



St. George Antiochian Orthodox Church
 Weekly Newsletter
 Sunday, November 29, 2020

13th Sunday of Luke

Ephesians 4:1-7

Luke 18:18-27

Parish Directory Update

We are currently updating our parish directory, and we want to be sure we have the most up to date contact information for each household. Letters will be sent via email for those whom we have emails on file and via mail for the rest. When you receive the letter, please review the information we have on file, make corrections as needed, and provide any missing information. If you do not receive a letter, it means we have no mail/email contact information on file for you – please contact the office to provide your information. You may either mail the completed form back to the church or [email it to the office](#).

Upcoming Meetings

- Choir Practice - Tuesday 11/24 at 7pm
 Contact [Matt Gordon](#) for link

Philly OCF

- Regular Meeting - Monday 11/30, 8pm
[Zoom link](#)
 Mtg ID #835 2215 9264
 Password: Fellowship
- Bible study - Tuesday 12/8, 11am
[Zoom link](#)
 Mtg ID #880 5713 0161
 Password: Scripture

- The following services will be held in the church and streamed on the [website](#):
 - **Tuesday 11/24** – Matins, 9:30am
 - **Tuesday 11/24** - Akathist, 7pm ([email Dn. Joseph](#))
 - **Thursday 11/26** – Akathist of Thanksgiving, 9:30am
 - **Saturday 11/28** – Vespers, 5pm
 - **Sunday 11/29** – Orthros and Liturgy, 9:30am
- To attend one of the services listed above at the church, please sign up via Sign Up Genius ([November services](#)) ([December services](#)). When doing so, please keep in mind the following:
 - reserve the number of slots for family members attending (For example, if there are 3 household members attending, reserve 3 slots.)
 - those who are elderly, have pre-existing conditions, or currently are not feeling well are asked to remain home.
 - children who are too young to keep a mask on are asked to remain home.
- To set up a time to receive communion, please sign up via the [Sign Up Genius](#). Please reserve only one slot per household unit. Prior to arriving at the church for communion, please say the [Morning Prayers](#) and the [Prayers of Preparation before Communion](#).
- Confession is also being scheduled by appointment. To set up an appointment, please email the church office and provide a few dates/times you are available. The office will email you to confirm your appointment time.

Troparion of St. George

O liberator and deliverer of captives, helper of the poor and needy, a healing physician of the sick, a contender for kings, O great among Martyrs, the victory-clad George; intercede with Christ our God for the salvation of our souls.

If you attend a service, you must wear a mask/face covering out of care for ourselves, our brothers and sisters in Christ, and our neighbors.

2020 Holiday Drive

St. George's will once again be supporting People's Emergency Center (PEC) in Philadelphia through our holiday gift drive. Due to COVID-19, PEC is requesting that all donations be mailed to the center, so we will not be collecting items at the church. To donate, [you may visit PEC's website to view the wishlists](#). Alternatively, you may also make a donation to St. George's online or via cash/check (with the note "PEC holiday drive") no later than December 6th and we will direct it to the holiday drive.

12 Baskets

If you would like to participate in the 12 Baskets ministry, please contact the [church office](#) to sign up.

Wisdom of the Holy Fathers

If you fast regularly, do not be inflated with pride, but if you think highly of yourself because of it, then you had better eat meat. It is better for a man to eat meat than to be inflated with pride and to glorify himself.

+ Abba Isidore

SUNDAY SCHOOL

The 2020-21 Sunday School year curriculum will focus on the 12 Great Feasts of the church. Classes will rotate through an activity each week, and everything will be done remotely. The schedule for November and early December is listed below. Parents will be receiving additional information from the church office later this week.

