

St. George Orthodox Church

5191 Lennon Road • Flint, MI 48507 • (810) 732-0720

Web Site: saintgeorgeflint.org

January 29, 2023

Father Joseph M. Abud, Pastor

Father Michael Bassett, Assistant

Christ is in our Midst!

He is and ever shall be!

Welcome to St. George! Thank you for attending today's Divine Services. If you are a first-time visitor, please register your visit by completing the guest book located in the narthex. We would appreciate getting to meet you after liturgy, so feel free to join us during Coffee Fellowship! Every Sunday we remember the Resurrection of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. The word "*Liturgy*" means *work of the people* that means everyone participates through singing, praying, hearing the teaching, and opening our hearts to allow God's grace to enter. We believe Holy Communion to be a sign that in Christ we have all things in common, share an identical faith, and are united fully to the Orthodox Church. Anyone interested in learning more about our faith are encouraged to speak with one of our clergy. Holy Communion can be given to Orthodox Christians who have prepared themselves through prayer, fasting (no food or drink from midnight the night before), the Sacrament of Confession (7 years and older) within the last 2 months, and being at peace with others. Everyone else, including visitors, are invited to receive the final blessing of the priest and Holy Bread at the end of Liturgy. Again, welcome!

Live Streaming of Divine Services

St. George is open for all parishioners and visitors. If you cannot attend, please pray with us through our livestream which can be seen on our YouTube Channel:

<https://www.youtube.com/c/SaintGeorgeOrthodoxChurchFlintMI>

If you have a smart TV, you actually have a web browser and YouTube app built in. All you have to do is start the browser app for YouTube and put the link in the address bar.

Holy Bread Offerings (*Oblations*)

- Ihsan and Reema Abufarha for the health of their family especially daughter **Ereny** on the occasion of her birthday ~ *may God grant her many years!*

BAPTISM/CHRISMATION DAYS

The Church School offers the Holy Bread for their teachers and/or students who are celebrating the day of their *New Birth* {Baptism and/or Chrismation} into the Church this coming week:

- **Eli** and **Julianna** Helal ~ January 31st

May they be children of the Light and heirs of eternal good things. {Baptismal Service}

- We also pray for the servants of God who have fallen asleep in the Lord: **Samir** Helal (+December 31st, cousin of Asmahan Helal), **Dannie** Jones (+January 3rd), **Mariam** Ghanim (+January 4th, mother of Manal Abuaita), **Connie** Molina (+January 5th, friend of Areen Bathish), **Diana** Petropoulos (+January 10th, mother of former parishioner Shamassy Lia Blomgren), **Charles** Sackllah (+January 12th, father-in-law of former parishioner Rachel Abuaita Sackllah), **George** Thabit (+January 12th, relative of Fr. Michael), and **Habib** Skafi (+January 13th).
- Prayers are offered for our parishioners and their friends who are ill, recovering, or in need, especially His servants: our local hierarch **Bishop Anthony**, **Sahar** Abdallah, **Reader Fouad** Abuaita, **Shafiqa** Abuaitah, **Laila** Abud, **Jane** Abueita, **Chelsy** Abufarha, **Youssif** Abousamra, **Danial** Alghanim (father of Dania Hanna), **William** Alsaouri, **Sanaa** Alqassis (daughter of Zahra Abuaita), **Walid** Andoni (brother of Vera Daoud), **Sharon** Ballreich (sister of Nancy Silpoch and Deborah Salim), **Levi** Cooper, **Vera** Daoud, **Valland** Frangi (sister of Ron Haddad), **Elias** Gantos, **Denise** Ghattas, **Phyllis** Good, **Ronald** Haddad, **Nadia** Ibrahim (mother of Ziyad), **Daisy** Isaac, **Loretta** Karpelenia (mother of Denise Ghattas), **Judy** Mikhail, **Antonia** Molina (friend of Areen Bathish), **Laura** Nassar, **Deborah** Salim, **Elaine** Shaheen, **Michael** Silpoch, **Christa** Whitehead, and **Samantha** Zerka (cousin of Lauren Zerka/Goddaughter & niece of Victoria Zerka).
- We also pray for our expectant parents: **Rania** and **Raed** AbuAita, **Jasanta** and **Ghassan** Al-Khouri, **Katrina** and **Gary** Gagne, **Narmeen** and **Deeb** Shamshoum, and **Taylor** and **Jeffrey** Tipton.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

COFFEE FELLOWSHIP is hosted by *Ihsan and Reema Abufarha*.

