

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 St. George Orthodox Church

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Altar Candles are offered by Anthony DelNuovo in Loving Memory of Thy Departed Servants of his family. May their 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 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

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24th SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST — Tone 7.
Ven. Sava the Sanctified (532). St. Gurias, Archbishop of Kazan' (1563). Martyr Anastasius. Ven. Karion (Cyrion) and his son, Ven. Zachariah, of Egypt (4th c.). Ven. Nectarius of Mt. Athos (1406). Ven. Philotheus of Karyes (Mt. Athos—14th c.). Monastic Martyrs of Karyes (Mt. Athos). St. Crispina (304).

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EPISTLE LESSON

GOSPEL LESSON

Galatians 5:22-6:2
Ephesians 2:14-22

Matthew 11:27-30
Luke 17:12-19

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DECEMBER 5, 2021 NO. 435

Come and See how we are all called to be Stewards of The Church!

- Stewardship is our active commitment to use all our time, talent and treasure for the benefit of humankind in grateful acknowledgment of Christ's redeeming love.
- Stewardship is caring for the needs of others.
- Stewardship is offering one's self to God as He offered Himself to us.
- Stewardship is what a person does after saying "I Believe . . . ", as proof of that belief.
- Stewardship is learning how to be a responsible and concerned caretaker of Christ's Church; it is learning how to enjoy Church life and be happy in Church work, for in Her dwells the fullness of the Spirit of God.

If you would like to make a donation to our parish, please feel free to use the QR Code below. Thank you for your continued support and generosity for our parish in bringing The Love and Faith of Our Lord Jesus Christ to all! May God continue to bless and guide you and keep all of you in His loving care today and always!



HYMNS FOR THE DIVINE LITURGY

Troparion for The Resurrection — Tone 7

By Thy Cross Thou didst destroy death. To the thief Thou didst open Paradise. For the Myrrhbearers Thou didst change weeping into joy, and Thou didst command Thy disciples, O Christ God, to proclaim that Thou art risen, // granting the world great mercy.

Troparion for The Venerable Sabbas the Sanctified — Tone 8

By a flood of tears thou didst make the desert fertile, and thy longing for God brought forth fruits in abundance. By the radiance of miracles thou didst illumine the whole universe. // Our Father Sabbas, pray to Christ God to save our souls!

Kontakion for The Resurrection — Tone 7

The dominion of death can no longer hold men captive, for Christ descended, shattering and destroying its powers. Hell is bound, while the Prophets rejoice and cry: "The Savior has come to those in faith; // enter, you faithful, into the Resurrection!"

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

Konatkion for The Venerable Sabbas the Sanctified — Tone 8

From thy youth thou didst offer thyself to God as a blameless sacrifice, having been dedicated to Him before thy birth, O blessed Sabbas. Thou wast an adornment of the righteous and a praiseworthy citizen of the desert. // Therefore, we cry to thee: "Rejoice, O ever-glorious Father!"

*Now and ever and unto ages of ages.
Amen.*

THE EPISTLE LESSON FOR TODAY

Ephesians 2:14-22 and Galatians 5:22-6:2

BRETHREN:

For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation, having abolished in His flesh the enmity, that is, the law of commandments contained in ordinances, so as to create in Himself one new man from the two, thus making peace, and that He might reconcile them both to God in one body through the cross, thereby putting to death the enmity. And He came and preached peace to you who were afar off and to those who were near. For through Him we both have access by one Spirit to the Father.

Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone, in whom the whole building, being fitted together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord, in whom you also are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit.

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,

Steadfast Protectress Tone 6 (Hymn to the Theotokos)

Steadfast Protectress of Christians, constant advocate before the Creator. Despise not the entreating cry of us sinners, but in Your Goodness come speedily to help us who call on You in faith! Hasten to hear our petition and to intercede for us, O Theotokos!! For You always protect those who honor You!

PROKEMEINON Tone 7

The Lord shall give strength to His people. /
The Lord shall bless His people with peace.

v. Offer to the Lord, O you sons of God! Offer young rams to the Lord!

THE SECOND PROKEMEINON Tone 7

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

ALLELUIA VERSES

It is good to give thanks to the Lord, to sing praises to Thy Name, O Most High.

To declare Thy mercy in the morning, and Thy truth by night.

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! The righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance. He shall not fear evil tidings. Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

considering yourself lest you also be tempted.

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

THE GOSPEL LESSON FOR TODAY

Luke 17:12-19 and Matthew 11:27-30

Let us Attend:

Then as He entered a certain village, there met Him ten men who were lepers, who stood afar off. And they lifted up their voices and said, "Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!" So when He saw them, He said to them, "Go, show yourselves to the priests." And so it was that as they went, they were cleansed. And one of them, when he saw that he was healed, returned, and with a loud voice glorified God, and fell down on his face at His feet, giving Him thanks. And he was a Samaritan.

So Jesus answered and said, "Were there not ten cleansed? But where are the nine? Were there not any found who returned to give glory to God except this foreigner? And He said to him, "Arise, go your way. Your faith has made you well."

At That Time:

All things have been delivered to Me by My Father, and no one knows the Son except the Father. Nor does anyone know the Father except the Son, and the one to whom the Son wills to reveal Him.

Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.

For My yoke is easy and My burden is light."

LOVE CONQUERS 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



****ALL POINSETTIAS ARE A \$10.00 DONATION!**

****PLEASE SEE MATUSHKA FRAN FOR PAYMENT!**

IF ANYONE HAS ANY QUESTIONS, PLEASE SEE OR CONTACT MATUSHKA FRAN OR FR. JASON!

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

May GOD continue to bless us and guide us as we grow together in faith and in love as we celebrate the Joyous Feast of the Nativity of Our Lord GOD and Savior Jesus Christ!

****POINSETTIAS WILL BE AVAILABLE FOLLOWING THE FESTAL DIVINE LITURGY ON**

CHRISTMAS DAY – DECEMBER 25!!

