

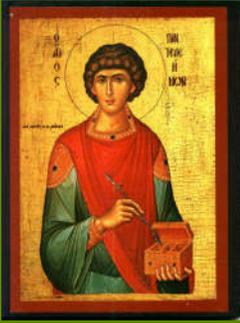
St. Panteleimon Orthodox Church

OCA - Diocese of the Midwest

Fr. Andrew Bartek, Rector V. Rev. Anthony Spengler, Attached

Protodeacon Robert Northrup Reader James Tilghman

Parish Council President: Nicholas Cavaligos



Sunday, September 25, 2016

Gospel: St. Luke 5:1-11

Tone 5

Epistle: 2 Corinthians 1:21-2:4

14th Sunday After Pentecost
Repose of Ven. Sergius of Radonezh

September Bulletin Sponsor

In Memory of Helene Flaherty by Mr. & Mrs. Paul Demkosky

Liturgical & Events Schedule

Sunday, September 25

9:10 am: Hours

9:30 am: D.L. / Social followed by Annual Meeting / No Church School

Wednesday, September 28

7:30 pm: Orthodox 101 Class

Saturday, October 1

6:00 pm: Great Vespers @ Burr Ridge

7:00 pm: Russian Concert

Sunday, October 2

9:10 am: Hours

9:30 am: D.L. / 40 Day Remembrance / Social / Church School

SCRIPT FUNDRAISING PROGRAM UP & RUNNING

Who to see: Matushka Susan

When: 1st & 3rd Sundays of each month

- In order for the program to be cost effective for us, a minimum \$300 order must be placed.
- A list of participating businesses is available for your review.

This is a great way for you to do your regular shopping and it benefit your church! Try it out!

GERTRUDE HAWK FUNDRAISER CANDY DRIVE

Please gather orders from friends, co-workers, family members and, of course, your own. They can be given as gifts at Thanksgiving or Housewarming gifts during the Christmas season.

Order forms due by Nov. 6 for Thanksgiving delivery. Payment due by Nov. 27th.

CARSON'S DAY FUNDRAISER

This is an easy way to raise money for our parish. The book is \$5 (and every book we sell the church keeps the \$5) and there is over \$500 of coupon savings. The beauty is you can also shop on line w/ special codes to get your savings & delivery to your home.

The event is November 9-12 & includes the following stores:

Bon-Ton	Bergner's
Boston Store	Carson's
Elder-Beerman	Younkers
Herberger's	

Remember you can shop on line from the convenience of your lounge chair!

40 DAYS MEMORIAL

October 2: Fr. Paul Herbert & Victims of the earthquake in Italy

October 9: Firefighter John, Archpriest John & Steven

October 23: Daniel & Mat. Cecilia

Annual Parish Meeting TODAY

(following the Divine Liturgy)

Please make sure your financial obligations are met otherwise you will not be permitted to vote. (A member in good standing: **financially very bare minimum** is \$550 {\$176 required to be sent to the Diocese per adult 18 yrs & older [except those in college] plus a minimum of at least \$1 a day = \$550}).

Next week you will receive a package in the mail containing the minutes & reports from last fiscal year. & The 2017 Proposed Budget. Please review prior to the meeting & bring them to the meeting.

7549 West 61st Place, Summit, Illinois 60501

Rectory 708-552-5276 / Cell 570-212-8747

website: <http://www.saintpanteleimon.org/>

Rest of the Venerable Sergius, Abbot and Wonderworker of Radonezh

Commemorated on [September 25](#)

Saint Sergius of Radonezh was born in the village of Varnitsa, near Rostov, on May 3, 1314. His parents were the pious and illustrious nobles Cyril and Maria (September 28). The Lord chose him while still in his mother's womb. In the Life of St Sergius it is reported that even before the birth of her son, St Maria and those praying heard the thrice-repeated cry of the infant at the Divine Liturgy: before the reading of the Holy Gospel, during the Cherubic hymn, and when the priest pronounced: "Holy Things are for the Holy."

