



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

[www.stgeorgebuffalo.com](http://www.stgeorgebuffalo.com)

**THE WEEKLY MESSENGER**

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

**ST. GEORGE ORTHODOX CHURCH**

**2 Nottingham Terrace Buffalo, NY 14216**

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

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

**Cell Phone: 609-851-3811 Email: [jvansuch@hotmail.com](mailto:jvansuch@hotmail.com)**

Rev. Peter Irfan, Attached

Mat. Katia Vansuch, Choir Director

Dr. Boris Kuvshinoff, Parish Council President

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

30th SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST – Tone 5. Holy Righteous Ones: Joseph the Betrothed, David the King, and James the Brother of the Lord. Leavetaking of the Nativity. Sunday after Nativity. “Unfading Flower” Icon of the Mother of God at Ardatov. Ven. Melania the Younger of Rome (439). Ven. Chiriacos (Kyriakis) of Bisericani (Romanian – 160). Ven. Chiriacos (Kyriakis) of Tazlau (Romanian – 1660).

**EPISTLE:** Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom **GOSPEL:**  
Galatians 1:11-19 Matthew 2:13-23

**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 DelNuovo in Loving Memory of Thy Dep  
arted 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 5**

Let us, the faithful, praise and worship the Word, co-eternal with the Father and the Spirit, born for our salvation from the Virgin; for He willed to be lifted up on the Cross in the flesh, to endure death, and to raise the dead// by His glorious Resurrection.

### **Troparion for The Feast of The Nativity of Our Lord – Tone 4**

Thy Nativity, O Christ our God, has shone to the world the light of wisdom! For by it, those who worshipped the stars, were taught by a star to adore Thee, the Sun of Righteousness, and to know Thee, the Orient from on high.// O Lord, glory to Thee!

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

### **Troparion for The Holy Righteous Ones - Tone 2**

Proclaim the wonder, O Joseph, to David, the ancestor of God; thou hast seen a Virgin great with child; and thou didst give glory with the shepherds; thou didst worship with the Magi, and didst receive the news from the Angel.// Pray to Christ God to save our souls!

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

### **Kontakion for The Feast of The Nativity of Our Lord - Tone 3**

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 was born as a little Child!

## **THE PROKEMEINON – TONE 8**

Let all the earth worship Thee and praise Thee; / let it praise Thy Name, O Most High!

*v. Make a joyful noise to God, all the earth! Sing of His Name, give glory to His praise!*

## **ALLELUIA VERSES**

*The heavens are telling the glory of God, and the firmament proclaims His handiwork.*

*Day to day pours forth speech, and night to night declares knowledge.*

*Remember, O Lord, David and all his meekness!*

## **THE HYMN TO THE THEOTOKOS**

*(Instead of “It is truly meet...,” we sing:)*

Magnify, O my soul, the most pure Virgin Theotokos, more honorable and more glorious than the heavenly hosts. I behold a strange, most glorious mystery: heaven—the cave; the cherubic throne—the Virgin; the manger—the place where Christ lay:the uncontainable God, Whom we magnify in song.

## **COMMUNION HYMN**

**Praise the Lord from the heavens, praise Him in the highest! The Lord has sent redemption to His people. Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!**

## EPISTLE LESSON FOR TODAY

### BRETHREN:

But I make known to you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached by me is not according to man. For I neither received it from man, nor was I taught it, but it came through the revelation of Jesus Christ.

For you have heard of my former conduct in Judaism, how I persecuted the church of God beyond measure and tried to destroy it.

And I advanced in Judaism beyond many of my contemporaries in my own nation, being more exceedingly zealous for the traditions of my fathers.

But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb and called me through His grace, to reveal His Son in me, that I might preach Him among the Gentiles, I did not immediately confer with flesh and blood, nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were apostles before me; but I went to Arabia, and returned again to Damascus.

Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and remained with him fifteen days.

But I saw none of the other apostles except James, the Lord's brother.

## GOSPEL LESSON FOR TODAY

### LET US ATTEND:

Now when they had departed, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream, saying, "Arise, take the young Child and His mother, flee to Egypt, and stay there until I bring you word; for Herod will seek the young Child to destroy Him."

When he arose, he took the young Child and His mother by night and departed for Egypt,

and was there until the death of Herod, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying, "Out of Egypt I called My Son."

Then Herod, when he saw that he was deceived by the wise men, was exceedingly angry; and he sent forth and put to death all the male children who were in Bethlehem and in all its districts, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had determined from the wise men.

Then was fulfilled what was spoken by Jeremiah the prophet, saying:

"A voice was heard in Ramah, lamentation, weeping, and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children, refusing to be comforted, because they are no more."

Now when Herod was dead, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt, saying, "Arise, take the young Child and His mother, and go to the land of

Israel, for those who sought the young Child's life are dead." Then he arose, took the young Child and His mother, and came into the land of Israel. But when he heard that Archelaus was reigning over Judea instead of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there. And being warned by God in a dream, he turned aside into the region of Galilee.

And he came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, "He shall be called a Nazarene."

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=== Scriptural Readings for the Week ===

PLEASE REFER TO THE OCA WEBSITE...[www.oca.org](http://www.oca.org)

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**SUNDAY DECEMBER 31, 2023**  
**THE EVE OF THE GREAT FEAST OF THE CIRCUMCISION OF OUR LORD GOD and SAVIOR JESUS CHRIST/ST. BASIL THE GREAT**

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

Parish Potluck Coffee Hour Fellowship in Parish Fellowship Hall following The Divine Liturgy!

