



Established 1918

# St. George Orthodox Church

211 E. Minnesota St. P.O. Box 122

Spring Valley, IL 61362

(815)664-4540 [springvalleyorthodox@gmail.com](mailto:springvalleyorthodox@gmail.com)

[www.springvalleyorthodox.com](http://www.springvalleyorthodox.com)

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



## Sunday, January 12, 2025 Sunday After Theophany

Tone 4/Eothinon 7

8:45am - Matins, 10:00am - Divine Liturgy  
Followed by Fellowship and Meeting of  
the Ladies of St. George

Fr. Jeremy Finzel, Pastor

### Coming Up at St. George:

Tuesday, January 14 at 6:30pm - Catechesis Class

Wednesday, January 15 at 6:30pm - Daily Vespers, 7:30pm - British Isles Presentation,  
Including Refreshments

Thursday, January 16 at 8:30am - Hours, 9:00am - Liturgy  
and at 6:30pm - Birthday Party for Patrick Ryder

Friday, January 17 at 8:30am - Hours, 9:00am Divine Liturgy for St. Anthony the Great

Saturday, January 18 at 5:30pm - Great Vespers

Sunday, January 19 at 8:45am - Orthros, 10:00am - Divine Liturgy,  
Followed by Fellowship and Parish Council Meeting

Tuesday, January 21 at 6:30pm - Catechesis Class

Wednesday, January 22 at 6:30pm - Daily Vespers, 7:30pm - British Isles Presentation,  
Including Refreshments

Thursday, January 23 at 8:30am - Hours, 9:00am - Liturgy

Saturday, January 25 at 5:30pm - Great Vespers

Sunday, January 26 at 8:45am - Orthros, 10:00am - Divine Liturgy,  
Followed by Fellowship and Annual Parish Meeting

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.*

Behold the dawn and rise of the day; why hast thou stood, O Mary, at the grave? And great darkness hath covered thy mind, and thou asked him, Where hath Jesus been placed? Yea, behold the Disciples who hastened to the tomb, how they surmised His Resurrection from the coffin wrappings and the turban, and remembered what was said about Him in the books. Wherefore, we who believed through them, praise Thee with them, O Christ, 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 service continues with the Great Doxology, Page 2.*

- *The Troparion after the Great Doxology:*

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 3.*

- *The First Antiphon:*

When Israel went out of Egypt, and the house of Jacob from among a barbarous people; Judah became His sanctuary; Israel His dominion.

**Refrain:** By the intercessions of the Theotokos, O Savior, save us.

The sea beheld and fled: Jordan turned back. What aileth thee, O sea, that thou fleddest? And thou Jordan, that thou didst turn back? *(Repeat Refrain)*

Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit. Both now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen. *(Repeat Refrain)*

- *The Little Litany*

- *The Second Antiphon:*

I am filled with love, for the Lord will hear the voice of my supplication. For He hath inclined His ear unto me, and in my days will I call upon Him.

**Refrain:** Save us, O Son of God, O Thou who wast baptized of John in the Jordan, as we sing unto Thee: Alleluia!

The pangs of death have encompassed me; the perils of hades have found me. Tribulation and sorrow have I found, and I called upon the name of the Lord. *(Repeat Refrain)*

Merciful is the Lord, and righteous; and our God hath mercy. *(Repeat Refrain)*

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

Save us, O Son of God, Who didst rise again from the dead, we who sing unto Thee: Alleluia!

Both now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen

Only-begotten Son and Word of God, who art immortal, and who didst deign for our salvation to be incarnate of the Holy Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary, and without change wast made man, and was also crucified, O Christ our God, and didst trample death by death, being yet one of the Holy Trinity, glorified together with the Father and the Holy Spirit: Save us!

- *The Little Litany*

- *The Third Antiphon:*

O give thanks unto the Lord, for He is good; for His mercy endureth forever. Let the house of Israel now confess that He is good; for His mercy endureth forever. Let the house of Aaron confess that He is good; for His mercy endureth forever. Let them now who fear the Lord confess that He is good; for His mercy endureth forever.

**Troparion of Theophany (Tone 1):** By Thy baptism, O Lord, in the River Jordan, worship to the Trinity hath made its appearance; for the voice of the Lord did come forth to Thee with the testimony, naming Thee beloved Son; and the Spirit in the likeness of a dove, confirming the truth of the word. Wherefore, O thou who didst appear and lighted the world, O Christ, glory to Thee.

