

# ST. GEORGE ORTHODOX CHURCH

His Eminence Metropolitan PHILIP, Primate

Very Rev. Father Joseph Kimmett, Pastor

Very Rev. Father Nifon Abraham, Pastor Emeritus



6 APRIL  
2008

SAINT JOHN  
OF THE  
LADDER:  
4TH SUNDAY  
IN LENT

**WELCOME** TO OUR VISITORS AND FRIENDS.  
IT IS A BLESSING TO HAVE YOU WITH US AT SAINT GEORGE.  
IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO KNOW MORE ABOUT OUR PARISH,  
OR THE ORTHODOX CHURCH, PLEASE SEE THE PRIEST.

ONLY THOSE ORTHODOX CHRISTIANS WHO ARE REPENTANT OF THEIR  
SINS AND HAVE PREPARED THEMSELVES THROUGH FASTING ARE INVITED  
TO RECEIVE HOLY COMMUNION. EVERYONE IS WELCOME TO VENERATE  
THE CROSS AND SHARE HOLY BREAD FOLLOWING THE LITURGY.

## THIS WEEK AT SAINT GEORGE

Today -	<i>Bible Bowl Study Session, during coffee hour</i>
Monday -	<i>Diocesan Compline service, 7:00 pm in Lawrence</i>
Wednesday -	<i>Reading of Life of Mary of Egypt &amp; Potluck Supper, 6:00 pm</i>
Friday -	<i>Parish Dinner, 5:00 pm</i> <i>Akathist, 7:00 pm</i>
Saturday -	<i>Vespers &amp; Footlamps Program, West Roxbury, 5:00 pm</i>
Next Sunday -	<i>Matins &amp; Divine Liturgy, 9:00 / 10:00 am</i>

*The Great Lenten Fast has begun. Meat, fish, dairy, eggs, wine and oil are not to be consumed until Pascha. There is katalysis for wine and oil Saturdays and Sundays and for fish on Palm Sunday.*

**Please stop downstairs for coffee after the service.**

We are looking for people to offer holy bread and sponsor coffee hour. Please check the notebook in the parish hall and sign up today. Offering the gifts for Divine Liturgy is a privilege for Orthodox Christians and their families. It is also a beautiful way to remember your loved ones in prayer. Following our Sunday service, we enjoy fellowship with our friends and visitors, and everyone should have a part in hosting this time together. Coffee hour need not be complicated or fancy -- unless you personally decide to offer a meal (for instance at the time of a memorial,) some drinks and simple eats are perfect (and for next week, they should be Lenten.) Let us know if you have any questions.

**VOTIVE CANDLES** Seven day candles burn before the Icon of Christ and the Theotokos, given by Don & Camille Florio, in memory of Mary Kaleel; and given in thanksgiving for Father Nifon Abraham on his birthday.

6 Atwood Avenue • Norwood, MA, 02062  
tel:781-762-4396 • fax:781-255-1871 • email: geonorwood@aol.com

## LENTEN DINNER

Circle Friday on your calendar: It's a **Parish Lenten Dinner**, starting at 5:00 pm.

## DELEGATES DAY

The Fellowship of Saint John, the Antiochian Women and the New England Council of Churches will have meetings this coming Saturday at Saint George in Lowell. The day begins with Liturgy at 9:00 am. (Please note, Teen SOYO will not be meeting.)

## FOOTLAMPS

The next program in this awesome series is Saturday at Saint George, Boston, beginning with Vespers at 5:00 pm. The speaker is Father John Heropoulos speaking on "**Christ: The Fulfillment of the Law and the Prophets**".

## ALMS BOXES

The money you drop in your **Food For Hungry People** box each day feeds thousands of starving children around the world. Don't forget to bring your box back to church at Pascha.

## SCHOOL AUCTION

The eighth annual benefit evening for **Theophany School** is Sunday, May 18th, at the X & O Restaurant in Stoughton. The theme is "Building On A Dream". The evening will be a tribute to the late founder, Sonia Daly Belcher.

