

HOLY ASCENSION PARISH

NOVEMBER 2009 NEWSLETTER



ASCENSION OF OUR LORD

THE HOLY ASCENSION ORTHODOX CHURCH

is the Washington, DC, parish of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad (ROCA), under the *omophor* (or the conciliar leadership) of Metropolitan Agafangel (Pashkovsky), Bishop of Odessa & Taurida. The Holy Ascension Parish was organized on Ascension Day, 17 May 2007.

BISHOPS & LOCAL CLERGY

✠ Metropolitan Agafangel, First Hierarch of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad, Metropolitan of Eastern America and New York, and Bishop of Odessa & Taurida ✠ Andronik, Archbishop of Ottawa & North America ✠ Bishop Joseph (Hrebinka) of Washington ✠ Michael Foster, deacon ✠ Seraphim Englehardt, subdeacon ✠ Jack Hinton, subdeacon ✠ Daniel Olson, reader ✠

OLD ADDRESS

500 West Annandale Road, Falls Church VA 22307

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NEW ADDRESS

3921 University Drive, Fairfax VA 22030

☎(703) 591-9445 🌐 www.holyascension.info

PART 1. OUR PARISH

The Holy Ascension parish welcomes all Orthodox people to its sacraments and all people with an interest in Christianity and the abiding Tradition of the Holy Orthodox Church. The immediate Holy Ascension parish background is Russian émigré with many English-speaking converts. Members, visitors, and people in touch online come from all ethnicities. The Church is One.

Please visit our websites~~

<http://ruschurchabroad.com/engindex.htm>

<http://www.rocor.us>

<http://www.holyascension.info>



PART 2. A NEW PLACE OF WORSHIP

All of the legal steps are done and we have purchased the property at 3921 University Drive in the City of Fairfax VA 22030. Renovation work has finished, and we will move in Saturday, November 7, 2009. The first service in our new location will be the Vigil at 5:00 PM that night.



With the move, a new chapter will begin for our parish. Please note the new telephone number: (703) 591-9445. Glory to God!

PART 3. FEAST OF SAINT MICHAEL THE ARCHANGEL

Saint Michael's Day each year is the anniversary of Bishop Joseph's ordination into the priesthood in 1969. St Michael the

Archangel is mentioned by name in the Books of Daniel of Jude, and of Revelation. In the book of Daniel, Michael appears as "one of the chief princes" who in Daniel's vision comes to the angel Gabriel's aid in his contest with the angel of Persia, Dobiel, and is also described there as the advocate of Israel and "great prince who stands up for the children of your [Daniel's] people." The Taomudic tradition rendered Michael's name as meaning "Who is like El?" ("Who is like God?"), As a question, it is understood as being rhetorical, implying

A 13th-century Byzantine icon of Saint Michael from Mt Sinai.



the answer, "No one is like God. Much of the late Midrastic detail about Michael was transmitted to Christianity through the Book of Enoch, whence it was taken up and further elaborated. In late medieval Christianity, Saint Michael, together with Saint George, became the patron saint of chivalry, and of the first chivalric order of France, the Order of Saint Michael of 1469.

In the New Testament Epistle of Jude in verse 9, St Michael disputes with the Devil over the body of Moses. In Revelation 12:7-8, "And there was a great battle in heaven, Michael and his angels fought with the dragon, and the dragon and his angels fought back. But he was not strong enough, and they lost their place in heaven." Saint John describes Satan being thrown out of heaven three and a half years from the end of the age, "a time, times, and half a cycle" (Revelation 12:14). Satan being thrown from heaven coincides with the "abomination that causes desolation" as spoken of by the prophet (Daniel 9:27). In Catholic teachings, Saint Michael will also triumph

at the end times when Antichrist will be defeated by him. The Book of Daniel (12:1) states: "At that time Michael, the great prince who protects your people, will arise."

According to some Christian theologians, Saint Michael may appear in Scripture where his name is not mentioned. Examples of this include the cherub who stood at the gate of paradise, "to keep the way of the tree of life" (Genesis 3:24), the angel through whom God published the Decalogue to his chosen people, the angel who stood in the way against Balaam (Numbers 22:22 sqq.), the angel who routed the army of Sennacherib (2 Kings 19:35).

