



The Trophy Bearer

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St. George Orthodox Church

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This newsletter is published monthly in the interest of the parishioners and friends of St. George Orthodox Church in Buffalo, a parish of the Diocese of New York and New Jersey and The Orthodox Church in America.

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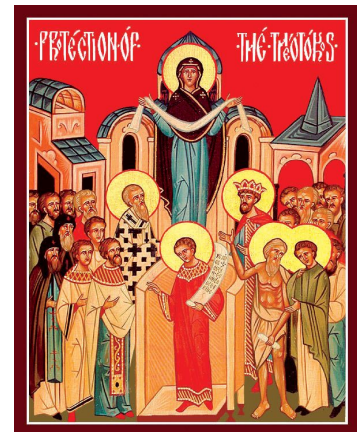
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THE GREAT FEAST OF THE PROTECTION OF THE MOST HOLY THEOTOKOS

The Protection of the Most Holy Theotokos: "Today the Virgin stands in the midst of the Church, and with choirs of Saints she invisibly prays to God for us. Angels and Bishops venerate Her, Apostles and prophets rejoice together, Since for our sake she prays to the Eternal God!"

This miraculous appearance of the Mother of God occurred in the mid-tenth

century in Constantinople, in the Blachernae church where her robe, veil, and part of her belt were preserved after being transferred from Palestine in the fifth century.

On Sunday, October 1, during the All Night Vigil, when the church was overflowing with those at prayer, the Fool-for-Christ St Andrew (October 2), at the fourth hour, lifted up his eyes towards the heavens and beheld our most Holy Lady Theotokos coming through the air, resplendent with heavenly light and surrounded by an assembly of the Saints. St John the Baptist and the holy Apostle John the Theologian accompanied the Queen of Heaven. On bended knees the Most Holy Virgin tearfully prayed for Christians for a long time. Then, coming near the Bishop's Throne, she continued her prayer.

After completing her prayer she took her veil and spread it over the people praying in church, protecting them from enemies both visible and invisible. The Most Holy Lady Theotokos was resplendent with heavenly glory, and the protecting veil in her hands gleamed "more than the rays of the sun." St Andrew gazed trembling at the miraculous vision and he asked his disciple, the blessed Epiphanius standing beside him, "Do you see, brother, the Holy Theotokos, praying for all the world?" Epiphanius answered, "I do see, holy Father, and I am in awe."

The Ever-Blessed Mother of God implored the Lord Jesus Christ to accept the prayers of all the people calling on His Most Holy Name, and to respond speedily to her intercession, "O Heavenly King, accept all those who pray to You and call on my name for help. Do not let them not go away from my icon unheard."

Sts Andrew and Epiphanius were worthy to see the Mother of God at prayer, and "for a long time observed the Protecting Veil spread over the people and shining with flashes of glory. As long as the Most Holy Theotokos was there, the Protecting Veil was also visible, but with her departure it also became invisible. After taking it with her, she left behind the grace of her visitation."

At the Blachernae church, the memory of the miraculous appearance of the Mother of God was remembered. In the fourteenth century, the Russian pilgrim and clerk Alexander, saw in the church an icon of the Most Holy Theotokos praying for the world, depicting St Andrew in contemplation of her.

The Primary Chronicle of St Nestor reflects that the protective intercession of the Mother of God was needed because an attack of a large pagan Russian fleet under the leadership of Askole and Dir. The feast celebrates the divine destruction of the fleet which threatened Constantinople itself, sometime in the years 864-867 or according to the Russian historian Vasiliev, on June 18, 860. Ironically, this Feast is considered important by the Slavic Churches but not by the Greeks.

The Primary Chronicle of St Nestor also notes the miraculous deliverance followed an all-night Vigil and the dipping of the garment of the Mother of God into the waters of the sea at the Blachernae church, but does not mention Sts Andrew and Epiphanius and their vision of the Mother of God at prayer. These latter elements, and the beginnings of the celebrating of the Feast of the Protection, seem to postdate St Nestor and the Chronicle. A further historical complication might be noted under (October 2) dating St Andrew's death to the year 936.

The year of death might not be quite reliable, or the assertion that he survived to a ripe old age after the vision of his youth, or that his vision involved some later pagan Russian raid which met with the same fate. The suggestion that St Andrew was a Slav (or a Scythian according to other sources, such as S. V. Bulgakov) is interesting, but not necessarily accurate. The extent of Slavic expansion and repopulation into Greece is the topic of scholarly disputes.