## PARISH LIFE CONFERENCE: JUNE 26-29 AT THE MARRIOTT IN PROVIDENCE



At the beginning He made  
them male and female.  
"For this reason a man shall  
leave his father and mother  
and be joined to his wife and  
the two shall become one flesh."

Matthew 19:5

## PASCHA DONATION

Envelopes for your donation this Easter are now available. A list of donations received by April 20th will be printed in the bulletin at Pascha. Your generosity and love for Saint George Church is appreciated.

## HOLY WEEK SCHEDULE

### Lazarus Saturday - 19 April

Divine Liturgy, 8:30 am  
*Followed by Church School breakfast*  
*Zahar baking, 12:00 noon*  
Great Vespers, 5:00 pm

### Palm Sunday - 20 April

Matins, 9:00 am  
Liturgy & Procession of Palms, 10:00 am  
*Ladies Bake Sale, 12 noon*  
Bridegroom Service, 7:00 pm

### Holy Monday & Holy Tuesday - 21-22 April

Bridegroom Service, 7:00 pm

### Holy Wednesday - 23 April

Holy Unction, 6:00 pm

### Holy Thursday - 24 April

Vesperal Liturgy, 8:30 am  
Passion Gospels, 7:00 pm

### Great and Holy Friday - 25 April

Royal Hours, 8:30 am  
*Decorating of the bier follows*  
Vespers, 1:00 pm  
*Church School retreat follows*  
Lamentations & All Night Vigil, 7:00 pm

### Holy Saturday - 26 April

Vesperal Liturgy, 8:30 am  
*Decorating of the church follows*  
**Matins & Paschal Liturgy, 11:00 pm**  
*Followed by parish breakfast*

### Holy Pascha - 27 April

Agape Vespers, 12 noon



# LAZARUS SATURDAY & Palm Sunday AT SAINT GEORGE

**Lazarus Saturday - April 19th:**  
 Divine Liturgy - 8:30 am / Church School Breakfast follows  
**Zahtar** Baking - 12 noon / Fresh pick-up - 4:00 pm  
 -- See Hellas Assad for pre-orders  
 Great Vespers - 5:00 pm

Blessed is He who comes in the  
 Name of the Lord.  
 Hosanna in the highest.

مبارك الآتي باسم  
 الرب، وأيضاً مبارك الآتي  
 باسم الرب.  
 أوصنا لابن داود، وأيضاً  
 أوصنا لابن داود.

**Palm Sunday - April 20th:**  
 Matins - 9:00 am / Divine Liturgy - 10:00 am / and Procession of Palms  
**Bake Sale** at Coffee Hour  
 Pick up a bag of home-made goodies from the Ladies of Saint George  
 (there will be items for fasting and to save for Pascha.)  
 Bridegroom Service - 7:00 pm



TOTAL DEPOSITS	PLEDGES	MEMORIALS & DONATIONS	TRAYS	SPECIAL TRAY	COFFEE HOUR OUTREACH
<i>MARCH 30</i>					
\$4779.00	\$4270.00	\$124.00	\$228.00	N.A.	N.A.



### PRAYERS OF OBLATION AND DONATIONS

Jane Perednia, Harry & Margie Spence, Janet Sheerin, Mildred Sanborn, Father Robert & Elizabeth Bethoney, Robert Cofsky, Nancy MacDonald, Delia Bartucca, Dorothy Palazzi, Janet Mauritz, Alfred & Margarida Rodrigues, Denis & Sandy Drummey, Mary Connolly, Marcia Shapiro, Donna Ivey, Helen Kelley, Nella Pazniokas . . . . .in memory of Helen Abdallah Dolores Elias and Sam & Beverly DiFlaminies . . . . .  
 . . . . .for the good health of Father Nifon Abraham and David Franciosi on their birthdays  
 Barbara Tayora, Dennis Rossetsky, Bruno & Reggie DiCicco, Michael & Samera Mike, Margaret Domet, Hellas Assad, Sharon Weiskerger, Dolores Elias, Sam & Beverly DiFlaminies, Emaline Eakle, Sandy Thomas & Family, George & Lovee Thomas and Kay Mike . . . . .in memory of Stanley Rossetsky Sam & Beverly DiFlaminies . . . . .in memory of Allen Milot David Franciosi . . .for Fr Nifon Abraham, Beverly DiFlaminies, Sophie Boulis and Joyce Boulis on their birthdays