Great Vespers – **12:00 PM**

**MONDAY JANUARY 1, 2024**  
**THE GREAT FEAST OF THE CIRCUMCISION OF OUR LORD GOD and SAVIOR JESUS CHRIST/ST. BASIL THE GREAT**

Divine Liturgy of St. Basil the Great followed by brief Moleben for The New Year and The Blessing of St. Basil Bread – **9:30 AM**

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

**THURSDAY JANUARY 4, 2024**

**Royal Hours for The Feast of Holy Theophany - 9:00 AM**

**FRIDAY JANUARY 5, 2024 [STRICT FAST DAY]**  
**EVE OF THE GREAT FEAST OF THE HOLY THEOPHANY OF OUR LORD GOD AND SAVIOR JESUS CHRIST**

Vespers with Liturgy of St. Basil followed by Lesser Blessing of Water - **9:00 AM**

Great Compline with Litiya - **6:00 PM**

**SATURDAY JANUARY 6, 2024**  
**THE GREAT FEAST OF THE HOLY THEOPHANY OF OUR LORD GOD AND SAVIOR JESUS CHRIST**

Festal Divine Liturgy followed by The Great Blessing of Water and The Blessing of The Church and Parish Fellowship Hall - **9:00 AM**

Great Vespers – **4:00 PM**

**SUNDAY JANUARY 7, 2024**  
**THE SYNAXIS OF ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST**

Matins – **9:00 AM**          Divine Liturgy - **10:00 AM**

Q&A with Fr. Jay and Blessing of Water for Children of our Parish

Coffee Hour Fellowship in Parish Fellowship Hall following The Divine Liturgy

Blessing of Hoyt Lake – 1:00 PM





Coffee Hour Fellowship is held every Sunday in The Parish Fellowship Hall following the Divine Liturgy. As this is a continuation of The Divine Liturgy itself through Agape and Fellowship, let us come together to enjoy the time as a parish family.

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:610.698.1666/frances.vansuch@yahoo.com))

## **FIND YOUR SPIRITUAL HOME In The Orthodox Christian Church**

SATURDAY Great Vespers 4:00 PM

SUNDAY Divine Liturgy 10:00 AM (Sept-May)

9:30 AM (May-September)

~ All are Welcome ~

Do we have questions about our life, its meaning, purpose, destiny?

Are we desiring to know Jesus Christ, the Son of the living God?

Are we seeking forgiveness, healing, and wholeness?

Do we wonder where to go to find answers?

We can find the answers to these questions and so many other questions in The Holy Orthodox Church through Her Sacred Tradition, Holy Scriptures, Her Teachings and Dogmas.

The Orthodox Church is the original Christian Church, the Church founded by the Lord Jesus Christ and described in the pages of the New Testament. Her history can be traced in unbroken continuity all the way back to Christ and His Twelve Apostles, empowered and sent forth on the day of Holy Pentecost. Incredible as it seems, for over twenty centuries she has continued in her undiminished and unaltered faith and practice. Today her apostolic doctrine, worship, and structure remain intact. The Orthodox Church maintains that the Church is the living Body of Jesus Christ. Many of us are surprised to learn that for the first 1000 years of Christian history there was just one Church.

Where is "**The Church**" to be found and experienced today? Come Taste and See How Good The Lord is every Sunday by joining us for The Divine Liturgy at 10:00 AM.

What is Orthodox Christianity all about? How does it differ from other Christian confessions? This section will attempt to answer these questions and many more.

For a visual introduction to the Orthodox Church, please view the video link below:

[http://www.youtube.com/v/Gj4pUphDitA&color1=0xb1b1b1&color2=0xcfcfcf&feature=player\\_embedded&fs=1](http://www.youtube.com/v/Gj4pUphDitA&color1=0xb1b1b1&color2=0xcfcfcf&feature=player_embedded&fs=1)

For a brief introduction and in depth study to The Orthodox Faith and to find answers to: 'What we Believe?', "Who we Are?", and "How we Live?", please view the PDF link below:

<http://orthodoxdelmarva.org/files/studies/InquirersClassV1final.pdf>

or you may visit the OCA website by clicking the link below:

<http://oca.org/orthodoxy/the-orthodox-faith>

or you can begin a Journey Through Orthodoxy by clicking the link below:

<http://journeytoorthodoxy.com>

To learn more ways that we can teach our children about the Orthodox Faith, The OCA has provided a wonderful website for us to use that provides great resources such as (handouts, texts, articles, stories, and much more)! To see this great website, please view the PDF link below:

<http://dce.oca.org/page/resources/>

If you have any questions or would like to know more about The Orthodox Faith or needs and help or assistance, please contact our parish priest: V Rev. Jason Vansuch ([jvansuch@hotmail.com](mailto:jvansuch@hotmail.com)) or 716.875.4222 and he will be able guide you.

To visit our parish website, please click on the QR Code below:



## 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](https://www.paypal.com/donate/?hosted_button_id=E5X6YTVC9DF3W)

## MONTHLY HEALING PRAYER SERVICE The Supplicatory Canon Prayer Service to St. Nektarios

MONDAY JANUARY 8, 2024 –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***

**ST. GEORGE SENIOR/RETIREE DAY  
THURSDAY JANUARY 11, 2024  
10:00 am to 12:00 PM**

We invite all Seniors and Retirees to come and join us as we spend a morning together in prayer and Christian fellowship!

