

SAINT GEORGE GREEK
ORTHODOX CHURCH

CHURCH STAFF

- Parish Priest:
Fr. Michael Constantinides
- Chanter:
Steve Morgan
- Caretaker: Jason Leon
- GOYA Advisors:
Dr. Vickie Pyevich/Anne
Kirpatrick
- HOPE/JOY Advisors:
Pres. Maria Constantinides/
Candice Elias
- Outreach and Evangelism
Chair: Angela Spurgetis
- Parish Council President:
Mary Rankin
- Philoptochos President:
Susan Coin
- Prayer Ministry: Gus Pappas
- Sunday School Director:
Deacon Paul Speed
- Senior Ministry Chairperson:
Kay Coin

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VOLUME 7 ISSUE 2

FEBRUARY 2017

The Trophybearer

PASTORAL MESSAGE

As Orthodox Christians we experience the Eucharist as the epicenter of history, sanctifying and transforming the world, making us a new creation in Christ and returning us to Paradise once again. We live and understand the Church in the compelling light of the Eucharist. At the Liturgy we experience the very presence of God in a tangible way. Whenever, we, the people of God, gather together as the Body of Christ in worship, we perpetuate the Lord's ministry on earth.

At the Liturgy, God accepts our offering of bread and wine, changes them into the Body and Blood of Christ and returns them to us for the remission of our sins and life everlasting. The Liturgy or Eucharist is the par excellence service of the Church, by which we Sacramentally offer ourselves and the whole world to God.

As Christian Stewards, what we experience at the Liturgy is incorporated into our everyday lives. Worship motivates us to eagerly and enthusiastically support the ministry of the Lord. Through Stewardship, we are afforded the extraordinary privilege to respond tangibly to God by offering our time, talents and treasures to His Church with gratitude and thanksgiving. In so doing, we aspire to attain the true definition of the word Liturgy, which means the people working in communion with God, the common work of all.

Through the Divine Liturgy we participate in the mystery of the Holy Trinity, the summation of the entire history of salvation in Christ and the foretaste of the Kingdom to come. In response to God's blessings "we praise, bless and thank" Him for all He has done for us. These words are sung at the climax of the Eucharistic prayer, fulfilling our ultimate calling, which is to offer all things to God in thanksgiving.

The words "praise, bless and thank" are intrinsically related to the three "t's" of Stewardship, which are "time, talents and treasures." Saint James tells us in his Epistle: "Faith without works is dead." Therefore, it is not enough to offer "praise" to the Lord without returning to Him the gift of our "time" through worship and doing His will on earth. It is not enough to "bless" God without returning our "talents" to Him through our good works, which bring glory to His name. It is not enough to "thank" the Lord without returning a fair measure of our "treasures," our possessions to Him through the Church, the Kingdom of God on earth. Thus, as Orthodox Christians, our worship finds its fulfillment in ministry.

Stewardship is not a matter of words but of works. All we are and all we have are gifts from the Lord. It is the offering of our time, talents and treasures to God, the Owner, who has freely given them to us to manage as Stewards, with the understanding that they are on loan. Christ expects us to return a fair portion of these gifts for His ministry through the Church. Our hearts experience the true joy of giving when we give freely, unselfishly and generously, as He has given to us. Generous giving without constraint is a mark of freedom and spiritual maturity.

The Old Testament speaks of offering the "first fruits" to the Lord from what He has allowed us to earn. First fruits means giving thanks first to God and recognizing Him as the Provider of all our possessions. Christian Stewardship means taking what God gives us, and making the support of Christ's work on earth our first priority as a gesture of our thanksgiving for what He has given us. When King David contemplated giving to God he said: "For all that is in heaven and in earth is Yours, O Lord, and You are exalted as head over all. For all things come from You, and of Your own we have given You." (1 Chronicles 29:11, 14)

