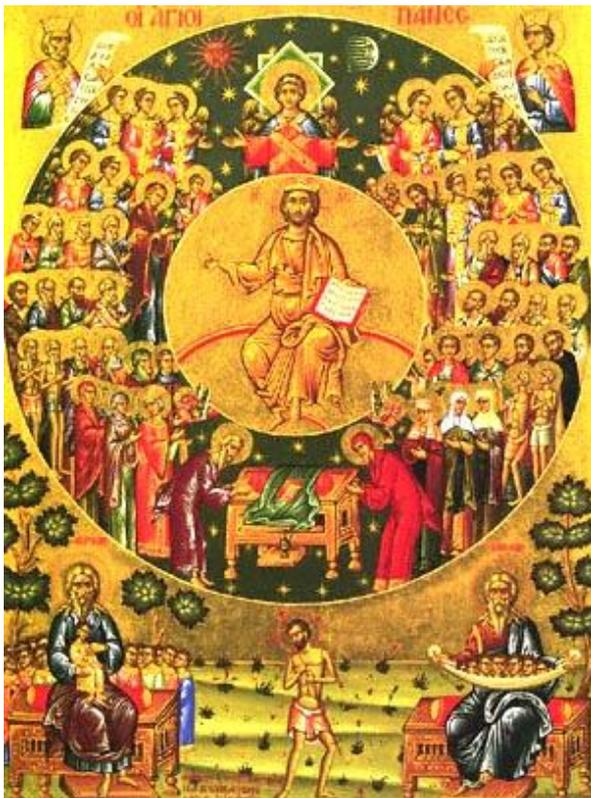




PARISH BULLETIN

HOLY ARCHANGHEL MICHAEL'S ROMANIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH

No. 167/23 June 2019



**First Sunday after Pentecost –
Sunday of All Saints**

Resurrectional Apolytikion. Mode pl. 4.

From the heights didst Thou come down, O Compassionate One. And Thou didst submit to three-day burial that from the passions Thou might deliver us. O our Life and Resurrection, O Lord, glory be to Thee.

Seasonal Kontakion. Mode Pl. 4.

As the first-fruits of our nature to the Planter of created things, the world presenteth the God-bearing martyred Saints in offering unto Thee, O Lord. Through their earnest entreaties, keep Thy Church in deep peace and divine tranquility, through the pure Theotokos, O Thou Who art greatly merciful.

Prokeimenon. Mode 4. Psalm 67.35,26

**God is wonderful among his saints.
Verse: Bless God in the congregations.**

The reading is from St. Paul's Letter to the Hebrews 11:33-40; 12:1-2

Brethren, all the saints through faith conquered kingdoms, enforced justice, received promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched raging fire, escaped the edge of the sword, won strength out of weakness, became mighty in war, put foreign armies to flight. Women received their dead by resurrection. Some were tortured, refusing to accept release, that they might rise again to a better life. Others

suffered mocking and scourging, and even chains and imprisonment. They were stoned, they were sawn in two, they were tempted, they were killed with the sword; they went about in skins of sheep and goats, destitute, afflicted, ill-treated - of whom the world was not worthy - wandering over deserts and mountains and in dens and caves of the earth. And all these, though well attested by their faith, did not receive what was promised, since God had foreseen something better for us, that apart from us they should not be made perfect. Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus the pioneer and perfecter of our faith.



The Gospel According to Matthew 10:32-33; 37-38; 19:27-30

The Lord said to his disciples, "Every one who acknowledges me before men, I also will acknowledge before my Father who is in heaven; but whoever denies me before men, I also will deny him before my Father who is in heaven. He who loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; and he who loves son or daughter more than

me is not worthy of me; and he who does not take his cross and follow me is not worthy of me." Then Peter said in reply, "Lo, we have left everything and followed you. What then shall we have?" Jesus said to them, "Truly, I say to you, in the new world, when the Son of man shall sit on his glorious throne, you who have followed me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. And every one who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or lands, for my name's sake, will receive a hundredfold, and inherit eternal life. But many that are first will be last, and the last first."

Word of the week – Reflection On the Sunday of All Saints

Today is the Sunday of All Saints, and who thinks about how the main purpose of our life on this earth is to acquire holiness? Yes, we exist to become saints.

The failure of this achievement is the greatest tragedy of human existence. But how is holiness considered today? What is our stance before it? How do we view it? How do we live it? How can we find it and not lose it? How do we use it, perhaps even exploit it?

