

SAINT GEORGE GREEK
ORTHODOX CHURCH

CHURCH STAFF

- Parish Priest:
Fr. Michael
Constantinides
- Caretaker: Jason Leon
- GOYA Advisors:
Dr. Vicky Pyevich/Anne
Kirpatrick
- HOPE/JOY Advisors:
Pres. Maria Constanti-
nides/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

INSIDE THIS
ISSUE:

September Calendar	2
President's Corner	3
Community News	5
Greek Fest News	8
Stewardship Update	9
Lives of the Saints	11- 14



VOLUME 6 ISSUE 8

SEPTEMBER 2016

The Trophybearer

PASTORAL MESSAGE

First and foremost, as I complete my first year as your Priest, I rejoice in the fact that from the beginning I have felt your love as I hope that you have felt mine. We have done much, yet there is still much to be done. This year you will hear much about our ministries and I look forward to your support so that we can grow our Parish family.

So, having been invigorated by the restful period of the summer season, a season that is full of feasts, fasts and many opportunities to grow in the image and likeness of God, we approach the beginning of the Ecclesiastical year full of enthusiasm and great expectation. We look at the world in a different light and we are excited to get back to our routines.

Yet this period of rest also has the possibility of making us lose our focus. We see this in other periods of our lives as well. Many of us who make our New Years resolutions in January, see them flounder by April. Goodness knows that I fail at keeping my own resolutions from time to time. We all do. Today I ask you to make a resolution with me now, one that with work, we can keep from not being unfulfilled, and will indeed bring you closer to God. This resolution is to re-dedicate your life to God. By offering your entire self, (your life, your talents and your treasures) you will be filled with the blessings of God and see before you endless possibilities.

Join us as we continue the process of re-dedication. And most especially join us as we “commit ourselves, each other, and our whole life to Christ our God” every Sunday at the Divine Liturgy and every day of our lives.

September 2016

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				¹ Beginning of the Ecclesiastical Year	² Fast Day	³ + Sacrament
⁴ 11th Sunday of Matthew 8:00a.m. Orthros 9:30 a.m. Divine Liturgy Sunday School/ HOPE JOY/GOYA registration	⁵ Labor Day Office Closed Rock Island Parade	⁶	⁷ Fast Day	⁸ Nativity of the Theotokos 8:00 a.m. Orthros followed by the Divine Liturgy 10:30 a.m. Senior Outing 6:30 p.m. Festival Committee Meeting in the Green Room	⁹ Fast Day	¹⁰
¹¹ Sunday before the Elevation of the Cross 8:30a.m. Orthros 10:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy Sunday School Class begin with an Agiasmos Service	¹²	¹³ Tour	¹⁴ The Universal Exaltation of the Holy Cross Strict Fast Day 8:30 a.m. Orthros followed by the Divine Liturgy	¹⁵	¹⁶ Fast Day Greek Fest 3:00p.m.— 11:00 p.m.	¹⁷ Greek Fest 11:00a.m.— 11:00 p.m.
	Festival set up and preparation all Week!					
¹⁸ Sunday after the Elevation of the Cross 8:30a.m. Orthros 10:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy Sunday School Class following Holy Communion	¹⁹	²⁰	²¹ Fast Day 10:00 a.m. Ortho- dox Study Forum	²²	²³ Fast Day	²⁴
²⁵ 1st Sunday of Luke 8:30a.m. Orthros 10:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy Sunday School Class following Holy Communion 40 Day Blessing	²⁶ Falling Asleep of Saint John the Theologian 9:00 a.m. Orthros followed by the Divine Liturgy at the Church of the Assumption	²⁷	²⁸ Fast Day 10:00 a.m. Ortho- dox Study Forum	²⁹	³⁰ Fast Day	

The Council Connection

Happy Ecclesiastical New Year!

The beginning of the church year, as all beginnings do, reminds us to be grateful for the blessings of the past and to renew our resolve to carry out Christ's mission in our parish life.

As the Sunday School year begins on September 11, **each** of us has the responsibility to support the ministry by ensuring all orthodox children in the area are able to attend liturgy and classes by directly bringing their own children, grandchildren, or by bringing children whose parents work on Sundays. In addition, we can **each** provide financial support to the religious education of our youth by earmarking contributions to the Sunday School program to provide educational tools and materials.

Youth groups (HOPE/JOY and GOYA) also begin their activities for the coming year in September. Through these ministries, lifelong friendships are developed which can carry

the church into the future on the strength of those bonds to each other and to Christ's calling.

The council encourages each of us to become involved in the above endeavors and in other ministries such as the upcoming Rock Island Labor Day Parade and our 12th annual Our Big Fat Greek Festival! Please give generously of your time, talent, and treasure to this event which witnesses an orthodox presence in the community as well as raising funds for the church ministries and providing funds for the area's hungry through the River Bend Foodbank, which provided 10.6 million meals in the fiscal year ending in June 2016!!!

Finally, the council is hoping to add to the parish's fundraising efforts through proposed monthly Friday Fish Fries. Joe Burmeister has stepped up to coordinate the efforts to bring this project to fruition and would welcome everyone's support in this future endeavor. If you have an interest in this project or suggestions,

please contact Joe or any of the council members.

There are many ministries that can use your individual talents. Please contact Father Michael or any council member if you want to learn about opportunities to serve in the new ecclesiastical year!

