



Saint Michael's Romanian Orthodox Church

Southbridge, Massachusetts
www.stmichaelorthodox.com

October 2021



LITURGICAL SCHEDULE

Saturday

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

Sunday

9:00am Matins
10:00am Divine Liturgy

Wednesday

6:00pm Paraklesis

Feast days

October 1st - Holy Protection
of the Theotokos

October 6th - Apostle Thomas

October 14th - St. Paraskeva
of Iasi, Romania

October 18th - St. Luke the
Evangelist

October 20th - St. Artemius
the Great Martyr

October 26th - St. Demetrius
the Great Martyr of
Thessaloniki

October 27th - St. Demetrius
of Basarabov, protector of
Bucharest

Venerable Paraskeva of Iasi, Romania

Saint Paraskeva the New was born into a pious family, living during the eleventh century in the village of Epivato, between Silistra and Constantinople. Her older brother Euthymius became a monk, and later he was consecrated as Bishop of Matidia. One day, while attending the divine services, the words of the Lord pierced her heart like an arrow, "If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself" (Mt. 16:24). From that time she began to distribute her clothing to the needy, for which reason she endured much grief from her family.

Upon the death of her parents, the saint was tonsured into monasticism at the age of fifteen. She withdrew to the Jordanian desert where she lived the ascetic life until she reached the age of twenty-five. An angel of the Lord ordered her to return to her homeland, so she stayed at Epivato for two years.

Saint Paraskeva departed to the Lord at the age of twenty-seven, and was buried near the sea. Because of the many miracles which took place at her grave, her relics were uncovered and found to be incorrupt. They were placed in the church of the Holy Apostles at Epivato, where they remained for about 175 years.

Saint Paraskeva's relics were moved to Trnovo, Bulgaria in 1223 and placed in the cathedral. Patriarch Euthymius wrote her Life and established the day of her commemoration as October 14. The Turks occupied Bulgaria in 1391, and her relics were given to Mircea the Elder, Prince of the Romanian Land (one of the districts of Romania). In 1394 the relics were given to Princess Angelina of Serbia (July 30), who brought them to Belgrade. For 120 years Saint Paraskeva's relics rested in Constantinople in the patriarchal cathedral.

On June 13, 1641, her incorrupt relics were transferred to the monastery of the Three Hierarchs at Iasi in Romania, where many healings took place. On December 26, 1888, after being rescued from a fire, Saint Paraskeva's relics were moved again. This time they were placed in the new cathedral at Iasi, where they remain until the present day.

Saint Michael's Romanian Orthodox Church
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2021 Parish Council

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

2021 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

Happy Birthday!!

God Grant You Many More Years!!

Oct. 2nd – Susan Silva
Oct. 5th – Stephanie Rapsomanikis
Oct. 11th – Shirley Yanka, Amanda Thomo
Oct. 12th – Richard Marcin
Oct. 15th – Loukas Mironidis, Spiro Kelly
Oct. 21st – Dimitry Downie
Oct. 22nd – Katie Mironidis
Oct. 23rd – Joy Rapsomanikis

Happy Name Day

October 1st – St. Romanos – Roman Alexander
October 6th – Apostle Thomas – Tom Dowling, Tom Andrea, Thomas Burren
October 18th – St. Luke – Luke Yanka, Loukas Mironidis
October 26th-27th – St. Dimitrius – Dimitry Mironidis, Dimitry Downie



Please join us for our church's feast day celebration with Metropolitan Nicolae. Come help us thank him for his support and care during the pandemic!

*Divine Liturgy: Sunday, November 7th, 10am
Banquet to follow*

Please Pray for:

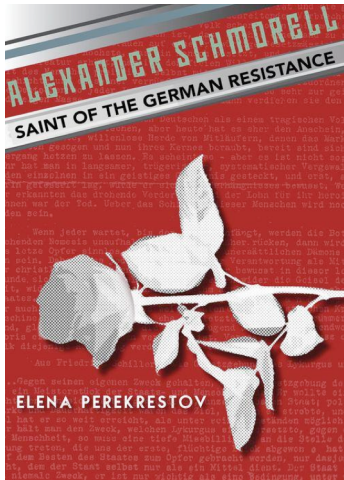
George
Elpiniki-Sophia (health)
Loukas, Mary, Eliza

General Assembly

Please join us Sunday, October 3rd, after the Divine Liturgy. Members will vote on the proposed floor repairs.

