

April 25, 2021  
Sunday of the Paralytic Man, Fourth Sunday of Pascha



## SAINT GEORGE BYZANTINE CATHOLIC CHURCH

*Fighting the Good Fight with Faith*

*Christ is Risen! Indeed he is Risen! ~ Christos Voskrese Voistinu Voskrese!*

Proprs for this Sunday: pp. 181 - 183

### Divine Services for the Week:

SUN., APRIL 25  
10:00 A.M.

SUNDAY of the PARALYTIC MAN  
JOINT-PARISHES DIVINE LITURGY,  
Patronal celebration breakfast/luncheon  
For the Parishioners

WED., APRIL 28

MID-PENTECOST

SUN., MAY 2  
8:30 A.M.

SUNDAY of the SAMARITAN WOMAN  
DIVINE LITURGY

+ Gordan Jn Baptist, requested by Barbara Reda & Jerry

### Welcome Parishioners, Visitors, and Friends!

We are glad that you have come to worship with us today for our Patronal Feast Day. We pray that your participation will be enriching to you. Following today's Divine Liturgy will be a breakfast/luncheon in our Center in honor of our Patron, St. George.



Christ is Risen! ~ Indeed He is Risen!

### Happy Birthday Greetings This Week:

April 25: John Gural, April 29: Isabel Maruhnich, April 30: Robert Dzumba, Ed Maruhnich

### Wedding Anniversaries this Week:

None for the week

### Please Pray For Our Sick and Shut-ins

**HOME** – Eileen Batcha, Rebecca Dickun, Marianne Dove, Jean Herdt, Rebecca Hutcheon, Kevin Joray, Mary Ann Jugan, Neil Jugan, Mary Salamon, John Simunick

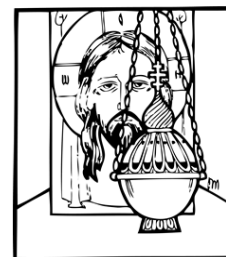
**Hunter's Care Home** (1916 Main St, Aliquippa, PA 15001) – Mary Poiarkoff

**Beaver Elder Care** (616 Golf Course Road, Aliquippa, PA 15001) – Josephine Maruhnich

Epistle Readers – April 25: Jo Ann Hersh – May 2: Reagan Cody

Ushers – Stand in as needed

Troica Holders – April 25: Francis Hersh – May 2: R. Dzumba



THIS WEEK'S SANCTUARY LAMP

April 25 – May 1, 2021

*Burns before the real presence of our Lord for:*

+ Nicholas Maruhnich

*(in loving memory)*

Offered By:

Ed & Isabel Maruhnich

Christ is Risen! Indeed, He is Risen!

Хрісто́съ воскресе́! Воистину́ воскресе́!

Χριστός ἀνέστη! Ἀληθῶς ἀνέστη!

al-Masīh qām! Ḥaqqan qām!

¡Cristo ha resucitado! ¡En Verdad ha resucitado!

Foltamadt Krisztus! Valoban Foltamadt!

Hristos a înviat! Adevărat a înviat!

## Mother's Day Breakfast in Two Weeks



On Sunday, May 9, following the 8:30 AM Divine Liturgy, the Men's Club will be serving a Mother's Day Breakfast. We will come together as a Church family in honor of all mothers, grandmothers, great-grandmothers, spiritual mothers, and all who portray a motherly role. **Everyone is invited.** There is a sign-up sheet as you enter the Church. A preparation morning will be held on Saturday, May 8. Please see Ed Maruhnich if you can help. *Thank you!*

## It's St. George Flea Market Time!

Our Flea Market will return this summer here at St. George Church, date to be announced. We are in need of new donations. Consider donating items you no longer need to our Flea Market, no clothing please. Items can be brought to the Center every Saturday from 9:00 A.M. - 11:00 A.M. or any time you are here. Ask family and friends to consider donating items to our Flea Market. Your help with this event will be greatly appreciated. *Thank you!*



*Remember that God, during your prayers, is watching for your affirmative answer to the question which He is inwardly asking you: 'Do you believe I am able to do this?' To which question you must from the depth of your heart reply, 'Yes, Lord'. Prayer is spiritual breathing; when we pray we breathe in the Holy Spirit; praying in the Holy Spirit (Jude 1:20). Thus, all church prayers are the breathing of the Holy Spirit; as it were spiritual air and also light, spiritual fire, spiritual food and spiritual raiment.*

St. John of Kronstadt

## **PRAYER PUPS** BY JEFFREY SMITH



## **A Note from Father Geoff**

Christ is risen!

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

Recently I had a conversation with a student in which he expressed that something had changed in the way he viewed religion. He used to attend church out of a sense of obligation. He then grew to understand it more as obedience. But as his faith grew, he began to desire to attend liturgies out of the sheer joy of it. I thought this was very profound.

