



ST MARY MAGDALENE

ORTHODOX CHURCH IN
RINCON/SAVANNAH, GEORGIA

Scripture Readings

1 Corinthians 3:9-17 (Epistle)

Brethren, we are God's fellow workers; you are God's field, you are God's building. According to the grace of God which was given to me, as a wise master builder I have laid the foundation, and another builds on it. But let each one take heed how he builds on it. For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if anyone builds on this foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, or straw, each one's work will become clear; for the Day will declare it, because it will be revealed by fire; and the fire will test each one's work, of what sort it is. If anyone's work which he has built on it endures, he will receive a reward. If anyone's work is burned, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire. Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you? If anyone defiles the temple of God, God will destroy him. For the temple of God is holy, which temple you are.

Matthew 14:22-34 (Gospel)

At that time, Jesus made His disciples get into the boat and go before Him to the other side, while He sent the multitudes away. And when He had sent the multitudes away, He went up on the mountain by Himself to pray. When evening came, He was alone there. But the boat was now in the middle of the sea, tossed by the waves, for the wind was contrary. In the fourth watch of the night Jesus went to them, walking on the sea. And when the disciples saw Him walking on the sea, they were troubled, saying, "It is a ghost!" And they cried out for fear. But immediately Jesus spoke to them, saying, "Be of good cheer! It is I; do not be afraid." And Peter answered Him and said, "Lord, if it is You, command me to come to You on the water." So He said, "Come." And when Peter had come down out of the boat, he walked on the water to go to Jesus. But when he saw that the wind was boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink he cried out, saying, "Lord, save me!" And immediately Jesus stretched out His hand and caught him, and said to him, "O you of little faith, why did you doubt?" And when they got into the boat, the wind ceased. Then those who were in the boat came and worshiped Him, saying, "Truly You are the Son of God." When they had crossed over, they came to the land of Gennesaret.

Short Reflection: Dormition Fast: The Summer Pascha

The Dormition Fast is one of the hidden treasures of the Church's liturgical year. Though it is often overshadowed by the busyness of summer, many Orthodox Christians have affectionately called the Feast of the Dormition the "Summer Pascha." Just as Great Lent prepares us to celebrate Christ's victory over death in His Resurrection, these two weeks prepare us to celebrate the Dormition of the Most Holy Theotokos, whose life bears witness to the transforming power of that same Resurrection. Her falling asleep is not the end of her earthly life, but her entrance into the fullness of life with her Son. In honoring her Dormition, the Church also proclaims the hope held out to every faithful Christian: that because Christ has conquered death, those who belong to Him need not fear it, for it has become the doorway to eternal life. The Church does not ask us to fast because the Dormition is a sorrowful event. Rather, we fast because every great feast deserves preparation. We clean our homes before welcoming honored guests, and in the same way, we seek to cleanse our hearts through prayer, repentance, fasting, and almsgiving before entering into this holy celebration. The Dormition Fast is an opportunity to step away from the distractions and comforts that so easily consume us, to quiet our hearts, and to make room once again for Christ to be at the center of our lives. The Most Holy Theotokos remains the great example of what every Christian is called to become: one whose entire life is a joyful "yes" to the will of God. Her humility, obedience, and unwavering trust in God are the pattern for our own spiritual lives. Yet she never points us to herself, but always to her Son. Her words at the wedding feast in Cana remain her message to the Church today: "Whatever He says to you, do it." If we keep those words before us during the Dormition Fast, these two weeks will become much more than a change in our diet. They will become a time of genuine spiritual renewal, drawing us closer to Christ through repentance, prayer, and a renewed commitment to living the Gospel. As we prepare to celebrate her Dormition, may we also prepare our own hearts for the day when, by God's mercy, we too will pass from death to life and enter the joy of the Kingdom with Christ, His Most Pure Mother, and all His saints. May this "Summer Pascha" remind us that every season of fasting is ultimately a journey toward the joy of the Resurrection.

AUGUST 2ND, 2026

ST. STEPHEN, POPE OF ROME
9TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

AUG Birthdays, Names Day, & Anniversaries

4th - Christina Hanna
4th - Garrett Clark
5th - Joshua Gimik
7th - Mat. Lindsey Osburn
7th - Saiah Nyantakyi
9th - Luke Rigato
11th - Connor Roberts
14th - Nate Hall
14th - Mark Guyer
15th - Theodore Harrod
15th - Mary Ann Welsh (Name's Day)
15th - Maria Guyer (Name's Day)
17th - Melissa Hajduk
19th - Rachel Woodthorpe
20th - Bently Carver
21st - Marcel Maghiar
21st - Rdr. Ron Somich
22nd - Kwasi and Saiah Nyantakyi
24th - Andrew Rigato Jr.
24th - Dan Léger
25th - Felix Galindez
25th - Maria Guyer
30th - Alex Dita (Name's Day)

SCHEDULE

August 5th - Wednesday
Transfiguration Vesperal Liturgy (6:30 PM)

