

Saint Michael's Romanian Orthodox Church

Southbridge, Massachusetts
www.stmichaelorthodox.com
November 2019



LITURGICAL SCHEDULE

Saturday

9:00am Divine Liturgy
10:00am Memorial Service
5pm Vespers

Sunday

9:00am Matins
10:00am Divine Liturgy

Wednesday

6:00pm Paraklesis

Feast days

Nov. 1st - Sts. Cosmas and Damian
Nov. 2nd - St. Raphael of Brooklyn
Nov. 8th - Synaxis of the Holy Archangels
Nov. 9th - St. Nectarios
Nov. 11th - St. Minas the Great Martyr
Nov. 13th - St. John Chrysostom and his mother Antuza
Nov. 14th - Apostle Philip and St. Gregory Palamas
Nov. 15th - Nativity Fast begins; St. Paisios of Neamt
Nov. 16th - Evangelist Matthew
Nov. 21st - Entrance of the Mother of God into the Temple
Nov. 25th - St. Catherine the Great Martyr
Nov. 30th - Apostle Andrew, the protector of Romania, St. Andrew Shaguna, the metropolitan of Transylvania, and St. Sebastian of San Francisco and Jackson

Synaxis of the Holy Archangels

All the Angels, according to the Apostle Paul, are ministering spirits, - sent forth to minister to them who shall be heirs of salvation - (Heb. 1:14). God set them as overseers of every nation and people, and guides to that which is profitable (Deut. 32:8); and while one Angel is appointed to oversee each nation as a whole, one is also appointed to protect each Christian individually. He commands them to guard them that hope on Him, that nothing should harm them, neither should any evil draw nigh to their dwelling (Ps. 90:10-12). In the Heavens, they always behold the face of God, sending up to Him the thrice-holy hymn and interceding with Him in our behalf, seeing they rejoice over one sinner that repents (Esaias 6:2-3; Matt. 18:10; Luke 15:7). In a word, they have served God in so many ways for our benefit, that the pages of Holy Scripture are filled with the histories thereof. It is for these reasons that the Orthodox Church, wisely honoring these divine ministers, our protectors and guardians, celebrates today the present Synaxis that is, our coming together in assembly for their common feast to chant their praises, especially for the Archangels Michael and Gabriel, who are mentioned in the Scriptures by name. The name Michael means "Who is like God?" and Gabriel means "God is mighty." The number of Angels is not defined in the divine Scriptures, where Daniel says that thousands of thousands ministered before Him, and ten thousands of ten thousands attended upon Him -(Dan. 7:10). But all of them are divided into nine orders which are called Thrones, Cherubim, Seraphim, Dominions, Powers, Authorities, Principalities, Archangels, and Angels.



Saint Michael's Romanian Orthodox Church
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2019 Parish Council

President: Luke Yanka
Vice President: Spiro Thomo
Secretary: Debby Thomo
Treasury: Paul Yanka

2019 Ladies Society Committee

President: Alexandra Nasto
Vice President: Louise Boilard
Secretary: Debbie Thomo
Treasurer: Mary Andreea

Clergy

Fr. John Downie fr.john_downie71@yahoo.com

Parish News & Events

Coffee Hour Volunteers Needed

We need more volunteers for each Sunday. If you volunteer, you can dedicate the coffee hour to the memory of a loved one. Any help would be greatly appreciated!

Please contact Deb Thomo to sign up.

Happy Birthday!! **God Grant You Many More Years!!**

November 9th – Sam Yanka
November 10th – Tom Dowling and Michael Boilard
November 11th – Max Yanka
November 12th – Brett Thomo
November 22nd – Peter Boilard
November 24th – Gregory Downie

Happy Name Day

Nov. 8th - Archangel Michael - Michael Boilard, Michael Pitsillides
Nov. 14th - St. Gregory Palamas - Gregory Downie
Nov. 16th - Evangelist Matthew - Matthew Dowling
Nov. 25th - St. Catherine the Great Martyr - Katie Mironidis
Nov. 30th - St. Apostle Andrew, St. Andrew Shaguna - Andrew Tanacea, Andrew Silva

Annual Banquet

Sunday, November 10th

Following Church Service

Catered Meal

\$25 (children eat FREE)



Happy Thanksgiving to All

Glory to God for All Things!

