



Established 1918

# St. George Orthodox Church

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*Metropolitan SABA, Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America  
Rt. Rev. Archimandrite Jeremy, Archiepiscopal Vicar Diocese of Toledo and the Midwest*

Fr. Jeremy Finzel, Pastor



## Sunday, September 1, 2024 - The Beginning of the Indiction (The Church New Year)

8:45am - Matins, 10:00am - Divine Liturgy with Fr. Jon Fate, followed by Fellowship

### Coming Up at St. George:

Saturday, September 7 at 9:00am - Hours and Divine Liturgy  
and at 5:30pm - Great Vespers

**Sunday, September 8 at 8:45am - Matins, 10:00am - Divine Liturgy  
for the Nativity of the Theotokos with Fr. Jeremy Finzel,  
followed by Fellowship and Adult Education**

Tuesday, September 10 from 1-3pm - Senior Share

Wednesday, September 11 at 6:30pm - Daily Vespers

**Saturday, September 14 at 9:00am - Festal Orthros, 10:00am - Divine Liturgy  
for the Feast of Exaltation of the Cross**

and at 5:30pm - Great Vespers

Sunday, September 15 at 8:45am - Matins, 10:00am - Divine Liturgy, followed by  
Fellowship and Adult Education

Services available on YouTube:

<https://www.youtube.com/@St.GeorgeSpringValleyOrthodox>

## Please follow along in the booklet for Divine Liturgy

- *The Glory hymns at the end of Matins:*

*Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.*

O Thou Who hast framed all things by Thine ineffable wisdom, O Christ God and Word, and hast established times and seasons for our sakes: Bless the works of Thy hands, and gladden our faithful hierarchs with Thy might, granting them strength against heresies, since Thou alone art good and the Lover of mankind.

*Both Now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.*

Thou hast transcended all blessings, O Virgin Theotokos! For Hades hath been spoiled by Him who was incarnate of thee. Yea, Adam was recalled, the curse was abolished. Eve was delivered and death was caused to die, and we were made to live again. Wherefore, with praise we cry: Blessed art Thou, O Christ our God, who hast thus shown Thy pleasure. Glory to Thee!

- *The Liturgy continues with the Great Doxology, see booklet Page 2.*

- *The Resurrectional Troparion:*

Today hath salvation come into the world. Let us sing praises unto Him who rose again from the grave, the Author of our life. For in that by death He hath destroyed death, He hath given us the victory and great mercy.

- *The Liturgy continues with the Opening Prayers, see booklet Page 4.*

- *The Third Antiphon and the Little Entrance:*

**Troparion for the Resurrection (Tone 1):** The stone being sealed by the Jews, and Thy pure body being guarded by the soldiers, Thou didst rise on the third day, O Savior, granting life to the world. Wherefore, the heavenly powers acclaimed Thee, O Giver of life, crying, Glory to Thy Resurrection, O Christ! Glory to Thy kingdom! Glory to Thy gracious providence, O Thou only Lover of mankind.

- *The Entrance Hymn:*

**Choir:** O come, let us worship and fall down before Christ, our King and God. Save us, O Son of God, who didst rise again from the dead, we who sing unto Thee: Alleluia!

- *Hymns of the day, following the Little Entrance:*

**Repeat the Troparion for the Resurrection** (from above)

**Apolitykion of the Indiction (Tone 2):** O Thou Creator of the whole universe, who didst appoint times by Thine own power, bless the crown of this year with Thy goodness, O Lord. Preserve in safety thy kings and thy city, by the intercessions of the Theotokos, and save us.

**Troparion to the Theotokos (Tone 7):** Rejoice, O virgin Theotokos, full of grace, O haven and intercessor for mankind; for from thee was the Deliverer of the world incarnate; and thou alone art Mother and Virgin, blessed and glorified always. Intercede, therefore, with Christ God, to grant safety to all the universe.

**Troparion to the Righteous Simeon (Tone 1):** For patience thou hast become a pillar, and the ancient fathers thou hast equalled and rivaled. Thou hast rivaled Job in sufferings, Joseph in temptations, and the life of the incorporals, while yet thou wast in the flesh. Therefore, O our righteous Father Simeon, intercede with Christ God to save our souls.

