

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, January 14, 2024

Leave-Taking of & Sunday After the Theophany

Commemorations: Holy fathers slain at Sinai and Raithu; Holy Martyr Agnes

THE DIVINE LITURGY OF ST. JOHN CHRYSOSTOM

THE EISODIKON OF THE LEAVE TAKING OF THE THEOPHANY

Blessed is He that cometh in the Name of the Lord. The Lord is God and hath appeared unto us. Save us, O Son of God, Who art risen from the dead; who sing to Thee. Alleluia.

RESURRECTIONAL APOLYTIKION IN TONE SEVEN

Thou didst shatter death by Thy Cross, Thou didst open paradise to the thief; Thou didst turn the sadness of the ointment-bearing women into joy. And didst bid Thine Apostles proclaim a warning, that Thou hast risen O Christ, granting to the world the Great Mercy.

APOLYTIKION OF THE THEOPHANY OF CHRIST IN TONE ONE

When Thou, O Lord, wast baptized in the Jordan, worship of the Trinity wast made manifest; for the voice of the Father bore witness to Thee, calling Thee His beloved Son. And the Spirit in the likeness of a dove confirmed the truth of His word. O Christ our God, Who hast appeared and enlightened the world, glory to Thee.

Now sing the apolytikion of Saint George

KONTAKION OF THE THEOPHANY OF CHRIST IN TONE FOUR

On this day Thou hast appeared * unto the whole world, * and Thy light, O Sovereign Lord, * is signed on us who sing Thy praise * and chant with knowledge: Thou hast now come, * Thou hast appeared, O Thou Light unapproachable.

EPISTLE:

Let Thy mercy, O Lord, be upon us.
Rejoice in the Lord, O ye righteous.

The Reading from the Epistle of St. Paul to the Ephesians. (4:7-13)

BRETHREN, grace was given to each of us according to the measure of Christ's gift. Therefore, it is said, "When He ascended on high He led a host of captives, and He gave gifts to men." (In saying, "He ascended," what does it mean but that He had also descended into the lower parts of the earth? He who descended is He who also ascended far above all the heavens, that He might fill all things.) And His gifts were that some should be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.

GOSPEL:

The reading from the Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew. (4:12-17)

AT that time, when Jesus heard that John had been arrested, he withdrew into Galilee; and leaving Nazareth he went and dwelt in Capernaum by the sea, in the territory of Zebulon and Naphtali, so that what was spoken by the prophet Isaiah might be fulfilled: "The land of Zebulon and the land of Naphtali, toward the sea, across the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles—the people who sat in darkness have seen a great light, and for those who sat in the region and shadow of death light has dawned." From that time Jesus began to preach, saying, "Repent, for the kingdom of Heaven is at hand."

HOLY BREAD

Holy Bread is offered for the health and welfare of Michael, Yordanka, Lubomir, Alexander, Veronika, Irina, Antonia, Ioana, Stanislava, Yordan, Ivan, Elena and family and all Parishioners of St. George.

In loving memory of Alexander, Irina, Yordan, Vera, Dimitar, Maria, Georgi, Stoila, Rangel, Irina, Michael, Varba, Todor, Ana, Perko and all departed Parishioners of St. George.

MEMORIAL

There will be a memorial service on the third anniversary of the repose of the soul of Archpriest John Morris! May his memory be Eternal!

COFFEE HOUR is offered by Dani and Michael. Please join us for this period of fellowship.