Yours in Christ,

Mary Rankin

Mary Rankin

Parish Council President

**Serving on
the
Council is
an honor!
If anyone is
interested
in serving
please see
Mary
Rankin or
Father
Michael**

Epistle Readers

**Sunday,
September 4, 2016
11th Sunday of
Matthew**
Michael Pyevich

**Sunday,
September 11, 2016
Sunday before the
Cross**
Angela Spurgetis

**Sunday,
September 18, 2016
Sunday after the Cross**
Ethan Kirpatrick

**Sunday,
September 25, 2016
1st Sunday of Luke**
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!**

Parish Council Sunday Duty

**Sunday,
September 4, 2016**
Joe Burmeister,
Mary Kay Eckert, Ken
Stiegel, Mary Rankin

**Sunday,
September 11, 2016**
Mike Patramanis,
Brad Crosson,
Mariellen Crosson,
Dale Allison

**Sunday,
September 18, 2016**
John Mekus, Dennis Spur-
getis, Diana Spurgetis,
Mary Rankin

**Sunday,
September 25, 2016**
Joe Burmeister,
Mary Kay Eckert,
Ken Stiegel, Mary Rankin

Monthly Pastoral Visits

Shut-in: 16

Hospital Calls: 11

**Please keep the
sick and the shut-
ins in your prayers!**

Coffee Hour Hosts for September 2016

**Sunday, September 4,
2016 hosted by:**
The Lillios Family

**Sunday, September 11,
2016 hosted by:**
Diane Breckon

**Sunday, September 18,
2016 hosted by:**
Open

**Sunday, September 25,
2016 hosted by:**
Open



**Fellowship
and fun!**

Community News

SUNDAY SCHOOL NEWS

Our Sunday School classes will begin on Sunday September 11th with an Agiasmos following the Divine Liturgy. Sunday school begins following communion and last for about 45 minutes. It is important to bring your children so they can learn about our faith.

PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

Will be on Tuesday, September 20, 2016 at 7:00 p.m. in the Green room.

VASILIKO (BASIL) WANTED

We are in need of Vasiliko plants for the celebration of the Litany of the Holy Cross, which will take place this year only on Wednesday, September 14th, the Feast of the Elevation of the Holy Cross. If you can be of assistance, please bring them to the church on Sunday September 11, 2016.

FESTIVAL VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

As the festival is quickly approaching us, we are making our annual drive to gather volunteers for this year's Greek fest. We cannot be successful without your help. You can sign up for being a volunteer either with Mary Rankin or you can simply go to our website at www.stgeorgeri.il.goarch.org and register online. Please help make our Greek fest the best one yet.

ALTAR BOY NEWS

Calling all young men of the Parish from the ages of 7 and

up. You are all invited and encouraged to serve as Altar Boys in the Holy Altar. It is both an honor and a blessing to serve the Lord in such a special way.

ORTHODOX STUDY FORUM

Come and join us as we look into the inner meaning of the Scriptural texts and see how they apply with the teachings of the Fathers, the Tradition of the Church and with our lives today. Join us also as we examine the traditions of the Church and compare them with what our parents taught us. We meet every Wednesday Morning at 10:00 a.m. beginning on Wednesday September 21, 2016 and Thursday evenings beginning on September 22, 2016 at 6:00 p.m. so bring your Bibles, your questions and your friends as we begin our Orthodox Study Forum.

FESTIVAL DATES TO RE-MEMBER

Our Big Fat Greek Festival

OBFGF Committee meeting held at St George at 6:30pm, on September 6. All are welcome to attend.

Volunteers, St George Church needs You! Please contact Mary Rankin to volunteer for Our Big Fat Greek Festival. She can be reached at 563-263-2341 or mbarton83@aol.com

Pastries will be packaging baklava will be on Wednesday, September 14th following the Divine Liturgy. Contact Jenny Bakeris at

J.Bakeris@hotmail.com

Labor Day Parade is a wonderful opportunity for St George's Big Fat Greek Festival to be recognized within the city of Rock Island. We will have a vintage Pontiac and a SUV again this year.

We need as many volunteers (adults and kids) as possible to hand out Free Admission tickets and candy. This parade is a blast. Its great fun being in a parade! Wear your festival t-shirt and comfortable walking shoes.

Time and staging location to be announced. Contact Joe Burmeister at burmeisterjoseph@stanleygroup.com or Gus Pappas at 563-370-6252 or gus.pappas@mchsi.com

The week of Greek Festival, we need two teams: 1. **Venue set up** team Monday thru Thursday at 8:30am. Contact Brad Crosson 563-349-9910 or bradmariellencrosson@gmail.com 2. **Kitchen & Gyros prep** on Thursday at 8:30am. Contact Gus Pappas 563-370-6252 or gus.pappas@mchsi.com

PRAYERS FOR OUR SHUT-INS

Helen Corelis

Stella Cudworth

Elaine Froumis

Pat Grevas

Judy Pappas

Jim Patton

Xenia Patton

Effie Skafidas

Janice Smirles

Gordon Smith

Helen Smith

Jim Tsagaris



**Our Saint
George Parish
Community**

Sunday School News

The summer is nearly gone, at least meteorological summer; some of our students are already back to school and the rest will be soon. It is well time to get ready for the Sunday School year.

Registration began on August 21st, in the hall after the Divine Liturgy. We will be trying to register every potential Sunday School student again on September 4. Sunday School will start full time

on the following Sunday, September 11th. We will be asking for the usual information, plus, where appropriate, the cell number and/or email for the student or guardian so that we can let the students know of special events coming up.

