



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

3rd SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST — Tone 2. Saint Theólēptos, Metropolitan of Philadelphia (1325). Virgin Martyr Febronia of Nisibis (ca. 304). Ss. Peter and Fevronia (tonsured David and Euphrosynē), Wonderworkers of Múrom (1228). St. Dionysios, the builder of Prodomou Monastery on Mt. Athos (1375). Ven. Dometius of Dionysiou (1405). Monastic Martyr Procopius of Ivéron. St. Moloug of Lismore

EPISTLE:
Romans 5:1-10

Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom

GOSPEL:
Matthew 6:22-33

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 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 St. John the Baptist — Tone 4

O Prophet and Forerunner of the coming of Christ, although we cannot praise thee worthily, we honor thee in love at thy nativity, for by it thou hast ended thy father's silence and thy mother's barrenness,// proclaiming to the world the incarnation of the Son of God!

Troparion for St. Febronia — Tone 4

Thy lamb Febronia calls out to Thee, O Jesus, in a loud voice: "I love Thee, my Bridegroom, and in seeking Thee, I endure suffering. In baptism I was crucified so that I might reign in Thee, and I died so that I might live with Thee. Accept me as a pure sacrifice, for I have offered myself in love."// Through her prayers save our souls, since Thou art merciful!

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

Kontakion for Resurrection - Tone 2

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

Now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

Steadfast Protectress Tone 6

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 2

The Lord is my strength and my song; / He has become my salvation.

v. The Lord has chastened me sorely, but He has not given me over to death.

ALLELUIA VERSES

May the Lord hear thee in the day of trouble! May the name of the God of Jacob protect thee!

Save the King, O Lord, and hear us on the day we call!

THE HYMN TO THE THEOTOKOS

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

COMMUNION HYMN

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

EPISTLE LESSON FOR TODAY

Brethren:

Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom also we have access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

And not only that, but we also glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation produces perseverance; and perseverance, character; and character, hope.

Now hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us. For when we were still without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly.

For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet perhaps for a good man someone would even dare to die. But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him. For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life.

GOSPEL LESSON FOR TODAY

Let us Attend!

The lamp of the body is the eye. If therefore your eye is good, your whole body will be full of light. But if your eye is bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in you is darkness, how great is that darkness! No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.

Therefore I say to you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink; nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food and the body more than clothing? Look at the birds of the air, for they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? Which of you by worrying can add one cubit to his stature? So why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin; and yet I say to you that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.

Now if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will He not much more clothe you, O you of little faith? Therefore do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' For after all these things the Gentiles seek. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things.

But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.

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=== Scriptural Readings for the Week ===

Monday	Romans 9:18-33	Matt. 11:2-15
Tuesday	Romans 10:11-11:2	Matt. 1:16-20
Wednesday	Romans 11:2-12	Matt. 11:20-26
Thursday	2 Cor.11:21-12:9	Matt. 16:13-19
Friday	Romans 11:25-36	Matt. 12:1-8
Saturday	Romans 6:11-17	Matt. 8:14-23
Sunday	Romans 6:18-23	Matt. 8:5-13

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Saint George Orthodox Church

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**THE 2023 SCHOOL
BACKPACK/SCHOOL SUPPLY DRIVE**

Once again we will be holding our Annual Backpack/School Supply Drive for The Salvation Army spearheaded by The Church School. This is a wonderful project of preparing backpacks for the children at Salvation Army for the upcoming school year.

With that in mind, please refer to The Annual Backpack/School Supply Drive for Salvation Army Flyer in the parish emails as well as hanging on the bulletin board in the Parish Fellowship Hall which contains all of the information needed for our Backpack Collection Drive. The Drive will run from June 25 through July 28! We will have a collection gathering on Friday July 28 for the children followed by a food collection drive/drop-off at Feed-More of WNY and outing to ice cream shop.

As this is our seventh year, we look to this great idea and wonderful opportunity as a chance for us to get more involved within the community by giving back and helping these dear children prepare for the upcoming school year by providing for them those school supplies and materials that they will need to succeed in their studies.

For more information or any questions, please contact Andrea: 585-576-4287 or ajchmiel@gmail.com.

