



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. Fr. Jacob Andoun
Rev. Archdeacon Saed Rihani

Parish Council

Fr. Mousa Haddad - Presiding Officer
Rashid Sweis - Chairman
Shireen Salman - Vice Chairman
Jason Haddad - Treasurer
Rain Chamoun - Financial Secretary
Fabiola Sweis - Secretary
Fadi Abu Manneh
Raed Bisharat
Laith Swais
Elia Sweiss
Najib Zedan

Parish Ministries

Sunday School - Elizabeth Andoun
SOYO - Daniel Nemri
YAM - Sally Sweis
Antiochian Women - Rita Sweis
Stewardship - Elia Sweiss
Fundraising - Rashid Sweis
Humanitarian - Shireen Salman
OCLife - Nancy Cannon
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 15th, 2019

*Sunday of the Holy Forefathers (Ancestors) of Christ
Hieromartyr Eleutherios, Bishop of Illyria*

أحد الأجداد القديسين

القديس الشهيد في الكهنة إلفثيريوس، أسقف إيريا



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 One)

While the stone was sealed by the Jews, and the soldiers were guarding Thy most pure body, Thou didst arise on the third day, O Saviour, granting life to the world; for which cause the Heavenly Powers cried aloud unto Thee, O Giver of Life, Glory to Thy Resurrection, O Christ! Glory to Thy Kingdom! Glory to Thy Providence! O Thou who alone art the Lover of Mankind.

إِنَّ الْحَجَرَ لَمَّا خُتِمَ مِنَ الْيَهُودِ، وَجَسَدَكَ الطَّاهِرَ حُفِظَ مِنَ الْجُنُودِ، قُمْتَ فِي الْيَوْمِ الثَّالِثِ أَيُّهَا الْمَخْلُصُ، مَانِحاً الْعَالَمَ الْحَيَاةَ. لِأَجْلِ ذَلِكَ قَوَّاتُ السَّمَاوَاتِ هَتَّفُوا إِلَيْكَ يَا وَاهِبَ الْحَيَاةِ. الْمَجْدُ لِقِيَامَتِكَ أَيُّهَا الْمَسِيحُ، الْمَجْدُ لِمُلْكِكَ، الْمَجْدُ لِتَدْبِيرِكَ، يَا مُحِبَّ الْبَشَرِ وَحْدَكَ.

Troparion of the Forefathers (Tone Two)

Thou hast justified by faith the ancient Forefathers, and through them thou hast gone before and betrothed unto thyself the Church of the Gentiles. Let the saints, therefore, take pride in glory; for from their seed sprouted forth a noble fruit, and she it was who gave birth to thee without seed. Wherefore, by their pleadings, O Christ God, save our souls.

لَقَدْ زَكَيْتَ بِالْإِيمَانِ الْأَبَاءَ الْقَدَمَاءَ، وَبِهِمْ سَبَقْتَ فَخَطَبْتَ الْبَيْعَةَ الَّتِي مِنَ الْأُمَّمِ. فَلَيْفَتَخِرِ الْقَدِيسُونَ بِالْمَجْدِ، لِأَنَّ مِنْ زَرْعِهِمْ أَيْعَ ثَمْرٌ حَسِيبٌ. وَهُوَ الْأُمُّ الَّتِي وَلَدَتْكَ بَغَيْرِ زَرْعٍ. فَبِتَوَسُّلَاتِهِمْ أَيُّهَا الْمَسِيحُ الْإِلَهَ خَلِّصْ نَفُوسَنَا.

Troparion of St. Eleutherios (Tone Five)

Being comely adorned in thy sacred priestly robes and newly drenched with the streams of thy pure and sanctified blood, thou didst soar aloft to stand before thy Master, Christ; hence never cease to intercede for those honoring with faith thy mighty and blessed contest, thou overthrower of Satan, O wise and blessed Eleutherios.

