

St. George Orthodox Church

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

Web Site: saintgeorgeflint.org

V. Rev. Father Joseph M. Abud, Pastor

Protodeacon Michael Bassett

June 7, 2020

THE DESCENT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT 50 DAYS AFTER PASCHA ON PENTECOST

Tone Festal

Matins Gospel for the Feast *{John 20:19-23}*

Confessions
8:30-9:30am

Matins p.44
8:50am

Divine Liturgy p.91
10:00am

Memorial Service
Trisagion p.183

Live Streaming of Divine Services

ALL services are served only with clergy, an altar server, and a few chanters. They are not open to the public. Please view our livestream at:

YouTube ~ <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCpLWfxMIJK4uQOV41ekE6Wg> or

Facebook ~ <https://www.facebook.com/St-George-Flint-254638524560302/>

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.

In the **Divine Liturgy** of **St. John Chrysostom** *{the Golden-Mouth}*,
The **Special Hymns** we sing are on the [Bilingual sheets from Fr. Joe's Email](#).

Holy Bread Offerings

- We also pray for the servants of God who have fallen asleep in the Lord: **Archimandrite Elias** Bitar (+May 21st, relative of Jeanette Nassif and Kh. Leslee Abud), **Helga** Lamb (+April 30th, mother of Rick, owner of Swartz Funeral Home), **Yacoub** Zureikat (+May 10th, father of Sahar Abdallah and Dr. George), **Farida** Andoni (+May 16th, sister-in-law of Basil Andoni), **Gaylord** Mannor (May 19th, father of Cindy Zureikat), **Fran** Khoury (+May 19th, relative of Evelyn Delbridge), and **Maryellen** Jensen (+May 20th, friend of Jeanette Nassif), and **Joseph** Papanek (+June 2nd, friend of Dn. Mike).
 - 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), **Anwar** Abueita, **Eman** Abufarha, **Wadia** Albaba, Dr. **Usama** Albedd (Sally Abuaita's brother), **Nabil** Andoni (brother of Vera Daoud), **Naila** Banna, **Emil J.** Bathish, **Levi** Cooper, **Vera** Daoud, **Micheline** El-Chaer, **Vera** Farah, **Averie** Fisher (niece of Sandy Thomas), **Mariam** Ghanim (Manal's mother), **Elias** Gantos, **Phyllis** Good, **Shawna** Hale, **Amirah** Hanna, **Donald** Hawkins, **Daisy** Isaac, **Imad** Isaac (friend of St. George), **Nawal** and **Nimer** Iseid, **Nakhleh** Khoury, **Nicola** Khoury, **George** Nassif, **Aida** Raffoul, **Deborah** Salim, **Nicholas** Saseen, **Elaine** Shaheen, **Michael** Silpoch, **William** Sophica Jr, **Lois** Teunion; **Martin**, **Jennifer** [daughter of Najwa Joubran], and newborn **Ava** Khoshaba (May 10th); **Rakan**, **Renea**, and newborn **Joelle Grace** Bayouk (May 25th).
 - We also pray for those who are with child: **Juliana** (Essa) AbuAita, **Andrea** Jones [daughter of Nasri and Carol Haddad], and **Katie** (Philip) Quackenboss [daughter of Bill and Sue Shaheen].
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ANNOUNCEMENTS

OUR STEWARDSHIP, OFFERINGS, AND DONATIONS Though parishioners are not physically able to attend church at this time, PLEASE help our parish by continuing to send your offerings to St. George. This can simply be done by going to our website (<https://saintgeorgeflint.org/>) or by mailing your offerings to St. George 5191 Lennon Road, Flint, MI 48507.

WE MISS YOU AND LOVE YOU!

Our Parish Council sent a letter this week to every one informing us of the steps they have taken during the COVID-19 pandemic and the closing of our church. Most importantly was the information they asked for and **we need**. PLEASE fill out the short form at the end of the letter and send to the church (*St. George 5191 Lennon Road, Flint, MI 48507*) or email Fr. Joe (njja@aol.com) with the information ~ thank you, Thank You, THANK YOU!

PARKING LOT PLEDGES Our goal is \$80,000 (we have raised over \$40,000 so far including half of the Valentine Gala profits) and we are so thankful for those who have donated and pledged. If you have not already, please pick up a form, fill it out, and send it to the church. Remember our donations to the Parking Lot are separate (above and beyond) our weekly offerings. Again, thank you to our donors!

