



# The Trophy-Bearer

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<http://www.stgeorgesouthgate.org/>

## Creator of Heaven and Earth

Rev. Fr. Anthony Cook



Last month, we talked about God as Father and as Almighty, both intensely Personal in His Fatherhood, and absolute in His power and might. We touched as well on the limitations normally implied with the idea of unlimited power in the case of other gods worshipped by human beings in the past, but we should take a little time to reflect more fully on these limitations as we consider what it means for God, our Father, to be Almighty without limitations.

A brief consideration of the story of Zeus, the king of the gods worshipped in ancient Greece, will serve our purposes well. Zeus was understood to be the son of the God Kronos. In the course of events he led his siblings in a rebellion against their father and the other gods of his generation, defeating and imprisoning them, and laying claim to their dominion over the world. Zeus then had several children, who, together with his siblings, rounded out the Greek pantheon. Zeus was considered to be the father of the gods, and almighty, and great - but there were significant limitations to that greatness. First, the other gods were constantly plotting against his will in one way or another. Second, and more basically, he had a birth, a beginning, and his actions were always limited within the constraints of time and space. Third, he had a father, and a mother, and although he ultimately defeated them, he did not do so through any power that was intrinsically his, but rather by organizing and leading a rebellion of the younger gods against the elder, a rebellion which succeeded through strength of numbers, careful planning, and luck. In all these cases, he is less than truly almighty.

If we dig deeper into Greek mythology, we find that Kronos, Zeus' father, was no more almighty, nor was he the original god - he, too, was the offspring of an earlier divinity, who was in turn himself only a derivative god. Going back another generation we find the first god, Gaia, the Earth, but she came, without explanation, from Chaos, meaning a gap, a chasm, perhaps including undefined and unformed matter on either side of that gap, but either way, a place in, or state of, the universe itself. And that is as far as the mythology goes, to a primordial chaos that assumed and necessitated the existence of both space and matter.

Thus, this ancient Greek religion assumed that matter itself was eternal, and had in some way generated life, first of all in the case of the gods in all their generations, and that the gods had then in their turn created humankind. Their gods could therefore never be truly almighty, because they were themselves derived from the stuff of the universe, and their almightiness was nothing more than a power and capacity to move within that time and space that was somewhat great than humanity possessed.

To my knowledge, every other ancient religion shares this fundamental assumption - that the universe, the world of time and space, is itself eternal and infinite, and that whatever gods and men there are are derived from this eternal existence of the material order, constrained to exist within it, according to the norms of its operation. We must understand this to recognize how truly striking it is when the Creed of the Church asserts that the One God known to the Church is Father Almighty, and then explains that Almighty means that He is the creator of heaven and earth. And just in case we miss the point, and presume that He made the heaven and the earth out of a fundamental material that already existed, the

## REGULAR SCHEDULE

### Sunday

8:50 am – Orthros (Greek)  
10 am – Div. Liturgy (bilingual)

### Tuesday

5:30-7:30 pm –Greek School

### Saturday

5 pm – Great Vespers (English)  
*Holy Confession during Vespers*

*Please see included calendar for other meetings  
& weekday services, and for any variations to  
this regular schedule.*

## COMMUNITY UPDATES

### Funerals

**April 6, 2017**

Erasmia Mihalís (in Florida)

**April 12, 2017**

Aspasia Papachrist

**April 13, 2017**

Evan Georvassilis

### 40-Day Blessings

**April 8, 2017**

Anastasia Capra

Parents: Ryan & Calliope

**April 9, 2017**

Jakob Nicholas Kontos

Parents: Stephen & Natalie

### Weddings

**April 29, 2017**

John & Amy (Burkardt) Biselas

## COMMUNITY UPDATES

*If you would like your news to be included, please  
call or email the Church Office.*

# SAINT GEORGE

## GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

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Office: (734) 283-8820

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Office Hours: 9-5 Mon-Fri

Website: [www.stgeorgesouthgate.org](http://www.stgeorgesouthgate.org)

*Outside of office hours, parishioners may leave a voicemail for Fr. Anthony or the office. In case of emergency, they may call Fr. Anthony directly on his cell. Please leave a message if Father does not answer, and he will return your call shortly.*

### Clergy

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### 2017 Parish Council

Nicholas Minton

John Kontos

Michael Liakos

Louis Kircos

Bob Kollias

Chris Kontos

Bill Colovos

John Diamantis

Stavros Dionyssopoulos

Pete Georvassilis

George Kaltsas

Sam Kiouis

George Kotronis

Pete Makarounas

Kim Moody

Christian Tougas

Peter Vougiouklakis

Creed repeats the point in starker terms, saying that He is the Creator, indeed, of ALL things, visible, and invisible.