شَارَكْتَ الرَّسُلَ فِي أَخْلَاقِهِمْ، وَخَلَفْتَهُمْ عَلَى كِرَاسِيهِمْ. فَوَجَدْتَ الْعَمَلَ مِرْقَاةً إِلَى رُؤْيَةِ الْإِلَهِيَّاتِ، يَا مُلْهَمًا مِنَ اللَّهِ. لِذَلِكَ فَصَلَّتْ بِأَحْكَامِ كَلِمَةِ الْحَقِّ، وَجَاهَدْتَ عَنِ الْإِيمَانِ حَتَّى الدَّمِ، يَا الْفَثِيرِيُوسُ الشَّهِيدُ فِي رُؤْسَاءِ الْكَهَنَةِ. فَتَشَفَّعْ إِلَى الْمَسِيحِ الْإِلَهِيِّ، فِي خَلَاصِ نَفُوسِنَا.

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 ميلادكِ حفِظتِ البتوليةَ وصننتِها وفي رقادِكِ ما أهملتِ العالمَ وتركتِ يا والدَةَ الإلهِ. لأنكِ انتقلتِ إلى الحياةِ بما أنكِ أمُّ الحياةِ. فبشفاعاتِكِ أنقذي من الموتِ نفوسنا.

Kontakion of the Forefeast 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 الدُّهورِ، ولادةً لا تُفسَّر ولا يُنطق بها، فافرحي أيتها المسكونة إذا سمعتِ، ومجدي مع الملائكة والرعاة، الذي سيظهرُ بمشيئته طفلاً جديداً وهو الإله الذي قبل الدُّهورِ.

Epistle for St. Eleutherios

الرسالة للقديس إلفيريوس

Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saint.

What shall we render unto the Lord for all that He hath rendered unto us?

The Reading from the Second Epistle of St. Paul to St. Timothy. (1:8-18)

Timothy, my son, do not be ashamed then of testifying to our Lord, nor of me his prisoner, but share in suffering for the gospel in the power of God, Who saved us and called us with a holy calling, not in virtue of our works but in virtue of his own purpose and the grace which he gave us in Christ Jesus ages ago, and now has manifested through the appearing of our Savior Christ Jesus, Who abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. For this gospel I was appointed a preacher and apostle and teacher, and therefore I suffer as I do. But I am not ashamed, for I know Whom I have believed, and I am sure that He is able to guard until that Day what has been entrusted to me. Follow the pattern of the sound words which you have heard from me, in the faith and love which are in Christ Jesus; guard the truth that has been entrusted to you by the Holy Spirit Who dwells within us. You are aware that all who are in Asia turned away from me, and among them Phygelos and Hermogenes. May the Lord grant mercy to the household of Onesiphoros, for he often refreshed me; he was not ashamed of my chains, but when he arrived in Rome he searched for me eagerly and found me. May the Lord grant him to find mercy from the Lord on that Day and you well know all the service he rendered at Ephesus.

كَرِيمٌ بَيْنَ يَدَيِ الرَّبِّ مَوْتُ بَارِهِ.

بِمَاذَا نُكَافِيءُ الرَّبَّ عَنْ كُلِّ مَا أَعْطَانَا؟

فَصَلُّ مِنْ رِسَالَةِ الْقَدِيسِ بُولُسِ الرَّسُولِ الثَّانِيَةِ إِلَى تِيموثَاوَسِ. (١٨-١:٨)

