



The Trophy Bearer

March 2021

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St. George Orthodox Church

2 Nottingham Terrace

Buffalo, NY 14216

Very Rev. Jason Vansuch, Parish Priest

Parish Rectory: (716) 875-4222 Cell: (609) 851-3811

Email: jvansuch@hotmail.com

Parish Website: www.stgeorgebuffalo.com

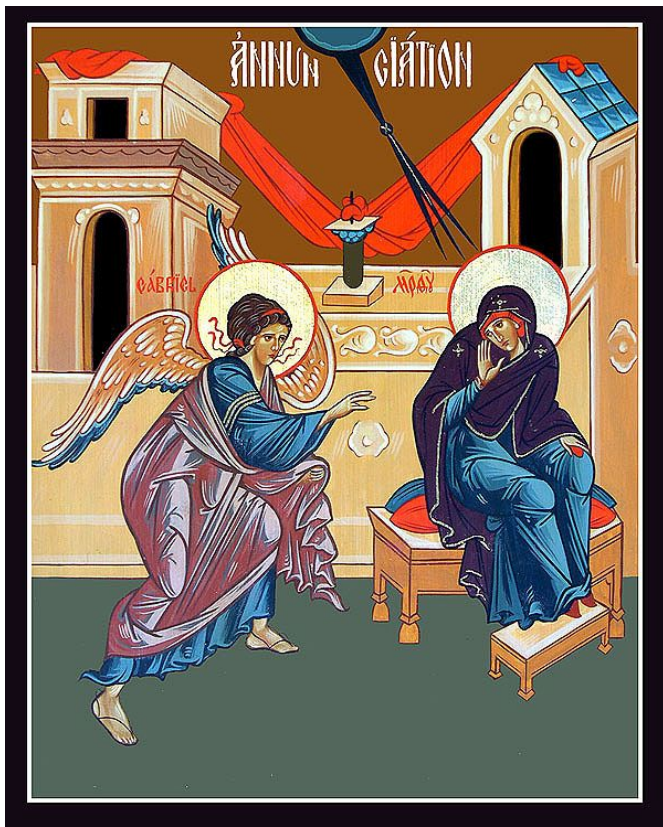
Presbyter Andreja Damjanovski - Attached

Reader John Kirwan, Choir Director

Priest Peter Irfan - Attached

Mr. Paul Shosho, Parish Council President

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



THE GREAT FEAST OF THE ANNUNCIATION OF THE MOST HOLY THEOTOKOS

March 25

The Feast of the Annunciation is one of the earliest Christian feasts, and was already being celebrated in the fourth century. There is a painting of the Annunciation in the catacomb of Priscilla in Rome dating from the second century. The Council of Toledo in 656 mentions the Feast, and the Council in Trullo in 692 says that the Annunciation was celebrated during Great Lent.

The Greek and Slavonic names for the Feast may be translated as "good tidings." This, of course, refers to the Incarnation of the Son of God and the salvation He brings. The background of the Annunciation is found in the Gospel of St Luke (1:26-38). The troparion describes this as the "beginning of our salvation, and the revelation of the eternal mystery," for on this day the Son of God became the Son of Man.

There are two main components to the Annunciation: the message itself, and the response of the Virgin. The message fulfills God's promise to send a Redeemer (Genesis 3:15): "I will put enmity between you and the woman, between your seed and her seed; he shall crush your head, and you shall lie in wait for his heel." The Fathers of the Church understand "her seed" to refer to Christ. The prophets hinted at His coming, which they saw dimly, but the Archangel Gabriel now proclaims that the promise is about to be fulfilled.

We see this echoed in the Liturgy of St Basil, as well: "When man disobeyed Thee, the only true God who had created him, and was deceived by the guile of the serpent, becoming subject to death by his own transgressions, Thou, O God, in Thy righteous judgment, didst send him forth from Paradise into this world, returning him to the earth from which he was taken, yet providing for him the salvation of regeneration in Thy Christ Himself."

The Archangel Gabriel was sent by God to Nazareth in Galilee. There he spoke to the undefiled Virgin who was betrothed to St Joseph: "Hail, thou who art highly favoured, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women. And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name Jesus. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Most High: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: And he shall reign over the house of Jacob forever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end."

