

the Light



SEPTEMBER 2022
NEWSLETTER

DOMSE FALL RETREAT 2022

September 9 - 10, 2022

St. Ignatius Orthodox Church, Franklin, TN

[REGISTER HERE!](#) LAST DAY SEPT 2.

NO ON-SITE REGISTRATION!



AMEN VIRTUAL BIBLE STUDY

September 15, 2022

7:00 - 8:00 pm EDT - Zoom

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YOUTUBE

Parish Spotlight

SAINT GEORGE ANTIOCHIAN ORTHODOX CATHEDRAL

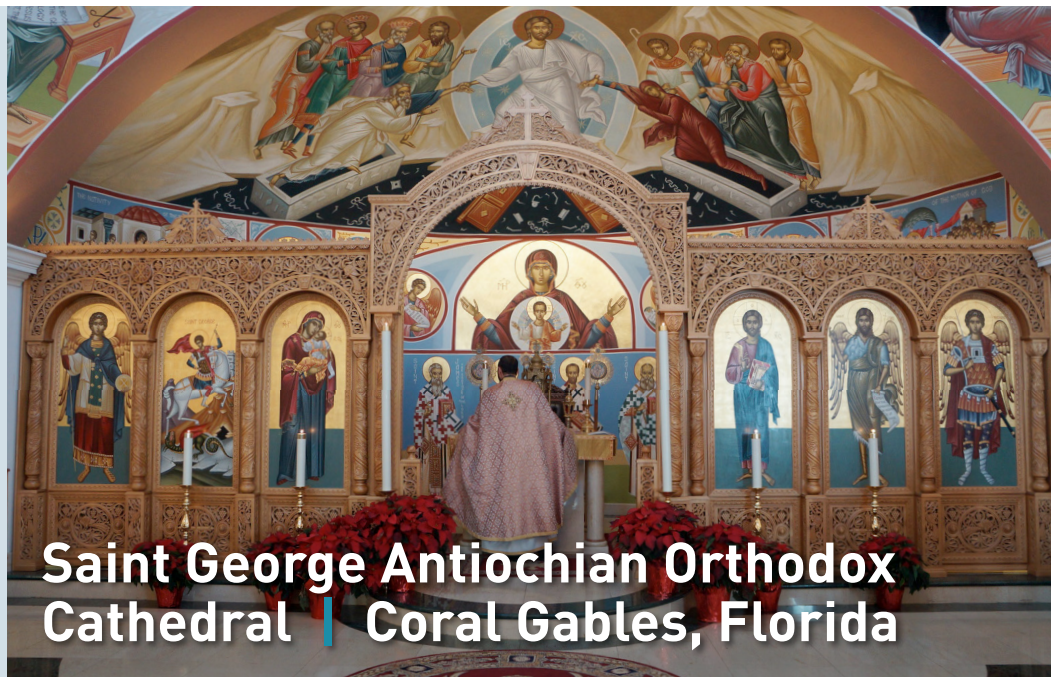
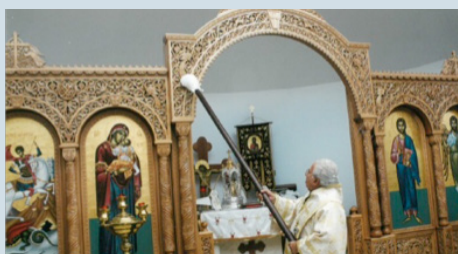
CLERGY

V. Rev. Fr. Paul R. Solberg, Pastor

FEAST DAY: Saint George, April 23

EMAIL: CathedralDean@stgmiami.org

WEBSITE: StGMiami.org



Saint George Antiochian Orthodox Cathedral | Coral Gables, Florida

In December 1949, the dream and vision were to establish an Orthodox Church in Miami, Florida. A missionary priest was assigned, and the community worked tirelessly until they were able to officially establish an Orthodox Church in 1953. At that time, Saint George was known as Saint Anthony and services were held in various locations. On February 26, 1967, was a most blessed day in Saint George history, Saint George Church moved to its current location and +Metropolitan PHILIP, consecrated the new Saint George edifice as the "Cathedral of Saint George," the "Spiritual Oasis of the Americas." In 2000, the Cathedral was fully renovated and on November 10, 2002, the new Saint George Antiochian Orthodox Cathedral of Coral Gables, Florida was consecrated.

Several churches began as missions from the Cathedral including Saint Philip Church in Fort Lauderdale, Saint Mary Church in West Palm Beach, and Our Lady of Regla Church in Miami.

