

**ST. MATTHEW THE EVANGELIST  
ANTIOCHIAN  
ORTHODOX CHURCH  
DECEMBER, 2022, NEWSLETTER**

**10383 ALBION ROAD, N. ROYALTON, OH 44133**

**P.O. Box 33183, N. Royalton, OH 44133**

**Father Andrew's Contact Info: [fatherharmon@outlook.com](mailto:fatherharmon@outlook.com)**

**cell: 440-539-1116 home: 440-826-0662 church: 440-582-5673**

**Website: [www.stmattroyalton.org](http://www.stmattroyalton.org)**

**SATURDAY VESPERS—5 p.m. SUNDAY MATINS—8:50 a.m.**

**SUNDAY LITURGY—10 a.m.**

**CONFESSION—after Vespers and during Sunday Matins & by appointment.**

**SPECIAL WORSHIP SERVICES IN DECEMBER**

**AKATHIST SERVICE FOR ST. NICHOLAS DAY----**Tuesday, December 6, 6:30 p.m. If anybody wishes to bring some little treats for the little ones, that would be nice!

**PARAKLESIS SERVICE FOR ST. SPYRIDON DAY----**Monday, December 12, 6:30 p.m.

**SMALL COMPLINE SERVICE WITH CANON OF FOREFEAST OF CHRISTMAS-----**Wednesday, December 21, 6:30 p.m.

**OUR NATIVITY OF CHRIST/CHRISTMAS SERVICE**

**SCHEDULE—*Please note different than most years because Christmas is on a Sunday***

**FRIDAY, DECEMBER 23---**Royal Hours, 9 a.m. (all done in succession, not separated like on Great & Holy Friday)

**SATURDAY, DECEMBER 24---**Matins, 9 a.m.; Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom, 10 a.m. Christmas Eve Vespers with Artoklasia, 5 p.m.

**SUNDAY, DECEMBER 25---**Christmas Matins, 8:30 a.m.; Festal Liturgy of St. Basil, 10 a.m.

**ANNUAL SUNDAY SCHOOL CHRISTMAS PROGRAM**  
**SUNDAY, DECEMBER 18<sup>TH</sup>, 6 P.M.**

**Come celebrate the Lord's birth with our children!**

**PARISH ORGANIZATIONS, STUDY GROUPS, MINISTRY**  
**TEAMS**

**PATHWAYS TO PEACE—BOTH IN PERSON AT CHURCH AND BY ZOOM—**Each Monday, 7:15 pm. “A gathering place for those who are broken from hurts, hang-ups, or habits. Join us as we renew our minds and encourage each other through the love of Christ.” Call Deacon Basil, 440-665-3591, for Zoom information.

**NORTH BIBLE STUDY---**Wednesday, December 14, at Elle Parker's, 1350 Elmwood Ct., Rocky River, 6:30. Focusing on short books right now..... Studying the book of Philemon

**WOMEN'S PRAYER GROUP—**Friday, December 16, 10 a.m. All women welcome! The location is at Tara Reidy's, 274 Elmwood, Berea. For more info, call Sandy Tolbert, 440-773-9162. *Note earlier time than usual.*

**WEST BIBLE STUDY—**Saturday, December 17, 6 pm at the church. Studying I Corinthians.

**SOUTH BIBLE STUDY—***Wednesday* (note different than usual day), December 7 & Tuesday, December 20, 6:30 p.m. at Craig & Cindy George's, 9451 Sherwood Trail, Brecksville. All are welcome. The study will be on the book of Ephesians.

**TEEN CLUB—**December activities to be announced...

**YOUNG ADULT BIBLE STUDY ----**On the book of Tobit. Saturday, December 10, 6 p.m., at the church. There will be refreshments! No RSVP needed, but if you want more info, please contact the study leaders: Subdeacon Samuel Harmon, 216-598-9230, [samuelharmon15@gmail.com](mailto:samuelharmon15@gmail.com) or Colton Bose, 440-567-6101, [coltonmichaelbose@gmail.com](mailto:coltonmichaelbose@gmail.com)

**ST. MATTHEW'S WOMEN'S GROUP----**Meeting after liturgy, Sunday, December 11.

**MARTHA MINISTRIES IS NOW UNDERWAY—**This is a ministry to provide meals for families in need of some help—new babies, illness, grieving, etc. If you can help, see/email/call Erin Musarra at 440-799-0838.

