



SAINT MARY ORTHODOX CHURCH

The Self-Ruled Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America

"The disciples were first called Christians in Antioch." (Acts 11:26)

6330 W. 127th St., Palos Heights, IL 60463

Phone : (708) 239-0004, Fax : (708) 221-6449

www.stmaryoc.org (office@stmaryoc.org)

Church Office Hours : Monday - Friday 10:00am-3:00pm

St. Mary Parish Clergy

V. Rev. Fr. Mousa Haddad, Pastor

V. Rev. Fr. Malek Rihani

V. Rev. Fr. Danial Doss (OCA)

Rev. Archdeacon Saed Rihani

Rev. Dn. Jacob Andoun

Parish Council

Fr. Mousa Haddad - Presiding Officer

Isa Riadi - Chairman

Shireen Salman - Vice Chairman

Jason Haddad - Treasurer

Scott Abdo - Financial Secretary

John Eannace - Secretary

Fadi Abu Manneh

Nidal Al-Farah

Nassar Khoury

Bassam Salman

Rashid Sweis

Luai Sweiss

Parish Ministries

Sunday School - Elizabeth Andoun

SOYO - Rachel Tadros

YAM - Murad Salman

Antiochian Women - Nihad Sweis

Fundraising - Rashid Sweis

Humanitarian - Shireen Salman

OCLife - Nancy Cannon

Fishers of Men - John Eannace

Athletics - Nidal Haddad

Choir - Angela Haddad

Chanters - Khaled Salman and Danny

Haddad

Webmaster - Sana Sweis

Ushers - Jamal Swais, Louis Sweiss

Couples Ministry- Nader & Angela

Haddad

Office

May Sweis

office@stmaryoc.org

Church Hall Rental

Call or email the church office

December 23rd, 2018

*Forefeast of and Sunday before the Nativity of Christ
(The Genealogy)*

الأحد الذي قبل عيد ميلاد السيد (أحد النسبة)



Weekly Schedule of Services:

Saturday Great Vespers 5:00pm

Sunday Orthros 8:45am followed by Divine Liturgy 10:00am

Wednesday Morning Prayers followed by Arabic Bible Study 10:00am

Check our website for feast day services and all other services

Welcome to St. Mary Orthodox Church! We extend our warmest and heartfelt greetings to you and your family. If this is your first time with us, we pray that you feel at home. After all, we are gathered together in our Father's house. For more information, please see one of the ushers at the end of the service for a "Welcome Packet." May God bless you and give you many healthy years in His service.

Changes in the Liturgy

تغييرات في القداس

Entrance Hymn

O Come, let us worship and fall down before Christ.

Save us, O Son of God, who art risen from the dead, who sing to Thee: Alleluia!

هلم لنسجد ونركع للمسيح ملكنا والهنا، خلصنا يا ابن الله يا من قام من بين الاموات، لنرتل لك هلوليا!

Troparion of the Resurrection (Tone Five)

Let us believers praise and worship the Word coeternal with the Father and the Spirit, born of the Virgin for our salvation. For he took pleasure in ascending the cross in the flesh to suffer death and to raise the dead by his glorious resurrection.

لنُسَبِّحُ نحن المؤمنين ونسجدُ للكلمة. المساوي للآبِ والروح في الازليَّةِ وعدمِ الابتداء. المولود من العذراء لخلصنا. لأنه سرٌّ وارتضى بالجسد أن يعلو على الصليب. ويحتمل الموت وينهض الموتى بقيامته المجيدة.

Troparion of the Fore-feast (Tone Four)

Be thou ready, Bethlehem, Eden hath opened unto all. Ephratha, prepare thyself, for now, behold, the Tree of Life hath blossomed forth in the cave from the holy Virgin. Her womb hath proved a true spiritual Paradise, wherein the divine and saving Tree is found, and as we eat thereof we shall all live, and shall not die as did Adam. For Christ is born now to raise the image that had fallen aforetime.

استعدي يا بيت لحم، فقد فتحت عدن لجميع، تهياي يا أفراثا، لأن عود الحياة قد أزهَرَ في المغارة من البتول. لأن بطنها قد ظهر فردوساً عقلياً، فيه العرس الإلهي، الذي إذ نأكل منه نحيا ولا نموت مثل آدم. المسيح يولد منهضاً الصورة التي سقطت منذ القديم.

Troparion of the Sunday before the Nativity (Tone Two)

Great are the accomplishments of faith; for the three holy youths rejoiced in the fountain of flames as though at waters of rest. And the Prophet Daniel appeared a shepherd to the lions as though they were sheep. Wherefore, by their pleadings, O Christ God, save our souls.

