

Let My Prayer Arise

Desire

A Message from Fr. Gabriel

On Sunday, March 10th, we began a journey together...a difficult 40-day trek of **repentance**. Now that we have gone through Holy Week and celebrated Christ's Resurrection from the dead, as we turn our calendars to May and June, we start a new 40-day period of **feasting and celebration!**

I often laugh (and cry a little), when I go to an Orthodox bookstore, and see so many books written about the Sundays of Great Lent, but very few books dealing this incredible period after Pascha. There is so much that we can glean from these Sundays...so much that we can learn! But typically, everyone is so tired from Holy Week and Pascha...that we tend to brush over or ignore these next 40 days!

Anyone who studies the ancient texts of the services, as well as the Gospel readings for the next few Sundays, will notice a common theme that arises. It is a virtue that the Church reminds us is important during all of our feasting: **"Maintaining a Desire for Christ"**.

All of the Holy Men and Women the Church focuses on in May, had a desire to be near Jesus. They had a desire to **know** Him, to be **in contact** with Him, and to **be present** with Him. All of them shared that **drive** to encounter Christ...to seek a real, genuine, and life-transforming encounter with the creator!

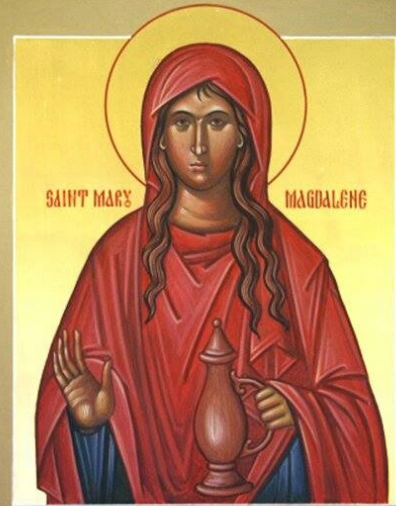
Look at the story of the Myrrh-Bearing Women (celebrated on May 12th), who were all devoted followers of Christ during His earthly ministry. When the hard times came, when Jesus's enemies seized Him and slandered His name, their desire to be with Him never wavered! These women didn't abandon Christ like His disciples did! All of Jesus's close friends denied Him, betrayed Him, and ultimately left Him alone to suffer and to die...but the Holy Myrrh-Bearers stayed. Their devotion was so great, their love so deep, and their **desire** to remain in contact with Him was so strong, that the threats of the religious leaders, the local police, and the soldiers never intimidated them!

What strength! What examples! What beauty of faith! It is stories and examples like these which should make us open our own eyes and ask ourselves: How far does our desire to be Christians go?

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Month in Review:

This past month, besides the obvious celebration of the Holiest Week of the Year, we also had several new items donated to the Church! The Altar iconography project was completed with a new hand written icon of our Lord's Crucifixion. We also received a new Holy Water Font from Greece! Glory to God for All Things! We were blessed to receive 2 newly baptized infants and 3 newly illumined catechumens into our parish family. His Eminence Archbishop Alexander was able to join us on Great and Holy Wednesday and Great and Holy Thursday.



May 2019

Inside this Issue

- Prayer Life
- Monthly Forecast
- Parish Youth
- St. Photini
- St Emilia's Moms Group

Important Dates to Remember

- 5/1 Bright Week Liturgy 6pm at St. George
- 5/3 Bright Week Liturgy 10:30am at Assumption
- 5/4 Great Vespers at its new time of 5pm
- 5/5 Easter Egg Hunt
- 5/12 Church School Graduation
- 5/22 Divine Liturgy for Mid Pentecost 10am
- 5/26 Mother and Fathers Day Luncheon



This Month's Scripture Readings

April 7th:

Matthew 28:16-20
 Ephesians 5:9-19
 Matthew 4: 25-5:12
 Mark 9:17-31

April 14th:

Mark 16: 1-8
 Galatians 3: 23-29
 Luke 7:36-50
 Mark 10:32-45

April 21st:

Genesis 49: 1-2, 8-12
 Zephaniah 3: 14-19, 9:9-15
 Matthew 21: 1-11, 15-17
 Philippians 4: 4-9
 John 12: 1-18

April 28th:

