

Issue 22 | Volume V, Number 6

GOOD WORKS

Bi-monthly Publication of
The Council of Orthodox Christian Churches
of Metropolitan Detroit

*It's Christmas-time
in the City!*



NOVEMBER-DECEMBER 2016

OUR PRESIDENT

Merry Christmas!

Our prayers for a wonderful Holiday Season.

Do Not Grow Fatigued!

With recent events in the United States of America culminating in the election of a new president, we were reminded, in a very gracious concession speech, of a passage from Galatians 6:8-10... *What a person plants, he will harvest. The person who plants selfishness, ignoring the needs of others—ignoring God!—harvests a crop of weeds. All he'll have to show for his life is weeds! But the one who plants in response to God, letting God's Spirit do the growth work in him, harvests a crop of real life, eternal life. So, let's not allow ourselves to get fatigued doing what is right. At the right time we will harvest a good crop if we don't give up, or quit. Right now, therefore, every time we get the chance, let us work for the benefit of all, starting with the people closest to us in the community of faith.*

We are only human and at times we forget that just by *doing* good our efforts may not be instantly rewarded. For years, we work diligently in our parishes and think surely others will be attracted to our churches and will join in the work and the joy of a parish community. We plan wonderful events and are dismayed when those invited do not come to the banquet.

In a version of the *Paradoxical Commandments* (Dr. Kent M. Keith), Mother Teresa's variation on this missive was found written on the walls of her Calcutta home for children and reads:

People are often unreasonable, irrational, and self-centered.

Forgive them anyway.

If you are kind, people may accuse you of selfish, ulterior motives.

Be kind anyway.

If you are successful, you will win some unfaithful friends and some genuine enemies.

Succeed anyway.

If you are honest and sincere people may deceive you.

Be honest and sincere anyway.

What you spend years creating, others could destroy overnight.

Create anyway.

If you find serenity and happiness, some may be jealous.

Be happy anyway.

The good you do today, will often be forgotten.

Do good anyway.

Give the best you have, and it will never be enough.

Give your best anyway.

In the final analysis, it is between you and God. It was never between you and them anyway.

In this season of being thankful and generous with our fellow man, let's look for ways to embrace our blessings and share our abundance and comfort with others. Let us have faith in each other and in the fact that we do not know how our simple acts of love, compassion, selflessness and generosity will touch someone's heart and spirit in profound ways. Maybe not today, but soon or even years from now. At that is alright.

Olga Liskivskiyi

COCC President



"Go forth and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and Lo, I AM with you always, even unto the end of time." (Matthew 28:19-20)

The Council of Orthodox Christian Churches of Metropolitan Detroit is a cooperative organization of clergy and laity established in 1957. Our mission is to promote the Faith through worship, fellowship, charity, education, and outreach.

The devotion of all who serve and support us allows our witness of faith in Detroit to continue into the future.

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OLGA LISKIWSKYI, President

St Mary the Protectress Ukrainian Orthodox Cathedral
phone 248 252-8184 | olgaliss0910@gmail.com

JOHN E LAZAR, Vice President / Publications

St George Romanian Orthodox Cathedral
phone 734 646-6420 | detroitROjel@yahoo.com

MARY STANESA, Secretary

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phone 313 562-1341 | mariaceamica@comcast.com

CHRISTINA TZILOS, Treasurer

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RICHARD SHEBIB, Past President

Antiochian Orthodox Basilica of St Mary
phone 248 345 9346 | paschabooks@sbcglobal.net

V REV FR LAURENCE LAZAR, Spiritual Advisor

St George Romanian Orthodox Cathedral
phone 248 569-4833 | flazar@hotmail.com

MARY ANN DADICH, Good Works Liaison

Holy Trinity Orthodox Church
phone 586 775 4799 | mdadich811@gmail.com

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“Come, let us wonder at the virgin most pure, wondrous in herself, unique in creation, she gave birth, yet knew no man; her pure soul with wonder was filled, daily her mind gave praise in joy at the twofold wonder: her virginity preserved, her child most dear. Blessed is He who shone forth from her!”

Saint Ephraim the Syrian, Songs of Praise

+ FROM OUR SPIRITUAL ADVISOR

Beloved Faithful,

Well, ready or not, and whether we will celebrate on Sunday, December 25 or Saturday, January 7, the great feast of the Lord’s Incarnation is upon us.



We made it through the presidential campaign season and the election itself. Wasn’t that fun!?! Of course, there was nothing funny about the whole process, and obviously there are many who are not at all “happy”, let alone accepting of the outcome. Yet, one person won according to the historic system of our country, and another fell (dramatically) short. That’s how it goes. Now, we must hope and pray for patience and

harmony among our fellow citizens, and trust that our civil authorities will seek and respond to God’s guidance.

Now we are in the midst of lent, the 40 days given to us as a time to cleanse our hearts. The heart of each of us is to be our own personal cave of Bethlehem, a fitting dwelling place for the King of All. Perhaps, just as in a cave, there has been a darkness within us. But as the animals, the shepherds and magi, and even the angels of heaven (!) followed the star to see what miracle had taken place deep within the rock, we too need to look deep inside ourselves in order to let in the incredibly brilliant Light of the World. Are we prepared for Christ to take abode within us? Is our heart, ready to be a welcoming home?

In a certain way, just as mankind has looked to Bethlehem

for 2,000 years, all of creation will now turn from Bethlehem to focus on the cave that is our heart: all the angels and saints, the Blessed Mary, *all of creation and the Creator Himself* will be looking at us, looking deep into us. Hopefully we will have done all we can to prepare ourselves through prayer, fasting, almsgiving, good works, and love of others, remembering that we must love one another even if the “other” doesn’t love us. And hopefully, in spite of our weaknesses and unworthiness, we will be found as ready as possible to receive the King of All.

What joy there will be in heaven to once again realize that the One who has no beginning, accepted a beginning as one of us...

What joy there will be in heaven to once again realize that the One who has no beginning, accepted a beginning as one of us; that Heaven descended to earth; that God became Man in the person of Jesus Christ, the eternal Word of God (*Logos*), in order to become our Savior.

Beloved, with my brothers, the dozens of priests and deacons who serve our Metro Detroit parishes, I pray that the joy of the Angels and shepherds will pour over you at this great and holy feast of the Nativity, and that the cave of our hearts will glow with the Light of Christ.

Fr Laurence Lazar

President of the Detroit Orthodox Clergy Brotherhood
Spiritual Advisor to the COCC

SAINTS & FEASTS OF THE SEASON



*God is with us, understand
this O nations and submit
yourselves, for God is with us!*

The Feast of the Nativity of Christ is one of the most joyful days of the Orthodox Church. It ranks next to the greatest holiday, the Resurrection. The Feast of the Birth of Jesus is also known as the "Incarnation of Christ." This means that Jesus became a man and came into the world to save us. We also refer to this joyous feast as Christmas.