- 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



**THE FEAST OF THE CIRCUMCISION OF OUR LORD/  
ST. BASIL THE GREAT/NEW YEAR'S DAY**

**SUNDAY DECEMBER 31, 2023**

**Eve of Feast of the Circumcision of Our Lord and  
St. Basil the Great/New Year's Day**

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

Coffee Hour Fellowship in Parish Fellowship Hall

Great Vespers with Litiya – 12:30 PM

**MONDAY JANUARY 1, 2024**

**The Feast of the Circumcision of Our Lord and St. Basil the  
Great/New Year's Day**

Divine Liturgy followed by Brief Moleben for The New Year and  
Blessing of St. Basil Bread– 9:30 AM

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

**THURSDAY JANUARY 4, 2024**

Royal Hours for The Feast of Holy Theophany - 9:00 AM

**FRIDAY JANUARY 5, 2024 [STRICT FAST DAY]  
EVE OF THE GREAT FEAST OF THE  
HOLY THEOPHANY OF OUR  
LORD GOD AND SAVIOR JESUS CHRIST**

Vespers with Liturgy of St. Basil  
followed by Lesser Blessing of Water - 9:00 AM

Great Compline with Litiya - 6:00 PM

**SATURDAY JANUARY 6, 2024  
THE GREAT FEAST OF THE HOLY THEOPHANY OF OUR  
LORD GOD AND SAVIOR JESUS CHRIST**

Festal Divine Liturgy followed by The Great Blessing of Water and The  
Blessing of The Church and Parish Fellowship Hall - 9:00 AM

Great Vespers – 4:00 PM

**SUNDAY JANUARY 7, 2024  
THE SYNAXIS OF ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST**

Matins – 9:00 AM                      Divine Liturgy - 10:00 AM

Q&A with Fr. Jay and Blessing of Water for Children of our Parish

Coffee Hour Fellowship in Parish Fellowship Hall following The  
Divine Liturgy

**FRIDAY JANUARY 12, 2024**

**6:30-9:00 P.M.    Parish Family Paint Night**

**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 bringing the joy, the love, and the peace of Our Lord God and Savior Jesus Christ 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 and FeedMore of WNY 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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**\*\*PLEASE REFER TO THE WEEKLY EMAILS AND PARISH WEBSITE  
FOR CHANGES TO THE CALENDAR!\*\***  
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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 (2023)

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  
Turtle Rock Road  
Livonia, NY

Mr. Steve Scordalakis  
122 Pennsylvania Ave  
Lockport, NY 14221

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!\*\***

## 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 Presbyteria 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,  
Gemmal, 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      Jake      Raphael

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, James, Jeffry, Dominic,  
Douglas, Rachel, Dennis, Edith, Joanna  
Brian John, Roberta, Barbara John, Michael John  
George Costa Jonathan, Kevin, Lary, Carly, Sherry, Mary Jo, Clara, Karl,  
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, David, David Alexander and Bonnie  
Ron, Illiana, Jillian, Joel, Robert, Susan, Arnold, Kyriaki, Danny, Thomas,  
Amelia, Emily, Kevin/Juanita Sam Anna

Crissy and the child Luke Raphael born of her  
Children of God - Jake, Raphael

#### 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

Jeremy Ayden Edward  
Rudy and Karen Judy Raymon/ Gina Raymond and Frankie

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

Barbara Gabe Anita Cindy Robert Lynn Francis

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

#### ST. GEORGE ORTHODOX CHURCH BOOKSTORE

As you are in the Parish Fellowship Hall for coffee hour, don't forget to check out our newly-formed Bookstore. We have some new items that just arrived. These items include: Icon ornaments, jewelry, Icons, prayer books, prayers ropes, and much more. If you need a Gift, come check out the Bookstore...you may find something you like!! We

are now also offering Gift Certificates for our Bookstore. Please speak with Dave or Andrea for more details/information!! We thank David and Andrea Chmiel who are managing of our Bookstore for us. If you have any questions or if you would like to order something that you do not see, please see or contact David or Andrea Chmiel and they will be able to assist you. You may also email them at: bookstore@stgeorgebuffalo.com. May GOD continue to bless and guide all of you.

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



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

Please be sure to check out “The Giving Tree” in the Parish Fellowship Hall as well as on our parish website ([www.stgeorgebuffalo.com](http://www.stgeorgebuffalo.com)) to see how we may be able to donate towards the needs of our parish through our continued support and stewardship for our beloved parish.

Some of the items on the leaves are as follows:

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

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

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

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

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

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

These sermons offered to us by The Diocese via video can be found on the Diocesan Website: <http://www.nynjoca.org>! There are videos for each week beginning with The Feast of Feasts – Holy Pascha! Be sure to check them out!

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**ST. GEORGE ORTHODOX CHURCH EDUCATION CENTER**

**Sunday after the Nativity: Commemoration of the Holy Righteous David the King, Joseph the Betrothed, and James the Brother of the Lord**

The Holy Prophet-King David, St Joseph the Betrothed, and St James the Brother of the Lord are commemorated on the Sunday after the Nativity. If there is no Sunday between December 25 and January 1, their commemoration is moved to December 26.

At an early date, some churches in the East began to commemorate certain important figures of the New Testament at the time of Theophany, and later during the Nativity season. In Syria, for example, St Stephen (December 27), Sts James (April 30) and John (September 26), and Sts Peter and Paul (June 29) were commemorated near the end of December.

In Jerusalem, the saints mentioned above were combined with a feast that the Jews of Hebron celebrated on December 25 or 26 in honor of the Old



Testament Patriarch Jacob. Later on, the Christians substituted St James (October 23) for Jacob, and then the commemoration of the Brother of the Lord became associated with his ancestor King David. In time, St. Joseph was linked with Sts David and James.

## The Afterfeast of the Nativity of Our Lord

On December 29, the Afterfeast of the Nativity, we commemorate the 14,000 holy infants who were put to death by King Herod in his attempt to kill the new-born Messiah (Mt. 2:16).

Today there is also a commemoration of all Orthodox Christians who have died from hunger, thirst, the sword, and freezing.



**Christ is born! Glorify Him!**

As we **continue the celebration** of our Lord's Nativity in Bethlehem, we remember how different people responded to the **birth of Jesus Christ**.