Which means that the Christian God is not bound by time or space, because these invisible things, and all the visible things that fill them, are all His Creation. When we say that He is almighty, we mean it in a sense that no other religion could possibly have begun to imagine meaning it. Our God, we believe and confess, is truly, absolutely, without any hesitation, All Mighty.

That involves some important implications. If our God is the Creator of Heaven and Earth, and of all things, visible and invisible, then we believe that He made everything out of nothing - existence itself, including the empty space of the universe, and all the matter and energy that fill it...all this is His creation. Furthermore, if all this only exists because God created it, it necessarily follows that its continued existence also depends on God's will and power. It, and everything in it, only exists because God upholds and sustains its being.

In short, if God is eternal and infinite, then this created order He has made is not - it is limited in both time and space. In terms of time, it had a beginning, and by its nature it will have an end - and in terms of space, it must be limited as well, although we do not know the nature of those boundaries.

This establishes Christianity firmly as the other pole of what is a basic either/or philosophical proposition. We can either believe that the material order, the universe in which we live, is infinite and eternal, or not. If it is not eternal, then we are left with the question of where it comes from, and the Christian answer is that it is created out of nothing, by God. If it is eternal, then we trade that simple answer for an infinite set of answers, with each cause preceded by another as we work our way back in time, with no end to the regress.

Neither of these positions can be proven. They are, from our perspective within the universe, a matter of choice, a best guess, a decision of what to believe as a working answer to the fundamental question of our existence. They are also not, in and of themselves, as a philosophical question, particularly relevant. In either case, the chain of causality goes on further than our sight and understanding. In either case, daily life is a matter of daily struggle against the inertia of cause and effect within the universe. The most that these two answers may tell us is what, if anything, is the meaning and purpose of that struggle - and it is over this that the ancient pagan and the Christian, and the modern atheist and the Christian, contend with each other.

I cannot presume to give the pagan or atheist answer to the question of meaning - it varies widely depending on time and place and culture. The Christian answer, however, is precisely the subject of this podcast, because the Christian believes that the meaning and purpose of this struggle, the reason that God has called us into being out of nothing, is relationship, communion with one another and with Him, that unity that flows from active, relational trust in Him that is described by the Christian Rule of Faith.

This belief, that God is Father Almighty, the Creator of Heaven and Earth, and of all things, both visible and invisible, is the foundational presupposition of the Christian Faith. It is the most essential difference between Orthodox Christianity and the basic belief in the eternal existence of the material order that is common to both ancient paganism and modern atheism. What we have not yet considered, however, is WHY we believe these things. So next time, before we continue to the next portion of the Creed, we will pause and consider what are the reasons that we believe what we believe. There are two questions we must consider as we do so: first, can it be rational to believe in an infinite, personal Creator God? And second - if it can be rational, what are our reasons for believing in Him?

*The above is the seventh installment of our new Adult Education Program, updated weekly at <http://theruleoffaith.typepad.com>. Comments/questions are welcome, by email or via a comment on the website.*

