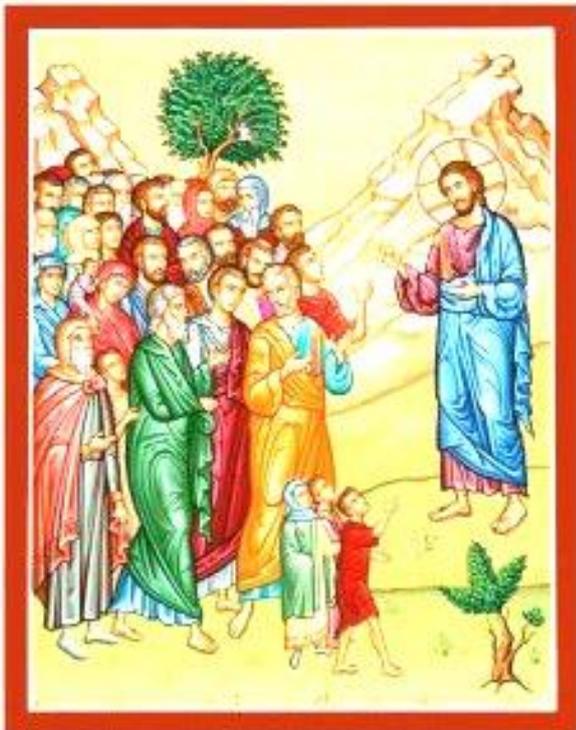




# PARISH BULLETIN

HOLY ARCHANGHEL MICHAEL'S ROMANIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH

No. 178/29 September 2019



**Nineteenth Sunday after  
Pentecost**

## **Resurrectional Apolytikion. Mode Pl. 2.**

*When the angelic powers were at Thy tomb, then they that guarded Thee became as dead. And Mary stood beside the grave seeking Thine immaculate body. Thou hast despoiled Hades and wast not tried thereby. Thou didst meet the Virgin and didst grant life to us. O Thou*

*Who art risen from the dead, Lord, glory be to Thee.*

## **Seasonal Kontakion. Mode 2.**

*O Protection of Christians that cannot be put to shame, mediation unto the Creator most constant: O despise not the supplicant voices of those who have sinned; but be thou quick, O good one, to come unto our aid, who in faith cry unto thee: Hasten to intercession, and speed thou to make supplication, thou who dost ever protect, O Theotokos, them that honor thee.*

## **Prokeimenon. Mode 3.**

**Luke 1: 46-48**

*My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior.*

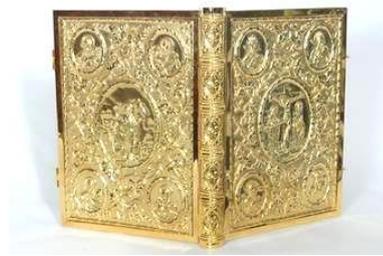
**Verse:** *For he has regarded the humility of his servant.*

The reading is from St. Paul's Second Letter to the Corinthians 11:31-33; 12:1-9

Brethren, the God and Father of the Lord Jesus, he who is blessed for ever, knows that I do not lie. At Damascus, the governor under King

Aretas guarded the city of Damascus in order to seize me, but I was let down in a basket through a window in the wall, and escaped his hands.

I must boast; there is nothing to be gained by it, but I will go on to visions and revelations of the Lord. I know a man in Christ who fourteen years ago was caught up to the third heaven -- whether in the body or out of the body I do not know, God knows. And I know that this man was caught up into Paradise --whether in the body or out of the body I do not know, God knows -- and he heard things that cannot be told, which man may not utter. On behalf of this man I will boast, but on my own behalf I will not boast, except of my weaknesses. Though if I wish to boast, I shall not be a fool, for I shall be speaking the truth. But I refrain from it, so that no one may think more of me than he sees in me or hears from me. And to keep me from being too elated by the abundance of revelations, a thorn was given me in the flesh, a messenger of Satan, to harass me, to keep me from being too elated. Three times I besought the Lord about this, that it should leave me; but he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." I will all the more gladly boast of my weaknesses, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.



