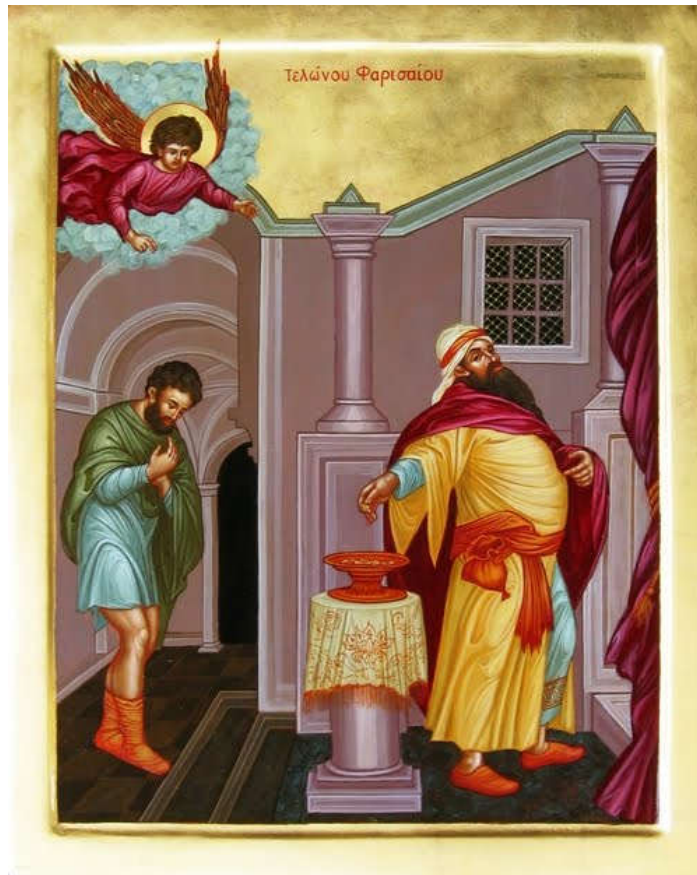


St. George

Antiochian Orthodox Christian Church

2587 W. 14th Street, Cleveland OH 44113



Sunday of the Pharisee and Publican

**Serving the Orthodox Christian Community
of Greater Cleveland**



**St. George
Antiochian
Orthodox Church**

**His Eminence Metropolitan SABA,
Archbishop of New York and Metropolitan
of all North America**

**His Grace Bishop Anthony, Auxiliary
Bishop of the Diocese of The Midwest**

**V. Rev Father John Ojaimi, *Pastor*
Archdeacon Yarid Sahley**

Office: (216) 781-9020

Pastor's Cellular: (440) 665-6724

www.stgeorgecleveland.com

Pastor's E-Mail: frjojaimi@msn.com

Sunday February 25, 2024

Tone 5/ Eothinon 5

Sunday of the Pharisee and Publican

Tarasios the confessor, archbishop of
Constantinople;
Hieromartyr Markellos, bishop of
Apamea in Syria

WELCOME TO OUR VISITORS

We are glad you are worshiping with us today. There are Service Books in the pews. Orthodox Christians must be prepared for Holy Communion through Confession, Fasting, Prayer and by being at peace with others. Please seek and give forgiveness before receiving Holy Communion. At the conclusion of the Divine Liturgy, please join us for coffee hour in the Parish Hall.

WELCOME

**The mission of St. George
Antiochian Orthodox Church**

Is to serve God and the community by commitment to the Gospel's command to grow in the knowledge of Jesus Christ through faith, hope, and love. It is a parish of the Self -Ruled Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America.

The Orthodox Church follows the faith and practice of the apostles and disciples of Christ handed down by the ancient Christian fathers and twenty centuries of Church tradition. Genuine Christian life nurtures and stimulates our spiritual and moral development. The liturgical life of the Orthodox Church has been developing over the last 2000 years. By taking part in the mysteries of Christ's life, death and resurrection at the liturgical services, the community members are drawn to repentance and the gradual change of their inner selves.

