

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/
Candace 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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MARCH 2017

The Trophybearer

PASTORAL MESSAGE

Christ completed His redemptive mission through His person, teaching, death, and resurrection. Believing in Him enables us to enjoy the blessings of abundant life -true fellowship with God by the grace of the Holy Spirit. For the Orthodox Christian steward this is the life of the Church. We gather as the body of Christ to participate in the saving work of Christ.

In accordance with Orthodox Christian teachings, genuine Christian living is a synergy, a fellowship, a cooperation, between man and God. We are called to freely respond to our Heavenly Father in managing our TIME, TALENTS, AND TREASURE! This is not achieved merely by one's personal commitment, but by real conviction made when the baptized faithful acknowledge and pledge their lives to Christ. It is with this type of fervent faith that we are united to our brothers and sisters in Christ.

When we "commit ourselves and each other and our whole life to Christ our God, " we become a family of believers placing our trust in Christ. This fellowship, strengthened by the Lord's sacrifice on the Cross, enables us to accept: "The Cross...guardian of the whole earth;...the Cross...beauty of the Church;...the Cross...support of the faithful,...The Cross...glory of angels... "

Fr. Michael Constantinides
Parish Priest

Lenten Prayer

O Lord and Master of my life, give me not a spirit of sloth, despair, ambition or vain talking.

**But rather a spirit of purity, humility, patience and love bestow on me
Your servant.**

Yes, Lord and King, grant me to see my own faults, and not to judge my brother. For You are blessed to the ages of ages. Amen

Saint Ephraim the Syrian

March 2017

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			¹ Fast Day 10:00 a.m. Orthodox Study Forum 5:00 p.m. Presanctified Divine Liturgy at Saint George	² Fast Day 6:00 p.m. Orthodox Study Forum	³ Fast Day 7:00 p.m. First Salutations	⁴ 3rd Saturday of Souls Fast Day Oil and Wine allowed 8:30 a.m. Orthros followed by the Divine Liturgy
⁵ First Sunday of Lent Fast Day Oil and Wine allowed 8:30a.m. Orthros 10:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy Sunday School Classes following Holy Communion 5:00 p.m. Sunday Evening Vespers	⁶ Fast Day 6:00 p.m. Great Compline	⁷ Fast Day	⁸ Fast Day 10:00 a.m. Orthodox Study Forum 5:00 p.m. Presanctified Divine Liturgy at Assumption	⁹ Fast Day 6:00 p.m. Orthodox Study Forum	¹⁰ Fast Day 7:00 p.m. Second Salutations	¹¹ Fast Day Oil and Wine allowed
¹² Second Sunday of Lent Fast Day Oil and Wine allowed 8:30a.m. Orthros 10:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy Sunday School Classes following Holy Communion 5:00 p.m. Sunday Evening Vespers	¹³ Fast Day 6:00 p.m. Great Compline	¹⁴ Fast Day	¹⁵ Fast Day 10:00 a.m. Orthodox Study Forum 5:00 p.m. Presanctified Divine Liturgy at Saint George	¹⁶ Fast Day 6:00 p.m. Orthodox Study Forum	¹⁷ Fast Day 7:00 p.m. Third Salutations	¹⁸ Fast Day Oil and Wine allowed
¹⁹ Third Sunday of Lent Fast Day Oil and Wine allowed 8:30a.m. Orthros 10:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy Sunday School Classes following Holy Communion 5:00 p.m. Sunday Evening Vespers	²⁰ Fast Day	²¹ Fast Day 7:00 p.m. Parish Council Meeting	²² Fast Day 10:00 a.m. Orthodox Study Forum Evening Meal 5:00 p.m. Presanctified Divine Liturgy at Saint Nicholas in Davenport, IA	²³ Fast Day 6:00 p.m. Orthodox Study Forum	²⁴ Eve of the Annunciation of the Theotokos Fast Day 7:00 p.m. Great Vespers with the reading of the fourth stanza of the Salutations	²⁵ The Annunciation of the Theotokos Fish, Oil and Wine allowed 8:30 a.m. Orthros followed by the Divine Liturgy
²⁶ Fourth Sunday of Lent Fast Day Oil and Wine allowed 8:30a.m. Orthros 10:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy Sunday School Classes following Holy Communion 5:00 p.m. Sunday Evening Vespers	²⁷ Fast Day 6:00 p.m. Great Compline	²⁸ Fast Day	²⁹ Fast Day 10:00 a.m. Orthodox Study Forum 5:00 p.m. Presanctified Divine Liturgy at Saint George	³⁰ Fast Day 6:00 p.m. Orthodox Study Forum	³¹ Fast Day 7:00 p.m. The Akathyst	