- ⇒ Our **Banquet Center Renovation** is underway! We still want, and need, to have time to be with each other and have fellowship! Coffee Fellowship will take place in the Lounge.

COFFEE FELLOWSHIP HOSTS Available dates: February 19th, March 5th, 19th, and 26th ~ sign-up poster and hosting information is in the Lounge. *Hosting includes bringing whatever you wish to serve, setting up, and cleaning up afterwards.* St. George provides coffee, cups, cream, and sugar at a charge to the host of \$30. **For more information**, contact as our coordinator Manal Abuaita. *Cheesefare Sunday is February 26th, no meat products are to be served. During the Great Fast (February 27th - April 16th), no meat, poultry, eggs, dairy, fish, or their by-products are served.*

GODPARENT SUNDAY IS SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 12TH

Invitations for Godchildren to send to their Godparents (and *vice-versa*) are available on the narthex table. Please pick up an invitation to send to your Godchild (or Godparents). It will be a wonderful day and we want everyone to be here! Godchildren may bring their Godparents to their Church School class. When you know who will be attending, please RSVP to Janet Abueita at cooeita@aol.com by February 5th.

FREE BED SET: Please look on our Lounge bulletin board at a beautiful bed set which is FREE and just needs to be picked up. Call the office (810-732-0720) if interested or need more information.

PAN-ORTHODOX BOOK CLUB The Book Club will be reading *Great Lent* by Fr. Alexander Schmemmann for our last two meetings prior to the Great Fast. This would be an excellent opportunity to deepen your participation in this most significant season in the life of the Church. We will meet twice to discuss the book via both ZOOM and LIVE formats at St. George as follows:

January

- ZOOM: TONIGHT, 1/29 @ 7pm
- LIVE: Monday evening, 1/30 @ 6pm

February

- ZOOM: Sunday evening, 2/19 @ 7pm
- LIVE: Monday evening 2/20 @ 6pm

Notes:

1. The book can be ordered via amazon.com or through any number of online used book sellers for a reasonable price. (we also have a couple of copies in our St. George Library!)
2. To register for either the ZOOM or LIVE meetings OR if you need help ordering a book please contact Fr. Michael at frdnmike@gmail.com or 989-627-9580

All are invited to join! Any questions or if you would like more information, contact Father Michael Bassett frdnmike@gmail.com or 989-627-9580.

BOOKS ON THE DIVINE LITURGY Our St. George Library has a number of books to learn more about the Divine Liturgy: *A Commentary on the Divine Liturgy, An Introduction to the Divine Liturgy, Living the Liturgy, Let Us Attend-A Journey through the Orthodox Divine Liturgy, The Melody of Prayer: How to Personally Experience the Divine Liturgy, Meditations on the Divine Liturgy*, and more. Check one out TODAY!



Our stewardship, offerings, and donations are needed. PLEASE help your parish by continuing to offer your gifts! If you cannot come to church, you can simply go to our parish website (<https://saintgeorgeflint.org/>) and donate on-line (or use the QR code to the left) or you can bring or mail your offerings to St. George, 5191 Lennon Road, Flint, MI 48507. As always, THANK YOU for your generosity and love of our St. George!

2023 OFFERING ENVELOPES AND CHURCH CALENDARS

Please pick up yours (and other family members and friends) so we do not have to mail them! If your name is not listed, let Fr. Joe know. All envelopes are now here. The calendars (*please take 1 per family*) are a gift from our Ladies Auxiliary ~ thank you, Ladies! Our children will receive their envelopes in Church School. **Parents**, please make sure your children get their *Offering Envelopes!*

COMING EVENTS

Fasting Discipline The traditional fasting discipline (*no meat, poultry, eggs, dairy, fish, wine, olive oil, and their by-products*) is observed on Wednesday and Friday.

Tonight **Book Club on Zoom** 7pm

Monday **Bible Study: 1st book of the Bible, Genesis** 1:30-3:30pm

Book Club LIVE 6-8pm

Tuesday Combined Pan-Orthodox Evening **Divine Liturgy** for the **Meeting of our Lord in the Temple at St. George** 6pm

Wednesday **Arabic-English Bible Study: 1st book of the Bible, Genesis** 12-2pm

Saturday **Great Vespers and Confessions** 4pm (note time change until further notice!)