****OUR GOAL IS TO COLLECT and
DONATE AT LEAST 25 BACKPACKS!****

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 2023, 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 | Nicholas Wityk
65 South Main Street
South Oakfield NY | |
| Andrew Wityk
Ellicott Center
200 Seventh Street
Buffalo, NY 14201 | | |

**** 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!****

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****PLEASE REFER TO THE WEEKLY EMAILS AND PARISH WEBSITE
 FOR CHANGES TO THE CALENDAR!****
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THE SCHEDULE OF WEEKLY SERVICES and ACTIVITIES

SUNDAY JUNE 25, 2023

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

Memorial Lita for Thy Handmaiden of God Helen (Mother of Lunda Mucyn – 26th Anniversary of her falling asleep in The Lord) and Tita

Coffee Hour Fellowship in Parish Fellowship Hall following Divine Liturgy!
Special Parish Presentation on Capital Campaign Project and Update on Parish Life

MONDAY JUNE 26, 2023

Monthly Healing Prayer Service in Honor of St. Nektarios – **6:00 PM**
St. George Education Class on The Icons of the 12 Major Feasts – **7:00 to 8:00 (Via Zoom)**

TUESDAY JUNE 27, 2023

Daily Matins – **9:00 AM**
Paraklesis Service to the Theotokos – **6:00 PM**

WEDNESDAY JUNE 28, 2023

Eve of The Feast of The Ss Peter and Paul

St. George Senior Day – **10:00 AM to 12:00 PM**
Great Vespers with Litiya – **6:00 PM**

THURSDAY JUNE 29, 2023

The Feast of The Ss Peter and Paul
Divine Liturgy – **9:00 AM**

SATURDAY JULY 1, 2023

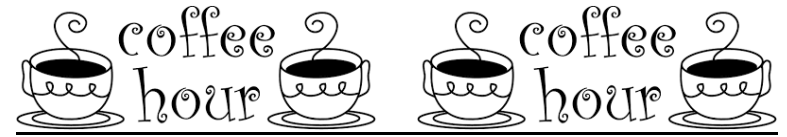
Great Vespers – **4:00 PM**

SUNDAY JULY 2, 2023

Matins – **8:45 AM** Divine Liturgy– **9:30 AM**

Hot Dog Lunch in Parish Fellowship Hall following Divine Liturgy!

\$5/per lunch (Hot Dog, Chips, Cole Slaw or Potato Salad, Pickle, Beverage, Dessert) All Proceeds for Capital Campaign Project



If anyone has any questions about fasting or restrictions when hosting coffee hour, please see Fr. Jason and he will help you and guide you!

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.**

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:frances.vansuch@yahoo.com))

****We have 12 available Sundays in 2023!****



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 Churc...
@StGeorgeOrthodoxChurch



venmo

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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

Archbishop BENJAMIN Archbishop ALEJO
Archbishop NATHANIEL Archbishop DANIEL

CLERGY

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

MATUSHKI Mat. Deborah Popadija Sara Mat. Gayle Mat. Natasha
Mat. Barbara Mat. Katia Mat. Paraskeva Mat. Joanna Popadia Vicki
Mat. Patricia Mat. Gloria Christine Coard Karen
Catherine Ivan/Marina/Inna Bonnie/Silviu Jennifer, Amanda
Edwina Irene Luba Jim, Darren, Marsha
Serena/Asma Lillian Reader Victor Nicholas, Andrew
Marilyn Frank June Theodora Amanda, Chase Ronald, Candice
Sarah Albert Boris Oscar Billy Clyde
Xenia, Justin, Danielle, Anne, Patricia Larry Joseph Frank
Victor Catherine Susan Svetlana Juliana
Evelyn Robert Rebecca Paul Brian
Jeanne Angela, Jason, Michelle Linda Justin Frances
John, Helen Ashley Steven Barbara Daniel
Joseph, John, Margaret, Thomas, Victoria, Tyler Matthew William
Melody Natalie, Lorraine Lee, Maribeth Bridget
Kelly, Robert, Boris, Zaeb, Tirza, Sabas, Sada, Charles, Thlisinitsa,
Gemmam, Geesa, and Patric Lia/Isaiah
Olga and Eugene Jeremy Stewart Susan
Susan Justin Louis Yuri/Elena Alex John, Kevin, Sean
Anthony Aldona, Melinda, Pam Valerie Mary John Rebecca
Jaime/Sammy, Juliana Harry James

Lee, Benjamin, Harry Patrick Aspasia/Stavros
Charles Emma/Alexander Elias, John, Joseph, Nadim, Theresa
Vadym Iryna Yuriy Anastasia Rosemary Anthony
Seraphim Anthony
Mary, Hal, Autumn, Ariana, and Amber, Judithann Anita, James, Jeffrey,
Dominic, Douglas, Rachel, Dennis, Edith, Robert, Joanna
Brian John, Roberta, Barbara John, Michael John
George Costa Jonathan, Kevin, Lary, Carly, Sherry, Mary Jo, Clara, Karl,
Dragica, Mary Al and Sophie and Family
Stephen, Larry, Olga, Olga, Sally, Deborah, David
Rdr Nicholas, Judithann, Michael, Mary, Cate, Michael, Gary, Damian, Olga,
Alexandra, Barbara, Damian
Ron, Illiana, Jillian, Joel, Robert, Susan, Arnold, Kyriaki, Konstantinos,
Danny, Thomas, Amelia, Emily, Kevin/Juanita

Alyssa Marie and the child Luke Joshua born of her
Children of God - Keely, Isla, Talia, Lane, Liam, Caiden
Chryssanthi 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 Mitred Archpriest Ken (*Starevsky*)
Archpriest Jonathan Archpriest Paul

Those Serving in The Armed Forces

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

Inquirers

William and Darlene Matthew Ayden Edward
Rudy and Karen Paul Judy

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

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 THEODOSIUS
Ever-Memorable Archpriest Eugene
Ever-Memorable Archpriest Rastko
Ever-Memorable Priest John
Ever-Memorable Dn. Mark

Metropolitan HERMAN
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

***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 Donation for Office Supplies (Paper, Copier)
- 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>!

