



St. MARY MAGDALENE ORTHODOX CHURCH

June 2020

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*"Acquiring the
Holy Spirit of
God is the true
aim of the
Christian Life."*

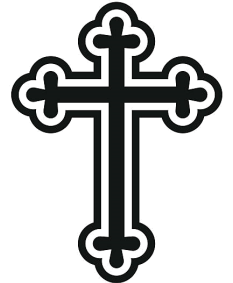
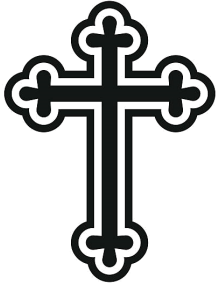




St. MARY MAGDALENE ORTHODOX ✝ CHURCH

MONTHLY BULLETIN

JUNE 2020



Infusion of The Holy Spirit at Pentecost

A message from Fr. Gabriel

As I reflect on last year's feast of Pentecost, I remember my excitement at having the large trees from our local greenhouse delivered to the Church. Although it might have seemed different (but awesome) from what we are used to in the Church, this would have been a normal sight to the Apostles, who were celebrating the Feast of Shavuot, where the Hebrews would bring the first fruits of the year's harvest into the temple, to offer them to God. We as Orthodox Christians carry on a similar tradition today! The trees and plants outside are now in full bloom, and the landscape has changed from a dead winter wasteland to a scene that is full of life! We bring that life into the temple of God to remind us of the **new life** that sprouts within all of us on the Feast of Pentecost, when the Holy Spirit comes down upon us and changes the direction of our lives for all eternity!

St. Seraphim of Sarov, in his conversation with Motovilov, says that *"Acquiring the Holy Spirit of God is the true aim of the Christian Life."* All of the virtues that we build up throughout our lives (prayer, fasting, and almsgiving) are a means for us to shape our lives in such a way, that we allow the Holy Spirit to descend upon us so that we may become *"spiritual beings."*

That word "Spiritual" is an interesting word in today's culture. I cannot tell you how many times I have had a conversation with someone, and when I ask them what Church they go to, I sometimes get this response: *"Oh, I don't go to Church...but I am pretty spiritual."* While I typically just smile and nod my head, what I really should be doing is to putting my arm around them and saying *"My beloved...I don't think you know what that word means..."*

Spirituality has somehow, over the years, taken on this stigma that equates it to things like "trances" or "vibes". I get calls every once in a while like the one I got recently from someone who told me that they were a "spiritual seer", and they "for-see" things like how there will be a gold watch that will be left on the front doorstep of the Church, that is meant for them.

Strange vibes, being one with nature, or being a person that is *"spiritual but not religious"*, from a Christian perspective is utter nonsense. There is no spirituality without the Church, without Pentecost, and without the Descent of **THE** Holy Spirit of God.

So then what is true spirituality? We should all know what it looks like, because we not only see it, but we experience it every time we enter into the Church. When we were baptized, we were literally infused with the Holy Spirit. When we receive the Holy Body and Blood of God within us at the Divine Liturgy, we sing: *"We have seen the true light! We have **received** the heavenly spirit! We have found the true faith...worshiping the undivided Trinity, who has saved us!"*

Baptism, Chrismation, the Eucharist, the Divine Life that we all share as a community, being possessed of and led by the Holy Spirit in **all things**...these are the reasons that we come to Church! It is these things that lead us to becoming *"spiritual beings!"*

When we take this tangible spirituality from the Church into the rest of the world, our perspective on life com-

(Continued on page 3)

pletely changes. We begin to see things a little bit differently than those who find themselves not living a spiritual life. I remember hearing a shining example of this difference when traveling with an Orthodox Bishop during my time at seminary. He shared with me a story about an Orthodox Christian family who had a child who was severely handicapped. The parents knew from the moment that he was born, that they were going to spend the rest of their lives taking care of their son, who had no hope of ever living on his own.

When the boy was 13 years old, the family was invited to a family reunion, where the son was having a particularly difficult day. The parents, despite keeping a smile across their face, seemed to be struggling a bit. After things had settled down, one of the relatives came up to them, and while trying to be sympathetic said:

***“I can’t imagine how difficult this must be for you.
I just don’t understand why God would allow you and your son to live through such pain...”***

The parents, who had spent the last 13 years receiving the eucharist, and participating in the Orthodox Spiritual Life replied:

“We give thanks to God for the numerous blessings our family has received in this life. However, we are humbled to know that the greatest gift he has received from God, is that he was given to a family that would never consider him a curse, but rather a blessing that goes beyond comprehension.”