Fr. Michael Constantinides
Parish Priest

February 2017

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 Fast Day 10:00 a.m. Orthodox Study Forum	2 The Presentation of the Lord 8:30 a.m. Orthros followed by the Divine Liturgy 6:00 p.m. Orthodox Study Forum	3 Fast Day	4 +Sacrament
5 Sunday of the Publican and the Pharisee Triodion Begins Fast Free 8:30a.m. Orthros 10:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy Sunday School Classes following Holy Communion	6 Feast Day of Saint Photios Fast Free 9:00 a.m. Orthros followed by the Divine Liturgy at Assumption	7 Fast Free	8 Fast Free 10:00 a.m. Orthodox Study Forum	9 Fast Free 6:00 p.m. Orthodox Study Forum	10 Feast Day of Saint Haralambos Fast Free 8:30 a.m. Orthros followed by the Divine Liturgy at Saint George	11 Fast Free
12 Sunday of the Prodigal Son 8:30a.m. Orthros 10:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy Sunday School Classes following Holy Communion 5:00 p.m. Young(ish) adult dinner	13 6:00 p.m.—8:00 p.m. Family Ministry at Assumption Church	14	15 Fast Day No Morning Orthodox Study Forum	16 6:00 p.m. Orthodox Study Forum	17 Fast Day	18 1st Saturday of Souls 8:30 a.m. Orthros followed by the Divine Liturgy 5:00 Mardigras
19 Judgment Sunday (Meatfare Sunday) 8:30a.m. Orthros 10:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy Sunday School Classes following Holy Communion +Sacrament	20 Fasting from meat only	21 Fasting from meat only 7:00 p.m. Parish Council Meeting	22 Fasting from meat only 10:00 a.m. Orthodox Study Forum Evening Meal	23 Fasting from meat only 6:00 p.m. Orthodox Study Forum	24 Fasting from meat only	25 2nd Saturday of Souls Fasting from meat only 8:30 a.m. Orthros followed by the Divine Liturgy
26 Forgiveness Sunday (Cheesefare Sunday) Proskomidi Service 8:30a.m. Orthros 10:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy Sunday School Classes following Holy Communion 5:00 p.m. Sunday Evening Vespers	27 Clean Monday Great Lent Begins Fast Day 6:00 p.m. Great Compline	28 Fast Day 5:00 p.m.—8:00 p.m. Family Ministry at Saint George preceded by Great Compline				

The Council Connection

Mardi Gras: Saturday, February 18

This is always a fun evening with delicious food, dancing and great decorations (provided by Nancy Spurgetis who updated the tables last year with some terrific finds)!

Connie Allen has volunteered to provide a basket for the auction and we are seeking other volunteers to do the same!

Tickets will be sold in advance on Sundays and at the door. If you would like to help with this event, please contact Mary Rankin (cell: 563-263-2341; email: mbarton83@aol.com) or any council member.

Wanted: Not-So- Young(ish) Adults to provide Contact Info for Young(ish) Adults in Area

If you are a parishioner "of a certain age" and have an offspring, niece, nephew, or godchild in the area to whom you would like an invitation sent for the event on February 12 (described in the following paragraph), please contact Father Michael or Mary Rankin as soon as possible!

Young(ish) Adult Dinner and Forum Planned for Sunday, February 12

There are no football games scheduled for this date, so a casual dinner and some fun activities will be provided beginning at 5:30 p.m. for parishioners (and would-be parishioners) who are in

their 20's, 30's and up to and including mid-forties.

Stereotypical young adult food (such as pizza... with slightly upscale toppings for millennial foodies) with wine and craft beer will be provided! The parish would love to become reacquainted with previous youth from the parish as well as newcomers to the area!

If you are interested in this event, please contact Father Michael or Mary Rankin (cell: 563-263-2341; email: mbarton83@aol.com).

Yours in Christ,

Mary Rankin

Mary Rankin
Parish Council
President

**Serving on
the Parish
Council is a
sacred
opportunity!
If you wish
to serve
please
contact
Father
Michael or
Mary
Rankin!**

Epistle Readers

**Sunday,
February 5, 2017**
**Sunday of the Publican
and the Pharisee**
Loukia Constantinides

**Sunday,
February 12, 2017**
**Sunday of the Prodigal
Son**
Ethan Kirpatrick

**Sunday,
February 19, 2017**
Judgment Sunday
Michael Pyevich

**Sunday,
February 26, 2017**
Forgiveness Sunday
Mary Rankin

Parish Council Sunday Duty

**Sunday,
February 5, 2017**
Brad Crosson,
Mariellen Crosson
Mike Patramanis
Ted Pitsoulakis

**Sunday,
February 12, 2017**
John Mekus,
Dennis Spurgetis,
Diane Spurgetis
Mary Rankin

**Sunday,
February 19, 2017**
Joe Burmeister,
Mary Kay Eckert
Mary Rankin
Ken Stiegel

**Sunday,
February 26, 2017**
Brad Crosson,
Mariellen Crosson
Mike Patramanis
Ted Pitsoulakis

Coffee Hour Hosts for February 2016

**Sunday,
February 5, 2017**
hosted by:
Mary Kay Eckert
Sunday, February 12, 2017
hosted by:
No Coffee Hour
Philoptochos Brunch

**Sunday,
February 19, 2017**
hosted by:
Martha Stratton/
Helen Moorhead
**Sunday,
February 26, 2017**
hosted by:
Mary Rankin



"O Lord, open my lips and
my mouth shall show forth
your praise!"