The Council Connection

Include St. George on Your Next Shopping Run!

Last spring St. George parishioners responded enthusiastically to a request to pick up some items needed for the church when on their next Wal-Mart, Sam's Club, Office Max or grocery expedition. Generous parishioners provided most of the copier paper, office supplies, paper plates and napkins, toilet paper, paper towels and other items used by the parish last year, resulting in reduced expenditures. Thank you so much!

We are close to exhausting last year's supply and would like to make this an annual opportunity to share our bounty from God (as well as Bounty from Procter & Gamble)!

Suggested items to donate

Office Supplies:

Reams of 8 1/2" x 11" copier paper (white)

Reams of 11" x 17" copier paper (Double size for printing newsletters)

Reams of colored paper for Sunday bulletins

Packages of address labels (size 1" x 2 5/8")

Coffee Hour/ Kitchen supplies:

8 oz. Styrofoam cups

Cocktail size napkins

Dessert size paper plates

Sugar packets/Artificial Sweetener packets

Paper towels

Packages of bar mops or towels (Sam's Club has a variety of these)

Banquet size disposable tablecloths

Restroom Supplies:

Toilet paper

Liquid hand soap (small bottles)

Thank you for supporting this effort last year! If you would like your expenditures noted on your end of year giving statement, please enclose copies of your receipts with a note of explanation in an envelope to Mary Rankin and place it on the desk in the main office.

Share our Bounty from God (as well as "Bounty" from Procter & Gamble)!

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,
March 5, 2017
Sunday of Orthodoxy**
Alexa Florence

**Sunday,
March 19, 2017
Third Sunday of Lent**
Michael Pyevich

**Sunday,
March 12, 2017
Second Sunday of Lent**
Ethan Kirpatrick

**Sunday,
March 26, 2017
Fourth Sunday of Lent**
Isabella Elias

Parish Council Sunday Duty

**Sunday,
March 5, 2017**
Nick Coin,
John Mekus,
Dennis Spurgetis,
Diane Spurgetis

**Sunday,
March 12, 2017**
Joe Burmeister,
Mary Kay Eckert
Mary Rankin
Ken Stiegel

**Sunday,
March 19, 2017**
Brad Crosson,
Mariellen Crosson
Mike Patramanis
Ted Pitsoulakis

**Sunday,
March 26, 2017**
Nick Coin,
John Mekus,
Dennis Spurgetis,
Diane Spurgetis

Coffee Hour Hosts for March 2017

**Sunday,
March 5, 2017
hosted by:**
Presbytera Maria
**Sunday, March 12, 2017
hosted by:**
Veronica Tolescu

**Sunday,
March 19, 2017
hosted by:**
Vicki Patramanis
**Sunday,
March 26, 2017
hosted by:**
The Stratton's and Pappas



"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,
March 5th,
2017**

Randy Smith

**Sunday,
March 12th,
2017**

John Stratton

**Sunday,
March 19th,
2017**

HOPE/JOY

**Sunday,
March 26th,
2017**

**Georgjean
Pitsoulakis**

EVENING MEAL VOLUNTEERS

March 22-
Dr. Vickie Pyevich
and the GOYA

April 26-Jim and
Elizabeth Teros

May 24-Nancy and
Nick Coin

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



**Fellowship
and fun!**

Community News

PARISH COUNCIL NEWS

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

DONATION OPPORTUNITY

As everybody who has tried to wash dishes in our kitchen realizes, hot water is very difficult to obtain. In fact, running out of hot water midway through an event or preparing an evening meal to serve at the shelter and then having to heat pots of boiling water to wash greasy pans is a potential safety risk carrying the boiling water to the sink and a health risk from inadequately sanitizing the dishes. So with this in mind, it was decided to acquire a tank less hot water heater that will solve the problems of

the hot water. The cost of this is \$3,500.00. We are seeking donations to defray the costs! Any amount that you can prayerfully give will help. No amount is too little!

