



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 22, 2024 - Thirteenth Sunday After Pentecost

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

### Coming Up at St. George:

Tuesday, September 24 from 1-3pm - Senior Share

Wednesday, September 25 at 6:30pm - Daily Vespers

Saturday, September 28 at 5:30pm - Great Vespers

Sunday, September 29 at 8:45am - Matins, 10:00am - Divine Liturgy, followed by Fellowship and Meeting of the Ladies of St. George

Wednesday, October 2 at 6:30pm - Daily Vespers  
and from 4-9pm - Rip's Fundraiser

Thursday, October 3 from 4-9pm - Rip's Fundraiser

Saturday, October 5 at 5:30pm - Great Vespers

Sunday, October 6 at 8:45am - Matins, 10:00am - Divine Liturgy, followed by Fellowship and Meeting of the Parish Council

### Office Hours:

Thursday and Friday from Noon-3pm

### 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.*

They who were with Mary came and brought with them ointments; and as they were at a loss how to achieve their desire, they saw that the stone had been rolled, and a divine young man removed all anxiety and trouble from their souls by saying, The Lord Jesus hath risen.

Wherefore, they proclaimed to His Disciples, that they should hasten to Galilee and behold Him, risen from the dead; for He is the Lord, the Giver of Life.

*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, 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, Page 4.*

- *The Third Antiphon and the Little Entrance:*

**Troparion of the Resurrection (Tone 4):** Having learned the joyful message of the Resurrection from the angel, the women Disciples cast from them their parental condemnation, and proudly broke the news to the Disciples, saying, Death hath been spoiled. Christ God is risen, granting the world Great Mercy.

- *The Entrance Hymn:*

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 of the Resurrection** (*from above*)

**Apolytikion for St. Phocas of Sinope (Tone 4):** By choosing the Apostles' way of life, thou hast succeeded to their throne. Inspired by God, thou didst find the way to divine contemplation through the practice of virtue. After teaching the Word of Truth without error, thou didst defend the Faith to the very shedding of thy blood, O Holy Martyr among bishops Phocas. Entreat the Lord our 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.

**Ordinary Kontakion (Tone 2):** O protection of Christians that cannot be put to shame,

mediation unto the Creator most constant, O despise not the suppliant voices of those who have sinned; but be thou quick, O good one, to come unto our aid, who in faith cry unto thee: Hasten to intercession, and speed thou to make supplication, thou who dost ever protect, O Theotokos, them that honor thee.

- *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 Thirteenth Sunday after Pentecost*

**Clergy:** Let us attend!

**Reader:** O Lord, how marvelous are Thy works. In wisdom hast Thou made them all. Bless the Lord, O my soul!

**Clergy:** Wisdom!

**Reader:** The Reading from the First Epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians (16:13-24).

**Clergy:** Let us attend!

**Reader:** Brethren, be watchful, stand firm in your faith, be courageous, and be strong. Let all that you do be done in love. Now, brethren, you know that the household of Stephanas were the first converts in Achaia, and they have devoted themselves to the service of the saints; I urge you to be subject to such men and to every fellow worker and laborer. I rejoice at the coming of Stephanas and Fortunatus and Achaicus, because they have made up for your absence; for they refreshed my spirit as well as yours. Give recognition to such men. The churches of Asia send greetings. Aquila and Prisca, together with the church in their house, send you hearty greetings in the Lord. All the brethren send greetings. Greet one another with a holy kiss. I, Paul, write this greeting with my own hand. If anyone has no love for the Lord, let him be accursed. Our Lord, come! The grace of the Lord Jesus be with you. My love be with you all in Christ Jesus. Amen.

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

**Reader:** And to thy spirit.

**Chanter:** Go forth and prosper and reign, be cause of truth and meekness and righteousness. You love righteousness and hate iniquity.

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

### *The Gospel for the First Sunday of Luke*

#### **The Reading from the Holy Gospel according to St. Luke (5:1-11).**

At that time, Jesus was standing by the lake of Gennesaret. And He saw two boats by the lake; but the fishermen had gone out of them and were washing their nets. Getting into one of the boats, which was Simon's, Jesus asked him to put out a little from the land. And He sat down and taught the people from the boat. And when Jesus had finished speaking, He said to Simon, "Put out into the deep and let down your nets for a catch." And Simon answered, "Master, we toiled all night and took nothing! But at Thy word I will let down the nets." And when they had

done this, they enclosed a great shoal of fish; and as their nets were breaking, they beckoned to their partners in the other boat to come and help them. And they came and filled both the boats, so that they began to sink. But when Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord." For he was astonished, and all that were with him, at the catch of fish, which they had taken; and so also were James and John, sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon. And Jesus said to Simon, "Do not be afraid; henceforth you will be catching men." And when they had brought their boats to land, they left everything and followed Him.