عظيمة هي تقويمات الإيمان، لأن الثلاثة الفتية القديسين قد ابتهجوا في ينبوع اللهب كأنهم على ماء الراحة. والنبى دانيال ظهر راعياً للسباع كأنها غنم. فبتوسلاتهم أيها المسيح الإله ارحمنا.

Troparion of the Dormition (Tone One)

In thy birth giving O Theotokos, thou didst keep and preserve virginity; and in thy falling asleep thou hast not forsaken the world; for thou wast translated into life, being the Mother of Life. Wherefore by thine intercessions, deliver our souls from death.

في ميلادك حفظت البتولية وصننتها وفي رقادك ما أهملت العالم وتركته يا والدة الإله. لأنك انتقلت إلى الحياة بما أنك أم الحياة. فبشفاعاتك أنقذي من الموت نفوسنا.

Kontakion of the Fore-feast of the Nativity (Tone Three)

Today the Virgin cometh unto the cave to give birth to the Word who was born before all ages, begotten in a manner that defies description. Rejoice, therefore, O universe if thou shouldst hear and glorify with the Angels and the shepherds. Glorify Him who by His will shall become a new-born Babe and who is our God before the ages.

اليومَ العذراء تأتي إلى المغارة، لتلد الكلمة، الذي قبل الدهور، ولادة لا تُفسَّر ولا يُنطق بها، فافرحي أيتها المسكونة إذا سمعت، ومجدي مع الملائكة والرعاة، الذي سيظهر بمشيئته طفلاً جديداً وهو الإله الذي قبل الدهور.

Epistle for the Sunday before the Nativity

الرسالة للأحد الذي قبل الميلاد

Blessed are you, O Lord, the God of our Fathers!

For Thou are just in all that Thou hast done to us!

The Reading is from St. Paul's Letter to the Hebrews (11:9-10, 32-40).

Brethren, by faith Abraham sojourned in the land of promise, as in a foreign land, living in tents with Isaac and Jacob, heirs with him of the same promise. For he looked forward to the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God. And what more shall I say? For time would fail me to tell of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, of David and Samuel and the prophets—who through faith conquered kingdoms, enforced justice, received promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched raging fire, escaped the edge of the sword, won strength out of weakness, became mighty in war, and put foreign armies to flight. Women received their dead by resurrection. Some were tortured, refusing to accept release, so that they might rise again to a better life. Others suffered mocking and scourging, and even chains and imprisonment. They were stoned, they were sawn in two, they were killed with the sword; they went about in skins of sheep and goats, destitute, afflicted, ill-treated—of whom the world was not worthy—wandering over deserts and mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth. And all these, though well attested by their faith, did not receive what was promised, since God had foreseen something better for us, that apart from us they should not be made perfect.

مبارك أنت يا ربُّ إله آبائنا!

لأنك عدلٌ في كلِّ ما صنعت بنا!

فصلٌ من رسالة القديس بولس الرسول إلى

العبرانيين (٣٢-٤٠، ١٠-٩: ١١).

يا اخوة بالإيمان نزل إبراهيم في أرض الميعاد نزولاً في أرض غريبة وسكن في خيامٍ مع اسحق ويعقوب الوارثين معه للموعِدِ بعينه* لأنه انتظر المدينة ذات الأسس التي الله صانعها وبارئها* وماذا أقول أيضاً. إنه يضيق بي الوقت إن أخبرت عن جِدعون وباراق وشمشون ويفتاح وداود وصموئيل والأنبياء* الذين