To join the community of St. George or to find out more information, please fill out the Guest Book in the Narthex. We hope this day will be spiritually rewarding for you. Fr John will be happy to answer any questions. Join us in the hall after Liturgy for our Coffee Hour and Fellowship.

The Coffee Hour is sponsored by Dr. Basem Haddad, Dr, Samar Bashour, Nadya Ayoub and their families in memory of Bassam Baza



The Coffee Hour is sponsored by St. George Young Adult Group

Bread of Oblation is offered in memory of Norma Alinati Chikhani (1 year) by Samir and Clara Nader

Bread of Oblation is offered in memory of John & Elena Abood and Adib & Antoinette Nassif by Tony Nassif and Family

Candles are offered for the Health, Safety & Spiritual Welfare of:

All of our parishioners, their family members and their friends.

The sick, shut-ins, homeless and needy

Family & Friends by George Haddad

Our Family by Samir and Clara Nader

Tony, Amanda, Amanda and Kyla Kanaan by George and Nayla Aboumrad

Woody, Bella and Noah Aboumrad by George and Nayla Aboumrad



Candles are offered in Beloved Memory of:

All of your beloved ones falling asleep in the Lord.

All Clergy and servants of God.

All the Victims of war and violence and diseases in the whole universe.

Michel Hayek, Michael Simone & Bob Mourad by the Hayek family

Wadia and Mary Ameen by their Family

Edward & Evelyn Haddad by Karen and Ted Ziton

Edward & Rita Fadel by his family

Charles and Joan Haddad by their family

Joie Haddad by George Haddad and his Family

William Isaac by his Wife June Isaac

Ramona Darmour by her daughter Charmaine Darmour

Florence Chbeir by Samir and Clara Nader

John El-Zeer by George Youssef Nader



for the sick, sufferings,
shut-ins, needy, homeless, victims of disasters, war and
violence in the whole universe.



"Then the Jews began to argue with one another, saying, How can this man give us His flesh to eat? So Jesus said to them, Truly, truly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in yourselves. He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day".

John 6:52-54

***"With fear of God, faith And love draw near".
Come to Church, Jesus loves you, we love you
we are waiting for you.***



UPCOMING DIVINE SERVICES

Sunday Marsh 03, 2024 Orthros Service @ 9:30am— Divine Liturgy @ 10:30 am

Saturday 03/09/2024 Vespers @5:00 pm Served by our Teens Group

Divine Liturgy Variables on Sunday, February 25, 2024

Tone 05/Eothinon 05; Sunday of the Pharisee and Publican

Tarasios the confessor, archbishop of Constantinople; Hieromartyr Markellos, bishop of Apamea in Syria

