



Volume 34, Number 1  
**JANUARY 2025**

# The Cathedral Messenger

*A Publication of St. George Antiochian Orthodox Christian Cathedral*

## 40th Annual Food For Friends Christmas Food Baskets

A special thanks to all who participated in this year's Food Basket project



A special thanks to all who participated in this year's Christmas Food Basket project. On December 14th, we celebrated our 40th year for this project where volunteers of all ages packed and delivered over 13,000 pounds of food to 100 families in need in the Wichita area. From the generosity of our parishioners, we raised over \$13,500.00 to purchase the groceries. Along with the groceries, parishioners delivered gifts that were bought especially for the children of the families. Following the deliveries, volunteers enjoyed a pizza lunch at AJ's Sports Grill, hosted by the Community Support Ministry.

1983, with the help of God and many generous parishioners, we have raised over \$320,000.00, purchased and distributed over 410,000 pounds of food, and provided 3,625 families in Wichita with food for the holidays.

Special thanks to Denise Johnston and Joy Farha with Ray Sales who ordered and organized the groceries, and to all the men and women who helped tape the boxes, set up the tables and the food, assigned the deliveries, and organized the gifts. We also want to thank Pratt Industries for donating the 400 boxes we packed.

This is a beautiful tradition of giving that brings children and adults of all ages together to help others in need. Since

Many lives are touched by this project and we thank everyone for helping to make a difference.

**Dean, V. Rev. Paul O'Callaghan • St. George Orthodox Christian Cathedral**

7515 East Thirteenth Street • Wichita, KS 67206-1223 • (316) 636-4676 • <http://www.stgeorgecathedral.net>

# *Metropolitan Saba Nativity Letter*

His Eminence  
The Most Reverend  
Metropolitan SABA



Archbishop of New York  
and Metropolitan of  
All North America

## **ANTIOCHIAN ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN ARCHDIOCESE OF NORTH AMERICA**

Nativity 2024

Beloved in Christ,

I extend my heartfelt greetings to each of you in these blessed days of the Nativity, holding you in my prayers and asking our loving and incarnate Lord to lift you to His glory and to pour upon you His abundant earthly and heavenly blessings.

On this sacred day, heaven bent down to embrace the earth, lifting it to itself. Before Christ, humanity knew God as a mighty, powerful, awe-inspiring, and distant figure, one whose wrath they sought to avoid. Yet, in Christ, we came to see a completely different face of God. Through His incarnation, we encountered a God who is loving, embracing, near, and fully present—one who shares in all things with us, except for sin.

God did not merely come to us; He became one of us, like us. He shared in our suffering, and through this, He raised us to Himself. The birth of Jesus Christ in the flesh forever transformed humanity's understanding of God. But have we, as individuals and as Christian communities throughout history, always lived according to what He has revealed and given to us? Often, we have failed to reflect His loving and participatory nature. Yet history is also rich with luminous examples—countless saints and faithful who have reflected the face of Christ in this suffering world.

In this joyous season, let us ask ourselves: How can we be born anew in Christ? How can we contribute to comforting this broken and weary world in which we live? This holy feast challenges us to follow the example of our Savior by embracing those in pain, those who are afraid, and those weighed down by the burdens of life. It calls us to offer them a spark of hope—a light to lift them beyond their worries, their pain, and their fears.

On this feast, let us remember our brothers and sisters throughout the world, especially those in the East, who endure hardships and long to experience the joy of our Lord. Let us prepare our hearts to receive Him within ourselves first so that we may see His presence in the faces of others.

I greet you with love and joy, saying: Merry Christmas and a blessed New Year.

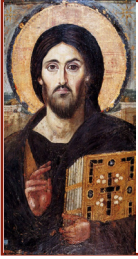
In Christ,

A handwritten signature in gold ink that reads "T. Saba". The signature is stylized and written in a cursive hand.

+SABA

Archbishop of New York and Metropolitan of all North America

# Bulletin Board



## MEMORY ETERNAL

Farris Farha, 11/28  
Hamid Nabbout, 12/4  
(father of Nassim & Bassem Nabbout  
— Koura, Lebanon)  
Nazih Moufarrij, 12/6

Join us for a Pancake Breakfast on

# Godparents Day

## January 12th

after Liturgy



Please join us in celebrating our Godparents with a pancake breakfast directly following liturgy in the Fellowship Hall. This is a free will give event and all profits from the breakfast go to The Treehouse.