يَا وَلَدِي تِيموثَاوَسُ، لَا تَخْجَلْ بِشَهَادَةِ رَبِّنَا، وَلَا بِي أَنَا أَسِيرُهُ، بَلِ اشْتَرِكْ فِي احْتِمَالِ الْمَشَقَّاتِ لِأَجْلِ الْإِنْجِيلِ بِحَسَبِ قُوَّةِ اللَّهِ، الَّذِي خَلَصَنَا وَدَعَانَا دَعْوَةً مُقَدَّسَةً، لَا بِمُقْتَضَى أَعْمَالِنَا، بَلْ بِمُقْتَضَى الْقَصْدِ وَالنِّعْمَةِ الَّتِي أُعْطِيتْ لَنَا فِي الْمَسِيحِ يَسُوعَ قَبْلَ الْأَزْمِنَةِ الْأَزَلِيَّةِ، وَإِنَّمَا أُظْهِرْتَ الْآنَ بِظُهُورِ مُخْلِصِنَا يَسُوعَ الْمَسِيحِ، الَّذِي أَبْطَلَ الْمَوْتَ وَأَنَارَ الْحَيَاةَ وَالْخُلُودَ بِوَاسِطَةِ الْإِنْجِيلِ. الَّذِي جُعِلْتُ أَنَا لَهُ كَارِرًا وَرَسُولًا وَمُعَلِّمًا لِلْأُمَّمِ. لِهَذَا السَّبَبِ أَحْتَمِلُ هَذِهِ الْأُمُورَ أَيْضًا. لَكِنِّي لَسْتُ أَخْجَلُ، لِأَنَّي عَالِمٌ بِمَنْ آمَنْتُ، وَمُوقِنٌ أَنَّهُ قَادِرٌ أَنْ يَحْفَظَ وَدِيعَتِي إِلَى ذَلِكَ الْيَوْمِ. تَمَسَّكَ بِصُورَةِ الْكَلَامِ الصَّحِيحِ الَّذِي سَمِعْتَهُ مِنِّي، فِي الْإِيمَانِ وَالْمَحَبَّةِ الَّتِي فِي الْمَسِيحِ يَسُوعَ. إِحْفَظِ الْوَدِيعَةَ الصَّالِحَةَ بِالرُّوحِ الْقُدُسِ السَّاكِنِ فِيْنَا. أَنْتِ تَعْلَمُ هَذَا أَنَّ جَمِيعَ الَّذِينَ فِي أَسِيَّا ارْتَدُّوا عَنِّي، الَّذِينَ مِنْهُمْ فِيجَلْسُ وَهَرْمُوجَانِسُ. لِيُعْطِ الرَّبُّ رَحْمَةً لِيَبْتَئِ أَنْيْسِيفُورُسَ، لِأَنَّهُ مِرَارًا كَثِيرَةً أَرَاخَنِي وَلَمْ يَخْجَلْ بِسِلْسِلَتِي، بَلْ لَمَّا كَانَ فِي رُومِيَّةَ، طَلَبَنِي بِأَوْفَرِ اجْتِهَادٍ فَوَجَدَنِي. لِيُعْطِهِ الرَّبُّ أَنْ يَجِدَ رَحْمَةً مِنَ الرَّبِّ فِي ذَلِكَ الْيَوْمِ. وَكُلُّ مَا كَانَ يَخْدُمُ فِي أَفُسَسَ أَنْتِ تَعْرِفُهُ جَيِّدًا.

Gospel for the Sunday of the Holy Forefathers

الإنجيل للأحد الأجداد القديسين

The Reading is from the Holy Gospel according to St. Luke (14:16-24).

The Lord spoke this parable: “A man once gave a great banquet, and invited many; and at the time for the banquet he sent his servant to say to those who had been invited, ‘Come for all is now ready.’ But, one by one, they all began to make excuses. The first said to him, ‘I have bought a field, and I must go out and see it; I pray you, have me excused.’ And another said, ‘I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to examine them; I pray you, have me excused.’ And another said, ‘I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come.’ So the servant came and reported this to his master. Then the householder in anger said to his servant, ‘Go out quickly to the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in the poor and maimed and blind and lame.’ And the servant said, ‘Sir, what you commanded has been done, and still there is room.’ And the master said to the servant, ‘Go out to the highways and hedges, and compel people to come in, that my house may be filled. For I tell you, none of those men who were invited shall taste my banquet. For many are called, but few are chosen.’”

فصل شريف من بشاره القديس لوقا الإنجيلي البشير، التلميذ الطاهر (٢٤-١٦:١٤).

قال الرب هذا المثل. إنسان صنع عشاء عظيمًا ودعا كثيرين * فأرسل عبده في ساعة العشاء يقول للمدعوين تعالوا فإن كل شيء قد أعد * فطفق كلهم واحد فواحد يستعفون. فقال له الأول قد اشتريت حقلًا ولا بد لي أن أخرج وأنظره فأسألك أن تغفني * وقال الآخر قد اشتريت خمسة فدادين بقر وأنا ماض لأجربها فأسألك أن تغفني * وقال الآخر قد تزوجت امرأة فلذلك لا أستطيع أن أجيء * فأتى العبد وأخبر سيده بذلك * فحينئذ غضب رب البيت وقال لعبده أخرج سريعاً إلى شوارع المدينة وأزقنها وأدخل المساكين والجذع والعميان والعرج إلى ههنا * فقال العبد يا سيدي قد قضي ما أمرت به ويبقى أيضاً محل * فقال السيد للعبد أخرج إلى الطرق والأسبجة واضطرهم إلى الدخول حتى يمتلئ بيئي * فإني أقول لكم إنه لا يذوق عشاءي أحد من أولئك الرجال المدعوين * لأن المدعوين كثيرين والمختارين قليلين.

