

St. Michael Con't from Pg 10

his right hand, in his left, a whip of three red (or black) thongs.

Barachiel is shown with a white rose on his breast.

Jeremiel holds balance-scales in his hand.

Each person has a guardian angel, and every nation also receives its own guardian angel from God (Dan. 10:13). When a church is consecrated, it also receives a guardian angel (Palladius, Dial. Ch. 10).

Why does the Church have time periods called "Fasts"?

* We know that some things are "secular" and some things are "sa-cred." If we spend too much time doing what is "secular" then we have less time for God, Who loves each of us and gives us many blessings, for which we must remember to thank Him. A Fasting period helps us to draw closer to God.

* The Orthodox Church teaches that there is a close connection between the body and the soul, so what happens to one affects the other. Fasting means abstaining from (avoiding, or not having, or not doing) certain things. One aspect of Fasting involves eating less and avoiding certain kinds of foods. It's not that God wants us to be undernourished. Food is good for us and necessary for health. But learning to control what we eat and when we eat is a spiritual practice that teaches us self-discipline, which helps us grow in spiritual maturity. Self-discipline is necessary in order for us to have the inner strength to overcome other kinds of behaviors and habits: those that are spiritually unhealthy (sins) and to work to increase our spiritually healthy habits.

* Therefore, fasting involves repentance and self-discipline. These help a person to become more like God created us to be.

* So, the Church teaches that Fasting isn't only about what foods we eat. Through practicing Fasting, a person learns to also "fast" from -- to control -- anger, greed, envy, gossip, and selfishness.

* In addition to Fasting, almsgiving (charity), such as helping the poor, the sick, and others *Con't Next Pg*

The Nativity Fast (The Fast of St. Philip)

During the Nativity Fast, Orthodox Christians prepare for the celebration of the Nativity of Christ. The word "nativity" means "birth." In western countries, this day became known as Christmas (Christ's Mass) because it is a day when religious services (which some churches call a "Mass" and we call the "Liturgy") are held to celebrate the birth of Christ, the Son of God, our Savior.

We know that in the present-day secular American tradition, the "holiday season" begins in November (usually the day after Thanksgiving). The Nativity Fast occurs at the same time as the secular American "holiday season." But it is a lot different in its meaning from secular "holiday" celebrations and traditions.

The original meaning of the word "holiday" actually was "Holy Day," a sacred day to glorify God and His Saints. The Nativity Fast is meant to get us ready, not for a present-opening party, but for a celebration of the birth of Christ.

In many Christian churches, several weeks prior to Christmas are known as Advent, from a Latin word that means "coming." In the Orthodox Church, this season of preparation for the Nativity of Christ always begins on November 15, the day after the Feast of the Apostle Philip. For this reason it is known as St. Philip's Fast.

This special period lasts 40 days, the same as Lent, and it is therefore sometimes called the Winter Lent. For those who still follow the Julian calendar, the Winter Lent does not begin until November 28 which is actually November 15 on the Julian calendar.

Similar to the period of Great Lent, the Nativity Fast was established by the Church as a time for repentance. If we look around in the church during this time, we do not yet see the Christmas colors of red, green, white, silver, and gold. During the Nativity Fast, we see vestments and cloths that are purple or red, a color that is a symbol of repentance.

So, two things are happening around us during this time, and both are called "the Christmas season." Some of the things during this season are "secular" and others, which are more important, are "sacred." Secular things are not "bad." There is a time and place for them. But we should not allow secular things and parties to take the place of Church observances.

Why does Church Fast con't from Pg 11

who are experiencing hardship in their lives,

is also important because Christ taught that we must love and help others, as the Good Samaritan did.

UNDERSTAND THE ORTHODOX USE OF THE WORDS:

SECULAR = activities or things that have no religious meaning, things that do not have the purpose to worship or glorify God

SACRED = holy, connected with or related to God, **things and activities dedicated to a religious purpose**

REPENTANCE = to feel sorry for past actions, words, or thoughts that are spiritually unhealthy (sins) and to ask God for His help so that we become stronger to not repeat them but instead to replace them with spiritually healthy habits.