A New Life...A new perspective...A new understanding...this is what it means to live a spiritual life, brothers and sisters...one full of the Holy Spirit. St. Simeon tells us that it is not enough for us to simply believe that that our lives are infused with the Holy Spirit, we have to get to the point to where we can actually **feel the movement and operation** of Him within us, like a pregnant mother who after several weeks, becomes aware of the new life that stirs within her.

Becoming Spiritual beings...this is the true aim of our faith, and the true aim of our entire life. A God-filled life is one that is powerful, personal, and one that changes the way we view the world. So as we approach the Holy Eucharist, let us do what we say in almost every litany, and *“...commend ourselves, each other, and our whole life unto Christ our God”*, allowing the Holy Spirit to penetrate and mold us into truly spiritual beings!

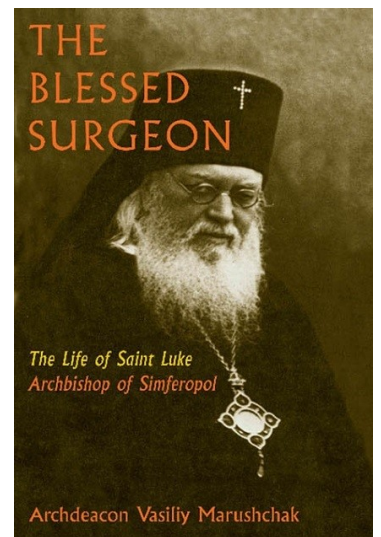
Recommended Book of the Month

The Blessed Surgeon by Archdeacon

By: Archdeacon Vasiliy Marushchak

The inspiring biography of a bishop and surgeon during the darkest years of Soviet oppression in Russia. St. Luke endured unthinkable tortures at the hands of the atheistic state due to his outspoken confession of Christ, but his pioneering work as a surgeon gave the lie to his persecutors’ separation of faith and science. This book documents his personal struggles, self-sacrifice and love for patients, miracles, and bold spiritual guidance during the Church's most difficult period in Russia. Includes a service and an akathist hymn in honor of St. Luke.

As we remember and celebrate the Feast Day of St. Luke the Surgeon this month, take some time to read about the life of this incredible confessor and Archbishop, who oversaw the treatment of injured soldiers during the Communist Regime in Russia in World War II.



WISHING YOU MANY BLESSED YEARS!

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

- ✝ 5– Freida Owens
- ✝ 6– Tonya Rice
- ✝ 7– Dennis Kemp
- ✝ 8– Melissa Axier
- ✝ 11– Erica Rice
- ✝ 12– Stephan Owens
- ✝ 14– Lucas Oslin
- ✝ 20– Andy Humphreys
- ✝ 21– Kurt Schutt
- ✝ 24– Ethan Durand
- ✝ 25– Stephen Bondira
- ✝ 26– Perpetua Nakagiri
- ✝ 27– Rebekah Humphreys
- ✝ 28– Patricia Smith
- ✝ 20= Francis Senter

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY!

- ✝ 7– Terry & Freida Owens
- ✝ 8– Brian & Tamara Arnes
- ✝ 11– Rdr. John & Renee Auxier
- ✝ 17– Doug & Joyce Ballnik
- ✝ 18– David & Cindy Welch
- ✝ 19– Subdn. Paul & Jeanette Hildreth



Month in Review

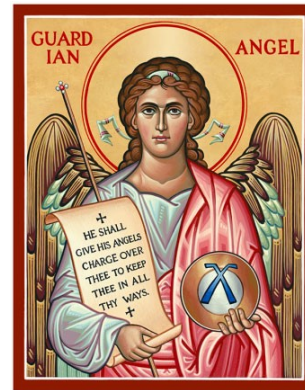
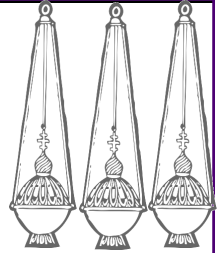
This past Month was one of careful preparation for the phased re-opening of our parish community. Fr. Gabriel would like to shout out all of the people who have continued to help with our live-stream, as well as our skeleton crew for all of the work that they have been able to do during this pandemic. Also, a special thanks goes out to our parish council, who worked a lot this month to come up with way to initiate the directives we received from the diocese. It has been a true blessing to see many of your faces these past few weeks!