God gave Cyril and Maria a son whom they named Bartholomew. From his very first days of life the infant amazed everyone by his fasting. On Wednesdays and Fridays he would not accept milk from his mother, and on other days, if Maria used oil in the food, the infant also refused the milk of his mother. Noticing this, Maria refrained altogether from food with oil.

At the age of seven, Bartholomew was sent to study together with his two brothers: his older brother Stephen, and his younger brother Peter. His brothers learned successfully, but Bartholomew fell behind in his studies, even though the teacher gave him much special attention. The parents scolded the child, the teacher chastised him, and his classmates made fun of his lack of comprehension. Finally, Bartholomew besought the Lord with tears to grant him the ability to read.

Once, his father sent Bartholomew out after the horses in the field. Along the way he met an angel sent by God under the appearance of a monk. The Elder stood at prayer beneath an oak in a field. Bartholomew approached him, and bowing, waited for the Elder to finish praying. The monk blessed him, gave him a kiss and asked what he wanted.

Bartholomew answered, "With all my soul I want to learn reading and writing. Holy Father, pray for me to God, that He may help me to become literate." The monk fulfilled Bartholomew's request, offering up his prayer to God. In blessing the child he said to him: "Henceforth, my child, God gives you to understand reading and writing, and in this you will surpass your brothers and peers" (See the famous M. Nesterov painting "Vision of Bartholomew").

Then the Elder took a vessel and gave Bartholomew a piece of prosphora. "Take, child, and eat," said he. "This is given to you as a sign of the grace of God, and for the understanding of Holy Scripture." The Elder wanted to leave, but Bartholomew asked him to visit at the home of his parents. His parents received their guest with joy and offered him

their hospitality.

The Elder replied that it was proper to partake of spiritual nourishment first, and he bade their son to read the Psalter. Bartholomew began to read, and his parents were amazed at the change that had occurred with their son. In parting, the Elder prophetically said of St Sergius, "Your son shall be great before God and the people. He shall become a chosen habitation of the Holy Spirit."

After this the holy child read without difficulty and understood the contents of books. He became immersed in prayer with a special fervor, not missing a single church service. Already in childhood he imposed upon himself a strict fast. He ate nothing on Wednesdays and Fridays, and on the other days he sustained himself on bread and water.

About the year 1328, the parents of St Sergius moved from Rostov to Radonezh. When their older sons married, Cyril and Maria received the monastic schema shortly before their death at the Khot'kov monastery of the Protection of the Most Holy Theotokos, not far from Radonezh.

Later on, the older brother Stephen was widowed and became a monk at this monastery. Having buried his parents, Bartholomew and his brother Stephen withdrew into the forest (12 versts from Radonezh) to live in the wilderness. At first they made cells, and then a small church, and with the blessing of Metropolitan Theognostus, it was consecrated in the name of the Most Holy Trinity. But soon, unable to bear the difficulties of life in the wilderness, Stephen left his brother and went on to the Moscow Theophany monastery, where he became close to St Alexis, afterwards Metropolitan of Moscow. (February 12).

On October 7, 1337 Bartholomew was tonsured by Igumen Metrophanes, taking the name of the holy Martyr Sergius (October 7), and he started to build a new habitation to the glory of the Life-Creating Trinity. Suffering temptations and demonic apparitions, St Sergius advanced from strength to strength. Gradually he became known to other monks seeking his guidance. St Sergius accepted all with love, and soon a brotherhood of twelve monks were gathered in the small monastery.

Their experienced spiritual guide distinguished himself by an extraordinary love for work. With his own hands he built several cells, he carried water, he chopped wood, baked bread, sewed clothing, prepared food for the brethren and humbly took on other tasks. St Sergius combined the heavy work with prayer, vigil and fasting.

The brethren were amazed that with such severe exertion the health of their guide did not deteriorate, but rather became all the more hearty. It was not without

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Metropolitan Council Fall Session opens September 19

The Fall Session of the [Metropolitan Council](#) of the Orthodox Church in America opened at Immaculate Conception Seminary here on Monday, September 19, 2016.