## **ASK THE PRIEST**

**DO YOU HAVE A QUESTION ABOUT OUR ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN FAITH? JUST ASK FATHER ANDREW AND HE WILL WORK YOUR QUESTION AND AN ANSWER INTO ONE OF OUR NEWSLETTERS.....**

### ***WHY DO WE USE INCENSE IN THE ORTHODOX CHURCH?***

Incense is used in the worship of the Orthodox Church and has been used by God's people since Old Testament times. There are many references to it in the Old Testament scriptures. And it was prophesied in the Old Testament that the day would come when incense would be offered to the true God by all the peoples of the world---as God said in Malachi 1:11---"My Name will be great among the nations, from the rising to the setting of the sun. In every place incense and pure offerings will be brought to my Name, because my Name will be great among the nations." This prophecy, which was made about 400 years before Christ, began to become true when the Wise Men brought incense to the baby Jesus in the manger. And we continue to fulfill this prophecy every time we burn incense in our services.

We use incense in the liturgy because the worship in the liturgy is a reflection of the worship of God in heaven by the Saints and Angels----and we know incense is used in heaven. St. John writes the following in his vision of heaven in Revelation 5:8---"the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each holding a harp and with golden bowls of incense, which are the prayers of the saints." And in Revelation 8:5---"And another angel came and stood at the altar with a golden censer; and he was given much incense to mingle with the prayers of the saints." Note how the incense and our prayers (*we* are the saints here referred to) are all mingled together as they rise to God above!

In addition to our using incense as a fulfillment of prophecy and because it used in heaven (and because God said we would in the book of Malachi!), there are several symbolic meanings. The smoke going up symbolizes our prayers going up to God. The beautiful smell reminds us of the beauty of heaven. The odor of incense purifies the air of other smells and so symbolizes how the Holy Spirit purifies our souls. Incense is a symbol of veneration so it aids us in venerating the holy things in church----the altar, the gospel book, the icons, etc. And it also aids in venerating each other as Christians having within them the Holy Spirit.....so the people in church are also censured along with the holy things.

Parishes have two censers---one with bells that is used most of the year as bells help us remember that worshipping God is a joyful thing. And a censer without bells that stays silent when used----the silent censer is used during Great Lent as that is a more somber time when we especially remember the death of our Lord Jesus Christ.

**ST. HERMAN'S MINISTRY TEAM**—Sunday, December 18, is our parish's next monthly turn to provide a meal to the poor at St. Herman Orthodox Homeless Shelter in Cleveland. If you can help with either the providing or cooking or serving of the meal, please contact Dn. Basil, 440-665-3591. Thank you to Jon Scordos for cooking the November meal and to the Blazek family for serving it.

**MONTHLY DELIVERY OF FOOD, CLOTHING, ETC. TO HOMELESS ON STREETS OF DOWNTOWN CLEVELAND**—Sunday, December 18. Alms box to help this outreach is near hall entrance. This month is our parish's turn to make the sack lunches.

**HOMESCHOOL ENRICHMENT GROUP**—Friday, December 9, 9 a.m.

**CHESS CLUB**—After liturgy, Sunday, December 18.

### **SUNDAY SCHOOL RIGHT AFTER LITURGY EACH WEEK**

For ages 3-19—please bring your child! For more information, call Superintendent Gail Malaniak at 440-552-4586 or [gailmeen@gmail.com](mailto:gailmeen@gmail.com).

### **SUNDAY SCHOOL CHRISTMAS PROGRAM**

The program will be on Sunday, December 18, 6:00 p.m. Christmas play practices will be as follows:

Saturday, Dec. 3 at 3:45 p.m.

Sunday, Dec. 11 during Sunday School

Sunday, Dec. 18 during Sunday School

Any children and adults who wish to play an instrument or sing a Christmas song during the program, please contact Kh. Bonnie.

### **NEW PARISHIONERS IN NOVEMBER**

**Samantha Daher**

182 Boston Lake Drive

Valley City 44280

330-635-1691

[S\\_daher3@yahoo.com](mailto:S_daher3@yahoo.com)

**Lindsey Katsaros**

17463 Shaw Avenue

Lakewood 44107

614-589-0705

[lindsey.c.swanson@gmail.com](mailto:lindsey.c.swanson@gmail.com)

*By Holy Chrismation—11/19*

**Lena McCoy**

6000 Boston Road

Valley City 44280

330-730-7635

[lnm141@case.edu](mailto:lnm141@case.edu)

*By Holy Baptism, 11/5*

### **NEW CATECHUMEN IN NOVEMBER**

Leigh Frank received the blessing to become a Catechumen on Sunday, November 6<sup>th</sup>.

**OUR CURRENT CATECHUMENS** We pray for them at each liturgy. Please pray for them during the week also as they prepare to enter the Orthodox Faith by either Baptism or Chrismation.

