

Let My Prayer Arise

Our Patroness, St. Mary Magdalene

A Message from Fr. Gabriel

This month, on Sunday, July 22nd, we will be celebrating the feast day of our patroness, St. Mary Magdalene! What a joy that it happens to fall on a Sunday this year!

St. Mary Magdalene is known as the Apostle to the Apostles, Equal to the Apostles, and one of the Holy Myrrh Bearers. That's a lot of titles for a woman, living in a time where women were not held in the same regard as the men. Yet the Church in Her wisdom, honors St. Mary with so many titles. We honor this simple sinner, who went against the grain of society, and became a follower of Christ.

There is a beautiful quote from St. Philaret that I know many of you have heard before, using the image of a fish swimming upstream. He says: *"A fish that is alive, always swims against the flow of water, while one that is dead, floats in the water and is carried downstream. A True Christian goes against the current of a sinful age. A false one is swept away by it's swiftness."*

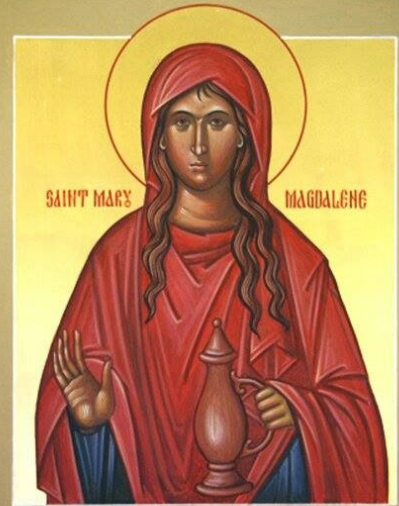
What a beautiful image to describe our patroness St. Mary! This analogy is even more profound, when we read what some Church traditions say about her early life.

There is this mistaken and unbiblical idea, that Mary was a prostitute before she met Christ. But through one of the oral traditions of the Church, we learn that Mary Magdalene, at a young age, led such a chaste life, that the devil thought **she** might be the one who would bear Christ into the world. It was for this reason that the devil put upon her seven demons to torment her, and lead her into a life of sin.

Continued Pg 3

June in Review:

- This past month was full of so many blessings, not the least of which was the visiting from the Weeping Mother of God! THANK YOU to all who donated their time and talents to make the icon's visit a success!



July 2018

Inside this Issue

- Prayer Life
- 2018 Parish Report
- Monthly Forecast
- Fellowship of St. Photini

Important Dates to Remember

- 7/8 Baptismal Liturgy
- 7/15 Pan-Orthodox Softball Game
- 7/22 Patronal Feast
- 7/29 First Responders Blessing



This Month's Scripture Readings

July 1st:

Luke 24:12-35
Romans 10:1-10
Matthew 8:28-9:1

July 8th:

Luke 24:36-53
Romans 12:6-14
Matthew 9:1-8

July 15th:

John 10:1-9; 17:1-13
Romans 15:1-7
Matthew 9:27-35

July 22th:

John 20:11-18
1 Corinthians 1:10-18
Matthew 14:14-22

July 29th:

John 10:19-31
1 Corinthians 3:9-17
Matthew 14:22-34

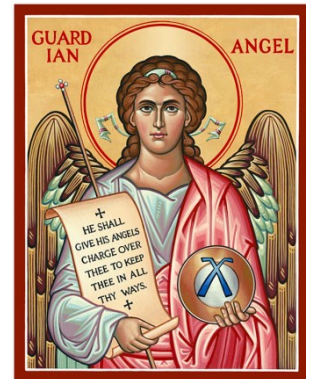
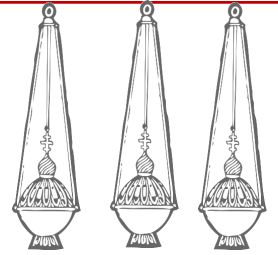


Prayer Life

Pray for our sick and suffering brothers and sisters.

