



Saint Michael's Romanian Orthodox Church

Southbridge, Massachusetts
www.stmichaelorthodox.com
November 2023



LITURGICAL SCHEDULE – detailed calendar on the last page, including events (blue ink)

Saturday

10:00am Divine Liturgy

5:00pm Vespers

Sunday

9:00am Matins

10:00am Divine Liturgy

Feast days

Nov. 1st - Sts. Cosmas and Damian

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, St. Andrew Shaguna, 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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Website: www.StmichaelOrthodox.com

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Facebook: St. Michael Orthodox Christian Church

2022 Parish Council

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

2022 Ladies Society Committee

President: Genevieve Boilard
Vice President: Katie Mironidis
Secretary: Susan Silva
Treasurer: Debbie Thomo

Clergy

Fr. John Downie fr.john_downie71@yahoo.com

Parish News & Events

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

November 3rd – Nicholas Goulas
November 9th – Sam Yanka
November 10th – Tom Dowling and Michael Boilard
November 11th – Max Yanka
November 12th – Brett Thomo
November 13th – Philip Economou
November 14th – Stella (Polly's granddaughter)
November 22nd – Peter Boilard
November 24th – Gregory Downie, Chrisanti Diamandi
November 27th – Michael Rapsomanikis

Happy Name Day

Nov. 8th - Archangel Michael - Michael Pitsillides, Michael Boilard, Mihai Moscin, Michael Rapsomanikis, Mihaela Moscin, Jonathan Michael Colon, Michelle Grasso
Nov. 14th - St. Gregory Palamas - Gregory Downie
Nov. 16th - Evangelist Matthew - Matthew Dowling, Matthew Panagiotu
Nov. 25th - St. Catherine the Great Martyr - Katie Mironidis
Nov. 30th - St. Apostle Andrew, St. Andrew Shaguna - Andrew Silva

Let's Welcome Grasso's family to St. Michael's family



Please Pray for:

Theodor, Henrietta, Virginia – health
Mary, Donna

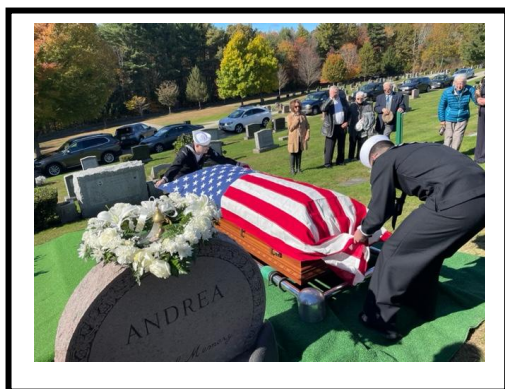
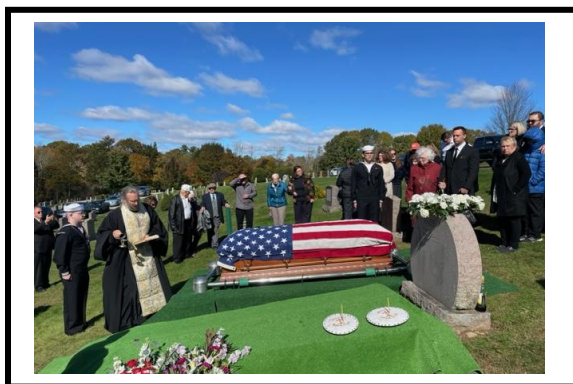


School Snack Drive

Thanks to all those who helped us with a new school snack drive



Philocalic Evenings Series on November 16th, 2023 and December 14th at 7:00pm on zoom. Speakers and more details about these events will be announced soon.



Please keep
Thomas Andrea
(Tomy) in your
prayers, and his
wife, Mary and
his daughter,
Donna.



Ladies Luncheon – December 9th – Location TBD

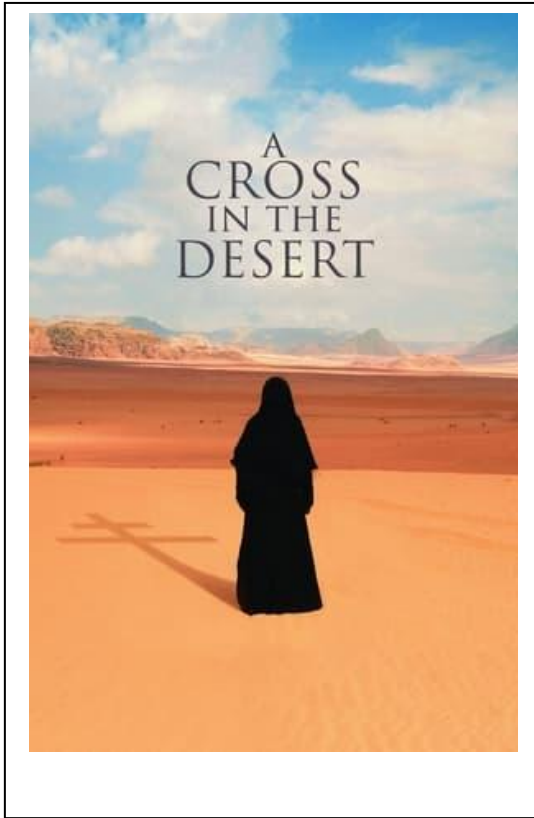
All ladies are invited.