August 6th - Thursday
Coffee Chat at Paddles (401 N Laurel St, Springfield, GA 31329) (10:00 AM)

August 8th - Saturday
Panakhida for Elizabeth Bentley (4:30 PM)
Great Vespers (5:00 PM)

August 9th - Sunday
Hours (9:00 AM)
Baptismal Divine Liturgy (9:30 AM)
Blessing Fruits (After Liturgy)
Coffee Hour (After Liturgy)

WISDOM

"It was fitting that she who had preserved her virginity inviolate in childbirth should also keep her body free from corruption after death. It was fitting that she who had carried the Creator as a child at her breast should dwell in the divine tabernacles. It was fitting that the Mother of God should possess what belongs to her Son and be honored by every creature as the Mother and handmaid of God."

- St. John of Damascus, First Homily on the Dormition

WEEKLY JOKES

Thinking about starting a jewelry business. If you want to help out, give me a ring.

My wife asked if she could have a little peace and quiet while she cooked dinner. So I took the battery out of the smoke detector.

GLORY TO JESUS CHRIST! GLORY FOREVER!

Parish Financial Report (July 31st, 2026) | 2026 Goal/Budget: \$175,000

“Every good and perfect gift is from above...Your own of Your own, we offer unto You.”

2026 Year to Date: \$103,995
July 2026 Collections: \$11,371
July 2026 Goal: \$13,552
August 2026 Goal: \$17,100

As we begin August, I want to thank everyone who continues to support our parish through faithful giving. Summer is often a slower season, and we're currently behind our monthly goal, but I know our parish has always responded generously when there has been a need. As God continues to bless us with growth, we also need to begin preparing financially for our future church expansion and parish hall. If you've fallen behind on your tithe during vacations or summer travel, consider catching up this month. Every gift, large or small, helps us continue the work Christ has entrusted to this parish. Thank you for your generosity, your faithfulness, and your commitment to building His Church together.

Full Report here: <https://savannahorthodox.com/reports/>
Give Securely Online: <https://savannahorthodox.com/help-us-grow/>

Greeters: Aug 2nd - Anthony, Jacob | Aug 9th - Anthony, Chastity | Aug 16th - Josh, Jacob
Coffee Hour Schedule: Aug 2nd - Team Mat Lindsey | Aug 9th - Team Josh | Aug 16th - Team Maria

Serve Our Parish Through Maintenance & Projects: Caring for our parish is a responsibility we all share. If you notice something that needs attention, please let Tom Maty know, or check the Maintenance & Projects sign-up list to see if it's already being addressed. We've also added current projects to the parish Google Calendar and will continue including them in the weekly newsletter so everyone can easily stay informed. Whether you have an hour or a few days to offer, there are tasks for every skill level and schedule. To view available projects and sign up, visit <https://savannahorthodox.com/serve/> AND speak with Tom for more information.

Youth Church School: Off for the Summer. Classes Resume September 13th. We are still looking for a teacher for our Ages 11-17 Church School class. However, due to the small number of students currently in that age group (we have only three, one of whom serves as Ms. Jeanie's assistant), we will be placing the class on hold until more teenagers join the parish.

Online Weekly Bible Studies: Every other Friday at 6:30 PM at <https://savannahorthodox.com/zoom/> All classes recorded and posted on all major podcast platforms. Catechumens are encouraged to attend the Class.

Coffee Chat: Thursdays at 10 AM at Paddles (401 N Laurel St, Springfield, GA 31329)

Saturday Night Questing: On Hold Until September - Summer Break.

St. Bridget Ministry (Narthex): This is a food ministry for our community. Items needed for donation to local food pantry includes any canned goods, including peanut butter. This is a good time to clean out your pantry, and restock! We are also looking for volunteers to deliver food to God's Mission House this summer. Please see Ruth: (814) 227-7632

St. Ambrose Ministry (Narthex): This is a ministry for babies is also in the narthex; please donate, it can include open packages of diapers. Anything helps. Please see the shelves in the back of the narthex, if in need or to donate!

St. Timothy's Young Adult's Group: A new Young Adult Group has started at the parish for activities, fellowship, discussion, and staying connected. Catechumens in the young adult age range are also welcome. Anyone interested should see Anastasia Collins.

OCF at GSU: In association with St. Timothy's Young Adult Group, we are working to start the OCF group at GSU. This will give our college students another opportunity for fellowship and growth in the Church. Anyone interested should speak with Rdr. Ron or Kristin Somich.

Baby Registry for Samson & Rachel Woodthorp

Samson and Rachel Woodthorp, former parishioners of St. Mary Magdalene, are preparing to welcome their little one. If you would like to bless and support them during this joyful season, their baby registry is available here: <https://savannahorthodox.com/woodthorp> Please keep them all in your prayers as they prepare for this beautiful gift of new life.

