

Saint Michael's Romanian Orthodox Church

Southbridge, Massachusetts
www.stmichaelorthodox.com
October 2019



LITURGICAL SCHEDULE

Saturday

9:00am Divine Liturgy
10:00am Memorial Service
5pm Vespers

Sunday

9:00am Matins
10:00am Divine Liturgy

Wednesday

6:00pm Paraklesis

Friday

5:30pm Akathist

Feast days

October 1st

Holy Protection of the
Theotokos

October 6th

Apostle Thomas

October 14th

St. Parascheva from Iasi,
Romanian

October 18th

St. Luke the Evangelist

October 20th

St. Artemius the Great Martyr

October 26th

St. Demetrius the Great Martyr
of Thessaloniki

October 27th

St. Demetrius of Basarabov,
protector of Bucharest

Holy Protection of the Theotokos

The Feast of the Protection commemorates the appearance of the most holy Theotokos in the Church of Blachernae in Constantinople in the tenth century, as recorded in the life of Saint Andrew the Fool for Christ's sake. While the multitudes of the faithful were gathered in church, Epiphanius, the friend of Saint Andrew, through the Saint's prayers, beheld the Virgin Mary above the faithful and spreading out her veil over them, signifying her unceasing protection of all Christians. Because of this we keep a yearly feast of gratitude, imploring our Lady never to cease sheltering us in her mighty prayers.



Saint Michael's Romanian Orthodox Church
16 Romanian Avenue, Southbridge Massachusetts 01550
Telephone: (508) 765-5276

Website: www.StmichaelOrthodox.com

Email: stmichaelromanianorthodox@gmail.com

Facebook: St. Michael Orthodox Christian Church

2019 Parish Council

President: Luke Yanka
Vice President: Spiro Thomo
Secretary: Debby Thomo
Treasury: Paul Yanka

2019 Ladies Society Committee

President: Alexandra Nasto
Vice President: Louise Boilard
Secretary: Debbie Thomo
Treasurer: Mary Andreea

Clergy

Fr. John Downie fr.john_downie71@yahoo.com

Parish News & Events

Coffee Hour Volunteers Needed

We need more volunteers for each Sunday. If you volunteer, you can dedicate the coffee hour to the memory of a loved one. Any help would be greatly appreciated!

Please contact Deb Thomo to sign up.

Happy Birthday!! **God Grant You Many More Years!!**

Oct. 2nd – Susan Silva
Oct. 11th – Shirley Yanka, Amanda Thomo
Oct. 12th – Richard Marcian
Oct. 15th – Loukas Mironidis
Oct. 21st – Dimitry Downie
Oct. 22nd – Katie Mironidis

Happy Name Day

October 6th – Apostle Thomas – Tom Dowling, Tom Andrea, Thomas Burren
October 18th – St. Luke – Luke Yanka, Loukas Mironidis
October 26th-27th – St. Dimitrius – Dimitry Mironidis, Dimitry Downie

Thanksgiving Turkey Raffle



Friday, October 25th 2019
Dinner 5:00pm to 6:00pm
Raffle 6:15pm
Romanian Hall

For more information:
Luke Yanka @ 508-958-4144 or
lsyanka@yahoo.com

ANNUAL BANQUET

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 10, 2019
FOLLOWING CHURCH SERVICE
ST. MICHAEL'S ROMANIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH
Romanian Ave. • Southbridge, Mass.

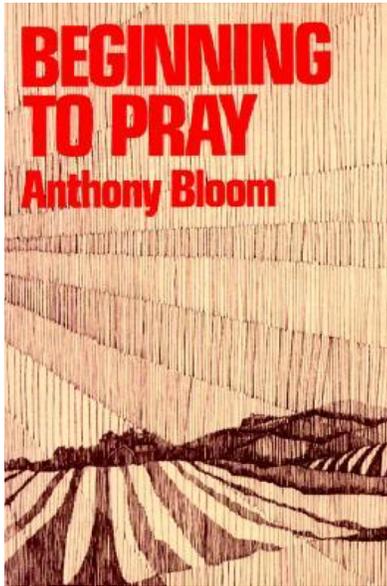
Donation \$25.00

Please see Spiro Thomo for tickets.

