

December 2021

St. Mary Magdalene Orthodox Church



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Office Hours*:

Monday 10:00am-3:00pm

Wednesday 10:00am-3:00pm

Friday 10:00am-3:00pm

***or by appointment**

Monthly e-Newsletter

ST. MARY MAGDALENE ORTHODOX CHURCH

Are They Not Written...?

From the Desk of Fr. Gabriel

As we enter into the days of December, we reach the midpoint of our 40 day preparation for the Winter Pascha!

St. Ambrose so beautifully stated: *"Christ was in a manger so that we might be at the altar. He was on earth, so that we might be in the stars. He had no place in the inn...so that we might have mansions in paradise."*

God didn't come into the world in some massive capital city. The King of Kings wasn't born in a featherbed made from the cedars of Lebanon. He wasn't surrounded by the riches of the Jewish Kingdom like so many of His forefathers. The Savior, the Messiah of us all, came into this world in the middle of a damp, cool, and rocky cave, being warmed by the breath of the animals who dwelt there. Why? Because the truly important things in life are not riches, gold, or beauty. From a Divine Perspective, none of these things matter. What is important, is **humility and repentance**.

"The Genealogy Gospel" of Matthew is perhaps one of my favorite passages of the entire New Testament, because it serves as a wonderful link to the past! As we go through this list of names given to us in that first chapter, there are probably many that you recognize from Holy Scripture and many that you do not recognize. If you don't recognize many of the names, it is not because you don't open your bible often enough. Rather it is because for a good majority of them, there is not a lot written!

We learn about a good portion of this lineage of Christ in 4 books: 1st and 2nd Samuel, and 1st and 2nd Kingdoms. After we get through the story of David and Solomon, there is a line that keeps popping up over and over about most of these other names, who were the kings of both Israel and Judah. In a few verses, they will say something about them and then you hear: *"Now the rest of the words of _____, and all that he did...are they not written in the book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel?"*

Scripture doesn't go into details about figures like King Omri, who from a historical perspective was a big deal. He was the founder of the Omri Dynasty, and according to scholars, was one of the most important rulers ever in the history of Israel. He conquered the territory of Moab, brought peace to the Northern Kingdom, formed alliances, even founded the city of Samaria where he made his capital! Omri had all of these earthly achievements in his 12-year reign, and this is what the bible says about him:

*"In the 31st year of Asa the King of Judah, Omri became king over Israel and reigned for 12 years. Omri bought the hill of Samaria for 2 talents of silver from its owner Shemer. Then he built on the hill and called the name of the city Samaria, after the name of Shemer, the owner of the hill. Omri did evil before the Lor, and did worse than all who were before him. For he walked in the ways of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, and in the sins he committed and caused Israel to commit. **"Now the rest of the words of Omri, and all that he did...are they not written in the book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel."***

UPCOMING THIS MONTH

1st - Resume Adult Education

5th- Annual Meeting (Seminarian Gift Cards Due)

6th - Pan-Orthodox Liturgy @ St. Nicholas

11th- SMMOY Gathering

12th- St. Nicholas Visit to our children

13th- Pan-Orthodox Liturgy for the Feats of St. Herman

14th- Parish Council

18th & 19th- Craft & Bake Sale

24th- Royal Hours 10am, Holy Supper 5:30pm, Nativity Vigil, 7pm

25th- NATIVITY LITURGY 10AM followed by Christmas Caroling at the Nursing Home

26th- Synaxis of the Theotokos



*"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*

The Definition of Holiness Continued

Why is it that King Omri only has 3 verses in the Bible, 1 of which says that his greatest accomplishment was to buy a hill? Because Holy Scripture is given to us from a Divine Perspective...it comes from God! To God, riches, power, beauty, and strength are meaningless. The political exploits of a king long forgotten by the world accomplishes **nothing** in the eyes of eternity. What God treasures the most is humility and repentance!

In contrast to King Omri, King David is a big deal in Holy Scripture, but until 1993, outside of the Bible, no one had discovered any archeological evidence that He was even a real person! In the world and in non-biblical history, he wasn't a big deal. But to us, and through the Divine Perspective of God, David is held as an example that we must all follow.

He was a man who was not perfect but had a love for God in his heart. He fell many times, even to the point of adultery and murder, yet no matter how many times he had fallen, David ran back to God with repentance. David is even credited with giving us Orthodoxy's most popular psalm, Psalm 51, which we call the psalm of repentance. He literally gave us poetry on how to humble ourselves before God, just as **God humbled** Himself to be with us in the middle of the damp cave in Bethlehem.

As we approach the feast of Christmas, there will be so many distractions. Last minute shopping, cooking for our families, figuring out plans on how to come together as a family, all of these things are great in and of themselves, but from a Divine Perspective, **they do not matter**. If my life were written about in Holy Scripture, and if my normal activities **did not include** coming to Church with Humility and Repentance on Christmas Eve and Christmas Morning, the verse would read: *"Fr. Gabriel and Family didn't worship God for the Nativity...Now the rest of the words of Fr. Gabriel, and all that his family did for Christmas...are they not written in the book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel."*

Brothers and Sisters, let us not be a footnote in the eyes of our Lord, but rather humble ourselves and join together in worship and celebration, as we approach the coming of our Savior into the world!