Jesus Christ, my Lord and God, I give thanks for your loving kindness and all the blessings You have richly bestowed upon me. I fall down in worship and adoration before You, the King of Glory. I praise You, I glorify You, I bless You and I give thanks to You for Your great goodness and tender mercy. To You I come, my sweet Lord and loving Master. Shine in my heart the light of Your grace. Enlighten my mind, that I may walk uprightly all my life by keeping Your commandments. Glorified and exalted is Your holy name, now and forever. Amen.



Please Pray for:

Preoteasa
Camelia

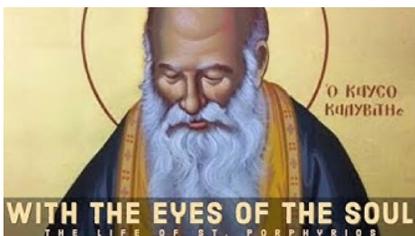
Bill & Laureen
Smith

Mary Grabosky
Henrietta Panu



~ Movie & Book Corner ~

Movie: *With the Eyes of the Soul: The Life of St. Porphyrios*

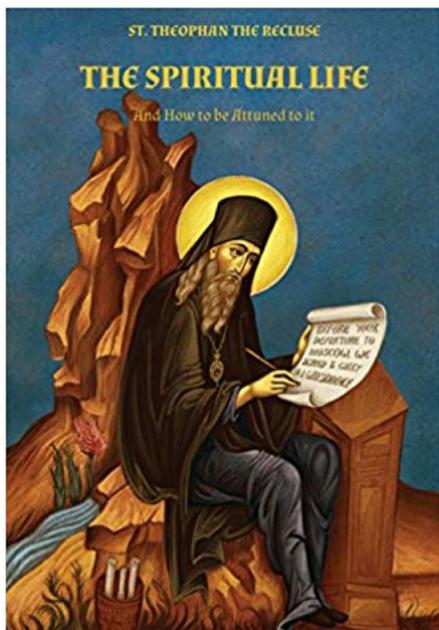


URL for Movie:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q_ifoznlb6M

From the producers: We're happy to announce the long awaited release of our video on the life of Saint Porphyrios, one of Orthodoxy's most well known contemporary elders who happened to live most of his life working as a priest in a clinic chapel in Athens, Greece. We hope that you enjoy and are inspired by not just his life but also in how he helped and healed many people through his prayers to God. This video is a first for us in the sense that it uses multiple voice actors and presents both a linear narrative about his life intertwined with accounts of healings and wonders that occurred at various times. We welcome your feedback and hope that you will also share the video. Thank you! Saint Porphyrios (Bairaktaris) the Kapsokalyvite (7 February 1906 – 2 December 1991) was an Athonite hieromonk known for his gifts of spiritual discernment, a type of clairvoyance which he sometimes called "spiritual television."

Book: *The Spiritual Life: And How to be Attuned to It*



THE SPIRITUAL LIFE AND HOW TO BE ATTUNED TO IT was the result of a correspondence between a young lady of the upper middle class and St. Theophan the Recluse. In the compilation of his letters of spiritual direction to her, it can be seen that St. Theophan strove to make sure that this young soul would not only be familiar with the principles of spiritual life, but first of all be able to keenly hear the right "tone" of spiritual life.

This tuning of the soul is necessary so that the soul will be in harmony with the voice of God's Providence echoing in the instrument of the heart. In that light, THE SPIRITUAL LIFE AND HOW TO BE ATTUNED TO IT could rightly be called a primer to be used before embarking into the realm of spiritual life.

