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October 2020

The Cathedral Messenger

A Publication of St. George Antiochian Orthodox Christian Cathedral

TIME TO COME HOME

BY FR. PAUL O'CALLAGHAN

Life experience during the coronavirus pandemic has been somewhat dizzying. Conflicting guidance from the CDC and other sources, prospects of first, second, and third waves, along with rumors and conspiracies theories have made it difficult to identify a clear direction going forward – not only for our parish, but for most people in general.



Except for one thing. Half of our previous congregation is missing on any given Sunday. If we add in the 25-50 who attend Liturgy on a particular Saturday, we may have about two thirds of our congregation represented on a weekend. By any calculation, the loss is still huge.

In April, I wrote that "... church attendance had continued to be very strong during first couple of months of the year. On the Sunday of Orthodoxy, March 8, we had the largest group of children ever participate in the procession of the icons. Then the coronavirus hit. On the Second Sunday of Lent, attendance was down by 50%. By the Third Sunday, the Veneration of the Cross, we were doing the service without a congregation." During the Sundays following, we were limited to 10 people, then down to 5, back to 10, then up to 50, 100, and finally 150. When we instituted the 150 limit, after several Sundays it became apparent that attendance would max out around that number; sometimes a little less, sometimes a little more. Attendance of 150-175 is in keeping with the current Archdiocese maximum of 33% of capacity, so we are right where we should be.

After the initial spread of the virus in the Feb-

ruary through April time frame, hopes were that it might taper off as warmer weather arrived. That was not to be. Kansas saw a significant spike in June and July that lasted through most of August as well. Only in the past several weeks have we seen a consistent downtrend in the number of positives compared to total tests. Will this trend continue? God only knows.

As this positive trend has developed, we have been cautiously moving toward the resumption of normal parish life. SOYO, OCF, Women's Faith and Growth, the Mostly Moms' Bible Study and other organizational meetings and classes have resumed in-person, while in many cases continuing live-streaming or Zoom. Likewise, we have continued to live-stream the Sunday Divine Liturgy.

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

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MEMORY ETERNAL

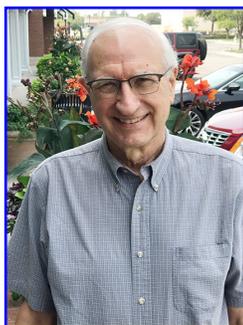
Jay Samra, 9/13
Karen Bratrude, 9/8

Welcome & Farewell



Steve Buxton
Who served us for 5 1/2 yrs.
Thank you!

Doren Rhoades
Our New Cathedral Bookkeeper
Welcome!

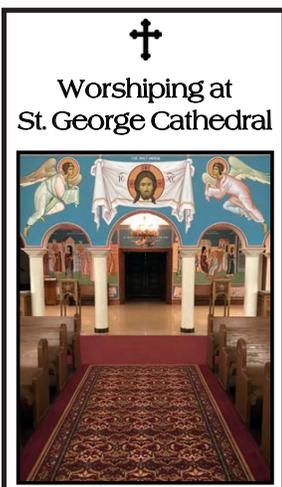


The Frantz family
Relocating to
Overland Park, KS

Worshiping Book Required Reading!

— Please pick up a copy at
the Cathedral,

— or view online on
our website
www.stgeorgecathedral.net



OCTOBER

FASTING

During this period, the normal fasting traditions are observed: abstain from meat, poultry and dairy products on Wednesdays and Fridays.



MABROOK! BLESSINGS!

MANY YEARS!

CHRISMATION

Frankie Powell, 9/19

BAPTISM

Rochelle Smith, 9/19

MARRIAGE

Frankie Powell and Rochelle Smith, 9/20



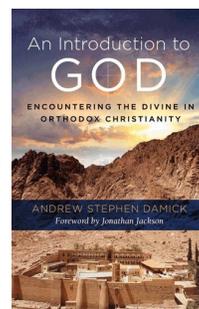
Women's Faith &

Join us Thursday
October 15, 7:15p
in the Youth Center

for an evening of fellowship & faith

Studying book by
Fr Andrew Stephen Damick

"An Introduction to God"



"Mostly Moms" Bible Study

A group for moms and other
interested women



Beginning the Gospel of Luke
Wednesday, October 14, 1:30pm
Meeting on ZOOM.

and continuing every other week.

