

# August 2023



2439 S. Long Lake Rd  
Fenton, MI 48430

Fr. Gabriel Bilas, Rector

Office: 810-750-1401

Church Email:  
SMMOCAFenton@gmail.com  
Father's Email  
frgabrielmm@gmail.com

<http://www.st-marymagdalene.org>

Office Hours\*:  
Monday 10:00am-3:00pm  
Wednesday 10:00am-3:00pm  
Friday 10:00am-3:00pm  
\*or by appointment

# WORSHIP WITH US!



Weekly Service Schedule\*  
Sunday Hours & Divine Liturgy, 9:40am  
Saturday Vespers & Confessions, 5:00pm

\*check the monthly calendar for any possible changes to this schedule  
and for weekday Divine Liturgies.

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# MONTHLY FORECAST

## GREAT FEAST OF TRANSFIGURATION

Pan-Orthodox Great Vespers and Litija with our area churches will be hosted here at St. Mary Magdalene on the eve of Transfiguration, Saturday, August 5th, at 5:00pm. On Sunday the 6th, we will celebrate the festal Divine Liturgy with the blessing of the harvest afterward. Be sure to bring a basket of grapes, fruit, and vegetables to the church to be blessed.

## WEDNESDAY DIVINE LITURGY

Due to Fr. Gabriel's travel schedule and the various major Feast Days in August, there will only be two Wednesday Liturgies this month, on the 9th & 23rd.

## AKATHIST TO ST. JOSEPH THE HESYCHAST

Our monthly parish akathist, hosted by the young adult group, will be on Thursday, August 10th at 6:00pm.

Everyone is welcome to join, pray and learn about this great saint of the Church. YA Fellowship to follow.

## PRAYER SERVICE FOR THE SICK & SUFFERING

Since Fr. Gabreil will be traveling on the first Tuesday of the Month, the prayer service is shifted to Tuesday, August 8 at 6:00pm

## VACATION CHURCH SCHOOL

This year's VCS is hosted at St. George in Flint. The VCS will take place on Saturday, August 12 from 10am -5pm followed by a combined Great Vespers at 5pm. There are no services at SMM that day.

## MATINS AND LAMENTATIONS FOR DORMTION.

As is our custom, we will be celebrating the beautiful Matins with Lamentations to the Most Holy Theotokos on Monday, August 14th, at 6:30pm This service has a lot of incredibly beautiful hymns and melodies that paint for us an incredible portrait of the Church's (and our) relationship with the Theotokos.

**Make sure you mark your calendars and attend this Holy Day, so as not to miss the funeral of our mother!**

## THE BEHEADING OF JOHN THE BAPTIST

On Monday, August 28th, Holy Assumption will be hosting Divine Liturgy for the beheading of St. John the Baptist at 6:00pm.

The Feast day is on August 29th, and we rememebr that is a strict fast day.

## HOLY DORMITION MONASTERY PILGRIMAGE

There are plenty of ways to celebrate the Divine Liturgy for the Feast of Dormition! If you prefer to remain close to home, thre is Divine Liturgy at Holy Asumption in Grand Blanc for their parish feast day at 10:00am. If you would like to take a pilgrimage to Holy Dormition Monastery for their outdoor Liturgy, Akathist and Hours begin at 9:00am followed by the Divine Liturgy at 10:00am. Be sure to pack an outdoor picnic for lunch if you plan on going to the monastery. Bring your children!!!!

## FR. GABRIEL TRAVELING

Fr. Gabriel will be traveling to England to celebrate the Cleis Wedding from July 24th- August 3rd. May God Grant Christopher and Chloe many blessed years!

Fr. Gabriel will also be traveling to Greece to celebrate the Peters Wedding from August 30 - September 9th. May God Grant John and Sophia many blessed years!

Should a pastoral emergency arise during this time please contact Fr. Matthew 810-744-0070 or Fr. Joe 810-732-0720. Fr. Robert will be serving Liturgy in Fr. Gabriel's absence.



***DORMITION OF THE MOTHER OF GOD  
ORTHODOX MONASTERY***

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**Mother GABRIELLA - Abbess**

**36<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL PILGRIMAGE  
CELEBRATION  
2023**

**Guest of Honor:  
His Grace Bishop DANIEL  
Diocese of the Midwest, OCA**

**Hosted by  
Archbishop NATHANIEL  
Bishop ANDREI**

**PILGRIMAGE SCHEDULE**

**Monday, August 14**

6:00 pm Vigil of the Feast with Lamentations.

**Tuesday, August 15**

9:00 am Akathist, 3rd Hour, 6th Hour.

Procession to the Pavilion

10:00 am Hierarchal Holy Liturgy.

2:30 pm Mystery of Holy Unction.

5:30 pm Vespers

6:30 pm Supper

**Guests are asked to bring their own lunch.**

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The monastery will provide refreshments and sweets.  
3389 Rives Eaton Road; P.O. Box 128, Rives Junction, MI 49277  
Phone: 517-569-2873

[www.dormitionmonastery.org](http://www.dormitionmonastery.org)  
[dormitionmonastery@dormitionmonastery.org](mailto:dormitionmonastery@dormitionmonastery.org)

# “DOING SOMETHING ABOUT THE TRANSFIGURATION”

FROM THE DESK OF FR. GABRIEL



“*Thou was transfigured upon Mt. Tabor, O Jesus, and a shining cloud, spread out like a tent, covered the Apostles with Thy glory! Their gaze fell to the ground, because they could not bear to look upon the brightness of the unapproachable glory of Thy face, O Savior Christ...our God Who art without beginning! Do Thou Who has shone upon them with Thy Light, give light now to our souls!*”

This month we will be celebrating the feast of the Transfiguration of our Lord. The Vespers and Divine Liturgy for the feast offer us such hymns as the one above, giving color and depth to what we read about it in the Gospel of Matthew. The Church does this so beautifully in all of its sacred feasts, and if we take the time to really study the ancient services, we gain a deeper appreciation and love for these feasts every single time they come around!

