

:: A Note on the Advent Season ::

Today, November 15, is the beginning of the Orthodox Advent season, a time of preparation for Christmas. Traditionally, all Christians observed Advent as a time of fasting and prayer, and did not begin celebrating Christmas until December 25. This is of course much more difficult to do today, but let us do our best to observe the fast according to our ability. Below is some excellent guidance for Advent from our Archdiocese.

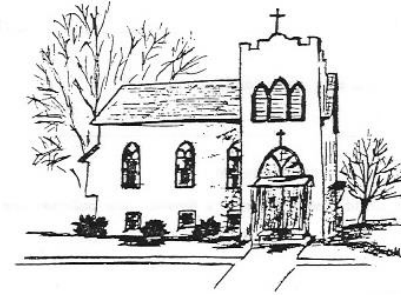
The Nativity Fast is one of the four Canonical Fasting Seasons in the Church year. This is a *joyous* fast in anticipation of the Nativity of Christ. ... The purpose of fasting is to focus on the things that are above, the Kingdom of God. It is a means of putting on virtue in reality, here and now. Through it we are freed from dependence on worldly things. We fast faithfully and in secret, not judging others, and not holding ourselves up as an example.

- Fasting in itself is not a means of pleasing God. Fasting is not a punishment for our sins. Nor is fasting a means of suffering and pain to be undertaken as some kind of atonement. Christ already redeemed us on His Cross. Salvation is a gift from God that is not bought by our hunger or thirst.
- We fast to be delivered from carnal passions so that God's gift of Salvation may bear fruit in us.
- We fast and turn our eyes toward God in His Holy Church. Fasting and prayer go together.
- Fasting is not irrelevant. Fasting is not obsolete, and it is not something for someone else. Fasting is from God, for us, right here and right now.
- Most of all, we should not devour each other. We ask God to "set a watch and keep the door of our lips."

Do Not Fast

- between December 25 and January 5 (even on Wednesdays and Fridays);
- if you are pregnant or nursing a newborn;
- during serious illness;
- without prayer;
- without alms-giving;
- according to your own will without guidance from your spiritual father.

Any announcements for the Sunday bulletin? Please submit by Friday each week to Fr. Andrew. If you do not receive the bulletin by email and would like to, let Father know.



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of Spring Valley**

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Sunday, November 15, 2015

First Sunday of Advent

Holy Martyrs Guria, Shamuna, and Habib

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

Epistle Reader: Mark Kerasotes

Holy Bread/Coffee Hour: Ron and Dottie Malooley

Next Week's Holy Bread/Coffee Hour: George and Lynette Forsa

Troparion of the Resurrection (Tone 7): Thou didst shatter death by Thy Cross, Thou didst open paradise to the thief; Thou didst turn the sadness of the ointment-bearing women into joy. And didst bid Thine Apostles proclaim a warning, that Thou hast risen O Christ, granting to the world the Great Mercy.

Troparion for Sts. Guria, Shamuna, and Habib (Tone 5): Since Thou hast given us the miracles of Thy holy Martyrs Guria, Shamuna and Habib as an invincible battlement, by their entreaties scatter the counsels of the heathen, O Christ our God, and strengthen the faith of Orthodox Christians, since Thou art good and the Lover of mankind.

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.

Kontakion for the Entrance of the Theotokos (Tone 4): The all-pure temple of the Savior, the most precious bridal chamber and Virgin, the treasure-house of the glory of God, today enters the Temple of the Lord, bringing with her the grace which is in the divine Spirit: whom also the angels of God do celebrate in song; for she is the heavenly tabernacle.

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

Epistle and Gospel Readings

The Lord will give strength to His people.

Ascribe to the Lord, O sons of God, ascribe to the Lord honor and glory.

The Reading from the Epistle of St. Paul to the Ephesians (2:14-22)

Brethren, Christ is our peace, Who has made us both one, and has broken down the dividing wall of hostility, by abolishing in His flesh the law of commandments and ordinances, that He might create in Himself one new man in place of the two, so making peace, and might reconcile us both to God in one body through the Cross, thereby bringing the hostility to an end. And He came and preached peace to you, who were far off, and peace to those who were near; for through Him we both have access in one Spirit to the Father. So then you are no longer strangers and sojourners, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the cornerstone, in Whom the whole structure is joined together and grows into a holy temple in the Lord; in Whom you also are built into it for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit.

The Reading from the Holy Gospel according to St. Luke (10:25-37)

At that time, a lawyer stood up to put Jesus to the test, saying, "Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" Jesus said to him, "What is written in the Law? How do you read?" And the lawyer answered, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbor as yourself." And Jesus said to him, "You have answered right; do this, and you will live." But the lawyer, desiring to justify himself, said to Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?" Jesus replied, "A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and he fell among robbers, who stripped him and beat him, and departed, leaving him half dead. Now by chance a priest was going down that road; and when he saw him he passed by on the other side. So likewise a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. But a Samaritan, as he journeyed, came to where he was; and when he saw him, he had compassion, and went to him and bound up his wounds, pouring on oil and wine; then he set him on his own beast and brought him to an inn, and took care of him. And the next day he took out two denarii and gave them to the innkeeper, saying, 'Take care of him; and whatever more you spend, I will repay you when I come back.' Which of these three, do you think, proved neighbor to the man who fell among the robbers?" The lawyer said, "The one who showed mercy on him." And Jesus said to him, "Go and do likewise."

Announcements and Upcoming Events

For a full calendar of events and services at St. George, see our website, www.stgeorgeorthodox.org.

Upcoming Events and Services:

- **Today:** Memorial Prayers for the victims of the Paris terrorist attacks. May their memory be eternal!
- **Today:** Sunday school, downstairs immediately after Holy Communion
- **Wednesday, Nov. 18:** Akathist of Thanksgiving, 6pm. *Confession, anointing, and any special priestly prayers available before and after.*
- **Friday, Nov. 20:** Divine Liturgy for the Entrance of the Mother of God, 6pm
- **Saturday, Nov. 21:** Vespers, 6pm. *Confession, anointing, and any special priestly prayers available before and after.*
- **Next Sunday, Nov. 22: Second Sunday of Advent.** Matins, 9am and Divine Liturgy, 10am. Epistle Reader: Kenneth Wiltse. Holy Bread/Coffee Hour: George and Lynette Forsa

Congratulations to Kyle and Sydney Thompson, who were married this past week at St. George Church. May God bless their family and grant them many years!

Our Orthodox Advent season begins today! This marks 40 days before Christmas, a special time of fasting, extra prayer and generosity. Please make time each day for the Lord, and join us for any special weekday prayer services.

Special thanks to **Ron Malooley** for donating the new sprayer in the church kitchen, and to **Bob Abraham** for volunteering his time to install it.

Update on our Building project: This past week, a letter and an email went out to all members of St. George Church. If you did not receive it, please let Fr. Andrew know. We believe it is now time to hear from all of you! The letter contains a short survey. It is very important that you respond to this, so we know how much support we can expect from all. Look for the survey this week, and as always, if you have any questions or concerns, feel free to talk with Father Andrew or with our building exploratory committee, Mark Kerasotes, Mike Kasap, and Matt Rowan.