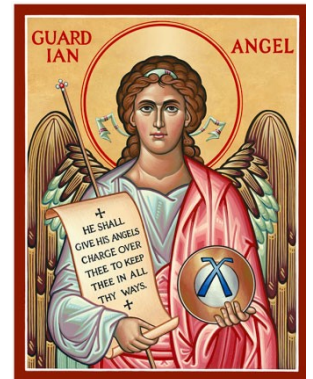
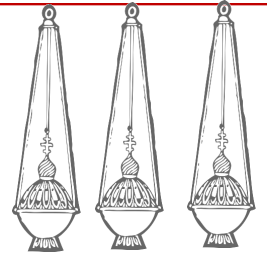
Acts 1:1-8
 John 1:1-17



Prayer Life

Pray for our sick and suffering brothers and

- | | |
|-----------------------------|------------|
| Metropolitan Theodosius | Elnora |
| Metropolitan Herman | Peter |
| Archbishop Melchisedek | Perpetua |
| Archpriest Dimitrie Vincent | Don |
| Deacon John Manutes | Sean |
| Subdeacon Paul Hildreth | James |
| Vinnie | Michael |
| Autumn | Maryann |
| John | John |
| Anastasia | Rose Marie |
| Alex | Calvin |
| Elaine | Thom |
| Frankie | Kandy |
| John | Christine |
| Damian | John |
| Stacie | David |
| Bryan | |
| Carolyn | |
| Aiden | |
| Megan | |
| Pat | |
| Kyle | |
| Lon | |
| Lon | |
| Joanna | |
| Ella | |



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	John	Jay Tonya Alyssa Eliana	Jenna

“Desire” Cont.

Do we desire to be Christians for just a few hours on Sunday morning? Or does it permeate our lives, every time we open our eyes to a new sunrise?

Do we desire to come to Church and develop our relationship with Christ and each other? Or do we only come when it is convenient for our busy schedules?

Do we desire to communicate with God daily by reading the Scriptures or saying our evening prayers? Or is that strength and energy spent on more frivolous activities in the morning and evening?

How far does our desire for Christ and His Church go? This is the question that so many of us need to ask ourselves as we begin this 40 days of fasting. The gospels, the services, our own personal prayer rules...all of these offer us wonderful reminders for what our response **SHOULD** be to that question!

Let our desire be like that of **Thomas**, who wanted to physically touch and know Christ! Let our desire emulate that of the **Holy Myrrh-Bearers**, which was so great, that **NOTHING** could separate them from Christ! Let us emulate the desire and thirst for Christ from the **Samaritan Woman** at the well! Let us live our lives with the desire of the **blind man**, who just wanted to see the Light of life! Let us be like the **paralytic**, and pick up ourselves from the things of the earth to follow after Him!

May God give us the strength to not let our guard down, and to rest on our laurels from the Great and Holy Fast, but rather allow it to strengthen us in our journey towards a life with Christ!



Monthly Forecast

Bright Week Schedule: As is the tradition of the Orthodox Churches in Genesee County, we will be traveling to our sister parishes for Bright Week Services. Bright Wednesday (May 1st) Divine Liturgy will be at St. George beginning at 6:00 PM. Bright Friday (May 3rd) Divine Liturgy will be at Holy Assumption at 10:30 AM, followed by their annual Bright Friday Luncheon

Rummage Sale Items and Collection: Now that Church School has concluded for the Summer, we ask that you start collecting and bringing in your items for this year's Rummage Sale! Items will be stored and organized in the Education Center next door to the Church. If you would like to bring items during the week, contact Fr. Gabriel to set up a time for drop-off. For any questions, please see Liz Ziats or Rebecca Lazar.

Church School Graduation and Ice Cream Social: On Sunday, May 12th, we will be having our Church School Wrap-Up and Ice Cream Social following the Divine Liturgy! All children and their families are welcome to participate downstairs!

Great Vespers and Confessions Time Change: Starting on Saturday May 4th, We will be going back to our regular scheduled time for Great Vespers and Confessions on Saturday Night, beginning at 5:00 PM.

Divine Liturgy for the Feast of Mid-Pentecost: On Wednesday, May 22nd, we will be joined by the Pan Orthodox Community for the Feast of Mid-Pentecost! Divine Liturgy will start at 10:00 AM!