Holiness does not eliminate the human personality. It does not violate human freedom and will, uniqueness and the sacredness of the human person. Holiness is not unmanned and the manufacturing of an identical statue. Many have a false perception of holiness. The most fragrant books of the lives of saints give us numerous and beautiful examples from the West to the East, among women and men, young and old, educated and

illiterate, married and unmarried, clergy and laity, closed and open types of personalities.

Generally holiness, being divine and sacred, causes awe and respect, admiration and fascination, but we must say that sometimes myths and exaggerations and inauthenticity is sometimes interwoven. A saint is considered completely detached from everything mundane. The source of holiness, self-holiness and self-goodness, is God. By sharing in Him it is offered to us. The early Christians were called saints in order to be reminded of the purpose of their lives. Holiness today is considered remote, otherworldly, impossible. It is a gift to the elite aristocracy of the spirit. Holiness has been given a purely moralistic dimension that does not characterize the status of the substance of a Christian.

Holiness is not a championship match, a supernatural feat, an awesome act of prowess, the acquisition of a winning record. Holiness is not an illuminated sign, a glowing halo, a spectacular display, a needed advertisement, the diffusion of applause. Rather, holiness loves to live in obscurity, ingloriousness, forgotten, silence, repentance and humility. Holiness is communion with All Holy God, not a human achievement. Holiness is true balance, authentic health, a meaningful relationship with God. It is the obedience to His command, that we become holy as God is holy. The will of God is our sanctification.

By holiness is meant following Christ to Gethsemane and Golgotha. Holiness is not transmitted, not earned by merely reading books and having lengthy discussions in living rooms. It calls out that we must give

blood, in order to receive the Spirit. We must persistently fight and be patient, to defeat the wild beast with many heads called pride. The saint overcomes selfishness, love for the flesh, ambition and love for money, with love for the divine, love for people, philanthropy, brotherly kindness, philoprogenitiveness, and the virtuous life.

The saints, according to the late Elder Justin Popovich, are the centuries old authentication of the gospel, the extensions of Christ. They have proved by practice that the virtues of the gospel are feasible.

Many pilgrims to Mount Athos today seek great saints in order to have their problems solved. In other words, we want the saints and Christ and the Church out of pure self-interest, to spend our lives undisturbed and well. This shows that there is a magical conception to holiness, the holy sacraments and the Church. This is how Orthodoxy becomes religionized. Elder Paisios would tell us that the saints would love Christ even if there was no paradise in the afterlife!

True holiness, because unfortunately there is a pseudo-holiness, is not a powerful projector, a loud speaker, lights, clicking, decoys and promotion. It is hidden, whether it be on Athos or in the city or in the village. It thrives in secrecy, humility and the in goodness of the honorable, the loyal, enduring illness, rejection, failure, grief, criticism, irony, and so on. Holiness may be in the minority and the exception, but it exists. This is very important and a message of great hope.

- *Monk Moses the Athonite, translated by John Sanidopoulos*



Liturgical Schedule for this week

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| Sunday <i>June 23</i> | 7:30 pm | Vigil: Vespers, Litia & Matins (St. John the Baptist's Nativity) |
| Monday <i>June 24</i> | 9:00 am | Divine Liturgy – St. John the Baptist |
| Wednesday <i>June 26</i> | 6:00 pm | Paraklesis |
| Friday <i>June 28</i> | 6:00 pm | Vespers, Litia, & Matins – Sts. Peter and Paul |
| Saturday <i>June 29</i> | 9:00 am 5:00 pm | Apostles' Fast Ends Divine Liturgy (Sts. Peter and Paul) & Memorial Vespers |
| Sunday <i>June 30</i> | | Divine Liturgy at 10am at St. Nicholas Albanian Orthodox Church |

Announcements:

- **Happy birthday** to John DeAngelis (June 26th).
- **Happy name day** to Peter Boilard, Paul Yanka, Paul Porra, and Paul Myers (Sts. Peter and Paul – June 29th) and Johns (St. John the Baptist – June 24th).
- **The Apostles' Fast** begins on Monday. No meat, cheese, or dairy is permitted. Please see the calendar concerning fish and shellfish.
- **Thank you** to all who participated in the Morris Street Yard Sale.
- **Coffee hour** is sponsored by Andrew and Rebecca Tanacea
- **Don't forget the Albanian Festival June 30!**



16 Romanian Avenue, Southbridge, Massachusetts, 01550, P.O. Box 823 (508) 765-5276

www.stmichaelorthodox.com