



## Words of Wisdom

From the Saints & Teachers

## Today Readings

Epistle: Philippians 3:8-19

Gospel: Luke 11:23-26

**Philippians 3:10-11: Sharing in Christ's Sufferings Share in His Sufferings. Chrysostom:** From faith comes our sharing in his sufferings. How? If we had not believed in him, we would not be suffering with him. If we had not believed that we will abide and reign with him, we would not have endured these sufferings. **Homily on Philippians 12.3.10-11.**

**Philippians 3:10-11: Attaining the Resurrection from the Dead Through Suffering to Resurrection. Marius Victorinus:** We who believe in Christ endure sufferings with him and indeed all sufferings, even as far as the cross and death. From the knowledge of all these and from the sharing in suffering comes resurrection. And thus, as we are sharers in his death and his burden, we are enabled to share his resurrection. **Epistle to the Philippians 3.10-11.**

**Luke 11:23 Those Who Reject Jesus Satan is Not with Jesus. Cyril of Alexandria:** "He that is not with me," he says, "is against me, and he that gathers not with me, scatters." "For I," he says, "have come to save every man from the hands of the devil and to deliver from his deceit those whom he had ensnared. I came to set the prisoners free, to give light to those in darkness, to raise up them that had fallen, to heal the broken-spirited, and to gather together the children of God who were scattered abroad. This was the object of my coming. Satan is not with me; on the contrary he is against me. He ventures to scatter those whom I have gathered and saved. How then can he, who wars against me and sets his wickedness in array against my purposes, give me power against himself? How is it not foolish even barely to imagine the possibility of such a thing as this?" **Commentary on Luke, Homily 81.**



## From The Ambvon

ST MICHAEL ORTHODOX CHURCH,  
OLD FORGE, PA

Priest Michael Shepherd (frmichael@stmichaelof.org)

Steering Committee: Barbara Sevensky, Bev Elko,  
Sandra Condon

Phone: 570-457-3703 Web: www.stmichaelof.org

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20th Sunday after Pentecost (6th of Luke), Tone 3

Hieromartyr Zenobius and his sister Zenobia, of Aegae in Cilicia

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### Birthdays & Anniversaries for October

**Birthdays:** Nadia Macheska (10/1); Mary Krevko (10/5); Thomas Zupko (10/10); Danny Pregmann (10/15); Stella Krenitsky (10/15); Blaise Shepherd (10/17)

**Nameday:**

**Anniversary:** Helen & +Paul Bezuhly (10/12)

**Baptism:**

**Travelers:** For all who are traveling this week

**Proshora Schedule:** Thank you Marie Pasternak for this week's Proshora. **Please sign up to bake proshora.**

**Visitors:** Please Stay for coffee hour that will be downstairs in the Church Do you have a birthday or anniversary this/next week? Please add it to our list on the shelf in the Vestibule/Narthex.

Service Attendance: Last weekend Divine Liturgy: 25

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DEAR GUESTS AND FRIENDS: *A most sincere and heartfelt welcome to you from our community. According to the ancient traditions of the Orthodox Church, the Sacrament of Holy Communion is to be administered only to Orthodox Christians who have prepared to receive themselves by fasting and a recent (monthly) confession..If you have questions please ask Fr Michael!*



## Service Schedule

### THIS WEEK: 31thOct-6Nov

THURS, Nov 3rd: @ 6:00 PM Vespers University of Scranton OCF  
 SAT, Nov 5th: @ 3:30 PM Inquirers Class/Book Study  
 SAT, Nov 5th: @ 5:00 PM Great Vespers / Confession After  
 SUN, Nov 6th: Hours @ 9:20 AM, Divine Liturgy @ 9:30 AM

### WEEK of 7Nov-13Nov

MON, Nov 7th: @ 5:00 PM Patronal Feast Great Vespers w/Litya  
 TUES, Nov 8th: @ 9:00 AM Patronal Feast Liturgy Feast of St Michael  
 THURS, Nov 10th: @ 6:00 PM Vespers University of Scranton OCF  
 SAT, Nov 12th: @ 3:30 PM Steering Committee Meeting  
 SAT, Nov 12th: @ 5:00 PM Great Vespers / Confession After  
 SUN, Nov 13th: Hours @ 9:20 AM, Divine Liturgy @ 9:30 AM

### UP COMING

NATIVITY FAST BEGINS 15NOV  
 Nov 20th & 21st: Great Vespers w/Litya & Liturgy Entrance of the Theotokos  
 Nov 24th: Thanksgiving Day Liturgy