It may have been natural to St Michael, the champion of the Jewish people, to be the champion also of Catholic Christians, giving victory in war to his clients. The early Catholics, however, regarded some of the martyrs as their military patrons: Saint George, Saint Theodore, Saint Demetrius, Saint Sergius and Bacchus, Saint Procopius, Saint Mercurius and the others; but to St Michael they gave the care of their sick. At the place where he was first venerated, in Phrygia (modern-day Turkey), his prestige as an angelic healer obscured his interposition in military affairs. It was from early times the centre of the true cult of the holy angels, particularly of St Michael.

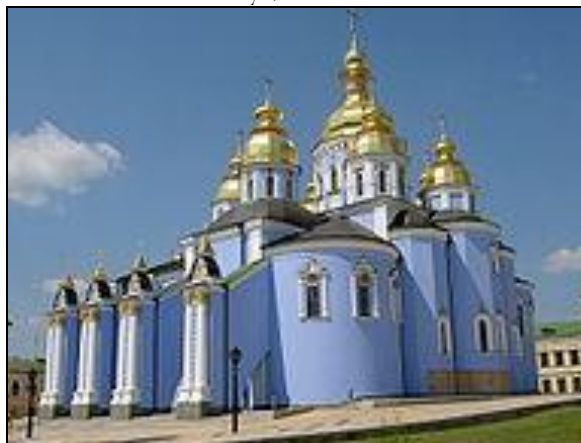
Still more famous are the legends of the springs that St. Michael is said to have drawn from the rock at Colassae (Chonae, on the Lycus). Catholic tradition tells that the pagans directed a stream against the sanctuary of St. Michael to destroy it, but the custodian of the shrine, named Archippus, prayed to St. Michael, and the archangel appeared and split the rock, opening up a new bed to divert the stream, and forever sanctified the waters which came from the gorge. The Orthodox Church believes that this apparition took place about the middle of the first century and celebrates a feast in commemoration of it on September 6 as the "*Miracle of the Archangel Michael at Chonae.*" The Monastery of the Miracle in the Moscow Kremlin, where the Russian tsars were baptized, was dedicated to the Feast of the Miracle at Chonae (Chonae or Kona). Hot springs at Pythia in Bythinia and elsewhere in Asia Minor were also dedicated to St Michael.

At Constantinople likewise, Saint Michael was the great heavenly physician. His principal sanctuary, the "*Michaelion*", was at Sosthenion, some fifty miles south of Constantinople. He supposedly visited Emperor Constantine the Great at Constantinople, intervened

RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH ABROAD, ARCHDIOCESE OF OTTAWA & NORTH AMERICA

in assorted battles, and appeared, sword in hand, over the mausoleum of Hadrian, in apparent answer to the prayers of Pope St. Gregory the Great (r. 590-604) that a plague in Rome should cease. In honor of the occasion, the pope took to calling the mausoleum the “Castel Sant’Angelo” (Castle of the Holy Angel), the name by which it is still known. The sick slept in this church at night to wait for a manifestation of St Michael; his feast was kept there June 9.

Saint Michael’s Monastery,
Kiyiv,Ukraine



PART 4. NOVEMBER LITURGIES BY CIVIL DATE

All Sunday Liturgies begin at 10:00 AM. A luncheon buffet always follows. Volunteers may offer to help with luncheon fare by cooking food at home and by preparation and service at the church. A volunteer may also bring monastic food for Bishop Joseph on Sundays that are not Lenten fasts.

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 15th: The Brotherhood of Saints Cosmos and Damian will hold their annual *shashlik*/barbecue fundraiser for the parish. The suggested donation is \$20 per plate which will be put toward the church building fund, for church improvements.

Currently a regular schedule also designates a family that is responsible for cleaning the church after the services. The duty is for

one month at a time. If you wish to volunteer, please see the warden/*starosta*, Mr. Gontscharow.

Schedule of Services — November 2009

Saturday, October 31

5:00 p.m.

Vigil

Sunday, November 1

9:40 a.m.

Twenty-First Sunday after Pentecost

Hours and Divine Liturgy

Saint John of Kronstadt

Saturday, November 7

5:00 p.m.

Vigil

First ceremony at the new home of the Holy

Ascension Orthodox Church in Fairfax,

Virginia.

Sunday, November 8

9:40 a.m.

Twenty-Second Sunday after Pentecost

Hours and Divine Liturgy

Great-martyr Demetrius of Thessalonica

Saturday, November 14

5:00 p.m.