Soup "Pick me up": One of our parishioners, Rebecca Lazar, has graciously offered to make soup for anyone in need of a "pick me up" during the pandemic lock down. She can be reached at (810) 714-1818, and a pick up will be arranged at the Church on a specific day!

Prayer Life

Pray for our sick and suffering brothers and sisters

Metropolitan Theodosius	Elnora	John
Metropolitan Herman	Peter	Betty
Archpriest Stephen	Calvin	Theresa
Vinne	David	Kristen
Anastasia	Michael	David
Alex	Jenna	Elaine
Elaine	Carol	Sandy
Perpetua	Melissa	Jeanne
Carol	Susan	Jessica
Katelyn	Renee	Sharon
Frankie	Josh	Claudia
Thom	Paul	Leo
Damian	Shari	Justin
Stacie	William	Alexandra
Carolyn	Sharon	Stephan
Megan	Tonya	Mat. Laura
Lon	Kathy	Brion
Ella	James	Phil
Noah	Shannon	Stephan



Armed Forces

Matthew Beck; Air Force
 Michael Oginsky; U.S. Marines
 Patrick Tejkl; U.S. Marines
 Lindsey Cazatt; U.S. Navy
 Stephany Bishop; U.S. Navy
 Jason Wilburn; Army Rangers
 Alex Suriano; Air National Guard
 Dallas Watson; Air Force
 Bradley Grimes,
 Seaphim Lazar-Watson; Air Force
 Stephen Bondaria– Coast Guard Lieutenant Commander

Recently Departed

Brigitte
 Nicolae
 Anita
 Corrine

Catechumens

John
 Karem
 Asher
 Miriam
 Elliott
 Alyssa
 William
 Anthony

Mother's With Child

Renee

Monthly Forecast

+Mask Clarification: Currently, in the state of Michigan, as well as under obedience to our Archbishop, we are required to wear a mask while inside the Church. Although we have a limited supply of masks available at the Church, **these are for those who forget to bring their own!** If you are unable to wear a mask to the Divine Liturgy, please reach out to Fr. Gabriel so that he can make some other suggestions.

Church Property Clean Up: There are still some tasks that we need to complete around the Church property, including the spreading of mulch and continued weed pulling! If anyone is available, please reach out to Fr. Gabriel!

Parish Family Game Night: Our Virtual Family Game Night for June will take place on Tuesday, June 2nd, beginning at 6:00 PM. Keep an eye out in your emails for an invite and a zoom link to join us!

Pentecost Divine Liturgy: Pentecost Divine Liturgy will be served on Sunday, June 7th, beginning at 9:50 AM. Although this Liturgy is open for Group 3 (Last Names Beginning with K-R), everyone is welcome to come to Great Vespers on Pentecost Eve (June 6th) beginning at 5:00 PM, or to Divine Liturgy the next day (June 8th) at 10:00 AM

Divine Liturgy for the Feast of the Holy Spirit: This year, we have added the Divine Liturgy for the Feast Day of the Holy Spirit, which will take place the day after Pentecost (June 8th) at 10:00 AM.

Divine Liturgy for St. Luke the Surgeon: We are blessed to have the relics of St. Luke the Surgeon here at our little parish in the woods. We celebrate his feast day on Thursday, June 11th, with Divine Liturgy at 10:00 AM. This service, like all of our weekday and Saturday services, is open to all on a first come first serve basis.

St. Mary Magdalene Apparel Pick Up: Our T-Shirt and Hoodie order is finally in! Pick up your items downstairs in the kitchen area of the Church!

Molebin and Prayer Service for Health Care Workers: On Wednesday, June 17th, we will be having an outdoor service of thanksgiving for all of the healthcare workers of our parish community. If you know of anyone in your family or circle of friends who is a healthcare worker, please invite them to the service and submit their name to be read during the service, which will be held at our outdoor shrine beginning at 6:00 PM

Group Scheduling and Weekday Service: A friendly reminder to keep an eye out on your emails for changes to the directives on the re-opening of our Church. We are currently in phase 4, which means that we are permitted 10 households upstairs, and 8 households downstairs in our secondary chapel. Individual groups (based off of the first letter of your last name) have been put together for the Sunday Services. All other services offered during the week are open to all on a first come first serve basis. For more information, please review the Group Schedule and Re-Opening Document in the bulletin!