Our Sunday School teachers do a great job; I ask we support and encourage them, in no small way by having the Youth of our parish there to

learn. As always we welcome and volunteers to team teach, help teach, and substitute teach. I will leave you with this quote from St. John Chrysostom: "In children we have a great charge committed to us. Let us bestow great care upon them, and do everything that the Evil One may not rob us of them."



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

We hope everyone had a wonderful summer. As we are getting ready for back to school, we are also getting ready to get our Hope/Joy group going again!

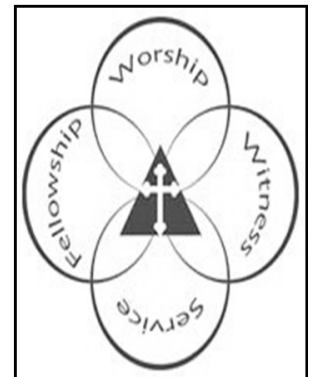
We will have a registration table after the Divine Liturgy for the next few weeks. Please stop by and fill out a profile form. We want all the kids in our church to become active in this group. This is a great opportunity to make

friends within our church, learn about our faith and have fellowship with their peers. We plan on having many fun activities throughout the year.

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

Please feel free to contact Presbytera Maria at presmariazoe@aol.com or Candace Elias at eli-

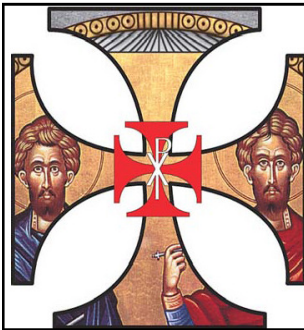
as4130@yahoo.com with any questions.



The Four Circles of Youth Ministry:

**Worship
Witness
Fellowship
Service**





**Saints Cosmas and
Damianos the
Patron Saints of
Philoptochos**

Focus on Philoptochos

Help us to Help Others

EVENING MEAL VOLUNTEERS

**September 25-
Cathy Farrell and
Adrienne John-
son**

**October 26-Mary
and Bill Rankin**

**Anyone inter-
ested in partici-
pating in this
worthwhile min-
istry should con-
tact Dena Manta
at 332-1684.**

The Philoptochos hosted the coffee hour in honor of Nancy & Mike Avgenackis on Sunday August 28. Nancy's departure leaves a vacancy on our board we must fill. We only have the 4 officers and 2 at large members and we must have an odd number for voting/tie breaking purposes. Anyone interested in filling that vacancy should contact Susan Coin at

Philoptochos News

[\(563\)650-7405](tel:(563)650-7405) or sescuin@aol.com.

We will be scheduling a Philoptochos meeting for sometime in September - probably shortly after the festival. Details to follow soon.

We also are planning a joint event with the Assumption Philoptochos for sometime in October. It will be a service

project benefitting the

Riverbend Food Bank and also a nice opportunity for fellowship with our sister parish.

Senior Ministry

September

The September meeting of our St. George Church Senior Citizen Group will be on Thursday, September 8th. We will be taking the River Action Senior Citizen Golf Cart Tour. The cost is \$12.50 per person and registration with payment is required as early as possible. We will

meet at the church at 10:30 a.m. and drive to Sunset Marina Park where we will meet our golf carts. Tour starts promptly at 11:30 a.m. and will take us to the Rock Island and Moline river fronts starting at and returning to Sunset Park and traveling to Sylvan Island, Moline, and Butterworth Parkway returning

at 1:30 p.m. If you are interested in going contact Kay Coin or Nancy Avgenackis who both have more information and registration forms. Don't wait! This sells out early! Following the tour we will go to the "City Limits Restaurant" for a "Dutch-treat" lunch.

Parish Registry

40-Day Blessing

Henry the son of Georgena and Ben Barnes was churched on August 28, 2016

Baptism

The servant of God Sophia, daughter of Steve and Mary Chiang was Baptized into the Orthodox Faith on August 27, 2016 and the sponsor was Ermioni Kever.

Funerals

The servant of God Theodore Bagatelas fell asleep in the Lord and was buried on August 25, 2016.

The servant of God Ann Allen fell asleep in the Lord and was buried on August 26, 2016.

Opa!

Please sign me up as a sponsor for
Our Big Fat Greek Fest!

Gift Amount:

Sponsorship Level:

Company Name

(as you would like it to appear in print):

Address:

Contact name:

Phone number:

E-mail address:

For \$500+ level sponsors, please send ad to:
trichistoc@gmail.com

Please detach this form and mail
with your check to:
St. George Greek Orthodox Church,
2930-31st Ave., Rock Island, IL 61201.
For more information call 786-8163.

Our sponsors help make **Our Big Fat Greek Fest** a **big success** for the St. George family, and a wonderful community event for the Quad-Cities.

Support St. George and be a part of the fun and fellowship!

Friday, September 16th, 8 p.m. - 11 p.m.
Saturday, September 17th, 11 a.m. - 11 p.m.

- ❖ Delicious Greek food and pastries for dinner and to go
- ❖ Greek coffee bar presented by Theo's Java Club
- ❖ Expanded boutique area with clothing, jewelry and other gifts
- ❖ Greek wine tasting hosted by Dimitri Wine and Spirits (Saturday)
- ❖ Greek music
- ❖ Greek folk dancing performances
- ❖ Children's tent with activities and prizes



2016 Sponsorship Program

Join us for
food, dancing and fun!

