

THE TROPHYBEARER

Pastoral Thoughts

On the 40th day after Pascha, always a Thursday, we celebrate Christ's Ascension. This is His final appearance to His disciples and precedes the sending of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost.

We know a little about those 40 days between Pascha and the Ascension. Each of the four Gospel writers' recounts various meetings between Christ and His followers. Luke, the writer of the Acts of the Apostles, also recounts appearances of the Risen Christ. Paul, reporting what it is presumed he learned from others, recounts an appearance before over five hundred believers in his first letter to the Corinthians.

St. John Chrysostom, in his homily on the Ascension reminds us that in returning to Heaven as the Risen Christ, He had never left the Father's side in His divinity, and as well, in returning to heaven, He never left us.

In the Gospel of Matthew, Christ tells His followers, and thus us, that he is 'with us always, unto the ages of ages'. We are not left alone or without guidance, support and protection.

Imagine those meetings between Christ and His followers, and how those meetings made a fundamental change in His followers. Forty-one days previous, before the Resurrection, the disciples, and it is safe to assume, all His followers were frightened and heartbroken.

They were in danger from the authorities. The Teacher, whom they believed was the Messiah, the one who was prophesied, was dead in a brutal public death. They must have wondered how they would pick up their interrupted lives and go on.

Christ's Resurrection and His appearances over the next 40 days changed that fundamentally. Before the century was out, Christianity would be present to some extent from Spain, at least, to modern day India. There is a strong tradition that Christianity came to the British Isles during this time as well.

Fishermen stood up to the Sanhedrin. Common people traveled, by foot and ship, tremendous distances to spread the word about the Word. Thousands upon thousands of people of every culture in the Roman Empire staked their lives to the accounts of a Jewish Messiah who came for them as well.

We marvel at this explosion of faith and its unlikely messengers. We wonder at what Christ said, in addition to what we already know, during those 40 days. We may miss, however, that we have access to the same converting power.

We too hear the words of Christ in the Divine Liturgy. We too see what His followers saw in the Resurrection. We too encounter the Risen Lord, in the cup of the Eucharist.

We then should be just as bold, just as empowered, just as reassured as those who watched Him ascend into heaven without leaving us. We then should be warmed and comforted by His promise to be with us always. It is our promise, our blessing, our strength as well.



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PARISH NEWS

Epistle Readers

Anyone wishing to become an Epistle Reader, Please Contact
Father Michael

Sunday, May 3, 2026: The Sunday of the Paralytic: Alexa Florence

Sunday, May 10, 2026: The Sunday of the Samaritan Woman:
Harry Coin

Sunday, May 17, 2026: The Sunday of the Blindman: Mary Rankin

Sunday, May 24, 2026: The Sunday of the Fathers of the 1st
Ecumenical Council: Eric Reyes

Sunday, May 31, 2026: Pentecost: Loukia Constantinides

Evening Meal Volunteers

May 27, 2026: Kathy Begyn / Elaine Amidon

June 24, 2026: Fr. Michael and Presbytera Maria Constantinides /
Doug and Patti Kenyon

Anyone interested in taking part in this worthwhile ministry
should contact Mary Winters at 563-726-2880

Parish Council Sunday Duty Schedule

Sunday, May 3, 2026: Joe Burmeister, Mariellen Crosson, Pete Hadjis, Gus Pappas

Sunday, May 10, 2026: Kathy Begyn, Kim Eastland, Mary Kay Eckert, and Mary
Rankin.

Sunday, May 17, 2026: Nick Elias, Ted Pitsoulakis, and Dennis Spurgetis

Sunday, May 24, 2026: Joe Burmeister, Mariellen Crosson, Pete Hadjis, Gus
Pappas

Sunday, May 31, 2026, Kathy Begyn, Kim Eastland, Mary Kay Eckert, and Mary
Rankin.

Graduate Sunday

On June 15th, we will take a day to honor our graduates here at St. George. Everyone
who has or knows someone graduating this year, either from High school or College,
should please email their names to Father Michael at frmike99@aol.com no later than
Sunday, May 31st.

Thank You...

- Thank you to everyone who donated their treasure, talent, and time to help set up, coordinate, serve, sing, and worship during Holy Week and Pascha this year! We would not have had such a beautiful Holy Week and Pascha without your hard work!
- Thank you to our Agape readers: Kennedy Raes, Eric Reyes, Sara Elias, Nick Elias, Veronica Tolescu, and, of course, Deacon Paul Speed!