Mother's and Father's Day Luncheon: Our Annual Mother's and Father's Day Luncheon will take place after Divine Liturgy on Sunday, May 26th! As always, the main course and a salad are provided! We just ask that you bring an appetizer or dessert to share with the parish family!

Compline and Confessions: After Bright Week, we will again be having weekly Compline and Confessions, beginning at 6:00 PM on Wednesday Evenings. Adult Education classes will be starting in June on Wednesday Evenings!

St. Thomas Sunday Easter Egg Hunt: On Sunday, May 5th, after the Divine Liturgy, we will be having our annual Easter Egg Hunt for children of all ages! Please make sure all of the kids are in attendance!

It is hard to believe we have reached the end of our church school year! We are looking forward to wrapping up with a short presentation of our year and an ice cream social following liturgy May 12th!

Thank you to all of our dedicated teachers and volunteers who helped to make this year successful, educational and fun for our children! Thank you also to our parents who brought your children each week and helped to support the program by participation in activities and fundraising efforts! If you would like to help with church school next year please let Mat. Laura or Fr. Gabriel know! We have a wonderful group of dedicated volunteers, but are always looking to add more! If you would like to be involved, but not as a teacher, there are plenty of ways you can help!

Keep your eyes open during the summer months for announcements about meetings, information, etc as we start to plan for the 2019/2020 school year! In the coming weeks we will also be sending out information on this summers vacation church school, which will be put on by St. Nicholas this year! Mark your calendars, VCS will be from June 17-19 from 6pm to 830pm each evening.

COLLEGE CORNER

Flint OCF: On April 12th, the Flint OCF met at St. Mary Magdalene after Presanctified Liturgy to discuss “Violence in the Orthodox Tradition.” It was a fascinating discussion. Our school year is nearly wrapped up.

Prayers for our college students:

Greg Auxier	Douglas Wilkinson
Katherine Arnes	Laura Khoury
David Schutt	Rachael Hildreth
Katherine Schutt	Sydney Wilkinson
Oliver Lazar Senter	Katerina Jonescu
Elena Bucciarelli	
Emmanuel Watson	
Zachary Wilkinson	

Prayer of a Student

Christ my Lord, the Giver of light and wisdom, who opened the eyes of the blind man and transformed the fishermen into wise heralds and teachers of the gospel through the coming of the Holy Spirit, shine also in my mind the light of the grace of the Holy Spirit. Grant me discernment, understanding and wisdom in learning. Enable me to complete my assignments and to abound in every good work, for to You I give honor and glory. Amen.

Prayers Before Study

Most blessed Lord, send the grace of Your Holy Spirit on me to strengthen me that I may learn well the subject I am about to study and by it become a better person for Your glory, the comfort of my family and the benefit of Your Church and our Nation. Amen

Christ, the true light, who enlightens and sanctifies every person coming into the world, let the light of Your countenance shine upon me (us) that I (we) may see Your unapproachable light; and guide my (our) steps in the way of Your commandments, through the intercessions of Your all-holy Mother and of all the Saints. Amen.

Prayer After Study

I thank You, Lord our God, that again on this occasion You have opened my eyes to the light of Your wisdom. You have gladdened my heart with the knowledge of truth. I entreat You, Lord, help me always to do Your will. Bless my soul and body, my words and deeds. Enable me to grow in grace, virtue and good habits, that Your name may be glorified, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, now and forever. Amen.



Reminder Every Sunday there are college group discussion/classes following Divine Liturgy. Deacon Michael will be leading the discussion. During this time of preparation for the Pascha of our Lord please make every effort to attend.

ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP (OCF) is the official campus ministry organization of the Assembly of Canonical Orthodox Bishops of the United States of America.

OUR PARISH YOUTH



As we wrap up our church school year, a BIG Thank You to everyone who has stepped up and helped “fill in the blanks” while all of our new moms are home with their little ones.

Looking ahead:

May 5th will be the annual egg hunt, make sure to come to Liturgy that day to participate :)

May 12 we will celebrate our Church school graduation!



"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.

