



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

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

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

27th SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST — Tone 2. Sunday before the Nativity. Martyr Sebastian at Rome and his companions: Martyrs Nicostratus, Zoë, Castorius, Tranquillinus, Marcellinus, Mark, Claudius, Symphorian, Victorinus, Tiburtius, and Castulus (ca. 287). Ven. Sebastian, Abbot of Pshekhónsk Monastery (Vologdá—ca. 150). Righteous Simeon, Wonderworker of Verkhotúr'ye (1694). St. Modestus, Archbishop of Jerusalem (633-634). St. Florus, Bishop of Amisus (7th c.). St. Michael the Confessor at Constantinople

EPISTLE: Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom **GOSPEL:**
Hebrews 11:9-10, 17-23, 32-40 *(Sunday Before)* Matthew 1:1-25

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!

Altar Vigil Candles are offered by Anthony DeNuovo in Loving Memory
of Thy Departed Servants of his family. May their memory be eternal.

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 2

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

Troparion for The Holy Fathers – Tone 2

Great are the accomplishments of faith, for the three Holy Youths rejoice in the fountain of flames as though in the waters of rest; and the Prophet Daniel appeared a shepherd to the lions as though they were sheep.// So by their prayers, O Christ God, save our souls!

Kontakion for The Resurrection – Tone 2

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

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

Kontakion for The Holy Fathers – Tone 6

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

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 4

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

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

ALLELUIA VERSES

We have heard with our ears, O God, for our fathers have told us.

For Thou hast saved us from them that oppose us, and hast put to shame them that hate us.

THE HYMN TO THE THEOTOKOS

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

COMMUNION HYMN

Praise the Lord from the heavens, praise Him in the highest! Rejoice in the Lord, O you righteous; praise befits the just! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

EPISTLE LESSON FOR TODAY

Brethren:

By faith he dwelt in the land of promise as in a foreign country, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise; for he waited for the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God.

By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac, and he who had received the promises offered up his only begotten son, of whom it was said, "In Isaac your seed shall be called," concluding that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead, from which he also received him in a figurative sense.

By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau concerning things to come.

By faith Jacob, when he was dying, blessed each of the sons of Joseph, and worshiped, leaning on the top of his staff.

By faith Joseph, when he was dying, made mention of the departure of the children of Israel, and gave instructions concerning his bones.

By faith Moses, when he was born, was hidden three months by his parents, because they saw he was a beautiful child; and they were not afraid of the king's command.

And what more shall I say? For the time would fail me to tell of Gideon and Barak and Samson and Jephthah, also of David and Samuel and the prophets: who through faith subdued kingdoms, worked righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, became valiant in battle, turned to flight the armies of the aliens. Women received their dead raised to life again. Others were tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection. Still others had trial of mockings and scourgings, yes, and of chains and imprisonment.

They were stoned, they were sawn in two, were tempted, were slain with the sword. They wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented – of whom the world was not worthy. They wandered in deserts and mountains, in dens and caves of the earth.

And all these, having obtained a good testimony through faith, did not receive the promise,

God having provided something better for us, that they should not be made perfect apart from us.

GOSPEL LESSON FOR TODAY

Let us Attend:

The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the Son of David, the Son of Abraham: Abraham begot Isaac, Isaac begot Jacob, and Jacob begot Judah and his brothers. Judah begot Perez and Zerah by Tamar, Perez begot Hezron, and Hezron begot Ram. Ram begot Amminadab, Amminadab begot Nahshon, and Nahshon begot Salmon. Salmon begot Boaz by Rahab, Boaz begot Obed by Ruth, Obed begot Jesse, and Jesse begot David the king. David the king begot Solomon by her who had been the wife of Uriah.

Solomon begot Rehoboam, Rehoboam begot Abijah, and Abijah begot Asa. Asa begot Jehoshaphat, Jehoshaphat begot Joram, and Joram begot Uzziah. Uzziah begot Jotham, Jotham begot Ahaz, and Ahaz begot Hezekiah. Hezekiah begot Manasseh, Manasseh begot Amon, and Amon begot Josiah. Josiah begot Jeconiah and his brothers about the time they were carried away to Babylon.

And after they were brought to Babylon, Jeconiah begot Shealtiel, and Shealtiel begot Zerubbabel. Zerubbabel begot Abiud, Abiud begot Eliakim, and Eliakim begot Azor. Azor begot Zadok, Zadok begot Achim, and Achim begot Eliud.

Eliud begot Eleazar, Eleazar begot Matthan, and Matthan begot Jacob. And Jacob begot Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus who is called Christ.

So all the generations from Abraham to David are fourteen generations, from David until the captivity in Babylon are fourteen generations, and from the captivity in Babylon until the Christ are fourteen generations.

Now the birth of Jesus Christ was as follows: After His mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Spirit. Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not wanting to make her a public example, was minded to put her away secretly. But while he thought about these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take to you Mary your wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit. And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name JESUS, for He will save His people from their sins." So all this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying:

"Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel, which is translated, 'God with us.'"

Then Joseph, being aroused from sleep, did as the angel of the Lord commanded him and took to him his wife, and did not know her till she had brought forth her firstborn Son. And he called His name JESUS.

THE MONTHLY SCHEDULE FOR DECEMBER 2022

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

19-23 - Little Compline Service - 6:30 PM

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) {STRICT FAST}

9:00 AM - Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom followed by Vespers

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. Basil the Great

(Brunch in Parish Fellowship Hall)

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

9:00 AM - Festal Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom

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

9:00 AM - Festal Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom

30 - Church School Outing to Our Lady of Fatima Shrine for Festival of Lights

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!

