

Entrance of the Virgin Mary in the Temple

**St. George Orthodox Church**  
**2 Nottingham Terrace - Buffalo, NY 14216**  
**(716) 875-4222**  
[www.stgeorgebuffalo.com](http://www.stgeorgebuffalo.com)

THE WEEKLY MESSENGER

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

**ST. GEORGE ORTHODOX CHURCH**

**2 Nottingham Terrace Buffalo, NY 14216**

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

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

**Cell Phone: 609-851-3811 Email: [jvansuch@hotmail.com](mailto:jvansuch@hotmail.com)**  
 Archpriest Andreja Damjanovski, Attached Rev. Peter Irfan, Attached

Mat. Katia Vansuch, Choir Director

Dr. Boris Kuvshinoff, Parish Council President

Home: 716-812-6132 Email: [boris.kuvshinoff@gmail.com](mailto:boris.kuvshinoff@gmail.com)

**23rd SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST — Tone 6. Forefeast of the Entry Into the Temple of the Most-holy Theotokos.** Ven. Gregory the Decapolite (816). St. Proclus, Archbishop of Constantinople (446-447). Ven. Diodorus, Abbot of Yuregórsk (1633). Martyr Dasius of Dorostorum (3rd c.). Martyrs Eustace, Thespesius, and Anatolius of Nicea (312). Hieromartyrs Nerses and Joseph; John, Saverius, Isaac, and Hypatius, Bishops of Persia; Martyrs Azades the Eunuch, Savonius, Thecla, Anna, and many other men and women who suffered in Persia

**EPISTLE:**  
 Ephesians 2:4-10

Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom

**GOSPEL:**  
 Luke 12:16-21

**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 Vigil 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.

## **HYMNS FOR THE DIVINE LITURGY**

### **Troparion for The Resurrection – Tone 6**

The Angelic Powers were at Thy tomb; the guards became as dead men. Mary stood by Thy grave, seeking Thy most pure body. Thou didst capture hell not being tempted by it. Thou didst come to the Virgin, granting life. O Lord, Who didst rise from the dead, // glory to Thee.

### **Troparion for The Forefeast of The Entrance of The Theotokos into The Temple – Tone 4**

Today Anna bequeaths joy to all instead of sorrow, by bringing forth her fruit, the only ever-Virgin. In fulfillment of her vow, today with joy she brings to the temple of the Lord // the true temple and pure Mother of God the Word.

### **Kontakion for The Resurrection – Tone 6**

When Christ God, the Giver of Life, raised all of the dead from the valleys of misery with His mighty hand, He bestowed resurrection on the human race. // He is the Savior of all, the Resurrection, the Life, and the God of all.

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

### **Kontakion for The Forefeast of The Entrance of The Theotokos into The Temple – Tone 4**

Today the universe is filled with joy at the glorious feast of the Mother of God, // and cries out: “She is the heavenly tabernacle.”

Now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

### **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 6**

O Lord, save Thy people, / and bless Thine inheritance!

*v. To Thee, O Lord, will I call. O my God, be not silent to me!*

### **ALLELUIA VERSES**

*He who dwelleth in the shelter of the Most High will abide in the shadow of the heavenly God.*

*He will say to the Lord: “My Protector and my Refuge; my God, in Whom I trust.”*

### **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! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

## EPISTLE LESSON FOR TODAY

### **Brethren:**

But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.

For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast.

For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.

## GOSPEL LESSON FOR TODAY

### **Let us Attend!**

Then He spoke a parable to them, saying: "The ground of a certain rich man yielded plentifully.

And he thought within himself, saying, 'What shall I do, since I have no room to store my crops?'

So he said, 'I will do this: I will pull down my barns and build greater, and there I will store all my crops and my goods.

'And I will say to my soul, "Soul, you have many goods laid up for many years; take your ease; eat, drink, and be merry."'

But God said to him, 'Fool! This night your soul will be required of you; then whose will those things be which you have provided?'

So is he who lays up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God."

### **THE MONTHLY SCHEDULE FOR OCTOBER 2022**

**NOVEMBER 2022**{Nativity Fast Begins: Nov. 15-Dec. 24}

**20 -Eve of the Great Feast of the Entrance of the Theotokos into the Temple**  
General Confession - 9:30 AM Divine Liturgy- 10:00 AM

Great Vespers - 1:00 PM

**21 - The Great Feast of the Entrance of the Theotokos into the Temple**  
Festal Divine Liturgy at 9:30 AM

**21 - Monthly Community Healing Prayer Service/  
Thanksgiving Prayer Service - 6:30 PM**

**24 - THANKSGIVING DAY**  
Moleben Service of Thanksgiving - 9:00 AM

**\*\*Education Sermon on Sunday November 27\*\***

**27- Make Health/Snack Kits for Mats for Mission**

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**BIBLE STUDY**

EVERY TUESDAY (6:30 – 8:00 PM)

**ADULT EDUCATION/BIBLE STUDY**

EVERY WEDNESDAY (10:00 – 11:30 AM)

EVERY WEDNESDAY (6:45 – 8:00 PM)

**BOOK CLUB**

EVERY MONDAY DURING THE NATIVITY FAST AND GREAT LENT  
(6:30 to 8:00 PM)

November 14      November 21      November 28

December 5      December 12      December 19

**\*\*PLEASE REFER TO THE WEEKLY EMAILS AND PARISH WEBSITE  
FOR CHANGES TO THE CALENDAR!\*\***

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**ST. GEORGE ORTHODOX CHURCH (Buffalo, NY)**  
**PARISH OUTREACH MINISTRIES**

To the Glory of God, every year our beloved parish family answers The Call of Our Lord of ministering to those in need by fulfilling The Gospel of Our Lord God and Savior Jesus Christ with participating in 5 on-going Parish Outreach Ministries within the local Buffalo Area on an on-going basis and especially during the Nativity Season.

Every year, we look forward to another wonderful blessed Nativity Season of bringing the joy, the love, and the peace of The Nativity of Our Lord to everyone especially through the following the outreach ministries:

**Hearts for The Homeless** – which is a mobile soup kitchen/thrift shop that feeds the poor and chronic homeless on the street. Characterized by a profound spiritual motivation. The program offers nourishing food, as well as clothing, pertinent information regarding area services, companionship and hope for the future.

- Each Month we collect a different canned good/non-perishable food item along with hygiene products and drop them off at the Hearts for The Homeless Distribution Center

**Buffalo City Mission** – exists to meet the spiritual and practical needs of the poor through the demonstration of the love and preaching of the Gospel of Jesus Christ in providing love, care, shelter, food, and other means necessary to those in need.

- Each Month we collect hygiene products, clothing for men, women, and children and drop them off at the Buffalo City Mission Distribution Center

**HomeSpace** – is a local community organization ministering to local teens and pre-teen moms which provides comprehensive care to 14-21 yr old moms (providing those essential items necessary for caring for their children: diapers, wipes, baby food, clothing (infants through 7/8 years old). Homespace Corporation supports at-risk young women to achieve independence two generations at a time.