In contrast to Eve, who was readily deceived by the serpent, the Virgin did not immediately accept the Angel's message. In her humility, she did not think she was deserving of such words, but was actually troubled by them. The fact that she asked for an explanation reveals her sobriety and prudence. She did not disbelieve the words of the angel, but could not understand how they would be fulfilled, for they spoke of something which was beyond nature.

Then said Mary unto the angel, "How shall this be, seeing I know not a man?" (Luke 1:34).

And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Most High shall overshadow thee: therefore also that which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God. And, behold, thy cousin Elisabeth hath also conceived a son in her old age: and this is the sixth month with her, who was called barren. For with God nothing shall be impossible.' And Mary said, 'Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word.' And the angel departed from her" (Luke 1: 35-38)."

In his Sermon 23 on the day of the Annunciation, St Philaret of Moscow boldly stated that "the word of the creature brought the Creator down into the world." He explains that salvation is not merely an act of God's will, but also involves the Virgin's free will. She could have refused, but she accepted God's will and chose to cooperate without complaint or further questions.

The icon of the Feast shows the Archangel with a staff in his left hand, indicating his role as a messenger. Sometimes one wing is upraised, as if to show his swift descent from heaven. His

right hand is stretched toward the holy Virgin as he delivers his message.

The Virgin is depicted either standing or sitting, usually holding yarn in her left hand. Sometimes she is shown holding a scroll. Her right hand may be raised to indicate her surprise at the message she is hearing. Her head is bowed, showing her consent and obedience. The descent of the Holy Spirit upon her is depicted by a ray of light issuing from a small sphere at the top of the icon, which symbolizes heaven. In a famous icon from Sinai, a white dove is shown in the ray of light.

There are several famous icons of the Annunciation. One is in the Moscow Kremlin in the church of the Annunciation. This icon appeared in connection with the rescue of a prisoner by the Mother of God during the reign of Ivan the Terrible. Another is to be found in the Dormition Cathedral in Moscow. It was originally located in Ustiug, and was the icon before which St Procopius the fool (July 8) prayed to save the city from destruction in 1290. One of the most highly revered icons in Greece is the Tinos icon of the Annunciation (January 30).

"While fasting in body, O brothers, let us also fast in spirit! Let us loose the bonds of iniquity! Let us undo the chains of injjustice! Let us break the yoke of oppression! Let us give food to the hungry! Let us shelter the poor and homeless, // so that we may receive great mercy from Christ our God! "
(Wednesday of the First Week of Great Lent)

A Message From Fr. Jason

THE 2021 GREAT LENTEN SEASON:

The Journey to Holy Pascha

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

GLORY TO JESUS CHRIST!

GLORY FOREVER!

I greet all of you with these words of praise as we begin The Great Lenten Journey. These words remind each of us about the importance of Great Lent and how this period in the Life of the Church is a time for repentance, forgiveness, and growth.

Every year we make this spiritual journey through Great Lent during which we gather together to pray at the various services. We gather together to seek God's love and

repentance. We gather together to seek guidance and salvation. We gather together as brothers and sisters in Christ as we prepare ourselves to celebrate the Great Feast of Holy Pascha! It is during this time, as such, that it would be beneficial for us, as Christians, to choose a goal that is appropriate for our own spirituality. Perhaps we need to attend the weekly services that are offered on a more regular basis, pray a little more each day, read the Bible all the way through, fast more often or more strictly, extend our time, talents, and efforts a little more. Whatever we need to do to grow spiritually, we need to start today!

The Great Lenten Season and Journey, itself, reminds us of the constant need to re-evaluate and recapture that which is central to our lives as Orthodox Christians, to restore balance in all we do, and in repentance to make an earnest attempt to set aside a portion—the “first portion”—of our time to acquire the peace of the Holy Spirit. This can be seen and fulfilled by way of our stewardship or commitment to Christ and His Holy Church. Stewardship is understood to be a spiritual exercise whereby we, as God’s Children, express our love and faithfulness in tangible ways through the giving of our time, talents and treasures for the building up of the Body of Christ as best expressed in our Parish life. For truly as Christ has taught, all things belong to God, and He has gifted them to us during our time on earth. As Christians, we are called to share these gifts with those around us. During this Great Lenten Season, I encourage all of us to support the good work being done by our parish by making a donation of our time, talents, or treasures as this would be a good way for all of us to set aside the “first portion” God has given to us.

