

St. Nicholas Orthodox Church Newsletter

Diocese of Toledo - Orthodox Church in America

2143 S. Center Road - Burton, Michigan 48519

Served by: Fr. Matthew-Peter Butrie - Protodeacon Kerry Luke Gonser

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Website: www.saintnicholasburton.org

Church Office: 810-744-0070

Services: Sunday - 9:30 a.m. Hours 10:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy

Wednesday- adult education 11:15 am

Saturday - 5 pm Vespers followed by Confessions

Holydays: Vespers & Liturgy as announced

MARCH 2025

St Ephrem of Nisibis "to the indolent soul" "Soul: do not be downcast, and do not be anxious. Neither count yourself to be in a multitude of sins. Do not draw upon yourself the fire. Say not, "The Lord has cast me away from his face," for saying this will not reconcile you to God. He cries to you, saying, *My people what have I done to you? How have I grieved you? Or how have I troubled you?* (Micah 6:3). When someone falls, does he not get up? And when someone is turned around, does he not turn back?

Soul: do you not hear of the goodness of the Lord? Have you not been redeemed, as one condemned at the hands of a ruler or a general? Do not be anxious that you have wasted your riches. Do not be ashamed to turn back. Rather, say, *I will arise and return to my Father* (Luke 11:18).

Arise and go! He will receive you. He will not upbraid you. Rather, he will even rejoice at your return. He will take you in. Only, do not be ashamed, like Adam. Do not hide from the face of God.

For your sake was Christ crucified. Will he then reject you? Of course not! For he knows what troubles us, and he alone is our helper. Christ knows that man is miserable. Let us not disregard this, as if we wanted to burn. For Christ has no need to cast anyone into the fire. He gains nothing by sending us to be punished.

Do you wish to learn what the punishment entails? For when the sinner has been driven from the face of God, the very foundations of the earth cannot endure the cry of his groaning. For it is written, *That day shall be a day of darkness and gloom, a day of cloud and fog, a day of trumpet and shouting* (Zephaniah 1:15-16). For if a condemned man is exiled by a ruler for two, five, or ten years, what sort of anguish, shame, and groaning do you imagine that man would have? And yet this man is comforted by the fact that his time will come to an end. We wish, therefore, to learn the time of sinners. How long will their exile last? Twenty years? Fifty? One-hundred? Five-hundred? How can we count the time, when the days and years never reach a number? Woe! Woe! The time is unknown. For the wrath that threatens sinners has also yet to be seen.

Do you hear the distress of sinners? Do not disgrace yourself with this necessity. For you need not fall under this threat. Do you have a multitude of sins? Do not hold back from crying to the Lord. Go! Do not be ashamed. The path is near. Arise and shake off the excrement of this world. Imitate the prodigal son. For, when he lost everything, he was not embarrassed to go to his father. The father, for his part, was more concerned about his son's captivity than the original riches that he lost. Thus, he approached without embarrassment, and he entered the house as nobility. He arrived naked, and he was received with robes. He presented himself as a hired servant, and he was restored to his position as master.

This story is directed at us! Do you see how much was solved by the son's lack of embarrassment? Do you understand the father's goodness? You, too, Soul: do not hesitate. Knock! Do you need something? Wait at the door and you will receive everything that you require, as the divine Scripture says: *On account of his shamelessness, he will rise and give him whatsoever he requires* (Luke 11:8). He will not reject you. He will not upbraid you, man, for the original riches that have been lost. For he has no lack of money. He gives to all *eagerly*, as the Apostles says. *Ask of God, who gives to all simply and without reproach* (James 1:5).

Are you at rest in the harbor? Ignore the waves, lest you be snatched, all of a sudden, into the depths of the sea by an oncoming storm. Then you will begin to say, with groaning, *I am come into the depths of the sea and the squall has plunged me down. I am weary with shouting and my throat is grown hoarse* (Ps 68:3-4). For the abyss of the sea is truly Hades, according to the Lord, who said that there is a great chasm between the righteous and sinners (Luke 16:26).

Therefore, do not condemn yourself to that chasm. Imitate the prodigal son. Leave the city that is in famine. Abandon the misery of the swine. Rest from eating their pods, and do not take them up again.

Come, then, and be comforted. Eat continually of the Manna, the sustenance of angels. Come, that you may behold the Glory of God and your face may be enlightened. Come, dwell in the Paradise of delight. Abandon your brief years and take hold of eternity. Let not the span of this present life disturb you. It is swift and short. From Adam until now the time has passed as a shadow. Prepare yourself for the journey. Do not overburden yourself. Winter approaches. Take up your covering, which we, too, by the grace of Christ, are seeking. Amen." *Ad animam neglegentem* (CPG 4059), ed. K.G. Phrantzoles, *Οσιον Ἐφραίμ τοῦ Σύρου ἐργα* 5. Thessaloniki, 1994: 427-431. Cf. Assemani 6:419-461. See, also, *Dictionnaire de Spiritualité* 4:814.

