

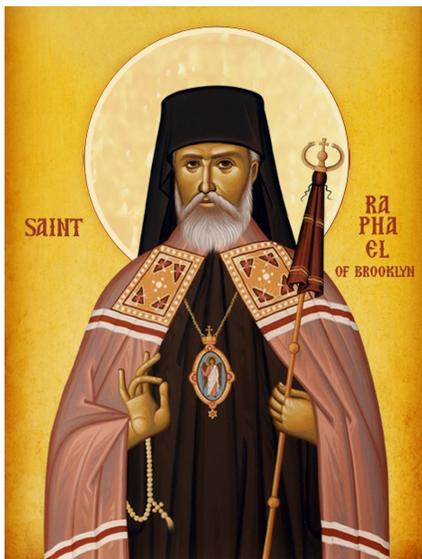
"I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me." Philippians 4:13

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St. Raphael School Journal



Newsletter
February 2020



Kontakion of St. Raphael the Bishop of Brooklyn

You were a guardian and a defender of the Church's teaching; you protected your flock from false doctrines and confirmed them in the true faith. O holy father Raphael, son of Syria and glory of North America, always intercede before the Lord that our souls may be saved.

St. John of Damascus on Icons and Their Veneration

By Samantha Woolman – Column Writer

How beautiful it is to venerate icons! To us Orthodox (and Catholic) Christians, the practice is likely natural, comforting, and simplistic. And yet the practice remains unfamiliar and strange to those who do not venerate icons. I have often found that explaining icons, their purpose, and their veneration is one of the more baffling topics for non-icon-venerating people to comprehend. The question "But aren't you worshipping a graven image when you bow down to it and kiss it?" is usually asked. I recently listened to a documentary on St. John of Damascus which quoted him on the subject of icons. I thought his words summarized the tradition in a lovely manner: "In former times, God, who is without form or body, could never be depicted. But now when God is seen in the flesh conversing with men, I make an image of the God whom I see. I do not worship matter; I worship the Creator of matter who became matter for my sake."

St. John of Damascus was born c.675 A.D. into a Christian family. Because Damascus was under a Muslim rule at that time, he was well educated in Greek and Arabic, and also knew well the texts of both the Christian and Moslem religions...

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St. Raphael School Journal

Prayer List

Living

David

Lily

Heidy

Zach

Taylor

Katherine

Grant

Will

Ginny

Departed

Elliot

Timothy

Mat. Anastasia

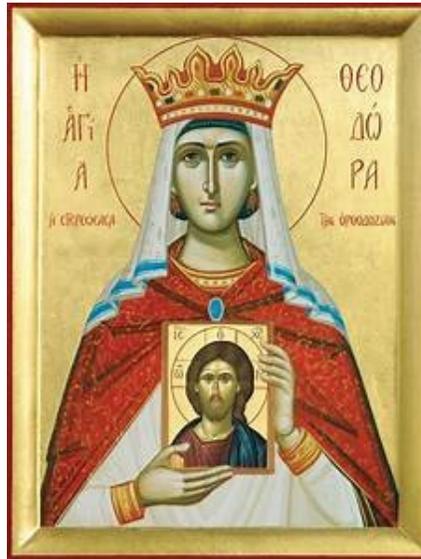
Michael

Deb

Pat

Ernie

St. Theodora the Empress



We sing thy praises as the gem and fairness of the Church, and as a diadem and pattern of all Christian queens, O all-lauded and divinely-crowned Theodora; for in bringing back the icons to their rightful place, thou didst cast usurping heresy out of the Church. Hence, we cry to thee: Rejoice, O Sovereign most ven'erable.
- Kontakion, Tone 4

“Accustom your tongue to saying 'Forgive me' and humility will come to you.”
- Abbah Isaiah

Feasts of the Month

February 3

Holy and Righteous
Symeon the God-Receiver and the
Prophetess Anna

February 11

St. Theodora the
Empress

February 26

St. Porphyrius,
Bishop of Gaza

February 27

St. Raphael, Bishop
of Brooklyn

Note From the Editor

Dear St. Raphael students, parents, and everyone else, thank you for checking out our newsletter. We have been greatly blessed to have such amazing support from SRS teachers and staff. We couldn't have done this without them. Thank you!

