

St. George Orthodox Church

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

Web Site: saintgeorgeflint.org

January 30, 2022

Father Joseph M. Abud, Pastor

Father Michael Bassett, Assistant

Glory to Jesus Christ!

Glory Forever!

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.

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 in our Banquet Center! 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!

Holy Bread Offerings (*Oblations*)

Baptism/Chrismation Days

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

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

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

- We pray for the servants of God who have fallen asleep in the Lord: **Edward** Shadeed (+December 27th, brother-in-law of JoAnn Hawkins), **Jim** Simpson (+December 27th, uncle of Kelly Sanderson), **Laurie** Crisp (+January 3rd, cousin of Lauren Zerka), **Ronna** Royer (+January 4th, mother of Fr. Bob), **Nael** Bannura (+January 13th, father of Amani Jarayseh), **Sub-deacon Brian** Thabit (+January 14th, relative of Father Michael), and **Salwa** Haddad (+January 27th).
- Prayers are offered for our parishioners who are ill, recovering, or in need, especially His servants: **Metropolitan Paul** and **Archbishop John** who are in captivity, **Sahar** Abdallah, **Asma** Abuaita (sister of Janett), **Shafiq**a Abuaitah, **Suheil** and **Abeer** Abuaita, **Laila** Abud, **Anwar** and **Georgette** Abueita, **Chelsy** Abufarha, **William** Alsahouri, **Rose** Ayoub, **Sharon** Ballreich (sister of Nancy Silpoch and Deborah Salim), **Emil** Bathish, **Cynthia** Brooks (sister of Fr. Michael), **Levi** Cooper, **Vera** Daoud, **Jimmy** David, **Ranna** Esho (friend of Batoul Burbar), **Averie** Fisher (niece of Doug and Sandy Thomas), **Elias** Gantos, **Mariam** Ghanim (mother of Manal Abuaita), **Phyllis** Good, **Amy** Handley (friend of Nataly Odeh), **Daisy** Isaac, **Salwa** Isaac, **Loretta** Karpelenia (mother Denise Ghattas), **Nicola** Khoury, **Lan** Kiley (niece of Raji and Sue Salomon), **Rafat** Nasri, **Laura** Nassar, **Aida** Raffoul, **Roger** Saadeh, **Deborah** Salim, **Elaine** and **Ellis** Salim, **Nicholas** Saseen, **Elaine** Shaheen, **Michael** Silpoch, and **Georgette** Yusuf; **Ghassan**, **Jasanta**, and newborn **Sophia** Al-Khouri (January 12th); **Mudaffer**, **Yara**, and newborn **Carla** Rishmawi (January 20th).
- We also pray for our expectant parents: **Casandra** and **Daniel** Burbar, and **Jacqueline** (daughter of Anwar and Janet) and **John** Timm.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

COFFEE FELLOWSHIP is not hosted today 😞. Please offer a donation to help cover our costs ~ thanks!

COFFEE FELLOWSHIP HOSTS Available dates: February 6th, 20th, and 27th ~ sign-up poster and hosting information is in the Lounge and includes bringing whatever you wish to serve and cleaning up afterwards. St. George provides coffee, cups, cream, and sugar at a charge to the host of \$25. **For more information, contact Manal Abuaita** (810-577-0028).

PROCEDURES As of early December, Fadi Rishmawi, Parish Council Chairman and Fr. Joe cancelled all activities, except Divine Services, because more and more parishioners were getting the covid virus. Further, while in our church building, everyone must properly wear masks. Please remember we can venerate icons at this time by bowing (*not kissing or touching*) and the same for the priest's hand and the chalice at Holy Communion. We all want the safest place for all of our parishioners to worship. We know that combining masks, vaccines, and boosters will protect ourselves and our community against this fast-changing virus. **PLEASE FOLLOW:**

1. Everyone must properly wear a mask inside our church building.
2. Pews in the back of the church are for **those who are not vaccinated** and **those who would like to be social distanced**.

E-MEMO'S If you would like to receive our weekly *St. George E-Memo*, please send your e-mail address to saintgeorgeflint@gmail.com.

HOLY WATER BOTTLES We celebrated the Theophany (Baptism) of our Lord on January 6th. As part of this celebration, Fr. Michael blessed water for all parishioners to take home. If you haven't picked yours up, they are in the Narthex.

ARE YOU VACCINATED? DO YOU HAVE QUESTIONS AND NEED ANSWERS? We are blessed to have many medical professionals in our parish and they want you to get the Covid-19 vaccine. There is lots of wrong information on TV and social media. Don't be fooled; it could cost you, your family, or friends in a tragic way! If you have any questions or need truthful information, please contact Dr. Lindsey (Farah) Brunner by text ONLY please at 810-908-9213. If you or someone you know needs help to make an appointment or be driven to one, please call the office 810-732-0720.

TEXTING FR. JOE? Fr. Joe does not see or use texting services. If you need to contact him, please call the church 810-732-0720, his cell 810-444-9108, or by email njja@aol.com.

2022 OFFERING ENVELOPES AND CHURCH CALENDARS Please pick yours up (and other family members and friends) so we do not have to mail them! If your name is not listed, let Fr. Joe know. The calendars (*please take 1 per family*) are a gift from our Ladies Auxiliary ~ thank you, Ladies! **Parents**, please make sure your children get their *Offering Envelopes* in the Lounge

COMING EVENTS

This Week	The traditional fasting discipline (<i>no meat, poultry, eggs, dairy, fish, wine, olive oil, and their by-products</i>) is observed on Wednesday and Friday.
Tuesday	Combined <i>Pan-Orthodox Divine Liturgy</i> for the Meeting of our Lord in the Temple at Assumption (2245 E Baldwin Rd, Grand Blanc, MI 48439) 6pm
Wednesday	Arabic-English Bible Study <i>Gospel of St. Matthew</i> 12-2pm
Saturday	Great Vespers and Confessions 5pm

The 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 60'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 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

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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 to trespass against God's intent.

Because our sexual drive is so powerful, it can be hard to control without the help of an experience 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.