Fr. Joe and Leslee Abud
Dn. Mike and Pam Bassett
St. George Preschool
Khader and Lucy Abuaita
Anwar and Janet Abueita
Laila Abud

Anonymous
Ladies Auxiliary
Tony Daoud
Ayman and Wafaa Elias
John and Theresa Farah
Betty Froberg

Dr. David and May Gantos
Bill and Sue Shaheen
Richard Shaheen
Bob and Lois Teunion

COMING EVENTS

This Week Since today is the great feast of the **Descent of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost**, there is no fasting this week.
Great Vespers 5pm

The Orthodox Home ~ Creating an Orthodox Christian environment in the home

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

Creating an Orthodox Christian home begins with the icon corner. The "bright corner" becomes the center for every domestic church, where the family devotions take place. This is also the family's way of declaring to visitors that this is a Christian home, where Christ is head. Because the husband is a sort of domestic priest (the priesthood of all believers), it is important that he be the one who leads the entire family in prayer.



Each member of the family should have their own patron saint's icon. A wonderful practice from ancient times is to have a family icon written so that all their patron saints are represented in the same icon.

The family should try as best they can to have dinner together every night of the week. Watching TV while eating dinner is a very bad idea, for the meal should be the time when the parents can talk to their children about school or other activities. In these modern times, there are almost always school or work-related activities that don't always allow everyone to be together for that all-important family meal, but every effort should be made to make this happen as often as possible.

The blessing of the food, with the father or mother making the sign of the cross over the meal with their fingers together as they do when blessing oneself, should never be avoided. If we always say a blessing over our food at home and give thanks to God for all He has given us, we are more likely to do so when at school or in a restaurant.

We've all seen those bumper stickers that read, "Kill Your TV". Television and the overuse of the Internet are wreaking havoc on family life. Don't allow these foreign invaders into your home to replace Christ as head of your household. Bad habits are hard to overcome, so replacing these with communal time in the living room may be hard at first, but is necessary for the basic foundation of any Christian home.

Guard your home from other invaders as well. Magazines and other reading material should be appropriate for the Christian home. If you'd not want your priest to see a magazine or book in your home, it shouldn't be there in the first place. The music played in the home should also be uplifting and devoid of profanity and vulgarity.

Regular family meetings where everyone has an opportunity to talk about things and where the atmosphere is loving, open and safe, help create trust and a sense of security for everyone. It is natural for parents to argue on occasion, but this should never take place in front of children. They need to feel secure.

Boys need to see their fathers as icons (*images*) of Christ in the home, demonstrating the biblical image of a husband and father. You men need, for the sake of your children, to give witness to the importance of prayer and church attendance. Statistically, children whose father is a church goer are far more likely to stay in church as adults. Don't leave spiritual instruction up to your wives. You will be held accountable before the Throne of God for your children.



*Train a child
in the way
he should go, and
when he is old he
will not turn
from it.*

PROVERBS 22:6

Men should not let their wives do all the house cleaning and cooking. In an age where both husband and wife often need to hold down jobs in order to make ends meet, a woman's work is not just household work. She should not have to come home from work and be expected to do all the housework and cooking by herself. Men need to teach their children by example to help around the house.

Children should be given a small allowance (according to age) so they can learn to manage money, and an important part of money managing is the tithe. The biblical command to give ten percent of one's income back to God is almost never taught in the Orthodox Church, which is why so many clergy are given such meager salaries, and parishes have to hold church festivals and other fundraisers. When we fail to tithe we are stealing from God! A child who tithes ten percent of his allowance will grow into an adult Orthodox Christian who tithes.

These are basic suggestions for creating an Orthodox home. If you begin to implement these suggestions, the Lord will reward you with a family that stands strong and your children will grow up as spiritually healthy Christians, grounded in biblical teachings and moral fortitude. Your grandchildren will, in turn, will be raised with the same biblical principles, and you will be the most blessed grandparents on your block!

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When We Feel Hopeless ~ Hopelessness can be the catalyst to pull us out of our rut

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

Hopelessness in painful situations is what pulls most of us out of our rut. My own bout with heart problems, and the subsequent healing through the intercession of the Holy Virgin, have given me pause as to how I'd been living my life.

Like many of you I'd been running at top speed. Acting like a man half his age I'd been burning candles at both ends for a very long time. The combination of a lack of sleep and taking on too many responsibilities brought me to the brink. My heart problems woke me up from my state of denial and forced me to look at what was of real importance. I've since been committed to making major changes in my life, cutting back on many things that don't really require my attention, getting more sleep and making sure I take time to get in a good walk every day.