FROM FATHER'S DESK

Beloved,

To make room for Christ in us, we follow Him, we deny ourselves, crucify our ego and selfishness so that He may increase in us. This we do not because we are forced to do so but because we express our love for God through this. We make our love of God visible through the self-denial of fasting. Christ Jesus Himself fasted from all food and drink for forty days in the desert where he was tempted by the devil.

There are two types of fasting we keep: the ascetical fast we observe during the seasons of the Great Fast, the Apostles' Fast, Dormition Fast, and Christmas Fast (no meat, dairy products, eggs, etc.). We also keep such a fast on most of the Wednesdays and Fridays throughout the year. Wednesdays because it is the day Judas went to the chief priests to betray Jesus. Fridays because it is the day our Lord died upon the cross for us. There are certain fast-free days and time in the year such as the time from Christmas until the eve of Theophany, the week following the Sunday of the Publican and the Pharisee, Bright Week and Pentecost Week.

Fr. Andrew Jarmus says this on fasting, "How strict should we be in our fasting? My rule of thumb is that our fast should be a challenge, but not overwhelming. Fasting is kind of like driving on a snowy, slippery road. The best results come from taking it easy and maintaining steady momentum, rather than giving it full gas and losing traction (and perhaps crashing)." That is an excellent rule of thumb. The ascetic fast is to curb our physical appetite and quiet our unruly desires so that we focus on the spiritual hunger in us and discover Christ alive in us. If there's a medical necessity for eating certain foods that may not be suitable for a strict fast then you can take on an additional effort whether other prayers or a special almsgiving over and above your lenten observance. As always, if you have any questions about your particular circumstances, please see me and we can talk about it.

Then there's the Eucharistic fast, the total fast (no food, no drink) before we come to receive our Lord Jesus in Holy Communion. For morning Divine Liturgies we fast from midnight from everything – food and drink – for receiving Holy Communion. For evening Liturgies (Vespers with Divine Liturgy or the Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts), we fast from after lunch to receive Communion. Fasting does not make us worthy to receive Christ Jesus in Holy Communion. Fasting is our preparation, to make us ready, to make us hungry for the spiritual and physical nourishment that comes from communion with our Lord Jesus Christ. That said, what about those who have to take medications or who because of illness must have something to eat? As an example, those who are diabetics must follow a schedule for eating in order to keep their blood sugar at safe levels. Others may have to take medicine for blood pressure or their heart. In these and other similar cases we may take food or drink with our medicine as prescribed and still approach to receive our Lord Jesus Christ in Communion. We are not taking these with the intent of breaking the fast or out of disregard for our Lord Jesus but because we want to be good stewards of our health as we approach Him who is the Physician of our souls and bodies. Again, if you have any questions about your particular circumstances, please see me and we can talk some more.

In all things we are to be mindful that fasting is not an end in itself. It is a way we show our love for God. The ascetic fast also works to tame our passions, open us up to experience Christ, finding out that in our seeking Him we discover that He finds us first. The Eucharistic fast is a concrete way of living the truth that we do not live on bread alone but every word that comes from the mouth of God. It is the Word of God Himself, our Lord Jesus Christ, Whom we receive into our souls and bodies through Holy Communion. With love in our hearts and non-judgement of others our fast will be spiritually healthy.

The Pharisee in the parable of the Publican and the Pharisee prayed to God saying, "I fast twice a week, I give tithes of all that I get." (Luke 18:12) But our Lord Jesus warned the Pharisees, "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for you tithe mint and dill and cumin, and have neglected the weightier matters of the law, justice and mercy and faith; these you ought to have done, without neglecting the others." (Matthew 23:23) We can keep the fast and have a hardened heart towards one another. If we fail to be loving then our fasting is fruitless. We are to show mercy and fast. It is not one or the other but both together that will lead us along the path of communion with God. As Saint Paul poetically states in writing to the Christians at Corinth, "If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. If I give away all I have, and if I deliver my body to be burned, but have not love, I gain nothing. So faith, hope, love abide, these three; but the greatest of these is love." (1 Corinthians 13:1-3, 13).

With love in Christ, Fr Matthew

Hours Schedule

<u>March</u>	<u>April</u>	<u>May</u>
2 Alexander	6 Alexander	4 Lucy
9 Angelo	13 Angelo	11 Alexander
16 Phil	20 Phil	18 Angelo
23 Barry	27 Barry	25 Phil
30 Lucy		

If you are unable to make your assigned reading date, please find a replacement.

Reader Schedule

<u>March</u>	<u>April</u>	<u>May</u>
2 Barry	6 Barry	4 Katherine
9 Phil	13 Phil	11 Barry
16 Alexander	20 Alexander	18 Phil
23 Katherine	27 Angelo	25 Alexander
30 Angelo		

If you are unable to make your assigned reading date, please find a replacement.

Candle Stand Attendant Schedule

<u>March</u>	<u>April</u>	<u>May</u>
2 Dennis Goodman	6 Dennis Goodman	4 Dennis Goodman
9 Christine Panoff	13 Christine Panoff	11 Susie Ford
16 Susie Ford	20 Susie Ford	18 Christine Panoff
23 Ian & Stephanie P.	27 Ian & Stephanie P.	25 Ian & Stephanie P.
30 Susie Ford		

If you are unable to make your assigned date please find a replacement. Let Susie know of any changes or if you cannot find a replacement (810-407-3016).