Joseph listened to the angel sent by God, fleeing in the middle of the night, taking Mary and the infant Christ to Egypt. Why? Because King Herod's response to the birth of Christ was filled with anger, feeling threatened by the Savior's birth.

### ◊ *Hearing God's Voice*

We also have an opportunity to **respond to God**. Whether we are in school, on winter break, at church, or at home, **God calls us to follow Him**.

The **grace of God** enables us to **receive His love**, planting it in our hearts to grow and mature, shaping how we live each day of our lives. Our response to God is fully expressed in living our Orthodox Faith with joy and gratitude.

### ◊ *Being God's Voice*

Our participation in the divine liturgy provides us with **the gospel readings** to teach us about God's love, and **the Eucharist**: that physical expression of God's love **wiping away our sins**, restoring us to communion with God.

The Body and Blood of Christ provides the **spiritual nourishment** necessary to live in the world. No matter how crazy things may get, we can rejoice. By singing His praises, we **give thanks** for the blessings received.

### ◊ *Illuminating the World*

As we draw closer to God like the wise men, we begin to understand how an encounter with **God** is rooted in **compassion and love**. As the **Light of the world**, Jesus Christ gives us the peace and joy to endure any situation we may face.

When our relationship with God is grounded in a desire to know Him, **scripture** and **our Orthodox Faith** are the tools which brings us closer to God and each other.

### ◊ *A New Year*

God is always **present in our lives**. The coming year may have moments of sorrow and times of happiness, and God will help us to **accept both in humility**, and with **faith like Joseph**.

The grace of God helps us recognize and **acknowledge His blessings**. It also inspires us to share our gifts, becoming **bearers of the light of Christ** in the world.

### ◊ *Scripture Readings* for the Sunday after the Nativity

Epistle: **Galatians 1:11-19**  
Gospel: **Matthew 2:13-23**

### ◊ *Hymns of the Day*

#### Troparion/Apolytikion — Tone 4

When the women disciples of the Lord learned from the angel the joyous message of the Resurrection, they cast away the ancestral curse and elatedly told the Apostles: "Death is overthrown! Christ God is risen, granting the world great mercy."

Tropar./Apol. (Sts. Joseph, David, James) — T2  
Proclaim the wonder, O Joseph, to David, the ancestor of God:

You saw a Virgin great with Child, you gave glory with the shepherds, you worshipped with the Magi, you received the news from the angel.

Pray to Christ God to save our souls!

#### Kontakion (Resurrection) — Tone 4

My Savior and Redeemer as God rose from the tomb and delivered the earth-born from their chains.

He has shattered the gates of hell, and as master, He has risen on the third day!

#### Kontakion (Sts. Joseph, David, James) — T3

Today godly David is filled with joy; Joseph and James offer praise.

The glorious crown of their kinship with Christ fills them with great joy; They sing praises to the One ineffably born on earth, and they cry out: "O Compassionate One, save those who honor You!"

Parents, Church School Teachers & Youth Directors: Watch for the ◊ to indicate topics/questions you can use to inspire conversations with youth. Or use the corresponding study guide for this resource.



# St. Basil's Bread

Sunday	<p><b>27</b>  <i>Sunday after Christmas</i>                  St. Joseph, James, and David                  St. Stephen the Deacon</p> <p>___ Attend Liturgy</p> <p>___ Sing (or pray) the festal hymns</p> <p>My favorite part of Christmas Liturgy is:</p>
Monday	<p><b>28</b>  <i>Feast of the Nativity</i>                  St. Nicanor the Deacon</p> <p>___ Read Acts 6:1-7</p> <p>___ Sing (or pray) the festal hymns</p> <p>Today I helped:</p>
Tuesday	<p><b>29</b>  <i>Feast of the Nativity</i>                  14,000 innocents of Bethlehem</p> <p>___ Sing (or pray) the festal hymns</p> <p>___ Pray for your choir and chanters</p> <p>___ Get the ingredients for making the vasilopita (see the link on Dec. 31 for details)</p>
Wednesday	<p><b>30</b>  <i>Feast of the Nativity</i>                  Virgin Mary's Anagnorisis of Greece</p> <p>___ Read Psalm 122</p> <p>___ Sing (or pray) the festal hymns</p> <p>Today I learned about:</p>
Thursday	<p><b>31</b>  <i>Leavetaking (Apodosis) of the Feast of the Nativity of our Lord</i>                  St. Ignace of Rome</p> <p>___ Pray the Nativity festal hymns one last time</p> <p>___ Make the vasilopita with your family:  <a href="http://bit.ly/vasilopita-recipe">http://bit.ly/vasilopita-recipe</a></p> <p>___ Read Psalm 150 and give thanks to God for the blessings received in the past year; glory to God!</p>
Friday	<p><b>Jan. 1</b>  <i>Circumcision of our Lord</i>                  St. Basil the Great                  New Year's Day</p> <p>___ Attend Liturgy</p> <p>___ Pray for your family, asking God for good health in the new year</p> <p>___ Cut the vasilopita and enjoy the feast of St. Basil!</p>
Saturday	<p><b>2</b>  <i>Saturday before zhaspnyay</i>                  St. Seraphim of Sarov</p> <p>___ Attend Liturgy</p> <p>___ Say a prayer to St. Seraphim to experience the joy of Christ in your daily life</p> <p>___ Sing (or pray) the festal hymns</p>

Each year, on the feast of St. Basil the Great (January 1), Orthodox faithful around the world make a special bread honoring this great bishop and theologian of the Orthodox Faith.

This bread is called **Vasilopita**, (pronounced Vah-see-LOW-pee-tah) a Greek word meaning "Basil's Bread."