I think this way of thinking is helpful, because it shows how our relationship with the Lord can grow. We may attend the Liturgy out of **obligation** - both because the Church says we need to do so and, perhaps, because we have personally internalized that such attendance is obligatory.

But as we grow in the faith, we may find that we desire to do those things that please the Lord we love. We enjoy pleasing him. We want him to be pleased with us. So, we may begin attending the Liturgy out of **obedience**.

But in the Gospel of John, Jesus calls his disciples "friends." (John 15.15) Think of that - we are friends of God! And just as we do not get together with our earthly friends out of mere obligation or obedience, but because we enjoy their presence! This is the highest aim of our attendance at the Liturgies of the Church. As we grow in the Faith, we desire to come close to the Lord, and to spend time in his presence. He speaks to us in the holy Scriptures and the homily. He instructs us in the words of the anaphora (the Eucharistic prayer). We speak to him, pouring out our hearts to him in the litanies. And he feeds us with his resurrected Body, Blood, Soul, and Divinity as we partake of the heavenly banquet with him in Communion. At this point, our participation in the liturgies of the Church becomes sheer **joy!**

Saint Anthony the Great, the Father of Monastics, described his growth in friendship with the Lord this way: **"I no longer fear God but I love him. For perfect love casts out fear."** (See 1 John 4.18) Brothers and sisters, it is my prayer that each and all of us would grow in the grace of our Lord's perfect love, that we may come to desire to abide in his presence and walk with him every step of our lives' journeys. May God be with you.

In Christ our True Friend

*Fr. Geoff*

**Get up and walk** - Jesus reveals Himself as the Merciful Savior who frees the man from his lifelong ailment. We share in the joy of this at our baptism when the same Savior washes us free from sin and makes us whole through His grace. Thus His life-giving death and glorious resurrection free us from the crippling effects of sin and recreate us in the image and likeness of God.

Do you want to be healed? Say yes to Christ and then follow Him. Respond to His gifts of forgiveness and grace by choosing to follow Him each and every day.



## *Sunday of the Paralytic Man*

How tragic today's story of life is...A man had been paralyzed for thirty-eight years. He had lain at a short distance from healing, but he, himself, had no strength to merge into the waters of ablution. And no one - no one in the course of all these years - had had compassion on him.

We are surrounded by people who are in need. It is not only people who are physically paralyzed who need help. There are so many people who are paralyzed in themselves, and need to meet someone who would help them. Paralyzed in themselves are those who are terrified of life, because life has been an object of terror for them since they were born: insensitive parents, heartless, brutal surroundings. How many are those who hoped, when they were still small, that there would be something for them in life. But no, there wasn't. There was no compassion. There was no friendliness. There was nothing...



So we are surrounded, all of us, by people who are in the situation of this paralytic man. Do you see that paralyzed person in your life, in your family or in your neighborhood? As Christians we are responsible for each of them. We are responsible, mutually, for one another; because when we look right and left at the people who stand by us, what do we know about them? Do we know how broken they are? How much pain there is in their hearts? How much agony there has been in their lives? How many broken hopes, how much fear and rejection and contempt that has made them contemptuous of themselves and unable even to respect themselves - not to speak of having the courage of making a move towards wholeness, that wholeness of which the Gospel speaks in this passage and in so many other places?

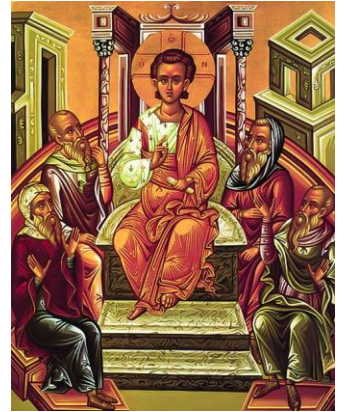
On this Sunday, let us look at one another with understanding, with attention. Christ is there. He can heal; yes. But we will be answerable for each other, because there are so many ways in which we should be the eyes of Christ who sees the needs, the ears of Christ who hears the cry, the hands of Christ who supports and heals or makes it possible for the person to be healed. Let us look at this Gospel reading of the paralytic with new eyes; not thinking of this poor man two thousand years ago who was so lucky that Christ happened to be near him and in the end did what every neighbor should have done. Let us look at each other and have compassion, active compassion; insight; love if we can. And then this Gospel reading will not have been spoken or this event will not have been related to us in vain. Amen.

*Christ is Risen! Indeed he is Risen! ~ Christos Voskrese Voistinu Voskrese!*

## *Mid-Pentecost*

The fourth Wednesday after the Feast of Holy Pascha, this year April 28, is commemorated as Mid-Pentecost. This feast marks the halfway point between Pascha and the Feast of Pentecost. This feast is closely linked to the Sunday of the Paralytic.