In the PROLOGUE, a Russian book of the twelfth century, a description of the establishment of the special Feast marking this event states, "For when we heard, we realized how wondrous and merciful was the vision... and it transpired that Your holy

Protection should not remain without festal celebration, O Ever-Blessed One!"

Therefore, in the festal celebration of the Protection of the Mother of God, the Russian Church sings, "With the choirs of the Angels, O Sovereign Lady, with the venerable and glorious prophets, with the First-Ranked Apostles and with the Hieromartyrs and Hierarchs, pray for us sinners, glorifying the Feast of your Protection in the Russian Land." Moreover, it would seem that St Andrew, contemplating the miraculous vision was a Slav, was taken captive, and became the slave of a local inhabitant of Constantinople named Theognostus.

Churches in honor of the Protection of the Mother of God began to appear in Russia in the twelfth century. Widely known for its architectural merit is the temple of the Protection at Nerl, which was built in the year 1165 by holy Prince Andrew Bogoliubsky. The efforts of this holy prince also established in the Russian Church the Feast of the Protection of the Mother of God, about the year 1164.

At Novgorod in the twelfth century there was a monastery of the Protection of the Most Holy Theotokos (the so-called Zverin monastery) In Moscow also under Tsar Ivan the Terrible the cathedral of the Protection of the Mother of God was built at the church of the Holy Trinity (known as the church of St Basil the Blessed).

On the Feast of the Protection of the Most Holy Theotokos we implore the defense and assistance of the Queen of Heaven, "Remember us in your prayers, O Lady Virgin Mother of God, that we not perish by the increase of our sins. Protect us from every evil and from grievous woes, for in you do we hope, and venerating the Feast of your Protection, we magnify you."

A Message From Fr. Jason

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

GLORY TO JESUS CHRIST! GLORY
FOREVER!

As we celebrated the Feast of The Universal Exaltation of The Precious and Life-Giving Cross of Our Lord back in September, we are reminded that this Feast is directly linked to our salvation and Life in Christ! As we sing in the beautiful Hymn: "Having beheld The Resurrection of Christ...", we hear the following words: "For through The Cross, joy has come into all the world!" "For through The Cross, life has been granted to all!" "For through The Cross death has been destroyed!"

My dear brothers and sisters in Christ, it is our responsibility as Orthodox Christians to uphold, maintain, and spread the Teachings of the Church. We are charged with this great responsibility so that we can share this Good News of Our Lord Jesus Christ with the entire world. We fulfill this by, with, and through The power of The Life-Giving Cross of Our Lord God and Savior Jesus Christ!

As we celebrated this Glorious Feast, may we not only become stronger in our faith but more so we become stronger with one another. For together we will journey and together we will pick up our crosses and follow Christ as a parish family to seek that Love and Grace from The God Who loves us more than we love ourselves.

As we began this New Liturgical Year, may The Cross of Our Lord be a reminder to each of us of how much God loves us that He gave His Only-Begotten Son that whoever believes in Him shall have everlasting life! May we look at The Cross of Our Lord for that hope, strength, love, forgiveness, and guidance as we continue the good work that has been entrusted to us.

My dear brothers and sisters in Christ, let us continue working together so that we can truly fulfill what we have been called to do: To Live and Proclaim the Gospel of Our Lord Jesus Christ!

I thank you all of you for your hard work, dedication, and support and for all that you do for our parish and to assist me and to assist one another. Continue to love one another. Continue to support one another. Continue to respect one another. Continue to pray for one another.

As always, please be assured of my continued love, guidance, support, and prayers for each of you and your families.

May GOD continue to bless and guide all of you, your families, and our entire parish family.

Have a good day! Have a good week! And may the Joy of the Lord be with each and everyone of you! God Bless You!

With Love in Christ,
Fr. Jason

Q&A with Fr. Jay

In this section, we will answer questions that have been given to Fr. Jason on various topics pertaining to our life as Orthodox Christians. If there are any questions that we may have about The Orthodox Faith and Her Teachings, please feel free to leave our question(s) in the box located at the candle desk in church (Questions for Father) or email it to Fr. Jason and he will be able to provide the answers for us. All questions are anonymous and are here for the benefit of everyone to help each of us grow closer in our relationship with Our Lord God and Savior Jesus Christ in understanding our Holy Orthodox Faith and Her Teachings.

What is an Akathist Service and why do we celebrate them?