The tradition of the vasilopita comes from an event in the life of St. Basil (<http://bit.ly/st-basil-the-great>), who lived in a desolate region of modern day Turkey called Cappadocia (pronounced Kah-pah-doe-shya).

The emperor had called for a tax on the people of the region, and his demands were outrageous. The people were already poor, and what little money and jewels they had left, was to be given as a tax to the government.

St. Basil, being a kind and loving bishop for the faithful, went to the emperor, calling him to repentance for his injustice and unkind tax.

The emperor, upon hearing St. Basil's words, repealed the tax, instructing his tax collectors to give all of the money to St. Basil, so he could distribute the money back to the people.

There was a lot of money, and a lot of people, and St. Basil needed to find a way ensuring everyone received what they had paid. So he prayed to God, asking for the wisdom to distribute the wealth.

He instructed for a large bread to be made, and he had all of the coins and jewelry baked into the bread. He called all of the people to attend the divine liturgy. Afterwards, he blessed the bread, giving a slice to each person.

A miracle occurred!

Each person received, in their slice of bread, the valuables they had paid towards the tax. The people rejoiced to God, thankful for His mercy and wisdom through the actions of St. Basil their bishop.

### Today's Celebration

While St. Basil fell asleep in the Lord in the year 379, we honor him each year with the baking of a vasilopita (here's a recipe: <http://bit.ly/vasilopita-recipe>). It is distributed to the faithful after liturgy on his feast day, January 1. Inside the bread is a coin, as remembrance of the miracle.

The one preparing the bread, wraps a coin in foil, closing their eyes while inserting it into the dough. They knead the dough, placing it into the pan for baking, not knowing who will receive the gift of the coin.

The bread is sometimes decorated with powder sugar or frosting depending on family traditions, and then brought to church for the liturgy on January 1. After the liturgy, the people will sing the troparion/apolytikion to St. Basil in tone 1:

**Your prodamation has gone out into all the earth  
 Which was divinely taught by hearing your voice.  
 You wisely taught the Faith,  
 expounding the nature of creatures, adorning the ways of man.  
 O holy father of a royal priesthood, righteous Basil,  
 Entreat Christ God that our souls may be saved.**

Standing in the middle of the church, holding up the bread, the priest will say, "Let us pray unto the Lord."

The people will reply, "Lord, have mercy."

The priest will read this prayer:

*O Creator of all things, Lord and King of the ages, plenteous in mercy and bountiful in goodness, who didst accept the Magi's gifts in Bethlehem, who art the Bread of Life that came down from heaven, who by Your authority didst establish the seasons and the years and dost hold our life in Your hands.*

*Hear us who pray to You on this holy day upon our entrance into the new year of Your Goodness and bless this bread, which has been offered to Your glory and in honor of our Father among the Saints Basil the Great, Archbishop of Caesarea in Cappadocia.*

*In Your benevolence, look down from Your Holy Heavens, sending down upon us, and those who have offered these gifts and upon them that partake thereof, Your heavenly gifts, for our hope is in You, the Living God, unto the ages.*

*Bless this parish (home, school, city, nation) and our comings and goings in the new year, fill our life with all good things and direct our footsteps that we may keep Your divine commandments, for man shall not live by bread alone.*

*Through the intercessions of Your Most Pure Mother, of our father among the saints: Basil the Great, and of all Your saints, who from all ages have been well pleasing to You.*

The people will respond, singing, "Amen."

The sign of the cross is made over the vasilopita and cut with a knife while the priest says, "In the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen."

Then pieces of the vasilopita are cut:

First, a piece is cut for Christ, reminding us that our first offering is always made to the Lord.

The second piece is cut for the Virgin Mary, reminding us of her place in our lives, and before the throne of God

The third piece is for St. Basil, thanking him for the example of his charity and love for others.

A fourth piece is cut for the poor, reminding us of those less fortunate.

Then pieces are cut for every individual present

The miracle of the vasilopita bread is there will be enough for everyone to receive their own piece, because God's generosity is for everyone. It is said that the person who receives the piece with the coin will receive blessings from St. Basil in the new year.

**Holy Father Basil, pray to God for us!**



## THE FEAST OF THE CIRCUMCISION OF OUR LORD (January 1)

On the eighth day after His Nativity, our Lord Jesus Christ was circumcised in accordance with the Old Testament Law. All male infants underwent circumcision as a sign of God's Covenant with the holy Forefather Abraham and his descendants (Gen. 17:10-14, Lev. 12:3).

After this ritual the Divine Infant was given the name Jesus, as the Archangel Gabriel declared on the day of the Annunciation to the Most Holy Theotokos (Luke 1:31-33, 2:21). The Fathers of the Church explain that the Lord, the Creator of the Law, underwent circumcision in order to give people an example of how faithfully the divine ordinances ought to be fulfilled. The Lord was circumcised so that later no one would doubt that He had truly assumed human flesh, and that His Incarnation was not merely an illusion, as certain heretics (Docetists) taught.

In the New Testament, the ritual of circumcision gave way to the Mystery of Baptism, which it prefigured (Col. 2:11-12). Accounts of the Feast of the Circumcision of the Lord continue in the Eastern Church right up through the fourth century. The Canon of the Feast was written by St Stephen of the St Sava Monastery (October 28 and July 13).

In addition to circumcision, which the Lord accepted as a sign of God's Covenant with mankind, He also received the Name Jesus (Savior) on the eighth day after His Nativity as an indication of His service, the work of the salvation of the world (Mt.1:21; Mark 9:38-39, 16:17; Luke 10:17; Acts 3:6, 16; Phil 2:9-10). These two events, the Lord's Circumcision and Naming, remind Christians that they have entered into a New Covenant with God and "are circumcised with a circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ" (Col. 2:11). The very name "Christian" is a sign of mankind's entrance into a New Covenant with God.