Anyone interested in being
an epistle reader should
contact the church office!

Prospora Baking Schedule

**Sunday,
February 5th,
2017**

**Mary Kay
Eckert**

**Sunday,
February 12th,
2017**

Patti Kenyon

**Sunday,
February 19th,
2017**

**Angela
Spurgetis**

**Sunday,
February 26th,
2017**

**Anne
Kirkpatrick**

EVENING MEAL VOLUNTEERS

February 22-
**Dr. Vickie Pyevich
and the GOYA**

March 22-
**Georgjean
Pitsoulakis**

**April 26-Jim and
Elizabeth Teros**

Anyone interested
in participating in
this worthwhile
ministry should con-
tact Dena Manta at
332-1684.



**Fellowship
and fun!**

Community News

SUNDAY SCHOOL NEWS

On Sunday February 26, 2017 Father Michael will be doing the Proskomidi (preparation service) and explain the service to the Sunday School. The children should be present by 9:45 a.m.

YOUNG(ISH) ADULT DINNER AND FORUM

There are no football games scheduled for this date, (February 12) so a casual dinner and some fun activities will be provided beginning at 5:30 p.m. for parishioners who are in their 20's, 30's and up to and including mid-forties. Additional information will be sent out soon. If you are interested in this event, please contact Mary Rankin (cell:

563-263-2341; email: mbarton83@aol.com).

PARISH COUNCIL NEWS

Will be on Tuesday, February 21, 2017 at 7:00 p.m. in the Green room.

2017 Executive Council

Congratulations to our new Executive Council:

Mary Rankin, President

Mary Kay Eckert,
Vice-President

Dennis Spurgetis,
Treasurer

Brad Crosson, Secretary

2017 Parish Council

Joe Burmeister

Nick Coin

Brad Crosson

Mariellen Crosson

Mary Kay Eckert

John Mekus

Mike G. Patramanis

Mary Rankin

Dennis Spurgetis

Dianna Spurgetis

Ken Stiegel

MARDI GRAS

Our Mardi Gras will be held on Saturday, February 18th. (see enclosed flier) The Mardi-Gras committee would like to remind all parishioners to think about donating items for our raffle. If you have something to donate for the raffle, please get in touch with the Church Office. Please help out as best you can to make this year's event as successful as we can!



Our Saint George Parish Community

PRAYERS FOR OUR SHUT-INS

Have we taken for granted our health? Some of our members who are no longer able to come to church would always appreciate a phone call just to say hello.

Emily Caras

Helen Corelis

Stella Cudworth

Elaine Froumis

Pat Grevas

Judy Pappas

Jim Patton

Xenia Patton

Effie Skafidas

Janice Smirles

Gordon Smith

Helen Smith

Jim Tsagaris

Outreach and Evangelism

Thank you to those who participated in the blood drive. The Mississippi Valley Regional Blood Center was very grateful.

If you would like to drive someone to church or if you need a ride to church, please contact Angela Spur-

getis [319-631-8154](tel:319-631-8154).

The Riverbend Foodbank needs volunteers for their many programs...they feed a lot of people! Jobs vary, not all require lifting. You may go as an individual or wait for a St. George group activity. I will collect names at

church for the group project. View their website and/or call if you want to help right away, [563-345-6490](tel:563-345-6490).

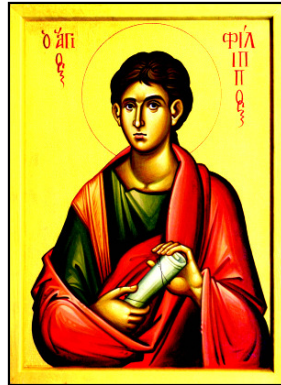
Please let me know your ideas for outreach at St. George and out in the community. Let's give with a cheerful heart!

Sunday School News

School proceeds apace after the holiday break. We should have only one 'day off' between now and the end of the year, on Pascha. We encourage all the children of our parish to attend Sunday School on a regular basis.

On Sunday February 26, 2017, Father will conduct another teaching session for the Sunday School children. This year it will involve the preparing of the bread for Holy Communion, the Proskomidi. Students will need to be in the nave ready 9:45 a.m. and should bring two list of names. One for the living and one for the dead (only Orthodox Christian family members can be commemorated)

Deacon Paul



St. Philip the Deacon is the patron saint of Religious Education. He was an inspired evangelist and teacher whose missionary work brought a multitude of new believers to Christ in Samaria and other cities. along the coast of Palestine

HOPE/JOY News

The generosity of the Saint George family is overwhelming! There were so many donations made of hats, gloves, mittens and scarves! Thank you to everyone who donated to this worthy cause. Father Michael said he gave out several items to families in need and the remainder will be donated to SafePath Shelter in Moline. It warms my heart to think of how many people we will help stay a little warmer this winter!