An **akathist** service, coming from the Greek word: *akathistos*, is a hymn dedicated to Our Lord, The Theotokos, a saint, a holy day/feast within the life of the Church, or one of the persons of the Holy Trinity. The word *akathist* itself means "not sitting." The early akathist hymn is that written in the 6th century to the Theotokos and in its use has part of the Salutations to the Theotokos service (used in the Byzantine tradition during Great Lent).

The name derives from the fact that during the chanting of the hymn, or sometimes the whole service, the congregation is expected to remain standing in reverence, without sitting down, except for the aged or infirm. During Orthodox Christian religious services in general,

sitting, standing, bowing and the making of prostrations are set by an intricate set of guidelines, as well as individual discretion. Only during certain parts of our Divine Services i.e.: readings of the Epistle, reading of the Gospel, Entrances, Anaphora, etc and the singing of Akathists is standing considered mandatory for all.

The writing of akathists continues today as part of the general composition of a service of praise to the Glory of God.

We celebrate the Akathist Service as another way for us to be connected to God through the prayers and intercessions of the One whom we are serving the Akathist in honor of. Akathists are also celebrated during special seasons of the Liturgical Year to help better understand the Feast, the Saints, an event within the Life of Our Lord or Theotokos or the Liturgical Season that we are celebrating. The Akathist Hymn is a very important and indeed an integral part of our religious and ecclesiastical life. When we are present during the Akathist Service, we firmly realize that we commence to ascend the spiritual steps of our life's journey.

The structure of the Akathist Hymn usually follows the following order: Opening Doxology, Trisagion Prayers, Psalm, Akathist Hymn

The akathist hymn itself is divided into thirteen parts, each of which has a kontakion and an oikos. The thirteenth kontakion (which does not have a corresponding ikos) is usually followed by the repetition of the first ikos and kontakion. After the thirteen kontakia and ikoi, additional prayers are added usually in the form of a Litany and Prayer which is followed by the singing of a troparion and kontakion. In some akathists, The Reading of the Gospel is also included. This is followed by the Dismissal.

Parish Activities

PARISH COUNCIL

The next meeting will be Monday, October 28 at 6:30 PM

BRING A FRIEND TO CHURCH SUNDAY

Annual Community Parish Open House/Bring a Friend to Church Sunday on October 27

CHURCH SCHOOL

Church School Outing to The Buffalo Zoo
1:00 to 4:00 PM

BIBLE STUDY

We will be having a Bible Study class two Wednesdays each month from 9:30 am to 11:00 am beginning on Wednesday October 9. There will also be evening classes beginning in November. See the weekly bulletin, The Messenger, for more information and schedule of classes.

ADULT EDUCATION/CATECHUMENS' CLASS

The adult class for Orthodox, non-Orthodox, and inquirers' will continue to meet on Wednesday from 6:30 pm to 8 pm. Although there are only 4 classes left, it's not too late to come. Bring yourself, your family, and your friends.

Class 4: The Liturgical Year: 12 Major Feast Days (**Wednesday October 16, 2019**)

Class 5: The Five Cycles of Prayer: Daily and Weekly (**Wednesday October 23, 2019**)

Class 6: Orthodox Traditions: Prayer and Fasting (**Wednesday November 6, 2019**)

Class 7: The Meaning of Holy Icons:

Windows into Heaven/The Creed:

Symbol of Faith

(**Wednesday November 20**)

SISTERHOOD OF ST. GEORGE

10/20: Uncle Tom Reading of Dr. Seuss
"Green Eggs and Ham"

- Special Green Eggs and Ham

Luncheon

- Collection of Dr. Seuss Books
for Buffalo Federation of Women

Up-Coming Events

"A CITY OF GOOD NEIGHBORS NIGHT" PARISH FUNDRAISER

Our parish is hosting "A City of Good Neighbors Night" on **Friday, November 8, 2019**. Join us from 6-10 PM for the best of Buffalo, featuring a meal of appetizers, wings, beef on weck, and spaghetti parm. There will be live music, beer and wine for sale, and a 7-1-6 auction - 7 beautiful theme baskets, 1 pair of fantastic lower bowl Sabres tickets on the blue line for 12/2 game against the NJ Devils, and 6 mystery pound auction items. Admission is \$15 for adults, and \$5 for children 12 and under. Make it a great family night and meet some of the good neighbors of the Queen City. For tickets call Barbara 553-5722, or Fr. Jason 609-851-3811.