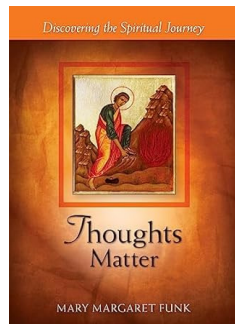
**2024 Annual Parish Meeting**  
to be held  
**Sunday, February 2nd, 2025**



# Women's Faith & Growth

**Join us Thursday**  
**January 16th, 7:15p**  
at the Parish House  
— 1328 N Tallyrand St —  
for an evening of fellowship  
& faith

Ashley Mullinix  
is leading the discussion  
**Studying "Thoughts Matter"**  
by Mary Margaret Funk



## JANUARY FASTING



There is no fasting Wednesday, the 1st or Friday the 3rd. There is fasting Sunday the 5th in preparation for the Theophany of Christ. The normal fasting traditions are observed after that: abstain from meat, poultry and dairy products on Wednesdays and Fridays.

# MABROOK! BLESSINGS!

## Baptisms

Uriah & Barachiah Arpin and Christine Garrett, 12/24  
Nicolas Humsi, 12/28 and Raphael Farha 12/29

## Chrismations

Seth & Conlee Arpin, Ian & Christine Franklin,  
Tom & Carey Tarkman, Maxwell Garrett,  
Finnegan Higgins and Ryan Jenkins, 12/24

MANY YEARS!

## 2025 PLEDGE STATUS

Make your 2025 pledge commitment by filling out a card or using this Realm link  
<https://onrealm.org/StGeorgeCathedral/AddPledge/2025pledge>

**2024:** number of pledges to date: 130  
for a total of \$538,525

**2025:** number of pledges to date: 113  
for a total of \$560,315

## 2025 PLEDGE PAYMENTS

If you would like the convenience of not writing checks, you may have your pledge payments automatically withdrawn from your bank account on the schedule of your choice. Please contact Christopher Farha at [chris@stgeorgecathedral.net](mailto:chris@stgeorgecathedral.net) for more

STEWARDSHIP

## Continuing Adult Educational Program

# Baptismal Catechesis

## An Introduction of the Rite of Baptism

### January 8:

The History and Theology of Baptism – Fr. Paul

### January 15:

The Baptismal Service – Dn. David Sebitts

### January 22:

Practical Aspects of Baptism: Sponsors, Godparents, and Parents – Fr. Mark

### January 29:

Baptism and/or Chrismation? – Fr. Calinic

This series is especially important for adults preparing to be baptized, for all parents planning to baptize children, for sponsors and godparents who will stand at a baptism, and useful for all who wish to know the meaning of this sacrament.

Wednesday evenings, following Daily Vespers at 7:15pm in the Chapel

# CATHEDRAL ICONOGRAPHY – UPDATE

At its meeting of November 14, the Cathedral Parish Council approved a new phase of iconography, progressing toward the completion the plan originally laid out prior to the construction of the Cathedral.

The major icons will be on the spaces above the west-facing colonnades to the right and left of the altar. The theme on the south side will be Moses at the Burning Bush. To the north, the Transfiguration will be placed. Behind the iconostasis, the icon of the Annunciation to the Theotokos will be split between the north and south back wall. On the north and south side walls above the iconostasis, the icons of the hierarchs will be installed.

**As of December 31, the icons listed remain available for donation:**

- Moses at the Burning Bush
- The Transfiguration
- The Annunciation to the Theotokos
- Saint Gregory the Theologian
- Saint James the Brother of the Lord
- Saint Gregory the Great
- Saint Cyril of Alexandria
- Saint Photios the Great
- Saint Mark of Ephesus
- Saint Tikhon the Confessor
- Saint Nicolai Velimirovitch

The major scene icons (Burning Bush, Transfiguration, Annunciation) are priced at \$20k each. The hierarchs are \$3k each.

Please contact Fr. Paul if you would like to contribute to the ongoing beautification of our Cathedral with holy icons.



**ORTHODOX  
CHRISTIANS FOR LIFE.  
ST. GEORGE CATHEDRAL**

As an affiliated local ministry of Orthodox Christians for Life, our mission is to cultivate Orthodox pro-life involvement in our parishes and the Wichita community.