PROSPHORA SIGN UP

In front of the office, you will find a sign-up sheet to make the Prospora for the Sunday Divine Liturgy. The first half of the year was a great success! Let us fill out the rest of 2017! God always accepts our gifts when given with a clean heart!

SUNDAY EVENING VESPERS

Every Sunday evening during Great Lent at 5:00 p.m. we will be having Lenten Vespers. Please join us for these special Lenten services

MONDAY COMPLINE

Presanctified Liturgy Schedule

March 1, 2017

Saint George

March 8, 2017

Assumption

March 15,
2017

Saint George

March 22

Saint Nicholas

March 29

Saint George

SERVICES

Every Monday during Great and Holy Lent at 6:00 p.m. we will be having Great Compline Services. All are invited.

LENTEN AND HOLY WEEK NEEDS

If you wish to give anything from our donation list, please call the Church office and speak with Fr. Michael to find out what is available. Thank You for your constant love and support

Palms and Bay Leaves for Palm
Sunday: \$400

Flowered Wreath for Holy
Thursday: \$150

12 Candles for Holy Thursday:
\$100

Linen White Bed Sheet for
Good Friday: \$20

Parish Registry

40-Day Blessing

Anna the daughter of Sam and Caitlin Eliopoulos was churched on February 5, 2017

Baptisms

The servant of God Demetrios, son of Benjamin and Georgena Barnes was Baptized into the Orthodox Faith on February 4, 2017 and the sponsor was William Smirles.

The servant of God Charles, son of Daniel and Jessica Sheridan was Baptized into the Orthodox Faith on February 19, 2017 and the sponsor was Helen Moorhead.

Funeral

The servant of God, Janice Smirles, fell asleep in the Lord and was buried on February 17, 2017



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

Gordon Smith

Helen Smith

Jim Tsagaris

Memorials

March 5, 2017

Carol Chickris

40 Days

March 26, 2017

Janice Smirles

40 Days

Despina Pappas

22 Years

Pete Pappas

36 Years

Tom Pappas

58 Years

Sunday School News

We are now in Great Lent. On the first Sunday of Lent we mark the return of the icons by celebrating the Sunday of Orthodoxy. Sunday School children will be participating in the service by joining in the procession. Students will dismiss to class and return for the procession at the end of the liturgy. They should bring an icon from home to carry. We do have some if a student forgets one.

As we spool up the journey to Pascha, it is all the more important to have

our young people in Sunday School to learn along the way from the various Gospel readings and commemorations. We have the teachers, they have the materials; what we need are students.

For future thought, we will have a commemoration of graduations coming up, likely in May. Now is the time to get those notifications in to the church office of our youth graduating from high school or college this spring.

Deacon Paul

HOPE/JOY News

Hope/Joy will be making Prosphoro again this Lenten period. Join us at the church on Saturday, March 18th at 2:00pm. The kids have so much fun making the Prosphoro and love that it's used for the Sunday Liturgy. We hope to see all the children of St. George there! GOYA kids are welcome to join us too.

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

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

Notification of the Spring General Assembly on April 2, 2017

Dear St. George Stewards,

On Sunday, April 2, 2017, following the fellowship and coffee hour, we will be convening our Spring General Assembly in the Gold Room. Please make every effort to attend.

As a reminder, the General Assembly is a meeting of all members in good-standing. A member in good-standing is defined by the Uniform Parish Regulations of the Archdiocese as any person eighteen years of age or older who was baptized according to the rites of the Orthodox Church, or was received into the Orthodox Church by Chrismation, who lives according to the faith and canons of the Orthodox Church, who has met his or her stewardship obligation and abides by the Uniform Parish Regulations of the Archdiocese and the by-laws of the Parish. Members in good-standing, in attendance, constitute a quorum of the General Assembly.