Hearing the hymns, blessing and eating the fruit, and gazing upon the icons are all wonderful ways in which we understand the feast days, but what I wanted to draw our attention to in this article is what we are supposed to DO with it in our lives. I was reading from the works of St. Paisios of the Holy Mountain this week, who really has a wonderful gift for relating the spiritual life to simple folks like me. He once said:

According to Abbá Isaac, Wisdom **that is not** based on righteous activity, is a deposit of **disgrace**.

There are many people who are interested in sports, who read magazines and newspapers while they are sitting down. They may all be like the fatted calf, but they still marvel at the athletes! “He is marvelous! He is great! Bravo!” Yet, they don’t work up any sweat and they don’t lose any pounds! They read and read about athletic events, and then they go lie down and gain nothing! They are satisfied with the pleasure of reading.

The same is often done by some people who read spiritual things. They may spend the whole night reading spiritual books with great intensity and be content. They take a spiritual book, sit comfortably, and begin reading. **“Oh, I profited from that”** they say...but this is not profit. We profit when we understand what we read, when we censure ourselves and discipline ourselves by applying it. **What does this mean and where do I stand in relation to this spiritual truth? What must I do now?”**

If we are to follow the words of St. Paisios, we should all be asking ourselves the following questions as we prepare for the upcoming Feast:

- 1.What will I learn from the Feast of Transfiguration? **News flash, if we don’t participate in the feasting, the answer will be “nothing”** (but know that despite your absence, you will be prayed for!)
- 2.The second, and equally important question: “What will I do after the feast?”

# "DOING SOMETHING ABOUT THE TRANSFIGURATION"

## CONTINUED

We are given this tremendous Grace on Transfiguration...this promise that we are destined to be something much greater than what we have ever known in this life. We are called to a connection with God that goes beyond our imagination! What do I do with this tremendous blessing when I leave the four walls of the Church?The answer: We climb the mountain dear ones. We don't just sit here and learn about it. We do something about it!

Doing something, rather than sitting on our couches, requires effort and nourishment. St. Paisios tells us that we have to take our **"Spiritual vitamins"** in order to begin our ascent.

This is a rather fitting term isn't it? In a physical climb up a mountain, we rely on strengthening our bodies through good nutrients and water. We take vitamins to make us stronger so we can endure the climb!Spiritual vitamins work the same way!They are completely necessary if we are to begin to grow in our relationship with God! And we have a treasure trove of spiritual vitamins with which to strengthen us.

We already mentioned two spiritual vitamins in this article! Coming to the Major Feast days of the Church, listening and reading the hymns that were composed millennia ago that describe what exactly God has done for us, and what we must do in order to move towards Him! If we never opened one book about the Spiritual Life, coming to all of the services would be more than enough spiritual vitamins for us to climb the mountain towards God!

Reading the lives of the Saints is another Spiritual Vitamin! How did they begin their ascent? What things did they do in their life to be able to reflect that light on Mt. Tabor? We can get a jolt of energy by reading their actions and their words, but as St. Paisios said, it isn't enough to get inspired. Taking a spiritual vitamin might make us feel better and stronger, **but it goes to waste unless we do something with it!**

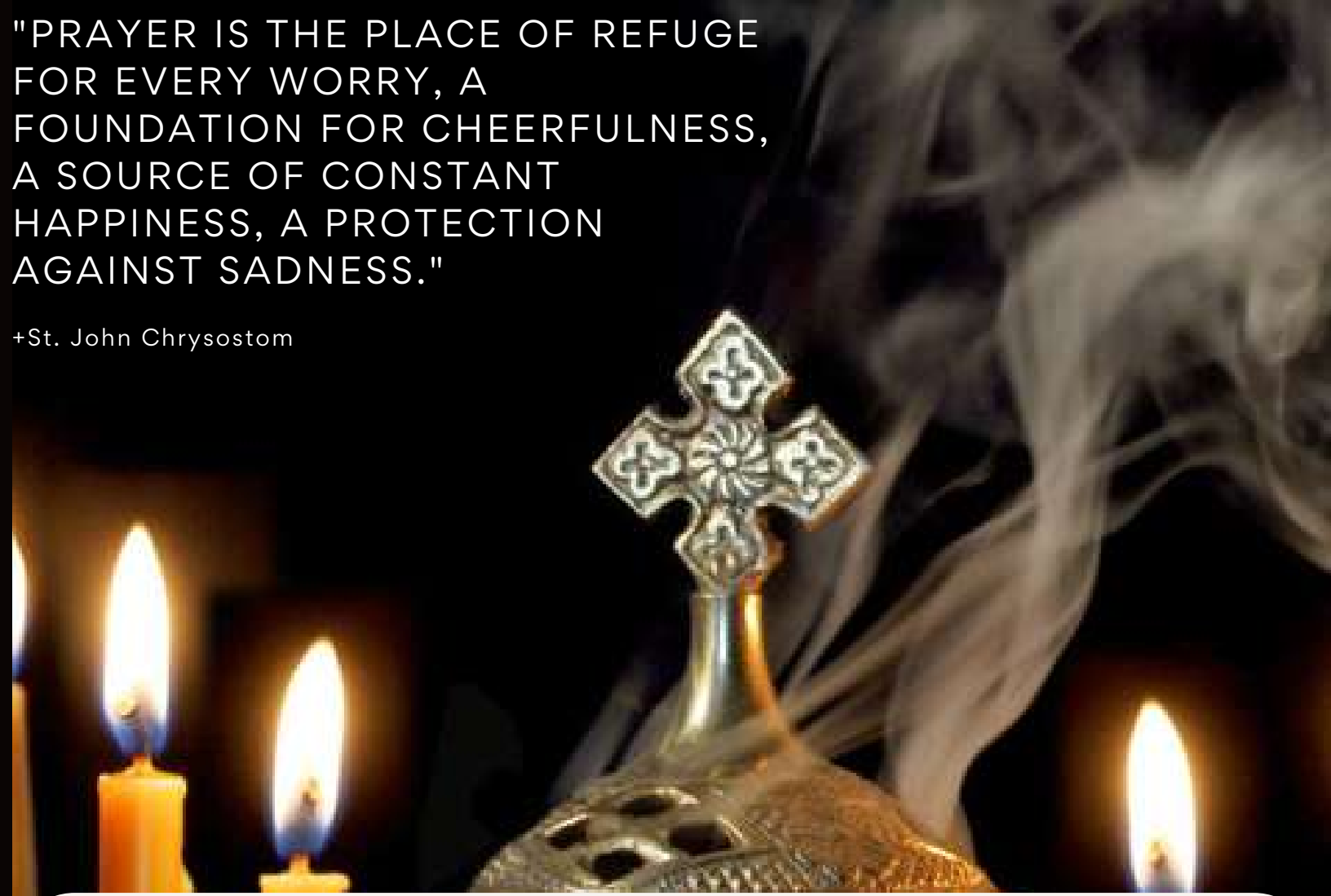
Perhaps the strongest spiritual vitamin that leads to action that is given to us, and one in which we hear about directly in the Gospels, is that of prayer. There are numerous transcripts and writings of the saints, examples in scripture, homilies, and books written about the incredible power of prayer and how it literally transfigures us and changes us. But reading these books about prayer and hearing about its importance from a priest on Sunday isn't enough.

