



# St. Michael's Orthodox Christian Church

1182 Ashland St., Greensburg, PA 15601  
*Diocese of Charleston, Oakland and the Mid-Atlantic  
Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese  
of North America.*

(See the back cover for detailed contact information.)

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**Sunday, September 17, 2017**

*To all who are present with us this morning,  
Welcome! Thank you for being here.*

*Please join us for "coffee and..."  
in the Fellowship Hall following Divine Liturgy.*

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**You May Find the Text of the Divine Liturgy** beginning on the bottom of page 91 of the Service Book (gold embossed cross on the reddish brown cover) or in the green-spiral-bound book; sheet music can be found in the 8.5" x 11" large, spiral-bound booklet.

**At the Kiss of Peace** our practice is for each of us to greet the person to our right and left with the bowing of our head, hands held in a prayerful clasp or crossed on the chest, while offering each other the seasonal Christian greeting, "Christ is in our midst!" and responding, "He is and shall be!"

**Please remember that Holy Communion is reserved** for those Chrismated Orthodox Christians who have appropriately prepared themselves through prayer, fasting and Confession to receive the Holy Mysteries of the Church. The bread (*anti'doron*, which means 'in place' of the gifts) which we share after Communion and at the end of the Liturgy is for all.

**Being mindful we are in church, let us always remember to...**

**...be quiet and attentive.** Let us sing, pray, stand, sit, kneel and respond where responses are indicated. Let us not talk, look around, text message, play games, etc.. Especially, let us work at this in the Communion line and when in line to venerate the Cross and depart. If we cannot hear the post-Communion prayers being chanted during our church departure, we are way too noisy.

**...refrain from eating, drinking or chewing gum** (most obviously and especially if you will be receiving Holy Communion).

**...stay put.** Except in rare cases, there are few of us who cannot stay in one location for two hours (actually less, for most of us).

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Sophia & her daughters  
Faith, Hope  
and Love

## The Mission of Our Church

The mission of St Michael's Antiochian Orthodox Christian Church is to tend the flock of our Lord Jesus Christ and to spread the Good News of Christ to those outside the flock. This mission is to be accomplished by a) living a full liturgical and sacramental life, b) proclaiming the Orthodox Christian faith to all people, c) providing effective charitable and social programs, and d) establishing strong spiritual leadership and resources.

### TONE 6

Arr: Basil Kazan.

When Ma - ry stood at Thy grave look - ing for Thy sa - cred Bo -  
dy, an - gel - ic pow'rs shone a - bove Thy re - vered tomb,  
and the sol - diers who were to keep guard be -  
came as dead men. Thou led Ha - des cap - tive and was not  
temp - ted there - by; Thou didst meet the Vir -  
gin and didst give Life to the world; O Thou Who art  
ri - sen from the dead, O Lord glo - ry to Thee.

## SYRIAN CHRISTIAN RELIEF

As the Syrian crisis continues, we continue to accept *donations* to do what we can to help ease the suffering there. Checks may be written to "St. Michael's" with the note "Syrian Relief." The following is a link to International Orthodox Christian Charities ((IOCC) "Response to the Crisis in Syria" page with more information on what you can do to help:

[http://www.iocc.org/countries/countries\\_syria.aspx](http://www.iocc.org/countries/countries_syria.aspx)

# Sunday, September 17, 2017

**Greeting:** Christ is in our midst!      **Response:** He is and shall be!

**Tone:** 6      **Eothinon:** 4

*Sunday after the Elevation of the Holy Cross; Martyrs Sophia and her daughters Faith, Love and Hope; Martyr Agathokleia; Hieromartyrs Heracleides and Myron, Bishops of Tamasus in Cyprus; Venerable Anastasios Peristeron of Cyprus; Euxiphios of Cyprus, the bishop.*

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## **THE READING FROM**

*The First Epistle of St. Paul to the Galatians (2:16-20)*

**B**RETHREN, you know that a man is not justified by works of the law but through faith in Jesus Christ. Even we have believed in Christ Jesus, in order to be justified by faith in Christ, and not by works of the law, because by works of the law shall no one be justified. But if, in our endeavor to be justified in Christ, we ourselves were found to be sinners, is Christ then an agent of sin? Certainly not! But if I build up again those things which I tore down, then I prove myself a transgressor. For I through the Law died to the Law, that I might live to God. I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ Who lives in me; and the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, Who loved me and gave Himself for me.