HOURS, READERS & CANDLE STAND. Please look at each month's newsletter as the schedule may have changed since the previous publication.

NORTH END SOUP KITCHEN Please come & minister to Christ with our brothers & sisters on March 7 from 9 am-12:30 pm. "Feeding the hungry is a greater work than raising the dead." St. John Chrysostom.

CHEESEFARE is March 2. A freewill offering will be collected. Everyone is invited to attend. You can contact Katherine Gonser with any questions at 810-877-1766.

LENTEN PRAYER PARTNER We will have our Lenten Prayer Partners again this year. If you are out of town for Lent or are homebound and would like to participate, please call the office: 810-744-0070. Here's how the Lenten Prayer Partner works: prayer cards are printed with a blank space for your name. It is then folded in half and returned to the office. On Cheesefare Sunday (March 2), everyone participating will draw a card. Then everyone will pray daily for the person on the card they drew. Remember to keep it secret! At Pascha, you can let your prayer partner know you remembered them in prayer during Lent by giving them a card or a red egg or sending them a card.

PRAYER SERVICE for the sick & suffering will be held at St. Mary Magdalene the second Tuesday of the month at 6 pm. Email names to smmocafernton@gmail.com

CONFESSIONS the sacrament of Confession is offered on Saturdays after Vespers and by appointment. Call the parish office 810-744-0070 or e-mail stnicholasburtonmi@gmail.com to make an appointment.

ADULT EDUCATION CLASSES on Wednesdays, at 11:15 am. We are reading - *Wounded by Love*, a transcription of conversations with Saint Porphyrios (1906-1991).

MEMORY ETERNAL! **Ellyn Gail Serra** fell asleep in the Lord on Wednesday, January 29, 2025 at Beaumont Troy Hospital. She is the daughter of parishioner Connie Maxim and the wife of parishioner Michael Serra. Visitation and funeral were held at church on Saturday, February 1. You may view Ellyn's obituary [here](#). Remember Ellyn in your prayers that she rest in the light of Christ's face. Also remember her family that the Lord sustain them in their time of grief. Memory eternal! Christ is risen!

Mykola "Nick" Ponomarenko fell asleep in the Lord on Monday, February 3, 2025 at The LaVigne Hospice Home in Burton. He is the brother of parishioner Ludmila (Lucy) Hogg. Visitation and funeral were held at church on Friday, February 7 through Swartz Funeral Home. Burial took place at Evergreen Cemetery. You may view Mykola's obituary [here](#). Remember Mykola in your prayers that he rest in the light of Christ's face. Also remember his family that the Lord sustain them in their time of grief. Memory eternal! Christ is risen! Bog da prosti!

Bernardita "Bernie" Gerzevske fell asleep in the Lord on February 5 in Naperville, IL She is sister-in-law to our parishioners Dat & Michelle Gerzevske. Her funeral was on February 18; you can read the obituary [here](#). Please remember Bernie in your prayers that she rest in the light of Christ's face and remember also her family in their time of grief that the Lord sustain them.

Michael G. Rudd fell asleep in the Lord on February 6, 2025. He is the brother of our parish secretary, Marcia (Terry) Hammerberg. He was a Navy Veteran and very active in his community in Chicago, IL. His funeral was February 22 and the obituary can be read [here](#). Please remember Michael in your prayers that he rest in the light of Christ's face and remember also his family in their time of grief that the Lord sustain them.

Eftyhia Batsios fell asleep in the Lord on February 14, 2025. She is the sister-in-law to our parishioner Irene and late husband Gerry Batcos. Her funeral was February 18 and was buried at Evergreen. She and her late husband, Lazaros, were members of Assumption Greek Orthodox Church. Her obituary can be read [here](#). Please remember Eftyhia in your prayers that she rest in the light of Christ's face and remember also her family in their time of grief that the Lord sustain them.

GOD BLESS everyone who helped take down all of the numerous Christmas decorations, trees, and Nativity scenes on Sunday, February 4. The Lord repay you!

NEWLY-CHRISMATED on Sunday, February 9 - **Michael Donigan**, his godfather is Deacon Luke Gonser, and **Adam & Kassandra Lang**, their godparents are Deacon Luke and Kathy Gonser; on Sunday, February 16 - **Annie Bailey**, her godmother is Matushka Lisa. God grant them many years!

BAPTIZED INTO CHRIST **Elliot James Prusac** and **Adeleine Mira Prusac** were baptized into Christ on Saturday, February 8 and **Kassiane (Madison) Green** was baptized into Christ on Sunday, February 16. God grant them many years!

PAN-ORTODOX LENTEN RETREAT March 21 & 22 at St. George with Fr. Silviu Bunta. The topic will be the *hymnography of Holy Friday & Holy Saturday in our lives*. The deadline to register is March 14. Fliers with the details are included in this newsletter. You can register at saintgeorgeflint@gmail.com or call 810-732-0720.