This month we will be teaming up once again with the St. Gabriel Project Pantry for New Mothers who have chosen life for their children, they are currently in need of these three items; 1. Newborn Size Diapers 2. Hypo-allergenic baby wipes 3. Hypo-allergenic toiletries. There will be a box in the vestibule for you to drop your items. We will also accept monetary donations. Please see Sue Walton with any additional questions.

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

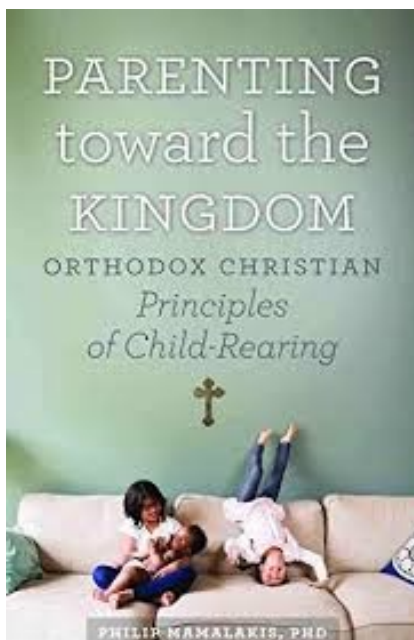




Next Group Meetings:
Sunday, May 19th
Following
Divine Liturgy

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

Be on the look out for the link from TakeThemaMeal.com, we will be sending this out to help our new mothers after they have their babies.

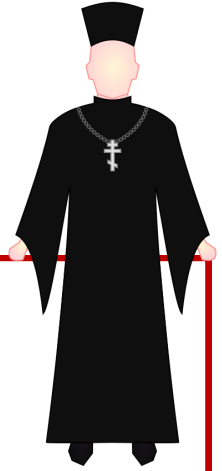


This group is currently reading:

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

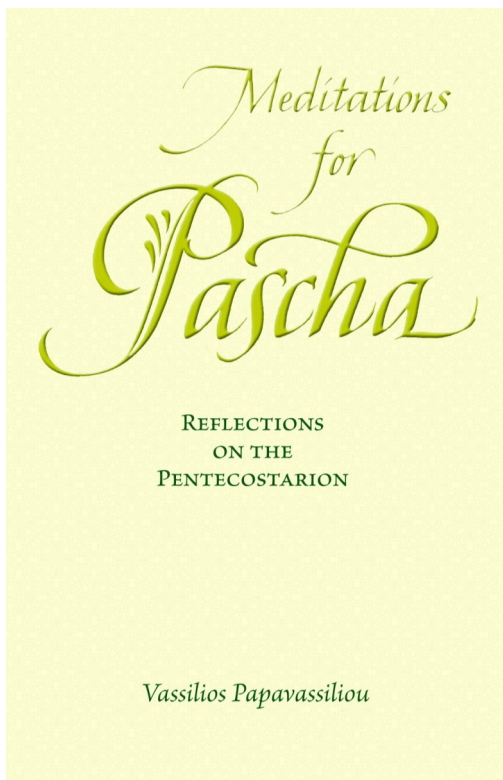
In May we will be discussing Chapters 5-8

Recommended Reading

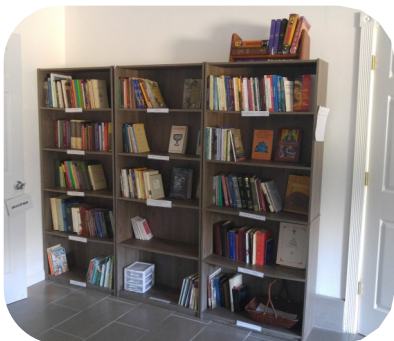


Meditations for Pascha: Reflections of the Pentecostarion

By: Vassilios Papavassiliou



Far from being merely a vacation from fasting, the Pascha season is a time that, properly understood, can greatly enrich our faith. During the Pascha season, we celebrate and rejoice in our Lord's Resurrection and we prepare for the great feast of the Holy Spirit descending upon us.



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

THANK YOU TO THOSE WHO SERVE OUR COMMUNITY!