*Together, we will...*



**PRAY** for abortion-vulnerable women and men, and for an end to abortion.

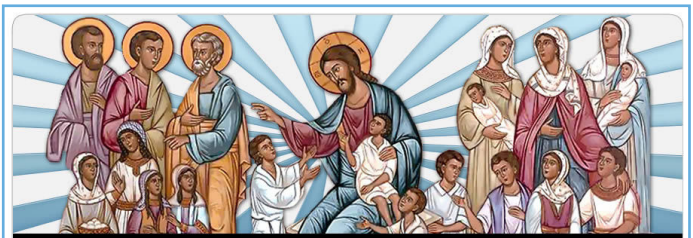


**EDUCATE** our parishes to raise awareness about bioethical issues and create a culture of life.



**SERVE** our local community by supporting organizations that help women in crisis pregnancies.

**JOIN US!**



Train up a child in the way he should go; and when he is old, he will not depart from it. - Proverbs 22:6

## Church School Spring Semester

- Sunday, JAN 5 No Church School
- Sunday, JAN 12 Church School Classes Resume
- Saturday, FEB 8 Creative Arts Festival
- Friday, APR 11 Church School Confessions
- Saturday, APR 12 Lazarus Saturday
- Sunday, MAY 12 Last Week of Classes  
- End of Year Assembly

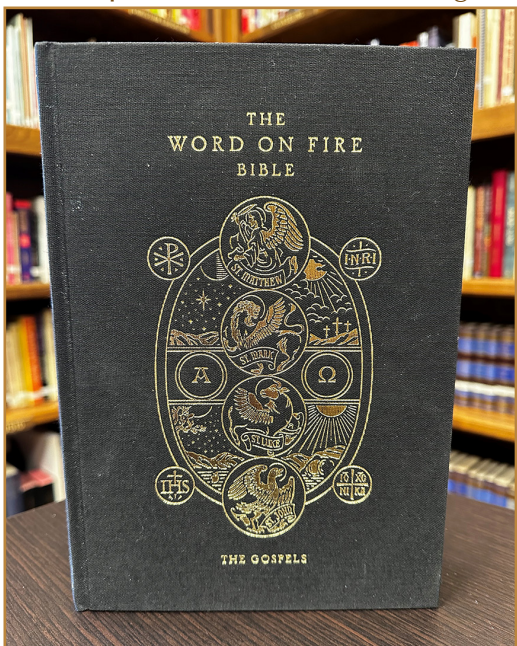
# St George Choir Sings



The Choir went to Larkfield to sing Traditional Sacred & Orthodox Carols. There were about 50 residents there who were so delighted with hearing the beautiful mix of 4-part choral music!

## ST. GEORGE LIBRARY

Newest addition to our library with three copies available for checking out



## CSA Round Up



If you will have a 4 or 5 year old by next August 31st, please join us for our PreK & Kindergarten Round Up at Christ the Savior Academy on January 15th.

For more information and to RSVP, visit [CSAWichita.org/event/round-up](http://CSAWichita.org/event/round-up) today!



## THE NATIVITY AND ALMSGIVING, Part One

by His Eminence Metropolitan Saba (Isper)

The hymn of the angels at the Nativity of Christ is the key verse to the practical meaning of this feast. The angels of heaven sing: ‘Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill among men’ (Luke 2:14). God is always glorified in the highest, and through His presence, peace is achieved on earth and goodwill enters the hearts and souls of mankind.

If the glory of God in the highest, the peace on earth, and the goodwill among men are interconnected, then the responsibility for achieving them falls primarily on the believers. The incarnation of the Lord Jesus teaches us to be messengers of peace and apostles of joy. This great responsibility is not fulfilled by excessive concern for the appearances of the holiday, but by working seriously to make the Lord ever present in and directing our lives.

Hence, this feast gains priority among believers in knowing how Jesus Christ was born in their souls. If they remain during the feast and after it as they were before, this means that the feast has not achieved its goal inside of them. Church feasts are stations for self-examination, and new beginnings to a more advanced extent in the life of virtue and the fruition of the Holy Spirit.

Today, Christmas is an essential moment to think about bringing joy to the hearts of despondent, sad, displaced and suffering people all around us. Unfortunately, their population is on the rise. The most important question is: How do we bring them joy? The answer is simple: by giving – morally, spiritually, emotionally and materially. Reviewing the customs associated with this feast is necessary and essential for all believers. On this feast, let us invite each other to activate our participation in bringing joy to our brothers and sisters in God.

How do we return the customs of this feast to their origin? Consider the popular tradition of exchanging gifts

and distributing alms to the needy on this blessed holiday. The origin of this tradition goes back to the Christian belief that God has presented humanity the greatest gift at Christmas, the second person of the Holy Trinity, His Word, His Son, in order to save it. Therefore, believers offer gifts to one another as a token of gratitude to God for His greatest gift: Jesus Christ.

