

St. George Orthodox Church

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

V. Rev. Father Joseph M. Abud, Pastor

Protodeacon Michael Bassett

Web Site: saintgeorgeflint.org

February 4, 2018

2ND PRE-LENTEN SUNDAY: PRODIGAL SON الإبن الشاطر

SUNDAY AFTER THE MEETING OF OUR LORD IN THE TEMPLE لعيد دخول السيد إلى الهيكل

Tone 2 2nd Matins Gospel {Mark 16:1-8}

Altar Servers: **EVERYONE** {Shane Gantos, captain}

Confessions
8:30-9:30am

Matins p.44
8:50am

Divine Liturgy p.91
10:00am

Memorial Service
Trisagion p.183

Welcome to St. George! Thank you for attending today's Divine Liturgy. Please register your visit by completing the guest book located in the narthex. We would appreciate getting to meet you, 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, being at peace with others, and attending the Divine Liturgy regularly. Please know everyone is invited to venerate the Holy Cross and receive Holy Bread at the end of Liturgy.

In the Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom *{The Golden-Mouth}*,
please follow the special Hymns on the bilingual sheets available on the Narthex Table.

Holy Bread Offerings

- Protodeacon Michael and Pamela Bassett for the health of their family especially friend **Rev. Dr. Michael** Pasquarello on the occasion of his birthday -- *May God grant him many years!* -- and in loving memory of **Mitch** Mickel (9 years, uncle).
- We also pray for the servants of God who have fallen asleep in the Lord: **Michel** Qumseya (40 day, uncle of Jeries Qumseya), **Deacon David** Lazar (+January 6th, husband of the late Norma Lee [Salim]) and **Ricky** Namey (+January 29th, cousin of Leslee Abud).
- 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, **Androlla** Abu Aita, **Asma** Abuaita (sister of Janett Abuaita), **Shafiq**a Abuaitah, **Jane** Abueita, **Abla** Abufarha, **Maher** Alatrash, **Cesar** and **Naila** Banna, **Emil** Bathish, **Alex** Deligorges, **Vera** Farah, **Mariam** Ghanim (Manal's mother), **Elaine** Gejoff, **Phyllis** Good, **Carol** Haddad, **Roland** Haddad, **Salwa** Haddad, **Daisy** Isaac, **Daniel** Isaac, **John** Isaac, **Nawal** Iseid, **Sally** Joseph, **Nakhleh**, **Nicola**, and **Saba** Khoury, **Chuck** Koory, **Danny** Mortensen, **George** and **Renee** Nassif, **Aida** Raffoul, **Elaine** Shaheen, **Mary** Salim, **Michael** Silpoch, **William** Sophia Jr.

- We also pray for those who are with child: **Dunyia** Abufarha (daughter-in-law of Ibrahim and Eman) and **Ghaida** Awad.

Communion Hymn (for the Lord's Day)

(Refrain) Praise the Lord from the heavens. Praise Him in the highest.

(Verse) Praise Him, all His angels; praise Him, all His hosts! (Refrain)

(Verse) Praise Him, sun and moon; praise Him, all you shining stars! (Refrain)

(Verse) Praise Him, you highest heavens, and you waters above the heavens! (Refrain)

Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia.

Reception of Holy Communion

Please remember only ORTHODOX CHRISTIANS who have PREPARED themselves may partake of Holy Communion. *"But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup. For he who eats and drinks in an unworthy manner eats and drinks judgment to himself, not discerning the Lord's body."* (1 Corinthians 11:28-29).

ANNOUNCEMENTS

COFFEE FELLOWSHIP is hosted by *Issa and Chelsy Abufarha*.

COFFEE FELLOWSHIP HOSTS Available dates: February 18th and 25th ~ 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, please see Manal Abuaita. *Cheesefare Sunday is February 18th, no meat products are to be served. During the Great Fast (February 19th – April 7th), no meat, poultry, eggs, dairy, fish, or their by-products are served.*

EUCHRE TOURNAMENT takes place every 2nd Friday of the month (THIS Friday, February 9th). Registration is at 6:30pm and play begins at 7pm. If you would like to help for a couple of hours, volunteers would be greatly appreciated. If you want to play, that's even better!

GODPARENT SUNDAY & BREAKFAST IS NEXT SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 11TH Invitations for Godchildren to send to their Godparents (and *vice-versa*) are available in Church School or in the Lounge. 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 class. When you know who will be attending, please RSVP in the Church School office.

WEEKLY OFFERINGS Our average weekly offerings need to be \$5,630 to meet our 2018 Budget. On January 28th, our offerings were \$1,766, so we were short \$3,844 ☹️ If you haven't already, please fill out your 2018 Offering Form and support God's work at St. George!

MAINTENANCE FUND As everyone was reminded at our recent 2017 Parish General Assembly, all of our families are asked to give \$100 a year ~ above and beyond their regular offerings ~ to help with the constant cost of fixing and repairing things around our complex. This is different than the Improvement Fund envelope. If you used the envelope and put \$100 or more, it was applied to the Maintenance Fund. Thank you for your generosity!

CREDIT AND DEBIT CARDS We can make donations and purchases by Credit or Debit Card. This can be done by coming to the office during normal Office Hours (see below) or calling.