By entering the Season of Great Lent we discover -- perhaps for the first time -- the mercy and love of God revealed in the services, which open to us the great acts of salvation. In these services, culminating in the Canon of St. Andrew of Crete, the celebration of Pre-Sanctified Liturgy, the celebration of the Divine Liturgy, and the many other services that are celebrated during Great Lent, the body of Christians is made into the body of Christ. In these celebrations, the Kingdom of God is being proclaimed and revealed. With the proclamation of the Gospel we are given the opportunity to receive the living Word of God which renews and illumines those seeking "to run the race that is set before us" (Heb. 12:1). By embracing this Word we are invited to draw near and receive from the table of the Kingdom the bread of life and the fountain of immortality.

My dear brothers and sisters in Christ, a great and awesome gift has been entrusted to us. By entering the Great Lenten Season, we are given the opportunity to proclaim, in word and deed, the Gospel of new and eternal life. Let us draw near together, as a parish family, and enter with great joy into the mystery of the spiritual and liturgical life of our Church. And let us proclaim to the world the saving acts of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ by fulfilling and proclaiming His Beloved Gospel.

As we begin this Great Lenten Season, I encourage all of us to participate in the Liturgical and Spiritual Life of our parish. We will be offering the services to allow everyone the opportunity to grow in their spiritual life as well as to become a part of the Liturgical Life of our parish. We will also be continuing Educational Sessions for both the children and the adults of our parish to allow the opportunity for all of us to grow in our faith. We also have Social Distant Lenten Pot-Luck Dinners on Wednesday

Evenings following Pre-Sanctified Liturgy to allow more time for us to gather together as a family for Christian Fellowship and discussion.

Through these services and activities, we will allow ourselves the opportunity of coming together as a parish family to pray and enjoy Christian fellowship with one another as brothers and sisters in Christ. If we are not able to make it to church for the Services, I encourage us to pray the Reader Servers at home together with our families as well as join us in prayer through live-streaming.

As we begin Great Lent, I encourage all of us to continue our love and support for one another. I encourage all of us to continue praying for one another. For through these efforts on everyone's part, not only will our beloved parish family continue to grow in faith and in love, but more so we will become what God has intended us to be: A Thriving and Living Body of Christ proclaiming and living the Gospel of His Beloved Son, Our Lord Jesus Christ!

As we begin Great Lent, I humbly ask for your forgiveness if I have failed you as your spiritual father, as your shepherd, as your priest. If I have sinned against you or caused you to sin through my words, my thoughts, my actions, I humbly ask for your forgiveness and for your continued love and prayers that God will continue to strengthen me so that together, through the Prayers of Our Heavenly Patron, Holy Great-Martyr and Wonderworker George the Victorious, GOD may continue to bless us and protect us as we minister and proclaim the Gospel of His Beloved Son, Our Lord God and Savior Jesus Christ.

As always, be assured of my continued love and prayers for you, your families, and our entire parish family.

Have a Blessed, Peaceful, and Prayerful Great Lenten Journey!

I remain with Love in Christ

Your Humble Servant, Fr. Jason

Parish Activities

PARISH COUNCIL

The next meeting will be held on March 20 at 5:00 PM. via Zoom

CHURCHSCHOOL

Sundays 12:30-1:15pm)

Sunday, March 7: Youth Sunday - Q&A with Fr. Jay

Sunday March 14: Church School Class via Google Classroom

ADULT EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Bible Study: We will be having a Bible Study class two Mondays each month. This month we will meet on March 8 & March 29 at 6:30 pm via Zoom. We are reading and discussing The Gospel according to St. Matthew.

Book Club: On Monday, April 5 & 12 at 6:30 PM we will be reading and discussing "For the Life of the World" by Protopresbyter Alexander Schmemmann. Please join us in the Zoom meeting even if you do not have the book.

Catechumen/Inquirer's/Adult Education Class:

Wednesday at 6:30 pm via Zoom.

