

**\*\*IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT ABOUT CONFESSION AND HOLY COMMUNION\*\***

\*\*Until further notice, we will continue celebrating the Divine Services up to no more 25 parishioners in attendance. With this in mind, if single parish members or parish member households - UP TO 25 PEOPLE IN CHURCH AT EACH DIVINE LITURGY - would like to attend the Divine Liturgy on a Sunday please refer to the following signup link <https://signup.com/go/AqSQSmX> \*\* (Slots 1-25 in the Church)! **PLEASE SIGN-UP BY 6:00 PM ON SATURDAY NIGHT!!**

**Regarding Holy Communion:**

- If anyone would like to come and receive Holy Communion or if you would like Fr. Jason to come and bring Holy Communion to your home, please contact him to make arrangements:  
[jvansuch@hotmail.com](mailto:jvansuch@hotmail.com)/[609.851.3811](tel:609.851.3811)/[716.875.4222](tel:716.875.4222)

**Regarding Holy Confession:**

*Taking into consideration the spiritual and mental healing that comes through the Sacrament of Confession, His Eminence blesses, for all priests and communities in the Diocese of New York and New Jersey, that for this period:*

- Confession may continue to be held over the telephone or by live video communication; it may also be done in person with social distancing kept between the priest and the penitent (6 feet), and with face masks worn by both. The Prayer of Absolution can be given by video or phone and especially in person.
- When Confession is heard over the telephone or by live video, the priest must read the Prayer of Absolution before ending the phone call or video communication, in the hearing of the penitent.
  - If anyone would like to have Confession, please contact Fr. Jason to make arrangements:  
[jvansuch@hotmail.com](mailto:jvansuch@hotmail.com)/[609.851.3811](tel:609.851.3811)/[716.875.4222](tel:716.875.4222)

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Please look up the below weblink for the Digital Edition of The Jacobs Well:

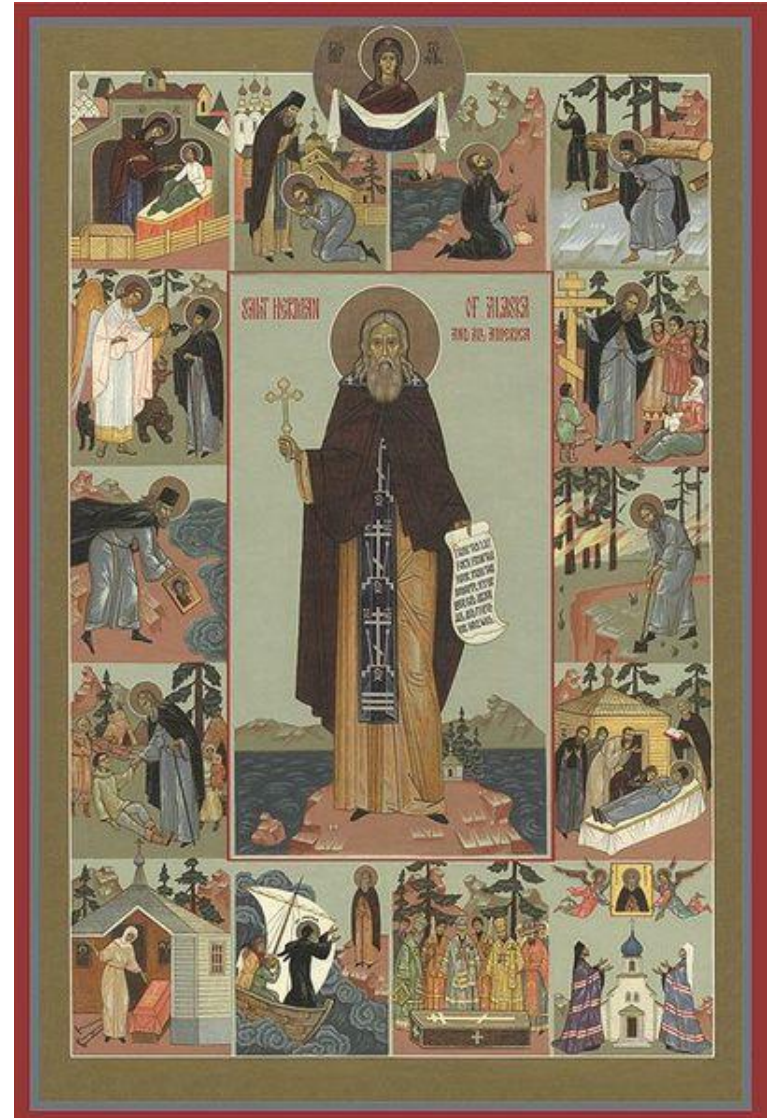
<https://issuu.com/jacobswell/docs/jacobs-well-fall-2019-nk>

Please look up the below weblink for the website of The Diocese of New York and New Jersey:

<https://www.nynjoca.org>

Please look up the below weblink for the newly-updated Diocesan Directives of The Diocese of New York and New Jersey for the Gradual Approach of Re-Opening of our Parishes:

<https://www.nynjoca.org/files/2020/covid-19/Diocesan-Directives-on-the-Gradual-Re-Opening-of-Diocesan-Churches-2020-05-08-For-Distribution.pdf>



**St. George Orthodox Church**  
**2 Nottingham Terrace - Buffalo, NY 14216**  
**(716) 875-4222**

**[www.stgeorgebuffalo.com](http://www.stgeorgebuffalo.com)**

## THE WEEKLY MESSENGER

Published weekly in the interest of the parishioners and friends  
of Saint George Orthodox Church, Buffalo, NY  
a parish of the Diocese of New York and New Jersey  
and The Orthodox Church in America

### **ST. GEORGE ORTHODOX CHURCH**

2 Nottingham Terrace Buffalo, NY 14216

**V. Rev. Jason Vansuch, Parish Priest**

**2 Nottingham Terrace 716-875-4222 Buffalo, NY 14216**

**Cell Phone: 609-851-3811 Email: [jvansuch@hotmail.com](mailto:jvansuch@hotmail.com)**

Presbyter Andreja Damjanovski, Attached Rev. Peter Irfan, Attached

Reader John Kirwan, Choir Director

Mr. Amil Slaiman, Parish Council President

Home: 716-773-2961 Email: [aslaiman2014@gmail.com](mailto:aslaiman2014@gmail.com)

27th SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST — Tone 2. Repose of Ven. Herman of Alaska, Wonderworker of All America (1837). Sunday of the Forefathers. Martyrs Eustratius, Auxentius, Eugene, Mardarius, and Orestes, at Sebaste (4th c.). Virgin Martyr Lucia (Lucy) of Syracuse (304). Ven. Arkády (Arcadius) of Novotorsk (11th c.). Ven. Mardárii (Mardarius), Recluse, of the Kiev Caves (Far Caves—13th c.). Ven. Arsenius of Latros (8th-9th c.). Ven. Nikodemos (Romanian).

**EPISTLE:** Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom

Colossians 3:4-11

Galatians 5:22-6:2

*(Forefathers)*

*(St. Herman)*

**GOSPEL:**

Luke 14:16-24

Luke 6:17-23

**GLORY TO JESUS CHRIST!**

**GLORY FOREVER!**

### **\*\*FLOWERS FOR THIS WEEK\*\***

In front of the Icon of Our Lord, In front of the Icon of The Theotokos,  
and on the Center Icon Table are donated by Bonnie Dan

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Altar Vigil Candles are offered by Anthony DelNuovo in Loving Memory  
of Thy Servant of God – Frank. May his memory be eternal.

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**TODAY'S WEEKLY MESSENGER IS SPONSORED BY:**

ST. GEORGE ORTHODOX CHURCH

### **WELCOME TO ST. GEORGE ORTHODOX CHURCH**

We welcome all of you to the Divine Liturgy this morning, especially those who are visiting with us here at St. George Orthodox Church. Everyone is invited to the Parish Fellowship Hall following the Divine Liturgy for Christian Fellowship. It is our prayer that your experience this morning was spiritually uplifting and you will return very soon to pray with our parish family. In the Orthodox Church, we do not practice open Communion. However we do invite everyone to come and participate in the Divine Liturgy. Hence only those Orthodox Christians who have properly prepared themselves through prayer and fasting may receive Holy Communion. May the Lord bless you with many years of good health and happiness.

