



## This Weeks Schedule

### THIS WEEK

**WED @ 5:00 PM:** Ascension Great Vesper w/Litya

**THURS @ 9:00 AM:** Ascension Divine Liturgy

### NEXT WEEKEND

**SAT, June 4:** Great Vespers @ 5:00 PM

**SUN, June 5:** Hours @ 9:10 AM, Divine Liturgy @ 9:30 AM

### UP COMING

Pentecost: Sunday, June 12

### **Announcements**

### **& Upcoming Parish & Diocesan Events**



**Upcoming Fundraisers:** If you would like to plan something please get with me to discuss the details and the dates such as **Peirogi Project**

**Financial Meeting:** This Wednesday June 1st, @ 2 p.m.

**Parish Steering Meeting:** June 11th, @ 3:30 p.m. prior to Great Vespers

**Parish Prospora Baking Class:** June 14th at 9 a.m.

**St Tikhon's Summer Camp:** July 3-9 (Diocesan Campers are FREE!)

**All American Council:** July 18-22

When Joshua was by Jericho, he lifted up his eyes and looked, and behold, a man was standing before him with his drawn sword in his hand. And Joshua went to him and said to him, "Are you for us, or for our adversaries?"

Joshua 5:13

Holy Archangel Michael Pray unto God for us!



## *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: <http://www.stmichaelof.org>

---

Sun, May 29nd, 2022 6th SUNDAY OF PASCHA — Tone 5. Blind Man.  
Christ is Risen! Indeed He is Risen!

---

### **Birthdays & Anniversaries**

**Birthdays:** Daniel Jones (5/30)

**Nameday:** Emily Krenitsky (5/30)

**Anniversary:** Fr Michael and Emilia (1997)

**Baptism:**

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

**Visitors:** Thank you for joining us and please introduce yourself to Fr Michael

**Kitchen Schedule:** Need volunteers for Kitchen

**Prospora Schedule:** June - Fr Michael

July - Need Volunteer

---

**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 confession..If you have questions please ask Fr Michael!*



## Words of Wisdom

### From the Saints & Teachers

#### 9:1 *A Man Blind from Birth*

Restoring What Nature Left Defective. Caesarius of Arles: We have just heard that Jesus gave sight to the man who was blind from birth. Do you wonder? Jesus is the Savior. He did something in keeping with his name, for by his kindness he restored what he had given to a lesser degree in the womb. Now when he made his eyes less powerful, surely he did not make a mistake, but he deferred it for the miracle.... Behold, why Christ delayed when he made the eyes less powerful in the womb. Do not think that the parents of that blind man had no sin and that the blind man himself, when he was born, did not contract original sin; because of the fact of original sin even very little children are baptized. However, that blindness was not due to the sin of his parents or due to the sin of the blind man, but in order that the glory of God might be made manifest in him. For when we are born we all contract original sin, and still we are not born physically blind. That blind man was prepared as a salve for the human race. He was bodily restored to light, in order that by considering his miracle we might be enlightened in heart. Sermon 172.1.

Elowsky, J. C. (Ed.). (2006). [John 1–10](#) (p. 320). Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.

#### 9:2 *Who Sinned?*

**Suffering As an Exercise.** Apollinaris of Laodicea: There was a certain philosophy among the ancients that troubles came from sin because they were confident that God was not responsible for any evil. The notion that people suffer as an exercise so that they might perceive the power of God at last—this was not well known at all because they would rather have God give good rewards to the just then and there and not prolong suffering any longer for the sake of eternal life. Since he was a blind man from birth, it occurred to the disciples to ask. Since no one can sin before his birth, they ventured a guess that the parents were to blame. For they knew that children may suffer in order to bring grief to the parents. But the Lord said that the blindness did not occur because of any sin but for the sake of the glory of God that was about to take place as the power of God would be revealed through his unexpected recovery of sight. Fragments on John 49.

Elowsky, J. C. (Ed.). (2006). [John 1–10](#) (p. 320). Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.

Today we also venerate the Icon of the Mother of God “The Surety of Sinners.