Today's Liturgy Inserts	تغييرات في القداس
<p>طروبارية القيامة (باللحن الخامس)</p> <p>لِنُسَبِّحْ نحن المؤمنين ونسجد للكلمة. المساوي للآب والروح في الازليّة وعدم الابتداء. المولود من العذراء لخالصنا. لأنه سُرَّ وارتضى بالجسد أن يعلو على الصليب. ويحتمل الموت وينهض الموتى بقيامته المجيدة.</p> <p>Troparion of the Resurrection (Tone 5)</p> <p>Let us believers praise and worship the Word; coeternal with the Father and the Spirit, born of the Virgin for our salvation. For, He took pleasure in ascending the Cross in the flesh to suffer death; and to raise the dead by His glorious Resurrection</p>	
	<p>الايصونديكون</p> <p>هَلُمَّ نَسْجُدْ وَنَرْتَعِبْ لِلْمَسِيحِ مَلِكِنَا وَآلِهِنَا. خَلَّصْنَا يَا ابْنَ اللَّهِ، يَا مَنْ قَامَ مِنْ بَيْنِ الْأَمْوَاتِ لِنُرْتَلِّ لَكَ هَلُويَا.</p> <p>Entrance Hymn</p> <p>O come, let us worship and fall down before Christ. Save us, O Son of God, who art risen from the dead, who sing to Thee: Alleluia.</p>
<p>تُعَاد طروبارية القيامة</p> <p>We repeat the Resurrectional Apolytikion</p>	
	<p>Troparion for the Patron Saint of the Church</p> <p>طروبارية القديس جاورجيوس الالابس الظفر (باللحن الرابع)</p> <p>بِما أَنَّكَ لِلْمَأْسُورِينَ مُحَرَّرٌ وَمُعْتَقٌ، وَلِلْفُقَرَاءِ وَالْمَسَاكِينِ عَاضِدٌ وَنَاصِرٌ وَلِلْمَرْضَى طَبِيبٌ وَشَافٍ وَعَنِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ مُكَافِحٌ وَمُحَارِبٌ أَيُّهَا الْعَظِيمُ فِي الشَّهَادَةِ جَاورْجِيُوسُ الْإِلَيْسُ الظَّفَرِ تَشَفَّعْ إِلَى الْمَسِيحِ الْإِلَهِ فِي خَلَاصِ نُفُوسِنَا.</p>
<p>Troparion of St. George the Great Martyr (Tone 4)</p> <p>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.</p>	
<p>قنداق الفريسي والعشار على (اللحن الرابع)</p> <p>لِنَهْرُبَنَّ مِنْ كَلَامِ الْفَرِيسِيِّ الْمُتَشَامِخِ. وَلِنَتَعَلَّمَ تَوَاضَعُ الْعَشَّارِ بِالنَّتَهَّدَاتِ هَاتِفِينَ إِلَى الْمُخَلِّصِ: إِرْحَمْنَا أَيُّهَا الْحَسَنُ الْمُصَالِحَةُ وَحَدِّكَ.</p> <p>Kontakion for the Pharisee and Publican in (Tone 4)</p> <p>Let us flee from the boasting of the Pharisee and learn the heights of humility from the publican's words. Let us cry out in repentance: O Saviour of the world be gracious to Thy servants.</p>	

THE TRISAGION

الرسالة لأحد الفريسي والعشار

Epistle for the Sunday of the Pharisee and Publican

Make vows to the Lord thy God, and perform them.

In Judah God is known; His Name is great in Israel.

The Reading from the Second Epistle of St. Paul to St. Timothy (3:10-15)

Timothy my son, you have observed my teaching, my conduct, my aim in life, my faith, my patience, my love, my steadfastness, my persecutions, and my sufferings; and what befell me at Antioch, at Iconium, and at Lystra. What persecutions I endured; yet from them all, the Lord rescued me. Indeed all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted, while evil men and impostors will go on from bad to worse, deceivers and deceived. But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings which are able to instruct you for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.

صَلُّوا وَأَوْفُوا الرَّبَّ إِلَهَنَا
اللَّهُ مَعْرُوفٌ فِي أَرْضِ يَهُودَا
فَصَلِّ مِنْ رِسَالَةِ الْقَدِيسِ بُولَسَ الرَّسُولِ الثَّانِيَةِ إِلَى
تِيموثَاوَسَ (3: 10-15)

يَا وَلَدِي تِيموثَاوَسَ إِنَّكَ قَدْ اسْتَقْرَبْتَ تَعْلِيمِي وَسِيرَتِي
وَقَصْدِي وَإِيمَانِي وَأَنَاتِي وَمَحَبَّتِي وَصَبْرِي *
وَاضْطِهَادَاتِي وَالْأَمِي، وَمَا أَصَابَنِي فِي إِنْطَاكِيَّةٍ وَأَيْفُونِيَّةٍ
وَلِسْتَرَةَ. وَأَيَّةَ اضْطِهَادَاتٍ اخْتَمَلْتُ! وَقَدْ أَنْقَذَنِي الرَّبُّ مِنْ
جَمِيعِهَا * وَجَمِيعُ الَّذِينَ يُرِيدُونَ أَنْ يَعِيشُوا بِالْتَقْوَى فِي
الْمَسِيحِ يَسُوعَ يُضْطَهَدُونَ * أَمَّا الْأَشْرَارُ وَالْمَعْوُونَ مِنْ
النَّاسِ فَيَزْدَادُونَ شَرًّا مُضِلِّينَ وَضَالِّينَ * فَاسْتَمِرِّي أَنْتِ
عَلَى مَا تَعَلَّمْتَهُ وَأَيَقَنْتِ بِهِ، عَالِمًا مِمَّنْ تَعَلَّمْتِ * وَأَنَّكَ
مُنْذُ الطِّفْلِ تَعْرِفُ الْكُتُبَ الْمُقَدَّسَةَ الْقَادِرَةَ أَنْ تُصِيرَكَ
حَكِيمًا لِلْخَلَّاصِ بِالْإِيمَانِ بِالْمَسِيحِ يَسُوعَ *