- Each Month we collect hygiene products, clothing for young women and children along with those essential items necessary for caring for their children: diapers, wipes, baby food, clothing (infants through 7/8 years old) and drop them off at the HomeSpace Distribution Center

**Mats for Mission/Resurrection Life Food Pantry** – A Local Organization assisting with providing rest mats made out of plastic bags for the less fortunate as well as providing food and other means necessary to those in need.

- Each Month we collect plastic bags as well as canned goods and non-perishable food items and drop them off at the Resurrection Life Food Pantry Distribution Center.
- Beginning in January 2022, our church school children will be volunteering here on a regular basis assisting with collecting and sorting out Food Bags for those in need.

**Baker Victory** – A Local Organization dedicated to fostering the highest possible quality of life and personal achievement by partnering with children, adults, their families and the WNY community through a diverse array of social, health and human services.

- Twice a year we collect gifts and other essential items necessary for the children and drop them off at the Baker Victory Distribution Center.

\*\*We also support Compass Care Pro-Life Agency on a regular basis!



## 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 (2022)

Mr. Anthony Dipiano  
305 North Street  
Apt. 77  
Buffalo, N

Reader Victor Shanchuk  
McAuley Residence  
1503 Military Rd.  
Buffalo, NY 14217  
716.881.3096

Mrs. Luba Japadjief  
Elderwood Nursing Home  
104 Old Niagara Rd.  
Lockport, NY 14221 (Room 47A)

Mr. Albert Fadell  
317.376.2562

Andrew Wityk  
Ellicott Center  
200 Seventh Street  
Buffalo, NY 14201

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MAY GOD CONTINUE TO BLESS YOU AND GUIDE YOU  
FOR YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT AND PRAYERS!  
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**THE SCHEDULE OF WEEKLY SERVICES and ACTIVITIES**

**SUNDAY NOVEMBER 20, 2022**

**EVE OF THE FEAST OF THE ENTRANCE OF THE THEOTOKOS INTO THE TEMPLE**

General Confession – **9:30 AM**      Divine Liturgy – **10:00 AM**

Special Luncheon in The Parish Fellowship following Divine Liturgy  
Brief Parish Council Meeting in The Parish Fellowship Hall during Luncheon  
Church School Class in The Parish Fellowship Hall following Divine Liturgy

**Abbreviated Great Vespers – 1:30 PM**

**MONDAY NOVEMBER 21, 2022**

**THE GREAT FEAST OF THE ENTRANCE OF THE THEOTOKOS INTO THE TEMPLE**

Divine Liturgy – **9:30 AM**

Akathist Service of Thanksgiving: “Glory to God for All Things” – **6:00 PM**  
St. George Book Club (Via Zoom) – **7:00 to 8:00 PM**

**TUESDAY NOVEMBER 22, 2022**

Akathist to Our Lord – **9:00 AM**

Little Compline – **6:00 PM**  
Bible Study/Adult Education Class (Via Zoom) – **6:30-8:00 PM**

**WEDNESDAY NOVEMBER 23, 2022**

Adult Education Class (Via Zoom) – **10:00 to 11:00 AM**

**THURSDAY NOVEMBER 24, 2022**

**THANKSGIVING DAY**

As we gather together with our families and friends on this Day, let us take time out and give thanks to God for those blessings, seen and unseen, He has graciously bestowed upon us during this past year. Also, let us remember our loved ones who now lie asleep in the Lord in the Heavenly Kingdom. May all of you, your families, and our beloved parish family have a Blessed, Happy, and Healthy Thanksgiving. Please refer to the Thanksgiving Day Prayer in today’s bulletin. We will also email the prayer to everyone this way we can pray it with our families and friends on this Thanksgiving Day!

Moleben Prayer Service of Thanksgiving – **9:00 AM**

**SATURDAY NOVEMBER 26, 2022**

Great Vespers– **4:00 PM**

**SUNDAY NOVEMBER 27, 2022**

The Hours – **9:40 AM**      Divine Liturgy – **10:00 AM**

Coffee Hour Fellowship in The Parish Fellowship following Divine Liturgy  
Church School Class in The Parish Fellowship Hall following Divine Liturgy



**\*\*A REMINDER FOR HOSTING COFFEE HOUR \*\***

When hosting coffee hour, please check the refrigerators in the Parish Fellowship Hall the week before we are hosting to see what supplies we will/may need.

We will also be using real coffee cups for coffee hour. If anyone needs assistance with cleaning them or using the dishwasher following Coffee Hour, please see or contact Mat. Katia.

**If there is no host for coffee hour, then we will not have coffee hour on that particular Sunday.**

Also, during The Nativity Fast, when hosting coffee hour, please keep in mind that we will be observing ALL Fasting Guidelines as prescribed by The Church and refrain from using meat and dairy products.

Please refer to the email from Mat. Fran to see which Sundays are available to host coffee hour.

If we do not have a host for a particular Sunday, then we will not have coffee hour!

If anyone would like to host coffee hour or has any questions regarding one’s preparations for Coffee Hour, please see or contact Mat. Fran ([610.698.1666/frances.vansuch@yahoo.com](mailto:610.698.1666/frances.vansuch@yahoo.com))

May all of us have a Blessed, Holy and Prayerful Nativity Fast Season!

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## FIND YOUR SPIRITUAL HOME In The Orthodox Christian Church

SATURDAY Great Vespers 4:00 PM  
SUNDAY Divine Liturgy 10:00 AM (Sept-May)  
9:30 AM (May-September)

~ 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](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.

## 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 or link to our parish website donation page 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!



St George Orthodox Churc...  
@StGeorgeOrthodoxChurch



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## **ST. GEORGE ORTHODOX CHURCH PRAYER LIST**

*Please remember in prayer Thy Servants of God...*

### **FOR THE HEALTH OF THY SERVANTS:**

#### **HIERARCHS**

Metropolitan TIKHON      Archbishop MICHAEL  
Archbishop BENJAMIN      Archbishop ALEJO  
Archbishop NATHANIEL      Archbishop DANIEL

#### **CLERGY**

Archpriest Herman, Matushka Cynthia and George, Elizabeth  
Archpriest Leonid      Archpriest David  
Archpriest Alexey and his family      Archpriest Vladimir and Matushka Jeanne  
Archpriest Timmothy/Mat. Michelle      Archpriest John and Presbyter Nancy  
Archpriest Ken and Matushka Natalie      Archpriest Robert  
Archpriest Andreja, Popadija Anica and Family  
Archpriest Timmothy      Priest Peter and Mat. Mary  
Dn. Sean and Mat. Heather      Archpriest John (Onofrey)

