

**:: Take up and Read! (Part 2) ::**

**By Fr. John Breck**

*courtesy of [www.oca.org](http://www.oca.org)*

Second, the Old Testament, as much as the New, is a “Christian book.” Its persons, events and institutions are “types” or prophetic images that point forward to Christ and are fulfilled by Him. Christ is the “new Moses”; as the Bread of Life (John 6) Christ is the true Manna come down from heaven. Similarly, the temple of the Old Covenant is a type of the Church, as the burning bush of Exodus 3 is of the Virgin Mary (who bore divine fire within her womb, yet was not consumed).

Third, Holy Scripture contains both a “literal” meaning and a “spiritual” meaning. The former refers to the author’s intended message. The spiritual sense, on the other hand, refers to the message God speaks to us today, through the text of Scripture. This is the “higher” sense that relates the biblical story to our own story, our own personal life.

How do we move from the literal meaning of a biblical passage to its spiritual meaning? God Himself creates this movement within us, through the inspirational activity of the Holy Spirit. For the Spirit inspires not only the writing of biblical books. He also inspires their interpretation throughout the life of the Church.

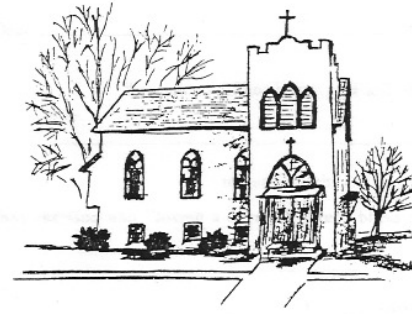
To take up and read, in order to hear in Scripture God’s Word for us today, is to open both heart and mind to God in prayer. “We do not know how to pray as we ought,” St Paul tells us. True prayer is the fruit of the Spirit within us (Rom 8). The same is true with our reading of Scripture. We hear God’s Word in Scripture as the Spirit guides our reading and fills it with ever new meaning.

To come to know God and to commune with Him through the Scriptures, then, is to submit ourselves, in prayer, to the work of the Spirit within us. Taking up the Word of God, we truly read by the power and grace of God Himself, who desires all of us to hear His voice and respond to it with faith and with love.

The Bible, then, is indeed an “icon” or sacred image. This is true of the Gospels, but it is true as well of the entire canon. Yet it is more than an image, insofar as it is God’s living Word addressed personally to each of us. To appreciate it as such, and to be nourished by it as we can be, we need to take it off the shelf or coffee table, dust it off, open it up, and read. Every time we do, we can experience God Himself speaking to us: in our own language but with His power, wisdom and healing grace.

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*Any announcements for the Sunday bulletin? Please submit by Wednesday each week to Fr. Andrew, by email or phone. If you are not on the church’s email list and would like to be, please let Fr. Andrew know.*



## St. George Orthodox Church of Spring Valley

211 E. Minnesota St., Spring Valley, IL 61362

[www.stgeorgeorthodox.org](http://www.stgeorgeorthodox.org)

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**Sunday, July 19, 2015**

**Holy Fathers of the 4th Ecumenical Council**

**Matins: 9:00 AM :: Divine Liturgy: 10:00 AM**

**Epistle Reader:** Matthew McNatt

**Holy Bread/Coffee Hour:** Richard and Bette Malooley

**Next Week’s Holy Bread/Coffee Hour:** OPEN

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**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, O Thou, Who art risen from the dead, O Lord, glory to Thee.

**Troparion for the Holy Fathers (Tone 8):**

Thou, O Christ, art our God of exceeding praise Who didst establish our Holy Fathers as luminous stars upon earth, and through them didst guide us unto the true Faith, O most merciful One, glory to Thee.

**Troparion of St. George the Great Martyr (Tone 4):**

Since thou art a liberator and deliverer of captives, a help and succour of the poor and needy, a healing physician of the sick, a contender and fighter for kings, O great among martyrs, the victory-clad George: Intercede with Christ God for the salvation of our souls.

St. George is a parish of the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese  
The Most Reverend Metropolitan JOSEPH  
The Right Reverend Bishop ANTHONY, Diocese of Toledo and the Midwest  
[www.antiochian.org](http://www.antiochian.org)

### **Kontakion of the Theotokos (Tone 2):**

O protection of Christians that cannot be put to shame, mediation unto the Creator most constant, O despise not the suppliant voices of those who have sinned; but be thou quick, O good one, to come unto our aid, who in faith cry unto thee: Hasten to intercession, and speed thou to make supplication, thou who dost ever protect, O Theotokos, them that honor thee.

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### **The Epistle and Gospel Readings**

Blessed art Thou, O Lord, the God of our Fathers.

For Thou art just in all that Thou hast done for us.

The Reading from the Epistle of St. Paul to the Romans (15:1-7)

We who are strong ought to bear with the failings of the weak, and not to please ourselves; let each of us please his neighbor for his good, to edify him. For Christ did not please himself; but, as it is written, "The reproaches of those who reproached thee fell on me." For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, that by steadfastness and by the encouragement of the scriptures we might have hope. May the God of steadfastness and encouragement grant you to live in such harmony with one another, in accord with Christ Jesus, that together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Welcome one another, therefore, as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God.

### **The Reading from the Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew (5:14-19)**

The Lord said to His Disciples: "You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hid. Nor do men light a lamp and put it under a bushel, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and give

glory to your Father Who is in heaven. Think not that I have come to abolish the law and the prophets; I have come not to abolish them, but to fulfill them. For truly, I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not an iota, not a dot, will pass from the law until all is accomplished. Whoever then relaxes one of the least of these commandments, and teaches men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but he who does them and teaches them shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven."



### **Announcements and Upcoming Events**

*For a full calendar of events and services at St. George, see our website, [www.stgeorgeorthodox.org](http://www.stgeorgeorthodox.org).*

#### **Upcoming Events and Services:**

- **TODAY:** Parish Council meeting, after Liturgy and coffee hour.
- No services on Wednesday evenings for the rest of July. We will resume Wednesday evening prayer on August 5.
- **Saturday, July 25:** Vespers at 6pm
- **Next Sunday, July 26:** Matins, 9am and Divine Liturgy, 10am. Holy Bread/ Coffee Hour: OPEN. Epistle Reader: Matthew Rowan.

**Feast of the Transfiguration** takes place each year on August 6, and we have been invited to celebrate the Liturgy at Christ the Savior Orthodox Church in Rockford. It will be Thursday morning, Aug. 6 at 10am. Please see Fr. Andrew if you are interested in carpooling or coming along.

**Camp St. George** in Cedar Rapids, IA will take place August 9-15. Camp is for all children and teens ages 9 to 17, and the total cost is \$330 for the week. **They are especially in need of female camp counselors! Camper applications were due June 30**, but there may still be space. See Fr. Andrew if you are interested or have any questions.

**Sermons and Feast Day videos are now online!** On the front page of our website, you will now have access to videos of the sermons from here at St. George Church. Go to [www.stgeorgeorthodox.org](http://www.stgeorgeorthodox.org), scroll down to the bottom, and click on the video window to view the latest sermon. Also, if you place your cursor over "About our Parish," and click "Feast Days," you will be able to view a video of our entire Easter service. Thank you to Mark Kerasotes and Matthew McNatt for making this possible!

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