



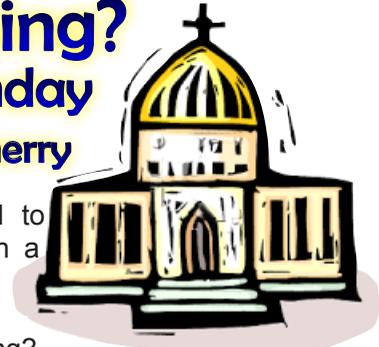
Volume 28, Number 3
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The Cathedral Messenger

A Publication of St. George Antiochian Orthodox Christian Cathedral

What Would You Be Missing? Why I go to church on Sunday

by **Victoria Sherry**



One morning, when I was four, I asked to stay home from nursery school. I didn't offer a reason. I was just tired of doing the same thing day after day.

My mother surprised me. Instead of forcing me to go, she reminded me that today was a classmate's birthday. "Think about what you'll be missing," she said.

I held my ground, but soon discovered the pleasures of freedom to be overrated. I never missed school again, except on days I was too sick to get out of bed. There was always a nagging question in the back of my mind: What will I be missing?

Sunday mornings were a different story. We stayed home, because my parents were not religious. All my friends went to Sunday school, so I had no playmates. Instead I tormented my brother, the morning ending with both of us in tears of boredom and frustration.

What was I missing? When a neighbor invited me to join her at Sunday school, my anticipation ran high. Although I had seen churches from the outside, with their beautiful stained glass windows, I'd never been inside one.

We passed the sanctuary on our way to the classroom, but I barely glimpsed what lay behind the double doors. After an hour spent coloring with the other children, I went home disappointed. I still had no idea what church was, or what people did there.

During my twenties I treated Sunday as an open book, a day whatever struck my fancy. I hiked or bicycled for hours, or jumped in my car for spontaneous day trips. Nothing ever quite lived up to my expectations. By evening I felt empty, crushed by the looming reality of work and

chores that waited to consume my life in a few short hours.

What was I missing?

One Christmas Eve, I attended midnight mass at an old German Catholic church downtown. The solemn ritual was lovely, but the frozen white statues scared me. I shuffled awkwardly in the pew while people went up for communion. At least no one pressured me to join them. Since I'd never been baptized, I knew I enjoyed the safety of a detached observer.

I reached my thirties without ever having attended a Sunday service. I did, however, spend Tuesday nights co-teaching t'ai chi at a nearby Methodist church. The assistant pastor, a kindly if uncoordinated fellow, was one of my students.

Every time I passed the sanctuary I felt a twinge of discomfort. It seemed rude to enter a church every week without darkening the door on a Sunday. Was I missing something?

Despite knowing Pastor Larry and a girl in the choir, I found my first Sunday with the Methodists quite bewildering. People stood up, shook hands at random intervals, and someone forced a basket into my hands. The pastor offered some prayers, but before I could truly follow what he was saying, he changed gears. Time for the choir to sing, followed by announcements and birthdays.

The stop-and-go service felt like a yo-yo, or a merry-go-round. I pondered the list of numbers (318, 128, 247, 445) posted on the front wall. Were those attend-

continues pg 5

Dean, V. Rev. Paul O'Callaghan • St. George Orthodox Christian Cathedral

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March is Antiochian Women's Month

