

St. George's News

December 2011

A Monthly Publication

Volume 12 Issue 12

In the great mystery of our faith we know that God became man in a real moment of history during the reign of Caesar Augustus. Jesus was a real person who put on our flesh. God became one of us that he might experience our suffering and live life in all its reality. He also came to sanctify human nature and deify human nature. He came to destroy sin, death and the power of the devil. He came to fill us with joy, peace, love and the light from above, that we might be His presence in the world. The Almighty God became a man, or as Bishop BASIL puts it, "the creator becomes clay."

The Wise men who were the scholars of their time, were led by faith to the stable. They prefigure the Church, the people of faith from all nations. They bring gifts, gold for a King, frankincense for God, and myrrh to be used for Christ's burial. The shepherds are the first to worship the Christ as the savior born in a manger. With the shepherds there is a foreshadowing that the one they worship will be the Great Shepherd, leading to the Kingdom both Jews and Gentiles. This revelation to the shepherds shows that God chose the most simple-hearted and therefore most able to receive this great revelation of His coming. He did not choose the Scribes or the Pharisees who were



the proud spiritual leaders of the day but rather the humble shepherds.

All human history was pointing to this day, the day the Savior was born into the world. Jesus himself said the prophets of old desired to see His day and the fulfillment of God's plan for the salvation of mankind. Jesus, the God-man, came to live a fully holy life without sin and sacrifice His life so we all can receive forgiveness of sins and live again a life united to God and in love for all mankind.

Finally, we must also understand that with the first coming of Christ we also look forward to the second coming of our Lord and the Day of His Kingdom. Human history has an end with the Final Judgment and the coming of Christ's rule when he comes to dwell eternally with

those He created and to make all things new! The Book of Revelation tells us that the dwelling place of God will once again be with men as it was always intended. But none of this would be possible if our loving God did not become man and dwell in a manger on that Christmas day so long ago!

May God bless you and yours in this blessed season of the coming of our Lord!

Christ is born! Glorify Him!
Fr. Tom

I behold a strange,
Most glorious mystery!
Heaven—the cave!
The cherubic throne—
The Virgin!
The manger—the place
Where Christ lay,
The uncontainable God
Whom we magnify in song.
From the Christmas Canon

LAST MINUTE ITEM FOR THE NEWSLETTER?

Email to: FiBegley@Aol.com
By 12/22/2011

inside...

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Birthdays & Anniversaries

Birthday in December

- 1 - George B. Droubie
- 2 - Nebi Tzegay
- 3 - Mariah L. Hamilton
- 4 - Cynthia Karos
- 4 - Michael L. Ablan
- 5 - Julie Haddad
- 5 - Rami Jubran
- 5 - Fred McDowell
- 5 - Kayla Abrass
- 6 - Sarah Larson
- 6 - Nikolaus Thotland
- 7 - Erma Ziton
- 8 - Richard Heuer
- 8 - John Price Sr.
- 8 - Noell Awada
- 13 - Reem Burnham
- 13 - Jerome Joseph
- 13 - Baseel Burnham
- 14 - Thomas Lukanen
- 14 - Elizabeth Lukanen
- 14 - James Damian
- 17 - Christina Zaine
- 18 - Holly Awada
- 18 - Afraa Aldaya
- 22 - Joseph Zaine
- 25 - Issa Aldaya
- 27 - Christian Worrall
- 28 - Eleanor Hafiz
- 28 - Joseph Rahme
- 29 - Victoria Michaels
- 29 - Magdalene Burnham
- 31 - Fotini Kloos
- 31 - Robert Worrall



Anniversary in December

- 12 - John & Ramona Etoll
- 17 - Issa & Afraa Aldaya
- 27 - Kevin & Denise Scott
- 27 - Fr. Thomas & Kh. Beth Begley



WELCOME

We welcome, and ask God's blessings, for Mike and Nancy Ayoub and their children, Jacob, George and Julianna, who have just recently moved to the Twin Cities from San Antonio, TX. Mike and Nancy are the son-in-law and daughter of Subdeacon Joseph and Rita Khoury.

