



ST. GEORGE Chronicle

SUMMER ISSUE
JULY/AUGUST 2020



The Very Rev. Christopher Morris
Pastor

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF ST GEORGE ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN CHURCH
KEARNEY, NEBRASKA

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Sept 1 - New Year!

Sept 8 - Nativity of Theotokos

Sept 14 - Exaltation of the Cross

A Handful of Sand

by Elder Ephraim of Arizona

Can you measure God's mercy? In the face of God's mercy, the sins of the worst person ever are a handful of sand in the ocean. There's no sin that can defeat God's mercy.

God's depicted as our mother; Can the sin of a child overcome the love of a mother? If a mother loves her child, God loves us infinitely more than that. He demonstrated this clearly when he was crucified on the Cross.



Saint Peter denied the Lord three times, and repentance restored him. Through repentance, the great persecutor of Christians, Saint Paul, became one of the chief apostles. Repentance has sanctified harlots, robbers, tax-collectors and thousands of other guilty people. So put aside your worry and the chastisement of your conscience. Become hopeful, take courage and get rid of any thought of despair.

[Source://pemptousia.com](http://pemptousia.com)

"For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need."

– Hebrews 4:15-16



The Dormition Fast: Summer Pascha by Archpriest Ayman Kfouf

The Dormition of the Theotokos is one of the Great Feasts of the Orthodox Church, celebrated on August 15. The word "Dormition" is a derivative from the Latin word "dormitio", which means "falling asleep."

The Feast of the Dormition of the Theotokos is the commemoration of the falling asleep, burial, resurrection, and translation of the Theotokos into heaven in the body.

Historical Background of the Feast

The Feast of the Dormition of the Theotokos is one of the oldest Marian feasts in the church. The roots of the feast go back to Jerusalem, where the apostles and the Christians of Jerusalem honored and kept alive the memory of the falling asleep of the Theotokos. Consequently, quickly, her empty tomb, in Gethsemane, became a destination for pilgrims from Jerusalem and the surrounding neighborhoods.

After the dogmatization of the doctrine of the Divine Motherhood of the Virgin Mary in the third Ecumenical Council of Ephesus (431), the commemoration of the falling asleep of the Theotokos became more popular amongst

Christians in the vast majority of the Christian world.

In the late sixth century, in the year 588, the Emperor Maurice officially adopted the commemoration of the Feast of the Dormition of the Theotokos into the liturgical calendar in the entire Byzantine Empire, and commanded that it be celebrated on August 15.

In the second half of the seventh century, the feast of the Dormition appeared in the West under the influence of the East. It was accepted in

Theotokos was preceded by two periods of fasting: FIRST: before the feast of the Transfiguration (August 1-5) and SECOND: after the feast of the Transfiguration (August 7-15). In the tenth century, the two fasting periods were merged into one, which includes fourteen fasting days beginning on August 1st through August 14th.

The Narrative of the Feast

The main source of the narrative of the feast of the Dormition is based on the oral and written Tradition of the church, which include: the writings of Saints

Dionysios the Areopagite, John the Damascene and Andrew of Crete; the hymnography and iconography of the Church, in addition to an apocryphal narrative of the feast by Saint John the Theologian.

According to the Orthodox Tradition, the Virgin Mary lived after Pentecost in the house of the Apostle John in

Rome under Pope Sergius I (687-701), and from Rome it passed over to the rest of Europe.

Up until the end of the ninth century,

the feast of the Dormition of the

Three days before her death, the
(continued page 5)



A Note from our . . .



Greetings,

I thought I would take a little space in this month's Chronicle to give a brief parish update since we have not been able to meet as a group to give an update in a long time. It has simply amazed me how quickly, yet so slowly, this quarantined year has moved

along. It seems like just a couple weeks ago we were preparing for Pascha and yet it seems like it has been forever since we have all been able to meet together as a parish. God's blessings on each of you as each of you have sacrificed during this time.