Upcoming Blessings During the Dormition Fast (August 2nd, 5th, and 15th)

With so many people who are new to the Orthodox faith, many may not be familiar with the beautiful traditions surrounding these feasts. Throughout the Dormition Fast, we will be observing several traditional blessings. This Sunday, August 2, we will bless honey following the Divine Liturgy. Next Sunday, August 9, we will bless grapes and other first fruits. Finally, on Saturday, August 15, the Feast of the Dormition of the Theotokos, we will bless herbs and flowers. We invite everyone to participate and bring these items on the appropriate day.

Dormition Flowers Donations (August 15th)

We are looking for flower donations, especially blue flowers or hydrangeas to decorate the Tomb of the Theotokos for Dormition. We will be decorating the evening before the feast. If you would like to donate flowers, help decorate, or have any questions, please see Nika or Mat. Lindsey.

Parish Council Meeting (August 16th)

Splash in the Boro Postponed Until Next Summer and Made in the Image Scheduling...

I sincerely apologize, but I've made the difficult decision to postpone our Splash in the Boro outing until next summer. Unfortunately, we did not have enough families sign up to qualify for the group rate. At the same time, a unique opportunity has come up for our parish. Rdr. Ben Dixon from UOJ will be visiting us on August 15th to help prepare for the launch of our new Made in the Image podcast, which is scheduled to go live in mid-September. We will be recording our first eight episodes on August 22nd and 29th, with additional recording sessions planned for September and October as we continue building out the first season. For those being interviewed, I will be reaching out to you soon, if I have not already. That said, I believe this is a wonderful opportunity for our parish and an important step in establishing a new outreach ministry that has the potential to share the Orthodox faith with many people beyond our local community.

We will still celebrate the Divine Liturgy for the Feast of the Dormition at 9:00 AM as planned on August 15th. Thank you for your understanding, and I apologize again to everyone who was looking forward to our day at the water park. I'll make it up to y'all.

Daily Reminder:

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

Are you praying the Jesus Prayer at least 40 times a day?

Are you giving your first offering of 10% to God/tithing regularly?

Prayer List

Departed

Fr. John, Fr. Andrew, Adam, Josh, Greg, Adam, Carl, Joe, Drew, David, Holly, Boris, Infant McIntyre, Maria, Elias, all children killed through the evil act of abortion, and all the fallen soldiers who defend our nation.

Living

Clergy: Bp. Gerasim (of Fort Worth, Locum Tenens of the Diocese of the South), Abp. Melchisedek, Abp. Benjamin, Abp. Nathaniel, Abp. Alexander, Met. Isaiah, Fr. Matthew, Fr. Michael, Fr. Stephen, Pdn. Vassily

Community: Mother Cassiana, Tammy, Litsa, child Lilliana, child Ciana Rose, Jaimie, Ray, Polly, Pina, Vic, Owen, Attiat, Chastity, Harry, Maegan, Lara, Nicholas, Kathy, Sam, Jerry (Gerasimos), Kate, Jeff, Abby, Gregory, Gabby, Benny, Troy, Jeanie, Andrew, child Lily, Karen, and especially all children suffering or in need throughout the world.

Expecting Mothers: Meagan, Ori, Rachel, Erin, Michaela, Kara, Noel, Taylee, Cody, Kirsten, Karis, Grace

Military and First Responders: Rdr. Alex, Van, Nick, Tyler, Shannon, Landan, Austin, Chad, Vladimir, Andrew, Justin, Mark, Tammy, Nika, Laila, Josh, Kamaka (Olga), Lia, Russell, Evan, Ignatius, Aaron

Catechumens: Aaron, Audra, Austin, Kasey, Bently, Raelynn, Emma, Oakleigh, Tyler, Nick, Melissa, Astrid, Freyja, Devin, Courtney, Kaden, Leo, Tyler, Shannon, Evan, Eric, Lia, Wyatt, Renata, Dawson, Katylin, James, Joshua, Kris, Ruth, Breanne, Samuel, Wyatt, Cody, Michaela, Anna, Aidan, Tim, Anthony, Evan, Kirsten, Jackson, Connor, Zen, Eleia, Carson, Christopher, Sarah, Tristan, Chesney, Lily, Grayson, Freyja, Zachary, Chandler, Angelina, Sidney, Billy, Tom, Kayla, Henry, Kristine, Jacob, Sean, Cody, Mckenzie, Ryker, Saylor, Raymond

Prisoners: Stefan, Daron (Basil), Mark

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

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

Latest Reflection:

Oppenheimer and the Limits of Human Intellect

Our newest installment of the Almost Christian series examines Christopher Nolan's Oppenheimer through the lens of Orthodox Christianity. While the film is remembered for its story of the atomic bomb, it raises a much deeper question: What happens when human knowledge outpaces holiness? The article explores the Orthodox distinction between knowledge and wisdom, showing why humanity's greatest need has never been more intelligence, but hearts transformed by God.

<https://savannahorthodox.com/oppenheimer-and-the-limits-of-human-intellect/>

Please read and share this on your social media accounts.

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