Please Pray for:

Preoteasa Camelia
Bill & Lauren Smith
Mary Grabosky
Henrietta Panu

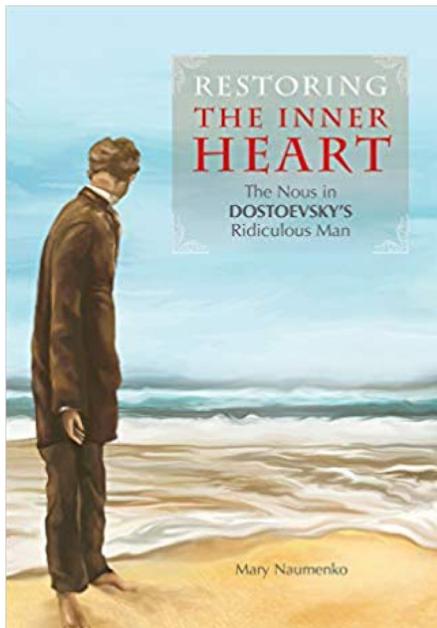
~ Book Corner ~



Book: *Beginning to Pray*

This book has established itself as a modern spiritual classic for Orthodox as well as other Christians. It is written by an Orthodox Archbishop for people who have never prayed before and has been read and loved by persons at all levels of spiritual development.

About the Author: Anthony Bloom, the son of a Russian diplomat, became a physician, monk and archbishop of the Russian Orthodox Church in Great Britain – earning the respect and affection of countless people worldwide because of his deep humanity and tireless witness to the Gospel. Although he died in 2003 at the age of 89, he continues to offer guidance in the spiritual life through his writings.

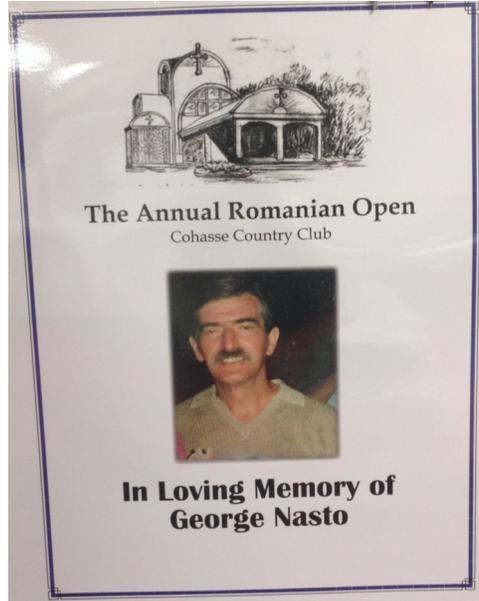


Book: *Restoring the Inner Heart: The Nous in Dostoevsky's Ridiculous Man*

Written close to the end of the great writer's life, Fyodor Dostoevsky's short story "The Dream of a Ridiculous Man" tells of a transformation of the heart and a journey from despair to joy: a joy that can be known by all through the experience of God that transcends a simply rational discourse. In this eye opening literary study, the title character and his spiritual metamorphosis are examined in depth in light of the ancient concept of Nous as it developed from the Greek philosophers to the Christian fathers. By comparing the "Ridiculous Man" to similar characters in Dostoevsky's corpus, the author shows how an Orthodox Christian understanding of the Nous underpins Dostoevsky's own anthropology and how his literary works in turn guide the reader toward a truer vision of humanity.

Parish Life

Golf Tournament and Fall Chicken BBQ – Thank you to all who participated!



President's Corner

President's Corner 10/01/2019

Hope everyone is having a great start to the Fall and the new school year! Thank you to everyone who participated in the 12th annual golf tournament; it was an overwhelming success and we could not do it without you guys! We have 2 big events this month, we have our Chicken BBQ on Saturday 10/5 and our annual Thanksgiving Turkey Raffle on Friday 10/25. We look forward to seeing everyone there! Our church has voted to start a project to repair and replace the roof over our pavilion behind the church hall; we thank all of you that have donated to make this project happen. We are currently running a calendar fundraiser to help cover the roof cost through the month of October, with prizes to be given out each day in November. The calendars are \$10 each and have over \$1500 in prizes on them! Thank you to Matt Dowling for his hard work and effort, and I am confident this will help us with the roof project. Also, His Eminence Metropolitan Nicolae will be joining us for our Feast Day banquet on 11/10; we are very blessed to have this opportunity and we look forward to having him! We are supremely thankful for all of you and we look forward to a great fall season and everything that comes with it!

"But I say to you," the Lord says, "love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, pray for those who persecute you." Why did he command these things? So that he might free you from hatred, sadness, anger and grudges, and might grant you the greatest possession of all, perfect love, which is impossible to possess except by the one who loves all equally in imitation of God.