Also, if you would like to submit a student submission or names for the prayer list, feel free to [email me](#).

~Elyse Hawkins

St. John of Damascus on Icons and Their Veneration

By Samantha Woolman – Column Writer

...Later in his life, he became a great defender of Christianity against the Muslims. In addition to the persecution of Christianity, the veneration and display of icons was forbidden by Emperor Leo the Isaurian. St. John defended Christianity, heretical beliefs, and iconoclasm in his writings. One time, the emperor forged a letter (making it seem as if the saint had written it) suggesting betrayal of the city of Damascus. A caliph imprisoned St. John and cut off his right hand so that he could no longer write against false beliefs. Tradition holds that his hand was restored after praying in front of an icon of the Theotokos.

Icons are “windows into Heaven”...they give us a glimpse of the goodness, beauty, and truth which is God. Through these images of Christ, the Theotokos, and the holy saints, we may be encouraged, strengthened, and comforted in our journey of faith. When we venerate their icons we greet the saint, showing them honor and acknowledging their holiness. St. John of Damascus explained that although we both venerate and worship God, we do not worship the saints. Even when we venerate icons of the saints, we do not venerate them as God Himself, but as an image and reflection of Him.

To worship an icon would be to worship matter. St. John makes it clear that we are to worship only God. We are also to venerate icons of the saints and ask them to pray for us. And so, let us sing praises to the God and Creator of matter who became matter for the sake of all us sinners. Lord Jesus Christ, have mercy! St. John of Damascus, pray for us!

Student Submissions

The Genetic Fallacy

By Ariana Karounos

If I told you not to trust a word your doctor is telling you because he is overweight, would you give me credibility? Just because your doctor is obese, that doesn't mean the information he provides you with about how to improve your health is invalid. Generally speaking, arguments stand or fall on their own merits and not on those of their sources. As you can see from my example, it is fallacious to either endorse or condemn an idea based on its past. This is called committing the genetic fallacy. Despite its name (coming from Ancient Greek as genesis, meaning beginnings), the genetic fallacy has nothing to do with genetic patterns, but rather, it refers to a type of logical fallacy in which an argument is rated on the basis of where it comes from. The genetic fallacy is committed whenever an idea is evaluated based upon irrelevant history.

The genetic fallacy occurs when a claim is accepted as true or false based on the origin of the claim. When in an argument, this fallacy is used by not looking at the actual merits of the claim, but by judging the idea based on its origin.

You may view the remainder of this essay [here](#).

Biography of Eve

By Aislinn Hawkins - Level 5

Eve was created by God as a companion for Adam, out of one of his (Adam's) ribs (So Adam said, "This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh. She shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man" Gn. 2:23). Adam and Eve were created in the Garden of Eden around the year 5500 B.C. When Adam and Eve were created, God told them that they could eat of any tree in the garden--except the tree in the middle of the garden. This tree is called the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

One day a snake, possessed by Satan, spoke to Eve and told her that God wanted to keep them from eating the fruit of that tree because if they did they would be like gods. He also said that they wouldn't die as God said they would. Eve decided to listen to the serpent and disobey God. She ate the fruit and gave some to Adam, and he ate as well. Then Adam and Eve heard God walking in the garden. They hid themselves in the tree that was in the middle of the garden. God called them, and they came out into the open. God asked them why they were hiding, they replied that it was because they had no clothes...

You may view the remainder of this essay [here](#).