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 John & Sandra, Angela Nygard, Dorina Morcan, Lisa Rudquist, Sh. Phyllis Hodge, Danny Zaine, Deborah Knooihuizen, Lisa Price, 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 Haddad, 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 **FEBRUARY NEWSLETTER deadline is Thursday, January 18, 2024**. 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
Jan, 21, Yumna Can	Memorial	Can
Jan. 28, Toma		Toma
Feb. 4,		
Feb. 11, J. Alevizos	Memorial (McDowell)	Alevizos
Feb. 18,		
Feb. 25,		

THIS WEEK AT ST. GEORGE

- Adult education class January 20, 2024 at 10:00am
- Saturday, January 20, 2024 Vespers at 5:00pm
- <https://youtube.com/live/qWErH1e6wE?feature=share>
- Sunday, January 21, Orthros & Divine Liturgy Service at 9:00am
<https://youtube.com/live/5gzwQvLZPjk?feature=share>

CANDLE STAND: *Attention Parents!*

With all due respect! We all know why we light candles in the back of the Church, but most of the kids do not. **THIS IS A TEACHABLE MOMENT.**

The Parents or Adults should be keeping an eye on the children who want to participate, making sure they don't burn their hands. Also, explain why we light the candles and that the **SANDBOX** is not for playing. We imprint the Cross in the center, to remind people the solemnity of this practice.

Profound and Sincere Thanks!

I want to take this opportunity to thank all of you for your generous, kind and thoughtful gifts at this holy time of the year. I am humbled by the outpouring of love from our parishioners as well as the organizations of this Parish. It is a joy and honor to serve you and again, I am so grateful for your thinking of me. I ask God's richest blessings on you and your families as we enter a new year.

Sincerely yours in Christ,
Father John A. Mangels, pastor

MEMORY ETERNAL

Please join us in offering our condolences to the family of Marie Slaieh, mother of Lina Smith. She reposed on Monday, January 8 surrounded by her loving family. The funeral services were held at St. Maron Catholic Church in Minneapolis on Friday, January 12. She was a wonderful, kind and sweet lady who will be dearly missed by her family and friends. May her memory be Eternal!

THANK YOU

We wish to thank Michelle Apman, Leslie Hafiz and Beirut Restaurant for a wonderful and fun filled Saturday afternoon. The Ladies who attended the holiday luncheon were treated to delicious food, entertainment and fun games which helped to cheer up the dreary weather!

KITCHEN AND HALL USE

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

SPRING PILGRIMMAGE INFORMATION TODAY

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 at 12:00, noon, 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.

THE CHURCH FATHERS SPEAK— Apt silence bridles anger; moderation in food bridles mindless desire; and the single-phrased Jesus Prayer bridles unruly thought. *Presbyter Ilias of the Philokalia*

NEIGHBOR'S INC

Our most recent food drive brought in 442 lbs of food and \$400 in cash! Thank you for your continued support and amazing generosity.

- **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, spaghettios, 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, pan cake 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.

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. Please ONLY include photos of active members of the Parish. This is to help us get to know each other better—"put a name to the face". 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

Please mark your calendars for February 24, 2024 and join us for an entertaining evening! This fun adult fellowship event is coming back to St. George in time to treat your "valentine" to a special evening on Saturday, February 24, 2024.

Our own wine connoisseur, Youssef Haddad will guide you in savoring wine from different countries of the globe. You will identify their flavors, learn about the history of the wines and enjoy pairing delicious appetizers with the wine selections.

Ticket price per person is \$50. Tickets can be purchased from George Khoury. The deadline to purchase tickets is Sunday, February 18, 2024 in order to plan accordingly. For any questions please contact Assaad Haddad or George Khoury.

CALENDARS & OFFERING ENVELOPES

The 2024 Liturgical Calendars and Offering Envelopes are in and available for pick up. We want to thank Deb Korluka and the Icon Studio for sponsoring the Calendars again this year. This is a great gift to the parishioners of St. George! They are in the Office.

THE CHURCH FATHERS SPEAK— Why were the heavens opened? To inform you that at your baptism also this is done, God calling thee to your country on high.—*St. John Chrysostom*, Homily 12 on Matthew 3, 4th Century

Christ is illumined, let us shine forth with Him. Christ is baptized, let us descend with Him that we may also ascend with Him.—*St. Gregory the Theologian*, Oration on the Holy Lights, Epiphany 381, 10-16., 4th Century

FOCUS Benefit Concert

Pan-Orthodox Choir Ministry (POCM) is performing a benefit concert "My Soul, Arise!" for FOCUS on March 9th at St. Mary's OCA Cathedral, 7pm.