### Announcements

#### & Upcoming Parish & Diocesan Events

**Church Work Day:** Every Friday is Church Maintenance day. Come help!  
**Ordination:** Fr Deacon Justin Pittsfield, MA - Fr Michael in Attendance  
**Pre-Nativity Retreat:** 3-4 Nov Daylesford Abbey  
**Parish Steering Meeting:** Nov 12th, @ 3:30 p.m. prior to Great Vespers  
**Holy Synod Meeting:** 9-14Nov St Tikhons  
**DEOPA Diocesan Council Meeting:** Nov 15th Diocesan Chancery

**Kontakion, Synaxis of Archangel Michael & all the Bodiless Hosts**  
 Commanders of God's armies and ministers of the divine glory, princes  
 of the bodiless angels and guides of mankind, ask for what is good for us,  
 and for great mercy, supreme commanders of the Bodiless Hosts.

*Holy Archangel Michael Pray unto God for us!*

Maybe Halloween holds a nice little life lesson: you give a little to get a little. The Book of Proverbs speaks often of the power of gifts. If we all practiced the spirit of Halloween—being prepared always to give small kindnesses to those around us—what a wonderful world we would have.

Again, let's be honest: no one was ever possessed by the devil because he or she dressed up for Halloween or passed out licorice or read a Harry Potter book. Our modern lives have way too many other avenues for temptation to enter, and these things are the real cause of our spiritual problems: pride, gluttony, hatred, materialism, and ignorance.

This may be the only pro-Halloween article by a clergyman you read this year. Actually, this piece isn't so much pro-Halloween as it is anti-superstition and anti-paranoia. American Christianity is too much titillated by thoughts of demons, based on a mythology of evil that has more to do with pagan folklore than the sober statements of Scripture. Such superstition gives all Christians a bad name.

That's why I'm not afraid of Halloween, and I see no problem with Orthodox Christians having fun at costume parties. After all, why would anyone want to learn more about Jesus Christ and his message, if being a Christian means forever being a spoilsport and a killjoy? If you believe in one God, if you trust Him, then accept his protection and don't live in fear of demonic bogeymen. The real battle with the devil is fought in the heart, not in front of the Harry Potter bookstore.

Some people drink too much on New Year's Eve. Should that stop you and me from enjoying a glass of champagne? Some people eat too much at Thanksgiving. Should that stop us from having our turkey with all the trimmings? Some people spend too much at Christmas. Should that stop us from exchanging gifts?

Some people go overboard on the spooky side of Halloween. It's not too hard to avoid that for your family. Skip the horror movies. Don't revel in gore. Don't profane death. Don't indulge in occult practices ... But don't be paranoid or superstitious either!  
 And have a Happy Halloween!

\* Fr. Mark Sietsema is the Presiding Priest at the Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church in Lansing, MI

# Current Financial Status

As of 28Oct22

## Peoples Security Bank and Trust

Society of St Michael Checking	\$2,826.93
Society of St Michael Savings	\$8,384.89
Society of St Michael 12 month CD	\$6,501.71
Society of St Michael 60 month CD	\$6,305.09
(Society of St Michael no longer exists)	
St Michael Orthodox Church Checking	\$20,185.56

## Edward Jones

St Michael Church Account	\$146,415.48
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## RBO

St Michael Church Saving Fund	\$135,812.15
St Michael Cemetery Fund	<u>\$65,014.26</u>

Total Assets	\$391,446.07
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## Projects

### Altar Robes

Fire Alarms (need new alarms/sensors installed)

Heating & A/C (A/C along with new controllers)

### Lighting

Security System (adding cameras, new motion sensors, entry pads; all switches: heating & a/c; alarms; security camera will be digital z-waves)

Paint Ceiling

Roof repair

Fix water damages in the Church from the leaking roof

## Who's Afraid of Halloween?

Original Article can be found at

<http://www.johnsanidopoulos.com/2010/10/whos-afraid-of-halloween.html>

By Fr. Mark Sietsema \*

I have a confession to make. And it's a bad one ....

When I was a kid ... I used to get dressed up for Halloween! And it was not always something innocent either, like an astronaut or a cowboy. Once I was even a ghost! Worse yet, I would go door-to-door with my brothers and say "Trick or treat!" Idolatrous! Occultic! Satanic! Over time, of course this demon-glorifying activity caught up with me. Look at me now. I dress in black almost every day ...

Of course you see the problem here. If not, you will very soon start reading about it in the paper again. Many people of churchy persuasions object strenuously to the observance of Halloween. Every year we read letters to the editor that run as follows:

"Halloween is the worship of the devil! Halloween comes from heathen roots! Trick or Treat comes from an ancient pagan custom: the Druids would go from house to house seeking a virgin to sacrifice! If you complied and handed over your family's virgin, they left outside your door a jack-o-lantern with a candle inside ... fueled by human fat! If you did not comply, a terrible trick would be played on you! The Catholic Church perpetuated the pagan legends with its Feast of All Saints. If you let your kids celebrate Halloween, you expose them to the possibility of demonic possession!"