## **THE SCHEDULE OF WEEKLY SERVICES and ACTIVITIES**

### **Sunday December 13, 2020**

**Sunday of The Forefathers**

**The Feast of The Repose of St. Herman of Alaska**

9:10 A.M. The Third and Sixth Hours

9:30 A.M. Divine Liturgy

“On-The-Go” Coffee Hour Fellowship following Divine Liturgy

Church School Class (Google Classroom) – 12:30-1:15 pm

### **Monday December 14, 2020**

6:30-8:00 PM Bible Study Class via Zoom

### **Wednesday December 16, 2020**

7:00-8:30 PM Inquirer’s Class via Zoom

### **Saturday December 19, 2020**

9:00 A.M. Divine Liturgy

3:00 P.M. Great Vespers

4:00 P.M. Annual Parish Meeting via Zoom

### **Sunday December 20, 2020**

**Sunday before The Nativity of Our Lord**

9:10 A.M. The Third and Sixth Hours

9:30 A.M. Divine Liturgy

“On-The-Go” Coffee Hour Fellowship following Divine Liturgy

Church School Class (Google Classroom) – 12:30-1:15 pm

**\* \* \* \* \* PRAYERFUL REMEMBRANCE \* \* \* \* \***

**PLEASE REMEMBER TO KEEP IN OUR DAILY PRAYERS  
FOR THE HEALTH OF THY SERVANTS:**

**HIERARCHS**

Metropolitan HERMAN

**CLERGY**

Archpriest Herman, Matushka Cynthia and George *(Schick)*

Archpriest James and Mat. Patricia *(Mason)*

Archpriest Alexey and his family *(Kargut)*

Archpriest Vladimir and Matushka Jeanne

Archpriest Timothy/Mat. Michelle

Archpriest Michael and Mat. Valerie *(Hatrak)*

Archpriest Ken and Matushka Natalie *(Starevsky)*

Dn. Sean and Mat. Heather *(McNulty)*

Archpriest Gregory and Mat. Diane *(Winsky)*

Priest Peter and Mat. Mary *(Irfan)*

Archpriest Leonid Palceski

Presbyter John and Presbytera Nancy

**MATUSHKI**

Presbyter Andreja, Popadija Anica and Family

Mat. Katia Mat. Paraskeva Mat. Joanna Popadia Vicki Mat. Christine Mat. Patricia *(Severeno)*

Mat. Gloria *(Martin)*

Stanley Mandy Annette, Amy, John., Kevin

**Family/Friends/Parishioners of St. George Orthodox Church**

William Natalie Natasha Richie

Catherine Ivan/Marina/Inna Bonnie *(Dan)*

Karen Aliscia *(Nick Rostko)* Walter, Paul

Edwina Irene Luba Silvu Dan, Jr.

Jim, Darren, Marsha *(Relatives of Elaine M.)*

Serena Lillian

Reader Victor

Nicholas, Andrew *(Wityk)* Frank

Sarah Albert *(Fadell)*

Carol *(Frank's friend)* Boris *(Kuvshinoff)* Marilyn *(Linda cousin)*

Xenia, Justin, Kylie, Danielle *(Friends of Fr. Jason)*

Frank Oscar Ronald, Candice *(Masset)*

Victor *(Tita Nephew)*

Catherine *(Tony)*

Susan *(Kirwan)*

June *(Pavlov)*

Evelyn *(Friend of Julie)*

Billy *(William – Mat. Christine's cousin)* Clyde Allison *(school)*

Rebecca *(Relative of Mat. Christine)* Svetlana *(Family friend of Fr. Jason/Mat. Katia)*

Jeanne *(Mat. Christine's Friend)* Angela, Jason, Michelle *(Relatives of Dn. Mark)* Linda Justin *(Slaiman)*

Carol *(Mailman's sister-in-law)* Margaret, Thomas, Victoria *(Ewing)* Ashley *(Friend from Roswell)*

Melody Lee *(Beth's brother)* Lee, Bridget *(John Kirwan friend)* Paul *(Shosho)* Brain *(Brother of Matthew Just)*

Kelly, Robert, Boris, Zaeb, Tirza, Sabas Sada Thlisinitsa, Gemmal, Geesa, and Patric *(Fr. Peter)* Child Senit

Anne *(Mariami Grandmother)* Jeremy Stewart *(nephew of Bill George)* Susan *(Zumba)* Juliana *(Matusiak)*

Susan *(Deeb)* Justin *(Cmunt)* Louis *(cousin of Barbara)* Yuri/Elena Alex *(Valieff)* John, Kevin Irene Sean

Jaime *(Zumba)* Vera *(grandmother of Hannah)* Rosemary Harry *(neighbor of Tom and MaryAnne Slaiman)* Anthony

Robert *(Bonnie Valieff father)* Aspasia *(Dean's Mother)* Charles Seraphim Emma/Alexander *(relatives of Natalie Huett)*

Olga *(Friend of Fr. Jason/Mat. Katia)* Vadym Iryna Yuriy Anastasia Noah *(McEntee)* Elias, John, Joseph

Mary, Hal, Autumn, Ariana, and Amber Judithann *(Friend of Barbara)* Steven *(Uncle of Dean)*

Barbara *(Rdr. John's Sister in Law)* Brian John, Roberta, Barbara *(Family of Dana and Annette)* John, Michael John

Matthew *(Bashira)* John, William *(Friend of Judge Family)* Larry Joseph *(Rocco Father in Law)*

**Diocese of NY&NJ Prayer List** Rdr Nicholas, Judithann, Michael, Mary, Cate, Michael, Gary, Damian, Olga *(Bethlehem)*

Protopresbyter Leonid *(Kishkovsky)* Archpriest Samuel *(Kedela)* Mitred Archpriest Joseph Lickwar

Archpriest George *(Hasenecz)* Archpriest Paul *(Shafraan)* Costa *(Father of Pete Thanos)*

Archpriest Jonathan *(Ivanoff)* Archpriest Paul *(Kucynda)* Ted *(friend of Paul/Jean)*

Archpriest Sergei and Mat. Gerry *(Glagolev)* Priest Vasili *(Dubee)* Barbara *(Archbishop Michael's Sister)*

Jeffry, Dominic, Rachel *(Family of Andrea)* Lee, Benjamin, Patrick *(Relatives of Beth Mellas)* John, Helen *(Parents of Tanya Cmunt)*

**Expectant Mothers** **Birthdays** \_Chris *(Friend of MaryAnne Slaiman)*

Rachel and the child to be born of her

**Those Serving in The Armed Forces**

**Catechumens**

Kenneth, Nadine, Jason, Robert, Andrew, Justin, Shawn, Austin,

Juanita Martha

Chris, John, Daniel

**FOR THY DEPARTED SERVANTS OF GOD:**

All of the clergy and parishioners of This Holy House who have departed this life, who now lie asleep in the Lord.

Ever-Memorable Archpriest Eugene Vansuch Ever-Memorable Archpriest George Timko

Ever-Memorable Priest John Bohush Ever-Memorable Archpriest George Aswad

Ever-Memorable Archpriest Rastko Matushka Dorothy *(Timko)*

Ever-Memorable Dn. Mark Ever-Memorable Sbdn. Gregory

Ever-Memorable Pdn. Gregory Akhtar Remyat, and Barkat *(Family of Fr. Peter)*

**Newly-Departed Servants of God** Michael *(nephew of Rdr. John)* Anne *(sister of Tita Abraham)*

Ana *(Sister of Tita Abraham)* Mary *(Massey)* (40<sup>th</sup> Day – December 20) Archbishop DAVID Met. THEODOSIUS

\*If anyone would like to have their loved ones added to the prayer list

for remembrance during the Divine Liturgy, please see or contact Fr. Jason.

**HYMNS FOR THE DIVINE LITURGY**

**Tropars/Kontakions for Divine Liturgy**

**TROPAR FOR THE RESURRECTION, TONE 2**

When Thou didst descend to death, O Life immortal, Thou didst slay hell with the splendor of Thy Godhead. And when from the depths Thou didst raise the dead, all the powers of heaven cried out:// “O Giver of life, Christ our God, glory to Thee!”

**TROPAR FOR ST. HERMAN OF ALASKA, TONE 7**

O joyful North Star of the Church of Christ, guiding all men to the Heavenly Kingdom, teacher and apostle of the True Faith, intercessor and defender of the oppressed, adornment of the Orthodox Church in America: Blessed Father Herman of Alaska, pray to our Lord Jesus Christ// for the salvation of our souls!