PARISH COUNCIL MEETING is Tuesday, March 11 at 6:30.

PARISH COUNCIL UPDATE *Present:* Father Matthew Butrie, Chris Taylor, Paul Brayan, Stephanie Price, Eileen Branoff, Dennis Jernigan, Bill Economou, Connie Maxim. *Absent:* Lena Bakousidis, Barry Cavett. The meeting convened with "Heavenly King..." at 6:33 pm. The first order of business was to elect the officer of secretary. The motion was made by Stephanie Price and seconded by Connie Maxim to nominate Eileen Branoff as interim secretary of parish council, approved. *Review of secretary's report* Bill Economou moved, Dennis Jernigan seconded, approved. *Review financial report* we finished the month of January with a deficit of \$1,734.52. A budget will be in place for 2025. *Endowment report* the fund is up \$9,859.25 from last month. *Rector's report* 3 baptisms, 4 receptions by chrismation, 2 deaths. *Youth ministry/church school* looking for a middle school/high school teacher. May move class to after the Divine Liturgy. *Community outreach* Adam George offered to be part of the media ministry for Facebook, livestreaming, etc. Pre-Lenten dance was rescheduled to Saturday, May 10 because of the snowstorm February 14 & 15. No family game night on May 17. *Fundraising* Meatfare dinner on Sunday, February 22 (chaired by Reader J Joseph Tome), Cheesefare dinner on Sunday, March 2 (chaired by Kathy Gonser & Shari Nicoloff). *Charity ministries* North End Soup Kitchen service on Thursday, March 6 from 9:30 am to 12 pm. *Church building and grounds* Spring clean-up on Saturday, May 3. Need to buy a container (10 by 20 feet or 20 by 40 feet) for storage that is rodent-proof as we are running out of storage space. Dennis Jernigan made the motion to investigate and purchase a storage container, seconded by Bill Economou, approved. It would be helpful to have an event sheet listing chairperson who seek out the persons who will do pre-check (how many plates are needed, napkins, cups, flatware, etc), set-up, wipe down tables, wash dishes, take our trash, etc. We can ring the bell in the hall during an event to ask persons to help clean up. Dennis Jernigan cleared the snow off the roof. New ballast on lights in the hall. *Old business* Chris Taylor has been working with ABC 12 to get our future community events on their community calendar and has succeeded in doing so. *New business* A. budget: a draft was presented and will be revisited at the March meeting. B. pavilion and hall rental: hall rentals only for parishioners, pavilion rentals available for non-members but they need to provide porta-potties. Meeting adjourned at 8:59 pm.

GENESEE COUNTY PAN-ORTHODOX SERVICE SCHEDULE - MARCH THROUGH APRIL

GREAT LENT - lenten potlucks follow the Presanctified Liturgies

Mon, Mar 25 10 am Annunciation Divine Liturgy at Assumption Church

Wed, Mar 12 6 pm Presanctified at St Nicholas Church

Fri, Mar 21 6 pm Akathist followed by opening of Lenten Retreat at St George

Sat, Mar 22 Lenten Retreat at St George concluding with Vespers (no Vespers at St Nicholas)

Wed, Apr 9 6 pm Presanctified at St George Church

Wed Apr 26 6 pm Presanctified at St Mary Magdalene Church

Sat, Apr 12 Lazarus Saturday - 9:30 am Divine Liturgy at St. Nicholas

BRIGHT WEEK

Mon, Apr 21 10 am Divine Liturgy at St Mary Magdalene Church

Tues, Apr 22 10 am Divine Liturgy at St Nicholas Church

Wed, Apr 23 Vespers with Divine Liturgy at St George Church (time to be determined)

Fri, Apr 25 10 am Divine Liturgy at Assumption Church

COOKIE WALK Cathy Edwards will be one of the co-chairs for our annual cookie walk on December 13, 2025. Another co-chair is needed. Please let Cathy know if you would like to co-chair with her.

ST. PATRICK'S DAY BOXED LUNCH SALE 2025 Thursday, March 17. Drive Thru 11 am - 1 pm. Order 15 or More and get FREE Delivery. Lunches include a delicious, corned beef & Swiss on rye bread, chips, coleslaw, pickle and a treat for \$12. All proceeds benefit Catholic Charities meal programs.

OUR CHARITY MINISTRIES

NORTH END SOUP KITCHEN we serve on Thursday, March 6 from 9 to 12:30 pm.

HOPE IN A BOX is collecting Feminine Care & Dental Products for the month of March. Place the items in a bag and then put in the Blue Box in the hall. Catholic Charities Community Closet will distribute the items.

FOOD DRIVE Place non-perishable food items in a bag then put them in the other blue box in the hall.