—St. Maximus the Confessor

Meet the Romanian Nuns Who Produce Natural Beauty Products

From *Positive News Romania*, by Mihaela P.

Monasteries in Romania are always a joy to visit. They are peaceful and beautiful locations and we are used to their maintained and luscious gardens that nuns care for every day.

However, did you know that you can buy beauty products made by nuns? The nuns from Nera monastery in Locvei mountains have started to produce oils, soaps, and moisturizers from medicinal plants.

The plants are collected by themselves from the local area, which is the Nera valley and Banat Mountains. They create the beauty products using traditional recipes.

There are 40 nuns at the monastery and they live their lives growing medicinal plants, processing them and they also do beekeeping.

The nuns say that the monastery was also built with this idea in mind, that the nuns would produce natural beauty treatments. The other monastery, which is considered its sister monastery, called Christiana, was built with the purpose of caring for the ill.

The nuns have been producing the beauty products only from the year of 2009. The laboratory in which they work is called “Saint Doctors without money”.

These products are completely natural and they go through a natural process of production. They are growing without pesticides or insecticides, then they are collected

and dried by the nuns. Everything is done by hand, even the labeling.

The plants contain honey, oregano, lavender, apple, sage, basil, thyme, acacia and lime tree leaves.



Mothers and the Upbringing of Children (Part 1) St. Nektarios of Aegina (+1920)

The education of children must begin from infancy, so that the child's mental faculties may, from their very first appearance, be directed right from the beginning toward the good, the gentle, the true, and may be removed from the evil, the obscene, and the false. This age can be regarded as a most immovable foundation upon which the child's moral and intellectual formation will be built. This is why Phocylides says, "You must while he is yet a child instruct him in good works," for it is from childhood, as from a starting line, that a man sets off on

the race he is to run in life. And Basil the Great declares, "The soul, while it is still easily molded and soft, while it is still like wax that is easily melted and that easily receives the impression of the shapes that are pressed upon it, must straightway and from the beginning be urged on to every exercise of virtues; so that, when the faculty of reason has come and the habit of discrimination has appeared, the soul's course may proceed from first principles and from the impressions of piety that have been handed down to it, with the faculty of reason suggesting that which is useful and the moral character producing an ease of accomplishing it." And who, indeed, does not acknowledge that those first impressions that have come during childhood prove indelible? Who doubts that in early childhood influences are so powerfully impressed on the child's tender soul, that they remain vivid throughout his whole life?

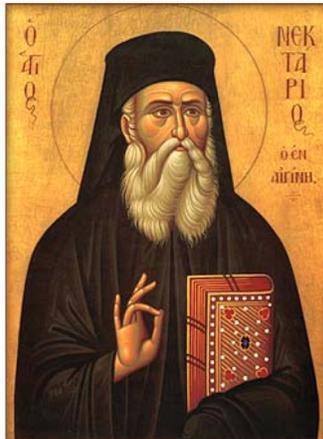
"By constant togetherness with the child...the mother influences the child's soul and moral character, and she is the first to give the first push toward the good."

As educators for this age nature has ordained the parents and, especially, the mothers. It is necessary, then, because of this lofty duty of theirs, this duty of the educator, that we instruct these mothers suitably and raise them carefully, for they will serve their own children as images and models – images and models of which the children will become casts. To such an extent does the child imitate the virtues or

the faults of his mother, and likewise her voice and manners and moral character and deportment, that one can quite

appropriately compare children to the brass disks of the phonograph, which first receive the foot-prints of the voice and then send the voice out again with the same pitch, the same expression, and the same color with which it was originally articulated. Every gesture, every word, every movement, and every action of the mother becomes the gesture and word and expression and movement and action of the child. This is why Asterios (Homily 5 on Matthew) says, "For one of the children preserves the likeness of his mother's voice, another assumes the greater part of her temperament, another with respect to the state of his moral character has been given the shape of her who bore him." By constant togetherness with the child and by the continuous display of the same dispositions, the mother influences the child's soul and moral character, and she is the first to give the first push toward the good.