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SCHEDULE OF SERVICES AND ADULT EDUCATION CLASSES

DIVINE LITURGY

EVERY TUESDAY (9:30 AM)

DAILY MATINS

EVERY WEDNESDAY (9:00 AM)

PARAKLESIS SERVICE TO THE THEOTOKOS

EVERY WEDNESDAY (6:00 PM)

AKATHIST SERVICE

EVERY THURSDAY (9:00 AM)

BIBLE STUDY/ADULT EDUCATION CLASS

EVERY OTHER TUESDAY (6:30 - 8:00 PM)

ADULT EDUCATION/BIBLE STUDY

EVERY OTHER WEDNESDAY (10:00 - 11:30 AM)

BOOK CLUB

EVERY OTHER MONDAY (6:30 - 8:00 PM)

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

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!**

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

THE SCHEDULE OF WEEKLY SERVICES and ACTIVITIES

SUNDAY DECEMBER 18, 2022

THE SUNDAY BEFORE THE NATIVITY OF OUR LORD

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

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

MONDAY DECEMBER 19, 2022

Little Compline – **6:00 PM**

TUESDAY DECEMBER 20, 2022

Divine Liturgy – **9:30 AM**

Little Compline – **6:00 PM**

WEDNESDAY DECEMBER 21, 2022

Little Compline – **6:00 PM**

THURSDAY DECEMBER 22, 2022

Akathist to Our Lord – **9:00 AM**

Little Compline – **6:00 PM**

FRIDAY DECEMBER 23, 2022

The Royal Hours Service – **9:00 AM**

SATURDAY DECEMBER 24, 2022 (STRICT FAST DAY)

THE EVE OF THE GREAT FEAST OF THE NATIVITY OF OUR LORD

Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom followed by Vespers – **9:00 AM**
Festal Vigil Service (Great Compline and Matins) – **4:30 PM**

SUNDAY DECEMBER 25, 2022

THE GREAT FEAST OF THE NATIVITY OF OUR LORD

The Hours – **9:10 AM** Festal Divine Liturgy – **9:30 AM**

Parish Nativity Brunch in The Parish Fellowship following Divine Liturgy
Singing of Nativity Hymns and Christmas Carols in 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)

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



**** NEW COFFEE HOUR SCHEDULE FOR 2023 IN THE PARISH FELLOWSHIP HALL!
BE SURE TO SIGN UP TO HOST A COFFEE HOUR! PLEASE JOIN US EVERY
SUNDAY IN THE PARISH FELLOWSHIP HALL FOLLOWING THE DIVINE LITURGY
FOR SOME CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP WITH ONE ANOTHER!****

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

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 Church...
@StGeorgeOrthodoxChurch



venmo

Scan this code to pay

https://www.paypal.com/donate/?hosted_button_id=E5X6YTVC9DF3W

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, Thlisinita, 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, William and Darlene Austin, Chris, John, Daniel, Gjorgie, Thomas

Catechumens

**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

Dean (*Uncle of Mariami Bekauri*)

***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) 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
- Monthly Donation for Health Kits for Mats for Mission
- Monthly Donation for Chowder Sale

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 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>.

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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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ST. GEORGE ORTHODOX CHURCH EDUCATION CENTER

THE SUNDAY BEFORE THE NATIVITY OF OUR LORD

December 18



THE SUNDAY BEFORE THE NATIVITY OF OUR LORD

On this day, the Sunday before the Nativity of Christ, our holy and God-bearing Fathers have enjoined us to make commemoration of all them that from the beginning of time have been well-pleasing unto God, from Adam even unto Joseph the Betrothed of the Most Holy Theotokos, according to genealogy, as Luke the Evangelist hath recounted historically; and likewise for the Prophets and Prophetesses, especially of Daniel the Prophet and the three holy youths. It is also known as the Sunday of the Holy Genealogy. We remember the aforementioned names, those in the Old Testament who were related to Christ by blood, and those who spoke of His Birth as a man. In the Divine Liturgy, we shall read of Jesus Christ’s lineage from the Gospel of Saint Matthew. In this way, the Church shows us that Christ truly became a man, taking on human nature. He was not a ghost, an apparition, a myth, a distant imagined god, or the abstract god of philosophers; such a god does not have a family tree. Our God is the God of Abraham,

Isaac and Jacob. He has flesh and blood, human ancestors—many of whom sinned greatly, but like David, also repented greatly. Yet, all of these righteous ones in every age had been well-pleasing to God because they loved Him. By taking on human nature, the Son of God became like us in all ways, in flesh and blood, in mind and soul, and in heart and will. He differed from us in only one way: He could not sin. Since we know that Christ’s human nature remained sinless, He is also fully divine, and He shows us the way in which we can avoid sin, and so improve and transform our human nature.

The Genealogy of Jesus Christ

On this, the Sunday before the Nativity, the Church prescribes the first chapter of the Gospel of Matthew. The second half of the reading is the nativity story. Joseph is betrothed to Mary, but she is found to be with child, and so his marriage to her remains a secret until after the birth. It is the story we all know; the story we have heard every year, all of our lives.

As familiar as the story is, we seem to skip over the first half of the reading, the genealogy of Jesus Christ. This account of His genealogy differs from the one in Luke. This one begins with Abraham, the patriarch of the Jewish

people, and moves through and emphasizes King David, who ruled over the golden age of the Israelites.

Matthew wrote his Gospel with the Jewish people as his primary audience, thus he highlights the important figures in the Hebrew narrative. Abraham, the first man blessed of God, the man chosen to father the nation from which the Messiah would be born, and David, the greatest king of Israel. It would be proper and expected that the Messiah would have such a lineage.

In contrast, Luke starts his genealogy with Adam, and ties the humanity of Christ to the humanity of Adam and all people. Luke was writing for a wider audience which included Gentiles as well as Jews.