If you are interested in singing in the concert, or would like more information, feel free to reach out to Mark Wesche at POCM@stmarysoca.org. Rehearsals begin Friday, January 19th at 7pm.

POCM CHORAL WORKSHOP

Join us as we take an in-depth look at vocal techniques of choral singing. The workshop is part of the Pan-Orthodox Choir Ministry program. Father Gregory Ealy will be the clinician. The event will be at St. Mary's Orthodox Cathedral on February 23 at 6pm with dinner and talk and then on Saturday, February 24 from 9:30-3:30 the workshop will take place. Suggested donation is \$10.00. Lunch will be provided. For more information contact Mark Wesche at POCM@stmarysoca.org.

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.

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

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.



CHRIST'S PERRENIAL MESSAGE: *"Repent, for the Kingdom of God is at hand"*

REPENTANCE is not a one-time action, but rather a continuous action. Our life is supposed to be spent "repenting." Repentance is not supposed to be a negative word, like "we're supposed to spend out whole life feeling bad for our sins." That is not what repentance is at all. Repentance is a continual "running" toward God, a sharpening of our hearts and souls so that we can better glorify Him. Repentance is a positive thing. More repentance doesn't mean more sin. More repentance means more focus on God. One can even sin less frequently but repent more. Because the greater thirst for God makes one sadder over sin and more motivated to act with righteousness, rather than in sinful ways.

The basic message of Christ is for us to center on Him—our life, our purpose, our hope. What follows next is the motivation to repent, which is that the Kingdom of heaven is at hand. There are two meanings to this phrase. Christ came to earth to inaugurate the "Kingdom of heaven" both on earth and in heaven. Before the time of Christ's earthly ministry, people were consigned to Hades and death at the end of their early lives. For as long as there were people, after the Fall of Adam and Eve, the journey through life was a journey to an end of darkness.

The coming of Christ changed that. Christ taught that after we die, those who believe will go to the Resurrection of life, a place of brightness, rest and peace.