**PARISH HOLY SUPPER
DECEMBER 24TH 5:30PM**

Prayers for our Sick and our Suffering His Beatitude Metropolitan Herman Archbishop Damaskinos

Vinnie	Terry	Sarah
Elaine	Tracy	Joanne
Peter	Maurice	Judy
David	Anthony	Judy
Michael	Alisha	Kathleen
Mason	Janet	John
Pat	Ivanka	Thomas
Joseph	Theresa	Hudson
Linda	Gus	Thomas
Arminada	Jeff	Martin
Dimitri	Jennifer	Anthony
Damian	Melissa	Dorothy
Thom	Dawn	Tyler
Linda	Michelle	
Nancy	Harry	
Rachael	Terry	
Dawn	Gail	
Eric		

Mother's With Child

Alexandra
Tailer

Catechumenate

Emily
Vince
Carol
Jacob
Mary Ellen
Timothy
Daniel
Andrew
Jake

Seminarian Family

Alexander &
Danielle Earl

Anniversary of Parish Members Departed

8- Manuela Kemp
24-Marcella Moorman

Recently Departed

Sarah
Richard

Michael Oginsky - U.S.
Stephany Bishop - U.S. Navy
Patrick Tejkl - U.S. Marines
Lindsey Cazatt - U.S. Navy

Prayers for our Armed Forces
Jason Wilburn - Army Rangers
Alex Suriano - Air National Guard
Dallas Watson - Air Force

Stephen Bondira- Coast Guard
Lt. Commander
Sarah Tyler- U.S. Air Force

PARISH GREETERS

December 5

Freida Owens

December 12

Seth & Mia Hillaker

December 19

Steve & Sue Walton

December 26

Scott & Tina Shepherd

COFFEE HOUR

December 5 (fasting)

Bruce Watson & Rebecca
Lazar

December 12 (fasting)

George & Julie Jonascu

December 19 (fasting)

Dave & Jaclyn Daugherty

December 26

Subdeacon Andrew &
Meghan Durand

BELL RINGERS

December 5

Renea Becklehamer

December 12

Tonya Rice

December 19

Vivian Capatina

December 26

Cindy Welch

WISHING YOU MANY BLESSED YEARS!

BIRTHDAYS

2- JAKE BARNHART
3- SUBDEACON ANDREW DURAND
4- EMMA LANTERMAN
5- RICHARD ZIATS & WINIFRED DAUGHERTY
6- ROMANOAS ROYER
8- CHRISTOPHER COOLEY
9- CHARLOTTE SHIPLEY & JACOB BOWERS
11- LUCILLE BILAS
12- RICHARD SCHLAACK
13- ANNE KHOURY
14- MAT. LAURA BILAS & OWEN DOLLINS
17- READER DAVID & KATHERINE SCHUTT
19- MAURA BURTKA & MYKOLA NEWMERZYCKY
21- DAVID WELCH
23- ROBERT OGINSKY JR
30- KRISTEN WOLF
31- CHRISTINE SURIANO & ISAIAH DURAND

ANNIVERSARIES

19- JAMES & TONYA RICE
27- STEPHEN & INNA BONDIRA
29- PAISIOS & ANNA HAMANN
30- SUBDEACON ROBERT & ADDIE LANTERMAN



EPISTLE READERS

December 5
Dr. Janet Wiese
Reader Chris Ballnik

December 12
Subdeacon John Auxier
Reader David Schutt

December 19
Subdeacon Andrew Durand
Dr. Janet Wiese

December 26
Reader Nathaniel Auxier
Subdeacon John Auxier



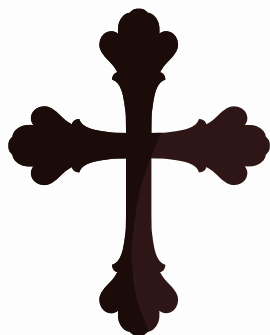
SCRIPTURE READINGS

December 5
Eph. 2:14-22
Luke 17:12-19

December 12
Col. 3:4-11
Luke 14:16-24

December 19
Hebrews 11:9-10, 17-23, 32-40
Matthew 1:1-25

December 26
Gal. 1:11-19
Matthew 2:13-23



MONTH IN REVIEW

November was highlighted by the continuation of our building project of the multi-purpose space addition, as well as the roll out of our capital campaign to raise funds for the Church Expansion, which we pray will happen in 2022! Some of the other highlights included the baptism of Lucas Bondira, a parish trip to Dormition Monastery, and the celebration of the Entrance of the Theotokos!

The Church is opened for
private prayer
Monday, Wednesday, & Friday
10am -3pm
or by appointment



"The Church is a hospital, and not a
courtroom, for souls. She does not
condemn on behalf of sins but grants
remission of sins."
+St. John Chrysostom

RECOMMENDED READING

**THE WINTER PASCHA:
READINGS FOR THE
CHRISTMAS-EPIPHANY
SEASON
BY: FR. THOMAS HOPKO**

"When the winter begins to make way into the Northern World, the Church of Christ begins to celebrate a 'splendid three-day Pascha.' " Thus Father Thomas Hopko begins the first of forty meditations for the season of Advent, Christmas, and Epiphany, ending with the feast of the Meeting of the Lord in the Temple on the fortieth day after Christ's birth. In the style of his popular book for the paschal fasting season, The Lenten Spring, the author again draws on the biblical readings and liturgical hymns and verses of the season to illumine the way for believers to follow the Church's days of preparation and celebration for the Coming of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, in human flesh. Many references are made to the writings of the saints and Church Fathers, as well as to contemporary Christian teachers and spiritual guides. All those who love the Lord's Coming will find comfort and strength, as well as enlightenment and instruction, for having passed through the Winter Pascha with this book as their companion.



**NEWLY BAPTIZED
ELIJAH BILAS**



**NEWLY BAPTIZED
LUCAS BONDIRA**

**Wishing you many
blessed years!**

SAVE THE DATE

10TH ANNUAL

WINTER FUNDRAISING DINNER

FOR HOLY DORMITION MONASTERY

THURSDAY, JANUARY 20TH | 5:00PM

MONTHLY FORECAST

Annual Meeting with Men's Gathering

Our Annual Meeting is scheduled for Sunday, December 5th after the Divine Liturgy. The reports have been sent out to everyone via email or via paper copy available in the narthex or by contacting the parish office. As has been announced, the parish council had a late November meeting on the 30th of last month, which marked the last chance for additions to the agenda, comments, or clarifications to the financial reports and upcoming budget. Following the (quick) Annual Meeting, there will be a men's gathering for some fellowship at Tom & Cindy Chiatas' home!

Weekday Divine Liturgies During Advent

What better way to continue to prepare for the coming of Christ than by celebrating our weekday Divine Liturgy together on Wednesdays at 9:00 AM! There will be no Wednesday Liturgy on December 15th and on the 29th.

Pan Orthodox Feast of St. Nicholas at our Sister Parish in Burton

Our sister parish of St. Nicholas will be celebrating their patronal feast day on Monday, December 6th at 10:00 AM. Join the pan Orthodox Community as we remember our Holy Father Nicholas!