A new member may vote in the General Assembly provided that they have been in good-standing at least three (3) months prior to the date of the General Assembly. If you would like to vote on any of the motions made during the General Assembly, you must be present. Absentee ballots will not be counted.

2017 SPRING GENERAL ASSEMBLY AGENDA April 2, 2017

CALL TO ORDER
OPENING PRAYER
STEWARDSHIP REPORT
FESTIVAL REPORT
MARDI GRAS REPORT
AUDIT COMMITTEE FINANCIAL REPORT
PRIEST REPORT
OLD BUSINESS
NEW BUSINESS
CLOSING PRAYER
ADJOURNMENT

St. George Stewardship Notes



QUICK FACTS

(as of
February 21, 2017)

\$120,974.00 =
Amount pledged for 2017 by
74 households

\$37,947.00 =
Amount given to 2017
stewardship since Jan. 1
(as compared to \$28,967.00 in
2016)

\$1,635.00 =
Average pledge per
household at this date

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

\$2,135 Remaining to Reach Goal of \$20,000!

Last fall, the 2017 St. George Stewardship campaign set a goal to increase stewardship pledges by \$20,000.00 to address the amount needed to fulfill the ministries of the parish.

Of the 74 pledges made so far, 46 households increased their pledges over last year's pledges. Increases ranged from \$25 per year to \$1,200 per year. Added together, all the increases total \$17,685.00!

Thank you to our generous 2017 stewards! For those who have yet to submit a pledge card, please consider an increase to help fulfill the parish's mission!

Parish Happenings

2017 Saint George Pascha Potluck Dinner

Come join us following AGAPE Vespers for a wonderful Lamb dinner provided by St. George Greek Orthodox Church.

Everyone brings something along with them and we share in the truest sense of Christians.



Fun for the kids with our annual Easter egg hunt.

Good Music

Fun fellowship

Foods from all around the world.

Again Join us for the Saint George Greek Orthodox Church annual

PASCHA POTLUCK DINNER



Virgin martyr Euthalia of Sicily (March 2)

The Holy Martyr Euthalia lived with her mother and brother in Leontina on the island of Sicily. Euthalia's mother, a pagan, suffered for a long while with an issue of blood. Once, the Martyrs Alphaeus, Philadelphus and Cyprian (May 10) appeared to her in a dream and told her she would be healed only if

she believed in Christ and was baptized.

After being baptized with her daughter, she was healed of her infirmity. When Euthalia's pagan brother Sirmianus learned of the baptism, went into a violent rage. The mother succeeded in fleeing, but Saint Euthalia confessed herself a Christian and suf-

fered martyrdom. After fierce tortures, the saint was beheaded with a sword



**The Virgin
martyr
Euthalia**

1st Saturday of Great Lent: The Miracle of the Boiled Wheat (March 4)

Today we remember the miracle of Saint Theodore and the boiled wheat. Fifty years after the death of Saint Theodore, the emperor Julian the Apostate (361-363), wanting to commit an outrage upon the Christians during the first week of Great Lent, commanded the city-commander of Constantinople to sprinkle all the food provisions in the marketplaces with the blood offered to idols. Saint Theodore appeared in a dream to Archbishop Eudoxius, ordering him to inform all the Christians that no one should buy anything at the marketplaces, but rather to eat cooked wheat with honey

(kolyva).

In memory of this occurrence, the Orthodox Church annually celebrates the holy Great Martyr Theodore the Recruit on the first Saturday of Great Lent. On Friday evening, at the Divine Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts following the prayer at the ambo, the Canon to the holy Great Martyr Theodore, composed by Saint John of Damascus, is sung. After this, kolyva is blessed and distributed to the faithful. The celebration of the Great Martyr Theodore on the first Saturday of Great Lent was set by the Patriarch Nectarios of Constantinople (381-397).