His Beatitude Metropolitan
Theodosius
His Beatitude Metropolitan
Herman
His Eminence Archbishop
Melchisedek
Archpriest Dimitri Vincent
Subdeacon Paul Hildreth
Susan
Vinnie
Autumn
Katherine
John
Anne
Katherine
Anastasia
Alex
Elaine
Bill
Carol
Anne
Carolyn
Manuela
Frankie
John

Stacie
Bryan
Doug
Megan
Duncan
Perpetua
Pat
Jan
Kyle
Aiden
Lon
Lon
James
Joanna
Sandy
Finn
Michael
Theodora
Damian
Ella
Elnora



Armed Forces	Recently Departed this Life	Catechumens	Mother's Child
Matthew Beck - Air Force Michael Oginsky - U.S. Marines Patrick Tejkl - U.S. Marines Lindsey Cazatt - U.S. Navy Stephanie Bishop - U.S. Navy Jason Wilburn - Army Rangers Alex Suriano - Air National Guard Dallas Watson - U.S. Air Force Seraphim Lazar- Watson - U.S. Air Force	Michael	Robert Forsyth	Solome Daugherty Christine Suriano Rachael Welch Kristen Jakubus Shannon

“Our Nation’s Weakest Export?” Cont.

We hear in St. Luke’s Gospel, how Christ freed her from these demons, and she followed him thereafter. Even at our Lord’s passion, St. Mary was not swept away by the currents of fear and denial like many of the Disciples. She openly followed Jesus to Jerusalem, and was steadfast at the foot of the Cross with the Theotokos...standing by Jesus in His darkest moments.

After Christ’s Crucifixion, she continued to swim against the current of society. St. Mary took courage with the other myrrh bearing women, and went to the tomb that her Lord was laid in. And because of that courage, she was given the great gift of being the first person to see the Risen Lord, and announce the Resurrection.

Our 21st century minds have a hard time grasping just how big of a deal it was for St. Mary to be the first person to see Christ resurrected. In that time, women were not considered credible witnesses. They were not allowed to give testimony, because only the men were considered believable. Yet to Jesus, this didn’t matter. He trusted St. Mary to deliver the greatest news in the history of the world. He saw her love for Him at the foot of the cross, when she shed tears of sorrow.

Christ saw St. Mary’s dedication to Him, when the myrrh bearing women went to the tomb prepared to ask the Romans to move the stone away, so that they could anoint Jesus’s body. He had for-seen that Mary would travel without fear to Rome, and announce the Resurrection to the capital of the Pagan Empire. Christ admired her struggle against the streams of a sinful society, and chose her to be the FIRST to see the Risen Christ!

What would happen, dear brothers and sisters, if we were able to consistently swim against that stream of sin which we find ourselves in the fallen world? The personal relationship that St. Mary Magdalene had with the Savior, is one that we spend our entire lives trying to achieve. Through her life, our patroness shows us the path that we must follow. Her life shows us that no matter what wrongs we have done in our lives up until now...there is still a chance to turn things around.



Until the day which we breathe our last on this earth, we have the opportunity to do as St. Mary did...and flip the switch. We have a unique situation in our Church today, because we are blessed with the presence and relics of this great “switch flipper”. In our little home of Fenton, Michigan, we have a piece of the bone, from the very first person to see our Lord Resurrected. This represents an undeniable and physical link to our Lord Himself...and I hope that every time you walk into the Church for the Divine Services, you take a few moments to whisper a prayer into the ear of St. Mary Magdalene herself...asking her to pray to God for the courage to make the changes in our own lives, allowing us to struggle against the streams of sin, and come into the loving embrace of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

ST. MARY MAGDALENE 2018 PARISH REPORT

FACTS AND FIGURES

"GO FORTH AND BAPTIZE ALL NATIONS..."

Avg. Attendance on Sunday: 100 Adults and Children
Total Pledging Families: 62
Baptisms/Chrismations: 6
Weddings: 1
Fallen Asleep: 3
Readers Tonsured: 1

Average attendance on Sunday Mornings continues to increase, with an influx of new families who are looking to participate more fully in the life of the Church.

While attendance at Divine Liturgy remains solid, this past year, there has been an increase in participation in Great Vespers and on Saturday evening. We have gone from around 10 regular attendees to 15 or 20 on most Saturdays.



WORSHIP

Under the leadership of Reader Greg Jannakos and Richard Ziats, we have also seen our choir continue to grow in number. We recently introduced regular Sunday Morning choir rehearsals, which has helped our singers learn new melodies for the Liturgical Hymns.

Regular Wednesday Evening Compline Services have continued, with the exception of when Fr. Gabriel is out of town. Compline is usually followed by time for confessions, or an adult education class. Attendance to this service varies, depending on what is happening afterwards.