Nurturing the Seeds of Orthodoxy Across North America

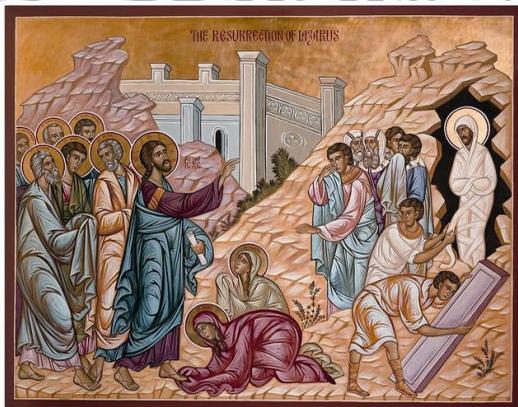


Presanctified Pot Luck Suppers

Please remember to bring a dish to share on these Wednesdays

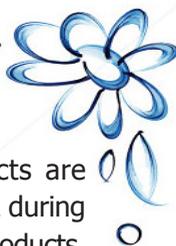
- March 13 - No supper after service
- March 20 @ St. Mary Church - Do Not Bring
- March 27
- April 3
- April 11, Thursday
- April 17 - HERE with St. Mary

GREAT FRIDAY VIGIL



All are more than **WELCOME** to participate in the Holy Friday All Night Vigil! A sign-up board is placed by the Chapel for sign-ups.

MARCH FASTING



Beginning March 4, we abstain from all meats, though fish and dairy products are allowed. The Great Fast begins March 11 during which we abstain from all meats, dairy products, and flesh fish. Fish is allowed following the Divine Liturgy for the Feast of the Annunciation on March 25.

MANY YEARS!

MABROOK! BLESSINGS!

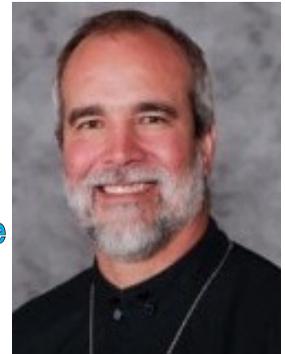
BIRTH

Emelia Pauline Dahdal 2/13
(daughter of Rami & Rebecca)

The 18th Annual Men's Lenten Retreat-2019

Mark your calendars now for this year's Men's Lenten Retreat, to be held **March 22-24** welcoming this year's presenter,

Fr. Theodore Dorrance from the Greek Metropolis of Denver
Topic: **"Leading a Disciplined Life"**



to register please contact the Cathedral office or email gina@stgeorgecathedral.net

OFFICERS 2019 PARISH COUNCIL
Chairman: Jeff Ayesh
Vice-Chairman: Craig Ablah
Secretary: Amy Fernandez
Treasurer: Chris Farha

Holy Saturday & Pascha



- Apr 27 • 9:30a **Vespertal Divine Liturgy**
11:00p **Rush Service & Orthros**
- Apr 28 • 12:00a **Divine Liturgy**
1:00p **Agape Vespers**



Seeking the Truth, Keeping the Faith: 7 Reasons to Attend Christ the Savior Academy

By: Dr Gaelan Gilbert, Headmaster of Christ the Savior Academy

The riches of the Orthodox tradition and faith are our greatest treasure. Our beloved Orthodox Faith includes the Church, Holy Tradition, the Scriptures, the saints, and the spiritual practices of prayer, asceticism, and charitable outreach. Taken together, this is the pearl of great price spoken about in the Gospel, the path to the Kingdom of God, and the inheritance passed on to us by our God-loving ancestors.

Yet the passing on of the Faith to the next generation is neither automatic nor guaranteed. While the Holy Spirit guides the unfolding of tradition and inspires faith in the hearts of all of us, it takes work. It takes understanding. Which means: it takes education.

There is a well-known saying: “[i]n the end, we will conserve only what we love; we will love only what we understand; and we will understand only what we are taught.” Sometimes in life we have to face hard truths. One of these is that our children are leaving the Orthodox Faith at an alarming rate. Are we adequately teaching and forming them in the Faith?

There are few choices more important than the education of our children. But picking the right school can be a challenge. Often, one schooling option will have academic benefits, but perhaps not the best moral and spiritual atmosphere. Or, vice versa: moral foundation, but thin academics. For some, homeschooling seems to provide the right balance, but for many, homeschooling is not possible, given parental job responsibilities or other commitments.

Is there a school out there that has the best of each aspect: academic, moral, spiritual?