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!



Annunciation Gift Shop & Bookstore



Glory be to God! Glory Forever!

St. Mary Orthodox Church would like to inform all its parishioners to take advantage of the materials that are offered at our Gift Shop & Bookstore. If you have not had the opportunity to stop by and check out our various selections, we ask that you please do. If you are looking for that perfect gift for birthdays, graduation, house warming, baptism, etc... we have many items to choose from. If there is something you would like but do not see, please let us know and we will try to accommodate you.

If you have any questions or comments please contact Nader or Angela Haddad at 989.780.2751 or naderemile3@yahoo.com

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

12/15: Ghaleb and Rita Sweis & Family

12/22: Feras and Jackie Salman & Family

12/29: Nabeel and Mariana Sweis & Family

Epistle Reading

12/15: Kh. Delia Haddad & Khaled Salman

12/22: Subdn. Matthew & Lily Sweiss

Pledge Envelopes

Please pick up your 2020 pledge envelopes from the back of the church after Liturgy today.



Graduation

Jasmine Ghaleb Sweis
Bachelor of Sciences and Arts
Professional Writing Concentration
University of Illinois at Chicago

Congratulations!



Graduation

Michael Makri
Bachelor of Science in Liberal Arts
and Sciences
University of Illinois at Chicago

Congratulations!

**EAT for a
GOOD cause.**



Every time you dine with Fattoush Restaurant, St. Mary will receive 10% of the bill! Be sure to mention St. Mary at time of payment.

Dine In | Carryout | Catering

Fattoush | 10700 S. Harlem Ave. Worth, IL

Upcoming Events

Thurs Dec 12	5:00pm	Nativity Compline
Sat Dec 14	10:45am	Arabic School
	4:00pm	Great Vespers
Sun Dec 15	8:45am	Orthros
	10:00am	Divine Liturgy
	10:00am	Sunday School
	6:00pm	Sunday School/Nativity Pageant
Mon Dec 16	7:00pm	Open Gym
Tues Dec 17	5:00pm	Nativity Compline
Wed Dec 18	10:00am	Morning Prayers
	10:30am	Arabic Bible Study
	6:30pm	Teen SOYO Night
Thurs Dec 19	5:00pm	Nativity Compline
Fri Dec 20	10:00am	Liturgy for St. Ignatius
Sat Dec 21	10:45am	Arabic School
	5:00pm	Great Vespers
Sun Dec 22	8:45am	Orthros
	10:00am	Divine Liturgy
	10:00am	Sunday School
	11:30am	Ghraibeh Sale
Mon Dec 23	7:00pm	Open Gym
Tues Dec 24	10:00am	Royal Hours and Typika for the Nativity
	4:30pm	Orthros for the Feast of the Nativity of Christ
	6:00pm	Liturgy for the Feast of the Nativity of Christ
Fri Dec 27-29	8:00am	Annual Teen SOYO Retreat

Liturgical Services

Thurs. Dec 12th	5:00pm	Nativity Compline
Tues. Dec 17th	5:00pm	Nativity Compline
Thurs. Dec 19th	5:00pm	Nativity Compline
Fri. Dec 20th	10:00am	Liturgy for St. Ignatius
Tues. Dec 24th	10:00am	Royal Hours and Typika for the Nativity
	4:30pm	Orthros for the Feast of the Nativity of Christ
	6:00pm	Liturgy for the Feast of the Nativity of Christ

Important: Mark your Calendars for Christmas Liturgy

Important! Please mark your calendars for the Christmas Liturgy. It will begin at 6pm, Tuesday 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 at Christmas Liturgy. God bless!

Christ is Born!