It is interesting that Matthew includes three women in his account. Normally, Jewish lineages were patriarchal, only figured through the fathers. Even more interesting is the fact that none of these three women are associated with ideal situations. Boaz was the son of Salmon and Rahab. Obed was the son of Boaz and Ruth. Solomon was the son of David and Bathsheba.

Rahab was a Canaanite, a Gentile, and a prostitute in the city Jericho. With her help, two Hebrew spies were able to escape with news of Jericho's military capabilities. She recognized and revered the true God, the God of the Israelites, and helped them in an act of faith and penitence.

Ruth was a Moabite, a race shunned by the Hebrews. The entire race was thought to be unclean because it was fathered by Lot, Abraham's nephew, through incestuous relations. Whether this sordid story found in Genesis is fact or legend, the Hebrews had a very low view of the Moabites. Ruth, on the other hand, was a convert to Judaism, and one of the most caring and loving characters in the entirety of Scripture and a great hero of the Jewish people.

The story of David and Bathsheba is the most well-known of the three stories mentioned in this genealogy. David, although he had many wives, saw Bathsheba, a married woman, bathing on a rooftop, and took a liking to her. In the course of his conquest of Bathsheba, he had her husband murdered and fathered an illegitimate child. The Scriptures are not as squeaky clean as one might imagine. Solomon the Wise, the builder of the temple, came from the marriage of King David and Bathsheba. Why would these sordid stories be included in the genealogy of the Messiah? Why not just say, "Salmon begat Boaz; Boaz begat Obed"? Why not hide the imperfections in the tapestry? We

know that Joseph is not the biological father of Jesus Christ, but he and the Theotokos shared this lineage.

The Nativity of our Lord draws near, the union of God and man. Jesus Christ is truly God, the Second Person of the Holy Trinity, existing before all ages, coessential with Father and Holy Spirit. But Jesus Christ is truly man, truly born from the ashes and dust of which humanity is made. There is nothing of created matter which God cannot sanctify through His All-powerful touch. There is nothing so sordid or awful which cannot be made to fulfill His good will.

Human nature was assumed into the person of Jesus Christ, and He thus sanctified it. It does not matter what sin we have fallen into; Rahab shows us faithfulness and repentance. It does not matter who we are; Ruth became a paragon of virtue from a despised race. It does not matter what is done to us;

Bathsheba's son's name, Solomon, has become synonymous with wisdom. All of these things work together ineffably to accomplish the will of God. "Every saint has a past; every sinner has a future." It is through Christ who sanctifies all, we can all have a hope of a saintly future.

The Jesse Tree

On the two Sundays preceding the feast of the Nativity, the Church commemorates the forefathers and the fathers: the prophets and saints of the Old Testament who prepared the coming of Christ. The Sunday before the Nativity of the Lord (December 18-24) is known as the Sunday of the Holy Fathers. On this day the Church commemorates all those who were well-pleasing to God from all ages, from Adam to St. Joseph the Betrothed of the Most Holy Theotokos, those who are mentioned in the genealogy of Luke 3:23-38. The holy prophets and prophetesses are also remembered today, especially the Prophet Daniel and the three holy youths.

The Jesse tree represents Jesus' family tree. The name is taken from Isaiah 11:1 – "There shall come forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots." - in which Jesus is referred to as a shoot coming up from the stump of Jesse, the father of David. Look up the information in the bible about each of the forefathers of Christ to find out why each symbol is associated with the ancestor.

Suggested Symbols

- | | | |
|----------------|--------------------|---------------------------------------|
| • Adam and Eve | Apple | (Genesis 2:4-3:24) |
| • Noah | Ark or rainbow | (Genesis 6:11-22, 7:17-8:12, 20-9:17) |
| • Abraham | Knife | (Genesis 12:1-7, 15:1-6) |
| • Isaac | Ram | (Genesis 22:1-19) |
| • Jacob | Ladder | (Genesis 27:41-28:22) |
| • Joseph | Colorful coat | (Genesis 37, 39:1-50:21) |
| • Moses | Tablets of the law | (Exodus 2:1-4:20) |
| • David | Harp | (1 Samuel 16:17-23) |
| • Isaiah | Lion and lamb | (Isaiah 1:10-20, 6:1-13, 8:11-9:7) |
| • Mary | Lily | (Luke 1:26-38) |
| • Elizabeth | Small home | (Luke 1:39-55) |
| • Joseph | Hammer or saw | (Matthew 1:18-25) |

The Winter Pascha, Chapter 16: The Genealogy of Jesus Christ

*The following is an excerpt from **The Winter Pascha**,
by Fr. Thomas Hopko*

The gospel reading for the Divine Liturgy on the Sunday before Christmas is "the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham," taken from the gospel according to St. Matthew. This genealogy lists the generations of people from Abraham to David, to the Babylonian captivity of the people of Israel, to the birth of Jesus. It is a selected genealogy, ending in the appearance of "Joseph, the husband of Mary, of whom Jesus was born, who is called Christ" (Mt 1:16). It differs from the genealogy presented in St. Luke's gospel which begins with Jesus "being the son (as was supposed) of Joseph," and goes back all the way not simply to Abraham but to Adam (Lk 3:23-38).

There are many purposes for presenting the genealogy of Jesus in the gospels, chief among which is the affirmation that Jesus, being in truth the Son of God, as all the gospels testify, has come "in the flesh" as a real human being. This affirmation was critically important in the time of the apostles and the first Christian generations because, unlike today, the temptation of the early period of Christianity was not to deny Jesus' divinity, but to deny His real and authentic humanity.

As a matter of historical fact, the first Christian heretics were those who said that Jesus was some sort of divine being (how this was explained had many

variations and versions) who only appeared to be a true man, but was not really one since "flesh and blood" were taken to be intrinsically degrading if not downright evil. Thus the apostle Paul had to insist that in Jesus, who belongs to the Jews "according to the flesh" (Rom 9:5), the "whole fulness of deity dwells *bodily*" (Col 2:9), and that it is the same Jesus who died and was buried and raised in the flesh as a real man, who is Messiah and Lord.

