

# THE ST. GEORGE Grapevine

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St. George Orthodox Cathedral • Charleston, WV



## Pastor's Corner On The Sacrament of Marriage in the Orthodox Church

By Rev. Fr. Christopher Eid

As we draw near to the summer, where wedding services are popular, brides will be busy with their bridesmaids picking up their dresses, shoes, flowers, cake and all colors of tablecloths, chair covers and centerpieces. Orthodox clergy know that this shopping list is not all.

Brides, also, think about church decoration, entrance and exit music, seat assignments, ushers and program printing.

It seems that the wedding march or what is referred to by some as the Bridal Chorus "Here Comes the Bride" is a popular song. What do we know about this song? What do the lyrics say? Is it the best choice and fit for a wedding? And most importantly for brides who really want to receive the blessings of God in the Church before they start their special life with their lifelong companion, rock, and husband, father of their children and best friend? Is it allowed to be played in Churches, especially the Orthodox Church?

In the Orthodox Church the wedding service is a sacrament of the Orthodox Church and is not permitted to be performed outside the sanctuary. It is most beautiful within the walls of the church where the ultimate services of liturgy and thanksgivings to God are performed with the witness of the saints.

It is a great blessing to be wedded in the House of God; receive His blessings for the bride and groom and their future family and children.

The bride and groom first steps as husband and wife after they are wedded are around the altar table where the Gospel book is placed on its center. This walk,

dance, around the Gospel book is called the Dance of Isaiah which represents the initial and the intended future life of this couple to be around God's word and with His blessings. During this dance a chant about the Virgin with Child, The Holy Martyrs and the Apostles is sung. This is a great indication of the view that the Orthodox Church takes about marriage: following the footsteps of holiness of the Virgin Mary, martyrdom for one another as the martyrs for Christ and being an apostle preaching the Consubstantial Trinity in the lives of the wedded bride and groom.

The real reason why this song isn't a good idea is because of the context of the song in the Opera Lohengrin. It speaks of a pagan god (does not believe in God) is marrying a witch (who is also a pagan god worshipper). The opera has scenes of killing, paganism and husband abandonment of his wife.

The Bridal March, while part of a really cool opera is absolutely not the kind of song you want for your wedding. Its message is marital infidelity, tragedy, and paganism; which is absolutely the opposite of what an Orthodox wedding at the Orthodox Church is all about.

This Wedding March is not permitted to be sung not only in any Orthodox Church but also in any Catholic, Lutheran or Anglican churches.

We pray that all of our brides choose chants from the beautiful hymnography of the Orthodox Church that would reflect their faith and dedication to their husband and love to their and our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.



## Feast Day of St. Agnes on July 5

St. Agnes was a young girl of Rome whose sweetness and purity of life brought about the conversion of many pagan women whose lives were just the opposite of her own. By her actions she became known to the authorities, who led her to the temple of Minerva to make sacrifice, which she refused to do.

After attempting to force her into a life of ill-fame, she was offered her freedom if she would marry a pagan, with the alternative of being burned at the stake if she refused. She remained steadfast, counting such a marriage defilement, for she had promised herself to the service of God.

When she was brought to the stake, a shower of rain put out the fire: this event was regarded as miraculous by those who witnessed it. Her steadfastness influenced even more pagans to change their way of life, even though the Roman Prefect finally had her beheaded, about 304 A.D.

The name Agnes means "pure". St. Agnes remained true to her name, and was willing to die for her convictions rather than to give into evil.

*"Blessed are the pure in heart; for they shall see God."*

Matthew 5:8

Weather Forecast : GOD REIGNS and the SON SHINES

EXPECT SHOWERS of BLESSINGS!

*(The Lord is my Shepherd Ministries)*

*"Teamwork divides the task and multiplies the success. " -*

Author Unknown

### ANCIENT FAITH RADIO

Fr. Stephen's bible study sessions can be heard on the Internet through Ancient Faith Radio.