We will exchange Christmas presents. We will pick names and give a present to the lady whose name we picked. Please bring a present in value of \$10, nice wrapped.

The menu will be displayed in the Hall after we will decide the location.

For registration please contact the lady Society's president Genevieve Boilard or Presbyteria Camelia.

Movie & Book



Movie: A Cross in the Desert

Overview

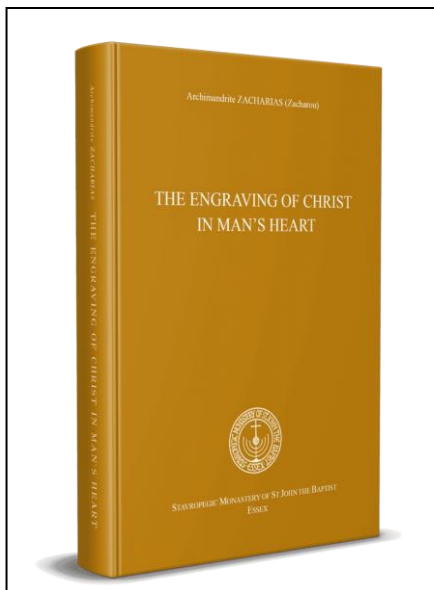
Pious girl Paraskeva became Saint after spending 40 years of her life in Jordan desert fighting temptations, sins and inner demons.

Ljiljana Habjanović Đurović

Novel, Writer

Hadži Aleksandar Đurović

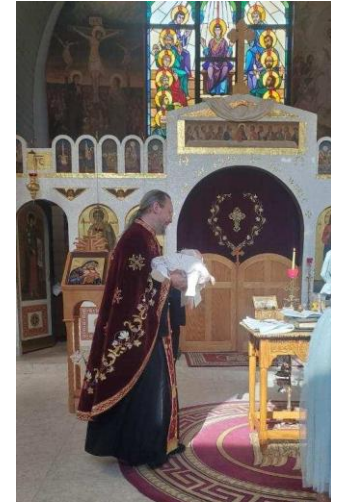
Director



Book: The Engraving of Christ in Man's Heart by Archimandrite Zacharias (Zacharou)

The greater our awareness of our weakness and our nothingness, and the stronger our self-denial in our downward journey to the place where Christ is, the more solid will be the foundations of the temple of God which is being built within us, allowing a more perfect dwelling of Christ in our hearts, upon which His heavenly image will be engraved ever more deeply.

Parish Life
Baptism of Sophia Sarah Alexander
Sunday school
Bake sale preparation



**Greek, Romanian and Polish
baking team**



Saint Gavrilia Papagianni – newly canonized saint

The Synod of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, decided to canonize Gerontissa Gavrilia Papagianni on October 3rd, 2023.

Gerontissa Gavrilia Papagianni was born on October 2/15, 1897 in Constantinople. Her father was a wealthy timber merchant and lived a comfortable life in the city of Phanar.

She was the fourth and last child of the family. Her oldest sister Vasiliki was the

first who spoke to her about God. Along with the stories she read to her, she read her from the Gospel and the Old Testament. One day she told her that God is “omnipresent” and that

whatever we do, He sees it... Then little Aurelia, who was 4 or 5 years old, lost her mind and asked in a frightened voice: “What if I go and lock myself in that cupboard, will He find me?” “Yes”, she said to her. “Well, what if I get smaller and smaller and peep into that matchbox and He will see me there too?” “Yes, He will.”

Then she understood that life is a serious business and that we can’t go on doing

mischief all the time, but we must be good children because “He who is everywhere” sees us! Then she burst into tears and crawled into her sister’s arms. “This means, I’m lost!”.

The years went by and little Aurelia loved the whole world and the whole world loved her! After high school, she went to Switzerland to study at the School of Agriculture in Estavayer-Le-Lace. She particularly loved plants and until the end of her life she “talked” with them until the end of her life.