Upcoming Events within The Life of our Parish/Diocese

DECEMBER 2021{Nativity Fast: Nov. 15-Dec. 24}

****FULL SCHEDULE OF SERVICES FOR THE NATIVITY FAST**

WILL BE SENT OUT TO EVERYONE VIA EMAIL AND/OR MAIL**

5 – Eve of the Feast of St. Nicholas the Wonderworker

Youth Sunday

Divine Liturgy at 10:00 AM Great Vespers at 1:30 PM

5 – ANNUAL CHURCH SCHOOL ST. NICHOLAS/NATIVITY PROGRAM

6 – The Feast of St. Nicholas the Wonderworker

Divine Liturgy at 9:30 AM

12 – Annual Parish Meeting (in-person and via Zoom)

13 – Feast of St. Herman of Alaska

Moleben/Akathist Service to St. Herman at 9:00 AM

13 – Monthly Community Healing Prayer Service– 6:00 PM

18 - Great Vespers – 4:00 PM Parish Council Meeting (5:00pm)

SUNDAY DECEMBER 12

****Bring New Pajamas for patients at Roswell Park****

****Christmas Cookies are due for Hearts for Homeless****

****Christmas Gifts are due for Church School Nativity Project****

****Winter Gloves Donations due for Mats for Mission****

13/15/17 – Little Compline Service – 6:30 PM

19 – Church School Q&A with Fr. Jay (The Acts of the Holy Apostles)

24/25 – THE GREAT FEAST OF THE NATIVITY OF OUR LORD

December 23

9:00 AM – The Service of Royal Hours

December 24 (Eve of The Great Feast of The Nativity of Our Lord)

9:00 AM – Vespers with Liturgy of St. Basil the Great

4:30 PM – Nativity Vigil Service

December 25 (The Great Feast of The Nativity of Our Lord)

9:30 AM – Festal Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom

(Brunch in Parish Fellowship Hall)

December 26 (2nd Day of The Great Feast of The Nativity of Our Lord)

10:00 AM – Festal Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom

Nativity Luncheon at Church following Divine Liturgy

Christmas Caroling around The Neighborhood

December 27 (3rd Day of The Great Feast of The Nativity of Our Lord)

9:30 AM – Festal Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom

26 – Church School Outing to Our Lady of Fatima Shrine for Festival of Lights

THE SCHEDULE OF WEEKLY SERVICES and ACTIVITIES

SUNDAY DECEMBER 5, 2021

YOUTH SUNDAY

Eve of The Feast of St. Nicholas

The Hours – 9:40 AM

Divine Liturgy - 10:00 AM

Annual Church School St Nicholas/Nativity Program following Divine Liturgy

Coffee Hour Fellowship in the Parish Fellowship Hall following Divine Liturgy!

**Coffee Hour Host: Church School
Coffee Hour Donation:**

Great Vespers – 1:30 PM

MONDAY DECEMBER 6, 2021

The Feast of St. Nicholas

Divine Liturgy - 9:00 AM

Little Compline – 6:00 PM

St. George Bible Study Class

(Via Zoom) – 6:45 to 8:00 PM

WEDNESDAY DECEMBER 8, 2021

Daily Matins – 9:30 AM

Little Compline – 6:00 PM

THURSDAY DECEMBER 9, 2021

Akathist to Our Lord – 9:00 AM

SATURDAY DECEMBER 11, 2021

Great Vespers -4:00 PM

SUNDAY DECEMBER 12, 2021

The Hours – 9:40 AM

Divine Liturgy - 10:00 AM

Annual Parish Meeting in Parish Fellowship Hall (in-person and via Zoom)

Church School and Coffee Hour Fellowship in the Parish Fellowship Hall following Divine Liturgy!

**Coffee Hour Host:
Coffee Hour Donation:**

**31 – Eve of Feast of Circumcision of Our Lord/St. Basil the Great/
New Year’s Day
Great Vespers with Litiya – 4:00 PM**

Church School Children decorate Holy Water Bottles at home with parents and bring back to church on Sunday January 10 for Blessing of Water!

****Please refer to the weekly bulletin, monthly calendar and our church website for any changes to the calendar****

PLEASE SHARE THESE EVENTS WITH EVERYONE!!

An Invitation to Support the Stewards of the OCA!

The Orthodox Church in America (OCA) set the direction for expanding our apostolic work in North America at the 18th All-American Council. The foundation for this work is Jesus Christ, Whom we encounter in our spiritual lives, stewardship, evangelism and outreach, and relations with others as we engage the world. Being a steward of the OCA goes beyond the financial gifts which support the work of our church. Being a steward is about caring for and knowing the history of the mission of the Orthodox Church here in North America and finding your place in that history. Having received this great gift of our Orthodox Faith, we bear the responsibility to continue the legacy of Saint Herman and Saint Tikhon; Saint Innocent and Saint Alexis and all the other saints known and unknown who have worked to build up and expand Christ's Church here in North America. Please consider being a part of that mission today by giving to the Stewards of the OCA. For more information, please visit The OCA Website: <https://oca.org/become-a-steward>

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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>.

PARISH THEME FOR 2021:

Orthodox Christian Stewardship

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

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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!**

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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. May GOD continue to bless and guide all of you.

Also in the Parish Fellowship Hall, we have the Giving Tree! If anyone would like to sign up for Coffee Hour Readers Bulletin Collection, Communion Cloth, Home Blessing, please see or contact Fr. Jason!



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

Please be sure to check out “The Giving Tree” in the Parish Fellowship Hall as well as on our parish website (www.stgeorgebuffalo.com) 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.

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 parish 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 Retreats, gatherings, and fellowship and by supporting our Parish in her many endeavors through which, by the Grace of God, we will bring the light and love of Our Lord to all!

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

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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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Some of the items on the leaves are as follows:

- Candles
- 7-Day Vigil Candles
- Flowers for Feast Days
- Charcoal
- Altar Wine
- Cups for Zapifka
- Snack Baggies for the Antidoron (Church Bread)
- Paper Towels
- Toilet Paper

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!

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ST. GEORGE ORTHODOX CHURCH OCMC PARISH AMBASSADORS

To The Glory of God, our parish has been blessed with two parishioners who have answered The Call of Our Lord to be Parish Ambassadors for OCMC guiding us to help bring The Gospel of Our Lord God and Savior Jesus Christ of "Making Disciples of All Nations baptizing them in The Name of The Father and of The Son and of The Holy Spirit!"