— a great time to join! Contact Fr. Paul for more info



October is Youth Month



During the month of October members of Teen SOYO will be reading the epistle during Liturgy as well as collecting special contributions for **Special Olympics** during the last two Sundays in of the month."

Men Have Forgotten God

(Excerpts from Alexander Solzhenitsyn's Templeton Prize Address, 1983.

His words proved prophetic concerning the resurrection of faith in then Soviet Russia, and the decline of the same in the West, resulting in a descent into hatred – Fr. Paul)

It was Dostoevsky, once again, who drew from the French Revolution and its seeming hatred of the Church the lesson that "revolution must necessarily begin with atheism." That is absolutely true. But the world had never before known a godlessness as organized, militarized, and tenaciously malevolent as that practiced by Marxism. Within the philosophical system of Marx and Lenin, and at the heart of their psychology, hatred of God is the principal driving force, more fundamental than all their political and economic pretensions. Militant atheism is not merely incidental or marginal to Communist policy; it is not a side effect, but the central pivot.

But there is something they did not expect: that in a land where churches have been leveled, where a triumphant atheism has rampaged uncontrolled for two-thirds of a century, where the clergy is utterly humiliated and deprived of all independence, where what remains of the Church as an institution is tolerated only for the sake of propaganda directed at the West, where even today people are sent to the labor camps for their faith, and where, within the camps themselves, those who gather to pray at Easter are clapped in punishment cells—they could not suppose that beneath this Communist steamroller the Christian tradition would survive in Russia. It is true that millions of our countrymen have been corrupted and spiritually devastated by an officially imposed atheism, yet there remain many millions of believers: it is only external pressures that keep them from speaking out, but, as is always the case in times of persecution and suffering, the awareness of God in my country has attained great acuteness and profundity.

The West has yet to experience a Communist invasion; religion here remains free. But the West's own historical evolution has been such that today it too is experiencing a drying up of religious consciousness. Imperceptibly, through decades of gradual erosion, the meaning of life in the West has ceased to be seen as anything more lofty than the "pursuit of happiness," a goal that has even been solemnly guaranteed by constitutions. The concepts of good and evil have

been ridiculed for several centuries; banished from common use, they have been replaced by political or class considerations of short lived value.

It has become embarrassing to state that evil makes its home in the individual human heart before it enters a political system. Yet it is not considered shameful to



make daily concessions to an integral evil. Judging by the continuing landslide of concessions made before the eyes of our very own generation, the West is ineluctably slipping toward the abyss. Western societies are losing more and more of their religious essence as they thoughtlessly yield up their younger generation to atheism. If a blasphemous film about Jesus is shown throughout the United States, reputedly one of the most religious countries in the world, or a major newspaper publishes a shameless caricature of the Virgin Mary, what further evidence of godlessness does one need? When external rights are completely unrestricted, why should one make an inner effort to restrain oneself from ignoble acts?

Or why should one refrain from burning hatred, whatever its basis—race, class, or ideology? Such hatred is in fact corroding many hearts today. Atheist teachers in the West are bringing up a younger generation in a spirit of hatred of their own society. Amid all the vituperation we forget that the defects of capitalism represent the basic flaws of human nature, allowed

continues next page

It is time to do away with live-streaming? Not quite yet. Again, the future is uncertain. We may face a fresh outbreak (God forbid!) in the context of flu season. But is it time for many who have stayed away to come home? At this point, yes.

I am concerned for the many, especially children, that have lost the habit of worship. As I've explained to many, in this respect church attendance is like physical exercise. Do it regularly, and it comes naturally and easily. Leave it off for a while, and it is like pulling teeth to get started again. But, "no pain, no gain." Fr. John of Kronstadt said, "If you only pray when you feel like praying, you will soon cease praying altogether. You must force yourself." Many of you must force yourselves back into the routine of regular worship and participation in the Eucharist.