If anyone has any questions or concerns or ever needs help or assistance, please do not hesitate to see or contact Fr. Jason. Looking forward to coming together for Prayer, Christian fellowship, education and discussion.

SISTERHOOD OF ST. GEORGE

SEMINARIAN SPONSORSHIP

Sbdn. Maximos, Michelle, and their daughter Madeline Gibson are being sponsored by the Parish. He is a 2nd Year Seminarian at St. Tikhon's Orthodox Theological Seminary. The parish has committed to a monthly stipend. We also would like to send gift cards to them periodically. Local stores are Wegmans, Target, Walmart, Kohls.

If anyone would like to contribute to our "Adopt a Seminarian Fund", please see or contact Fr. Jason or Barbara Kuvshinoff.

Upcoming Events:

March 7: Meatfare Sunday/ Sunday of the Last Judgment

Social Distant Meatfare Luncheon following Liturgy. Please see or contact Fr. Jason, or Mat. Katia, or Mat. Fran if you would like to help out or bring a (meat and dairy) covered dish to share with everyone!!

March 14: Forgiveness Sunday

St. George Meet & Greet in the fellowship hall immediately following forgiveness Sunday Vespers. The Hours - 9:10 AM Divine Liturgy followed by Forgiveness Sunday Vespers - 9:30 AM Please join us on Sunday March 14 for a Special Social Distant Lenten Luncheon during which we will get to know our parish family a little better as we begin The Great Lenten Season! Great Food ~~~~ Great Fellowship ~~~~ Great Fun for All! Let us come together as a parish family, as brothers and sisters in Christ and enjoy Christian Fellowship as begin The Great Lenten Season!

Please see or contact Fr. Jason, Paul Shosho, or Mat. Katia if you would like to help out or bring a Lenten (dairy but no meat) covered dish to share with everyone!!

March 21: Do you know about the lots of socks initiative? Those with Down syndrome have a 3rd copy of chromosome 21, so on 3/21 (March 21) the world celebrates World Down Syndrome Day. The idea behind lots of socks is that everyone wears two different colorful socks to highlight the uniqueness of these individuals and show their support for the Down syndrome community. We will be celebrating this on Sunday March 21.. So get your mismatched socks ready and be prepared to display them on Sunday. Please bring a pair or two of socks to donate towards the Buffalo City Mission.

March 25: Feast of the Annunciation

Wed. March 24

Pre-Sanctified Liturgy - 9:30 AM

Great Compline with Litiya - 6:00 PM

Thursday March 25

Vespers with Liturgy of St. John - 9:30 AM

Lenten Public Service Announcements:

- ❑ During Great Lent, we will continue with our on-going collections for The Buffalo City Mission, Hearts for Homeless, Mats for Mission, HomeSpace, Kevin Guest House as well as the OCMC Coin Boxes and Health Kits for The Buffalo City Mission.
- ❑ The first week of Great Lent brings us the Canon of St. Andrew of Crete at being celebrated on Monday-Tuesday-Thursday at 6:00 PM
- ❑ On Wednesdays at 6:00 PM and Fridays at 9:30 AM of Great Lent, Fr. Jason will be celebrating the Divine Liturgy of the Pre-Sanctified Gifts. We can find the service starting on **page 175** of the black Divine Liturgy book.

- ❑ Starting Sunday, March 21, Fr. Jason and every Orthodox Priest will be celebrating the Divine Liturgy of St. Basil the Great. We can find the Liturgy of St. Basil on **page 97** of the black Divine Liturgy book.

Divine Liturgy on Sundays (slots 1-33 for the Church, slots 34-50 in the Parish Fellowship Hall). All of the information pertaining to signing up is contained within the signup invitation/application.