The four-day session will be chaired by His Beatitude, Metropolitan Tikhon. Also present will be the members of the [Standing Synod of Bishops](#).

According to Archpriest Eric G. Tosi, OCA Secretary, the session will open with a retreat on Monday. Protodeacon Peter Danilchick and Charles Ajalat will offer presentations on Christian Leadership in the Church.

On Tuesday, Metropolitan Tikhon will present his report and review major goals and initiatives for the upcoming year. In his report, Archpriest John Jillions, OCA Chancellor, will offer updates on the work of [ORSMA and SMPAC](#). Reports also will be given by representatives of the [Pension Board](#); Alexis Liberovsky, OCA Archivist; Protopresbyter Leonid Kishkovsky, Director of [External Affairs](#); and Angela Parks, Esq., Chair of the Metropolitan Council Legal Committee. In his report as OCA Secretary, Father Eric will present proposed dates and locations for the 19th All-American Council, slated to convene in 2018, and review the work of the OCA's departments.

Wednesday will open with the celebration of the Hierarchical Divine Liturgy at the OCA Chancery's Saint Sergius of Radonezh Chapel. The remainder of the day will be devoted to reports on the [Stewards of the OCA/a>; the work of the Internal and External Auditors; the Fellowship of Orthodox Christians in America](#); and the Metropolitan Council's committees. Melanie Ringa, OCA Treasurer, will offer her report, after which Archpriest John Dresko will present the proposed 2017 budget.

On the final day of the gathering, Thursday, September 22, Metropolitan Tikhon will facilitate a strategic planning session and open discussion.

Metropolitan Council members also will participate in the Saint Sergius Day celebration on Saturday, September 24. The Metropolitan Council is the permanent executive body of the Church Administration which exists for the purpose of implementing the decisions of the [All-American Council](#) and continuing its work between sessions. Members include the Metropolitan, who serves as Chair; the Chancellor, the Secretary, and the Treasurer; one priest and one layperson elected by each diocese; and three priests and an equal number of laypersons elected by the All-American Council.

Ven Sergius Con't

difficulty that they implored St Sergius to accept the position of igumen of the monastery.

In 1354 Bishop Athanasius of Volyn ordained the saint a hieromonk and elevated him to the rank of igumen. Just as before, monastic obediences were strictly fulfilled at the monastery. With the expansion of the monastery, its needs also grew. Often the monks had only scant food, but through the prayers of St Sergius unknown people provided the necessities.

Reports of the exploits of St Sergius became known even at Constantinople, and Patriarch Philotheus sent to the monk a cross, a "paraman" (monastic clothing, a four-cornered cloth tied with cords to the chest and worn beneath other garb, and adorned with symbols of the Lord's Passion) and schema-robe in blessing for new deeds, and a grammota of blessing, in which the Patriarch counselled the chosen of God to organize a cenobitic monastery. The monk set off with the patriarchal missive to St Alexis, and received from him the counsel to introduce a strict manner of cenobitic life. The monks began to grumble at the strictness of the monastic Rule, and St Sergius was compelled to forsake the monastery. At the River Kirzhach he founded a monastery in honor of the Annunciation of the Most Holy Theotokos. Matters at the former monastery went quickly into disarray, and the remaining monks resorted to St Alexis that he should get the saint to return.

St Sergius unquestioningly obeyed the holy hierarchy, and left in place of himself at the Kirzhachsk monastery his disciple, St Roman.

Already during his lifetime St Sergius had been vouchsafed the gift of wonderworking. He raised a lad, at a point when the despairing father had given up on his only son as lost. Reports about the miracles worked by St Sergius began quickly to spread about, and the sick began to come to him, both from the surrounding villages and also from remote places. And no one left from St Sergius without receiving healing of infirmities and edifying counsel. Everyone gave glory for St Sergius, and revered him on an equal with the ancient holy Fathers. But human glory did not hold allure for the great ascetic, and as before he remained the example of monastic humility.