- *The Liturgy continues with the Homily, Page 13.*

*The Prayers for the Catechumens:*

The Priest offers the prayers for the Catechumens.

**People:** Lord, have mercy. (*repeat after each petition*)

**Clergy:** Catechumens, bow your heads to the Lord.

**People:** To Thee, O Lord.

**Clergy:** So that with us they also may glorify Your most honorable and majestic name, of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, now and forever and to the ages of ages.

**People:** Amen.

*The Supplication of the Faithful:*

**Clergy:** Again and again, in peace, let all of us, the faithful, pray to the Lord.

**People:** Lord, have mercy.

**Clergy:** Help us, save us, have mercy on us, and protect us, O God, by Your grace.

**People:** Lord, have mercy.

**Clergy:** Wisdom!

*The Priest offers the First Prayer of the Faithful.*

**Clergy:** For to You all glory, honor, and worship are due, to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and forever and to the ages of ages.

**People:** Amen.

**Clergy:** Again and again, in peace, let all of us, the faithful, pray to the Lord.

**People:** Lord, have mercy.

**Clergy:** Help us, save us, have mercy on us, and protect us, O God, by Your grace.

**People:** Lord, have mercy.

**Clergy:** Wisdom!

*The Priest offers the Second Prayer of the Faithful.*

**Clergy:** That, ever guarded by Your might, we may ascribe glory to You, to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and forever and to ages of ages.

**People:** Amen.

- *The Cherubic Hymn:*

Let us who represent the Cherubim mystically, as we sing with them the thrice-holy hymn to the life-giving Trinity, the thrice-holy chant intoning. All cares terrestrial, now lay aside. We raise on high the King of All.

- *The Liturgy continues with the Great Entrance, Page 13.*



## Information & Announcements

**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 bulletin board downstairs or the church calendar at [springvalleyorthodox.com/st-george-events](http://springvalleyorthodox.com/st-george-events).

**Next Sunday, September 29:** The Ladies of St. George will have a meeting following fellowship. All ladies are welcome!

**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 Kerasotes 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*

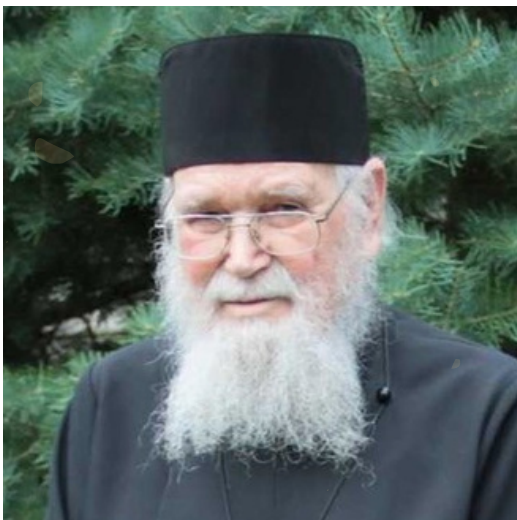
### Birthdays & Anniversaries

Sept. 25 - Jax Thompson, Kaitlyn Kelly

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## This is How God's Pure Ones Think

By His Eminence Metropolitan Saba (Ispere)



Father Roman Braga, a confessor of the faith, was born in Romania in 1922 and fell asleep in the Lord in the United States in 2015. Considered by many as a saint, they continually pray for the official announcement of his canonization. He endured a harrowing eleven-year imprisonment in communist Romania, enduring severe physical and psychological torment. Even after his release, he continued to suffer moral persecution until his departure for Brazil in 1968. Patriarch Justinian facilitated Father Braga's departure in order to save him from further harm from law enforcement because of his active involvement in his parish.

Father Braga, released as a deacon, struggled to find employment in various dioceses to make ends meet. Despite facing rejection from some bishops, he harbored no resentment, nor did he hold a grudge against them. Rather, he recognized their fear of persecution that the Church was suffering at the time.

We come to know him more intimately through his book, *Exploring the Inner Universe: Joy – The Secret of Life*, which is an extensive interview with him. In this book, he delves into various aspects of his life, the history of the contemporary Orthodox Church in Romania, the spirituality of the Orthodox Church and its people, and many other topics.