#### **MATUSHKI**

Mat. Katia      Mat. Paraskeva      Mat. Joanna      Popadia Vicki      Christine  
Mat. Patricia      Mat. Gloria      Popadija Sara      Mat. Gayle      Mat. Natasha

Catherine      Ivan/Marina/Inna      Bonnie/Silviu      Coard Karen      Aliscia  
Walter/Paul      Edwina, Irene      Luba      Jim, Darren, Marsha  
Iman.Serena/Asma, Sarah, Lillian, Olga      Reader Victor      Nicholas, Andrew, Theresa  
Xenia, Justin, Danielle      Albert      Frank      June  
Marilyn      Amanda, Chase, Ronald, Candice      Boris      Oscar  
Larry Joseph Frank      Billy      Clyde      Amy  
Victor Catherine      Susan      Svetlana      Juliana  
Evelyn      Robert      Paul      Brian  
Jeanne Angela, Jason, Michelle      Linda      Justin      John, Helen  
Joseph, John, Margaret, Thomas, Victoria, Tyler      Ashley      Steven      Barbara  
Lia/Isaiah      Lee, Bridget      Matthew      William  
Melody Kelly, Robert, Boris, Zaeb, Tirza, Sabas      Sada, Charles, Thisinitsa, Gemmal,  
Geesa, and Patric  
Olga and Eugene      Jeremy Stewart      Susan      Mary      John  
Susan Justin Louis Alex      John, Kevin, Sean      Anthony      Aldona, Melinda  
Yuri/Elena      James      Lee, Benjamin, Harry Patrick  
Jaime/Sammy, Juliana      Anthony      Roscoe      Rosemary  
Aspasia/Stavros, Harry      Charles, Seraphim      Emma/Alexander  
Elias, John, Joseph, Nadim, Theresa      Amelia, Emily  
Vadym Iryna Yuriy Anastasia  
Mary, Hal, Autumn, Ariana, and Amber, Judithann Anita, James, Jeffry, Dominic,  
Douglas, Rachel, Dennis  
Brian John, Roberta, Barbara John, Michael John      Ron, Illiana, Jillian, Joel

George Costa Jonathan, Kevin, Lary, Carly, Sherry, Mary Jo, Clara, Karl, Dragica, Mary  
Stephen, Larry, Olga, Olga, Sally, Deborah, David  
Rdr Nicholas, Judithann, Michael, Mary, Cate, Michael, Gary, Damian, Olga,  
Alexandra, Barbara, Damian  
Kyriaki and Konstantinos (*Pete Thanos parents*)      Amy (*friend of Molly Burke*)

Children of God –Keely, Isla, Talia, Lane, Liam  
Alyssa Marie and the child to be born of her

#### **Diocese of NY&NJ Prayer List**

Archpriest Samuel  
Mitred Archpriest Joseph Lickwar      Mitred Archpriest Daniel and Mat. Myra  
Archpriest George      Archpriest Paul  
Archpriest Jonathan      Archpriest Paul

#### **Those Serving in The Armed Forces**

Kenneth, Nadine, Jason, Robert, Andrew, Justin, Shawn,  
Austin, Chris, John, Daniel, Gjorgie, Thomas

#### **Catechumens**

William and Darlene

**For All of our Parishioners and their families, the communicants of this holy house, those who pray here, our loved ones and their families and for those who are praying with us today and all of those whom we have in our hearts and minds  
For All of our parishioners who are in hospitals, nursing home, and those who are homebound.**

**For All of the ill-afflicted of our parishes and families especially those affected with the Coronavirus and other ailments and for their continued full recovery and good health**

**For All of our doctors, nurses, physicians, and medical professionals**

**For our Nation that The Lord our God will continue to bless us and guide and teach us to love another, pray for one another and forgive one another.**

**For All of those who are travelling and for their safe journey and return to their homes**



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## FOR THY DEPARTED SERVANTS OF GOD:

For all of those who tragically lost their lives to the Coronavirus and other ailments  
All of the clergy and parishioners of This Holy House who have departed this life, who  
now lie asleep in the Lord

Metropolitan HERMAN

Metropolitan THEODOSIUS

Ever-Memorable Archpriest Eugene

Ever-Memorable Priest John

Ever-Memorable Archpriest Rastko

Ever-Memorable Dn. Mark

Ever-Memorable Archpriest Bernard

Ever-Memorable Archpriest George

Ever-Memorable Archpriest George

Matushka Dorothy

Khouria Grace

Priest Leonid Gregory, Priest Peter, Archpriest Kirill, Dn. Michael, John Robert, Sister  
Thomas, Frank, Jenny, Charles, Florence, Michael Stevens, William, George, Marion

Ever-Memorable Pdn Gregory

Ever-Memorable Sbdn Gregory

Martha, Akhtar, Barkat, Rehmat

### Newly-Departed Servants of God

John (Hutnyan) - Grandfather of Danielle Geeza [Spiritual Daughter of Fr. Jason]

40<sup>th</sup> Day - December 13

**\*If anyone would like to have their loved ones added to the prayer list  
for remembrance during the Divine Liturgy and Divine Services, please see or contact Fr. Jason.**

### 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 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](http://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.

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
- 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!

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

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

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

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

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

**An Invitation to Support the Stewards of the OCA!**

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

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**An Invitation to Support the Ministry of the DDB!**

In order to fund necessary ministries and fulfill the work of the Church in the Diocese of New York and New Jersey, **Distinguished Diocesan Benefactors** generously contribute financial support. To learn more about the DDB, please go to the following link: <http://vimeo.com/71021182> and watch a 60 second video inviting you to join the ever-growing list of Distinguished Diocesan Benefactors of The Diocese of New York and New Jersey who joyfully support the on-going work of our diocese. Their support allows us to provide assistance to new mission parishes, scholarships to seminarians, support the departments of The Diocese, and much-needed encouragement to older struggling parishes. How about you? Our parish is a member of the DDB. If anyone would like to join, please see Fr. Jason as well as take a pamphlet from the table in the back of the church. May God continue to bless and guide you for your continued support. The Diocese of New York and New Jersey has two monthly newsletters: "**First Fruits**" and "**Beyond the Plateau.**" The goal, as expressed by Archbishop Michael, is to increase communication and grow the communal spirit of diocesan fellowship in the building-up and strengthening of our parish communities. To learn more about these monthly diocesan publications, please refer to the diocesan website: <http://www.nynjoca.org/newsletters.html>.

