WEEKLY BULLETIN

August 17, 2025, Vol. 42, No. 25
10th Sunday After Pentecost

THE VOICE

SAINT ELIA ORTHODOX CHURCH

A Parish of the Orthodox Church in America
64 W. Wilbeth Rd., Akron, Ohio 44301
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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

2023 Parish Council

President: Veronica Bilas
V. President: Sandy Graham
Secretary: Deacon Aaron Gray
Treasurer: Daniel Slife
Members: Anthony Dodovich, Bud Graham, Jefferson Hodge, Daniel Ralich

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, Eve Tavenier, Reader Nicholas Morelli, Frances Hakim, Subdeacon David Trace

Sisterhood of St. Juliana:

President: Sandy Graham V. President: Kathy Gray
Secretary: Katherine Hodge; Treasurer: Mary Magensky;
Assistant Treasurer: Anastasia Bohush

Workers of St. Elizabeth the New Martyr:

Coordinators: Subdeacon Aaron Gray, Veronica Bilas

Scheduled Readers - 2025

Sunday, August 17 - Reader Nicholas Morelli
Sunday, August 24 – Sue Ellen Turscak
Sunday, August 31 - Bud Graham
Sunday, September 7 – Sandy Graham
Sunday, September14 – Reader Michael Luc

SCHEDULE OF DIVINE SERVICES

10th SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST - Tone 1
Afterfeast of the Dormition of the Theotokos

Saturday, August 16

5:00 pm Great Vespers and Confessions
Matins Gospel: John 21:1-14

Sunday, August 17

9:10 am 3rd and 6th Hours: Reader Nicholas Morelli
9:30 am Divine Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom
Epistle Reader: Reader Nicholas Morelli
Epistle: 1 Corinthians 4:9-16
Gospel: Matthew 17:14-23

11th SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST - Tone 2
Hieromarttyr Eutychius, Disciple of Saint John the Theologian

Saturday, August 23

5:00 pm Great Vespers and Confessions
Matins Gospel: John 21:15-25

Sunday, August 24

9:10 am - 3rd and 6th Hours: Sue Ellen Turscak
9:30 am Divine Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom
Epistle Reader: Sue Ellen Turscak
Epistle: 1 Corinthians 9:2-12
Gospel: Matthew 18:23-35

THE BEHEADING OF THE HOLY GLORIOUS PROPHET, FORERUNNER, AND BAPTIST JOHN

Thursday, August 28

6:00 pm Vesperal Divine Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom

Friday, August 29 – *Strict Fast Day*

SUNDAY SCRIPTURE READINGS

Epistle: 1 Corinthians 4:9-16

9 For I think that God has displayed us, the apostles,
last, as men condemned to death; for we have been
made a spectacle [a]to the world, both to angels and to
men. 10 We *are* fools for Christ's sake, but
you *are* wise in Christ! We *are* weak, but
you *are* strong! You *are* distinguished, but
we *are* dishonored! 11 To the present hour we both
hunger and thirst, and we are poorly clothed, and
beaten, and homeless. 12 And we labor, working with
our own hands. Being reviled, we bless; being
persecuted, we endure; 13 being defamed,
we [b]entreat. We have been made as the filth of the
world, the offscouring of all things until now.

Paul's Paternal Care

14 I do not write these things to shame you, but as my
beloved children I warn *you.* 15 For though you might
have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet *you*
do not *have* many fathers; for in Christ Jesus, I have
begotten you through the gospel. 16 Therefore I urge
you, imitate me.

Gospel: Matthew 17:14-23

A Boy Is Healed

14 And when they had come to the multitude, a
man came to Him, kneeling down to Him and

saying, 15 “Lord, have mercy on my son, for he
is [a]an epileptic and suffers severely; for he often
falls into the fire and often into the water. 16 So I
brought him to Your disciples, but they could not
cure him.”
17 Then Jesus answered and said, “O [b]faithless
and perverse generation, how long shall I be with
you? How long shall I bear with you? Bring him
here to Me.” 18 And Jesus rebuked the demon,
and it came out of him; and the child was cured
from that very hour.
19 Then the disciples came to Jesus privately and
said, “Why could we not cast it out?”
20 So Jesus said to them, “Because of
your [c]unbelief; for assuredly, I say to you, if you
have faith as a mustard seed, you will say to this
mountain, ‘Move from here to there,’ and it will
move; and nothing will be impossible for
you. 21 [d]However, this kind does not go out
except by prayer and fasting.”

Jesus Again Predicts His Death and Resurrection

22 Now while they were [e]staying in Galilee, Jesus
said to them, “The Son of Man is about to be
betrayed into the hands of men, 23 and they will
kill Him, and the third day He will be raised
up.” And they were exceedingly sorrowful.

THE DORMITION OF THE MOTHER OF THE GOD

A Thought from +Father Alexander Schmemann

This great Feast of the Church, the Dormition of the Mother of God, and the icon celebrates a fundamental teaching of our faith—the Resurrection of the body. In the case of the Theotokos, this has been accomplished by the divine will of God.

Thus, this Feast is a feast of hope, hope in Resurrection and life eternal. Like those who gathered around the body of the Virgin Mary, we gather around our departed loved ones and commend their souls into the hands of Christ. As we remember those who have reposed in faith before us and have passed on into the communion of the Saints, we prepare ourselves to one day be received into the new life of the age to come.

We also affirm through this Feast as we journey toward our heavenly abode that the Mother of God intercedes for us. Through Christ she has become the mother of all the children of God, embracing us with divine love.

Repose of Venerable John, Abbot of Rila, Bulgaria August 18

Saint John of Rila, the great spiritual ascetic of the Bulgarian Orthodox Church and Heavenly Protector of the Bulgarian nation, was born in the year 876 in the village of Skrino in the Sredets district [now Sofia].