Throughout the years, the Cathedral has established strong ministries and organizations: Antiochian Women, Antiochian Men, The Order of Saint Ignatius, Young Adult Fellowship, SOYO, Sunday School, and the Brotherhood

(continued on page 2)

of the Noble Joseph. Continual growth and development of our organizations and ministries is crucial in keeping our community strong and steadfast. Attaining this goal includes regularly scheduled meetings to ensure that communication between the Priest, organizational leaders and the Cathedral Council are constant. Events are always being coordinated to encourage participation and gather our community in service to Christ and each other. Each organization also has a dedicated month in the year where they can usher, read the epistle, recruit members and host charity events for their individual causes.

The Cathedral has established two large events: The Annual Love Ball Gala is when we honor our church's graduates, recipients of distinguished service awards to the church and our founders with the Medal of Merit. Our Annual Mediterranean Festival is where we enjoy home cooked Middle

Eastern food and family fun. All our organizations lend a hand in bringing these events to life. Our Antiochian Women spend week's preparing delicious food, our Young Adults help with the coordination, and our Antiochian Men lending a helping hand for the set-up and logistics. All our events focus on bringing the community together in worship and fellowship.

We are blessed that the Cathedral is the mother church of His Grace, Bishop NICHOLAS, and each year we are filled with warm anticipation of his visits in celebrating the Nativity of Christ and Pascha with our community.

Through the years, Saint George Cathedral has hosted several Archdiocese conventions: 1979, 2003, and 2017 as well as hosting the first Parish Life Conference

in 1993. As we prepare to celebrate the Cathedral's 70th anniversary next year, we will also celebrate the 30-year anniversary of the formation of the Diocese of Miami and the Southeast at next year's Parish Life Conference. With God's grace, we look forward to seeing our beloved DOMSE families in June 2023.



Mission Spotlight

St. James Orthodox Mission Gwinnett County, GA

CLERGY

V. Rev. Fr. Steven Ritter, Pastor

Rev. Dn. Anthony Bridges

FEAST DAY

St. James, the brother of the Lord,
October 23rd

WEBSITE: stjamesorthodox.org

EMAIL: info@stjamesorthodox.org

St. James Orthodox Church is a mission parish that was founded in 2013 thanks to several missionary-minded, non-jurisdictionally affiliated people in northern Gwinnett County, Georgia. After speaking with many clergy (including its present pastor), they decided that the Antiochian Orthodox Church would be the most amenable to their parish goals. St. James has the honor and distinction of being one of the last missions founded by His Eminence, Metropolitan Philip. The church is currently located about twenty miles north of Atlanta, Georgia, one of eighteen Orthodox churches in the greater Atlanta area. The congregation, which is comprised of about half convert, and half multi-ethnic folks of Greek, Ukrainian, Romanian, and Georgian extraction, worships overwhelmingly in the English language. Starting with about twelve people when meeting in a high school classroom, the parish roll contains over 110 men, women, and children who

come to St. James from within a 50-mile radius. The church's facilities are in a retail building, and we are currently looking for a permanent location.

Our charitable activities include an ongoing, regular collection for the Lawrenceville Cooperative Ministry (a Christian organization providing food for people in need in Lawrenceville and Dacula), Christmas gifting donated to the Quinn House (a multi-task, non-profit Outreach Operation that assists hundreds of people in Gwinnett County and in other areas of the State of Georgia), and a parish alms box that supplies emergency assistance to those in need who contact the church. The St. Maria of Paris Ladies' group is active in all manner of church ministry (including quarterly service projects), and our A-Men group (just in its formation process) will engage in service projects for members in need, and personal spiritual development. We have an active Sunday School program

for all ages and are working to establish an active SOYO chapter. Throughout the year we have special events for the entire parish family, including picnic outings, movie Sundays, and coffee hour classes, as well as a weekly adult and catechetical class. Every Sunday features a parish luncheon and coffee hour. Our worship, and the consequent pursuit of Christlikeness that stems from it, is our primary focus, and the surest method of attracting others to the Holy Orthodox Faith. If you are in the northern Atlanta area, be sure to visit our warm and exceedingly welcoming parish!





FEATURED ORGANIZATION

Christian Education

DOMSE CHRISTIAN EDUCATION COORDINATOR:

Anna-Sarah Farha | St. George Church, Jacksonville, FL



DOMSECHRISTIANED

As summer break wraps up and the new Church year begins, Sunday Church School teachers and students return to the classroom around the time when the Church celebrates the Feast of the Elevation of the Holy Cross. This Feast celebrates not one, but two important (but very much related) events in the history of the Church. We celebrate both the finding of the Cross by St. Helena in 326 and the return of the Cross to Constantinople (and then on to Jerusalem) in 628.