The signup links will also appear on the front page of our parish website as well to make it easier for everyone to sign. **PLEASE SIGN-UP BY 6:00 PM ON SATURDAY NIGHT!!**

The live stream will be available in the Parish Fellowship Hall and Fr. Jason, Fr. Andreja, or Fr. Peter will come into the Hall to distribute Holy Communion to those present. Please keep in mind that if the church is "full" we can not travel between the Parish Fellowship Hall and the Church

PLEASE MAKE SURE WE READ THE DIOCESAN GUIDELINES AS WE MUST ADHERE TO THEM AND FOLLOW THEM! They are posted by the door and on our website

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 and ask you 4 COVID Related Questions if you signed-up to attend. If we did not sign-up, then we will write your name down and ask you the questions as well askindly remind you to sign-up before next Sunday. We will also take your temperature as well. If someone has a fever or is experiencing symptoms or awaiting results of a COVID test, they will not be permitted to come into the church.**
2. **EVERYONE attending the Divine Liturgy (those in the Nave and those in The Parish Fellowship Hall – parishioners, choir members, parish council members) NEED to sign-up. Only Those in the Altar do not need to**

Information on the Services

LIVE STREAMING

As a friendly reminder, ALL DIVINE SERVICES WILL CONTINUE TO 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 we can join together in prayer via Live-Stream even if we do not have a FaceBook account:

- 1) Go directly to our Parish Website (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/UCft4AWAX2COrLZExfMJc5KQ> and there you will see the Live-stream video.

Attending the Sunday Divine Liturgies In Person

If any **single parish members or parish member households** - UP TO 33 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>. We have updated the signup application for our parish to ensure that everyone will have an opportunity to come to the Church OR Parish Fellowship Hall for

sign-up as they are not taking space in The Nave. Once we reach our capacity of 33 people in The Church, everyone else will be seated in The Parish Fellowship Hall. We must also remember to wear a mask in Church and in the Parish Fellowship Hall as well as on Church Property at all times and maintain social distancing. If we forget one, we will have them available at the Candle Desk as well as in the Parish Fellowship Hall. Also, when we enter the Church and say our prayers, we must use the hand sanitizer that is located at the Candle Desk as well as review the posted Diocesan Guidelines. These (masks, prayers, hand sanitizer) are also located in the Parish Fellowship Hall. These precautions are for the

Regarding Receiving Holy Communion when we are unable to attend The Divine Liturgy

If anyone would like to come to Church to pray, light a candle 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/609.851.3811/716.875.4222

Regarding The Mystery of 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

health, safety, and well-being of everyone who comes and enters our Church to pray and worship God.

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.

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. Phone: 609.851.3811/716.875.4222

What makes an Orthodox Home?

This is a series of articles on establishing an Orthodox home. The article was written by Phyllis Meshel Onest, M.Div., who was the Christian

Education director of the Metropolis of Pittsburgh
(Greek Archdiocese)

Last month we listed reasons why the church home is important in teaching the faith. This month, in part 2, we list some of the activities and items that mark our home as an Orthodox Christian home.

Some signposts of an Orthodox Christian home

1. Placing Icons in a Prayer Corner and throughout the house to remind us that God, the Theotokos and the Saints are always with us.

Traditionally, an icon corner should be on an eastern facing wall. In an Orthodox Church, Christians pray facing the East. The icon corner should also be in a place that is visible to all of the family and easily accessible. It should be an integral part of the daily life of the household.

What should be in the icon corner: The basic answer to this is an icon of Christ, an icon of the Theotokos, and a candle. You can add the following if you wish: icons of family patron saints, icons of feasts, blessed candles, holy water, palm branches/pussy willows, incense, prayer books, prayer lists, Bible

2. Placing Icons of the Theotokos at the doorways to remind us to ask for protection for all who leave and give thanks for their safe return.
3. Having a Daily Rule of Prayer, both for individuals and the family, no matter how short. Using the Prayer Corner to help keep us focused On Christ.

Prayer books often contain prayers for morning and evening prayers as well as at other times. See your spiritual father, or confessor to discuss what prayers you need to be praying

4. Regularly attending the Liturgy and other services of the Church.

If you are unable to come to any service, live streaming is available at this parish and parishes and monasteries across the US. If you go to the parish's youtube page, you can watch the services at a time convenient to you. [St. George youtube page](#)

5. Owning and using Prayer books and Service books for Liturgy, Holy Week, and other services.
6. Reading Scriptures on a regular basis, individually and as a family, even if for just 15 minutes a day. Begin with the weekly Sunday Epistle and Gospel readings.
7. Reading the Lives of the Saints who are heroes, models, and guides for our Spiritual life. Go to [lives of saints/oca](#) to find specific saints.
8. Maintaining the Wednesday and Friday fasts throughout the year (Jesus was betrayed on Wednesday & died on Friday) and the 4 Lenten Fasts as best we can.
9. Celebrating the Major Feast & Saints Days by attending services whenever possible, and making the Feast Day a special day in our home.