Christ the Savior Academy combines academic substance, moral character development, and formation in the Orthodox Christian tradition. It is one of the very few Orthodox Christian classical schools in the USA - there are only about half a dozen in total.

In considering the education of your children and the right choice of school, I would like to submit 7 reasons to consider Christ the Savior Academy (CSA):

1. CSA connects faith and knowledge in an Orthodox Christian classical education that sees each student as created in the image of God.
2. CSA affirms that Jesus Christ is the cornerstone of all truth, the Word who teaches, saves, and strengthens us for the pursuit of wisdom.
3. CSA emphasizes attentive study and love of learning in an academic environment of dedicated teachers, integrated curriculum, and small classes.
4. CSA forges the character of our children to be virtuous, morally discerning, and compassionate to others.
5. CSA cultivates a sense of wonder in children, evoking curiosity and awe at the created world in its complexity and beauty.
6. CSA engages and familiarizes students with the most enduring cultural achievements in western civilization, art, music, science, and literature.
7. CSA approaches each school day as a holistic experience of prayer, learning, discovery, and character formation that shapes the whole person: soul and body, mind and heart.

After 7 years of instruction at CSA, the fruits are evident: our graduates go on to thrive in their next school, often excelling beyond their peers. This is all the more reason for encouragement in the planning of a Middle School at CSA in coming years.

Education is a key element in the active responsibility we have as parents and guardians to raise and care for our children. Will we pass on the tradition which means so much to us to the next generation? It is our greatest gift, and their greatest inheritance: a living faith in Our Savior Jesus Christ, and a faithful life in the Holy Orthodox Church.

We welcome you to visit and inquire about the education offered at Christ the Savior Academy. Enrollment season has begun. We are right down the hall. Please feel free to visit www.csawichita.org or call 201-4810 with any questions, or to schedule a tour. God bless you!

2019

Your Missions Dollars at Work!



ORTHODOX MISSION TEAMS

Our number of “spiritual grandchildren” is growing! They may live far from us, but through today’s technology—even in remote places—they can and do express their appreciation for help and relief from often desperate circumstances!

On the island of Sulawesi in Indonesia, a priest with a vision and a passion for Christ is not allowed to build a church, so he is building a school and translating Orthodox catechism books for the parents of the children, with hopes that they can meet in the school space for Liturgy someday!



In Fiji, a former Hindu priest has a heart for the poor people of his island—some of whom are named in our prayer-request list each week. Soon after our first support money arrived, his island was engulfed in a Tsunami, and he even had parishioners

living in the house that is their church, for awhile. The fruit of his vision and labor is evident in his recent baptism of 20 catechumen!

You are cordially invited to our Annual Missions Awareness Luncheon,

Sunday March 31, following Liturgy

The menu features Indonesian and Fijian dishes with “Kecap”. (the origin of our word ketchup!) Join us to see beautiful pictures and hear stories of your “spiritual grandchildren”!

On Sunday, March 31, we hope to serve you a luncheon menu of Indonesian and Fijian delights in our “new” hall, and share news of your “grandchildren” in Guatemala, Uganda, Romania, India, Albania, and Kansas! Can you imagine a Russian style stave church in the woods in the middle of Lawrence, Kansas?

We’ve just celebrated 100 years of ministry to our community by St. George and its faithful! Now we can look forward to the next 100 years with ever-expanding global outreach! We can’t imagine what this work may be—only God can do that for us! He told us, after all, to “go into ALL the world!”



Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America

Francis Maria Scholarship Application

Deadline for all materials May 15, 2019

Awards of \$2,500 each

This Scholarship is available to members of parishes in the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America who will be in one of their first four years of undergraduate college studies full time in the fall following their application.

Please contact Fr. Paul for further information or visit this website: <https://files.constantcontact.com/821c24ef001/88f358c2-b11b-465c-b7b0-e2c4d35022f5.pdf>



What Would You Be Missing? ... continued

ance figures from previous weeks, or perhaps the sum of money collected? I couldn't decide. Would 445 people really fit into this room? Hard to imagine. Maybe \$128 at the end of the month, when folks were short on funds?