بالإيمان قَهَرُوا المَمَالِكَ وَعَمَلُوا البِرَّ ونَالُوا المَوَاعِدَ وسَدُّوا أَفْوَاهَ الأَسْوَدِ * وَأَطْفَأُوا حِدَّةَ النَارِ وَنَجَّوْا مِنْ حَدِّ السَّيْفِ وَتَقَوُّوا مِنْ ضَعْفٍ وَصَارُوا أَشْدَاءَ فِي الحَرْبِ وَكَسَرُوا مَعسَكَرَاتِ الأَجَانِبِ * وَأَخَذَتْ نِسَاءٌ أَمَوَاتَهُنَّ بِالقِيَامَةِ. وَعُدِّبَ آخَرُونَ بِتَوْتِيرِ الأَعْضَاءِ وَالصَّرْبِ وَلَمْ يَقْبَلُوا بِالنَّجَاةِ لِيَحْصَلُوا عَلَى قِيَامَةِ أَفْضَلِ * وَآخَرُونَ ذَاقُوا الهُزْءَ وَالجَلْدَ وَالثَّقِيلَةَ أَيْضاً وَالسَّجْنَ * وَرُجِمُوا وَنُشِرُوا وَامْتَحِنُوا وَمَاتُوا بِحَدِّ السَّيْفِ وَسَاحُوا فِي جُلُودِ غَنَمٍ وَمَعَزٍ وَهُمْ مُعَوِّزُونَ مُضَائِقُونَ مَجْهُودُونَ * (وَلَمْ يَكُنِ العَالَمُ مُسْتَحَقًّا لَهُمْ *). وَكَانُوا تَائِهِينَ فِي البَرَارِيِّ وَالجِبَالِ وَالمَغَاوِرِ وَكُهُوفِ الأَرْضِ * فَهَؤُلَاءِ كُلُّهُمْ مَشْهُوداً لَهُمْ بِالإِيمَانِ لَمْ يَنَالُوا المَوَاعِدَ * لِأَنَّ اللّهَ سَبَقَ فَتَنَرَ لَنَا شَيْئاً أَفْضَلَ أَنْ لَا يَكْمُلُوا بِدُونِنَا.

Gospel for the Sunday before the Nativity

الإنجيل للأحد الذي قبل الميلاد

The Reading is from the Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew (1:1-25).

The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham. Abraham was the father of Isaac, and Isaac the father of Jacob, and Jacob the father of Judah and his brothers, and Judah the father of Perez and Zerah by Tamar, and Perez the father of Hezron, and Hezron the father of Aram, and Aram the father of Amminadab, and Amminadab the father of Nahshon, and Nahshon the father of Salmon, and Salmon the father of Boaz by Rahab, and Boaz the father of Obed by Ruth, and Obed the father of Jesse, and Jesse the father of David the king. And David was the father of Solomon by the wife of Uriah, and Solomon the father of Rehoboam, and Rehoboam the father of Abijah, and Abijah the father of Asa, and Asa the father of Jehoshaphat, and Jehoshaphat the father of Joram, and Joram the father of Uzziah, and Uzziah the father of Jotham, and Jotham the father of Ahaz, and Ahaz the father of Hezekiah, and Hezekiah the father of Manasseh, and Manasseh the father of Amon, and Amon the father of Josiah, and Josiah the father of Jechoniah and his brothers, at the time of the deportation to Babylon. And after the deportation to Babylon: Jechoniah was the father of Shealtiel, and Shealtiel the father of Zerubbabel, and Zerubbabel the father of Abiud, and Abiud the father of Eliakim, and Eliakim the father of Azor, and Azor the father of Zadok, and Zadok the father of Achim, and Achim the father of Eliud, and Eliud the father of Eleazar, and Eleazar the father of Matthan, and Matthan the father of Jacob, and Jacob the father of Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom Jesus was born, Who is called Christ. So all the generations from Abraham to David were fourteen generations, and from David to the deportation to Babylon fourteen generations, and from the deportation to Babylon to the Christ were fourteen generations. Now the birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way. When His mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child of the Holy Spirit; and her husband Joseph, being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame, resolved to divorce her quietly. But as he considered this, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary your wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit; she will bear a son, and you shall call His Name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins." All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet: "Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and His Name shall be called Emmanuel" (which means, God with us). When Joseph woke from

sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord had commanded him; he took his wife, but knew her not until she had borne a son; and he called His Name Jesus.

فصلٌ شريفٌ من بشارَةِ القديسِ متىّ الإنجيليّ البشيرِ، التلميذِ الطاهرِ (٢٥-١:١).