Confession Schedule: Confessions are being heard after Great Vespers every Saturday evening. If you cannot make it during this time, please email Fr. Gabriel to schedule something during the week.

Pan Orthodox Service for St. Peter and Paul: The Feast of St. Peter and Paul will take place at St. George Orthodox Church in Flint on Monday, June 29th, beginning at 10:00 AM. The service will be live-streamed on St. George's Youtube page.

Divine Liturgy for Nativity of St. John the Baptist: We are very blessed to have a small relic of St. John the Baptist here at our parish. We will be celebrating His Nativity on Wednesday, June 24th, beginning at 10:00 AM. This will take the place of the regular Thursday Liturgy for that week.

JUNE
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OUTDOOR PRAYERS OF THANKSGIVING FOR HEALTH CARE WORKERS

**Outdoors at the St. Mary Magdalene Shrine
Wednesday, June 17th, 6:00 PM
All Are Welcome to Attend**

Weather permitting, we will be holding an outdoor prayer service of thanksgiving for all First Responders and Healthcare Workers throughout the world...many who have selflessly put their own lives on the line to save others. The service will be outdoors, so there will be plenty of opportunity for social distancing out by the shrine. All healthcare workers will be anointed with the oil which flows from the Iveron Icon of the Theotokos. If anyone has any questions, please email Fr. Gabriel at frgabrielsmm@gmail.com

The Apostles' Fast

(Saints Peter & Paul Fast)

Observed beginning June 15th until June 28th Oca.org

The Orthodox year has a rhythm, much like the tide coming in and going out - only this rhythm is an undulation between seasons of fasting and seasons (or a few days) of feasting. Every week, with few exceptions, is marked by the Wednesday and Friday fast, and every celebration of the Divine Liturgy is prepared for by eating nothing after midnight until we have received the Holy Sacrament.

It is a rhythm. Our modern world has lost most of its natural rhythm. The sun rises and sets but causes little fanfare in a world powered and lit by other sources. In America, virtually everything is always in season, even though the chemicals used to preserve this wonderful cornucopia are probably slowly poisoning our bodies.

The Scriptures speaks of the rhythms of the world - "the sun to rule by day... the moon and stars to rule by night..."

The rhythm of the Church does not seek to make us slaves of the calendar nor does it treat certain foods as sinful. It simply calls us to a more human way of living. It's not properly human to eat anything you want, anytime you want. Even Adam and Eve in the Garden initially knew what it was to abstain from the fruit of a certain tree.

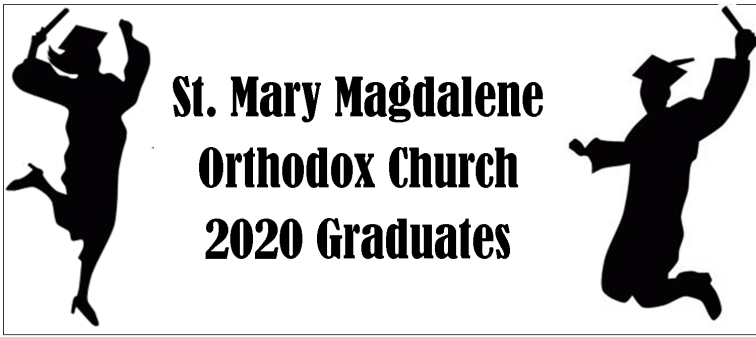
Orthodox do not starve when they fast - we simply abstain from certain foods and generally eat less.

At the same time we are taught to pray more, attend services more frequently, and to increase our generosity to others (alms).

But it is a rhythm - fasts are followed by feasts. The fast of the Apostles begins on the second Monday after Pentecost and concludes on the Feast of Sts. Peter and Paul on June 29. Most of Christendom will know nothing of any of this - that Eastern Christians will have begun a Lenten period while the world begins to think of vacations.

The contemporary God is much the same as the contemporary diet - we want as much of Him as we want - anytime, anywhere. There is no rhythm to our desire, only the rise and fall of passions. There is no legalism in the Orthodox fast. I do not think God punishes those who fail to fast. I believe that they simply continue to become less and less human. We will not accept the limits and boundaries of our existence and thus find desires to be incessant and unruly. It makes us bestial.

For those who have begun the fast - may God give you grace! For those who know nothing of the fast - may God give you grace and preserve from a world that would devour you. May God give us all the mercies of His kindness and help us remember the work of His blessed apostles!