	HOPE IN A BOX
March	Feminine Care & Dental Products
April	Deodorant & First Aid Items
May	Bar & Hand Soap

March Coffee Social Sponsors	
2	Cheesefare
9	Connie Maxim
16	
23	Lucy Hogg
30	

MAKE YOUR FAITHFUL GIVING EASY AND CONVENIENT WITH GIVELIFY

Go to the [website](#) and on the home page click on the box [Give now with Givelify](#) which will walk you through the donation process; this is a secure site. (2.9% + \$0.30 of your donation goes to Givelify as a fee). *Please consider adding the extra fee we are charged to your donation. If you do not wish to donate online, you may write a check to St. Nicholas Orthodox Church and send it to the parish address: 2143 S Center Rd, Burton, MI 48519.

ANOTHER WAY TO GIVE-KROGER/COSCO COMMUNITY REWARDS Remember to use your community rewards when checking out. If you haven't signed up for it you can do so online or at their customer service desk. They send a check to St. Nicholas for a portion of everything participants spend in their stores.

THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION SCHOLARSHIP/SEMINARIAN OFFERING There is a category marked "Seminarian" on your stewardship envelopes that you can include with your regular giving. There are also specially marked envelopes at the candle stand. This helps to support parish seminarians, those training to become catechists, and kiosk expense for theological materials for inquirers.

YOUTUBE CHANNEL subscribe to our YouTube channel [Saint Nicholas Orthodox Church Burton](#) to receive notifications of upcoming livestreams for services. [Livestreams begin at 9:30 with Hours.](#)

DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME March 9



MARCH BIRTHDAYS, ANNIVERSARIES, & NAMESDAYS

BIRTHDAYS

- 1 Steven Krych
- 3 Petro Ahejew
- 5 Adam Lang
Michelle Gerzevske
- 7 Amir Abu-Aita
Andy & Isabella Bakousidis
Johnny Kantor
- 9 Linda Kilbourne
- 12 Zeid Helal
- 14 Megan Krigner
- 15 John Popoff
Ryan Broadfoot
Theodore Wilhelm
- 18 Allison Borkovich
Jim Grossi
- 19 Joseph Oginsky Sr.
- 20 Mary Batzos
Sandra Ahejew
- 26 Scott Adkisson



NAMESDAYS

- 2 Chad Conover
- 7 Eugene Akkerman
- 9 Vivian Binelli
- 10 Leonid Rabkin
- 17 Alexis Nedanis
- 23 Lydia Nicoloff
- 25 Angela Bakousidis
Angelo (Vangel) Panoff
Angelo Young
Austin Angelo Selmi
Evangelos Stavridis
- 26 Gabriel Paul
- 27 Robert Elieff
Robert Russell
Robert Steiner

ANNIVERSARIES

- 5 John & Fanny Popoff (1967)
- 26 Gregory & Danni Burns (2003)

If your name is missing or has the incorrect information in the birthday, anniversary or namesday list please call the office: 810-744-0070

DAILY INTERCESSION FOR OUR SICK AND HOMEBOUND

VISITATION TO THE SICK If you would like Fr. Matthew to make a visit to home, hospital, or nursing home, please contact the office 810-744-0070.

DAILY INTERCESSION FOR OUR SICK AND HOMEBOUND

The following are our brothers and sisters of St. Nicholas who are currently homebound, suffering from chronic illness, in recovery or in need of special prayers. Please remember them in your prayers and reach out to them with a card, a phone call or a visit!

Deacon John Bocek	Bill Haw	Macy Lemmen	Bill Tadrick
Allison Borkovich	Mary Karayanis	Helen Popoff	Wendy Tadrick
Paul Ellis	Nick Karayanis	Ron Salhany	Dave Vuckovich

To aid in your outreach, here is a listing of the addresses and phone numbers of our Homebound:

Jeanette Brayan @Serene Gardens	1481 E Hill Rd room MC-6	Grand Blanc, MI 48439
Paul Ellis @ Beaconsire	21630 Hessel Ave	Detroit, MI 48219 313-534-8400
Allison Borkovich @Kra-Nur Manor	1383 Kra-Nur Dr.	Burton, MI 48509
Mary & Nick Karayanis	2238 Old Hickory	Davison, MI 48423 810-653-1169
Julia Peck @ Living Joy Assisted Living	1525 E Pierson Rd	Flushing, MI 48433
Helen Popoff	2221 Bellemeade Dr.	Davison, MI 48423 810-653-3867
Mike Stikovich @Kra-Nur Manor	1383 Kra-Nur Dr.	Burton, MI 48509 810-658-8321(Stephanie)
Diane Todorovsky	14182 Moffett Dr	Fenton, MI 48430 810-750-7860
Dave Vuckovich	9352 Morrish Rd	Swartz Creek, MI 48473 810-348-4733 (Barb)

ELDER AIMILIANOS OF SIMONOPETRA MONASTERY on Mount Athos, father in God to our Archbishop Alexander, gave a series of talks on St Hesychios' reflections on spiritual watchfulness/sobriety (nipsis). [HERE](#) you may listen to a disciple of Elder Aimilianos, Bishop Emilianos of Meloa, speak in a series of talks on this collection of Elder Aimilianos' reflections. These talks are down-to-earth and practical for all of us who strive to live our life in Christ.