The Troparion to Saint Theodore is quite similar to the Troparion for the Prophet Daniel and the Three Holy Youths (December 17, Sunday Before Nativity). The Kontakion to Saint Theodore, who suffered martyrdom by fire, reminds us that he also had faith as his breastplate (see I Thessalonians 5:8).

Saint Theodore the Recruit is also commemorated on February 17.



**1st Saturday of
Great Lent: The
Miracle of the
Boiled Wheat**

40 Holy Martyrs of Sebaste (March 9)



The 40 Martyrs of Sebaste

In the year 313 Saint Constantine the Great issued an edict granting Christians religious freedom, and officially recognizing Christianity as equal with paganism under the law. But his co-ruler Licinius was a pagan, and he decided to stamp out Christianity in his part of the Empire. As Licinius prepared his army to fight Constantine, he decided to remove Christians from his army, fearing mutiny.

One of the military commanders of that time in the Armenian city of Sebaste was Agricola, a zealous champion of idolatry. Under his command was a company of forty Cappadocians, brave soldiers who had distinguished themselves in many battles. When these Christian soldiers refused to offer sacrifice to the pagan gods, Agricola locked them up in prison. The soldiers occupied themselves with prayer

and psalmody, and during the night they heard a voice saying, "Persevere until the end, then you shall be saved."

On the following morning, the soldiers were again taken to Agricola. This time the pagan tried flattery. He began to praise their valor, their youth and strength, and once more he urged them to renounce Christ and thereby win themselves the respect and favor of their emperor.

Seven days later, the renowned judge Lucius arrived at Sebaste and put the soldiers on trial. The saints steadfastly answered, "Take not only our military insignia, but also our lives, since nothing is more precious to us than Christ God." Lucius then ordered his servants to stone the holy martyrs. But the stones missed the saints and returned to strike those who had thrown them. One stone thrown by Lucius hit Agricola in the face, smashing his teeth. The torturers realized that the saints were guarded by some invisible power. In prison, the soldiers spent the night in prayer and again they heard the voice of the Lord comforting them: "He who believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live (John 11:25). Be brave and fear not, for you shall obtain imperishable crowns."

On the following day the judge repeated the interrogation in front of the torturer, but the soldiers remained unyielding.

It was winter, and there was a severe frost. They lined up the holy soldiers, threw them into a lake near the city, and set a guard to prevent them from coming out of the water. In order to break the will of the martyrs, a warm bath-house was set up on the shore. During the first hour of the night, when the cold had become unbearable, one of the soldiers made a dash for the bath-house, but no sooner had he stepped over the threshold, than he fell down dead.

During the third hour of the night, the Lord sent consolation to the martyrs. Suddenly there was light, the ice melted away, and the water in the lake became warm. All the guards were asleep, except for Aglaius, who was keeping watch. Looking at the lake he saw that a radiant crown had appeared over the head of each martyr. Aglaius counted thirty-nine crowns and realized that the soldier who fled had lost his crown.

Aggias then woke up the other guards, took off his uniform and said to them, "I too am a Christian," and he joined the martyrs. Standing

The bread you do not use is the bread of the hungry. The garment hanging in your wardrobe is the garment of the person who is naked. The shoes you do not wear are the shoes of the one who is barefoot. The money you keep locked away is the money of the poor. The acts of charity you do not perform are the injustices you commit.
St. Basil the Great 4th century

40 Holy Martyrs of Sebaste (Continued)

in the water he prayed, "Lord God, I believe in You, in Whom these soldiers believe. Add me to their number, and make me worthy to suffer with Your servants." Then a fortieth crown appeared over his head.

In the morning, the torturers saw with surprise that the martyrs were still alive, and their guard Aggias was glorifying Christ together with them. They led the soldiers out of the water and broke their legs. During this horrible execution the mother of the youngest of the soldiers, Meliton, pleaded with her son not to persevere until

death.

