

# Let My Prayer Arise

## Orthodox Family Living

A Message from Fr. Gabriel

If we pay attention to the Gospel readings in early January, we hear St. Matthew describe for us two very contrasting families. We first hear of the Holy Family, made up of Joseph, Mary, and our Lord, who after taking refuge in the residence of the womb of the virgin...after being born in the most humble of places...after being laid in a feeding trough, and being warmed by the breath of oxen and donkeys...is now wrapped up and forced to flee with his family into Egypt.

And then we hear of a second family, led by the very king which the Holy Family is fleeing from. Historians point out to us that King Herod was an extremely vicious and cruel man, who murdered two of his own wives...and killed three of his own sons! And if that wasn't bad enough, we hear about how he is so afraid of the rumors of a rival messiah king being born, that he goes and has all of the holy innocent infants slaughtered.

St. Matthew gives us that chilling prophecy by the Prophet Jeremiah, which is enough to cause all of us to cringe at the wickedness that was on display: "A voice was heard in Ramah, lamentation, weeping, and great mourning...Rachel, weeping for her children...refusing to be comforted, because they are no more."

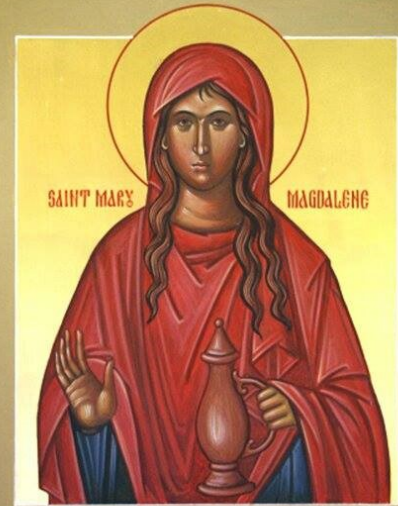
Unimaginable terror...for an indescribably wicked family.

### Continued Pg 3

#### December in Review:

This month began with the Baptismal Divine Liturgy of Addie Joseph, who took the name Elizabeth after St. Elizabeth the New Martyr. The children of the parish were also visited by St. Nicholas, who brought gifts for all. We conducted our annual meeting and had an extremely successful craft and bake sale for the Church!

Our emphasis on Adult Education and Study was enhanced in December, as Dcn. Michael led a course on the writings and conferences of St. John Cassian. The discussion during the course was extremely fruitful, so much so that it was decided to extend the class into the early weeks of January!



## January 2019

### Inside this Issue

- Prayer Life
- Monthly Forecast
- Fellowship of St. Photini
- Parish Youth
- OCF
- Adult Education

### Important Dates to Remember

- 1/2 Cannon to the Theotokos
- 1/5 Blessing of the Waters
- 1/6 Theophany, Blessing of the River and Annual Lamb Roast
- Begin Mentanoia Semester
- 1/17 Dormition Dinner
- 1/20 Sanctity of Life Sunday
- 1/27 Baptismal Divine Liturgy



## This Month's Scripture Readings

### December 2nd:

Luke 24:12-35; 18:18-27

Ephesians 6:10-17

### December 9th:

Luke 24:36-53; 8:16-21; 17:12-19

Galatians 4:22-31

Colossians 1:12-18

### December 16th:

John 20:1-10

Colossians 3:4-11

Luke 14:16-24

### December 23rd:

Genesis 14:14-20

Deuteronomy 1:8-11, 15-17;  
10:14-21

John 20:11-18

Hebrews 11:9-10, 17-23, 32-40

Matthew 1:1-25

### December 30th:

John 20:19-31

Galatians 1:11-19

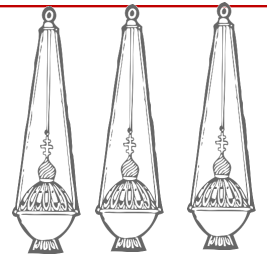
Matthew 2:13-23



# Prayer Life

Pray for our sick and suffering brothers and

|                            |            |
|----------------------------|------------|
| His Beatitude Metropolitan | Lon        |
| Theodosius                 | Lon        |
| His Beatitude Metropolitan | Joanna     |
| Herman                     | Sandy      |
| His Eminence Archbishop    | Ella       |
| Melchisedek                | Elnora     |
| Archpriest Dimitri Vincent | Theodora   |
| Subdeacon Paul Hildreth    | Peter      |
| Vinnie                     | Perpetua   |
| Autumn                     | Don        |
| Katherine                  | Sean       |
| John                       | James      |
| Anastasia                  | Michael    |
| Alex                       | Maryann    |
| Elaine                     | John       |
| Frankie                    | Rose Marie |
| John                       | Calvin     |
| Damian                     |            |
| Stacie                     |            |
| Bryan                      |            |
| Michael                    |            |
| Carolyn                    |            |
| Aiden                      |            |
| Megan                      |            |
| Pat                        |            |
| Kyle                       |            |