<https://youtube.com/playlist?list=PLZr36eiFirKQX2kDGvKPqN0C2DO8ZpgaF&si=MUGrevouDWcSXA8E>

THE TRIODION - the book with the hymns we will use from the Sunday of the Publican and the Pharisee through Holy Saturday - is [here https://www.ponomar.net/data/lenten_triodion.pdf](https://www.ponomar.net/data/lenten_triodion.pdf) and the hymns for the weekdays of the Great Fast are [here https://www.ponomar.net/data/lts.pdf](https://www.ponomar.net/data/lts.pdf) This time of the Great Fast takes the name the time of the Triodion from this book because of the three odes (triodion) for the canons - poetic hymns - at matins. Reading the Scriptures of the day during the Great Fast and the hymns from the Triodion leads us along the journey to Pascha.

RESOURCES FOR THE GREAT FAST

Beloved in the Lord,

As we approach the Great forty days' Fast (Great Lent) I want to help prepare and encourage you with these various resources for your Lenten journey.

The season of the Great Fast is the time of preparation for the feast of the Resurrection of Christ. It is the living symbol of a human's entire life which is to be fulfilled in your own resurrection from the dead with Christ. It is a time of renewed devotion: of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving. It is a time of repentance, a real renewal of our minds, hearts and deeds in conformity with Christ and his teachings. It is the time, most of all, of our return to the great commandments of loving God and our neighbors.

In the Orthodox Church, Great Lent is not a season of morbidity and gloominess. On the contrary, it is a time of joyfulness and purification. We are called to "anoint our faces" and to "cleanse our bodies as we cleanse our souls." The very first hymns of the very first service of Great Lent set the proper tone of the season: *"Let us begin the lenten time with delight . . . let us fast from passions as we fast from food, taking pleasure in the good words of the Spirit, that we may be granted to see the holy passion of Christ our God and his holy Pascha, spiritually rejoicing."*

"Your grace has arisen upon us, O Lord, the illumination of our souls has shown forth; behold, now is the acceptable time; behold, now is the time of repentance" (Vespers Hymns).

It is our repentance that God desires, not our remorse. We sorrow for our sins, but we do so in the joy of God's mercy. We mortify our flesh, but we do so in the joy of our resurrection into life everlasting. We make ready for the resurrection during Great Lent, both Christ's Resurrection and our own. ([source](#))

Resources for Great Lent

Read about the services of Lent [here](#).

Read about Presanctified Liturgies [here](#).

Read about the Sundays of Lent [here](#).

Orthodox Pebbles Resources for KIDS! is [here](#).

Attending Services during Lent

This is the season of a marked increase in divine services. Please simplify, plan ahead, and prepare yourself for attending as many of the services of the Church as possible. I especially encourage a serious effort for laying that groundwork in the first week of Lent. There is a service to attend every day. Take turns with your spouse in attending services. Turn off Netflix, silence your phone notifications, give of your time and treasures, eat less, and pray more. You will discover that Christ is closer to you than you are to yourself...

Praying during Lent

Seek God in prayer. Read the Psalms. Do your morning and evening prayers. Consult the priest and get a prayer rule. Read these [homilies](#) by St. Theophan on prayer. Memorize the prayer of St. Ephraim appointed to be read during the weekdays of Lent. Pray and do prostrations. Use your prayer rope! Seek God in prayer.

Fasting during Lent

"Let us fast with a fast pleasing to the Lord. This is the true fast: the casting off of evil, the bridling of the tongue, the cutting off of anger, the cessation of lusts, evil talking, lies and cursing. The stopping of these is the fast true and acceptable." (Monday Vespers of the First Week).

Fast according to the tradition of the Church. Unless you cannot do so, seek advice as to how to enter into the fast. Refrain from unnecessary and excessive food and drink. The Fathers are clear that our war against the passions starts with fasting. Here is a refresher essay from Metropolitan Kallistos Ware and Mother Mary on the [True Nature of Fasting](#). Here is also a wonderful reflection from Fr. Sergei Sveshnikov [Fasting for Non-Monastics](#). Read more about fasting [here](#).

Almsgiving during Lent

Almsgiving is another invaluable pillar of Lent and of our lives in Christ. Read this [reflection](#) on almsgiving. One of the assumptions of the Fast is that the money we save through fasting is owed to the poor. Find a way to give, give in secret, give generously, and give from your heart.

Confessions during Lent

We are given 40 days of the Lenten Season before we enter Holy Week. Please make your confession during these 40 days. I am available for confession by appointment as well as after Vespers on Saturdays. I will not be hearing confessions after the evening service on Holy Wednesday, unless there is a particular need (distance, illness, etc.). If you have any questions please let me know!