After he had been orphaned, the boy became a cowherd to avoid people. Once the rich man beat him for losing a cow with its calf. The boy cried long and he prayed, that God would help him. When he found the cow with the calf, the water at that time flowed high and strong in the River Struma. The young cowherd prayed, he placed his own tattered shirt on the water, made the Sign of the Cross over it, took up the calf in his arms and went with it, as though on dry land, to the other bank of the river where the cow was.

The rich man, hidden in the forest, was frightened upon seeing this miracle. He rewarded the youth generously, then sent him away from his home. Having given away his things, the boy left his village. Where and when the saint took monastic tonsure is unknown.

At the very beginning he lived an ascetical life on top of a high and barren hill, eating only wild plants. His cell was made from brushwood. After a short time, robbers fell upon him by night, beat him, and drove him away. Later, he found a deep cave and settled in it.

Saint John spent twelve years in the desolate cave, and then he went into the Rila wilderness and settled in the hollow of a tree. He fasted and prayed a great deal, wept incessantly, and ate only grass. Seeing such endurance, God caused beans to grow, which he ate for a long time. The beans and his exploits made him known to people.

Once a flock of frightened sheep ran along the hilly steep paths and did not stop until the place where the monk lived. The shepherds, following the flock, with astonishment saw the hermit, who amicably greeted them: "You arrive here hungry. Pick some of my beans and eat." All ate and was satisfied. One gathered many beans in the reserve. Along the way home he offered them to his comrades, but there were no beans in the pilfered pots. The shepherds turned back penitent, and the Elder stood there, saying with a smile: "See, children, these fruits are appointed by God for subsistence in the wilderness."

From that time, they began to bring to the monk the sick and those troubled by unclean spirits, which he healed by prayer. Fleeing celebrity, the monk went from his beloved tree-hollow and settled on a high and rocky crag difficult of access, where he dwelt for seven years under the open sky. Reports about the great ascetic reached even the Bulgarian king Peter (927-969), who wanted to meet him. Saint John wrote a letter, refusing such a meeting out of humility.

Later, Saint John accepted under him the guidance of monks, who built a monastery with a church in the cave where Saint John formerly lived. He wisely tended his flock and died on August 18, 946 at 70 years of age.

Five years before his end he wrote in his own hand "A Testament to Disciples," one of the finest creations of Old Bulgarian literature. The holy life of the ascetic and the remarkable mercies of God through his prayers were a fine preaching of the Christian Faith in the newly baptized Bulgarian land. In the uneasy time of struggle of Bulgaria with Byzantium, under the west Bulgarian king Samuel (976-1014), Saint John appeared to his disciples, commanding them to transfer his relics to Sredets (Sofia), where the Bulgarian Patriarch Damian (927-972) was hiding. It is presumed that the transfer of relics took place in the year 980.

Somewhat later, the right hand of Saint John of Rila was transferred to Russia (presumably to the city of Rila, where a church was constructed in the name of Saint John of Rila, with a chapel dedicated to the martyrs Florus and Laurus, on the day of their commemoration (August 18) on which he died).

The name of Saint John was known and loved by the Russian people from antiquity. Data about the death of the saint is preserved, especially in Russian sources (the *Menaion* for August in the twelfth century, in the Mazurinsk Chronicle). In the year 1183, the Hungarian king Bela II (1174-1196), during a campaign against the Greeks, seized the chest with the relics of Saint John, together with other booty, and took it to the city of Esztergom.

In the year 1187, after he embellished the reliquary, he sent back the holy relics with great honor. On October 19, 1238, the relics of Saint John were solemnly transferred to the new capital, Trnovo, and put in a church dedicated to the saint. On July 1, 1469, the holy relics of Saint John of Rila were returned to the Rila monastery, where they rest to the present day, granting grace-filled help to all the believers.

OPENING OF SCHOOL BLESSING

On next Sunday, August 24, we will have a Prayer of Blessing for the opening of the school year for all students and teachers.

Our students in Preschool, School Age, High School, along with our teachers, and College Students will be asked to come forward as we pray for them to have good academic year.

DIOCESAN CONFERENCE

The Annual Conference of our Diocese, the Bulgarian Diocese of the Orthodox Church in America, will be held on **Friday, October 10, and Saturday, October 11, at St. Nicholas Church in Burton (Flint), Michigan**

A **Parish Meeting** will be held on **Sunday, September 7**, following the Divine Liturgy to elect a delegate to the Conference

OUR STEWARDSHIP – AUGUST 10, 2025

Candles:	**$ 92.00**
Sunday Tray Offerings:	**498.00**
Tithely Donations:	**416.62**
TOTAL:	**$1,006.62**

REMEMBERING THOSE SERVING IN THE ARMED FORCES

Subdeacon Anthony Freude, son of Fr Don and Popadia Donna
Egor Cravcenco, son of Serghei and Ludmila Cravcenco
Kristopher Barnhart, son of Diego and Chanelle

REMEMBERING OUR SICK AND SHUTINS

Archbishop Onuphry of the Ukraine
Archbishop Benjamin
Archbishop Nathaniel
Archpriest Andrew Moulton
Archpriest Emil Huntyan
Matushka Laryssa Huntyan
Priest Gabriel Bilas
Priest John Manuel
Mitred Archpriest Daniel Kovalak
Matushka Myra Kovalak
Matushka Christine Zebren
Matushka Valerie Zahersky
Reader John Paluch
Florence Lambo
Mary Magensky
Sarah Niglio
Melissa Trace
Frances Hakim
Louis Hakim
Joey Gresh
Halina Woroncow
Joseph Taylor
Brian Gable
Ellen Rees
David Elioff
Sofia Wsevolodovna