ST. MARY'S
ANNUAL NATIVITY PAGEANT

PLAY WILL TAKE PLACE IN CHURCH
DECEMBER 15TH 2019
6:00PM

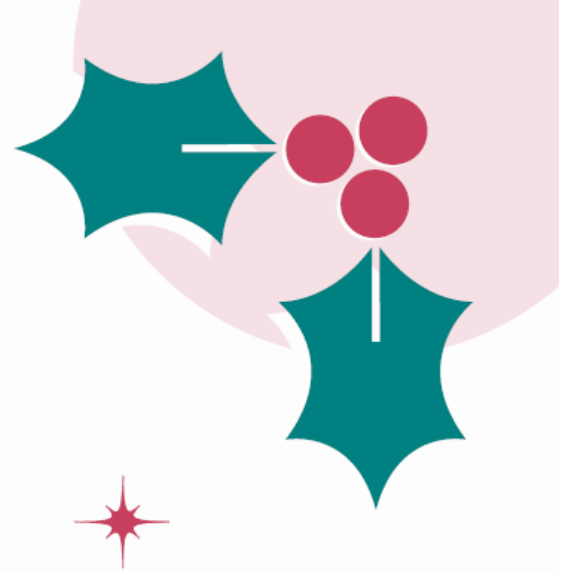
FOLLOWED BY A
NATIVITIY CELEBRATION
IN THE FELLOWSHIP HALL



CAN'T WAIT TO SEE EVERYONE THERE

YOUNG ADULT MINISTRY

YAM Christmas Retreat!



Topic: Iconography

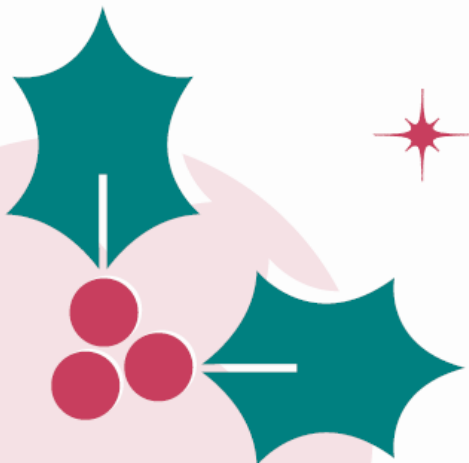
- Join us for a day of education, fellowship, and worship with special guest speaker Fr. Stephen Vernak from Pennsylvania!
- Engage in spiritual and educational talks!
- Enjoy Christmas themed refreshments and activities!



Dec. 14, 2019 | Cost: \$30
9:00am to 5:00pm

St. Mary's Orthodox Church
6330 W 127 St. Palos Heights, IL

Wear your ugliest Christmas sweater!



**“Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness;
and all things shall be added unto you.” Matthew 6:33**



**SOYO MEMBERS ARE INVITED
TO OUR 14TH ANNUAL CHRISTMAS RETREAT!**

Guest Speaker: Bishop Nicholas of Miami

Ages: 13 - 18 years old

When: Friday, December 27th to Sunday, December 29th

**Where: Dickson Valley Camp and Retreat Center
8250 Finnie Rd., Newark, IL 60541**

Cost: \$150.00

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

DEADLINE: December 15, 2019

**December 27th departure time 8:30am
December 29th arrival at church 7:00pm**

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

For Scholarship or Financial Assistance.
Please Contact Fr. Jacob Andoun Directly

Annual General Assembly Meeting and Parish Council Nominations



If you are interested in nominating yourself or another person for St. Mary's Parish Council, please let any member of the Parish Council know by Saturday, December 14th. Nominations will not be considered after that date.

Our Annual General Assembly Meeting will take place Sunday, January 12th immediately following the Divine Liturgy. Mark your calendars and make every effort to attend.

Please make sure your 2019 pledge is paid in full by Tuesday, December 31st, so that you can participate in the General Assembly.

Thanks and God bless!

22nd Annual Midwest **Basketball Tournament**

Canton, Ohio

January 17-19, 2020

Welcome to His Grace Bishop Anthony and Participants

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

Friday, January 17

7 pm: Registration begins (*Hotel Lobby*)

8 pm: Pizza (*Registration area*)

**8:30 pm: Sing 'Happy Birthday/Name-day' to Bishop Anthony
(*Meeting Room*), followed by Youth Discussion**

Saturday, January 18

7 am -10 am: Breakfast available at Hotel

8 am: Basketball Tournament begins (*at locations to be announced*)

12 pm: Lunch (*at Basketball locations*)

