



ST MARY MAGDALENE

ORTHODOX CHURCH IN RINCON/SAVANNAH, GEORGIA

Scripture Readings

Hebrews 4:14-5:6 (Epistle)

Brethren, seeing then that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need. For every high priest taken from among men is appointed for men in things pertaining to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins. He can have compassion on those who are ignorant and going astray, since he himself is also subject to weakness. Because of this he is required as for the people, so also for himself, to offer sacrifices for sins. And no man takes this honor to himself, but he who is called by God, just as Aaron was. So also Christ did not glorify Himself to become High Priest, but it was He who said to Him: "You are My Son, today I have begotten You." As He also says in another place: "You are a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek".

Mark 8:34-9:1 (Gospel)

At that time when the Lord had called the people to Himself, with His disciples also, He said to them, "Whoever desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake and the gospel's will save it. For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul? For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him the Son of Man also will be ashamed when He comes in the glory of His Father with the holy angels." And He said to them, "Assuredly, I say to you that there are some standing here who will not taste death till they see the kingdom of God present with power."

Lives of the Saints: Veneration of the Cross

In today's Gospel reading from Mark 8:34, Christ calls each of us to "deny ourselves, take up our cross, and follow Him." This denial is not simply about rejecting small pleasures or making token sacrifices. The original Greek word *aparnisastho* conveys a much deeper meaning: a full renunciation of all that stands between us and God's plan for our salvation. True Christian self-denial means confronting and letting go of our pride, ego, and hidden sins—not losing our identity, but transforming it into what God intended.

Too often, we settle for surface-level sacrifices during Lent—giving up things like TV or sweets—while ignoring the deeper call to repent and change the direction of our hearts. Jesus' command is a call to serious spiritual work: to master our passions, to surrender our will, and to walk the hard path of humility and obedience. Taking up our cross means facing suffering, loss, and spiritual struggle with faith, knowing that following Christ leads us to true life.

The Church gives us the Veneration of the Cross on this third Sunday of Lent as a moment of encouragement and renewal. Like weary travelers resting under a tree before continuing a long journey, we pause at the Cross for strength and hope. The Cross is our reminder of God's deep love, the victory over death, and the promise of the Resurrection. As St. John Chrysostom said, "The Cross is the proof of the love of God." With renewed strength, we continue toward Pascha, knowing there is no resurrection without the cross.

MARCH 23RD, 2025

3RD SUNDAY OF LENT

ST. GREGORY PALAMAS

MAR Birthdays, Names Day, & Anniversaries

- 3rd - James Kenley
- 6th - Fr. Stephen Osburn (Priesthood Anniversary)
- 7th - Wyatt Roberts
- 7th - Aryana Zdionica
- 25th - Tom Maty
- 28th - Kate Jackson
- 30th - Theodosia (Teddy) Lentz
- 31st - Ceilia (DeeDee) Lentz

SCHEDULE

March 24th:
Vespural Liturgy for Annunciation (6:30 PM)

March 26th:
Presanctified Liturgy (6:30 PM)

March 27th:
Coffee Chat @ Paddle's Coffee (10 AM)
(401 N Laurel St, Springfield, GA 31329)

March 29th:
Great Vespers (5 PM)

March 30th:
Divine Liturgy (9:30 AM)

WISDOM

"The Cross abolished idolatrous worship, enlightened the whole world, gathered the nations, and established the Church. It made earth into heaven."

- St. Ephraim the Syrian

"If you have an open heart, God will touch it."

- Anonymous

WEEKLY JOKES

Went to the doctors yesterday with a suspicious looking mole. He said they all look like that and I should have left him in my garden.

Three weeks ago I sent my hearing aids in for repair. I've heard nothing since.

COME AND SEE! YOU'RE ALWAYS WELCOME!

Confessions:

Confessions Every Saturday Before (4:15 PM) and After Vespers or By Appointment. During Lent, Confessions 30 Minutes before all Services.

Stewardship and Serving Our Community

Please make every effort to participate in these meaningful opportunities for stewardship within our parish.

Weekly Church Clean-up (through May): (Holy Week sign up needed more than anything due to extra services)

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/8050B4BAAAC23ABF49-52968691-weekly>

Maintenance Items and Projects (through August):

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/8050B4BAAAC23ABF49-52940655-maintenance>

Coffee Hour (March):

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10CoE48ADAD2DA0F94-55447864-march>

St. Christopher Society: (Carpool Volunteering) (On Hold until new website is developed)

All links on our website (under the Calendar tab): <https://www.stmmoqa.org/calendar>

Special Collection for Pascha Flowers (Over the next few weeks)

Espresso Your Faith...Coffee Chat (March 20th at 10 AM - Paddle's)

Last week we discussed everything from why Mormon/Utah culture has the weirdest choice of naming their kids to the Methodist church and its Anglican origins, to the great American experiment, to robotics, to processed food and its connection with man made tradition in Christianity, to how to apply Christ in our secular lives, specifically to evangelize and bring people to the knowledge of Truth, to are aliens demons? All of that and more can be yours for the low price of just hanging with us every Thursday at Paddles. Join us!