In January we visited the ice skating rink at Middle Park in Bettendorf, IA. Thank you

to all who came and skated and had fellowship with our church family. Hopefully there weren't too many bumps and bruises.

Our next gathering will be on February 12th after Liturgy. Watch your emails for the details soon.

Remember, all kids between the ages of 3-12 are encouraged to join in the fun.

Please feel free to contact Presvytera Maria at pres-mariazoe@aol.com or Candace Elias at eli-as4130@yahoo.com with any ideas or questions.

GOYA News

Goya plans on hosting the February evening meal as part of our Community Service. We are discussing visiting the shut ins since the December freezing temperatures put a damper on our Christmas caroling. If you want to be part of these activities and are between the ages of 13 and 18, please contact Father Michael, Vickie Pyevich or Ann Kirkpatrick.



The Four Circles of Youth Ministry: Worship Witness Fellowship Service

Parish Family News

Happy Birthday to Presbytera Maria! We are all proud of you! (Father Michael, Nicholas and Loukia)!

Congratulations to Andrew Leon for receiving High Honors for the first semester at Moline High School!

Congratulations to Mary Grevas an honor roll student and Dance Marathon co-captain at Alleman High School. She is a state finisher, Western Big Six and sectional champion on the tennis team. Mary volunteers for Habitat for Humanity and is a member of Student Ambassadors, Foreign Language Club, Key Club and the Student Hunger Drive. Mary plans to study speech pathology at the University of Iowa.

Congratulations to Ellen Pappas the 2016 captain and a four-year member of the Bettendorf High School swim team. She volunteers at Spring Forward Learning Center and Figge Art Museum. She also received Bettendorf School award for English. Ellen is a member of St. George Greek Orthodox Church. She plans to study early childhood education

St. George Stewardship Notes



QUICK FACTS

(as of
January 21, 2017)

\$92,244.00 =
Amount pledged for 2017
by 56 households

\$7,850.00 =
Amount given to 2017
stewardship since Jan. 1

\$1,647.00 =
Average pledge per
household at this date

\$263,855 =
Amount needed for the
ministries of
St. George Parish for
2017

64% of 2017 Pledges Received Reflect Increase from Previous Year's Pledge

Fifty-six 2017 pledge cards have been received and thirty-six of those pledges reflected an increase in the amount pledged. As of January 21, the increase is \$14,380.00. The following chart reflects the range of pledges so far:

Amount Pledged	Number of Pledges
\$50 - \$499	8
\$500 - \$999	14
\$1,000 - \$1,200	7
\$1,500 - \$1,900	6
\$2,000 - \$2,580	11
\$3,000 - \$3,660	4
\$4,000 - \$4,200	2
\$5,500	1
\$6,000	1
\$7,200	1

Parish Happenings



Music & Dancing

An Exciting Raffle Will Be Held

Saturday

February 18, 2017

Serving from 5:00 – 8:00 p.m.



Menu

Roast Chicken

Macaroni with Kapama Sauce,
Greek Salad, Roll and Dessert

Adults: \$15.00

Children (under 12) \$10.00

Tickets available at door or by calling
Church Office 786-8163

St. George Greek Orthodox Church
2930 – 31st Avenue
Rock Island, Illinois



Parish Happenings

Family Ministry

Offered By Assumption, Saint George and Saint Nicholas Orthodox Churches

Your Life Meets Your Faith



February 13, 2017 (Assumption)
6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.

February 28, 2017 (Saint George)
5:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m. (beginning with Compline)
Adult book discussion
"Saint John Chrysostom on Marriage and Family"

Separate Program for children
Dinner offered
Free-will donation appreciated!



Sunday of the Publican and Pharisee (January 3)



The Publican and the Pharisee

The Sunday after the Sunday of Zacchaeus is devoted to the Publican and the Pharisee. At Vespers the night before, the TRIODION (the liturgical

book used in the services of Great Lent) begins.

