

SAINT GEORGE ANTIOCHIAN ORTHODOX CATHEDRAL

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# Servanthood: Finding our Place in the Church By Fr. Joshua Makoul





Determining our involvement in the church can be challenging. Let us first start with our one universal calling in the church and then we will cover what we need to keep in mind in determining our unique, individual ministry in the church. We will also discuss some insights that can help keep our role in the church healthy. Our universal calling is to strive to transform our fallen nature and work towards becoming like God through grace. This process is what the church calls Theosis or Deification. If we are an Orthodox Christian, then this is what we should be striving for with all our mind, heart, and soul. We live in a state of being ever mindful of who we can become; while gently, mercifully, and actively transfiguring those fallen aspects of ourselves. This is our universal calling.

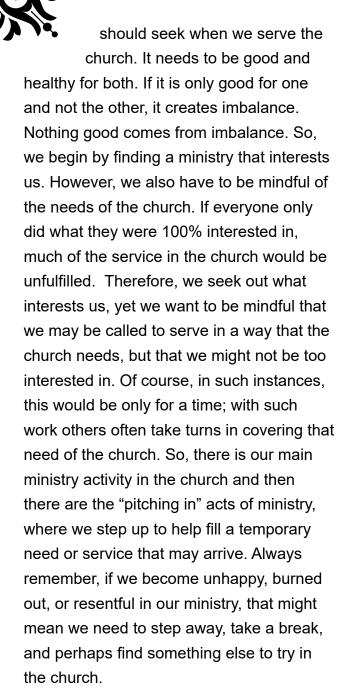
In addition to this calling, we are called to serve the church.

This includes serving the local

parish of which we are a member. However, we often serve in different ways, according to our skill set, interests, and the needs of the church. This service to the church can also be called our tithe of time. We take a portion of the time that God has given us and offer it back to Him out of gratitude. Of course, we also tithe our treasure or financial resources. In tithing our financial resources, we offer back to God a portion of what He has given us, out of gratitude. Depending upon the lives and gifts that we have been given, we may do more one than the other. In the end, it is between us and God as to what we can do and offer. We all have to face our conscience and indeed God Himself.

Once we establish what we can do with regards to tithing time and resources, we set about finding the right activity for us in the church. It should be one that is good for us and good for the church.

This is the healthy synergy that we



As part of being fair to ourselves, to the church, and as part of the necessary balance that must be maintained, we need to make sure we are doing our respective ministry or work for the right reasons. True

service means we have hopes but not expectations. Often, sadly,

the church can be held hostage to our expectations. This occurs when our service becomes conditional. If we are straying into this area, we tend to have a crisis or meltdown if the church is not doing what we think it should be doing. When this occurs, our service to the church has become about us and we risk making our service to be in vain. If we find ourselves doing this, we need to step back, do some work on ourselves, and make the adjustment so we are truly serving the church in a spirit of humility and not out of ego and arrogance.

It is also important to remember that while it is appropriate and healthy to seek fulfillment in our ministry or work in the church, we must be careful not to expect our involvement in the church to meet certain unmet needs from other areas of our lives. If we live alone or lack family, it is totally appropriate to get a sense of family from our faith community. If our service in the church gives us greater fulfillment than what we get from our work in the world, then that is wonderful. However, where it can become problematic is if, for example, as a young adult we seek to meet a future spouse in the church and if that does not occur; we feel disillusioned, as though our parish community somehow let us down. Another example is if at the mid-life stage of life our secular work or career has plateaued or simply has not



worked out, and we suddenly look to our work in the church for that sense of importance and fulfillment. While on the surface this would seem benign, it unfortunately leads to problems. It can lead to over-functioning in the church and placing too heavy of expectations on the church, which if the church cannot meet, often leads to us feeling resentful. This can also happen if we are in the retirement stage of life. Of course, it is totally appropriate to utilize our church to help fill some time and create purpose. However, when we look to the church to fill as much time, attention, and space as our career did, we may be in for a disappointment. We serve the church to help further the gospel of Christ in this world. In this process we should indeed get a sense of purpose and fulfillment, but we have to stay balanced; the church is not there to serve our ego, cooperate with our ego, nor is it there to meet our ego needs. Overall, let it not get to the point where it goes from us serving the church to us serving ourselves. That shift from the former to the latter can happen very subtly. It requires a high degree of insight and selfawareness to detect. A sign that shift has occurred is when we find that we are frequently getting upset and feeling "put out" in the church.