St. Nicholas Day Celebration and Visitation

We are excited to announce that St. Nicholas will be paying us a visit on Sunday, December 12th! There will be gifts for the children who are in attendance, the opportunity for photos with St. Nicholas. This year, we will also be having a special St. Nicholas Trivia contest, so start to study your St. Nicholas history!

Craft and Bake Sale

This year's Craft and Bake Sale will be held on Saturday and Sunday, December 18th and 19th. We are in need of volunteers to make their favorite homemade baked goods to bring to the Church to be sold to the community! Drop off for the Baked Goods and Crafts will be on Friday, December 17th, from 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM! Invite your friends, family, and co-workers to the sale! We are also in need of home crafted goods, see Liz Ziats for more information.

Angel Tree Cards Due!

Angel Tree Gift Cards are due on Sunday, December 5th. Get these all in as soon as possible so that we can send them to the seminaries before they break for Christmas!

Nativity Choir Rehearsal

The choir will continue rehearsals at 9:30 AM before Sunday Divine Liturgy, as well as hold a special Saturday Rehearsal on December 18th at 3:00 PM to prepare for the Feast Days!

Holy Supper

We are excited to announce the traditional Holy Supper to be held by our parish family. On Christmas Eve, at 5:30 PM, all are invited to come to the Church for the Traditional Holy Supper, complete with ancient ethnic traditions and prayers, as we prepare to welcome our Lord into the World on His Nativity! If you are planning on attending, sign your family up for the meal in the narthex, especially if you have never attended or held a Holy Supper of your own!

Nativity Services

Royal Hours will be celebrated on Christmas Eve Morning at 10:00 AM, with the Holy Supper beginning at 5:30, and the Nativity Vigil at 7:00 PM. Divine Liturgy for Christmas Morning will be held at 10:00 AM. Following Divine Liturgy, join us as we head to sing at the local nursing home to spread the Joy of the Incarnation! (Prior singing experience not required!)

St. Mary Magdalene Orthodox Church

2439 S. LONG LAKE RD
FENTON, MI 48430

ST-MARYMAGDALENE.ORG



NATIVITY SCHEDULE

12/24 Royal Hours | 10:00am
12/24 Holy Supper | 5:30pm
12/24 Nativity Vigil | 7:00pm
12/25 Nativity Liturgy | 10:00am
12/26 Hours & Divine Liturgy | 9:50am

THEOPHANY SCHEDULE

1/5 Blessing of the Waters | 7:00pm
1/6 Theophany Liturgy | 10:00am
1/8 Vespers | 4:00pm
1/9 Hours, Divine Liturgy, Blessing of the
River & Lamb Roast | 9:50am



PARISH LENDING LIBRARY

Don't forget to turn off the T.V. and to utilize our wonderful parish lending library to help feed your spiritual growth . Simply sign-out the book you are borrowing on the sheet next to the bookshelf in the Parish Education Center. The parish lending library can be accessed Sunday after Liturgy or during office hours.

The Library covers the following topics and MORE!

Introduction to Orthodoxy, Orthodox Theology, Patristics, Spiritual Study, Children's Books, Service Books, Orthodox Living & Prayer, Orthodox Ethics, Church History, Lives of the Saints, Liturgical Theology



P

NOW AVAILABLE

Parish Kiosk Gift Certificates

For purchase at any value for any occasion. See Rebekah in the parish office to purchase yours as a gift today!

A K

R I

I O

S S

Be sure to check out our Nativity display which will include several gifts and stocking stuffers! Available while supplies last!

H K

What a way to share your faith!



MONDAY, DECEMBER 13TH
10:00AM DIVINE LITURGY

ST. MARY MAGDALENE
ORTHODOX CHURCH

2439 S. LONG LAKE RD
FENTON, MI 48430

COME VENERATE THE
RELICS OF ST. HERMAN

“From this day forth from this very hour and this very minute, let us love love God above all and seek to accomplish His Holy Will.”

— St. Herman of Alaska



UPCOMING CHOIR REHEARSALS

Holy melodists and hymnographers



St Romanos
the Melodist



St Kosmas
the Poet



St Sabbas
of Buzău



St Joseph the
Hymnographer



St John of
Damascus



St Andrew of
Crete



St John
Koukouzelis



The Holy Prophet
King David



St Gregory
Domestikos



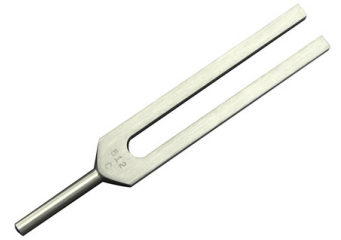
St Cecilia



St Kassiani



St Joseph
the Merciful



Saturday,
December 18th,
3:00pm

Sundays prior to
Divine Liturgy,
9:30am

Please see Reader
Greg with any
questions



SAINT NICHOLAS THE WONDERWORKER, ARCHBISHOP OF MYRA IN LYCIA

COMMEMORATED DECEMBER 6TH

Saint Nicholas, the Wonderworker, Archbishop of Myra in Lycia is famed as a great saint pleasing unto God. He was born in the city of Patara in the region of Lycia (on the south coast of the Asia Minor peninsula), and was the only son of pious parents Theophanes and Nonna, who had vowed to dedicate him to God.

As the fruit of the prayer of his childless parents, the infant Nicholas from the very day of his birth revealed to people the light of his future glory as a wonderworker. His mother, Nonna, after giving birth was immediately healed from illness. The newborn infant, while still in the baptismal font, stood on his feet three hours, without support from anyone, thereby honoring the Most Holy Trinity. Saint Nicholas from his infancy began a life of fasting, and on Wednesdays and Fridays he would not accept milk from his mother until after his parents had finished their evening prayers.

From his childhood Nicholas thrived on the study of Divine Scripture; by day he would not leave church, and by night he prayed and read books, making himself a worthy dwelling place for the Holy Spirit. Bishop Nicholas of Patara rejoiced at the spiritual success and deep piety of his nephew. He ordained him a reader, and then elevated Nicholas to the priesthood, making him his assistant and entrusting him to instruct the flock.