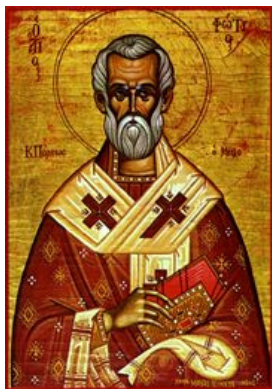
Two men went to the Temple to pray. One was a Pharisee who scrupulously observed the requirements of religion: he prayed, fasted, and contributed money to the Temple. These are very good things, and should be imitated by anyone who loves God. We who may not fulfill these requirements as well as the Pharisee did should not feel entitled to criticize him for being faithful. His sin was in looking down on the Publican and feeling justified because of his external religious observances.

The second man was a Publican, a tax-collector who was despised by the people. He, however, displayed humility, and this humility justified him before God (Luke 18:14).

The lesson to be learned is that we possess neither the Pharisee's religious piety, nor the Publican's repentance, through which we can be saved. We are called to see ourselves as we really are in the light of Christ's teaching, asking Him to be merciful to us, deliver us from sin, and to lead us on the path of salvation.

Almsgiving heals the soul's incensive power; fasting withers sensual desire; prayer purifies the intellect and prepares it for contemplation of created beings. For the Lord has given us commandments which correspond to the powers of the soul. St. Maximos the Confessor (First Century on Love no. 79)

Saint Photios the Great (February 6)



Saint Photios the Great

Saint Photios, Patriarch of Constantinople, "the Church's far-gleaming beacon," lived during the ninth century, and came from a family of zealous Christians. His father Sergius died as a martyr in defense of holy icons. Saint Photios received an excellent education and,

since his family was related to the imperial house, he occupied the position of first state secretary in the Senate. His contemporaries said of him: "He so distinguished himself with knowledge in almost all the secular sciences, that it rightfully might be possible to take into account the glory of his age and compare it with the ancients."

Michael, the young successor to the throne, and Saint Cyril, the future Enlightener of the Slavs, were taught by him. His deep Christian piety protected Saint Photios from being seduced by the charms of court life. With all his soul, he yearned for monasticism.

In 857 Bardas, who ruled with Emperor Michael, deposed Patriarch Ignatius (October 23) from the See of Constantinople. The bishops, knowing the piety and extensive knowledge of Photios, informed the emperor that he was a man worthy to occupy the archpastoral throne. Saint Photios accepted the proposal with humility. He passed through all the clerical ranks in six days. On the day of the Nativity of Christ, he was consecrated bishop and elevated to the patriarchal throne.

Soon, however, discord arose within the Church, stirred up by the removal of Patriarch Ignatius from of-

Saint Photios (Continued)

fice. The Synod of 861 was called to end the unrest, at which the deposition of Ignatius and the installation of Photios as patriarch were confirmed.

Pope Nicholas I, whose envoys were present at this council, hoped that by recognizing Photios as patriarch he could subordinate him to his power. When the new patriarch proved unsubmitive, Nicholas anathematized Photios at a Roman council.

Until the end of his life Saint Photios was a firm opponent of papal intrigues and designs upon the Orthodox Church of the East. In 864, Bulgaria voluntarily converted to Christianity. The Bulgarian prince Boris was baptized by Patriarch Photios himself. Later, Saint Photios sent an archbishop and priests to baptize the Bulgarian people. In 865, Saints Cyril and Methodius were sent to preach Christ in the Slavonic language. However, the partisans of the Pope incited the Bulgarians against the Orthodox missionaries.

The calamitous situation in Bulgaria developed because an invasion by the Germans forced them to seek help in the West, and the Bulgarian prince requested the Pope to send his bishops. When they arrived in Bulgaria, the

papal legates began to substitute Latin teachings and customs in place of Orthodox belief and practice. Saint Photios, as a firm defender of truth and denouncer of falsehood, wrote an encyclical informing the Eastern bishops of the Pope's actions, indicating that the departure of the Roman Church from Orthodoxy was not only in ritual, but also in its confession of faith. A council was convened, censuring the arrogance of the West.

In 867, Basil the Macedonian seized the imperial throne, after murdering the emperor Michael. Saint Photios denounced the murderer and would not permit him to partake of the Holy Mysteries of Christ. Therefore, he was removed from the patriarchal throne and locked in a monastery under guard, and Patriarch Ignatius was restored to his position.

The Synod of 869 met to investigate the conduct of Saint Photios. This council took place with the participation of papal legates, who demanded that the participants sign a document (Libellus) condemning Photios and recognizing the primacy of the Pope. The Eastern bishops

would not agree to this, and argued with the legates. Summoned to the council, Saint Photios met all the accusations of the legates with a dignified silence. Only when the judges asked him whether he wished to repent did he reply, "Why do you consider yourselves judges?" After long disputes, the opponents of Photios were victorious. Although their judgment was baseless, they anathematized Patriarch Photios and the bishops defending him. The saint was sent to prison for seven years, and by his own testimony, he thanked the Lord for patiently enduring His judges.