2012 OCMC Orthodox Mission Team Opportunities Now Available!

Short-term Orthodox Mission Team opportunities for 2012 are now available through the OCMC. These 2-3 week mission teams will provide the faithful of North America with opportunities to share the Orthodox Christian faith by offering evangelism, catechism, healthcare, construction, and youth ministry in 9 countries around the world. Please prayerfully consider your participation on an Orthodox mission team in 2012. Visit www.ocmc.org, or contact OCMC Teams Director Andrew Lekos by phone at 1-866-463-6784 ext. 140 or by e-mail at teams@ocmc.org for more information or to apply.

The Parish of St. George joins in wishing each of the celebrants congratulations and best wishes for a joyful, peaceful, healthful year.

(Updated 5/2010)

Each month we endeavor to provide a complete list of Birthdays and Anniversaries so that we will know who to commemorate in our prayers and to greet on their special day. If we have inadvertently omitted someone, please let Father Tom know so that we can include you. The purpose of the list is to be inclusive rather than exclusive. Please help us keep the list updated. Thank you and all our prayers on your special day!

"SUNSHINE LADY"

ROSA NEIMY

would appreciate being called at 651-457-6173 if you know of anyone to whom a card should be sent.



CONGRATULATIONS

Our congratulations to Adam and Christine Quam on the birth of their son, Nathaniel Joseph Quam. Nathaniel was born on Saturday, November 19 at 5:34pm. He weighed 7 lbs 9 oz and was 22 inches long. Many years to Adam, Christine and Nathaniel!

CONGRATULATIONS

Our congratulations to Breana Catherina Welch who was received into the Holy Orthodox Church, November 18, through Holy Baptism. Breana took St. Theosebia as her patron saint. Her godparents were Saed Samir Kakish and Ranya Phelps. We welcome Breana into our church family and ask God to grant her many years!





ST. GEORGE ANTIOCHIAN CHURCH SCHOOL NEWSLETTER **December 2011**

“The Bible fills us with Eternal Joy”
St. John of Damascus

Christmas Food Drive

Thank you to everyone who donated to our Thanksgiving food drive. We are continuing to collect non-perishable food and toiletries for Neighbors Inc. food shelf through Christmas. If you would like to give a cash donation to Neighbors you can give your check to George Droubie.

“Share with God’s people who are in need” Romans 12:13



Christmas Play- Sunday Dec. 11

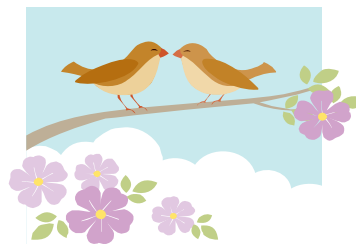
Join us on Sunday, December 11th, after Divine Liturgy for this year’s Christmas play and Lenten pot luck. Please bring your favorite Lenten dish to share. The play is titled, “Just Believe” and is a children’s Christmas musical about trusting in God. Preceding the musical the preschool, Kindergarten and 1st grade classes will entertain us with a few skits/songs. The kids have been busy memorizing lines and the new songs so please plan on attending. Thank you to Deacon John for directing this year’s play again.

No Church School Sunday, December 25th and January 1st.

There will be no church school on either of these dates. May you and your family have a Merry Christmas and a blessed New Year!

Creative Arts Festival Topic

This year’s Creative Arts Festival topic is “The Bible ...fills us with eternal joy.” St. John of Damascus wrote: The Bible is a scented garden, delightful, beautiful. It enchants our ears with birdsong in a sweet, divine and spiritual harmony; it touches our heart, comforts us in sorrow, soothes us in a moment of anger, and fills us with eternal joy. Bishop Thomas has asked all parishes for 100% participation in the festival this year. More information on the topic will be coming in January and we will again be setting a date for a group discussion and brainstorming idea session. Until that time be sure to be reading Scripture daily. Since we are approaching the Advent and Nativity season, read the narratives from the Gospels of Matthew and Luke and compare and contrast them.



Upcoming Outreach

We will be collecting donations of underwear and socks to be given to Focus Minnesota and Neighbors, Inc. These organizations will then distribute these at their clothes closets, keep some on reserve for the cases that pop up at random times, and distribute as Christmas gifts.

Sometimes it is the simplest luxuries we have that are so out of reach for the poor in our midst. All sizes, styles, and colors are welcomed and appreciated. Please put all donations in designated box on table in hallway.