**Troparion for St. George the Great-Martyr (Tone 4):** Since thou art a liberator and deliverer of captives, a help and succour of the poor and needy, a healing physician of the sick, a contender and fighter for kings, O great among martyrs, the victory-clad George: Intercede with Christ God for the salvation of our souls.

**Kontakion for the Indiction (Tone 4):** O God of all, verily transcendent in essence, Creator of the ages and their Master, bless the cycle of this year, saying by Thy boundless mercy, O Compassionate One, all those who worship only Thee, O Master, and who cry unto Thee in fear, saying, Grant to all, O Savior, a fertile year.

*The Trisagion Hymn:*

Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal One: Have mercy on us! (three times)

*Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, both now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.*

*Holy Immortal One: Have mercy upon us!*

Louder! Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal One: Have mercy upon us!

### *The Epistle for the Indiction*

**Clergy:** Let us attend!

**Reader:** Great is our Lord, and great is His power. Praise the Lord, for the Lord is good.

**Clergy:** Wisdom!

**Reader:** The Reading from the First Epistle of St. Paul to St. Timothy (2:1-7).

**Clergy:** Let us attend!

**Reader:** Timothy, my son, first of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all men, for kings and all who are in high positions, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life, godly and respectful in every way. This is good, and it is acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, Who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, Who gave Himself as a ransom for all, the testimony to which was borne at the proper time. For this I was appointed a preacher and apostle (I am telling the truth, I am not lying), a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and truth.

**Clergy:** Peace be to thee who redest.

**Reader:** And to thy spirit.

**Chanter:** God gives vengeance to me, and subdues people under me. He magnifies the salvation of the king, and deals mercifully with His Christ, with David and his seed forever.

**All:** Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

### *The Gospel for the Indiction*

**The Reading from the Holy Gospel according to St. Luke (4:16-22).**

At that time, Jesus came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up; and He went to the synagogue, as His custom was, on the Sabbath day. And He stood up to read; and there was given to Him the book of the prophet Isaiah. Jesus opened the book and found the place where it was written, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He has anointed Me to preach good news to the poor and to heal the broken hearted. He has sent Me to proclaim release to the

captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord.” And Jesus closed the book, and gave it back to the attendant, and sat down; and the eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on Him. And He began to say to them, “Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing.” And all spoke well of Him, and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of His mouth.

- *The Liturgy continues with the Homily and the Great Entrance, see booklet Page 13.*

**Communion Hymn of the Indiction (Tone 8):** Bless the crown of the year with Thy goodness, O Lord. Alleluia.

- *The Liturgy continues, see booklet Page 27.*

### Information & Announcements

**Sunday, September 8:** Out first Major Feast of the Church year, the Nativity of the Theotokos, and our first Sunday services with Fr. Jeremy. Please see the sign up sheet on the bulletin board to bring a dish to celebrate and join us if you're able!

**Additional Liturgy Services:** Throughout the forty days following Fr. Jeremy's ordination, there will be many opportunities to join us for these special services. Please see the attached calendar, the bulletin board downstairs or the church calendar at [springvalleyorthodox.com/st-george-events](http://springvalleyorthodox.com/st-george-events).

**OCWA Fall Retreat 2024:** “On the Theotokos” September 27-28, 2024 at St. Iakovos Retreat Center in Kansasville, Wisconsin. If interested, please see the available flyer or the bulletin board downstairs. Pre-registration is encouraged and you must RSVP by September 2.

**Rip's Fundraiser:** Wednesday, October 2 and Thursday, October 3 at Rip's in Ladd. We have tickets to sell, at \$12 each, please see Mark Kerasotas or Allyson. We also need individual baked goods, like cookies and brownies, to sell as desserts. If you're interested in baking up some goodies, please see Allyson.

### Parish Council Members

Elected & Appointed Members

Wayne Sanders, *Chair*

Melanie Thompson, *Treasurer*

Sbdn. David Anderson, *Sunday School*

Mark Kerasotes, *Vice-Chair & Order of St. Ignatius*

Rdr. Michael Baum, *Secretary & Ecclesiarch*

Organization Representatives

Genie Sanders, *Chanters/Choir*

Maxwell Colby, *Young Adults*

Allyson Scandale, *Antiochian Women*

Robert Abraham, *Facilities*

### Birthdays & Anniversaries

Sept. 1 - Fr. Jeremy and Kh. Jordan Finzel (anniv)

Sept. 4 - Tyler Thompson

Sept. 7 - Mary Miller (anniv)