During this time the Latin clergy were expelled from Bulgaria, and Patriarch Ignatius sent his bishops there. In 879, two years after the death of Patriarch Ignatius, another council was summoned (many consider it the Eighth Ecumenical Council), and again Saint Photios was acknowledged as the lawful archpastor of the Church of Constantinople. Pope John VIII, who knew Photios personally, declared through his envoys that the former papal decisions about Photios were annulled. The council

acknowledged the unalterable character of the Nicean-Constantinople Creed, rejecting the Latin distortion ("filioque"), and acknowledging the independence and equality of both thrones and both churches (Western and Eastern). The council decided to abolish Latin usages and rituals in the Bulgarian church introduced by the Roman clergy, who ended their activities there.

Under Emperor Basil's successor, Leo, Saint Photios again endured false denunciations, and was accused of speaking against the emperor. Again deposed from his See in 886, the saint completed the course of his life in 891. He was buried at the monastery of Eremia.

The Orthodox Church venerates Saint Photios as a "pillar and foundation of the Church," an "inspired guide of the Orthodox," and a wise theologian. He left behind several works, exposing the errors of the Latins, refuting soul-destroying heresies, explicating Holy Scripture, and exploring many aspects of the Faith.

The Holy Prophet Zachariah (February 8)



The Holy Prophet Zachariah

The Prophet Zachariah the Sickle-Seer the eleventh of the twelve Minor Prophets. He was descended from the tribe of Levi, and seems to have been a priest (Nehemiah 12:4,16). He was called to prophetic service at a young age and became, in the wondrous expression of church hymnology, “a spectator of supra-worldly visions.”

The Book of the Prophet

Zachariah contains inspired details about the coming of the Messiah (Zach 6:12); about the last days of the Savior’s earthly life, about the Entry of the Lord into Jerusalem on a young donkey (Zach 9:9); about the betrayal of the Lord for thirty pieces of silver and the purchase of the potter’s field with them (Zach 11:12-13); about the piercing of the Savior’s side (Zach 12:10); about the scattering of the apostles from the Garden of Gethsemane (Zach 13:7); about the eclipse of the sun at the time of the Crucifixion (Zach 14:6-7).

“Enlightened by dawns all above,” the Prophet Zachariah, “saw the future as it were the present.” According to Tradition, this “most true God-proclaimer” lived to old age and was buried

near Jerusalem, beside his illustrious contemporary and companion, the Prophet Haggai (December 16). The title “Sickle-Seer” given Zachariah comes from a vision in which he saw a sickle flying in the air, destroying thieves and perjurers (Zach 5:1-3).

The holy Prophet Zachariah died around 520 B.C. His tomb was discovered in 415 in a village near Eleutheropolis (Sozomen, Hist. Eccles. VI:32, IX:17). At the prophet’s feet was the body of a child dressed in royal accoutrements. His holy relics were transferred to the church of Saint James the Brother of the Lord (October 23) in Constantinople.

**Almsgiving
above all else
requires
money, but
even this
shines with a
brighter luster
when the alms
are given from
our poverty.**

**The widow
who paid in
the two mites
was poorer
than any
human, but
she outdid
them all. St.**

**John
Chrysostom**

Saint Haralambos the Hieromartyr (February 10)



Saint Haralambos the Hieromartyr

The Hieromartyr Haralambos, Bishop of Magnesia, the Martyrs Porphyrius and Bap-tus and Three Women Martyrs suffered in the year 202.

Saint Haralambos, Bishop of Magnesia (Asia Minor), successfully spread faith in Christ the Savior, guiding people on the way to salvation. News of his preaching reached Lucian, the governor of the district, and the military commander Lucius.

The saint was arrested and brought to trial, where he confessed his faith in Christ and refused to offer sacrifice to idols.

Despite the bishop’s advanced age (he was 113 years old), he was subjected to monstrous tortures. They lacerated his body with iron hooks, and scraped all the skin from his body. During this the saint turned to his tormentors, “I thank you,

Saint Haralambos the Hieromartyr (Continued)

brethren, that you have restored my spirit, which longs to pass over to a new and everlasting life!”

Seeing the Elder’s endurance and his complete lack of malice, two soldiers (Porphyrius and Baptus) openly confessed Christ, for which they were immediately beheaded with a sword. Three women who were watching the sufferings of Saint Haralambos also began to glorify Christ, and were quickly martyred.