In 1923 she started her studies at Aristotle University in Athens

with a major in Philosophy. After graduation she got a job in a psychiatric clinic where she stayed for only one year because she moved to England.

Her adventure in Christ was just beginning... In England she found various jobs while helping a lot of needy and unemployed people.



The year 1954 was a milestone in her spiritual life. It was March 24, the day when her mother passed away.

From then on, she began her great mission to the five Continents. In 1954 she went to India where she lived for 5 years. There she helped day and night a multitude of lepers and sick people offering them boundless love.

Everyone loved her and called her Sister Leela. In her busy daily schedule she always schedule two hours of Bible reading and many hours of prayers that were essential. She had complete trust in God and therefore never kept money on her. She said that God provided her everything she needed, airline tickets, food, lodging... Because of her example and good influence many people were baptized and became Orthodox. She never told others about Christ unless they asked her about.

She met Mother Teresa, Guru Sivananda, Baba Amte.

Mother Gavrilia was invited to various countries to speak about Orthodox Christianity and she really left the crowds speechless.

After India, she went to Himalayas "alone with God" for one year where she spent

hours of endless prayer. She would later say that during that year she experienced contemplative monasticism without even knowing it!

When she starting believing that she was doing God's will she heard an angel telling her, "Now you are able to become a nun". Then she understood that monasticism was a special and superior way of life. However she continue her life as a lay person believing that God would once again guide her.

Then she met a gentleman who asked her to accompany him to Bethany to a monastery. She went to Bethany, at the age of 62.

She had a surgery in Athens to cure the 100% blindness of her left eye. When the operation was performed, "light was born". She remained in Athens at the Holy Monastery of Evangelistria, the New Jerusalem, as she used to say. From the monastery she corresponded and helped many people.

She also traveled and helped poor people in Africa.

Mother Gavrilia passed away at the age of 95, on March 28, 1992 in Leros. At that moment her spiritual children heard clearly a young voice singing a melody unknown,

joyful, angelic... This lasted only a few seconds and then a silence filled her cell...

All the bells of Leros rang mournfully. The Funeral Service was sung, and while the nuns were escorting her to the grave, the Bishop wanted to see her face for the last time. Those who saw her face were amazed and said that there were no words to describe the divine face of Gerontissa Gavrielia.

She was a rare person with boundless love for her neighbor. She got the gift of clairvoyance. She said that the angels once told her that what matters most is the amount and quality of love you give to others without discrimination!

Everyone asked her how it was possible for her to love so much even strangers and how it was possible for her to be obedient to everyone and travel constantly to help even only one person. So her life is rightly described as the ascetic life of love!

She did not know any Indian dialects like other missionaries. She spoke only English but she used to say that she knew five languages: the first is smile, the second is tears, the third is touch, the fourth is prayer and the fifth is love. With these five languages, she traveled around the world.

Saint Gavrielia pray for us!



ST. MARY ANTIOCHIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH
INVITES YOU TO OUR FIRST PAN-ORTHODOX SERIES:

*Seasons of change:
the church and
young adulthood*

NOVEMBER 10TH, 2023
SICILIA'S PIZZERIA
181 ATWELLS AVE, PVD
7PM
PLEASE RSVP ON THE LINK BELOW



ST MARY
ANTIOCHIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH

Parents' school corner From St. Porfirios teachings

According to elder Porphyrios, the family is the first physical means of upbringing and educating people. In the first 5 years of human life the family with all functions – visible and hidden, conscious and unconscious – helps on shaping the personality. The child and the adolescent observe the family roles played by parents. Children often identify themselves with the roles of parents. Sometimes, however, the children reject their parents and adopt a reactive behavior.

Elder Porphyrios teaches that the core of the personality of young people is organized in the framework of the dynamic relationships in the family.

What makes good children, says elder Porphyrios, is the virtuous lives of parents at home. Parents should love God. Parents, according to elder Porphyrios, should become 'saints', 'holy' near their children and have

gentleness, patience and love. They should be always available for their children, with enthusiasm and love for them. Then, with the grace of God, and their 'holiness' they will transfer their good and virtuous feelings to their children.

For the bad behavior of the children, says elder Porphyrios, we should blame the parents. Parents don't help their children with their advices and by 'lecturing'; neither by imposing a strict discipline, nor by controlling their life. If the parents don't 'sanctify' and become 'saints' and virtuous, they make a big mistake and send the wrong message to their children.

Love, unity and cooperation of parents and good understanding between them and their children gives a sense of security and confidence to their children. Otherwise, the children become unsafe and insecure. Often the unsecure children can lead to the 'safety' of a gang and/or obtain a violent behavior (as a reaction to a dysfunctional family).

