



# FROM THE AMBIVON

## ST MICHAEL ORTHODOX CHURCH

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**July 21st, 2024 4th SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST — Tone 3.** The Finding of the honored relics of the Venerable right-believing Great Princess and Nun Anna of Kashin, Wonderworker (1649). Prophet Ezekiel (6th c. B.C.). Ven. Simeon of Emessa, Fool-for-Christ, and his fellow ascetic, Ven. John (ca. 590). Ven. Onuphry (Onuphrius) the Silent, and Ven. Onesimos, Recluse, of the Kiev Caves (Far Caves—12th-13th c.).  
The “ARMATIA” Icon of the Mother of God.

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### **Birthdays & Anniversaries for July**

**Birthdays:** Sharissa Vorozichak (7/9); Tammy Vrabel (7/10); Mia Keklak (7/14); Sandy Pregmon (7/11); David Barsigian (7/16); Silas Hart (7/17); Vitaliy Rakovsky (7/20); Santo Joseph Cerminaro (7/20); Maria Rakovsky (7/26);

**Nameday:** Patricia Jones (St Paraskeva of Rome 7/26)

**Baptism:**

**Anniversary:** Maria & Vitaliy Rakovsky (7/4)

**Travelers:**

**Prospora Schedule: HELP! We need families to start baking prospora at home. Please sign up. *The Church has a prospora kit if you would like to borrow it.* Thank you all for your offering “for the people by the people.” Thank you Emily for today’s prospora.**

July 28

Aug 4

Aug 11

**Counting: HELP! Please sign up to help us count weekly donations! Thank you Emily for helping count today.**

July 28 Tammy

Aug 4

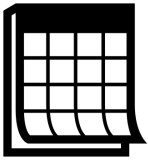
Aug 11

**Visitors: PLEASE JOIN US DOWNSTAIRS for an Agape Meal. Thank you to everyone who donated. Please donate what you would spend for lunch at the agape meal to replenish our supplies.**

**PLEASE SING ALONG! Singing the hymns and responses to the litanies throughout the services is encouraged!**

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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 prayer, fasting, and a recent (monthly) confession. If you have questions please ask Fr Michael! Visitors, if you did not introduce yourself to Fr Michael at Vespers, please refrain from Holy Communion.*



## Service Schedule

SAT, July 27th: @ 5:00 PM - Great Vespers

SUN, July 28th: @ 9:10 AM - Hours and Divine Liturgy

**5th SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST — Tone 4.**



## *Words of Wisdom*

### *From the Saints & Teachers*

## Today's Readings

**Epistles:** (93) Romans 6:18-23

**Gospels:** (25) Matthew 8:5-13

### **EPISTLE**

Deacon: Let us attend!

Priest: Peace be unto all!

Reader: And to thy spirit.

Deacon: Wisdom!

Reader: The Prokeimenon in the 3rd Tone, a Psalm of David: Sing praises to our God, sing praises, sing praises to our King, sing praises!

Choir: Sing praises to our God, sing praises, sing praises to our King, sing praises!

Reader: Clap your hands, all ye peoples. Shout to God with loud songs of joy.

Choir: Sing praises to our God, sing praises, sing praises to our King, sing praises!

Reader: Sing praises to our God, sing praises,

Choir: Sing praises to our King, sing praises!

Deacon: Wisdom!

Reader: The reading from the Epistle of the Holy Apostle Paul to the Romans.

Deacon: Let us attend!

[(93) Romans 6:18-23] **Brethren:** Having been set free from sin, you have become slaves of righteousness. I am speaking in human terms, because of your natural limitations. For just as you once presented your members to uncleanness and to greater and greater lawlessness, so now yield your members to righteousness for sanctification. When you were slaves of sin, you were free from righteousness. But then what fruit did you get from the things of which you are now ashamed? The end of those things is death. But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves of God, the return you get is sanctification and its end, eternal life. For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Priest: Peace be unto thee, Reader.

Reader: And to thy spirit.

### **ALLELUIA**

Deacon: Wisdom!

Reader: In the 3rd Tone: AL-LE-LU-IA!

Choir: Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

Reader: In Thee, O Lord, have I placed my hope; let me not be put to shame.

Choir: Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

Reader: Be Thou a God of protection for me, a house of refuge in order to save me.