The enraged Lucius seized the instruments of torture and began to torture the holy martyr, but suddenly his forearms were cut off as if by a sword. The governor then spat in the face of the saint, and immediately his head was turned around so that he faced backwards.

Then Lucius entreated the saint to show mercy on him, and both torturers were healed through the prayers of Saint Haralambos. During this a multitude of witnesses came to believe in Christ. Among them also was Lucius, who fell at the feet of the holy bishop, asking to be baptized.

Lucian reported these events to the emperor Septimus Severus (193-211), who was then at Pisidian Antioch (western Asia Minor). The emperor ordered Saint

Haralambos to be brought to him in Antioch. Soldiers twisted the saint’s beard into a rope, wound it around his neck, and used it to drag him along. They also drove an iron nail into his body. The emperor then ordered them to torture the bishop more intensely, and they began to burn him with fire, a little at a time. But God protected the saint, and he remained unharmed.

Many miracles were worked through his prayer: he raised a dead youth, and healed a man tormented by devils for thirty-five years, so that many people began to believe in Christ the Savior. Even Galina, the daughter of the emperor, began to believe in Christ, and twice smashed the idols in a pagan temple. On the orders of the emperor they beat the saint about the mouth with stones. They also wanted to set his beard on fire, but the flames burned the torturer.

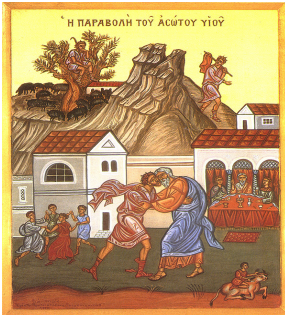
Full of wickedness, Septimus Severus and an official named Crispus hurled blasphemy at the Lord, mockingly summoning Him to come down to the earth, and boasting of their own power and might. The Lord sent an earthquake, and great fear fell upon all, the impious ones were both suspended in mid-air held by invisible bonds,

and only by the prayer of the saint were they put down. The dazed emperor was shaken in his former impiety, but again quickly fell into error and gave orders to torture the saint.

And finally, he sentenced Saint Haralambos to beheading with a sword. During his final prayer, the heavens opened and the saint saw the Savior and a multitude of angels. The holy martyr asked Him to grant that the place where his relics would repose would never suffer famine or disease. He also begged that there would be peace, prosperity, and an abundance of fruit, grain, and wine in that place, and that the souls of these people would be saved. The Lord promised to fulfill his request and ascended to heaven, and the soul of the hieromartyr Haralambos followed after Him. By the mercy of God, the saint died before he could be executed. Galina buried the martyr’s body with great honor.

In Greek hagiography and iconography Saint Haralambos is regarded as a priest, while Russian sources seem to regard him as a bishop.

Sunday of the Prodigal Son (February 12)



Sunday of the Prodigal Son

The Sunday after the Sunday of the Publican and the Pharisee is the Sunday of the Prodigal Son. This parable of God's forgiveness calls us to come to

ourselves" as did the prodigal son, to see ourselves as being "in a far country" far from the Father's house, and to make the journey of return to God. We are given every assurance by the Master that our heavenly Father will receive us with joy and gladness. We must only "arise and go," confessing our self-inflicted and sinful separation from that "home" where we

truly belong (Luke 15:11-24).

After the Polyeleion at Matins, we first hear the lenten hymn "By the Waters of Babylon." It will be sung for the next two Sundays before Lent begins, and it serves to reinforce the theme of exile in today's Gospel.

Saturday of Souls (February 18)



Saturday of
Souls

On the day before Meatfare Sunday, on which we remember the Last Judgment, the Orthodox Church prays for those of its members who may have died unexpectedly because of wars, plagues, starvation, or any other sort of death while they were in a foreign country, or while they were traveling by sea, by land, or by air. The

Church also prays for the poor, or for those who may not have received a proper burial, or who had no one to request Memorial Services to be offered for them.

We pray for the departed on this Saturday because the Orthodox Church has established Saturday as the proper day of the week for remembering the dead. On this day before we hear the Gospel about the Last Judgment, we should pause to recall our own inescapable death when we shall appear before Christ to give an account of our lives. May we have "an acceptable defense before

His dread Judgment Seat."

As we prepare for the spiritual struggles of the Great Fast, we should remember that we have been given this present life for repentance and for entreating God's mercy. When Christ comes in glory to judge the world, it will be too late then to say that we repent, or to ask for mercy. Therefore, we should make the most of the time that has been given us in order to struggle against every sinful impulse which separates us from God, to confess our sins, to correct ourselves, and to pursue a life of virtue and holiness.