### REMEMBER IN PRAYER

**Pray** for the good health of the servants of God: Archpriest Edward, Priest Robert, Deacon Elias, Khouriyee Joanne, Mary, Florence, Alice, Hayes, Katrina, Elsa, John, Jeanne, Gregory, Albert, Dimitri, James, Frederick, Anne, Grace, Renee, Robert, Nicole, Mary, Pauline, Ioana, Nicolae, Kathleen, Lillie, Jennifer, Edward, Carrie, Sam, Camille, Michael, Mikayla, Christopher, Nancy, Kenneth, Joy, Claudia, Thomas, Sarah, Nicholas, Charles, Catherine, Joyce, Janice, Barbara, Beverly, John, Katherine, Mary, Beverly, Najlae, Irene, Edmond, Helen, George, Frances, Marlene, Felecia, Catherine, Lana, Gail, Margaret, Brian, Nicole, Marion, Donna, Linda, Edmond, Emaline, Carrie, Nicholas, George, Lovee, Elizabeth, Sarah, Charles, Jenine, Josephine, George, Sandy, Edward, Michael, Madeline, Rosemary, John, Margaret, Sarah, Nima, Dean, David, Sterling, William, Mary.  
**Pray** for Erik, our catachumen.

### THE PARISH COUNCIL

Leeann Plouffe - Chairwoman  
 Barbara Campbell, Paul Eysie, Camille Florio (Secretary), Andrew Howard (Vice Chairman),  
 Marlene Lupaczyk, Marwan Samman (Treasurer), Linda Thomas and Sharon Weiskerger

### CHURCH LEADERS

Ladies of Saint George - Katie Birtwell, President	Church School - Rich Plouffe, Superintendent
Parish Chanter - Paul Eysie	Choir Director - David Franciosi
Teen Advisor - Michele Markatos	Teen President - Jenna Weiskerger
Ushers - Andrew Howard & Marwan Samman	Epistle Reader Coordinator - Lovee Thomas
Bible Bowl Team Leader - Emily Shay	Seminarian - Michael Razook
Web-Master - Ekaterina Oleinik	Scholarship Committee Chair - Helen Abril
Church custodian - Gerry Mullen	

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SUNDAY 6 APRIL 2008 • VENERABLE JOHN OF SINAI, AUTHOR OF THE LADDER

TONE 4 • EOTHINON 1 • THE FOURTH SUNDAY IN LENT

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Eisodikon

*Come, let us worship and bow down before Christ, O Son of God, who art risen from the dead, save us who sing unto thee, Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia.*

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.*

Troparion of Saint John (Tone 8)

*The barren wilderness thou didst make fertile with the streams of thy tears; and by thy deep sighing thou hast given fruit through thy struggles hundred-fold. Accordingly, thou hast become a star for the universe, sparkling with miracles. Therefore, O righteous Father John, intercede with Christ God to save our souls.*

Troparion of Saint George, Patron of our Community (Tone 4)

*As deliverer of captives, and defender of the poor, healer of the infirm, champion of kings, victorious Great-Martyr George, intercede with Christ our God, for our souls' salvation.*

Kontakion of the Annunciation (Tone 8)

*To thee, the Champion Leader, I thy city ascribe thank-offerings of victory; for thou hast delivered me from terrors, O Theotokos; but as thou hast that power which is invincible, from all dangers set me free, that I may cry out unto thee: "Hail, O Bride without bridegroom!"*

EPISTLE & GOSPEL

**Prokeimenon and Verse:**

The Lord is my strength and my praise. The Lord chastising hath chastised me: But He has not delivered me over to death.

