

VOL. 1 | SEPTEMBER 2021

THE DELIVERER

A Monthly Newsletter of St. George Upper Darby



SEPTEMBER DATES TO REMEMBER

- St. Katherine Women - no Sept meeting
- Fall Retreat with Rita Madden - 9/10-9/12
- Sunday School begins - 9/12
- Parish Council - 9/19
- Parish Picnic - 9/26

The Tree of Life

by Fr. Joel Gillam

O Lord save Thy people, and bless Thine inheritance; And to Thy faithful people grant victory over the enemy, and by the power of Thy Cross protect all those who follow Thee.

-Troparion of the Holy Cross

At the beginning of the Liturgical Year the Church places the Feast of the Exultation of the Cross. So great is this feast among the Orthodox that it is a day of strict fasting even if it falls on a Sunday. Why is it that this Feast, a feast commemorating Christ's passion and suffering, is one of the first "celebrations" of the new year?

Pilate said to them, "What then shall I do with Jesus who is called the Christ?" They all said to him, "Let Him be crucified!" With these words the climax of the Gospel begins to take shape. Now Christ will be led to Golgotha where He will suffer the final humiliation, a criminal's death at the hands of the Gentiles brought about by the condemnation of the Jews, the very people God had called His own.

(Article continued on page 2)

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Yet, after His death, the instrument of His humiliation is a source of awe for His followers. Instead of being an image of oppression it becomes the image of true freedom. The Cross, an instrument of Roman occupation becomes the symbol of Christian victory. To this day the Cross is an object worthy of veneration, even for those who would disavow the use of icons. Why should something so gruesome become so important to the followers of a man killed by it?

The answer is that the Cross, just as every other part of the Gospel, reveals the great Truth, God has remained faithful to His creation in the face of the creation's faithlessness, 2 Timothy 2:13. Christ's submission "to the point of death, even the death of the Cross" (Phil 2:8) is the ultimate sacrifice. The co-eternal Son and Word has identified totally with those created in the image and likeness of God. He has taken on the burden of an unjust death, and it is in that very act of dying that He reveals what being in the image and likeness of God really means. Through this act He is able to fill hades with the love of God, which brings life, and to return those bound in sin to the One who created them. He makes known both the love of God that can never be made out of reach and the real "greater love" of man "for his friends." (John 15:13)

The Cross of Christ is "to the Jews a stumbling block and to the Gentiles a foolishness..." (1Cor. 1:23), but for the Christian it is the ultimate expression of God's love for His creation. In the crucifixion of Jesus we are freed not just from an earthly master but from bondage to the enemy, Death, along with him who holds the reins of it, that is the devil, and we are given the perfect example of humanity in God's image and likeness, a humanity that bridges the earthly and the heavenly realms.

Through this ancient symbol of oppression Christ showed that the denial of the world and its desires is the path to salvation. It is the great paradox of Christianity: in weakness we are made strong, in humility we are raised up, and in submission to God we are truly set free. This is why Christians still venerate the Cross, for in stretching out His hands on it, Christ has embraced us and surrounded us in His love, reuniting us with our God and Father. By partaking of the "tree of Life" Christ has revealed the knowledge of, and in God that has healed the wound of ignorance caused by Adam's partaking of the tree of the in Eden without God. This is why the Feast is presented to us right in the beginning of the Liturgical Year, so that we might be reminded that God has overcome our enemies, and that in the coming year we live in the hope that comes through the Cross.

MINISTRY UPDATE

Sunday School is Back!

Sunday School is back in session and in person for the 2021-22 Sunday School year!

Our Sunday School teachers are excited to welcome students back starting Sunday, September 12. If your child has never participated in Sunday School before, or if your family is new to our parish, please contact Caitlin in the church office at office@saintgeorgeupperdarby.org to add your name to the contact list so you can receive updates and important information from your child's Sunday School teacher.

We're looking forward to a wonderful year of Christian Education together!

September Greeters and Readers

September 5

Greeters: TBD

Reader: Ed Donahue

September 12

Greeters: TBD

Reader: Sheri San Chirico

September 19

Greeters: TBD

Reader: Caroline Becker

September 26

Greeters: TBD

Reader: Kerry San Chirico

Interested in being a greeter? Contact Ed Donahue at edjdonahue@gmail.com

Interested in being a reader? Contact Matt Gordon at mmsgordon2@gmail.com

Upcoming Events

Fall 2021 Retreat: Caring for Health in a Spiritually Minded Manner, with Rita Madden

Join us at St. George on September 10-12 for our fall retreat. We will be joined by Rita Madden MPH, RDN, author of *Food Faith and Fasting: A Sacred Journey to Better Health*.