If you need ideas, you can search online for **activities celebrating orthodox christian feasts** (or the name of a specific feast)

Next month, we will continue with additional signposts of an Orthodox Christian home.

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

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

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

Reader Victor Shanchuk
495 Lafayette Ave.
Buffalo, NY 14222
716.881.3096

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

Mr. Andrew Wityk
Ellicott Center
200 Seventh Street
Buffalo, NY 14201

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

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

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.

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 three quarterly newsletters: **"First Fruits"**, **"Koinonia"** 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. 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:)**

COVID-19 SCREENING

PLEASE READ EACH QUESTION CAREFULLY.

If we answer yes to **any** question, please do **NOT** come to church but remain at home until cleared to resume normal activity.

1. Have you experienced **any** of the following symptoms in the past 48 hours? If you have **any** of these symptoms, please do NOT come to church.
 - fever or chills
 - cough
 - shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
 - fatigue
 - muscle or body aches
 - headache
 - new loss of taste or smell
 - sore throat
 - congestion or runny nose
 - nausea or vomiting
 - diarrhea
 2. Are you currently waiting on the results of a COVID-19 test? If you are, do NOT come to church. You are required to quarantine until you have received a negative result for your test.
 3. Within the past 14 days, have you been in close physical contact (6 feet or closer for a cumulative total of 15 minutes) with:
 - a. • Anyone who is known to have laboratory-confirmed COVID-19?
 - b. Anyone who has any symptoms consistent with COVID-19?
 4. Are you isolating or quarantining because you may have been exposed to a person with COVID-19 or are worried that you may be sick with COVID-19?
-

COMMENTARY ON GREAT LENT

As we begin the Great Fast, the Church reminds us of Adam's expulsion from Paradise. God commanded Adam to fast (Gen. 2:16), but he did not obey. Because of their disobedience, Adam and Eve were cast out of Eden and lost the life of blessedness, knowledge of God, and communion with Him, for which they were created. Both they and their descendants became heirs of death and corruption.

Let us consider the benefits of fasting, the consequences of disobedience, and recall our fallen state. Today we are invited to cleanse ourselves of evil through fasting and obedience to God. Our fasting should not be a negative thing, a mere abstention from certain foods. It is an opportunity to free ourselves from the sinful desires and urges of our fallen nature, and to nourish our souls with prayer, repentance, to participate in church services, and partake of the life-giving Mysteries of Christ.

At Forgiveness Vespers we sing: "Let us begin the time of fasting in light, preparing ourselves for spiritual efforts. Let us purify our soul, let us purify our body. As we abstain from food, let us abstain from all passion and enjoy the virtues of the spirit...."

Finally, on the eve of Great Lent, the day called Cheesefare Sunday and Forgiveness Sunday, we sing of Adam's exile from paradise. We identify ourselves with Adam, lamenting our loss of the beauty, dignity and delight of our original creation, mourning our corruption in sin.

We also hear on this day the Lord's teaching about fasting and forgiveness, and we enter the season of the fast forgiving one another so that God will forgive us. If you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will forgive you; but if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your heavenly Father forgive you your trespasses.

The season of Great Lent is the time of preparation for the feast of the Resurrection of Christ, It is the living symbol of man's entire life which is to be fulfilled in his own resurrection from the dead with Christ. It is a time of renewed devotion: of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving. It is a time of repentance, a real renewal of our minds, hearts and deeds in conformity with Christ and his teachings.

It is the time, most of all, of our return to the great commandments of loving God and our neighbors.

In the Orthodox Church, Great Lent is not a season of morbidity and gloominess. On the contrary, it is a time of joyfulness and purification. We are called to "anoint our faces" and to "cleanse our bodies as we cleanse our souls." The very first hymns of the very first service of Great Lent set the proper tone of the season:

Let us begin the lenten time with delight ... let us fast from passions as we fast from food, taking pleasure in the good words of the Spirit, that we may be granted to see the holy passion of Christ our God and his holy Pascha, spiritually rejoicing.