Parish Life

Thanksgiving Turkey Raffle



President's Corner

11/01/2019

It has been an incredible year thus far at Saint Michael's Church, God has truly blessed us! November begins the holiday season, and with that comes Thanksgiving. We have much to be thankful for in Southbridge! I want to thank our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ because through Him all things are possible!!! I'd like to thank Father John for his hard work and efforts this year because with his commitment to our community and faith, we have seen a growth in both attendance and stewardship! We have to be thankful for our church council: Spiro & Deb Thomo, Paul Yanka, Tom & Mary Dowling, Matt Dowling, Sam Yanka, Nick Thomo, Charles Panu, Sandra Nasto, and our Festival Chair, Deb Yanka. The physical and financial investment you have all made this year can not be understated, and you guys help make up the core of what makes our community special. With that being said, we can not forget those who chant and make up our choir, starting with Loukas and Maria Mironidis, as well as Paul Myers for his hard work in the choir and on our parish bulletins. We are very thankful for Yanni and Katie Mironidis, who are putting on our annual Feast Day banquet where we are hosting Metropolitan Nicolae on November 10th. We have so many other members and friends who have stepped up this year and helped in so many ways, and for that we are so thankful. Thank you to all of you for faithfully attending services and events as well as supporting our community! We look forward to a great end of the year and a wonderful start to 2020! Who and what are you thankful for and have you told them lately? I encourage us all to tell those people in our lives that we are thankful for them and to thank our Lord and Savior for putting them in our lives! We wish you an amazing November and a blessed Thanksgiving!!

“Let us give thanks to God continually. For, it is outrageous that when we enjoy His benefaction to us in deed every single day, we do not acknowledge the favor with so much as a word; and this, when the acknowledgment confers great benefit on us. He does not need anything of ours, but we stand in need of all things from Him.”

— St. John Chrysostom, Homily 25, Homilies on the Gospel of St. Matthew

Ecumenical Patriarch Announces the Canonization of Four 20th Century Athonite Elders; Elder Sophrony of Essex to be Considered for Canonization

[On] 20 October 2019, Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew announced during his sermon at the Protaton Church in Karyes of Mount Athos, the canonization of four Athonite Elders beloved throughout the Orthodox world: Hieronymos of Simonopetra (+ 1957), Daniel of Katounakia (+ 1929), Joseph the Hesychast (+ 1959) and Ephraim of Katounakia (+ 1998).

Many of the Athonite monks present were moved to tears by the announcement. Elder Ephraim, the abbot of Vatopaidi Monastery on the Holy Mountain, expressed his gratitude to the Ecumenical Patriarch for such a joyful announcement upon his visit to Mount Athos. He said: "We are moved All-Holiness by this announcement of the canonization of four new elders of the Holy Mountain."

Patriarch Bartholomew replied to Elder Ephraim: "Holy Abbot, I was keeping it from you as a surprise."

Speaking of the relationship between the Mother Church of Constantinople with the Holy Mountain, the Patriarch said among other things: "Holiness is the quintessence of this place and our Saints are what is most precious in the Church."

- *From Mystagogy Resource Center*

Hot on the heels of the announcement of the canonization of four 20th-century Athonite elders, Patriarch Bartholomew also announced that the Patriarchate of Constantinople would proceed with a study of the life and teachings of Elder Sophrony, towards his eventual canonization.

Pat. Bartholomew made the announcement before the Holy Community of Mt. Athos, consisting of one member of each of the 20 ruling monasteries on the Mountain.

The news that initially came out from Pemptousia, a site under the auspices of Vatopedi Monastery, incorrectly reported that the decision to canonize Elder Sophrony was already made.

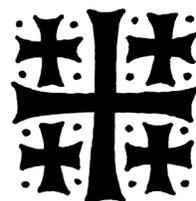
Pat. Bartholomew earlier announced the canonization of Elders Ieronymos of Simonopetra (+ 1957), Daniel of Katounakia (+ 1929), Joseph the Hesychast (+ 1959), and Ephraim of Katounakia (+ 1998) on Mt. Athos on Sunday, and at first it seemed that Elder Sophrony was officially added to the list.