- September 10 - A Healthy Dose of Stress Management
 - 6:30pm - Prayer
 - 6:45pm - Session 1
 - 7:45pm - Session 2
 - 8:45pm - Little Compline
- September 11 - Eating in an Attentive Manner
 - 10:45am - Akathist and Fellowship
 - 11:30am - Session 1
 - 12:45pm - Lunch
 - 1:30pm - Session 2
 - 3:00pm - Session 3
 - 4:30pm - Vespers
- September 12 (during coffee hour) - The Treasure of Fasting
 - one-on-one sessions with Rita will also be available after her final presentation for those who would like to ask her specific questions

Parish Picnic - September 26

The fall parish picnic will be on Sunday, September 26, after Liturgy at Ridley Creek State Park, Pavilion #11B. [Please be sure to sign up](#) so we have an accurate head count, and let us know what you'll be bringing! Directions to the pavilion will be available the week before the picnic.

Connect Conference

The Connect Conference will return in-person this year in Dallas, TX, from October 8-10. For more information about this Pan-Orthodox conference for young adults and to register, visit www.connectorthodox.org.

Saint Philip Orthodox Church
9th Annual

INTERNATIONAL FOOD FESTIVAL

featuring dishes from:

GREECE

ERITREA

RUSSIA



LEBANON

ETHIOPIA

ROMANIA

WHEN

Friday & Saturday, Sept 17 & 18
12 noon - 8pm

WHERE

1970 Clearview Road, Souderton

MENU

online at www.st-philip.net/festival

Also - Church Tours - Choir Concert - Gift Bazaar - Children's Activities - Live Music - Iconography Display

A portion of proceeds to benefit local charitable agencies.

ST VLADIMIR'S SEMINARY COMES TO CLEVELAND!

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 2, 2021

REGISTER FREE

ORTHODOXY & EVANGELISM

Educational Event & Book Launch

Also Featuring:

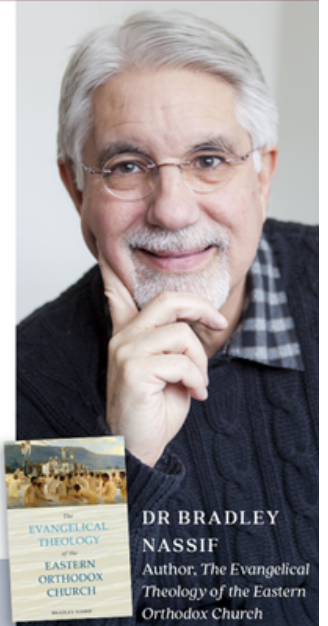
VERY REV. DR CHAD HATFIELD
President, St Vladimir's Seminary

VERY REV. DR ERIC TOSI
Chair, Commission on Missions & Evangelism
(OCA Diocese of NY/NJ)

ATTEND IN PERSON OR ONLINE
LUNCH PROVIDED FOR IN-PERSON ATTENDEES
ST MARY ROMANIAN ORTHODOX CATHEDRAL
3256 WARREN RD. CLEVELAND, OH

SVOTS.EDU/EVENTS

*HELP RAISE \$30K TO EDUCATE SEMINARIANS!



DR BRADLEY NASSIF
Author, *The Evangelical Theology of the Eastern Orthodox Church*

September 2021

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
			1 Liturgical New Year	2 3 rd Hour 9am 12 Baskets 8pm	3	4 Baptism 10am Vespers 5pm Orthodoxy 101 6:30pm
5 Orthros and Liturgy 9:30am	6	7 Matins 9am Akathist 7pm Choir practice 7pm	8 Nativity of the Theotokos Orthros and Liturgy 9am	9 3 rd Hour 9am	10 Fall Retreat 6pm	11 Fall Retreat 10-4:5am Vespers 4:30pm Orthodoxy 101 6:30pm
12 Fall Retreat Orthros and Liturgy 9:30am Sunday School starts	13 Orthros and Liturgy 6pm	14 NO Matins Akathist 7pm	15	16 3 rd Hour 9am	17	18 Vespers 5pm Orthodoxy 101 6:30pm
19 Orthros and Liturgy 9:30am Parish Council 12:30pm	20	21 Matins 9am Akathist 7pm Choir practice 7pm	22	23 3 rd Hour 9am	24	25 Vespers 5pm Orthodoxy 101 6:30pm
26 Orthros and Liturgy 9:30am Parish Picnic	27	28 Matins 9am Akathist 7pm Choir practice 7pm	29	30 3 rd Hour 9am		

To view the full calendar, visit www.saintgeorgeupperdarby.org

Not on our mailing list? Contact Caitlin at office@saintgeorgeupperdarby.org to add your name to our mailing list.

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