I felt that giving everyone a quick update on the business side of St. George would be good. Despite quarantine and many other things ... God's grace, not surprisingly, is AMAZING. I am no longer surprised by the ways that St. George

weathered and overcomes many things: I now stand in amazement.

The business of the church has continued on and there are many to thank for the many things that continue behind the scenes. I will refrain from calling these people out by name for fear of missing the name of someone that sacrificially (without any knowledge or recognition) takes their time to help with many and any of these things. First let me say a HUGE thank you to those who are faithfully and diligently cleaning and sanitizing

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ST. TIMON SUNDAY IS JULY 26

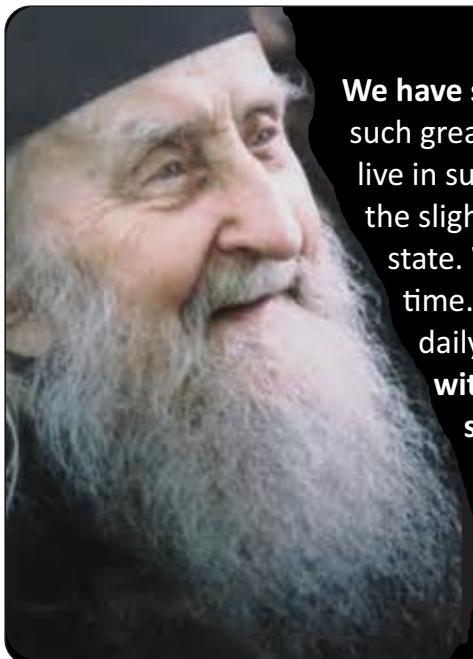
Each year on "Saint Timon Sunday" the congregations of our Diocese are asked to prayerfully consider the needs of DOWAMA's "The Hauran Connection" which assists our Sister Diocese of Bosra-Hauran in south Syria. This area is shepherded by His Eminence Metropolitan Saba.

After Liturgy on Sunday, July 26th, we will accept donations for St. Timon Sunday; please make check payable to St. George with message line "Bosra-Hauran". If you are unable to attend Liturgy on the 26th, please plan now to give an offering in advance.



Thank you for your continued support to help St. George Kearney participate in this community offering to our Sister Diocese. Let us encourage our brothers and sisters in Christ, through our prayers and gifts. Any monetary amount you can give, does make a difference, especially in Syria. Please prayerfully consider how you can help. Thank you.

* * *



We have such a rich God, Who has such great grace, but all the same we live in such poverty. We are upset by the slightest thing; this is a wretched state. We ought to be joyful all the time. Our life should always be a daily surprise. **Not a day passes without God giving us a new sense of eternal life.**

—Elder Sophrony of Essex



Our Sympathy

TO THE FAMILY OF:

John Maloley, on the loss of his wife **Mary**, May 11, 2020.



MAY HER
MEMORY
BE ETERNAL

Our Sympathy

TO THE FAMILY OF:

Margo Maloley on the loss of her husband **Nimir**, on June 5, 2020.



MAY HIS
MEMORY
BE ETERNAL

Our Sympathy

TO THE FAMILY OF:

Amy, Levi, Micah and Alexis Hadley, on the loss of Amy's father, **Tom Mauler**, on June 19, 2020.



MAY HIS
MEMORY
BE ETERNAL

Our Sympathy

TO THE FAMILY OF:

Tim and Tracey Shada, Megan Shada, Amanda, Zane and Rexton Williamson, on the loss of Tracey's mother, **Carol Ann Yencer**, on July 6, 2020.



MAY HER
MEMORY
BE ETERNAL

WE GET LETTERS ...



“TELL YOUR STORY”

- Archbishop Michael



“The Holy Scriptures were not given to us that we should enclose them in books, but that we should engrave them upon our hearts.”

— Saint John Chrysostom



Love, Margo and family



Dear members of Saint Helena Ladies Society,
Thank you for the beautiful flower arrangement. They surrounded Nimir with comfort and beauty.
We appreciate your thoughtful gesture.