This year, we were blessed to increase our bell collection by one, install new hand carved royal doors into the iconostasis, obtain an eternal flame candle with the Holy Fire, receive relics of our patroness from Jerusalem, have newly hand written icons installed into the altar table, and have Dcn. Michael make us a new tomb for our newly restored Plashenitza. Glory to God!

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

One of the major focuses of our parish this past year was outreach to our community. In August, we collected close to \$1,000 dollars worth of school supplies for our local teachers. In September, we partnered with FOCUS Detroit and sponsored a "Family Feeding" event at the Church, where we purchased and put together over 400 meals for needy families in Detroit. In November we donated \$1,000 to the Fenton Area Resource Referral Agency, which helps support our local families who are in need. In December, we purchased \$1500 worth of gift cards for seminarian families for Christmas. In January, we purchased material, and had each of our families make blankets for those who are suffering from cancer, to be used during their chemotherapy treatments. In February, we collected baby wipes, blankets, diapers, and socks for single parent families who are struggling to support their young ones.

In an effort to continue these ministries, and to also further our outreach to the community, the new "**Fellowship of St. Photini**" was established late this past year, to increase the amount of lay involvement and direction for our outreach ministries.

COMMUNITY

In an effort to continue our mission of “uncovering the hidden gem of Orthodoxy”, our parish community has continued to try and find exciting ways to introduce the Ancient Faith to our surrounding cities.

This past July, and again in a few weeks, we will be welcoming our local First Responders for the 3rd annual blessing and appreciation barbecue. Last year, we had well over 25 first responders and their families join us, to get their vehicles (firetrucks, police cars, ambulances, and motorcycles) blessed, and to receive a blessing of oil from the tomb of Christ in the Holy Sepulcher in Jerusalem.

This past year, we also had our first annual community pet blessing in September, with a Moleben to St. Mammias (patron Saint of Animals). Fr. Gabriel blessed well over 130 animals and their families, in conjunction with the work of our local “Adopt a Pet” of Fenton.

We are looking forward to many more community events this summer, including another visit from the Konevets Choir, a visitation from the Iveron Myrrh Streaming Icon, and a presentation of North American Saints by the Curator of the OCA's Metropolitan Museum!

EDUCATION

This past year was the first full year in which we were able to make use of our newly remodeled parish education center. With the generous donations of so many over the past two years, we were able to purchase whiteboards, tables, and chairs for our adult education and church school programs!

The Church School enrollment and participation this past year was up over previous years. By the Grace of God, we had 15 children in our Pre-School and Elementary classes, and anywhere from 6-8 in our teen program. Currently, most of the children in our parish community are on the younger side, with 20 kids under 1st grade (and God willing, more babies on the way!)

Along with our regular “Metanoia” (Introduction to Orthodoxy) courses (Fall and Spring Semesters), our adult education this past year focused on the Worship Services of the Church. We held (and posted on our website) classes outlining the Divine Liturgy and Great Vespers, all of which were well attended. This Fall, we hope to do a study on the Apostolic Fathers.



STEWARDSHIP AND LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

We have been extremely blessed to have a parish community that believes in tithing to the Church. Having this type of commitment and love for your parish family, where everyone looks to give not only their treasurers, but their time and talent as well, helps to strengthen the faith and love that we are called to show to our Church, and to each other.

In 2017, we were able to decrease our mortgage liability by over \$60,000, which included paying off the balance of our education center. This Summer, we will be refinancing our main Church mortgage for, God willing, the last time. With our community growing, we hope that very soon, God will bless us with an expansion project to help further the mission of spreading Orthodoxy to Fenton and it's neighboring communities.

Monthly Forecast

Choir Rehearsal:

Choir rehearsals will continue to take place on Sunday mornings at 9:20 AM. We have a lot to prepare for this month, so please plan on being in attendance!

Baptismal Liturgy:

On Sunday, July 8th, we will be having a Baptismal Divine Liturgy for Luke Shephard, son of Subdeacon David and Sara, and grandson of Scott and Tina Shephard. The exorcism prayers will begin in the back of the Church at 9:40 AM. Please plan on arriving early that Sunday!

Parish Council Meeting:

There is a parish council meeting scheduled for Tuesday, July 10th at 7:00 PM

Compline and Confession Schedule:

This month, we will be having Compline and Confession on Wednesday July 11th and Wednesday July 18th. Please see the calendar before making the trip on Wednesday evenings for services this month!