Teen SOYO

In November the Teen SOYO raked for a few members of the church. A group of ten of them went to four houses to rake. Each house had its difficulties with hills or even just the immense amount of leaves. The SOYO even had someone go on a roof and leaf-blow the gutters. He had a lot of courage. After three houses and some 45 bags of leaves, the SOYO had its last house to rake in the dark which was extremely interesting but turned out really well. We would like to thank Barb Abrass, Rosa Neimy, Jeff Adams, and the Jubran Family for the donations and allowing us to rake their leaves.

NEXT MONTH!!! DECEMBER!!!!

This December the Teens had decided to adopt a family so they could help give someone less fortunate a Christmas who would have never had one. Also the SOYO will be trying something new: they will be having a SOYO Fun Night on Wednesday, December 14th. During this evening, there will be fellowship, devotions, and lots of fun.



Orthodox Christian Youth Workers' Conference

An Orthodox Christian Camp, Youth Worker and OCF Chaplain Conference, endorsed by the Assembly of Canonical Orthodox Bishops of North & Central America, will meet at the Antiochian Village and Conference Center. The Parish Council agreed to send our SOYO Advisors, Jody Adams and Deanna Badman to this conference. We have been very pleased with the work they have done with our teens. It is our hope that this conference will give them the tools to enhance their work with our young people. Our bishop-elect is also very interested in having our teens more connected to the teens of our diocese. Please pray for Jody and Deanna and our SOYO. May God lead them to be true servants of His.

Announcing :

Our next Arabic Liturgy will be Thursday, December 1, at 6:30 PM. Our special guest will be Archbishop Theodosius (Attallah) Hanna. I hope all of our members will consider attending..

Fr. Tom

TEEN SOYO

Hello Everyone!

We have some exciting events planned for SOYO in December! We wanted to make sure we let everyone know in advance so you can mark your calendars.

Firstly, the TLC has decided to start a Teen SOYO night one Wednesday night a month! It will start at 6:30 at church. Each week we will plan to spend the first 30 minutes or so discussing a topic of our choice. The archdiocese has different topics for the teens or maybe this time will act like it did on SOYO Sunday. Then we will spend another 30 minutes doing things to help out around the church like vacuuming, cleaning, shoveling, etc. There are always things to do around church and as the body of Christ it will be great to put in some work doing whatever is needed! Then for the last hour or so we can all enjoy each other's fellowship playing Foosball, board games, and having fun in our teen room! The fellowship night would be over at 8:30. We understand that everyone is very busy and might not be able to come every month or for the whole time, so just do what you can. Our first night will be Wednesday December 14th! We are excited!

The next December event will be on Friday, December 16th. We again have adopted a family off the Christmas tree. Please meet at church at 6PM and we are going to leave for Target at about 6:30 to

shop for things for the family. We ask for everyone who is able to either donate any amount of money they feel comfortable with or, if you prefer, donate items for the family. Below is a list of what the family asked for. We hope to get these people who can't afford it some nice gifts so please give from your heart!

Nick and Martha (Parents) - They ask for toiletries, soap, paper towels, tools, and a small sewing kit. Anything will help.

Andrew (Age 2) - He likes toys, games, warm blankets, gloves and socks.

Luke (Age 4) - He'd like toys, games, pajamas, gloves, and warm blankets.

Heidi (Age 6) - Heidi would like a game or doll, some winter socks and gloves, and maybe a puzzle.

Like we said before, ANYTHING helps. Open your heart and do what you can. If prayer is what you can offer this family during our holiday season, they sure need that as well!

We hope everyone has a blessed Thanksgiving!

As always, with any rides or questions, contact Jody or Deanna!

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In Christ,
SOYO Presidents

To Contact SOYO Advisors:
Deanna Badman: 651-270-6650
Jody Adams: 651-341-6541

St. George Antiochian Orthodox Christian Church MEN'S CLUB MEETING

Sunday, November 6, 2011
12:15pm

The men's bank account balance is \$85. George expects fund-raising efforts noted below will help increase the balance.

Election for new officers is postponed until next month due to the low turnout today.

The men will serve a Thanksgiving dinner this year at the Cherokee Sirloin room. Assad Haddad will coordinate for St. George. The dinner will need 20 volunteers from St. George. George suggested meeting at the church prior and carpooling to the restaurant due to limited parking.

St. George men will coordinate / supply food for an upcoming FOCUS dinner.