Thy grace has arisen upon us, O Lord, the illumination of our souls has shown forth; behold, now is the acceptable time; behold, now is the time of repentance (Vesper Hymns).

It is our repentance that God desires, not our remorse. We sorrow for our sins, but we do so in the joy of God's mercy. We mortify our flesh, but we do so in the joy of our resurrection into life everlasting. We make ready for the resurrection during Great Lent, both Christ's Resurrection and our own.

Self Preservation

Many things have been done - or words were said

That pierced the heart - like a bullet of lead

And though the event came - and soon was gone

The sting of it all - lingered on and on.

Dwelling on the past - though time has marched on
Will make us miserable - no mood for a song,
Because peace and joy - Satan is stealing
Thus, he alone prospers - if we hold an ill-feeling.
We must forgive others - in a way that is right:
Leaving their flaws - for only God's sight.
Sometimes it's impossible - to humanly do
So we call on the Holy Spirit - to see us through.
When the Lord forgives us - our slate is wiped clean.
God doesn't hold grudges - or see us as mean.
Yes, He gives us a chance - for a whole new start.
He holds no memory - of our mistakes in his heart.
If we can't forgive - like the Lord intended
We have a miserable life - which can't be mended.
Because an unforgiving heart - is real devastation
And forgiving completely - is self-preservation.

2021 - THE SCHEDULE OF SUNDAY GREAT LENTEN VESPERS - 2021

“Fulfilling the Gospel through Our Life in Christ”

****ALL SUNDAY EVENING VESPERS**

WILL BE SERVED AT ST. GEORGE ORTHODOX CHURCH (BUFFALO, NY)**

Sunday of Orthodoxy	Sunday March 21, 2021
Discussion: “Being called to be Living Icons of The Gospel in our everyday life”	5:00 PM
St. Gregory Palamas	Sunday March 28, 2021
Discussion: “Prayer as a key to Fulfilling The Gospel in our everyday life”	5:00 PM

Veneration of the Cross

**Discussion: “The Cross a key to
Fulfilling The Gospel in our everyday life”**

Sunday April 4, 2021

5:00 PM

St. John Climacus

**Discussion: “The Ladder of Divine Ascent
a key to Fulfilling The Gospel in our everyday life”**

Sunday April 11, 2021

5:00 PM

St. Mary of Egypt

**Discussion: “Repentance
a key to Fulfilling The Gospel in our everyday life”**

Sunday April 18, 2021

5:00 PM

Orthodox Christian Stewardship is a way of life, which acknowledges accountability, reverence, and responsibility before God. A primary goal of Stewardship is to promote spiritual growth and strengthen faith. Becoming a Steward begins when we believe in God, to whom we give our love, loyalty and trust and act on those beliefs. As Stewards, we affirm that every aspect of our lives comes as a gift from Him. Stewardship calls on the faithful to cheerfully offer back to God a portion of the gifts with which they have been

blessed. Orthodox Christian Stewardship is a way of life, which acknowledges accountability, reverence, and responsibility before God by teaching and giving examples of a virtuous life to all (St. John Chrysostom).

A primary goal of Stewardship is to strengthen our understanding of the teachings and dogmas of The Orthodox Faith through supporting the work of The Church. This can be found in The Divine Services as reiterated by St. John of San Francisco:” The Divine Services in their composition contain all the fullness of the dogmatic teaching of the Church and set forth the path of

salvation.” Fulfilling our responsibility of continual learning begins when we believe in God, to whom we give our love, loyalty and trust and act on those beliefs. Through being Stewards of the Gospel and of The Orthodox Church, Education calls on the faithful to cheerfully receive instruction given to the Church by Our Lord, Holy Scripture, The Divine Services, and The Holy Fathers of the Church. Through Orthodox Christian Stewardship, The Church promotes spiritual growth and strengthened faith and calls on all of us to bring the faith and love of Our Lord to every aspect of our lives as gifts from Him through our time, talents, and treasures. During this year, let us come together as a Diocesan Family and recommit ourselves to both spiritual growth of our Life in Christ as well as through Orthodox Christian Stewardship by attending the Divine Services, attending the many opportunities of Education for both Adults and Children through Parish Education, gatherings, and fellowship and by supporting our Parishes and Diocese in the many endeavors through which, by the Grace of God, we will bring the light and love of Our Lord to all!