Sacredness of Sexuality ~ When the Gift of Sexuality Becomes an Occasion for Sin

by Abbot Tryphon, head of All-Merciful Savior Monastery on Vashon Island, Washington

Sins of a sexual nature are common among many people today. Much of the struggle is directly related to the fact that people do not take advantage of having a spiritual father. If you are your own guide the struggles with sexual passions can be beyond your ability to fight, leading to despair.

Our body is a temple that has been bought with a price. We do not, therefore, own our own bodies. The 1960's mantra of the women's movement that laid claim to the right of a woman to abort her baby is the ultimate result of the misuse of human sexuality. The good that came out of the women's movement regarding equal pay, equal opportunity, the end to discrimination, and the right not to be sexually exploited, was good and just. But the idea that women can make the decision to abort a child is unjust, because such belief ignores the right of a child to life. The unborn child is unable to speak out for her rights, so must have the protection under the law, just as does the woman.

That a man would see it as his right to expect sex with a woman because he took her out to dinner and a movie, is yet another example of the wrongful view of the role of sex in one's life. Our bodies belong to God, and our sexuality should only be expressed in ways that are sanctioned by God's law. One need not be embarrassed by struggles with masturbation, or falling into other temptations of a sexual nature. Our sexuality is a gift from God, and is meant to feel good, but it is also a gift that has been given for a purpose. It is through sexuality that our species increases, and through which a man and a woman become one. The sexual act between a husband and a wife is meant to unite them as one flesh, bringing them closer to each other in a bond of love. For this gift to be used in any other way is a sin against God.

Because our sexual drive is so powerful, it can be hard to control without the help of an experienced spiritual guide. In an age where sexual expression is seen as one's right, and where the view that one cannot be fulfilled if they are not sexually active, keeping oneself chaste can be a daunting task, indeed. If everyone is doing it, how can it be wrong?

For a Christian to be selective as to which commandment he is going to keep is illogical. We don't steal because we know it is against God's commandments, and we don't murder another person because we know all life is precious. Yet we think nothing of coveting another man's wife, or sleeping with someone for the sake of personal pleasure. An unborn child is dispensable because she is the inconvenient result of an evening of sexual gratification, and the future of costly child support. Our human sexuality is a sacred gift from God. For the celibate monk or nun this is a gift from God that we offer back to God, as a sign of our love and desire to be united completely to the Lord of Lights. To the unmarried it is a gift that is to be saved for the marriage bed, where one gives of oneself to one's spouse.

Without the help of a spiritual father or mother, abstinence can seem impossible, especially given the powerful drive of our sexual nature, and the pressures of our society to express our sexuality freely. For the young man or woman who is bombarded with the tales of the sexual exploits of one's friends, the struggle for purity can seem impossible. One more reason why we need to surround ourselves with friends who are committed Christians, and who know the importance of living lives that are centered on Christ. Frequent confession with one's spiritual father or confessor is a tool that can make all the difference in our struggle to be free of sinful passions, and triumphant in our goal of purity before the Lord, who loves us so.



GODPARENT SUNDAY

FEBRUARY 12TH

We are excited to announce our
Annual **Godparent Sunday**
sponsored by our Church
School.

This day will allow our Godparents and Godchildren to “reconnect” with each other and help us understand the joy and beauty of that special relationship! Please make note of the following:

2022-23 Church School Theme

- ❖ *Children (or parents) INVITE your Godparents to Divine Liturgy as soon as possible!*
- ❖ *Godparents INVITE your Godchildren to Divine Liturgy as soon as possible!*
- ❖ *Godparents and Godchildren should prepare themselves with Confession before February 12th so they can participate in Holy Communion together!*

⇒ An **Invitation** (to be sent by Godparents to Godchildren or Godchildren to Godparents) is on the previous page!



***This is an exciting day for Godparents, Godchildren, and our
WHOLE parish Family!***

~~ Plan on Attending!!! ~~



Godparent Sunday February 12th

2022-23 Church School Theme

Dear _____,

On Sunday, February 12, 2023 we will be having "Godparent Sunday" at St. George Orthodox Church. It would be an extra special day if you would attend the Divine Liturgy with me. Matins begin at 8:50am and Divine Liturgy begins at 10am. If we are prepared, we can receive Holy Communion together. Confessions are available on Saturdays after Great Vespers at 4pm, by appointment during the week, or from 8:30am-9:30am on Sunday mornings.

I hope that we can be together on this special day!

Love in Christ,