However, the Greek version of Pravoslavie.Ru has clarified that the decision to canonize Elder Sophrony has not yet been officially made.

There has, unfortunately, been a number of hasty reports on Greek Orthodoxy lately, especially as concerns the position of the hierarchs of Greek Church towards the so-called "Orthodox Church of Ukraine."

Elder Sophrony (1896-1993) is known as the spiritual child and biographer of the great St. Silouan the Athonite and the founder of St. John the Baptist Monastery in Essex, England.

- *From OrthoChristian.com*



Mothers and the Upbringing of Children (Part 2) St. Nektarios of Aegina (+1920)

Because of the great influence they possess over their children, mothers can fashion them according to their own character, just as the potter fashions the clay in accordance with his own design. Concerning the easy moldability of childhood, Diogenes used to say the following, that “the upbringing of children is like the moldings of potters; for just as potters, while the clay is soft, shape it and proportion it as they wish, but are no longer able to mold it after it has been fired, so too the young, having been educated without toil, when they have become full-grown, become incapable of being remolded.” And Plutarch (in *On the Education of Children*) declares, “Youth is a thing easily molded and pliant, and lessons are readily absorbed by their still-soft souls.” During the child’s tender years, then, mothers can more effectively and more profoundly influence the child’s soul and thought and emotion and mind and imagination and moral character, since in the subsequent years, as the child’s heart hardens, education becomes, if not impossible, exceedingly difficult, as the divine Chrysostom rightly declares: “You should have anticipated these faults from the beginning and, when he was docile and still very young, you should have bridled him with strictness, accustomed him to the performance of duties, brought him to order, arrested the diseases of his soul. You should have cut the thorns down then, when the work was easier, when, being of a tenderer age, they

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would have been uprooted more easily, and the passions would not, neglected and growing, have become hard to work. This is why the Scripture says “bow down their neck from their youth” (Ecclesiasticus 7:23), for thus may the upbringing of children proceed more easily” (Chrysostom, Homily on 1st Timothy 5:9 – *Hom. in illud: Vidua eligatur*).

Accordingly, mothers, both on account of their lofty vocation and on account of their subjective value independent of this office, must receive from infancy the upbringing that befits them. And the upbringing that befits them is that which has as the object of its formation the mind and the heart, for these two things are the two poles around which both the intellectual and the moral formation of the human person revolve. If one of the two is neglected, the person’s formation turns out defective and impaired. The mind and the heart, although they are organs of a single soul, nevertheless require different means and manners of formation, for the heart, because of its intuition, belongs to the supernatural world, but the mind, because of its reason, belongs to the natural world. Because of this, each of the two must be instructed thoroughly in its proper truths. And their proper truths are these: of the mind, learning, but of the heart, religion. We must, then, give our girls both learning and religion, so that they too may pass these things on to their own children.

Learning and religion are two bright lighthouses guiding seafaring man on the billowy course of his life and protecting him from every shipwreck and removing him from every dangerous reef. They are the two eyes of the soul, through which she looks out around her and without stumbling advances into happiness and salvation. They are the two spiritual organs that perfect a man and present him worthy of his lofty origin and of his lofty position in the world. Only thus formed can mothers present virtuous children, good citizens, and brave men. We have before us as radiant examples the mothers of all great and virtuous men. We have before us as radiant examples the mothers of the Holy Three Hierarchs Basil the Great, Gregory the Theologian, and John Chrysostom.



These mothers, desiring to educate their children as perfectly as possible and to polish their minds through Greek learning and knowledge, did not at all hesitate to entrust them to pagan teachers, so that they might be suitably developed intellectually. They considered the teachers' heterodoxy of no importance, because they had confidence in themselves, confidence that by their own example they had wholly channeled their own love for true learning and their fervent zeal for religion into their children's hearts. They recognized that nothing would be strong enough to shake their sons' religious principles and convictions, because these principles and convictions had been carefully built upon a rock! Consistent, then, with their