The behavior of the children is related to the situations they experienced in their family. The negative attitude of parents creates wounds in the hearts of the children and leaves scars of injury in their souls that keep during their whole life. These psychological scars are affecting their behavior and their relationship with the others, during the rest of their lives.



Children, says elder Porphyrios, become older, educated, but do not really change. This is obvious even from the most minor events of their life.

He says that when you start from a young age with good memories and experiences, then when you grow up you don't have trouble to get good and virtuous, but you live goodness every day, you have it within yourself, it is your property that does not vanish.

Children with psychological problems, says elder Porphyrios, are usually created by negative experiences they lived in a troubled, with many conflicts, family life. Elder Porphyrios used to say that 'confused children come up from confused parents'. The disturbance of homeostasis and balance of family bonds erases the educating and upbringing role of the parents.

In relation to the teaching role of the parents, elder Porphyrios says that parents often know to 'lecturing' their children, but they have not learned to pray for their children. Advices, suggestions and 'lecturing' are often tiring for their children, says elder Porphyrios. Instead, the prayer goes immediately to their heart.

Prayer, silence and love help better from 'lecturing'. However the parents love their children with human criteria and human means (however human love can often be pathological) and the children become 'confused' and their attitude is negative and reactive. But when the parents love each other and their children, children will not have problems. Elder Porphyrios summarizes his pedagogical teaching in one sentence: <<the 'sanctity' of the parents saves their children>>. But to do this, God's grace should visit the soul of the parents.

Elder Porphyrios says that the parents' life is the only thing that creates good children inside the house. Parents should be very patient and 'saint'...For the bad attitude of the children, says elder Porphyrios, the parents are usually responsible. The parents don't help their children with their repeating 'advices', the discipline that they impose and their strict rules.

If the parents don't become 'saints' and truly love their children, if they don't struggle for it, they make huge mistake and they convey to their kids their bad feelings that they have inside their soul. Then their children become reactive and insecure.

Contrary, says elder Porphyrios, if the parents show love and communicate well themselves, then their children feel secure.

Their children's attitude is related directly with the attitude of their parents. When the children get hurt from their parents bad attitude (or the bad relationship between their parents), then they lose their strength to progress.

Elder Porphyrios states that children do not belong to the parents. The role of parents is pedagogical, educational. They need to respect their children ... They should see God in the face of their children and give God's love to them.

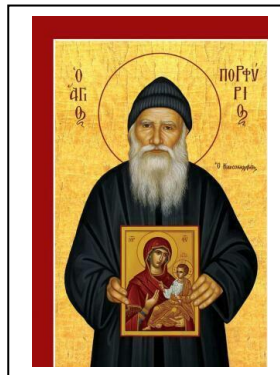
Parents, continues elder Porphyrios, need to understand that their words, their 'lecturing' and their suggestions do not work as effectively unless they follow what they say and also live a virtuous life.

Parents also serve as models, patterns. With their experiences and their behavior they teach their children.

However, says elder Porphyrios, parents should not 'change' their children with threats, strict rules, 'advices' and compulsions, because they rather make things worse. ... Children need love from their parents, and not threats, or parents that keep on lecturing to their children, however they do not follow the good example that they 'preach'.

Parents, says elder Porphyrios, shouldn't hurt their child by punishing it with a strict way or punishing it excessively. Parents and teachers, says elder Porphyrios, should avoid extreme measures like excessive strictness, authoritarianism and violence (physical, verbal, psychological).

Elder Porphyrios emphasized for the young the role of prevention, instead of treatment.



Christmas Fast – November 15 - December 24
The easiest fast – fish allowed many days during the fasting period.
Check the Orthodox Calendar

The Holy Fathers about Fasting

There is both a physical and a spiritual fast. In the physical fast the body abstains from food and drink. In the spiritual fast, the faster abstains from evil intentions, words and deeds. One who truly fasts abstains from anger, rage, malice, and vengeance. One who truly fasts abstains from idle and foul talk, empty rhetoric, slander, condemnation, flattery, lying and all manner of spiteful talk. In a word, a real faster is one who withdraws from all evil.

As much as you subtract from the body, so much will you add to the strength of the soul.

Holy Hierarch Basil the Great

Do you fast? Then feed the hungry, give drink to the thirsty, visit the sick, do not forget the imprisoned, have pity on the tortured, comfort those who grieve and who weep, be merciful, humble, kind, calm, patient, sympathetic, forgiving, reverent, truthful and pious, so that God might accept your fasting and might plentifully grant you the fruits of repentance.

Fasting of the body is food for the soul.