| Armed Forces  | Recently Departed this Life | Catechumens     | Mother's Child   |
|---|-----------------------------|-----------------|--|
| Matthew Beck - Air Force<br>Michael Oginsky - U.S. Marines<br>Patrick Tejkl - U.S. Marines<br>Lindsey Cazatt - U.S. Navy<br>Stephanie Bishop - U.S. Navy<br>Jason Wilburn - Army Rangers<br>Alex Suriano - Air National Guard<br>Dallas Watson - U.S. Air Force<br>Seraphim Lazar-Watson - U.S. Air Force | Manuela Kemp                | Seth<br>Shannon | Matushka Laura Bilas<br>Renee Auxier<br>Theresa Cooley |

## “Orthodox Family Living” Cont.

And the horror, unfortunately does not end there. We also know about Herod Antipas, the one who murdered St. John the Baptist, and took his brother’s wife to be his wife!

The Third Herod Generation, Herod Agrippa the 1st, in order to please the Jews who did not convert to Christianity, was the one who murdered St. James!

So on one hand, we have the satanic, blood thirsty, and demonic family of Herod, whose eyes were fixated on their worldly goods, and were guided by the demons of pride, jealousy, greed, lust, and envy. Their family thought only of themselves...of their own needs, wants, and desires...without ever giving a thought to the law of God...or to anyone else. We can be assured, that Herod wasn’t thinking about the lamenting Rachel, when he issued the order to slaughter the holy innocents. His mind was focused on his earthly rule...on his kingdom...on himself. These things were his priorities in life, and we see from history, that that wickedness was passed down to his family.

But in sharp contrast to all of that, we have the Holy Family. This was a family who was guided by their love and devotion to God. Rather than conversing with generals and nobles of the earth, each member of this family had personal conversations with the angels. Rather than being guided by royal advisors, the Holy Family remained in obedience to God’s messengers, who told them to flee into Egypt. This was no vacation spot for them! They followed God’s command and went into the belly of the beast! Egypt was so wicked at the time, that the Jews would use it as a slang term which meant “ungodly way of life”! But despite all of this, the family of Christ obeyed...and went. They never had their eyes fixated on the earth...never worrying about their wealth, happiness, and property. Instead, they always had their gaze on what was above, and were guided by the very Child who had been entrusted to their care.

These two contrasting families are a wonderful example to us, that how we act within our families speak volumes about us and our devotion to God. It shows us through Herod’s family, a clear picture of what happens when our priorities are not where they should be. When God is absent from our homes, when we don’t take the time to converse with Him in communal prayer, when we don’t give thanks before our meals, when we don’t show gratitude for all that He has given us, and when we don’t praise him for all he has NOT given us (this is a difficult one to grasp)...we fall prey to the temptations that Herod’s family had fallen into.



One of the greatest sins we can fall into with our families...is to dismiss or forget God. Herod’s family EGO was so large (and for those that have heard me preach or teach, you know that my favorite acronym is EGO, because it means “Easing God Out” ...and it’s a trap that all of us fall into from time to time...filling ourselves and our families up with fleeting nonsense of this world...instead of with God.)

This is something that we simply cannot afford (or have the time) to do. Following the example of the Holy Family is the only way to everlasting happiness! When we pray together, when we ask each other in our families to pray for us, when we give thanks for the food, heat, water, and shelter that we have, when we learn and internalize the Holy Scriptures, and when we use the lives of the saints as examples, we are able (if I may borrow a popular Christian theme of the season”), to “make room at the inn” for Christ in our families and in our hearts.

Let us strive to make this our “new years resolution” for 2018. Like the Magi did all of those years ago, may God allow us to follow the bright and shining star of the Holy Family, and bring some of those principals and virtue into our homes, as we begin a new year of drawing even closer to our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.



