

"LORD, BENEVOLENT AND ALL POWERFUL, AS WE CELEBRATE THIS MEMORABLE OCCASION OF THE CONSECRATION, WE GLORIFY YOU, THE GIVER OF THIS BLESSING, PRAYING THAT YOU BLESS THE SPIRITUAL UNDERSTANDING OF OUR SOULS, THROUGH THE INTERCESSION OF THE GLORIOUS CHAMPIONS OF THE FAITH."

THE CONSECRATION OF AN ORTHODOX CHURCH

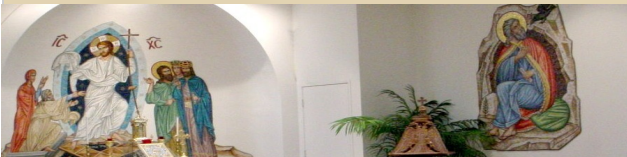
Churches are dedicated to the exclusive service and Glory of God through the rite of Consecration. We refer to this as the baptism of the church building that we call our sanctuary.

For an Orthodox Christian, salvation is union with Christ. The Church's sacraments are the means by which a Christian is united to Christ. Because the sacraments are performed on the Holy Altar Table, the Consecration Service is centered there.

On the eve of the Consecration Service, all articles on the Altar Table are moved, and the Altar is left uncovered. The bishop brings the relics of saints, usually holy martyrs. They are placed on a ceremonial plate called the paten and are set on the Altar, where overnight, they remain illuminated by a vigil lamp. A short prayer service is celebrated honoring the memory of these martyrs. Great Vespers follows, a very joyous celebration attended by all the faithful.

The next morning the order of services is: Matins (Orthros) followed by the Consecration Service and then the first Divine Liturgy in the newly consecrated sanctuary.

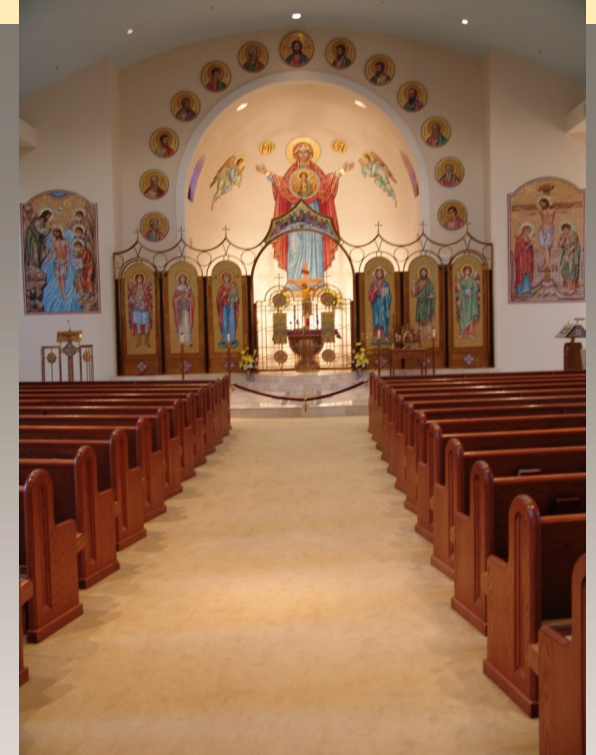
During the Consecration Service, the holy relics will be sealed in a compartment inside the Altar Table. The Altar will then be washed, anointed and a vigil lamp will be lighted and continue to burn at all times, symbolic of the never-failing light of Christ who is the light of the world.



ABOUT ST. BARBARA GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

- March 31, 1959 The state of Florida granted a charter to the newly formed Greek Orthodox Community of Manasota.
- February 1973 The community was reorganized and purchased an estate on 22nd Ave West in Bradenton.
- June 14, 1976 The Official Charter from the Church was granted by the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese
- 1979 St. Barbara was chosen as the Patron Saint of the community and was approved by the congregation.
- 1979 The present property of St. Barbara Church was purchased.
- 1982 The construction for the Community Center / Fellowship Hall began.
- October 1983 Rev. Fr. Frank Kirlangitis is assigned as the first full time priest of St. Barbara.
- June 1984 The first Glendi Festival was organized.
- December 4, 1988 Ground Breaking service and ceremony for the new church building.
- March 25, 1990 Construction began for St. Barbara's new church
- December 7, 1991 Thyranixia service by His Grace Bishop Philip of Daphnousia.
- October 1994 the "Ecclesiastical Fine Arts Committee" under Fr. Frank's guidance commissioned Mr. Sirio Tonelli to execute the mosaic iconography.
- July 2001, St. Barbara community hosts the "Atlanta Diocese Clergy-Laity Assembly and Philoptochos Conference.
- Rev. Fr. Frank Kirlangitis was elevated to the rank of Archimandrite of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese.
- April 28, 2002 (Palm Sunday) Burning of the Church Mortgage ceremony.
- April 2006 The "Ecclesiastical Fine Arts Committee" under Fr. Frank's guidance and the Metropolis of Atlanta blessings commissioned Mr. George Filipakis to complete the mural iconography: the dome, the four side icons and the front of the choir loft.
- 2010 Very Rev. Arch. Fr. Frank Kirlangitis retires after serving faithfully St. Barbara's community for 27 year and 55 years of deep dedication to the work of the Lord as a priest.
- June 2010 Rev. Fr. Peter Andronache is assigned to serve as a full time priest to St. Barbara's Community.
- November 2012, Rev. Fr. John Bociu is assigned to serve St. Barbara's community as a full time priest.
- December 13-14, 2013 His Eminence Alexios, consecrates the St. Barbara Greek Orthodox Church.