الإنجيل لأحد الفريسي والعشار

Gospel for the Sunday of the Pharisee and Publican

The Reading from the Holy Gospel according to St. Luke. (18:10-14)

The Lord spoke this parable: "Two men went up into the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, 'God, I thank Thee that I am not like other men, extortionists, unjust, adulterers, or even like this tax collector. I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all that I get.' But the tax collector, standing far off, would not even lift up his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, 'God, be merciful to me a sinner!' I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other; for every one who exalts himself will be humbled, but he who humbles himself will be exalted."

فَصَلِّ شَرِيفٌ مِنْ بَشَارَةِ الْقَدِيسِ لُوقَا الْإِنْجِيلِي الْبَشِيرِ
وَالْتَلْمِذِي الطَّاهِرِ (18: 10-14)

قَالَ الرَّبُّ هَذَا الْمَثَلُ. إِنْسَانَانِ صَعِدَا إِلَى الْهَيْكَلِ لِيُصَلِّيَا
أَحَدُهُمَا فَرِيسِيٌّ وَالْآخَرُ عَشَّارٌ * فَكَانَ الْفَرِيسِيُّ وَاقْفًا
يُصَلِّي فِي نَفْسِهِ هَكَذَا اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَشْكُرُكَ لِأَنِّي لَسْتُ
كَسَائِرِ النَّاسِ الْخَطْفَةِ الظَّالِمِينَ الْفَاسِقِينَ وَلَا مِثْلَ هَذَا
العَشَّارِ * فَإِنِّي أَصُومُ فِي الْأَسْبُوعِ مَرَّتَيْنِ وَأَعْتِشِرُ كُلَّ مَا
هُوَ لِي * أَمَّا الْعَشَّارُ فَوَقَّفَ عَنْ بُعْدٍ وَلَمْ يُرِدْ أَنْ يَرْفَعَ
عَيْنَيْهِ إِلَى السَّمَاءِ بَلْ كَانَ يَقْرَعُ صَدْرَهُ قَائِلًا اللَّهُمَّ
ارْحَمْنِي أَنَا الْخَاطِئُ * أَقُولُ لَكُمْ إِنَّ هَذَا نَزَلَ إِلَى بَيْتِهِ
مُذَبَّرًا دُونَ ذَلِكَ. لِأَنَّ كُلَّ مَنْ رَفَعَ نَفْسَهُ اتَّصَعَ وَمَنْ
وَضَعَ نَفْسَهُ ارْتَفَعَ *

- ***The Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom continues as usual.***

Megalynarion:

It is truly meet to call thee Blessed, Lady Theotokos; Lady ever greatly blessed, and most perfect in innocence, and the Mother of our God. Lady more precious than the Cherubim and more glorious beyond all measure than the Seraphim. That without corruption gavest birth to God the Word, and art truly Theotokos. We magnify thee.

Post-Communion

We have seen the true light; we have received the heavenly Spirit.