The story of the Nativity of Christ is beautifully told in the Holy Scriptures (Matthew 1:18-25 and Luke 2:1-20).

As with Pascha, or Easter, the Feast of the Nativity begins with a period of preparation. It is preceded by a fast corresponding to

Lent and lasting for forty days. The fast begins on November 15. On the Sundays immediately before December 25, special commemorations emphasize the link between the Old Covenant and the New. On December 20 the Forefast of the Nativity is commemorated, and the daily liturgical texts are directed toward the Feast itself. On Christmas Eve, services include the Great or Royal Hours, the Great Vespers, and the Liturgy of Saint Basil. On Christmas Day the service commemorates the birth of Christ in Bethlehem, the adoration of the Shepherds, and the arrival of the Wise Men with their gifts. The service held on this day is the Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom.

The days following Christmas are associated with the Theotokos and Joseph. December 26 is the Synaxis of the Mother of God, and the first Sunday after the Feast commemorates "Joseph the Betrothed." December 29 commemorates the Massacre of the Innocents, and January 1 the Circumcision of our Lord. The Nativity season concludes on December 31, but the spirit of the festival extends to the celebration of Theophany (Epiphany), the feast commemorating the Baptism of our Lord in the Jordan River on January 6.

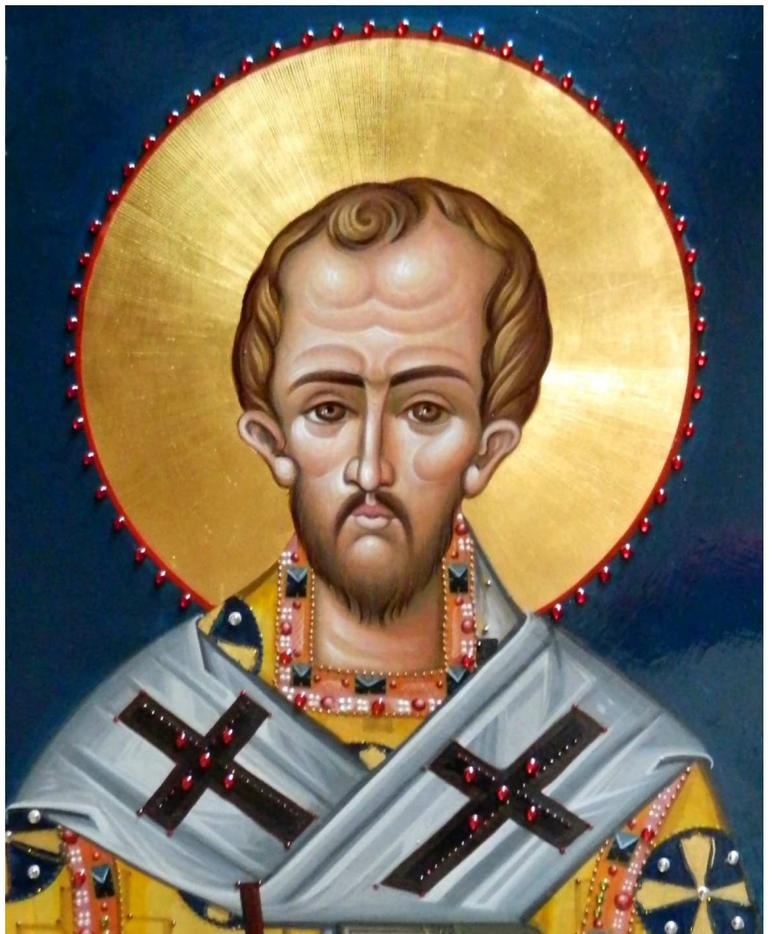
(Taken from goarch.org)

SAINT JOHN CHRYSOSTOM "The Golden Mouth" | November 13

This greatest and most beloved of all Christian orators was born in Antioch the Great in the year 344 or 347; his pious parents were called Secundus and Anthusa. After his mother was widowed at the age of twenty, she devoted herself to bringing up John and his elder sister in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. John received his literary training under Anthragathius the philosopher, and Libanius the sophist, who was the greatest Greek scholar and rhetorician of his day. Libanius was a pagan, and when asked before his death whom he wished to have for his successor, he said, "John, had not the Christians stolen him from us." With such a training, and with such gifts as he had by nature, John had before him a brilliant career as a rhetorician. But through the good example of his godly mother Anthusa and of the holy Bishop Meletius of Antioch, by whom he was ordained reader, he chose instead to dedicate himself to God. From 374 to 381 he lived the monastic life in the hermitages that were near Antioch. His extreme asceticism undermined his health, compelling him to return to Antioch, where St Meletius ordained him deacon about the year 381. Meletius was called to Constantinople later that year to preside over the Second Ecumenical Council, during which he fell asleep in the Lord. In 386 Bishop Flavian ordained John presbyter of the Church of Antioch. Upon his elevation to the priesthood his career as a public preacher began, and his exceptional oratorical gifts were made manifest through his many sermons and commentaries. They are distinguished by their eloquence and the remarkable ease with which rich imagery and scriptural allusions are multiplied; by their depth of insight into the meaning of Scripture and God's providence; and, not least of all, by their earnestness and moral force, which issue from the heart of a blameless and guileless man who lived first what he preached to others. Because of his fame, he was chosen to succeed St Nectarius as Patriarch of Constantinople. He was taken away by stealth, to avoid the opposition of the people, and consecrated Patriarch of Constantinople on February 28, 398, by Theophilus, Patriarch of Alexandria, who was to prove his mortal enemy.

At that time the Emperor of the East was Arcadius, who had had St Arsenius the Great as his tutor; Arcadius was of weak character, and under the influence of his wife Eudoxia. The zealous and upright Chrysostom's unsparing censures of the lax morals in the imperial city stung the vain Eudoxia; through Theophilus' plottings and her collaboration, John was banished to Pontus in 403. The people were in an uproar, and the following night an earthquake shook the city; this so frightened the Empress Eudoxia that she begged Arcadius to call Chrysostom back. While his return was triumphant, his reconciliation with the Empress did not last long. When she had a silver statue of herself erected in the forum before the Church of the Holy Wisdom in September of 403, John thundered against her, and she could not forgive him. In June of 404 he was exiled to Cucusus, on the borders of Cilicia and Armenia. From here he exchanged letters with Pope Innocent of

Rome, who sent bishops and priests to Constantinople requesting a council be held. Saint John's enemies, dreading his return, prevailed upon the Emperor to see an insult in this, and had John taken to a more remote place called Pityus near the Caucasus. He did not reach Pityus, but gave up his soul to the Lord near Comana in Pontus, at the chapel of the Martyr Basiliscus, who had appeared to him shortly before, foretelling of his death, which came on September 14, 407. His last words were "Glory be to God for all things." His relics were brought to Constantinople thirty-one years later by the Emperor Theodosius the Younger and St Pulcheria his sister, the children of Ar-



cadus and Eudoxia, with supplications that the sin of their parents against him be forgiven.