Birthdays

July 5

Linda Maloley

July 9

Delaney Denny

July 11

Cedar Kremer

Joanie Klein

July 18

Amanda Williamson

Drew Fothergill

Cora Theesen

July 22

Dione Steinbrink

Tasia Theoharis

July 30

Jeannie Hoff

Jenny Bergt

Virginia Suleiman



July 10

John & Theodora Wolf

July 12

Phillip & Ashley Maloley

July 29

Darren & Cora Theesen



Donation given to **Burn The Mortgage Fundraiser** in honor of *Mark and Joanie Klein, Mike and Ronda Maloley*
Anniversaries from Tim and Tracey Shada

Donation to **Burn The Mortgage Fundraiser** in honor of *Victoria Salem*

Donation to **Saint Helena Ladies Society** from Margo Maloley and family

Donation to **Saint George Church** from Varthie and Lee Ann Eliakis

Donation to **Burn The Mortgage Fundraiser** in honor of July birthdays from anonymous donor



Donation given to **Saint George church** in memory of *Mary Maloley* from Paul Steinbrink

Donation given to **Burn The Mortgage Fundraiser** in memory of *Mary Maloley* from Mike and Darlene Liakos

Donations to **Saint George Church** in memory of *Nimir Maloley* from Sharon and Eric Hoffman; Jodi and David Walker; the employees of Barlow/McCarthy Midwest

Several donations to **Saint George Memorial fund** in memory of *Nimir Maloley* from donors

Donation to **Saint George Church** in memory of *Nimir Maloley* from Fred and Michele Day

Donation to **Saint George Church** in memory of *Nimir Maloley* from Jean and Randy Hinton

Donation to **Saint George Church** in memory of *Nimir Maloley* from Kerry Oddo

Donation to the **Burn The Mortgage Fundraiser** in memory of *Tom Mauler* from anonymous donor

May God bless you all for your generosity!

GOD GRANT YOU
MANY YEARS

"God is visiting you when tears come during prayer."

—Elder Amphilochios Makris of Patmos



O Most Glorious Ever Virgin Mary,

Mother of Christ

Our God,

accept our prayers
and present them
to Thy Son and our
God, that He may
enlighten and
save our souls.



* * * * *



Birthdays

August 7

Juli Jones

August 13

Ronda Maloley

August 20

Diana Brailita

Grant Guikema



August 5

Gerald & Kim Rehtus

August 12

John & Margaret Morris

August 15

Fr. Christopher & Kh. Anastasia

August 27

Rocky & Dione Steinbrink



(SUMMER PASCHA - continued from page 2)

Archangel Gabriel appeared to the Virgin Mary and revealed to her the date of her departure into eternal life. Immediately, the Theotokos returned to her home and prepared herself for this event through fasting and prayer.

On the day of her repose, even though the apostles were scattered throughout the world, they were miraculously transported to be at her side. Exceptionally, the Apostle Thomas did not arrive on time to bid his final farewell to the Theotokos.

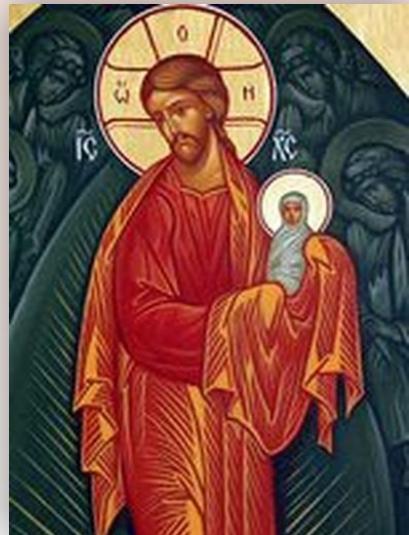
While the Apostles were singing hymns in honor of the Mother of God, they saw a vision showing Christ, accompanied by Angels and Saints, coming to escort the soul of His Most Holy Mother into heaven. With songs of praises, the Apostles carried the body of the most pure Theotokos to the grave in Gethsemane to be buried near her parents.