September 16 and 17, 2016



St. George
Greek Orthodox Church
in Rock Island
invites you
to be a
sponsor for its
12th Annual Festival



Greek Music
and Dancing!

Wonderful authentic food!



Levels of Participation:



PLATINUM

Give a gift of \$1,500 or above and receive:

- ❖ Company name on Greek Fest signage at event
- ❖ 40 admission tickets
- ❖ 6 dinner tickets
- ❖ 4 wine tasting tickets

GOLD

Give a gift of \$1,000 and receive:

- ❖ 30 admission tickets
- ❖ 4 dinner tickets
- ❖ 2 wine tasting tickets
- ❖ Company name on Greek Fest signage at event

SILVER

Give a gift of \$500 and receive:

- ❖ 20 admission tickets
- ❖ 2 dinner tickets
- ❖ 2 wine tasting tickets
- ❖ Company name on Greek Fest signage at event

BRONZE

Give a gift of \$300 and receive:

- ❖ 10 admission tickets
- ❖ 2 dinner tickets
- ❖ Company name on Greek Fest signage at event

SUPPORTING

Give a gift of \$150 or more and your name will appear on Greek Fest signage at event.



Children's tent and family fun!



Homemade pastries!



Wine tasting!

And more!



Festival Volunteers Needed!

Plan now for a great time of fun and fellowship!

Help is needed for all positions, but particularly in the kitchen and serving lines during the evening dinner hours!

Please plan to work as many shifts as possible!

You may sign up at church, on the back of this form, or by contacting Mary Rankin

(Cell phone: 563-263-2341 or email: mbarton83@aol.com)

St. George Greek Orthodox Church
"Our Big Fat Greek Festival"

Sept. 16 & 17

Sign up: Mail this sheet to Mary Rankin (5001 Sheridan Street, Apt 163; Davenport, IA 52806) **or** place in volunteer box in church hallway **or** email Mary (mbarton83@aol.com) **or** call Mary (563-263-2341) **or** sign up online at: <http://www.stgeorgeri.il.goarch.org/FestivalNews.dsp>

Your Name:

Your phone number:

Your email address:

Circle Shift(s) you wish to work:

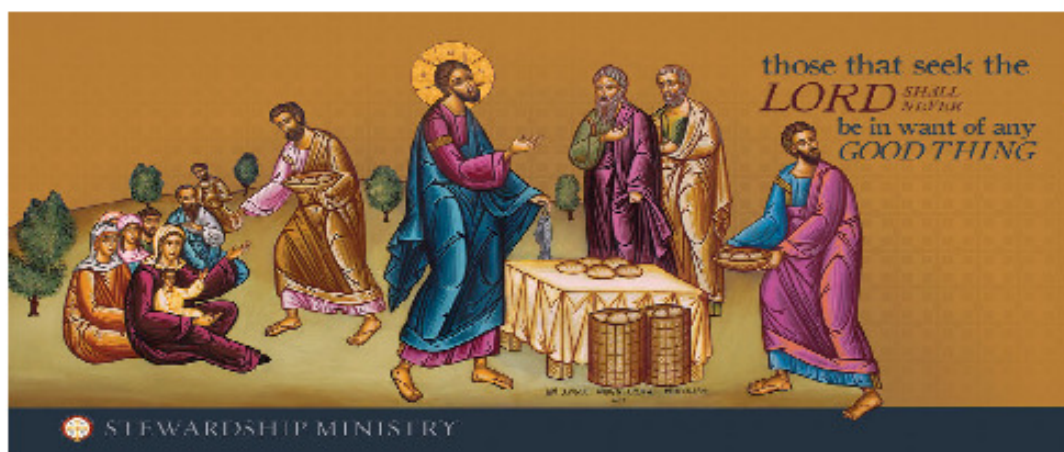
PLEASE CONSIDER WORKING MULTIPLE SHIFTS!!!!

Children's Area	2:30 pm - 8 pm	10:30 am - 4 pm
	5 pm - 8 pm	4 pm - 8 pm
Taverna	2:30 pm - 8 pm	10:30 am - 4 pm
	5 pm - 10:30 pm	4 pm - 10:30 pm
Pop (Inside)	2:30 pm - 8:30 pm	10:30 am - 4 pm
	4:30 pm - 8:30 pm	4 pm - 8:30 pm
Gift Shop	2:30 pm - 8 pm	10:30 am - 4 pm
	5 pm - 10:30 pm	4 pm - 10:30 pm
Gates	2:30 pm - 8 pm (outside)	10:30 am - 4 pm (Inside)
		10:30 am - 4 pm (outside)
Kitchen/Grills	10 am - 4 pm	10 am - 4 pm
	4 pm - 9 pm	4 pm - 9 pm
Serving Line	2:30 pm - 8:30 pm	10:30 am - 4 pm
	4:30 pm - 8:30 pm	4 pm - 8:30 pm
Drive Through	11 am - 4 pm	10:30 am - 4 pm
	4 pm - 9 pm	4 pm - 9 pm
Clear Tables	5 pm - 9 pm	5 pm - 9 pm

Pastries For pastry availability, contact Jenny Bakeris
(phone: 563-324-4540 or email: J.Bakeris@hotmail.com)

St. George Stewardship Notes

"Those that Seek the Lord Shall Never be in Want of Any Good Thing"



2016 QUICK FACTS

(as of
August 22, 2016)

\$147,444.00 =
Amount pledged for 2016
by 130 households

\$90,510.00 =
Amount given to 2016
stewardship since Jan. 1

\$1,134.18 =
Average pledge per
household at this date

\$274,893.00 =
Amount needed for the
ministries of
St. George Parish for
2016

How Did the Traditional Summer Cash Flow Problem Resolve?