كتابُ ميلادِ يسوعَ المسيحِ ابنِ داودَ ابنِ إبراهيمَ* فإبراهيمُ وُلدَ إسحقَ وإسحقُ وُلدَ يعقوبَ ويعقوبُ وُلدَ يهوذا وإخوته* ويهوذا وُلدَ فارصَ وزارحَ من تامارَ وفارصُ وُلدَ حصرونَ وحصرونُ وُلدَ آرامَ* وأرامُ وُلدَ عمينادابَ وعمينادابُ وُلدَ نحشونَ ونحشونُ وُلدَ سلمونُ* وسلمونُ وُلدَ بُوعزَ من راحابَ وبُوعزُ وُلدَ عُوبيدَ من راعوثَ وعُوبيدُ وُلدَ يسيىَ ويسيىَ وُلدَ داودَ الملكَ* وداودُ الملكُ وُلدَ سليمانَ منَ التي كانتَ لأريّا* وسليمانُ وُلدَ رحبعامَ ورحبعامُ وُلدَ أبيّا وأبيّا وُلدَ آسا* وآسا وُلدَ يوشافاطَ و يوشافاطُ وُلدَ يورامَ ويورامُ وُلدَ عزّيا* وعزّيا وُلدَ يوتامَ ويوتامُ وُلدَ آحازَ وآحازُ وُلدَ حزقيّا* وحزقيّا وُلدَ منسىَ ومنسىَ وُلدَ آمونَ وآمونُ وُلدَ يوشيا* ويوشيا وُلدَ يكنيا وإخوته في جلاءِ بابلَ* ومن بعدِ جلاءِ بابلَ يكنيا وُلدَ شالنتيلَ وشالنتيلُ وُلدَ زربابلَ* وزربابلُ وُلدَ أبيهودَ وأبيهودُ وُلدَ ألياقيمَ وألياقيمُ وُلدَ عازورَ* وعازورُ وُلدَ صادقَ وسادوقُ وُلدَ آخيمَ وآخيمُ وُلدَ أليهودَ* وأليهودُ وُلدَ ألعازارَ وألعازارُ وُلدَ متانَ ومتانُ وُلدَ يعقوبَ* ويعقوبُ وُلدَ يوسفَ رَجُلَ مريمَ التي وُلدَ منها يسوعُ الذي يُدعى المسيحَ* فكلُّ الأجيالِ من إبراهيمَ إلى داودَ أربعةَ عَشَرَ جيلًا ومن داودَ إلى جلاءِ بابلَ أربعةَ عَشَرَ جيلًا ومن جلاءِ بابلَ إلى المسيحِ أربعةَ عَشَرَ جيلًا* أمّا مولدُ يسوعَ المسيحِ فكانَ هكذا. لَمَّا خُطِبَتْ مريمُ أمُّه لِيُوسُفَ وُجِدَتْ مِنْ قَبْلِ أَنْ يَجْتَمِعَا حُبْلَى مِنَ الرُّوحِ الْقُدْسِ* وَإِذْ كَانَ يُوسُفُ رَجُلًا صِدِّيقًا وَلَمْ يُرِدْ أَنْ يُشْهِرَهَا هَمَّ بِتَخْلِيَّتِهَا سِرًّا* وَفِيمَا هُوَ مُتَفَكِّرٌ فِي ذَلِكَ إِذَا بِمَلَائِكَةِ الرَّبِّ ظَهَرَ لَهُ فِي الْحُلْمِ قَائِلًا يَا يُوسُفُ ابْنَ دَاوُدَ لَا تَخَفْ أَنْ تَأْخُذَ امْرَأَتَكَ مَرِيَمَ. فَإِنَّ الْمَوْلُودَ فِيهَا إِنَّمَا هُوَ مِنَ الرُّوحِ الْقُدْسِ* وَسَتَلِدُ ابْنًا فَتُسَمِّيهِ يَسُوعَ فَإِنَّهُ هُوَ يُخَلِّصُ شَعْبَهُ مِنْ خَطَايَاهُمْ* (وَكَانَ هَذَا كُلُّهُ لِيَتِمَّ مَا قِيلَ مِنَ الرَّبِّ بِالنَّبِيِّ الْقَائِلِ. هَا إِنَّ الْعِذْرَاءَ تَحْبَلُ وَتَلِدُ ابْنًا وَيُدْعَى عِمَّا نُؤْيِيلَ الَّذِي تَفْسِيرُهُ اللَّهُ مَعَنَا)* فَلَمَّا نَهَضَ يُوسُفُ مِنَ النَّوْمِ صَنَعَ كَمَا أَمَرَهُ مَلَائِكَةُ الرَّبِّ. فَأَخَذَ امْرَأَتَهُ* وَلَمْ يَعْرِفْهَا حَتَّى وَلَدَتْ ابْنَهَا الْبِكْرَ وَسَمَّاهُ يَسُوعَ.