At Gethsemane, the disciples gathered and remained around her tomb and kept a vigil for three days. On the Third day, the Apostle Thomas arrived and asked to view for the last time the Most Holy Mother of God. When the Apostles opened the grave of the Theotokos, her body was not there. The Apostles realized then that she was taken into heaven in the body to be reunited with her soul.

The Liturgical Background of the Feast

The Feast of the Dormition of the Theotokos is preceded by a two-week fasting period, which referred to as

the "Dormition Fast." The Dormition Fast starts on August 1 and ends on August 14th. It is considered to be a very strict fast, even stricter than both the Nativity and the Apostles Fasts.



In the Dormition Fast all kinds of meat, fish, oil and wine are forbidden to eat; with the following exceptions: on the feast of the Transfiguration (August 6) when fish is allowed; on Saturdays and Sundays when oil and wine are allowed.

During the Dormition Fast, either the Small Paraklesis (Supplicatory Canon) or the Great Paraklesis are celebrated every evening with the following exceptions: on Saturdays, on the Eve of the Feast of the Transfiguration and on the Eve of the Feast of the Dormition itself, where the festal services are celebrated.

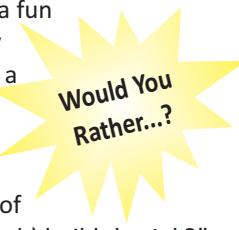
In some churches and monasteries, the service of the "Burial of the Theotokos" is celebrated during an All-Night Vigil.
(continue page 6)



Youth Group at St. George

The youth group of St. George has been using both conventional and modern ways to communicate the past few months during the Covid pandemic.

In March, we mailed letters to each other with notes of encouragement and secret messages to decode. We also used Zoom to "meet" for fellowship social time. It was a sweet surprise to get to see into each other's houses. We don't normally meet in our homes, so this was a fun opportunity to get to know each other by seeing how our homes look. We enjoyed a game of "**Would You Rather...?**" Sarah asked us all questions and we took turns answering. One of the questions was, "Would you rather...(like Adam) name all of the animals that God created, OR (like Noah) build the Ark?"



It was interesting to hear how differently we all answered. The reasoning behind our answers was also sometimes very humorous.

In May, we used Zoom again to have a virtual scavenger hunt. We all had a blast running around our houses looking for funny items to bring back to show to our friends. We only had 30 seconds to find a particular item. A couple of examples were "go find something that brings you joy," and "go find something that makes noise." It was memorable and fun. It has been a wonderful gift to also hear that our youth group members are communicating with each other outside of youth group during the pandemic.



We want to thank you all for your continued prayers for our youth. May the Lord be glorified in all of our interactions.

Amanda and Sarah



(SUMMER PASCHA - *continued from page 6*)

The order of the service is based on the service of the burial of Christ, which consists of chanting the "Lamentations at the Bier of the Mother of God", and a solemn procession made with the a Epitaphion of the Theotokos.

According to our Antiochian practice, the Lamentations of the Dormition of the Theotokos may be chanted at Great Vespers on the eve of the Feast. Please note that this beautiful service of the "Burial of the Theotokos" is not a standard service in most parishes, or even most cathedrals or monasteries.

The Meaning of the Feast

The hymnography and liturgical text of the feast of the Dormition portrays the feast as mystical, eschatological, and paschal in nature.

1. Mystical and Eschatological

The hymnography of the feast envisions the Dormition of the Theotokos as an eschatological event that confirms the destruction of hades and the defeat of death. The Dormition of the Theotokos confirms the reality of the transformation of death from a fearful enemy into a joyous passage to eternal life.

The eschatological nature of the feast of the Dormition is evident, not only in the hymnography of the feast, but also in the mysterious gathering of the apostles, who gathered to witness how Christ, himself, comes to escort His mother to the kingdom. They are mysteriously gathered to witness, again, to the truthfulness of resurrection of Christ and his victory over death.