To register your child(ren) and to ensure we have updated contact information for parents, please fill out this brief form:

<https://forms.gle/HmNKu2Fa2TpM6Jz6>

Feast: Entrance of the Theotokos (11/21)

November 29

No Sunday School

December Feast: Nativity of Our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ (12/25)

December 6

- Elementary school: At home resources
- Middle school: Ask Abouna
- High school: Class (via Zoom)

Guidelines for the Nativity Fast

November 15 - December 24

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. That is the reason it is less strict than other fasting periods. The fast is divided into two periods. The 1st period is November 15th through December 19th when the traditional fasting discipline (no meat, dairy, fish, wine, and oil) is observed. There is dispensation given for wine and oil on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Similarly, fish, wine, and oil are permitted on Saturdays and Sundays. The 2nd period is December 20th through 24th when the traditional fasting discipline (no meat, dairy, fish, wine, and oil) is observed. There is dispensation given for wine and oil only on Saturday and Sunday during this period. Here are the guidelines:

Meat	Dairy	Fish	Wine	Oil
beef, chicken, pork, turkey, elk, veal, lamb, deer, rabbit, buffalo, and so forth	milk, eggs, cheese, butter, yogurt, cream, and so forth	fish with a backbone (not including shrimp, octopus, shellfish, squid, or other seafood.	(some include all types of alcohol in this category)	(some include all types of oil in this category)
Abstain.	Abstain.	Permitted only on Saturdays and Sundays before December 20. (some permit fish Tuesdays and Thursdays also)	Permitted only on Tuesdays, Thursdays, Saturdays, & Sundays before December 20.	Permitted only on Tuesdays, Thursdays, Saturdays, & Sundays before December 20.

Abstinence includes refraining from the food and drink mentioned above, as well as from smoking. The Eucharistic Fast means abstaining from at least the previous midnight for communing at a morning Liturgy.

The Purpose of Fasting

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.

Church History

This week we continue a series on the Essentials of Faith. The hope is that we can all learn and be edified, and come to a “knowledge of the Truth” (1 Tim. 2:4), and to witness to the things of faith that were “delivered to the saints” (Jud. 1:3) in the Church, which is the “pillar and ground of Truth”. (1 Tim. 3:15) May God bless the labor. These lessons are taken from Fr. Thomas Hopko’s series The Orthodox Faith.

Russia: Missionary Activity

Siberia

The nineteenth century in Russia, as in the West, was a missionary century. The priest Makary Glukharev (1792–1847) dedicated his life to the evangelization of the Siberian tribes. The lay professor, Nikolai Ilminsky (1822–1892), translated the Scriptures and Church books of the Orthodox Faith into some of the languages of these peoples. The theological academy founded in 1842 in Kazan, at the ‘Gateway to Siberia,’ became the center of the missionary activity of the Russian Church to the animistic Siberian tribes (some of whom were being converted to Buddhism by monks from Tibet), and to the Muslims living in the south-central parts of the Russian Empire. In the Kazan area alone, in 1903, the Divine Liturgy was celebrated in 22 different languages or dialects.

Japan

The first Russian missionary to Japan, Saint Nikolai Kasatkin of Japan (1836–1912), spent six years mastering the Japanese language, and proceeded to convert thousands of Japanese to the Orthodox Faith—despite several periods of persecution by the Japanese government. At his death, as Japan’s first Orthodox bishop, he left a self-governing local church of about 33,000 members, with the Scriptures and liturgical books in the native language, and a number of native pastors. The impressive stone cathedral he had built in Tokyo, affectionately called Nikolai-Do (Nikolai’s house), still is a prominent architectural presence in the city.



Alaska

In 1970, the Orthodox Church in America glorified its first saint: Saint Herman of Alaska (c. 1758–1837), who was one of the first ten monastic missionaries who arrived on Kodiak Island in 1794. The memory of his extraordinary holiness, expressed by his self-emptying love and care for the Alaskan people—especially in the face of exploitation and abuse of the natives by the Russian-American (fur-trading) Company—and by various miracles accomplished through his prayers, had been kept strongly alive by the descendants of the Aleuts with whom he lived and labored in Kodiak and on nearby Spruce Island.