THE DISMISSAL

Priest: May He Who rose from the dead, Christ our true God, through the intercessions of His all-immaculate and all-blameless holy Mother; by the might of the precious and life-giving Cross; by the protection of the honorable Bodiless Powers of Heaven; at the supplication of the honorable, glorious Prophet, Forerunner and Baptist John; of the holy, glorious and all-laudable apostles; of our father among the saints, John Chrysostom, archbishop of Constantinople, whose Divine Liturgy we have now celebrated; of the holy, glorious and right-victorious Martyrs; of our venerable and God-bearing Fathers; *of Saint George the patron and protector of this holy community*; of the holy and righteous ancestors of God, Joachim and Anna, and of all the saints: have mercy on us and save us, forasmuch as He is good and loveth mankind.

Priest: Through the prayers of our holy fathers, Lord Jesus Christ our God, have mercy upon us and save us.

Choir: Amen.

In 1 Timothy 5, Paul describes the church not as a building but as people dedicated to doing whatever it takes to reach out and help others. We have a responsibility to serve and help others in need as the church. Caring for each other as well as those outside of the church is the quickest way to see Jesus change lives. Too often, we see a need and wait for the pastor or someone on staff to take responsibility. But that's not the way church works.

RESERVE THESE DATES ON YOUR CALENDER

Medical Professionals Organization 02/25/24 @4:00 pm
 Saturday 03/02/2024 Deanery Teens Retreat 10AM-3PM @St. George Akron
 Marsh 23-24 Teens Trip to The Holy Dormition Monastery Junction, MI
 St George Feast Celebration 05/ 11/ 2024
 Teen Soyo Hafli 05/18/2024



A New Pharisaism

By Metropolitan Saba (Isper)

There is a negative trend in the Church these days, with certain people criticizing everything. They adhere in an extreme way to what they believe is authentic, while attacking all that they consider innovative, calling it heresy that destroys the Faith and the Church of Christ. The adherents of this trend tend to be aggressive in their attacks and fundamentalist in their opinions, denouncing as heretics all those who disagree with their opinions, views, and citations.

They employ the interpretation of Scriptures as they see fit, for their purposes. They adhere to the letter and not to the spirit of the text, neglecting what St. Paul said: "For the letter kills, but the spirit gives life" (2 Cor 3:6).

The Church was not born yesterday; her earthly age is 21 centuries. She has experienced all kinds of systems, situations, cultures, and heresies. The Church, through the power of the Holy Spirit, has always expressed her faith and steadfastly witnessed to it—even unto martyrdom—through different circumstances and pressures, wars and persecutions, peace and freedom, on top of intellectual, cultural, and religious or atheistic trends. According to the word of the Lord, "The gates of Hades shall not prevail against it" (Matt 16:18).

The followers of this new trend forget all the good and the benefits that the Church provides. They fail to see God's acts in history and blind themselves from seeing how history works. Therefore, their responses come as brutal, hostile attacks, lacking the love that marks disciples of Christ.

They remain on the surface and do not dive into the essence of things, failing to differentiate between the essential and the superficial. They do not assign any importance to the changing course of history or the turning points of science and the challenges these pose. In their rigid view, humans are subject to requirements of the Faith according to their historical formulations, without regard to human capabilities and advances across generations.

They claim, for example, that churches should be built of stone. They argue that the life of the brick does not exceed one hundred years, which necessitates the demolition of the church building after the expiration of the brick's effectiveness. They ignore the number of stone churches that were destroyed by the passage of time and by wars and earthquakes. They also forget churches that were turned into places of worship for other religions, or even into animal pens, due to their desecration and the disappearance of Christians from these places, as in northern and southern Syria.

These people are armed with the malleable phrase "according to the holy fathers" to support their opinion. If you ask most of them about their references, they cannot provide an answer. The phrase "holy fathers" has become a term used to defend and justify their positions, but often without knowledge or understanding. This happens with some Christian groups that cling to the letter of the Scripture while disregarding the living word of God that comes through the perpetual presence of the Holy Spirit in the Church of Christ.