Will Parker  
Steven Rogers  
Mariya Butt  
Leigh Frank

Jamie & Lucas Domonokos  
Mikaela Cihon  
Victoria Rodgers

### **CONGRATULATIONS TO----**

- Constantine & Lindsey Katsaros on the baptism of Peter on November 19<sup>th</sup>
- Lindsey Katsaros on her chrismation on November 19<sup>th</sup>
- to Lena McCoy for her baptism on November 5<sup>th</sup>
- to Sam & Lena Snyder for their wedding on November 12<sup>th</sup>
- to Kyle & Renee Calvert on the 40 Day Churching of James on November 20<sup>th</sup>.
- to Reader Anthony & Olivia Harmon on the birth of Aglais Marilyn on November 24<sup>th</sup>

### **NEW MINISTRY BEGINNING AT ST. MATTHEW'S**

St. Matthew's is now officially affiliated with OCLife, a "non-profit organization dedicated to equipping the Orthodox Christian community to strengthen its commitment to the sacredness of human life from conception to death, illuminating the Church's teaching on life issues through education and engagement." If you would like to get involved in this new ministry, please contact Lisa Palivoda at [ldpal1703@outlook.com](mailto:ldpal1703@outlook.com) or Cindy George at [cindygeorge127@gmail.com](mailto:cindygeorge127@gmail.com).

### **OUR CHURCH FAMILY MEET-UP**

You may have noticed a relatively new young man who comes to church every Sunday and participates in our coffee times after church and also our chess club. This is Paul Zabala, son of Gloria and Len Zabala. He was born on November 28, 1986, and grew up in the Brecksville area.

Paul graduated from Brecksville High School in 2005. He later attended ITT Tech and received an Associate's Degree in web design in 2009. For a time, he worked doing freelance in web design. Paul now works for Swagelock Company in Solon. He started out as a temporary worker a year-and-a-half ago and soon was hired on as a full time permanent worker, his job title being processor machine operator. This company makes gadgets and silver-plated nuts that are sold to various industries. Paul works Monday through Friday, 10-hour days with the option of working Saturdays. So, you can see he is not afraid of hard work and long hours.

Paul was baptized and brought up at Christ the Saviour Orthodox Church. When he was around 10-years-old, his church had some sort of a split. He ended up becoming the only child in Sunday School and also the only altar boy. He was faithful, however, and continued serving every Sunday. He told me that he served under four different priests throughout those years until he turned 30 and his church joined with St. Matthew's. Paul says he likes St. Matthew's because of how welcoming the people are and also because of all of the activities offered here.

Paul explained to me why he has stuck with the Church since becoming an adult. He said that when he was around 20, one day as he was in the liturgy, about the time of the Gospel and

the sermon, suddenly he experienced an extreme feeling of serenity, the peace that passes all understanding, which lasted for several minutes. This presence of God given to Paul that day, has convinced him to stay with the Church, with Jesus Christ.

For relaxation, Paul enjoys video games, playing chess, and listening to his music on Spotify. His favorite type of music is electro swing of which he played me a sample. Not bad!

Paul describes himself as a libertarian conservative Christian. He has deep and specific ideas about culture, economics, and government. He thinks that corporations have become way too powerful and are running the show these days which he thinks is unwise. He studies these issues on his own and picks and chooses what he thinks makes sense. However, he wanted to emphasize that he does not force his views on others.

I asked him what his goals in life were. He says that his goals in life have already been fulfilled. He's gotten through school and has a good job. He does say that there is always room for improvement. Otherwise, he just goes about his business and tries not to worry.

I hope this article has made you want to get to know Paul Zabala better. You won't be disappointed.



#### **THANK YOU—**

---to all who helped in various ways with our annual Thanksgiving Food For Needy Homes project. 22 homes were helped. Special thanks to our coordinators: Rebecca Kubicek, Matthew Roach, and Lisa Bowden. And a special "thanks" to Archdeacon Joseph Harb for his special help!

---to Jon Scordos for cooking the meal for our monthly serving at St. Herman Orthodox Homeless Shelter.....and to the Blazek family for serving the meal

--to Jean Fadil for her gift in memory of Ramona Darmour

Please support the St. Matthew  
Antiochian Women's Sisterhood

## Christmas Bake Sale

Sunday, December 18, 2022  
right after church!!!

Please help us by baking your holiday favorites and  
specialties!!

Also..... it doesn't have to be sweet bakery.

If you have a great savory recipe, We'll take it!!!

(You may also price your donated bakery, if you prefer and don't  
forget to label and seal the packaging.)

Our parish has wonderful bakers!!

So, please help make it a great success!! And remember....  
many sweets and savories can be frozen for later use!!!