In serving the Lord the youth was fervent of spirit, and in his proficiency with questions of faith he was like an Elder, who aroused the wonder and deep respect of believers. Constantly at work and vivacious, in unceasing prayer, the priest Nicholas displayed great kind-heartedness towards the flock, and towards the afflicted who came to him for help, and he distributed all his inheritance to the poor.

There was a certain formerly rich inhabitant of Patara, whom Saint Nicholas saved from great sin. The man had three grown daughters, and in desperation he planned to sell their bodies so they would have money for food. The saint, learning of the man's poverty and of his wicked intention, secretly visited him one night and threw a sack of gold through the window. With the money the man arranged an honorable marriage for his daughter. Saint Nicholas also provided gold for the other daughters, thereby saving the family from falling into spiritual destruction. In bestowing charity, Saint Nicholas always strove to do this secretly and to conceal his good deeds.

The Bishop of Patara decided to go on pilgrimage to the holy places at Jerusalem, and entrusted the guidance of his flock to Saint Nicholas, who fulfilled this obedience carefully and with love. When the bishop returned, Nicholas asked his blessing for a pilgrimage to the Holy Land. Along the way the saint predicted a storm would arise and threaten the ship. Saint Nicholas saw the devil get on the ship, intending to sink it and kill all the passengers. At the entreaty of the despairing pilgrims, he calmed the waves of the sea by his prayers. Through his prayer a certain sailor of the ship, who had fallen from the mast and was mortally injured, was also restored to health.

When he reached the ancient city of Jerusalem and came to Golgotha, Saint Nicholas gave thanks to the Savior. He went to all the holy places, worshiping at each one. One night on Mount Sion, the closed doors of the church opened by themselves for the great pilgrim. Going round the holy places connected with the earthly service of the Son of God, Saint Nicholas decided to withdraw into the desert, but he was stopped by a divine voice urging him to return to his native country. He returned to Lycia, and yearning for a life of quietude, the saint entered into the brotherhood of a monastery named Holy Sion, which had been founded by his uncle. But the Lord again indicated another path for him, "Nicholas, this is not the vineyard where you shall bear fruit for Me. Return to the world, and glorify My Name there." So he left Patara and went to Myra in Lycia.

Upon the death of Archbishop John, Nicholas was chosen as Bishop of Myra after one of the bishops of the Council said that a new archbishop should be revealed by God, not chosen by men. One of the elder bishops had a vision of a radiant Man, Who told him that the one who came to the church that night and was first to enter should be made archbishop. He would be named Nicholas. The bishop went to the church at night to await Nicholas. The saint, always the first to arrive at church, was stopped by the bishop. "What is your name, child?" he asked. God's chosen one replied, "My name is Nicholas, Master, and I am your servant."

After his consecration as archbishop, Saint Nicholas remained a great ascetic, appearing to his flock as an image of gentleness, kindness and love for people. This was particularly precious for the Lycian Church during the persecution of Christians under the emperor Diocletian (284-305). Bishop Nicholas, locked up in prison together with other Christians for refusing to worship idols, sustained them and exhorted them to endure the fetters, punishment and torture. The Lord preserved him unharmed. Upon the accession of Saint Constantine (May 21) as emperor, Saint Nicholas was restored to his flock, which joyfully received their guide and intercessor.

Despite his great gentleness of spirit and purity of heart, Saint Nicholas was a zealous and ardent warrior of the Church of Christ. Fighting evil spirits, the saint made the rounds of the pagan temples and shrines in the city of Myra and its surroundings, shattering the idols and turning the temples to dust.

In the year 325 Saint Nicholas was a participant in the First Ecumenical Council. This Council proclaimed the Nicene Symbol of Faith, and he stood up against the heretic Arius with the likes of Saints Sylvester the Bishop of Rome (January 2), Alexander of Alexandria (May 29), Spyridon of Trimythontos (December 12) and other Fathers of the Council.

Saint Nicholas, fired with zeal for the Lord, assailed the heretic Arius with his words, and also struck him upon the face. For this reason, he was deprived of the emblems of his episcopal rank and placed under guard. But several of the holy Fathers had the same vision, seeing the Lord Himself and the Mother of God returning to him the Gospel and omophorion. The Fathers of the Council agreed that the audacity of the saint was pleasing to God, and restored the saint to the office of bishop.

Having returned to his own diocese, the saint brought it peace and blessings, sowing the word of Truth, uprooting heresy, nourishing his flock with sound doctrine, and also providing food for their bodies. The face of Saint Nicholas resembled that of an Angel, resplendent with divine grace. A brilliant ray shone from his face, like that which shone from the face of Moses (Exodus 34:29), so that those who looked at him were astonished. Whoever was oppressed by some affliction or passion of the soul had only to behold the Saint, and his sorrow was eased at once. As for those who conversed with him, they soon found themselves advancing on the path of virtue. Not only were the faithful moved to compassion, but unbelievers as well, and they directed their steps on the path of salvation when they heard him speak. The evil of unbelief which had been implanted in their hearts since childhood was uprooted, and in its place, the word of truth was sown.

Even during his life the saint worked many miracles. One of the greatest was the deliverance from death of three men unjustly condemned by the Governor, who had been bribed. The saint boldly went up to the executioner and took his sword, already suspended over the heads of the condemned. The Governor, denounced by Saint Nicholas for his wrong doing, repented and begged for forgiveness.

Witnessing this remarkable event were three military officers, who were sent to Phrygia by the emperor Constantine to put down a rebellion. They did not suspect that soon they would also be compelled to seek the intercession of Saint Nicholas. Evil men slandered them before the emperor, and the officers were sentenced to death. Appearing to Saint Constantine in a dream, Saint Nicholas called on him to overturn the unjust sentence of the military officers.

He worked many other miracles, and struggled many long years at his labor. Through the prayers of the saint, the city of Myra was rescued from a terrible famine. He appeared to a certain Italian merchant and left him three gold pieces as a pledge of payment. He requested him to sail to Myra and deliver grain there. More than once, the saint saved those drowning in the sea, and provided release from captivity and imprisonment.