They put the bodies of the martyrs on a cart and committed them to fire. Young Meliton was still breathing, and they left him on the ground. His mother then picked up her son, and on her own shoulders she carried him behind the cart. When Meliton drew his last breath, his mother put him on the cart with the bodies of his fellow sufferers. The bodies of the saints were tossed in the fire, and their charred bones were thrown into the water, so that Christians would not gather them up.

Three days later the martyrs appeared in a dream to Saint Peter, Bishop of Sebaste, and commanded him to bury their remains. The bishop together with several clergy gathered up the relics of the glorious martyrs by night and buried them with honor.

There is a pious custom of baking "skylarks" (pastries shaped like skylarks) on this day, because people believed that birds sing at this time to announce the arrival of spring. Forty "skylarks" are prepared in honor of the Forty Martyrs.

Venerable Alexis the Man of God (March 17)

Saint Alexis was born at Rome into the family of the pious and poverty-loving Euphemianus and Aglais. The couple was childless for a long time and constantly prayed the Lord to grant them a child. And the Lord consoled the couple with the birth of their son Alexis.

At six years of age the child began to read and successfully studied the mundane sciences, but it was with particular diligence that he read Holy Scripture. When he was a young man, he began to imitate his parents: he fasted strictly, distributed alms and beneath his fine clothing he secretly wore a hair shirt. Early on there burned within him the desire

to leave the world and serve God. His parents, however, had arranged for Alexis to marry a beautiful and virtuous bride.

On his wedding night, Alexis gave her his ring and his belt (which were very valuable) and said, "Keep these things, Beloved, and may the Lord be with us until His grace provides us with something better." Secretly leaving his home, he boarded a ship sailing for Mesopotamia.

Arriving in the city of Edessa, where the Icon of the Lord "Not-mad-by-Hands" (August 16) was preserved, Alexis sold everything that he had, distributed the

money to the poor and began to live near the church of the Most Holy Theotokos under a portico. The saint used a portion of the alms he received to buy bread and water, and he distributed the rest to the aged and infirm. Each Sunday he received the Holy Mysteries.

The parents sought the missing Alexis everywhere, but without success. The servants sent by Euphemianus also arrived in Edessa, but they did not recognize the beggar sitting at the portico as their master. His body was withered by fasting, his comeliness vanished, his stature diminished. The saint recognized them and gave thanks to the



**Venerable
Alexis the
Man of God**

Venerable Alexis the Man of God (Continued)

Lord that he received alms from his own servants.

The inconsolable mother of Saint Alexis confined herself in her room, incessantly praying for her son. His wife also grieved with her in-laws.

Saint Alexis dwelt in Edessa for seventeen years. Once, the Mother of God spoke to the sacristan of the church where the saint lived: "Lead into My church that Man of God, worthy of the Kingdom of Heaven. His prayer rises up to God like fragrant incense, and the Holy Spirit rests upon him." The sacristan began to search for such a man, but was not able to find him for a long time. Then he prayed to the Most Holy Theotokos, beseeching Her to clear up his confusion. Again a voice from the icon proclaimed that the Man of God was the beggar who sat in the church portico.

The sacristan found Saint Alexis and brought him into the church. Many recognized him and began to praise him. The saint secretly boarded a ship bound for Cilicia, intending to visit the church of Saint Paul in Tarsus. But God ordained otherwise. A storm took the ship far to the West and it reached the coast of Italy. The saint journeyed to Rome and decided to live in his own house. Unrecognized, he humbly asked his father's permission to settle in some corner of his courtyard. Euphemianus settled Alexis in a

specially constructed cell and gave orders to feed him from his table.

Living at his parental home, the saint continued to fast and he spent day and night at prayer. He humbly endured insults and jeering from the servants of his father. The cell of Alexis was opposite his wife's windows, and the ascetic suffered grievously when he heard her weeping. Only his immeasurable love for God helped the saint endure this torment. Saint Alexis dwelt at the house of his parents for seventeen years and the Lord revealed to him the day of his death. Then the saint, taking paper and ink, wrote certain things that only his wife and parents would know. He also asked them to forgive him for the pain he had caused them.