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.
Monday	Bible Study: Acts of the Apostles 3-5pm
Tuesday	Ladies Auxiliary Meeting 6pm Fr. Joe at <i>Michigan State University Orthodox Christian Fellowship (OCF)</i> 7pm
Wednesday	Bible Study: Acts of the Apostles 12:30-2pm SOYO Wednesday 7-9pm
Friday	Euchre Tournament 6:30pm
Saturday	Soul Saturday Divine Liturgy 10am Great Vespers and Confessions 5pm Valentine Day Hafli 7pm

FEBRUARY 4TH ~ PRODIGAL SON

Through the parable of today's Gospel, our Savior has set forth three things for us: the condition of the sinner, the rule of repentance, and the greatness of God's compassion. The divine Fathers have put this reading the week after the parable of the Publican and Pharisee so that, seeing in the person of the Prodigal Son our own wretched condition -- inasmuch as we are sunken in sin, far from God and His Mysteries -- we might at last come to our senses and make haste to return to Him by repentance during these holy days of the Fast.

Furthermore, those who have wrought many great iniquities, and have persisted in them for a long time, oftentimes fall into despair, thinking that there can no longer be any forgiveness for them; and so being without hope, they fall every day into the same and even worse iniquities. Therefore, the divine Fathers, that they might root out the passion of despair from the hearts of such people, and rouse them to the deeds of virtue, have set the present parable at the forefront of the Fast, to show them the surpassing goodness of God's compassion, and to teach them that there is no sin -- no matter how great it may be -- that can overcome at any time His love for man.

FEBRUARY 2ND ~ MEETING OF OUR LORD IN THE TEMPLE

On February 2nd, the Church commemorated an important event in the earthly life of our Lord Jesus Christ (Luke 2:22-40). Forty days after His birth the God-Infant was taken to the Jerusalem Temple, the center of the nation's religious life. According to the Law of Moses (Lev. 12:2-8), a woman who gave birth to a male child was forbidden to enter the Temple of God for forty days. At the end of this time, the mother came to the Temple with the child, to offer a young lamb or pigeon to the Lord as a purification sacrifice. The Most Holy Virgin, the Mother of God, had no need of purification, since she had given birth to the Source of purity and sanctity without defilement. However, she humbly fulfilled the requirements of the Law.

At this time the righteous Elder Simeon (February 3) was living in Jerusalem. It had been revealed to him that he would not die until he should behold the promised Messiah. By

inspiration from above, Saint Simeon went to the Temple at the very moment when the Most Holy Theotokos and Saint Joseph had brought the Infant Jesus to fulfill the Law.

The God-Receiver Simeon took the divine Child in his arms, and giving thanks to God, he spoke the words repeated by the Church each evening at Vespers: *“Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace, according to Thy word, for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation, which Thou hast prepared before the face of all people, a light to enlighten the Gentiles, and the glory of Thy people Israel”* (Luke 2:29-32). Saint Simeon said to the Most Holy Virgin: *“Behold, this child is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel, and for a sign which shall be spoken against. Yea, a sword shall pierce through your own soul also, that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed”* (Luke 2:34-35).

At the Temple was the 84-year-old widow Anna the Prophetess, daughter of Phanuel (February 3), *“who did not leave the temple, but served God with fasting and prayers night and day. She arrived just when Saint Simeon met the divine Child. She also gave thanks to the Lord and spoke of Him to all those who were looking for redemption in Jerusalem”* (Luke 2:37-38). In the icon of the Feast she holds a scroll which reads: *“This Child has established Heaven and earth.”*

Before Christ was born, righteous men and women lived by faith in the promised Messiah, and awaited His coming. The Righteous Simeon and the Prophetess Anna, the last righteous people of the Old Testament, were deemed worthy to meet the Savior in the Temple.

The Feast of the Meeting of the Lord is among the most ancient feasts of the Christian Church. We have sermons on the Feast by the holy bishops Methodius of Patara (+ 312), Cyril of Jerusalem (+ 360), Gregory the Theologian (+ 389), Amphilocius of Iconium (+ 394), Gregory of Nyssa (+ 400), and John Chrysostom (+ 407). Despite its early origin, this Feast was not celebrated so splendidly until the sixth century.

In 528, during the reign of Justinian, an earthquake killed many people in Antioch. Other misfortunes followed this one. In 541, a terrible plague broke out in Constantinople, carrying off several thousand people each day. During this time of widespread suffering, a solemn prayer service (Litia) for deliverance from evils was celebrated on the Feast of the Meeting of the Lord, and the plague ceased. In thanksgiving to God, the Church established a more solemn celebration of this Feast.

On this day, we also commemorate the icon of the Most Holy Theotokos known as “the Softening of Evil Hearts” or “Simeon’s Prophecy.” The Virgin Mary is depicted without Christ, with seven swords piercing her breast: three from the left side, three from the right, and one from below. The icon “Simeon’s Prophecy” symbolizes the fulfillment of the prophecy of the Elder Simeon: *“a sword shall pierce through your own soul”* (Luke 2:35).

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- **OFFICE HOURS** Our secretary, Kelly Dotson, works on Mondays, Thursdays, and Fridays (10am-4pm); Tuesdays and Wednesdays (1pm-4pm). Kelly can be reached during office hours at 810-732-0720 or kellysecstgeorge@gmail.com.
- If you know of a parishioner who has given birth, fallen ill, or admitted to the hospital, please call the church office or let Father Joe know.