PROSPHORA MAKERS

Sunday, May 3, 2026: Open

Sunday, May 10, 2026: Open

Sunday, May 17, 2026: Open

Sunday, May 24, 2026: Open

Sunday, May 31, 2026: Open

COFFEE HOUR HOSTS

**Sunday, May 3, 2026: Husam
and Raneen Ghawi**

**Sunday, May 10, 2026:
Mother's Day**

**Sunday, May 17, 2026: Nick
and Alexa Gnatovich**

**Sunday, May 24, 2026: Pete
and Allison Hadjis**

**Sunday, May 31, 2026: John
and Darcy Callas**

PARISH REGISTRY

Baptisms

The servant of God
Katherine May (Angelike)
Koltz was Baptized into the
Orthodox Faith on April 18,
2026 and the sponsor was
Elizabeth Coin.

The servant of God Nadia Edith
(Nadia) Jestel was Baptized into
the Orthodox Faith on April 26,
2026 and the sponsor was Elena
Nistor.

LIVES OF THE SAINTS

Sunday of the Paralytic (May 3)

Close to the Sheep's Gate in Jerusalem, there was a pool called the Sheep's Pool. It had, around it, five porches, that is, five sets of pillars supporting a domed roof. Under this roof, there lay very many sick people with various maladies, awaiting the moving of the water. The first to step in after the troubling of the water was healed immediately of whatever malady he had.

It was there that the paralytic of today's Gospel lay, tormented by his infirmity of thirty-eight years. When Christ beheld him, He asked him, "Wilt thou be made whole?" And he answered with a quiet and meek voice, "Sir, I have no man, when the water is troubled, to put me into the pool." The Lord said unto him, "Rise, take up thy bed, and walk." And straightaway the man was made whole and took up his bed. Walking in the presence of all, he departed rejoicing to his own house. According to the expounders of the Gospels, the Lord Jesus healed this paralytic during the days of the Passover, when He had gone to Jerusalem for the Feast, and dwelt there teaching and working miracles. According to Saint John the Evangelist, this miracle took place on the Sabbath.

Mid-Pentecost (May 6)

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

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

SUNDAY OF THE SAMARITAN WOMAN (MAY 10)

One of the most ancient cities of the Promised Land was Shechem, also called Sikima, located at the foot of Mount Gerazim. There, the Israelites had heard the blessings in the days of Moses and Jesus of Navi. Near to this town, Jacob, who had come from Mesopotamia in the nineteenth century before Christ, bought a piece of land where there was a well. This well, preserved even until the time of Christ, was known as Jacob's Well. Later, before he died in Egypt, he left that piece of land as a special inheritance to his son Joseph (Gen. 49:22). This town, before it was taken into possession by Samaria, was also the leading city of the kingdom of the ten tribes. In the time of the Romans it was called Neapolis, and at present Nablus. It was the first city in Canaan visited by the Patriarch Abraham. Here also, Jesus of Navi (Joshua) addressed the tribes of Israel for the last time. Almost three hundred years later, all Israel assembled there to make Roboam (Rehoboam) king.

When our Lord Jesus Christ, then, came at midday to this city, which is also called Sychar (John 4:5), He was wearied from the journey and the heat, and He sat down at this well. After a little while the Samaritan woman mentioned in today's Gospel passage came to draw water. As she conversed at some length with the Lord and heard from Him secret things concerning herself, she believed in Him; through her many other Samaritans also believed.

Concerning the Samaritans we know the following: In the year 721 before Christ, Salmanasar (Shalmaneser), King of the Assyrians, took the ten tribes of the kingdom of Israel into captivity, and relocated all these people to Babylon and the land of the Medes. From there he gathered various nations and sent them to Samaria. These nations had been idolaters from before. Although they were later instructed in the Jewish faith and believed in the one God, they worshipped the idols also. Furthermore, they accepted only the Pentateuch of Moses, and rejected the other books of Holy Scripture. Nonetheless, they thought themselves to be descendants of Abraham and Jacob. Therefore, the pious Jews named these Judaizing and idolatrous peoples Samaritans, since they lived in Samaria, the former leading city of the Israelites, as well as in the other towns thereabout. The Jews rejected them as heathen and foreigners, and had no communion with them at all, as the Samaritan woman observed, "the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans" (John 4:9). Therefore, the name Samaritan is used derisively many times in the Gospel narrations. After the Ascension of the Lord, and the descent of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, the woman of Samaria was baptized by the holy Apostles and became a great preacher and Martyr of Christ; she was called Photine, and her feast is kept on February 26.