As mentioned in the last edition of *The Trophybearer*, our Saint George Parish requires about \$23,000.00 in income every month to meet its ongoing expenses and traditionally in the summer, income decreases.

Although giving was up compared to last summer, expenses were also up. It was necessary to transfer from the Memorial Fund to the General Fund to pay bills. At the August council meeting, it was decided that a transfer of a portion of available interest from the Foundation Fund (following the fund's policies) would be needed to meet expenses until the Festival.

The executive council decided to meet on August 22 to discuss stewardship strategies to meet this ongoing challenge. Proposals will be implemented during this fall's stewardship campaign. Any and all suggestions from stewards for addressing this issue are welcome!

Parish Happenings

Saint George Greek Orthodox Church
2930 31st Avenue, Rock Island, IL 61201

SUNDAY CHURCH SCHOOL, HOPE/JOY AND GOYA REGISTRATION FORM

Family Last Name			Mother's First Name			Father's First Name		
Address			City			Zip Code		
1 st Number to call			2 nd Number to call			Best email for communications		

SUNDAY SCHOOL INFORMATION

FIRST NAMES	PATRON SAINT	BIRTHDAY (MONTH/DAY/YEAR)
1. _____	_____	_____
2. _____	_____	_____
3. _____	_____	_____
4. _____	_____	_____
5. _____	_____	_____

HOPE/JOY

Child's Name

GOYA

Child's Name

GRADE IN SCHOOL

First Names	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018
1. _____					
2. _____					
3. _____					
4. _____					
5. _____					

The Synaxis of Joachim and Anna (September 9)

So much attention is paid by Christians to the Blessed Virgin Mary, the Theotokos, sanctified in every conceivable way, that there is a tendency to overlook her parents. Commemorated the day after the commemoration of their daughter, who is remembered on other days as well, Joachim and Anna were the parents of a flesh-and-blood human being they called Mary and, therefore, the grandparents of a flesh and blood human being, in form at least, who died to save the world. Considered in this light, this couple is appreciated most by the grandfathers and grandmothers of the world.

The world's most famous painting, the Mona Lisa, inspired Walter Pater to compare her to the 'St. Anne, the mother of Mary'. The spiritual beauty of Anna is expressed in the Bible,

equaled by that of her devoted husband, the too lightly regarded Joachim. Since there is no greater part of the divine plan of the universe than motherhood, it follows that St. Anna is given individual honor with an observance of a feast day in her name on July 26. This in no way diminishes the image of her husband Joachim.

Shrouded by twenty centuries of legend, close scrutiny by biblical scholars has cleared away legend and established a more accurate and factual account, however meager, of Joachim and Anna. There is no denying the word of the Apostle James, who saw fit to go to great lengths to glean facts about the parents of Mary which he describes in a letter that somehow failed to find offi-

cial acceptance. Conflicting views notwithstanding, it is definitely known that Anna was of the prestigious Hebrew tribe of Levi and that she was the daughter of the high priest Nathan, wed to a namesake Mary. This high priest had two daughters besides the Mary who mothered Anna. They were called Sovin and Anna, both of whom became mothers in Bethlehem, but Anna was married in Galilee where Mary, the Theotokos, was born.

There is no denying Joachim was favored of God, who answered his prayer that a child be born to the barren union with Anna. The answer was Mary, of course, and thereafter was set in motion the world's greatest faith, so overwhelming that Joachim fades from view in misty swirls that surround the sweet mysteries of Christianity. It is enough to know Joachim was the father of Mary, the mother who bore Jesus Christ, the divine Savior who changed the course of world history and set it on another path which, if followed, leads to eternal life.

The fact that God moves in a mysterious way was evident when Joachim and Anna prayed for a child they knew not whether they were being granted a son or a daughter so they had no knowledge of what lay in store for them and for the world. The Apostle James has quoted an angel of the Lord as saying to Anna, "the Lord hath heard thy prayer, and thou shall conceive and bring forth, and thy seed shall be spoken of in all the world." There was no mention of the sex of the child as

the Apostle James goes on to say that Anna accepted with the words: "As the Lord my God lives if I beget male or female, I will bring it as a gift to the Lord my God; and it shall minister unto him holy things all the days of its life." The use of the word "it" indicates Anna may have had premonitions but certainly no advance notice that 'it' was to be "she," who in turn knowingly brought forth the Son of God. Indeed God does move in a mysterious way.

