WEEKLY BULLETIN

September 8, 2024, Vol. 41, No.35
11th SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST
Nativity of the Theotokos.
Sunday before the Exaltation of the Cross

THE VOICE

SAINT ELIA ORTHODOX CHURCH

A Parish of the Orthodox Church in America

64 W. Wilbeth Rd., Akron, Ohio 44301

Church Hall: 330-724-7129
Office: 330-724-7009
www.saintelia.com
www.facebook.com/sainteliakron

His Eminence Alexander, Archbishop of Toledo, Bulgarian Diocese,
Very Rev. Mitred Archpriest Father Don Anthony Freude, Parish Rector
Rev. Protodeacon James M. Gresh, Attached

SAINT ELIA THE PROPHET PARISH

2024 Parish Council

President: Veronica Bilas
V. President: Sandy Graham
Secretary: Subdeacon Aaron Gray
Treasurer: Reader Joshua Wherley
Members: Subdeacon Terrence Bilas, Bud Graham, Jefferson Hodge, Nicholas Morelli

Choir Director: Subdeacon Terrence A. Bilas
Assistant Directors: Anastasia Bohush
Deaconisa Heidi Gresh, Reader Michael Luc

Church School Coordinator: Popadia Donna Freude
Staff: Natalie Slife, Martha Morelli. Subdeacon David Trace

Sisterhood of St. Juliana:

V. President: Sandy Graham
Secretary: Katherine Hodge
Treasurer: Mary Magensky

Workers of St. Elizabeth the New Martyr:

Coordinators: Subdeacon Aaron Gray, Veronica Bilas

Scheduled Readers

Sunday, September 8 - Reader Michael Luc
Sunday, September 15 –Reader Joshua Wherley
Sunday, September 22 Subdeacon Aaron Gray
Sunday, September 29 –Mary Beth Gray

SCHEDULE OF DIVINE SERVICES.

11TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST – Tone 2
THE NATIVITY OF OUR MOST-HOLY LADY THEOTOKOS AND EVER VIRGIN MARY. SUN. BEFORE THE EXALTATION OF THE CROSS.

Saturday, September 7

5:00 pm Great Vespers and Confessions

Matins Gospel: Luke 1:39-49, 56

Sunday, September 8

9:10 am 3rd and 6th Hours: Reader Michael Luc

9:30 am Divine Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom

Epistle Reader: Reader Michael Luc

Epistles: Galatians 6:11-18, Philippians 2:5-11

Gospels: John 3:13-17, Luke 10:38-42; 11:27-28

THE UNIVERSAL EXALTATION OF THE PRECIOUS AND LIFE-GIVING CROSS

Friday, September 13

6:00 pm Vesperal Divine Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom

Saturday, September 14 – STRTICT FAST DAY

12TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST – Tone 3
AFTERFEAST AND SUNDAY AFTER THE EXALTATION OF THE CROSS.

Saturday, September 14

5:00 pm Great Vespers and Confessions

Matins Gospel: Matthew 28:16-20

Sunday, September 15

9:10 am 3rd and 6th Hours: Reader Joshua Wherley

9:30 am Divine Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom

Epistle Reader: Reader Michael Luc

Epistle: Galatians 2:16-20 Gospel: Mark 8:34-9:1

TODAY'S SCRIPTURE READINGS

Epistle: Galatians 6:11-18

See with what large letters I have written to you with my own hand! As many as desire to make a good showing in the flesh, these would compel you to be circumcised, only that they may not suffer persecution for the cross of Christ. For not even those who are circumcised keep the law, but they desire to have you circumcised that they may boast in your flesh. But God forbid that I should boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world. For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision avails anything, but a new creation. And as many as walk according to this rule, peace and mercy be upon them, and upon the Israel of God. From now on let no one trouble me, for I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus. Brethren, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen.

Epistle: Philippians 2:5-11

The Humbled and Exalted Christ

Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus,
who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be
equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, taking the
form of a bondservant, *and* coming in the likeness of men. And
being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself
and became obedient to *the point of* death, even the death of the
cross. Therefore, God also has highly exalted Him and given
Him the name which is above every name, that at the name of
Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those
on earth, and of those under the earth, and *that* every tongue
should confess that Jesus Christ *is* Lord, to the glory of God the
Father.

Gospel: John 3:13-17

No one has ascended to heaven but He who came down from heaven, *that is,* the Son of Man [a]who is in heaven. And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in Him should [b]not perish but have eternal life. For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.

Gospel: Luke 10:38-42; 11:27-28

Now it happened as they went that He entered a certain village; and a certain woman named Martha welcomed Him into her house. And she had a sister called Mary, who also sat at Jesus' feet and heard His word. But Martha was distracted with much serving, and she approached Him and said, "Lord, do You not care that my sister has left me to serve alone? Therefore, tell her to help me." And Jesus answered and said to her, "Martha, Martha, you are worried and troubled about many things. But one thing is needed, and Mary has chosen that good part, which will not be taken away from her."