According to these people, the Church must remain captive to expressions, systems, and traditions (and I do not mean "Holy Tradition") formulated by the Spirit for a specific era, in order for the Church to express its faith among different languages and cultures. According to them, if the Church expresses something in some way at some time, then this expression must prevail at all times. The Holy Spirit, therefore, must stop working, according to these people, lest He invents something new, necessary, and beneficial for the salvation of man. Do you think that a person is saved through molds and forms, or through the Holy Spirit alive and effective in him?

In addition, you sense in them a fear for the upright faith, bordering on terror—to the point that it almost becomes a pathological obsession, seeing in everything a conspiracy against the Orthodox Church and the truth that it faithfully preserves. They believe that they are the only ones to preserve the truth, so they resort to strict adherence to the forms and calendars that the Church knew in the past, which were a successful expression of the upright faith in the cultures of that time. Writing the names of saints on icons in the local language becomes a heresy,

because the ancient Greek letters, in their view, alone are appropriate to the Orthodox art of the icon! They circulate a saying of Saint Nektarios, "Poor thing, Orthodoxy," claiming themselves to be the defenders of Orthodoxy. Every effort in the Church, according to them, whether pastoral, institutional, or spiritual, is aimed at eliminating the faith and fragmenting the Church.

If these people poison the Church with a spirit of hatred, discord, blasphemy, and hostility toward every leader, guide, and spiritual father who does not say what they say, then they miss seeing themselves as a tool of Satan, who is targeting their Church. Truly, this is his murkiest trap. He abuses the naivete of some Church members to split it. They fall under the delusion that they are cleansing it.

Faithfulness is required of all believers. You may differ with your brethren regarding matters unrelated to doctrine. We prevent fracture with continual love, humility, and dialogue. However, to monopolize Christ, appoint yourself as His spokesman, and break from His true Church to establish what you want His Church to be means that you have sunk to a level of pride that makes you a tool in the hands of Satan.

Truly, this is the greatest sin.

ANTIOCHIAN WOMEN OF ST. GEORGE

*We will be having Our next Arabic Bible Study
Tuesday February 27, 2024 @ 7:00 pm at Panera
26086 Brookpark Rd, North Olmsted

Dear Saint George Family, Beloved in Christ

Our community is fortunate to have such compassionate and loving Parishioners. Because of your pledge and support, our Church is able to continue to serve you and to support the needy families. As we read in the 2 Corinthians 9:7 "Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver".

What makes us Christians is our faith being reflected by our actions in a beautiful way that manifests our identity through our work of love.

With The Parish Council we are making every effort to reduce our expenses, to ensure our reserve fund can be maintained for its intended purpose and the future growth and support of our Church. We are asking anyone who is financially able, to either mail a pledge donation check to the Church's Office or Donate via our website Donation button.

Also please let us know if you have any hardships that the Church can help with. We will try to support you in any way possible.

In closing, we ask for the Lord's Protection to keep all of us safe, and to guide all of us to become His new disciples and to serve and love His people

Dear St. George medical professionals



By the blessing and direction of our Metropolitan Saba, we are starting St. George Chapter of the North America Antiochian Orthodox Medical Professional fellowship .

We encourage all medical professionals, Doctors, Nurses, Dentists, Hygienists.... to be ready to join the first meeting **Today February 25, 2024 @ 4:00 PM** engage in discussion regarding goals and interests .

A national Zoom meeting is planned for March to hear from Daniel Hinshaw , MD.

God Bless and protect you and your families

Mission Statement for NAAOMP

North America Antiochian Orthodox Medical Professionals -
Is a network of medical professionals (MDs, DDs, PharmDs, physician assistants ,NPs, Nurses, physical therapists , and Medical students)
who work together, under the blessing of the Antiochian Orthodox Archdiocese and local parishes, to grow in their relationship and commitment to Christ. In growing spiritually together, the group aims at bringing the healing presence of Christ to their professional practice every day.

-we are not gathering any funds ! .