The Greek Orthodox Church has a hymn which sings gloriously: "As we celebrate the remembrance of thy righteous grandparents, through them we beseech thee, O Lord, to save our souls.... " There can be no more touching tribute than to be sung in praise and prayer in the sacred music of the Church. Another hymn contains the words: "Anna doth rejoice now that she is loosed from the bonds of barrenness, as she nourishes the most pure one, calling all to praise him who hath given the world her who alone is Mother, yet hath known no man." The names of Joachim and Anna are an integral part of the Greek Liturgy, always mentioned in the prayerful conclusion of services with the words: "May the risen Christ, our true God, with the prayers of his pure and holy Mother, the power of the precious and life-giving Cross, the protection of the spiritual powers of Heaven ...the holy and righteous ancestors Joachim and Anna ...and all the saints whose memory we celebrate have mercy on us and save us ... "



**The Synaxis of
Joachim and Anna**

Saint Euphrosynos the Cook (September 11)



Saint Euphrosynos the Cook

Although the paths of righteousness that may lead any Christian to sainthood are many in number, they may not contain any directional signs, nor be limited in access to any particular class of individuals. These holy ranks of men and women come from all stations in life, from the weak and the strong, the humble and the mighty, the simple and the scholarly. God shows no favoritism and accepts among the saints those who served him best, regardless of their background or extraction.

While Mt. Athos has been a spiritual haven for some of the greatest minds in church history, it has also opened its doors to those of limited intellect whose devotion to God was limitless. Their power was more spiritual than intellectual. Among these children of God who had no academic credentials was a peasant named Euphrosynos, who was admitted to the monastery of Mt. Athos for his pure and simple spirit. His illiterate but devout parents had given him no formal schooling, but had enriched his life through devout prayer.

Unqualified for any sort of intellec-

tual work, Euphrosynos was relegated to the kitchen. There he performed the menial but not necessarily demeaning work of preparing the meals. For this reason he was called Euphrosynos the Cook. While many have looked down their intellectual noses at the cook, none of the more educated monks ever doubted his sincerity. While he dispensed food for the body, Euphrosynos found food for his soul.

While he was not in the kitchen, Euphrosynos sought seclusion in one of the many caves in the area. There he meditated and prayed in his own way, thereby acquiring an intimacy with God for which many of the scholars would have traded their entire knowledge. It was to this seclusion that Euphrosynos had crept after having attended a rather profound lecture and discussion of the Kingdom of Heaven, conducted by the abbot. He was able to comprehend very little and contributed little, if anything, to the discussion. Retiring in embarrassment and confusion, Euphrosynos crept to his place of seclusion to address God himself in his own simple terms.

In a dream one night, the abbot envisioned a garden of breathtaking beauty. In the center of it stood a lone figure which he discerned to be none other than Euphrosynos. Of the hundreds of monks of Mt. Athos, only the lowly cook occupied the garden. In the dream, Euphrosynos explained to the incredulous abbot that he was looking upon the Kingdom of Heaven, and then placed a branch laden with apples in the abbot's hands and walked away

into the mist.

When the abbot awoke from the dream, he found himself clutching a real branch with real apples. Excitedly he summoned Euphrosynos and the other monks to share this revelation. The new-found respect and admiration of his fellow monks only made the cook ill-at-ease and so he excused himself to seek the seclusion he cherished, but now with the knowledge that he had somehow received God's favor. The apples the abbot found in his hand were said to have miraculous powers, but Euphrosynos himself never bothered to witness this. He left for his place of solitude, which he enjoyed to his last day.

Except for the miraculous apple branch there was nothing in the life of St. Euphrosynos that was out of the ordinary. If he spent a lifetime acquiring a reputation as the world's greatest chef, catering not only to monks but to the hierarchy and royalty as well, he would today be as unknown as the many cooks who have looked to work in the kitchen to sustain the temporal life. But a divine manifestation made it clear that St. Euphrosynos was not a run-of-the-mill cook preparing meals for the temporal well-being of dedicated men. At a time when this manifestation proclaimed him to be a true man of God he sought no advantage that may have come of it, choosing the solitude and isolation of a true saint.

Euphrosynos is usually depicted in icons holding an apple branch in his hand. His memory is celebrated each year on September 11.

The Exaltation of the Holy Cross (September 14)

As important as any of the feast days commemorating the exalted saints of the Church is the feast day held annually on September 14 in special tribute to the cross of Jesus Christ, the reproduction of which is worn or displayed in every corner of the earth as a symbol of the mightiest faith in all the universe. The two timbers on which the Messiah died to save the world, priceless beyond measure, form the most familiar and beloved symbol in a world full of symbols and emblems. For nearly three hundred years after his death the Cross was buried in obscurity, eventually to be salvaged through the efforts of a devout Byzantine emperor and his mother.

The Emperor Constantine the Great was not only the first Christian emperor, but, together with his mother, has been honored with sainthood. His mother is honored for her determined efforts in the cause of Christianity. It was Constantine who beheld a vision in the sky in which were emblazoned the words *En Touto Nika*, translating into "In this Sign Conquer," etched across a brilliant cross of Jesus Christ. Ordering that all the shields of his army bear the sign of the Cross, Constantine went on to subdue the enemies of the state and to establish the Christian faith, which has outlived his empire and will endure forever.

Helen, the mother of Constantine and a saint of the Church, had the full support of her son when she decided to recover the cross of Christ, and although nearly three hundred years had elapsed since the Crucifixion,

she was optimistic in her resolve to find the Cross and return it to the city of Constantinople. After months of diligent search, painstakingly following every historic clue as to its whereabouts, Helen and her dedicated group of searchers discovered the Cross on 14 September 325 in the vicinity of Golgotha, where it had been buried in the dust of the centuries.