Drawing closer to God through prayer requires effort on our part. If anyone reading this has never had a regular prayer rule, has never said morning prayers or evening prayers, or have never made it a part of their daily routine to escape the noise of the world and to quiet their mind to pray to God every single day...what is stopping you? What is holding you back? Whatever it is, rid yourself of it...because it is of no profit to you!

Living as a Christian **requires effort dear ones!** This is how we get to the top of the mountain to be united with God and to experience the Divine Life and Light that mankind was destined for, no matter how many times the devil tries to trip us up! As we continue in these holy days of fasting and preparation, my prayer for our parish family is that we not only take the time to be inspired and in awe of the Feasts like Transfiguration, but that we make the effort to transform our lives in such a way, that we don't only stare up at Mt. Tabor...but that we begin to climb it to reach new heights in our relationship with God and with each other.

"PRAYER IS THE PLACE OF REFUGE  
FOR EVERY WORRY, A  
FOUNDATION FOR CHEERFULNESS,  
A SOURCE OF CONSTANT  
HAPPINESS, A PROTECTION  
AGAINST SADNESS."

+St. John Chrysostom



### **Sick and the Suffering\***

|                      |                |
|----------------------|----------------|
| Archbishop Alexander | Rosealie Jim   |
| Archpriest Polycarp  | Nancy Roxanne  |
| Dn. Peter Vinne      | Joyce Connie   |
| Elaine David         | Kendall David  |
| Pat Michael          | Edward Jim     |
| Lauren Mason         | Carly Perpetua |
| Theresa Robert       | Rosemarie      |
| Linda Arminda        |                |
| Martin Shirley       |                |
| Nadia James          |                |
| Bryan Doug           |                |

### **Mother's With Child**

Anastasia  
Anna  
Natania  
Dania  
Inna  
Anna

### **Catechumenate**

Sarah  
Jeannie  
Monica  
Eric  
Jerry  
Landen

### **Seminarian Families**

Reader Paisios,  
Anna, John &  
Theodore Hamann

### **Armed Forces**

Michael Oginsky - U.S.  
Stephany Bishop - U.S. Navy  
Jason Wilburn - Army Rangers  
Alex Suriano - Air National Guard  
Sarah Tyler- U.S. Air Force  
Sergeant Mark Stringer -Army Reserves

### **Anniversary of Repose**

7-Taisa Czubenko (one year)  
8-Marian Dimoff  
18-Peter Oginsky  
30-Nathaniel Hildreth

### **Recently Departed**

John Joey  
Annette  
Marilyn  
Jan  
Willard

*\*To help keep our list organized, names will be taken off of our prayer list every 3 months. Please contact the parish office to add names back to the list.*



# MAY GOD GRANT YOU MANY YEARS!

## SACRAMENTAL LIFE OF THE CHURCH



*Recent & Upcoming  
Baptism & Chrismations*  
None this month.

### *Engagements*

Mark Foster & Katerina Jonascu  
Nick Swartz & Sarah Miller  
William Keegan & Lauren Peters  
Jeff Schalk & Julia Zayan

### Confession Schedule

Father Gabriel will hear confessions on the following days or by appointment  
Saturday Evenings following Great Vespers  
Following weekday Liturgies

Keep an eye on the calendar for exact dates and times.

### For the Sick and the Suffering

There is a prayer service for the sick and the suffering, especially those with cancer, held the first Tuesday of every month at 6:30pm. Please contact the parish office to add any names to the prayer list.

### *Birthdays*

2-Charles Owens  
4-Julie Yonan  
10- Eliana Rice  
12-Iris Torrey  
16-Rdr Tom Chiatallas  
16-Collin Olson  
17-Elaine Gejoff  
19-Issac Dollins  
21-Tammy Arnes  
21-Daniel Suriano  
25-Seraphim Pardee  
26-Tikhon Hillaker  
28-Stephen Walton

### *Anniversaries*

15-Stephen & Susan Walton  
16-Nathaniel & Amanda Auxier  
17-Michael & Anne Khoury  
17-Doug & Melissa Auxier