~ Movie & Book Corner ~

Book: Alexander Schmorell, Saint of the German Resistance



At the height of World War II, a small band of students in Munich, Germany, formed a clandestine organization called the White Rose, which exposed the Nazi regime's murderous atrocities and called for its overthrow. In its first anti-Nazi tract, the group wrote, "...Nothing is so unworthy of a civilized nation as allowing itself to be 'governed' without opposition by an irresponsible clique that has yielded to base instinct..." The students risked everything to struggle against a world that had lost its moorings. Early in 1943 key members of the group were discovered and executed. Among those put to death was Alexander Schmorell, a young man of Russian birth whose family came to Germany when he was a small boy. This biography eloquently recounts the journey of an energetic and talented young man who loved life but who, deeply inspired by his Orthodox Christian faith, was willing to sacrifice it as a testimony to his faith in God that had taught him to love beauty and freedom, both of which the Nazis sought to destroy. In 2012, the Russian Orthodox Church officially recognized him as a martyr and saint. The story of Alexander's life and death is made available to English readers here for the first time, vividly illustrated with black and white photographs.

Book: The Eternal Today

ARCHIMANDRITE ZACHARIAS

The Eternal 'Today'



JOURNEYING WITH THE CHURCH,
IN THE LIGHT OF THE FEASTS



Stavropegic Monastery of St. John the Baptist
Essex, England

The book "The Eternal 'Today'" begins with the Incarnation of the Son of God and the divine work of the salvation of the world. It continues with the luminous feasts of holy Theophany and the Presentation of the Lord in the Temple, reaching the rich liturgical period of the devotional Triodion. The uppermost crown of our journey is Easter, during which we become partakers of the grace of the saving Resurrection of Christ. At this point a new path of expectation and desire opens up to us, leading to the great and final feast of Pentecost. Our journey reaches its end with the Sunday of All Saints. When the Holy Spirit came to dwell in the Church the greatest fruit which was imparted were the Saints. The main work of the Church is to produce images of Christ. But who is Christ? He is the New Adam, Who came, suffered and ascended the Cross having only one thought and one desire: to save the whole world.

President's Corner

Hey guys! Happy fall, hope everyone had a tremendous summer! It is hard to believe we are in the 4th and final quarter of 2021 as it feels like the year just started. September was a great month at Saint Michael's, as we hosted our 14th annual golf tournament as well our chicken BBQ event. Both events were incredibly successful, and we want to thank everyone for their donations and participation. As we approach the end of this year, we are coming to the close of this 2-year term for our church committee. My mother, Deb Yanka, as well as Tom Dowling, have agreed to head up our nominating committee for the next 2-year term which will begin after our "General Assembly" meeting in January. If you are interested in serving on the church committee, please inform Deb or Tom when you see them. On another note, our church is about to commence on a very exciting renovation project! We have voted on, and approved, a project to renovate the pews and flooring in the main body of the church. This will be the first major church beautification project I can remember in recent memory, and it will provide an amazing cosmetic upgrade that all will be able to appreciate. If you are interested in donating towards this project, please contact me or our treasurer, Paul Yanka. Without everyone's constant support and hard work, this project would not even be remotely possible. In closing, I want to say God bless you and we pray for your health and safety as we transition towards the cold weather and the holiday seasons.

---Luke Yanka, Parish Council President

(508)958-4144

Two Thoughts from St. Justin Popovich on Being Orthodox

"To be Orthodox means to have the God-man Christ constantly in your soul, to live in Him, think in Him, feel in Him, act in Him. In other words, to be Orthodox means to be a Christ-bearer and a Spirit-bearer."



The Prayers of the Parents Strengthen the House of the Children and Even Save Them A True Story Told by Fr. Remus Bleahu

Fr. Remus Bleahu lived in St. Michael's parish house between 1981-1983. At that time, he became a good friend with Thomas Ziu, Shirly Ziu's father. Thomas asked Fr. Remus to promise him he would make his funeral services when he would pass away. For objective reasons Fr. Remus did not attend his funeral and visit Southbridge this summer to fulfill his promise to Thomas. Here there are some pictures from the memorial services in the Southbridge cemetery. Currently Fr. Remus is a priest in a Romanian church in Ohio.