**"Open the
gates of
repentance
to me, O
Giver of
Life, for my
spirit rises
early in the
morning to
your holy
temple,
bearing a
temple of
the body all
defiled. But
as you are
full of pity,
cleanse it
by your
compassion
ate mercy."
Triodion
Ideomelon.**

Answers to Last Month's "Test Your Faith..."

The Old Testament

Across

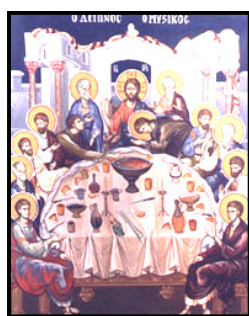
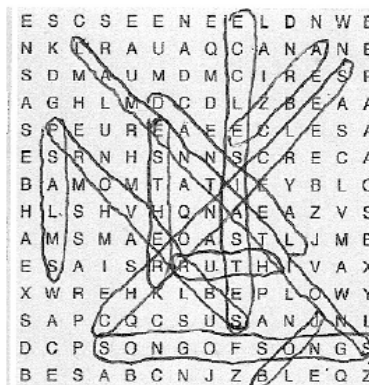
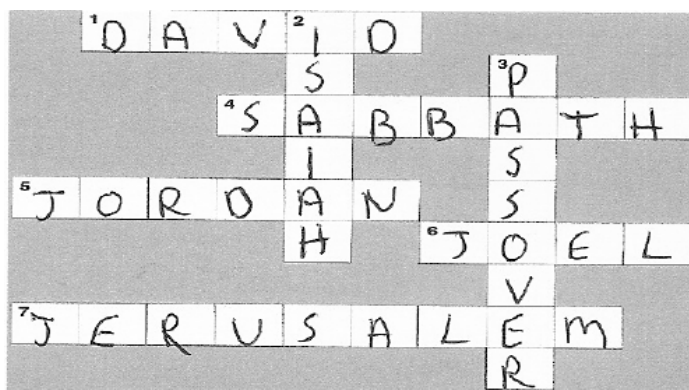
1. The great warrior-king of the Hebrew nation.
4. Saturday, the seventh day of the week.
5. The one river of Palestine.
6. The second of the twelve minor prophets.
7. Capital and spiritual center of historic Judaism.

Down

2. Old Testament messianic prophet.
3. The major feast observed by the Jews that commemorates the liberation of the Hebrew nation from bondage in Egypt.

Old Testament Writings

- Lamentations
Ecclesiastes
Song of Songs
Chronicles
Proverbs
Daniel
Psalms
Esther
Ezra
Ruth
Job



The Sacraments of
the Church

Parish Registry

Funerals

The servant of God, Carol Chickris, fell asleep in the Lord and was buried on January 20, 2017.

Fasting Notes:

- The week of February 5, 2017, the first week of the Triodion, is a fast free week. That means we are allowed to eat anything on any day and still receive Holy Communion on Sunday. It is Fast-free because we do not wish to be like the Pharisee who fasted twice a week and was hypocritical, so we do not fast this week.
- The week of February 12, 2017, the second week of the Triodion, is normal fasting week. That means we are allowed to eat anything on any day except on Wednesday and Friday, (where we fast normally) and still receive Holy Communion on Sunday.
- The week of February 19, 2017, the third week of the Triodion, is fast-free from everything except meat. That means we are allowed to eat anything except meat on any day including Wednesday and Friday, and still receive Holy Communion on Sunday.
- The week of February 26, 2017, the fourth week of the Triodion, is we begin the Lenten Fast. That means Monday through Friday we fast from meat, dairy, fish, wine and oil while on Saturday and Sunday we are allowed to have oil and wine, and still receive Holy Communion on Sunday.

Test Your Faith...

The New Testament

Across

1. The shortest Gospel.
7. John the Baptist also called the _____.
8. The apostle who betrayed Jesus.
11. A tax collector considered to be treacherous to the Hebrew people where in bondage to the Roman Empire.
12. One of the Letters adopted as books of the New Testament.

Down

1. Wrote the Gospel for the Hebrews.
3. First bishop of the Church of Rome.
4. The Prayer of Mary the Theotokos
5. The apostle Doubting _____
6. The missionary-evangelist wrote most of the New Testament.
8. Author of the non-synoptic Gospel.
10. Wrote a Gospel and the book of Acts

Old Testament Historical Books

Deuteronomy	Joshua
Chronicles	Tobit
Leviticus	Kings
Maccabees	Ezra
Nehemiah	Ruth
Genesis	
Numbers	
Judith	
Samuel	
Exodus	
Judges	
Esdras	
Esther	