### **The Gospel According to Luke 6:31-36**

The Lord said, "As you wish that men would do to you, do so to them. If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them. And if you do good to those who do good to you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners do the same. And if you lend to those from whom you hope to receive, what credit is that to you? Even sinners lend to sinners, to receive as much again. But love your enemies, and do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return; and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High; for he is kind to the ungrateful and the selfish. Be merciful, even as your Father is merciful."

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### **Word of the week – Reflection On the Holy Protection of the Theotokos (Oct. 1<sup>st</sup>)**

This feast is referred to in the life of Saint Andrew the Fool for Christ and his disciple Epiphanius. One day they were in Constantinople praying in the Church of the Panagia of Blachernae, and with the crystal clear eyes of their holy souls they saw a vision.

The Church honors this vision, not so much as an event in the life of two men, but as a truth that marks the life of every Christian and the entire Church.

They saw the Theotokos hovering somewhat over Constantinople, praying to her Son and God, and bowing down she took off her omophorion, the stole she wore over her shoulders, and with this she covered the entire city. The Church perceives this vision as a manifestation and revelation of divine wisdom, as it appears in the life of the Church and it is connected with the all-holy person of the Most Holy Theotokos.

She is our covering, our protection from afflictions, dangers, sicknesses and needs. She is the protection we seek in response to our difficulties, to escape the suffocating atmosphere of the daily lives of each of us.

We have much to contend against: obstacles arise when we don't expect them, problems mark our biological course in this world, issues complicate our professions, our daily lives, our relationships with others, even our very survival. Then we take recourse to the person of the Theotokos.

We do this not because we were taught to do so, but because it was taught to us by the experience of the Church to do so. We chant: "No one is turned away from you, ashamed and empty, who flee unto you, O pure Virgin Theotokos."

There is no request that is made with humility to the person of the Most Holy Theotokos that remains unanswered.

With the intercessions of the Theotokos, where our logic and senses tells us we will be crushed and

destroyed, we experience the miracle of our freedom.

The Most Holy Theotokos is the one who gathers our prayers, gives us a sense of God, but not the boldness of our acquaintance with Him.

How illuminating how God has arranged things so that we as people can cultivate humility, and in our humbled hearts, prayed for and protected by the grace of the Theotokos to be able to understand, to set our sights on high towards His face!

These are the four great blessings that connect the protection of the Theotokos with the life of the Church. The first is the protection and boldness of her prayers. The second is the coziness and warmth of her presence. The third is the covering of our nakedness that was brought by the fall and sin, which is her holiness. And the fourth is the grace, which somehow covers and protects man from a caustic relationship with God.

It is a relationship that can burn and destroy us, when we are not dominated by humility, divine fear and contraction, but rather by selfishness and pride.

On such a day we are glorifying God for our freedom. We remember our history, our past. At the same time we praise the great fortune given to us by the person of the Most Holy Theotokos.

Let us fervently pray that her protection accompanies us in the desert of our lives, that we may be able through her holy person to approach the face of our Lord in this life "as in a mirror dimly", and in eternity to meet Him in His kingdom "face to face". Amen.

- Metropolitan Nicholas of Mesogaia and  
Lavriotiki; translated by John  
Sanidopoulos



## Liturgical Schedule for this week

<b>Wednesday</b> <i>October 2</i>	<b>6:00 pm</b>	<b>Paraklesis</b>
<b>Friday</b> <i>October 4</i>	<b>5:30 pm</b>	<b>Akathist</b>
<b>Saturday</b> <i>October 5</i>	<b>9:00 am</b> <b>5:00 pm</b>	<b>Divine Liturgy &amp; Memorial</b> <b>Vepsers</b>
<b>Sunday</b> <i>October 6</i>	<b>9:00 am</b> <b>10:00 am</b>	<b>Matins</b> <b>Divine Liturgy</b>



### Announcements:

- **Happy name day** to Gregory Downie (St. Gregory of Armenia – Sep. 30<sup>th</sup>).
- **Autumn chicken BBQ** – Saturday, October 5<sup>th</sup>, 5pm to 6:30pm. Please see Spiro Thomo for tickets.
- **Coffee hour** is sponsored by Paul and Carol Porra



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