Because we are generally operating at less than 50% strength, there is plenty of open space in the Cathedral even in a Sunday Liturgy – especially in the south front area (near the chanters' stand). For some reason, people are tending to cluster in the north rear area. Again, I encourage everybody to spread out and forget about sitting in your "reserved seat." For those who haven't been coming, there is plenty of room! It is time to come home.

Although a Saturday Liturgy should never be a substitute for Sunday, in this context we are forced to accept that. Because attendance is so much less on Saturdays, everyone is much more spread out and attendees tend to be more careful about masking. If you remain highly concerned about spread of the virus, and have not returned to church yet, I encourage you to come on a Saturday. It is very safe from the risk of community spread. It is time to come home!

If trends take a turn for the worse, we remain ready to pivot on a dime and implement stricter controls. But being cautiously and carefully optimistic, we are moving incrementally toward the resumption of normal parish life. Yet normal parish life requires the full participation of our congregation. We will remain vigilant. The use of masks continues to be strongly encouraged. But if you haven't been attending, we wish to welcome you back. We want everyone here. Is it time for you to come home?

Men Have Forgotten God ... continued

unlimited freedom together with the various human rights; we forget that under Communism (and Communism is breathing down the neck of all moderate forms of socialism, which are unstable) the identical flaws run riot in any person with the least degree of authority; while everyone else under that system does indeed attain "equality"—the equality of destitute slaves. This eager fanning of the flames of hatred is becoming the mark of today's free world. Indeed, the broader the personal freedoms are, the higher the level of prosperity or even of abundance—the more vehement, paradoxically, does this blind hatred become. The contemporary developed West thus demonstrates by its own example that human salvation can be found neither in the profusion of material goods nor in merely making money.

This deliberately nurtured hatred then spreads to all that is alive, to life itself, to the world with its colors, sounds, and shapes, to the human body. The embittered art of the twentieth century is perishing as a result of this ugly hate, for art is fruitless without love. In the East art has collapsed because it has been knocked down and trampled upon, but in the West the fall has been voluntary, a decline into a contrived and pretentious quest where the artist, instead of attempting to reveal the divine plan, tries to put himself in the place of God.

Here again we witness the single outcome of a worldwide process, with East and West yielding the same results, and once again for the same reason: Men have forgotten God.

Many Thanks

Dear Fr. Paul & the Parish Council,

Thank you for the generous gift of an iPad upon my retirement. It was a joy to work for St. George over the last 5 1/2 years, especially being around such a great staff and getting to interact with the parish family.

I love being an Orthodox Christian and being part of this church (over 22 years).

Thank you again, — Steve Buxton

Your Missions Dollars at Work

Things to know before you visit Fiji!

Sunday is church day in Fiji! Most Fijians are Christian and they take Sundays very seriously. Everyone goes to church dressed in their Sunday best with many of the men wearing crisp white shirts and black sulus (a traditional black men's skirt). Shops are closed on Sundays or have limited opening hours. The second most common religion is Hinduism because of the Fijian Indian population.

The dress code is conservative in towns and small villages. Always remove your hat and take your sunglasses off when entering a village or going indoors!

They are frugal and eat roots instead of bread and eat vegetables they cultivate, and chicken fish. They mostly go barefoot or wear light sandals.

A conversion through kindness!