## Love the Lord Thy God

By Subdeacon George M. Damous

Negativity begets negativity. Evil begets evil. Good begets good. Good and evil cannot exist at the same time. One cancels out the other. Positive and negative cannot exist at the same time. So if the discussion involves only negative comments then there is no room for positive comments. Through reasoning, negative comments can be set aside to allow positive comments to enter in. Oftentimes when dealing with problems, people may be blame oriented. This means that the person places responsibility on other people or other situations which caused the problem. Does this resolve the problem, no. In order to resolve the problem we must be solution oriented. In this frame of mind we are looking for ways to solve the problem. We can continue to criticize which results in blaming but it takes us nowhere except in a circle. If we look at Jesus' teachings, they are all based on solutions. Even if He discussed what others did, immediately He went to a solution. The solutions were often embedded in parables. This allowed the average person to understand them better.

There is a difference between arguments and debates. Arguments are more opinionated and subjective whereas debates are more factual and you support debates based on truths. However in this case when we discuss truths we are talking about objective truths that are obvious to everyone and is guided by the teachings of the Church and of course Jesus Christ Himself. For example some people may

argue why do I need to attend Divine Liturgy; I can worship God at home. When debating this question, the truth put forth is obvious that we are instructed to worship God in the Church, in His holy temple. Solomon built the temple so God could meet with His people there. During the Last Supper Jesus instructed us to partake of His body and blood in remembrance of Him. These things cannot be done at home. We read throughout the New Testament especially in the Gospels that the disciples fasted and prayed. The Greek word relates to liturgy or worship together. Therefore we are instructed by Jesus Christ to worship Him in the temple. When Jesus was a young boy about the age of 12 and Mary and Joseph were looking for Him, they found Him in the temple. And He said to them where else would I be but in the house of My Father. However an opposing view would say "I can worship at home by watching television or see the Liturgy streamed over the Internet." This is a subjective argument which is not based on Jesus' teachings or the Church. Of course people who are sick and unable to attend church for appropriate reasons, our technology today allows them to observe the worship of God and through the priest they can receive Holy Communion when he visits. So in this sense there is no debate or argument available. The opposing view may continue and say this is "your opinion" or "you are being judgmental." However this argument is baseless because it's not a matter of an opinion it is from the teachings of the Church of Jesus Christ. Therefore there is not a question here.

People who find the outcome of this debate to be unacceptable will continue to deny its validity and may even become angry. This brings us back to the topic of negativity. A person may become angry and lash out at the church by reducing or withdrawing their pledge or not participating or not attending the Liturgy. Not realizing that they are separating themselves from the Church by doing this. If a person decides they will not attend the Divine Liturgy and not participate, then they separate themselves from the Church. People believe reducing their support (as in financial pledges) and participation and attendance to the Church is a way of showing their anger and disagreement so they will not support the Church. However as we read in the



the church to provide alms for the poor. To hinder the church in doing this, then we sin against God by attempting to thwart the good works of the Church and in our glorification of God. Some would say this is an opinion. However if you read the story of Ananias and Saphira in the Book of Acts it explains how God views tithing and pledges to the Church. Now when talking about pledges this does not just have to be a monetary value but it is a commitment to God. Some people might pledge a period of time each day for God, such as our daily prayers. At a minimum as a Christian we pledge at least an hour or so a week (the bare minimum) to attend Divine Liturgy to worship God. But back to the story. Ananias and Saphira told Peter they would sell their possessions and give all of the monies that they made to the Church. However when they sold their possessions they gave half of the profits to the Church. When Ananias came to Peter, Peter asked him if he had given all of his profits to the Church and Ananias said he did. Immediately Ananias fell down to the ground dead. The men there carried Ananias' body out of the room. Saphira was called to Peter and Peter asked the same question to her and she claimed that they had given all the profit to the Church and she fell to the ground dead. Some would look at this and say did they not give enough to the Church. This is not what happened. What happened was they lied to God. For they said they would give all the profit to the Church. Therefore when we reduce our pledges to the church, whether monetarily, spiritually or even physically we sin against God. When Ananias and Saphira lied, God's protection was withdrawn from them and the evil one destroyed them.