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**"Lessons in Our Faith" Video presented by His Eminence Archbishop MICHAEL**

His Eminence Archbishop Michael presents a series of talks on matters of faith, belief, and the teachings of the Church. These instructional videos are concise and "to the point," offering Orthodox Christians much-needed information, helpful advice for their spiritual journey, and assistance in answering questions that may come from non-Orthodox friends or acquaintances. The goal is that we might better know and better live our faith. These instructional videos can be found at the Diocesan Website: <http://www.nynjoca.org>! For those who do not have internet, please see the handouts from each lesson which are located on the table in the back of the church. **There are 14 videos! Be sure to check them out!**

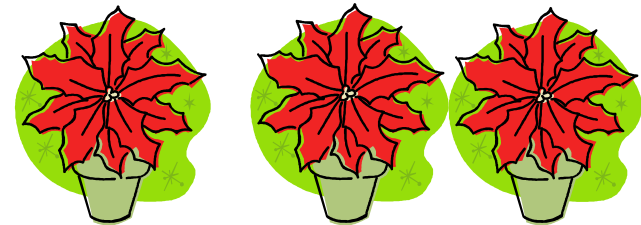
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**WEEKLY VIDEO SERMONS GIVEN BY HIS EMINENCE ARCHBISHOP MICHAEL**

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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**2021 POINSETTIA SALE SIGN-UP SHEET**

We are once again looking for donations for our Christmas Poinsettias to adorn and decorate our church during The Nativity Season. We will be ordering 15 Poinsettias this year.

**\*\*ALL POINSETTIAS ARE A \$15.00 DONATION! PLEASE MAKE CHECKS OUT TO ST. GEORGE ORTHODOX CHURCH (Memo Line: Poinsettia Sale)**

**\*\*PLEASE SEE PATTI FIDEN FOR PAYMENT!**

**IF ANYONE HAS ANY QUESTIONS, PLEASE SEE 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 prepare ourselves to 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!!**

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## **THE 2022 PARISH NATIVITY CHRISTMAS CARD**



As we enter into The Nativity Fast, we are always finding ways that we can bring the Love and Joy of Our Lord God and Savior Jesus Christ to everyone. One of these ways is to send a Christmas Card to our loved ones during this Holy Season. The idea of sending a Parish Christmas Card is to extend the greetings and prayerful best wishes of The Nativity of Our Lord to our families, friends, and neighbors.

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 attached form with how we would like our name to appear in the card and hand it in to Matushka Katia or Matushka Fran no later Sunday December 11 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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**DIVINE LITURGY WILL BE CELEBRATED EVERY WEDNESDAY MORNING AT 9:30 AM DURING THE NATIVITY FAST BEGINNING WITH WEDNESDAY MOVEMBER 16! ADULT EDUCATION CLASS WILL BE HELD FROM 11:00 am TO 12:30 PM.**

**ST. GEORGE ORTHODOX CHURCH EDUCATION CENTER**

**The Great Feast of The Entrance of the  
Most Holy Theotokos into the Temple  
November 21**



According to Holy Tradition, the Entry of the Most Holy Theotokos into the Temple took place in the following manner. The parents of the Virgin Mary, Saints Joachim and Anna, praying for an end to their childlessness, vowed that if a child were born to them, they would dedicate it to the service of God.

When the Most Holy Virgin reached the age of three, the holy parents decided to fulfill their vow. They gathered together their relatives and acquaintances, and dressed the All-Pure Virgin in Her finest clothes. Singing sacred songs and with lighted candles in their hands, virgins

escorted Her to the Temple (Ps. 44/45:14-15). There the High Priest and several priests met the handmaiden of God. In the Temple, fifteen high steps led to the sanctuary, which only the priests and High Priest could enter. (Because they recited a Psalm on each step, Psalms 119/120-133/134 are called "Psalms of Ascent.") The child Mary, so it seemed, could not make it up this stairway. But just as they placed Her on the first step, strengthened by the power of God, She quickly went up the remaining steps and ascended to the highest one. Then the High Priest, through inspiration from above, led the Most Holy Virgin into the Holy of Holies, where only the High Priest entered once a year to offer a purifying sacrifice of blood. Therefore, all those present in the Temple were astonished at this most unusual occurrence.

After entrusting their child to the Heavenly Father, Joachim and Anna returned home. The All-Holy Virgin remained in the quarters for virgins near the Temple. According to the testimony of Holy Scripture (Exodus 38; 1 Kings 1: 28; Luke 2: 37), and also the historian Josephus Flavius, there were many living quarters around the Temple, in which those who were dedicated to the service of God dwelt.

The earthly life of the Most Holy Theotokos from Her infancy until She was taken up to Heaven is shrouded in deep mystery. Her life at the Jerusalem Temple was also a secret. "If anyone were to ask me," said Saint Jerome, "how the Most Holy Virgin spent the time of Her youth, I would answer that that is known to God Himself and the Archangel Gabriel, Her constant guardian."

But there are accounts in Church Tradition, that during the All-Pure Virgin's stay at the Temple, She grew up in a community of pious virgins, diligently read the Holy Scripture, occupied Herself with handicrafts, prayed constantly, and grew in love for God. From ancient times, the Church has celebrated the Feast of the Entry of the Most Holy Theotokos into the Temple. Indications that the Feast was observed in the first centuries of Christianity are found in the traditions of Palestinian Christians, which say that the holy Empress Helen (May 21) built a church in honor of the Entry of the Most Holy Theotokos into the Temple.

Saint Gregory of Nyssa, in the fourth century, also mentions this Feast. In the eighth century Saints Germanus and Tarasius, Patriarchs of Constantinople, delivered sermons on the Feast of the Entry.



The Feast of the Entry of the Most Holy Theotokos into the Temple foretells God's blessing for the human race, the preaching of salvation, the promise of the coming of Christ.

### **DISCOURSE ON THE FEAST OF THE ENTRY OF OUR MOST PURE LADY THEOTOKOS INTO THE HOLY OF HOLIES**

by Saint Gregory Palamas, Archbishop of Thessalonica

If a tree is known by its fruit, and a good tree bears good fruit (Mt. 7:17; Luke 6:44), then is not the Mother of Goodness Itself, She who bore the Eternal Beauty, incomparably more excellent than every good, whether in this world or the world above? Therefore, the coeternal and identical Image of goodness, Preeternal, transcending all being, He Who is the preexisting and good Word of the Father, moved by His unutterable love for mankind and compassion for us, put on our image, that He might reclaim for Himself our nature which had been dragged down to uttermost Hades, so as to renew this corrupted nature and raise it to the heights of Heaven. For this purpose, He had to assume a flesh that was both new and ours, that He might refashion us from out of ourselves. Now He finds a Handmaiden perfectly suited to these needs, the supplier of Her own unsullied nature, the Ever-Virgin now hymned by us, and Whose miraculous Entrance into the Temple, into the Holy of Holies, we now celebrate. God predestined Her before the ages for the salvation and reclaiming of our kind. She was chosen, not just from the crowd, but from the ranks of the chosen of all ages, renowned for piety and understanding, and for their God-pleasing words and deeds.