On the day of Saint Alexis' death in 411, Archbishop Innocent (402-417) was serving Liturgy in the presence of the emperor Honorius (395-423). During the services a Voice was heard from the altar: "Come unto Me, all ye who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Mt.11:28). All those present fell to the ground in terror.

The Voice continued: "On Friday morning the Man of God comes forth from the body; have him pray for the city, that you may remain untroubled." They began to

search throughout Rome, but they did not find the saint. Thursday evening the Pope was serving Vigil in the Church of Saint Peter. He asked the Lord to show them where to find the Man of God.

After Liturgy the Voice was heard again in the temple: "Seek the Man of God in the house of Euphemianus." All hastened there, but the saint was already dead. His face shone like the face of an angel, and his hand clasped the paper, and they were unable to take it. They placed the saint's body on a cot, covered with costly coverings. The Pope and the Emperor bent their knees and turned to the saint, as to one yet alive, asking him to open his hand. And the saint heard their prayer. When the letter was read, the righteous one's wife and parents tearfully venerated his holy relics.

The body of the saint was placed in the center of the city. The emperor and the Pope carried the body of the saint into the church, where it remained for a whole week, and then was placed in a marble crypt. A fragrant myrrh began to flow from the holy relics, bestowing healing upon the sick.

The venerable relics of Saint Alexis, the Man of God, were buried in the church of Saint Boniface. The relics were uncovered in the year 1216.

**Just as the poor
should give thanks
to God and return
rich love to those
who assist them,
so all the more
should the
wealthy give
thanks, for
through God's
providence they
are able to
perform acts of
charity and so are
saved both in this
age and in the age
to be. For without
the poor they
cannot save their
souls or flee the
temptations of
wealth.**

**St. Simeon the
New Theologian**

St. Patrick the Bishop of Armagh and Enlightener of Ireland (March 17)

Saint Patrick, the Enlightener of Ireland was born around 385, the son of Calpornius, a Roman Decurion (an official responsible for collecting taxes). He lived in the village of Bannavem Taberniae, which may have been located at the mouth of the Severn River in Wales. The district was raided by pirates when Patrick was sixteen, and he was one of those taken captive. He was brought to Ireland and sold as a slave, and was put to work as a herder of swine on a mountain identified with Slemish in Co. Antrim. During his period of slavery, Patrick acquired a proficiency in the Irish language which was very useful to him in his later mission.

He prayed during his solitude on the mountain, and lived this way for six years. He had two visions. The first told him he would return to his home. The second told him his ship was ready. Setting off on foot, Patrick walked two hundred miles to the coast. There he succeeded in boarding a ship, and returned to his parents in Britain.

Some time later, he went to Gaul and studied for the priesthood at Auxerre under Saint Germanus (July 31). Eventually, he was consecrated as a bishop, and was entrusted with the mission

to Ireland, succeeding Saint Palladius (July 7). Saint Palladius did not achieve much success in Ireland. After about a year he went to Scotland, where he died in 432.

Patrick had a dream in which an angel came to him bearing many letters. Selecting one inscribed "The Voice of the Irish," he heard the Irish entreating him to come back to them.

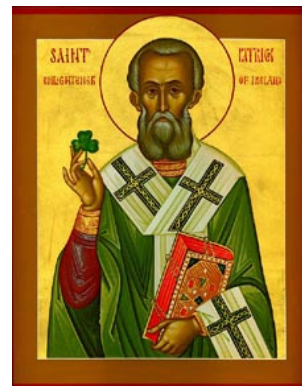
Although Saint Patrick achieved remarkable results in spreading the Gospel, he was not the first or only missionary in Ireland. He arrived around 432 (though this date is disputed), about a year after Saint Palladius began his mission to Ireland. There were also other missionaries who were active on the southeast coast, but it was Saint Patrick who had the greatest influence and success in preaching the Gospel of Christ. Therefore, he is known as "The Enlightener of Ireland."