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## **THE HOLY GOSPEL**

*According to St. Mark (8:34-9:1)*

**T**HE LORD SAID, "If any man would come after Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow Me. For whoever would save his life will lose it; and whoever loses his life for My sake and the Gospel's will save it. For what does it profit a man, to gain the whole world and forfeit his soul? For what can a man give in return for his soul? For whoever is ashamed of Me and of My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him will the Son of man also be ashamed, when He comes in the glory of His Father with the holy angels." And He said to them, "Truly, I say to you, there are some standing here who will not taste death before they see the Kingdom of God come with power."

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## ***September 14, The Feast Of the Holy Cross***

([www.antiochian.org](http://www.antiochian.org))

Each year on September 14 (ending September 18) the Orthodox Church celebrates the feast of “The Elevation of the Honorable & Life-giving Cross.” This is one of the great feasts of the Church year, and one which has an important historical background. Although one or two of the hymns for the day refer obliquely to the vision of the cross in the heavens, the actual commemoration is not that of Constantine’s vision before his battle with Maxentius on October 28, 312. On that occasion, while he was in doubt about the outcome of the impending battle for Italy, he saw in the heavens the arms of the cross stretching far and wide, and the words. “In This Conquer.” The battle won, he did begin to aid Christians, and ended by being baptized himself.

Nor does the feast as celebrated refer to the finding of the cross in Jerusalem by Constantine’s mother, St. Helena, about the year 326, according to the tradition. A great many stories sprang up about this event, but Constantine did erect a great church over the Holy Sepulchre, and in it the cross was enshrined in a reliquary. This church stood for three centuries before it was destroyed by the Persians, during their series of campaigns against the Empire. Whatever were the early feasts observed in Jerusalem in honor of the Finding of the Cross, they became overshadowed by the events of the reign of the Emperor Heraclius, which are what the Feast as it is today does commemorate.

When Heraclius was crowned Emperor on October 5, 610, after the overthrow of the unworthy Phocas, the provinces on all sides were overrun by the Persians, Avars, and Slavs. He started on a series of internal reforms, such as canceling the dole of grain, which enabled a great many able-bodied loafers in Constantinople to spend their time attending the circus and games instead of doing something useful, and in trying to improve the finances of the government. He embarked on a series of campaigns in due course of time to re-establish Byzantine rule in the neighboring parts of the Empire. The Persians had for some years been harassing Syria and Asia Minor, and in 613 they attacked the city of Damascus. The next year they took Jerusalem, and left a garrison in charge of the city. The population revolted as soon as the main body of the invading army left, and slaughtered the garrison. This brought back the conquerors, who are said to have killed 90,000 of the inhabitants, sparing only the Jews who aided them in the conquest. They took the Patriarch Zacharias and the case containing the relics of the cross back to Persia with them.

This event was regarded by all the Christians as the greatest possible disaster, since they regarded the sacred relics as the palladium of the city. Added to this was the insolence of Chosroes, King of the Persians, who taunted the Christians with their religion and their Lord, who so obviously had failed to deliver them. For the next eight years Heraclius was busy with the Avars, and was not able to go out against the Persians until 622. He waged six campaigns between 622 and 627, and finally defeated Chosroes and his generals decisively, but at great cost. The Empire was in great danger: in 626 the Persians were in Asia Minor right across the Bosphorus from the City, while their barbarian allies were encamped on the north in Thrace. But Heraclius managed to fight them all off, and restore some control.

He brought back to Jerusalem the Patriarch and the relics of the cross, which had not been molested. The populace demanded to see and venerate the relics, and accordingly they were solemnly elevated for all to see and reverence. The Emperor took a part of the sacred wood back to Constantinople with him. From the time of the finding of the cross by the Empress Helena, small bits of the wood were sent all over the world as most sacred relics, and the part which remained, although large, was still portable.