Although the empress Helena was 79 years old, she left on a journey to Jerusalem to find the precious Cross in the year 325. She had never seen a basil plant before this time. Just outside of Jerusalem, she noticed this unusual plant (basil) that was growing all over the ground. The unfamiliar plant's appearance and its location caused her to suspect that this was a special place. She decided to have her men dig at that spot in search of the Cross. It turned out that she was right! Three crosses were found in the ground under the growing basil. All three were tested on a sick woman (and/or a dead man – traditions vary), who had no response to the two other crosses, but became immediately well after touching the third cross, the Cross of Christ.

Soon thereafter, St. Helena had a church built at the site and most of the Cross stayed in that church, with a small piece going back to Constantinople. In 614 however, the

Persians conquered Palestine and stole the Cross. A few years later, in 628, Emperor Heraclius and his men were able to recover the Cross after defeating the Persians. At that point, the Cross was returned to the Church of the Holy Resurrection in Jerusalem.

Here is a sampling of ways to learn about this feast and to celebrate it together as a Sunday Church School class or at home as a family:

For more background on the Feast of the Elevation of the Holy Cross, [listen to Fr. Thomas Hopko \(of blessed memory\)'s podcast.](#)

[Read this blog post](#) with your students/family to help them understand the feast of the Elevation of the Holy Cross. For young children, add in a memorable activity such as a [Cross-themed sensory bin](#). Teens might enjoy organizing a Find-the-Cross scavenger hunt for older church school students or siblings.

[Practice the Festal hymn.](#) (Apolytikion)

[Print this pop-up centerpiece](#) to decorate your table for the Feast of the Elevation of the Holy Cross.

Explore the great outdoors together, imagining the terrain St. Helena must have traversed during her journey to find the Cross. Gather materials to construct a nature Cross.

[Enjoy a family-friendly Liturgical guide](#) filled with activities and traditions for the Feasts and Saints of September from Ascetic Life of Motherhood.

Resources to support Orthodox Christian educators in the classroom and Orthodox Christian families in the Little Church are readily available across the Antiochian Orthodox Department of Christian Education (AODCE) platforms:

[Main website](#)

[AODCE on Pinterest](#)

[Orthodox Christian Sunday Church](#)

[School Teachers blog](#)

[Orthodox Christian Parenting blog](#)

[Orthodox Church School Directors](#)

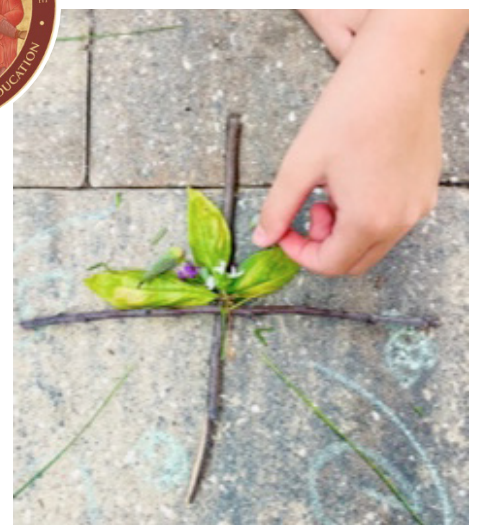
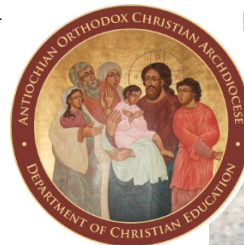
[Facebook page](#)

[Orthodox Christian Sunday Church](#)

[School Teachers Facebook page](#)

[Orthodox Christian Parenting Facebook page](#)

Connect with DOMSE Christian Education Coordinator Anna-Sarah Farha: aodce@antiochian.org





Support Your Diocese

DONATE TO:
Camp St. Thekla
DOMSE Scholarship
Antiochian Men
Antiochian Women
Young Adult Fellowship
Teen SOYO
or a General Donation

Thank You!

New DOMSE Officers

Some of the DOMSE Ministries received new officers in certain positions that we would like to highlight.