Well, good Orthodox Christian, what should our Church make of this controversy? Is Halloween something we Christians should shun like the Black Mass? Don't the facts about Halloween's origins prove that it is an abomination?

No. First of all, none of these "facts" are true. It's all fiction. We know almost nothing about the culture and practices of the ancient Druids, except what little the Romans had to say. (Mind you, these are the same Romans who also used to say that Christians hold secret orgies where they sacrifice babies and eat them—so let's be careful about how much credence we give them.) The Romans invaded Britain in 43 B.C. There they found a number of Celtic tribes, which the Roman legions subjugated with relative ease.

Now, you need to know that the Romans were not what you would call "culturally curious."

They had little interest in the ways of the conquered Britons. Generally, when there is interaction between conqueror and subject, the conqueror picks up and uses the local names for rivers, hills,

and the like. For instance, our state is full of names from the native languages of the Indians: Michigan, Mackinac, Saginaw, Escanaba, Kalamazoo, Washtenaw. However, we find almost no use of the Celtic place names by the Romans. The Romans did not come to Britain for kaffee-klatsches, but for plundering and pillaging. Under the Roman sword the Celtic place-names perished with the Celts, as did any certain knowledge of Celtic or Druidic customs (like what kind of fat they used in their candles).

But what if the stories about pagan Halloween were true? Does that prevent us from making a fun day out of the Thirty-First of October? Or do pagan origins damn a thing forever?

I would hope that as Orthodox Christians we would know better than to say that. We borrowed an awful lot of useful things from ancient pagan cultures. Our musical system of eight tones? From the pagan Greeks. (Next time you hear a dismissal hymn in the Third Tone, picture a phalanx of Lacedaemonian warriors marching into an attack: they liked Third Tone for their battle hymns.)

And our iconography is an obvious adaptation of Egyptian funerary art: the portraits painted on Egyptian coffins look just like the faces in our icons. Christmas, we all know, is a retooling of the Roman celebration of the winter solstice, the Feast of Sol Invictus (the Invincible Sun-god). And many, many Christian churches were built atop pagan shrines and holy places, the most famous example being the conversion of the Parthenon (a temple built in honor of Athena the Virgin Warrior) to a church dedicated to the Virgin Mary.

Even Protestants with their Puritan impulses and their “just the Bible” mentality have to contend with borrowings from pagan sources in the Scriptures. For example, chapters 22-24 of the Book of Proverbs are almost certainly a translation of the older Egyptian advice guide The Instruction of Amen-em-Opet. And elsewhere in the Bible different titles given to God such as El Elyon “God Most High” and “the one who rides on the clouds like a chariot” (Psalm 104:3) are originally epithets for the pagan storm-god Baal.

What’s my point? You can’t judge a custom by its origins. What counts is one’s intention in the here and now. And let’s be honest: modern Halloween for you and me—and even the Wiccans down the street—has nothing to do with virgin sacrifice or black magic. It’s about having fun in a costume and eating things your dentist wouldn’t approve of.

“Well!” the anti-Halloween crowd would reply, “Halloween teaches kids that they can get something for nothing!!” But is that so bad? To my ears that sounds awfully close to the Christian idea of grace!

“Yes, yes, but we shouldn’t teach our kids that it’s OK to threaten someone with vandalism if they don’t fork over something you want!” Well, let’s look at this from another perspective.

## **Parish Prayer List**

Please remember in your prayers LIVING  
Captive Hierarchs PAUL and JOHN

All those caring for the sick and suffering at this time throughout the world, especially our families and friends: Mike, Bernie, Margaret, Marie, Helen, Rosemary, Sandra, Sandy, Paula, Al, Eli, Evelyn, Nadia, John, Paulette, Andrew, Daniel, Charissa

Ill-afflicted Archpriests John Nightingale & Fr Theodore Orzolek

Matushka Paula Soucek

**Servants of God** Dcn Nathan, Mat. Katherine, Miraiiah, Evangeline, Gideon, Zacharias, Ignatius, Basil (Clausson), Mat. Emilia, Blaise, Maximus, Rodion, Savina (Shepherd), Barbara, Bev, Sandra, Ann, Sandy & Danny, Walter, Michael & Euphemia (Mia), Elizabeth Amaya; Justin Robert, Vitaly & Maria, Gregory, Emilia, Marie, Tammy

**Seekers:** Jason, Emilia, Judah, Nadia, & Silas

DEPARTED

**Newly departed:** Rose Krenitsky (10/19)

**Departed:** Nicholas Lugin (10/20)