THE 2ND ANNUAL DIOCESAN BIBLE BOWL

The Second Annual Diocesan BIBLE BOWL is coming up on Saturday, 16 November 2019, at Holy Resurrection Church in Wayne, New Jersey (10 am to 2 pm)! The first Bible Bowl was a great opportunity for children and adult contestants to deepen their knowledge of the Holy Scriptures while building friendships in fun-filled fellowship. Age groupings are Pre-teens (ages 9-12), Teens (ages 13-19), and Adults (ages 20+). Plan now to attend, to learn, to grow, and to better appreciate the Good News of our Lord found in the Bible. For more information and registration, please visit our diocesan website. NyNjOCA.org

PARISH SHUT-INS

As we say our daily prayers, let us also take time out to remember our loved ones who are homebound, who are in hospitals and who are in nursing homes. Let us remember them that GOD will continue to watch over them and protect them. Also, during the Year, let us take to either send them a card, give them a call, or visit them to let them know how much we love them, how much we remember them, and how much we pray for them.

If anyone has any questions or would like to add someone to our List of Parish Shut-Ins, please see or contact Fr. Jason.

Mr. Albert Fadell
317.376.2562

Mr. Miro Gergoff
508 Massachusetts Avenue
Buffalo, NY 14213

Mrs. Luba Japadjief
189 Tremaine Ave.
Kenmore, NY 14217
716.876.6823

Mrs. Mary Massey
3192 Amsdell Road
Hamburg, NY 14075
716.649.4029

Mrs. Diane Salvamoser
147 West Hazeltine Avenue
Kenmore, NY 14217
716.875.9503

Reader Victor Shanchuk
495 Lafayette Avenue
Buffalo, NY 14222
716.881.3096

Mrs. Catherine Tony
274 Wadsworth Ave.
Tonawanda, NY 14150
716.695.3068

ST. GEORGE ORTHODOX CHURCH BOOKSTORE

When you are in the Parish Fellowship Hall for coffee hour, don't forget to check out our Bookstore. We have some new items that just arrived. These items include icon ornaments, jewelry, icons, prayer books, prayer ropes, and much more. If you need a gift, come check out the bookstore.... you may find something you like!! We are also offering gift certificates for our bookstore. Please speak with Dave or Andrea for more details/information. We thank David and Andrea who are managing our bookstore for

us. If you have any questions or if you would like to order something that you do not see, please see or contact Dave or Andrea and they will be able to assist you. You may also email them at bookstore@stgeorgebuffalo.com. May God continue to bless and guide all of you.

Our Parish Outreach Missions:

Hearts for the Homeless

There are over 400 red bins located throughout the area. The organization collects items to sell in the thrift store as well as items that can be recycled. With the money earned, they provide meals for the homeless of Buffalo from their mobile soup kitchen as well as a food pantry open to local families. They also are in need of donations of food for the soup kitchen and food pantry. The website is <http://heartsforthehomeless.org>

Homespace

The mission of Homespace is to provide not only transitional housing, but also provide support programs to help families in need break away from dependency and begin a new life of personal growth and economic independence. Homespace provides affordable housing for young (ages 16 - 21), homeless, single parent families.

To see what kind of donations they need, see their website which is <http://www.homespacecorp.org>

Buffalo City Mission:

This organization provides meals, shelter, and services to the homeless. They are looking for donations of canned goods and other non-perishable food. The website is www.buffalocitymission.org

Mats for Mission:

This organization collects grocery store bags which they cut into strips and after looping the strips together, crochet mats for the

homeless. The homeless put the mats on the ground under their blankets. The mats provide a dry warm base for sleeping on. There is a bin in the social hall to place your grocery bags in. We meet monthly on the second Tuesday of the month to sort and cut bags. Dinner is provided. Come and join us.

Please bring these items to church and place them in the collection bins located in the Parish Fellowship Hall. Once a month, we will take these items down to the Hearts for Homeless, HomeSpace, and Buffalo City Mission.

Kevin Guest House

Once a month we provide dinner, conversation, and prayer for the residents of the Kevin Guest House. The residents are patients and their caregivers who are under treatment at local hospitals. If you would like to get involved, dinner is served the second Tuesday of the month. Bring something to share (see Fr. Jason) or just come to share in the conversation and prayer.