I was particularly struck by the purity and clarity of his spirit in some of his responses to the interviewer's questions. The interviewer, also Romanian, posed a lengthy question spanning several pages, criticizing the bishops who compromised with the communist authorities and remained silent about the brutal persecution of Christians in prisons and detention camps solely for their faith and zeal for the church. At that time, the authorities fiercely opposed any grassroots pastoral work, keeping some churches open and allowing high-level theological publications that the general populace did not understand and thus posed no threat. This facade served to show the world that the church was alive while concealing the reality of persecution.

In his critique of the bishops, the journalist indirectly suggests that the grace of God has left the "open" churches and moved to the prisons, where believers endure daily horrors.

Father Roman responds, "I never believed that the Spirit moved from the Romanian Church into the prisons, as you seem to imply in your question. When we were in prison, we would pray that the hierarchs of the church would stay where they were and not come to us, because the Spirit is where the Holy Sacraments are, where the Holy Liturgy takes place, and where the Hours, Vespers, and Matins are read. The Holy Spirit is the life of the Church. Only if we are truly members of the Church, members of the Holy Body of Christ, we are nourished only by the Holy Spirit. The Church cannot exist without its clerical hierarchs. The Church is comprised of the hierarchy, the clergy, and the people. As you cannot mistake the Church for the fault of some individuals, you cannot confuse it for some hierarchs. It is true that the hierarchs made compromises, but they worked to maintain and continuously offer the Holy Sacraments. And the Church could not exist without them. We know this also from the Holy Fathers. You cannot have the Church comprised only of people and no hierarchs" (p. 101).

He continues: "I believe that the Church, at least in Romania and Russia, was strengthened during the Communist persecution. I dare to say that suffering compels individuals to mature, but also the Church. Nikolai Berdyaev, a Christian philosopher, in one of his books, affirms that the Church was strong during the first 300 years of persecution. Later, when Constantine the Great gave freedom to the Christians, the spiritual life of the Church became diluted; the Church was more of an institution than a spiritual reality.

"The same thing happened during Communism: the Church was obligated to limit all her activities to the inside the four walls of the temple. I do not know the situation in other countries, but the Romanian Church today launched a campaign of physical and spiritual reconstruction. Priests are now serving in schools, hospitals, and the army. I'm optimistic; I think that the Romanian Church will contribute in renewing Orthodoxy in the soul of the Romanian nation" (p. 102).

In his answer to the question about the Church's historical state, which witnessed heretical patriarchs and bishops who indulged in their desires, Father Roman says: "To tell you the truth, I am not comfortable with the idea that if the hierarchs are sinful, then the Church no longer exists. Nor am I comfortable with the idea of what is called spiritual elitism. All bishops, without

exception, must be free from suspicion and lead exemplary lives. But their failure to do so does not negate the existence of the Church. I do not dare say that if a bishop is personally sinful, the Spirit of God no longer works in him, because the Holy Spirit always works for the salvation of all people, regardless of the worthiness of those who officiate at the Holy Sacraments. The Holy Spirit uses one hierarch today and tomorrow another, but the Church remains the same. Many priests are not worthy, but the Holy Spirit does not come and go in relation to our worthiness or unworthiness. The Holy Spirit is the life of the Church, even if some of the members of the Church are sick or wounded by sin” (p. 101-102). When the journalist challenged his assertion that bishops' virtuous lives are insignificant to the Church's continuity, he replied, “I never implied that.” He noted that countless holy bishops existed and convened ecumenical councils even during periods of widespread episcopal heresy. Nevertheless, the Church persisted, and the Holy Spirit remained active despite numerous crises.

Father Roman then cited the faithful who filled the churches even amidst severe persecution, emphasizing the significance of their ongoing spiritual nourishment through the Church's sacraments. This, in his view, preserved the church.

He says: “The faithful Orthodox people were wise in those days and did not leave the church. The churches under persecution were more crowded with believers than in the so-called free period, that is, when we began to enjoy freedom and democracy during the Constantinian era and our bishops no longer bargained with the authorities. When we were in prisons, we prayed for our hierarchs. We used to pray for the hierarchs, hoping they would do something to keep the churches open” (p. 103-104).

He cited Saint Gennadius II, Patriarch of Constantinople, who signed an agreement with the Ottoman Sultan after the fall of Constantinople to the Turks, stipulating that Christian services be limited to the remaining churches. He quoted the saintly patriarch, “It is time to sacrifice the forms in order to keep the essence.”

May God have mercy on us and infuse our souls with His grace, as He promised, “Where sin increased, grace abounded all the more.”

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>