Saint John was surnamed Chrysostom ("Golden-mouth") because of his eloquence. He made exhaustive commentaries on the divine Scriptures and was the author of more works than any other Church Father, leaving us complete commentaries on the Book of Genesis, the Gospels of Matthew and John, the Acts, and all the Epistles of Saint Paul. His works are 1,447 sermons and 240 epistles. Twenty-two teachers of the Church have written homilies of praise in his honor. He is celebrated as one of the Three Hierarchs on January 30. (*adapted from goarch.org*)



ON SATURDAY, October 22, a group of college students were hosted at the St George Romanian Orthodox Cathedral for a informational program (“Open House”) of the Council of Orthodox Christian Churches. Its purpose was to encourage participation of college students (and those in high school about to enroll) in the ministry known as **Orthodox Christian Fellowship (OCF)**, which has chapters on college and university campuses across North America. It is a ministry aimed at gathering the Orthodox students together in fellowship especially while they are away from home, and keeping them active and involved in Church life, prayer, and social gatherings.

COCC President Olga Liss welcomed the participants and offered words of encouragement. *John Lazar*, who

coordinated and led a portion of the discussion, arranged to have *Oana Grigoras*, a student at the University of Pittsburgh and officer of the national OCF ministry (student chair of the Real Break program), speak of the importance of OCF is in the life of students. The 25 participants came from several area parishes including St George Romanian Cathedral, St George Greek parish (Southgate), St Sabbas Monastery (Harper Woods), Sts Peter & Paul Romanian Church (Dearborn Hts), St Mary Antiochian Basilica (Livonia), Ascension Monastery (Clinton), St Demetrius Church (Jackson). Fr Laurence Lazar opened the workshop with prayer and welcomed the guests. The day ended with Vespers and the opportunity to venerate a tiny relic of St George which is kept in the Cathedral.

The COCC has been a strong supporter of OCF for many years, and is renewing its commitment to groups locally. Recently the Council has begun mentoring a group of students at Wayne State University to reactivate its long dormant chapter. It is hoped that this Open House, and others will be a catalyst for increased growth and interaction among the youth of our parishes around the city!



Metropolitan NICHOLAS Celebrates Names-day with Faithful in Ann Arbor

We wish His Eminence, Metropolitan Nicholas of the Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Detroit “Many Years” on the occasion of his patron saint’s Feast Day, December 6.

His Eminence was present at the St Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church in Ann Arbor, where Fr Nicolaos Kotsis is the pastor, for services there. Several clergy from other parishes also took part. In the spirit of the holy saint Nicholas, patron of children, the Metropolitan gave out small gifts (icons, etc) to the appreciative parish children that were present.

Χρονια Πολλα!

God Grant you many years!

Bishop JOHN Makes First Visit to St Innocent Parish

On Saturday, November 12, 2016, His Grace, Bishop John made his first Archpastoral visit and presided at a Hierarchal Divine Liturgy at St. Innocent Church in Redford, MI, of which Mitered Archpriest Roman Star is Pastor, and Fr. Daneil Shirak is the assistant priest. Concelebrating with His Grace were 8 priests and 2 deacons of the Central States Deanery, (of which Fr. Roman is the Dean), plus 3 priests of the OCA Bulgarian and Albanian dioceses, plus the bishop’s own priest and deacon assistants, for a total of 15 clergy, plus the diaconal candidate. Joining them were 2 experienced subdeacons and 4 youth altar-servers from a nearby ROCOR parish, plus an experienced Reader-Server priest’s son from a MI Patriarchal Parish.

During the Divine Liturgy, Subdeacon Joshua Genig was ordained to the Diaconate, to serve at St. Innocent Parish. Fr. Dn. Joshua had been a Lutheran minister for 7 years before becoming Orthodox with his wife and 4 children, 3 years ago. He has an M.Div. seminary degree and Ph.D. and teaches at a local Catholic seminary, from which 5 of his colleagues, plus 5 of his seminarian students, and the Monseigneur Rector-Chancellor of the seminary and associated schools attended, and were warmly and respectfully welcomed by His Grace.

Also during the Divine Liturgy, Victor Cardarelli, a life-long member of Nativity of Christ Church in Youngstown, Ohio, was tonsured a Reader, to serve at his parish. His priest and three friends also came from Youngstown for the occasion.

An excellent choir of local church singers beautifully sang the responses, led by St. Innocent’s director, Elizabeth Star Hatfield.

After the Divine Service, a delicious festive dinner, prepared by parishioners, was served in the hall in celebration of the day.



It was a marvelous, prayerful, peaceful, beautiful gathering, appreciated by all, where St. Innocent parishioners were joined by many members of Fr. Dn. Joshua and Matushka Abigail’s Lutheran families, his Roman Catholic colleagues and students, and by many Orthodox clergy and friends of St. Innocent Church and of Fr. Joshua, who all enjoyed the prayerful worship and fellowship, and the opportunity to rejoice with Fr. Dn. Joshua on this joyful occasion of his ordination, and the first visit of our Archpastor, Vladyka John.

This year, a friend of my brother passed away. His death was sudden and unexpected, and the loss was felt by many who knew this quiet, gentle man of fifty-five. His wife, who was his childhood sweetheart, struggles daily with her grief. Counseling and support groups have been of no help. Well-meaning friends have encouraged her to go to her church to find comfort and support. But her response to these suggestions is always the same: "No one speaks to me there. I'm treated like a stranger." At first, I thought her comment to be somewhat harsh. After all, these were Christian people. But personal experiences and observations

left and no one has acknowledged my presence. It can feel awkward attending Divine Liturgy at a new church. I know how much it means to see a friendly face, so I try to make a genuine effort to greet any newcomer in my own parish whom I see.

While guests may occasionally visit our parishes, we may still have strangers worshipping with us each Sunday. Of course, we don't think of them as strangers. We may know them by sight even if we don't speak to them. They belong to our church—just not to our close circle of friends. They are the strangers among us.

Besides the three definitions previously given, the dictionary has another entry for the word stranger and that is "outsider." It is one thing to be a guest and quite another to be an outsider. At various times in our lives, we may have felt like we were "on the outside looking in." The sting of being rejected or forgotten can leave its mark. No matter what age we are or the circumstances, we all want to be liked and accepted. This is just human nature.

I think of my friend, the widow, who no longer fits in because she has no spouse; or perhaps, others are uncomfortable with death and her grief and they avoid her because they just don't know what to say.

I, also, think of the older members in our churches who have become "invisible" to some. It is ironic that these are the same people who worked for the church all of their lives and continue to support it on their fixed incomes, yet they are not valued as members of the parish community. As for the homebound and caregivers, their situation is especially sad for often times they are completely forgotten. That is, until it is too late.

There may be others in our parishes who are timid and have difficulty making friends. Just because a person is quiet doesn't mean that they are unfriendly.