# THEOPHANY SCHEDULE

## 2019



Saturday, January 5th Vigil and Blessing of the Water  
4:00 p.m.

Sunday, January 6th: Divine Liturgy, Blessing of the River and Lamb Roast  
10:00 a.m.

# Monthly Forecast

**River Blessing and Lamb Roast for Theophany:** The Holy Feast of Theophany falls on a Sunday (January 6th) this year! We will be having Compline and the blessing of the Waters on Saturday, January 5th at 4:00 PM, and Divine Liturgy with the blessing of the river and our annual lamb roast, on Sunday, January 6th! Bring a dish to share!

**Metanoia Classes Beginning:** The Spring Semester of the Metanoia Classes will begin on Wednesday, January 16th, and run through February! These classes begin after compline (around 6:30 PM), and will cover the teachings of the Ancient Christian Faith! A schedule with topics is available in the flier below!

**Parish Council Installation:** Congratulations to the Newest Members of the Parish Council, Chris Ballnik, David Welch, Susan Walton, and Joe Otis! They will be installed with the returning members of the council on Theophany!

**House Blessings:** It's that time of the year! Fr. Gabriel is now scheduling House Blessings for 2019! There is a form that is available in the vestibule. Please fill it out and get it to Fr. Gabriel in the next few weeks!

**7th Annual Pan-Orthodox Winter Charity Dinner for Holy Dormition Monastery:** On January 17th we will be taking part of the Charity Dinner Event for Holy Dormition Monastery. Join us for this wonderful event. Please see the flyer or the write-up for more information.

**Memorial Service for all Unborn Children:** After Divine Liturgy on Sunday, January 20th, we will be having our annual Memorial Service for all unborn children. Please invite and spread the word to anyone who might have lost a child in the womb.

**Divine Liturgy for the 3 Holy Hierarchs:** We will be celebrating the Divine Liturgy for the Three Holy Hierarchs on Wednesday, January 30th, beginning at 10:00 AM. Mark your calendars!

**St. John Cassian Course Extended!** Due to the wonderful discussions the class has had over the conferences of St. John Cassian, the course will be extended for a few weeks in January! Mark your calendars for January 8th and January 22nd, at 7:00 PM! The class is available via Skype as well!

**Mind, Body ,and Soul Workout Group:** Living an Orthodox Christian Life requires work on our entire person...both our body and our soul. Theophan Forsyth has started a special ministry here at St. Mary Magdalene, which helps to improve both of these aspects. On Monday's, Tuesday's and Friday's, he will be leading a short group workout in the education center, followed by morning prayers in the Church. It is a great way to start the day! If you are interested, please contact Theophan at [Bobforsyth1031@gmail.com](mailto:Bobforsyth1031@gmail.com)



## 7th Annual Pan-Orthodox Winter Charity Dinner

On January 17, 2019, we will be taking part in the 7th Annual Pan-Orthodox Winter Charity Dinner. This event started as a way to gather with our Orthodox brothers and sisters in the Flint area for the purpose of sharing a meal and receiving spiritual refreshment, while also raising awareness of the Dormition of the Mother of God Monastery located in Rives Junction, MI, and the vital part that monasticism plays in our lives as Orthodox Christians. Since everything is donated, all the money collected through the sale of event “tickets” go directly to the monastery, as do all donations from the sale of kiosk items sold by the sisterhood.

To keep costs down, we have been rotating the various meal preparation duties between the three participating churches: St. Mary Magdalene; St. George; St. Nicholas and Assumption. We have also asked the clergy from the participating churches to give a small talk on a topic of spiritual interest. In past years, we have been blessed to have our bishop, His Eminence Archbishop Alexander, speak to us as well. The evening talks are completed with some spiritual insight provided by Mother Gabrielle, Abbess of the Dormition Monastery.

A lot of work and planning goes into these annual events, and as the old saying teaches us, “Many hands make light work.” We have not been able to keep these dinners going for the past seven years if not for all of the dedicated people who gave up their time and money to make these memorable events possible, and I cannot express enough my gratitude to all of you who have worked, donated and participated over the past years. It is truly humbling for me to witness the love so many of you have shown for your brothers and sisters in Christ, as well as for the Dormition Monastery and, by the grace of God, I pray that these events can continue.

So, how can YOU be a part of this exciting event? I’m glad you asked! The first thing you can do is to PARTICIPATE: buy a ticket and show up! Cost should not be a reason for not attending: if you cannot afford to make the entire recommended donation, give what you can. We want everyone who is interested to participate.