6 pm: Great Vespers (*St. George Antiochian*)

7 pm: Banquet/Awards Presentation/Hafli (*St. George Antiochian*)

Sunday, January 19 (*St. George Antiochian*)

8:45 am: Matins

10 am: Hierarchical Divine Liturgy

Brunch and Farewell

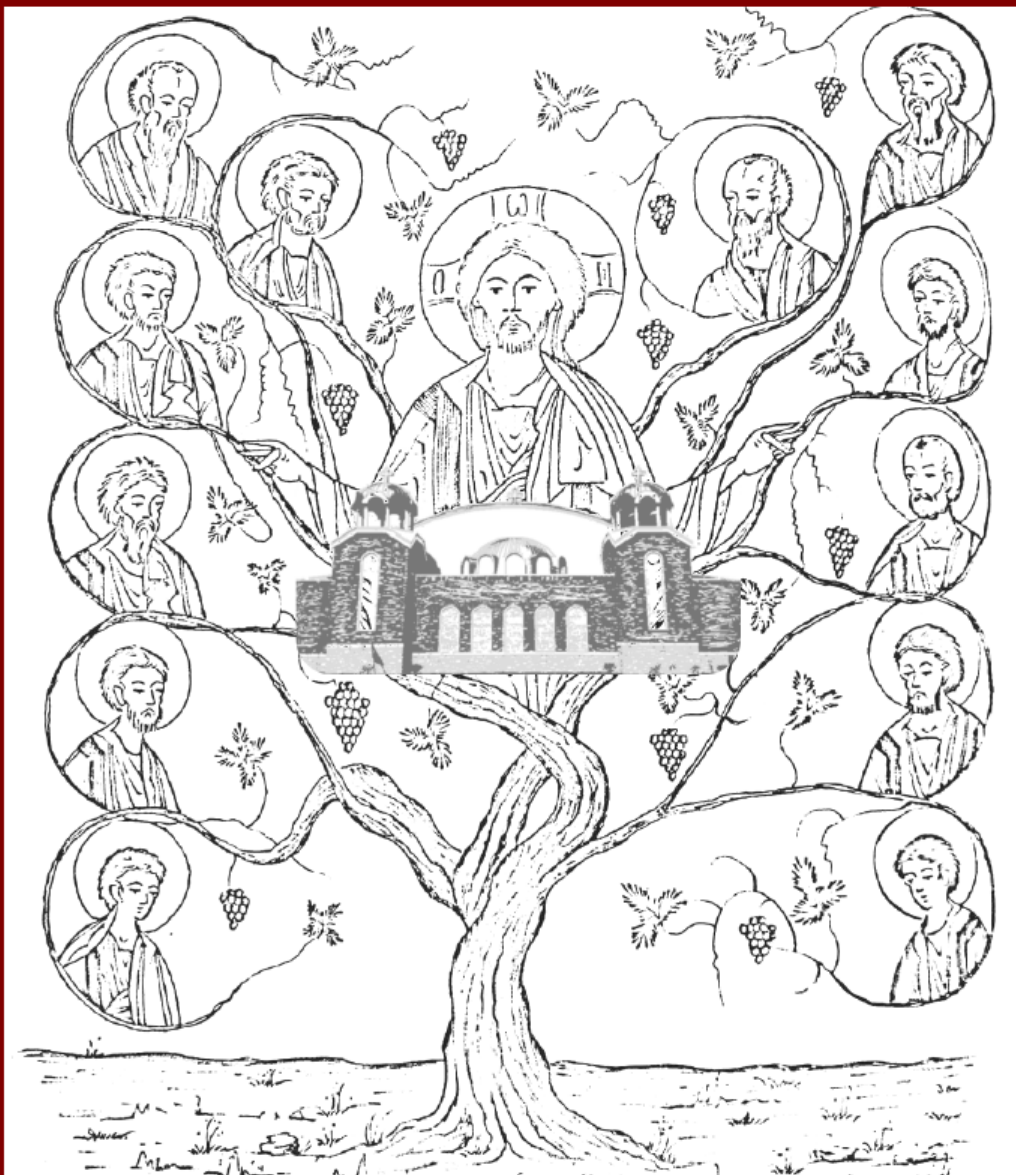
**Early Registration: \$50 by January 10 Registration: \$60
(*Includes all meals and events*)**

