



Words of Wisdom

From the Saints & Teachers

1:15b The Firstborn of All Creation - St Athanasius: Not then because he was from the Father was he called “Firstborn,” but because in him the creation came to be; and as before the creation he was the Son, through whom was the creation, so also before he was called the Firstborn of the whole creation, the Word himself was with God and the Word was God. ... If then the Word also were one of the creatures, Scripture would have said of him also that he was Firstborn of other creatures; but in fact, the saints’ saying that he is “Firstborn of the whole creation” demonstrates that the Son of God is other than the whole creation and not a creature.... He is called “Firstborn among many brothers” because of the relationship of the flesh, and “Firstborn from the dead” because the resurrection of the dead is from him and after him. **Discourses Against the Arians 2.63.**

Gorday, P. (Ed.). (2000). [Colossians, 1-2 Thessalonians, 1-2 Timothy, Titus, Philemon](#) (p. 13). Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.

18:18-23 Jesus Responds to the Question - Flattery Mixed with Fraud and Deceit. St Cyril of Alexandria: The Jewish crowds ... with their princes and teachers ... looked at Christ as being a mere man like one of us, and not as God who had become man. They approached him to test him and lay the nets of their cleverness for him....He is called here a ruler. He fancied himself to have learned the law and supposed that he had been accurately taught it. He imagined that he could convict Christ of introducing laws of his own and of dishonoring the commandment spoken by most wise Moses. It was the Jews’ goal to prove that Christ opposed and resisted the former commandments and established new laws by his own authority, in opposition to those previously existing. Their wicked conduct toward him had a false pretext. He comes near and makes a pretense of speaking kindly. He calls him “Teacher,” designates him “good,” and professes himself desirous of being a disciple. He says, “What shall I do to inherit eternal life?” Observe how he mixes flattery with fraud and deceit, like one who mingles vinegar with honey. He supposed that he could deceive him in this way. **Commentary on Luke, Homily 122.**

Just, A. A. (Ed.). (2005). [Luke](#) (p. 283). Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.

Today Readings

Epistle: 1 Timothy 1:15-17

Gospel: Luke 18:18-27



From The Ambvon

ST MICHAEL ORTHODOX CHURCH,
OLD FORGE, PA

Priest Michael Shepherd (frmichael@stmichaelof.org)

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31st SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST — Tone 6. Ven. Paul of Thebes (341) and John Calabytes (“the Hut-dweller” — 5th c.). Ven. Pansophius of Alexandria, Martyr (ca. 249-251). Ven. Prochorus, Abbot, in the Vranski desert on the River Pshina in Bulgaria (10th c.). Ven. Gabriel, founder of Lesnovo Monastery in Bulgaria (11th c.).

Birthdays & Anniversaries for December

Birthdays: Gregory Krenitsky (1/9); Paula Stavisky (1/17); Eli Stavisky (1/22);

Nameday: Gregory Krenitsky (1/25)

Anniversary:

Baptism:

Travelers:

Prospora Schedule: Please sign up to bake prospora. We are out!

Open dates: Jan 22, & 29 and February. Thank you to Marie for this week's Prospora!

Visitors: PLEASE JOIN US FOR COFFEE HOUR DOWNSTAIRS

Service Attendance: Last weekend Divine Liturgy: 47

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

WEEK of 9Jan-15Jan

Wed, Jan 18th: @ 11:00AM - 1:30PM Silent Prayers

SAT, Jan 21st: @ 5:00 PM Great Vespers

SUN, Jan 22nd: Hours @ 9:20 Hours, Divine Liturgy @ 9:30 AM

UP COMING

SAT, Jan 28th: @ 3:30 PM Catechumen Class

SAT, Jan 28th: @ 5:00 PM Great Vespers

SUN, Jan 29th: Hours @ 9:20 Hours, Divine Liturgy @ 9:30 AM

WED, Feb 1st: @ 5:00 PM Great Vespers w/Litya Presentation of our Lord

THURS, Feb 2nd: Divine Liturgy @ 9:00 AM



Announcements

& Upcoming Parish & Diocesan Events

Church Work Day: Every Friday is Church Maintenance day. Come help!
Theophany Home blessings! Yes, dear loved ones, it is that time again to bless our homes! Fr. Michael has started blessing homes of the members of our Parish, and the weeks are filling up. Please coordinate with Fr to have your little church blessed.