-we are not discussing politics .(regional nor international)

The ways through which this group will achieve its goals, include but not limited to:

- * Plan regular local events to bring medical professionals together for retreats and social gatherings depending on the local circumstances and needs of the group
- * share how orthodoxy affect your daily practice and lives.
- * Assist local priests in serving sick parishioners as needed (when hospitalized, or when needing second opinion, referrals)
- * helping in residency / fellowship placement for new graduates)
- * Create an online platform to offer spiritual encouragement and edification to each other
- * Exchange the experiences of local groups to build on best practices to improve the engagement of local professionals
- * Offer professional expertise to the Archdiocese or organize medical mission trips when needed
- * Plan for Archdiocese-wide meetings for group members in conjunction with Parish Conferences or Archdiocese Conventions”



31 January 2024

Beloved Friends in the Lord,

Greetings! The Orthodox Christian Community of Greater Cleveland and Lorain will soon be honoring the Sunday of Orthodoxy, the first Sunday of the Great Fast. A celebration of this triumph of our Faith will take place on the evening of 24 March 2024, at 4:00pm. This service of Great Vespers will be hosted by Saint Theodosius Orthodox Cathedral (OCA), located at 733 Starkweather Avenue, Cleveland, Ohio 44113. His Eminence, the Most Reverend Nicolae, Metropolitan of the Romanian Orthodox Archdiocese of the Americas, will preside as well as offer the homily.

Each year, the Greater Cleveland Council of Orthodox Clergy (GCCOC) solicits donations to help underwrite this celebration of our Faith, and this year, donations will be given to International Orthodox Christian Charities for humanitarian relief in Gaza. We humbly ask that you consider providing a contribution to the GCCOC; in return, you will be listed as a "Patron" within the handout at this special service.

If you wish to donate, we ask that you make checks payable to the "Greater Cleveland Council of Orthodox Clergy," or simply the "GCCOC." Checks can either be given to your parish priest, or they can be mailed to the address below no later than 12 March 2024.

In Christ,
>>>Father Peter Simko
GCCOC Treasurer

2024 SUNDAY OF ORTHODOXY | PATRON DONATION

YOUR NAME _____

MAILING ADDRESS _____

EMAIL ADDRESS _____

YOUR PARISH NAME _____

DONATION AMOUNT _____

GCCOC, c/o St. Innocent Orthodox Church, PO Box 38208, Olmsted Falls, Ohio 44138

The Great Martyr George



The holy, glorious and right-victorious Great-martyr and Trophy-bearer George was a Christian Roman soldier killed under in Cappadocia, his mother was from Palestine, and thus he is Diocletian at the beginning of the fourth century. Though he was born a particular favorite of many Palestinian Christians. He is also the patron saint of Moscow, Georgia, and England, amongst other places. The Church commemorates St. George on April 23, and the translation of his relics on November 3.

According to Tradition, St. George was born to a Christian family during the late 3rd century. His father was from Cappadocia and served as an officer of the army. His mother was from Lydda, Palestine. She returned to her native city as a widow along with her young son after the martyrdom of St. George's father, where she provided him with a respectable education and raised him in piety.

The youth, it would seem, followed his father's example in joining the army soon after his coming of age. He proved to be a charismatic soldier and consequently rose quickly through the military ranks of the time. By his late twenties he had gained the titles of *tribunus* (tribune) and later *comes* (count). By that time St. George had been stationed in Nicomedia as a member of the personal guard attached to Roman Emperor Diocletian (reign 284-305).

In 303, Diocletian issued an edict authorizing the systematic persecution of Christians across the Empire. His Caesar, Galerius, was supposedly responsible for this decision and would continue the persecution during his own reign (305-311). It is believed that St. George was ordered to take part in the persecution but instead confessed to being a Christian himself and criticized the imperial decision. An enraged Diocletian proceeded in ordering the torture of this apparent traitor and his execution.

Then, after innumerable forms of torture, St. George was executed by decapitation in front of Nicomedia's defensive wall on April 23, 303. The witness of his suffering convinced Empress Alexandra and Athanasius, a pagan priest, to also become Christians, and so they also joined St. George in martyrdom as consequence. St. George's body was then returned to Lydda for burial, where Christians soon came to honor St. George as a martyr.