"Without the relics of martyrs or holy saints it is not permissible to perform a Consecration, for the martyrs are the foundation of the Church, built over the foundation of the Savior. In the Church, it is necessary that the saints and martyrs be beneath the altar, since this is the Church, and since the altar is the throne of God and the Tomb of Christ our God."



WHY WE USE RELICS

Relics, the bodily remains of saints, have been honored and venerated by Christians from the beginning. The sealing or embedding of the relics of martyrs inside the Holy Altar during the Consecration service follows the ancient traditions of the Orthodox Church in performing the Eucharist on the tombs of martyrs. In this manner, we are always reminded that the Church was built on the blood of the martyrs and their faith in our Lord.

OUR MISSION STATEMENT

St. Barbara Greek Orthodox Church follows the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, sanctifying the lives of the faithful, through the Holy Sacraments and assisting those in spiritual and physical need towards a transformed life.

FATHER JOHN BOCIU

"When He opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain for the word of God and for the testimony which they held. And they cried with a loud voice saying, 'How long, O Lord, holy and true, until You judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?' Then a white robe was given to each of them; and it was said to them that they should rest a little longer until both the number of their fellow servants and their brethren, who would be killed as they were, was completed." (Revelation 6:9-11)

From generation to generation, over the centuries, the Orthodox Church kept the custom of the Early Church to build our edifices of worship on the relics of the martyrs saints. They glorified Christ being killed for confessing their faith in Him.

Moses sanctified the altars with blood sacrifice. We retained aspects of that practice, placing into the altar something incomparable more precious than the animals' blood—the relics of saints that were a "living sacrifice". A Saint is the reflection of Christ on earth, a human being that allows God to transform his/her life and to shine through him.

The Holy Altar sanctifies us because it is first sanctified through consecration. The Hierarchy surrounded by clergy attend the Altar as though preparing for a burial, since it represents the tomb of Christ. The spices that we will use and the fragrance that fill the air at the time of consecration, remind us of the spices the Myrrh bearing women took to Christ's tomb to anoint Him early morning, on the Sunday of the Resurrection. Jesus' tomb became a source of life as the linen cloths were first witness to His resurrection, then... the indescribable joy and fear of seeing Him alive.

What a great opportunity we have in front of our eyes while witnessing a truly "once in a life time" blessing. From now on, the relics of the Fathers from the Monastery of St. Savas in Sinai, St. Panteleimon and St. Kyrillos will be a presence that will remain with us in the expectation of the ultimate, greatest event in God's creation—the glorious return of His Son.

The consecrated altars around the world are proof of resurrection and eternal life that continuously sanctify us as a foretaste of His Kingdom.

In Christ,
Rev. Fr. John Bociu

We invite you to participate in:

THE CONSECRATION OF SAINT BARBARA

Friday, December 13, 2013

Evening

Great Vespers 6:00 pm

Prior to the beginning of the Vespers there will be a procession for receiving of the Holy Relics

Reception 8:00 pm

Saturday, December 14, 2013

Morning

Matins 8:00 am

The Consecration Divine Liturgy 9:30 am

Noon

Complimentary

Consecration Luncheon 12:30 pm

Sunday, December 15, 2013

Morning

Matins 8:30 am

Divine Liturgy 9:30 am

Evening

Grand Banquet

HYATT Hotel 5:00 pm

Please contact the Office for information about:

- *Consecration Commemorative Album*
- *Submission of names to be commemorated and sealed in the Holy Altar Table with the Relics*
- *Tickets for the Consecration Grand Banquet*

*Consecration Weekend
December 13-15, 2013*



THE
CONSECRATION
OF SAINT BARBARA