Next, you can INVITE A FRIEND, preferably someone who has never attended these events in the past. And the friend does not need to be an Orthodox Christian; some of our highest compliments in the past came from people of other faith traditions.

As I mentioned above, the entire evening relies on volunteers to make it successful, so consider VOLUNTEERING to either cook, setup or cleanup; there is always something that needs to be done. Finally, please DONATE GENEROUSLY. Even if you cannot attend the event yourself, consider donating a ticket for someone else. Remember, all money raised goes directly to the Dormition Monastery.

If you like to know more about the Pan-Orthodox Winter Dinner and how you can be a part of this great event, please contact Dcn. Michael Bassett or Dcn. Michael Schlaack.





"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."

**Fellowship of St. Photini needs your help to reach those in need in our communities.**

**Be on the lookout for information on how to donate toward the Lazarus Bags. This will be our January/February outreach.**

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

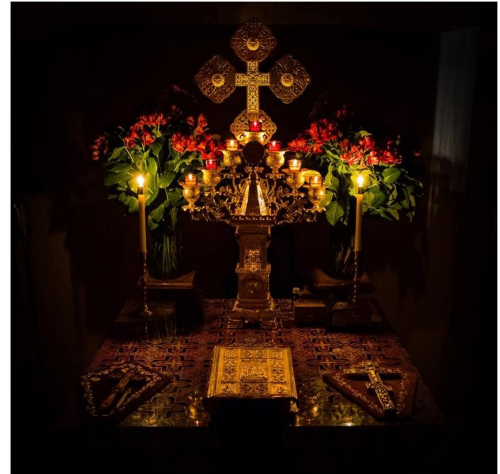
| Ministry of Presence<br>(2 fasting periods)<br>Showing Compassion   | Ministry of Giving<br>(6 months)<br>Matthew 25   | Ministry of Hands-on Support<br>(2 fasting periods)  |
|---|--|--|
| Heartland Hospice<br>(Lenten Fast)<br>Chair: Leadership Team<br><br>Summer Feeding with FOCUS<br>(Sts. Peter and Paul Fast)<br>Chair: Leadership Team | February – Lazarus Bags<br>Chair: Marisa Bailey<br><br>May- St. Gabriel Project for Mother's Day<br>Chair: Susan Walton<br><br>July- First Responders Blessing<br>Chair: Frieda Owens<br><br>August- School Supply Drive<br>Chair – Terri Oginsky<br><br>October- Blanket making<br>Chair- David Schutt/Susan Walton<br><br>December- Seminarian Gift Cards<br>Chair- Liz Ziats<br><br>Ongoing- collecting used glasses for orphanages<br>Chair- Jeanette Hildreth | Habitat for Humanity or group pick<br>(Dormition Fast)<br>Chair: Leadership Team<br><br>Backpack Feeding program:<br>(Advent Fast)<br>Chair: Leadership Team |





# "METANOIA"

LEARNING TO CHANGE ONE'S HEART FOR GOD



**In a Christian World now littered with various denominations, each teaching a different version of the same Gospel, have you ever wondered or thought about what the earliest Christians taught, how they worshiped, and what believed? Now is your opportunity to come, discuss, and learn about the fullness of what the Ancient Christian Faith is all about!**

**Classes will begin on January 16th, every Wednesday evening, beginning at 6:30 PM.**

## **Spring Semester, 2019**

|                                  |   |
|----------------------------------|---|
| <b>Wednesday, January 16th:</b>  | <b>Where do all of these teachings come from?</b>         |
| <b>Wednesday, January 23rd:</b>  | <b>What do we believe and know about God?</b>             |
| <b>Wednesday, January 30th:</b>  | <b>What does it mean to be a Human Being?</b>             |
| <b>Wednesday, February 6th:</b>  | <b>What did the Ancient Christians Believe about Sin?</b> |
| <b>Wednesday, February 13th:</b> | <b>Who is Jesus Christ?</b>                               |
| <b>Wednesday, February 20th:</b> | <b>Why is there such a large emphasis on Mary/Saints?</b> |
| <b>Tuesday, February 26th:</b>   | <b>Who is the Holy Spirit? The importance of prayer</b>   |