Anthony Gregory DelNuovo and John Moses Lutz are our Parish Ambassadors for OCMC (The Orthodox Christian Mission Center). To help the good work being done by The OCMC of supporting Missionaries around the world, our parish will be sponsoring and supporting a missionary on a annual basis. The cost is only \$600/year. So far we have \$450 collected for next year's sponsorship. If anyone would like to make a donation, please see or contact Anthony or John. We express our most sincere and heartfelt thanks and appreciation to everyone who has graciously donated so far. Thank you for kindness and generosity.

For more information about The OCMC, please visit their website:
www.ocmc.org

Another blessing for our parish of continuing the Good Work that has been entrusted to us of bringing The Gospel Message to All!
Lord it is good to be here!

Scriptural Readings for the Week

Monday
Hebrews 13:17-21
Luke 6:17-23
2 Thessalonians 1:1-10
Luke 20:27-44

Tuesday
Thessalonians 1:10-2:2
Luke 21:12-19

Wednesday
2 Thessalonians 2:1-12
Luke 21:5-7, 10-11, 20-24

Thursday
Galatians 4:22-31
Luke 8:16-21
2 Thessalonians 2:13-3:5
Luke 21:28-33

Friday
2 Thessalonians 3:6-18
Luke 21:37-22:8

Saturday
Galatians 1:3-10
Luke 13:18-29

Sunday
Colossians 3:4-11
Luke 14:16-24

**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
(2021)**

Mrs. Diane Salvamoser 147 West Hazeltine Avenue Kenmore, NY 14217 716.875.9503	Reader Victor Shanchuk McAuley Residence 1503 Military Rd. Buffalo, NY 14217 716.881.3096	Mrs. Luba Japadjief Elderwood Nursing Home (Memory Care Unit) 245 Bassett Road Williamsville, NY 14221 (Room 30)
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Mrs. Bonnie Dan 15 Pine Street North Tonawanda, NY 14150 716.693.1377	Mr. Albert Fadell 317.376.2562
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Andrew Wityk Ellicott Center 200 Seventh Street Buffalo, NY 14201	Mrs. Tita Abraham 84 Stonington Lane Getzville, NY 14068	James Stephen Silver 20 Traymore Street Buffalo, NY 14216
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**IMPORTANT PARISH
ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- We will continue with our on-going collections for The Buffalo City Mission, Hearts for Homeless, Mats for Mission, HomeSpace, Resurrection Life Food Pantry, Baker Victory as well as 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 Outlines for ALL weekend SERVICES**
- 2) Zoom information for Education Classes and Book Club**
- 3) Updates on Schedule of Services Events**
- 4) Pastoral Video for Parish Monthly Update**

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EACH WEEK WE WILL BE
RECORDING
THE WEEKLY INCOME FOR EACH
SUNDAY AS WELL AS POSTING
THE MONTHLY INCOME and
EXPENSE FOR OUR PARISH
FOLLOWING THE MONTHLY
PARISH COUNCIL MEETINGS!

INCOME FOR SUNDAY
NOVEMBER 28, 2021 – \$1, 885.90
Commercial Savings Account Deposit -
\$500.00
DONATION TO THE CAPITOL
IMPROVEMENT FUND (Kitchen) - -
\$5, 035.00

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

ST. GEORGE ORTHODOX CHURCH NATIVITY PARISH OUTREACH MINISTRY

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ:
Glory to Jesus Christ! Glory Forever!

Greetings to all of you, your families, and our entire parish family as we prepare to begin The Nativity Fast in just a few short weeks!

Once again, this year, as part of our parish outreach ministry during The Nativity Fast and Christmas Season, we are holding collections for the following Ministries within our Greater Buffalo Area:

- 1) **Baker Victory** – Christmas Gifts for Children
BY SUNDAY DECEMBER 12
***More information will be emailed out this week**
- 2) **Roswell Park** – New Pajamas for the Patients
(adult men and women s-m-l-xl/ children boys and girls s-m-l-xl)
BY SUNDAY DECEMBER 12
- 3) **Hearts for Homeless** – Christmas Cookies and Canned Goods/Non-Perishable Items –
BY SUNDAY DECEMBER 12
- 4) **Mats for Mission** - – **New Pairs of Winter Gloves All Sizes – AT LEAST 15 PAIRS BY SUNDAY DECEMBER 5**

ST. GEORGE ORTHODOX CHURCH PARISH CHRISTMAS CARD

Continuing with our Annual Parish Tradition with the sending of a Parish Christmas Card, we come to all of you – our dear Parish Family for your support in bringing the Love and Joy of Our Lord God and Savior Jesus Christ to everyone during this Holy Season. The cost is only \$20 per family.

If we would like to have our name in the Christmas Card, please fill out the enclosed form with how we would like our name to appear in the card and hand it in to Fr. Jason, Matushka Katia, or Matushka Fran no later Sunday December 5 along with your payment of \$20.00. Besides our names, we will also have a Nativity Message and Greeting from our parish family.

If anyone has any questions, please do not hesitate to contact myself (716-875-4222)/jvansuch@hotmail.com or Matushka Katia (609-851-3811) / katia.vansuch@gmail.com or Matushka Fran (610-698-1666)/fances.vansuch@yahoo.com

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Thank you for your continued love, prayers, support, generosity and stewardship for our Annual Parish Nativity Outreach Ministry Projects, and for all that you do for our parish and throughout the year as well as for the community in which we live, serve, and dwell.

Looking forward to another wonderful blessed Nativity Season of bringing the joy, the love, and the peace of The Nativity of Our Lord to everyone Be assured of my continued love and prayers for you, your families, and our entire parish family. 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 today and always.

I remain, with love in Christ
Your Humble Servant,
Fr. Jason

SAFETY GUIDELINES AND PROTOCOLS FOR OUR PARISH

We will continue to celebrate The Divine Services with FULL CAPACITY in The Church. ALL Pews will be open and available for everyone to stand together. So that we can, to the Glory of God, pray together, sing together and stand together as parish family, as brothers and sisters in Christ.