The hard-won peace of 626 left both the Persian anti Byzantine empires exhausted. At this very time a new danger appeared on the horizon: both Chosroes and Heraclius received letters from the Arab Mohammed, who invited them to adopt Islam, his newly founded faith. They both declined, but their contacts with the Moslems were to be many and difficult. In 629 Arab attacks on the empires began, and in 635 Damascus was taken, and Jerusalem in 637. Heraclius went back to Jerusalem and removed the sacred relics to Constantinople for safe keeping, but the Patriarch remained behind to greet the new rulers.

The ceremony of Elevation as performed in Church is actually a patriotic one, with prayers for the Rulers and their people, for Church and State, and for their establishment and preservation. The key to the observance is to be found in the Hymn for the Feast, the Troparion, which runs as follows:

*“O Lord, save thy people and bless thine inheritance:  
To our Rulers grant victories over the barbarians,  
And by thy Cross protect thine own Estate.”*

To the Byzantines, their Empire was the civilized world, the Oikoumene, the habitation of law and order; outside the pale were the barbarians, the people who spoke some other language that no one could understand, and whose ways were violent and strange. The Christian religion was a part of this, the vehicle of salvation and civilization. This is the heritage that was transmitted down through the ages by the Byzantine Empire, the struggle for civilization against the power of the destroyers. When we celebrate the feast today, we should have this in mind; it is apt that the Feast of the Cross is always a Fast. This paradox is striking, but accentuates the understanding our ancestors had that victory comes hard, and that nothing good is achieved without sacrifice.

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Sign up sheet for the ***October 11th luncheon to be held at the First Lutheran Church*** on South Main Street, Greensburg is on the bulletin board in the Fellowship Hall.

Please consider joining us from 11:30-1:00as St. Michael's takes its turn to serve a luncheon to the community.

Contact Michele Murray at 724-837-2244 if you can help.



## ***Holy Resurrection Orthodox Church, Belle Vernon***

*(Holy Resurrection is conveniently located off Route 201-South, just below Kmart Plaza. Turn onto Allen Street and continue three blocks to Mary Street.)*

### ***22nd Annual Fall Festival***

***12:00 noon to 6:00 pm, October 1st, 2017***

Featuring Baba's Kitchen and Baba's Bake Shoppe  
*(halupki, halushki, pierogies, beef stroganoff, kielbasa, potato pancakes, baked beans, homemade braided bread & pastries)*

Take-Out orders are welcome! Raffle drawings, too!

For further information, contact Wendy Mica at 724-875-9970,  
or Fr. Sam Smolcic at 724-837-8957.

## **PANCAKE & SAUSAGE BREAKFAST**

*to benefit*

*The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society (LLS)*

**Saturday, September 23,**

**8:00 AM to 12:00 PM in our Fellowship Hall**

*Adults: \$5 Children: \$3*

*Tickets may be purchased at the door.*

See **Michele Gajewski** or **Paulette Sproch** for tickets, to donate, or to get more information.



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## **WALK FOR THE CURE - "Light the Night"**

*to benefit The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society (LLS)*

**Tuesday, October 10, 5:30 PM**

**at HEINZ FIELD (walk starts at 7:00 PM)**

*Come walk. Come support. Come donate.*

<http://pages.lightthenight.org/wpa/pptsbrgh17jennzfriendz>

See **Michele Gajewski** or **Paulette Sproch** for info on The Walk or to donate.



**“Yum, the food was so delicious...”**

**“Oh, what a beautiful church...”**

**“Wow, everything was so well organized....”**

Comments such as these were heard throughout the afternoon last Sunday at our Mediterranean Buffet. Anecdotally, that is enough to declare the day a grand success! Add to that the fact that we sold pretty much everything and that the bulk of clean-up was happily completed by around 7:00 PM, and you have a day that was financially fruitful and all-around satisfying to have been a part of.

How much did we make, you ask? Initial numbers being bandied about by our Buffet bean-counters are in the eleven-five to \$12,000 range. (Although the relative significance of that number is quite moot as we sold “pretty much everything” that we could.)

