

Saint George Antiochian Orthodox Christian Church
1250 Oakdale Avenue, West Saint Paul, Minnesota 55118

Parish Website: <http://www.saintgeorge-church.org>

Church Phone: 651-457-0854

His Eminence Metropolitan SABA,
Archbishop of New York and Metropolitan of all North America

Right Reverend Bishop ANTHONY

Bishop of the Diocese of Toledo and the Midwest

Right Reverend Archimandrite John Mangels, *Pastor*

Pastor's email: ajamnn@aol.com

Reverend Father John Mikhail, *Assistant Pastor*

Very Reverend Archpriest Paul Hodge, *attached* Very Reverend Archpriest Thomas Begley, *retired*

Reader Michael Begley, *Music Director*

Christina Worrall, *Church School Director*

Heath Nelson and Sophie Haddad, *SOYO Advisors*

Sunday, December 24, 2023

**Sunday Before Nativity of Christ (Sunday of the Genealogy),
Which Falls on Paramon (Eve) of Nativity of Christ**

TONE 4

EOTHINON 7

Commemorations: Venerable Martyr Eugenia of Rome and those with her

THE DIVINE LITURGY OF ST. JOHN CHRYSOSTOM

RESURRECTIONAL APOLITIKION IN TONE FOUR

Having learned the joyful message of the Resurrection from the angel the women disciples of the Lord cast from them their parental condemnation. And proudly broke the news to the Disciples, saying: Death hath been spoiled; Christ God is risen, granting the world Great Mercy.

APOLYTIKION OF SUNDAY BEFORE THE NATIVITY IN TONE TWO

Great are the accomplishments of faith; for the three holy youths rejoiced in the fountain of flames as though at waters of rest. And the Prophet Daniel appeared a shepherd to the lions as though they were sheep. Wherefore, by their prayers, O Christ God, save our souls.

APOLYTIKION FOR THE PARAMON (EVE) OF THE NATIVITY IN TONE FOUR

As the fruit of David's seed, Mary was registered of old * with the Elder Joseph in the little town of Bethlehem, * when she conceived with a seedless and pure conception. * Behold, the time was come that she should bear her Child, * but no place was found within the inn for them; * yet the cave proved a delightful palace * for the pure Lady and Queen of all. * For Christ is born now to raise the image that had fallen aforesaid.

Now sing the apolytikion of Saint George

KONTAKION OF PREPERATION OF CHRIST'S NATIVITY IN TONE THREE

On this day the Virgin cometh to the cave to give birth to * God the Word ineffably, * Who was before all the ages. * Dance for joy, O earth, on hearing * the gladsome tidings; * with the Angels

and the shepherds now glorify Him * Who is willing to be gazed on * as a young Child Who * before the ages is God.

EPISTLE:

Blessed art Thou, O Lord, the God of our Fathers.

For Thou art justified in all that Thou hast done for us.

The Reading from the Epistle of St. Paul to the Hebrews. (11:9-10, 32-40)

BRETHREN, by faith Abraham sojourned in the land of promise, as in a foreign land, living in tents with Isaac and Jacob, heirs with him of the same promise. For he looked forward to the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God. And what more shall I say? For time would fail me to tell of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, of David and Samuel and the prophets who through faith conquered kingdoms, enforced justice, received promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched raging fire, escaped the edge of the sword, won strength out of weakness, became mighty in war, and put foreign armies to flight. Women received their dead by resurrection. Some were tortured, refusing to accept release, so that they might rise again to a better life. Others suffered mocking and scourging, and even chains and imprisonment. They were stoned, they were sawn in two, they were killed with the sword; they went about in skins of sheep and goats, destitute, afflicted, ill-treated—of whom the world was not worthy—wandering over deserts and mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth. And all these, though well attested by their faith, did not receive what was promised, since God had foreseen something better for us, that apart from us they should not be made perfect.

GOSPEL

The Reading from the Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew. (1:1-25).