**St. Mary Magdalene
Orthodox Church
2020 Graduates**



Gregory Auxier
Oakland University
with honors
Electrical Engineering.

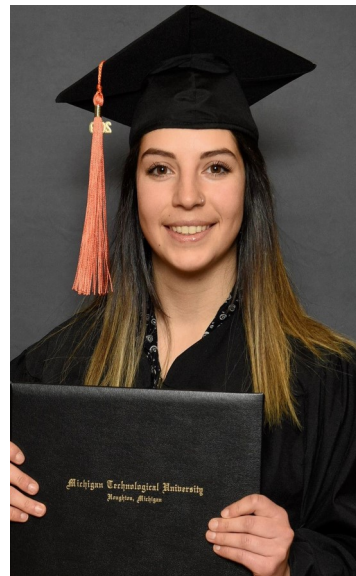


Lauren Serafimovski
Hartland High School
Attending University of Michigan - Flint
Biology Pre-Physician's Assistant program.



Dcn. Mike Schlaack
MA-Theology
(Systematic Theology)
Summa Cum Laude
Ss. Cyril & Methodius Seminary

Rachael Hildreth
Northern Michigan University
B.S. in Biology
Concentration in Ecology



Laura L. T. Khoury
Michigan Technological
University
B.S. in Forestry
Minor in Ecology



Nyomi Nicole Forsyth
Fenton High School
Becoming a certified personal
trainer through the
American Council Of Exercise.



Abigail Grace Arnes
Davison High School
Lourdes University in Sylvania,
Ohio—Nursing Program
Athletic Scholarship for the
Women's Bowling Team



Roman Royer
Fenton High School.
Roman plans to join the electrical union and become an electrician



St. Mary Magdalene Phased Re-Opening Procedures

Family Schedule

As we begin our phased re-opening of St. Mary Magdalene, each family will have the opportunity to come to at least one Sunday Divine Liturgy per month. In our current phase, we are permitted to have up to 50% of our maximum social distancing capacity (10 families in the nave, and 10 families down in the secondary chapel in the hall). Please note that if the spots in the main Church are filled, the remaining families will still be able to receive communion, but will need to participate in the secondary chapel downstairs.

Group 1: Households with the last name that starts with A-B

Group 2: Households with the last name that starts with C-J

Group 3: Households with the last name that starts with K-R

Group 4: Households with the last name that starts with S-Z

While these groups are for Sunday Divine Liturgies, everyone may come to the Thursday Morning Liturgies and Saturday Great Vespers services, regardless of what group you are in. ***However, please note that this is on a first come first serve basis.***

General Guidelines to Remember

+Please remember to practice social distancing protocols when entering, leaving, or standing in the Church. This includes standing in line for communion.

+When venerating icons, faithful should continue to use contactless veneration (cross yourself and bow before icons and relics)

+Personal Protective Equipment (masks) need to be worn inside the Church, as long as the civil authority mandates it. Even if the mandate is lifted, it is still highly recommended. If you do not have a mask, one will be provided for you.

+Anyone who is more vulnerable to the COVID-19 disease should practice caution when deciding whether to attend a Divine Service or not.

Please refer to the diocesan guidelines for more information on the re-opening procedures!

Should you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to reach out to Fr. Gabriel at frgabrielmm@gmail.com



St. MARY MAGDALENE ORTHODOX ✝ CHURCH

St. Mary Magdalene Upcoming Schedule and Group Assignments

Sunday, May 24th, Divine Liturgy 9:50 AM: Group 1 (Last names beginning with A-B)

Wednesday, May 27th, Ascension Vespers: Open to all on first come first serve basis

Thurs. May 28th, Ascension Divine Liturgy, 10:00 AM: Open to all on first come first serve basis

Sunday, May 31st, Divine Liturgy, 9:50 AM: Group 2 (Last Names C-J)

Sunday, June 7th, Pentecost Divine Liturgy, 9:50 AM: Group 3 (Last Name K-R)

Sunday, June 14th, Divine Liturgy for All Saints, 9: 50 AM: Group 4 (Last Name S-Z)

Sunday, June 21st, Divine Liturgy, 9:50 AM: Group 1 (Last Names A-B)

Sunday, June 28th, Divine Liturgy, 9:50 AM: Group 2 (Last Names C-J)

Sunday, July 5th, Divine Liturgy, 9:50 AM: Group 3 (Last Names K-R)

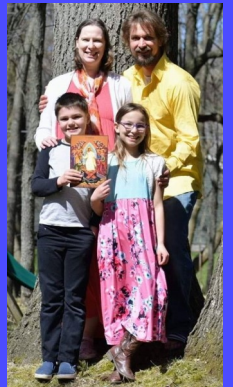
Sunday, July 12th, Divine Liturgy, 9:50 AM: Group 4 (Last Names S-Z)

Please Note that all weekday Divine Liturgies and Saturday Vespers and open to all on a first come first serve basis!