Vigil

Sunday, November 15

9:40 a.m.

Twenty-Third Sunday after Pentecost

Hours and Divine Liturgy

Martyr Acyndinus

Friday, November 20

6:00 p.m.

Vigil

Saturday, November 21

7:40 a.m.

ST MICHAEL THE ARCHANGEL

Hours and Divine Liturgy

Feast of Saint Michael

5:00 p.m.

Vigil

Sunday, November 22

9:40 a.m.

Twenty-Forth Sunday after Pentecost

Hours and Divine Liturgy

Martyrs Onesiphorus and Porphyrius of Ephesus

Thursday, November 26

10:00 a.m.

Thanksgiving Moleben

Thanksgiving Day

Saturday, November 28

5:00 p.m.

Vigil

Sunday, November 29

9:40 a.m.

Twenty-Fifth Sunday after Pentecost

Hours and Divine Liturgy

Holy Apostle and Evangelist Matthew

Thursday, December 3

6:00 p.m.

Vigil

Friday, December 4

7:40 a.m.

**ENTRY OF THE MOST HOLY
THEOTOKOS**

Hours and Divine Liturgy

*Entry of the Most Holy Theotokos into the
Temple*

Saturday, December 5

5:00 p.m.

Vigil

Sunday, December 6

9:40 a.m.

Twenty-Sixth Sunday after Pentecost

Hours and Divine Liturgy

*Afterfeast of the Entry of the Most Holy
Theotokos into the Temple*

PART 5. AMERICAN THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY.

Christians have traditionally offered Thanksgiving services after national victories and after successful harvests. The first recorded American Thanksgiving ceremony took place on September 8, 1565, when 600 Spanish settlers, under the leadership of Pedro Menendez de Aviles landed at what is now St Augustine, Florida, and held an immediate Mass of Thanksgiving for their safe delivery. *La Florida* colony become part of the United States. The greatest Western church thanksgiving for victory emerged soon after, recalling the great victory of Holy-League versus the Ottoman Empire at the Battle of Lepanto in 1571, out of which emerged the Western veneration of Our Lady of Victory.

On December 4, 1619, some 38 English settlers arrived at Berkeley Hundred, which comprised about 8,000 acres on the north bank of the James River, near Herring Creek, in an area then known as

Charles Cittie, about 20 miles upstream from Jamestown, where the first permanent settlement of the Colony of Virginia was set on May 14, 1607. The group's charter required that the day of arrival be observed yearly as a "Day of Thanksgiving" to God. On that first day, Captain John Woodleaf held the service: "We ordain that the day of our ships arrival at the place assigned for plantation in the land of Virginia shall be yearly and perpetually kept holy as a day of thanksgiving to Almighty God." The site can be visited at Berkeley Plantation, the traditional home of the Virginia Harrison family. Virginia State Route 5, parallel to the James River northern edge.

The modern American Thanksgiving holiday, however, traces its origins from another, quite different celebration, at the Protestant Plymouth Plantation, Massachusetts, where the English settlers held a harvest feast after a successful growing season in 1621. This event is generally referred to as the "First Thanksgiving." Harvest festivals, of course, already existed in the English and Amerindian traditions alike. Several colonists gave personal accounts of the 1621 feast.

During the 18th century individual British colonies commonly observed days of thanksgiving throughout each year. A traditional Thanksgiving Day in that period was not marked by plentiful food and drink as is today's custom, but was a day set aside for prayer and fasting. Later in the 1700s, British colonies periodically designated a day of thanksgiving in honor of a military victory, an adoption of a State constitution, or an exceptionally bountiful crop. Such a thanksgiving celebration was held in December 1777 by the colonies Nationwide, to commemorate the surrender of the British General Burgoyne at Saratoga NY.

In 1939, President Franklyn D Roosevelt initiated a more permanent tradition: a Thanksgiving Day on the fourth Thursday in every November. Both religious and commercial concepts bore upon his decision, which the US Congress legislated in 1941 (55 Stat. 862). The Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia has not added the American Thanksgiving Day to its typicon, but it customarily offers a harvest *moleben* on the official day.

PART 6

Please report difficulties with newsletter distribution and, by all means, report newsletter corrections to the newsletter preparer, Patrick Brown ~ lpcjfbrown@cox.net.



SAINT MICHAEL THE ARCHANGEL