So let us choose a ministry that strikes that balance between our interests and what the church needs. Let

us also maintain balance and awareness in what we expect of the church. Insight and self-awareness go a long way in all of this and help protect the church as well as ourselves. We learn a lot about ourselves in our service to the church. We may see that we have areas of ourselves to work on and resolve. This is true in the monasteries as well. Monks will often report that in the monastery, all of their faults and weaknesses become revealed and exposed as they each engage in their own designated tasks within their community. This is because as a result of spending so much time together, all of their fallen aspects will eventually manifest themselves. So just being part of a community provides them with a treasure trove of feedback and insight into themselves that they then use to target in their spiritual life. Like the monastics, we should welcome this and not be threatened by it. In so many ways our parish is our monastery. If we refuse to address and resolve those fallen aspects of ourselves that we discover, we can cause great harm to our community. So, an added benefit to our service and ministry in the church, is that we gain insight into ourselves through our ministry experiences, and this helps us on our path to Theosis. These are just some realities to keep in mind as we find our place in the church and that will also help us preserve God's peace within

# THE HOMELESS MINISTRY IS NOW THE ST. GEORGE OUTREACH MINISTRY



... I was thirsty and you gave me drink

For I was hungry and you gave me food ..







Icon by the hand of Nick Papas

In an effort to better serve the complex and diverse needs of our brothers and sisters, the Homeless Ministry has been reformed as the St. George Outreach Ministry. While there are over 1,000 individuals in the city that experience homelessness on any given night, over 20% of people in Pittsburgh suffer the threat of a housing crisis, with an income below the poverty line. Our brethren living on the edge face an uncertain future, and our Ministry feels called to adapt and meet their needs.

The Outreach Ministry will continue to partner with local organizations to prepare and deliver freshly cooked meals and supply kits to individuals suffering from homelessness and poverty in Pittsburgh. We are continually searching for more ways to serve. Please reach out if you feel called to offer time, skills, donations, or connections with the Ministry!



**Contact:** Robin Khorey 412.953.3627 homelessministry@sgcoakland.org

# His Eminence Metropolitan Saba's First Visit to our Cathedral Community Sunday, September 10

















# St. George Ministry Fair Sept 17



# A Stewardship Opportunity and Need

As we enter the final quarter of the year, please help us in our great push to meet our operating expenses and to help the church recover financially from its many projects that it needed to accomplish in 2023.

The replacing of the front staircase (which was crumbling), the railings, and all the details associated with it were costly. We also tore down the three houses that we owned in order to remove properties that had begun to detract from the dignity and beauty of our church and that were obstacles to us meeting the needs of our members. We also replaced large industrial air conditioning units and did many other projects that were unavoidable.

We know that many members have been challenged by inflation and also supporting other worthy projects elsewhere. However, please remember that our beloved St. George Community needs our help.

In this final quarter of the year, please set some time aside to reflect and evaluate what we can do for our St. George family and community. It is the home of our spiritual family.

Thank you for everything that you do. May God grant you all peace and good health.

## **Photos of The Demolition and Our New Porch**



# Building project Update.....

- \*All of the houses we had purchased so that we could one day improve our facilities have been torn down.
- \*We now have a large open space to visualize and to fill.
- \*What will go in the open space will maintain the balance between meeting the needs of the community but also being responsible stewards of the church's financial resources.
- \*In the coming months, we will be meeting with architects with the goal to choose one to work with, who can help us develop a master plan and give us several options of what we can do with our new space.
- \*We seek to improve our facilities in order to better meet the needs of parishioners, to create physical environments that are more professional, updated, and conducive to learning, and also to beautify our church property. This is all part of being good stewards of what God has given us.

A St. George Cathedral Retreat...

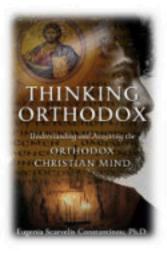
# The True Orthodox Mind and Lifesyle: Why it Matters

Retreat Speaker.

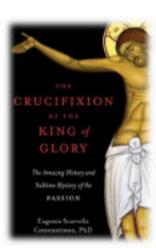
### Dr. Jeannie Scarvelis Constantinou, Ph.D

Saturday, October 28<sup>th</sup>, 2023. 9:30AM to 4:45PM.

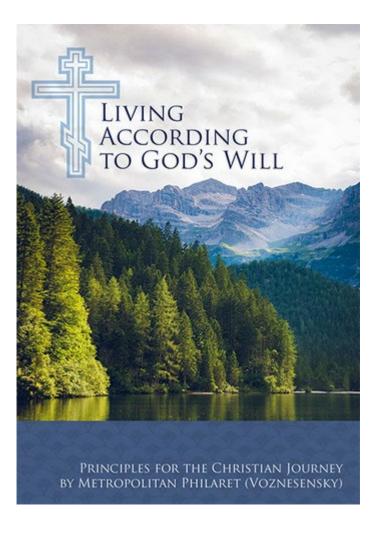
St. George Antiochian Orthodox Cathedral~3400 Dawson Street, Pittsburgh, PA
Please register and RSVP at <a href="https://www.sgcoakland.org">www.sgcoakland.org</a> or call 412-681-2988
\$30 Donation~lunch, refreshments, and coffee will be provided







Dr. Eugenia Constantinou hosts the popular podcast Search the Scriptures Live! on Ancient Faith Radio. She has been a professor and visiting lecturer on the Bible, patristic interpretation of Scripture, and early Christianity at Orthodox and non-Orthodox universities and schools of theology.