Please Schedule with Fr Michael to bless your home!

Jan 26-27 2023 Diocesan Assembly Announcement - St Nicholas, Bethlehem, PA. Matushka Emilia will be the lay delegate.

Annual All Parish Meeting - 26Feb23 after Liturgy. *PLEASE SPEAK TO FR ABOUT YOUR MEMBERSHIP/VOTING STATUS*

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!

Proposed Budget

Reminder Full services Started in April

2022 Exenditures

Priest Salary: \$31062.16

Housing/Utilities: \$5500

Pension Plan: \$

SECA: \$2498.96

*Diocesan/OCA Meetings: \$

*Life Insurance: \$466.64

*Health Insurance: \$6400

*Travel Allowance: \$3200

Electric: \$6456.09

Water: \$854.73

Gas: \$8069.22

Comcast: \$905.77

Candles: \$

Trash/Recycle \$

Grounds/Maint. \$

Evangelism: \$

Sunday School: \$

Housing: \$

Office Supplies:

Church Supplies

Liturg. Supplies

Charity: 10% of our proposed budget/ideally 10% of monthly collections

Est.

\$65,413.57

\$113,141.61

*Required Non-Compensation

** This list will grow as I continue to research 2021/2022 expenditures. So far this is a quick search of expenditures that are on auto pay that I can pull.

What is Christianity?

Many people see Christianity as one of the numerous philosophies and religions known from antiquity. Certainly Christianity is not a philosophy... The main difference between Christianity and philosophy is that the latter is human thinking, while Christianity is a revelation... by God Himself to man...

Christianity cannot be regarded as a religion... as religion presents itself today. God is usually visualized as dwelling in heaven and directing human history from there: He is extremely exacting, seeking satisfaction from man, who has fallen to earth in his sickness and weakness. There is a wall of separation between God and man. This has to be surmounted by man, and religion is a very effective help. Various religious rites are employed for this purpose.

According to another view, man feels powerless in the universe and needs a mighty God to help him in his weakness. In this view God does not create man, but man creates God. Again, religion is conceived as man's relationship to the Absolute God, that is to say, the "relationship of the 'I' to the Absolute Thou". Yet again, many regard religion as a means whereby the people are deluded into transferring their hopes to the future life. In this way strong powers put pressure on the people by means of religion.

But Christianity is something higher than these interpretations and theories; it cannot be contained within the usual conception and definition of religion given in the "natural" religions. God is not the Absolute Thou, but a living Person Who is in organic communion with man. Moreover, Christianity does not simply transfer the problem to the future or await the delight of the kingdom of heaven after history and after the end of time. In Christianity the future is lived in the present and the kingdom of God begins in this life. According to the patristic interpretation, the kingdom of God is the grace of the Triune God, it is vision of the uncreated Light.

We Orthodox are not waiting for the end of history and the end of time, but through living in Christ we are running to meet the end of history and thus already living the life expected after the Second Coming. St. Symeon the New Theologian says that he who has seen the uncreated light and united with God is not awaiting the Second Coming of the Lord but living it.

So the eternal embraces us at every moment of time. Therefore past, present and future are essentially lived in one unbroken unity. This is so-called condensed time.

Thus Orthodoxy cannot be characterized as the 'opium of the people', precisely because it does not postpone the problem. It offers life, transforms biological life, sanctifies and transforms societies. Where Orthodoxy is lived in the right way and in the Holy Spirit, it is a communion of God and men, of heavenly and earthly, of the living and the dead. In this communion all the problems which present themselves in our life are truly resolved.

Since the membership of the Church includes [spiritually] sick people and beginners in the spiritual life, it is to be expected that some of them understand Christianity as religion in the sense referred to above. Moreover, the spiritual life is a dynamic journey. It begins with baptism, which is purification of the 'image', and continues through ascetic living aimed at attaining 'likeness', which is to say communion with God. Anyway it must be made clear that even when we still speak of Christianity as a religion we must do it with certain necessary pre-suppositions.