When we become angry with the Church, or the people of the Church, or the clergy, our hearts become hardened. This prevents us from being forgiving and charitable and most of all loving. We become negative and perform harmful acts. Remember St. Paul when he persecuted the Christians and Jesus' disciples. On the road to Damascus a blinding light appears and Jesus asks Paul why do you persecute Me. Paul's heart was hardened at that time until the blinding light. Then his heart softened in order for him to receive Jesus. The interesting story of St. Mary of Egypt where Mary was unable to enter the Church of the Virgin Mary because of her earthly desires which were more important to her than her spiritual life, her heart also was

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### THE ST. GEORGE Grapevine

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# Golden Parishioners Honored

After Divine Liturgy on Sunday, May 7, a tribute luncheon was held to honor our Golden Parishioners 80 and over. Approximately 150 parishioners attended and 33 of them were our honorees. The parish council set up a committee to plan and prepare the tribute luncheon with Diana Shdeed and Patty Haddy co-chairpersons. The luncheon included salata, eggplant boats and rice, pita bread, fruit cocktail and cookies. Fr. Christopher Eid blessed the food and Fr. Stephen gave the benediction.

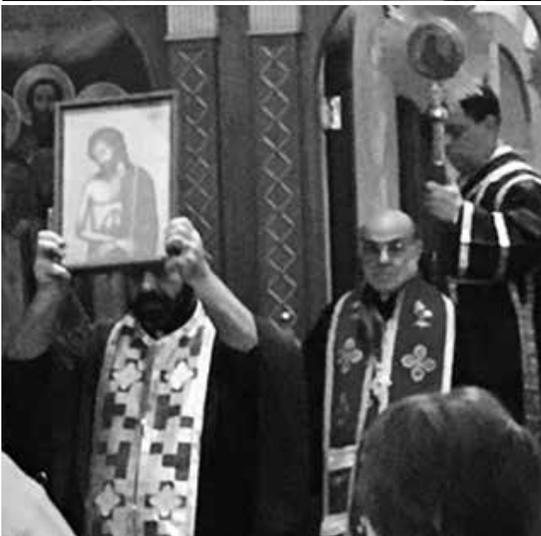
After the luncheon was served, Dr. Bruce Cassis, master of ceremonies, introduced each Golden Parishioner who was escorted by a parish council member to a chair on the dance floor. Once the honorees were seated, our choir, under the direction of Lexie Damous, presented a nostalgic musical program that included

“Singing in the Rain” and “Chattanooga Choo Choo”. Choir member Ernest Bsharah sang “ My Way” dedicated to his mother, Jenna Bsharah who was seated on the front row with the other 9 - 90 and over parishioners.

A group picture was taken and a

copy was given to the 80 and over group present.

They have nurtured the entire parish of St. George with their lifetime experiences, dedication, and hard work, and we thank them for all they have done for their families and their St. George family. May God grant them many years. ✕



### Deadline for the next Grapevine issue

Sept., Oct., Nov., 2017, is Aug. 15, 2017.  
Place articles in box outside Church office or email ritakee@aol.com



# Fellowship of St. George

Come one, come all and experience the new organization called the Fellowship of St. George.

Our purpose is to spread the word of Orthodoxy with our projects, and welcome new ideas for projects. We meet the last Tuesday of the month at 7p.m

Our current list of projects include: Manna Meal, Church Library, Church Bookstore, Visitation, Community Outreach, Spiritual Enrichment and Prayer Net. Past activities have included: Baskets for Shut-ins, Adopt-a-family, Hospice Lovelight Tree, Icon Festival, Pre-Lenten Retreat, Canned Food Drives.