2. Paschal

The liturgical text of the Feast of the Dormition depicts the feast as a Paschal event. The hymns of the feast assert that the Virgin Mary experienced her own personal Pascha by passing through death and rising to eternal life. Being alive in heaven, as a queen and mother of Christ, we, now, can ask her intercessions to help us transform our own forthcoming death into a Paschal victory over death.

In the ecclesiastical tradition, the feast of Dormition of the Theotokos is called the "Summer Pascha." This name is derived from the fact that the Theotokos experienced her own Pascha; "Passover" from this life into life eternal.

St. John of Damascus confirms the

nature of the Feast of the Dormition by calling the death of the Theotokos: "The Deathless Death". He calls it the deathless death because of the fact that death resulted in her translation into life eternal, into glorification and union with the Lord. "O how does the source of life pass through death to life? She dies according to the flesh, destroys death by death, and through corruption gains incorruption, and makes her death the source of resurrection." (St. John of Damascus)

Conclusion

The Dormition of the Theotokos is a confirmation of the resurrection of Christ and a source of hope for the faithful in the promise of their personal resurrection, their personal Pascha. The death of the Theotokos and her translation into heaven confirms the divine promise of Christ to His faithful children that they will enjoy life eternal in everlasting communion with God.

What a paradox! While this Feast is called the "Falling Asleep of the Theotokos," it is in reality a celebration of her life and victory over death. It is a celebration of her "Passover" from this life into life eternal. It is a celebration of the confirmation of the promise of our own resurrection in Christ. Amen!

source:antiochianfeast

(GREETINGS - *continued from page 2*)

the church during this time. Another huge thank you to those who weekly and tirelessly mow and maintain the church properties. To those who keep the landscape beautiful and for the beautifying of the inside of the church. To the faithful chanters and servers who many times a week sacrifice their time and talents to chant services so that we may participate whether now in person or through live streaming. I am so grateful for everyone's sacrifices and service. It is truly amazing!

I thought I would close out this article with an update on how we are doing financially at this point in the year. I am sure the mention of the word "financial" could bring fear or concern to many people's minds. I am happy to report that fear and concern are not necessary. The fact that I can say this is another reason for a thank you to all of you for continuing to give sacrificially during this time. I would like to bring to your attention to where we are with regards to our budget for the year, now that we are at the half way point of the calendar year. On the income side of the budget we should ideally be at 50% of our goal as we are at the midpoint of the year. Currently we are sitting at 44% of our goal overall on income. I would like to explain this a little further. In the income lines you will find that with the permission of the Archdiocese and Bishop Basil the finance ministry made the decision to apply for a government stimulus grant. Like other parishes in our diocese, this grant was approved and we were given \$8,700 to help cover monthly expenses during the pandemic. This \$8,700 will show as income and thus puts our overall income number in a better condition than if we only compared actual giving to the budget. If we look at actual giving (minus stimulus \$) we are sitting at 37% of our budget. Keep in mind we are at the 50% or mid-point of the year. Still not too bad

considering we haven't been able to have full attendance for many of the past few months. On the expense side, we are currently sitting at a 34% spend of expenses. So let me repeat, true giving income is at 37% of budget and expenses are at 34% of what was budgeted at the mid-point or 50% point of the year. I would say this is truly AMAZING and Glory be to God! Thanks to all of you! Just to be clear though the \$8,700 federal stimulus grant that we received carries the potential for us to have to repay it back. However, currently the government will be providing all those who received stimulus grants to apply and request that these be forgiven. When the time comes for these requests to be submitted it is the finance ministry's intent to do so. If this grant is forgiven then we will continue to keep this amount in our income line of the budget and the money will be used for paying operating expenses. If for some strange reason they do not accept our request for forgiveness, then we are well-prepared to pay back this grant. This is all possible thanks again to your giving.