Until further notice, we continue to follow the following guidelines based upon The Newly Updated Pastoral Guidelines for our Parish and the new directives from Erie County:

- To ensure that everyone feels comfortable and safe while attending Divine Services and Fellowship Activities at our parish, all who wish to attend the Divine Service and Fellowship Activities here at our Parish of St George Orthodox Church will be required to wear a mask while indoors (inside of The Church and The Parish Fellowship Hall) This is to ensure that we, as a parish family and as brothers and sisters in Christ, minister in every way possible through love to those who come to St. George Orthodox Church to grow in their faith and love of Our Lord God and Savior Jesus Christ. Out of love, care, concern, and the well-being of EVERYONE, The Clergy, when distributing Holy Communion and Holding The Cross at the Veneration of the Cross/Dismissal and whenever there is interaction between The Clergy and parishioners, The Clergy will be wearing a mask to ensure the health, safety, and well-being of everyone. As a parish family, let us continue to love one another, respect one another, and pray for and with one another! As I have mentioned previously, the topic of vaccinated vs unvaccinated has no place in our parish. That is a private and individual matter and choice and above that is a HIPAA Privacy Law!
- We will also continue to have hand sanitizer and masks available for everyone both in the Church and in The Parish Fellowship Hall to ensure the health, safety, and well-being of everyone who comes to St. George Orthodox Church for Divine Services and Fellowship Activities. These precautions are for the health, safety, and well-being of everyone who comes and enters our Church to pray and worship God.

* The choir will continue to sing up front

* The space in the back of the church (choir area and children's area) will remain open for the 17 chairs socially distant for those who wish to stand there.

* We will continue to use the Common Communion Cloth. However, if anyone wishes to use the individual napkin to wipe their lips after receiving Holy Communion, they may do so.

* We will be passing the Stewardship Collection Plate during The Litany before The Lord's Prayer

* The Church will continue to be cleaned and sanitized every week and after every service

* The Parish Fellowship Hall will continue to be cleaned and sanitized throughout the week as well as a thorough cleaning/sanitizing every week by hiring our Professional Cleaner (Rocco) who will come in every week on Saturday Night to clean and sanitize the Parish Fellowship Hall and Restrooms. When Hosting Coffee Hour, we will need to be wearing masks as well as use gloves and proper utensils. Following Coffee Hour, the table and chairs will need to be properly sanitized as well as put away properly along with the kitchen and countertops need to be cleaned and properly sanitized,

* With this in mind, we will still need to sign up when we come to Church for THE DIVINE LITURGY on Sundays! This is to ensure the safety, health, and well-being of everyone attending our Parish for the Divine Liturgy. We do NOT need to sign-up beforehand but rather we will need to sign in at The Candle Desk when we come to church. This sign-up is important for us and our parish not only to ensure that everyone has an opportunity to come to Church to pray, participate in The Divine Liturgy and to receive Holy Communion but also to ensure that I have a record of everyone who attends the Divine Liturgy in case, God-forbid, someone becomes ill I would need to contact everyone who was in attendance.

We are taking every measure that we can to ensure the health, safety, and well-being of our parishioners and of everyone that comes to our parish to pray. Together, with the Parish Council, we express our most sincere and heartfelt thanks and appreciation for your help, assistance, patience, and understanding and for your continued working together and praying together as a Parish Family for The Glory of God, To the Glory of God, and With the Glory of God!

**If anyone has any questions or concerns,
please do not hesitate to see or contact Fr. Jason,
Paul or any member of the Parish Council!**

May God continue to bless and guide all of you!**

FIND YOUR SPIRITUAL HOME In The Orthodox Christian Church

Saturday Great Vespers 4:00 PM

SUNDAY Divine Liturgy 10:00 AM

~ All are Welcome ~

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

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 or needs and help or assistance, please contact our parish priest: V Rev. Jason Vansuch (jvansuch@hotmail.com) or 716.875.4222 and he will be able guide you.

THE VENERABLE SAVVA THE SANCTIFIED

December 5

Saint Savva the Sanctified was born in the fifth century at Cappadocia of pious Christian parents, John and Sophia. His father was a military commander. Journeying to Alexandria on military matters, John and Sophia left their five-year-old son Savva in the care of an uncle. When the boy reached eight years of age, he entered the monastery of Saint Flavian located nearby. The gifted child quickly learned to read and became an expert on the Holy Scriptures. In vain did his parents urge Saint Savva to return to the world and enter into marriage.

When he was seventeen years old he received monastic tonsure, and attained such perfection in fasting and prayer that he was given the gift of wonderworking. After spending ten years at the monastery of Saint Flavian, he went to Jerusalem, and from there to the monastery of Saint Euthymius the Great (January 20). But Saint Euthymius sent Saint Savva to Abba Theoctistus, the head of a nearby monastery with a strict cenobitic rule. Saint Savva lived in obedience at this monastery until the age of thirty.

After the death of the Elder Theoctistus, his successor blessed Saint Savva to seclude himself in a cave. On Saturdays, however, he left his hermitage and came to the monastery, where he participated in divine services and ate with the brethren. After a certain time Saint Savva received permission not to leave his hermitage at all, and he struggled in the cave for five years.

Saint Euthymius attentively directed the life of the young monk, and seeing his spiritual maturity, he began to take him to the Rouba wilderness with him. They set out on January 14, and remained there until Palm Sunday. Saint Euthymius called Saint Savva a child-elder, and encouraged him to grow in the monastic virtues.

When Saint Euthymius fell asleep in the Lord (+ 473), Saint Savva withdrew from the Lavra and moved to a cave near the monastery of Saint Gerasimus of Jordan (March 4). After several years, disciples began to gather around Saint Savva, seeking the monastic life. As the number of monks increased, a lavra sprang up. When a pillar of fire appeared before Saint Savva as he was walking, he found a spacious cave in the form of a church.

Saint Savva founded several more monasteries. Many miracles took place through the prayers of Saint Savva: at the Lavra a spring of water welled up, during a time of drought there was abundant rain, and there were also healings of the sick and the demoniacs. Saint Savva composed the first monastic Rule of church services, the so-called "Jerusalem Typikon", accepted by all the Palestine monasteries. The saint surrendered his soul to God in the year 532.