convictions, Nonna and Emmelia, the good and noble mothers of Basil and Gregory, sent them off to Athens, to the hearth of learning and enlightenment, but the center also of idolatry, where the pagan religion was enthroned with all its magnificence. But their confidence was not disappointed, for the two young students, having alive in the hearth of their heart the fire of faith in Christ, remained uninfluenced during the whole period of their studies. For being neither shaken by the teaching of professors systematically waging war against Christianity, nor seduced by the magnificent ceremonies of the pagan religion, but remaining vigorous and lively in their religious convictions, they returned to their mothers, presenting themselves to them as a reward

for their labor of child-rearing, for their motherly care, and for their virtue. And the reward was rich indeed, for they were receiving their sons back as members of Christ, as members, that is, of themselves. For he that is not a member of Christ is not a member of a Christian mother either, for a Christian mother, being a member of Christ, cannot have a foreign member, a rotten member, a corrupt member. Had the sons wandered away, then, it would have meant their perdition! We can, therefore, fittingly call their sons' keeping of the faith in Christ a reward for them, a reward which would never have come about had the mothers not been formed in a Christian manner.

To be continued.

What is a Priest? An Orthodox Statement (Part 3) Fr. Thomas Hopko (+2015)

The ordained priesthood in the Church exists to manifest and realize the priesthood of Christ, and so the priesthood of all Christian believers, in and for the body. For the priesthood of Christ and the priesthood of the believers are not two priesthoods; they are one and the same. The ordained, sacramental priesthood is the objective sacramental realization and expression within the Church of this one priesthood. The question whether the ordained priest, bishop or presbyter, represents Christ or represents the people is unanswerable. In the first place the ordained priest does not represent anyone. He presents Christ in the community and actualizes his presence in a sacramental way within the body. The Christ whose presence is manifested sacramentally in the Church is “the one mediator between God and men” whose unique, perfect divine, and eternal priesthood — the only priesthood that exists — abides in the Church as its own priesthood in him as his body and his bride: “... a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God’s own people” (1 Peter 2:9).

The priesthood of the head is the priesthood of the body. The priesthood of the husband becomes the priesthood of the bride. The priesthood of the Savior is the very priesthood of the saved. As Christ himself is the presentation (and not the representative) of God to man; so also is he the presentation of man to God. But he is the latter only because he is first the former. He takes us to the Father as his children only because he first brings his

Father to us who were not his children, but the children of darkness and of the “father of lies.” In like manner, the ordained priest in the Church presents the community to God because first and primarily he presents God in the community. “Where the bishop appears, *there* let the people be, just as where Jesus Christ is, *there* is the catholic [Orthodox] Church” (St. Ignatius of

Antioch, *To the Smyrneans* 8:2).

This is the doctrine of the catholic Church from the beginning, and not only from the beginning of the history of the new

covenant Church, but from the beginning of creation itself. For the initiative is always God’s. His action is always “first.” And we might even dare to say that this is so not only “from the beginning” but even “in the beginning” when from the Uncreated Arche of the Father, the eternal Son of God, is timelessly generated, together with the eternal procession of God’s Holy Spirit, the only begotten Son of God for whom and by whom all things are made to be his body and his bride by the indwelling of his Spirit in the communion of divine life, whose essence is love. This is the testimony of the Scriptures, the prophets, the apostles, and the saints. This is the witness of the sacramental life of the Church and its canonical tradition. We find this testimony in Hosea, Jeremiah, and Isaiah. We find it in Saint Paul. We find it in Ignatius of Antioch, Gregory of Nyssa, John Chrysostom, and John of the Cross. We find it symbolized in the