*Adult Education*



**2018-2019 Church School Events**

- March 10—No Class, Forgiveness Sunday
- April 21— No Class, Palm Sunday
- April 28— No Class, Pashca
- May 5— Annual Easter Egg Hunt
- May 12— Graduation & Ice Cream Social

# OUR PARISH YOUTH



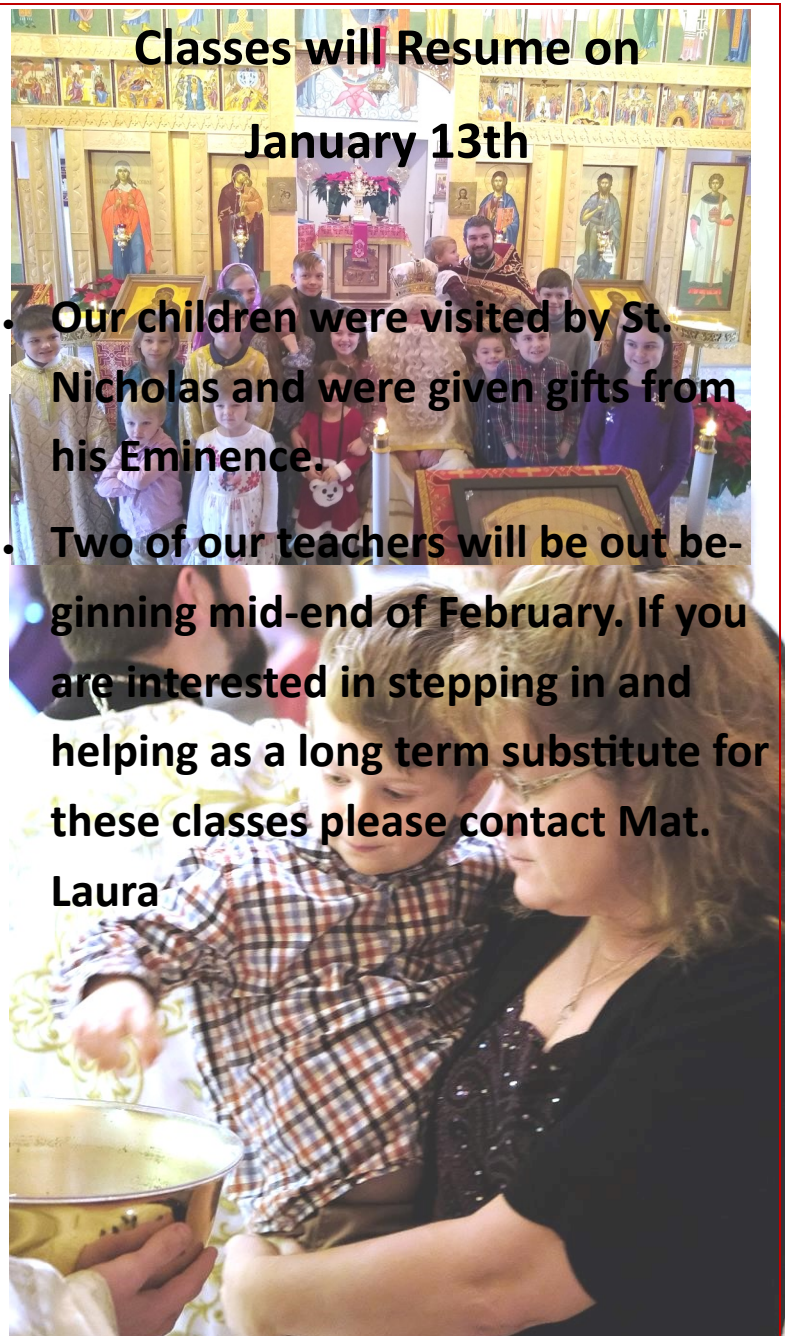
**Our volunteers this year:**

Renee Auxier, Doug Auxier,  
Chris Ballnik, Renea Beckle-  
hamer, Lori Drummond, Sbdn.  
Andrew Durand, Meghan Du-  
rand, Terri Oginsky, Jenni Otis,  
Sharon Watson, Cindy Welch,  
David Welch, Mat. Laura

**Classes will Resume on**

**January 13th**

- Our children were visited by St. Nicholas and were given gifts from his Eminence.
- Two of our teachers will be out beginning mid-end of February. If you are interested in stepping in and helping as a long term substitute for these classes please contact Mat. Laura