Pan Orthodox Softball Game:

On Sunday, July 15th, we will be having our annual Pan Orthodox Softball Game! This year's game will be played at St. Pius X School Baseball Field (3139 Hogarth Ave, Flint). A picnic will begin at 4:00 PM, with the game beginning around 4:45 PM. There is a sign up sheet in the vestibule! Hope to see everyone there!

Parish Feast Day:

Our Patronal Feast Day, by the Glory of God, falls on a Sunday this year! Sunday, July 22nd, we will celebrate our patroness! Vespers and Lijtia will be on Saturday, July 21st, with Hours and Divine Liturgy at a special start time of 9:20 AM that Sunday! After Divine Liturgy, Fr. Gabriel will be departing for the Orthodox Church in America's Conference in St. Louis, MO.

Parish Council in Review

This past parish council meeting was all about prep work for the big weekend with the Weeping Icon and the Diocesan Conference. The council approved a much needed staining of the front railing and entry way into the Church. A big thank you goes out to all who helped to prepare the inside and outside of our little "Church in the Woods" for the conference! We are grateful to all who helped make the weekend a success!

3rd Annual First Responder's Blessing and Appreciation Luncheon:

On Sunday, July 29th, we will be welcoming our First Responders for the annual blessing of vehicles. This has become a truly wonderful summer event, which offers us the chance to show our appreciation for those heroes who risk life and limb to keep us protected. Please spread the word for this event, and invite any first responders that you are close too! This will also be our agape luncheon, so please bring a dish to share!



"For I was hungry and you gave me food,
 I was thirsty and you gave me drink,
 I was a stranger and you took me in,
 I was in prison and you came to me,
 I was sick and you visited me, I
 was naked and you clothed me."

This month the Fellowship of St. Photini will be hosting the First Responders Blessing on Sunday, July 29th Following Divine Liturgy. There will be a picnic lunch to follow. Hot Dogs and Hamburgers will be provided so please bring a dish to pass and enjoy the company of those in our communities who work so hard for us.

Please contact David Schutt, Roland Drummond, Bob Forsyth or Rebekah Humphreys if you would like any more information about upcoming projects or would like to donate to the works of The Fellowship of St. Photini.

UPCOMING EVENTS

JULY:

First Responders Blessing

AUGUST:

School Supply Drive

DORMITION FAST:

Habitat for Humanity

OCTOBER:

Cancer Blankets

DECMEBER:

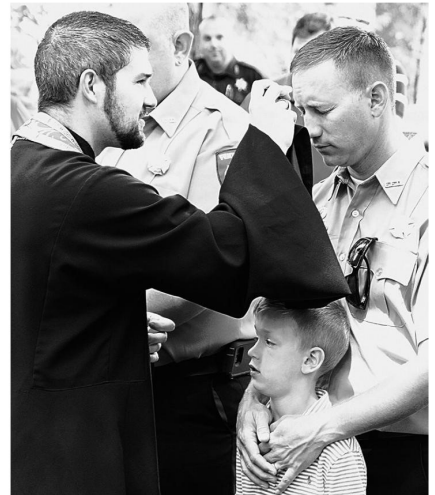
Seminarian Gift Cards

ADVENT FAST:

FOCUS Backpack Feeding



"And the King will answer and say to them, 'Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me.' "



St. Mary Magdalene's 3rd Annual First Responders Blessing and BBQ!

St. Mary Magdalene Orthodox Church

2439 S. Long Lake Rd. Fenton, MI 48430

Sunday, July 29th, 2018, After the Divine Liturgy (Approx 11:20 AM)

Mark your calendars for our Third Annual First Responder Blessing and BBQ, as we welcome all of our local heroes to the Church for a special prayer service following the Divine Liturgy, where we will pray not only for those who have lost their lives in the line of duty, but also for the strength and protection of all of our those who put themselves in harms way to protect each and every one of us.

After the blessing, in honor of the feast of St. Elijah the Prophet, who left the world on a fiery chariot, we will have the traditional blessing of vehicles, including our local fire trucks, police cars, motorcycles, and ambulances. All of our heroes are then invited with their families, to a special cookout held in their honor on our outdoor patio

Please contact Fr. Gabriel at (810) 750-1401, or by email at frgabrielismm@gmail.com for any further questions!