## ST. BASIL THE GREAT, ARCHBISHOP OF CAESAREA

(January 1)

Basil was born about 330 at Caesarea in Cappadocia. He came from a wealthy and pious family which gave a number of saints, including his mother Saint [Emily](#) (also styled Emilia or Emmelia), grandmother Saint [Macrina the Elder](#), sister Saint [Macrina the Younger](#) and brothers Saints [Gregory of Nyssa](#) and [Peter of Sebaste](#). It is also a widely held tradition that Saint [Theosebia](#) was his youngest sister, who is also a saint in the Church.

While still a child, the family moved to Pontus; but he soon returned to Cappadocia to live with his mother's relations, and seems to have been brought up by his grandmother Macrina. Eager to learn, he went to Constantinople and spent four or five years there and at Athens, where he had the future emperor [Julian](#) for a fellow student and became friends with [Gregory the Theologian](#). Both Basil and Gregory were deeply influenced by [Origen](#) and compiled an anthology of uncondemned writings of Origen known as the *Philokalia* (not to be confused with the [later compilation of the same name](#)).

It was at Athens that he seriously began to think of religion, and resolved to seek out the most famous hermit saints in Syria and Arabia, in order to learn from them how to attain enthusiastic piety and how to keep his body under submission by asceticism.

After this we find him at the head of a convent near Arnesi in Pontus, in which his mother Emily, now a widow, his sister Macrina and several other ladies, gave themselves to a pious life of prayer and charitable works. Basil sided with those who overcame the aversion to the [homoousios](#) in common opposition to [Arianism](#), thus drawing nearer to Saint [Athanasius the Great](#).

He was [ordained presbyter](#) of the Church at Caesarea in 365, and his ordination was probably the result of the entreaties of his ecclesiastical superiors, who wished to use his talents against the Arians, who were numerous in that part of the country and were

favoured by the Arian emperor, Valens, who then reigned in Constantinople.

In 370 [Eusebius](#), bishop of Caesarea, died, and Basil was chosen to succeed him. It was then that his great powers were called into action. Caesarea was an important [diocese](#), and its [bishop](#) was, *ex officio*, [exarch](#) of the great diocese of Pontus. Hot-blooded and somewhat imperious, Basil was also generous and sympathetic. His zeal for orthodoxy did not blind him to what was good in an opponent; and for the sake of peace and charity he was content to waive the use of orthodox terminology when it could be surrendered without a sacrifice of truth.

With all his might he resisted the emperor Valens, who strove to introduce Arianism into his diocese, and impressed the emperor so strongly that, although inclined to banish the intractable bishop, he left him unmolested. To an imperial prefect, astonished at Saint Basil's temerity, he said, "Perhaps you have never before dealt with a proper bishop." To save the Church from Arianism, Basil entered into connections with the West, and with the help of Athanasius, he tried to overcome its distrustful attitude toward the Homoousians. The difficulties had been enhanced by bringing in the question as to the essence of the Holy Spirit. Although Basil advocated objectively the consubstantiality of the Holy Spirit with the Father and the Son, he belonged to those, who, faithful to Eastern tradition, would not allow the predicate homoousios to the former; for this he was reproached as early as 371 by the Orthodox zealots among the [monks](#), and Athanasius defended him. His relations also with [Eustathius](#) were maintained in spite of dogmatic differences and caused suspicion. On the other hand, Basil was grievously offended by the extreme adherents of Homoousianism, who seemed to him to be reviving the Sabellian heresy.

He did not live to see the end of the unhappy factional disturbances and the complete success of his continued exertions in behalf of Rome and the East. He suffered from liver illness and his excessive [asceticism](#) seems to have hastened him to an early death. A lasting monument of his episcopal care for the poor was the great institute before the gates of Caesarea, which was used as poorhouse, hospital, and hospice. The principal theological writings of Basil are his *Treatise on the Holy Spirit* (Lat. *De Spiritu Sancto*), a lucid and edifying appeal to Scripture and early Christian tradition to prove the divinity of the Holy Spirit, and his *Refutation of the Apology of the Impious Eunomius*, written in 363 or 364, three books against Eunomius of Cyzicus, the chief exponent of Anomoian Arianism. The first three books of the *Refutation* are his work; the fourth and fifth books that are usually included do not belong to Basil, or to Apollinaris of Laodicea, but probably to Didymus The Blind.

He was a famous preacher, and many of his homilies, including a series of Lenten lectures on *The Six Days of Creation* (Gr. *Hexaëmeron*), and an exposition of the psalter, have been preserved. Some, like that against usury and that on the famine in 368, are valuable for the history of morals; others illustrate the honor paid to [martyrs](#) and [relics](#); the address to young men on the study of classical literature shows that Basil was lastingly influenced by his own education, which taught him to appreciate the importance of the classics as preparatory instruction.

His ascetic tendencies are exhibited in the *Moralia* and *Regulae*, ethical manuals for use in the world and the cloister respectively. Of the [monastic](#) rules traced to Basil, the shorter is the one most probably his work. It is in the ethical manuals and moral sermons that the practical aspects of his theoretical theology are illustrated. So, for example, it is in his *Sermon to the Lazicans* that we find Basil explaining how it is our common nature that obliges us to treat our neighbor's natural needs (e.g., hunger,

thirst) as our own, even though he is a separate individual. Later [theologians](#) explicitly explain this as an example of how the saints become an image of the one common nature of the persons of the Trinity.

His three hundred letters reveal a rich and observant nature, which, despite the troubles of ill-health and ecclesiastical unrest, remained optimistic, tender and even playful. His principal efforts as a reformer were directed towards the improvement of the liturgy, and the reformation of the monastic orders of the East.