Coffee Hour Volunteers

May 5th:

Brian & Theresa Cooley

May 12th:

Elaine Boucher

May 19th:

Chris & Rachel Burtka

May 26th:

Dave & Jaclyn Daugherty

Parish Greeters

May 5th:

Wes & Donna Nakagiri

May 12th:

Seth & Mia Hilaker

May 19th:

Pat Smith

May 26th:

George & Julia Jonascu

Epistle Readers

May 5th:

Rdr. David Schutt & Rdr. Brian Walton

May 12th:

Janet Wiese & Rdr. Chris Ballnik

May 19th:

Rdr. John Auxier & Rdr. David Schutt

May 26th:

Sbdn. Andrew Durand & Janet Wiese

Wishing you many blessed years!

Happy Birthday

- 1—Rachel Burtka
- 5—Sydney Wilkinson
- 6—Sharon Watson & Sara Shephard
- 8—Meghan Durand
- 9—Mike Onderchanin
- 12—Joseph Otis & Elisha Watson
- 14—Evelyn Watson
- 15—Stacey Yonan & Daniel Oginsky
- 19—Sydney Kekel
- 20—Jenni Otis
- 21—Alyssa Rice
- 22—Andy Marko
- 24—Nathaniel Damic
- 30—Lynda Joseph
- 31—Eliot Senter

Happy Anniversary

- 5—John & Tatiana Tyrell
- 5—Andrew & Shannon Joseph
- 8—Fr. Gabriel and Matushka Laura Bilas
- 16—Roland & Lori Drummond
- 17—Jeremy & Renea Becklehamer
- 17—Dn. David & Sara Shephard
- 23—Joseph & Christine Suriano
- 26—Mike & Irene Onderchanin





Jerusalem Pilgrimage 2019

November 17th-29th

Ready to enhance your understanding and experience of the Gospels more than you ever thought possible? **St. Sabbas Monastery and St. Mary Magdalene Orthodox Church is once again pleased to announce our bi-annual pilgrimage to Jerusalem and the Holy Land, beginning in late November of this year! Led by His Eminence Archbishop Damaskinos of Jaffa, pilgrims will gain invaluable insight on the history, spirituality, and worship of all of Jerusalem's Holiest Sites!**

Price Includes

Round Trip Airfare from Detroit
Breakfast and Dinner
Bus Travel and Entrance Fees to all of the Holy Sites
Hotel Accommodations in the Old City and Tiberias
Boat Cruise on the Sea of Galilee

Highlights of the Trip

- Visit and Take Part in an Orthodox Liturgy in the Tomb of Christ and by Golgotha
- Visit the Church of the Nativity and see the place of Christ's Birth
- Be Blessed as a Pilgrim in the Waters of the Jordan River by His Eminence Archbishop Damaskinos
- Take a Boat Tour of the Sea of Galilee
- Visit the Ancient Monasteries of Mar Sabba and St. Gerasimos
- Take a relaxing float in the Dead Sea
- Participate in St. Michael's Feast Day in Jaffa
- Mt. Tabor, Jacob's Well, Church of the Annunciation, **and so much more!**

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!



Middle Eastern Luncheon and Bake Sale

Thursday, May 30, 2019

11am-3:00pm

St. George Orthodox Church

5191 Lennon Road

Flint, MI

(Behind Kohl's) Between Linden and Dye Roads

Menu

**Cooked Kibbee, Green Bean Stew
(Yahnee) and Rice, Hummus, Salad,
Pita Bread, Dessert, Coffee, Iced Tea**

Vegetarian Plate available

Cost: \$10

For Information / Deliveries call:

St. George at 810-732-0720

Take-outs Available

Free Delivery with 8 or more orders

AGAPE' GRILL THRILL!



Calling all hamburger and hotdog fans!

Tantalize your tastebuds and join us on May 26th as we come together to enjoy expertly grilled hamburgers and hotdogs after the Divine Liturgy. Plenty of Food, Fun and Fellowship! Please bring your favorite side dish or dessert to share.

HEADS

UP!!!



There will be a

Church Yard Sale

At the end of June.

Start setting aside items you can donate.
Prepare to bring your yard sale items to the
Annex beginning the First Week of June.

A list of items we are looking for can be found
on the bulletin board in the Church vestibule.

Volunteers will be needed to prepare for and to
work at the Yard Sale.

If you have any questions or wish to volunteer,

See:

Liz Ziats or
Tatiana Tyrell