One time St Stephen, Bishop of Perm (April 27), who deeply revered St Sergius, was on journey from his diocese to Moscow. The roadway passed eight versts distant from the Sergiev monastery. ***Con't Page 8***

SAVE THE DATE / UP COMING EVENTS

PAN-ORTHODOX CHOIR OF GREATER CHICAGO HOSTS AN EVENING OF SUPREME CHORAL CHAMBER MUSIC

St Petersburg, Russia internationally acclaimed Konevets Quartet will be in concert at St Peter & Paul in Burr Ridge.

Oct 1: 6:00pm Vespers 7:00pm Concert

Admission is free will appreciation

Reach for Life & Sound the Alarm on Suicide “My Last Party” Stage Production

WHEN: Sunday, October 9

WHERE: Chicago Gaelic Park, 6119 West 147th, Oak Forest, IL 60452

6:00pm -7:15 pm VIP SEATING INCLUDES: \$45
Priority Seating / 3 course meal / non-alcoholic beverages / Macy's shopping pass / Meet & Greet Writer & Director Michelamone

General Admission: \$25

Doors Open @ 7:30pm for general admission

Cash Bar until 8:00pm

For tickets: mylastparty.eventbrite.com

2016 CHICAGO SYNERGY ANNUAL SYMPOSIUM

WHEN: Saturday October 15 from 9:00am -2:00pm

WHERE: St George Antiochian Orthodox Church, 1220 South 60th Court, Cicero, IL 60804

COST: \$40 per person in advance
\$50 at the door
Registration & payment prior to Oct 8: \$35.
Husband & wife couples \$50
High School & College Students \$25
Registration includes: coffee & lunch.

TOPIC: Holiness in Contemporary Culture by Hieromonk Alexii Altschul

Uncompromising Faith in Compromising Times By Fr. Evan Armatas SATURDAY OCTOBER 22

Where: St. Demetrios Greek Orthodox Church in Elmhurst, 893 North Church Rd., (60126)

Retreat Schedule:

10:30am: Registration & Fellowship

11:00am: Session 1: Elements of faith that Matter

12:30pm: Harvest of Plenty (aka Lunch)

1:15pm: Session 2 Walking & Standing in Faith

Reservations Required by Monday, October 17
(Cost: \$15) contact office @ 630-834-7010 or saintdemetriosoffice@gmail.com

Fr. Evan is the priest of St. Spyridon Church in Loveland, CO. He founded and manages the St. Nektarios Education Fund, www.snef.org, a non-profit student education program. Fr. Evan is the host of the podcast Transforming our Lives in Christ and the live call-in show Orthodox Live on Ancient Faith Radio. Visit ancientfaith.com to listen to his podcasts.

Webinar summarizing OCA Mission School to be held Tuesday, September 27

On Tuesday evening, September 27, 2016 the Diocese of the Midwest's Mission Committee will present a webinar summarizing the "Mission School" held by the Orthodox Church in America in 2015 and 2016.

Priest Weir, Rector of Saint Stephen Church, Crawfordsville, IN and a participant in the 2015 Mission School, will be the primary presenter. The session — free of charge and open to interested clergy and laity alike — will begin at 7:00 p.m. Central Time and will last approximately one hour. Advance [registration](#) is required.

“While no 60 minute session can convey the content of a week-long workshop, we hope to at least put down a foundation and offer some ideas for follow-up actions,” said facilitator Joseph Kormos.

While primarily geared to members of the Diocese of the Midwest, faithful of other dioceses and jurisdictions are invited to participate.

Prayer List

Prizsts: Anthony Spenglar, John Kuchta, Fr. James Gleason (*Fr.'s spiritual father*), ***Ted Bobosh**, ***Moses Berry**, John Duranko, Archimandrite Vladimir, ***Joseph Gibson**, ***Yves Babich**, * **Fr. Philip Lashbrook**, ***John Reeves**, ***Protodeacon Alexis**

Matushkii: ***Carol Janacek**, ***Barbara Matusiak**, **Mary Perez**, **Snezana Ruzic**, Pani Patricia Duranko