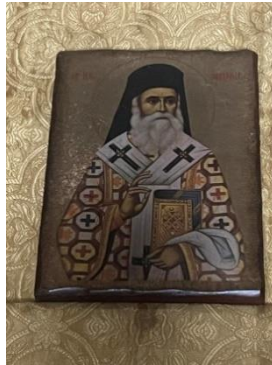
There are videos for each week beginning with The Feast of Feasts – Holy Pascha! Be sure to check them out!

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MONTHLY HEALING PRAYER SERVICE

The Supplicatory Canon Prayer Service to St. Nektarios

MONDAY JUNE 26, 2023 – 6:00 PM



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

1) ADULT BIBLE STUDY/EDUCATION CLASS WILL RESUME IN SEPTEMBER

2) ST. GEORGE SENIOR DAYS WILL BEGIN ON JUNE 28 (10:00 AM TO 12:00 PM)

- A morning filled with prayer, fellowship, education and fun for all of our retired parishioners to come together and spend time together

- Coffee, tea, juice and snacks will be provided

- Held 1-2x a month

3) ST. GEORGE ORTHODOX CHURCH EDUCATION CLASS ON THE ICONS OF THE 12 MAJOR FEAST DAYS WILL BE HELD IN JULY ON THE FOLLOWING DAYS (Via Zoom)

June 26 (Nativity of The Theotokos - September 8 and Exaltation of The Life-Giving Cross - September 14)

July 3 (Presentation of The Theotokos in The Temple - November 21 and The Nativity of Our Lord - December 25)

July 10 (The Holy Theophany of Our Lord - January 6 and The Meeting of Our Lord in The Temple - February 2)

July 24 (The Annunciation of The Theotokos - March 25 and The Entrance of Our Lord into Jerusalem,

The Feast of The Transfiguration of Our Lord - August 6)

July 31 (The Feast of Holy Pentecost and The Feast of The Ascension of Our Lord, The Feast of The Dormition of The Theotokos - August 15)

4) CAPITAL CAMPAIGN PRESENTATION AND PARISH UPDATE - SUNDAY JUNE 25 DURING COFFEE HOUR

Fr. Jason and The Parish Council will be making a presentation to The Parish on The Capital Campaign for 2023/2024 along with an update on The Life of The Parish

(Liturgical/Pastoral, Financial Report, Update on Projects)

10) MATS FOR MISSION HEALTH SNACK KITS - ITEMS DUE TO BY SUNDAY JULY 2 WHEN WE WILL MAKE THE KITS DURING LUNCH!!

Each kit is a small package of supplies that is assembled and distributed to people in need. The Health Kits program is administered by The Mats for Mission Project.

Here's what we'll need:

Fill gallon sized ziplock bags with:

- **1-gallon sized ziplock bag (need 50)**
- **1 tooth brush (need 50)**
- **1 washcloth (need 50)**
- **1 travel size toothpaste (need 50)**
- **1 travel size bar of soap (need 50)**
- **1 travel size deodorant (need 50)**
- **1 travel size shampoo (need 50)**
- **1 small hand sanitizer (need 50)**
- **Snack-Size Fruits Packages (need 50)**
- **Granola Bars (need 50)**
- **Cases of Water (need 50 bottles)**

**** PLUS CANNED GOODS AND NON-PERISHABLE FOOD ITEMS FOR RESURRECTION LIFE FOOD PANTRY!****

All items need to fit inside a Gallon size plastic zipper closure bag.



Help us reach our goal of 50 Welcome Kits!!

13) SS PETER AND PAUL FAST JUNE 12-29

The spirit of Holy Pentecost leads us to another feast and fast of the church. The feast of the Holy Apostles Peter and Paul is celebrated on June 29th . From the 4th Century on, the Church has celebrated this feast which is spiritually linked with Holy Pentecost. It stands as the witness of the Apostles immediate fruit at the descent of the Holy Spirit when it came upon them. The Feast is preceded by a fasting period called "Saints Peter and Paul Fast." The fast is different from year to year since it always begins on the Monday following All Saints' Sunday (1st Sun. after Pentecost). The fast in preparation for the feast begins this year on June 12th and continues to the feast on June 29th.