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

**Hotel Information (New Location): Hyatt Place
5421 Whipple Ave. NW Canton, OH 44720 330-244-1700
Group Rate: \$85/night (mention St. George Basketball)
Our block of rooms will be reserved for us until Jan. 10**

[Click here to reserve your room online](#)

St. Mary Orthodox Church of Palos Heights
Adult Catechism Class with Fr. Jacob



Know Your Church

*15 talks about the
Orthodox Faith*

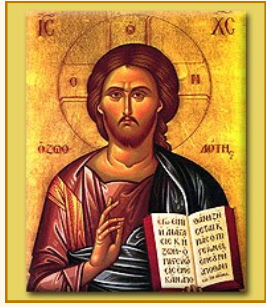
*Lectures adapted from
Fr. Josiah Trenham*

Every Saturday
6:00-7:00pm

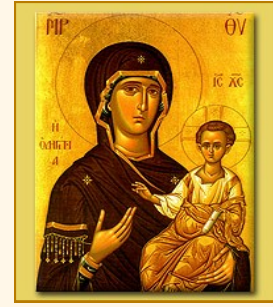
January 4th–
April 18th 2020

This class is open to all adults who are desiring to learn and grow in the Orthodox Faith. The schedule is listed below. Please contact Fr. Jacob with any questions.

1/4/20	Starting Down the Royal Path: How to become an O. C.	3/7/20	The Church and the Mother of God
1/11/20	The True God	3/14/20	The Mystery of Holy Baptism & Chrismation
1/18/20	The Human Being	3/21/20	The Mystery of Holy Confession
1/25/20	Sin	3/28/20	The Mystery of the Holy Eucharist
2/1/20	Jesus Christ the Son of God	4/4/20	The Mystery of Holy Unction, Death and the Funeral
2/8/20	Jesus Christ the Savior of the World	4/11/20	The Mystery of Holy Priesthood & Marriage
2/15/20	Repentance and Faith	4/18/20	(Baptism/Chrismation) Holy Saturday
2/29/20	The Holy Spirit		



Weekly Synaxarion



On December 15 in the Holy Orthodox Church we commemorate the Venerable Paul of Latra; Stephen, bishop-confessor of Surozh; and Venerable Tryphon of Pechenga. On this day, we also commemorate the contest of the holy Hieromartyr Eleutherios, Bishop of Illyria, and his mother, Saint Anthia. Anthia heard the Gospel from the great Apostle Paul himself, and was baptized by him. Being early left a widow, she entrusted her only son to the education and service of the Bishop of Rome, Anacietus. Seeing how greatly Eleutherios was gifted and illumined by the grace of God, the bishop ordained him as bishop of Illyria at age 20. This Godly man kept his flock like a good shepherd, adding to their number from day to day. In the year 120, Emperor Hadrian, a persecutor of Christians, sent a commander, Felix, with soldiers, to seize Eleutherios. Instead, Felix became a Christian, as did the Governor Choribus. They went back to the capitol where all three men were tortured and beheaded. As Anthia held the dead body of her son, she was also beheaded. Their bodies were taken to Valona in Albania, where Eleutherios glorifies the name of Christ to this day by many wonders. On this day we celebrate the Sunday of the Holy Forefathers (Ancestors) of our Lord Jesus. We remember all the holy Patriarchs of the Old Testament who prefigured or foretold Christ: Adam the first Father, Enoch, Melchizedek, Abraham, the friend of God, Isaac, the fruit of the Promise, Jacob and the twelve patriarchs. We then commemorate those who lived under the Law: Moses, Aaron, Joshua, Samuel, David, and the Prophets: Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel; the twelve minor prophets; Elijah, Elisha, Zachariah, and John the Baptist; and finally the Virgin Mary, the intermediary between mankind and her divine Son. Indeed, the Lord Jesus did not come to abolish the Law and the Prophets, but to redeem humanity which bemoaned the weight of evil since Adam; to realize the promise made to Abraham; to change the Law of Fear into the Law of Love; and to give Resurrection and Life to mankind. This feast prepares us for the Nativity of Jesus Christ, placing before us the anticipation and hope for His coming among us. By the intercessions of Thy Saints, O Christ God, have mercy upon us. Amen.