...

The genealogies in the gospels of Saints Matthew and Luke are made to and from Joseph. This is not to give the impression that Jesus came from Joseph's seed. Both gospels are absolutely clear on this point. Jesus is born from the Virgin Mary by the power of the Holy Spirit. The point is rather that Joseph is Jesus' father according to the law, and it is from the father that one's lawful descent is to be traced. Jesus' legal father is "Joseph, son of David," the legal husband of Mary (Mt 1:20).

One other important point is made in listing the human generations which led to the birth of Jesus. This is the fact that God is faithful to His promises even though His chosen people are often not faithful. Among the people from whom Jesus came are both sinners and heathens. In a word, Jesus comes not only from the righteous and holy, but from the wicked and sinful. And He comes not only from Jews, but from Gentiles. The names of the four women specifically mentioned in St. Matthew's list-- Tamar, Rahab, Ruth, and the wife of Uriah (Bathsheba)-- were noted, not to say notorious, Gentiles, including one of David's own wives, the mother of Solomon. The point to be seen here is one beautifully made in an early Christian hymn quoted in the Bible in the second letter to Timothy:

If we have died with Him, we shall also live with Him;

If we endure, we shall also reign with Him;

If we deny Him, He also will deny us;

If we are faithless, He remains faithful-- for He cannot deny Himself. (2 Tim 2:11-13)

This is the wonderful witness of the genealogies of Jesus: If we are faithless, the Lord God remains faithful-- for he cannot deny Himself!

Behold, the time of our salvation is at hand. Prepare yourself, O cavern, For the Virgin approaches to give birth to her Son. Be glad and rejoice, O Bethlehem, land of Judah,

For from you our Lord shines forth as the dawn. Give ear, you mountains and

hills And all lands surrounding Judea, For Christ is coming to save the people Whom He has created and whom He loves.

The Sunday before The Nativity of Our Lord

DECEMBER 18

The Sunday before the Nativity of the Lord (December 18-24) is known as the Sunday of the Holy Fathers. On this day the Church commemorates all those who were well-pleasing to God from all ages, from Adam to Saint Joseph the Betrothed of the Most Holy Theotokos, those who are mentioned in the genealogy of Luke 3:23-38. The holy prophets and prophetesses are also remembered today, especially the Prophet Daniel and the three holy youths (December 17).

The Troparion to the Prophet Daniel and the three holy youths ("Great are the accomplishments of faith...") is quite similar to the Troparion for Saint Theodore the Recruit (February 17, and the first Saturday of Great Lent). The Kontakion to Saint Theodore, who suffered martyrdom by fire, reminds us that he also had faith as his breastplate (see I Thessalonians 5:8).

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The Eve of the Nativity of Our Lord God and Savior Jesus Christ Commemorated on December 24

In Slavic practice, on the eve of the Nativity of the Lord, the liturgical services consist of the Royal Hours with the Typika, Vespers, and the Divine Liturgy of Saint Basil the Great. At Vigil in the evening, Great Compline is followed by Matins.

If the Nativity falls on Sunday, however, the Royal Hours with the Typika are read on the preceding Friday. On Friday evening, the office of the Forefeast, December 24. The Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom is served on Saturday morning. At Vigil in the evening, Great Compline is

followed by Matins. On Sunday morning, the Liturgy of Saint Basil is celebrated.

If the Nativity falls on a Monday, Royal Hours with the Typika are read on Friday December 22. On Saturday evening and Sunday morning we follow the order for the Sunday before the Nativity with the office of the Forefeast for December 24. On Sunday morning the Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom is served. Vigil on Sunday evening consists of Great Compline is followed by Matins. On Monday morning the Liturgy of Saint Basil is celebrated.

On the eve of the Nativity, instead of three readings from the Old Testament at Vespers, there are eight readings (from Genesis, Numbers, Micah, Isaiah, Baruch, Daniel, and two more readings from Isaiah). The entrance is made with the Gospel.

At the end of Liturgy the priest places a lighted candle in a candlestick in the center of the church. Then the troparion and kontakion of the Feast are sung. At Vigil on the evening of the twenty-fourth, Great Compline is followed by Matins.

THE CELEBRATION OF THE NATIVITY OF OUR LORD GOD and SAVIOR JESUS CHRIST ACCORDING TO THE FLESH

The celebration of the feast of the **Nativity of Christ** in the Orthodox Church is patterned after the celebration of the feast of the Lord's Resurrection. A fast of forty days precedes the feast, with special preparatory days announcing the approaching birth of the Saviour. Thus, on St Andrew's Day (November 30) and St Nicholas Day (December 6) songs are sung to announce the coming birthday of the Lord:

Adorn yourself, O Cavern. Make ready, O Manger. O Shepherds and wisemen, bring your gifts and bear witness. For the Virgin is coming bearing Christ in her womb (Vesperal Hymn of St Nicholas Day)

On the eve of Christmas, the **Royal Hours** are read and the **Divine Liturgy of St. Basil** is served with **Vespers**. At these services the Old Testament prophecies of Christ's birth are chanted, emphasizing the prophecy of **Micah**

which foretells Bethlehem as the birthplace of the Saviour, and the prophecies of **Isaiah** about the appearance and character of the Messiah:

The Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel, which translated is, God with us (Is 7:14-15).

God is with us, understand all ye nations, and submit yourselves, for God is with us (Is 8:9).

For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulders, and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there will be no end (Is 9:6-7).