His autobiographical Confession tells of the many trials and disappointments he endured. Patrick had once confided to a friend that he was troubled by a certain sin he had committed before he was fifteen years old. The friend assured him of God's mercy, and even supported Patrick's nomination as

bishop. Later, he turned against him and revealed what Patrick had told him in an attempt to prevent his consecration. Many years later, Patrick still grieved for his dear friend who had publicly shamed him.

Saint Patrick founded many churches and monasteries across Ireland, but the conversion of the Irish people was no easy task. There was much hostility, and he was assaulted several times. He faced danger, and insults, and he was reproached for being a foreigner and a former slave. There was also a very real possibility that the pagans would try to kill him. Despite many obstacles, he remained faithful to his calling, and he baptized many people into Christ.

The saint's Epistle to Coroticus is also an authentic work. In it he denounces the attack of Coroticus' men on one of his congregations. The Breastplate (Lorica) is also attributed to Saint Patrick. In his writings, we can see Saint Patrick's awareness that he had been called by God, as well as his determination and modesty in undertaking his missionary work. He refers to himself as "a sinner," "the most ignorant and of least account," and as someone who was "despised by many." He as-



**St. Patrick the
Bishop of Armagh
and Enlightener
of Ireland**

St. Patrick the Bishop of Armagh and Enlightener of Ireland (Continued)

cribes his success to God, rather than to his own talents: "I owe it to God's grace that through me so many people should be born again to Him."

By the time he established his episcopal See in Armagh in 444, Saint Patrick had other bishops to assist him, many native priests and deacons, and he encouraged the growth of monasticism.

Saint Patrick is often depicted holding a shamrock, or with snakes fleeing from

him. He used the shamrock to illustrate the doctrine of the Holy Trinity. Its three leaves growing out of a single stem helped him to explain the concept of one God in three Persons. Many people now regard the story of Saint Patrick driving all the snakes out of Ireland as having no historical basis.

Saint Patrick died on March 17, 461 (some say 492). There are various accounts of his last days, but they are mostly legendary. Muirchu

says that no one knows the place where Saint Patrick is buried. Saint Columba of Iona (June 9) says that the Holy Spirit revealed to him that Patrick was buried at Saul, the site of his first church. A granite slab was placed at his traditional grave site in Downpatrick in 1899.

PRIORITY QUESTIONS

Where does my giving to the Church belong? Do I consider it a matter of mere choice? Do I think of it as something obligatory? Is it merely a personal preference? Or do I look upon it as privilege and responsibility? When I plan my budget, where do I place my giving to the Church? Do I place it first because the responsibility is laid on my heart, or do I place it last, after I have discovered if anything is still available? Is my giving to the Church proportionate giving? Do I relate

my giving to the Church to what I spend on pleasure and comforts and luxuries and even necessities? Is my giving haphazard? Does it belong in the category of leftovers? In other words, do I find a rightful place for stewardship in my life? Do I treat my giving carelessly or do I treat it as thoughtfully as I want God to treat me and mine? The prophet Samuel said, "I will not offer to the Lord my God that which has cost me nothing."

WINDOWS AND MIRRORS

Wherever we live, we observe two common items made of glass: windows and mirrors. We look through a window but at a mirror. A mirror simply reflects what is in front of it. We look, in a mirror to see how we look, but we don't need a mirror to see how other people look; we need a window.

Our life style can be like a window or like a mirror. "Window" people look beyond themselves, at other people, at the world. "Mirror" people see only themselves. Therein lies their misery.

Christ and His followers are "window" people. Through Christian stewardship they find life's highest joy in helping support God's work in the world through His Church.

Test Your Faith...

Across

5. The process of becoming in the image of Christ.
7. Depicts holiness in artworks.
8. One of Christ's twelve main followers.
9. The "adversary".

Down

1. "God-Bearer"
2. The "good news".
3. The universal Church.
4. Unconditional love.
6. "Windows into heaven"

Old Testament Prophets

Letters of Jeremiah	Nahum
Lamentations	Hosea
Zephaniah	Micah
Zechariah	Jonah
Jeremiah	Joel
Habakkuk	Amos
Ezekiel	Haggai
Malachi	
Obadiah	
Baruch	
Daniel	
Isaiah	