After the Savior had miraculously healed the paralytic, the Jews, especially the Pharisees and Scribes, were moved with envy and persecuted Him, and sought to slay Him, using the excuse that He did not keep the Sabbath, since He worked miracles on that day. Jesus then departed to Galilee. About the middle of the Feast of Tabernacles, He went up again to the Temple and taught. The Jews, marveling at the wisdom of His words, said, "How knoweth this man letters, having never learned?" But Christ first reproached their unbelief and lawlessness, then proved to them by the Law that they sought to slay Him unjustly, supposedly as a despiser of the Law, since He had healed the paralytic on the Sabbath. Therefore, since the things spoken by Christ in the middle of the Feast of Tabernacles are related to the Sunday of the Paralytic that is just passed, and since we have already reached the midpoint of the fifty days between Pascha and Pentecost, the Church has appointed this present feast as a bond between the two great feasts, thereby uniting, as it were, the two into one, and partaking of the grace of them both. Therefore today's feast is called Mid-Pentecost, and the Gospel Reading, "At Mid-feast"--though it refers to the Feast of Tabernacles--is used.



It should be noted that there were three great Jewish feasts: the Passover, Pentecost, and the Feast of Tabernacles. Passover was celebrated on the 15th of Nisan, the first month of the Jewish calendar, which coincides roughly with our March. This feast commemorated that day on which the Hebrews were commanded to eat the lamb in the evening and anoint the doors of their houses with its blood. Then, having escaped bondage and death at the hands of the Egyptians, they passed through the Red Sea to come to the Promised Land. It is also called "the Feast of Unleavened Bread," because they ate unleavened bread for seven days. Pentecost was celebrated fifty days after the Passover, first of all, because the Hebrew tribes had reached Mount Sinai after leaving Egypt, and there received the Law from God; secondly, it was celebrated to commemorate their entry into the Promised Land, where also they ate bread, after having been fed with manna forty years in the desert. Therefore, on this day they offered to God a sacrifice of bread prepared with new wheat. Finally, they also celebrated the Feast of Tabernacles from the 15th to the 22nd of "the seventh month," which corresponds roughly to our September. During this time, they live in booths made of branches in commemoration of the forty years they spent in the desert, living in tabernacles, that is, tents (Ex. 12:10-20; Lev. 23).

SAINT GEORGE BYZANTINE CATHOLIC CHURCH



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**Cantors: Jo Ann Hersh, Louisa Hersh, David Klacik**

**E.C.F. coordinator: Jo Ann Hersh**

**Facilities Supervisor: John Poiarkoff**

Holy Mystery of Reconciliation ..... Before and after Liturgies

Holy Mysteries of Initiation ..... Contact the church office

Holy Mystery of Anointing ..... Ask prior to surgery or serious illness

Holy Mystery of Marriage ..... Contact the church office eight months prior to wedding

Religious Education Classes ..... September through May, following Sunday Divine Liturgy

St. George Ladies' Guild & Men's Club ..... Everyone welcome to participate



***Christ is Risen! Indeed He is Risen! Христос Воскресе! Воскресе!***



## ***The Symbolism of the Story St. George and its Icons***

There is indeed strong symbolism behind the story and icons of St George slaying the dragon. The dragon and the serpent are both descriptions given to the devil by St John in his Revelation (Rev 12:9). Whatever the true nature of the beast, it is described as a dragon in the earliest written records, and depicted as a serpentine dragon in the oldest surviving images, to deliberately evoke this imagery of the devil.



St George's appearance also deliberately evokes Biblical symbolism. Again in the Divine Revelation to St John, the Apostle writes:

*And I saw, and behold a white horse: and he that sat on him had a bow; and a crown was given unto him: and he went forth conquering, and to conquer. (Rev 6:2)*

A conquering soldier upon a bright white horse is precisely how St George is described in both the written and painted accounts of the miracle. Icons of the miracle also often show a crown being brought down from heaven and placed on George's head by an angel. Other icons, especially from Greece, will also show George with a bow and quiver of arrows near his saddle, completing the comparison with the horseman in Revelation.

St George sits atop his conquering white steed, red cloak of martyrdom billowing behind him, with the blessing of Jesus Christ indicated by the hand reaching forth to bless him. He rides forth conquering: the devil first of all, in the form of the dragon, and then latterly the inhabitants cowering behind the town walls. Ensconced in their fortress, they look fearfully on because they too are conquered by St George: not through force, but by their conversion to Christianity after seeing the wonders performed by God through him.



