



Christ is risen! Truly He is risen!

Sunday of the Blind Man
[Reader Service](#)

Calendar and Announcements

Calendar:

- The following services will be prayed with clergy, servers, and chanters, with limited availability for parishioners to attend:
 - Thursday 5/21 – Liturgy (Sts. Constantine & Helena), 9:30am
 - Saturday 5/23 – Vespers, 5pm
 - Sunday 5/24 – Orthros and Liturgy, 9:30am
 - Tuesday 5/26 – Liturgy (Leave-Taking of Pascha), 6pm
 - Wednesday 5/27 – Vespers, 6pm
 - Thursday 5/28 – Orthros and Liturgy (Ascension), 9:30am
 - Saturday 5/30 – Vespers, 5pm
 - Sunday 5/31 – Orthros and Liturgy, 9:30am
- The above services will be livestreamed via St. George's [website](#) and [official Facebook page](#). In addition, links to the texts will be included on the home page of the parish website above the livestream video for those who would like to follow along.
- Bible study on the Gospel of John: Wednesday 5/20, 6:30pm
 - Join the meeting:
<https://us04web.zoom.us/j/75171452841?pwd=L29OOTNHafJhRVpvYmVIRDBCvXpndz09>
 - Meeting ID: 751 7145 2841; Password: 0zbpui
 - Please note: Bible study on 5/27 is cancelled due to Vespers in anticipation of Ascension.

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.

Announcements:

- If you would like to attend one of the services listed above, please sign up via [Sign Up Genius](#), reserving the number of slots for family members attending. (For example, if there are 3 household members attending, reserve 3 slots.) Please remember that those who are elderly, have pre-existing conditions, or currently are not feeling well are asked to remain home. Additionally, those children who are too young to keep a mask on are asked to remain home. If you are scheduled to attend a service, please wear a mask/face covering, bring hand sanitizer, and bring disinfectant wipes (if possible) to help clean and disinfect the church at the end of service.
- Communion will offered by appointment after each service. To set up a time to receive communion, please sign up via the [Sign Up Genius](#). Please reserve only one slot per household unit. Your time will be confirmed via email from the church office. 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.
- If you would like to have a candle lit at the church, please email the church office at office@saintgeorgeupperdarby.org. Candle donations can be made via PayPal.
- Based on Metropolitan JOSEPH'S latest directive (5/6/2020), all non-liturgical events remain **cancelled**.
- Dn. Joseph is leading Akathist on Tuesday evenings via Skype. To participate, please email Dn. Joseph at dnjosephclark@gmail.com to receive the link.
- The Ministry Team is organizing small group (less than 10 people) Typika services that meet in local parks. If interested in attending, please contact Ed Donahue at Edjdonahue@gmail.com.
- Several members of the ministry team will be contacting parishioners to identify any special needs and to ensure our church family is taken care of during this time. If you or someone you know has a particular need during this time, please contact the church office so we can coordinate with the ministry team.

General notes:

- If you are able to still tithe / contribute to the church during this time, please consider giving online [via PayPal on the church's website](#).
- All communication about services and other updates during this time will be sent via parish email from Fr. Joel (or the office) or posted on the [website](#) or [official church Facebook page](#). All questions can be directed to the office (office@saintgeorgeupperdarby.org).

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.

The Establishment of the Rum Milet

In ruling these vast formerly Christian regions, the Ottomans basically followed the pattern of the Arabs after they conquered so many Christian lands beginning in the decade of the 630s. This pattern was to allow the Christians, as a tolerated minority, to maintain their basic way of life under the leadership of their patriarch, who governed the Christians in his territory as an *ethnarch*—that is, as ruler of the ethnic minority, or in other words, as ruler of "a nation within a nation."

Under the Ottomans, the Patriarch of Constantinople quite naturally was made the ethnarch over all the Christians in the realm. This "nation within a nation" was called the *Rum millet*, the *Roman* people—since the Turks fully understood that the Byzantines were the perpetrators of the Roman Empire and hence were still Romans, as indeed they still called themselves.

The Ottoman Sultan Mehmet II the Conqueror (r. 1451–1481) was not bent on destroying the very advanced civilization that he had conquered. Rather, he wanted to build upon it, so that his new empire would be the grandest in the world. Hence, he wanted to make sure that the Christians in his realm would contribute positively to the well-being of the Empire.

So concerned was he to assure the continued peaceful existence of the Christians in his newly conquered territory that he personally selected George Scholarios, the head of the anti-Union party in Constantinople, to be the new patriarch (the former one had fled to Italy in 1451). But in the days following the fall of the city, Scholarios disappeared. Agents were sent out, and he was found as a slave in the hands of a rich Turkish merchant in Adrianopolis, in nearby Thrace.

Scholarios was brought back to Constantinople, where the Sultan personally invested him with the patriarchal office on the Day of Theophany, January 6, 1454. According to Sir Steven Runciman, “The Sultan handed him the insignia of his office, the robes, the pastoral staff, and the pectoral cross, a new one made of silver-gilt. As he invested the Patriarch, he uttered the formula: ‘Be Patriarch, with good fortune, and be assured of our friendship, keeping all the privileges that the Patriarchs before you enjoyed.’” Patriarch Gennadios also received a magnificent horse and a handsome gift of gold from the Sultan.

The Patriarchal law-courts alone had penal jurisdiction over the clergy, and over the laity they had full jurisdiction in all affairs which had a religious connotation, such as marriages, divorces, guardianship of minors, and last wills and testaments. If both disputants were Orthodox, the Patriarchal courts had the right to try any commercial/civil case.

A greatly enlarged Church bureaucracy gradually developed to deal with the increased responsibilities of the Patriarch-Ethnarch, especially in the realm of legal matters. Many lay financiers and lay judges were eventually brought into this growing ecclesiastical administration.

The Sultan expected the Patriarch-Ethnarch to make sure that the Christians of the realm paid their taxes and did not revolt. As long as the Christians were cooperative, the Muslims allowed them freedom of worship, basically respecting them as “People of the Book.”

At this point the bishops, and clergy generally, began to dress publicly like Turkish judges, with the riasson and the cylindrical hat. And in church the bishops adopted the vesting and insignia of the Byzantine rulers, such as the mitre, sakkos, and long hair.

Wisdom of the Holy Fathers

*A Christian must always be kind,
gracious, and wise in order to conquer evil
by good.*

+St. John of Kronstadt

However, the Christians were still never allowed to forget that they were a captive people. They could only build new churches or repair old ones with special permission, which was usually denied. They could make no public display of their Faith—no ringing of church bells, no outdoor processions or services, no attempting to share their Faith with non-Christians. They had to wear a distinctive costume, and except for the Patriarch they were forbidden from riding on horseback. And worst of all, they had to endure the seizure of their young sons to be enrolled in the elite Janissary regiment in the Ottoman military, which also meant being forced to accept Islam and live a life of celibacy.