**TROPAR FOR THE HOLY FOREFATHERS, TONE 2**

Through faith Thou didst justify the Forefathers, betrothing through them the Church of the gentiles. These saints exult in glory, for from their seed came forth a glorious fruit: she who bore Thee without seed.// So by their prayers, O Christ God, have mercy on us

**Kontakion for The Resurrection – Tone 2**

Hell became afraid, O almighty Savior, seeing the miracle of Thy Resurrection from the tomb! The dead arose! Creation, with Adam, beheld this and rejoiced with Thee,// and the world, my Savior, praises Thee forever.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.

**Kontakion for St. Herman of Alaska – Tone 3**

The eternal light of Christ our Savior guided thee, O blessed father Herman, on thine evangelical journey to America to proclaim the Gospel of peace. Now thou standest before the throne of glory: intercede for thy land and its people,// asking peace for the world and salvation for our souls.

Now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

### **Kontakion for The Holy Forefathers - Tone 6**

You did not worship the graven image, O thrice-blessed ones, but armed with the immaterial Essence of God, you were glorified in a trial by fire. From the midst of unbearable flames you called on God, crying: "Hasten, O compassionate One! Speedily come to our aid, // for Thou art merciful and able to do as Thou dost will!"

### **PROKEMEINON Tone 4**

Blessed art Thou, O Lord God of our fathers, / and praised and glorified is Thy Name forever!

*v: For Thou art just in all that Thou hast done for us!*

### **The Second Prokeimenon in the 7<sup>th</sup> Tone:**

Precious in the sight of the Lord / is the death of His saints.

### **ALLELUIA VERSES**

*Moses and Aaron were among His priests; Samuel also was among those who called on His Name.*

*They called to the Lord and He answered them.*

*Blessed is the man who fears the Lord, who greatly delights in His commandments.*

### **THE HYMN TO THE THEOTOKOS**

It is truly meet to bless You, O Theotokos, ever blessed and most pure and the Mother of our God. More honorable than the Cherubim and more glorious beyond compare than the Seraphim. Without defilement, You gave birth to God the Word, true Theotokos, we magnify You!

### **COMMUNION HYMN**

Praise the Lord from the heavens, praise Him in the highest! Rejoice in the Lord, O you righteous; praise befits the just! The righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance. He shall not fear evil tidings. Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

### **EPISTLE LESSON FOR TODAY**

Colossians 3:4-11 (*Forefathers*) Galatians 5:22-6:2 (*St. Herman*)

### **Brethren:**

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law.

And those who are Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. Let us not become conceited, provoking one another, envying one another.

Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness, considering yourself lest you also be tempted.

Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.

### **Brethren:**

When Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory.

Therefore put to death your members which are on the earth: fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry.

Because of these things the wrath of God is coming upon the sons of disobedience, in which you yourselves once walked when you lived in them.

But now you yourselves are to put off all these: anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy language out of your mouth. Do not lie to one another, since you have put off the old man with his deeds, and have put on the new man who is renewed in knowledge according to the image of Him who created him, where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcised nor uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave nor free, but Christ is all and in all.

## GOSPEL LESSON FOR TODAY

Luke 14:16-24 (*Forefathers*)

Luke 6:17-23 (*St. Herman*)

### Let us Attend!

Then He said to him, "A certain man gave a great supper and invited many, and sent his servant at supper time to say to those who were invited, 'Come, for all things are now ready.' But they all with one accord began to make excuses. The first said to him, 'I have bought a piece of ground, and I must go and see it. I ask you to have me excused.' And another said, 'I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I am going to test them. I ask you to have me excused.' Still another said, 'I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come.' So that servant came and reported these things to his master. Then the master of the house, being angry, said to his servant, 'Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in here the poor and the maimed and the lame and the blind.' And the servant said, 'Master, it is done as you commanded, and still there is room.' Then the master said to the servant, 'Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled.' For I say to you that none of those men who were invited shall taste my supper."

### Let us Attend!

And He came down with them and stood on a level place with a crowd of His disciples and a great multitude of people from all Judea and Jerusalem, and from the seacoast of Tyre and Sidon, who came to hear Him and be healed of their diseases, as well as those who were tormented with unclean spirits. And they were healed. And the whole multitude sought to touch Him, for power went out from Him and healed them all. Then He lifted up His eyes toward His disciples, and said: "Blessed are you poor, for yours is the kingdom of God. Blessed are you who hunger now, for you shall be filled. Blessed are you who weep now, for you shall laugh.

Blessed are you when men hate you, and when they exclude you, and revile you, and cast out your name as evil, for the Son of Man's sake.

Rejoice in that day and leap for joy! For indeed your reward is great in heaven, for in like manner their fathers did to the prophets.

### === Scriptural Readings for the Week ===

Monday	2 Timothy 2:20-26	Mark 8:11-21
Tuesday	2 Timothy 3:16-4:4	Mark 8:22-26
Wednesday	2 Timothy 4:9-22	Mark 8:30-34
Thursday	Titus 1:5-2:1	Mark 9:10-16
Friday	Titus 1:15-2:10	Mark 9:33-41
Saturday	Ephesians 1:16-23	Luke 14:1-11
Sunday	Hebrews 11:9-10, 17-23, 32-40	Matthew 1:1-25

## \*\* NEW PROTOCOLS WHEN ATTENDING THE DIVINE LITURGY ON SUNDAYS....

- 1) A Parish Council Member will greet everyone at the Front Entrance Doors to the Church. We will have the Sign-Up Sheet there to mark off your name if you signed-up to attend. If we did not sign-up, then we will write your name down and kindly remind you to sign-up before next Sunday.
- 2) EVERYONE attending the Divine Liturgy (those in the Nave and Parish Fellowship Hall - parishioners, choir members, parish council members) NEED to sign-up. Only Those in the Altar do not need to sign-up as they are not taking space in The Nave. Once we reach our capacity of 25 people in The Church, everyone else will be seated in The Parish Fellowship Hall.
- 3) When receiving Holy Communion, a Parish Council Member will call everyone up - pew by pew - to allow for social distancing (the children and Altar Servers will come first, then the first pews up front all the way to the back of the Church with the Choir being the last ones to receive Holy Communion). If any faithful are in The Parish Fellowship Hall, Fr Jason, Fr. Andreja, or Fr. Peter will bring Holy Communion to those in the Hall.

\*\*If anyone has any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to see or contact Fr. Jason. May God continue to bless and guide all of you!\*\*

## **ANNUAL PARISH MEETING**

**(via Zoom) 4:00 PM – SATURDAY DECEMBER 19, 2020 – 4:00 PM (via Zoom)**

At their monthly meeting held on Saturday November 14, the Parish Council decided to postpone The Annual Parish Meeting until Saturday December 18 due to the fact of the COVID Pandemic and needing more time to properly prepare for our meeting. With this in mind, on Saturday December 19, following the Celebration of Great Vespers at 3:00 pm, we will be holding our Annual Parish Meeting **via Zoom** to review and discuss the life and mission of our beloved parish of St. George. As is our custom, all reports will be emailed out and mailed out one week prior to our meeting to give everyone the opportunity to read them and reviewing them. We ask everyone to make every effort to read the reports and come to the meeting with our thoughts, ideas, questions. So that together, as a parish family, with one voice, one heart, and one mind, we may come together for the building up of The Body of Christ here at our beloved parish of St. George. Looking forward to coming together as a parish family on December 19 to review and discuss the life and mission of our beloved parish of St. George. If anyone has any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to see or contact Fr. Jason, Amil, or any member of the parish council.

**\*\* Election of Parish Council Officers/Financial Bookkeeper will take place at our Annual Parish Meeting in December. If anyone would like to run/be nominated for anyone of these positions (President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, Financial Bookkeeper, please see Fr. Jason or any member of the parish council. Also a written nomination must be presented to Fr. Jason prior to the December meeting of the parish council.**



### **A SINCERE AND HEARTFELT THANKS AND APPRECIATION FOR THE FOLLOWING DONATIONS TO THE PARISH FROM OUR PARISH GIVING TREE**

- Matushka Fran for donating Hand Sanitizer
- The Thanos Family for donating Liturgical Charcoal
- Drew and Molly for donating Liturgical Incense
- Fr. Jason/Mat. Katia/Anna and Alex for donating cups for Zapifka
- Dr. Boris and Barbara Kuvshinoff for donating the Flowers for The Feast of the Entrance of The Theotokos into The Temple
- Dr. Boris and Barbara Kuvshinoff for donating the Vigil Candles by The Mother of God for the continued good health of The Kuvshinoff Family.
- The Kfoury Family for donating the Flowers for The Feast of the Nativity of Our Lord God and Savior Jesus Christ According to The Flesh
- Reader John and Sue Kirwan for donating Liturgical Wine as well as towards Supplies for Prospora
- Linda and George Mucyn for donating Plastic Bags for Prospora
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Please be sure to check out "The Giving Tree" in the Parish Fellowship Hall to see how we may be able to donate towards the needs of our parish through our continued support and stewardship for our beloved parish.