Important: Mark your Calendars for Christmas Liturgy

Important! Please mark your calendars for the Christmas Liturgy. Orthros will begin at 4:30pm followed by Liturgy at 6pm, Monday December 24th. How can we truly celebrate Christmas if we skip out on Christmas Liturgy? The Christmas season is a very busy time, & we have plans to be with friends & family. But, we must learn to set our priorities straight, so schedule your gatherings around the Christmas Liturgy. Can you imagine having a birthday party without the birthday boy?! That's exactly what we do when we don't attend Christmas Liturgy. Let us begin to change the secularization of Christmas & bring Christ back into the picture by remembering the reason for the season. We look forward to seeing you all at Christmas Liturgy. God bless!

PARISH NEWS



Honoring your loved ones: Please consider signing up for one or more Sundays to provide Holy Bread and Coffee hour.

It's this gift of Holy Bread that we use to prepare communion and to share with our parishioners at the end of the service. *What better way to honor your loved ones on their birthday, anniversary, graduation or memorial.* It takes minimal effort, and it encourages fellowship among our community.

Holy Bread and Coffee Hour

12/23: Jamal and Kholoud Swais & Family

12/30: Jiries Salman & Family

1/06: Ghaleb and Rita Sweis & Family

Epistle Reading

12/23: Subdn. Matthew & Wajih Haddad

12/24: Fabiola Sweis & Rima Sleiman

12/30: Angela Haddad & Norma Tadros

REMINDER

In an effort to eliminate distractions, collection baskets will not be passed during the Divine Liturgy. Instead, we kindly ask you to make your donation or pledge before or after service by placing it in the **donation box** at the entrance of the church. Envelopes are available on both sides of the donation box. Please keep this in mind since we depend on your contributions. Thank you for your generosity!



Ghriebeh Sale

Sunday, December 23rd
Sponsored by the Antiochian Women

Upcoming Events

Thurs Dec 20	6:00pm	Nativity Compline
	7:00pm	Open Gym
Sat Dec 22	10:45am	Arabic School
	5:00pm	Great Vespers
Sun Dec 23	8:45am	Orthros
	10:00am	Divine Liturgy
	11:30am	Ghriebeh Sale - Antiochian Women
Mon Dec 24	4:30pm	Orthros for the Feast of the Nativity of Christ
	6:00pm	Liturgy for the Feast of the Nativity of Christ
Thurs Dec 27	7:00pm	Open Gym
Sat Dec 29	5:00pm	Great Vespers
Sun Dec 30	8:45am	Orthros
	10:00am	Divine Liturgy
Thurs Jan 3	7:00pm	Open Gym
Sat Jan 5	5:00pm	Great Vespers
Sun Jan 6	8:45am	Orthros
	10:00am	Divine Liturgy
Wed Jan 9	10:00am	Morning Prayers
	10:30am	Arabic Bible Study
	6:30pm	SOYO Night
Thurs Jan 10	7:00pm	Open Gym
Sat Jan 12	10:45am	Arabic School
	5:00pm	Great Vespers



ST. MARY'S CHURCH



Pilgrimage to Greece

The cost of the trip is \$3,690 per person and includes round trip economy airfare from Chicago, 5 star hotels in Thessaloniki, Athens and Zakynthos, breakfast and dinner daily, ferry to Zakynthos, luxury tour buses, English speaking tour guides, entrance fees to museums and attractions, as well as all taxes. Departure from other cities are available but may incur an additional cost.

The group will be limited to 30 people, and will be on a first come, first served basis. **A non-refundable \$500 deposit is required immediately to reserve a spot on the trip.** All payments should be made by check, payable to Good Shepherd Travel, with "Group Reference Number: G060719" in the memo.

Looking for the perfect Christmas gifts?

Stop by our bookstore and check out our new arrivals, gifts and cards.

We have all your Christmas shopping needs!

Keep *Christ*
in Christmas

25% off all adult & children books, now thru end of 2018

**St. Mary Antiochian Orthodox Church - Palos Heights, IL
13th ANNUAL SOYO CHRISTMAS RETREAT - 2018**



“Do not be afraid because of your Orthodoxy; do not be afraid because, as an Orthodox in the West, you will be often isolated and always in a small minority. Do not make compromises but do not attack other Christians; do not be either defensive or aggressive; simply be yourself.” St. Amphilochios

**SOYO MEMBERS ARE INVITED
TO OUR THIRTEENTH ANNUAL CHRISTMAS RETREAT!**

Join us for inspiring sessions with our very own Father Mousa Haddad, Deacon Saed Rihani and Deacon Jacob Andoun

Who: SOYO Members 13 - 18 years old

When: Thursday, December 27th to Saturday, December 29th

Where: Dickson Valley Camp and Retreat Center
8250 Finnie Rd.