It is easy to resist taking care of yourself if you run at full speed as though you are the only one who can get things done. We all need to set priorities, making sure we focus on Christ and not let that which is transitory rule our lives. If you pay attention to your health, family and spiritual life, everything else will take care of itself. Don't let your life be so full of work that you don't have time to focus on the things that bring you joy. Pay attention when the Lord is calling you to slow down and place your rest in Him.

If you focus only on the things that haven't been done and ignore the little things that bring joy to your life, you'll find yourself in a rut. If you are constantly thinking of where you'd rather be living, or the job you'd rather have, or the work that still needs to be completed, you'll wake up one day and realize all you've needed for happiness has been right in front of you. Don't wait to enjoy what you already have.

His Eminence
The Most Reverend
Metropolitan JOSEPH



Archbishop of New York and
Metropolitan of
All North America

ANTIOCHIAN ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN ARCHDIOCESE
OF NORTH AMERICA

June 2, 2020

Beloved Faithful in Christ,

Greetings and blessings to you and your families as we prepare for our celebration of Holy Pentecost!

As we stand between these two great feasts of the Ascension of our Lord and Holy Pentecost, our festal joy is intermingled with profound sadness and grief. We witnessed the brutal murder of a defenseless man, George Floyd, by men entrusted by our society to uphold peace and justice. As Orthodox Christians, we are appalled by this act of unjust violence, and we fervently entreat the Lord to grant repose to George's soul and comfort and peace to his grieving family and loved ones.

We are also witnessing protests that speak to the wider issues of racial prejudice and injustice in our society. We do not condone chaos and violence as a means of protest, as they only serve to fan the flames of anger and hatred and harm the very communities the peaceful protestors are working to improve. As Antiochian Orthodox, we can offer our broken-hearted empathy, as many of our faithful have come from countries where they have experienced injustice, and we must forcefully proclaim the equal dignity of every human person as created in the image and likeness of God.

As we see the images of so many places set aflame, let us contemplate the images of fire that the Church will offer us this weekend. On Sunday morning, we will chant a festal hymn: "All the nations in the city of David beheld wonders, when the Holy Spirit descended in fiery tongues." This hymn and many others speak to the teaching that the feast of Pentecost healed the division of humanity into competing nations as a result of the Tower of Babel. In the Old Covenant, God fashioned for Himself a people to receive the Law. In the New Covenant, God brings *all* the nations into unity through the Gift of the Holy Spirit – as Christ foretold to the Samaritan Woman a few short weeks ago that all would worship God "in spirit and truth."

"The disciples were first called Christians in Antioch" (Acts 11: 26)

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We live in a time when events provoke us to burn with the passions of anger and divisiveness. This weekend, the Church will call us to burn with love and reconciliation towards all. I would like to pose the question: Which fire will we welcome into our hearts?

There is an instructive note placed before the Prayers of Preparation for Holy Communion that reads: “If thou desirest, O man, to eat the Body of the Master, approach with fear, lest thou be scorched; for it is fire. And, before drinking the divine Blood unto communion, reconcile thyself to them that have wronged thee. Then dare to eat the Mystical Food.” To receive the fire that is communing with our Creator, we must put out the flames of our anger and judgments of others and seek reconciliation – even with those who have wronged us.

As we celebrate Pentecost in the midst of these tumultuous days, let us as Orthodox Christians quench the flames of our hatred and passions that we be set afire with the Gift of the Holy Spirit. Let us cultivate the fruits of the Spirit – love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, and self-control – and work towards the love and reconciliation of all.

With fervent prayers for healing and peace, I remain,

Your Father in Christ,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Metropolitan Joseph" with a stylized flourish at the end.

+JOSEPH

Archbishop of New York and Metropolitan of all North America

cc. Our Hierarchs

“The disciples were first called Christians in Antioch” (Acts 11: 26)

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Descent of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost

In the Old Testament, **Pentecost** was the feast that occurred fifty days after Passover. As the passover feast celebrated the exodus of the Israelites from the slavery of Egypt, so the day of Pentecost celebrated God's gift of the ten commandments to Moses on Mount Sinai.