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Understanding The Gospel Lesson: Matthew 11: 27-30

The Lord said to His disciples: All things are given unto Me by My Father. And no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son willeth to reveal Him. Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and

learn from Me that I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For My yoke is easy, and My burden is light.

St. Theophylaktos of Ochrid, in his commentary on St. Matthew, answers the question, “What is the yoke of Christ?” thus:

*The yoke of Christ is humility and meekness. For he who humbles himself before all men has rest and remains untroubled; but he who is vainglorious and arrogant is ever encompassed by troubles as he does not wish to be less than anyone but is always thinking how to be esteemed more highly and how to defeat his enemies. Therefore the yoke of Christ, which is humility, is light, for it is easier for our lowly nature to be humbled than to be exalted. But all the commandments of Christ are also called a yoke, and they are light because of the reward to come, even though for a time they appear heavy. – **The Explanation of the Holy Gospel According to St. Matthew**, by Blessed Theophylact (Chrysostom Press 1992)*

The yoke of Christ, then, can be understood as being humility and can also be understood as being the commandments of the Gospel. The two, of course, are intimately related: We attempt to carry out the Gospel commands, and we find that by our own power we cannot. This realization brings on a deeper understanding of ourselves – that we are dust and ashes, that all is given by God and we have nothing of ourselves – and thereby to humility. Once we give up the heavy burden of the illusion of self-sufficiency and take on ourselves the light yoke of humility, all goes well. There will be many external trials and temptations – indeed these normally increase for those who attempt to follow the Gospel – but within we are at peace.

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The Healing of the Ten Lepers

Luke 17:12-19

From The Explanation of the Gospel of St. Luke

by Blessed Theophylact, Archbishop of Ochrid and Bulgaria

11-19. And it came to pass, as He went to Jerusalem, that He passed through the midst of Samaria and Galilee. And as He entered into a certain village, there met Him ten men that were lepers, who stood afar off: and they lifted up their voices, and said, Jesus, Master, have mercy on us. And when He saw them, He said unto them, Go show yourselves unto the priests. And it came to pass, that, as they went, they were cleansed. And one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, and with a loud voice glorified God, and fell down on his face at His feet, giving Him thanks: and he was a Samaritan. And Jesus answering said, Were there not ten cleansed? But where are the nine? There are not found any that returned to give glory to God, save this stranger. And He said unto him, Arise, go thy way: thy faith hath made thee whole.

From this one may learn that nothing prevents a man from living in a manner pleasing to God, not even if he belongs to a despised race, if only he has a good will and disposition. For behold, ten lepers met Jesus as He was about to enter a certain city. They met Him outside the city, for those who were considered unclean were not permitted to go into the city. They stood afar off, as if ashamed of their supposed uncleanness, and did not dare to draw near, thinking that Jesus abhorred them as did the others. They lifted up their voices and made supplication. By physical location they were standing afar off, but in their supplication they were near. For the Lord is nigh unto all that call upon Him in truth (Ps. 144:19). And they did not make supplication to Him as to a mere man, but as to One greater than a man. For they called Him Master, meaning Lord, Protector, and Guardian, which is not far from thinking of Him as God.

The Lord instructs them to show themselves to the priests. Initially the priests would examine men such as these to determine whether they were lepers or not. For there were certain signs by which the priests could recognize incurable leprosy. But in addition to this, if it should happen that someone who had been suffering from leprosy was healed, the priests would again examine him to verify the cure, in which event the gift commanded by the law would be offered (Lev. 14). In this case, since these men were already confirmed lepers, why should they show themselves to the priests, unless indeed they were about to be cleansed? To command them to go the priests indicated nothing less than that they would be healed. This is why the Evangelist says that as they went, they were cleansed. Of the ten lepers, the nine who were Israelites showed themselves to be ungrateful, while it was the Samaritan, an accursed foreigner, as we said earlier, who returned to voice his gratitude. The Samaritans were Assyrians; therefore, let no Gentile despair, and let no one descended from holy forebears boast. This miracle also signifies the common salvation that came to the whole human race. For the ten lepers represent all of human nature—it was leprous with wickedness, carrying about with it the ugliness of sin, passing its life outside the heavenly city on account of its uncleanness, and standing afar off from God. But this very distance from God is itself a supplication. For when the Lover of mankind, Who wills that all should be saved and receive good things, sees someone who is not sharing in His goodness, then He is most quick to show mercy and to heal those who are so miserably afflicted. But He also healed the whole leprous nature of man, when, for every mans sake, He took flesh and tasted of death. Although the Jews had been cleansed of the uncleanness of their leprous sin, as far as it was the Lords part to do, they showed themselves ungrateful and did not return from the path of their vain foolishness to give glory to God Who saved them, that is, to believe in Him Who is God and Who endured the extremes of suffering. For this is the glory of God: His Flesh and His Cross. These Jews, then, did not confess the incarnate and crucified Lord of glory. But the foreign and accursed people of the Gentiles recognized the One Who makes clean, and they glorified Him by believing in Him. They believed that God loves man so much and is so powerful that He accepted the very depth of dishonor for our sake—this is His love of man; and having accepted it, He suffered no harm to His own nature—this is His power.

THE FEAST OF OUR FATHER AMONG THE SAINTS:

ST. NICHOLAS THE WONDERWORKER

December 6

Saint Nicholas, the Wonderworker, Archbishop of Myra in Lycia is famed as a great saint pleasing unto God. He was born in the city of Patara in the region of Lycia (on the south coast of the Asia Minor peninsula), and was the only son of pious parents Theophanes and Nonna, who had vowed to dedicate him to God.

As the fruit of the prayer of his childless parents, the infant Nicholas from the very day of his birth revealed to people the light of his future glory as a wonderworker. His mother, Nonna, after giving birth was immediately healed from illness. The newborn infant, while still in the baptismal font, stood on his feet three hours, without support from anyone, thereby honoring the Most Holy Trinity. St Nicholas from his infancy began a life of fasting, and on Wednesdays and Fridays he would not accept milk from his mother until after his parents had finished their evening prayers.