If anyone has any questions, please see or contact Fr. Jason or Barbara.

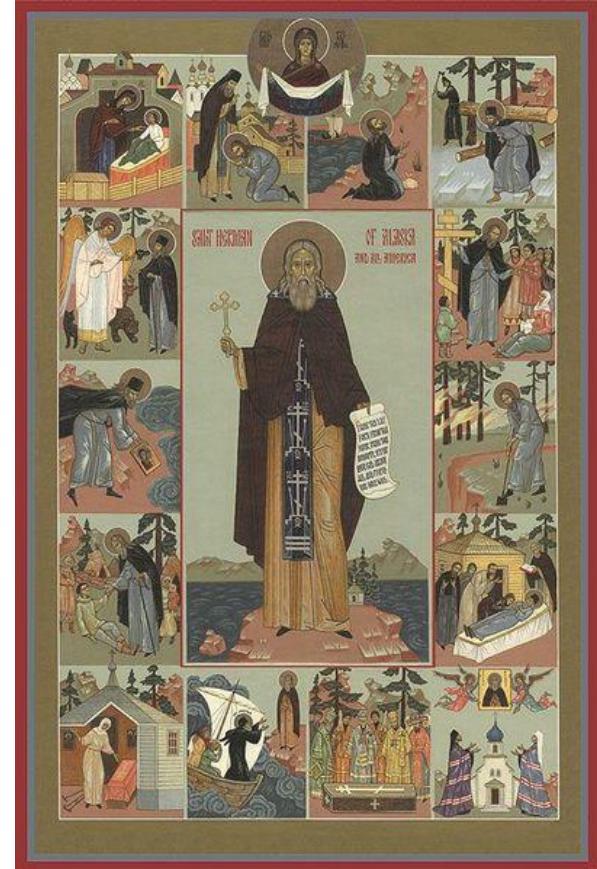
Thank you for your continued prayerful support and stewardship. May God continue to bless and guide all of you, your families and our entire Parish family and keep all of us in His Loving Care!

## LIVE-STREAMING OF DIVINE SERVICES

As a friendly reminder, ALL DIVINE SERVICES, WILL ALSO BE LIVE-STREAMED from Fr. Jason's Facebook page and our Parish Youtube Page so that we can still be together and pray together. So please continue to join us in prayer!! There are three ways you can join us in prayer via Live-Stream even if we do not have a FaceBook account:

- 1) Go directly to our Parish Website ([www.stgeorgebuffalo.com](http://www.stgeorgebuffalo.com)) and on our homepage you will see a box that says 'Restream: Stream currently offline". When 'live-stream' is active, the live video will automatically appear.
- 2) Go directly to Fr. Jason's Facebook Page <https://www.facebook.com/jason.vansuch> and there you will see the Live-stream video.
- 3) Go directly to our Parish Youtube Page <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCft4AWAX2COlZExfMjC5KQ> and there you will see the Live-stream video.

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“From this day forth from this very hour and this very minute, let us love love God above all and seek to accomplish His Holy Will.”

— St. Herman of Alaska

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**O, Holy Father Herman, Pray unto God for us!**

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## WELCOME TO THE ORTHODOX CHURCH!

Do we have questions about our life, its meaning, purpose, destiny?

Are we desiring to know Jesus Christ, the Son of the living God?

Are we seeking forgiveness, healing, and wholeness?

Do we wonder where to go to find answers?

We can find the answers to these questions and so many other questions in The Holy Orthodox Church through Her Sacred Tradition, Holy Scriptures, Her Teachings and Dogmas.

The Orthodox Church is the original Christian Church, the Church founded by the Lord Jesus Christ and described in the pages of the New Testament. Her history can be traced in unbroken continuity all the way back to Christ and His Twelve Apostles, empowered and sent forth on the day of Holy Pentecost. Incredible as it seems, for over twenty centuries she has continued in her undiminished and unaltered faith and practice. Today her apostolic doctrine, worship, and structure remain intact. The Orthodox Church maintains that the Church is the living Body of Jesus Christ. Many of us are surprised to learn that for the first 1000 years of Christian history there was just one Church.

Where is "**The Church**" to be found and experienced today? Come Taste and See How Good The Lord is every Sunday by joining us for The Divine Liturgy at 10:00 AM.

What is Orthodox Christianity all about? How does it differ from other Christian confessions? This section will attempt to answer these questions and many more. For a visual introduction to the Orthodox Church, please view the video link below: [http://www.youtube.com/v/Gj4pUphDitA&color1=0xb1b1b1&color2=0xcfcfcf&feature=player\\_embedded&fs=1](http://www.youtube.com/v/Gj4pUphDitA&color1=0xb1b1b1&color2=0xcfcfcf&feature=player_embedded&fs=1) For a brief introduction and in depth study to The Orthodox Faith and to find answers to: "What we Believe?", "Who we Are?", and "How we Live?", please view the PDF link below:

<http://orthodoxdelmarva.org/files/studies/InquirersClassV1final.pdf>

or you may visit the OCA website by clicking the link below:

<http://oca.org/orthodoxy/the-orthodox-faith>

or you can begin a Journey Through Orthodoxy by clicking the link below:

<http://journeytoorthodoxy.com>

To learn more ways that we can teach our children about the Orthodox Faith, The OCA has provided a wonderful website for us to use that provides great resources such as (handouts, texts, articles, stories, and much more)! To see this great website, please view the PDF link below:

<http://dce.oca.org/page/resources/>

If you have any questions or would like to know more about The Orthodox Faith, please contact our parish priest: V Rev. Jason Vansuch ([jvansuch@hotmail.com](mailto:jvansuch@hotmail.com)) or 716.875.4222 and he will be able guide you.

## IMPORTANT DATES WITHIN THE LIFE OF OUR PARISH

### Parish Announcements:

- We will continue with our on-going collections for The Buffalo City Mission, Hearts for Homeless, Mats for Mission, HomeSpace as well as Kevin Guest House and our other outreach ministry projects.
- **WE CONTINUE TO CONTACT ALL OF OUR PARISHIONERS ON A REGULAR BASIS TO ENSURE THAT EVERYONE IS OKAY, SAFE AND HEALTHY.**

**\*\*Please be on the lookout for emails this week with the following items:**

- 1) **Reader Vespers for Saturday Evening (December 19)**
- 2) **Reader Typika Service for Sunday Morning (December 20)**
- 3) **Information for St. George Bible Study – Monday December 14**
- 4) **Information for Inquirer Class – Wednesday December 16**

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**BEGINNING IN SEPTEMBER, WE WILL BE RECORDING THE WEEKLY INCOME FOR EACH SUNDAY AS WELL AS OFFERING THE MONTHLY INCOME and EXPENSE FOR OUR PARISH!**

**INCOME FOR SUNDAY November 29, 2020 – \$1, 458.00**

**DONATIONS FOR THE NEW BOILER (Capital Improvement Fund) –**

**Total Donations so far for the New Boiler: \$13, 305.00**

**MAY GOD CONTINUE TO BLESS YOU AND GUIDE YOU FOR YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT AND PRAYERS!**

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**\*Please refer to the Weekly Bulletin and Church Website for any changes to the calendar!\***

### DAILY FAMILY PRAYER RULE WE CAN PRAY TOGETHER AT HOME WITH OUR FAMILIES

A Prayer Rule must be done in front of the icons and the Gospel in our Icon Corners with a lit candle.. It is important to remember that we must make time for God, for the "Kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and the violent take it by force"(Matt. 11:12).The best time to pray is in the morning or in the evening when we as a family can come together in prayer. Also, when using a Rule of Prayer, we must be flexible and do what we can and do it attentively and consistently. Our goal is to maintain the connection with God and cultivate a real relationship with Him.

With that in mind, please find below The Rule of Prayer offered by our Diocese for us to use at home especially during this most difficult time when we are not able to be in church together as a parish family.

<https://www.nynjoca.org/files/2020/praying-at-home/A-FAMILY-PRAYER-RULE.pdf>

**May God bless you and keep you always in His Loving Care!**



## ST. ANDREW'S CAMP

\*\* Saint Andrew's Camp has released a new promotional video for prospective campers!