The Fellowship of St George assembled a basket of religious children's books to donate to the Kanawha County Public Library's annual fundraiser: "A Tisket a Tasket". Specialty literary-themed baskets were auctioned in April with the proceeds going to all of the area public libraries. The theme of ours was: "Saints Are Superheroes". The books included intriguing titles such as: **The Monks and the Grapes; The Patriarch and the Quilt; Saint Spyridon and the Horses; The Barber Saint; Saint Nectarios' Shoes**, to name a few. (A wonderful collection of these tiny paperback books and many others can be purchased in the church bookstore. The stories are wonderful and they make great gifts, especially for "stocking stuffers"!)

Our literary basket also included a superhero cape (with a Bible verse on it) and a mask. It is always our hope that the highest bidder of this basket is inspired by a touch (or taste - you pick) of our Orthodox faith.

Many volunteers are needed to clean mold off of numerous library books. This is a church project, not just a fellowship one. Details as to a day/time will follow. We need your support and ideas to make this group successful, so mark your calendars and join us at our next meeting ✝

## Senior Fellowship

Senior Fellowship celebrated its 30th anniversary at the first get-together of 2017 on Tuesday, May 2. Taco salads, fruit and cake, prepared by the committee, was enjoyed by all, and then we played their most popular game, Bingo, with prizes for the winners. We celebrated everyone's birthday and had the men present sing "Happy Birthday" to the women and of course, the women sang "Happy Birthday" to the men.

We will try to have another get-together in June and/or September. Watch the bulletin for details. Enjoy the summer. ✝

## Antiochian Women (Ladies Guild)

May 1 was our last meeting before summer break. Refreshments were furnished by President Gigi Michael. So have a great summer and come back refreshed, rested and ready to work in preparing for our annual dinner on Oct. 22. We are also helping the Aitha Reunion Committee make Mazza for the Haffi Labor Day Weekend. So mark your calendars for our next meeting on Monday, August 7 at 7 pm. All ladies of St. George are members, so hope to see all of you in August. ✝

# Church School News

By Layla Michael

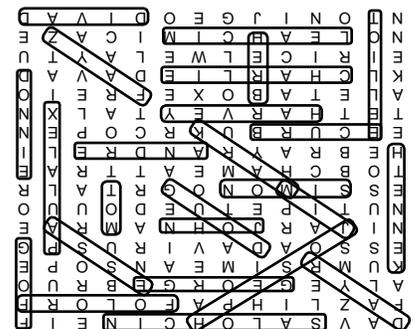
Christ has Risen!! Truly he has Risen!! It's hard to believe that another church school year has gone by so quickly! I would like to thank everyone who has been so generous with their time, materials and necessary resources to the Church School. Our success would not be possible if it weren't for the parents who continually bring their children to Church School and the teachers being there every Sunday to instill in our youth the lesson of Jesus Christ and the importance of church in one's life. The end of the year celebration will be held in conjunction with the annual church picnic on June 11, 2017, at Coonskin Park, Gorman Shelter. We have arranged fun activities for the children and hope to see you all there as we celebrate the end of another year! There will be a wet inflatable slide (so bring a towel) for all to enjoy!!

Church School teachers will be having a teacher retreat on August 19, 2017 Saturday at 10 am in the lower level.

In addition, mark your calendars for our kick-off luncheon, which will be held on August 27, 2017, for all Church School families and new students to register for the upcoming year. Please bring a picture of your child with the month of their birthday written on the back, to be put on the bulletin board on the month of their birthday. The 2017-2018 Church School year will begin on September 10, 2017.

We are always in need for help with the Church School, if anyone can give their time we would greatly appreciate it. We are always open to new ideas, suggestions, or anything that can better our program. The children of our Cathedral are our future; please think about helping us to preserve what we have now so that our future remains bright as ever. Have a great and safe summer vacation! ✝

### Answers to Word Search



## Kids Corner Q & A

**Q.** How did Paul send letters to churches if they didn't have mailboxes?

**A.** In Paul's time, they didn't have a postal service like the one we have today. Instead, people sent letters by messengers or friends. Many of Paul's friends delivered his letters to churches. These friends included Timothy, Tychicus, and others. Paul wrote some letters, such as Philemon and Titus, to individuals. He wrote others, such as Romans and Philippians to specific churches with the idea that the letters would be passed along to other churches. Paul's letters teach us about other parts of the Bible, about Jesus, about how his Christians should live, and about how churches should be organized. Paul's letters have a lot to teach us!