Icon Painting Workshop St. George Greek Orthodox Church

Experience the unique spiritual world of the Byzantine Era through icon painting

July 6-11, 2026
St. George Greek Orthodox Church
Rock Island, Illinois



Join us on this six day intensive course under the direction of visiting master iconographer and expert instructor Theodoros Papadopoulos from Greece. This Virgin Mary icon will "come alive" as he will guide you step by step, through the ancient techniques of Byzantine Iconography. Let us journey together, discovering anew, this traditional artistic expression of theology and spirituality often called the "meeting place of the Divine". Whether you are beginner or a professional, this workshop offers the opportunity to learn or refine your techniques. The schedule of courses runs daily from 9:00 am until 4:30 pm.

Your tuition fee of \$850 includes all materials including boards, brushes, pigments etc.

Space is limited and early registration is suggested.

For enrollment or information contact Mr Theodoros Papadopoulos at the email: theodoreicons@gmail.com

or visit the website: theodoreicons.com/rock-island

St. George Greek Orthodox
Church Presents:

OUR BIG FAT GREEK DRIVE-THRU PRE-ORDER EVENT

Saturday, May 9th, 2026
11am - 5pm

MENU INCLUDES:

- Greek Chicken Dinner
- Gyro with Orzo Salad
- Spanakopita with Orzo Salad
- Keftedes with Orzo Salad
- Domathes with Orzo Salad
- Baklava



SCAN HERE FOR ORDERING

CHURCH PICK-UP ONLY:

2930 31ST AVENUE ROCK
ISLAND, IL 61201

For Additional Information:



Our Big Fat Greek Festival



Great Food, Great Fellowship, Greater Cause



Class of 2026
Congratulations!
You did great!



On June 15th, we will take a day to honor our graduates here at St. George. Everyone who has or knows someone graduating this year, either from High school or College, should please email their names to Father Michael at frmike99@aol.com no later than Sunday, May 31st.

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
					1 Fast Day	2 ALL ORDERS DUE FOR "OUR BIG FAT GREEK DRIVETHRU"
3 Sunday of the Parylytic 8:30 a.m. Orthros 9:30 a.m. Divine Liturgy Sunday School classes following Holy Communion	4	5	6 Fast Day 8:00 a.m. Men's Fellowship Group @ Coffee House (1315 Jersey Ridge Road, Davenport, IA)	7	8 Fast Day 9:00 a.m. Women's Group @ Coffee House (1315 Jersey Ridge Road, Davenport, IA)	9 11:00 a.m. through 5:00 p.m. Drivethru pickup
METROPOLIS OF CHICAGO CLERGY RETREAT						
10 Sunday of the Samaritan Woman Mother's Day 8:30 a.m. Orthros 9:30 a.m. Divine Liturgy Sunday School classes following Holy Communion	11	12 7:00 p.m. Virtual Orthodox Study Forum	13 Fast Day 8:00 a.m. Men's Fellowship Group @ Coffee House (1315 Jersey Ridge Road, Davenport, IA) 11:00 a.m. "In Person" Orthodox Study Forum	14 7:00 p.m. Book Study: On the Incarnation by Saint Athanasios the Great both "in-person" and Zoom	15 Fast Day	16
17 Sunday of the Blind Man 8:30 a.m. Orthros 9:30 a.m. Divine Liturgy Sunday School classes following Holy Communion	18	19 6:30 p.m. Parish Council Meeting	20 Fast Day 8:00 a.m. Men's Fellowship Group @ Coffee House (1315 Jersey Ridge Road, Davenport, IA) 11:00 a.m. "In Person" Orthodox Study Forum	21 Ascension of the Lord Feast Day of Saints Constantine and Helen 8:00 a.m. Orthros followed by the Divine Liturgy @ Saint George	22 Fast Day 10:00-11:00 a.m. Arsenal Cemetery, Rock Island	23 + Sacrament
24 Sunday the Fathers of the 1 st Ecumenical Council 8:30 a.m. Orthros 9:30 a.m. Divine Liturgy Sunday School classes following Holy Communion (Final Day of Sunday School)	25 Memorial Day 8:00-9:00 a.m. Riverside Cemetery 9:30 a.m.-10:30 a.m. Memorial Park, Moline 11:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m. Memorial Park, Rock Island	26 7:00 p.m. Virtual Orthodox Study Forum	27 Fast Day 8:00 a.m. Men's Fellowship Group @ Coffee House (1315 Jersey Ridge Road, Davenport, IA) 11:00 a.m. "In Person" Orthodox Study Forum Evening Meal	28	29 Fast Day	30 Saturday of souls 8:30 a.m. Orthros followed by the Divine Liturgy
31 Pentecost 8:30 a.m. Orthros 9:30 a.m. Divine Liturgy						