The Surety of Sinners (Споручница грешных) Icon of the Theotokos is a Russian image which was revealed as wonder-working during the middle of the 19th century. It gets its name from the inscription found on the icon:

*“I am the Surety of sinners for My Son Who has entrusted me to hear them, and those who bring me the joy of hearing them will receive eternal joy through me.”*

The word Sporuchnitsa (Споручница), translated as “surety”, can also be translated as “pledge” or even as “intercession”. The pledge is not only shown in the inscription but also in the way Jesus Christ holds His mother’s hand, a sign of one giving a pledge for the other.

The origins of the icon are unclear, but the style of the icon (both Mother and Child are crowned; 12 stars around the Theotokos) suggest either the Ukraine or Belarus, both places where Western religious art influenced iconographers. Despite this, the basis for the icon is in a much more ancient source, the [Akathist to the Protection of the Theotokos](#), in which there is the line: “*Rejoice, You Who offer Your hands in surety for us to God.*” This icon was first glorified by miracles in 1848 at the St Nicholas Odrino men’s monastery. The icon was in an old chapel beyond the monastery gates, and stood between two other ancient icons. Because it was so faded and covered with dust, it was impossible to read the inscription. It was revealed to many of the people in dreams that the icon was endowed with miraculous power. They solemnly brought the icon into the church. Believers began to flock to it to pray for the healing of their sorrows and sicknesses. The first to receive healing was a crippled child, whose mother, wife of a merchant named Pochepyn, prayed fervently before the icon in 1844. The icon was glorified during a cholera epidemic, when many people fell deathly ill, and were restored to health after praying before the icon.

\* Jesus said to him, "Thou hast seen Him, and it is He Who speaks to thee." \*  
He said, "Lord, I believe"; and he worshiped Him.

### The Priest's Blessing.

The clergy (that is, specially ordained people who celebrate the Divine Services) are our spiritual fathers. Bishops and priests sign us with the sign of the Cross. This is called a **blessing**.

When the priest blesses us, he forms the Greek letters **IC XC**, that is, Jesus Christ, with the fingers of his hand. This means that through the priest our Lord Jesus Christ Himself blesses us. Therefore, we must receive the blessing of the clergy with reverence.

When we hear in the church the words of blessing, "Peace unto all" and others, in reply to them we should bow without making the sign of the Cross. In order to receive a personal blessing from a bishop or a priest, we should place our hands in the form of a cross: the right hand on the left with the palms upward. When we have received the blessing we kiss the hand that blesses us — we kiss, as it were, the invisible hand of Christ the Saviour Himself.

**Questions:** Who signs us with the sign of the Cross? What is this called? What does the priest form with the fingers of his hand when he gives a blessing? What does this mean? How should we place our hands when we ask for a blessing? What should we do when we have received a blessing?

*The Law of God*, Seraphim Slobodskoy; Holy Trinity Monastery, Jordanville, NY  
13361-0036 USA

EPISTLE

Deacon: Let us attend!

Priest: Peace be unto all!

Reader: And to thy spirit.

Deacon: Wisdom!

Reader: The Prokeimenon in the 8th Tone, a Psalm of David: Pray and make your vows before the Lord our God.

Choir: Pray and make your vows before the Lord our God.

Reader: In Judah God is known; His name is great in Israel!

Choir: Pray and make your vows before the Lord our God.

Reader: Pray and make your vows

Choir: Before the Lord our God.

Deacon: Wisdom!

Reader: The reading from the Acts of the Holy Apostles.

Deacon: Let us attend!

[(38) Acts 16:16-34] In those days, as we apostles were going to the place of prayer, we were met by a slave girl who had a spirit of divination and brought her owners much gain by soothsaying. \* She followed Paul and us, crying, "These men are servants of the Most High God, who proclaim to you the way of salvation." \* And this she did for many days. But Paul was annoyed, and turned and said to the spirit, "I charge thee in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her." And it came out that very hour. \* But when her owners saw that their hope of gain was gone, they seized Paul and Silas and dragged them into the market place before the rulers; \* and when they had brought them to the magistrates they said, "These men are Jews and they are disturbing our city. \* They advocate customs which it is not lawful for us Romans to accept or practice." \* The crowd joined in attacking them; and the magistrates tore the garments off them and gave orders to beat them with rods. \* And when they had inflicted many blows upon them, they threw them into prison, charging the jailer to keep them safely. \* Having received this charge, he put them into the inner prison and fastened their feet in the stocks. \* But about midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening to them, \* and suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken; and immediately all the doors were opened and every one's fetters were unfastened. \* When the jailer woke and saw that the prison doors were open, he drew his sword and was about to kill