Surely I was missing something. Every few weeks, I forced myself to go back. I learned the routine after a while, but I still had no clue what compelled people to show up each Sunday. They talked about God, but never long enough to shed any light. As a detached observer, I was often at risk of being overcome by boredom.

The last Sunday I visited that church was January 6, 1991, which I vaguely knew was a holiday. The choir performed some special music followed, to my astonishment, by communion. Up until now I had associated that service with the Roman Catholic mass.

Row by row, the pews emptied as people went forward to kneel at the altar rail. I was in the very back, watching from my accustomed spot. At some point the reality hit me. Every single person was going to receive communion—except me.

Did that mean I was somehow worse than every person in the room? Or did it mean I was the only person there who thought I didn't need God?

Out of nowhere, tears started pouring down my face. They came in rivers that wouldn't stop—and yet I, who'd done my share of crying as an adolescent, didn't feel at all sad. My friend in the choir stared at me, her face wrinkled with concern. I wanted to signal to her that I was fine, maybe for the first time in my life. I understood, at last, what I was missing.

Church wasn't coloring books and collection plates, or bible readings, hymns, and sermons. It was a moment of encounter, a divine presence directly connected to the eucharist. All I had to do was find the church where this moment stood at the heart of everything.

Eight months later, on August 16, the feast of the Icon Made Without Hands, I walked into Annunciation Greek Orthodox Church. Gazing back at me from the iconostasis was Jesus Christ, tall as I was, his hand extended in blessing. Tears sprang up out of nowhere, as they had in January. Everything missing was here.

I went back the next Sunday, and the next. On the fourth Sunday I woke up tired, and rather reluctant to make another 80-minute drive to Kansas City. Was I becoming the kind of person who goes to church every Sunday? It seemed a preposterous idea until I found myself, against my will it seemed, behind the wheel.

At the end of liturgy the lady next to me extended her hand and spoke to me with a strong Greek accent. "We see you here in our pew every week." I was amazed that she considered four Sundays in a row to be "every week," but also relieved she hadn't asked me why I spent the entire service in tears.

"If you want to join the church, we will sponsor you," she continued. The idea of joining a church, any church, had never once crossed my mind. And yet I knew, in that moment, that my life did not belong to me. I now belonged to God.

I was baptized on January 11, 1992, forever the most important day of my life. Twenty-seven years later, I've missed perhaps half a dozen Sunday liturgies due to illness, or travel. If I even consider staying home, I hear a voice asking me, What will you be missing?

Food for the Hungry



We urge you, during this season of prayer, self-discipline and fasting, to be very generous in your contribution to this campaign. As we practice the virtues which cleanse our souls, let us not forget or refrain from the "greatest of the virtues." As important as prayer and fasting are, they are of no avail to us if we fail to give to those in need.

If you would like to give, please make your check payable to **St. George Cathedral - earmark "FFHP"**

"When you see a poor person, remember the words of our Lord Jesus Christ by which He declared that it is He, Himself who is fed. For though that which appears be not Christ, yet in that person's form, it is Christ Himself who receives and begs."

--St. John Chrysostom, "Homilies on Mathew" #78.

Community Support

by Traci Spencer

we'd love to have you join us!

"for I was hungry and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger and you took Me in; I was naked and you clothed Me; I was sick and you visited Me; I was in prison and you came to Me" — Matthew 25: 35-36

Completed Projects

COOK UP A STORM

On Saturday, February 16th, St. George volunteers made casseroles and cookies to serve the homeless in our community on March 5th through the Warming Souls Center.



THE LORD'S DINER

On Sunday, February 17th, St. George volunteers served the homeless in our community at the Broadway location. St. George serves at the Lord's Diner the 3rd Sunday of every month. Please let Mikell Awwad know if you can help serve at 250-3016.