From his childhood Nicholas thrived on the study of Divine Scripture; by day he would not leave church, and by night he prayed and read books, making himself a worthy dwelling place for the Holy Spirit. Bishop Nicholas of Patara rejoiced at the spiritual success and deep piety of his nephew. He ordained him a reader, and then elevated Nicholas to the priesthood, making him his assistant and entrusting him to instruct the flock.

In serving the Lord the youth was fervent of spirit, and in his proficiency with questions of faith he was like an Elder, who aroused the wonder and deep respect of believers. Constantly at work and vivacious, in unceasing prayer, the priest Nicholas displayed great kind-heartedness towards the flock, and towards the afflicted who came to him for help, and he distributed all his inheritance to the poor.

There was a certain formerly rich inhabitant of Patara, whom St Nicholas saved from great sin. The man had three grown daughters, and in desperation he planned to sell their bodies so they would have money for food. The saint, learning of the man's poverty and of his wicked intention, secretly visited him one night and threw a sack of gold through the window. With the money the man arranged an honorable marriage for his daughter. St Nicholas also provided gold for the other daughters, thereby saving the family from falling into spiritual destruction. In bestowing charity, St Nicholas always strove to do this secretly and to conceal his good deeds.

The Bishop of Patara decided to go on pilgrimage to the holy places at Jerusalem, and entrusted the guidance of his flock to St Nicholas, who fulfilled this obedience carefully and with love. When the bishop returned, Nicholas asked his blessing for a pilgrimage to the Holy Land. Along the way the saint predicted a storm would arise and threaten the ship. St Nicholas saw the devil get on the ship, intending to sink it and kill all the passengers. At the entreaty of the despairing pilgrims, he calmed the waves of the sea by

his prayers. Through his prayer a certain sailor of the ship, who had fallen from the mast and was mortally injured was also restored to health.

When he reached the ancient city of Jerusalem and came to Golgotha, St Nicholas gave thanks to the Savior. He went to all the holy places, worshiping at each one. One night on Mount Sion, the closed doors of the church opened by themselves for the great pilgrim. Going round the holy places connected with the earthly service of the Son of God, St Nicholas decided to withdraw into the desert, but he was stopped by a divine voice urging him to return to his native country. He returned to Lycia, and yearning for a life of quietude, the saint entered into the brotherhood of a monastery named Holy Sion, which had been founded by his uncle. But the Lord again indicated another path for him, "Nicholas, this is not the vineyard where you shall bear fruit for Me. Return to the world, and glorify My Name there." So he left Patara and went to Myra in Lycia.

Upon the death of Archbishop John, Nicholas was chosen as Bishop of Myra after one of the bishops of the Council said that a new archbishop should be revealed by God, not chosen by men. One of the elder bishops had a vision of a radiant Man, Who told him that the one who came to the church that night and was first to enter should be made archbishop. He would be named Nicholas. The bishop went to the church at night to await Nicholas. The saint, always the first to arrive at church, was stopped by the bishop. "What is your name, child?" he asked. God's chosen one replied, "My name is Nicholas, Master, and I am your servant."

After his consecration as archbishop, St Nicholas remained a great ascetic, appearing to his flock as an image of gentleness, kindness and love for people. This was particularly precious for the Lycian Church during the persecution of Christians under the emperor Diocletian (284-305). Bishop Nicholas, locked up in prison together with other Christians for refusing to worship idols, sustained them and exhorted them to endure the fetters, punishment and torture. The Lord preserved him unharmed. Upon the accession of St Constantine (May 21) as emperor, St Nicholas was restored to his flock, which joyfully received their guide and intercessor.

Despite his great gentleness of spirit and purity of heart, St Nicholas was a zealous and ardent warrior of the Church of Christ. Fighting evil spirits, the saint made the rounds of the pagan temples and shrines in the city of Myra and its surroundings, shattering the idols and turning the temples to dust.

In the year 325 St Nicholas was a participant in the First Ecumenical Council. This Council proclaimed the Nicene Symbol of Faith, and he stood up against the heretic Arius with the likes of Sts Sylvester the Bishop of Rome (January 2), Alexander of Alexandria (May 29), Spyridon of Trimythontos (December 12) and other Fathers of the Council.

St Nicholas, fired with zeal for the Lord, assailed the heretic Arius with his words, and also struck him upon the face. For this reason, he was deprived of the emblems of his episcopal rank and placed under guard. But several of the holy Fathers had the same vision, seeing the Lord Himself and the Mother of God returning to him the Gospel and omophorion. The Fathers of the Council agreed that the audacity of the saint was pleasing to God, and restored the saint to the office of bishop.

Having returned to his own diocese, the saint brought it peace and blessings, sowing the word of Truth, uprooting heresy, nourishing his flock with sound doctrine, and also providing food for their bodies.

Even during his life the saint worked many miracles. One of the greatest was the deliverance from death of three men unjustly condemned by the Governor, who had been bribed. The saint boldly went up to the executioner and took his sword, already suspended over the heads of the condemned. The Governor, denounced by St Nicholas for his wrong doing, repented and begged for forgiveness.

Witnessing this remarkable event were three military officers, who were sent to Phrygia by the emperor Constantine to put down a rebellion. They did not suspect that soon they would also be compelled to seek the intercession of St Nicholas. Evil men slandered them before the emperor, and the officers were sentenced to death. Appearing to St Constantine in a dream, St Nicholas called on him to overturn the unjust sentence of the military officers.

He worked many other miracles, and struggled many long years at his labor. Through the prayers of the saint, the city of Myra was rescued from a terrible famine. He appeared to a certain Italian merchant and left him three gold pieces as a pledge of payment. He requested him to sail to Myra and deliver grain there. More than once, the saint saved those drowning in the sea, and provided release from captivity and imprisonment.

Having reached old age, St Nicholas peacefully fell asleep in the Lord. His venerable relics were preserved incorrupt in the local cathedral church and flowed with curative myrrh, from which many received healing. In the year 1087, his relics were transferred to the Italian city of Bari, where they rest even now (See May 9).

The name of the great saint of God, the hierarch and wonderworker Nicholas, a speedy helper and suppliant for all hastening to him, is famed in every corner of the earth, in many lands and among many peoples. In Russia there are a multitude of cathedrals, monasteries and churches consecrated in his name. There is, perhaps, not a single city without a church dedicated to him.