Whether our church membership is large and growing or few in numbers and struggling, we have something in common. We are all brothers and sisters in Christ. In other words, we are all Family. And as members of this Family, we need to reach out to those in our midst who have become alienated for whatever the reason. Begin this Sunday. Smile and say "Good morning" to someone you normally don't speak to. Make a new friend at coffee hour. If you don't have one, start a Sunshine Committee in your parish. Send a card or make a call to someone you haven't seen in church for a while. Give a hug. The list is endless.

Let's start today to make certain that there are no more strangers among us.

Margaret Pysarchyk
(Previously published in
The Orthodox Herald)

BE KIND TO STRANGERS



came to mind, and I sadly realized that her statement was not an exaggeration. She had become a stranger among her own people.

We generally think of strangers in our churches as "newcomers, guests, or visitors." This definition suggests a positive view of someone new to our parish community. Today, many churches have welcoming committees whose members greet visitors upon their arrival. During coffee hour they may introduce them to other members, answer questions about the church and the Faith, and, of course, invite the guest to return. I admit, as a visitor to a number of parishes, my desire to return has been partly based on a welcome before or after Divine Liturgy. Whether it's a shy smile and a whispered "Good morning" or an invitation to sing in the choir or join them for coffee, I feel warmly received and will return. There have been other churches, few in number, where I've entered and



Our ZOE ministry here in metro Detroit is slowly growing. At the same time, our mission can be very difficult – the mothers we encounter are in dire financial and emotional straits and their needs are far beyond what we can provide.

We are very thankful for your continued prayers and spiritual support. Every bit helps! Any monetary donations you are able to provide will be accepted with great joy! Checks can be made payable to “ZOE for Life! Livonia” and mailed to PO Box 258, Farmington MI 48332.

www.zoehousemi.org



ZOE for LIFE! BOTTLES FOR BABIES Campaign

We want to send you a baby bottle and ask you to fill it with loose change. Simply empty your change into the bottle everyday. When it is full, take it to the bank and send the cash to ZOE. Reuse and repeat!



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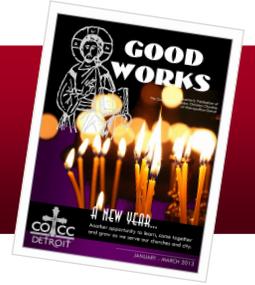
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“Truly a unique magazine — I don’t think any Orthodox council in the country can say they have something like this to help us further our work!”

“Outstanding publication! It’s amazing how interesting and informative each issue is!”

YOU CAN HELP US!



APPEAL + SURVEY

Our “Good Works” Publication is an effort of love and joy which is intended to provide a FREE, bi-monthly resource of articles, photographs, educational material, announcements, and other information for Orthodox Christians, and the public here in Detroit. Though it is a labor intensive undertaking, it is an integral part of the COCC’s Media Ministry and as it evolves is becoming a stronger connecting mechanism for our parishes and faithful!

We grateful for the positive comments received, and welcome your submissions (and even constructive critiques).

If you have found merit in the “Good Works”, or other aspects of the COCC, we hope you will find it in your heart to support us with a donation. Your contribution helps with expenses, and enables us to expand our publication and the work of the COCC. Simply fill out and return the card below with your gift and proper postage *Thank you and may God bless you!*



GOOD WORKS Appeal + Survey

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Please accept my gift of: \$100 \$50 \$25

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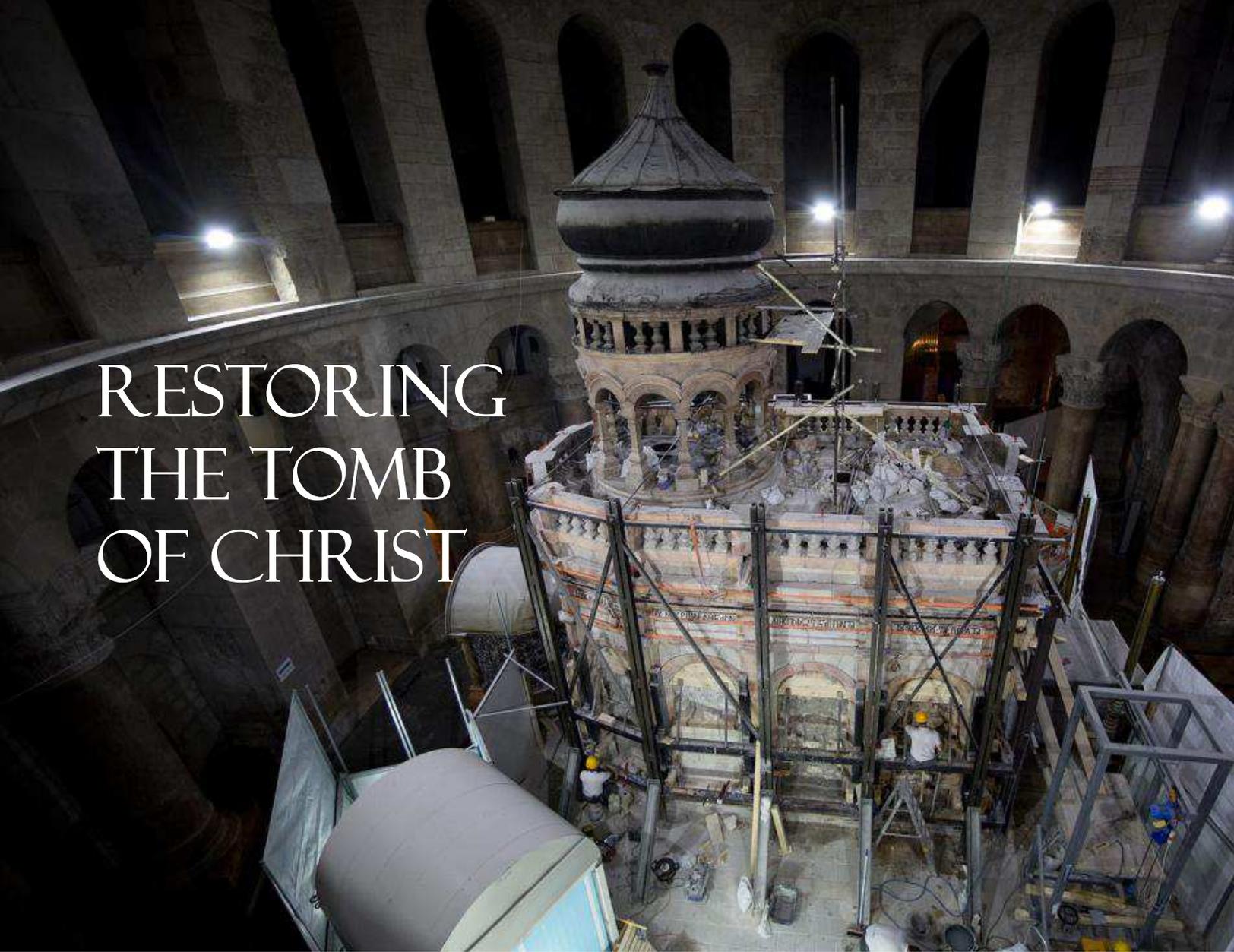
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Comments regarding “Good Works” or the COCC are welcome:

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RESTORING THE TOMB OF CHRIST



For the first time in centuries, scientists have exposed the original surface of what is traditionally considered the tomb of Jesus Christ. Located in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in the Old City of Jerusalem, the tomb has been covered by marble cladding since at least 1555 A.D., and most likely centuries earlier. "The marble covering of the tomb has been pulled back, and we were surprised by the amount of fill material beneath it," said Fredrik Hiebert, archaeologist-in-residence at the National Geographic Society, a partner in the restoration project. "It will be a long scientific analysis, but we will finally be able to see the original rock surface on which, according to tradition, the body of Christ was laid."