**Pan-Orthodox Churches of Genesee County
2018**

Vacation

Church

School

Monday, August 6th – Thursday, August 9th

6:00pm – 8:30pm

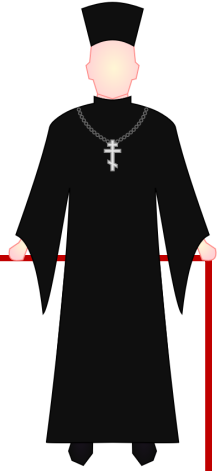
Hosted at:

**St. George Orthodox Church
5191 Lennon Road
Flint, MI 48507**

Registration opens in June

For more information, to volunteer, or donate,
please contact Kh. Leslee Abud,
laabud@aol.com or 810-695-2177

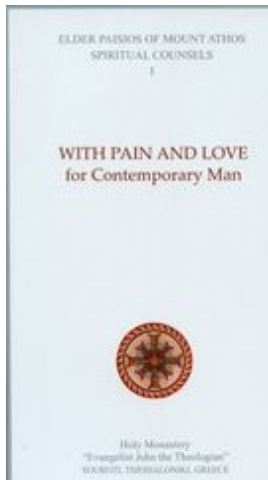
Recommended Reading



“Spiritual counsels of the Elder Paisios—With Pain and Love”

This is the first volume of the series 'Spiritual Counsels of the Elder Paisios of Mount Athos'. It is divided into four thematic parts. Each part is subdivided into chapters and every chapter into sections with the appropriate subheadings; • Part 1 Sin and the Devil • Part 2 Modern Civilization • Part 3 The Spirit of God and the Spirit of the World • Part 4 The Church in our Times

The Blessed Elder Paisios was born on 25th July 1924. From the time that he was a child, Elder Paisios lived an ascetic life, and was nourished by the lives of the Saints, whose feats he sought to imitate with great zeal and admirable precision. He practised unceasing prayer, cultivating all along the virtues of humility and love. He led an ascetic life on Mount Athos, in the Holy Monastery of Stomion in Konitsa, and on Mount Sinai in Egypt. He lived in obscurity, giving himself completely to God, and God in turn revealed him and gave him to the whole world. He guided, consoled, healed and granted peace to multitudes of people who sought him. His sanctified soul overflowed with divine love and his saintly face radiated the divine Grace. All day long, he tirelessly gathered the human pain and imparted divine consolation. He is the founder of the Holy Monastery of Saint John the Theologian in Souroti of Thessalonik, Greece, which he also guided spiritually for twenty-eight years (1967-1994). After suffering excruciating pains, which, as he used to say, benefited him more than the ascetic struggles of his entire life, he fell asleep in the Lord on 12 July 1994



**Our Library is growing!
Don't forget to
donate and checkout!**

THANK YOU TO THOSE WHO SERVE OUR COMMUNITY!

Coffee Hour Volunteers

July 1st:

Lamb Roast

July 8th:

Michael & Annie Khoury

July 15th:

Brady & Kathy Damic

July 22nd:

Charles & Minka Owens

July 29th:

Terry & Freida Owens

Parish Greeters

July 1st:

Pat Smith

July 8th:

Steve & Sue Walton

July 15th:

Scott & Tina Shephard

July 22nd:

Elaine Boucher

July 29th:

David & Cindy Welch

Epistle Readers

July 1st: Rdr. Brian Walton & Sue Walton

July 8th: Rdr. Chris Ballnik & Sbdn Andrew Durand

July 15th: Rdr Emanuel Watson & Rdr. Brian Walton

July 22nd: Janet Wiese & Rdr. Chis Ballnik

July 29th: Rdr. John Auxier & Rdr Emanuel Watson

Wishing you many blessed years!