### *Weddings*

July: Christopher Cleis & Chloe Lee  
September: John Peters & Jaclyn Selewski

### Recent Funerals

John Matts - July8, 2023



# PARISH LIFE

THIS MONTH

**Dormition Fast:** August 1-14

**Father Traveling:** July 24-August 3

**August 5th:** Pan-Orthodox Vespers & Litija for the Feast of Transfiguration at SMM

**August 6th:** Blessing of the Harvest

**August 8th:** Prayer service for the sick & suffering, 6pm followed by Parish Council, 7:00pm

**August 9th:** weekday Liturgy

**August 10th:** Akathist to St. Joseph the Hesychast, 6pm followed by YA fellowship

**August 12th:** VCS at St. George 10am -5pm followed by combined Vespers 5pm

**August 14th:** Matins & Lamentions for the Most Holy Theotokos, 6:30pm

**August 15th:** Pilgrimage to Holy Dormition Monastery for the feast (see the flyer above)

**August 17th - 21st:** Parish office closed for regular hours, open by appointment.

**August 23rd:** weekday Liturgy

**August 28th:** Vesperal Liturgy for the Beheading of John the Baptist, 6pm at Holy Assumption

**August 29th:** Strict Fast



PAN-ORTHODOX SOFTBALL GAME

JULY 9, 2023

## PARISH GREETERS

**August 6:** George & Julie Jonascu

**August 13:** Seth & Mia Hillaker

**August 20:** Freida Owens

**August 27:** Steve & Sue Walton

## BELL RINGERS

**August 6:** Cindy Welch & Ruth Karabina

**August 13:** Vivian Capatine & Tonya Rice

**August 20:** Cindy Welch & Ruth Karabina

**August 27:** Vivian Capatine & Tonya Rice

## COFFEE HOUR

**August 6:** John & Bree Walton

**August 13:** Pat Matts

**August 20:** David & Cindy Welch

**August 27:** Jeremy & Renea Becklehammer

## EPISTLE READERS

**August 6:** Rdr. Chris Ballnik & Rdr. Brian-Phillip Walton

**August 13:** Rdr. David Schutt & Rdr. Tom Chiatas

**August 20:** Seraphim Pardee & Rdr. Chris Ballnik

**August 27:** Rdr. Nathaniel Auxier & Rdr. David Schutt

**ST MARY MAGDALENE ORTHODOX CHURCH**

# **HOLY DORMITION**



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**DO YOU MISS THE BEAUTIFUL MELODIES  
FROM THE GREAT AND HOLY FRIDAY  
LAMENTATIONS? JOIN US!**

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**MONDAY, AUGUST 14TH**

**MATINS, LAMENATATIONS, AND  
PROCESSION AT SMM,  
6:30PM**

**TUESDAY, AUGUST 15TH**

**PILGRIMAGE TO  
HOLY DORMITION MONASTERY**

**HOURS & DIVINE LITURGY, 9:00AM  
DIVINE LITURGY, 10:00AM  
PACK A PICNIC LUNCH**

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**HOLY DORMITION MONASTERY  
3389 RIVERS EATON ROAD- RIVES JUNCTION, MI 49277  
PLEASE CONSIDER MAKING A DONATION TO THE MONASTERY!**

# A RECTOR'S REFLECTION OF ST. MARY MAGDALENE PARISH

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*"UNLESS THE LORD BUILD'S THE HOUSE, THOSE WHO BUILD IT LABOR IN VAIN"*

As I watch the new dome in our parking lot being prepared to ascend to the highest point of the Church as a beacon for all, I wanted to offer a short reflection in gratitude for all that the parish council and faithful parishioners of this parish have accomplished, **solely by the Grace of the Holy Spirit.**

In the almost 8 years since I have been blessed to be the rector of this parish, I have watched this community accomplish some pretty incredible things... building on the foundation that my predecessor Fr. Paul had put into place for this community to draw closer to Christ. It was his leadership that sought to avoid St. Mary Magdalene becoming another "brick and mortar parish", which by definition is one who focuses solely on the status quo (i.e. fixing up the Church, but neglecting spiritual growth).

Since I mentioned brick and mortar, I will start there. Several years ago, due to the growth of the community, the parish council, in conjunction with His Eminence Archbishop Alexander and myself as the rector, sought the need to begin to look towards the future of expanding the St. Mary Magdalene campus. This was accomplished through the work of the Holy Spirit, Who has worked through the parish councils in the past 5 years to:

1. Pay off previously existing mortgages totaling \$496,000.
2. Remodel a fully functioning parish office building.
3. Complete classrooms for our growing church school and adult education program.
4. Add a multipurpose space that has served as our temporary chapel for the past 16 months.
5. Hire architects and engineers to begin to make construction plans for an expanded Church Temple and fellowship hall.

**The Holy Spirit worked through the Church Leadership and this entire community to accomplish all of this while wiping out a half a million-dollar mortgage and not adding a single penny of debt.**

# A RECTOR'S REFLECTION OF ST. MARY MAGDALENE PARISH

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*“UNLESS THE LORD BUILD’S THE HOUSE, THOSE WHO BUILD IT LABOR IN VAIN”*

With all of the brick-and-mortar progress that has been made, this is not and will never be the end goal of our mission here in Fenton. Despite all of the “pardon our dust” moments these past 5 years, the Liturgical, Charitable, and Spiritual life of the community has continued to grow exponentially, despite a climate in our country where other Non-Orthodox Churches are losing members in droves:

1. We have never in our parish’s history had more Divine Liturgies, Vespers/Vigils, Akathists, and other supplicatory services (due to the increase in hands and talents needed to accomplish these services correctly and beautifully).
2. We continue to support seminarians and monthly charitable outreach programs with the creation of our fellowship of St. Photini (a lay led outreach ministry which creates and directs opportunities for us to practice our Lord’s command in the 25th Chapter of Matthew)
3. The increase in the sacramental life of the parish, most importantly regular confession with a majority of the faithful on a regular basis has strengthened the individual spiritual lives of those who seek growth.
4. The increase in regular attendance, not just on Sundays, but throughout all of the services offered has been remarkable and a credit to those who seek to grow as Orthodox Christians (This past Wednesday, we have 43 people for a non-festal weekday Divine Liturgy in the middle of the summer!)
5. The increase and welcoming of so many children in the Church and their families, who despite the noise, are learning what it means to live as an Orthodox Christian by witnessing the True Love of a community by the Grace of the Holy Spirit. The average age when accounting all of the children of the parish is in the upper 30s!
6. The welcoming of those outside of the parish community with open arms, especially those coming back to the faith and the numerous catechumens who are coming to learn about the faith for the first time has been increasing year over year.
7. The increase of our witness to the community, who now knows, recognizes, supports, and partners with us to accomplish the work of the Holy Spirit.

I beg God for His Eternal Forgiveness that there are so many other blessings he has bestowed upon our parish community that I did not list. I also weep for anyone who does not see the work of the Holy Spirit in this parish community, which has been able to see Fr. Paul’s dream come to fruition in not becoming another brick-and-mortar parish.