CHOICES MEDICAL CLINIC

The Community Support Committee is giving \$1,000 to Choices Medical Clinic to help them purchase a new sonogram machine. They work with women in a crisis pregnancy and provide free sonograms, support, resources, and medical care for those women in need.

Next Meeting Tuesday, March 12th

12:00 noon in the Conference Room.

We would love to have you join us!!

We usually meet the 2nd Tuesday of every month at noon. Please consider sharing your gifts and talents with our community. Please contact Traci Spencer at 371-5599 if you would like to be involved.

What's Coming Up?

SENIOR SERVICES

On Friday, March 1st, St. George volunteers will meet at Senior Services, 200 S. Walnut, to do Meals on Wheels for seniors in our community. We will meet for instructions at 9:30 and deliver from 10:00-12:00. One route consists of 12-15 meals and kids are welcome to join their parent. The Seniors love having kids present!! Please let Traci Spencer know if you can help with this worthwhile project at 316-371-5599.

GUADALUPE CLINIC

The Community Support Committee is giving \$1,000 to the Guadalupe Clinic toward their Mental Health program; which helps provide people therapy for those who could otherwise not afford it.

WARMING SOUL'S CENTER

On Tuesday, March 5th, St. George volunteers will help serve the homeless from 5:45- 7:30 p.m. We will meet at The Warming Souls Center, 841 N. Market (park on west side). Please let Traci Spencer know if you can help serve at 371-5599.

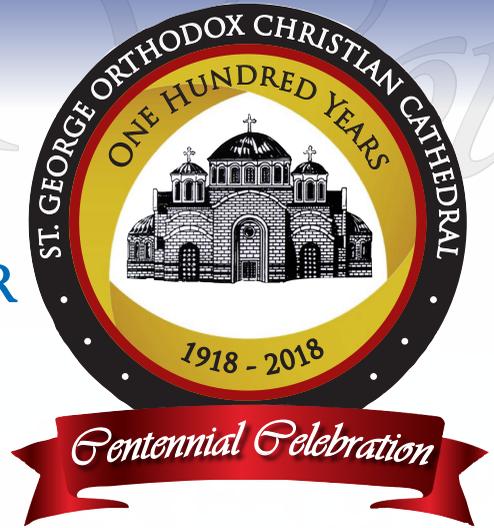
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THANK YOU TO ALL

WHO HAVE PARTICIPATED IN OUR
CENTENNIAL CAPITAL CAMPAIGN



Cindy Abdallah
Craig & Stacey Ablah
Faissal & Carol Abou-Faissal
Dr. Alex & Pamela Ammar
Stan & Gretchen Andeel
Ghassan & Mikell Awwad
Jeff & Patti Ayesh
Ryan & Sara Ayesh
Sherri Ayesh
Sally Bayouth
Bishop BASIL
Bob Bayouth
Lindy Bayouth
John & Marcia Bever
Jeff & Susan Bloomer
Steve & Sally Buxton
Dr. Jim & Rhonda Castrisos
Spencer & Jennifer Christian
Brandon & Jaleen Claassen
Steve & Nancy Claassen
Greg & Connie Clark
Denny & Janet Cohlmlia
George & Karla Cohlmlia (OK)
Jean Cohlmlia
Dr. Jerry & Catherine Cohlmlia
Nancy Cohlmlia and family
Dr. Sam Cohlmlia
Steve & Missy Cohlmlia
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Dr. Ed & Lina Elkouri

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Beverly Farha
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Mary Ellen Joyner
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Merawi & Tiruwork Kebede
Elie & Dr. Mayssa (Zayat) Khalife
Chad & Christine Koehn
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George & Jocelyne Laham
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Floyd Walpole
Fr. Ignatius & Misha Warren
Dr. George & Jihane Zakharia
Dr. Estephan & Janane Zayat

FOR THOSE WHO HAVEN'T YET ... WON'T YOU JOIN US?

*The Cathedral
Messenger*

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