Newark, IL 60541

Cost: \$150.00

For Information Contact: Dn. Jacob Andoun, at 908-370-8632 or
youthpastor@stmaryoc.org

For Scholarship or Financial Assistance. Please Contact Fr. Mousa Haddad Directly

Registration Starts: October 28, 2018

DEADLINE: December 16, 2018

\$50 Deposit Required to Reserve Spot

Teens will enjoy Outdoor Laser Tag, Gauntlet, Tubing, Wall Climbing and many more fun activities.

ST. MARY'S GOT TALENT

**FOR THE YOUNG AND
YOUNG AT HEART**

Do you Act? Sing? Dance? Play an Instrument? Are you a Comedian? Recite Poems? An excellent Cook?

Can you make the best Knafeh or the best Chili? Bring your best dish to be judged & win First Prize!

Lunch will be available for purchase. All proceeds will go to the Sunday School.

Submit your registration forms by January 13, 2019 to Elizabeth Andoun

**FEBRUARY 17
Immediately
after Liturgy**

*Join St. Mary's
First ever
Talent Show!*

*Fun & entertaining
for the entire family!*



21st Annual Midwest Basketball Tournament

Canton, Ohio

January 18-20, 2019

New this year in Canton

His Grace Bishop Anthony and the faithful of the Midwest Diocese most joyfully welcome participation from churches of the Mid-Atlantic Diocese led by His Grace Bishop Thomas

Division I: Ages 12-15 / Division II: Ages 15-18 / Division III: Ages 19+

Friday, January 18

7 pm: Registration begins *(Hotel Lobby)*

8 pm: Pizza *(Registration area)*

8:30pm: Retreat *(Hotel Ballroom)*

Saturday, January 19

7 am: Morning prayers/Light Breakfast *(Hotel Ballroom)*

8 am: Basketball Tournament begins

12 pm: Lunch (at Basketball locations)

6 pm: Great Vespers

7 pm: Banquet/Awards Presentation/Hafli

Sunday, January 20

8:45 am: Matins

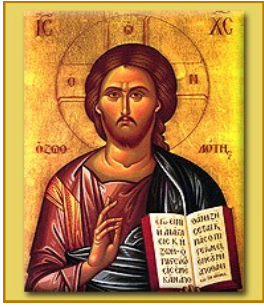
10 am: Hierarchical Divine Liturgy

Brunch and Farewell

Early Registration: \$50 by January 11 Registration: \$60
(Includes all meals and events)

St. George Antiochian Orthodox Church
1118 Cherry Ave. NE Canton, OH 44704
330-455-8482 stgeorgecanton@sbcglobal.net

Hotel Information: Courtyard by Marriott
4375 Metro Circle NW N. Canton, OH 44720 330-494-6494
Group Rate: \$89/night (mention St. George Basketball)
Our block of rooms will be reserved for us until Jan. 7
[Click here to reserve your room online](#)



Weekly Synaxarion



On December 23 in the Holy Orthodox Church we commemorate the holy Ten Martyrs of Crete; New-martyr Nicholas; and Venerable Nahum of Ochrid, enlightener of the Bulgarians. On this day, the Sunday before the Nativity of Christ, we have been enjoined by our holy and God-bearing Fathers to make commemoration of all them that from the beginning of time have been well-pleasing unto God, from Adam even unto Joseph the Betrothed of the Most Holy Theotokos, according to genealogy, as Luke the Evangelist hath recounted historically; and likewise for the Prophets and Prophetesses, especially of Daniel the Prophet and the three holy youths. It is also known as the Sunday of the Holy Genealogy. We remember the aforementioned names, those in the Old Testament who were related to Christ by blood, and those who spoke of His Birth as a man. In the Divine Liturgy, we shall read of Jesus Christ's lineage from the Gospel of Saint Matthew. In this way, the Church shows us that Christ truly became a man, taking on human nature. He was not a ghost, an apparition, a myth, a distant imagined god, or the abstract god of philosophers; such a god does not have a family tree. Our God is the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. He has flesh and blood, human ancestors—many of whom sinned greatly, but like David, also repented greatly. Yet, all of these righteous ones in every age had been well-pleasing to God because they loved Him. By taking on human nature, the Son of God became like us in all ways, in flesh and blood, in mind and soul, and in heart and will. He differed from us in only one way: He could not sin. Since we know that Christ's human nature remained sinless, He is also fully divine, and He shows us the way in which we can avoid sin, and so improve and transform our human nature. By their holy intercessions, O God, have mercy upon us and save us. Amen.