Extended Lenten Service: Charities to Support

As I said in my fasting guide, it is important to treat Lent as more than just fasting from foods but it is also a time to offer alms and service to those in need. We have done a good job with this as many have taken home-less kit bags as well as come to me for other ways they can help Orthodox Charities in need. I have compiled a list below of the best charities to support for those who are able (above and beyond their normal tithing):

- International Orthodox Christian Charities (IOCC) - ioccc.org
- Orthodox Christian Mission Center (OCMC) - ocmc.org
- FOCUS North America - focusnorthamerica.org
- Orthodox Christian Prison Ministry (OCPM) - theoicpm.org
- ZOE for Life! - zoeforlife.org
- Project Mexico & St. Innocent Orphanage - projectmexico.org
- Reconciliation Services (Fr. Justin is a friend of mine and has done amazing work) - rs3101.org
- Orthodox Church Capital Improvement Fund (technically not a charity but they are a nonprofit. This organization helps Orthodox parishes avoid having to go to banks for property loans, which come with huge interest rates and demanding terms, by giving not only lower rates but flexible terms and conditions. They do really good work and what I can add here is that you can also invest in a 5 year CD where your money will grow but also go towards building up Christ's Church. Fr. John Dresko, OCCIF's president calls it the perfect Orthodox win/win situation.) - OCCIF.com

Additionally, we have some in our parish that have expressed needs for helping others. I emailed the parish about Laila's situation and the young mother (huge thank you to all who stepped up for this) as well as another involving our catechumen Kate, who is in need of food/snack donations for her classroom as many of her kids come from poor homes and are not able to have breakfast or lunch on a regular basis. If you would like to support either, please see both of them or myself and I can point you in the right direction.

Come and See Challenge:

As someone who does alot of social media for church and secular clients, I keep up alot on viral trends and while kids do not call them challenges anymore, they still do challenges because they're fun, help them feel connected to others, and offer a chance to go viral or gain attention, likes, and social credibility online. I also look at that as an opportunity for us to Christianize this concept and use it to our benefit so you will see from here on out in the bulletin a challenge that relies on bringing others to the Church, come to extra services yourself like Vespers, and follow a life of repentance through confession. In other words, this challenge is not to go viral or social credibility but to gain God's attention through our dedication to Him and ultimately aid in our salvation.

Monthly Parish Financial Report (As of March 16th, 2025):

February	March
Income Goal: \$11,535	Income Goal: \$11,535
Collections: \$9,017	Collections: \$5,948
Difference: -\$2,518 / -21.83%	Difference: -\$5587 / -51.56%

PRIEST: Fr. Stephen Osburn 702-521-6988 | DEACON: Dn. Vassily Kocher 912-756-5178

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The Come and See Challenge:

Have you brought someone NEW this month or reached out to someone come back?

Have you gone to Great Vespers at least once this month?

When was the last time you went to Confession?

Prayer List

Living

Clergy: Abp. Benjamin, Abp. Nathaniel, Abp. Alexander, Met. Isaiah, Fr. Michael, Fr. Matthew

Community: Tammy, Litsa, child Lilliana, Carl, Christina, Olga, Rita, Lucinda and her newborn child Ciana Rose, Jamie, Alexandra, Dorthy, Issac, Sandy, Donald, Cole, Marco, Joseph, Chad, Landin, Austin, Catherine Ann, Katherine, Jeff, David, Andrew, Eftihia, Hilda, John, Polly, June

Catechumens: Andrew, Braden, Camilo, Chandler, Dan, Dusty, Evan, Felix, Garrett, Jordan, Kamaka, Kate, Kendra, Megan, Nathan, Nicole, Rachel, Sherrell with child, Van, William, Winry, Wyatt, Camron, Jason

Prisoners: Basil, Mark

Orthodox Missions: St. James (Beaufort) St. Basil (Marietta), St. John the Merciful (Kissimmee), St. Anthony (Rock Hill), Holy Resurrection (North Augusta), Annunciation (Jacksonville), St. John the Baptist (Colorado Springs), Ss. Mary and Martha Monastery (Wagner) and all missions and monasteries throughout the Diocese of the South and USA.

And all of those who are suffering throughout our community and the world who are in need of prayers.

Departed

Fr. Symeon, Ron, George, Veronica, Braswell

Youth Group

TBA Next Week