lord, choose this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your fathers served in the region beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you dwell; but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord."</i>
ACTS 6:1-4	<i>Now in these days when the disciples were increasing in number, the Hellenists murmured against the Hebrews because their widows were neglected in the daily distribution. 2 And the twelve summoned the body of the disciples and said, "It is not right that we should give up preaching the word of God to serve tables. 3 Therefore, brethren, pick out from among you seven men of good repute, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we may appoint to this duty. 4 But we will devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word."</i>
EPHESIANS 4:11-12	<i>11 And His gifts were that some should be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, 12 to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ</i>
1 CORINTHIANS 12:25-28	<i>25 that there may be no discord in the body, but that the members may have the same care for one another. 26 If one member suffers, all suffer together; if one member is honored, all rejoice together. 27 Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it. 28 And God has appointed in the church first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then workers of miracles, then healers, helpers, administrators, speakers in various kinds of tongues.</i>
HEBREWS 6:10	<i>For God is not so unjust as to overlook your work and the love which you showed for His sake in serving the saints, as you still do.</i>
PSALM 100:2	<i>Serve the Lord with gladness! Come into His presence with singing!</i>

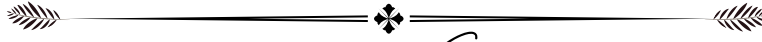


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PART FIVE: *Service*



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 have you 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?