*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*

St. George Orthodox Church March Calendar

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2 9 am Matins	3	4 9 am Akathist	5 t	6 Memorial Saturday 3:30 pm Full Memorial Panahyda Service 4:00pm Great Vespers
7 Meatfare Sunday 9:10 am Third & Sixth Hours 9:30 am Divine Liturgy Coffee Hour (On-the-Go)	8 6 :30 pm St. George Bible Study Class (Via Zoom)	9 9:00 am Daily Matins	10 6:30 pm Adult Education Class (via Zoom)	11 9:00 am Akathist	12	13 4:00 pm Great Vespers

<p>Care Package)</p> <p>Church School via Google Classroom (12:30-1:30 pm)</p>						
<p>14</p> <p>Forgiveness Sunday/ Cheesefare Sunday</p> <p>9:10 am The Hours</p> <p>9:30 am Divine Liturgy & Forgiveness Sunday Vespers</p> <p>Coffee Hour (On-the-Go Care Package)</p> <p>Church School via Google Classroom (12:30-1:30 pm)</p>	<p>15</p> <p>Great Lent Begins</p> <p>6:00 pm Great Compline with Canon of St. Andrew of Crete</p>	<p>16</p> <p>9:00 am Daily Lenten Matins</p> <p>6:00 pm Great Compline with Canon of St. Andrew of Crete</p>	<p>17</p> <p>6:00 pm Pre-Sanctified Liturgy</p> <p>Pot Luck Lenten Dinner/ Discussion in Parish Hall following Liturgy</p>	<p>18</p> <p>9:00 am Akathist Service to Our Lord Jesus Christ</p> <p>6:00 pm Great Compline with Canon of St. Andrew of Crete</p>	<p>19</p> <p>9:30 am Pre-Sanctified Liturgy</p> <p>6:00 pm Moleben to St. Theodore</p>	<p>20</p> <p>St. Theodore Saturday</p> <p>9 am Divine Liturgy and Blessing of Koliva</p> <p>4:00 pm Great Vespers</p> <p>5:00 pm Parish Council Mtg (via Zoom)</p>
<p>21</p> <p>1st Sunday of Great Lent: Sunday of Orthodoxy</p> <p>9:10 am Third & Sixth Hours</p> <p>9:30 am Divine Liturgy</p> <p>Coffee Hour (On-the-Go Care Package)</p>			<p>24</p> <p>Eve of the Great Feast of the Annunciation of the Theotokos</p> <p>9:30 am Pre-Sanctified Liturgy</p> <p>6:00 pm Great Compline with Litiya</p>	<p>25</p> <p>Great Feast of the Annunciation of the Theotokos</p> <p>9:30 am Vespers with Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom</p> <p>6:30 pm Adult Education Class (via Zoom)</p>	<p>26</p> <p>9:30 am Pre-Sanctified Liturgy</p> <p>6:00 pm Memorial Matins</p>	<p>27</p> <p>Memorial Saturday</p> <p>9:30 am Divine Liturgy</p> <p>4:00 pm Great Vespers</p>

Church School via Google Classroom (12:30-1:30 pm) Lenten Vespers 5pm						
28 2nd Sunday of Great Lent: St. Gregory Palamas 9:10 am Third & Sixth Hours 9:30 am Divine Liturgy Coffee Hour (On-the-Go Care Package) Church School via Google Classroom (12:30-1:30 pm) Lenten Vespers 5 pm	29 6 :30 pm St. George Bible Study Class (Via Zoom)	30 9:00 am Daily Lenten Matins	31 6:00 pm Pre-Sanctified Liturgy Pot Luck Lenten Dinner/ Discussion in Parish Hall following Liturgy	April 1 9:00 am Akathist Service to Our Lord Jesus Christ 6:30 pm Adult Education Class (via Zoom)	April 2 9:30 am Pre-Sanctified Litugry 6:00 pm Memorial Matins	April 3 Memorial Saturday 9:30 am Divine Liturgy 4:00 pm Great Vespers