The **Vigil of Christmas** begins with **Great Compline**, highlighted once again by the solemn chanting of **God is with us** and the words of the prophecy of Isaiah. At Compline there is also the singing of the Troparion and Kontakion of the feast along with the special hymns glorifying the Saviour's birth. There are also the special long litanies of intercession and the solemn blessing of the **five loaves** of bread together with the **wheat** and the **wine** of which the faithful partake and the **oil** with which they are anointed. This part of the festal vigil, which is done on all great feasts, is called the **litya** (in Greek, the *artoklasia* or the **breaking of the bread**).

At the beginning of the **Christmas Matins**, which together with Compline form the Christmas Vigil, the six matinal psalms begin as usual with the words; Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace, good will among men (*Lk 2:14*).

At the Christmas services these words of the angelic song are normally sung with great solemnity rather than being chanted as at the daily service. The Christmas Matins proceed as usual. The gospel reading from Matthew (*1:18-25*) tells of the birth of Christ, and all of the hymns and verses glorify his appearance on earth:

Christ is born, glorify him. Christ is from heaven, go to meet him. Christ is an earth, be ye lifted up. Sing to the Lord, all the earth. Sing out with gladness, all ye people. For he is glorified. (First Ode of the Christmas Canon)

The **Christmas Liturgy** begins with psalms of glorification and praise. The troparion and kontakion mark the entrance with the Book of the Gospels. The baptismal line from **Galatians 3:27** once again replaces the Thrice-Holy. The Epistle reading is from **Galatians**:

But when the time had fully come, God sent forth his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons. And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!" So through God, you are no longer a slave but a son, and if a son then an heir (Gal 4:4-7).

The Gospel reading is the familiar Christmas story from **Matthew** (*2:1-12*), and the liturgy continues in the normal fashion. A specific two-day celebration follows, dedicated to **Mary the Theotokos** and **St Stephen, the First Martyr**. The period of Christmas rejoicing extends to Epiphany during which time the Christmas songs are sung and fasting and kneeling in prayer are not called for by the Church.

The feast of Christmas is formally entitled the **Nativity in the Flesh of our Lord and God and Saviour Jesus Christ**. At Christmas we celebrate the birth as a man of the Son of God, the one who together with the Father and the Holy Spirit is truly God from all eternity. Thus, we sing in the Church.

Today the Virgin gives birth to the Transcendent One, and the earth offers a cave to the Unapproachable One! Angels, with shepherds, glorify Him! The wise men journey with the star! Since for our sake the Eternal God is born as a little child (Kontakion).

The feast of Christmas was not a separate Church feast for the first four centuries of Christian history. It was celebrated with **Epiphany** in the one great feast of God's appearance on earth in the form of the human Messiah of Israel. The Nativity began to be celebrated as such on the twenty-fifth of December in order to offset the pagan festival of the Invincible Sun which occurred on that day. It was established by the Church quite consciously as an attempt to defeat the false religion of the heathens. Thus, we discover the troparion of the feast making a polemic against the worship of the sun and the stars and calling for the adoration of Christ, the **True Sun of Righteousness** (*Mal 4:2*), who is himself worshiped by all of the elements of nature.

Thy Nativity, O Christ our God, has shone to the world the light of wisdom! For by it, those who worshiped the stars were taught by a star to adore Thee, the Sun of Righteousness and to know Thee, the Orient from on high (Lk 1:78, translated as Dawn or Day spring). O Lord, glory to Thee! (Troparion).

Thus, the feast of Christmas is the celebration of the world's salvation through the Son of God who became man for our sake that, through him, we might ourselves become divine, sons of God the Father by the indwelling of his Holy Spirit in us.

A GREAT CHRISTMAS STORY

The old man sat in his gas station on a cold Christmas Eve. He hadn't been anywhere in years since his wife had passed away. It was just another day to him. He didn't hate Christmas, just couldn't find a reason to celebrate. He was sitting there looking at the snow that had been falling for the last hour and wondering what it was all about when the door opened and a homeless man stepped through.

Instead of throwing the man out, Old George as he was known by his customers, told the man to come and sit by the heater and warm up. "Thank you, but I don't mean to intrude," said the stranger. "I see you're busy, I'll just go." "Not without something hot in your belly." George said.

He turned and opened a wide mouth Thermos and handed it to the stranger. "It ain't much, but it's hot and tasty. Stew ... Made it myself. When you're done, there's coffee and it's fresh."

Just at that moment he heard the "ding" of the driveway bell. "Excuse me, be right back," George said. There in the driveway was an old '53 Chevy. Steam was rolling out of the front.. The driver was panicked. "Mister can you help me!" said the driver, with a deep Spanish accent. "My wife is with child and my car is broken." George opened the hood. It was bad. The block looked cracked from the cold, the car was dead.

"You ain't going in this thing," George said as he turned away.

"But Mister, please help ..." The door of the office closed behind George as he went inside. He went to the office wall and got the keys to his old truck, and went back outside. He walked around the building, opened the garage,

started the truck and drove it around to where the couple was waiting. "Here, take my truck," he said. "She ain't the best thing you ever looked at, but she runs real good."

George helped put the woman in the truck and watched as it sped off into the night. He turned and walked back inside the office. "Glad I gave 'em the truck, their tires were shot too. That 'ol truck has brand new ." George thought he was talking to the stranger, but the man had gone. The Thermos was on the desk, empty, with a used coffee cup beside it. "Well, at least he got something in his belly," George thought.

George went back outside to see if the old Chevy would start. It cranked slowly, but it started. He pulled it into the garage where the truck had been. He thought he would tinker with it for something to do. Christmas Eve meant no customers. He discovered the the block hadn't cracked, it was just the bottom hose on the radiator. "Well, shoot, I can fix this," he said to himself. So he put a new one on.

"Those tires ain't gonna get 'em through the winter either." He took the snow treads off of his wife's old Lincoln. They were like new and he wasn't going to drive the car anyway.