THE BOOK of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham. Abraham was the father of Isaac, and Isaac the father of Jacob, and Jacob the father of Judah and his brothers, and Judah the father of Perez and Zerah by Tamar, and Perez the father of Hezron, and Hezron the father of Aram, and Aram the father of Amminadab, and Amminadab the father of Nahshon, and Nahshon the father of Salmon, and Salmon the father of Boaz by Rahab, and Boaz the father of Obed by Ruth, and Obed the father of Jesse, and Jesse the father of David the king. And David was the father of Solomon by the wife of Uriah, and Solomon the father of Rehoboam, and Rehoboam the father of Abijah, and Abijah the father of Asa, and Asa the father of Jehoshaphat, and Jehoshaphat the father of Joram, and Joram the father of Uzziah, and Uzziah the father of Jotham, and Jotham the father of Ahaz, and Ahaz the father of Hezekiah, and Hezekiah the father of Manasseh, and Manasseh the father of Amon, and Amon the father of Josiah, and Josiah the father of Jechoniah and his brothers, at the time of the deportation to Babylon. And after the deportation to Babylon: Jechoniah was the father of Shealtiel, and Shealtiel the father of Zerubbabel, and Zerubbabel the father of Abiud, and Abiud the father of Eliakim, and Eliakim the father of Azor, and Azor the father of Zadok, and Zadok the father of Achim, and Achim the father of Eliud, and Eliud the father of Eleazar, and Eleazar the father of Matthan, and Matthan the father of Jacob, and Jacob the father of Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom Jesus was born, Who is called Christ. So all the generations from Abraham to David were fourteen generations, and from David to the deportation to Babylon fourteen generations, and from the deportation to Babylon to the Christ were fourteen generations. Now the birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way. When His mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child of the Holy Spirit; and her husband Joseph, being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame, resolved to divorce her quietly. But as he considered this, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary your wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit; she will bear a son, and you shall call His Name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins." All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet: "Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and His Name shall be called Emmanuel"

(which means, God with us). When Joseph woke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord had commanded him; he took his wife, but knew her not until she had borne a son; and he called His Name Jesus.

HOLY BREAD

Holy Bread is offered for the health and welfare of Bishop ANTHONY, Joanne, the Michaels, Kangas, and Varian families, Joe and Beverley Zaine, Joan Alevizos and all Parishioners of St. George.

In loving memory of Anthony and Gertrude, Vaso and Johanna, Samuel and Helen, James and Mae, Victor and Mary and all departed Parishioners of St. George.

MEMORIAL SERVICE

There will be a Memorial Service for the repose of the souls of Anthony and Gertrude Michaels. May their memory be eternal.

COFFEE HOUR is hosted by the Michaels family. Please join us! Merry Christmas to all!

WELCOME to all our guests and visitors. We are delighted to have you visiting and worshipping with us this morning and hope that you return soon. We invite you to participate in the Divine Liturgy, but, sadly, due to the divisions in Christianity, **only baptized/christened members of the Orthodox Church who have made a recent Confession before an Orthodox priest and prepared themselves by fasting may receive Holy Communion.** We invite you to come forward after Liturgy to venerate the Cross and partake of the *Antidoron*-Holy Bread. Please **turn off your cell phones and all electronic devices.**

ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRAY FOR THE SICK

Please pray for Lamese McDowell, Dorina Morcan, Lisa Rudquist, Sh. Phyllis Hodge, Danny Zaine, Deborah Knooihuizen, Lisa Price, Lorraine Hartwig, Rosina Schwager, Vincent, Tim Anderson, Frank Abraham, William Baker, Michelle Apman, Ruth Nasseff, Lisa Bridges, Larry Andersen, Shula, Laura Mellow, Cordelia and Jody Copa, Nancy Maker, Paisios Sundin, Ilyas Hadad, Elliott, Anna Windsor, Elaine Acheson, Paul Kloos, Marie Ferren, Joe Dragich, Julie Laumer, Maria Golden, Letensie, Ethan Glynn, Yasmine & Samir Kakish, Kh Eileen Simon, John N & John J Etoll, Mike & Jim Etoll, Camille Goll, Eleanor & Peter Hafiz, Jeff Toby, Gigi Daugherty, Lisa Hargrave, Mervat & Abigail Lotfalla, Genevieve, Mikhail & Nikolai Lehnen, Feryal Rahme, Tony Khoury, Mary & Alan Poulsen, Natalie Mozey, Barb & Dawn Tilbury, Steve Salla, Tracy L, Richard Lang.