In the beginning, there was one who rose up against us: the author of evil, the serpent, who dragged us into the abyss. Many reasons impelled him to rise up against us, and there are many ways by which he enslaved our nature: envy, rivalry, hatred, injustice, treachery, slyness, etc. In addition to all this, he also has within him the power of bringing death, which he himself engendered, being the first to fall away from true life.

The author of evil was jealous of Adam, when he saw him being led from earth to Heaven, from which he was justly cast down. Filled with envy, he pounced upon Adam with a terrible ferocity, and even wished to clothe him with the garb of death. Envy is not only the begetter of hatred, but also of murder, which this truly man-hating serpent brought about in us. For he wanted to be master over the earth-born for the ruin of that which

was created in the image and likeness of God. Since he was not bold enough to make a face to face attack, he resorted to cunning and deceit. This truly terrible and malicious plotter pretended to be a friend and useful adviser by assuming the physical form of a serpent, and stealthily took their position. By his God-opposing advice, he instills in man his own death-bearing power, like a venomous poison.

If Adam had been sufficiently strong to keep the divine commandment, then he would have shown himself the vanquisher of his enemy, and withstood his deathly attack. But since he voluntarily gave in to sin, he was defeated and was made a sinner. Since he is the root of our race, he has produced us as death-bearing shoots. So, it was necessary for us, if he were to fight back against his defeat and to claim victory, to rid himself of the death-bearing venomous poison in his soul and body, and to absorb life, eternal and indestructible life.

It was necessary for us to have a new root for our race, a new Adam, not just one Who would be sinless and invincible, but one Who also would be able to forgive sins and set free from punishment those subject to it. And not only would He have life in Himself, but also the capacity to restore to life, so that He could grant to those who cleave to Him and are related to Him by race both life and the forgiveness of their sins, restoring to life not only those who came after Him, but also those who already had died before Him. Therefore, Saint Paul, that great trumpet of the Holy Spirit, exclaims, "the first man Adam was made a living soul, the last Adam was made a quickening spirit" (1 Cor. 15:45).

Except for God, there is no one who is without sin, or life-creating, or able to remit sin. Therefore, the new Adam must be not only Man, but also God. He is at the same time life, wisdom, truth, love, and mercy, and every other good thing, so that He might renew the old Adam and restore him to life through mercy, wisdom and righteousness. These are the opposites of the things which the author of evil used to bring about our aging and death.

As the slayer of mankind raised himself against us with envy and hatred, so the Source of life was lifted up [on the Cross] because of His immeasurable goodness and love for mankind. He intensely desired the salvation of His creature, i.e., that His creature would be restored by Himself. In contrast to this, the author of evil wanted to bring God's creature to ruin, and thereby put mankind under his own power, and tyrannically to afflict us. And just as he achieved the conquest and the fall

of mankind by means of injustice and cunning, by deceit and his trickery, so has the Liberator brought about the defeat of the author of evil, and the restoration of His own creature with truth, justice and wisdom.

It was a deed of perfect justice that our nature, which was voluntarily enslaved and struck down, should again enter the struggle for victory and cast off its voluntary enslavement. Therefore, God deigned to receive our nature from us, hypostatically uniting with it in a marvelous way. But it was impossible to unite that Most High Nature, Whose purity is incomprehensible for human reason, to a sinful nature before it had been purified. Therefore, for the conception and birth of the Bestower of purity, a perfectly spotless and Most Pure Virgin was required.

Today we celebrate the memory of those things that contributed, if only once, to the Incarnation. He Who is God by nature, the Co-unoriginate and Coeternal Word and Son of the Transcendent Father, becomes the Son of Man, the Son of the Ever-Virgin. "Jesus Christ the same yesterday and today, and forever" (Heb. 13:8), immutable in His divinity and blameless in His humanity, He alone, as the Prophet Isaiah prophesied, "practiced no iniquity, nor deceit with His lips" (Is. 53: 9). He alone was not brought forth in iniquity, nor was He conceived in sin, in contrast to what the Prophet David says concerning himself and every other man (Ps. 50/51: 5). Even in what He assumes, He is perfectly pure and has no need to be cleansed Himself. But for our sake, He accepted purification, suffering, death and resurrection, that He might transmit them to us.

God is born of the spotless and Holy Virgin, or better to say, of the Most Pure and All-Holy Virgin. She is above every fleshly defilement, and even above every impure thought. Her conceiving resulted not from fleshly lust, but by the overshadowing of the Most Holy Spirit. Such desire being utterly alien to Her, it is through prayer and spiritual readiness that She declared to the angel: "Behold the handmaiden of the Lord; be it unto Me according to thy word" (Luke 1:38), and that She conceived and gave birth. So, in order to render the Virgin worthy of this sublime purpose, God marked this ever-virgin Daughter now praised by us, from before the ages, and from eternity, choosing Her from out of His elect.

Turn your attention then, to where this choice began. From the sons of Adam God chose the wondrous Seth, who showed himself a living heaven through his becoming behavior, and through the beauty of his virtues. That is why he was chosen, and from whom the Virgin would blossom as

the divinely fitting chariot of God. She was needed to give birth and to summon the earth-born to heavenly sonship. For this reason also all the lineage of Seth were called "sons of God," because from this lineage a son of man would be born the Son of God. The name Seth signifies a rising or resurrection, or more specifically, it signifies the Lord, Who promises and gives immortal life to all who believe in Him.

And how precisely exact is this parallel! Seth was born of Eve, as she herself said, in place of Abel, whom Cain killed through jealousy (Gen. 4:25); and Christ, the Son of the Virgin, was born for us in place of Adam, whom the author of evil also killed through jealousy. But Seth did not resurrect Abel, since he was only a type of the resurrection. But our Lord Jesus Christ resurrected Adam, since He is the very Life and the Resurrection of the earth-born, for whose sake the descendents of Seth are granted divine adoption through hope, and are called the children of God. It was because of this hope that they were called sons of God, as is evident from the one who was first called so, the successor in the choice. This was Enos, the son of Seth, who as Moses wrote, first hoped to call on the Name of the Lord (Gen. 4:26).

In this manner, the choice of the future Mother of God, beginning with the very sons of Adam and proceeding through all the generations of time, through the Providence of God, passes to the Prophet-king David and the successors of his kingdom and lineage. When the chosen time had come, then from the house and posterity of David, Joachim and Anna are chosen by God. Though they were childless, they were by their virtuous life and good disposition the finest of all those descended from the line of David. In prayer they besought God to deliver them from their childlessness, and promised to dedicate their child to God from its infancy. By God Himself, the Mother of God was proclaimed and given to them as a child, so that from such virtuous parents the all-virtuous child would be raised. So in this manner, chastity joined with prayer came to fruition by producing the Mother of virginity, giving birth in the flesh to Him Who was born of God the Father before the ages.