Having reached old age, Saint Nicholas peacefully fell asleep in the Lord. His venerable relics were preserved incorrupt in the local cathedral church and flowed with curative myrrh, from which many received healing. In the year 1087, his relics were transferred to the Italian city of Bari, where they rest even now (See May 9).

The name of the great saint of God, the hierarch and wonderworker Nicholas, a speedy helper and suppliant for all hastening to him, is famed in every corner of the earth, in many lands and among many peoples.



DECEMBER'S CHURCH SCHOOL SCHEDULE

DECEMBER 5TH: SHORT CLASS THEN MOVIE IN THE TEEN LOUNGE DURING THE ANNUAL MEETING

DECEMBER 12TH: ST. NICHOLAS VISIT

WINTER BREAK BEGINS UNTIL AFTER THE FIRST OF THE YEAR.

Greetings St. Mary Magdalene Family. It is hard to believe December is here already. This month the children will learn about the Feast of the Nativity and will be greeting St. Nicholas.

Advent continues as does the almsgiving opportunity for our children who are being asked to donate new toys to be given to children in need. Having children earn the money for a toy by doing some extra chores around home is a great way of making this truly their gift to someone in need.

After welcoming St. Nicholas on December 12 (no class) and we will all be taking a break from church school (but not from Church :) until January 16.

We are always hoping to add to the church school staff. A need for teachers and substitutes never goes away. Please let us know if you would like to work in this very important ministry.

Yours in Christ,
Terri Oginsky
Church School Coordinator
989-906-0135
toginsky@gmail.com

St. Mary Magdalene Orthodox Church

St. Nicholas Visit

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 12, 2021

O who loves Nicholas the saintly,
O who serves Nicholas the saintly,
Him will Nicholas receive,
And give help in time of need:
Holy Father Nicholas!*

He who dwells in God's holy
mansions,
Is our help on the land and oceans,
He will guard us from all ills,
Keep us pure and free from sins
Holy Father Nicholas!*

Holy Saint, hearken to our prayer,
Let not life drive us to despair,
All our efforts shall not wane,
Singing praises to your name:
Holy Father Nicholas!*

O kto kto Nikolaja l'ubit,
O kto kto Nikolaja sluzit,
Tomu svjatyj Nikolaj,
Na vsjakj cas pomahaj:
Nicolaj, Nicolaj!*

*Repeat the three lines of the refrain.

St. Nicholas will be joining us following Divine Liturgy on Sunday, December 12th. Traditionally this is the day gifts are exchanged in honor of the life of St. Nicholas and his benevolence. He will be bringing gifts for all our children. Be sure your children, Godchildren and grandchildren are present to hear about the life of St. Nicholas and his giving soul.





SMMOY

ST. MARY MAGDALENE
ORTHODOX YOUTH

The teens will meet at the Church on Saturday, December 11th following Vigil.

They will take this time for fun, fellowship and to make Nativity cards to send to our shut-ins

UPCOMING GATHERING DECEMBER 11



COLLEGE CORNER

PRAYERS FOR OUR COLLEGE STUDENTS

Katherine Arnes
Oliver Senter
Sydney Wilkenson
Renee Wilkenson
Katerina Jonescu
Katheryn Brcic
Alexandra Kekel
Abigail Arnes
Tea Jonascu
Ethan Durand
Justin Auxier

Orthodox Christian Fellowship (OCF) is the official campus ministry organization of the Assembly of Canonical Orthodox Bishops of the United States of America



KEEPING THE FAITH IN A NOISY WORLD: A CHRISTIAN APPROACH

The course will focus on the noise of our world that causes stress and anxiety, and what we can do as Christians to deal with it.

Deacon Michael Schlaack will be using scripture and the teachings of the saints to see how they handled the stress and anxiety in their worlds.

Classes will be held on Wednesdays at 6:00pm

November 3rd

November 10th

December 1st

December 8th

December 15th

St. Mary Magdalene Orthodox Church
2439 S. Long Lake Rd.
Fenton, MI 48430
810-750-1401
smmoca@fenton@gmail.com





COMMUNITY OUTREACH

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

UPCOMING SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

DECEMBER:

DISTRIBUTE GIFT CARDS FROM SEMINARIAN ANGEL TREE

CAROLING FOR SHUT-INS FOLLOWING NATIVITY LITURGY

CHURCH SCHOOL ALMSGIVING

SMMOY CARD MAKING FOR SHUT-INS

Please contact Deacon Mike or the Parish
office if you would like to join the efforts of
the Fellowship of St. Photini