**The Reading is from Apostle Paul's Letter to the Hebrews (6:13-20 Fourth Sunday)**

Brethren when God made a promise to Abraham, since he had no one greater by whom to swear, he swore by himself, saying, "Surely I will bless you and multiply you." And thus Abraham, having patiently endured, obtained the promise. Men indeed swear by a greater than themselves, and in all their disputes

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an oath is final for confirmation. So when God desired to show more convincingly to the heirs of the promise the unchangeable character of his purpose, he interposed with an oath, so that through two unchangeable things, in which it is impossible that God should prove false, we who have fled for refuge might have strong encouragement to seize the hope set before us. We have this as a sure and steadfast anchor of the soul, a hope that enters into the inner shrine behind the curtain, where Jesus has gone as a forerunner on our behalf, having become a high priest for ever after the order of Melchiz'edek.

Alleluia

**The Reading is from the Holy Gospel according to Saint Mark (9:17-31 Fourth Sunday)**

**Glory to Thee O Lord, Glory to Thee**

At that time, a man came to Jesus, kneeling and said "Teacher, I brought my son to you, for he has a dumb spirit; and wherever it seizes him, it dashes him down; and he foams and grinds his teeth and becomes rigid; and I asked your disciples to cast it out, and they were not able." And he answered them, "O faithless generation, how long am I to be with you? How long am I to bear with you? Bring him to me." And they brought the boy to him; and when the spirit saw him, immediately it convulsed the boy, and he fell on the ground and rolled about, foaming at the mouth. And Jesus asked his father, "How long has he had this?" And he said, "From childhood. And it has often cast him into the fire and into the water, to destroy him; but if you can do anything, have pity on us and help us." And Jesus said to him, "If you can! All things are possible to him who believes." Immediately the father of the child cried out and said, "I believe; help my unbelief!" And when Jesus saw that a crowd came running together, he rebuked the unclean spirit, saying to it, "You dumb and deaf spirit, I command you, come out of him, and never enter him again." And after crying out and convulsing him terribly, it came out, and the boy was like a corpse; so that most of them said, "He is dead." But Jesus took him by the hand and lifted him up, and he arose. And when he had entered the house, his disciples asked him privately, "Why could we not cast it out?" And he said to them, "This kind cannot be driven out by anything but prayer." They went on from there and passed through Galilee. And he would not have any one know it; for he was teaching his disciples, saying to them, "The Son of man will be delivered into the hands of men, and they will kill him; and when he is killed after three days he will rise."

**Glory to Thee O Lord, Glory to Thee**

Lord's Prayer

As is our custom during Lent at Saint George, the prayer taught to us by our Lord himself will be prayed in the languages of those present, beginning with English, then , Arabic, Greek, Russian and Romanian.

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## Readings for Lent from Saint George Church

### Saint John of the Ladder, a sermon by Metropolitan Philaret

More than once, brethren, the fact has been mentioned that on each Sunday in the Great Fast (i.e., Lent) there are other commemorations besides that of the Resurrection. Thus, on this day, the Church glorifies the righteous John of the Ladder, one of the greatest ascetics, which the Church, in speaking of them, calls "earthly angels and Heavenly men."

These great ascetics were extraordinary people. They commanded the elements; wild beasts willingly and readily obeyed them. For them, there were no maladies they could not cure. They walked on the waters as on dry land; all the elements of the world were subject to them, because they lived in God and had the power of grace to overcome the laws of terrestrial nature. One such ascetic was St. John of the Ladder.