Now, when Righteous Joachim and Anna saw that they had been granted their wish, and that the divine promise to them was realized in fact, then they on their part, as true lovers of God, hastened to fulfill their vow given to God as soon as the child had been weaned from milk. They have now led this truly sanctified child of God, now the Mother of God, this Virgin into the Temple of God. And She, being filled with Divine gifts even at such



a tender age, ... She, rather than others, determined what was being done over Her. In Her manner She showed that She was not so much presented into the Temple, but that She Herself entered into the service of God of her own accord, as if she had wings, striving towards this sacred and divine love. She considered it desirable and fitting that she should enter into the Temple and dwell in the Holy of Holies.

Therefore, the High Priest, seeing that this child, more than anyone else, had divine grace within Her, wished to set Her within the Holy of Holies. He convinced everyone present to welcome this, since God had advanced it and approved it. Through His angel, God assisted the Virgin and sent Her mystical food, with which She was strengthened in nature, while in body She was brought to maturity and was made purer and more exalted than the angels, having the Heavenly spirits as servants. She was led into the Holy of Holies not just once, but was accepted by God to dwell there with Him during Her youth, so that through Her, the Heavenly Abodes might be opened and given for an eternal habitation to those who believe in Her miraculous birthgiving.

So it is, and this is why She, from the beginning of time, was chosen from among the chosen. She Who is manifest as the Holy of Holies, Who has a body even purer than the spirits purified by virtue, is capable of receiving ... the Hypostatic Word of the Unoriginate Father. Today the Ever-Virgin Mary, like a Treasure of God, is stored in the Holy of Holies, so that in due time, (as it later came to pass) She would serve for the enrichment of, and an ornament for, all the world. Therefore, Christ God also glorifies His Mother, both before, and also after His birth.

We who understand the salvation begun for our sake through the Most Holy Virgin, give Her thanks and praise according to our ability. And truly, if the grateful woman (of whom the Gospel tells us), after hearing the saving words of the Lord, blessed and thanked His Mother, raising her voice above the din of the crowd and saying to Christ, "Blessed is the womb that bore Thee, and the paps Thou hast sucked" (Luke 11:27), then we who have the words of eternal life written out for us, and not only the words, but also the miracles and the Passion, and the raising of our nature from death, and its ascent from earth to Heaven, and the promise of immortal life and unfailing salvation, then how shall we not unceasingly hymn and bless the Mother of the Author of our Salvation and the Giver of Life, celebrating Her conception and birth, and now Her Entry into the Holy of Holies?

Now, brethren, let us remove ourselves from earthly to celestial things. Let us change our path from the flesh to the spirit. Let us change our desire from temporal things to those that endure. Let us scorn fleshly delights, which serve as allurements for the soul and soon pass away. Let us desire spiritual gifts, which remain undiminished. Let us turn our reason and our attention from earthly concerns and raise them to the inaccessible places of Heaven, to the Holy of Holies, where the Mother of God now resides.

Therefore, in such manner our songs and prayers to Her will gain entry, and thus through her mediation, we shall be heirs of the everlasting blessings to come, through the grace and love for mankind of Him Who was born of Her for our sake, our Lord Jesus Christ, to Whom be glory, honor and worship, together with His Unoriginate Father and His Coeternal and Life-Creating Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

## **The Nativity Fast – Why We Fast**

November 15, marks the beginning of the Nativity Fast (40 days before Christmas). The following article offers some thoughts on the purpose of fasting.

Fasting is not very alive and well in the Christian world. Much of that world has long lost any living connection with the historical memory of Christian fasting. Without the guidance of Tradition, many modern Christians either do not fast, or constantly seek to re-invent the practice, sometimes with unintended consequences.

There are other segments of Christendom who have tiny remnants of the traditional Christian fast, but in the face of a modern world have reduced the tradition to relatively trivial acts of self-denial.

I read recently (though I cannot remember where) that the rejection of Hesychasm was the source of all heresy. In less technical terms we can say that knowing God in truth, participating in His life, union with Him through humility, prayer, love of enemy and repentance before all and for everything, is the purpose of the Christian life. Hesychasm (Greek Hesychia=Silence) is the name applied to the Orthodox tradition of ceaseless prayer and inner stillness.

But these are incorrectly understood if they are separated from knowledge of God and participation in His life, union with Him through humility, prayer, love of enemy and repentance before all and for everything.

And it is the same path of inner knowledge of God (with all its components) that is the proper context of fasting. If we fast but do not forgive our enemies – our fasting is of no use. If we fast and do not find it drawing us into humility – our fasting is of no use. If our fasting does not make us yet more keenly aware of the fact that we are sinful before all and responsible to all then it is of no benefit. If our fasting does not unite us with the life of God – which is meek and lowly – then it is again of no benefit. Fasting is not dieting. Fasting is not about keeping a Christian version of kosher. Fasting is about hunger and humility (which is increased as we allow ourselves to become weak). Fasting is about allowing our heart to break.

I have seen greater good accomplished in souls through their failure in the fasting season than in the souls of those who “fasted well.” Publicans enter the kingdom of God before Pharisees pretty much every time.

Why do we fast? Perhaps the more germane question is “why do we eat?” Christ quoted Scripture to the evil one and said, “Man does not live by bread alone but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.” We eat as though our life depended on it and it does not. We fast because our life depends on the word of God.

I worked for a couple of years as a hospice chaplain. During that time, daily sitting at the side of the beds of dying patients – I learned a little about how we die. It is a medical fact that many people become “anorexic” before death – that is – they cease to want food. Many times family and even doctors become concerned and force food on a patient who will not survive. Interestingly, it was found that patients who became anorexic had less pain than those who, having become anorexic, were forced to take food. (None of this is about the psychological anorexia that afflicts many of our youth. That is a tragedy)

It is as though at death our bodies have a wisdom we have lacked for most of our lives. It knows that what it needs is not food – but something deeper. The soul seeks and hungers for the living God. The body and its pain become a distraction. And thus in God’s mercy the distraction is

reduced. Christianity as a religion – as a theoretical system of explanations regarding heaven and hell, reward and punishment, is simply Christianity that has been distorted from its true form. Either we know the living God or we have nothing. Either we eat His flesh and drink His blood or we have no life in us. The rejection of Hesychasm is the source of all heresy.

Why do we fast? We fast so that we may live like a dying man – and in dying we can be born to eternal life.

## **A Prayer for Thanksgiving Day**

O Master, Lord, God Almighty, we have gathered together to praise Thy majesty, to bless Thee, to glorify Thee, the only true God, and to offer thanks unto Thee with a grateful heart for all the blessings Thou hast bestowed upon us, and for all of Thy mercies seen and unseen which Thou graciously continues to pour out upon us. We thank Thee for Thy blessings Thou hast bestowed upon us during this past year. We ask forgiveness of and from Thee for our sins and transgressions.

