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For immediate release

Inaugural St. Basil International Food Festival Showcases Ethnic Foods for New Orleans Foodies

First annual festival boasts three days of music, dancing and multiethnic dishes

Metairie, LA (October 12, 2016) – Across Europe, the Middle East, Russia, and in many other countries, having a meal is an event filled with family, great food and wonderful conversation. St. Basil Antiochian Orthodox Church in Metairie is bringing back the tradition of breaking bread together. But instead of the traditional three-hour meal, the congregation wants to break bread for three days with music, dancing, and a celebration of cultures from around the world! The St. Basil International Food Festival kicks off Friday, November 4 at the church grounds in Metairie, 3916 Hudson Street, across from the East Jefferson General Hospital Emergency Room.

“Our congregation comes from all over the world. Among the many Orthodox countries, our parish hails from Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, Palestine, Russia, Ukraine, Serbia, Romania, Ethiopia, Greece and the United States,” says Very Reverend Father Peter Nugent.

“Everyone is so excited about introducing their culture, hospitality and traditional foods from their countries to Southeast Louisiana! You know we love good food here, and that is what everyone will find at our International Food Festival,” he says.

Dishes will showcase Middle Eastern staples like kibbe, baklawas, grape leaves, spinach and meat pies, saj cheese and fresh bread baking demonstrations. You can’t find pumpkin kibbe anywhere else in New Orleans, one of the vegan dishes being served! Those looking for Ethiopian foods may like to try the traditional dorwot, rich chicken stew, served with traditional injera – flatbread that accompanies all Ethiopian cuisine. Russian and Eastern European cuisine will round out the food tour. For those with a less exotic palate, Louisiana seafood gumbo will be served and so will grilled shish kabob and hamburgers.

“We are a melting pot of culinary flavors, spices and tastes from many different countries in the world, just like New Orleans. We welcome everyone to come and taste our menu of exotic foods, wines and beers and enjoy some dancing and music to top it off,” says Festival Chairman Cesar El Hajj.

The fun starts Friday, November 4 at 4pm with a DJ. At 7pm, Tin Roof Band takes over the music stage and dance floor. On Saturday, the doors open at noon. Festival-goers can experience a traditional hafli, a Middle Eastern celebration of

food and hospitality with Al Laylai Band that will take the stage at 8pm. On Sunday, Steel House Band starts at 6pm and will close the festival at 9pm.

Make sure to bring the kids! There will be many children's games and bouncy houses making this a family-friendly event. For those wanting to learn more about the ancient Orthodox faith, church tours will be available.

For more on the festival and up-to-date information, go to www.stbasilneworleans.org, check out the St. Basil International Food Festival Facebook page or contact Laila Morcos Zisis at 504-615-2388 or LailaMorcos123@gmail.com.

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