# A RECTOR'S REFLECTION OF ST. MARY MAGDALENE PARISH

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*“UNLESS THE LORD BUILD’S THE HOUSE, THOSE WHO BUILD IT LABOR IN VAIN”*

When we began construction on the expansion of the Church, the Holy Spirit continued to work through the parish council to grow the capacity for which we are able to accomplish even more spiritual and physical growth. He even helped the parish leadership work through complications that had arisen during the construction phase, which include a rising inflation factor, underestimated construction costs, and subcontractor delays. With the help of Clark Senter and also our new general contractor John Peters who will be seeing this project to completion, the Holy Spirit will have accomplished the following miracles for our parish community:

1. A nearly 1.7 million dollar addition, bringing the total net worth of our entire campus to north of 3 million dollars.
2. A loan that will end up accounting for 18% (\$550k) of our campus value. The interest rate we are paying on the loan isn't going to a bank, but rather to the Orthodox Capital Church Improvement Fund, which is using the interest to help other Orthodox Church accomplish the same goals we have.
3. Provided an incredibly beautiful temple, complete with historic stain glass windows from the oldest Orthodox Monastery in the country. The panels were gifted to the Church through a donation to St. Tikhon's Monastery by a visitor of the Church! (As an aside, on top of their beauty, these windows were originally selected, served in front of, and donated by SAINTS in the Orthodox Church who served at that monastery! We will be receiving more documentation and detailed history of these windows by the OCA's Metropolitan Museum in the coming months)

I offer this reflection with the caveat that we as a parish community have only reached the beginning of our journey towards Christ. We can look back on all of the items listed here (and so much more!) and be incredibly grateful for the way that the Holy Spirit has led us to this moment. However, we do that with the caveat of knowing that once we serve our first Liturgy in the new temple, there is still so much work to do.

May the cross, which will be placed at the highest point of the Church this week, be our guiding light from the darkness of the world as we continue our journey towards salvation.

Your Unworthy Priest,  
Fr. Gabriel

Given at the Special Parish Meeting held on July 9, 2023



# St. Mary Magdalene

## Parish Council

### Upcoming Meetings:

All Meetings begin at 7:00pm

|           |      |
|-----------|------|
| August    | 8th  |
| September | 12th |
| October   | 10th |
| November  | 14th |
| December  | 12th |

Annual Meeting  
December 3, 2023

### Parish Council Members

John Wolf, Chair

George Jonascu, Vice Chair

Ann Schutt, Treasurer

Rachel Burtka, Secretary

Subdeacon Andrew Durand

Terri Oginsky

Jay Rice

Subdeacon John Auxier

Alternate: Pat Matts

# Building Project Update:



If you have any questions regarding the building project please reach out to our contractor Jonathan Peters or to a member of parish council.

## July Highlights:

- At our parish meeting held on July 9th we voted to advance with the east end expansion using a crawl space or slab without expanding the basement level.
- The inadequate metal roof was removed and the new shingle roofing was installed.
- Ideal Millwork is continuing to work on the interior finishing of the dome.
- Additional issues with the construction work have been identified and are in the process of being corrected.



## TOTAL MONEY SPENT

JANUARY 1, 2022-

JULY 24, 2023

\$1,167,504.36

## DONATION FROM PRIVATE DONOR

\$509,925

## REMAINING FUNDS IN FLAGSTAR RESTRICTED

AS OF JULY 24, 2023

\$101,331.45

## TOTAL FINANCED BY OCCIF FOR PROJECT

COMPLETION

\$550,000

## REMAINING OCCIF BALANCE AS OF JULY 12,

2023

\$545,755.11

## AVERAGE MONTHLY

OCCIF PAYMENT

\$3,554.23

## TOTAL BUILDING FUND DONATIONS SINCE

JANUARY 1, 2023

\$8,740.00



Brothers & Sisters,

I'd like to start the first construction update letter with a very fitting gospel reading. "Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock. But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash."

Matthew 7:24-27

As I'm sure everyone has seen, we have stripped the old roof system off and have installed an impact-rated composite shingle. We are now coordinating to have the onion dome removed so we can install a rubber membrane to ensure that we have a water-tight seal for years to come. Once that is completed, we will begin working on the metal roofing that will be on the dome portion of the roof.

We received the architectural plans for the east altar expansion. These plans incorporate a crawl space as discussed during the in-person construction meeting we had a few weeks back. We are working to get our permits updated and coordinate our trade partners to begin as soon as the first week of August.

We are continuing to work together diligently with Nick Swartz's company Ideal Millwork to overcome the design & install challenges associated with the interior dome. We plan to finalize the plan moving forward in the next week and push the dome itself into production.

We have involved an engineer to assist us with creating floating platform so that our insulators, drywallers, carpenters, and icon painters can access the top portion of the dome. Ideally, we will find a solution that allows us to continue on schedule with the tile installation. This is critical to our overall timeline as we will be unable to put scaffolding or a lift on the tile floor.

There are still a variety of miscellaneous items that need to be corrected concerning the foundation, electrical, and HVAC. We are working to have these resolved in the next few weeks and call in our rough building inspection. Once this is completed, we can begin insulating the building and move to drywall soon after.

As always, please feel free to contact me with any questions you may have.

In Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John P. [unclear]".

John

**President**  
**Blackstone Building Company**



# BRICK FUNDRAISER



4"x8" Brick Engraved  
with your favorite scripture  
\$100 Donation



8"x8" Brick Engraved  
with your favorite scripture  
\$200 Donation

- Fill out the order form with your favorite Scripture Verse or Saint Quote. Please place your order form and payment in the basket. Attach your payment to your order form with a paper clip.
- There is an option to order a mini-replica brick keepsake for you to keep at home for an additional \$30
- If you would like to purchase a brick for someone who may not be able to afford one please write a check for the size brick you wish to donate and speak to Rebekah.
- Please distribute order forms to any business, friends or family who would also like to contribute. We can pick the quotes if they are unsure of what to write.

**PLEASE** if you are able fill out the handwritten form and give **cash or check** as payment rather than ordering online. We are charged PayPal fees for all online orders and that takes away from the total potential profits toward the building fund.