On the spot where the Cross was discovered there was found to grow a hitherto unknown flower of rare beauty and fragrance which has been named *Vasiliko* (Basil), meaning the flower of royalty, out of respect to the Dowager Queen who led the expedition. This flower, since that memorable day over 1600 years ago, has been the official flower of the Orthodox Christian Church and is in evidence when clergymen engage in the age-old tradition of blessing homes or the waters on which seamen ply their trade. Helen afterwards made countless pilgrimages to the Holy Land and was responsible for the establishment of churches at the sites of the Nativity, Holy Sepulcher, Ascension, and at many other places.

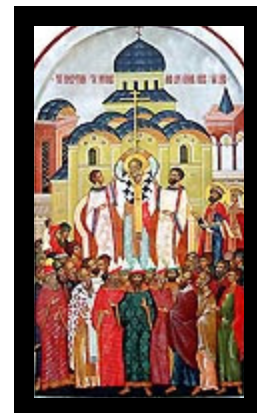
For the next three hundred years the Cross stayed in the possession of the Christians in Jerusalem, but after a series of forays the city of Jerusalem was captured by the Persians in 614 and the Cross fell into the hands of an enemy that for years prior and since scoffed at the faith of Jesus Christ. Several attempts were made by devout and bold Christians to recover the precious Cross, but they were no

match for the Persian hordes.

Finally, the Byzantine Emperor Heraklios, in the tradition of his ancestor Constantine, amassed an army of size and equipment to match that of the Persians, and after months of planning launched an attack on the Holy City but with no immediate success. What the Persians lacked in faith they made up for in numbers of trained warriors who respected nothing but the sword, and because of this relentless defense the tide of battle wavered over an agonizing fifteen years until at last the Christian forces broke through the Persian defenses and regained control of the Holy City and its priceless treasure.

The successful outcome of the campaign is celebrated jointly with the finding of the Cross by St. Helen on September 14, and the veneration of the Precious and Life-giving Cross is again celebrated by Christians on the Third Sunday of Lent. With the sign of the Cross so much in evidence in the daily life of a Christian, the celebration seems to extend over every minute of every day of every year, but the official days underscore the magnitude of the Cross in the Christian concept.

With the perilous conditions prevalent in a land where the fortunes of a menaced society were subject to sudden change and mood, depending on who held the upper hand, the Fathers of the Church decided to divide the Cross into small sections, thereafter to repose in the safety of the great spiritual centers of Constantinople, Mt. Athos, Alexandria, Rome, and Antioch.



The Exaltation of the Holy Cross

Saint Sophia and her daughters Faith, Hope and Love (September 17)



Saint Sophia and her daughters Faith, Hope and Love

The Holy Martyrs Saint Sophia and her Daughters Faith, Hope and Love were born in Italy. Their mother was a pious Christian widow who named her daughters for the three Christian virtues. Faith was twelve, Hope was ten, and Love was nine. St Sophia raised them in the love of the Lord Jesus Christ. St Sophia and her daughters did not hide their faith in Christ, but openly confessed it before everyone.

An official named Antiochus denounced them to the emperor Hadrian (117-138), who ordered that they be brought to Rome. Realizing that they would be taken before the emperor, the holy virgins prayed fervently to the Lord Jesus Christ, asking

that He give them the strength not to fear torture and death. When the holy virgins and their mother came before the emperor, everyone present was amazed at their composure. They looked as though they had been brought to some happy festival, rather than to torture. Summoning each of the sisters in turn, Hadrian urged them to offer sacrifice to the goddess Artemis. The young girls remained unyielding.

Then the emperor ordered them to be tortured. They burned the holy virgins over an iron grating, then threw them into a red-hot oven, and finally into a cauldron with boiling tar, but the Lord preserved them.

The youngest child, Love, was tied to a wheel and they beat her with rods until her body was covered all over with bloody welts. After undergoing unspeakable torments, the holy virgins glorified their Heavenly Bridegroom and remained steadfast in the Faith.

They subjected St Sophia to another grievous torture:

the mother was forced to watch the suffering of her daughters. She displayed adamant courage, and urged her daughters to endure their torments for the sake of the Heavenly Bridegroom. All three maidens were beheaded, and joyfully bent their necks beneath the sword.

In order to intensify St Sophia's inner suffering, the emperor permitted her to take the bodies of her daughters. She placed their remains in coffins and loaded them on a wagon. She drove beyond the city limits and reverently buried them on a high hill. St Sophia sat there by the graves of her daughters for three days, and finally she gave up her soul to the Lord. Even though she did not suffer for Christ in the flesh, she was not deprived of a martyr's crown. Instead, she suffered in her heart. Believers buried her body there beside her daughters.

The relics of the holy martyrs have rested at El'zasa, in the church of Esho since the year 777.

Answers To Last Month's Test Your Faith...