He was surnamed "of the Ladder" (Climacus) because he wrote an immortal work, the "Ladder of Divine Ascent." In this work, we see how, by means of thirty steps, the Christian gradually ascends from below to the heights of supreme spiritual perfection. We see how one virtue leads to another, as a man rises higher and higher and finally attains to that height where there abides the crown of the virtues, which is called "Christian love."

Saint John wrote his immortal work

especially for the monastics, but in the past his "Ladder" was always favorite reading in Russia for anyone zealous to live piously, though he were not a monk. Therein the Saint clearly demonstrates how a man passes from one step to the next.

Remember, Christian soul, that this ascent on high is indispensable for anyone who wishes to save his soul unto eternity.

When we throw a stone up, it ascends until the moment when the propelling force ceases to be effectual. So long as this force acts, the stone travels higher and higher in its ascent, overcoming the force of the earth's gravity. But when this force is spent and ceases to act, then, as you know, the stone does not remain suspended in the air. Immediately, it begins to fall, and the further it falls the greater the speed of its fall. This, solely according to the physical laws of terrestrial gravity.

So it is also in the spiritual life. As a Christian gradually ascends, the force of spiritual and ascetical labours lifts him on high. Our Lord Jesus Christ said: "Strive to enter in through the narrow gate." That is, the Christian ought to be an ascetic. Not only the monastic, but every Christian. He must take pains for his soul and his life. He must direct his life on the Christian path, and purge his soul of all filth and impurity.

Now, if the Christian, who is ascending upon this ladder of spiritual perfection

by his struggles and ascetic labours, ceases from this work and ascetic toil, his soul will not remain in its former condition; but, like the stone, it will fall to the earth. More and more quickly will it drop until, finally, if the man does not come to his senses, it will cast him down into the very abyss of Hell.

It is necessary to remember this. People forget that the path of Christianity is indeed an ascetical labour. Last Sunday, we heard how the Lord said: "He that would come after Me, let him take up his cross, deny himself, and follow Me." The Lord said this with the greatest emphasis. Therefore, the Christian must be one who takes up his cross, and his life, likewise, must be an ascetic labour of bearing that cross. Whatever the outward circumstance of his life, be he monk or layman, it is of no consequence. In either case, if he does not force himself to mount upwards, then, of a certainty, he will fall lower and lower.

And in this regard, alas, people have confused thoughts. For example, a clergyman drops by a home during a fast. Cordially and thoughtfully, they offer him fast food (i.e., food prepared according to the rules of the Fast), and say: "For you, fast food, of course!" To this, one of our hierarchs customarily replies: "Yes, I am Orthodox. But who gave you permission not to keep the fasts?" All the fasts of the Church, all the ordinances, are mandatory for every Orthodox person. Speaking of monastics, such ascetics as St. John of

the Ladder and those like him fasted much more rigorously than the Church prescribes; but this was a matter of their spiritual ardour, an instance of their personal ascetic labour. This the Church does not require of everyone, because it is not in accord with everyone's strength. But the Church DOES require of every Orthodox the keeping of those fasts which She has established.

Oftentimes have I quoted the words of Saint Seraphim, and once again shall I mention them. Once there came to him a mother who was concerned about how she might arrange the best possible marriage for her young daughter. When she came to Saint Seraphim for advice, he said to her: "Before all else, ensure that he, whom your daughter chooses as her companion for life, keeps the fasts. If he does not, then he is not a Christian, whatever he may consider himself to be." You see how the greatest saint of the Russian Church, Saint Seraphim of Sarov, a man who, better than we, knew what Orthodoxy is, spoke concerning the fasts?

Let us remember this. Saint John Climacus has described the ladder of spiritual ascent: then let us not forget that each Christian must ascend thereon. The great ascetics ascended like swiftly-flying eagles; we scarcely ascend at all. Nonetheless, let us not forget that, unless we employ our efforts in correcting ourselves and our lives, we shall cease our ascent, and, most assuredly, we shall begin to fall. Amen.