Reflection of the Month

St. Ephraim the Syrian

By John Dye

On January 28th in the Holy Orthodox Church, we commemorate St. Ephraim the Syrian. He is perhaps most famous for his prayer, “O Lord and Master of my life.” This prayer of repentance is said every year during Lent. It reflects his penitential life quite well. He was born in Nisibis in the fourth century. His family was poor, but sought holiness through Christ. Nevertheless, Ephraim was known to be aggressive and careless, often involving himself in troublesome brawls and pointless fracas. He also was prone to doubt, but soon enough God delivered him from his faults, and he took after St. Anthony the Great, travelling to the desert and living as a hermit. Here, in the mountains of Nisibis, he was taught by St. James of Nisibis until the Persians took over in 338.

After the Persian invasion, he moved to Edessa. Here he spent the rest of his life writing psalms, hymns, and other Liturgical works of art. Before his oncoming death, however, he travelled to Egypt to see the saints there. Upon his return to Edessa he was ordained a deacon, although he allowed this hesitantly, not considering himself worthy. Finally back in Edessa, he died peacefully, a monolith of the Orthodox Church.



Poetry Column

The Goblins

By Genevieve Bell – Level 4

*As the light bades the night,
Comes...*

The Goblins!

When you see them your heart beats like a drum,

The Goblins!

They are fast and vile,

The Goblins!

They are certainly not something you want in your wedding aisle.

The Goblins!

But there is a weakness too,

The Goblins!

Yes, yes, a weakness I'm sure,

To...

The Goblins!

They have feet,

The Goblins?

Yes and they aren't very neat!

The Goblins?

They are nimble and fragile,

The Goblins?

And if you are agile,

You might make them beat!

The Goblins!

February Highlights

Collected and Edited by Andrea Woolman

Level 3.5 Literature

In the month of January, some of Level 3 Literature had to move up to Level 3.5 because their teacher is still in recovery from her cancer. Level 3.5 reads the same books as Level 4. However, all of Level 3 goes back to Trinity Time with Presbytera Maria every Thursday. Level 3.5 (and Level 4) have had some lively discussions about the literature they are reading and the deep sea creatures. In nature studies, the classmates are learning about the sea. For literature they are reading *The Princess and the Goblin*, which is a fun and adventurous book.

Contributed by Nicholas Kjendal

Level 4 Literature

This month, the Level 4 Literature students have been reading *The Princess and the Goblin*. The class has had many good discussions and done some very fun activities. The students have also been reading many poems related to *The Princess and the Goblin* with Mrs. Johnson. It is felt that Mrs. Johnson and Presbytera Maria deserve a huge thank you for all of their hard work.

Contributed by True Jones.

Level 5 Literature

January has been a good get-back-into-the-swing-of-things month for Level 5.2 British Classics! It was great to see everyone after the long break and hear about their holidays. The students then jumped right into the swing of things with T.H White's *The Sword and the Stone* from the collection called *The Once and Future King*. That was a really interesting Arthurian legend and fantasy classic. Many of the students really enjoyed it! The classmates were able to really unpack the book and look at the author's use of literary devices, symbolism, themes, and such elements that make the book so amazing.

Contributed by Erika Kjendal

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February Highlights Cont.

Collected and Edited by Andrea Woolman

Level 6 Literature

The month of January has been a busy one for the Level 6 Literature class. The students have read several of *Plutarch's Lives*: Cato the Elder, Tiberius and Gaius Gracchus, Pompey the Great, and Julius Caesar. As a way of helping the students immerse themselves more fully into the material, Mr. Lockridge has assigned each of the students to wage a fake political campaign for their Roman of choice. He has encouraged them to become as creative as possible.

Contributed by Andrea Woolman.

Level 4 Catechism

Since returning from the Christmas break, the Catechism Level 4.2 class has performed its first of two oral exams of the school year. They have had one class after the oral exam in which the students discussed the word theology in much detail. They also discussed the word trinity. The class also looked at and examined the icon The Hospitality of Abraham. The students then talked about the significant meanings of the trinity and all the elements in the icon that represent many objects. Finally, they discussed abortion and the way the church has to deal with all the things that we, as the church, disagree about. Classes have been full of great discussions between the teacher and the students.

Contributed by Samuel Jenkins.