The storage garage organization is delayed until church roof is repaired and classrooms are renovated. We will have to clean up and fix the classrooms (2 different rooms from prior year clean up) with water damage from the leaking roof.

Tony Khoury brought up the fact the kitchen still needs to be cleaned, ie. floors, ovens and exhaust hoods.

(continued of p. 7)

ORTHODOX PRISON MINISTRY

Orthodox Christian Prison Ministry

by
Mary Rudquist

Every Tuesday Tom and I travel to Shakopee Women's Prison to participate in a two-hour Orthodox Christian Prison Ministry bible study with inmates from the institution. Five or six volunteers meet at Culver's restaurant in Shakopee one hour before the bible study begins. We have dinner together, enjoy each other's company, and talk about the subjects we will discuss that night.

The volunteers are mostly from St. Mary's Greek, St. Mary's OCA, and St. George Antiochian Orthodox Churches.

The team leader is Carol Karos. She leads most of the bible lessons. The rest of us lead when the spirit of God moves us to do so. Each leader picks and organizes his or her own lesson. Sometimes the inmates' behavior is good; sometimes not so good. But, the girls and the volunteers keep coming back. Sometimes we wonder why. I think it's because they feel the presence of the Holy Spirit in this little chapel. And, with the grace of God, they have grown to love us; and we them.

When we started participating in this mission about five years ago, there were five to six inmates attending the bible study. Many times there were only as many inmates as there were volunteers. Now, at times we have twenty

women show up, sometimes fifty. But, mostly, we have twenty-five to thirty in attendance.

Carol reminds the inmates every Tuesday that we "are not here to fix you, or to change you, or to make you Orthodox. That's the job of the Holy Spirit. We are here to share in our mutual love of Jesus Christ."

The girls love to talk about their trials and tribulations both inside and outside the prison.

They also want to talk about their fears about returning to society after they serve their sentences.

The girls love to talk about the passions as they relate to the gospels. Passions such as: love, hate, anger, jealousy, contempt, pride, and forgiveness.

They love learning about the Old Testament stories and how those stories relate to the New Testament. They love to talk about how God is present in their lives.

After the lesson, we return to Culver's to debrief. We discuss the positive and the negative aspects of the evening in hopes that we can continue to improve this ministry, with the help of God.

I can honestly say that I feel we have gotten more out of this ministry than we have put in. At the current time, Mary and I

are the only ones from St. George who go to the Shakopee Women's Prison for the Orthodox Christian Prison Ministry Bible Study. Christine Johnson participated at times when she was here. Mike Hartwig and John Windsor participate in a similar Orthodox Christian Prison Ministry Bible Study at the men's minimum security prison at Lino Lakes .

Snow days and church cancelations

We have set a policy for church cancelations for this winter. Tony Khoury has been designated by the Parish Council to coordinate snow removal. If Tony determines that the lot cannot be cleared he will contact Fr. Tom. Together, they will monitor the Weather Service Travel Reports and our snow removal and determine when to cancel services. When a decision has been made to cancel, a blast e-mail will be sent to parishioners whose e-mail we have. For those who do not have e-mail, a message will be placed on the phone at church. Please be patient. Other people will be trying to call at the same time you do. We will also report the closings to the TV stations that will carry church closings.

Please remember in all cases to use good judgment and do not put yourself at risk if the weather is bad and we have not canceled church.



Announcements

DEANERY VESPERS AND DINNER

We served Vespers Thursday, November 17, with the Deanery Clergy. We thank the Ladies for the wonderful fasting meal. We concluded the evening with a discussion with the Deanery Clergy of the Midwest Deanery. Much of the discussion was centered on our Bishop-elect, Fr. Anthony Michaels. Fr. Anthony will be consecrated bishop on Sunday, December 11, at the Balamand in Lebanon. The Deanery clergy thank you for your hospitality!

BISHOP'S VISIT

Our newly elected bishop, Fr. Anthony Michaels has agreed to make his first pastoral visit to St. George on the weekend of February 3-4. St. George Church holds a very special place in the heart of our future bishop and he is looking forward to visiting us!

CHRISTMAS PROGRAM

Our church Christmas program will be Sunday, December 11, after Liturgy. Everyone will want to be there.

NATIVITY SERVICE

We will celebrate the Christmas Nativity Service on Saturday, Dec. 24. We will serve Matins at 9:00 PM and Liturgy at 10:00 PM. Because Saturday night is liturgically Sunday, there will be no Sunday service. A blessed Nativity to you all!