The task of man's earthly life is preparing himself for eternal salvation and blessedness. To attain this, a man must live in a holy and pure manner - that is, according to God's will.

It is too often the case that we are ignorant of theology or an Orthodox understanding of how we should live in a way that is pleasing to God: Such an understanding as is offered in this brief work will open a way to our own purpose and fulfillment in life being found and more fully realized.

- Holy Cross Monastery

#### **ADULT CHRISTIAN EDUCATION 2023-24**

The Sunday morning Adult Christian Education group will continue to read and discuss the book *Living According to God's Will: Principles for the Christian Journey* by Metropolitan Philaret (Voznesensky).

Sundays at 9:50 a.m. in the Church Hall Begins on September 10th

No preparation required - Materials will be provided

## **Departed Anniversary List**

#### **July 2023**

July 2, 2023: Norman Riston- 1981, Souad A. Domat- 2012, Sarah Esper- 1961, Lillian Alice Albert- 1988, Irene Bazari- 2001, Anthony Edward Esper- 2010, Jane Ward- 1986, Jane Marie Albert- 1957, Elizabeth Esper- 1974, Russell A. Khorey- 2002, William Bryan- 2003.

July 9: Alice Mellick- 1962, Miriam R. Salem- 2012, Michael Abraham- 1959, David George- 1971, Virginia Albert- 1962, Martin George- 1998, Jack Shaheen- 2017.

July 16: Joseph Assad- 1960, Mary Farley- 2007, Selma Elias- 1959, Alfred Dahma- 1985, Dorothy Mansour- 2000, Elias Dahma- 1955, Julia Joseph- 1984, Carol Matthews- 1977, Abraham Najeeb- 1959, Agnes George- 1985, Rose Marie Essa- 2017.

July 23: Henry Abraham- 1967, Donald A. Abraham- 1978, Frank J. Karel- 1982, Anna Isaac- 1970, David Tarmuty- 1960, Carolyn Bryan Meyer- 2002, Sara Nassar- 1985, Joan M. Nassar- 1986, Mary Khalil- 2017, Naffa Jacobs- 1969, Shiha Solomon- 1995.

July 30: Elizabeth Thomas- 1992, Mary Salem- 1986, Elizabeth George- 1993, Mary Kelly- 1994, Elizabeth Jacob- 1993, Julia Medich- 1974, Helen J. Abbott- 1976, Elias M. Saba- 1989, Mary Dip- 1956, Stanley S. Sams- 2007, Afif Dayoub- 2020, Josephine Evans- 1954.

#### August 2023

August 6: Hesna Davis- 1980, Paul Douglas Labash- 1975, Elias Moses- 1980, Abraham Dahma- 1984, Emily Esper- 1994, Mildred (Mickey) Kosanovich- 2010, Violet S. Khorey- 2009, Nahiba Joseph- 1956, Martha Davis- 1973, Paul Hazo- 1960.

August 13: Isaac Ward- 1972, Sara Joseph- 1984, Freda "Fritzie" George- 2003, Renee Jabbour- 2002, David Diab Moosa- 1964, Sarah Deep- 1996, Mary Fayad- 1963, Alex Nassar-1979, Adib Khouri- 1972, Elaine Reuss- 1997, Mildred Abraham- 2009, Audrey Myers Trbovich- 1963, Sadie Brown- 2002, Michael C. Jacobs- 2005.

August 20: Freda Thomas- 1970, Sam Hazo- 1973, Anna Eazor Johns- 1972, Sylvia Roy- 2003, Kathy Mitchell- 2014, Abraham Davis- 1957, Mary Barterome- 1978, Edward Albert- 1998, Suad Khoury- 2009, Eva Jane Fekete- 2006, Jennie Solomon- 1967, Hilweh D. Saba- 1981, Anthony Joseph- 1989, Helen Elias- 1993, Helen Elias- 1961, Dewey David- 1983, Thomas Gallaher- 1973, Helen Haddad- 1975.

August 27: George Riston- 1973, George N. Elias- 1988, John E. Khalil- 1997, Theresa M. Johnson- 2003, Albert Anthony, Sr.-2000, Sabha Abdallah Lesoon- 2017, Jabour Khalil- 1965, Michael Essad- 1971, Velma Thomas- 1998, Taofik Abboud- 2017, Leona Jacob- 2018.