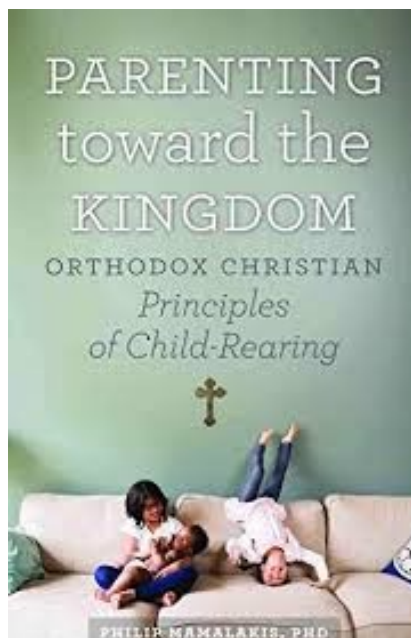


Next Group Meeting :  
Sunday, January 20th

**CALLING ALL MOTHERS:** This group would like the participation of all mothers in the parish as they begin their new parish ministry. This is a new ministerial group to our parish. For more information please reach out to Renea Becklehamer or Addy Lanterman

This group is currently reading:

*"Parenting Toward the Kingdom: Orthodox Christian Principles of Child-Rearing"* by: Philip Mamalkis





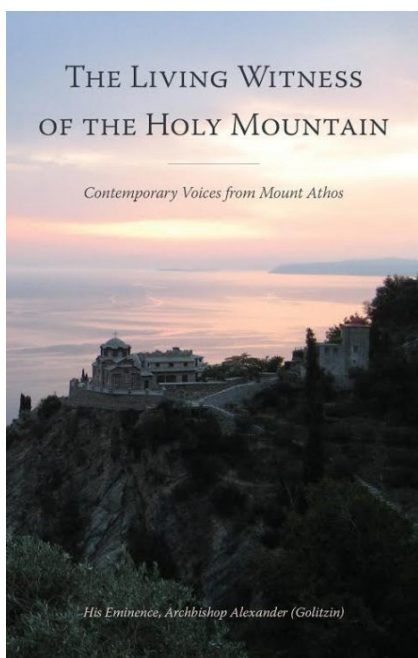
## Recommended Reading



### The Living Witness of the Holy Mountain: Contemporary Voices of Mount Athos

**By: Archbishop Alexander Golitzin**

From as early as the ninth century, Mount Athos — a monastic re-public situated on a peninsula in northern Greece extending some 35 miles into the Aegean Sea — has been a monastic center and a spiritual beacon of the Orthodox world. As the present collection of essays, sermons, narratives, and apophthegmata shows, the significance of the work of the monks who come to Athos to devote themselves to God continues undiminished, as does the vitality of their contribution to the spiritual life of Orthodoxy worldwide. In these pages we see the simplicity and truth of the Gospel reflected in



anecdotes of contemporary Fathers of the Holy Mountain; we read of the connection between the light of Christ's Transfiguration on Mount Tabor and Orthodox monastic spirituality; we learn how St. Herman of Alaska, America's first Orthodox saint, was a kind of gift to America from Athos. Several writings by Archimandrite Aemilianos (Vapheides), Abbot of Simonos Petras Monastery on Mount Athos, set forth the critical importance of the spiritual father and the Jesus prayer in an Orthodox monastery, and the link between monasticism and martyrdom. A leading French Catholic scholar recounts in detail his path to Orthodoxy over a span of many years. Also included is the Tomos of Mount Athos in Defense of the Holy Hesychasts — an important Orthodox doctrinal document, written in the fourteenth century by St. Gregory Palamas and signed by the elders of the Holy Mountain. These writings, together with the others in this volume, have all been written by Athonite monks. All but one of them

appears in English for the first time, translated by His Eminence, Archbishop Alexander (Golitzin), who contributes, in his illuminating Introduction, an examination of Athonite history, organization, and daily life.