The video can be found here on Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/saintandrewsorthodoxcamp/videos/357928144820497/>

\*\*Be sure to check it out...you may recognize the priest:)

For more than sixty years, St. Andrew's Camp has offered the young people of our parishes an incredible summer camping experience. Children and teens have been instructed in prayer and the divine services, the reading of Scripture and the teachings of our Orthodox Church. They have been nourished with the Sacraments of Confession and Holy Communion. They have had fun swimming, horseback riding, playing sports, singing and learning musical instruments, creating in the visual arts, learning to safeguard the planet, and exploring the stars. And they have established friendships that last a lifetime, met their future spouses, and nurtured their vocations to serve the Lord in ministry.

As a token of gratitude for the labors of love extended by the administration and staff, both clergy and laypersons, of St. Andrew's over the past six decades, it is now time for us to help the Camp in an especially needed way.

Please join us in raising funds for the new multi purpose building which will include new kitchen, dining hall and activities center. The cost of this new building is \$300,000. To become a reality, the completion and furnishing of this much-needed center will require great generosity of individuals, organizations and parishes.

You can click on the link below which will take you to the gofundme.com page.

<https://www.gofundme.com/f/st-andrew039s-camp-fundraiser-by-ss-peter-and-paul>

As we continue to fulfill the work of Our Lord by living and fulfilling His Gospel Message, let us open our hearts and minds by providing support and assistance to our Diocese, to our children, by taking a moment to reflect upon what God has given us, and to discern how we might be able to return to God a portion of the blessings we have received.

We extend our heartfelt thanks and appreciation to all of you and your families for your continued prayers, support and generosity.

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\*\*Also, make sure we check out the promotional video for prospective campers!

**The video can be found here on Facebook:**

<https://www.facebook.com/saintandrewsorthodoxcamp/videos/357928144820497/>

\*\*Be sure to check it out...you may recognize the priest:)

## Remember our Loved Ones during Our Daily Prayers

*'Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me.'*

{Matt. 25:40}

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.

Please refer to the of our Parish Shut-Ins below.

If anyone has any questions or would like to add someone to our List of Parish Shut-Ins, please see or contact Fr. Jason. May God continue to bless you and guide you!

### ST. GEORGE ORTHODOX CHURCH PARISH SHUT-INS (2020)

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. Luba Japadjief  
Elderwood Nursing Home (Memory Care Unit)  
245 Bassett Road  
Williamsville, NY (Room 30)

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

Mr. Albert Fadell  
317.376.2562

Andrew Wityk  
Ellicott Center  
200 Seventh Street  
Buffalo, NY 14201

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### WEEKLY VIDEO SERMONS GIVEN BY HIS EMINENCE ARCHBISHOP MICHAEL

These sermons offered to us by The Diocese via video can be found on the Diocesan Website: <http://www.nynjoca.org>! There are videos for each week beginning with The Feast of Feasts – Holy Pascha! Be sure to check them out!

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## **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 18<sup>th</sup> 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>

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## **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. 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>.

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### **"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/>! For those who do not have

internet, please see the handouts from each lesson which are located on the table in the back of the church. **There are 14 videos! Be sure to check them out!**

## **ST. GEORGE ORTHODOX CHURCH BOOKSTORE**

As you are in the Parish Fellowship Hall for coffee hour, don't forget to check out our newly-formed Bookstore. We have some new items that just arrived. These items include: Icon ornaments, jewelry, Icons, prayer books, prayers ropes, and much more. If you need a Gift, come check out the Bookstore...you may find something you like!! We are now also offering Gift Certificates for our Bookstore. Please speak with Dave or Andrea for more details/information!! We thank David and Andrea Chmiel who are managing of 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 David or Andrea Chmiel and they will be able to assist you. You may also email them at: [bookstore@stgeorgebuffalo.com](mailto:bookstore@stgeorgebuffalo.com). May GOD continue to bless and guide all of you.

## **ST. GEORGE ORTHODOX CHURCH EDUCATION CORNER** **THE FEAST OF THE REPOSE OF ST. HERMAN OF** **ALASKA**

**December 13**

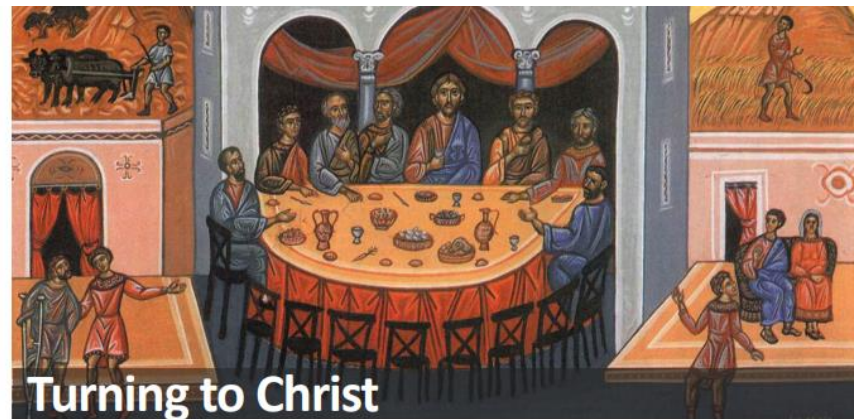
SAINT HERMAN OF ALASKA is often referred to as the first American saint. Born in Russia, he entered the monastic life when he was only sixteen. He would eventually take up abode in the Valaam Monastery on Lake Ladoga. When a mission of monks was organized in 1793 to travel to North America, St. Herman was part of that effort. Russian merchants had discovered the Aleutian Islands and, in addition to their trading endeavors they found a great need to bring the Gospel of Christ to the native inhabitants. St. Herman would settle on Spruce Island, calling his home "New Valaam." The

rugged island was heavily forested, but the pious monk enjoyed the solitude it brought him. Earthly pleasures meant nothing to him. He dug a cave with his own hands where he lived for more than 40 years. He humbly wore the same clothing every day; he used two bricks for a pillow and he covered himself at night with a board rather than a blanket.

Although only a simple monk and not an ordained priest, St. Herman soon gained a reputation for being a great spiritual teacher. He established a school and enjoyed teaching the native children about Christ. He particularly loved to teach them the prayers and hymns of the Church. Young and old alike would listen spell-bound for hours to his sermons.

St. Herman also became known for his wondrous works and miracles as well. A great flood once threatened Spruce Island, and the inhabitants came to their blessed Elder in great fear. He took an icon of the Theotokos, placed it on a sandy bank and began to pray. Amazingly, the progress of the waters was impeded immediately! A forest fire broke out once on Spruce Island. St. Herman dug a simple trench and proclaimed: "The fire will not pass this line." It did not!

St. Herman of Alaska died in the same cave in which he had lived for all those years on Spruce Island. His final words were a statement of his entire philosophy of life: "GLORY TO THEE, O LORD."



### Glory to Jesus Christ!

Each week, we are invited to a **heavenly banquet**, hosted by our Lord Jesus Christ. The opportunity to **hear the Word of God**, to **offer prayers** of worship and thanksgiving, to **receive spiritual guidance** from our priest, and to **receive the Eucharist** is an amazing blessing from God. The experience can be **life changing**.

#### ☞ Taste and See

The **divine liturgy** is far from ordinary. It is the only place where we are given an opportunity to receive the Body and Blood of our Savior. This bloodless sacrifice **nourishes us** for the coming week and **unites us to the community of believers** known as the Orthodox Church.

Yet, do we treat this with a **sense of awe, wonder, and gratitude**?

#### Excuses, Excuses

Sometimes, we're tired, or maybe our parents are. Other times it might be a birthday party, a soccer game, a dance recital, or a weekend get-away. Sometimes we need prayer, **asking God for the strength** to resist the devil's nudging us to skip liturgy.

Declining **Christ's invitation** to His heavenly banquet is dangerous. God will always **accept our repentance** with joy, so we will not be left out of the Kingdom.

#### Making the Right Choice

Choosing to be **in church every Sunday** (even virtually) is a **wise decision** for our spiritual health. Jesus Christ took on our human nature, died on the cross, and rose from the dead precisely so we can have a deep and meaningful **relationship with Him**. The liturgy enables us to **grow closer to God**.

A relationship with Christ is one which ultimately can **lead to our salvation**. Like any relationship, it requires **our involvement** and **active participation**.

#### A Life Worth Living

Each of us, regardless of age, can express a desire to be in church every Sunday morning. We can also **look forward with anticipation** to offering our voices in song, singing "**Holy! Holy! Holy!**" like the angels in Heaven. And with a humble spirit, we can boldly approach the chalice to **receive the Eucharist**, because Christ is offering His Body and Blood to all of us, for the **forgiveness of our sins**.