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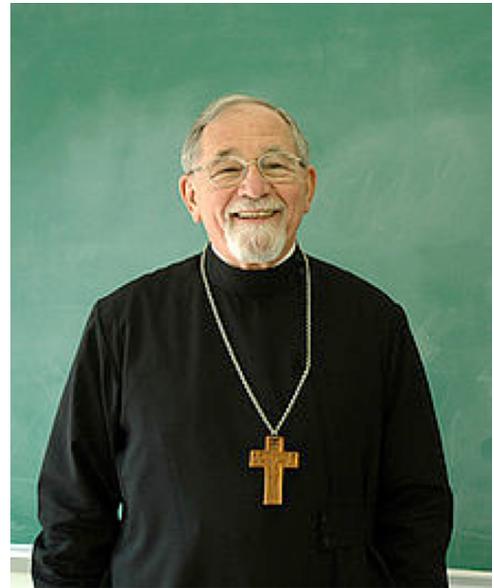
sacramental rites of baptism, the Eucharist, marriage, and ordination. We find it in the canons which insure the proper churchly life. Yahweh is the husband of Israel. Christ is the husband of the Church. The husband and wife reflect the great mystery of Christ and the Church. And the ordained priest is married to his flock as the sacramental expression of Christ whose Church, filled by his Spirit, is his body and his bride.

The ordained priesthood is a sacrament of the Church. As such it is not an individual vocation or a personal charism. It is not one of the several ministries of the members of the Church. It is rather the sacramental ministry of the ministry of Christ, in whom all partial and personal ministries are fulfilled and by whom they are judged. In this sense it may be said that the ordained priest in the Church, as Jesus Christ himself, has no particular ministry and no individual vocation. He has none because he is the *term of reference* and *norm of evaluation* of all. And so, in the opposite way, it may be said that the ordained priest has all vocations, precisely because, by the very sacramental nature of his being a priest in the Church of Christ, he has none in particular.

The sacramental priest exists in and for the Church, being himself a human member of the Church, as the living *term of reference* for all personal and individual vocations and ministries of the members of the Church. He is the one whose sacramental vocation it is to be the sign and the presence, and in a sense even the judge, of the value and significance of all human activities and modes of existence. He is the pastor who witnesses to the pastoral dimension of all human

vocations. He is the priest who testifies that all human being and life must be offered to God in Christ by the grace of the Spirit. He is the teacher whose presence is the measure and norm for all human teaching. He is the judge whose very presence judges all who execute justice. He is the healer who demonstrates what healing is. He is the servant reminding all who serve of the purpose of their ministry. He is, in a word, the sign of the presence of Christ and the expression of his presence in the Church as the source and the goal, the content and the judge, of all human life and activity.

To be continued.



November 2019

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Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1 Sts. Cosmas and Damian	2 St. Raphael of Brooklyn Divine Liturgy 9:00am (Memorial Service following Liturgy 10:00am) Vespers, Litia 5:00pm
3 Matins 9:00am Divine Liturgy 10:00am	4	5	6 Paraklesis 6:00pm	7 Vespers, Litia - Archangels Michael and Gabriel 6:00pm	8 Synaxis of the Holy Archangels Vespers – St. Nectarios 6:00pm	9 St. Nectarios Divine Liturgy 9:00am (Memorial Service following Liturgy 10:00am) Vespers, Litia for St. Michael's Parish 6:00pm
10 Matins 9:00am Divine Liturgy 10:00am FEAST DAY BANQUET	11	12	13 St. John Chrysostom and his mother Antuza Paraklesis 6:00pm	14 Apostle Philip and St. Gregory Palamas	15 Nativity Fast Begins; St. Paisios of Neamt	16 Divine Liturgy 9:00am (Memorial Service following Liturgy 10:00am) Vespers, Litia 5:00pm
17 Matins 9:00am Divine Liturgy 10:00am	18	19	20 Vespers, Litia, and Matins – Entrance of the Theotokos into the Temple 6:00pm	21 Entrance of the Theotokos into the Temple Divine Liturgy 10:00am (TBA)	22	23 Divine Liturgy 9:00am (Memorial Service following Liturgy 10:00am) Vespers, Litia 5:00pm
24 Matins 9:00am Divine Liturgy 10:00am Vespers – St. Catherine 6:00pm	25 St. Catherine the Great Martyr Divine Liturgy 10:00am (TBA)	26	27	28	29	30 Apostle Andrew, St. Andrew Shaguna, St. Sebastian