If you are ill or having surgery and wish to be remembered in the Liturgy and daily prayers of the priest, please contact Fr. Mangels. Please **contact Brigitte Khoury** if you would like to have someone placed on the Prayer List at bgkstgeorge@gmail.com

BULLETIN & NEWSLETTER ANNOUNCEMENT PROCEDURE

ALL announcements in the weekly bulletin and monthly Newsletter are subject to approval by Fr. Mangels/and the Council. **Notify Brigitte by e-mail (bgkstgeorge@gmail.com) or phone with your bulletin information and Holy Bread names by NOON Wednesday** of the week before. Our **JANUARY NEWSLETTER deadline is Thursday, Dec. 21st**. Please make sure any news items or photographs are sent to Brigitte for the Newsletter.

To schedule **Holy Bread offering**, contact Joan Alevizos at 651-453-1894. To host **Coffee Hour**, contact Sanaa Jubran at sanajubran@gmail.com or 651-245-7173. Let us be grateful for what is offered! The expense and effort that our Coffee Hour hosts donate for our period of fellowship is immense!

It is completely appropriate to offer the Memorial Service for more than one person.

HOLY BREAD LIST		COFFEE HOUR
Dec. 31, open		Sunday after Nativity
Jan. 1, open		New Year's Day St. Basil
Jan 5, open		Epiphany/Theophany
Jan 7, open		

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT: The only difference between falling and failing is whether or not you choose to get up.

THIS WEEK AT ST. GEORGE

Sunday, December 24, Vespers of Christmas Eve at 5:00pm
<https://youtube.com/live/WB7Xbb4xOGI?feature=share>
Monday, December 25, Christmas Day Matins at 9:00am followed by Divine Liturgy
https://youtube.com/live/4jchBevXe_g?feature=share
Saturday, December 30, Adult Education, 10:00am/No class January 6, 2024
Saturday, December 30, Vespers at 5:00pm
<https://youtube.com/live/wdhLgc4R2b4?feature=share>
Sunday, December 31, Orthros & Divine Liturgy Service at 9:00a
<https://youtube.com/live/Zp2nSZPwTcc?feature=share>

SCHEDULE FOR CHRISTMAS, NEW YEAR'S EVE, AND THEOPHANY
2023-2024

- Vespers of Christmas Eve TODAY at 5:00 p.m.
- Monday, December 25 – **Christmas Day** Matins at 9:00 a.m. followed by Divine Liturgy
- Saturday, December 30 Regular Vespers at 5:00 p.m.
- Sunday, December 31 – New Year's Eve Day (Sunday before Theophany) Regular Sunday Morning Schedule Matins at 9:00 a.m. followed by Divine Liturgy
- Monday, January 1 – New Year's Day Divine Liturgy for St. Basil at 10:00 a.m.
- Friday, January 5, 2024—**Epiphany/Theophany** Evening Divine Liturgy at 6:30pm

LADIES LUNCHEON

“Save the Date” Saturday, January 13, 2024 at NOON. It will be in the Church Hall like last year! More info to follow! Please use sign-up sheet located in Hall.

SPRING PILGRIMAGE INFORMATION

Information Meeting Sunday, January 14th "Serbia- Monasteries, Vineyards and Spas 2024"
Icon Art Studios will be forming a group pilgrimage to Serbia in 2024. Please attend the informational meeting on Sunday, January 21st at 12:00 in the conference room.

A group went to Serbia last fall visiting gorgeous century old monasteries, churches and convents along with enjoying wine and beautiful spa hotels. Serbia is known to be a country having natural springs of healing potential in the beauty of the landscape.

Please contact Deb Korluka at akorluka@aol.com or 612-889-5868 to sign onto the pilgrimage.

KITCHEN AND HALL USE

Please contact George Khoury for ANY & ALL kitchen or hall use!