In the new covenant of the Messiah, the passover event takes on its new meaning as the celebration of Christ's death and resurrection, the "exodus" of men from this sinful world to the Kingdom of God. And in the New Testament as well, the pentecostal feast is fulfilled and made new by the coming of the "new law," **the descent of the Holy Spirit upon the disciples of Christ.**

When the day of Pentecost had come they were all together in one place. And suddenly a sound came from heaven like the rush of a mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared to them tongues as of fire, distributed as resting upon each one of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit. Acts 2:1-4

The Holy Spirit that Christ had promised to his disciples came on the day of Pentecost (Jn 14:26, 15:26; Lk 24:49; Acts 1:5). The apostles received "the power from on high," and they began to preach and bear witness to Jesus as the risen Christ, the King and the Lord.

This moment has traditionally been called the birthday of the Church.

In the liturgical services of the feast of Pentecost, the coming of the Holy Spirit is celebrated together with the full revelation of the divine Trinity: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The fullness of the Godhead is manifested with the Spirit's coming to man, and the Church hymns celebrate this manifestation as the final act of God's self-disclosure and self-donation to the world of His creation. For this reason, Pentecost Sunday is also called **Trinity Day** in the Orthodox tradition. Often on this day the **icon of the Holy Trinity** -- particularly that of the three angelic figures who appeared to Abraham, the forefather of the Christian faith - is placed in the center of the church. This icon is used with the traditional **pentecostal icon** that shows the tongues of fire hovering over Mary and the Twelve Apostles, the original prototype of the Church, who are themselves sitting in unity surrounding a symbolic image of the world.

On Pentecost we have the final fulfillment of the mission of Jesus Christ and the first beginning of the age of the Kingdom of God mystically present in this world in the Church. For this reason, the **fiftieth day** stands as the beginning of the era which is beyond the limitations of this world, fifty being that number which stands for eternal and heavenly fulfillment in Jewish and Christian mystical piety: seven times seven, plus one.

It must be noted that the feast of Pentecost is not simply the celebration of an event that took place centuries ago. It is a celebration of what must happen and does happen to us in the Church today. We all have died and risen with our Lord, and we all have received his Most Holy Spirit. We are the "temples of the Holy Spirit." God's Spirit dwells in us (Rom 8; 1 Cor 2-3, 12; 2 Cor 3; Gal 5; Eph 2-3). By our own membership in the Church, we have received "*the seal of the gift of the Holy Spirit*" in the sacrament of Chrismation. Pentecost has happened to each of us!

Thus, Pentecost is called an **apocalyptic** day, which means the day of **final revelation**. It is also called an **eschatological** day, which means the day of the **final and perfect end**. For when the Messiah comes and the Lord's Day is at hand, the "last days" are inaugurated in which "God declares: ... I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh." This is the ancient prophecy to which the Apostle Peter refers in the first sermon of the Christian Church that was preached on the first Sunday of Pentecost (Acts 2: 1-7; Joel 2: 28-32).

The **Divine Liturgy of Pentecost** recalls our baptism into Christ with the verse from Galatians again replacing the Thrice-Holy Hymn. Special verses from the psalms also replace the usual antiphonal psalms of the liturgy. The epistle and gospel readings tell of the Spirit's coming to men. The Kontakion sings of the reversal of Babel as God unites the nations into the unity of his Spirit. The Troparion proclaims the gathering of the whole universe into God's net through the work of the inspired apostles. The hymns *O Heavenly King* and *We have seen the*

True Light are sung for the first time since Pascha (*passover* in Greek), calling the Holy Spirit to "*come and abide in us*", and proclaiming that "*we have received the heavenly Spirit*". The church building is decorated with flowers and the green leaves of the summer to show that God's divine Breath comes to renew all creation as the "life-giving Spirit." In Hebrew the word for Spirit, breath and wind is the same word, *ruah*.

Blessed art Thou, O Christ our God, who hast revealed the fishermen as most wise, having sent upon them the Holy Spirit: and through them Thou hast fished the universe, O Lover of Man, glory to Thee (*Troparion*).

When the Most High came down and confused the tongues, he divided the nations. But when he distributed the tongues of fire, he called all to unity. Therefore, with one voice, we glorify the All-Holy Spirit! (*Kontakion*)

The **Great Vespers of Pentecost evening** features three long prayers at which the faithful kneel for the first time since Pascha. The Monday after Pentecost is the **feast of the Holy Spirit** in the Orthodox Church, and the Sunday after Pentecost is the **feast of All Saints**. This is the logical liturgical sequence since the coming of the Holy Spirit is fulfilled in men by them becoming saints, and this is the very purpose of the creation and salvation of the world. "Thus, says the Lord: Consecrate yourselves therefore, and be holy, for I your God am holy" (Lev 11:44-45, 1 Pet 1:15-16).