The mother by a single glance, by a single kiss, by her sweet voice and her delicate caresses, can immediately arouse in the child's heart the leaning and inclination toward the good. Likewise, by a single disapproving glance, by a single tear falling on her cheeks, by a single expression suggestive of her heart's sorrow, she can remove the child from the most destructive danger of the heart. The child, nurtured in his mother's bosom and warmed in his mother's embrace, begins to love before he learns the concept of love, and he begins to subordinate his will to the moral law before he learns the concept of the moral law, and it is the mother alone who is most suited to arousing in the child's heart his first conception of God. Because of this, Basil the Great says (Letter 223), "The conception of God which I received in childhood from my blessed mother – it was this conception, brought to maturity, that I had within myself. For I did not change from one set of opinions to another in the maturation of my reason, but rather I brought to completion the beginnings handed down to me by her." And the greatest of modern educators, Pestalozzi, assigning all the child's religious upbringing to the mothers, exclaims, "I believed in my mother. Her heart showed me God. My God is my mother's God. The God of my heart is the God of my mother's heart. Mother, mother! You showed me God in your instructions, and I found Him in my obedience. Mother, mother! If I should forget God, I must even forget you."



But just as every good action, every good word, and every good disposition of the mother constitute the corner-stone of the subsequent good actions, words, and dispositions of the child, so too do every bad action, word, and disposition of the mother contain the corruptive seeds of the subsequent bad actions, words, and deeds of the child, wherefore the child turns out to be such as his mother is. If, then, the mother's soul is ugly and malignant, or dark, or corrupt, or hard and harsh, and her inclinations evil, and her conduct scandalous and indecent, or if she tends toward irreverence, or toward anger, or toward frenzied passions and hatreds, there will quickly sprout up from the child as well the buds of these malignant vices. But if, on the contrary, the mother's soul is godlike, pure, cheerful, innocent, and full of the fear of God, and her inclinations generous and holy, and her dispositions peaceful, God-loving and mankind-loving, then the child's soul too, mirrored in such a mirror and imitating her unawares, turns out like her and, as time goes on, exhibits the sprouting of the good seeds. This is why, when the great Napoleon asked an eminent educator, Henriette Campan, "What does France need in order to acquire good and honorable men?" this most thoughtful woman replied to the monarch, "Mothers." "Then," said the great man, "appoint enough such women for this great national purpose."

To be continued.

What is a Priest? An Orthodox Statement (Part 2) Fr. Thomas Hopko (+2015)

Jesus of Nazareth is the one great high priest who offers the one perfect sacrifice to God, which is himself and all of creation; or rather, which is all of creation embodied in himself as his deified body and divinized bride. Christ alone is the one and only priest. He is the one who, as St. John Chrysostom's liturgy puts it, "offers and is offered, receives and is given." He is the priest and he is the offering. He is the Logos and he is the lamb. He is the teacher and pastor, the healer and reconciler, the king and judge. He is the teacher and pastor because he is the disciple and the sheep. He is the healer and reconciler because he is the wounded and the forsaken. He is the king and judge because he is the slave and the condemned. He is *all*; and his being as all is the very essence of his priesthood as the last and final Adam who, in offering himself, offers all to his Father, who is the source of all.

The unique priesthood of Christ remains in the Church forever, because Christ himself remains forever in the Church. Christ is not absent from his Church. He is present. His body is not headless. His bride is not widowed. Christ is eternally present in the Church until the end of the ages. As present, he needs no vicar, no representative, no delegate. He needs no substitute to take his place, no *alter christus*. For he himself is here.

The sacrament of the priesthood in the Church, the ordained ministry, is, according to the [orthodox] catholic tradition, the sacrament of Christ's presence in the Church. It is

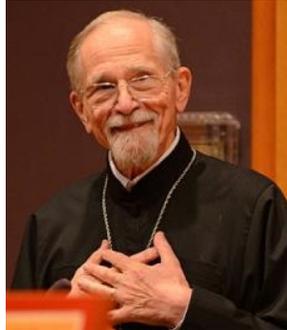
the *mysterion* of the presence of the head and bridegroom with his body and his bride in all the fullness of his messianic presence and power, with all the fullness of grace and truth of the eternal life of the kingdom of God which he brings. Jesus Christ is present in the Church as its head and husband, king and lord, priest and pastor, prophet and teacher, reconciler and healer. The realization and manifestation of his presence is the sacrament of the ordained clergy which is an essential element of the one "great mystery... Christ and the Church" (Ephesians 5:32).