15) ANNUAL PARISH OPEN HOUSE/PICNIC

Fr. Jason, Matushka Katia

Anna and Alexandra Vansuch

Cordially Invite You to a

Parish Open House/Picnic

Sunday, July 9, 2023

12:00 pm to 3:00 pm

2 Nottingham Terrace

Buffalo, NY

Luncheon Foods and Refreshments will be served

Games and Activities for Children and Fellowship for Everyone!!

Please RSVP to Matushka Katia or Fr. Jason by Wednesday July 5

Katia.vansuch@gmail.com

jvansuch@hotmail.com

609-851-3034

609.851.3811

THE 2023 SCHOOL BACKPACK/SCHOOL SUPPLY DRIVE



Saint George Orthodox Church

2 Nottingham Terrace, Buffalo, NY 14216
(716) 875-4220

HELP CHILDREN SUCCEED IN SCHOOL

By collecting backpack and school supply items

Collection will occur from June 25th to July 23rd

Please bring items with you to church and place them in the Red Bins located in the Parish Fellowship Hall.

****OUR GOAL IS TO COLLECT and DONATE ITEMS/SUPPLIES FOR AT LEAST 25 BACKPACKS!!****

Church School Food Pantry/Ice Cream Outing on Friday, July 28th

Items needed:

- Backpacks
- 2 pocket folders
- Pencils
- Composition notebooks
- Spiral notebooks
- Crayons
- Colored pencils
- Washable Markers
- Tissues
- Glue sticks
- Dry erase markers
- Blunt-tip scissors



For more information or any questions, please contact Andrea: 585-576-4287 or ajchmiel@gmail.com.

This year the Salvation Army has a **Walmart Registry** at <https://bit.ly/3ymRNqO> where items will be sent directly to their 960 Main Street location.

SUNDAY JULY 2, 2023



(Hot Dog, Chips, Cole Slaw or Potato Salad, Pickle, Beverage, Dessert)

\$5/Person

PROCEEDS FROM TODAY'S LUNCHEON ARE GOING TOWARDS

"St. George Capital Improvement and Maintenance Campaign Drive"



Please take a moment to reflect upon what God has given us, and to discern how we might be able to return to God a portion of the blessings we have received.

Thank you for your continued support and generosity.
May God continue to bless and guide you and keep you always in His Loving Care!

THE BLESSING OF VEHICLES:

To Honor The Feast of the Prophet Elias (Elijah)

SUNDAY JULY 16, 2023

After his ministry on earth, the Prophet Elias (Elijah) was taken up to heaven in a fiery chariot. He is therefore known as the patron saint of vehicles, reminding us that we must struggle to manifest holiness in our lives, especially when we travel.

To honor and celebrate this great Feast and Holy Prophet, THIS SUNDAY JULY 16, following the Divine Liturgy, we will gather together in church to serve the customary service for the blessing of vehicles followed by a procession to the Church Parking Lot where we will bless our vehicles (cars, vans, motorcycles, trucks, bikes, strollers, wagons, walkers, wheelchairs, etc.)

Just as we have our homes blessed each year, everyone is encouraged to bring their vehicles for this special service and have them blessed with Holy Water.

I encourage all of us, our parishioners and families to come and bring our vehicles to church SUNDAY JULY 16 and have them blessed!! For our children, I encourage them to bring their bikes and other modes of transportation that they use/play with so that they, too, can participate in this wonderful tradition!! This is a wonderful pious tradition for us to participate in!! I look forward to seeing everyone on Sunday July 16!!

ST. GEORGE ORTHODOX CHURCH EDUCATION CENTER

Virgin Martyr Febronia of Nisibis

June 25

The Virgin Martyr Febronia suffered during the reign of Diocletian (284-305). She was raised at a monastery in the city of Sivapolis (Assyria). The head of the women's monastery was the abbess Bryainē, the aunt of Saint Febronia. Being concerned about her niece's salvation, she assigned her a stricter form of life than the other nuns. According to their monastic rule, on Fridays the sisters put aside their other duties and spent the whole day in prayer and the reading of Holy Scripture. The abbess usually assigned the reading to Saint Febronia.

News of her pious life spread throughout the city. The illustrious young widow Hieria, a pagan, began to visit her, and under the influence of her guidance and prayer she accepted holy Baptism, bringing her parents and kinsfolk to the Christian Faith.

Diocletian sent a detachment of soldiers to Assyria under the command of Lysimachus, Selinus and Primus for the destruction of Christians. Selenos, the uncle of Lysimachus, was noted for his fierce attitude against Christians, but Lysimachus was of a different frame of mind from him, since his mother had sought to inspire love for the Christian faith in her son, and she had died a Christian. Lysimachus had discussed with his kinsman Primus how it would be possible to deliver Christians from the hands of the torturer. When the detachment of soldiers approached the convent, its inhabitants hid. There remained only the abbess Bryainē, her helper Thomais and Saint Febronia, who was seriously ill at the time.