Across

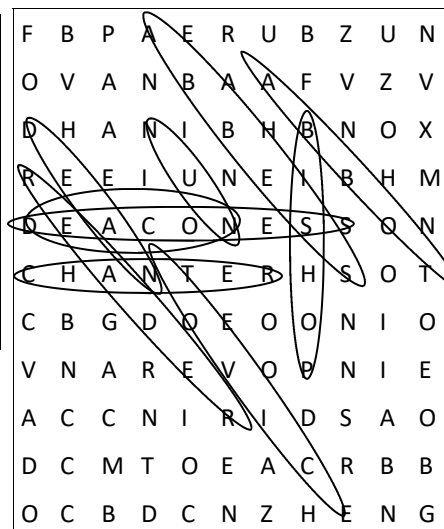
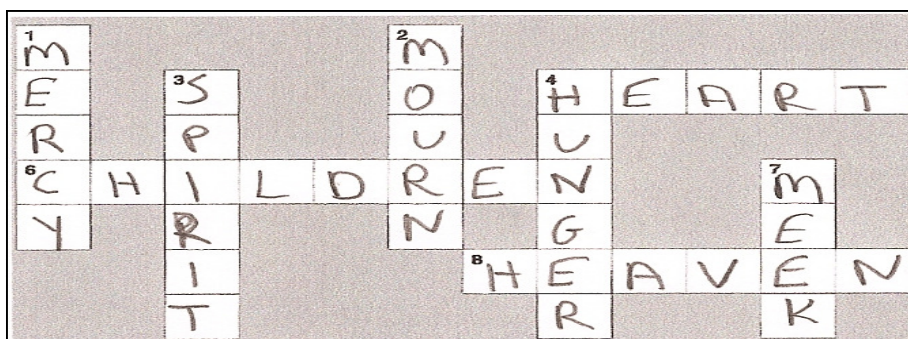
4. Blessed are the pure of _____, for they shall see God.
6. Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called _____ of God.
8. Blessed are they who are persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of _____.

Down

1. Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain _____.
2. Blessed are they who _____: for they shall be comforted.
3. Blessed are the poor in _____: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
4. Blessed are they who _____ and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.
7. Blessed are the _____: for they shall inherit the earth.

CHURCH ROLES

1. Deaconess
2. Abbess
3. Bishop
4. Reader
5. Chanter
6. Deacon
7. Novice
8. Abbot
9. Dean
10. Nun



Thoughts to Ponder

In the matter of piety, poverty serves us better than wealth, and work better than idleness, especially since wealth becomes an obstacle even for those who do not devote themselves to it. Yet, when we must put aside our wrath, quench our envy, soften

our anger, offer our prayers, and show a disposition which is reasonable, mild, kindly, and loving, how could poverty stand in our way? For we accomplish these things not by spending money but by making the correct choice. 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

Test Your Faith...

Popular

New Testament Verses

I

Across

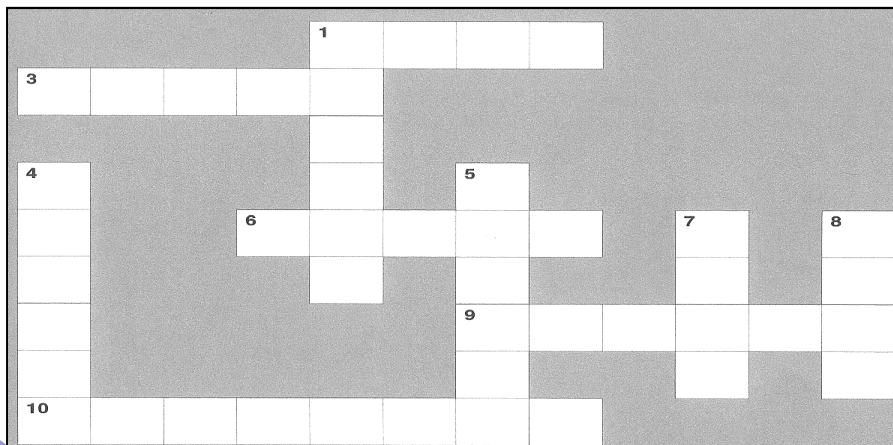
1. But Lot's wife looked back, and she became a pillar of _____.
3. _____ goes before destruction, a haughty spirit before a fall.
6. A land flowing with milk and _____.
9. Do not throw your _____ before swine.
10. The Lord is my _____, I shall not want.

Down

1. To every thing there is a _____, and a time to every purpose under the heaven.
4. They will beat their _____ into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks.
5. Am I my brother's _____?
7. Your _____ is a lamp unto my feet.
8. For _____ you are and unto _____ shall you return

CHURCH ROLES II:

Archimandrite
Archdeacon
Chancellor
Catechumen
Archbishop
Presbyter
Acolyte
Exarch
Acolyte



A	H	A	D	E	Y	E	Z	A	Q	X	C	G	H	T	C
C	E	F	V	B	C	M	E	M	C	I	J	E	A	H	I
Q	A	K	E	X	S	A	A	E	C	O	D	A	R	N	K
A	G	E	D	A	Y	A	I	C	H	Q	L	G	W	C	T
R	F	X	Y	A	J	N	R	H	A	O	A	Y	C	N	D
A	N	A	R	C	H	I	M	A	N	D	R	I	T	E	G
L	R	R	Z	F	W	L	B	Z	C	W	R	N	L	E	I
E	C	C	A	A	V	I	P	R	E	S	B	Y	T	E	R
C	L	H	H	T	Y	O	C	I	L	Y	A	H	R	A	C
B	C	D	Y	B	U	T	N	K	L	H	B	R	R	K	L
I	L	E	S	D	I	M	Z	T	O	G	A	Q	T	F	A
T	J	A	H	T	W	S	R	Y	R	D	I	W	A	R	A
V	A	C	A	T	E	C	H	U	M	E	N	S	X	Q	Q
N	R	O	D	E	O	A	A	O	N	T	B	T	E	U	B
R	N	N	O	A	Y	N	M	H	P	J	S	T	X	L	E
M	I	G	C	C	Y	M	S	O	H	Y	F	L	G	F	V