

**A Thanksgiving Prayer
by Fr. Alexander Schmemmann**

Protopresbyter Alexander Schmemmann celebrated the Divine Liturgy for the last time on Thanksgiving Day, 1983. This was particularly appropriate since Father Alexander had devoted his whole life to teaching, writing and preaching about the Eucharist; for the word 'eucharist' in Greek means 'thanksgiving.' At the conclusion of the liturgy, Father Alexander took from his pocket a short written sermon, in the form of a prayer, which he proceeded to read. This was a strange occurrence since Father never wrote his liturgical homilies, but delivered them extemporaneously. These were his words, which proved to be the last ever spoken by him from the ambo in Church.

Thank You, O Lord!

Everyone capable of thanksgiving is capable of salvation and eternal joy.

Thank You, O Lord, for having accepted this Eucharist, which we offered to the Holy Trinity, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and which filled our hearts with the joy, peace and righteousness of the Holy Spirit.

Thank You, O Lord, for having revealed Yourself unto us and given us the foretaste of Your Kingdom.

Thank You, O Lord, for having united us to one another in serving You and Your Holy Church.

Thank You, O Lord, for having helped us to overcome all difficulties, tensions, passions, temptations and restored peace, mutual love and joy in sharing the communion of the Holy Spirit.

Thank You, O Lord, for the sufferings You bestowed upon us, for they are purifying us from selfishness and reminding us of the "one thing needed;" Your eternal Kingdom.

Thank You, O Lord, for having given us this country where we are free to Worship You. ...

Thank You, O Lord, for our families: husbands, wives and, especially, children who teach us how to celebrate Your holy Name in joy, movement and holy noise.

Thank You, O Lord, for everyone and everything.

Great are You, O Lord, and marvelous are Your deeds, and no word is sufficient to celebrate Your miracles.

Lord, it is good to be here! Amen.

Any announcements for the Sunday bulletin? Please submit by Wednesday each week to Fr. Andrew, by email or phone.



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Spring Valley**

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December 1, 2013 – Third Sunday of Advent

Prophet Nahum; Venerable Philaretos the Merciful of Amnia; Martyr Ananias the Persian;
Theoklitos, archbishop of Lakediamonias

Orthros Morning Prayers, 9:00 am

Divine Liturgy, 10:00 am

Coffee hour afterwards – all are welcome!

Troparion of the Resurrection (Tone 6):

When Mary stood at thy grave looking for thy sacred body, angelic powers shone above thy revered tomb, and the soldiers who were to keep guard became as dead men. Thou led hades captive and wast not tempted thereby. Thou didst meet the Virgin and didst give life to the world. Thou who art risen from the dead, O Lord, glory to Thee.

Kontakion of Advent (Tone 3):

Today the Virgin cometh to the cave to give birth in an ineffable manner to the Word before the ages. Rejoice, therefore, O universe, when thou hearest, and glorify with the angels and shepherds him who shall appear by his own will as a new babe, being God before the ages.

St. George is a parish of the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese
The Most Reverend Metropolitan PHILIP, primate
The Right Reverend Bishop ANTHONY, Diocese of Toledo and the Midwest
www.antiochian.org

Orthros Gospel Reading: Matthew 28:16-20

At that time, the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. And when they saw him they worshipped him; but some doubted. And Jesus came and said to them, "All power in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, to the close of the age." Amen.

Epistle Reading: Ephesians 2:4-10

BRETHREN, God who is rich in mercy, out of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead through our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), and raised us up with him, and made us sit with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, that in the coming ages he might sow the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. For by grace you have been saved through faith; and this is not your own doing, it is the gift of God--not because of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared before hand, that we should walk in them.

Gospel Reading: Matthew 22:2-14

The Lord spoke this parable: The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who gave a marriage feast for his son, and sent his servants to call those who were invited to the marriage feast; but they would not come. Again he sent other servants, saying, 'Tell those who are invited, Behold I have made ready my dinner, my oxen and my fat calves are killed, and everything is ready; come to the marriage feast.' But they made light of it and went off, one to his farm, another to his business, while the rest seized his servants, treated them shamefully, and killed them. The king was angry and he sent his troops and destroyed those murderers and burned their city. Then he said to his servants, 'The wedding is ready, but those invited were not worthy. Go therefore to the thoroughfares, and invite to the marriage feast as many as you find.' And those servants went out into the streets and gathered all whom they found. Both bad and good; so the wedding hall was filled with guests.

But when the king came in to look at the guests, he saw there a man who had no wedding garment; and he said to him, 'Friend, how did you get in here without a wedding garment?' And he was speechless. Then the king said to the attendants, 'Bind him hand and foot, and cast him into the outer darkness; there men will weep and gnash their teeth.' For many are called but few are chosen.

Announcements and Upcoming Events

For a full calendar of events and service at St. George, consult the calendar on our newly-updated website, www.stgeorgeorthodox.org.

Our good friend Fr. Patrick Kinder of St. Ignatius Church in Madison, WI has graciously donated to us a box of CDs of their "Akathist of Thanksgiving" recording. (This is the service we served here at St. George last night.) The CDs are available in the basement for a suggested donation of \$15 each; all proceeds will go to St. George Church. Please see Fr. Andrew or Kh. Patty if you are interested in purchasing one.

The Orthodox season of Advent is a 40-day period of preparation for our celebration of Christmas. This is a good time to increase our devotion the Lord through prayer, church attendance and personal Bible reading. The Sacrament of Confession is available before and after each service, or by appointment with the priest. Please also do not forget the poor and lonely among us during this holy time. If you have any questions about fasting or other Christian disciplines, do not hesitate to ask Fr. Andrew.

Our next baptism will be that of **Jax Ronald Thompson**, on Sunday, December 22, at the Divine Liturgy. Please join us for this blessed event!

Looking ahead, our **Christmas vigil** will be held Saturday, Dec. 24 at 6:00 pm.

"Suppose for a moment that God began taking from us the many things for which we have failed to give thanks. Which of our limbs and faculties would be left? Would I still have my hands and my mind? And what about loved ones? If God were to take from me all those persons and things for which I have not given thanks, who or what would be left of me?"

-Fr. Patrick Henry Reardon