# St. George Calendar of Events • MAY 2017

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>7 ✠ Paralytic</b> Comm. of the Precious Cross <i>Epistle: Acts 9:32-42/Gospel: John 5:1-15</i> <b>Orthros/Liturgy (8:50 &amp; 10 am)</b> <i>Philopt./Scholarship (11:45 am)</i> S. S. Teachers' Mtg. (12:15 pm) GOYA Game Night (5:00 pm)	<b>8</b> John the Theologian Arsenios the Great <i>Epistle: 1 John 1:1-7</i> <i>Gospel: John 19:25-28; 21:24-25</i>	<b>9</b> Isaiah the Prophet Christopher the Martyr of Lyca <i>Epistle: Acts 10:21-33</i> <i>Gospel: John 7:1-13</i> <b>Greek School (5:30-7:30 pm)</b> <b>Book Club (5:30-7:00 pm)</b>	<b>10 ✐ Mid-Pentecost</b> Simon the Zealot & Apostle Laurence of Egypt <i>Epistle: 1 Corinthians 4:9-16</i> <i>Gospel: Luke 6:12-19</i> <b>Investment Oversight (7:00 pm)</b>	<b>11</b> Renewal of Constantinople Moksos the Holy Martyr <i>Epistle: Acts 10:34-43</i> <i>Gospel: John 8:12-20</i> <b>Maintenance (6:00 pm)</b>	<b>12 ✐</b> Epiphanius, Bishop of Cyprus Germanos, Pat. of Constan. <i>Epistle: Acts 10:44-48; 11:1-10</i> <i>Gospel: John 8:21-30</i>	<b>13 ◆</b> Glykeria of Heracleia Sergios the Confessor <i>Epistle: Acts 12:1-11</i> <i>Gospel: John 8:31-42</i> <b>Great Vespers/Confession (5 pm)</b>
<b>14 ✠ Samaritan Woman</b> <b>Mother's Day</b> Isidore the Martyr of Chios <i>Epistle: Acts 11:19-30</i> <i>Gospel: John 4:45-42</i> <b>Orthros/Liturgy (8:50 &amp; 10 am)</b>	<b>15</b> Pachomios the Great Martyr Achilles, Bishop of Larissa <i>Epistle: Acts 12:12-17</i> <i>Gospel: John 8:42-51</i>	<b>16</b> Theodoros the Sanctified Martyr Peter of Blachernae <i>Epistle: Acts 12:25; 13:1-12</i> <i>Gospel: John 8:51-59</i> <b>Greek School (5:30-7:30 pm)</b> <b>Book Club (5:30-7:30 pm)</b>	<b>17 ✐</b> Andronikos & Junia the Martyr Nectarius of Varnaam <i>Epistle: Acts 13:13-24</i> <i>Gospel: John 6:5-14</i>	<b>18</b> Peter, Dionysios, Andrew, Paul Julian the Martyr <i>Epistle: Acts 14:20-28; 15:1-4</i> <i>Gospel: John 9:39-10:9</i> <b>Seniors Luncheon (Noon)</b> <b>Parish Council (7:00 pm)</b>	<b>19 ✐</b> Patrikos, Bishop of Proussa Memnon the Wonderworker <i>Epistle: Acts 15:5-12</i> <i>Gospel: John 10:17-28</i>	<b>20 ◆</b> Thallelaos & Companions Mark the Hermit <i>Epistle: Acts 15:35-41</i> <i>Gospel: John 10:27-38</i> <b>Great Vespers AT STS CONSTANTINE &amp; HELEN (6:30 pm)</b>
<b>21 ✠ Blind Man</b> Constantine & Helen, Equal-to-the-Apostles <i>Epistle: Acts 26:1, 12-20</i> <i>Gospel: John 9:1-38</i> <b>Orthros/Liturgy (8:50 &amp; 10 am)</b> Philoptochos Board Elections (12:15 pm)	<b>22</b> Basiliskos, Bishop of Comana Demetrius and Paul of Tripoli <i>Epistle: Acts 17:1-9</i> <i>Gospel: John 11:47-54</i>	<b>23</b> Michael, Bishop of Synnada <i>Epistle: Acts 17:19-28</i> <i>Gospel: John 12:19-36</i> <b>Greek School (5:30-7:30 pm)</b> <b>Book Club (5:30-7:30 pm)</b> <b>Deaconess (7:00 pm)</b>	<b>24 ✐ Apodosis of Pascha</b> Symeon the Stylite Vincent of Lerins <i>Epistle: Acts 18:22-28</i> <i>Gospel: John 12:36-47</i> <b>FOCUS Detroit (7:00-8:30 pm)</b>	<b>25 ✠ Holy Ascension</b> Third Finding of the Head of St. John the Baptist <i>Epistle: 2 Corinthians 4:6-15</i> <i>Gospel: Matthew 11:2-15</i> <b>Orthros/Liturgy (9 &amp; 10 am)</b>	<b>26 ✐</b> Carpos & Alphaeus of the 70 Alexandros of Thessaloniki <i>Epistle: 1 Corinthians 4:9-16</i> <i>Gospel: John 14:1-11</i>	<b>27 ◆</b> Hieromartyr Haliadros John the Russian of Evria <i>Epistle: Acts 20:7-12</i> <i>Gospel: John 14:10-21</i> <b>Great Vespers/Confession (5 pm)</b>