himself, supposing that the prisoners had escaped. \* But Paul cried with a loud voice, "Do not harm thyself, for we are all here." \* And he called for lights and rushed in, and trembling with fear he fell down before Paul and Silas, \* and brought them out and said, "Men, what must I do to be saved?" \* And they said, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and thou shalt be saved, thou and thy household." \* And they spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all that were in his house. \* And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed their wounds, and he was baptized at once, with all his family. \* Then he brought them up into his house, and set food before them; and he rejoiced with all his household that he had believed in God.

Priest: Peace be unto thee, Reader.

Reader: And to thy spirit.

ALLELUIA

Deacon: Wisdom!

Reader: In the 8th Tone: AL-LE-LU-IA!

Choir: Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

Reader: Look upon me and have mercy on me.

Choir: Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

Reader: Direct my steps according to Thy word.

Choir: Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

GOSPEL

[(34) John 9:1-38] At that time, as Jesus passed by, He saw a man blind from his birth. \* And His disciples asked Him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" \* Jesus answered, "It was not that this man sinned, or his parents, but that the works of God might be made manifest in him. \* We must work the works of Him Who sent Me, while it is day; night comes, when no one can work. \* As long as I am in the world, I am the Light of the world." \* As He said this, He spat on the ground and made clay of the spittle and anointed the man's eyes with the clay, \* saying to him, "Go, wash in the pool of Siloam" (which means Sent). So he went and washed and came back seeing. \* The neighbors and those who had seen him before as a beggar, said, "Is not this the man who used to sit and beg?" \* Some said, "It is he"; others said, "No, but he is like him." He said, "I am the man." \* They said to

him, "Then how were thine eyes opened?" \* He answered, "The man called Jesus made clay and anointed my eyes and said to me, 'Go to Siloam and wash'; so I went and washed and received my sight." \* They said to him, "Where is He?" He said, "I do not know." \* They brought to the Pharisees the man who had formerly been blind. \* Now it was a Sabbath day when Jesus made the clay and opened his eyes. \* The Pharisees again asked him how he had received his sight. And he said to them, "He put clay on my eyes, and I washed, and I see." \* Some of the Pharisees said, "This man is not from God, for He does not keep the Sabbath." But others said, "How can a man who is a sinner do such signs?" There was a division among them. \* So they again said to the blind man, "What dost thou say about Him, since He has opened thine eyes?" He said, "He is a prophet." \* The Jews did not believe that he had been blind and had received his sight, until they called the parents of the man who had received his sight, \* and asked them, "Is this your son, who ye say was born blind? How then does he now see?" \* His parents answered, "We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind; \* but how he now sees we do not know, nor do we know Who opened his eyes. Ask him; he is of age, he shall speak for himself." \* His parents said this because they feared the Jews, for the Jews had already agreed that if any one should confess Him to be Christ, he was to be put out of the synagogue. \* Therefore his parents said, "He is of age, ask him." \* So for the second time they called the man who had been blind, and said to him, "Give God the praise; we know that this man is a sinner." \* He answered, "Whether He is a sinner, I do not know; one thing I know, that though I was blind, now I see." \* They said to him, "What did He do to thee? How did He open thine eyes?" \* He answered them, "I have told you already, and ye would not listen. Why do ye want to hear it again? Do ye too want to become His disciples?" \* And they reviled him, saying, "Thou art His disciple, but we are disciples of Moses. \* We know that God has spoken to Moses, but as for this man, we do not know where He comes from." \* The man answered, "Why, this is a marvel! Ye do not know where He comes from, and yet He opened my eyes. \* We know that God does not listen to sinners, but if any one is a worshiper of God and does His will, God listens to him. \* Never since the world began has it been heard that any one opened the eyes of a man born blind. \* If this man were not from God, He could do nothing." \* They answered him, "Thou wast born in utter sin, and wouldst thou teach us?" And they cast him out. \* Jesus heard that they had cast him out, and having found him He said, "Dost thou believe in the Son of God?" \* He answered, "And Who is He, sir, that I may believe in Him?"