It grieved the abbess terribly that her niece might fall into the hands of the torturers, who might defile her. She prayed fervently that the Lord would preserve her and strengthen her in the confession of Christ the Savior. Selinus gave orders to bring him all the nuns of the convent. Primus with the detachment of soldiers found no one, except the two old

women and Saint Febronia. He regretted that they had not hidden, and he suggested to the nuns that they flee. But the nuns decided not to leave the place of their labors and they entrusted themselves to the will of the Lord.

Primus told Lysimachus about the particular beauty of Saint Febronia and advised him to take her for himself. Lysimachus said that he would not seduce a virgin dedicated to God, and he asked Primus to hide the other nuns somewhere so that they would not fall into the hands of Selinus. One of the soldiers overheard the conversation and told Selinus. They led Saint Febronia off to the military commander with her hands bound and a chain around her neck. Selinus urged her to deny Christ, promising her honors, rewards, and marriage with Lysimachus. The holy virgin firmly and fearlessly answered that she had an Immortal Bridegroom, and she would not exchange Him for any mortal man. Selinus subjected her to fierce torture. The saint prayed, "My Savior, do not abandon me in this terrible hour!"

They beat the martyr for a long time, and blood flowed from her wounds. In order to intensify the suffering of Saint Febronia, they tied her to a tree and set a fire under it. The tortures were so inhuman, that the people began to demand an end to the torture, since there was no confession of guilt by the girl. Selinus continued to mock and jeer at the martyr, but Saint Febronia became silent. Because of weakness she was unable to utter a word. In a rage Selinus gave orders to tear out her tongue, smash her teeth, and finally, to cut off both hands and feet. The people were unable to bear such a horrid spectacle and they left the scene of the torture, cursing Diocletian and his gods.

Among the crowd was the nun Thomais, who afterwards recorded Saint Febronia's martyrdom in detail, and also her student Hieria. She came forth out of the crowd and in the hearing of all reproached Selinus for his boundless cruelty. He gave orders to arrest her, but learning that Hieria was of illustrious standing whom he could not readily subject to torture, he said, "By your speech you have brought on Febronia even greater torment." Finally, they beheaded the holy Martyr Febronia.

Departing the place of execution, Lysimachus wept and withdrew to his quarters. Selinus made ready to eat, but he was not able to take food,

and went off to the quiet of his own chambers. Suddenly, he became like one deranged. Looking up to the heavens, he raved and bellowed like a bull, then fell down and struck his head on a marble column and died. When Lysimachus learned of this, he said, "Great is the God of the Christians, Who has avenged Febronia's blood, so unrighteously shed!" He prepared a coffin, placed the martyr's body in it, and took it to the convent.

Abbess Bryainē fell senseless, seeing the mutilated remains of Saint Febronia. Later, she recovered her senses and gave orders to open the convent gates so that all would be able to come and venerate the holy martyr and glorify God Who had given her such endurance in suffering for Christ. Lysimachus and Primus renounced their idol worship and accepted both Baptism and monasticism. Hieria gave her wealth to the convent and petitioned Abbess Bryainē to accept her at the convent in place of Saint Febronia.

Every year, on the day of the martyric death of Saint Febronia, a solemn feast was celebrated at the convent. During the time of the all-night Vigil the nuns always saw Saint Febronia, at her usual place in church. From the relics of Saint Febronia occurred numerous miracles and healings. The Life of Saint Febronia was recorded by the nun Thomais, an eyewitness to her deeds.

In the year 363 the relics of Saint Febronia were transferred to Constantinople.

Soon after the death of Saint Febronia, Saint James the Bishop of Nisibis (January 13) built a church and transferred into it a portion of the of the holy martyr's relics.

THE FEAST OF SS PETER AND PAUL

JUNE 29

Ss. Peter and Paul are commemorated by the Orthodox Church on June 29th. The feast occurs on this day, not because it is when the Apostles were martyred, but instead because it was on this day in 258 AD that Pope Sixtus II moved their relics to the catacomb of St. Sebastian in Rome. The Church has celebrated the Feast on June 29th since the fourth century.

The Feast of Ss. Peter and Paul is directly linked to our celebration of Pentecost, because the evangelistic work of the Apostles in spreading the Gospel of Jesus Christ was empowered by the descent of the Holy Spirit. St. Irenaeus of Lyon, a second century Christian, wrote about the spiritual power of the Apostles' work: *The Lord of all gave to His apostles the power of the gospel, and by them we also have learned the truth, that is, the teaching of the Son of God — as the Lord said to them, 'He who hears you hears Me, and he who despises you despises Me, and Him Who sent Me' (Luke 10:16). For we learned the plan of our salvation from no other than from those through whom the gospel came to us. The first preached it abroad, and then later by the will of God handed it down to us in Scriptures, to be the foundation and pillar of our faith...They went out to the ends of the earth, preaching the good things that come to us from God, and proclaiming peace from heaven to all men, all and each of them equally being in possession of the gospel of God.*

Within an icon of Ss. Peter and Paul, one can see the details that tell us a great deal about why Orthodox Christians venerate Ss. Peter and Paul.