According to Christian tradition, the body of Jesus Christ was laid on a shelf or "burial bed" hewn from the side of a limestone cave following his crucifixion by the Romans in A.D. 30 or possibly 33. Christian belief says Christ was resurrected after death, and women who came to anoint his body three days after the burial reported that no remains were present.

This burial shelf is now enclosed by a small structure known as the Edicule (from the Latin *aedicule*, or "little house"), which was last reconstructed in 1808-1810 after being destroyed in a fire. The Edicule and the interior tomb are currently undergoing

restoration by a team of scientists from the National Technical University of Athens, under the direction of Chief Scientific Supervisor Professor Antonia Moropoulou.

The exposure of the burial bed is giving researchers an unprecedented opportunity to study the original surface of what is considered the most sacred site in Christianity. An analysis of the original rock may enable them to better understand not only the original form of the tomb chamber, but also how it evolved as the focal point of veneration since it was first identified by Helena, mother of the Roman emperor Constantine, in A.D. 326. "We are at the critical moment for rehabilitating the Edicule," Moropoulou said. "The techniques we're using to document this unique monument will enable the world to study our findings as if they themselves were in the tomb of Christ."

The doors to the church were shut early—hours before normal closing time, leaving a bewildered crowd of pilgrims and tourists standing in front of the towering wooden doors. Inside, a scrum of conservators in yellow hard hats, Franciscans in simple brown robes, Greek orthodox priests in tall black hats, and Copts in embroidered hoods surrounded the entrance to the Edicule, peering into its reaches. Rising above all of them was the façade of the early 19th-century shrine, its elaborate carvings obscured



by iron beams and orange safety tape.

Inside the tomb, which usually glows with a faint constellation of wax candles, bright construction lighting filled the small cell, revealing tiny details that are usually overlooked. The marble slab that covers the holy bench—roughly 3 by 5 feet and carved from creamy marble—had been pulled away from the wall. Beneath it was a grey-beige stone surface. What is it? a conservator was asked. "We don't know yet," she replied. "It's time to bring in the scientific monitoring tools."

The Church of the Holy Sepulchre (also known as the Church of the Resurrection) is currently under the custody of six Christian sects. Three major groups—the Greek Orthodox Church, the Roman Catholic Church, and the Armenian Orthodox Church—maintain primary control over the site, and the Coptic, Ethiopian Orthodox, and Syriac communities also have a presence there. Parts of the church that are considered common areas of worship for all of the sects, including the tomb, are regulated by a Status Quo agreement that requires the consent of all of the custodial churches.

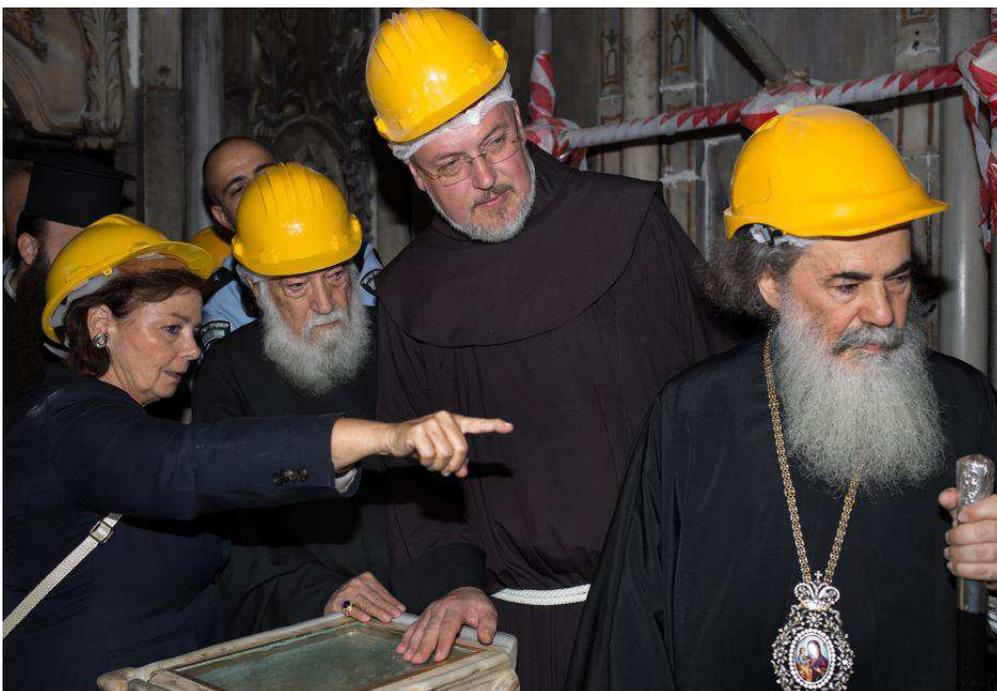
Outside the Edicule, Theophilos III, the Greek Patriarch of Jerusalem, stood watching the events with a serene smile. "I'm glad that the atmosphere is special, there is a hidden joy," said the patriarch. "Here we have Franciscans, Armenians, Greeks, Muslim guards, and Jewish police officers. We hope and we pray that this will be a real message that the impossible can become the possible. We all need peace and mutual respect."

The structural integrity of the early 19th-century Edicule has been a concern for decades. It suffered damage during a 1927 earthquake, and British authorities were forced to shore up the building in 1947 with unsightly exterior girders that remain to this day. Difficulties among the Status Quo representatives and a lack of financial resources have hindered its repair.

In 2015, the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Jerusalem, with the agreement of the other two major communities, invited the National Technical University of Athens (which had previously led restoration projects on the Athenian Acropolis and the Hagia Sophia) to study the Edicule. The communities of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre agreed to restore the structure in March 2016, with work to be completed by the spring of 2017. Major donors to the \$4-million-plus project include a multi-million-dollar royal benefaction from Jordan's King Abdullah II, and \$1.3-million gift from Mica Ertegun to the World Monuments Fund in support of the project.

The National Geographic Society, with the blessing of the Greek Patriarch of Jerusalem and the other religious communities, formed a strategic alliance with the National Technical University of Athens for cultural heritage preservation. For an exclusive look at the restoration project, watch Explorer on National Geographic Channel coming in November.