NEIGHBOR'S INC

As we enter the holiday season, the need is great! Please continue to be generous.

- MOST NEEDED FOOD ITEMS: - Canned/dried fruit; Plant proteins such as: dried beans, lentils, peanut butter; - Canned meats; - Cooking & baking supplies such as: flour, oil, pancake mix & syrup; - Rice & canned or instant potatoes; - Soup; - Pasta & pasta sauce; - Cereal

- NON-FOOD ITEMS: - Diapers (sizes 4 & 5); - Feminine products; - Toilet paper; - Personal care items such as toothpaste, toothbrushes, soap & shampoo; - Laundry soap

FOCUS MN

• FOOD SHELF UPDATE

We are in need of all types of staples including: soups, beans (black, chick peas, kidney), canned vegetables, pasta sauce, chili, spaghetti, ravioli and the like (meal-in-a-can), crackers, cookies, cereal, ramen noodles, canned meats, instant potatoes, stuffing mix, tea bags, ground coffee, hot chocolate, canned fruit, oil, condiments, pancake mix, syrup, peanut butter, jelly, granola bars.

- Needed as well all these hygiene products: deodorant, shampoo, lotion, razors, and toothbrushes and toothpaste. All sizes are needed from travel to large bottles for big families.
- FOCUS Minnesota has an opening for an Administrative Assistant/ If you, or someone you know, might find this is a good fit, please send a resume to our director Vera Proctor at vproctor@focusna.org, or give us a call at (651) 222-0712. Your work can make a big difference to our neighbors in need.

WINTER CAMP 2024

For 6th—12th graders from Jan 12 –15 @ Camp Courage in Maple Lake, MN (*note place change*) Cost: \$270

Registration link: <https://forms.gle/kLmKgGY1mFt9obmx5> (Deadline is Dec 30th)

Payment info: https://venmo.com/code?user_id=3418849642807296613&created=1698173011.3536448&printed=1

Or send a check to St. Mary's c/o Lisa Tucci 414 17th Ave., Minneapolis, MN 55413 For questions contact Matushka Lisa Tucci: 612-599-0814 or lisatucci71@gmail.com

ORTHODOX GAME LEAGUE NIGHT

Come on Saturday, January 20, 2024 to St. Mary's OCA in Mpls. For a night of fun, games and to meet new friends and greet old ones. Bring a "Munchie or Dessert" to share! Check out flyer on bulletin board!

YAL Chicago Conference

The Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Chicago's annual YAL conference will be taking place this President's Day Weekend (February 16-19) in Chicago! This conference is filled with inspiring speakers, fulfilling workshops, fabulous service projects, amazing glendies and many opportunities to connect with Orthodox young adults from across the country! Registration is now open and tickets WILL sell out! Link to register: <https://www.yalchicago.com/conference-registration>

ST. GEORGE PARISH CONNECTION COMING

With God's blessings, the Parish of St. George overcame the challenges of Covid and emerged stronger and with many NEW members. Now, is the time to better acquaint ourselves with each other and in order to achieve this, we will create a simple document that will be forwarded via email to the parishioners that will have a photo of the family/individuals with their names. No other information will be included or required. **This is totally optional.** The goal is to put the name and the face of the parishioners together to make the connection easier. The completed document will be sent to you by the end of January 2024. Please send your family or individual photos to Assaad Haddad at haddadlb@msn.com or via text message to 651-335-1776.

WINE TASTING EVENT

This fun adult fellowship event is coming back to St. George in time to "extra treat" your Valentine to a special evening on Saturday, February 24, 2024. We will have wonderful décor, scrumptious food and delicious wine to savor. More details will follow soon. Please mark your calendars. There will be a sign-up sheet posted in the Church Hall.

ALTERNATE WAY TO MAKE CONTRIBUTIONS TO ST GEORGE

Scan the QR code below to make contributions via Venmo. In the field that says "What's this for?", you can specify where the contribution should go (building fund, candles, flowers, memorial, etc.). If not specified, the contribution will go to the general fund.