Level 5 Catechism

Coming back from Christmas break, Catechism 5 students have been discussing David: David anointed as king, David and Goliath, David and the jealousy, and plots of Saul. They have also completed their Midterm Exam. This was an open book exam, but with questions to make one think, such as "The interdependence of Church and Bible is evident in at least two ways. What are the two ways?" or "Explain what it means that we were made in the image and likeness of God."

Contributed by Aislinn Hawkins.

Cont. on the Next Page

More School News

February Highlights Cont.

Collected and Edited by Andrea Woolman

Level 6 Catechism

Getting back in slowly after Christmas break, Catechism Level 6 is back to their usual schedule. As a refresher, they have been reading 2-3 chapters of the theological work *Unseen Warfare* (referring to the inner battles against temptation) and writing a 100-200 word synopsis. Recent chapters have focused on different virtues and vices, and the devil's techniques of turning the one into the other. The upcoming essay (students will begin outlining in February) is on the broad concept of what "virtue" is.

Contributed by Owen Bender.

Level 7 Catechism

Catechism VII started the spring semester at the beginning of Book 4 of *The Exact Exposition of the Orthodox Faith*. They are currently finishing up their essay for the month of January and will soon begin working on their end-of-semester paper.

Contributed by Elyse Hawkins.

Russian 1

In Russian 1, the students have begun learning type one and type two conjugations. They have now moved on to chapter three (they are long chapters) of the Golosa workbook.

Contributed by Thea Frederick.

Greek 1

Recently, Greek 1 students have been working on translating sentences from Greek into English, and vice versa. They have now been working on the Holy Theophany of Christ hymn for two weeks, and finished up the Virgin Cometh Today over the break. The classmates have also started a new Bible verse Revelation 1:8 ("I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End," says the Lord, "who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty.")

Contributed by Aislinn Hawkins.

Recipe of the Month

One-Pan Pakistani Kima

By Thea Frederick

Ingredients*:

4 TBS. butter**
1 large onion
1 pound ground beef, venison or bison**
1 TBS. curry powder
1 tsp. sea salt
1 tsp. freshly ground black pepper
1 tsp. ground cinnamon
1 tsp. ground ginger
1 tsp. Ground turmeric
1 tsp. garlic powder
1 15-ounce can diced tomatoes
2 medium sweet potatoes
1 pound green beans
2 TBS. chicken bone broth or water**

Directions:

In a large skillet over medium heat, melt the butter. Dice the onion and add to the skillet. Saute for three minutes, until the onion starts to become translucent. Add the beef, breaking it up, and cook until well browned, about 10 minutes. Stir in the curry powder, salt, pepper, cinnamon, ginger, turmeric, garlic powder, drain the tomatoes, peel and dice the sweet potatoes, and trim the green beans, then add all to the skillet.

Taste and adjust the seasonings if needed. Cover the skillet and simmer for 20 minutes, or until the sweet potatoes have softened. Check after 10 minutes and add a couple of tablespoons of broth (or water) if needed. Serve warm and enjoy!

We like to eat this dish with pita and tzatziki.

*This does not make very much so we double it for our family of seven

**To make this recipe vegan, substitute the butter for oil, the meat for 1 cup of lentils (soaked) and use water instead of chicken bone broth.

Meet the Newsletter Team!

Samantha Woolman



Column Writer

"And so let us be glad and bear with patience everything the world throws at us, secure in the knowledge that it is then that we are most in the mind of God."

- St. Basil the Great

John Dye



Column Writer

"Behold, I have commanded you. Be strong and courageous. Do not be cowardly or fearful, for the Lord your God is with you in all things, wherever you go."

- Joshua 1:9

Elyse Hawkins



Managing Editor
Website Coordinator

"Acquire the Spirit of Peace and a thousand souls around you shall be saved."

- St. Seraphim of Sarov

Andrea Woolman



Column Writer

"...and music is before all other arts the awakening of the heart."

- Baroness Marenholz-Bulow

Thea Frederick



Column Writer

"If you have the strength to be thankful in troubles then that is when the Holy Spirit shines through you."

- Elder Arsenie