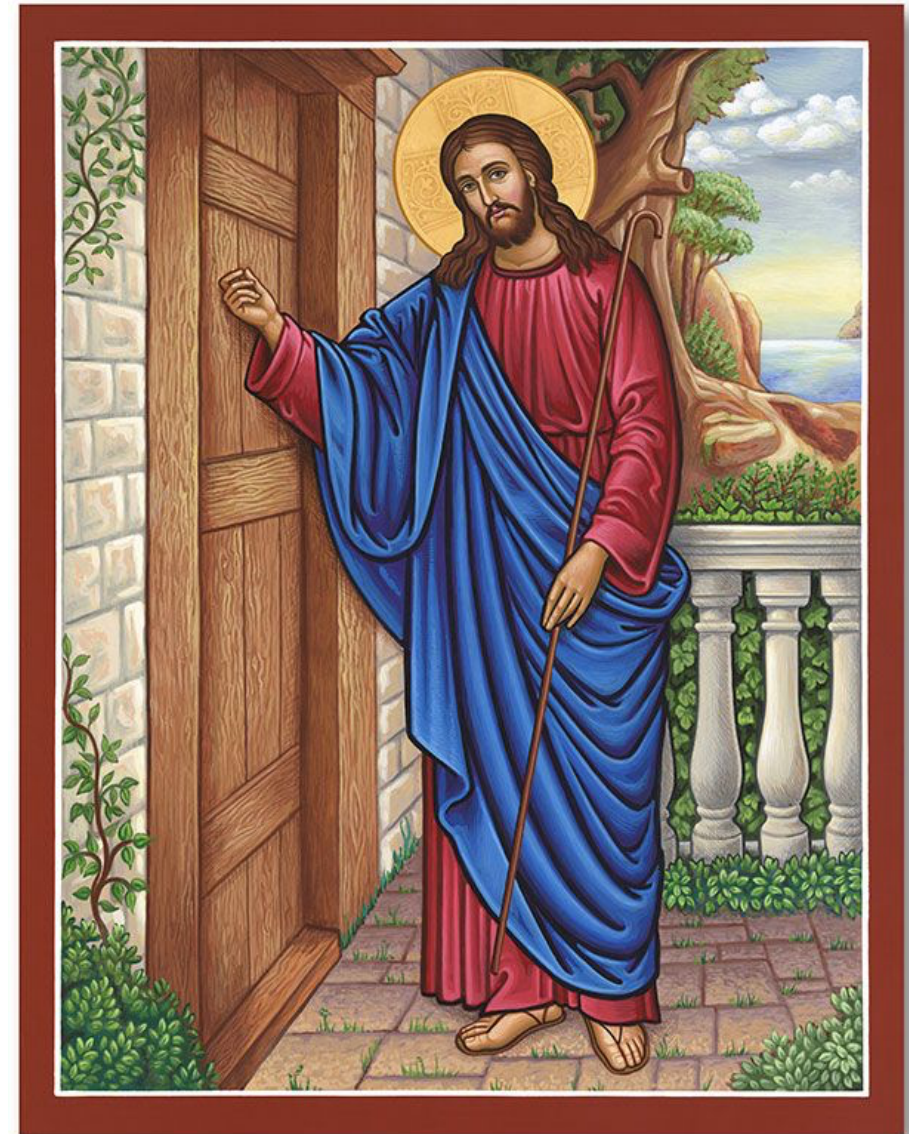
Christ's message went even further though. The Kingdom of heaven was not going to just be a far off destination, but with the coming of Christ, it is a PRESENT reality. We LIVE in the Kingdom NOW. This is why the Divine Liturgy begins with the words "Blessed is the Kingdom, of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, NOW and forever and to the ages of ages." We know that the Kingdom is forever. However, the Kingdom is also present NOW.

How is that? Because when we partake of Christ, either through Holy Communion, or through prayer, when we establish an "intimacy" with Christ, we will experience what heaven will be like. Heaven will be an eternal closeness with Christ. However, we can achieve this closeness in life, by developing a deeper relationship with the Lord.

Throughout the Gospels, we hear references to the Old Testament prophecies and how they are now fulfilled in the person of Jesus Christ. Today's Gospel reading quotes the Prophecy of Isaiah, where he wrote "The land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, toward the sea, across the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles—the people who sat in darkness have seen a great light, and for those who sat in the region and shadow of death light has dawned. (Matthew 4:15-16. This prophecy is fulfilled in the person of Christ, who came not only to call the Jews, His own people, to salvation, but to call the Gentiles (EVERYONE ELSE) as well. However, the call of Christ is to come to His Light. Oftentimes, when I read this verse, how those who sat in darkness saw a great light, I wonder if the phrase should read "the people who sat in darkness have seen a great light, and ran away from it," or "The people who sat in darkness have seen a great light, but were content to stay in darkness. They did not desire to BE in the light.

God doesn't want us sitting in darkness. He does not want us to be depressed about the "shadow of death." Rather, He wants us to walk in the Light, to repent, to grow closer to Him, to enjoy an intimacy with Him right now, so that we can experience His Kingdom here, which in turn will motivate us to work for the Kingdom which is to come.

Fr. Stavros Akrotirianakis



What must I repent of? What must I convert to? What must I change inside of me in order to follow Christ more authentically?

There is a famous painting of Jesus knocking on a closed door. The door has no handle. The person inside the house must open the door and answer Jesus' knock. If not, Jesus will walk away.

Sunday, January 14, 2024
Leave-Taking of & Sunday after the Theophany