**KEY VERSE:** Remember, the Lord is waiting so that people have time to be saved. This is just as our beloved brother Paul wrote to you with the wisdom God gave him." (2 Peter 3:15)

From 102 Questions Children Ask about the Bible. ✝



# Skipping Church

Father Norton woke up Sunday morning and realizing it was an exceptionally beautiful and sunny early spring day, decided he just had to play golf.

So...he told the Associate Pastor that he was feeling sick and persuaded him to say Mass for him that day.

As soon as the Associate Pastor left the room, Father Norton headed out of town to a golf course about forty miles away. This way he knew he wouldn't accidentally meet anyone he knew from his parish. Setting up on the first tee, he was alone. After all, it was Sunday morning and everyone else was in church.

At about this time, Saint Peter leaned over to the Lord while looking down from the heavens and exclaimed, "You're not going to let him get away with this, are you?"

The Lord sighed, and said, "No, I guess not."

Just then Father Norton hit the ball and it shot straight towards the pin, dropping just short of it, rolled up and fell into the hole.

IT WAS A 420 YARD HOLE IN ONE!

St. Peter was astonished. He looked at the Lord and asked, "Why did you let him do that?"

The Lord smiled and replied, "Who's he going to tell?"

PEACE BE WITH YOU! 



## Happy Father's Day- June 18

A father is neither an anchor to hold us back,  
Nor a sail to take us there,  
But always a guiding light whose love shows us the way.

*"The Lord shall guide thee continually."*

- Isaiah 58:11 

## Cont. from page 2

### Love the Lord

hardened. In her frustration and sadness, her heart softened and she repented and asked forgiveness. She devoted her whole life worshiping God alone in the desert. All these accounts have to do with our devotion to God and our intense love for God. Our unconditional love of God. As Jesus tells us whatever we do unto others we also do unto him regardless how small it may be.

The greatest commandments as Jesus told us is to love thy neighbor as thyself and to love the Lord thy God with all our heart, with all our mind, with all our soul, and with all her strength. In the Book of Jeremiah God says to "call on me and I will answer thee and tell you all the things of which thou knowest not." Jesus also says, "I will be with you always even until the end of the age." Do we really want to throw away these promises from God because of our anger, ignorance, and hardened heart. Love God so that we may all be together after the final judgment to worship our eternal Lord God together.

### Fathers of St. George word search

D A V S A L O H C I N E I F  
 F A Z L I H P A F O L O R F  
 A L Y E G E O R G E B R U O  
 K U M R S I M E A N S O P E  
 E S S O A D A V I R U S P G  
 N I J A R J O H N A M R A E  
 N U T I P E T U E D O U U O  
 E S S I M O N O G R T A L R  
 T O B C H A M E A T T R A E  
 H E B R A Y R A N D R E L I  
 E E C U R B U K R C O P E N  
 T E T H A R V E Y T A L X N  
 A L E T A B O X E F R E I O  
 K L C H A R L I E D A V A D  
 E I R I C E L W E L A Y T U  
 N O L E A H C I M I C A Z E  
 N T O N I J G E O D I V A D

- |             |               |             |
|-------------|---------------|-------------|
| 1. Tom      | 10. Paul Alex | 19. Geoff   |
| 2. Doug     | 11. Bruce     | 20. Harvey  |
| 3. George.  | 12. Donnie    | 21. Essa    |
| 4. Fr. Olof | 13. Simon     | 22. Fayz    |
| 5. Andre    | 14. Mark      | 23. Joseph  |
| 6. Ryad     | 15. John      | 24. Kenneth |
| 7. Michael  | 16. Herb      | 25. David   |
| 8. Jim      | 17. Nicholas  |             |
| 9. Charlie  | 18. Elliot    |             |



SAVE THE DATE!  
 Labor Day Weekend



## Aita Al Fokhar Reunion Foundation National Convention 2017

Sept. 2 - 3 in Charleston, West Virginia

**Saturday evening Sept. 2**  
**Hafli**

featuring music by Danny Al Achkar  
 Mazza and Drinks available for purchase.