In one early morning, a priest from Ohio was called by the local hospital to visit an Orthodox Romanian patient in the ICU. As he arrived at the patient bed the priest did not recognize him. He introduced himself telling the priest that he was a member of the Romanian Orthodox Church in town and he left the town teaching in many colleges and universities all over the world, being a physics professor. Now he is retired and came home, but all his relatives passed away. His name was George Mehit. The priest recognized the family name but none of the people with the same name were alive.

George continued and said: Father.... mentioning the name of the priest, last night I was dead and I met Our Lord Jesus Christ. He shown me my friends teachers and others from the schools I was teaching who were dead and they were all in Hell. All of them started telling me not to go there because it is very bad and they are tormented with pain of any kind. And he turned to Our Lord Who said to him:

"George, because your parents prayed for you to be saved I've promised them to help you. If you want to stay you go with your friends in Hell, if you want to be saved you

Fr. isn't too late for me to be saved? No George if Our Lord sent you back is not too late. If I knew what is in the other life I give up all the books I've wrote and all the money I got and stay in the Church all my life. Nothing matter for Eternal Life.

Then the priest Confessed him, read all the absolution prayers, gave him Communion, anointed him with the Holy Unction oil and talked with him for a few minutes. George started smiling and felt light in his heart thanked the priest and said: "Father I don't want to live anymore. It is much better in the Other Life". By the time the priest reached the main entrance of the hospital, he was announced by the Chaplaincy Department that George Passed away. Now we see the power of the parent's prayer for the children. One of the shortest prayer of the parents is: "Lord Jesus Christ Our God Forgive the sins of our children and save them in Eternal Life".



Vasile Banescu, Spokesman of the Romanian Patriarchate, on Protecting Traditional Family Values

Recently, in a TV show and at a time of maximum audience, a belligerent and widely mobilizing call was launched: "Let's get rid of the parents and save their children! That's what the schools should do! That's what we have to do!"

The message induces the idea that it is not the parents who are the most important beings in the children's lives, but someone else, vaguely intuited as the state. The leviathan state, autocratic of course, a huge and deformed social body devoid of soul, dominant, oriented not in favor of the individual good of the citizen, but in order to swallow him with his freedoms altogether.

But it is not the illustrious Thomas Hobbes now, but those who *a priori* put themselves in the service of the idol of necessarily socialist & naturally anti-Christian Progress, and become his ardent missionaries. Defying reason, but also faith, including that in the highest values of humanity, which he zealously and programmatically discredits.

One of these fundamental values is the family, the natural family founded on the Mystery of Marriage, the family so assaulted today ideologically progressive. The family consists of father, mother and children.

A few years ago, camouflaged ideologues from the Ministry of Education proposed

in an official document made public (National Strategy for Parental Education 2018-2025), no more, no less than the (re) education of parents guilty of "conservatism," translated as insulating them from the forced sexual education of their own children, through their rejection of the aberrations of transgenderism and through their attachment to the established values of the family. This was described in that detestable document, later withdrawn from the institution's

"In order to destroy the family on earth (the earthly "trinity") the heavenly Trinity must be destroyed from the minds of men."

website, as a "constellation of ideas" interchangeable adaptable to any fashion and

ideological fad (The family is not intelligible as an objective reality, it is rather a socio-cultural construction, "a constellation of ideas, images and terminology" created and permanently recreated by socio-cultural practices).

Long ago, but not so long as to be forgotten, the famous serial killer, Lenin, programmatically declared that "in order to destroy the family on earth (the earthly 'trinity') the heavenly Trinity must be destroyed from the minds of men." That is, the absolute landmark of the moral order must be eradicated from the foundations: God revealed in the Trinity as a paradigmatic form of love, otherness, natural hierarchy and authority, the transcendent model of the human family.

And a few days ago, a "new man" - new who came to confuse alienating

progressivism/moral regression with real progress - declared war on normalcy, proclaiming the categorical imperative of saving children from their own parents. Parents who, from the point of view of the Leviathan state, are no longer good enough for their children, as they allow themselves to raise questions dictated by a dubious and suffocating reality, because they are not obedient enough to the complete absence of any kind of convincing moral and professional authority in the midst of a troubling crisis for all.

The case is edifying for the autocratic, pseudo-democratic and anti-Christian stateism that encourages the denunciation and destruction of the freedom to choose, stateism embodied today in totalitarian manifestations of so-called Barnevernet child protection institutions.