\*\*\*\*\* With our Sincere Thanks and Gratitude!!!!\*\*\*\*\*



THE GREATER CLEVELAND  
COUNCIL OF ORTHODOX CLERGY

## THE 30TH ANNUAL PAN-ORTHODOX NATIVITY CONCERT

DECEMBER 11, 2022  
5:00 PM



CELEBRATE CHRIST'S BIRTH WITH SACRED MUSIC FROM  
MULTI-ETHNIC CHOIRS OF CLEVELAND'S ORTHODOX CHURCHES

FREE AND OPEN TO ALL!

FREE WILL DONATIONS TO BENEFIT LOCAL ORTHODOX MINISTRIES  
REFRESHMENTS TO FOLLOW IN THE  
HELLENIC CENTER

ST PAUL GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH  
4548 WALLINGS ROAD  
NORTH ROYALTON OH 44133

# GIFTS FOR JESUS OFFERING

Since our first years of St. Matthew's history, we have had a Christmas time "Gifts For Jesus" offering. It is an opportunity to give a Christmas present to God to thank Him for His most generous gift----His Son Jesus Christ. As we give in thanksgiving to the Lord, it makes our own exchanging of gifts with family and friends more special! Your gift will go to the parish operating fund. There will be a special offering box in the narthex/entry area at our Christmas time services. Or you can bring it in or mail it any time before January 15----St. Matthew Church, 10383 Albion Road, North Royalton, 44133

*St. Nicholas Workshop for Children*  
ages 10 and under with parent supervision

Saturday, December 10, 10am-noon  
at St. Matthew's

Coloring, crafts, cookie decorating and a surprise visit from St. Nick!  
Hosted by the St. Matthew's Women's Group

\$3 per child

Please RSVP by Nov 27<sup>th</sup>

Dima Kash	<a href="mailto:dima.hanania@gmail.com">dima.hanania@gmail.com</a>	440-444-8446
Georgette Dye	<a href="mailto:georgette.dye@gmail.com">georgette.dye@gmail.com</a>	440-429-5398

Please return the slip below with payment to Dima Kash, Georgette Dye, or the parish office.

**Children's names and ages**

**\$3 per child for the St. Nicholas Workshop**

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# ADOPT A POINSETTIA

Christmas Food Box Ministry

**IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO OFFER A POINSETTIA  
TO BEAUTIFY OUR CHURCH FOR THE  
CHRISTMAS SEASON, PLEASE FILL OUT BELOW**

Offered by:

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For the health & safety of:

---

In beloved memory of:

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The poinsettias will adorn the church from December 23-January 1.

The deadline to order is December 15<sup>th</sup>. The donation amount is \$14.

Fill out the form and attach check or cash and mail it to the church or  
put in offering box or give to Subdeacon Richard Sahley.

We are in need of about 20 filled Christmas boxes for needy homes. Please bring your filled box to the church between December 16 and 18. Boxes will be passed out and delivered to homes on Sunday the 18th after Liturgy. (If you can deliver, please let us know!)

Have fun packing and thank you! It is a great help!

Fill each box with the following items:

- Stuffing mix
- Mashed potatoes, scalloped potato mixes
- Cans of cranberry sauce
- Canned corn or canned green beans
- Christmas candy
- Cake mix or Brownie mix
- Soda
- Chicken broth

Hams & Gift Cards

We also need hams and gift cards for:

- Groceries
- Toys
- Clothes for children

Contact Lisa Bowden 440-667-2767 or Louise Bounhasin 216-544-2319 to let them know you are filling a box no later than December 11th. Please put hams in church freezer or refrigerator. And you can either mail or bring in gift cards. If something comes up or you need help or have questions, don't hesitate to reach out. We usually need around 20 filled boxes. Thank you SO much for your kindness!

St. Matthew Orthodox Church  
10383 Albion Road  
North Royalton, OH 44133

**ADVENT CONFESSIONS AND FASTING**---The Advent Fast (or Nativity Fast) is from November 15 through December 24. It is a season of fasting & spiritual preparation for celebrating Christ's First Advent at His birth and preparing ourselves for His Second Advent at the end of the world.

Part of this preparation for Orthodox Christians is to come to Confession during these weeks. All should go to Confession during this season. Usual Confession times here are after Saturday Vespers and during Sunday Matins---but you can make an appointment for other times. Questions about Confession? Just ask Father Andrew.

The recommended Advent Fast varies some from one national tradition to another. A good basic way is this: From Nov. 15 to Dec. 12, a bit lighter fast than Lent: fish, wine, & oil are permitted, but not meat, dairy, or eggs. From Dec. 13-24, it is a full Lenten fast: no animal foods except shellfish; no wine or oil except Saturdays & Sundays. In the Antiochian Archdiocese, we are granted a dispensation from fasting for the Thanksgiving holiday.