First, Ss. Peter and Paul are displayed together (in many other icons, their heads are inclined toward each other, or they are even shown giving each other the kiss of peace). They are together to demonstrate the unity of the faith, as well as the unity of the two groups of the early Church: Jews (to whom St. Peter had a special ministry) and Gentiles (to whom St. Paul had a special ministry).

Second, Ss. Peter and Paul are holding a church, showing that they cooperated in spreading the Gospel and building the Church. It is this cooperation that provides the apostolic foundation of the Church (Ephesians 2:20).

Third, if you look closely at their faces and clothes, you will see that they appear to glow. This light is not simply a reflection of the sun: it comes from within the saints, demonstrating their holiness (you will see this in all icons of Christ and the saints).

The Light of the Body is the Eye

Holy Fathers on Matthew 6:22-23

The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light. But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!

St. Athanasius the Great

When the eye is evil the body becomes dark, but the Creator is not to blame for this—because everything that God has made is *very good* (cf. Gen. 1:31)—but rather the corrupt and ill-intentioned morals of the one to whom the eye belongs. And you, wise reader, in hearing about the evil eye understand it to be not the eye in the head, but the evil thoughts in the unenlightened heart. And if it so happens that the bodily eye can become darkened by strong suppurations and from headaches, physical blindness nevertheless does not make a man foreign to future and eternal blessedness.

From his Discourses on the Gospel of Matthew.

St. Anthony the Great

The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light.

Self-examination and prudence is the eye and lamp of the soul, just as the eye is the lamp of the body.

But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!

That is, through self-examination a person searches and discerns all his desires, words, and actions and avoids all that can separate him from God.

With the help of this wise discernment a person deflects and completely destroys all the enemy's deceit and clearly discerns good from evil.

The truth of this is clear in Holy Scripture.

Because Saul the king of Israel did not have this lamp, his mind became so darkened that he did not even understand how to fulfill what God commanded him through the prophet Samuel and that the fulfillment of these commandments would be better than making sacrifices; therefore he irritated God by the very thing that he thought would please Him. For this his kingdom was taken from him (cf. 1 Kings 13:7–15).

The apostle calls this discernment “examining himself” (cf. 1 Cor. 11:28), and it is honored as the ruler and source of our life, according to the Scripture: *They that have no guidance fall like leaves: but in much counsel there is safety* (Prov. 11:14).

That is, the Scripture calls self-examination counsel and prescribes it to us so that we would do nothing without counsel; it does not even allow us without counsel to drink spiritual wine that makes the heart glad, for it says, *Do nothing without advice* (Sir. 36:31), *Do all things with counsel: drink wine with counsel* (Prov. 26:3).

The same scripture tells us, *As a city whose walls are broken down, and which is unfortified*, in which, that is, anyone can come in and pilfer as he pleases, *so is a man who does anything without counsel* (Prov. 27:28).

Answers to questions posed by the brothers.

[St. Macarius the Great](#)

The eyes are the light of the body, and when the eyes are healthy, the whole body is illuminated; and when something gets into the eyes and they are darkened, the whole body is in darkness—so were the apostles

placed as the eyes and light for the whole world. Therefore, the Lord commanded them, “If you will be the light of the world, stand steadfast and do not lie, then the body of the world will be enlightened. But if you—the light of the world—are darkened, then “that darkness will be great”—that is, the world. Thus, having become light, the apostles received light for those who believed, enlightening their hearts with the heavenly light of the Spirit with which they themselves were enlightened.

Collected manuscripts, type II. Discourse 1.

[St. Nilus of Sinai](#)

It is said, *the light of the body is the eye* (Matt. 6:22). For the mind that has its thoughts on high is the eye of the soul, and its sight strongly disseminates its light throughout the construct of all things. But if drunken amidst useless cares that draw the mind downward into the abyss of destruction you incline your mind to what is coarse and pitiful, then will the mind be in any shape to present itself as something good, or to suggest something profitable to its own thoughts? Therefore every evil habit, which everywhere, like at night, brings the mind perplexity and onerous struggle, necessarily leads to darkness and confusion.

Letters on various themes. To Priest Serapion.

[St. Symeon the New Theologian](#)

What other eye does He mean here other than the mind? This eye can be simple if it sees simple (pure) light. Simple (pure) light is Christ. Thus, whoever has in himself the light of Christ, which would shine in his mind, about him it is said that he has the mind of Christ. When your eye, that is, the mind, is simple, that is, shines, then your bodiless body, that is, all the parts of your soul, will be light; and to the contrary, when your mind is evil, that is, darkened and extinguished, then your whole soul will be dark. Thus, think well—is darkness or light in you? Think deeply also—do you not think that you possess what you have not yet begun to acquire? Look well at this, that you might not be deceived and think that you have light in you when it is not light, but darkness.