Fortunately, despite the efforts of progressives only digitally, not culturally, this stateist deformity has not yet come to life in Romania and we must never witness such a sinister emergence of evil in the face of good in our public space.



The Difficulties of Life Metropolitan Athanasios of Lemessos

Often when we go to sad events, we all say, with the best will in the world- and we're partially right- that it's God's will. And, of course, if we can understand properly, those are, indeed, words of comfort, words that give us strength. Since it's what God wants, since God decided this was to happen, we trust in his providence.

But to be precise, these words aren't strictly true. God doesn't want these things to happen. God doesn't bless them. He knows about them, but doesn't want them. They can't be identified with God, with his will or his knowledge. God knows everything. What we have to know is that God isn't the cause of our evils. The cause of our evils is our apostasy from God. In the most profound sense, the cause of our evils is the fact that we've allowed corruption and death to enter our lives, from the time of the fall onwards.

What is God's attitude and our own towards the difficult events which happen to us on a daily basis? God comes and reminds us that, yes, death is the greatest victory of the devil, in that he destroys the image of God, us people; in that he disrupts the harmony between body and soul; in that he's able to put an end to our beautiful human personality. But then God comes and willingly takes death upon himself for our sake.

He himself enters death and sets all of us free of it. And, as a result, he's given each of us the opportunity to live with him eternally, in reality. To overcome death. Not when we die and thereafter, but in this life, every day, when we taste the body and blood of Christ, when we live in the Church, experience the events of the Church to the ages of ages. It never stops. Death doesn't end it. Death

doesn't dissolve us, but gives us the chance to proceed to God's eternal kingdom. In this way, we learn to judge the events of life not from the side we're on now, but from the side of God. From the side beyond. We judge everything from the side of God's eternal kingdom. Because our present life is fleeting. It's 70, 80, 90, maybe even 100 years. But eternity's boundless, endless. It has no end. And people aren't appraised over the 80 years or so that they live, but they're judged, that is they're seen as beings, as entities that do, indeed, have a beginning, but who live eternally.

So the difficulties of this life find a response, or better, a correlation in God's eternal kingdom. To put it another way, that's where everything's redeemed.

The sufferings of the present time, our efforts, our sorrows, our death, all of these things, can be properly understood when we see ourselves in the kingdom of God. That's where we realize that God vindicates us. God doesn't allow injustice to persist. He doesn't allow injustice to remain eternally, but vindicates it in his kingdom.



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Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1 Holy Protection of the Theotokos Divine Liturgy 10:00am	2 Divine Liturgy 9:00am (Memorial Service following Liturgy 10:00am) Vespers, 5:00pm
3 Matins 9:00am Divine Liturgy 10:00am	4	5	6 Apostle Thomas; St. Innocent of America	7	8	9 Apostle James, Son of Alphaeus Divine Liturgy 9:00am (Memorial Service following Liturgy 10:00am) Vespers, 5:00pm
10 Matins 9:00am Divine Liturgy 10:00am	11	12	13 Vespers, Litia – St. Paraskeva 6:00pm	14 St. Paraskeva of Iasi Divine Liturgy 10:00am	15	16 St. Longinus the Centurion Divine Liturgy 9:00am (Memorial Service following Liturgy 10:00am) Vespers 5:00pm
17 Prophet Hosea Matins 9:00am Divine Liturgy 10:00am	18 St. Luke the Evangelist	19 Prophet Joel	20 Great Martyr Artemius	21 St. Hilarion the Great	22	23 Apostle James, Brother of Our Lord Divine Liturgy 9:00am (Memorial Service following Liturgy 10:00am) Vespers, Litia 5:00pm
24 Matins 9:00am Divine Liturgy 10:00am	25 Vespers, Litia, Matins – St. Demetrius of Thessaloniki 6:00pm	26 St. Demetrius the Great Martyr of Thessaloniki Divine Liturgy 10:00am Vespers – St. Demetrius of Basarabov 6:00pm	27 St. Demetrius of Basarabov Divine Liturgy 10:00am	28	29	30 Divine Liturgy 9:00am (Memorial Service following Liturgy 10:00am) Vespers, Litia 5:00pm
31 Matins 9:00am Divine Liturgy 10:00am						