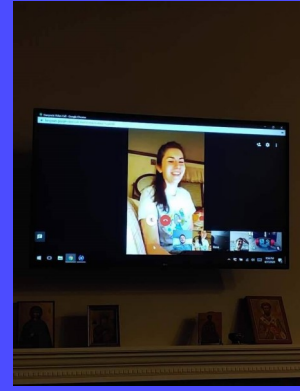
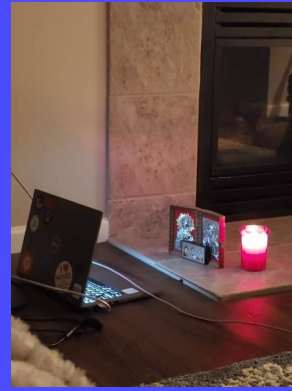
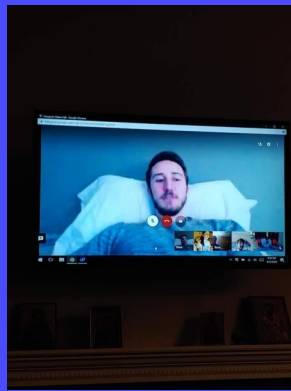
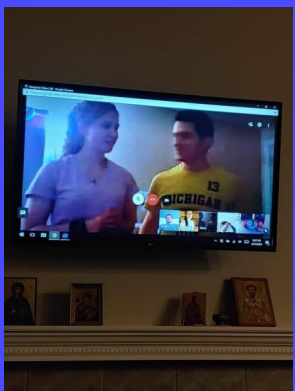
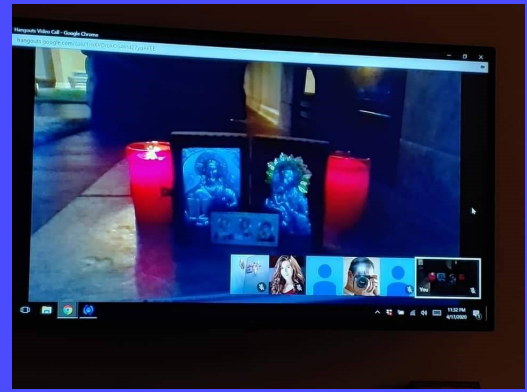
This schedule is subject to change, especially as we are allowed more and more people throughout the summer months .

Please stay in your designated groups (no switching or trading) without a blessing to do so from Fr. Gabriel

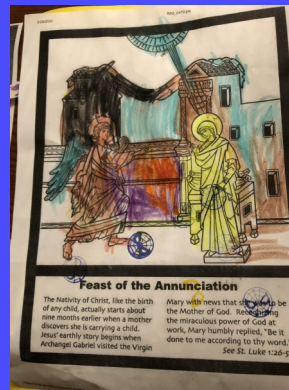
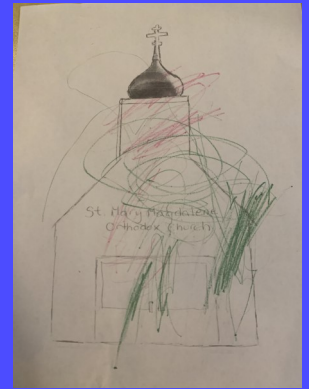
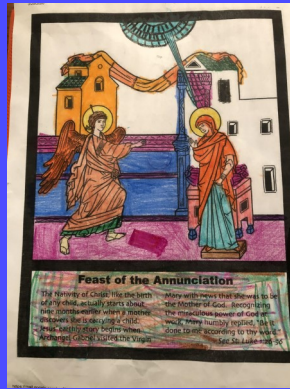
Parish Life at Home



Parish Life at Home



Parish Life at Home



Parish Life at Home



Referral Program To Benefit The St. Mary Magdalene Church Expansion



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