ANTIOCHIAN WOMEN



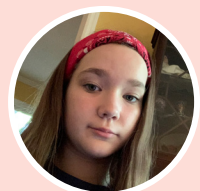
Emily Bradley, VP
St. Raphael of Brooklyn
Mission, Fuquay-Varina, NC



Denise King, Treasurer
St. Nicholas,
Springdale, AR



Olivia Baca, President
St. Ignatius, Franklin, TN



Susannah Bandy, VP
St. Elias, Atlanta, GA



Elizabeth Baclig, Secretary
St. Nicholas, Springdale, AR



Brendan Wilson, Secretary
St. Stephen, Hiram, GA



Stella Hallberg, Treasurer
All Saints, Raleigh, NC

YOUNG ADULT FELLOWSHIP



Rebekah Meese, President
St. Anna Mission, Columbia, TN



Brendan Bibeau, Social Media
St. Paul, Naples, FL

CONNECT YOUR STUDENTS WITH OCF AROUND DOMSE



Alabama

- Auburn
- University of Alabama
- University of Alabama in Huntsville
- University of Alabama at Birmingham

Arkansas

- University of Arkansas

Florida

- Florida State University
- Jacksonville OCF
- University of Florida
- Nova Southeastern University
- University of Central Florida
- University of Miami
- University of South Florida
- University of Tampa

Georgia

- Atlanta OCF
- Georgia Tech
- Augusta University
- Berry College
- Georgia College and State University
- Kennesaw State University
- Savannah College of Art and Design
- University of Georgia

Louisiana

- Louisiana Tech University
- Tulane University
- University of Louisiana - Lafayette

Mississippi

- Mississippi State University
- Southern Mississippi University
- Ole Miss

North Carolina

- Appalachian State University
- Davidson College
- Duke University
- Elon University
- North Carolina State University
- University of North Carolina
- UNC Charlotte
- Wake Forest University
- Western Carolina University

South Carolina

- Clemson University
- Coastal Carolina University
- Furman University
- The Citadel
- University of South Carolina
- Wofford College

Tennessee

- Austin Peay State University
- East Tennessee State University
- Middle Tennessee State University
- Rhodes College
- University of Memphis
- University of Tennessee, Knoxville
- Vanderbilt/Belmont OCF

Visit ocf.net/chapters for a complete list of OCF chapters.

College Student SUNDAY

OCTOBER 2, 2022

The Assembly of Bishops has designated the first Sunday of October as the date for College Student Sunday. Please consider recognizing your college students by asking a student to share their experiences in OCF. We also ask that you take a special collection to continue supporting the vital ministry of Orthodox Christian Fellowship. Find details at ocf.net/college-student-sunday/.



DOMSE College Scholarship

The Diocese of Miami & the Southeast established an annual DOMSE Scholarship Program in 2021 for the purpose of recognizing high school graduates as they pursue higher education. Last year we had three applicants. This year we increased to nine applicants!

With the blessing of His Grace Bishop NICHOLAS, the DOMSE Scholarship Committee is excited to announce the 2022 recipients of the DOMSE College Scholarship! Our Diocese was able to award two \$2,500 scholarships to two of our DOMSE Teens.

THE JUDGE'S CHOICE SELECTIONS WERE:



SUSAN REID, St. Paul Church, Naples, FL

Susan is attending Belmont Abbey College, pursuing a degree in Liberal Arts/Humanities.



SARAH SETZLER, St. Stephen Church, Hiram, GA

Sarah is attending Samford University, pursuing a degree in Architecture.

It is good to know that the future of DOMSE is in good hands with such amazing and intelligent youth. We pray that these teens will spread the light of Christ to everyone that they encounter in their college experience! Keep a lookout for the upcoming DOMSE 2023 Scholarship application at DOMSE.ORG.

Members of the 2022 Scholarship Committee were:

Sayedna NICHOLAS, Chairperson
Anna-Sarah Farha (St. George, Jacksonville, FL)
Anne Castrodale (St. John, Memphis, TN)
Kh. Delia Haddad (Midwest Diocese)



Join us for the 2022 DOMSE Fall Retreat

Hosted at St. Ignatius Orthodox Church in Franklin, TN
September 9th & 10th, 2022



[REGISTER HERE!](#)[CLICK HERE FOR SCHEDULE!](#)

REGISTRATION CLOSSES SEPT. 2 AT 11:59 PM EST. THERE IS NO ON-SITE REGISTRATION.