"Even if we fall a hundred times a day, it does not matter; we must get up and go on walking toward God without looking back." - Elder Thaddeus, *Our Thoughts Determine Our Lives*

Spiritual Reading during Great Lent

"Hearken, I entreat you, all you that are careful for this life, and procure books that will be medicines for the soul." St. John Chrysostom

[PDF of entire Old Testament Readings for Great Lent](#) - compiled by Deacon Raphael Shelton

The Lenten Triodion translated by Metropolitan Kallistos (Ware) and Mother Mary [online](#) or [hardcover](#)

[To the indolent soul](#) by Saint Ephrem of Nisbis

[On watchfulness](#) by Elder Aimilianos (talks give by Bishop Emilianos of Meloa)

[On the holy lenten fast](#) by Saint Dorotheos of Gaza

[Homily on the publican and the Pharisee](#) by Saint Cyril of Alexandria

[Kontakion on the prodigal son](#) by Saint Romanos the Melodist

Book Recommendations

Fr. Alexander Schmemmann "[Great Lent: Journey to Pascha](#)"

Fr. Thomas Hopko "[The Lenten Spring](#)"

Elder Aimilianos - [works available from Ormylia Monastery](#)

Olivier Clement "[The Song of Tears: An Essay on Repentance based on the Great Canon of St. Andrew of Crete](#)"

Elder Thaddeus "[Our Thoughts Determine Our Lives](#)"

St. John of Kronstadt "[Season of Repentance: Lenten Homilies of St. John of Kronstadt](#)"

Read the Lives of the Saints

“In the Lives of the Saints are shown numerous but always certain ways of salvation, enlightenment, sanctification, transfiguration, ‘christification,’ deification; all the ways are shown by which man conquers sin, every sin; conquers passion, every passion; conquers death; conquers the devil, every devil. There is a remedy there for every sin: from every passion — healing, from every death — resurrection, from every devil — deliverance; from all evils — salvation. There is no passion, no sin for which the Lives of the Saints do not show how the passion or sin in question is conquered, mortified, and uprooted.” - St. Justin Popovich, Orthodox Faith & Life in Christ, “Introduction to the Lives of the Saints”

[Online at the OCA Website](#)

Prologue of Ohrid either [online](#) or [hardcover](#)

[The Synaxarion \(Complete Set\)](#)

The Lord be with us on this journey of these forty days leading to his holy passion and resurrection.

love,
Fr Matthew

13th Annual Dormition Dinner from Father Michael Bassett:

Glory to Jesus Christ!

I would like to thank each and every one of you for the fabulous job you did in leading each of your parishes toward a successful Pan-Orthodox gathering last Thursday. You each make it look so easy but, without question, it is clear that you put forth a lot of time and effort in preparing, shopping, setting up, tearing down, coordinating volunteers, promoting the event, etc! Forgive me for not helping you more!

Here are the counts (a record year)!

- 174 registered for dinner (we are estimating perhaps 165 actually showed up); livestream: 36 unique views for Vespers and 60 unique views for the Panel Discussion
- 22 made a donation but did not attend
- Total \$ raised for the Monastery:
 - \$11,014 (subject to final double count) - about half of this was raised online and a very special contribution of over \$1,600 was made by a very special friend of the monastery as a result of his Men's Ministry activities for the past year
 - \$1,949 Gift Shop Sales

This was a record for a live event for the Winter Dinner (in 2021, the first Virtual Only event, we did have 400 views and raised over \$14,000).

God brought all of this about through the hands, thoughts and prayers of many! Thank you again for your love for the Monastery - for OUR Monastery!

Love, fm *Father Michael Bassett*



CHURCH GROUNDS SPRING CLEAN UP Saturday, May 3 starting at 10 am. There will be something for everyone to do no matter your age or ability. Lunch will be provided. Bring your gloves, yard & garden tools. Please sign up in the fellowship hall or call the office so Dennis can coordinate the jobs beforehand.



Orthodox Churches of Genesee County, Michigan

Assumption (Greek) 2245 Baldwin Road ❖ Grand Blanc, MI 48439 ❖ 810-771-4611
St. George (Antiochian) 5191 Lennon Road ❖ Flint, MI 48507 ❖ 810-732-0720
St. Mary Magdalene (OCA) 2439 S. Long Lake Road ❖ Fenton, MI 48430 ❖ 810-750-1401
St. Nicholas (OCA) 2143 South Center Road ❖ Burton, MI 48519 ❖ 810-744-0070

2025 Great Fast and Bright Week



Pan-Orthodox Divine Services and Lenten potlucks

Great Compline at St. George (*Mondays, Tuesdays, & Thursdays 6 pm, Fridays 6 pm Akathist*) All are welcome. This beautiful service along with the Lenten Hours on Wednesdays allows us to experience the Great Fast more deeply. Confessions will be available after the service.

Lenten Hours at St. Nicholas (*Wednesdays, 10 am*) All are welcome.

Presanctified Divine Liturgy and **Lenten Potlucks** (*Wednesdays, 6 pm*) We will celebrate together the Presanctified Liturgy and the Great Feast of the Annunciation according to the schedule below. Holy Communion is given at both. To partake of Holy Communion at evening liturgies, please be prepared with prayer and fasting (*no eating or drinking after 12 noon*). Confessions will only be available prior to the evening liturgies from 5:30pm–6pm. The lenten potluck dinners will be coordinated by the host parish.