Most of the [liturgies](#) bearing the name of Basil, in their present form, are not primarily his work, but they nevertheless preserve the recollection of Basil's activity in this field in formularizing liturgical prayers and promoting church-song. One liturgy attributed to him is *The Divine Liturgy of Saint Basil the Great*, a liturgy that is somewhat longer than the more commonly used *Divine Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom*; it is still used on certain feast days in the Church, such as every Sunday of [Great Lent](#) and [January 1](#), on which his memory is celebrated.

All his works, and a few spuriously attributed to him, are available in the *Patrologia Graeca*, which includes Latin translations of varying quality. No critical edition is yet available.





## A Note on Christian Stewardship .....

Life is given to us through Our Lord Jesus Christ. Our commitment to expressing gratitude for this great blessing is seen through our participation in Christian Stewardship by being faithful stewards of The Gospel. Our commitment reveals how we live our faith in the Resurrected Lord. It is in The Resurrection of Our Lord that we receive eternal life and we express our hope in the life to come by our response as Orthodox Christian stewards.

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

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!

### What is Stewardship?

Stewardship means making a regular commitment of one's time, talent, and treasure to Christ and His Church

Stewardship is a way of life, which acknowledges accountability, reverence, and responsibility before God.

Stewardship recognizes that we believe that "every good and perfect gift we receive in our lives comes from above."

Stewardship is a spiritual practice, much like prayer and fasting. And just as prayer and fasting are ways we seek to deepen our relationship with God, so we use Stewardship to turn everything in our lives into an opportunity to grow in our relationship with God.

Stewardship, like prayer and fasting, should be undertaken purposefully and with intention - while giving of time, talent, and treasure when we feel so moved is a good beginning, it can only bear limited fruit. We should set aside portions of our time, talent, and treasure to give to God before we give them to anything else, in the same way that we should plan our prayer and fasting. There will always be times for spontaneous giving, as with spontaneous prayer - but intention is also necessary.

### Why be a Steward?

To be a Steward of the Church means being an active participant in the life of the Church - growing in Faith and communion with God and proclaiming that same Faith with every word, every action, and every moment of our lives.

## What is Orthodox Christian Stewardship

*"It is by offering our blessings back to God that He will be able to continue His forgiving, healing, liberating, empowering, transfiguring, loving ministry through the Church. For God, Infinite though He be, has chosen to work through us, through our gifts, to continue His saving work in the world today." - Fr. Anthony Coniaris*

Stewardship reminds us that everything we have has been given to us by God - not for us to have, but for us to care for as stewards, or caretakers. This is why we call those who are actively living the Orthodox Christian life "stewards," because to live the Orthodox Christian life fully means to recognize that we have received everything from God, and therefore we offer some of what we have received back in thanksgiving.

Financial stewardship is an offering, and it is part of how we participate in the saving work of Christ and His Church. By offering back some of what has been given to us, we allow God to work through that offering "for the life of the world." Just as we offer bread and wine for the Liturgy which God transforms into the Body and Blood of Christ to transform us into the living Body of Christ, so do we offer our time, treasure, and talents to Christ and His Church so that God might receive them and transform them into the means not only of our salvation, but for all Creation.

**\*\* WEEKLY DIVINE SERVICES AND EDUCATION CLASSES\*\***

**TUESDAY MORNINGS**

Daily Matins - 9:00 AM

**WEDNESDAY EVENINGS**

Paraklesis Service to The Theotokos - 6:00 PM

**THURSDAY MORNINGS**

Akathist or Moleben Prayer Service - 9:00 AM

**EVERY OTHER TUESDAY**

Catechism/Adult Education Class - 6:30 PM  
(via Zoom)

**EVERY OTHER TUESDAY**

St. George Bible Study Class - 6:30 PM  
(via Zoom)

**EVERY OTHER MONDAY**

St. George Book Club - 6:30 PM  
(via Zoom)

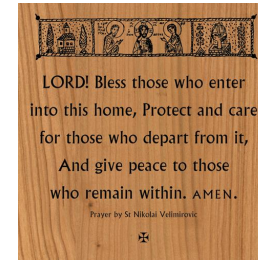
**EVERY 3<sup>RD</sup> THURSDAY OF THE MONTH**

St. George Prayer Group – 6:30-7:30 PM



BE SURE TO CONTACT MAT. FRAN REGARDING THE NEW 2024 COFFEE HOUR SCHEDULE AS WELL AS SEE IT LOCATED IN THE PARISH FELLOWSHIP HALL!!

**\*\*BEGINNING IN 2024 – THE 1<sup>ST</sup> SUNDAY OF EVERY MONTH WILL BE POT-LUCK SUNDAY! BRING A FAVORITE DISH OR DESSERT TO SHARE WITH YOUR PARISH FAMILY AS WE COME TOGETHER TO ENJOY CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP AS WELL AS HONOR ALL OF THE PARISH BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES FOR THAT MONTH!\*\*\***



**HOME BLESSING**

**HOME BLESSING**

BE SURE TO CONTACT FR. JASON TO SCHEDULE A TIME AND DAY FOR HIM TO COME AND BLESS YOUR HOME DURING THE THEOPHANY SEASON!! HOMES WILL BE BLESSED DURING THE THEOPHANY SEASON ALL THE WAY UP TO THE BEGINNING OF GREAT LENT. AS A REMAINDR, WE CAN HAVE OUR HOMES BLESSED ANYTIME THROUGHOUT THE YEAR 😊

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BE SURE TO SEE THE 2024 READER SCHEDULE (Hours and Epistle) SIGN UP SHEET LOCATED IN THE PARISH FELLOWSHIP HALL AS WELL AS ON THE PARISH WEBSITE!! Please see Fr. Jason or Sbdn. Shawn if we are interested in Reading during The Divine Service.