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



# THANK YOU TO THOSE WHO SERVE OUR COMMUNITY!

## Coffee Hour Volunteers

### January 6th:

Donna & Wes Nakagiri  
(Theophany Lamb Roast)

### January 13th

Andy Marko

### January 20th:

Joe & Jeni Otis

### January 27th:

Brady & Kathy Damic

## Parish Greeters

### January 6th:

Mia Jonascu

### January 13th

Wes & Donna Nakagiri

### January 20th:

Pat Smith

### January 27th:

Steve & Sue Walton

## Epistle Readers

### January 6th:

Sbdn. Andrew  
Durand & Jeni Otis

### January 13th:

Rdr. Chris Ballnik  
& Sue Walton

### January 20th:

Janet Wiese &  
Sbdn. Andrew Durand

### January 27th:

Rdr. John Auxier  
& Rdr. Chris Ballnik

## Wishing you many blessed years!

### Happy Birthday

### Happy Anniversary

- 1-Robyn Dollins
- 3- Jeremy Becklehamer, Benjamin Cooley
- 4- John Oslin, Jacob Yonan
- 6- Brion Cooley
- 7- Anastasia Branoff
- 10- Theresa Cooley, Jaclyn Daugherty, Layla Yonan
- 11- Theodora Tyrell
- 13- Hannah Burtka
- 15- Mark Yonan
- 16- Minka Owens, Logan Welch
- 18- Cindy Welch, Katherine Senter
- 19- Katherine Arnes, Adalyn Joseph
- 20- Jeanette Hildreth, Terry Owens, Laura Khouriy
- 21- Fr.Dn.. David Shephard
- 22- Denise Oslin
- 23- Bob Forsyth
- 24- Katheryn Auxier
- 25- Michael Khoury
- 29- Fr..Dn Michael Schlaack, Ruth Becklehamer
- 30- Renee Wilkinson, Shannon Joseph
- 31- Stephen Schlaack

NO ANNIVERSARIES THIS MONTH





# ST. MARY MAGDALENE HOUSE BLESSING FORM 2019

**Family Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Home Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Best Number to Reach You:**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Circle What Days and Times Work Best For Your Family:**

**Monday**

**Tuesday**

**Wednesday**

**Friday**

**Mornings**

**Afternoons**

**Evenings**

*In preparation for your House Blessing, please have a candle, an icon, a small dish to hold the Holy Water, and a list of names for your family's living and departed.*





January 20<sup>th</sup>  
After Liturgy

Group discussion and sharing on the first section of the book "Parenting Toward the Kingdom".



Excerpts from "How to Talk so Kids will Listen and How to Listen so Kids will Talk" and "How to Talk so Teens will Listen and How to Listen so Teens will Talk" are printed and will be available.

JOIN US FOR FELLOWSHIP IN A RELAXED ORTHODOX GET-TOGETHER

Please join us on Sunday, January 20<sup>th</sup>, 2019 as we meet after Divine Liturgy in the Annex. Feel free to grab a snack downstairs to bring with you as you head over!



**YOU ARE INVITED TO JOIN**

Mother Abbess Gabriella & The Community of  
The Dormition of the Mother of God Monastery on  
Thursday, January 17, 2019, at St. George Church for our

*~ 7<sup>th</sup> Annual Winter Dinner To Support ~*

**The Dormition of the Mother of God  
Orthodox Monastery**

**Donation Requested**  
\$35 Adult / \$25 Student

**The Mothers will be  
bringing the Monastery  
Gift Shop to Flint!**

**Evening Schedule**

- ✓ 5:30 - *Vespers sung by the Mothers of Dormition Monastery*
- ✓ 6:15 - *Social Time & Bookstore Open*
- ✓ 6:45 - *Dinner & Speakers*
- ✓ 8:30 - *Benediction*

| Names | Donation |
|-------|----------|
|       |          |
|       |          |
|       |          |
|       |          |
|       |          |
|       |          |
|       |          |

**See Your Parish Rep to make a reservation, volunteer your time or be a sponsor  
OR: Contact St. George Church at 810-732-0720**

- ✓ Assumption..... Lori Photiou
- ✓ St. George ..... Dn. Michael Bassett
- ✓ St. Mary Magdalene .... Dn. Michael Schlaack
- ✓ St. Nicholas ..... Deborah Adams

*~ 100% of your donation goes to Dormition Monastery ~*

**ALL ACTIVITIES TO BE HELD AT ST. GEORGE CHURCH  
5191 Lennon Rd., Flint, MI 48507**

# Referral Program To Benefit The St. Mary Magdalene Mortgage Initiative



**Conne Terova**  
**Real Estate One**  
**Cell: (248) 318-7342**  
**Email:**  
**[cterova@gmail.com](mailto:cterova@gmail.com)**  
**[teamterova.com](http://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!