*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

ST. MARY MAGDALENE ORTHODOX CHURCH



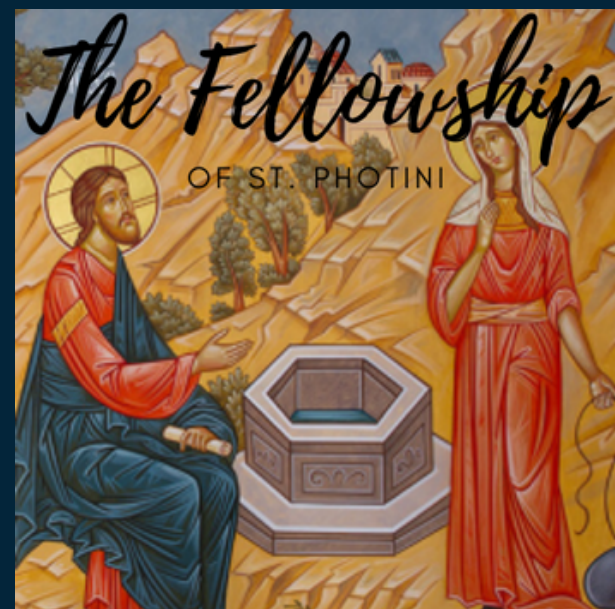
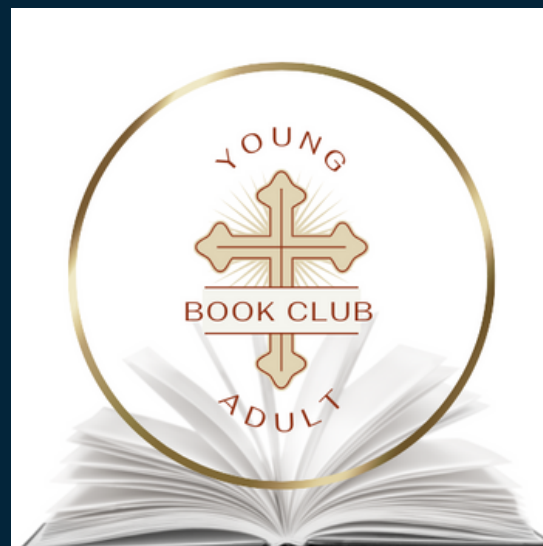
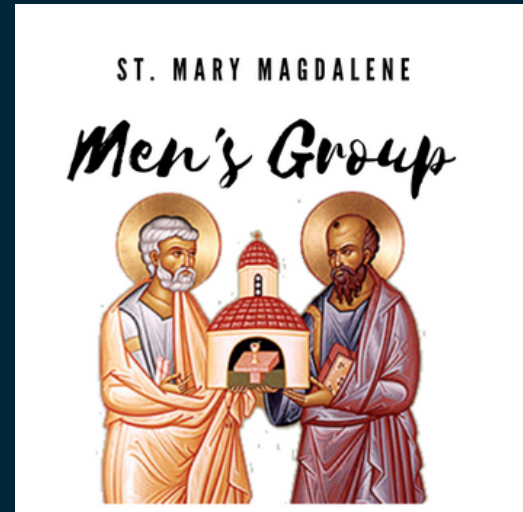
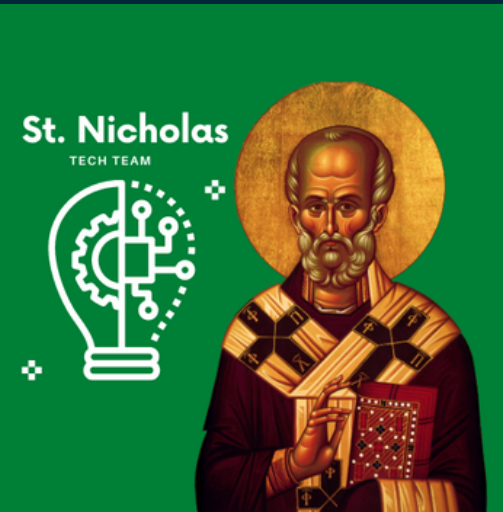
**Nativity
Caroling
2021**

**SATURDAY, DECEMBER 25TH
FOLLOWING THE DIVINE LITURGY**

**LOCKWOOD OF FENTON
16309 SILVER PKWY**

**JOIN US AS WE PUT OUR FAITH INTO ACTION AND VISIT WITH THOSE WHO
ARE ALONE ON THE FEAST OF THE NATIVITY.**

PARISH MINISTRIES & GROUPS





St. Mary Magdalene

Parish Council

Upcoming Meetings:

December 14th, 7:00 pm

January 11th, 7:00 pm

February 8th, 7:00 pm

Annual Meeting:

Sunday, December 5th

Parish Council Members

Joe Otis, Chair

Reader Chris Ballnik, Secretary

Ann Schutt, Treasurer

David Welch

Tina Shepherd

Subdeacon Andrew Durand

Rachel Burtka

Terri Oginsky

Alternate: Jay Rice

PARISH ANNUAL MEETING
SUNDAY, DECEMBER 5, 2021
FOLLOWING THE DIVINE LITURGY



Topics of Discussion:
Pastoral Report
Building/Expansion Plan
Annual Budget
Committee Reports

.... and more!



FELLOWSHIP AGAPE MEALS

Agape (Greek agapē): in the New Testament, the fatherly love of God for humans, as well as the human reciprocal love for God. In Scripture, the transcendent agape love is the highest form of love and is contrasted with eros, or erotic love, and philia, or brotherly love.

Sobornost: Divine-Human Oneness

Sobornost means spiritual harmony based on freedom and unity in love. It is a necessary component in our membership with the Body of Christ, for if we are not bound together in love, our freedom becomes our enemy, separating us from others and ultimately from Christ Himself. This concept was so important to early Christians that it was the basis for the agape meal, when Christians shared their food with one another after the celebration of the eucharistic banquet.

That the pre-communion fast would be broken after the Divine Liturgy with a communal meal (the love feast) clearly demonstrates the importance of community within the life of the Church. Sobornost is the divine human oneness we experience as members of the on Body, the Church, and is the moment when we who are many become one. It is the image of the unity of the Holy Trinity, finding its expression among the believers.

Sobornost is not the same as fraternity, a submission to a brotherhood for benefit of the individual. Rather, it is akin to *kenosis* (the relinquishment of divine attributes by Jesus Christ in becoming human) Sobornost is when the individual gives up self-benefit for the community or ecclesia.

We cannot truly be one in Christ if we do not seek out oneness with our fellow Christians. Nor can we be one with Christ if we routinely reject sobornost for heights of spirituality that make us so conscious of self that they separate us from our neighbor.

-*"The Morning Offering"* Abbot Tryphon November 16th

2022 AGAPE

MEAL SCHEDULE

January 9th: Theophany Lamb Roast please bring a dish to pass.

February 27th: Meatfare please bring a meaty dish to pass

March: No Agape Meal since we will have potlucks following all Pre-Sanctified Liturgies.

April 24th: Pascha Celebration, bring your basket!

May 1st: Agape Meal bring a dish to pass - Egg Hunt for the kids.

June 12th: Holy Pentecost, bring a dish to pass

July 24th: First Responders Blessing, Main Meal provided please bring a dessert to share

August: No Agape Meal

September 18th: Agape Meal, bring a dish to pass

October 9th: October Fest bring a dish to pass

November 13th: Veterans Lunch, main dish provided, please bring a dish to pass

December 11th: Agape Meal (Fasting)\

December 24th: Holy Supper



St. MARY MAGDALENE ORTHODOX ✝ CHURCH

Glory be to Jesus Christ!
Glory Forever!