Sept. 8 - Lynette Forsa (anniv)

Sept. 3 - Ron and Mari Ford (anni)

Sept. 6 - Christopher and Jennifer Baran (anniv)

Sept. 8 - Mike Kasap

### Church Finances

	July 2024	2024 YTD	2023 Comparison
Income:	\$3,996.00	\$51,298.34	\$62,008.11
Expense:	\$6,898.33	\$38,084.65	\$53,913.65
<b>Net:</b>	<b>-\$2,902.33</b>	<b>\$13,213.69</b>	<b>\$8,094.46</b>

**2024 figures do not include proceeds from the sale of the parsonage as they have been invested.**

# Your Grace Transforms the Universe, Part Three

By His Eminence Metropolitan Saba (Ispert)



## Distinguishing between Evil and Good

The human world today tends to accept the disease and change its name, in its quest to embrace the sick. Orthodox Christianity distinguishes between sickness and the patient, between wickedness and the wicked, between the sin and the sinner. It is called upon to liberate the wicked man from his wickedness and to free the sinner from his sin. It is aware that evil lies not in the matter itself but, rather, in one's attitude towards this matter; it lies in the will of man. Accepting the disease with the patient makes the patient worse. Compassion is for the fallen person, not for the fall itself. In order to cure patients from their illness, we must identify the illness and name it.

Orthodox Christian theology unleashes the energies that can transform this world back into what it was made to be. Orthodox theology must be the inspiration for movements of love, peace, service, non-discrimination, alleviating injustice, and caring for the environment—not influenced by movements of a merely human nature.

Christ came to save the world, to establish the earth as a heaven, not to establish a system limited to the parameters of mere earthly life.

The misery of the world, rich and poor alike—spiritual and material misery, which is constantly being exacerbated—is only a sign that Christians have not been sufficiently transfigured by the Holy Spirit, so that the world might be transfigured by them. Olivier Clement says, "If some people become prayer—that is, pure prayer that transcends all measures of the criteria of this world—then they transform the universe by their mere presence, by their mere existence."

## Church and Joy

There is another thing that the Church should be aware of: the desired joy, the joy of life in Christ. Christianity began by declaring joy: "I announce to you a great joy, that today a Savior has been born to you and he is Christ the Lord" (Luke 2:11). Christianity, since its inception, was a declaration of the only possible joy on earth.

Christianity announced a new, all-encompassing joy, turning the end into a beginning, death into life. It is not possible to understand Christianity without proclaiming this joy. And, since the Church is joy—only joy—it has triumphed in the world. But let us remember that every time it loses this joy, it will inevitably lose the world and will lose its testimony in it. Every time its joy becomes a worldly joy rather than the fruit of the Holy Spirit, it spoils its flavor and loses its taste, which the world needs but is unaware of; then the Church becomes null and void.

Is the Church aware today of the following words of Fr. Alexander Schmemmann, which are a contemporary echo of Christ's words? "The Church is in the world but not of the world, because only by not being of the world can it reveal and manifest the 'world to come,' the beyond" (For the Life of the World). Only Christianity can restore this world to come—the lost world, yet at the same time the desired one. An extended pause for reflection is required here, because a comprehensive change of prevailing notions is required.

## Comfort or Life?

How can we restore the realm of the Heavenly Kingdom—where "there is no sorrow, death, or sighing"—while we are affected by a debilitating secularism that strips our Christianity of its substantial mystical quality and turns it into a mere sector or domain among several sectors or domains of man's needs, even if we call it a "spiritual sector"? Freedom from the influence of contemporary secularism is one of the most important priorities of the Church in today's world. This is the spirit that has prevailed in the world, starting from the formerly Christian world and spreading from it to all countries.

Contemporary secularism seeks human comfort, while true Christianity seeks human life. Contemporary secularism reconciles people with death and presents it as a natural end to a normal life, whereas Christianity is not a reconciliation with death but a revelation of death, and it is able to reveal death because it is a revelation of life. Christ is this life. "Only if Christ is Life," quoting Father Alexander Schmemmann, "is death what Christianity proclaims it to be, namely, the enemy to be destroyed, and not a 'mystery' to be explained" (For the Life of the World).

### **Church Expatriation**

The Church is a divine institution that comes from above and is directed upwards. Its message is to raise the world to where and how it originally was.