- *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:*

**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.

**Repeat the Troparion of Theophany (Tone 1):** By Thy baptism, O Lord, in the River Jordan, worship to the Trinity hath made its appearance; for the voice of the Lord did come forth to Thee with the testimony, naming Thee beloved Son; and the Spirit in the likeness of a dove, confirming the truth of the word. Wherefore, O thou who didst appear and lighted the world, O Christ, glory to Thee.

**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 of the Theophany of Christ (Tone 4):** On this day Thou hast appeared unto the whole world, and Thy light, O Sovereign Lord, is signed on us who sing Thy praise and chant with knowledge: Thou hast now come, Thou hast appeared, O Thou Light unapproachable.

- *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 Sunday After the Theophany of Christ*

**Clergy:** Let us attend!

**Reader:** Let Thy mercy, O Lord, be upon us. Rejoice in the Lord, O ye righteous.

**Clergy:** Wisdom!

**Reader:** The Reading from the Second Epistle of St. Paul to the Ephesians (4:7-13).

**Clergy:** Let us attend!

**Reader:** Brethren, grace was given to each of us according to the measure of Christ's gift. Therefore, it is said, "When He ascended on high He led a host of captives, and He gave gifts to men." (In saying, "He ascended," what does it mean but that He had also descended into the lower parts of the earth? He who descended is He who also ascended far above all the heavens, that He might fill all things.) And His gifts were that some should be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.

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

**Reader:** And to thy spirit.

**Chanter:** O Lord, Thy mercy endureth forever. For Thou hast said: Mercy shall be built up forever.

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

### *The Gospel for the Sunday After the Theophany of Christ*

#### **The reading from the Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew (4:12-17).**

At that time, when Jesus heard that John had been arrested, he withdrew into Galilee; and leaving Nazareth he went and dwelt in Capernaum by the sea, in the territory of Zebulon and Naphtali, so that what was spoken by the prophet Isaiah might be fulfilled: "The land of Zebulon and the land of Naphtali, toward the sea, across the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles—the people who sat in darkness have seen a great light, and for those who sat in the region and shadow of death light has dawned." From that time Jesus began to preach, saying, "Repent, for the kingdom of Heaven is at hand."

- *The Liturgy continues with the Homily, Page 12.*

- *The Litany of the Catechumens:*

**Priest:** Pray to the Lord, ye catechumens.

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

Let us, the faithful, pray for the catechumens, that the Lord will have mercy on them.

That He will teach them the word of truth.

That He will reveal to them the gospel of righteousness.

That He will unite them in His holy, catholic and apostolic Church.

Save them; have mercy on them; help them; and keep them, O God, by Thy grace.

**Priest:** Bow your heads unto the Lord, ye catechumens.

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

**Priest:** (Quietly) O Lord our God, who dwellest on high and regardest the humble, who hast sent forth as the salvation of the race of men thine only-begotten Son and God, our Lord Jesus Christ; Look down upon thy servants the catechumens, who have bowed their necks before Thee; make them worthy in due season of the laver of regeneration, the forgiveness of sins and the robe of incorruption. Unite them to Thy holy, catholic and apostolic Church, and number them with Thine elect flock. (Louder) That with us they may glorify Thine all-honorable and majestic name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto ages of ages.

**People:** Amen.

**Priest:** As many as are catechumens, depart. Depart, catechumens. As many as are catechumens, depart. Let none of the catechumens remain.

- *The First Litany of the Faithful:*

**Priest:** As many as are of the faithful, again and again in peace, let us pray to the Lord.

**Choir:** Lord, have mercy. (Very slowly while the Priest prays quietly.)

**Priest:** Help us, save us, have mercy on us, and keep us, O God, by Thy grace.

**People:** Lord, have mercy.

**Priest:** Wisdom!

**Priest:** For unto Thee are due all glory, honor and worship to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto ages of ages.