<b>28 ✠</b> <b>1st Ecumenical Council</b> <i>Epistle: Acts 20:16-18; 28:36</i> <i>Gospel: John 17:1-13</i> <b>Orthros/Liturgy (8:50 &amp; 10 am)</b> GOYA Game Night (tentative @ 5:00 pm)	<b>29 Memorial Day</b> Theodosia of Tyre <i>Epistle: Acts 21:8-14</i> <i>Gospel: John 14:27-15:7</i> <b>Woodner (8 am)</b> <b>Our Lady of Hope (10:30 am)</b> <b>Ferndale (12:15 pm)</b> <b>Michigan Memorial Park (1 pm)</b>	<b>30</b> Emmelia mother, Basil the Great <i>Epistle: Acts 21:26-32</i> <i>Gospel: John 16:2-13</i> <b>Greek School (5:30-7:30 pm)</b> <b>Book Club (5:30-7:30 pm)</b>	<b>31 ✐</b> Hermias the Martyr at Comana Eusebius and Haralambos <i>Epistle: Acts 23:1-11</i> <i>Gospel: John 16:15-23</i>	<b>1 JUNE</b> Justin the Martyr Pyrrhos the Hieromartyr <i>Epistle: Acts 25:13-19</i> <i>Gospel: John 16:23-33</i>	<b>2 ✐</b> Nikephoros Pat. of Constan. Erasmos of Ochrid <i>Epistle: Acts 27:1-44; 28:1</i> <i>Gospel: John 17:18-26</i>	<b>3 ✠ ◆</b> <b>SATURDAY OF SOUIS</b> Athanasios the Wonderworker <i>Epistle: 1 Thessalonians 4:13-17</i> <i>Gospel: John 21:1-4-25</i> <b>Orthros/Liturgy (9 &amp; 10 am)</b> <b>Great Vespers/Confession (5 pm)</b>
<b>4 ✠ Holy Pentecost</b> Metrophanes, Pat. of Constan. Mary & Martha <i>Epistle: Acts 21-11</i> <i>Gospel: John 7:37-52; 8:12</i> <b>Orthros/Liturgy (8:50 &amp; 10 am)</b> <b>Picnic in the Park / Graduation</b>	<b>5 Day of the Holy Spirit</b> Dorotheos, Bishop of Tyre Nicandrus, Gorgias and Apollon <i>Epistle: Ephesians 5:8-19</i> <i>Gospel: Matthew 18:10-20</i>	<b>6</b> Hilarion of Dalmatos Monastery Athalose the Wonderworker <i>Epistle: Romans 11:7; 13-17</i> <i>Gospel: Matthew 4:23-25; 5:1-13</i>	<b>7</b> Theodotos, Bishop of Ankyra Righteous Paragis Basias <i>Epistle: Romans 11:8-27</i> <i>Gospel: Matthew 5:20-26</i>	<b>8</b> Relics - Theodore - Commander Kallipe the Martyr <i>Epistle: Ephesians 2:4-10</i> <i>Gospel: Matthew 10:16-22</i>	<b>9</b> Cyril, Patriarch of Alexandria 3 Virgin-martyrs of Chios <i>Epistle: Romans 21:4-28</i> <i>Gospel: Matthew 5:33-41</i>	<b>10 ◆</b> Alexander & Antonina, Martyrs Timothy, Bishop of Proussa <i>Epistle: Romans 1:7-12</i> <i>Gospel: Matthew 5:42-48</i> <b>Great Vespers/Confession (5 pm)</b>

• Shaded days denote a fast day. ✠ denotes a Liturgy ◆ Great Vespers/Compline ❖ Akathist/Paraklisis ✂ Presanctified Liturgy ✐ fish/wine/oil allowed ✐ wine/oil allowed

**Saint George Greek Orthodox Church**  
**Southgate, Michigan**

# **ANNUAL PICNIC & GRADUATION EXERCISES**

at the

Fr. Karamanos Park

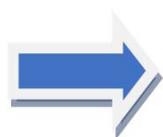
**Sunday, June 4, 2017**  
**12:30–2:30 pm**

**ENJOY OUR BEAUTIFUL PARK!**

- COVERED PAVILION
- PLAYGROUND AREA
- MUSIC, DANCING
- CASH BAR



**\* *HAMBURGERS* \* *HOT DOGS* \***  
**\* *SIDE DISHES* \***

 **ADMISSION \$5.00** 

Fr. Karamanos Park is located directly behind the Church parking lot at 16300 Dix-Toledo, Southgate

For further information, contact the Church Office at 734-283-8820