The Church, while caring for the world, tends to come down to its measure. Many times, it overlooks, with good intentions, the fact that it has become the world's size. When, as it deals with human beings, it forgets that they are fallen, then it abandons its most sacred message—that is, salvation.

Today, the spirit of world secularism poses a threat to the Church. The secular achievements are undoubtedly attractive. Father Giovanni Martini described his Catholic Church after the Second Vatican Council, with all its positive aspects, with prophetic words. He said, "The post-Council Church lost its mystical face, and it became the Church of permanent dialogue, organizations, consultations, conferences, councils, committees, academies, parties, blocs of influence on public opinion, jobs, structures and reconstruction, social experiments, and statistics. Thus, the church became more than ever, the human church, that is, an entity without an identity."

To trust that life is truly with and in Christ is not a new requirement, but let us trust that Christ alone is sufficient for the world to have life, as we really believe. Then our sole trust in money, science, and technology becomes invalid; and they, in turn, become no more than servants of the message of Christ.

We should not forget that, according to the expression of Saint Paul the Apostle, we as Christians must be "as unknown, yet well-known; as dying, yet behold we live; as punished, yet not put to death; as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, yet possessing all things" (2 Cor. 6:9–10).

Our world talks a lot about God. God is often the subject of dissection and analysis, an idea, an ideology; and consequently, the face of God is absent—God the Life, the Father, God who cares for His people and carries them on eagles' wings. Isn't the Bible currently being taught as a book of literature or culture in many theological schools? Aren't there many theological books that present Christianity as an intellectual philosophy that only certain intellectuals are aware of? Saint Sophrony Sakharov talks about this subject, saying, "The long-standing experience of scientific theology has convincingly demonstrated that a person can obtain a thorough understanding of scientific theology without having a living faith, that is, in his or her ignorance of God."

Do we live what we have spoken of—that the universe manifests Christ through us or via our mediation—without restoring our fallen passions to their original position? How do we restore the world to God if we do not restore our souls to Him first?

The Orthodox Church persistently asks for repentance. It realizes that repentance is a change of mind that leads to awakening. To repent means to remain vigilant. The awakened person is the one who does not surrender to dreams aimlessly, under the influence of fleeting impulses. The awakened person is the one who has a meaning, a direction, a goal. He knows where he is and where he is going.

To be alert is to be present where we are. We live in the reality of the present. We do not become nostalgic for the past, and we do not get distracted and disturbed by desires for the future. It is what Paul Evdokimov says: "The present hour in which you live, the person you meet here and now, and the task you are doing at this moment are the most important issues in your life."

This permanent repentance inevitably leads to both purification of the soul and purification at the bodily level, simultaneously. The Orthodox Church emphasizes the spiritual effectiveness of bodily ascetic practices because it looks at Creation in its entirety and at the same time asks to restore it in its entirety to the Kingdom from which it had fallen.

### **The Last Offering**

When Christians present the world to God after its liberation from the effects of the fall, they present themselves along with it, realizing the presence of God in matter and beyond all matter. They do not accept the fallen world on its own terms because they know that our relationship with God's Creation has been distorted by sin and we will not rediscover its fundamental sacred character until our hearts are purified.

When we are cleansed, our hearts are filled with the love of God, rather than with overflow of emotions that are subject to changing influences. At that point, we understand the words of Father Zosima in the novel *The Brothers Karamazov*, when he was questioned about resorting to force or to humble love, especially in the face of sin. He advises, "Do not resort except to this love, this love that subjugates the entire world. Humanity that is filled with love is a marvelous force, unlike any other force."

*This teaching was originally printed for the 56th biennial Archdiocese Convention in July of 2023.*

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His Eminence, the Most Reverend Saba Isper is the Archbishop of New York and Metropolitan of the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America. His Beatitude Patriarch John X of Antioch and All the East and the Holy Synod of Antioch elected His Eminence to lead the Archdiocese during its extraordinary session on Feb. 23, 2023, in Balamand, Lebanon.

His Eminence will lead and oversee the Archdiocese's parishes, missions, departments, institutions and organizations in the United States and Canada from the headquarters in Englewood, New Jersey. The auxiliary bishops aid him in his administration across the continent.

For more information on His Eminence and his teachings, please visit

<https://www.antiochian.org/dashboard?name=MetSaba>