**The Blessing of Homes**

The custom of blessing homes during the Theophany season is of special beauty and significance. It is not simply a sentimental tradition without meaning, nor is it a custom whose meaning we have forgotten, like an old friend whose face we remember, but whose impact on our life has been forgotten.

When an Orthodox Christian believer moves into a new home, he dedicates his new home as the abode of a follower of Christ. He asks that God, the source of all goodness and the Giver of every perfect gift, to bless his house and all that is within it; he recalls that Jesus Christ, His Son, came to bring Salvation to all, even as He brought Salvation to



the house of Zaccheus; he prays that the Holy Spirit may abide in it, guiding those who dwell in it in the Paths of righteousness.

On the Feast of Theophany we rededicate our home for its original purpose, just as we must periodically rededicate our life to Christ. We do it especially on this Feast because this is the day on which we remember in the Church Year the coming of Christ who began His Ministry when He descended into Jordan to be Baptized by St. John the Forerunner and Baptist. He enters again into our lives reminding us that we must "repent, for the Kingdom of God is at hand."

An Orthodox Christian must dedicate not only himself and his house to the Lord, but his daily work and all his efforts as well. All things are to be done to the glory of God. That is why in the Orthodox Church, not only religious objects, such as icons, crosses, churches and vestments, are blessed, but also homes, fields, animals and all objects which are used in our daily life for the good of man. In this the Church expresses its faith that the Holy Spirit's sanctifying action extends over the whole Creation.

### **The Feast Of Theophany**

The Feast of Theophany (or Epiphany) commemorates the Baptism of our Lord in the Jordan River by John the Baptist. We know from the troparion of the day that "the Trinity was made manifest" to us. But there's more to it than this. "When Jesus descends into the depths of the river, there occurs a profound upheaval. It is not the one baptized who is purified, for he is spotless; but it is the water that is transfigured and illumined. This water, which was believed to be transparent and purifying, is in fact polluted, inhabited by evil spirits, servants of the old gods. ... By purifying the elements, by sanctifying matter, Jesus frees the cosmos from the powers of evil." (*The Incarnate God, Vol. I*, Catherine Aslanoff, French edition editor, translated by Paul Meyendorff, p.163.)

### **The Great Blessing of Water and the Home**

The Great Blessing of Water takes place at the end of that day's Liturgy. Since our homes cannot be brought to the Church, the Church - through the priest and cantor - go to the homes. There the service of blessing, which began in the church, is finished with the sprinkling of water in the

home. Traditionally, in most Orthodox parishes, the priest personally visits all his parishioners each year to pray with them in the place where they live, and to bless their surroundings with the newly sanctified water of Theophany (January 6/13). By sanctifying our living quarters, our private place, we extend the grace of God to our individual dwellings. (In very large parishes a yearly visit may not be possible. In areas of the country where the winter is harsh, I know of at least one parish where houses are blessed at the beginning of the ecclesiastical year in September.)

We also bring the blessed water to our homes to use throughout the year to bless our homes and to drink whether we are ill or as part of our daily prayer life. "There are many occasions in family life when a sip of holy water can help to remind us of the blessing that was given 'to bestow sanctification', 'unto healing of soul and body', 'to be a fountain welling forth unto life eternal', as the priest prayed in the litany of Epiphany day." (*Little Falcons: Water*, Vol. 5, No. 2, 1998, p.33.)

### **Weaving Christ into Our Lives**

The blessing of homes by these holy waters maintains the spiritual association between the 'family church' and the parish, as well as again providing for the sharing of God's spiritual gifts. ... This annual blessing is not as elaborate as the blessing of the new dwelling, but because of this it should not be overlooked, for it is in this way that the grace of God is extended to individual dwellings." (*Marriage and the Christian Home*, p.25.)

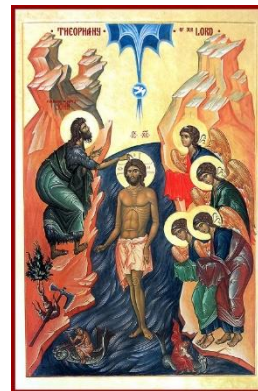
If the priest comes to bless the home when the children are present, they have the opportunity to see the parish priest in a different and personal situation. If the priest permits, they can lead the way through the house, or hold a candle. They can show him their rooms or pets or favorite toys. They receive a blessing with water. For children, the house blessing shows the connection of the Church to the home.

### **In Summary**

What does it mean to ask God to bless something? All things in the world have been spoiled right along with us. God must bless His world again in order for it to be the way that He wants it to be. For this reason

God sent His Son Jesus and the Holy Spirit to the world: to bless everyone and everything that He made, to make all things good again. When the priest comes to bless our homes, he asks God to have mercy on the house, to rid it of every evil and to fill it with every blessing. What a wonderful way to begin the New Year!

If anyone would like to have their home blessed this year, please contact Fr. Jason with any specific day and time that would be best for him to come and bless your home. You can contact Fr. Jason at (716) 875-4222 or (609)851-3811 or email him at [jvansuch@hotmail.com](mailto:jvansuch@hotmail.com) and he will be in contact with you to make other arrangements. 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. If anyone has any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to let Fr. Jason know. May God continue to bless and guide all of you and your families. May you have a Holy and Blessed Theophany Season and a Blessed, Healthy, and Happy New Year.



**THE GREAT BLESSING OF WATERS  
HOYT LAKE – DELAWARE PARK  
SUNDAY JANUARY 7, 2023  
1:00 PM**

**Let us come together during this Holy Theophany  
Season 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