*All are welcome  
 to attend*

**Sunday Morning:**  
 Hierarchical Divine Liturgy  
 at St. George Cathedral

**Sunday evening Sept. 3**  
**Banquet and Hafli**

featuring music by Danny Al Achkar  
 Drinks available for purchase.

*More info  
 to come!*

Accommodations available at  
 Embassy Suites Hotel  
 Phone: 304-347-8700.  
 Reference: AAF  
 Rates: \$109.00 plus tax /night  
 www.embassysuitescharleston.com

*Invited guests include*  
**Metropolitan JOSEPH of North America;**  
*Fr. Mitri al-Houssan from Aita; and*  
**Guest Speaker Dr. Ghassan Skaff, Professor**  
*and Department Head at the American*  
**University of Beirut**

For more info call Makhoul Ghareeb 304-546-3030,  
 Joe Awad 304-419-2700 or Andre Haikal 304-552-6461,

Follow Us on Facebook Aita Al Fokhar Reunion Foundation



**CALENDAR**  
Weekly Schedule

Check the weekly bulletin for updates, changes or cancellations.

**Thurs.:** 7:30 pm Choir Rehearsal:

**Sat.:** 5:00 pm Great Vespers

**Sun.:** 9:30 am Matins; 9:45 am Church School; 10:30 am Divine Liturgy; 6:30 pm Bible Study



June

4: Holy Pentecost, Symphony Sunday

- 6: 7:00pm - Parish Council Meeting
- 11: 12:00pm - Church Picnic
- 20: 7:00pm - Foundation Board Meeting
- 24: Nativity Forerunner, 9:30am - Manna Meal prep
- 27: 7:00pm - St. George Fellowship Meeting
- 28: 6:30pm - Evening Liturgy - Ss. Peter and Paul



July

8: 4:00pm - Great Vespers  
10: Joseph of Damascus

11: 7:00pm - Parish Council Meeting

- 15: St. Vladimir
- 18: 7:00pm - Foundation Board Meeting
- 20: Prophet Elias
- 25: 7:00pm - St. George Fellowship Meeting
- 27: St. Panteleimon
- 29: 9:30am - Manna Meal prep



August

1: 7:00pm - Parish Council Meeting

- 6: Transfiguration
- 7: 7:00pm - Ladies Guild
- 15: Dormition, 7:00pm - Foundation Board Meeting
- 22: 7:00pm - St. George Fellowship Meeting
- 26: 9:30am - Manna Meal prep
- 29: Beheading of St. John the Forerunner

June 2017							July 2017						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
				1	2	3							1
4	5	6	7	8	9	10	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
11	12	13	14	15	16	17	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
18	19	20	21	22	23	24	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
25	26	27	28	29	30		23	24	25	26	27	28	29
							30	31					

August 2017							September 2017						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
			1	2	3	4						1	2
6	7	8	9	10	11	12	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
13	14	15	16	17	18	19	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
20	21	22	23	24	25	26	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
27	28	29	30	31			24	25	26	27	28	29	30



September

5: 7:00pm - Parish Council Meeting  
8: Birth of Theotokos

- 11: 7:00pm - Ladies Guild
- 14: Elevation of Cross
- 19: 7:00pm - Foundation Board Meeting
- 26: Falling Asleep of St. John the Theologian, 7:00pm - St. George Fellowship Meeting
- 30: 9:30am - Manna Meal prep

**Mon.-Fri.:** 12:30pm Sixth Hour/confession has been postponed over the month of June/July due to priest schedules.  
**Wed.:** 6:30pm Vespers & Family Night have been postponed until August

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