The past two years for the entire world can be best described as chaotic. I have been constantly reminded of that image that is used in the Matins service, describing our existence as a rough sea that is surging with storms. However, despite the choppy waters and regardless of size of the waves that knock against us, we are reminded of one of the images the Church is: **The Ship, guided by the Holy Spirit, that provides a refuge for all who are constantly being tossed about in the storms.**

We have been so extremely blessed over the past two decades to have offered a place for all to come who are searching for something deeper than the limited existence that the outside world offers us. Our little Church in the woods, located on the shores of the Shiawassee River, has truly provided a place of beauty, serenity, and peace for thousands of men, women, and children who have graced us with their presence and prayers. Now, more than ever, there is a need for our Temple to be expanded to accommodate those who are coming to our doorstep.

The upcoming expansion of our temple is currently set to include a larger worship space, an open dome, an expanded hall with a kitchen, a moms and babies room, enhanced handicap accessibility, and much more. The estimated cost of the expansion is coming in at \$900,000.

While that figure might seem daunting, allow me to share an incredible gift that could only be made possible by the workings of the Holy Spirit. We have received a matching financial pledge of up to \$500,000 towards the building fund. This means that for every dollar that is raised or pledged from now until the end of 2022 will be doubled by an anonymous donor!

In your generosity, if you are able to donate, checks can be made out to "St. Mary Magdalene" with the memo "building fund". Contributions can be made in person or can be sent to our address below.

We give glory to God for all of the financial sacrifices that so many people have made to our parish. This Church has truly grown into a beacon which shows the Gentle Presence of Christ in the midst of the world. That Presence is not only experienced by our parishioners, but by so many others in our local community who have embraced us. May our Lord continue to give us the strength to grow the vineyard which He has planted with His Own Right Hand, as we all move towards His Heavenly Embrace!

Your Servant in Christ,
Fr. Gabriel Bilas, Rector, St. Mary Magdalene, Fenton, MI

"Look down from Heaven of God and Behold, and Visit this Vineyard which You have planted with Your right hand, and establish it!"



Outdoors from the front of the building.



The inside of the Sanctuary.



Outdoors from the back of the building.

CONNECT WITH US

St. Mary Magdalene Orthodox Church
2439 S. Long Lake Rd
Fenton, MI 48430
810-750-1401
smmocafernton@gmail.com
st-marymagdalene.org



**St. MARY
MAGDALENE**
ORTHODOX ✝ CHURCH

CAPITAL CAMPAIGN



EXPANDING THE MISSION

By the Grace of God, since the founding of the mission in 2002, our Lord has indeed allowed tremendous growth to our little parish in the woods. The time has now come, as was the hope of our founding members, to complete the expansion of our Church Temple in order to accommodate an ever growing parish family!

WORSHIPING IN THE CENTER OF THE CROSS

Beginning in 2019, the parish began to make plans for a future expansion with the goal of doubling the size of our current worship space, while still maintaining the "Little" Church feel by keeping the faithful in close proximity to the altar. The expansion calls for each side of the existing temple to extend out into the shape of a cross, leaving us to worship in the very center of the cross which is where Christians belong!



WINDOWS INTO THE PAST

Along with the new additions, we have been given the blessing to acquire the stain-glass icon windows from St. Tikhon's Monastery, the oldest Orthodox Monastery in the country, thus tying a small piece of History from the Orthodox Church in America to our little parish in the woods.

A TREMENDOUS BLESSING

We have received a commitment from a private donor who has offered to match any donation dollar for dollar, up to \$500,000! If God so wills that we are able to make the most of this incredible gift, we should be able to cover the cost of the expansion without the need of a mortgage!

If you would like to help take advantage of this blessing, checks can be made out to St. Mary Magdalene with the memo "Building Fund".

HOW CAN YOU HELP FULFILL THE MISSION?

The first and most important thing that all of us can do is to pray, by adding this prayer to your daily intentions:

"O Lord our God, we ask that you bless the good intentions and works of the faithful of St. Mary Magdalene parish, and by the Grace Guidance, and indwelling of the Most Holy Good and Life Creating Spirit, allow it to build up it's Holy Community to Your Glory. For unto You belong all glory, honor, and worship, to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages, Amen!"

How can you help?

1. Like and share our social posts to spread awareness
2. Keep us in your prayers as we embark on this new mission.
3. Give as you are able, remember we have a matching donor that will meet dollar for dollar up to \$500,000 so no amount of giving is too small!

How to give.

1. Checks can be made payable to St. Mary Magdalene with "building fund" in the memo line and mailed to St. Mary Magdalene Orthodox Church 2439 S. Long Lake Rd - Fenton, MI 48430
2. Visit our website at <http://www.st-marymagdalene.org> and click the donate button on the bottom right hand side of the page
3. Cash can be dropped at the Parish Office Monday, Wednesday or Friday between 10am & 3pm or by appointment.
4. The parish also has options available for investment transfers of appreciated stocks, bonds and mutual funds. For more information on this option call the parish office at 810-750-1401.

Christ is Born, Glorify Him!



ORTHODOX CHRISTMAS CONCERT

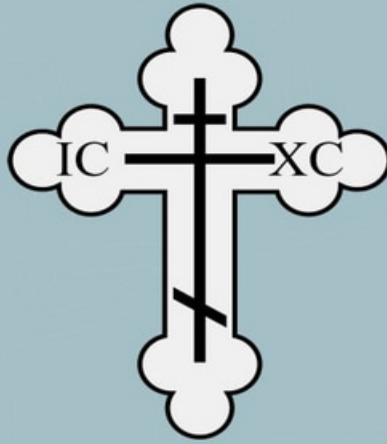
Featuring The Orthodox Choir of Detroit and other local choirs representing the rich musical traditions of the Orthodox Christian World!

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 12, 2021, 5 PM
ANNUNCIATION GREEK ORTHODOX CATHEDRAL
707 E. LAFAYETTE ST, DETROIT (GREEKTOWN)

ALL ARE WELCOME!