Let us thank God for the beautiful day we were granted (can you beat that weather?) and for the superb food and fellowship which constituted our Buffet day.

Thank you, one and all, for your part in our Mediterranean Buffet! (Watch your bulletin for when we will meet to ‘debrief.’)

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### ***There are large, goldenrod Fellowship Hour sign-up sheets in the Fellowship Hall...***



*Please take a moment and sign up for a future coffee hour date (and mark it in your calendar). Fellowship Hour is an important time for us to get together each week after Divine Liturgy to socialize and get to know each other better.*

*Coffee is provided. You provide the refreshments, such as fruit, pastries, nuts, candy, etc., and, very importantly, the clean-up afterwards.*

*Thank you for your participation.*

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### ***CALEB’S CUPBOARD is always in need of contributions.***

*The ‘Cupboard’ is the big chest you see as you come through the main entrance of our church. It is a very simple way to help our neighbors in need. If you could bring in a few cans of food, cereal, pasta, paper goods, or hygiene items or other nonperishables when you come to church, you will be making a big difference for someone in need.*



*Please note that most of your generous donations are distributed to those who attend St. Michael’s “Food on the Hill” monthly luncheon.*

***Thank you for continuing to contribute to this worthwhile community project.***

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REMEMBER, the *Second Week* on this schedule *May Change...*  
***ALWAYS USE THE MOST CURRENT BULLETIN!***

***This Week's  
Secretary Office Hours:***

Monday, Wed., Friday  
9:00 am to 3pm

**September 17 thru September 23**

***Sunday, September 17***

- 8:45 AM - MATINS
- 9:30 AM - Choir Rehearsal
- 10:00 AM - DIVINE LITURGY
  - Church School
- 12:30 - Prayers for all  
Victims of Abortion

***Tuesday, September 19***

- 6:30 PM - Executive Board Meeting
- 7:00 PM - Parish Council Meeting

***Wednesday, September 20***

- 6:30 PM - Stewardship Meeting

***Thursday, September 21***

- 7:00 PM - Choir Rehearsal

***Saturday, September 23***

- 8:00 AM to 12 noon - Leukemia  
and Lymphoma Society Pancake  
and Sausage Breakfast
- 9:00 AM - DIVINE LITURGY  
Conception of John the Baptist
- 6:00 PM - GREAT VESPERS

**September 24 thru September 30**

***Sunday, September 24***

- 8:45 AM - MATINS
- 9:30 AM - Choir Rehearsal
- 10:00 AM - DIVINE LITURGY
  - Church School
  - Antiochian Women's Meeting

*Fr. John will be out of town from  
Tuesday, September 26 through  
Thursday, September 28.*

***Tuesday, September 26***

- 7:00 PM - Church School Meeting

***Thursday, September 21***

- 7:00 PM - Choir Rehearsal

***Saturday, September 30***

- 9:00 AM - Antiochian MEN Meeting at  
the Bean & Baguette
- 6:00 PM - GREAT VESPERS at  
Sts. Cyril & Methodius Church  
520 Scott Ave., Jeannette, PA

***VISITING VESPERS***

As noted on the calendar above, on Saturday evening, September 30, Great Vespers will not be prayed here at St. Michael's but will be celebrated with our Orthodox Church neighbors at Sts. Cyril and Methodius Church, Jeannette. Thank you to Fr. Larry and Sophie Daniels for the invitation to prayer and fellowship.

***Next "Food on the Hill," Tuesday, October 3***

"Food on the Hill" is the name that has been attached to the lunch for those in need that will be prepared and served free of charge on the first Tuesday of each month. Our Men's Fellowship has continued to take on the work of providing a bit of "daily" bread to those who can benefit from it. The next "Food on the Hill" lunch is scheduled for **Tuesday, October 3, 2017** from 12:00 to 1:00 PM.

Anyone who would like to support "Food on the Hill" in any capacity you would like, should contact Gus Flizanes (724-863-4443). Please make checks out to "St. Michael's Church" with "Food on the Hill" on the memo line.