The first Russian Christian prince Askold (+ 882) was baptized in 866 by Patriarch Photius (February 6) with the name Nicholas. Over the grave of Askold, St Olga (July 11) built the first temple of St Nicholas in the Russian Church at Kiev. Primary cathedrals were dedicated to St Nicholas at Izborsk, Ostrov, Mozhaïsk, and Zariaïsk. At Novgorod the Great, one of the main churches of the city, the Nikolo-Dvorischensk church, later became a cathedral.

Famed and venerable churches and monasteries dedicated to St Nicholas are found at Kiev, Smolensk, Pskov, Toropetsa, Galich, Archangelsk, Great Ustiug, Tobolsk. Moscow had dozens of churches named for the saint, and also three monasteries in the Moscow diocese: the Nikolo-Greek (Staryi) in the Chinese-quarter, the Nikolo-Perervinsk and the Nikolo-Ugreshsk. One of the chief towers of the Kremlin was named the Nikolsk.

Many of the churches devoted to the saint were those established at market squares by Russian merchants, sea-farers and those who traveled by land, venerating the wonderworker Nicholas as a protector of all those journeying on dry land and sea. They sometimes received the name among the people of "Nicholas soaked."

Many village churches in Russia were dedicated to the wonderworker Nicholas, venerated by peasants as a merciful intercessor before the Lord for all the people in their work. And in the Russian land St Nicholas

did not cease his intercession. Ancient Kiev preserves the memory about the miraculous rescue of a drowning infant by the saint. The great wonderworker, hearing the grief-filled prayers of the parents for the loss of their only child, took the infant from the waters, revived him and placed him in the choir-loft of the church of Holy Wisdom (Hagia Sophia) before his wonderworking icon. In the morning the infant was found safe by his thrilled parents, praising St Nicholas the Wonderworker.

Many wonderworking icons of St Nicholas appeared in Russia and came also from other lands. There is the ancient Byzantine embordered image of the saint, brought to Moscow from Novgorod, and the large icon painted in the thirteenth century by a Novgorod master.

Two depictions of the wonderworker are especially numerous in the Russian Church: St Nicholas of Zaraisk, portrayed in full-length, with his right hand raised in blessing and with a Gospel (this image was brought to Ryazan in 1225 by the Byzantine Princess Eupraxia, the future wife of Prince Theodore. She perished in 1237 with her husband and infant son during the incursion of Batu); and St Nicholas of Mozhaik, also in full stature, with a sword in his right hand and a city in his left. This recalls the miraculous rescue of the city of Mozhaik from an invasion of enemies, through the prayers of the saint. It is impossible to list all the grace-filled icons of St Nicholas, or to enumerate all his miracles.

St Nicholas is the patron of travelers, and we pray to him for deliverance from floods, poverty, or any misfortunes. He has promised to help those who remember his parents, Theophanes and Nonna.

St. Nicholas is also commemorated on May 9 (The transfer of his relics) and on July 29 (His Nativity of birth)

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THE STORY OF ST. NICHOLAS and THE GOLD COINS

There was a certain formerly rich inhabitant of Patara, whom St Nicholas saved from great sin. The man had three grown daughters, and in desperation he planned to send his daughters to work so they would have money for food. The saint, learning of the man's poverty and of his wicked intention, secretly visited him one night and threw a sack of gold coins through the window. With the money the man arranged an honorable marriage for his daughter. St Nicholas also provided gold coins for the other daughters, thereby saving the family from falling into spiritual destruction. In bestowing charity, St Nicholas always strove to do this secretly and to conceal his good deeds.

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GREETINGS & PHRASES

Use these greetings or create your own within your card designs!

English

Christ is Born!

Glorify Him!

Out of the womb before the Morning Star
have I begotten Thee!

Albanian

Krishti u lind!
Lavdërojeni!

Khree - shtee eh - leend!
Lahv - deh - ro - yeh - nee!

Rejoice, Bethlehem, land of Judah,
for our Lord has come from you!

Arabic

! المسيح وُلِدَ
! مَجْدُوهُ

Al - mah - see - eh wu - li - da!
Ma - ji - du!

The Virgin said to the wise men:
"Come and behold the invisible God, visible now as a man."

Celebrate, O Zion! Rejoice, O Jerusalem!

Finnish

Kristus syntyi!
Kiittäkää!

Kree - stoos Soohn - too!
KEE - tah - kah!

Come, O faithful, let us look upon the glory of
the Only-begotten Son from God the Father!

Blessed are You, O God, our Redeemer!

French

Le Christ est né!
Glorifiez-le!

Leh Kreest eh nee!
Glor - eh - f'yeh - leh!

Behold, He Who dwells on high holding the world in His hand
is wrapped in swaddling clothes and received in a manger.

Georgian

ქრისტე დაიბადდა!
აღივსებო!

Khree - steh ee Shveh - bees!
Ah - dee - deb - deet!

Bless Him O youths, praise Him, O priests!
Come all people, exalt God above all forever!

Let mortals join the angels and celebrate in the feast!

Greek

Χριστός Γεννάται!
Δοξάσατε!

Khree - stos Yeh - NAH - teh!
Dohks - AH - sah - teh!

The sayings of the prophets are now fulfilled:
Our God is born ineffably of the Virgin Mary!

Japanese

ハリストス 生る!
崇め讃めよ!

Hris - tos u - ma - ru!
A - ga - me ho - me yo!

Let us celebrate, keeping the feast of Christ's Nativity!
Let us all go forth to meet our new-born Lord.

Today, we sing the new song of the angels to our God.

Polish

Chrystus się rodzi!
Wychwalajmy go!

Khree - stos szhee rohd - zhee!
Veech - vah - lahy - meh gho!

Christ is revealed as a newborn child,
while remaining the eternal God!

Romanian

Hristos se naște!
Mariti-L!

Hree - stos seh NAH - shteh!
Mah - ree - tee'!

God the Lord is made flesh of the Virgin,
Giving Light to those in darkness!

Let all the nations sing with rejoicing,
and let all peoples be joyous!