Parishioners: Karen Muzyka, Ronald Stachowiak, Rebecca Eggers, Sonja Harris, Pauline, Marilyn, Jason Kirnbauer

Parishioner's Friends / Family: Donna Parhas (*Nick's Cousin*), Mary Ann Magerko, John Magerko, Stephen Holly & Walter Litzie (*Fr.'s cousin*), George Cavaligos (*Nick's brother*), Christos Parhas (*Nick's cousin*), Constantine Cavaligos (*Nick's dad*), John Hartel (*Joann's Step-dad*), Sandra (*Karen's sister*), Erika Northrup, Mark Svara, Mary Northrup, Dianne Northrup, Raymond Northrup, Joey Krush, Carol Bregin (*Friend of Lynn*), Jan Kost (*Linda's sister*), Ann Lazo (*Friend of Lynn*), George Lazo (*Friend of Lynn*), Bruce (*Fr. Kurt's brother*), Vivian (*friend of Becky Eggers*), June, James (*Hruban Family*), Tommy, Jimmy, (*Spengler Family*), Roger Seglem

Other Requests: Lucille (*Duke*), Dianne (*Bill Rudolph*), Elizabeth Lilos, Jemsey Pradun, Hermenegil (*Neighbor*), Lidiya (*Neighbor*), Cathleen Rebollar, Dianna Rudolph, Gloria Salgado (*Lynn's Friend*), ***John Sedor**, * **Daria Petrykowski**, ***Cynthia Koranda**, Jacob, Emilian, Joyce, John, Robert, William & Dana, Mark, Eve, Stephanie & her unborn baby, Michelle & her unborn baby

Military: Fr. Herman, Fr. Gregory, Amber, Caleb, Nicholas, David, Timothy, Robert, Kristen, Matthew, Brian, Daniel, Joseph

Captives: Metropolitan Paul (*Orthodox Archdiocese of Aleppo*), Archbishop John (*Syriac Archdiocese of Aleppo*)

For the UN & IOCC humanitarian aid workers in & around Syria / Those suffering persecution in Iraq, Syria, Israel, Egypt, Ukraine and throughout the world / Those held captive throughout the world.

Additions or removals from the list? Please notify Fr. Andrew.

(***Bishop Request**):

2 Corinthians 1:21-2:4 (Sunday, Epistle)

Now He who establishes us with you in Christ and has anointed us is God, who also has sealed us and given us the Spirit in our hearts as a guarantee. Moreover I call God as witness against my soul, that to spare you I came no more to Corinth. Not that we have dominion over your faith, but are fellow workers for your joy; for by faith you stand. But I determined this within myself, that I would not come again to you in sorrow. For if I make you sorrowful, then who is he who makes me glad but the one who is made sorrowful by me? And I wrote this very thing to you, lest, when I came, I should have sorrow over those from whom I ought to have joy, having confidence in you all that my joy is the joy of you all. For out of much affliction and anguish of heart I wrote to you, with many tears, not that you should be grieved, but that you might know the love which I have so abundantly for you.

Luke 5:1-11 (Sunday, Gospel)

So it was, as the multitude pressed about Him to hear the word of God, that He stood by the Lake of Gennesaret, and saw two boats standing by the lake; but the fishermen had gone from them and were washing their nets. Then He got into one of the boats, which was Simon's, and asked him to put out a little from the land. And He sat down and taught the multitudes from the boat. When He had stopped speaking, He said to Simon, "Launch out into the deep and let down your nets for a catch." But Simon answered and said to Him, "Master, we have toiled all night and caught nothing; nevertheless at Your word I will let down the net." And when they had done this, they caught a great number of fish, and their net was breaking. So they signaled to their partners in the other boat to come and help them. And they came and filled both the boats, so that they began to sink. When Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord!" For he and all who were with him were astonished at the catch of fish which they had taken; and so also were James and John, the sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon. And Jesus said to Simon, "Do not be afraid. From now on you will catch men." So when they had brought their boats to land, they forsook all and followed Him.