O Lord, we find ourselves in this land as Jonah did in the boat, when, in time of danger, all of the sailors and passengers, though of different faiths, yet with one heart and one mind, they raised supplicatory arms in prayer. Thou, the only true and living God, did not despise their prayers but answered their prayers, revealing to them Thy holy will, and rescuing them from danger.

We too, O God of our fathers, as we are about to sit down and partake of these gifts which Thou hast set before us, we raise up our arms unto Thee and do humbly ask that Thou dost accept our prayer of thanksgiving, along with people of every faith on this land. We unite

our prayer together in one mind and one heart, thankful for the religious freedom we enjoy in which we use it to learn about Thee, the true God, in order to know Thee, love Thee and worship Thee in truth. We are especially thankful, Almighty God, for Thine ineffable love toward us, Thine unworthy servants that we are, and for the sacrifice on the Cross of Thy only begotten Son, our Lord, God and Savior Jesus Christ, and for the gifts of Thy all Holy Good and Life-giving Spirit.

Gratefully we unite our voices and we pray to Thee, O Lord Jesus Christ our God, the God of all mercies and bounties Whose mercy is immeasurable, and whose love for mankind is an unfathomable deep: falling down in adoration before Thy majesty, with fear and trembling, as unprofitable servants, and now humbly rendering thanks unto Thy loving-kindness for Thy benefits bestowed upon Thy Servants we glorify Thee, we praise Thee, we sing Thee and we magnify thee as our Lord, and Master, and Benefactor; and again falling down before Thee, we humbly thank Thee, supplicating Thy boundless and inexpressible mercy. And in that Thou hast graciously vouchsafed to accept the petitions of Thy servants and to fulfill them, so also grant that henceforth thy Holy Church and this city may be delivered from every hostile assault, and may be vouchsafed peace and tranquillity, and that increasing in true love of Thee, and in all virtues, all Thy faithful people may receive Thy benefits; and that we may ever offer thanksgiving unto Thee, We ask that you grant rest eternal and blessed repose to all of our loved ones who now lie asleep in The Lord, especially Thy Servants of God\_\_\_\_\_. May their Memories be Eternal! O Lord Jesus Christ our God Who didst bless The five loaves in the

wilderness and didst feed the five thousand, do Thou the same Lord bless these gifts and this Thanksgiving Table and bless those who have no home or family to share this meal with and protect them and all of us in Thy loving care all the days of our life unto ages of ages.

### **Protopresbyter Alexander Schmemmann**

#### **Final words**

Father Alexander Schmemmann celebrated the Divine Liturgy for the last time on Thanksgiving Day. This was particularly appropriate since Father Alexander had devoted his whole life to teaching, writing and preaching about the Eucharist; for the word eucharist in Greek means thanksgiving. At the conclusion of the liturgy, Father Alexander took from his pocket a short written sermon, in the form of a prayer, which he proceeded to read. This was a strange occurrence since Father never wrote his liturgical homilies, but delivered them extemporaneously. These were his words, which proved to be the last ever spoken by him from the ambo in Church.

#### ***“Thank You, O Lord!”***

Everyone capable of thanksgiving is capable of salvation and eternal joy. Thank You, O Lord, for having accepted this Eucharist, which we offered to the Holy Trinity, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and which filled our hearts with the joy, peace and righteousness of the Holy Spirit. Thank You, O Lord, for having revealed Yourself unto us and given us the foretaste of Your Kingdom. Thank You, O Lord, for having united us to one another in serving You and Your Holy Church. Thank You, O Lord, for having helped us to overcome all difficulties, tensions,

passions, temptations and restored peace, mutual love and joy in sharing the communion of the Holy Spirit. Thank You, O Lord, for the sufferings You bestowed upon us, for they are purifying us from selfishness and reminding us of the "one thing needed;" Your eternal Kingdom. Thank You, O Lord, for having given us this country where we are free to Worship You. Thank You, O Lord, for this school, where the name of God is proclaimed. Thank You, O Lord, for our families: husbands, wives and, especially, children who teach us how to celebrate Your holy Name in joy, movement and holy noise. Thank You, O Lord, for everyone and everything. Great are You, O Lord, and marvelous are Your deeds, and no word is sufficient to celebrate Your miracles. Lord, it is good to be here! Amen.

## The History and Meaning of Thanksgiving Day

### Thanksgiving at Plymouth

In September 1620, a small ship called the Mayflower left Plymouth, England, carrying 102 passengers—an assortment of religious separatists seeking a new home where they could freely practice their faith and other individuals lured by the promise of prosperity and land ownership in the New World. After a treacherous and uncomfortable crossing that lasted 66 days, they dropped anchor near the tip of Cape Cod, far north of their intended destination at the mouth of the Hudson River. One month later, the Mayflower crossed [Massachusetts](#) Bay, where the Pilgrims, as they are now commonly known, began the work of establishing a village at Plymouth.

#### Did You Know?

Lobster, seal and swans were on the Pilgrims' menu.

Throughout that first brutal winter, most of the colonists remained on board the ship, where they suffered from exposure, scurvy and outbreaks of contagious disease. Only half of the Mayflower's original passengers and crew lived to see their first New England spring. In March, the remaining settlers moved ashore, where they received an astonishing visit

from an Abenaki Indian who greeted them in English. Several days later, he returned with another Native American, Squanto, a member of the Pawtuxet tribe who had been kidnapped by an English sea captain and sold into slavery before escaping to London and returning to his homeland on an exploratory expedition. Squanto taught the Pilgrims, weakened by malnutrition and illness, how to cultivate corn, extract sap from maple trees, catch fish in the rivers and avoid poisonous plants. He also helped the settlers forge an alliance with the Wampanoag, a local tribe, which would endure for more than 50 years and tragically remains one of the sole examples of harmony between European colonists and Native Americans.

In November 1621, after the Pilgrims' first corn harvest proved successful, Governor [William Bradford](#) organized a celebratory feast and invited a group of the fledgling colony's Native American allies, including the Wampanoag chief Massasoit. Now remembered as America's "first Thanksgiving"—although the Pilgrims themselves may not have used the term at the time—the festival lasted for three days. While no record exists of the historic banquet's exact menu, the Pilgrim chronicler Edward Winslow wrote in his journal that Governor Bradford sent four men on a "fowling" mission in preparation for the event, and that the Wampanoag guests arrived bearing five deer. Historians have suggested that many of the dishes were likely prepared using traditional Native American spices and cooking methods. Because the Pilgrims had no oven and the Mayflower's sugar supply had dwindled by the fall of 1621, the meal did not feature pies, cakes or other desserts, which have become a hallmark of contemporary celebrations.