# FELLOWSHIP OF ST. PHOTINI

Thank you to Deacon Mike for an informative update on OCPM within our parish. We have several parishioners who are regular correspondents with incarcerated people. Due to your generosity in donating to Orthodox Christian Prison Ministries we will be able to continue outreach to these individuals.

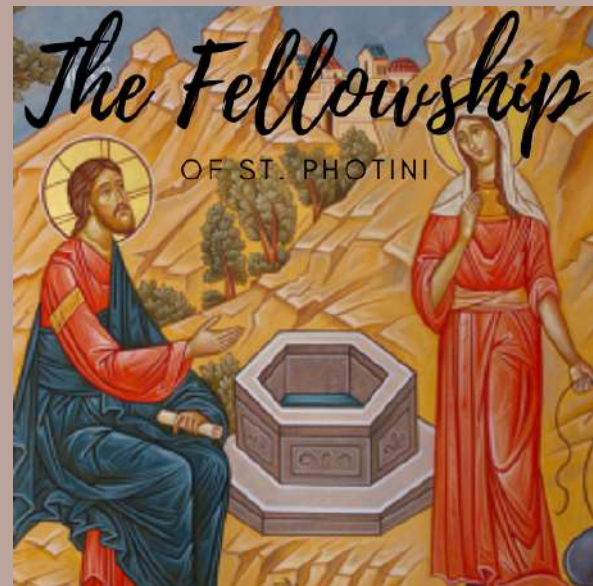
## UPCOMING

August: School Supply Drive



*Truly, I tell you,  
whatever you did for one of  
the least of these  
brothers and sisters of mine,  
you did for me.*  
~MATTHEW 25:40

“AN INCLUSIVE OPPORTUNITY FOR  
COMMUNITY OUTREACH LED BY THE  
FAITHFUL OF ST. MARY MAGDALENE  
ORTHODOX CHURCH”





# PARISH EXTRAS

## PARISH LENDING LIBRARY

The parish lending has recently gone through a reorganization and added several new titles. The list of current titles are available digitally on our website. Use the sign-out sheet to check out a book.

You can find reading on the following topics;

St. Mary Magdalene Pictorial History, Young Adult, Journals, Children's Books, Orthodox Theology, Spirituality, Multi Media, Family Life, Orthodox Living, About Prayer & Prayer Books, Sacraments, Advent, Great Lent & Pascha, Intro to Orthodoxy, Scriptural Study, Church History, Liturgical Theology, Service Books, Lives of the Saints, Patristics, Memoirs & Commemorations, and Ethics

**Access the full list of library titles by clicking the stack of books below!**



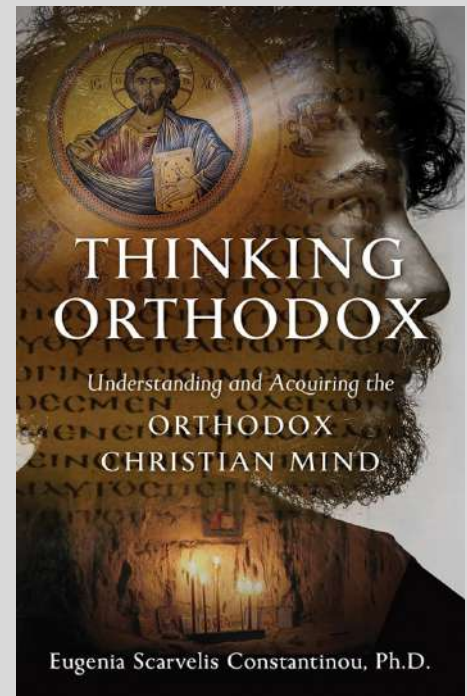
## REMEMBERING MISS. LIZ



The family of Liz Ziats has donated many of her hand crafted items to the church. We will be having a Miss Liz memorial craft sale from Sunday, July 30th through Sunday, August 13th. Proceeds will go to the building fund. Keep an eye on the weekly bulletin for more information as we get closer!

## THINKING ORTHODOX DR. EUGENIA SCARVELIS CONSTANTINO

What does it mean to "think Orthodox"? What are the unspoken and unexplored premises and presumptions underlying what Christians believe? Orthodox Christianity is based on preserving the mind of the early Church, its phronema. Dr. Jeannie Constantinou brings her more than forty years' experience as a professor, Bible teacher, and speaker to bear in explaining what the Orthodox phronema is, how it can be acquired, and how that phronema is expressed in true Orthodox theology - as practiced by those who are properly qualified by both training and a deep relationship with Christ.



If you are looking for something specific please reach out to the parish office and we can order it from our suppliers. Your order helps support the parish.



# MUSIC MINISTRIES

PARISH BELL RINGERS AND CHOIR



## Regular Bell Ringing Rehearsals

1st Tuesday of the Month, 10:30am

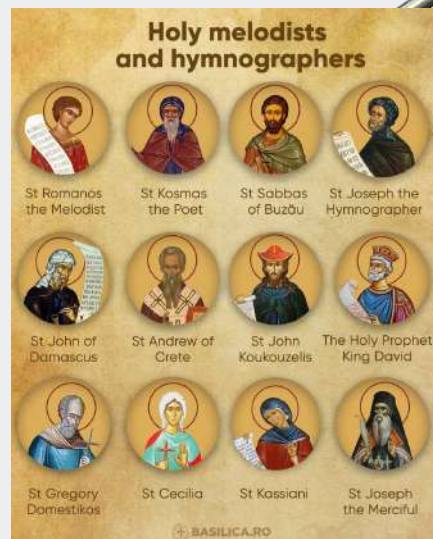
1st Sunday of the Month following Divine Liturgy

Contact Cindy Welch if you are interested in joining this ministry!

# PARISH CHOIR

There will be no regular choir rehearsals in the month of July.

If you are interested in joining the choir reach out to Reader Gregory Jannakos or Elena Schutt.



“  
*Oh, sing to the Lord a new song! For he has done marvelous things...*

*-Psalm 98:1*

”

# EDUCATION

LIVE AND LEARN THE FAITH!



Our  
Parish  
Youth!

**THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING OUR LEMONADE STAND. BY THE GRACE OF GOD AND WITH YOUR GENEROCITY WE RAISED \$581.00.**

Hello Parents and Children!

Hope you are all well and enjoying the summer.

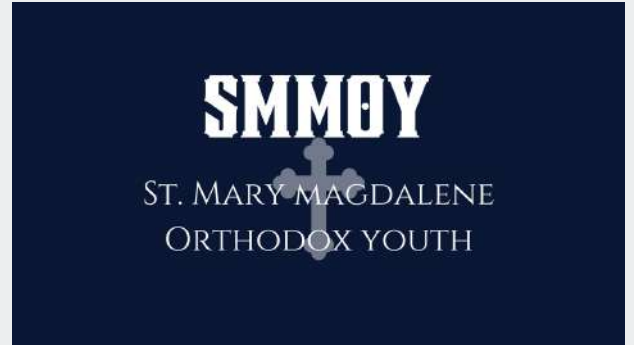
Many thanks to everyone who supported the children in their efforts with the Lemonade/ Bake Sale. It was a great success!! Generous folks helped the children raise \$581.00.

We are looking forward to seeing everyone at Vacation Church School hosted by St. George Antiochian Church this year on Saturday, August 12.

Please feel free to reach out to me with questions, concerns and ideas.

Yours in Christ,

Terri Oginsky  
Church School Coordinator  
989-906-0135  
toginsky@gmail.com



**AUGUST IS A BUSY MONTH!**

**S.M.M.O.Y WILL  
RECONVENE IN SEPTEMBER  
AFTER OUR HIGH SCHOOL  
STUDENTS ARE BACK TO  
CLASS.**

**PRAYERS FOR OUR  
COLLEGE STUDENTS**

Katerina Jonescu  
Katheryn Brcic  
Alexandra Kekel  
Abigail Arnes  
Tea Jonascu  
Ethan Durand  
Justin Auxier  
Ava Arnes  
Francis Senter  
Eliot Senter





THE PAN-ORTHODOX  
CHURCHES OF GENESEE COUNTY  
VACATION CHURCH SCHOOL

**Saturday, August 12**  
**10:00am -5:00pm**

FOLLOWED BY PAN-ORTHODOX  
VESPERS 5:00PM

HOSTED AT  
ST. GEORGE ORTHODOX CHURCH  
5191 LENNON RD | FLINT 48507

# "REFLECTING THE LIGHT OF THE SON"

-Exploring the Transfiguration and the Dormition-

[SIGN UP](#)



# YOUNG ADULTS

## BOOK CLUB AND FELLOWSHIP

Our Young adult group is for anyone ages 21-45 who wish to join in fellowship and faith.

St. Mary Magdalene Orthodox Church

YOUNG  
ADULT  
GROUP



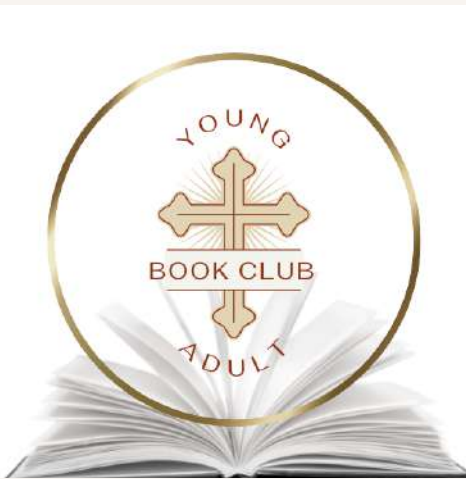
The Young Adult Social group meets Monthly for an Akathist, meal and fellowship. This group also spends time together following Vespers/Vigils on Saturday

### Monthly Akathist 2023 SCHEDULE

HOSTED BY THE YOUNG ADULT GROUP

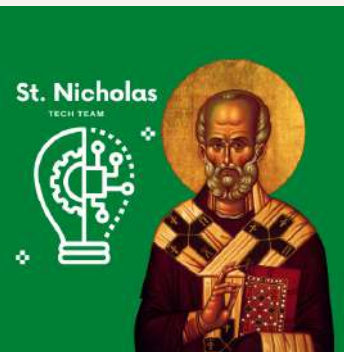
|           |                            |
|-----------|----------------------------|
| JANUARY   | 6:00PM                     |
| <b>12</b> | St. Seraphim of Sarov      |
| FEBRUARY  | 6:00PM                     |
| <b>9</b>  | St. Innocent of Irkutsk    |
| MARCH     | 6:00PM                     |
| <b>9</b>  | Canon of Repentance        |
| APRIL     | 6:00PM                     |
| <b>6</b>  | Canon of St. Mary of Egypt |
| MAY       | 6:00PM                     |
| <b>11</b> | Martyr Varus               |
| JUNE      | 6:00PM                     |
| <b>8</b>  | Inexhaustable Cup          |
| JULY      | 6:00PM                     |
| <b>13</b> | St. Mary Magdalene         |
| AUGUST    | 6:00PM                     |
| <b>10</b> | St. Joseph the Hesychast   |
| SEPTEMBER | 6:00PM                     |
| <b>21</b> | St. Iakovos of Evia        |
| OCTOBER   | 6:00PM                     |
| <b>12</b> | TBD                        |
| NOVEMBER  | 6:00PM                     |
| <b>9</b>  | TBD                        |
| DECEMBER  | 6:00PM                     |
| <b>14</b> | TBD                        |

To join either of these groups on the Band App, reach out to Subdeacon John Auxier and he will get you added!

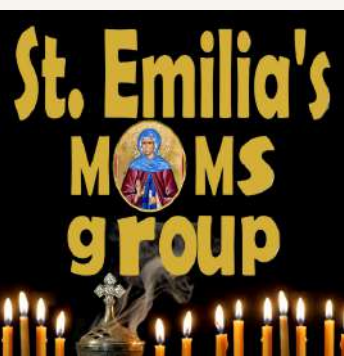


The Young Adult self-guided book club is open to everyone in our Pan-Orthodox community. They meet Thursday evenings at 6:00pm (*with the exception of Akathist evenings*) and move from home to home to read spiritual books and enjoy a meal together.