 Merry Christmas

ST GEORGE HOSTS HONORED GUEST

Our church will be privileged to host Theodosius (Atallah) Hanna, Archbishop of Sebaste. The highly-respected Archbishop will serve the Arabic Liturgy Thursday, December 1, 6:30 PM. He speaks English and we will ask that he give the sermon in English. I encourage all our members to be present for this service. The Archbishop has been invited by the Muslim community in the Twin Cities to speak on Christians in the Holy Land. His invitation was made by the American Muslims for Palestine.

Council Corner

The Parish Council met on 10-2-11. Among the items discussed:

- A motion was seconded and passed to appoint Jane Chagnon to fill the term vacated by Tim Johnson.
- New Officers are:
 - o President – Mike Hartwig
 - o Vice-President – George Khoury
 - o Treasurer – Pat Percy
 - o Financial Secretary – Habte Teclehaimanot
 - o Secretary – Jane Chagnon



ST GEORGE LADIES' HOLIDAY BRUNCH BUFFET

Saturday, January 7, 2012
Angelo's in So. St Paul from 11:00-2:00
\$15.00 includes beverage, tax & tip

Ladies, make your reservations for this fun event by Wednesday, January 4, 2012. Instead of a "gift exchange" we would appreciate a donation for FOCUS/Neighbors. Items include: blankets, hats/gloves, scarves, socks, food items and toiletries/grooming aids (shampoo, conditioner, toothpaste, etc.).

Come one, come all for food, fun, friendship and games. Sign-up sheet will be located in church hall. Hosted by Pat Burbank, Michelle Apman, and Brigitte Khoury. Please call Brigitte with any questions.



(Men's Club continued from p. 6)

Fundraiser ideas mentioned:
Super bowl party
Pancake breakfast
Spaghetti dinner

Adjournment - 12:29
Submitted by: Tom Perry

Ladies' Activities

LADIES CLUB MEETING

Due to the visit of Archbishop Hanna, the Ladies Club Meeting has been moved to Thursday, Dec. 8, at 6:00 PM. A fasting meal will be served prior to the meeting.

COOKIE EXCHANGE

The Annual Cookie exchange will be held Thursday evening, December 8, 2011. There will be a sign-up sheet in the Coffee Hall. Once I have a count of how many people sign up, more details will follow. Thank you, Sarah Larson

NEIGHBORS

As I think you know, the number of families being served in the Neighbors food shelf this year is up over 25% compared to last year. One of the consequences is that we are out of paper bags in which we pack orders. Paper bag donations would be greatly appreciated. Thank you for your continued support! John Kemp, Executive Director, Neighbors.

LADIES CLUB NEWS

- SAVE THE DATE :

-Congratulations to our Ladies Secretary, Christine Quam, and Adam on the birth of their son, Nathaniel Joseph, on Nov 19th. Many God grant them many years.

-Thanks to Sara Larson for coordinating the wonderful Holiday Cookie Exchange on Dec. 8th.

-We plan to visit those who are unable to get out this winter and take them treats. Anyone interested in visiting our dear friends and giving warm hugs, Holiday Cookies, treats and cards, please see Sue.

NATIONAL ANTIOCHIAN BOARD NEWS;

-The Humanitarian Project for the NAB is the Treehouse, an Orthodox Christian Ministry. The Treehouse serves about 2600 women in Wichita, Kansas, each year. This is the first time the NAB has done this project to help the moms who have given birth in difficult circumstances and have material, emotional, and spiritual needs. We are asked to donate Bibs and Baby wipes. We can also do a collection for these items that we are assigned. Each of the seven Diocese are assigned different baby items to donate. We would like to send this by St. Nicholas Day, if possible. " And God is able to make all grace abound toward you, that you, always having all sufficiency in all things, may have an abundance for every good work." (II Corinthians 9:8) Sue Perry Humanitarian Coordinator

-The 2012 Mid-Winter Meeting is held Feb 17-19th in Naples, Florida.