### Thanksgiving Becomes an Official Holiday

Pilgrims held their second Thanksgiving celebration in 1623 to mark the end of a long drought that had threatened the year's harvest and prompted Governor Bradford to call for a religious fast. Days of fasting and thanksgiving on an annual or occasional basis became common practice in other New England settlements as well. During the [American Revolution](#), the Continental Congress designated one or more days of thanksgiving a year, and in 1789 [George Washington](#) issued the first Thanksgiving proclamation by the national government of the United States; in it, he called upon Americans to express their gratitude for the happy conclusion to the country's war of independence and the successful

ratification of the U.S. Constitution. His successors [John Adams](#) and [James Madison](#) also designated days of thanks during their presidencies.

In 1817, [New York](#) became the first of several states to officially adopt an annual Thanksgiving holiday; each celebrated it on a different day, however, and the American South remained largely unfamiliar with the tradition. In 1827, the noted magazine editor and prolific writer Sarah Josepha Hale—author, among countless other things, of the nursery rhyme “Mary Had a Little Lamb”—launched a campaign to establish Thanksgiving as a national holiday. For 36 years, she published numerous editorials and sent scores of letters to governors, senators, presidents and other politicians. [Abraham Lincoln](#) finally heeded her request in 1863, at the height of the Civil War, in a proclamation entreating all Americans to ask God to “commend to his tender care all those who have become widows, orphans, mourners or sufferers in the lamentable civil strife” and to “heal the wounds of the nation.” He scheduled Thanksgiving for the final Thursday in November, and it was celebrated on that day every year until 1939, when [Franklin D. Roosevelt](#) moved the holiday up a week in an attempt to spur retail sales during the Great Depression. Roosevelt’s plan, known derisively as Franksgiving, was met with passionate opposition, and in 1941 the president reluctantly signed a bill making Thanksgiving the fourth Thursday in November.

### Thanksgiving Traditions

In many American households, the Thanksgiving celebration has lost much of its original religious significance; instead, it now centers on cooking and sharing a bountiful meal with family and friends. Turkey, a Thanksgiving staple so ubiquitous it has become all but synonymous with the holiday, may or may not have been on offer when the Pilgrims hosted the inaugural feast in 1621. Today, however, nearly 90 percent of Americans eat the bird—whether roasted, baked or deep-fried—on Thanksgiving, according to the National Turkey Federation. Other traditional foods include stuffing, mashed potatoes, cranberry sauce and pumpkin pie. Volunteering is a common Thanksgiving Day activity, and communities often hold food drives and host free dinners for the less fortunate.

Parades have also become an integral part of the holiday in cities and towns across the United States. Presented by Macy’s department store since 1924, New York City’s Thanksgiving Day parade is the largest and

most famous, attracting some 2 to 3 million spectators along its 2.5-mile route and drawing an enormous television audience. It typically features marching bands, performers, elaborate floats conveying various celebrities and giant balloons shaped like cartoon characters.

Beginning in the mid-20th century and perhaps even earlier, the president of the United States has “pardoned” one or two Thanksgiving turkeys each year, sparing the birds from slaughter and sending them to a farm for retirement. A number of U.S. governors also perform the annual turkey pardoning ritual.

### Thanksgiving Controversies

For some scholars, the jury is still out on whether the feast at Plymouth really constituted the first Thanksgiving in the United States. Indeed, historians have recorded other ceremonies of thanks among European settlers in North America that predate the Pilgrims’ celebration. In 1565, for instance, the Spanish explorer Pedro Menéndez de Avilé invited members of the local Timucua tribe to a dinner in St. Augustine, [Florida](#), after holding a mass to thank God for his crew’s safe arrival. On December 4, 1619, when 38 British settlers reached a site known as Berkeley Hundred on the banks of Virginia’s James River, they read a proclamation designating the date as “a day of thanksgiving to Almighty God.”

Some Native Americans and others take issue with how the Thanksgiving story is presented to the American public, and especially to schoolchildren. In their view, the traditional narrative paints a deceptively sunny portrait of relations between the Pilgrims and the Wampanoag people, masking the long and bloody history of conflict between Native Americans and European settlers that resulted in the deaths of millions. Since 1970, protesters have gathered on the day designated as Thanksgiving at the top of Cole’s Hill, which overlooks Plymouth Rock, to commemorate a “National Day of Mourning.” Similar events are held in other parts of the country.

### Thanksgiving’s Ancient Origins

Although the American concept of Thanksgiving developed in the colonies of New England, its roots can be traced back to the other side of the Atlantic. Both the Separatists who came over on the Mayflower and the Puritans who arrived soon after brought with them a tradition of



providential holidays—days of fasting during difficult or pivotal moments and days of feasting and celebration to thank God in times of plenty.

As an annual celebration of the harvest and its bounty, moreover, Thanksgiving falls under a category of festivals that spans cultures, continents and millennia. In ancient times, the Egyptians, Greeks and Romans feasted and paid tribute to their gods after the fall harvest. Thanksgiving also bears a resemblance to the ancient Jewish harvest festival of Sukkot. Finally, historians have noted that Native Americans had a rich tradition of commemorating the fall harvest with feasting and merrymaking long before Europeans set foot on their shores.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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**=== Scriptural Readings for the Week ===**

|                  |                               |                         |
|------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------|
| <b>Monday</b>    | Hebrews 9:1-7                 | Luke 10:38-42; 11:27-28 |
| <b>Tuesday</b>   | 1 Thessalonians 3:9-13        | Luke 17:26-37           |
| <b>Wednesday</b> | 1 Thessalonians 4:1-12        | Luke 18:15-17, 26-30    |
| <b>Thursday</b>  | 1 Thessalonians 5:1-8         | Luke 18:31-34           |
| <b>Friday</b>    | 1 Thessalonians 5:9-13, 24-28 | Luke 19:12-28           |
| <b>Saturday</b>  | 2 Corinthians 11:1-6          | Luke 10:19-21           |
| <b>Sunday</b>    | Ephesians 2:14-22             | Luke 13:10-17           |

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We are thrilled to announce that tickets for Sight & Sound Film’s debut feature are on sale now! I HEARD THE BELLS tells the inspiring true story behind the beloved Christmas carol and its author, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow. We invite you to join us this holiday season as this story of resounding hope and rekindled faith comes to life in movie theaters nationwide— December 1, 3, and 4 only

**WHEN** - Thursday 1 December at 7:00 pm

**WHERE** - Regal Elmwood Center 16  
2001 Elmwood Avenue, 14207, Buffalo

**COST** - \$12.50/PERSON \$10.00 CHILD

We will meet at the Church at 6:00 PM for Pizza and then head over to the Theater around 6:30 PM.

Please see or contact Fr. Jason if you are interested in going so that we can order tickets! Deadline is Sunday November 27!



**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 this week!

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**
- 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 12**

**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 Matushka Katia or Matushka Fran no later Sunday December 11

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](mailto:katia.vansuch@gmail.com) or Matushka Fran (610-698-1666)/[fances.vansuch@yahoo.com](mailto: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.

Asking for your continued love and prayers,  
I remain, with love in Christ,

Your Humble Servant,  
Fr. Jason