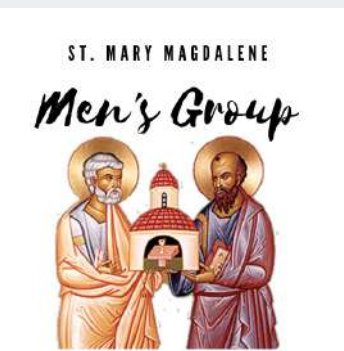
# PARISH MINISTRIES & GROUPS



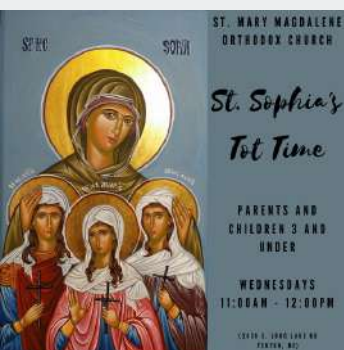
THE ST. NICHOLAS TECH TEAM IS RESPONSIBLE FOR PROMOTING, UPDATING, AND ENHANCING THE ONLINE PRESENCE OF OUR PARISH. ENCOMPASSING THE WEBSITE, SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNTS, AND LIVE-STREAMING SO THAT WE CAN SPREAD ORTHODOXY THROUGH MODERN COMMUNICATION CHANNELS.



THE ORTHODOX MOM'S GROUP IS MADE UP OF MOTHERS WHO GET TOGETHER TO DISCUSS HOW BEST TO HELP RAISE THEIR CHILDREN WITHIN THE TRADITIONS OF THE ORTHODOXY FAITH. WE ARE IN NEED OF A MOTHER TO HEAD THIS MINISTRY.



THE MEN OF THE PARISH GET TOGETHER A FEW TIMES A YEAR AT VARIOUS PLACES TO ENJOY IN FELLOWSHIP WITH ONE ANOTHER. FOR MORE INFORMATION, DO NOT HESITATE TO REACH OUT TO THE PARISH OFFICE.



THE ST. SOPHIA'S TOT TIME IS FOR PARENTS OF BABIES AND YOUNG CHILDREN TO COME TOGETHER FOR FELLOWSHIP, AND COFFEE, DURING THE WEEK. THE GROUP GATHERS ON WEDNESDAY MORNINGS FOLLOWING DIVINE LITURGY APPROX. 11:00AM -12:00PM (THE GROUP STILL MEETS ON WEDNESDAY EVEN IF DIVINE LITURGY IS NOT HELD) THIS IS A WONDERFUL OPPORTUNITY FOR CHILDREN TO LEARN AND EXPLORE THE CHURCH WHILE PARENTS COME TOGETHER TO SHARE PARENTING LIFE, JOYS AND DISCUSS THE RAISING OF THEIR LITTLE SAINTS. REACH OUT TO MATUSHKA LAURA WITH ANY QUESTIONS

*The Pan-Orthodox Churches  
of Genesee County*

Holy Assumption Greek  
Orthodox Church  
(2245 E. Baldwin Rd Grand Blanc, MI)

St. George Orthodox Church  
(5191 Lennon Rd Flint, MI)

St. Mary Magdalene Orthodox  
Church  
(2439 S. Long Lake Rd Fenton, MI)

St. Nicholas Orthodox Church  
(2143 S Center Rd Burton, MI)



***Upcoming Events with  
our Pan-Orthodox  
Brothers and Sisters***

UPCOMING PAN-ORTHODOX SERVICES

**AUGUST 5:**

PAN-ORTHODOX VESPERS & LITIJA FOR THE FEAST OF TRANSFIGURATION

5:00PM AT ST. MARY MAGDALENE

**AUGUST 12:**

PAN-ORTHODOX VESPERS FOLLOWING VCS

5:00PM AT ST. GEORGE (9191 LENNON RD | FLINT, MI 48507)

**AUGUST 15:**

DIVINE LITURGY FOR THE FEAST OF DORMITION 10:00AM AT HOLY ASSUMPTION (2245 E. BALDWIN RD | GRAND BLANC, MI 48439)

**OR**

ANNUAL PARISH PILGRIMAGE TO HOLY DORMITION MONASTERY

(3389 RIVES EATON RD | RIVES JUNCTION, MI 49277)

AKATHIST & HOURS 9AM

DIVINE LITURGY 10AM (OUTDOORS)

FOLLOWED BY A PICNIC LUNCH

PLEASE REACH OUT WITH ANY QUESTIONS ABOUT ETIQUETTE OR DRESS CODE FOR THE MONASTERY

**AUGUST 28:**

PAN-ORTHODOX VESPERAL LITURGY FOR THE FEAST OF THE BEHEADING OF JOHN THE BAPTIST

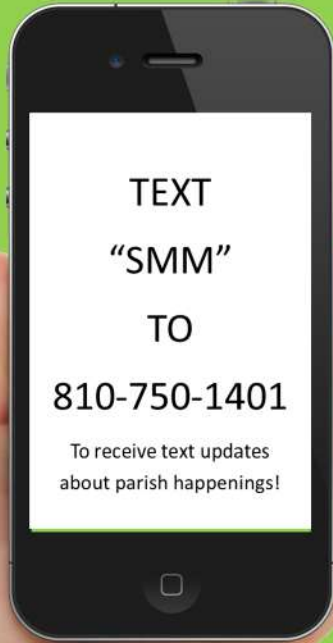
6:00PM AT HOLY ASSUMPTION (2245 E. BALDWIN RD | GRAND BLANC, MI 48439)

THE FEAST IS ON AUGUST 29TH AND A STRICT FAST IS OBSERVED.

Stay up-to-date with  
St. Mary Magdalene  
Orthodox Church



St. MARY  
MAGDALENE  
ORTHODOX CHURCH



ST. MARY MAGDALENE ORTHODOX CHURCH

LET'S GET CONNECTED!

Follow us!



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@ocasmm



youtube.com/c/SaintMaryMagdalene

Subscribe

save the date

August

6-Blessing of the Harvest

12- Vacation Church School

14-Matins & Lamentations

15-Holy Dormition Pilgrimage

20-School Supply Drive