*Kristin Romey, National Geographic Partners
27 October 2016*



The Patriarch of Jerusalem, Theophilos III, looks on at the restoration site with the project manager and other representatives of the churches that share the sacred Church of the Holy Sepulchre.



CHRISTMAS AROUND THE WORLD...

keeping tradition

There is no time of the year when customs are kept more strongly than at Christmas. Nations around the world have countless traditions that pass through generations.

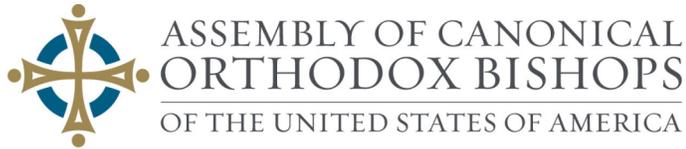
In Orthodox countries, there is special attention given to the actual Feast of the Nativity. The “12 Days of Christmas” is the time from Christmas Day until Theophany / Epiphany. The Lenten period is spent in fasting and preparation for the feasts to come.

In **Romania** and elsewhere, beginning with the feast of St Nicholas, when children put a shoe outside the door and receive nuts and fruits from “Moș Nicolae”, traditional carols can be heard announcing Christ’s birth. There, in **Ukraine** and elsewhere, the carolers travel with the “star” and icon of the Nativity through the towns from door to door, and sing joyful songs. Many customs vary from village to village, and even carry on past

Theophany, having roots in ancient times. In **Serbia**, “Badnjak” (oak branches / Yule log) are burned and straw on floors recreates the cave in Bethlehem. **Greeks** often use a decorated ship (in honor of their seafaring culture) in addition to a tree, and share the “Vassilopita” bread on St Basil’s Day (January 1). The list goes on and on.

Our traditions continue here in America, even if modified here and there. We don’t just toss the tree onto the curb and shut down on December 26 (our Julian / Old Calendar friends can adapt accordingly, respectfully) like most of our neighbors do. Remember that customs are very important and make us who we are. In our parishes and homes, it is essential that we teach our children these ancient customs and help them understand why they are so important. Rather than shy away from them or just forget them as something “we used to do”, let’s be proud of who we are! We must be sure to keep our traditions strong for generations to come!

EVENTS TO PARTICIPATE IN...



The Assembly of Canonical Orthodox Bishops of the USA has designated January 15, 2017 as Orthodox Christian Network "Share the Light Sunday."

Dear Blessed Faithful:

We greet you during this great and joyous Feast of Theophany in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Now more than ever, we need to focus on the next generation of Orthodox leaders. The Orthodox Christian Network (OCN) has decided to take this concern and address it in a real and impactful way. In addition to our strong media ministry presence on multiple platforms, we will spend 2017 focusing on identifying and highlighting thirty Orthodox individuals who exhibit strong leadership and mentor skills in their community and who are under the age of thirty. This will be done to encourage others to emulate their faith.

We are asking parishes across America to participate in this mission. The missions and ministries of OCN are not possible without the financial support of Orthodox parishes. We ask you to join us in supporting the next generation of Orthodox leaders!

OCN is an official agency of the Assembly of Canonical Orthodox Bishops of the United States of America. During OCN's Share the Light Sunday, January 15th, the Assembly asks EVERY Orthodox parish in America to participate in our mission. MyOCN is YourOCN! Please join us in speaking about Orthodox Christian Network at church, informing parishioners about OCN's suite of mobile applications, passing a tray, and identifying an ambassador at your parish that can request brochures and answer questions at coffee hour about OCN's ministry.

Please join us in encouraging the next generation of mentors and leaders of our faith. We cannot do this without your support, financial and otherwise. Spread the word about this ministry. Remember OCN in your parish's charitable giving. OCN is supported almost entirely by parish and personal donations. Join with OCN now and contribute to strengthening the future of Orthodox evangelism and outreach in the Digital Age.

On behalf of the Assembly of Canonical Orthodox Bishops, we thank you for your continued support of this vital ministry. Let us go forth and share the Good News.

In Christ,

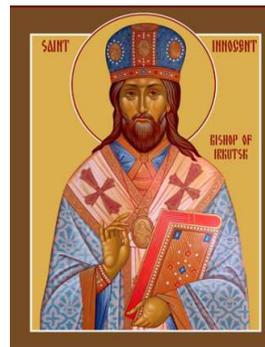
Archbishop Peter
Liaison to the Assembly

Nick T. Mavrick
Board Chairman

Eleni Alexiou
Managing Director

College Conference - Each year during Christmas Break, OCF's College Conference hosts hundreds of college students from across North America for four transformative days of fellowship, education, and prayer. College Conference EAST (Antiochian Village/PA) is full. However, space is still available at College Conference WEST (St. Nicholas Ranch/CA) or College Conference MIDWEST (*new* St. Iakovos Retreat Center/WI). A limited amount of partial scholarships are available. **Real Break** - Each spring, teams of Orthodox college students set out to serve others through participation in domestic and international spring break trips that offer a worthwhile and meaningful alternative to the typical spring break experience. Real Break provides students with a chance to assist those in need, to rebuild areas that have been damaged, and through those experiences, to better understand their faith and to explore their own personal vocation.

For more about these programs or to learn more about OCF and its mission, please visit www.ocf.net.



"ST INNOCENT" Orthodox Study Group

Bearing the name of our Church Patron and through his prayers, this study group has been formed as a venue for ongoing, life-long formation in the faith and life of the Holy Orthodox Church. Following the example of St Innocent of Irkutsk, who devoted much of his life to theological

education, we seek to promote continuing catechesis as a means for the faithful to grow, by God's mercy, from strength to strength.

We will kick-off off with a broad, relevant study of our life together as Orthodox Christians, set on a pilgrimage back to Eden. From there, we will go where the discussion nudges us. This is not only for Orthodox Christians, but to be evangelical, in the sense of sharing the beauty of our faith with friends, co-workers, families — who are literally dying to live. So, do come, and bring a friend or two!

WEDNESDAYS, 6:30 - 7:30pm

St Innocent Church (23300 W Chicago, Redford 48239)

Instructor: Sbdn Joshua D. Genig (M.Div., Ph.D.)

RSVP/Questions: joshua.genig@gmail.com; 630 936-6386;

[Facebook.com/stinnocentredford](https://www.facebook.com/stinnocentredford)

The ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN WOMEN OF MICHIGAN (OCW), is an organization of ethnically diverse Orthodox Christian Women from in and around the metro Detroit area, sharing our holy Orthodox faith through topics and presenters, charitable works and fellowship. Our topics are selected by situations, events and of course knowing our faith so we can put it to work for us for our salvation. Now, more than ever, come, we invite you to join us, as this is the best time for all of us Orthodox women to come together with what is happening in the world. Hope to see you soon. - Mary Ann Dadich, President

SPEAKER SERIES



ALL WELCOME at these FREE, Educational programs!