Diocesan Ministries

AN INVITATION TO SUPPORT THE STEWARDS OF THE OCA

The Orthodox Church in America (OCA) set the direction for expanding our apostolic work in North America at the 18th All-American Council. The foundation for this work is Jesus Christ, Whom we encounter in our spiritual lives, stewardship, evangelism and outreach, and relations with others as we engage the world. Being a steward of the OCA goes beyond the financial gifts which support the work of our church. Being a steward is about caring for and knowing the history of the mission of the Orthodox Church here in North America and finding your place in that history. Having received this great gift of our Orthodox Faith, we bear the responsibility to continue the legacy of Saint Herman and Saint Tikhon; Saint Innocent and Saint Alexis and all the

other saints known and unknown who have worked to build up and expand Christ's Church here in North America. Please consider being a part of that mission today by giving to the Stewards of the OCA. For more information, please visit The OCA Website: <https://oca.org/become-a-steward>

AN INVITATION TO SUPPORT THE MINISTRY OF THE DDB

In order to fund necessary ministries and fulfill the work of the Church in the Diocese of New York and New Jersey, **Distinguished Diocesan Benefactors** generously contribute financial support. To learn more about the DDB, please go to the following link: <http://vimeo.com/71021182> and watch a 60 second video inviting you to join the ever-growing list of Distinguished Diocesan Benefactors of The Diocese of New York and New Jersey who joyfully support the on-going work of our diocese. Their support allows us to provide assistance to new mission parishes, scholarships to seminarians, support the departments of The Diocese, and much-needed encouragement to older struggling parishes. How about you? Our parish is a member of the DDB. If anyone would like to join, please see Fr. Jason as well as take a pamphlet from the table in the back of the church. May God continue to bless and guide you for your continued support.

MONTHLY PUBLICATIONS

The Diocese of New York and New Jersey has two monthly newsletters: **"First Fruits"** and **"Beyond the Plateau."** The goal, as expressed by Archbishop Michael, is to increase communication and grow the communal spirit of diocesan fellowship in the building-up and strengthening of our parish communities. To learn more about these monthly diocesan publications, please refer to the diocesan website: <http://www.nynjoca.org/newsletters.html>.

"LESSONS IN OUR FAITH" VIDEO PRESENTED BY HIS EMINENCE ARCHBISHOP MICHAEL

His Eminence Archbishop Michael presents a series of talks on matters of faith, belief, and the teachings of the Church. These instructional videos are concise and to the point, offering Orthodox Christians much-needed information, helpful advice for their spiritual journey, and assistance in answering questions that may come from

non-Orthodox friends or acquaintances. The goal is that we might better know and better live our faith. These instructional videos can be found at the Diocesan Website: <http://www.nynjoca.org>! **There are 14 videos! Be sure to check them out!**

St. George Orthodox Church October Calendar

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	Sept 30 6 pm Great Vespers	1 Feast of the Protection of the Theotokos 9:30 am Divine Liturgy	2 6 pm Paraklesis to the Theotokos 6:30-8pm Intro to Orthodoxy Class	3 9 am Akathist Service	4	5 4 pm: Reader Vespers
6 9:40 am Hours 10 am Divine Liturgy followed by Sunday School & Coffee Hour	7	8 9 am Matins 6:30 pm Mats for Missions	9 Feast of St. Tikhon of Moscow 9 am Moleben Service 9:30-11 am Bible Study 5:30-7:30 pm Monthly Parish Dinner at Kevin Guest House	10 9 am: Akathist Service	11	12 4 pm Great Vespers
13 9 am Matins 10 am Divine Liturgy Followed by Sunday School & Coffee Hour Memorial Litia for 4 yr Anniversary of the Falling Asleep in the Lord of Dn. Mark	14	15 9 am Matins	16 6 pm Monthly Community Healing Prayer Service 6:30-8pm Intro to Orthodoxy Class	17 9 am: Akathist Service	18	19 4 pm Great Vespers

Special Parish Mtg						
20 9:40 am Hours 10 am Divine Liturgy Followed by Sunday School Reading of Green Eggs & Ham by Uncle Tom with Green Eggs and Ham Luncheon & Collection of Dr. Seuss Books Church School/Parish Outing to Buffalo Zoo	21	22 9 am Matins	23 6 pm Paraklesis to the Theotokos 6:30-8pm Intro to Orthodoxy Class	24 9 am: Akathist Service	25	26 4 pm Great Vespers
27 9:30 am Service of General Confession 10 am Divine Liturgy Followed by Sunday School & Coffee Hour Bring a Friend to Church Sunday and Open House	28 Parish Council Meeting 6:30 PM	29 9 am Matins	30 Fr Jason will be away at Diocesean Assembly	1 Fr Jason will be away at Diocesean Assembly	2 Fr Jason will be away at Diocesean Assembly	3 4 pm Great Vespers