Choir: Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

### **GOSPEL**

[(25) Matthew 8:5-13] **At that time,** as Jesus entered Capernaum, a centurion came forward to Him, beseeching Him and saying, "Lord, my servant is lying paralyzed at home, terribly tormented." And He said to him, "I will come and

heal him." But the centurion answered Him, "Lord, I am not worthy to have Thee come under my roof; but only say the word, and my servant will be healed. For I am a man under authority, with soldiers under me; and I say to one, 'Go,' and he goes, and to another, 'Come,' and he comes, and to my slave, 'Do this,' and he does it." When Jesus heard him, He marveled, and said to those who followed Him, "Truly, I say to you, not even in Israel have I found such faith. I tell you, many will come from east and west and sit at table with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven, while the sons of the kingdom will be thrown into the outer darkness; there men will weep and gnash their teeth." And to the centurion Jesus said, "Go; be it done for thee as thou hast believed." And the servant was healed at that very moment.

**6:16 Slaves of Sin or of Obedience**

**CONFESSING GOD THROUGH OUR ACTIONS.** AMBROSIASTER: Paul warns us not to say one thing and do another, so that when we are said to be servants of God we should be found by our actions to be servants of the devil. He proclaims that we are servants of the one whose will we do and that it is not fair to confess God as Lord but do the works of the devil. For God himself notices this and attacks it: "This people honors me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me," and the Lord says in the Gospel: "No man can serve two masters," and in the law it is written: "God is not mocked." COMMENTARY ON PAUL'S EPISTLES.

Bray, G., ed. (1998). *Romans (Revised)* (pp. 162–163). InterVarsity Press.

**8:13 The Servant Healed**

**AS YOU BELIEVED.** IRENAEUS: **There is no coercion with God.** He has a good will toward us continually. He gives reliable counsel to humans and angels (who also are rational beings), to whom he has given the power of choice. Those who yield obedience therefore possess what is good freely and justly. It is given by God but preserved by themselves.... The human spirit is possessed of free will from the beginning, and God is possessed of free will, in whose likeness humanity was created. Humanity is advised to hold fast to the good and thereby be responsive to God. This refers not only to works but faith as well. God preserved the human will free and under his own self-control ... as is shown in Jesus' word to the centurion: "Go. Be it done for you as you have believed." **AGAINST HERESIES 3.37.1, 4–5.** Simonetti, M., ed. (2001). *Matthew 1–13* (p. 163). InterVarsity Press.

*Treasury*

*"... but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal.  
+ Jesus Christ +++*



**How Much is my tithe**

Weekly	2%	4%	5%	10%
<b>\$200</b>	\$4	\$8	\$10	\$20
<b>\$500</b>	\$10	\$20	\$25	\$50
<b>\$750</b>	\$15	\$30	\$37	\$75
<b>\$1000</b>	\$20	\$40	\$50	\$100
<b>\$1500</b>	\$30	\$60	\$75	\$150

**WEEKLY GIVING UPDATE:** We thank you for your continued giving in gratitude for all that our loving God does for each of us, for His Holy Church, and all the blessings we receive through her.  
**July Income:** \$9,750.00  
**July Expense:** \$8,938.53  
**Weekly Cost to Keep the Church Open:** \$3,740.85  
**Monthly Cost to Keep the Church Open:** \$14,963.58



## **Announcements - Upcoming Parish & Diocesan Events**

**Silent Prayers and Confession:** Every Wednesday 11:00AM - 1:30PM or after vespers. Or you can make an appt for confession.

**Church Work Day:** Every Day is Church Maintenance day! I will begin a list of items that we will need to work on. If you are free and would like to work at the church let me know. Just check the list and when you finish the task, initial off that it has been done.

**TODAY - BLESSING OF VEHICLES - SUN, JULY 21st:** Vehicles are traditionally blessed on or near the Feast of St. Elijah (July 20th) who was taken up by God into the heavens in a fiery chariot. We are all accustomed to having our homes blessed around the Feast of Theophany, yet we also spend a great deal of time in OR on our vehicles traveling through town, on vacations, for work, and for recreation. This blessing is a request to Our Lord that He send a Guardian Angel to protect and keep both drivers and passengers in safety, and to bless our vehicles given to us by God for their good use. Bring your vehicles, motorcycles, bicycles or any other form of transportation on Sunday, July 21st to be blessed immediately following Divine Liturgy.