***Yesterday and today, God has entrusted St. George Church to each of us. It is our parish; we are one in the Holy Trinity with one faith, one church, and one destiny. Each and every one of us is responsible to God for its future! Let's use work to build up our Church and God's Kingdom!***

**Happy Parish Feast to All!**

## ***St. George, Our Patron***



***Thank you to everyone who worked to make our Parish Feast Day Special!***



# The Feast of our Patron, St. George

## What is a Patronal Feast?

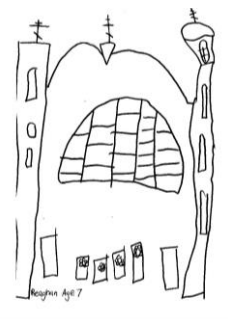
April 23<sup>rd</sup> marked the Feast Day of our Patron Saint. All Catholic and Orthodox Churches are dedicated to the worship of God, of course, and when Christians first became able to build Churches they built them on Holy sites associated with events in scripture, the life of Christ, or over the tombs of the martyrs. And if there was no Holy site at hand, nonetheless a Church would be dedicated in the name of a person or an event marked on the Church calendar. We continue this tradition.

In short, our Churches always have their own special feast day. This is sometimes called the Altar Feast or the Feast of Dedication or the Patronal Feast. The celebration of a parish feast ought to be something special, full of prayer and good fellowship. It is kind of like a birthday party. It is something that **every** parishioner should participate in, giving thanks to God for our place of worship, for His innumerable mercies to us, for the intercession and protection of the Mother of God on our walk through life, for our parish family and our fellowship.



***O Victorious Great Martyr George, protector of the poor, liberator of prisoners, physician of the sick, and champion of kings, intercede with Christ our God to save our souls.***

St. George. George was born of a father from Cappadocia and a mother from Palestine. Being a military tribune, he was illustrious in battle and highly honored for his courage. When he learned that Emperor Diocletian was preparing a persecution of the Christians, Saint George presented himself publicly before the Emperor and denounced him. When threats and promises could not move him from his steadfast confession, he was put to unheard of tortures, which he endured with great bravery, overcoming them by faith and love towards Christ. By the wondrous signs that took place in his contest, he guided many to the knowledge of the truth, including Queen Alexandria, wife of Diocletian, and was finally beheaded in 296 in Nicomedia. His sacred remains were taken by his servants from Nicomedia to Palestine, to a town called Lydda, the homeland of his mother, and then were finally transferred to the Church which was raised up in his name.



## St. George, St. Paul, and the Dragon



The Great Martyr and Wonderworker George was born to Christian parents in Cappadocia, toward the end of the third century.

George always knew he wanted to be a soldier, and quickly rose in the Roman army ranks, gaining the status of tribune. He enjoyed the favor of the Emperor Diocletian, who had known his family, and was also an excellent soldier.

But Diocletian hated Christianity and brutally punished anyone identified as a follower of Jesus Christ. When George saw the way Christians were persecuted and killed, he confronted the emperor, condemning the cruel acts and proclaiming his own Christian faith. He even renounced his army commission, an act which was seen as deeply insulting to Rome and her ruler.

The emperor had George jailed and tortured. The young prisoner prayed constantly and was saved from death over and over again despite the terrible things done to him. The sight of these miracles and of George's faithful prayer led many who witnessed them to become Christians, including the emperor's wife Alexandra. This inflamed Diocletian's fury and frustration and in 303 he ordered his wife and George beheaded.

The well-known image of Saint George shows him thrusting a long spear into a menacing beast, a dragon, but accounts of his life don't include such an episode. Yet it is an appropriate image, because it reflects his courage in challenging powerful evil and overcoming its might through prayer. The image reminds us that we also must stand up to evil and defend the faith. We also need to be people of prayer who can face "dragons" of various kinds rather than running away from them.

Saint George continues to be venerated today. He is the patron saint of England; the city of Moscow has several statues and other depictions of him; countless Orthodox churches are named for him. People still look to him for miracles and healing, too. Among many shrines is a small, unimposing one at Beit Jala, near Bethlehem. Visitors, both Muslim and Christian, come in great numbers to pray, to ask for healing, and to honor this beloved "slayer of the dragon."

Acts 9:1-19 tells of the Apostle Paul's conversion on the road to Damascus. The first words, describing Paul, make him sound like a man possessed by a "dragon" himself. We read: "Meanwhile Saul, still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord..." Saul so hates Christians that he wants to round up any there are in Damascus, bind them, and bring them to Jerusalem to face the Temple authorities.

Paul has an inner dragon to face and conquer. He must change his whole way of thinking and acting, and do away with the hatred inside him. We too have dragons to defeat. Some are internal, some external. Saint George and Saint Paul remind us of that, and they also remind us that Christ can lead us, as He led them, to victory over the dragons in our path.