FESTIVAL 2024 UPDATE Sunday, January 28

Dear Friends of St. George,

Holiday greetings to you all, we pray the hope and promise of the birth of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ continues to shine over humanity.

It is with great pleasure and much happiness that the initial planning stage for the 2024 St. George Middle Eastern Festival is set to begin. Without the hard work, enthusiasm, and overall commitment of everyone who participated in last summer's festival, this could not be possible. What a great testament to the parish of St. George, that after a 3-year hiatus the festival went off virtually without a single negative issue. So much so that we experienced record numbers in attendance and overall sales. All glory goes to God. The execution of putting on such an event is no easy task and needs the help and effort of many to ensure the event goes as smoothly as possible. The first thing we need to do is have our annual festival meeting. At this meeting we will look back to last summer's festival and collectively as a committee, discuss the pros and cons and determine what positives we can emphasize and what negatives we can improve. Listening and discussing as a group on how to make our festival better is of the utmost importance and will be priority number 1. It's the only way we can continue to keep this an event fun and enjoyable for all.

For all those who are interested again in joining the festival committee please join us *Sunday, January 28 in the conference room after church*. We will need many new people this year to step up as area leaders along with asking those who were leaders last year to again volunteer their time and expertise. The good news is there are no major changes from last year's festival and we are planning on using the 2023 blueprint for the 2024 festival. We hope you can find it in your heart to give your time once again to help your church in the event that has given us the identity around the Twin Cities as the welcoming, friendly, humble, selfless, and close church family we are, that also by the way has amazing food and camel rides. If you have any questions, please feel free to reach out to me or Fadi Bshara at any time. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to you all.

Yours in Christ,
John Khoury & Fadi Bshara
Festival co-chairs

The Grandeur and Nobility of the Sunday before the Nativity

THE SUNDAY BEFORE CHRISTMAS is known to the Orthodox as the Sunday of the Holy Genealogy. On this day the Church commemorates the ancestors of Christ from Adam to Joseph the Betrothed. Christ's full humanity meant not just that he possessed a human nature but that he had blood relatives, and that he came from a long family line. One of the shortcomings of modern culture is the tendency to leave the past behind and focus on the now. This has resulted in people feeling rootless and incomplete.

In Orthodoxy we remember our ancestors because they are part of us. To remember our family and our family roots is to affirm our humanity; likewise, to overlook our family connections is to diminish our humanity. To remember is an act of love and faithfulness. We all came from somewhere. Our family heritage is a source of blessing and sometimes a source of pain. As Christians we have both a biological and a spiritual family lineage. Salvation in Christ extends to both family lines.

The **first** paragraph of the Synaxarion read at Matins teaches us that it is part of the Orthodox Tradition to remember our ancestors in the faith. The Sunday before Christmas is an appropriate time to remember the ancestors of Christ. It provides us an opportunity to reflect on the way God works mysteriously and sometimes obscurely in our family history. It also reminds to have faith that God is working redemptively in human history. Sin might be present but God's grace even more so (Romans 5:15).

The **second** paragraph affirms Jesus' blood relatives. The second paragraph asserts that Jesus was a real historical person and not some mythical figure. This means that Christian theology is ultimately grounded in the empirical events of the birth of Jesus Christ, his life and ministry, his crucifixion under Pilate and his third day resurrection. The truth claims of Orthodox Christianity rests ultimately on a historical chain of testimony pointing to the historical events of Christ's life and teaching.

There is a hunger among many Protestants and Evangelicals for a historically grounded Christianity. This is evidenced by a recent upsurge of interest in the early Church Fathers and ancient liturgical practices. It is also evidenced by many Evangelicals becoming enamored with the writings of the original Reformers like John Calvin. But it will take more than reading ancient theological writings and incorporating long forgotten practices to fill this hunger. The Sunday of the Holy Genealogy is a reminder that the Orthodox Church has a historical lineage that reaches back to the original Apostles. Those who are hungering for the historic Christian faith would do well to consider the Orthodox Church.



Sunday, December 24, 2023
Sunday Before Nativity of Christ (Sunday of the Genealogy)