S E P T E M B E R

BIRTHDAY	NAMES DAY	ANNIVERSARY
2- Jaxson Wolfe 3- Reader James Tilghman 4- Alice Sutko 6-Matushka Roberta 9- Braydan Grabavoy 9- Nicole Hruban 12- Alexis Northrup 16- Tommy Leonchik 29- John Magerko Sr.	9-9 His Beatitude, Met. Theodios <i>(retired)</i> 9-30 Archbishop Michael of New York / New Jersey	9-10-11 Andrei & Linda Davik 9-13-75 Protdeacon Robert & Matushka Susan Northrup 9-21-97 Vitaly & Karen Muzyka 9-23-07 Richard & Tanya Wolfe

If there are those names to be added or removed, please contact Fr. Andrew. He would like to list all members of your family Orthodox and non-Orthodox.

In blessed repose: S E P T E M B E R

3- Lyle Foraker (00) 3- Stella Gruener (07) 11-Elias Kotsones (14) 12- Anita Milosovic (14) 14-George Grabavoy (50) 15- Anastasia Barfomchik Gracios (84)	15- John Patrick (86) 22- William Nosek (99) 26- Andrew Sklar (86) 27- John Termin (87) 29- Alice Whitko Clinnin (83) 30- Bishop John Martin (84)	1954: Michael Tonrich Evdokim Sternik Katherine Fissiuk Steve Sterenchuk Gregory Demchik Demian Kuzmich Joseph Litrenchuk 1955: Joseph Drabino Melania Homko Jacob Kuzmich Timothy Savchuk Melania Genaliuk
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Remember those who have gone before us in prayer. If there is a name missing from the above list, please speak to Fr. Andrew to have them added.



Orthodox Christian Coalition
for
Healthy Youth

OCCHY QUIZ

**WHEN YOU SMOKE, DO TOXIC
CHEMICALS ONLY REACH YOUR LUNGS?**



YES
 NO

Answer: NO! When you smoke, your blood carries toxic chemicals from your lungs to **every** organ in your body.

Source: U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services.

Like us on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/OCCHYChicago>

OCA represented at Veterans Affairs' conference

Archpriests Theodore Boback and Joseph Martin represented the Orthodox Church in America at the annual Veterans Affairs Medical Center [VAMC] Chaplains Conference here August 29 through September 1, 2016. The gathering was held in part to celebrate the 70th anniversary of the VA Chaplaincy.

Father Theodore is the Director of the Orthodox Church in America's [Military and VA Chaplaincies](#), while Father Joseph serves as Chief of the VAMC Chaplain Office in Wilkes-Barre, PA.

The conference theme—"Providing for the Spiritual Care Needs of Our Nation's Veterans and Their Families"—was developed in a series of training and breakout sessions conducted by chief and lead VAMC chaplains and endorsers and the director of the VA National Chaplain Center Office and associates. Sessions included leadership training, patient-centered care and cultural transformation, the free exercise of religion in VA facilities, suicide awareness and prevention, conflict management, rural health and community clergy training, contemporary approaches to education and mental health, and a variety of related topics.

Chaplain Michael L. McCoy, Director of the National VA Chaplain Office, also addressed the gathering, as did Carolyn Clancy, MD, Deputy Under Secretary for Health for Organizational Excellence, who delivered the keynote address at the conference awards luncheon. VA chaplains who died between January 2011 and June 2016 also were remembered during a special ceremony.

In related news, Father Theodore attended the graduation of Deacon Matthew Fuhrman from the Army Chaplain Basic Officer Leader Course at the US Army Chaplain Center and School, Fort Jackson, SC, on August 19, 2016. A student at [Saint Tikhon's Seminary](#), South Canaan, PA, Deacon Matthew was commissioned as a 2LT in the Army Chaplain Candidate Program in 2014. His wife, Matushka Jessica—a member of the OCA web site team—also was present at the ceremony, at which Chaplain (Brigadier General) Thomas L. Solhjem, US Army Deputy Chief of Chaplains, was guest speaker and Chaplain (Colonel) Peter R. Sniffen, Commandant of the US Army Chaplain Center and School, presented awards and diplomas.