There are those who deny this doctrine of the catholic tradition of the Church and this view of the ordained ministry. Some say that the Church is an institution established by God with sacraments, defined as visible signs of invisible grace, instituted by Christ, one of which is the sacrament of the priesthood understood as the vicarious, delegated continuation and representation of the power and authority of Christ in the Church exercised by those individuals possessing this gift. Others say that the Church is indeed an institution established by God with sacraments so defined, but that the ordained ministry is not a sacrament because Christ is invisibly present in the Church which is itself essentially invisible, having human expressions within the life of this world which are necessarily limited, partial, and sinful. With the Church thus understood, the grace of God is given through faith with baptism and the Lord's supper generally understood, one way or another,

"The ordained priesthood in the Church and for the Church...is the sacramental presence of Christ himself in and for the Church."

as the only visible sacramental signs of this invisible grace working through faith. In this general view, the ordained ministry is essentially a ministry of preaching and administration, one of the many ministries of the Church, with Christ's unique priesthood operating within the community through the "priesthood of all believers." Thus, in a word, there is no sacramental sign and presence of Christ in the Church, and the clergy of the Church are functionaries of the body, possessing the professional qualifications for this service.

Both of these views, according to the orthodox faith, are wrong. They are wrong because they are expressions of a wrong understanding of the Church and a wrong understanding of the sacraments. The Church, to put it simplistically, and perhaps to risk a grave misunderstanding, is not an institution with sacraments understood as particular channels of grace existing within it. The Church is rather itself a sacrament, indeed the sacrament par excellence. It is the great mystery of new life in the new humanity of the new Adam in the new creation. It is, as it were, the new Eve, the new mother of the living. It is a sacramental reality with sacramental expressions as its essential realization within the time and space of the old creation. It is itself the new creation and the new life in Christ, one with the unity of God; holy with his sanctity; catholic with his divine fullness; apostolic with his eternal mission of salvation through communion with himself. It is Christ's deified body by grace. It is Christ's glorious bride by love. It has purely



human, historical institutions and organizations, but it is not essentially identified with them or defined by them. Its essential being is the mystery hidden for ages in God but now revealed to men, the mystery of man's salvation and deification in communion with God through the Son of God in the Holy Spirit.

As such, it is the "church which is his body, the fulness of him who fills all in all" (Ephesians 1:23). It is the "church of the living God, the pillar and bulwark of the truth" (1 Timothy 3:15).

The ordained priesthood in the Church and for the Church—not without or apart from or over the Church — is the sacramental presence of Christ himself in and for the Church. It is the sacrament of Christ's abiding presence in the Church as its husband and head, priest and pastor, prophet and teacher, master and lord, forgiver, reconciler, healer. It is the mystery within the great mystery of Christ and the Church which guarantees the objective presence of salvation in the body, for it guarantees the objective presence of the Savior in all the fullness and power of his theandric, messianic activity. It is the sacrament which guarantees the objective identity and continuity of the Church in space and time — the so-called apostolic succession — because it manifests and realizes in the body the identity and continuity of the saving presence and activity in and for the Church of the "one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus" (1 Timothy 2:5; cf. Hebrews 8-10).

To be continued.

October 2019

Saint Michael's Romanian Orthodox Church
 Southbridge, Massachusetts
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| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|---|------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--|---------------------|---|--|
| | | 1 Holy Protection of the Theotokos | 2 Paraklesis 6:00pm | 3 | 4 Akathist 5:30pm | 5 Divine Liturgy 9:00am (Memorial Service following Liturgy 10:00am) Vespers, Litia 5:00pm |
| 6 Apostle Thomas Matins 9:00am Divine Liturgy 10:00am | 7 | 8 | 9 Apostle James, Son of Alphaeus Paraklesis 6:00pm | 10 | 11 | 12 |
| 13 Seventh Ecumenical Synod Divine Liturgy TBA | 14 St. Parascheva of Iasi | 15 | 16 St. Longinus the Centurion | 17 Prophet Hosea | 18 St. Luke the Evangelist | 19 Prophet Joel |
| 20 Great Martyr Artemius Divine Liturgy TBA | 21 St. Hilarion the Great | 22 | 23 Apostle James, Brother of Our Lord Paraklesis 6:00pm | 24 | 25 Vespers – St. Demetrius 6:00pm | 26 Great Martyr Demetrius of Thessaloniki Divine Liturgy 9:00am (Memorial Service following Liturgy 10:00am) Vespers, Litia 5:00pm |
| 27 St. Demetrius of Basarabov Matins 9:00am Divine Liturgy 10:00am | 28 | 29 | 30 Paraklesis 6:00pm | 31 | | |