BOOKSTORE

I am back from the World Conference in Iconography and have returned from Russia with many new items. The bookstore will have our Holiday Open House on Sunday December 4th. All purchases starting today and through December 4th will qualify for a drawing which will offer a \$50.00 gift certificate gift to the lucky recipient. The drawing will take place at 12:30 December 4th. Enjoy some holiday shopping in the gift store starting now! - Deb Korluka

CHURCH SCHOOL COORDINATES THANKSGIVING FOOD DRIVE

The Archdiocese encourages us to participate in food drives for our local community. All food collected between October 16 and January 1, will be recorded and reported to the Archdiocese as part of the World Food Drive . All food is given to Neighbors, Inc., the local food shelf that serves West St. Paul , Inver Grove Heights , Mendota Heights and Mendota. Cash and checks, (made out to Neighbors, Inc.), can be given to Michelle Apman or George Droubie.

The Merciful Jesus/ Divine Mercy

The image in Orthodox Byzantine iconography takes its prototype from the biblical passage: John 20:19- 31

Feast Day in the Western Catholic Church- the first Sunday after the Day of the Resurrection



This icon written by Debra Korluka was recently commissioned by a donor and installed at The Basilica during the opening of the Icon Festival.

Christ- appears in white representing the Resurrection. His white robes are created with shades of blue and shades of red denoting the nature of His humanity and His divinity. The red cloak represents his Divine nature and the blue cloak represents taking on the cloak of humanity. He is depicted

as He is found in the icons of The Doubting Thomas revealing the wound on His right side, and on His hands and feet. The feast of the Divine Mercy image is celebrated on The Sunday of St. Thomas in which John 20: verse 29 is a beatitude on future generations; faith, not sight, matters. When we assemble in Christ's name, especially on His holy day, He will meet us, and speak peace. The disciples of Christ should endeavor to build up one another in their most holy faith, both by repeating what they have heard to those that were absent (as was St. Thomas), and by making known what they have experienced. The Holy Face of Christ fills our souls with great magnitude of iconographic joy. He reaches out to us in love, He invites us to know God, He comes to us not to condemn but to save. His Face remains open to all the sorrows of the world. In His face we see everything which encompasses human nature; body, soul, emotions, thoughts and will.

The Door- The image of Christ resurrected according to John 20: 19-31, comes to us as He came to the disciples who shut the door for fear of those that oppose their Christian belief. As if they had no expectation, Jesus himself came and stood in the midst of them, comforted them, graced them in mercy and love.



. Christ manifests His love to believers by the comforts of His Spirit, he assures us that because he lives, we shall live also. The sight of Christ will gladden the heart of a disciple at anytime. Variations of the image and the door: historically, after their Excellencies the Bishops decided in 1953 to prohibit the exposure of the Divine Mercy Image in churches so as not to anticipate the Holy See's decision regarding the authenticity of private revelation, Father Sopocko in turn projected the image as representing Christ in the moment of instituting the Sacrament of Divine Mercy (of Penance) in the Upper Room (John 20: 19 ff). Consonant with Sister Faustina's own thoughts, he provided the doors of the Cenacle for a background, and Professor Ludomir Sledzinski accomplished a new painting according to the Kazimirovski prototype. The rays are rendered in light blue and light red signifying John 19: 34, "Instead, one of the soldiers pierced his side with a spear, and at once blood and water came out. Water represents baptism and blood represents communion. The Footstool- designates important figures. The design of the footstool moves one closer to "Jesus I Trust In You".

"Jesus who died but the source of life flowed out for souls and the ocean of mercy opened up for the whole world. O fount of life, immeasurable Divine Mercy, cover the whole world and empty yourself out upon us. O blood and water which flowed out as a fountain
Continued on Page 10...

Guidelines For Fasting

Continued from Page 9...

of mercy for us, I trust in you. Holy God, Holy Mighty One, Holy Immortal One, Have mercy on us and on the whole world (repeat thrice) Jesus, King of mercy, I trust in you!"