**Sunday Parking:** With the increase in parish attendance on Sundays we are asking that the parking row across the street be reserved for elderly, those with difficulty walking, handicap, and parish visitors. If you do not fall into one of those categories, please use the parking lot kitty-corner to us with the stairs so we can keep plenty of parking free for those who need to be closer. Thanks so much!

**Parish Council Meeting:** 4 August 4:00 PM - 5:00 PM - All are invited.

**Choir practice: Saturday's @ 4pm prior to vespers. If you would like to sing in the choir please make every effort to be at the practice.**

**Bulletin Boards:** Community and Administration Boards. Please, you can post on the community board as long as the post/event does not contradict our faith.

**PROSPHORA BAKING:** I would like to hold another prospora baking class this week for all who would like to learn the valuable and God pleasing ministry. Remember the offering of bread is "for the people and by the people."

**ICE CREAM SOCIAL:** We are in the midst of planning an Ice Cream Social! This is to be like a town council to chit chat about life, the church, where the church is headed in regards to ministries etc.....but to have a lot of ice cream! This will more than likely be the first week of August.

**RETAINING WALL:** We have several bids to fix the retaining wall on Church Street. The company will donate capstones and replace the paved sidewalk with a cement sidewalk. The company will tear down the wall, replace/install drainage pipes, and reuse the existing block stones to reduce the cost. **17K** is the best bid and the lowest by almost 30K and will be done by Cerminaro Stone Company. This is our Summer Campaign drive. We would like to get this finished before winter and if you would like to donate to this campaign; please add it to your envelopes or you can donate by paypal on our website: <https://www.stmichaelof.org/donate>

**WISH LIST!** I am putting together a church wish list for items needed for our day to day operations and liturgical services. Please consider purchasing from our wish list as this will reduce our cost of expenses and will allow us to increase and focus our giving in other vital areas needed.

<https://www.myregistry.com/giftlist/stmichaelsorthodoxchurcholdforgewishlist>

**St. Michael's Greeters Ministry** "*I was a stranger, and you welcomed me.*" Matthew 25:35 Our objective is to welcome visitors to the Parish, help them "feel at home" during the worship service, provide them with information about Orthodoxy and the Parish, invite them to Parish activities, introduce them to people of like interests, invite them back, follow-up to thank them for visiting us, and identifying whether we can help them in the future. Most people leave a church once they enter because no one greeted them. Please sign up to greet people.

## **Parish Prayer List**

**Newly Departed:** *John Pritchyk (6/16); Matushka Paula Soucek (6/23);*

**Departed:** *Genevieve Barile 7/31/2015; John Sokol 7/7/2016; Justine (Tinchey) Ludwig 7/19/2016; Steve Serniak 7/20/2016; Michael Peregrim Sr. 7/08/2018; William Keslosky 7/15/2019; Tom Krenitsky 7/6/2021; Stella (Minnick) Krenitsky 7/12/2022*

### **Please remember in your prayers LIVING**

Ill-afflicted *Archpriests Michael Evans, John Nightingale, & Theodore Orzolek*

**All those caring for the sick and suffering at this time throughout the world, especially our families and friends:** *David Lezinsky, Christine Sevensky, Mike Jadick, Margaret Pregmon, Daniel Jones, Michael Sokol; Michael Krenitsky; Bernie Elko; The children of God Abigail and Nathan.*

**Servants of God** *Mark Bezhuly, David Barsigian, Patricia Jones, Anne Buday, Mary Krevko, Gregory Krevko, Emily Krenitsky, Gregory Krenitsky, Barbara Sevensky, Beverly Elko, Sandra Condon, Marie Pasternak, Nicole Earl, Anna Tyrpak, Sandy & Danny Pregmon, Walter Pritchyk, Michael & Euphemia Keklak, Justin & Elisabeth Kane, Maria & Vitaliy Rakovsky, Ekaterina & Anna, Joe & Kelly Cigna, George, Natasha, Rosa, & Lucia Coyoy, Paul & MaryAnn Newmeyer, Mat. Emilia, Blaise, Maximus, Rodion, Savina Shepherd, Joseph, Emilia, Judah, Nadezda, & Silas Hart, Eli & Paula Stavisky, Helen Wytovich, Tammy Wytovich, Sharissa & Debra, Nadia Macheska, Paulette Ezbiansky, Jason Vo & Maura Elko, Santo Joseph Cerminaro, Mikayla Brown*