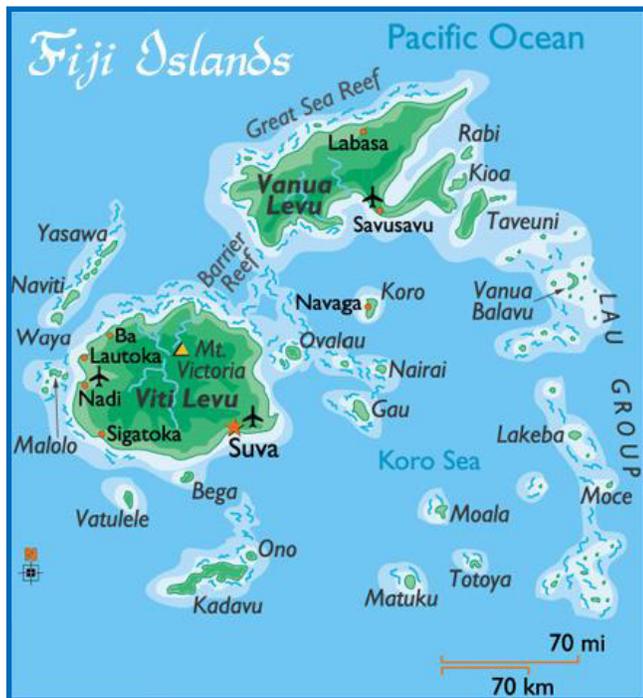
by Fr Barnabas Nair

"When I first met His Eminence [Archbishop] Amphilochios on my island Vanua Levu...he visited me in my store...I thought he was an ordinary man, but...he wore a pectoral cross. I was very happy and my tears were rolling when I shook hands with him. With his smiling face he called me outside and we had a pleasant conversation.

I managed to meet him again the next Sunday... I, who up until then was a very strong Hindu and did not want to become a Christian. One evening I invited him to my home....Throughout my life being a Hindu no one ever visited my family. But that which His Eminence did by blessing me, despite me not being a Christian, ...left me speechless....later he asked me if I wanted to change my faith and become an Orthodox Christian....I easily noticed...that he was a man full of love and true faith.

"Later he took me and my family to Greece, and then I was ordained a deacon in Rhodes....We came to know what Orthodoxy is. It is a true faith and today I feel proud that I am an Orthodox Christian. When I see churches and monasteries, tears fall from my eyes and I thank our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, who changed our life into Orthodox Christians.

"I assure you that with the help of God and the blessing of His Eminence...I will bring in many Orthodox Christians on my island, in the Church of Saint Athanasius and Saint Nicholas..." in Labasa, Fiji.



Getting to know Fiji

There are 300 islands with 800,000 people. Verdant islands with abundant rains make the islands fertile, producing sugar cane, papaya, bananas, mangoes. The cities are connected by asphalt roads and small trains as well as air planes and boats. English is an official language, along with Fijian.

The people are happy and lovable and love for people to say " (Native Fijians handle the government, and those of Indian descent handle industry and trade.



Tsunamis — earthly and heavenly!

We had just learned of Fr. Barnabas, the former Hindu priest who has a heart for the poor people of his island (some of whom are named in our prayer--request list each week), and, *shortly after our first support money arrived, his island was engulfed in a Tsunami, and he had to invite 35 parishioners to live in the house that is their Church temple, and buy food and clothes for them.*

Since then, his vision, to “bring in many Orthodox Christians on my island,” and his labor to do so, has resulted in **two** tsunamis of baptisms of 20 to 25 catechumens!

Here is some of the fruit of Fr. Barnabas’ ministry.



One sentence at a time

Father Barnabas has to make a weekly journey into Labasa to be able to email us one sentence at a time to assure us all is well in his parish.



On May 28, 2019, he sent this message: *“hi christ risen hope ure fine i got very bad road accident on Sunday WHILE DROPPING [OFF] OUR CHURCH MEMBERS”*



We didn’t get a follow up email until January 27, when he said he had just been discharged from a hospital in Sydney. He flew to Sydney in February for a check-up in Feb. and then returned in August for a sec-

ond shoulder surgery. In concern for his and his parish’s welfare, we sent some extra funds to help to offset his travel and medical expenses. We received this sen-



tence in August, ““Hi...hope ure fine may god bless you always...we are all good in my parish in Labasa fiji ”island.” We rejoice that he was able to have successful surgery, as we rejoice in these beautiful pictures he sent of the ministry in Labasa!

Prayer list connection

In our missionary prayer list in the bulletin each week, we have included the names Fr. Barnabas has asked us to pray for-- the poorest of his community, the Nectarios and Panioties families----and his own family.



Thank you for your faithful support of the St. George missions budget so that many precious families can hear the Gospel and come to Christ and His Church as these families have!

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

Lord's Diner

On Sunday, September 20, St. George volunteers served the homeless in our community.