Keeping the Word

And it happened, as He spoke these things, that a certain woman from the crowd raised her voice and said to Him, “Blessed *is* the womb that bore You, and *the* breasts which nursed You!”

But He said, “More than that, blessed *are* those who hear the word of God and keep it!”

The Nativity of our Most Holy Lady the Mother of God and Ever-Virgin Mary

Commemorated on September 8

The Most Holy Virgin Mary was born at a time when people had reached such a degree of moral decay that it seemed altogether impossible to restore them. People often said that God must come into the world to restore faith and not permit the ruin of mankind. The Son of God chose to take on human nature for the salvation of mankind and chose as His Mother the All-Pure Virgin Mary, who alone was worthy to give birth to the Source of purity and holiness.

The Nativity of Our Most Holy Lady Theotokos and Ever Virgin Mary is celebrated by the Church as a day of universal joy. Within the context of the Old and the New Testaments, the Most Blessed Virgin Mary was born on this radiant day, having been chosen before the ages by Divine Providence to bring about the Mystery of the Incarnation of the Word of God. She is revealed as the Mother of the Savior of the World, Our Lord Jesus Christ.

The Most Holy Virgin Mary was born in the small city of Galilee, Nazareth. Her parents were Righteous Joachim of the tribe of the Prophet-King David, and

Anna from the tribe of the First Priest Aaron. The couple was without child, since Saint Anna was barren. Having reached old age, Joachim and Anna did not lose hope in God's mercy. They had strong faith that for God everything is possible, and that He would be able to overcome the barrenness of Anna even in her old age, as He had once overcome the barrenness of Sarah, spouse of the Patriarch Abraham. Saints Joachim and Anna vowed to dedicate the child which the Lord might give them, to the service of God in the Temple.

Childlessness was considered among the Hebrew nation as a Divine punishment for sin, and therefore the righteous Saints Joachim and Anna had to endure abuse from their own countrymen. On one of the feast days at the Temple in Jerusalem the elderly Joachim brought his sacrifice to offer to God, but the High Priest would not accept it, considering him to be unworthy since he was childless.

Saint Joachim in deep grief went into the wilderness, and there he prayed with tears to the Lord for a child. Saint Anna wept bitterly when she learned what had happened at the Jerusalem Temple. Never once did she complain against the Lord, but rather she prayed to ask God's mercy on her family.

The Lord fulfilled her petitions when the pious couple had attained to extreme old age and prepared

themselves by virtuous life for a sublime calling: to be the parents of the Most Holy Virgin Mary, the future Mother of the Lord Jesus Christ. The Archangel Gabriel brought Joachim and Anna the joyous message that their prayers were heard by God, and of them would be born a most blessed daughter Mary, through Whom would come the Salvation of all the World.

The Most Holy Virgin Mary surpassed in purity and virtue not only all mankind, but also the angels. She was manifest as the living Temple of God, so the Church sings in its festal hymns: “the East Gate... bringing Christ into the world for the salvation of our souls.”

The Nativity of the Theotokos marks the change of the times when the great and comforting promises of God for the salvation of people from slavery to the devil are about to be fulfilled. This event has brought to earth the grace of the Kingdom of God, a Kingdom of Truth, piety, virtue and everlasting life. The Theotokos is revealed to all of us by grace as a merciful Intercessor and Mother, to Whom we have recourse with filial devotion.

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“You must remember, somethings legally right are not morally right.” Abraham Lincoln

RECEPTION INTO THE CATECHUMENATE

By the Providence of God, our Parish Family of St. Elia has been entrusted with those who have been sent to us to love them and nourish them in the faith.

TODAY, Sunday, **September 8**, we will receive Randy Warner, Amber Larabee, and the children Marceline and Bonnibel into the Catechumenate.

We prayerfully congratulate them in their reception into the Catechumenate as they prepare to be received into the Church.

NEXT Sunday, **September 15**, we will receive Daniel Williamson into the Catechumenate.

CHURCH SCHOOL

Twenty-five classes are planned for our Church School Program for 2024-2025, beginning on Sunday, October 13 and ending on St. Thomas Sunday, April 27, with Popadia Donna as Coordinator.

Our children will be separated into three groups: Mrs. Natalie Slife – Preschool; Mrs. Martha Morelli – School Age; Subdeacon David Trace – High School

On Sunday, October 13, our children and our Church School Staff will begin the year with a Prayer and Blessing for the Opening of Church School.

A meeting of the CHURCH SCHOOL STAFF will be held next Sunday, September 15, in the Office.