Words from Sayedna Nicholas

As you may know, the Ecclesiastical year begins on September 1st, ushering in an entire twelve months of new blessings from God. New optimism begins the year with the usual and familiar feast days, fasting periods, and retreats. They all culminate in a spiritual growth that is unprecedented on a personal level. Each one of us needs to explore new heights in our closeness to our Creator and in sailing uncharted individual spiritual grounds within the context of the Orthodox Church Doctrines, Scriptures, and Holy Traditions. Simply put, spiritual stagnation is unacceptable, spiritual decline is unfathomable, and spiritual falling-out-of-Grace is incomprehensible. The only way forward is growing in our Lord Jesus Christ! This is not open to individual interpretations but rather in accordance with the elucidations and explanations of the Church Fathers as the Holy Spirit inspired them. The Christ promised us the guidance of the Holy Spirit (Matthew 4:1, Acts 2:1, Acts 13:2, Acts 15:28, Romans 14:8, Romans 8:26-27). If we believe in Christ, we must believe in His teachings and the pledges He guaranteed us. The Holy Spirit has been guiding the Orthodox Church, despite the occasional stumbling of Her fallible leaders throughout the ages, during the last two thousand years. And therefore, the Church is infallible! May the Holy Spirit be our inspiration to reach new spiritual heights in Christ Jesus.

On a different note, [the Fall Retreat](#) is upon us on September 9 (the faithful and clergy to arrive in the evening of September 8). The retreat ends on Saturday, September 10. However, all are welcome to participate in the Hierarchical Divine Liturgy on Sunday, September 11. We are planning a spiritually edifying retreat, as usual, hosted at St Ignatius Church, Franklin, TN. We will have engaging and exciting speakers to spark our interest in Godly topics to further increase our faith and get us closer to God in our steps to becoming God-like. In addition, the men have their [annual Fall AMEN retreat](#) in November. The customary stimulating speakers will give incentive and motivation for continued spiritual growth. I personally look forward to both retreats.

May God bless you and may the Holy Trinity protect you all.



Theology Editor's Corner

In Orthodox Christianity, we recognize our Lord Jesus Christ as the eternal Word of God, for St. John says of Him, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God" (John 1:1). But this does not mean that the Scriptures are not important to us, because every word of Holy Scripture testifies to Christ the Word, and they are even the garments that our Lord Jesus is clothed with according to St. Maximos the Confessor (Ambiguum 10.34). But how exactly do the Scriptures reveal God to us? And how can we take them up in order to draw closer to Him?

The key to these questions is to affirm that our Lord Jesus Christ is both fully God and fully man, or in other words, He perfectly reveals to us both God the Father and our own humanity, since He is the image of the invisible God (Col. 1:15) and the full stature of mature manhood (Eph. 4:13). Given this, when we take up any reading from the Scriptures, we should ask: **1) What do the passages tell us about God?**, and **2) What do they tell us about humanity or the human condition?** By prayerfully seeking to answer these questions we come to a general knowledge of who God is, as well as who He intends for us to be, which also gives us insight into our own struggles and the ways that we continue to fall short of becoming like God.

However, the Holy Spirit can also enliven the text of the Scriptures so that we receive a specific word from God that applies directly to us in our own circumstances, as we see in the life of St. Augustine or St. Anthony the Great, where the first was told to put on the Lord Jesus and make no provision for the flesh in its lusts (Rom. 13:14; Confessions, VIII.xi.29), while the second was told to sell all that he had, to give to the poor, and to follow Christ if he would be perfect (Mat. 19:21; Life of Antony, 2). And given this it also good to ask: **3) What might God be saying to each of us through the passages?**

Whenever we prayerfully take up these questions while reading and reflecting upon the Scriptures, we come face to face with the living God – the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit; we hear from Him and are given the grace and strength to follow Him in order to become more like Him. Glory to God!

Upcoming Events

SEPTEMBER

DOMSE FALL RETREAT 2022

September 9 - 10, 2022
St. Ignatius Orthodox Church
Franklin, TN

[REGISTER HERE!](#)

[SCHEDULE HERE!](#)

AMEN VIRTUAL BIBLE STUDY

September 15, 2022
7:00 pm - 8:00 pm EDT
Zoom

OCTOBER

AMEN VIRTUAL BIBLE STUDY

October 20, 2022
7:00 pm - 8:00 pm EDT
Zoom

NOVEMBER

ANNUAL AMEN VIRTUAL RETREAT

November 19, 2022
10:00 am - 1:30 pm EDT
Details to come!

2023 JANUARY

DOMSE CLERGY & WINTER RETREATS 2023

January 24 - 29, 2023 (Tentative)
Clergy Retreat: January 24 - 26
Winter Retreat: January 27 - 29
Details to come!

JUNE

DOMSE 2023 PARISH LIFE CONFERENCE (PLC)

June 14 - 17, 2023 (Tentative)
St. George Cathedral, Miami, FL
Details to come!



IF YOU HAVE ARTICLES OR SUGGESTIONS FOR THE LIGHT NEWSLETTER, PLEASE EMAIL THEM TO

DOMSENEWSLETTER@GMAIL.COM

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