**Seekers -** *Christopher, Eugene, Mike, Brayden, Barbara, Amanda, Tommy*

**Catechumens -** *JoAnne Snopek & Paul Dunay*

## **BRINGING OTHERS TO THE FAITH - Fr. Stavros Akrotirianakis**

*Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you.*

Matthew 28:18-19

This Bible verse is known as the Great Commission. After the Resurrection, Jesus commissioned His Disciples to spread the Gospel to the entire world. In fact, there are four verbs in these verses instructing His disciples exactly what to do—go, make (disciples), baptize, and teach. A disciple is a follower, a student. An apostle is a recruiter, one who spreads news. One must be a disciple before being an apostle. In essence, in these verses, Jesus commissioned His students to go out and be His teachers, and His recruiters. This was not a great suggestion. It was a great commission, an order. All followers of Jesus are disciples. We are all disciples. Being a disciple is not enough. Why? Because what we believe is good news that we should want to bring to someone else. And second, if we do not spread this news and do not bring others into the fold, then the faith and the Church dies with us. Thus, we are all called to be apostles.

At every baptism service, the above Scripture verses are read over the person who has just been baptized. Through baptism, they are not only welcomed into the church, but they are commissioned just like the first disciples, with the expectation that we will bring others to Christ and to the church. I once heard a podcast

where the speaker talked about the purpose of a shoe factory being to make shoes. He said, “if you have a beautiful factory, pricey machinery and great workers but the factory doesn’t produce shoes, then it is a failure.” Similarly, the purpose of the church is to make disciples. If we have beautiful churches, ornate furnishings, and nice people, but the church is empty, if there are no disciples being made, then the church has failed as well.

God has given each of us a way to bring others to Him. To some, like me, we are called to do it as priests. Some will do it as parents, bringing their own children to know the Lord. Each of us will have many opportunities in life to talk to someone in need, most likely a family member or close friend. There will be an opportunity to pray with that person. Will we do it? There will be an opportunity to shine Christ’s light on someone, either intentionally or even unintentionally. Are we going to do that? Each of us has at least one talent that we can use to serve others, and to make a living for ourselves. And each of us has a way to spread the Gospel. At our judgment before Christ, He is going to ask us how we used the talents He gave us, and He’s also going to ask us what did we do to bring His message to others. Our judgment of being worthy of His kingdom will be based in part on this.

So, on a practical level, how can we bring others into the faith? The easiest way is by example. The fruit of the Spirit—love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control—are very rare in the world today. They are also very attractive. People crave peace, they want kindness, they wish they had patience. When we are these things, when we model these things, we become attractive to people (almost everyone) who wants these things. When we model them, and people want to emulate them, they will inevitably ask, how are you patient, or kind or joyful? And then there is the opportunity to tell them how Christ helps us be these things.

Another example is going about your Christian faith—go to church on Sundays, so that your children see that it is important and your friends realize it is important to you. Read the Bible at home. Contribute generously to charitable causes. In Matthew 5:16, Jesus tells us “Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father who is in heaven.” When people see our good works, when they are done in a way that shines a light upon God, they will want to glorify our Father in heaven. Inviting someone to church is somewhat risky. What will someone think if you put yourself out there like that? What if they say no? What if they say yes? What will they find if they come and see your church—will it be in a language they understand? Will people be welcoming and friendly?

The thing we can say for certain about bringing people to Christ is that in order to do this, you first must have come to Him yourself. We can’t convince people to join something that we are not convinced of. The other thing we can say for certain is that we cannot control outcomes, only efforts. We can’t make people come to Christ, we can only invite them. And even more certain, we can bring Christ to people, but we can’t convert them. The Holy Spirit is the one who converts hearts of people to come to Christ. So, how can we bring others to the faith—believe, practice, model and invite, and let the Holy Spirit do the rest.

*Lord, thank You for the gift of my baptism. Thank You for calling me to You, and accepting me as one of Your disciples. Help me to be a good student of faith. Help me to comprehend the message of the Gospel. Allow my heart to meditate on You. Kindle in me a joy for You, so that not only I want to be with You but I want to invite others also. Give me the courage to lead by example. Give me the boldness to invite others. Send Your Holy Spirit into those around me. Use me to lead them to You. Amen.*

We have all been commissioned to spread the Gospel from the time of our baptisms. It is not enough just be a disciple. We must first be a disciple and eventually an apostle. This isn’t a suggestion. It is a commission.