Holy Hierarch John Chrysostom

Whosoever rejects the fast, deprives himself and others of weapons against his own much-suffering flesh and against the devil, who have power over us especially as the result of our intemperance.

Holy Righteous John of Kronstadt

The greatest of the virtues is prayer, while their foundation is fasting.

Holy Hierarch Ignaty Brianchaninov

If thou, O man, dost not forgive everyone who has sinned against thee, then do not trouble thyself with fasting. If thou dost not forgive the debt of thy brother, with whom thou art angry for some reason, then thou dost fast in vain. God will not accept thee. Fasting will not help thee, until thou wilt become accomplished in love and in the hope of faith. Whoever fasts and becomes angry, and harbors enmity in his heart, such a one hates God and salvation is far from him.

Venerable Ephraim the Syrian

The Holy Fathers about Fasting

A excellent faster is he who restrains himself from every impurity, who imposes abstinence on his tongue and restrains it from idle talk, foul language, slander, condemnation, flattery and all manner of evilspeaking, who abstains from anger, rage, malice and vengeance and withdraws from every evil.

Saint Tichon of Zadonsk

Seest thou what fasting does: it heals illnesses, drives out demons, removes wicked thoughts, makes the heart pure. If someone has even been seized by an impure spirit, let him know that this kind, according to the word of the Lord, "goeth not out but by prayer and fasting" (Matthew 17:21).

Saint Athanasius the Great

By fasting it is possible both to be delivered from future evils and to enjoy the good things to come. We fell into disease through sin; let us receive healing through repentance, which is not fruitful without fasting.

Saint Basil the Great

Do not neglect the Forty Days [of fasting]; it constitutes an imitation of Christ's way of life.

Saint Ignatius the Godbearer

Each Orthodox Christian should confess at least 4 times per year during the main fasting periods. St. Kosmas said that a person who does not confess resembled with an unbaptized (pagan)

“Priests have received a power which God has given neither to angels nor to archangels. It was said to them: ‘Whatsoever you shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever you shall loose, shall be loosed.’ Temporal rulers have indeed the power of binding; but they can only bind the body. Priests, in contrast, can bind with a bond which pertains to the soul itself and transcends the very heavens. Did [God] not give them all the powers of heaven? ‘Whose sins you shall forgive,’ he says, ‘they are forgiven them; whose sins you shall retain, they are retained.’ What greater power is there than this? The Father has given all judgment to the Son. And now I see the Son placing all this power in the hands of men [Matt. 10:40; John 20:21–23]. They are raised to this dignity as if they were already gathered up to heaven” (*The Priesthood* 3:5 [A.D. 387]).

Saint John Chrysostom

Fr. John is available for confession every day of the week. Call for an appointment.

November 2023

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Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 Sts. Cosmas and Damian	2 Bible Study – 7:00pm - Zoom	3	4 Divine Liturgy 9:00am Vespers, 5:00pm
5 Matins 9:00am Divine Liturgy 10:00am	6	7 Night Vigil -Vespers, Litia, Matins – Holy Archangels 10:00pm -12:00am	8 Synaxis of the Holy Archangels Akatist of Holy Arch. Michael Divine Liturgy 12:00am	9 St. Nectarios Divine Liturgy at St. Nicholas in Shrewsbury 10:00am	10 St. Minas the Great Martyr	11 Divine Liturgy 9:00am
12 Matins 9:00am Divine Liturgy 10:00am Banquet/Festival Lunch 12:00 pm	13 St. John Chrysostom, and his mother Antuza	14 St. Apostle Philip; St. Gregory Palamas	15 Nativity Fast Begins Divine Liturgy 8:00 am	16 Divine Liturgy 8:00 am Philocalic Night – zoom lecture	17 Divine Liturgy 8:00 am	18 Divine Liturgy 9:00am (Memorial Service following Liturgy 10:00am)
19 Matins 9:00am Divine Liturgy 10:00am	20 Divine Liturgy 8:00 am	21  Entrance of the Theotokos into the Temple Matins 9:00 am Divine Liturgy 10:00 am	22 Divine Liturgy 8:00 am	23 Divine Liturgy 8:00 am	24 Divine Liturgy 8:00 am	25  St. Catherine the Great Martyr Divine Liturgy 9:00am (Memorial Service following Liturgy 10:00am) Vespers 5:00pm
26  Matins 9:00am Divine Liturgy 10:00am	27 Divine Liturgy 9:00 am	28 Divine Liturgy 8:00 am	29 Divine Liturgy 8:00 am	30  Apostle Andrew, St. Andrew Shaguna, St. Sebastian Divine Liturgy 9:00am		