**Isn't that wonderful?** That's the **treasure** we receive as **Orthodox Christians**. It is a gift freely received from God worth cherishing, sharing, and living.

### ☞ Scripture Readings for the Sunday of the Forefathers

Epistle: **Colossians 3:4-11**

Gospel: **Luke 14:16-24**

### ☞ Hymns of the Day

#### Troparion/Apolytikion — Tone 2

When You descended to death, O Life Immortal, you slew hell with the splendor of Your Godhead.

And when from the depths You raised the dead, all the powers of heaven cried out: "O Giver of life, Christ our God, glory to You!"

#### Tropar./Apol. (Forefathers) — T2

Through faith You justified the Forefathers, betrothing through them the Church of the gentiles.

These saints exult in glory, for from their seed came forth a glorious fruit: she who bore You without seed.

So by their prayers, O Christ God, have mercy on us!

#### Kontakion (Resurrection) — Tone 2

Hell became afraid, O almighty Savior, seeing the miracle of Your Resurrection from the tomb!

The dead arose! Creation, with Adam, beheld this and rejoiced with You, and the world, my Savior, praises You forever.

#### Kontakion (Forefathers) — T6 /PI 2

You did not worship the graven image, O thrice-blessed ones, but armed with the immaterial Essence of God, you were glorified in a trial by fire.

From the midst of unbearable flames you called on God, crying: "Hasten, O compassionate One! Speedily come to our aid, for You are merciful and able to do as You will!"

Parents, Church School Teachers & Youth Directors: Watch for the ☞ to indicate topics/questions you can use to inspire conversations with youth. Or use the corresponding study guide for this resource.

Icons are often called windows to Heaven, because they show and teach us how historic events and the saints are to be understood in the saving message of Jesus Christ.

Icons do not portray people like we see them in person or in photos, but instead transfiguring them with the light of Christ, emanating from within, by their encounter with God. Likewise, each element of an icon has a purpose or meaning.

Let's take a closer look at the icon of St. Herman which features scenes from his life along the perimeter.

Can you use the word list at the bottom to identify who's who, and what's what?

# The Life of Saint Herman of Alaska

## Saint Herman

In the center of the icon, our holy father, Saint Herman of Alaska, is shown in the robes of a monastic, wearing a large cross and prayer rope. The Alaskan wilderness is very rugged, so he is holding a walking stick. In the background are pine trees, very common on Spruce Island where Saint Herman lived, and the chapel of Ss. Sergius and Herman of Valaam, which was built over the grave of Saint Herman in 1898 by Saint Tikhon of Moscow, who served as Archbishop in North America. Saint Herman was glorified in 1970 as the first Orthodox Saint in North America, and today, his relics are at Holy Resurrection Cathedral, Kodiak, Alaska.

### Top Row

1. St. Herman is tonsured as a \_\_\_\_\_ at the Valaam Monastery in northern \_\_\_\_\_.
2. The Virgin \_\_\_\_\_ visits St. Herman, healing him of a life-threatening growth on his \_\_\_\_\_.
3. St. Herman wrote to his \_\_\_\_\_ in Valaam, telling about his \_\_\_\_\_ inspired by God.
4. St. Herman is \_\_\_\_\_ by Abbot Nazarius to travel to \_\_\_\_\_ in the New World.
5. After traveling nearly a \_\_\_\_\_ in 1794, St. Herman gives thanks to \_\_\_\_\_ for arriving in Alaska.

### Left Side

1. St. Herman chose \_\_\_\_\_ Island for his home, building a hermitage called "New Valaam," by cutting down huge \_\_\_\_\_ despite their size and the cold winter weather.
2. While St. Herman lived in solitude, the local people often saw him interacting peacefully with \_\_\_\_\_, and speaking with \_\_\_\_\_.
3. St. Herman shared his knowledge of God and the \_\_\_\_\_ Faith by establishing a \_\_\_\_\_ for the local Native Alaskans, helping entire communities to believe in God.
4. When a \_\_\_\_\_ threatened his hermitage and local village, Father Herman guided the people to dig a trench and to \_\_\_\_\_, which saved them from the fire.



### Right Side

1. St. Herman dug a \_\_\_\_\_ which he lived in, and later was buried in. A \_\_\_\_\_ was built on this site in 1898 by Archbishop Tikhon, who we know today as St. Tikhon, Apostle to America.
2. Some local natives killed St. \_\_\_\_\_, misunderstanding his message, he knelt and prayed peacefully accepted \_\_\_\_\_ for Jesus Christ.
3. A tidal \_\_\_\_\_ threatened the local village, so St. Herman placed an icon of the \_\_\_\_\_ Mary on the shore, and the waves never passed the icon.
4. During a smallpox \_\_\_\_\_, many local residents were sick and dying. St. Herman did everything he could to care for the ill, helping them \_\_\_\_\_.
5. Today, Saint Herman is remembered around the world for his holy life and great deeds.

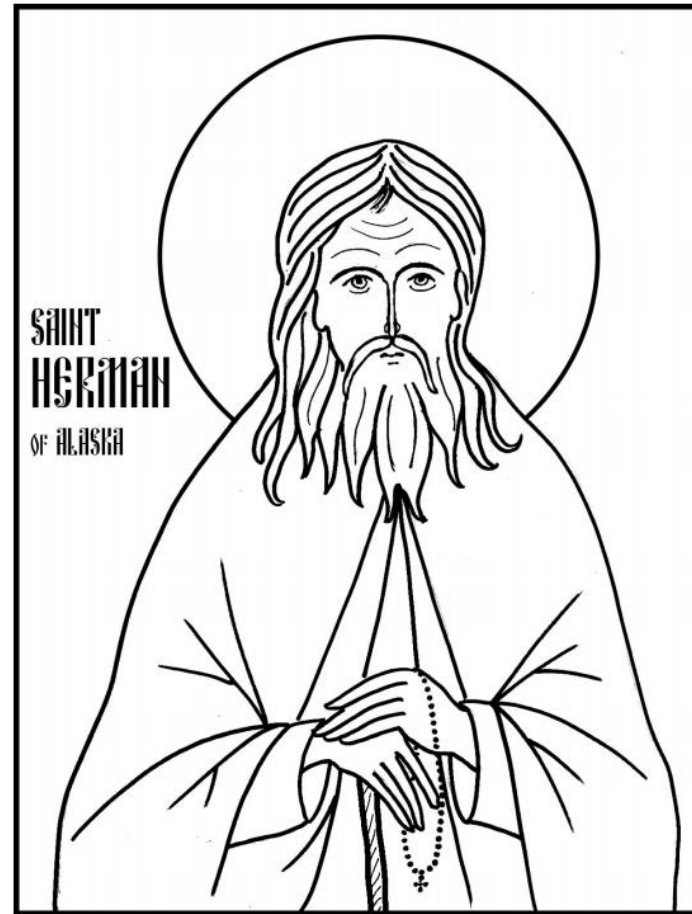
**Saint Herman,  
pray to God  
for us!**

### Bottom Row

1. Many years later, when Bishop \_\_\_\_\_ was traveling to Alaska by ship, in the middle of a \_\_\_\_\_, he prayed to St. Herman and the strong winds and rain ceased immediately.
2. In 1907, when a young crippled \_\_\_\_\_ came to Spruce Island and prayed at St. Herman's \_\_\_\_\_, she was healed and immediately began to walk normally.
3. Saint Herman died on December 13th in 1837, and people came from nearby \_\_\_\_\_ to pray at his burial. In 1969, church leaders decided to formally recognize Father Herman as \_\_\_\_\_'s Saint!
4. When St. Herman was glorified on August 9, 1970, a US Coast Guard \_\_\_\_\_ was used to transport his relics to the cathedral in Kodiak for the \_\_\_\_\_ of glorification.

Alaska	Animals	Chapel	Girl	Helicopter	Labors	Monk	Pray	School	Storm	Trees	Wave
America	Blessed	Fire	God	Innocent	Martyrdom	Orthodox	Recover	Services	Superiors	Villages	Year
Angels	Cave	First	Grave	Juvenaly	Mary	Plague	Russia	Spruce	Throat	Virgin	

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Above is an icon of the Saint Herman of Alaska, the first saint of North America. Using your favorite markers, colored pencils, or paints, bring the icon to life.