Honoring our college students on Sunday, October 2

Every year, parishes across North America honor their college students at the outset of the fall semester. This year, the [Assembly of Canonical Orthodox Bishops of the United States of America](#) has designated October 2 as College Student Sunday.

"Orthodox Christian Fellowship continues to provide students with opportunities to encounter Christ and grow in their Orthodox faith through their growing network of campus OCF chapters led by talented students, clergy and lay advisors as well as through programs such as regional retreats, college conference, 'Real Break', and the summer leadership institute, writes His Grace Bishop Gregory of Nyssa, Liaison to OCF for the Assembly in an encyclical marking the occasion.

"OCF continues to make every effort to connect new freshmen to campus chapters and local parishes through the [First Forty Days Initiative](#), which involves extensive effort from our student leaders and spiritual advisors to contact every incoming freshman within their first 40 days on campus. We wholeheartedly pray for and strongly encourage your support of these noble efforts by ensuring that the contact information for your parish's graduating high school seniors be sent each and every year to the [OCF National Office](#) for dissemination to our dedicated local chapters."

OCF offers a number of suggestions by which parishes can reach out to students on College Student Sunday and throughout the school year.



Ven. Sergius Con't

Intending to visit the monastery on his return trip, the saint stopped, and having recited a prayer, he bowed to St Sergius with the words: "Peace be to thee, spiritual brother." At this instant St Sergius was sitting in the trapeza for a meal with the brethren. In reply to the blessing of the holy hierarch, St Sergius rose up, recited a prayer, and made a return blessing to St Stephen. Certain of the disciples, astonished at the extraordinary action of St Sergius, hastened off to the indicated place, and became convinced of the veracity of the vision.

Gradually the monks began to witness also other similar actions. Once, during Liturgy, an angel of the Lord served with the saint, but St Sergius in his humility forbade anyone to tell about this until after his death.

St Sergius was connected with St Alexis by close bonds of spiritual friendship and brotherly love. St Alexis in his declining years summoned St Sergius to him and besought him to accept to be Russian Metropolitan, but St Sergius humbly declined to be primate.

The Russian Land at this time suffered under the Mongol-Tatar Yoke. Having gathered an army, Great-prince Demetrius Ioannovich of the Don went to monastery of St Sergius to ask blessing in the pending struggle. St Sergius gave blessing to two monks of his monastery to render help to the great-prince: the Schemamonk Andrei [Oslyaba] and the Schemamonk Alexander [Peresvet], and he predicted the victory for prince Demetrius. The prophecy of St Sergius was fulfilled: on September 8, 1380, on the feastday of the Nativity of the Most Holy Theotokos, Russian soldiers gained a total victory over the Tatar hordes at Kulikovo Pole (Kulikovo Field), and set in place the beginning of the liberation of the Russian Land from the Mongol Yoke. During the fighting St Sergius and the brethren stood at prayer and besought God to grant victory to the Russian forces.

For his angelic manner of life St Sergius was granted an heavenly vision by God. One time by night Abba Sergius was reading the rule of prayer beneath an icon of the Most Holy Theotokos. Having completed the reading of the canon to the Mother of God, he sat down to rest, but suddenly he said to his disciple, St Mikhei (May 6), that there awaited them a wondrous visitation. After a moment the Mother of God appeared accompanied by the holy Apostles Peter and John the Theologian. Due to the extraordinary bright light St Sergius fell down, but the Most Holy Theotokos touched Her hands to him, and in blessing him promised always to be Protectress of his holy monastery.

Having reached old age, and foreseeing his own end six months beforehand, St Sergius summoned the brethren to him and designated his disciple St Nikon (November 17), who was

experienced in the spiritual life and obedience, to be igumen. In tranquil solitude St Sergius fell asleep in the Lord on September 25, 1392. On the night before, the great saint of God summoned the brethren a final time to give them his final instruction: "Brethren, be attentive to yourselves. Have first the fear of God, purity of soul and unhyphocritical love...."



Fr. Andrew blesses some of the children as they begin the school year.