Faith Builders

On Tuesday, April 21st, St. George Community Support gave \$1,000 to Faithbuilders because their food pantry was very low. The give food boxes weekly to families in need. In addition, St. George offered snacks that had been purchased for Sunday School (which would have expired) to the children of these families. Families in crisis are especially suffering during this time.

Rise Up for Youth

In September, St. George Community Support gave \$1,500 toward college kits for youth at risk going to college for the first time.

Focus Backpacks

In September, St. George Community Support gave \$1,200, partnering with FOCUS, and provided 48 pre-filled backpacks for children in need in USD 259.

Children First

In September, St. George Community Support gave \$1,400 toward their Keep it Clean project which helps families in USD 259 with cleaning supplies in their homes.

What's Coming Up ?

Cash for Classrooms

In October, St. George Community Support will provide \$500 to the following schools in need in USD 259: Enders Open Magnet Elementary, Enterprise Elementary, Anderson Elementary, and North High School. We have had an ongoing relationship with these schools and have been honored to partner with them to help meet children's basic needs to help them have a successful educational experience.

Next Meeting October 13th

12:00 noon in the Fellowship Hall.
We would love to have you join us!!

Please mask up and join us in this worthwhile ministry of making a difference in our community.

Contact Traci Spencer at 371-5599
if you would like to be involved.

Family Crisis Center

In October, St. George Community Support will provide \$1,000 to Family Crisis Center who provides shelter and support for women and children suffering from domestic violence.

Miracles, Inc

In October, St. George Community Support will provide \$800 to Miracles, Inc to help women suffering from alcohol and drug addiction find recovery, sobriety, and wrap-around support systems.

Real Men, Real Heros

In October, St. George Community Support will provide \$800 to Real Men, Real Heroes toward their mission of positively mentoring African American youth in the Wichita Community.

Dear Friends,

Our Church Directory is Online!

View our church directory online or via the FREE mobile app today.

To view the directory online, go to members.instantchurchdirectory.com and follow the prompts under "Sign In" to "Create a login now." Please remember, you must confirm your email address before you can sign in.

There is also a free mobile app available for download at the Apple App store in iTunes, Google Play store and the Amazon Fire App Store. Simply search for "Instant Church Directory" to get the download.

You will need to use your email address as listed in our directory to create a log-in the first time you use the directory online and via the mobile app.

Need help or have questions?

Please contact: Gina @ 636.4676 or email at gina@stgeorgecathedral.net

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Wichita, KS 67206-1223

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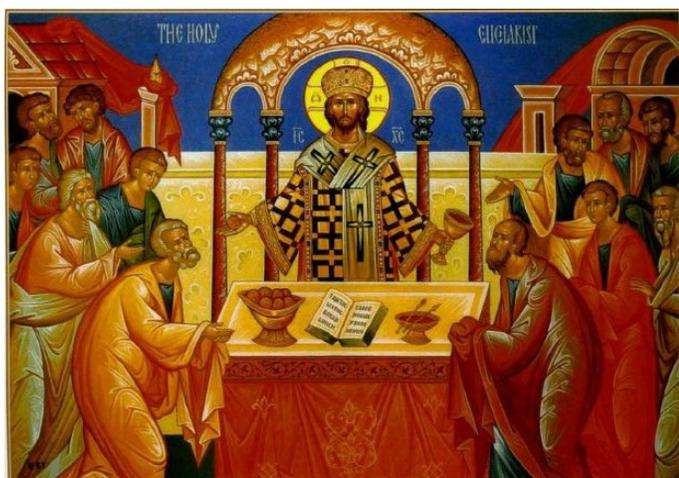
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Wichita, KS

PERMIT NO. 734

Explorations in the Divine Liturgy A series with Fr. Calinic

Continuing on the Wednesday
Evenings of October at 7:15p
In-person, Livestream and Zoom



Zoom Meeting at the link below:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82361961493?pwd=a1dhdENzVS80YmxhVitUYTNEFjZGIMZz09>

Meeting ID: 823 6196 1493

Passcode: 67206

This will be broadcast on our usual Facebook and YouTube links as well:

YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCnOr97AzdC5YM3NDDt-xEXA>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/stgeorge-wichita/>

Those who wish to attend in person may do so in the Fellowship Hall.