KRISTOPHER BARNHART

Our Parish Family member, Kristopher Barnhart is stationed at the Navy Recruit Training Command. We can send him a letter or card by using the following **CORRECTED** address:

SR. Barnhart Kristopher
Ship #07 Div #296
3905 Sailor Drive
Great Lakes, Illinois 60088

DEACONATE ORDINATION

The Annual Conference of the Bulgarian Diocese of Toledo will be held on the weekend of October 4 - 6, 2024, here at Saint Elia. You will be receiving shortly all the details involving all our parish members in the social events of the Conference.

On **Sunday, October 6**, **2024**, the Feast of Saint Innocent, at the Pontifical Divine Liturgy **Subdeacon Aaron Innocent Gray**, of our Parish Family, will be ordained a Deacon of the Orthodox Church in America by His Eminence our Father and Archbishop Alexander.

Subdeacon Aaron Innocent was tonsured a Reader by Metropolitan Herman on October 8, 2006, and ordained a Subdeacon by Archbishop Alexander on December 11, 2022.
Let us remember Subdeacon Aaron as he prepares for his Diaconal ordination.

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ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN WOMEN (OCW)

ANNUAL WELCOME and FELLOWSHIP TEA

Sunday, October 13, 2024 – 2 pm
St. George Antiochian Orthodox Church

CHRISTIANITY IN CHINA: An Orthodox Christian Perspective

Presented by Protodeacon James Gresh of Saint Elia Orthodox Church

Fr. Deacon James will discuss his experience with mission work in China

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OUR STEWARDSHIP, September 1, 2024

Candles:	**$65.00**
Improvement Fund:	**5.00**
Tray Offerings:	**899.00**
TOTAL:	**$969.00**
PayPal Donations:	**$ 27.84**
Tithely Donations:	**273.33**
TOTAL:	**$ 301.17**
TOTAL OFFERNGS	**$1,270.17**

REMEMBERING THOSE SERVING IN THE ARMED FORCES

Subdeacon Anthony Freude, son of Fr Don and Popadia Donna Freude
Egor Cravcenco, son of Serghei and Ludmila Cravcenco
Kristopher Barnhart: son of Diego and Chanelle - Naval Station Great Lakes in Chicago

REMEMBER OUR SICK AND SHUT-INS

Archbishop Alexander
Archbishop Benjamin
Archbishop Nathaniel
Archpriest Emil Huntyan
Archpriest Andrew Moulton
Florence Lambo
Martin Vronick
Pani Dolores Zuder
Mitered Archpriest Daniel Kovalak
Matushka Myra Kovalak
Matushka Christine Zebren
Matushka Laryssa Huntyan
Subdeacon Martin Paluch
Mary Magensky
Sarah Nigilo
Melissa Trace
Halina Woroncow
Carl Nickoloff (St. Edward's in Fairlawn)
Joseph Taylor (nephew of DiPuccio Family)
Brian Gable (Protodeacon James' nephew)

YOU ARE INVITED TO

A SONG OF VICTORY

A CONCERT PROUDLY PRESENTED BY A PANORTHODOX CHOIR OF THE GREATER CLEVELAND AREA

Please join us for a one-hour choral concert that will benefit Saint Theodosius Orthodox Christian Cathedral, which was recently damaged by fire. The concert is open to the public, & free will donations will go directly toward the Restoration Fund.

The event will be held at Holy Trinity Orthodox Church, located at 6822 Broadview Road in Parma, Ohio, on September 15th, at 3 PM.

Light refreshments will follow, & CDs with 15 tracks of familiar Orthodox hymns will be available ($20 each). Also included on each CD is a special Interview with Father Ján Čižmár, Cathedral Dean. Professional recording time was donated by Spider Studios.

LESSONS FROM GEESE

As each goose flaps is wings, it creates an uplift for the bird following it. By flying in a "V" formation, the whole flock adds 71% more flying range than if each bird flew alone.

Lesson: People who share common direction and sense of community can get where they are going quicker and easier because they are traveling on the thrust of one another.

When a goose falls out of formation, it suddenly feels the drag and resistance of trying to fly alone and quickly gets back into formation to take advantage of the "lift" given by each bird in front.

Lesson: If we have as much sense as a goose, we will stay in formation with those who are headed where we want to go.

When the lead goose gets tired, it rotates back into the formation and another goose flies at the point position.

Lesson: It pays to take turns doing the hard tasks and sharing leadership.

The geese in formation honk from behind to encourage those in front to keep up their speed.

Lesson: Make sure you're honking from behind is encouraging, and not just mindless chatter.

When a goose gets sick or wounded, two geese drop out of formation and follow him down to help and protect him. They stay with him until he can fly again or dies. Then they launch out with another formation or catch up with the flock.

Lesson: Stand by one another

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A Thought from C.S. Lewis

Hope means a continual looking forward to the eternal world. It doesn't mean we are to leave the present world as it is. If you read history, you will find that the Christians who did most for the present world were those who thought most of the next. It is since Christians have largely ceased to think of the other world that have become so ineffective. Aim at heaven and will get the earth "thrown in." But aim at earth and you will get neither.