Galatians 2:16-20 (Epistle)

knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law but by faith in Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, that we might be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the law; for by the works of the law no flesh shall be justified. But if, while we seek to be justified by Christ, we ourselves also are found sinners, is Christ therefore a minister of sin? Certainly not! For if I build again those things which I destroyed, I make 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 lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.

Luke 10:25-37 (Gospel)

And behold, a certain lawyer stood up and tested Him, saying, "Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" He said to him, "What is written in the law? What is your reading of it?" So he answered and said, "'You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind,' and 'your neighbor as yourself.'" And He said to him, "You have answered rightly; do this and you will live." But he, wanting to justify himself, said to Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?" Then Jesus answered and said: "A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, who stripped him of his clothing, wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead. Now by chance a certain priest came down that road. And when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. Likewise a Levite, when he arrived at the place, came and looked, and passed by on the other side. But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was. And when he saw him, he had compassion. So he went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine; and he set him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him. On the next day, when he departed, he took out two denarii, gave them to the innkeeper, and said to him, 'Take care of him; and whatever more you spend, when I come again, I will repay you.' So which of these three do you think was neighbor to him who fell among the thieves?" And he said, "He who showed mercy on him." Then Jesus said to him, "Go and do likewise."

Holy, All-Praised Apostle Philip Commemorated on November 14

The Holy and All-praised Apostle Philip was a native of the city of Bethsaida in Galilee. He had a profound depth of knowledge of the Holy Scripture, and rightly discerning the meaning of the Old Testament prophecies, he awaited the coming of the Messiah. Through the call of the Savior (John 1:43), Philip followed Him. The Apostle Philip is spoken about several times in the Holy Gospel: he brought to Christ the Apostle Nathaniel (i.e. Bartholomew, April 22, June 30, and August 25. See John. 1:46). The Lord asks him where to buy bread for five thousand men (John. 6: 5-7). He brought certain of the Hellenized Jews wanting to see Jesus (John. 12:21-22); and finally, at the Last Supper he asked Christ to show them the Father (John. 14:8).

After the Ascension of the Lord, the Apostle Philip preached the Word of God in Galilee, accompanying his preaching with miracles. Thus, he restored to life a dead infant in the arms of its mother. From Galilee he went to Greece, and preached among the Jews that had settled there. Some of them reported the preaching of the Apostle to Jerusalem. In response, some scribes arrived in Greece from Jerusalem, with one of the Jewish chief priests at their head, to interrogate the Apostle Philip.

The Apostle Philip exposed the lie of the chief priest, who said that the disciples of Christ had stolen away and hidden the body of Christ. Philip told instead how the Pharisees had bribed the soldiers on watch, to deliberately spread this rumor. When the Jewish chief priest and his companions began to insult the Lord and lunged at the Apostle Philip, they suddenly were struck blind. By his prayer the Apostle restored everyone's sight. Seeing this miracle, many believed in Christ. The Apostle Philip provided a bishop for them, by the name of Narcissus (one of the Seventy Apostles, January 4).

From Greece the Apostle Philip went to Parthia, and then to the city of Azotus, where he healed an eye affliction of the daughter of a local resident named Nikoklides, who had received him into his home, and then baptized his whole family.

From Azotus the Apostle Philip set out to Syrian Hieropolis (there were several cities of this name) where, stirred up by the Pharisees, the Jews burned

the house of Heros, who had taken in the Apostle Philip, and they wanted to kill the apostle. The apostle performed several miracles: the healing of the hand of the city official Aristarchus, withered when he attempted to strike the apostle; and restoring a dead child to life. When they saw these marvels, they repented and many accepted holy Baptism. After making Heros the bishop at Hieropolis, the Apostle Philip went on to Syria, Asia Minor, Lydia, Emessa, and everywhere preaching the Gospel and undergoing sufferings. Both he and his sister Mariamne (February 17) were pelted with stones, locked up in prison, and thrown out of villages.