#### September 2023

September 3: Susan Davis- 1959, James Thomas- 1993, Yasmine Bazari- 2015, Zachary E. Hallow- 1977, Minerva Namen- 1987, John Abraham- 1988, Michael Abraham- 1961, Ayna Maryam Zahir- 1993, Craig R. Stephens- 1988, Philip Nassar- 2008, Mary Hazo- 1965, Esper Bazy- 1982, Helen Farah- 1979.

September 10: Donna Lehiy- 2007, Dolores Farah- 2018, Ronald E. Degenkolb- 2005, Abraham Albert- 1956, George N. Abraham- 1997, Joseph E. Lesoon- 1976, Wallace Solomon- 1996, Charles G. Thomas- 2001, Margaret J. Giangarlo- 2018, Maryann Esper-

# **Departed Anniversary List Continued**

1993, John Bazari- 1998, Elias J. Hakim- 1964, Agnes "Aggie" Khalil- 2003, Lottie Haddad- 1956, Mikhail Khalil- 2018.

September 17: Ayupe Hanna (Bitar)- 1977, James Hanna- 2000, Mariam Mashraky- 2017, Judith Griffin- 2019, Katherine Joseph- 1978, Craig Stephens- 1988, John David Skelton, Jr.- 1998, Julia Esper- 1999, Thomas A. Hakim, Sr.- 2007, Mary Ayoub- 2006, James Mahfood- 1978, Wasif D. Saba- 2016, Michael M. Serafy- 2013, Dan Robbins- 2014, Selma Detmer- 1964, Albert Khalil Nahas- 1976, Yassemine Khalil- 2014, Mary Hanna- 1993, Souheil Azzam- 2019.

September 24: Olga Marie Solomon- 1996, Martha Hanna- 1978, Charles Charley- 1980, Margaret Khorey- 2017, Daniel Fraed- 1972, Elias Hakim, Jr.- 2009, Susan Salem- 1973, Sari Brooks- 2004, Samuel Abraham- 1966, Edward W. Liebert- 2003.

#### October 2023

October 1: Abraham Esper- 1989, Elizabeth S. Cory- 1994, Elias Khalil- 2007, George Jacob- 2018, Namy Farah- 1965, Sadie Abraham- 1977, William Salem- 2013, Mary Ruth Zahir- 2014, Daniel Khalil, Sr.- 2021, Sylvia Gilbert- 1997, Rose Roy- 2000.

October 8: Sadie Abraham- 1953, Madeline Baraket- 1978, James W. Davis- 1989, Philip Nemy- 2019, Nazara Jacobs Shaheen- 1980, Anna Abraham- 1981, Khalil Khalil- 2022, Katherine Ward- 1965, Nadia Rizk- 1974, John Albert- 1969, Lucia (Lucy) Ayoub- 2003, Nabe B. Jacob, Sr.- 1979, Julia Fedwa Fraed- 1993, Edward M. Albert- 2008.

October 15: Joan (Thomas) Edmonds- 2011, Michael Cory- 1971, Sameera Thomas- 1997, George A. George- 2003, Sam S. Bazari- 1962, Elma H. Khalil- 2001, George Deep Thomas- 1959, George D. George- 2004, Badr Domat- 2014, Michael Albert Haddad- 1956, Mildred Hadad- 1995, Amelia Kronstein-2001.

October 22: Abraham Thomas- 1954, Albert George- 1972, Sophie Aber- 2009, Virginia Sadie Hadad- 1998, Minnie Abraham- 1987, Charles Davis- 1990, Robert Aber- 2019, Andrew Albert- 1963, Rahme Roy- 1968, Anthony Joseph- 1982, James E. Khalil- 1996, Mitchell Abraham- 1981, Anna Salem- 1984.

October 29: Virginia Roy Harris- 1969, William J. Albert- 1970, Les T. Dayoub (Davis)- 1978, Mike Deep- 1968, Minerva Thomas- 2000, Shafeka Ristom- 1955, Leslie Joseph- 1989, George Hanna- 2000, Catherine Ann George- 2003, David C. Thomas, Sr.- 2004, Abraham Shaheen- 1965, Joan E. Filby- 1966, Minnie Abraham- 1969, Louis Jabbour- 1975, Miro Michael Serafy- 1995, Robert E. Abraham- 1989.

ST. GEORGE ANTIOCHIAN
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PITTSBURGH, PA 15213-4314

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#### **Dates To Remember**

#### Saturday, October 28th:

Retreat - The True Orthodox Mind and Lifestyle - Why it Matters

Wednesday, November 15th:

Start of Nativity Advent

**Tuesday, November 21st:** 

Entrance of the Theotokos into the Temple

Please visit our website calendar or download our events bulletin, The Cathedral, for more details.