The first is that Christianity is mainly a Church. 'Church' means 'Body of Christ'. There are many places in the New Testament where Christianity is called the Church. We shall only mention Christ's words: "You are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church" (Matt.16:18) and the words of the Apostle Paul to the Colossians: "And he is the head of the body, the church" (1:18) and to his disciple Timothy: "...so that you may know how you ought to conduct yourself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth" (1Tim.,3,15). This means that Christ does not simply dwell in heaven and direct history and the lives of men from there, but He is united with us. He assumed human nature and deified it; thus in Christ deified human nature is at the right hand of the Father. So Christ is our life and we are 'members of Christ'.

By Metropolitan Hierotheos Vlachos of Nafpaktos, from *Orthodox Psychotherapy*

Yearly Financial update

PEOPLES SECURITY BANK – 15Jan23 (*indicates updates from previous bulletin)

<u>Current Balance</u>	<u>January Credits</u>	<u>January Debits</u>
\$49,298.22	\$3848.00	– \$5,707.93

<u>2022 Credits:</u> \$77,923.99	<u>2022 Debits:</u> – \$53,549.00
\$32,375 selling the lot	
\$15,600 Income from rentals	
\$47,975 received from sources other than from Dues or people who	

Approx.: \$15,019.05 in Donations
 We roughly have 80 members/non-voting members/non-communicant members on the census.

I am still working the numbers and will update this weekly so we have accurate numbers for the Annual Parish Meeting.

<u>EDWARD JONES – 25NOV22</u>		<u>Society of St Michael 01NOV22</u>	
Beginning Value:	\$165,345.58	Checking	\$2,826.93
Assets Added:	\$0.00	Savings	\$8,384.89
Assets Withdrawn:	\$0.00	12 month CD	\$6,501.71
Fees and Charges:	\$1827.33	60 month CD	<u>\$6,305.09</u>
Change In Value:	<u>\$12,807.25</u>		\$24,018.62
Current Balance:	\$150,711.00		

<u>*RBO – 24DEC22</u>		<u>*15Jan23 Total Assets: \$426,542.13</u>
Saving Fund	\$135,812.15	
Cemetery Fund	<u>65,339.58</u>	
	\$202,514.29	

Parish Prayer List

Please remember in your prayers LIVING

Ill-afflicted Archpriests John Nightingale & Fr Theodore Orzolek

All those caring for the sick and suffering at this time throughout the world, especially our families and friends: Mike Jadick, Bernie Elko, Margaret Pregmon, Marie Buranich, Helen Wytovich, Tammy Wytovich, Rosemary Kuzmich, Sandra Pritchky, Marie Pasternak, Sandy Batton, Paula Stavisky, Al Pritchky, Eli Stavisky, Evelyn Bunevitch, Nadia Macheska, John Pritchky, Paulette Ezbiansky, Andrew Lutzyck, Daniel Jones, Charissa Voroziichak, Matushka Paula Soucek

Servants of God Dcn Nathan, Mat. Katherine, Micaiah, Evangeline, Gideon, Zacharias, Ignatius, Basil (Clausson), Mat. Emilia, Blaise, Maximus, Rodion, Savina (Shepherd), Barbara Sevensky, Bev Elko, Sandra Condon, Ann Tyrpak, Sandy & Danny Pregmann, Walter Pritchky, Michael & Euphemia (Mia) (Keklak); Amaya Jackson; Robert Kane; Maria & Vitaliy Rakovsky; Ekaterina & Anna; Kelly Cigna;

Catechumens: Jason, Emily, Judah, Nadia, & Silas

DEPARTED

Departed: Helen Wirhanowsky 01/10/2018; Marie Morek 1/15/2014; Ned Matechak 1/20/2014; Helen Sokol 1/25/2017; Marie Horek 1/29/2015; Margaret Jadick 1/29/2016; Margaret Cushner