As he was working, he heard shots being fired. He ran outside and beside a police car an officer lay on the cold ground. Bleeding from the left shoulder, the officer moaned, "Please help me."

George helped the officer inside as he remembered the training he had received in the Army as a medic. He knew the wound needed attention. "Pressure to stop the bleeding," he thought. The uniform company had been there that morning and had left clean shop towels. He used those and duct tape to bind the wound. "Hey, they say duct tape can fix anythin'," he said, trying to make the policeman feel at ease.

"Something for pain," George thought. All he had was the pills he used for his back. "These ought to work." He put some water in a cup and gave the policeman the pills. "You hang in there, I'm going to get you an ambulance."

The phone was dead. "Maybe I can get one of your buddies on that there talk box out in your car." He went out only to find that a bullet had gone into the dashboard destroying the two way radio.

He went back in to find the policeman sitting up. "Thanks," said the officer. "You could have left me there. The guy that shot me is still in the area."

George sat down beside him, "I would never leave an injured man in the Army and I ain't gonna leave you." George pulled back the bandage to check for bleeding. "Looks worse than what it is. Bullet passed right through 'ya. Good thing it missed the important stuff though. I think with time your gonna be right as rain."

George got up and poured a cup of coffee. "How do you take it?" he asked.

"None for me," said the officer..

"Oh, yer gonna drink this. Best in the city. Too bad I ain't got no donuts." The officer laughed and winced at the same time.

The front door of the office flew open. In burst a young man with a gun. "Give me all your cash! Do it now!" the young man yelled. His hand was shaking and George could tell that he had never done anything like this before.

"That's the guy that shot me!" exclaimed the officer.

"Son, why are you doing this?" asked George, "You need to put the cannon away. Somebody else might get hurt."

The young man was confused. "Shut up old man, or I'll shoot you, too. Now give me the cash!"

The cop was reaching for his gun. "Put that thing away," George said to the cop, "we got one too many in here now."

He turned his attention to the young man. "Son, it's Christmas Eve. If you need money, well then, here. It ain't much but it's all I got. Now put that pea shooter away."

George pulled \$150 out of his pocket and handed it to the young man, reaching for the barrel of the gun at the same time. The young man released his grip on the gun, fell to his knees and began to cry. "I'm not very good at this am I? All I wanted was to buy something for my wife and son," he went

on. "I've lost my job, my rent is due, my car got repossessed last week."

George handed the gun to the cop. "Son, we all get in a bit of squeeze now and then. The road gets hard sometimes, but we make it through the best we can."

He got the young man to his feet, and sat him down on a chair across from the cop. "Sometimes we do stupid things." George handed the young man a cup of coffee. "Bein' stupid is one of the things that makes us human. Comin' in here with a gun ain't the answer. Now sit there and get warm and we'll sort this thing out."

The young man had stopped crying. He looked over to the cop. "Sorry I shot you. It just went off. I'm sorry officer."

"Shut up and drink your coffee " the cop said.

George could hear the sounds of sirens outside. A police car and an ambulance skidded to a halt. Two cops came through the door, guns drawn. "Chuck! You ok?" one of the cops asked the wounded officer.

"Not bad for a guy who took a bullet. How did you find me?"

"GPS locator in the car. Best thing since sliced bread. Who did this?" the other cop asked as he approached the young man.

Chuck answered him, "I don't know. The guy ran off into the dark. Just dropped his gun and ran."

George and the young man both looked puzzled at each other.

"That guy work here?" the wounded cop continued.

"Yep," George said, "just hired him this morning. Boy lost his job."

The paramedics came in and loaded Chuck onto the stretcher. The young man leaned over the wounded cop and whispered, "Why?"

Chuck just said, "Merry Christmas boy ... and you too, George, and thanks for everything."

"Well, looks like you got one doozy of a break there. That ought to solve some of your problems."

George went into the back room and came out with a box. He pulled out a ring box. "Here you go, something for the little woman. I don't think Martha would mind. She said it would come in handy some day."

The young man looked inside to see the biggest diamond ring he ever saw. "I can't take this," said the young man. "It means something to you."

"And now it means something to you," replied George. "I got my memories. That's all I need."

George reached into the box again. An airplane, a car and a truck appeared next. They were toys that the oil company had left for him to sell. "Here's something for that little man of yours."

The young man began to cry again as he handed back the \$150 that the old man had handed him earlier.

"And what are you supposed to buy Christmas dinner with? You keep that too," George said. "Now git home to your family."

The young man turned with tears streaming down his face. "I'll be here in the morning for work, if that job offer is still good."

"Nope. I'm closed Christmas day," George said. "See ya the day after."

George turned around to find that the stranger had returned. "Where'd you come from? I thought you left?"

"I have been here. I have always been here," said the stranger. "You say you don't celebrate Christmas. Why?"

"Well, after my wife passed away, I just couldn't see what all the bother was. Puttin' up a tree and all seemed a waste of a good pine tree. Bakin' cookies like I used to with Martha just wasn't the same by myself and besides I was gettin' a little chubby."

The stranger put his hand on George's shoulder. "But you do celebrate the

holiday, George. You gave me food and drink and warmed me when I was cold and hungry. The woman with child will bear a son and he will become a great doctor.

The policeman you helped will go on to save 19 people from being killed by terrorists. The young man who tried to rob you will make you a rich man and not take any for himself. "That is the spirit of the season and you keep it as good as any man."

George was taken aback by all this stranger had said. "And how do you know all this?" asked the old man.

"Trust me, George. I have the inside track on this sort of thing. And when your days are done you will be with Martha again."