Like everything transcendent, the concept of giving is distorted by sinful humans and diverted from its original meaning. In like manner, this tradition has become disfigured with excessive consumerism where exchanging gifts is now a mere imposed seasonal tradition. Anyone can see the excess in this area. Gifts should not be exchanged between people just because “it is Christmas,” regardless of the receivers and their needs. Nevertheless, it remains a beautiful custom, although it needs more spirituality and personalization.

Believers first present themselves as pure offerings to the Lord. The Lord came to us to save us, so we, in turn, present ourselves to Him pure and clean with sincere repentance and a noticeable change for the better.

Then, we present to our brothers, sisters, loved ones and friends a simple, thoughtful and joyful offering. Hence, it has become customary on the eve of this feast for all family members to gather for Christmas dinner.

The most important thing is for believers to visit the grieving, the needy, and the neglected, bringing whatever they can provide them during the Nativity Fast.

This feast is an occasion to practice giving. God gave us Himself, so we give Him ourselves. God visited us with His great mercy, so we visit others with our love derived from His love.



Submitted by Mikell Awaad

### Community Support 2025 Agencies

Do you have a heart to serve in our community? Now is the time to get involved! This is the time of year that we discuss which community agencies that we will be supporting in the upcoming year. Please join us at our next Community Support Planning Meeting – January 14th at noon at the Parish House. For more information contact Carrie Camden at [camden9492@gmail.com](mailto:camden9492@gmail.com).

### Dillons Community Rewards Update

Thank you to all who have signed up for this free program! We have seen a 15% increase in the amount of money we are receiving from Dillons. To join this effort and earn money for St George Cathedral every time you shop at Dillons, designate St George Cathedral as your Community Rewards recipient. For more information go to <https://tinyurl.com/2p9zrezy>

### Upcoming Volunteer Opportunities

#### KS Food Bank – January 13th, 1:30-3:30

Help package pantry food to distribute to needy kids and families. To sign up, contact Jane Evans at [sittie49@gmail.com](mailto:sittie49@gmail.com)

#### Lord's Diner January 1 - Jan – January 19th, 5:00-7:30.

Help serve meals to those in need. To sign up, contact Pat Milburn at [pmilburn@josephhollander.com](mailto:pmilburn@josephhollander.com)

#### EmberHope Youthville - donation and tour

Meaghan Koci and I met with Tamber Rouse on Tuesday, November 26th. She showed us around the Emberhope campus located Newton. Founded by the United Methodist Church more than 95 years ago, EmberHope Youthville began with a gift from the estate of Mr. Edward P. Libbey. This gift, combined with funds from the City of Newton, enabled the purchase of 30 acres to build the Kansas Methodist Home for Children. Originally started as an orphanage, it has evolved to provide resources and support to at-risk youth and families through many trauma-sensitive programs. The Newton campus is currently psychiatric residential treatment cottages, an alternative school and their administrative building, affectionately called Libbey Hall after their generous benefactor.

**Next Meeting:**  
**Tuesday, December 14 at The Parish House**  
**Join us!**

For more information contact Carrie Camden at [camden9492@gmail.com](mailto:camden9492@gmail.com)

EmberHope is currently undergoing massive change and growth. They were awarded the contract for the Sedgwick County foster care program this year. They had previously run this program from 1997-2013. They applied for a grant to improve the campus and are currently undergoing the process of tearing down older buildings to replace with a low-income housing development for the elderly and youth that age out of the foster care system. The psychiatric residential treatment cottages currently house 12 girls who are either in state custody or their families have placed them there. These girls attend the alternative school that is located on campus along with other youth from the community that have applied to go to the school. They are at capacity and have a long waiting list for the school. The organization also supports hundreds of foster children in Sedgwick County and foster families all over the state. They are building more psychiatric residential treatment housing in Goddard. They have plans to build homes on the Newton campus for foster families to live in and have access to the counseling and other services they provide on-site.

Tamber mentioned that they have an annual volunteer week in June where volunteers will round up donations, work on landscaping, help organize donations or work on special projects.

### Community Support and Sewing Sisters

worked together to provide quilts for parishioners serving in the military.



Abou-Faissal Family



Cox Family

*The Cathedral  
Messenger*

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**St. George Orthodox Christian Cathedral**

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Wichita, KS 67206-1223

[www.stgeorgecathedral.net](http://www.stgeorgecathedral.net)

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