Then the Apostle Philip arrived in the city of Phrygian Hieropolis, where there were many pagan temples. There was also a pagan temple where people worshiped an enormous serpent as a god. The Apostle Philip by the power of prayer killed the serpent and healed many bitten by snakes.

Among those healed was the wife of the city prefect, Amphipatos. Having learned that his wife had accepted Christianity, the prefect Amphipatos gave orders to arrest Saint Philip, his sister, and the Apostle Bartholomew traveling with them. At the urging of the pagan priests of the temple of the serpent, Amphipatos ordered the holy Apostles Philip and Bartholomew to be crucified.

Suddenly, an earthquake struck, and it knocked down all those present at the place of judgment. Hanging upon the cross by the pagan temple of the serpent, the Apostle Philip prayed for those who had crucified him, asking God to save them from the ravages of the earthquake. Seeing this happen, the people believed in Christ and began to demand that the apostles be taken down from the crosses. The Apostle Bartholomew was still alive when he was taken down, and he baptized all those believing and established a bishop for them.

But the Apostle Philip, through whose prayers everyone remained alive, except for Amphipatos and the pagan priests, died on the cross.

Mariamne his sister buried his body, and went with the Apostle Bartholomew to preach in Armenia, where the Apostle Bartholomew was crucified (June 11); Mariamne herself then preached until her own death at Lykaonia.

The holy Apostle Philip is not to be confused with Saint Philip the Deacon (October 11), one of the Seventy.

Give As You Have Been Blessed

“You shall truly tithe all the increase... year by year. And you shall eat before the Lord your God... the tithe of your grain and your new wine... that you may learn to fear the Lord your God always” (Deuteronomy 14: 22-23)

2022 Household Estimate of Giving

\$ _____ - weekly – biweekly – monthly - (circle one)

\$ _____ Total Annually

Signed: _____

Signed: _____

****Please remember: if unforeseen hardships change your ability to give, you will not be held accountable to your original estimate. Simply speak with Fr. Andrew and different arrangements will be made. Conversely, if the Lord blesses you more than you had originally foreseen, feel free to give more than your estimate.****

Return by December 5, 2021

May our Lord God bless you as you follow His commands!

“Thine Own of Thine Own, we offer unto Thee”

A note from Fr. Andrew

Every week our financial picture is put in the bulletin. If we read it, we take note that we do not meet our budget obligations. Our budget is very tight. In order to meet our expenses, additional funds need to come in from somewhere. If not for our Halupki Festival and our Market days, this parish would be in financial distress.

Many of us say, “We are getting too old to keep doing these events.” and “It is the same handful of people doing the work.” However, ask , “If we do away with the fundraisers, what will happen to Holy Assumption? Will the doors close?” I can assure you, that would be the case.

It is imperative more people become active in the parish and increase their giving.

God has provided for us and for this parish. The question is, are we willing to give back a portion to God of what He has provided to us? The priest says right before the consecration of the bread and wine, “Thine own of Thine own, we offer unto Thee.” Can we, will we, say the same about our financial support of this parish?

Above is the 2022 Pledge Card. As we pray about what we will return to God this year in financial support of this parish, I respectfully ask everyone to consider a minimum 5% increase over last year. That means, for example, if we currently give:

- \$10 a week, an additional 5% equals 50 cents to that weekly offering.
- \$20 a week, an additional 5% equals \$1.00 to that weekly offering.
- \$25 a week, an additional 5% equals \$1.25 to that weekly offering (\$65 a year increase).
- \$50 a week, an additional 5% equals \$2.50 to that weekly offering (\$130 a year increase).

Thank you and God bless you for your consideration of this very important spiritual matter.

PLEASE NOTE:

This year everyone please fill out this form in order to be considered a member in good standing. Remember this form reflects your weekly Sunday Tithe to the church only. The form does not reflect everything you give to the church, (i.e. candles, etc).