- March 12 **Presanctified Liturgy** at St. Nicholas 6 pm
- March 21 & 22 **Lenten Retreat with Father Silviu Bunta** at St. George (*separate flier*)
- March 25 **Great Feast of the Annunciation Divine Liturgy** at Assumption 10 am
- March 26 **Presanctified Liturgy** at St. Mary Magdalene 6 pm
- April 9 **Presanctified Liturgy** at St. George 6 pm
- April 12 **Preparation of Gifts, Raising of Lazarus Liturgy** at St. Nicholas 9:30 am

Bright Week (April 19-25)

- April 21 **Paschal Divine Liturgy** at St. Mary Magdalene 10 am
- April 22 **Paschal Divine Liturgy** at St. Nicholas 10 am
- April 23 **Paschal Divine Liturgy** at St. George time to be determined
- April 25 **Paschal Divine Liturgy for the Life-giving Font** at Assumption 10 am

*Member Churches of the Assembly of Canonical Orthodox Bishops in North America
A Vision of Orthodox Unity*

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Come, Join Us for this Lenten Retreat by Fr. Silviu Bunta!



The story of our lives: Holy Friday & Holy Saturday in human experience

Fr. Silviu will discuss the hymnography of Holy Friday and Holy Saturday in our lives.

**Friday & Saturday,
March 21 & 22, 2025**

**St. George Orthodox Church •
5191 Lennon Rd • Flint, MI 48507**

**Please RSVP by March 14 to 810-732-0720 or
saintgeorgeflint@gmail.com**

Friday, March 21

6 pm

Salutations (Akathist)

7 pm

1st talk with question & answer

Saturday, March 22

9 am

registration

9:30 am

2nd talk

10:05 am

break

10:20 am

3rd talk

10:55 am to 12 pm

lunch (free-will offering)

12 pm

questions and answers

12:45 pm

Fr Silviu departs

1:15 pm

Great Vespers


































Fr. Silviu specializes in Scriptural studies and has his Ph.D. in Second Temple Judaism from Marquette University. He has his M.A. in New Testament from the University of Oradea (Oradea, Romania). He is a priest of the Diocese of Toledo (OCA) serving as rector of Saint George Church in Pharr, TX. He is retired as Professor at the University of Dayton having taught Bible, ancient Judaism, Hebrew, and Greek.

Member Churches of the Assembly of Canonical Orthodox Bishops in North America - A Vision of Orthodox Unity

March 2025

St. Nicholas Orthodox Church
 2143 S. Center Rd. Burton, MI 48519
 810-744-0070

stnicholasburtonmi@gmail.com Website: www.saintnicholasburton.org

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
 <i>Fast</i>  <i>Wine & Oil Permitted (no meat)</i>  <i>Fish Permitted (no other meat)</i>		<i>Services in blue</i> <i>- click for the livestream</i>	<i>Times and events are subject to change</i>			1 Meat Fast 5 pm Vespers Confessions
2 Meat Fast 9:30 am Hours 10 am Liturgy Church School: St Gerasimus Cheesefare Dinner Vespers	3 GREAT LENT  BEGINS 6 pm Compline w/Canon of St. Andrew of Crete	4  6 pm Compline w/Canon of St. Andrew of Crete	5  10 am lenten Hours 6 pm Compline w/Canon of St. Andrew of Crete	6 9am to 12:30 pm  North End Soup Kitchen 6 pm Compline w/Canon of St. Andrew of Crete <i>Office Closed</i>	7  9:30 am Presanctified Liturgy 11:15 am adult ed	8 St Theodore  Saturday 9:30 am Liturgy 5 pm Vespers Confessions
9  9:30 am Hours 10 am Liturgy Church School: Orthodoxy Sunday	10  6 pm Compline at St George	11  6:30 pm Parish Council	12 10 am Hours  6 pm pan-Orthodox Presanctified at St Nicholas followed by lenten potluck	13  <i>Office Closed</i>	14  9:30 am Presanctified Liturgy 11:15 am adult ed	15  4:45 pm Trisagion & Vespers Confessions
16  9:30 am Hours 10 am Liturgy Church School: St Gregory Palamas	17  6 pm Compline at St George	18 	19  10 am Hours 6 pm Presanctified Liturgy	20  <i>Office Closed</i>	21  6 pm Akathist @ St George 7 pm Lenten Retreat @ St. George	22 9 am Lenten  Retreat @ St. George 1:15 pm Vespers @ St George <i>No Vespers @ St. Nicholas</i>
23  9:30 am Hours 10 am Liturgy Church School: St Patrick	24  31  Repose of St Innocent 6 pm Compline at St George	25  Annunciation 10 am pan-Orthodox Liturgy @ Assumption	26 Synaxis of the  Archangel Gabriel 10 am Hours 6 pm pan-Orthodox Presanctified at St Mary lenten potluck	27  <i>Office Closed</i>	28  9:30 am Presanctified Liturgy 11:15 am adult ed	29  4:45 pm Trisagion & Vespers Confessions
30  9:30 am Hours 10 am Liturgy Church School: St Cyril				30  <i>Office Closed</i>		