Homilies (Homily 59).

[St. John of Kronstadt](#)

God is the All-Seeing Eye—and our souls are simple (the Church Slavonic word *prostiy*, meaning open, forthright, pure; whole, not divided into parts); for if your eye shall be simple, your whole body will be light, says the Lord. Thus, may your eye be the Lord in your heart.

Our soul is the eye that comes from the Eye, and as the soul sees through bodily vision, so does God—the Eye of our heart—see through the eye of our heart in its pure state. This is how the prophets and clairvoyant saints saw what is in the future and hidden, and the hidden thoughts of man.

The Fast and the Feast of Saints Peter and Paul



***By Bishop Thomas Joseph and Peter Schweitzer
(Antiochian Archdiocese)***

Having celebrated the feast of feasts, the Lord's Pascha, and Pentecost fifty days thereafter, we are about to embark upon the Apostles' Fast, which this year begins on June 12, 2017, and ends with the commemoration of the holy Apostles Peter and Paul on June 29.

The Apostles' Fast is a prescribed fasting period of the Church, lasting from the day after the Sunday of All Saints to the 29th of June, the feast of the Apostles Peter and Paul.

It is a sad truth that many neglect this particular fast for a variety of reasons inconsistent with the apostolic and patristic tradition. Prior to

reflecting upon the importance of the Apostles' Fast, a review of the ancient history of this particular fast may help us to recognize its integral place in the life of each and every Orthodox Christian.

The fast of the holy Apostles is very ancient, dating back to the first centuries of Christianity. We have the testimony of St. Athanasius the Great, St. Ambrose of Milan, St. Leo the Great and Theodoret of Cyrrhus regarding it. The oldest testimony regarding the Apostles' Fast is given to us by St. Athanasius the Great (†373).

In her Diary, the pilgrim Egeria (fourth century) records that on the day following the feast of Pentecost a period of fasting began. The Apostolic Constitutions, a work composed no later than the fourth century, prescribes: "After the feast of Pentecost, celebrate one week, then observe a fast, for justice demands rejoicing after the reception of the gifts of God and lasting after the body has been refreshed."

From the testimonies of the fourth century we ascertain that in Alexandria, Jerusalem, and Antioch the fast of the holy Apostles was connected with Pentecost and not with the feast of the Apostles Peter and Paul on June 29. In the first centuries, after Pentecost there was one week of rejoicing, that is a fast-free week, followed by about one week of fasting.

The canons of Nicephoros, Patriarch of Constantinople (806-816), mention the Apostle's Fast. The Typicon of St. Theodore the Studite for the Monastery of Studios in Constantinople speaks of the Forty Days Fast of the holy Apostles. St. Symeon of Thessalonica (†1429) explains the purpose of this fast in this manner: "The Fast of the Apostles is justly established in their honor, for through them we have received numerous benefits and for us they are exemplars and teachers of the fast ... For one week after the descent of the Holy Spirit, in accordance with the Apostolic Constitution composed by Clement, we celebrate, and then during the following week, we fast in honor of the Apostles."

The spiritual benefit derived from the Apostles' Fast is great. Saint Leo the Great noted that, "After the extended feast of Pentecost, the fast is particularly needed in order to cleanse our mind by ascetic labors, and to make us worthy of the gifts of the Holy Spirit." Saint Leo also reminds us, "In the Apostolic canons inspired by God Himself, the Church fathers have, at the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, established first and foremost that all virtuous labors begin with fasting."

Periods of fasting such as the one upon which we are about to embark are not, as some in the West would have us believe, exercises in

mortification or penance but the divinely inspired method to gain mastery over the self and conquer the passions of the flesh. It is to liberate oneself from dependence on the things of this world in order to concentrate on the things of the Kingdom of God. It is to give power to the soul so that it would not yield to temptation and sin. According to St. Seraphim of Sarov, fasting is an “indispensable means” of gaining the fruit of the Holy Spirit in one's life (cf. Conversation with Motovilov), and Jesus Himself taught that some forms of evil cannot be conquered without it (Matthew 17:21, Mark 9:29)

Neglecting the fast is not the only pitfall to be avoided however. Those who fast may be tempted to judge those who do not fast, thus losing the efficacy of their labors. We should not concern ourselves with what others are doing but concentrate on our own spiritual life.

Fasting periods, particularly the Apostles' Fast, assist us in avoiding the spiritual pitfalls to which we are so accustomed after the ascetical struggle of Great Lent and the joyous celebration of Pascha.