Happy Birthday

- 7– Scott Shephard
- 9– Ann Schutt & Anabell Durand
- 10– David Daugherty & Alex Branoff
- 12– Michael Popilchak
- 16– Dr. Melissa Royer
- 20– Ava Arnes
- 24– Nathaniel Auxier
- 25– Kathy Damic
- 26– Taylor Blohm
- 28– Daniel Lesho, Seraphim Lazar-Watson & Roland Drummond
- 29– Megan Owens
- 31– Brigitte Ziegler

Happy Anniversary

- 2– Charles & Minko Owens
- 14– George & Niki Naum
- 28– Sbdn Andrew & Meghan Durand



Orthodox Christian Women of Michigan

2018 SPEAKER SERIES

<p>Saturday, March 10 at 10AM MARY & THE ORTHODOX WOMAN Fr. Joshua Genig, Speaker St. Thomas Orthodox Church 29150 Ten Mile Rd., Farmington Hills</p>	<p>Saturday, July 14 at 9AM ANNUAL RETREAT THE SPIRITUAL ADVISOR/FATHER CONFESSOR: What role does he play in my life? Fr. Dusan Koprivica, Speaker Holy Dormition Orthodox Monastery 3389 Rives Eaton Rd., Rives Junction</p>
<p>Monday, April 16 at 7PM ORTHODOX SAINTHOOD: How is it established? Who are some of our Modern/ American Saints? Fr. John Artemas, Speaker St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church 760 W. Wattles Rd., Troy</p>	<p>Monday, September 17 at 7PM MUSICAL RESPONSES IN THE ORTHODOX CHURCH: Chant, Choir, Congregational Singing Petra Koprivica, Panel Leader Basilica of St. Mary Antiochian Orthodox Church 18100 Merriman Rd., Livonia</p>
<p>Monday, May 21 at 7PM ORTHODOX MEDIA MINISTRIES: In Detroit & Beyond! John E. Lazar, Speaker St. Lazarus Ravanica Serbian Orthodox Cathedral 4575 E Outer Dr. (@ Van Dyke), Detroit</p>	<p>Monday, October 15 at 7PM FASTING: Why? When? How? Who, me? Fr. Lev Kopistiansky, Speaker Assumption Greek Orthodox Church 21800 Marter Rd., St. Clair Shores</p>
<p>Monday, June 18 at 7PM CARING FOR OUR ELDERLY: Individually & as a Church Community Karen Todorov, Speaker Holy Ghost Bulgarian Eastern Orthodox Church 38500 Ryan Rd., Sterling Heights</p>	<p>Monday, November 12 at 7PM GATHERING THE 'LOST SHEEP': How can I help my family/friends actively return to the Church/faith? Fr. Gabriel Bilas, Speaker St. George Greek Orthodox Church 43816 Woodward, Bloomfield Hills</p>

The mission of the Orthodox Christian Women of Michigan is to serve God, the faithful of His Orthodox Church and the world. This purpose shall be fulfilled through programs and charitable works that promote Orthodox unity, fellowship, and witness, Orthodox Christian values, lay leadership and education, spiritual growth and renewal and interpersonal support.

2018 OCW Board of Directors

Mary Ann Dadich – President	Mary Stanesa – Programming
Helen Martin – Vice President	Grace Kovacevic – Trustee
Effie Iwankowski – Secretary	Mary Lafter – Trustee
Loretta Gates – Treasurer	Nora Wojciechowski – Trustee
Fr. Laurence Lazar – Spiritual Advisor	

For more information, contact Mary Ann Dadich, mdadich811@gmail.com or 586-775-4799. Like our Facebook page at https://www.facebook.com/Orthodox-Christian-Women-of-Michigan-OCW-440819592966158/?ref=aymt_homepage_panel

3rd ANNUAL PAN-ORTHODOX SOFTBALL GAME

Sunday, July 15



Picnic: 4 pm
Softball Game: 4:45 pm



All ages and abilities are welcome!

St. Pius X School Baseball Field ~ 3139 Hogarth Ave., Flint

Please contact Deacon Luke (Kerry) Gonser for more information or if you can help in any way at 810-694-9001 or email kgonser1@yahoo.com



*Please note that we are playing on school grounds and state law prohibits the consumption of any alcoholic beverage and the use of tobacco products.

Referral Program To Benefit The St. Mary Magdalene Mortgage Initiative



Conne Terova
Real Estate One
Cell: (248) 318-7342
Email:
cterova@gmail.com
teamterova.com

Know anyone who is looking to buy or sell a home in the state of Michigan? Conne Terova of Real Estate One is offering an incentive program to benefit the St. Mary Magdalene Mortgage Initiative, by offering a \$500.00 donation to the Church's Mortgage Balance for every referral that results in a closed transaction! The referral program runs from now until December 31, 2018!