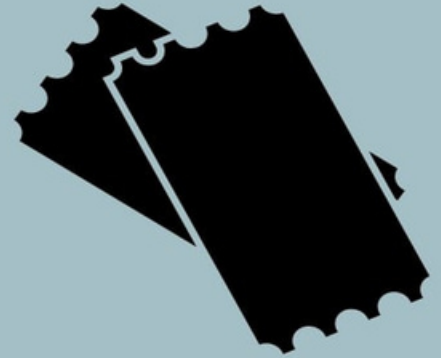


A freewill offering will be taken to support the work of The Council of Orthodox Christian Churches of Detroit (COCC) and FOCUS Detroit



Pan-Orthodox Movie Night

Hosted @ St. Nicholas



First Saturday of the Month

- 1) December 4th - Martin the Cobbler
- 2) January 7th - New Men / From the Little Mountain
- 3) February 4th - The Shepherd

Vespers @ 5pm with Movie and Refreshments following

**2143 S. Center Rd.
Burton, MI 48519**

10th Annual Winter Dinner benefiting Holy Dormition Monastery



**Guest Speaker
+ Archbishop
Nathaniel**



*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)



Thursday, January 20th

Hosted by St. George Orthodox Church

5191 Lennon Rd, Flint, MI 48507

810-732-0720

Join us to experience a beautiful and otherworldly vespers service offered by the Mothers and Sisters of the Monastery. Then stay and enjoy an uplifting evening of warm fellowship, delicious food and listen to talks that will spark spiritual enlightenment. Bring your family and your friends to this edifying evening while generously supporting the works of the monastery.

Please register by Sunday, January 16th. To register for the event or to make a donation please call St. George Orthodox Church. The suggested Donation of \$35/ person or \$25/ student can be paid via check (written to St. George Orthodox Church) or by Credit Card. Please do not let the cost keep you away from this wonderful event!

- 5:00pm Vespers with the Nuns of Holy Dormition
- 6:00pm Social Time and time to shop the Monastery Gift Shop
- 7:00pm Dinner, Dessert and Special Guest Speaker The Most Reverend Nathaniel, Archbishop of Detroit and the Romanian Episcopate
- 8:30pm Final Prayer and Return Home



"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 what about what the earliest Christians taught? How did they worship? What did they believe? Now is your opportunity to come, discuss and learn about the fullness of what the Ancient Christian Faith is all about!

This 7 week class will cover the fundamental beliefs of the Ancient Christian Church, passed down to us from Christ and His Disciples.

First Semester 2022- All classes begin at 6:30pm

Wednesday, January 12th:	Introduction to Orthodoxy and Holy Tradition
Wednesday, January 19th:	The True God
Wednesday, January 26th:	The Human Being
Wednesday, February 2nd:	Sin
Wednesday, February 9th:	Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the Savior of the World
Wednesday, February 16th:	The Holy Spirit and Prayer
Wednesday, February 23rd:	The Church and Mary

ST. MARY MAGDALENE ORTHODOX CHURCH

LET'S GET CONNECTED!

Follow us!



@StMaryMagdaleneOrthodoxChurch



@ocasm



@ocasm



youtube.com/c/SaintMaryMagdalene

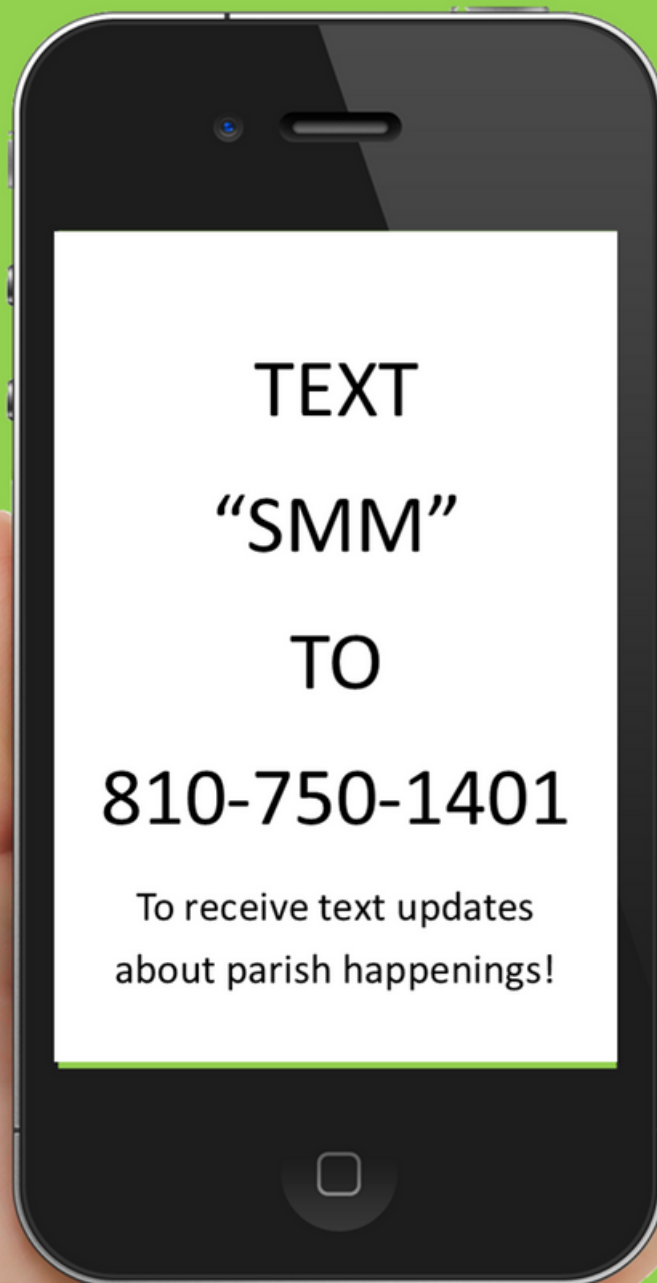
Subscribe



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



St. MARY
MAGDALENE
ORTHODOX ✝ CHURCH



TEXT

"SMM"

TO

810-750-1401

To receive text updates
about parish happenings!



St. MARY
MAGDALENE
ORTHODOX CHURCH

Call: 248-318-7342

Donation of

\$500.00

REFERRAL PROGRAM

To benefit the Building Expansion Project

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 Church Expansion Fund by offering a \$500.00 donation for every referral that results in a sold home!

Conne Terova
Real Estate One

Cell: 248-318-7342
cterova@gmail.com
teamterova.com