### Did You Know?

- All monastics wear black or dark grey robes, a symbol of their humility, devotion to God, and commitment to a simple way of life.
- Some monastics are ordained as deacons, priests, or bishops. St. Herman was not, and led a life of prayer as a monk.
- Living on the coast of Alaska, St. Herman experienced harsh weather and conditions, so he would wear layers of clothing, including inner garments of animal fur.
- In icons, monastics are shown holding a a prayer rope, signifying their life of prayer. St. Herman would pray for hours at a time for the people in nearby villages, the other Orthodox missionaries in Alaska, and the members of the monastic community where he was tonsured, thousands of miles away.
- St. Herman lived a long life (=1756 - 1837, nearly 80 years old), so his hair and beard in the icon are grey or nearly white.
- The rocky terrain of Spruce Island led St. Herman to have a walking stick which he holds in his right hand.
- The halo around Saint Tikhon's head reminds us of his saintly life, lived with humility and prayer, guiding the faithful under his care. We pray to St. Herman, as he now stands before the throne of God, offering prayers to God for all of the Orthodox faithful in North America.
- Be sure to take a photo of your icon and email it to [orthodoxjourneys@gmail.com](mailto:orthodoxjourneys@gmail.com) to be featured in our youth art gallery, where we celebrate your talents!

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### Troparion — Tone 7

O joyful North Star of the Church of Christ, guiding all people to the Heavenly Kingdom, Teacher and apostle of the True Faith, Intercessor and defender of the oppressed, Adornment of the Orthodox faithful in America: Blessed Father Herman of Alaska, pray to our Lord Jesus Christ for the salvation of our souls!

### Kontaxion — Tone 7

The eternal light of Christ our Savior guided you, O blessed father Herman, on your evangelical journey to America to proclaim the Gospel of peace. Now you stand before the throne of glory: Intercede for your land and its people, asking peace for the world and salvation for our souls.

### Pray the Akathist to St. Herman:

<https://bit.ly/st-herman-akathist>

**Holy Father Herman,  
pray to God for  
the Church in  
North America!**

## The Sunday of The Holy Forefathers

that falls between December 11-17 is known as the Sunday of the Holy Forefathers. These are the ancestors of Christ according to the flesh, who lived before the Law and under the Law, especially the Patriarch Abraham, to whom God said, "In thy seed shall all of the nations of the earth be blessed" (Gen. 12:3, 22:18).

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## **The Twenty- Seventh Sunday After**

### **Pentecost**

### **The Parable of the Supper**

**Luke 14:16-24**

**From The Explanation of the Gospel of St. Luke**

**by Blessed Theophylact, Archbishop of Ochrid and Bulgaria**

**16-20. Then said He unto him, A certain man made a great supper, and called many, and sent his servant at supper time to say to them that were called, Come; for all things are now ready. And they all with one accord began to make excuse. The first said unto him, I have bought a piece of ground, and I must needs go and see it: I pray thee have me excused. And another said, I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to prove them: I pray thee have me excused. And another said, I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come.**

Because the man who sat at table with Him had said, Blessed is he that shall eat bread in the kingdom of God, the Lord teaches him at some length what it means to feast with God, and tells this parable. By a certain man the Lord means His Father, the Lover of man. Whenever

Scripture alludes to God's power to punish, He is called a panther, a leopard, or a bear [Hos. 13:7-8]. But whenever it alludes to God's love for man, He is presented as a man, as is the case here. Since the parable treats of God's extreme love for man and the divine economy of the Incarnation which He worked in us, making us sharers of the Flesh of His Son, the parable calls God a man and this divine economy a great supper. It is a supper because the Lord came in the last days, as it were at the evening of this age. And this supper is great because great indeed, we confess, is the mystery of our salvation. [I Tim. 3:16] And he sent his servant at supper time. Who is this servant? The Son of God, Who assumed the form a servant and became man, and as a man is said to have been sent forth. Notice how He did not say "a servant," but instead, using the definite article, the servant [of his.] (1)

Christ is the One and only Servant Who in His human nature was perfectly obedient and pleasing to God. For Christ is pleasing to the Father not only as Son and God, but also as Man. He is the only Sinless One Who carried out all the counsels and commandments of the Father and fulfilled all righteousness, and in this sense is said to serve God the Father. He alone can be called the true Servant of God. He was sent at supper time, that is, at the appointed and proper time. For there was no other time more opportune for our salvation than the reign of Caesar Augustus, when iniquity had reached its peak and it was critical that it be cleansed. Just as physicians allow a festering and malignant boil to burst and release all its foul pus, and only then apply the medication, so too it was necessary that sin first display all its forms, and then the Great Physician applied His medicine. For this very reason the Lord waited for the devil to fill the full measure of iniquity, and then the Son of God took flesh and healed every form of iniquity by every aspect of His holy life. Therefore He was sent at that hour, that is, at that comely and opportune season of which David says, Gird Thy sword upon Thy thigh, O Mighty One, in Thy comeliness. (2) Certainly the sword here signifies the Word of God [Heb. 4:12], while the words upon Thy thigh indicate His Nativity in the flesh which was in comeliness, that is, when the time was right and seemly. He was sent to speak to those who had been called. Who are those that were called? Perhaps this refers to all men. For God has called all to the knowledge of Him, by means of the order and harmony of visible creation, and by means of the natural law. But those that were called are also, more specifically, the children of Israel,

who were called through the law and the prophets. In the first place, then, the Lord was sent to the sheep of the house of Israel. [Mt. 15:24] The Lord was saying to all the Jews, Come, for all things are now ready, when He proclaimed the good tidings that the kingdom of heaven is at hand [Mt. 4:17], and among you [Lk. 17:21].

And they all with one accord began to make excuse, that is, as if at a signal. For all the leaders of the Jews refused to have Jesus as their King, and thus were found unworthy of the supper, one because of his love of wealth, and another because of his love of pleasure. The man who bought a piece of ground and the man who bought the five yoke of oxen signify those who love wealth, while the man who married a wife signifies those who love pleasure. Furthermore, the man who bought a piece of ground signifies the man who cannot accept the mystery of faith because he is governed by the wisdom of this world. The piece of ground represents the world and, in general, nature, and the man who must go and see his piece of ground is he who sees only nature, and cannot accept what is beyond nature. Therefore the Pharisee, for example, "sees his piece of ground," that is, he looks only at the laws of nature and cannot accept that a Virgin gave birth to God, because that is beyond nature. Because they are examining this "piece of ground," that is, nature, none of those who boast in external wisdom have recognized Jesus Who made nature new. The man who bought five yoke of oxen, and tested them, also represents a man who loves the material world. He has yoked the five senses of the soul to the five senses of the body and has made the soul into flesh. For this reason he is concerned only with the earth and does not desire to commune of the rational Supper, for as Wisdom says, How can he get wisdom that holdeth the plough? [Eccles. (Wis. of Sirach) 38:25] He who stays behind because of a wife is a lover of pleasure who has devoted himself to the flesh, the mate of the soul. By cleaving to the flesh he cannot please God. You may also understand these things literally. We also fall away from God because of fields, because of yokes of oxen, because of marriages, when we become so attached to them that they consume our whole life and we are carried away even to the point of shedding blood over them. Then there is no divine thought or word that we can practice, or even comprehend.

**21-24. So that servant came, and declared to his lord these things. Then the master of the house being angry said to his servant, Go out**

**quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in hither the poor, and the maimed, and the halt, and the blind. And the servant said, Lord, it is done as thou hast commanded, and yet there is room. And the lord said unto the servant, Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled. For I say unto you, That none of those men which were called shall taste of my supper.**