In turning our attention to the feast of the holy apostles Peter and Paul, the connection between the feast of Pentecost, the Apostles' Fast, and the actual feast of the two preeminent apostles becomes clearer. As I noted earlier, this fast was originally connected to the feast of Pentecost and we understand this connection by examining the feast itself. As Metropolitan Hierotheos Vlachos writes,

Pentecost had a significant place in the life of the Apostles. Having previously passed through purification of the heart and illumination – something that also existed in the Old Testament in the Prophets and the righteous – they then saw the Risen Christ, and on the day of Pentecost they became members of the risen Body of Christ. This is particularly important because every Apostle had to have the Risen Christ within Him. At Pentecost the Holy Spirit made the Disciples members of the theanthropic Body of Christ. Whereas at the Transfiguration the Light acted from within the three Disciples, through glorification, but the Body of Christ was outside them, at Pentecost the Disciples are united with Christ. They become members of the theanthropic Body and as members of the Body of Christ they share in the uncreated Light. This difference also exists between the Old Testament and Pentecost. . . In addition, on the day of Pentecost, the Disciples attained to “all truth”. Before His Passion, Christ told His Disciples: “I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth” (John 16:12-13).

These words of Christ are closely linked with the coming of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost, with the revelation of the whole truth, which the Disciples were unable to bear; they could not receive it earlier, without the Holy Spirit.

This “all truth” revealed on the day of Pentecost to the Apostles is the truth of the Church as the Body of Christ: that the Disciples will become members of this risen Body and that in the Church they will know the mysteries of the glory and rule (*vasileia*) of God in the flesh of Christ. On the day of Pentecost they knew the whole truth. It follows that the complete truth does not exist outside the Church. The Church has the truth, because it is the Body of Christ and a community of glorification. As the foremost of the holy apostles, it is fitting that after the feast of Pentecost, wherein the apostles received the revelation of truth in its fullness, we commemorate Saints Peter and Paul jointly. As Saint Gregory Palamas writes in his sermon on the occasion of the saints' feast,

If, as we have said, we commemorate each of the saints with hymns and appropriate songs of praise, how much more should we celebrate the memory of Peter and Paul, the supreme Leaders of the pre-eminent company of the Apostles? They are the fathers and guides of all Christians: Apostles, martyrs, holy ascetics, priests, hierarchs, pastors and teachers. As chief shepherds and master builders of our common godliness and virtue, they tend and teach us all, like lights in the world, holding forth the word of life (Phil. 2:15-16). Their brightness excels that of the other radiantly pious and virtuous saints as the sun outshines the stars, or as the heavens, which declare the sublime glory of God (cf. Ps. 19:1), transcend the skies. In their order and strength they are greater than the heavens, more beautiful than the stars, and swifter than both, and as regards what lies beyond the realm of the senses, it is they who reveal things which surpass the very heavens themselves and indeed the whole universe, and who make them bright with the light in which there is no variableness neither shadow of turning (cf. Jas. 1:17). Not only do they bring people out of darkness into this wonderful light, but by enlightening them they make them light, the offspring of the perfect light, that each of them may shine like the sun (Matt. 13:43), when the Author of light, the God-man and Word, appears in glory.

On the day of Pentecost, the apostles received the fullness of the revelation of truth because the Lord Christ had prepared them for the advent of the Comforter. As the preeminent apostles, Saints Peter and Paul were the guardians of that truth which was to be passed on to the

faithful. Saint Seraphim of Sarov tells us, “The true aim of our Christian life consists of the acquisition of the Holy Spirit of God. As for fasts, and vigils, and prayer, and almsgiving, and every good deed done for Christ's sake, are the only means of acquiring the Holy Spirit of God.” We know from Holy Scripture and Tradition that the Holy Spirit does not abide in a vessel that is not being purified. Saint Luke of Crimea notes, “For could the Holy Spirit possibly abide in an impure heart that is filled with sin? As smoke chases away the bees, as stench repels all people, so does the stench of the human heart repel the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit lives only in pure hearts, and only to them does he grant He Divine grace, His holy gifts, for He is the ‘Treasury of good things’—all the true and most precious goods that the human heart could possibly possess. Could the impure heart receive them? Could the heart that is sinful and deprived of mercy and love possibly receive the grace of the Holy Spirit?”

This is precisely why, in her wisdom, the holy Church offers us the period of the Apostles’ Fast soon after Pentecost and just prior to the feast of the Holy Apostles Peter and Paul who were worthy to receive the Holy Spirit. If the aim of the Christian life is the acquisition of the Holy Spirit, we must engage in the struggle through fasting and continual prayer. It is only then that we may acquire the Holy Spirit and can properly appreciate and be joyous in the feast of the Holy Apostles Peter and Paul.

ST. ANDREW'S CAMP

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

The video can be found here on Facebook:
<https://www.facebook.com/saintandrewsorthodoxcamp/videos/357928144820497/>
****Be sure to check it out...you may recognize the priest:)**

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

As a token of gratitude for the labors of love extended by the administration and staff, both clergy and laypersons, of St. Andrew’s over the past six decades, it is now time for us to help the Camp in an especially needed way. Please check out the Camp Website to see how we can support the work on our Diocesan Camp:
<https://saintandrewscamp.org>

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

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