EPISTLE
The Reading is from St. Paul’s Second Letter to Timothy 4:5-8
TIMOTHY, my son, always be steady, endure suffering, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry. For I am already on the point of being sacrificed; the time of my departure has come. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, and I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will award to me on that Day, and not only to me but also to all who have loved his appearing.

GOSPEL
The Reading is from Mark 1:1-8
The beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. As it is written in Isaiah the prophet, 'Behold, I send my messenger before your face, who shall prepare your way; the voice of one crying in the wilderness: prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight" John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. And there went out to him all the country of Judea, and all the people of Jerusalem; and they were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. Now John was clothed with camel's hair, and had a leather girdle around his waist, and ate locusts and wild honey. And he preached, saying, "After me comes he who is mightier than I, the thong of whose sandals I am not worthy to stoop down and untie. I have baptized you with water; but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."

WISDOM FROM THE CHURCH FATHERS
For in a contest there is much labor needed--and after the contest victory falls to some, to others disgrace. Is the palm ever given or the crown granted before the course is finished? ... Therefore no one can receive a reward, unless he has striven lawfully; nor is the victory a glorious one, unless the contest also has been toilsome.

St. Ambrose of Milan, Chapter 15, Three Books on the Duties of the Clergy 4th century

It is the sole and peculiar property of the Substance that transcends all, to be able to bestow on men the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, and make those that draw near unto It partakers of the divine nature.

Welcome to Saint George Church  
**Sunday Worship:**  
8:30 am Orthros/Matins  
10:00 am Divine Liturgy

### TODAY…

**Saints Commemorated:** On 3rd of this month we commemorate the holy Prophet Malachi. On this day we also commemorate the holy martyr Gordios. On this day we also commemorate our devout father Peter the worker of signs and wonders, who is buried at St. Zacharias in Atroa. On this day the holy martyrs, a mother and two children, died by fire.

**Readings:**  
**Ninth Matins Gospel:** John 20:19-31  
**Epistle:** 2 Timothy 4:5-8  
**Gospel:** Mark 1:1-8  
**Epistle Reader:** Alexa Florence  
**Council Duty:** Brad Crosson, Mariellen Crosson and Mike Patramanis

No Sunday School Classes. Family worship only!

### THE NICENE CREED & LORD’S PRAYER:
Cards are located in the backs of the pews. Everyone is encouraged to recite them out loud.

### COMMUNION PRAYERS:
Everyone who is planning to receive Holy Communion is encouraged to read the prayers before Holy Communion on page 29 in the Red service books.

### COFFEE FELLOWSHIP HOUR:
Sponsored today by our Orthodox Study Forum.

### THIS WEEK…

**Tuesday, January 5, 2016**  
**Eve of Theophany**  
**Strict Fast Day**  
7:00 p.m. Vesperal Divine Liturgy with the Blessing of the Waters

**Wednesday, January 6, 2016**  
**The Theophany of Our Lord**  
8:30 a.m. Orthros followed by the Blessing of the Waters followed by the Divine Liturgy  
6:00 p.m. Orthodox Study Forum

**Thursday, January 7, 2016**  
**The Synaxis of Saint John the Baptist**  
8:30 a.m. Orthros followed by the Divine Liturgy

**Saturday, January 9, 2016**  
12 noon blessing of the Illinois River in Peoria

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### 2016 CALENDAR NEWS

Please be advised that we will not be sending out calendars this year. You can pick up your 2016 Ecclesiastical Calendars by the entry way until Theophany. They will be in envelopes with your names on it.

### PASTORAL NOTE

- Please be advised that from Christmas Day, we are fast free until January 4, 2016. This means that we can eat whatever we want and still receive Holy Communion.  
- January 5, 2016 is a strict fast day in preparation for the feast of the Theophany of our Lord.

### DONATION OPPORTUNITY

Have you remembered to help the needy and hungry? Please bring in a contribution of food to the church. They are still running dangerously short.

### HOSPITAL VISITS

If you or a family member are in the hospital, please call the office. Ever since the change in the privacy laws, hospitals are reluctant to call churches. Please call us so that we can avoid missing our parishioners in their time of need.

### THEOPHANY CELEBRATION SCHEDULE

On the **Eve of Theophany** we will have Vesperal Divine Liturgy at 7:00 p.m. followed by the Great Blessing of the Waters.  
**On Theophany** the Great Blessing of the Waters will take place following the 8:30 a.m. Orthros, as is the ancient Tradition of the Church (not following the Divine Liturgy).

Please Join Us!

### RIVER BLESSING

It's that time of the year again. It is time for the **Outdoor Blessing of Illinois River on Saturday, January 9 at 12:00 PM (noon) on "The Spirit of Peoria" Paddle Boat** from where the cross will be thrown into the Illinois River and retrieved.

### VASILOPITA CELEBRATION

Our Parish Family will be celebrating our Annual Vasilopita Celebration on Sunday, January 10, 2016.

### HOUSE BLESSINGS

Call Father Michael if you wish to have your house blessed. Father Michael will be blessing homes from Wednesday January 6 through the beginning of Great Lent. All appointments are on a first call first served basis, so telephone today!