The stranger moved toward the door. "If you will excuse me, George, I have to go now. I have to go home where there is a big celebration planned." George watched as the old leather jacket and the torn pants that the stranger was wearing turned into a white robe. A golden light began to fill the room. "You see, George ... it's My birthday. Merry Christmas."

George fell to his knees and replied, "Happy Birthday, Lord Jesus"

MERRY CHRISTMAS AND GOD BLESS!

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

The Scriptural Readings for the Week

Monday	2 Timothy 2:20-26	Mark 9:42-10:1
Tuesday	2 Timothy 3:16-4:4	Mark 10:2-12
Wednesday	2 Timothy 4:9-22	Mark 10:11-16
Thursday	Titus 1:5-2:1	Mark 10:17-27
Friday	Titus 1:15-2:10	Mark 10:23-32
Saturday	Hebrews 1:1-12	Luke 2:1-20
Sunday	Galatians 4:4-7 (The Nativity of Our Lord)	Matthew 2:1-12

Fatima Shrine Festival of Lights

Friday December 30, 2022

6:30 PM



We will walk the beautiful grounds of Fatima Shrine and see the beautiful Festival of Lights (75 displays) spanning over 15 acres of land dedicated to The Glory of God!

In the Main Rotunda behind the Chapel, we will serve a brief prayer service during which we will sing The Tropar and Kontakion for The Nativity of Our Lord followed by Silent Night!

Let us come together during the Nativity Season and enjoy the Joy, Love, Peace and Glory of God in celebration of The Nativity of Our Lord.

What a blessing for us to have this opportunity during the Holy Nativity Season. If anyone would like to carpool, we will be meeting at church around 6:00 PM and then driving up to Our Lady of Fatima Shrine together. If we are driving straight to Our Lady of Fatima Shrine, we will meet right outside the Bookstore. If anyone has any question or concerns, please do not hesitate to let Fr. Jason know.

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 an annual basis. The cost is only \$600/year. So far we have collected \$1100 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



SUNDAY DECEMBER 18 IS THE LAST DAY TO MAKE A DONATION!!

ST. GEORGE ORTHODOX CHURCH 2023 HOME BLESSING SCHEDULE

NOTES ON THE SCHEDULE FOR THIS YEAR

For anyone who would like to have their home blessed, we kindly ask that you write your name and date/time that would be best for Fr. Jason to come and visit you and your family and bless your home. If anyone has any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to see or contact Fr. Jason. Sign-Up Sheet is located in the Parish Fellowship Hall.

As we begin our journey through the Nativity Fast, May God continue to bless and guide all of you, your families, and our entire parish family.

- 1) As Fr. Jason makes his pastoral visitations to the homes of the parishioners, he will use the sign-up sheet as a guideline for him to follow.
- 2) I ask your patience when anticipating my visit. I will do my best to reach every home on the scheduled date. I thank you for your understanding.
- 3) If anyone has any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to let me know.

May GOD continue to bless and guide all of you and your families!
Have a blessed and glorious Feast of the Nativity of Our Lord and a Blessed, Happy, and Healthy New Year!

With Love in Christ,
Fr. Jason

PARISH FAMILY NATIVITY BRUNCH

Immediately Following the Festal Divine Liturgy on Christmas Morning

As is our tradition here at St. George's, we have a Parish Family Nativity Brunch following the Divine Liturgy on Christmas Morning. Please plan on staying and celebrating The Joy, Glory, and Blessing of The Nativity of Our Lord together as a parish family by enjoying a delicious brunch as well as spending time together in fellowship and enjoying our Parish "Christmas Sing-A-Long"!

With that in mind, if anyone would like to bring something for the Parish Family Nativity Brunch, which will be held on SUNDAY DECEMBER 25 in the Parish Fellowship Hall following the Divine Liturgy, please bring it with you to church either when you come for The Vigil Prayer Service on Christmas Eve December 24 at 4:30 PM or when you come to church on Christmas Morning (December 25) for The Divine Liturgy at 9:30 AM.

So far, we have the following items for our brunch:

French Toast Casserole, Sausage/Egg Casserole

If anyone has any questions or concerns or would like to bring something for the Parish Family Nativity Brunch, please see or contact Mat. Katia who is organizing the Brunch for us. May God continue to bless and guide all of you, your families, and our entire parish family during this Holy Nativity Season.

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**BLESSING OF WATERS AT HOYT LAKE
SUNDAY JANUARY 8, 2023**

On Sunday, January 6, 2019 we will be gathering at Hoyt Lake in Delaware Park for The Annual Blessing of Waters. Invite our families, friends, and neighbors as we come together and celebrate The Great Feast of Holy Theophany. Please refer to the flyer in today's bulletin!!

Time – 1:30 PM

Location: Hoyt Lake – Delaware Park

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**THE GREAT BLESSING OF HOLY WATER FOR CHILDREN WILL BE HELD ON
SUNDAY JANUARY 8 IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING THE DIVINE LITURGY!!**

**PARENTS and CHILDREN: PLEASE REMEMBER TO BRING YOUR HOLY WATER
BOTTLES WITH YOU ON SUNDAY JANUARY 8.**

**IF ANYONE NEEDS A HOLY WATER BOTTLE, PLEASE SEE OR CONTACT FR.
JASON!!**

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“We can be so busy listing our troubles,
that we forget how to count our blessings!”

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“Our life is life to the extent that it is life in Christ. And how
much is it life in Christ? This is revealed by its holiness.
The holier the life is, the more immortal and eternal it is.”

The Nativity Eve Holy Supper

Following 40 days of Nativity Lent, the birth of Jesus Christ is commemorated with a final Lenten feast on December 25.

There are several symbolic features to the dinner table, including the placing of **hay** under the tablecloth in memory of the manger in which the Holy Child was placed by His Mother at His birth. Some **grain** is also placed in the straw to represent the abundance of Christ's Coming. The **linen tablecloth** represents the birth clothes Christ was wrapped.