THE MINISTRY OF IOCONOGRAPHY

The schedule of 2012 classes are as follows: please register by sending a deposit of \$75.00 to Icon Art Studios, 13921 127th Street North, Stillwater, MN, 55082. All inquiries can be sent via e-mail at akorluka@aol.com or my cell at 612-889-5868. Session 1 will concentrate on the prototype of "The Holy Face". Sessions 2 and 3 will offer a new study, for 2012- "Prayer and Contemplation with Angels". Either an archangel or the guardian angel will be the prototype of choice for icons written during these sessions. Session 1- at St. Mary's Greek Orthodox Church on Lake Calhoun, 3450 Irving Ave. South, Mpls., 55408, Thursdays from 5:30 to 9:30 on January 19, 26, and February 2 and 9. Tuition cost is \$135.00 plus materials. Session 2- at St. Mary's Greek Orthodox Church, Thursdays from 6:00 to 9:30 on February 23, March 1, 8, 15, 22 and 29. Tuition cost is \$195.00 plus materials. Session 3- at the Basilica of St. Mary, Hennepin at Sixteenth Street, Mpls., 55403 from 9:00 am to 1:00 pm on Saturdays, March 3, 10, 17 and 24 during Great Lent. Tuition including materials \$295.00

GUIDELINES FOR THE NATIVITY FAST

The Nativity Fast (November 15 through 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.

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.

- Taken from Archdiocese website.



Coming Events ...



If you would like to host a coffee hour by yourself or with someone, sign up on the sign-up sheets located in the rear of the church hall

to reserve a date. All that is asked is that hosts strictly follow the Fasting traditions of our Holy Orthodox Church. And as always everyone is invited for this period of fellowship.

HOLY BREAD

SCHEDULE –Joannie Alevizos

If you would like to offer the Holy Bread in memory of loved ones or for the health of your family, etc., call Joannie Alevizos - 651-453-1894 to secure a date in advance. The same is true for the Memorial Wheat.

NOTE: STAMP FOR HOLY BREAD NOW RESIDES IN THE CHURCH KITCHEN.

GENERAL INFORMATION IN CASE OF ILLNESS OR NEED.

please be sure our Priest and the Sunshine Lady are aware. Only then can they carry out their duties! Also, if you would like to have your home blessed, call the Priest to make arrangements.

MOVING??

OR

HAVE YOU MOVED?

Don't forget to tell your church about your new address. Please contact Joannie Alevizos so she can update our mailing list.

THE WORD MAGAZINE

Anyone interested in receiving the WORD Magazine please contact Fr. Tom. Any member of St. George may receive the WORD free.

Please be sure to visit our church website for important news and related information.

DRAFT 2012 PARISH DI-

RECTORY – The DRAFT 2012 Parish Directory is located in the Church Hall. Please review your contact information and correct if necessary. Thank you!

CALENDARS

Please pick-up your 2012 church calendars on the table by the bulletin-board. Our thanks to Deb Korluka and Ion Art Studios, Inc. for donating the calendars again this year!

MEMORY ETERNAL!

Stefan Tchepichev 's father, Petko Tchepichev, fell asleep in the Lord Wednesday, November 9. Our condolences to Stephan and Sonia and their families. May his memory be eternal!

Beloved in Christ,

God bless you.

It is important for us to remember, and to remind our parishioners of the essential need for a daily life of prayer and reflection. To accomplish this I encourage you to visit the website of our Archdiocese, www.antiochian.org, where you will find the daily scriptural readings, information regarding major commemorations and feasts, and articles regarding a wealth of topics concerned with our life in Christ. A wonderful supplement to this material is the website of the Greek Archdiocese, www.goarch.org, where you can see daily information regarding the lives of the saints, as well as information regarding the daily festal observances.

- Bishop THOMAS

ST JOHN DAMACENE –Dec. 4

He was first a minister of Caliph Abdul-Malek, and then became a monk in the monastery of St Sava the Sanctified. For his ardent advocacy of the veneration of icons, while still a courtier during the reign of the iconoclast Emperor Leo the Isaurian, he was slandered by the Emperor to the Caliph, who had his right hand cut off. John fell down in prayer before the icon of the most holy Mother of God, and his hand rejoined to his arm and miraculously healed. When he beheld this wonder, the Caliph repented, but John no longer desired to remain at the court as a nobleman, but to withdraw to a monastery. There, he was from the beginning a model of humility and obedience, and of all the works of asceticism prescribed for monks. He wrote hymns for the Parting of the Soul from the Body, put together the Octoechos, the Irmologion, the menologion and the Easter Canon, and wrote many theological works of an inspired profundity. A great monk, hymnographer and theologian and a great warrior for the truth of Christ, Damascene is counted among the great Fathers of the Church. He entered peacefully into rest in about 749, being seventy-five years old.

- Taken from The Prologue from Ochrid, Vol. 4, p. 283

*CHRIST IS BORN!
GLORIFY HIM!*