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 5 | 2PM

ANNIVERSARY LUNCHEON

St George Romanian Cathedral, Southfield

MONDAY, MARCH 20 | 7 PM

"ST GREGORY PALAMAS", Fr Dimitrie Vincent

Holy Trinity Church, Detroit

MONDAY, APRIL 24 | 7PM

"DEALING WITH SECULARISM", Fr Nick Marcus

St Clement Ohdriski Church, Dearborn

MONDAY, MAY 15 | 7PM

"RECAP OF THE GREAT COUNCIL", Metropolitan Nicholas

St John Greek Church, Sterling Heights

MONDAY, JUNE 19 | 7PM

"MARRIAGE TO NON-ORTHODOX", Fr Radomir Obsenica

St Mary Protectress Ukrainian Cathedral, Southfield

SATURDAY, JULY 15 | 9AM

"UTILIZING MY SEMINARY EDUCATION", Christina Stavros

Holy Dormition Monastery, Rives Junction

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 18 | 7PM

"INCLUDING THE CHURCH IN DAILY LIFE", Fr Michael Manos

St Mark Church, Rochester Hills

MONDAY, OCTOBER 16 | 7PM

"ORTHODOX PARENTING", Panel Discussion

Holy Transfiguration Church, Livonia

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 18 | 10AM

"THE CHURCH IN THE PUBLIC SQUARE...", Fr Joseph Abud

St Mary Antiochian Church, Berkley

NEWS from around the Orthodox World...

9TH CENTURY MANUSCRIPT RETURNED

[CHICAGO, IL] His Eminence Archbishop Demetrios, with the blessings of the Ecumenical Patriarch, received a rare 9th century Greek manuscript (Codex 1424) of the New Testament, being returned by the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago to the Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Drama, Greece.

"Today, in the spirit of the upcoming Thanksgiving holiday, our hearts are filled with gratitude to our Lutheran brothers and sisters for this generous and kind gesture (...) Nearly a century ago, our faithful lost an integral part of the treasures of our Orthodox faith and tradition when the library of the Monastery of Panagia Eikosi-foinissa was ransacked and many manuscripts, Codex 1424 included, were taken..."

The President of LSTC, James Nieman, said: "For nearly a century, we have been blessed to be the stewards of this remarkable document, and today we are blessed again by the opportunity to return it to our Greek Orthodox friends and strengthen the bond we have together in Christ Jesus."



ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN IS CHIEF OF STAFF

[Washington, D.C.] President-elect Donald Trump has named Reince Priebus, an Orthodox Christian, as his White House chief of staff come January 2017.

Priebus has served as state treasurer and Republican party chairman in Wisconsin, and took up the post of Republican National Convention chairman in 2011, becoming a loyal Trump campaign adviser and helping to garner broad support that led to his victory.

More importantly, the soon-to-be chief of staff is an Orthodox Christian, and through his efforts with fellow Orthodox Republicans, the need for defending religious freedom in places of high risk for Orthodox Christians was added to the Republic Party platform, according to the Greek Archdiocese's official site.

Priebus is an active member of St. Sophia's Greek Orthodox Cathedral in D.C.

THE ORTHODOX CHOIR OF DETROIT

The Orthodox Choir of Metropolitan Detroit brings an essential aspect of our Faith to the region with its beautiful music. The mixed voice (SATB) ensemble is composed of singers from parishes across the city, and is highly regarded nationally. This group rehearses more intensely to prepare for concerts and other events as needed. The Vesper Choir is a more loosely organized group that leads responses at the annual Lenten series. The varied repertoire includes many composers and traditions. (Matushka) Victoria Kopistiansky is director, and **Elizabeth Star Hatfield (734 306-1486 | starelizabeth70@gmail.com)** is COCC liaison. New singers always welcome!

ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN WOMEN (OCW)

The Orthodox Christian Women of Michigan has members from various Orthodox churches in the Detroit region. Educational programs are presented monthly, and a summer retreat is held. Charitable work focuses primarily on collecting free-will financial and / non-perishable food items for distribution to qualified local ministries. For information, contact **President Mary Ann Dadich (586 775-4799 | mdadich811@gmail.com)**.

FOCUS DETROIT

FOCUS is a Fellowship of Orthodox Christians United to Serve. They are a national 501c3 nonprofit with a local Detroit ministry to children in need. Live out your faith in Christ by serving the needs of neglected children in the city of Detroit. They have volunteer opportunities at Detroit K-5 schools, at area parishes and in their office in Midtown. Visit www.FOCUSdetroit.org or www.facebook.com/focusdetroitcenter for more info contact the Director, **Eric Shanburn (Detroit@focusna.org)**.

MEDIA MINISTRY

There are several branches to the Media Ministry, intended to expand our reach and provide educational and other resources to our Orthodox faithful and the public worldwide. These outlets include: *Good Works* publication, *COCCdetroit.org*, YouTube *COCCTelcom* channel, and *Detroit's Own Orthodox Radio* (DOOR) weekly program. Contact **Olga Liss (248 252-8184 | olgaliss0910@gmail.com)** to help.



FRESH START: DETROIT

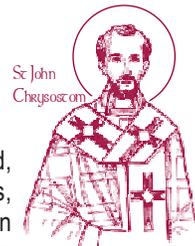
Fresh Start Detroit is small, grass-roots service group that collects food and clothing and then distributes it face to face to the needy in underserved areas of the inner-city. Contact **Jerome Fisher (313 407-1888 | jfisher48228@yahoo.com)**.

BROTHERHOOD OF SAINT MOSES

The Detroit Chapter of the Brotherhood of Saint Moses the Black exists primarily as an outreach to those seeking the Orthodox Church. As the Church finds deep roots in Africa, the BSMB strive to make it known America. **Sharon Gomulka (248 477-6411 | bsmb-detroit@att.net)** serves as Detroit Chapter Chair.

CLERGY BROTHERHOOD

The Orthodox Clergy of metropolitan Detroit gather throughout the year as part of the "Saint John Chrysostom" Brotherhood, as a way to share their pastoral experiences, learn, pray, and interact with one another on a unique level. All priests and deacons in canonical order are encouraged to take part. The president of the Clergy Brotherhood, also serves as Spiritual Advisor to the COCC and other affiliated groups. Contact **Fr Laurence Lazar (248 569-4833 | frlazar@hotmail.com)**



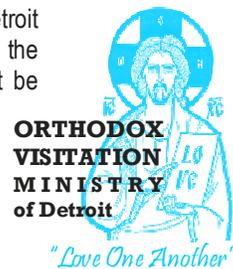
ORTHODOX DETROIT OUTREACH (ODO)



Since 2011, our mission is to provide a venue for Orthodox Christians to serve the poor within an Orthodox ethos. We serve them face to face, providing a hot meal every Sunday at 2:00pm in SW Detroit at Ss Peter & Paul community center. Men, women, and children are served with love, dignity, friendship, and respect. A small clothing bank and a food pantry, including a mini-pantry outside providing much needed food during the week, are on site. All are welcome to come and serve, parishes, individuals, etc. Contact **Matt McCroskery (matt@orthodoxdetroitoutreach.org)**, or **Janet Damian Lapko (janet@orthodoxdetroitoutreach.org)**.