**People:** Amen.

- *The Second Litany of the Faithful:*

**Priest:** Again and again in peace, let us pray to the Lord.

**Choir:** Lord, have mercy. (Very slowly while the Priest prays quietly.)

**Priest:** Help us, save us, have mercy on us, and keep us, O God, by Thy grace.

**People:** Lord, have mercy.

**Priest:** Wisdom!

**Priest:** That guarded always by Thy might we may ascribe glory unto Thee to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto 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 12.*

### **Birthdays & Anniversaries**

January 13 – Freda Kapetaneas, Lukas Schrader

January 14 – Angelo Fousekas

January 16 – Nicholas Leonard

## Parish Council Representatives

### Elected & Appointed Members

Wayne Sanders, *Chair*  
Mark Kerasotes, *Vice-Chair & Order of St. Ignatius*  
Melanie Thompson, *Treasurer*  
Rdr. Michael Baum, *Secretary & Ecclesiarch*  
Sbdn. David Anderson, *Sunday School*

### Organization Representatives

Genie Sanders, *Chanters/Choir*  
Allyson Scandale, *Antiochian Women*  
Maxwell Colby, *Young Adults*  
Robert Abraham, *Facilities*

## Information & Announcements

**British Isle Presentations:** Mike Baum has put together slideshows of his and Ruth's recent pilgrimages to England and Ireland. There's an amazing amount of ancient Christian heritage, sites, and stories, and they brought back a lot of pictures! Continuing this week on the topic: The Flowering of Ireland. Presentations and refreshments will start at 7:30 pm, right after Wednesday's Daily Vespers at 6:30 pm.

**Birthday Party for Patrick Ryder:** You're invited! Patrick's second birthday party will take place here, this Thursday, January 16th, from 6:30-8:30pm. Light snacks will be provided.

**House Blessings:** It is the season for house blessings! Fr. Jeremy is eager to visit you and bless your home with the purifying holy water that is blessed by God. Please see him about scheduling a visit over the next few weeks.

## Baptizing the World, Part One

by His Eminence Metropolitan Saba (Ispere)

Until the fourth century, the Christian Church continued to celebrate one feast, for the birth of Christ and his baptism together. The feast marked one occasion to celebrate two divine events. However, after the Byzantine emperor, Constantine the Great, converted to Christianity followed by many others, starting in the fourth century, their new religious practices started to become mixed with the pagan customs and ceremonies previously ingrained in their conscience, which conflicted with their new faith. This forced the Church to confront and overcome the new challenge by Christianizing it.

The feast of the sun god was a great feast in the Roman Empire, especially in the East. Feasts are always, unfortunately, occasions to escape morality for many. When new believers continued to celebrate this feast alongside the Christian feasts, the Church, the pillar of truth, decided to separate Christmas from Theophany and assign a special feast for it – independent feasts for the Lord's birth and baptism. The feast of baptism remained on January 6, and Christmas was moved to December 25, the date of the feast of the sun.

Therefore, those who attend the prayers and liturgical services will notice an almost complete similarity in the structure of the two festal services.

The Christmas apolytikion uses the title "Sun of Justice" for Christ: "For they that worshipped the stars learned through a star (the light of the knowledge of Christ) to worship Thee, O Sun of Justice." Thus, in time, the pagan festival became Christianized, and Christians began to celebrate in a manner befitting their faith.

This is what we call the Christianization, or baptism, of the world. It consists of adopting an existing practice and giving it a Christian meaning. Let us take baptism as a second example. Water in ancient civilization was a source of fear and danger. Ancient man did not have the ability to confront floods, torrents, heavy rains and their aftermath, let alone seas and rivers. Water was considered a source of uncontrollable chaos, and was called, in the Old Testament, “chaos.” The god of water was a fearsome god. However, water was also considered a sign of purification and cleanliness, and a tangible proof of the inner purity towards which the repentant person turns. Therefore, it was used in most religions as a symbol of purification and inner cleanliness.

St. John the Baptist called for the baptism of repentance, which was a sign of a change in the baptized person’s behavior and taking a new path, well pleasing to God and in accordance with the divine commandments. Would the Baptist have called for this water baptism if this practice was unknown and unfamiliar to his contemporaries? Christ came and accepted John’s baptism, to teach us “to fulfill all righteousness” (Matthew 3:15). He also asked his disciples to baptize those to whom they preached in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit (Matthew 28:19).

Baptism by water was no longer a mere sign, but became, in Christ, a spiritual rebirth, divine sonship for the baptized, forgiveness of sins, a garment of incorruption, etc. It was no longer a symbol or image of a deeper meaning, but a real act bearing divine grace. In other words, Christianity adopted a familiar practice, gave it a completely new meaning, and arranged a special ritual for its completion, commensurate with the faith.

The same is true for many other things.

Some people try to ridicule Christianity on the grounds that it adopted rituals and practices that existed long before it, and therefore are not of its own invention. Their argument is that the rituals were taken from what came before Christianity – as if the authenticity of a subject lies only in its invention!

---

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>

---