Russian

Христос Рождается!
Славите Его!

Khree - stos Rohzh - dye - yet - sya!
Slah - vee - teh Yeh - vho!

Let us come to Bethlehem, worshipping Christ with the Magi,
Bringing the fruits of our righteous deeds as gifts!

Serbian

Христос се роди!
Воистину се роди!

Khree - STOS seh Roh - dee!
Vo - ees - tee - nu seh Roh - dee!

The star from Jacob has risen within the cave!

Blessed are You, our God who has come: glory to You!

Spanish

¡Cristo ha nacido!
Glorifícale!

Khree - sto ah na - SEE - do!
Glo - ree - FEE - ca - leh!

Come, Christ-bearing people!
Let us behold wonders that will amaze every mind.

Ukrainian

Христос Раждається!
Славте Його!

Khree - stos Rahzh - DYE - yet - sya!
Slah - vee - teh Yo - ho!

Come, God-inspired faithful,
arise and behold the descent of God from on high!

O Christ our God of great mercy, glory to You!

MY ADVENT PLANNER

Sunday	<p>6 St. Nicholas of Myra</p> <p>___ Attend Liturgy</p> <p>___ Read the life of http://bit.ly/st-nicholas-feast</p> <p>___ Talk with your parents/guardians to decide when you'll go to confession before Christmas</p>
Monday	<p>7 St. Ambrose of Milan</p> <p>___ Watch a video of the Hymn of St. Ambrose: https://youtu.be/_OMQQ32ghI8</p> <p>___ Pray for members of your family</p> <p>Today I helped:</p>
Tuesday	<p>8 St. Papatius of Thbes</p> <p>___ Read the life of http://bit.ly/st-papatius</p> <p>___ Pray for your teachers at church and school</p> <p>What decorations are you putting up for Christmas?</p>
Wednesday	<p>9 Prophetess Hannah</p> <p>___ Read 1 Samuel 1:2-2:21</p> <p>___ Pray for your school classmates</p> <p>Today I learned about:</p>
Thursday	<p>10 Blessed John of Serbia</p> <p>___ Read Luke 6:17-23</p> <p>___ Pray for the homeless</p> <p>Today I helped:</p>
Friday	<p>11 Venerable Daniel the Stylite</p> <p>___ Read Psalm 63</p> <p>___ Pray for your departed relatives</p> <p>___ Make a donation to FOCUS North America, helping those in need.</p>
Saturday	<p>12 St. Spyridon the Wonderworker</p> <p>___ Plant seeds in cotton with water for St. Spyridon Day. ___ watch them grow 'til spring!</p> <p>___ Help your parents at home</p> <p>___ Attend vespers (or vigil)</p>

Christmas Cards

☞ This week, let's create greeting cards for parishioners who may be in the hospital, assisted living facilities, or homebound (either because of the COVID pandemic or a lack of mobility).

It's also possible to make cards for parishioners who are doctors, nurses, or home health care workers, giving of themselves every day, caring for the needs of those who are ill or infirm.

Did you know that Christmas cards have only existed since the mid 1500s? But the greeting "Christ is born!" and its response, "Glorify Him!" is much older, and can be said between December 25-31.

We greet each other on festive occasions like Christmas sharing the joy and our devotion to the new-born Son of God, Jesus Christ. Christmas cards become an extension of our faith in God, and a tangible way for us to share our joy, especially with the homebound or ill.

Making Christmas Cards

We'll need some supplies like these:

- **Paper**
(colored construction paper is a great option, white 8.5 x 11" 65 lb cardstock paper is ideal and available from most office supply or discount retailers. Best for use with markers, paints, inks, etc.)
- **Coloring Supplies**
(markers, colored pens, colored pencils, crayons, watercolor paints [best used with 120lb or thicker paper, otherwise paints tend to bleed through thinner paper])
- **Craft Supplies**
(glitter, pipe cleaners, tinsel, stickers, yarn, stencils, colored string, etc.)
- **Tools**
(scissors, glue, tape, ruler, pencil, pencil sharpener, etc.)
- **Examples of Orthodox Christmas icons**
(the Nativity, Jesus Christ, the Theotokos, angels, patron saint, etc., see some ideas on page 3)
- **Examples of Christmas imagery**
(candles, Christmas tree, wreath, star of Bethlehem, manger/cave, wise men, shepherds, angels, town of Bethlehem, Church, people singing, ornaments, colored lights, see some ideas on page 3)
- **Phrases and Greetings**
(Merry Christmas, Christ is born! Seasons Greetings, or any other liturgical text, some are available to choose from on page 4)
- **Envelopes and Stamps**
(A9 envelopes (<https://bit.ly/A9-envelopes>) are best for paper folded to 5.5x8.5", this is a standard greeting card envelope size. And don't forget to put a stamp on the envelope!)

Using your supplies and creativity, let's make some cards, decorating the front and inside, sharing your joy and celebration of the Christmas feast!

Below the greeting you write on the inside right panel of the card, be sure to sign your first name (last name optional).

After making the card(s), place them in envelopes, and coordinate with your parents/teacher (or priest) to address the cards to members of your parish.

Think Outside Your Parish

If your parish doesn't have homebound members or health care workers, or if you want to make more cards, consider creating "Get Well Soon" or generic holiday greeting cards (Happy Holidays, Seasons Greetings) for young people in the pediatric ward of a local hospital. There are always children being cared for in hospitals, and a get well card can bring a word of encouragement at a difficult time in their life.

Since we cannot assume every child in a hospital is an Orthodox Christian, or believes in Jesus Christ, these cards shouldn't have any religious imagery or messages. However, we can still be examples of Christ's love for our neighbor by making and sending cards with our heartfelt best wishes to children who aren't able to be at home with their families or loved ones.

Use your own ideas to draw friends holding hands, rainbows, nature scenes, happy moments, big smiles, with positive messages of encouragement (You can do this! Get well soon! I believe in you! Thinking of you!) for boys or girls. Be sure to sign your first name.

After making the cards and placing them in envelopes, coordinate with your parents/teacher, or priest to have them delivered to the local hospitals for distribution. *May God bless your kindness!*



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