I would call out as a final thought, that even though we have managed our expenses to keep them under the actual income received, it would be wise for everyone to consider where you and your family are at with what you committed in giving to St. George. If the pandemic quarantine kept you from church and thus prevented you from making the amount of donations you would have normally, then now is a great time to catch back up. **I again want to say a HUGE thank you to everyone, as sacrifice is alive and well at St. George.**

Your servant,
Gerald Rehtus



Did You Know?

We offer numerous resources to encourage you in your Orthodox journey. Video clips, Articles, Podcasts, Photos, Weekly Church Bulletin, The Chronicle Newsletter, and our Monthly Calendar.



VISIT US TODAY
www.saintgeorgekearney.com

"The crisis of our time is nothing other than a privilege and a challenge for us, which hides within it the great gift of faith. It is a unique opportunity to prove our faith and to give the Almighty Lord the possibility to manifest His power in our weakness and poverty."

– Archimandrite Zacharias

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Stand in church as if you
are in heaven together
with the angels, and
consider yourself
unworthy to be praying
together with your
brothers. And be vigilant
not to be looking back
and forth to observe the
brothers and sisters, how
they are standing or
chanting, but observe
only yourself, your
chanting and your sins.

— St. Symeon the New Theologian

**"Let God intervene between you and your purpose, instead of
your purpose intervene between you and God."**

— Mother Gavrilia Papyannis

OUR FASTING DISCIPLINE

The Traditional fasting discipline of the Orthodox Church is observed on all Wednesdays and Fridays of this month. We fast from meat, poultry, eggs, fish, dairy products, wine, and oil.

The Dormition Fast takes place August 1st through the 14th, we fast everyday with exception on Sat. and Sun., when wine and oil are permitted.

Saturday, August 6th is the **Feast of our Lord's Transfiguration**, there is an allowance for fish as well.



— Mother Gavrilia Papyannis

"Miracle is the normal course of events according to God's Will. What we call a Miracle is only what is natural to God."

"Never wish for anything but the Will of God and accept with love any trials that come your way."

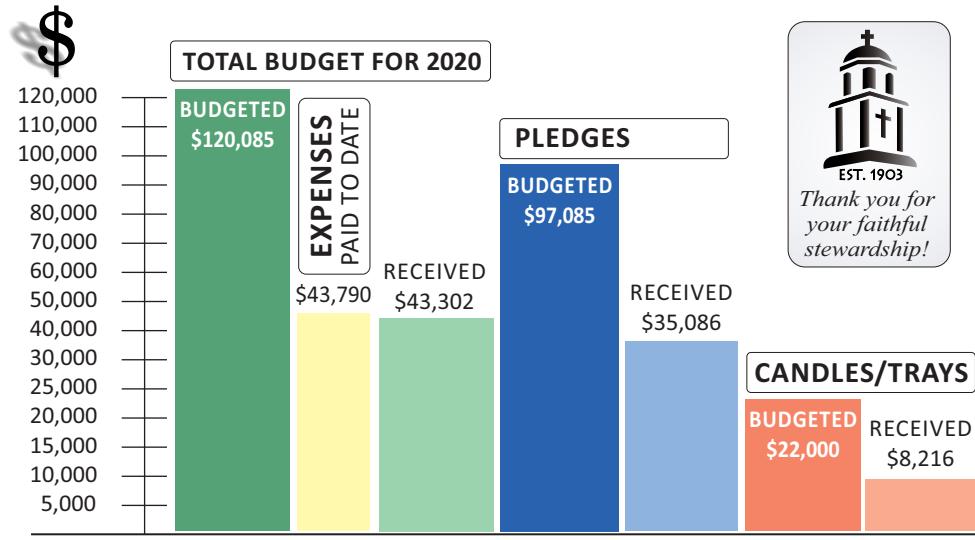


Let us hear from you. We welcome your comments, ideas, photos and any info you would like to share with your St. George family!

stgeorgechronicle@yahoo.com

Thank You!

YEAR-TO-DATE FOR 2020 ST. GEORGE



"And the disciples were first called Christians in Antioch." Acts 11:26