The rulers of the Jews were rejected, and not one of them believed in Christ. And they even boasted of their malice, saying, Have any of the rulers believed on Him? [Jn. 7:48] Therefore these students of the law and scribes, as the prophet says, became foolish and fell from grace. But the simple from among the Jews are likened to the halt, the blind, and the maimed. It is the foolish of this world, the lowly, who were called. For the multitude marvelled at the words of grace which proceeded from the mouth of Jesus, and they rejoiced in His teaching. But after these had come to Him from the sons of Israel, that is, from the chosen whom God foreordained for His glory, such as Peter, and the sons of Zebedee, and the tens of thousands of those Jews who believed, then God's goodness was poured out also upon the Gentiles. For those who are in the highways and hedges mean the Gentiles. The Israelites were within the city, inasmuch as they had received the lawgiving and inherited a civil and moral way of life. But the Gentiles were strangers to the Covenants, and the lawgiving of Christ was foreign to them. They were not fellow citizens of the saints, and did not travel the one true path, but instead followed many highways of lawlessness and coarseness, and were to be found in the hedges, that is, in sins. For sin is a great hedge and middle wall which separates us from God. By highways He signifies the Gentiles' coarse way of life, which led them to so many false beliefs. By hedges He signifies their life of sins. The master does not command his servant simply to call all those in the highways and hedges, but to compel them to come in, although each man is free whether to believe or not. But He uses the word compel to teach us that it is a sign of God's great power that the Gentiles, who were in such ignorance, came to believe. If the power of the preaching and the might of the word of truth had not been so great, how could men who were crazed with idol worship and practiced unspeakable things have been persuaded all at once to know the true God, and to perfect a spiritual life? He called this "compulsion" to show the miraculousness of their

change. One might say that the pagan Greeks did not want to leave their idols and their rich feasting, yet they were compelled to flee from them by the truth of the Gospel. Also, the power of the miracles He worked was a strong force that induced them to be converted to faith in Christ. Every day this Supper is prepared and we are all invited to the kingdom which God prepared for man even before the foundation of the world. But we are not worthy of this Supper—some of us because of useless philosophical musings, others because of love of material things, and yet others because of pleasures of the flesh. But God in His love for man freely bestows this kingdom upon other sinners, upon the blind who have no spiritual vision to perceive the will of God; or if they can perceive it, upon those who are crippled and unable to take a step to do the will of God. And in short He grants the kingdom of heaven to all the poor who have fallen away from the glory above, and even to the maimed who cannot show forth in themselves a blameless life. To invite these sinners to the Supper, who are wandering astray in the streets and broad avenues of sin, the Father sends His Son Who became a Servant according to the flesh, and Who came not to call the righteous, but sinners. All these He feasts liberally, instead of the clever, the rich, and those who indulge the flesh. By the judgments known to Him alone He sends diseases and dangers upon many, causing them, even against their will, to renounce this life. Thus He leads them to His Supper, "compelling" them by means of the dangers. There are many examples of this. Understood in a simpler way, this parable also teaches us to show favor to the poor and the crippled rather than to the rich, just as He exhorted us to do a short while before. [Lk. 14:13-14] It is for this reason that He tells this parable, to confirm that we must give hospitality to the poor. And we may also learn from this that we should be so eager and generous in welcoming our brethren that, even when they are reluctant, we should compel them to partake of our good things. This is also good advice for teachers: teach what is necessary, even when the students are unwilling.

***LET ALL THAT YOU DO BE DONE IN LOVE. 1 Cor.16:14***

***YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND. Matt. 22:37***

***YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF. Matt. 22:39***

***LOVE YOUR ENEMIES AND PRAY FOR THOSE WHO PERSECUTE YOU. Matt. 5:44***

***LOVE IS PATIENT, LOVE IS KIND, LOVE DOES NOT ENVY, LOVE DOES NOT BOAST, LOVE IS NOT PROUD, LOVE IS NOT SELFISH, LOVE IS NOT PROVOKED. 1Cor. 13:4***

***LOVE BEARS ALL THINGS, LOVE ALWAYS HAS FAITH, LOVE ALWAYS HAS HOPE, LOVE ENDURES ALL THINGS. LOVE NEVER FAILS! 1Cor. 13:7,8***

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**Parish Activities**

**PARISH COUNCIL**

The next meeting will be January 9 at 5:00 PM

**CHURCH SCHOOL**

Held every Sunday from 12:30-1:15 PM via Google Classroom

Church School Q&A with Fr. Jay on Sunday, January 10.

(The Life of St. Nicholas the Wonderworker

**BIBLE STUDY**

Next Class - Monday, December 14 at 6:30 PM (Via Zoom). We are studying the Gospel According to Matthew. We will be starting Chapter 9.

**BOOK CLUB**

Next Class - Monday, December 28 at 6:30 PM (Via Zoom). The topic is Marriage

**ADULT EDUCATION/CATECHUMENS' CLASS**

We will be offering a 4 part class on the Basics of Orthodox Christianity

Next Class – Wednesday December 16 at 7:00 PM (Via Zoom)Information will be sent out to everyone. Please tell our families, friends, neighbors and anyone who may be interested in learning more about The Orthodox Faith.

**SISTERHOOD OF ST. GEORGE**

We will be collecting those delicious homemade Christmas Cookies for Hearts for the Homeless. Please bring them to church on Sunday December 13. We are looking for at least 2 dozen per donation.

If anyone has any questions, please see or contact Barbara.

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**JOIN ARCHBISHOP MICHAEL, TO PRAY AND FAST FOR RECONCILIATION AND AN END TO CIVIL STRIFE**

The clergy and faithful of the Diocese continue to mourn the tragic losses of life, the needless acts of violence, the divisions among races, and the civil strife which plague many of our cities and countrysides.

Our Lord’s own words instruct us as to what our response to injustice, inequality, violence and hopelessness must be: “Whatever you do to the least of My brethren, you do it to Me” (Matthew 25:40), and “by this will all men know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another” (John 13:15). The Saints remind us that we are blind unless we see every human being – regardless of their differences – as made in the image, and after the likeness, of God (Genesis 1:26-27). And the Sermon on the Mount challenges us to become “peacemakers, for they shall be called the sons of God.”

Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King put it this way, “Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate; only love can do that. Hate multiplies hate; violence multiplies violence in a descending spiral of destruction.”

The work of establishing justice and equality, and peace and love among all peoples in our country, cannot be achieved by one-time efforts; it must be an ongoing process of change, of repentance. And some kinds of evil, according to our Savior, are only driven out “by prayer and fasting” (Matthew 17:21).

So, I invite all of our diocesan family to join with me in a Year Dedicated to Reconciliation and An End to Civil Strife by praying and fasting on the first day of every month, beginning Wednesday, July 1: by praying the Akathist to the African Saints, and the Prayer for Racial Reconciliation (which is attached to this e-mail) – at 12:00 noon, and abstaining from eating lunch that day.

If you cannot pray and fast at noon on that day, then choose another meal from which to fast, and another time to pray the Akathist ... or at least offer the Prayer for Racial Reconciliation, which is at the conclusion of the service, if that is all that you have time to do.

We ask the Lord to help us become instruments of peace and reconciliation ... for those who truly pray and fast for this cause, cannot be at the same time



instruments of hatred and violence.

May Our Lord bring an end to the strife that divides the people of this country from one another ... may He make us instruments of that process ... and, may He grant mercy and blessed repose to all those who have been taken from us in acts of hatred and fear. May their memory be eternal.

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WE WILL GATHER TOGETHER AS A PARISH FAMILY IN PRAYER ON THE FOLLOWING DAYS AT 12:00 NOON AND SERVE "THE PRAYER SERVICE FOR AMERICA":

**Friday January 1, 2021** *(After Divine Liturgy)*

**Monday February 1**                      **Monday March 1**

**Thursday April 1**                      **Saturday May 1**

**Tuesday June 1**

**\*\*PLEASE SPREAD THE WORD AND INVITE OUR FAMILIES FRIENDS, NEIGHBORS COME AND PRAY WITH US!**

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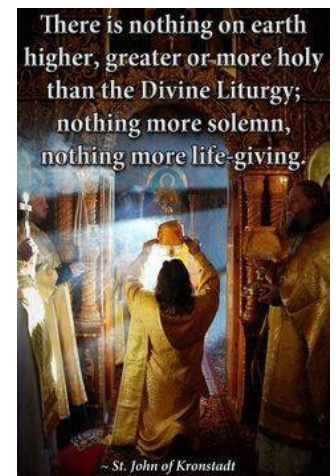
**COMMEMORATION SHEETS FOR REMEMBRANCE AT THE DIVINE SERVICES**

The greatest form of strength for our faith is Prayer. Prayer is the essence of our connection to the presence and existence of God in our lives. When we pray, we must be spiritually standing in awe before God and be in communion with Him. One of the greatest aspects of prayer is praying for our loved ones.

To help us with our prayer life and remembering our loved ones in prayer, we can submit names for Father Jason to commemorate during the Proskomedia as well as during the Divine Liturgy.

If anyone would like to have our loved ones ("For The Health of...." and/or "For the Repose of....."), please submit the below Commemoration Sheet to Fr. Jason at anytime and he will be sure to remember our loved ones during the Divine Services.

May God continue to bless and guide you and your families and keep all of us in His loving care.





For the Health and Salvation of:

15 horizontal red lines for writing names.



For the Departed Souls of:

15 horizontal black lines for writing names.

Use this page to create a prayer list of family members, friends, relatives, or other people who know and want to remember in your daily prayers



For the Health and Salvation of:

15 horizontal red lines for writing names.



For the Departed Souls of:

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