The Supper usually consists of 12 courses, symbolic of the 12 Apostles. The twelve fasting foods usually served are: barley, honey, stewed prunes, pierogi, sauerkraut, potatoes, lima beans, garlic, Lenten bread, mushroom soup and salt. Reminders that life is both bitter and sweet and that the work of each day throughout the current year was required to truly celebrate Christ's Coming.

The meal begins with the singing of the Christmas troparion and the lighting of a **candle** placed in the center of the table. The candle symbolizes the star of Bethlehem.

The Holy Supper usually takes place in the home with the father leading the family in the prayer ritual. It begins with the youngest child reading the Nativity account from the Gospel of St. Matthew 2:1-12. The father then starts with an opening prayer asking God to bless the bread, wine, and food. He then breaks the bread and passes it out to all present. This symbolizes Christ at the Last Supper.

The supper begins with a spoonful of the traditional Kutya, a cooked wheat or barley kasha, sweetened with honey, poppy seeds and chopped nuts – symbolic of joy and happiness.

An extra place is always set at the table for Jesus, either in Spirit, or in the form of a traveller or stranger, for none are turned away on this day without a warm invitation to partake of this Holy Supper.

**MAY ALL OF YOU HAVE A BLESSED, HOLY, AND JOYOUS
FEAST OF THE NATIVITY OF OUR LORD GOD and SAVIOR JESUS CHRIST!**

CHRIST IS BORN!

GLORIFY HIM!

THE GREAT FEAST OF THE NATIVITY OF OUR LORD GOD and SAVIOR JESUS CHRIST ACCORDING TO THE FLESH

Monday December 19-Tuesday December 20-Wednesday December 21-Thursday December 22

6:00 P.M. Little Compline

Friday December 23 9:30 A.M. The Royal Hours

The Eve of The Great Feast of the Nativity of Our Lord God and Savior Jesus Christ According to the Flesh

Saturday December 24 9:00 A.M.
Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom followed by Vespers
4:30 P.M. Festive Vigil Service

The Great Feast of the Nativity of Our Lord God and Savior Jesus Christ According to the Flesh

Sunday December 25 9:15 A.M. The Hours
9:30 A.M. Festive Divine
Liturgy of St. Basil The Great Following Divine Liturgy, Annual Parish
Brunch and Christmas Sing-A-Long in the Parish Fellowship Hall

2nd Day of the Feast of the Nativity of Our Lord (*Synaxis of The Theotokos*)

Monday December 26 9:30 A.M. Festal Divine Liturgy

3rd Day of the Feast of the Nativity of Our Lord (*Feast of St. Stephen the Protomartyr*)

Tuesday December 27 9:30 A.M. Festal Divine Liturgy

THE GREAT FEAST OF THE CIRCUMCISION OF OUR LORD GOD and SAVIOR JESUS CHRIST/ST. BASIL THE GREAT/NEW YEAR'S DAY

Saturday December 31 4:00 P.M. Great Vespers with Litiya

Sunday January 1, 2023 9:15 A.M. The Hours
9:30 A.M. Festal Divine Liturgy
of St. Basil the Great followed by Moleben for the New Year and The
Blessing of St. Basil Bread
Memorial Litia for Stephen James Silver
(One-Year Anniversary of his falling asleep in The Lord)
Luncheon in Parish Fellowship Hall following Divine Liturgy

**THE GREAT FEAST OF THE THEOPHANY OF OUR LORD GOD
and SAVIOR JESUS CHRIST**

WEDNESDAY JANUARY 4, 2023 9:00 A.M.
Royal Hours for The Feast of Holy Theophany

THURSDAY JANUARY 5, 2023 {STRICT FAST DAY}
**EVE OF THE GREAT FEAST OF THE HOLY THEOPHANY
OF OUR LORD GOD AND SAVIOR JESUS CHRIST**

9:00 A.M. Vespers with Liturgy of
St. Basil the Great followed by Lesser Blessing of Water

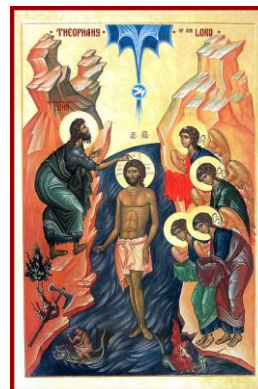
6:00 P.M. Great Compline with Litiya

FRIDAY JANUARY 6, 2023
**THE GREAT FEAST OF THE HOLY THEOPHANY
OF OUR LORD GOD AND SAVIOR JESUS CHRIST**

9:30 A.M. Festal Divine Liturgy
followed by The Great Blessing of Water and Blessing of Church and
Parish Fellowship Hall

Saturday January 7 3:00 P.M. Blessing of Waters at Hoyt Lake
4:00 P.M. Great Vespers

Sunday January 8 9:40 A.M. The Hours
10:00 A.M. Divine Liturgy
Following Divine Liturgy, Coffee Hour Fellowship in the Parish Fellowship
Hall
Church School Class in the Parish Fellowship Hall



**THE GREAT BLESSING OF WATERS
HOYT LAKE – DELAWARE PARK
SATURDAY JANUARY 7, 2023
3:00 PM**

**Let us come together during this Holy Theophany
Season, and join the clergy and the faithful from
our sister parishes as we bless the waters of Hoyt
Lake in Delaware Park.**

DRIVING DIRECTIONS TO HOYT LAKE

START: 2 Nottingham Terrace, Buffalo, NY 14216

Head south on Nottingham Terrace toward Meadow Rd

Turn left onto Elmwood Ave

Turn left onto Iroquois Dr

Turn right onto Lincoln Pkwy

END: Destination will be on the left: 199 Lincoln Parkway, Buffalo,
NY 14222