ORTHODOX VISITATION MINISTRY (OVMD)

The Orthodox Visitation Ministry of Detroit helps parishes keep in contact with the elderly, shut-in, or others who cannot be physically active in their community. It is a simple, meaningful program that can be adopted by any parish wishing to benefit. Contact **Karen Todorov or Gail Razook (248 345-9346 | orthodoxvisitationdetroit@gmail.com)**.



ZOE FOR LIFE!

ZOE is a non-profit Christ-centered support organization with three major goals: to help women who need confidential emotional and spiritual support during crisis pregnancies; to assist Orthodox Christians seeking to adopt; and to provide an education for Pure Living and other resources. The metro Detroit presence of Zoe is new, but becoming a presence in the community, open to ALL women in need. **Sue Barna serves as president (info@zoehousemi.org | zoehousemi.org)** or call the anonymous help-line 855 ZOE-LIFE.



DETROIT METRO OCF



Orthodox Christian Fellowship is an organization with chapters at colleges across North America. Our local effort is a resource and support for students and campuses in the Detroit region. Contact **Olga Liss (248 252-8184 | olgaliss0910@gmail.com)**.



The DOOR is open... have you stopped in?!

Detroit's Own Orthodox Radio continues its work in providing quality programming each Sunday, thanks to the hard work of our volunteer staff, special guests, clergy contributions, and of course, listeners like you!

We are expanding subjects and special interviews that are entertaining and informative for the entire family. With God's help, the program will continue to evolve as an Inter-Orthodox effort for our parishes, faithful and the entire city!

Affordable on-air and on-line advertising space for busi-

nesses, restaurants, banquet halls, and professionals is available! Program sponsorship is also available for your personal or parish special occasion! We also hope you will consider a gift (see form below) to support DOOR and keep us on the air!

SUNDAYS: 4:00-5:00PM
690AM
WWW.DOORRADIO.ORG

Contact us 248 345-9346 or staff@DOORradio.org!

Listen on 690AM Radio, via live-stream online and archives on DOORradio.org



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Please accept my gift of: \$100 \$50 \$25
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ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN CHURCHES IN METROPOLITAN DETROIT



Saint John the Baptist Greek Orthodox Church

www.stjohngoc.net

11455 Metropolitan Parkway, Sterling Heights
 Very Rev Fr Nicholas Kyritses

Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Detroit



Saint Mary Antiochian Orthodox Church

www.stmaryofberkley.org

3212 W Twelve Mile Rd, Berkley
 Very Rev Fr Moussa Boulos

Antiochian Diocese of Toledo and the Midwest



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COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Detroit's Own Orthodox Radio Program airs each Sunday (4-5pm) on 690AM and live-streamed / archived shows at DOORradio.org.

Lunch for the Hungry is served Sundays at 2pm, Sts Peter & Paul Hall (3810 Gilbert St, Detroit). Contact Orthodox Detroit Outreach to help.

NOVEMBER

- 1 Clergy Brotherhood Luncheon
12pm: Nikola's Restaurant, Southfield
- 8 +Synaxis of the Archangels
Election Day (USA)
COCC Monthly Meeting,
7pm: Holy Transfiguration Church, Livonia
- 11 Veteran's Day
Outreach Detroit Foundation Board Meeting
6:30pm: St George Romanian Cathedral, Southfield
- 12 OCW Speaker Series: "Refugee Crisis"
7pm: St Nicholas Greek Church, Troy
- 13 104th Anniversary Banquet
1pm: St George Romanian Cathedral, Southfield
- 15 Start of Nativity Fast (Christmas Lent)
- 16 "A Quiet and Peaceful Life" Lecture
7:15pm: Holy Transfiguration Church, Livonia
- 20 Orthodox Combined Christmas Chorus (rehearsal)
2pm: St George Romanian Cathedral, Southfield
- 21 +Entrance of Mary into the Temple
- 23 Thanksgiving Eve Service
7pm: St George Romanian Cathedral, Southfield
- 24 Thanksgiving Day Holiday
- 26 "St Nicholas is Santa Claus" Children's Event
12pm: St George Greek Church, Bloomfield Hills

DECEMBER

- 6 + St Nicholas the Wonderworker
- 11 2nd Annual "Christ is Born! Glorify Him!
A Detroit Orthodox Christmas Concert"
6pm: St Lazarus Serbian Cathedral, Detroit
- 12 + St Spyridon
Patronal Feast-day Liturgy
10am: Greek Orthodox Metropolis Center, Troy
- 13 COCC Monthly Meeting
7pm: St Mary Ukrainian Cathedral, Southfield
- 20 11th Annual Christmas Concert & Dinner
1pm: St George Romanian Cathedral, Southfield
Annual Christmas Program
1pm: Sts Peter & Paul Romanian Church, Dearborn Hts
- 24 Christmas Eve
- 25 + Feast of the Nativity of Christ (Christmas)
- 27 + Proto-martyr Stephen the Archdeacon

Unless otherwise noted, Saints listed are based on New Calendar
OCW - Orthodox Christian Women sponsored event
Parishes are encouraged to submit calendars to us!

The 2nd Annual
*Christ is Born!
 Glorify Him!*
 A DETROIT ORTHODOX

CHRISTMAS CONCERT

HYMNS AND CAROLS OF SERBIA, ROMANIA, THE MIDDLE-EAST,
 UKRAINE, AND BEYOND, AS WELL AS ENGLISH SELECTIONS OFFERED BY

- ◆ Saint Lazarus Serbian Orthodox Cathedral Singing Society "Ravanica"
- ◆ Antiochian Orthodox Basilica of Saint Mary Choir
- ◆ Saint Mary the Protectress Ukrainian Orthodox Cathedral Choir
- ◆ Saint George Romanian Orthodox Cathedral "Archbishop Valerian" Choir
- ◆ Ensemble of The Orthodox Choir of Metropolitan Detroit
- ◆ The Detroit Inter-Orthodox Christmas Chorus

RESCHEDULED DATE!
8 JANUARY 2017 | 6pm
 Saint Lazarus Serbian Orthodox Cathedral
 4575 East Outer Drive, Detroit (enter off Van Dyke)

FREE ADMISSION (FREE-WILL OFFERING)
 Please bring a few "Ready to eat" CANNED FOOD items to
 feed the hungry at Orthodox Detroit Outreach's Pantry

MORE INFORMATION: 248 252-8184
 COCCDETROIT.ORG | DOORADIO.ORG
 orthodoxdetroit

A cooperative effort in celebration of Christ's Nativity, endorsed by the Council of Orthodox Christian Churches of Metropolitan Detroit

Visit: www.coccdetroit.org
www.DOORradio.org

GET CONNECTED! Like *COCC Detroit* on Facebook®!

GOOD WORKS NOV-DEC 2016



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