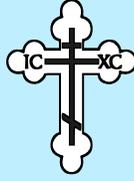


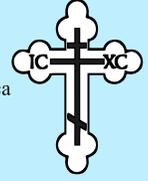


## St. Basil the Great Orthodox Church

205 Highland Avenue  
Des Peres, MO 63122



A parish of the Diocese of Chicago and Mid-America  
Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia



**V. Rev. Fr. Martin Swanson, Pastor**  
**Fr. Sergii Alekseev, Associate Pastor**  
**V. Rev. Fr. Radomir Chkautovich, Attached**

### November 2018

### Homily on the Day of Archangel Michael

by Metropolitan Platon (Levshin)

(St. Sergius Lavra, Archangel Cathedral, November 8/21, 1780)

Our Creator has made us in such a way that we are composed of both the earthly and the heavenly. Because our body is made from dust it is like unto dust, but because our soul was breathed into us by God's lips, we have our origin in the heavens. There are things seen, such as the many and various bodies; there are also things unseen, such as the Angels, simple spirits, not made from any kind of matter. We possess the qualities of creatures both material and immaterial, and I can say that although the Creator has given us the greater ascetic struggle because of these nearly opposite natures, we are nevertheless obligated to preserve a precise balance between them, so that by observing what is natural to the body we do not violate the demands of the soul; and by protecting the soul's privilege, we do not neglect the needs of the body. In her concern that we be perfected, God's Church has not deprived this important ascetic struggle of her attention and precautionary care. For I believe that it is with this intention that she has instituted the celebration of such special days as the commemoration days of Saints—who were people with like passions as us—as well as of the Angels, whose essence is like our souls. Thus, prefiguring the Angelic spirits we would strive to preserve our purity and not disrupt our likeness to them; and observing the men who pleased God, we would not doubt our strength to subject the passions of our flesh to the spirit.

But as those who were glorified by their saintliness are already numbered among the Angelic hosts, and having shed the garment of their earthly flesh are now blessed spirits, like unto the Angelic spirits in purity and essence, comprising the Church Triumphant in heaven; and as we are those still sailing

the sea of life to reach the heavenly harbor, and comprise the Church Militant on earth—then we will discuss now the relationship one has toward the other.

The Church Militant is composed of virtuous ascetic laborers, and that is why it is so-called: because her members, like valiant warriors, must always war with the passions and vices under the leadership of Jesus, Who laid the foundation for asceticism, and under the sign of His cross. But the Church Triumphant is composed of the blessed in heaven; that is why it is so-called: because after their bright victory over all worldly opposition her members triumph in the heavenly habitations, and delight in true rest and glory.

The great Paul explains both Churches with these words: For ye are not come unto the mount that might be touched, and that burned with fire, nor unto blackness, and darkness, and tempest, and the sound of a trumpet, and the voice of words; which voice they that heard intreated that the word should not be spoken to them any more: But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect (Heb. 12:18–19, 22–23). Here the Apostle names a mountain that is hard to climb, fire, darkness, tempest, the sound of a trumpet, and terrible voices to indicate the Church Militant on earth; while he uses the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, the innumerable company of Angels, the triumph of the firstborn written in heaven, and the perfect, just men, to signify the Church Triumphant in heaven.

From the Apostle's thoughts we too can see what relationship one Church has to the other. In the Church Militant there is essentially continual ascetic labor. The lot of virtuous men is labor and vigilance. As passions constantly seduce us and vices always attract us by their pleasant appearance, (cont'd page 5

### Special Services & Events for November

11/1 Wed. 8:00 a.m. D. Liturgy for St. John of Kronstadt  
11/3 Sat. 4:00 p.m. Pannyhida, Demetrius Saturday—commemoration of the departef  
11/4 Sun. 2:00 p.m. VanRonzelen Wedding  
11/7 Wed. 6:00 p.m. Blessing of Water

11/21 Wed. 6:00 p.m. Thanksgiving Moleben  
11/23 Fri. 6:00 p.m. Vigil for St. Martin and St. Stephen of Decani (Fr. Radomir's Slava)  
11/24 Sat. 9:00 a.m. D. Liturgy for St. Martin and St. Stephen of Decani (Fr. Radomir's Slava)  
11/27 Tues 6:00 p.m. Lenten Vespers for the beginning of the Nativity Fast  
11/28 Wed. 8:00 a.m. Ninth hour and Typica

# St. Basil the Great Orthodox Church St. Louis, MO

## Parish News

### Weekly Tours of St. Basil's To Be Offered

Beginning on Wednesday November 7th weekly tours will be conducted of St. Basil's church by Fr. Martin. The tours will take place between 2 and 3 p.m. every Wednesday and are designed to acquaint the community with the church, its architecture, traditional design, iconography and history. No appointments are necessary and the tours will accommodate both individuals and groups. Advance notice would be appreciated for groups of over 5. For additional information or to schedule a group tour contact Fr. Martin at 314-935-1569.

### Newest Parishioner To Be Wed At St. Basil's



William VanRonselen was received into Holy Orthodoxy by Baptism and became the newest member of St. Basil's parish after a year of study on Saturday October 27th. He took St. Basil as his patron saint. The newly Baptized Basil will enter into sacrament of Matrimony with Molly Clark on Sunday, November 4th at 2:00

p.m. at St. Basil's. All parishioners are welcome to attend the wedding ceremony.

### Please Support Your Parish - Our Witness of Christ to the World!

Mortgage payments, utility bills, maintenance expenses, insurance premiums, and the list goes on and on! Imagine what it would be like if you didn't have an income to pay your bills?

The Church faces the same kind of expenses each month and relies on your donations to provide the income it needs to survive. Our church cannot rely on candle and prosphora sales alone to pay its bills, it must depend on regular contributions from its members to stay financially healthy. We are all members of the church and we all share in the responsibility to pay its expenses if we wish to continue to have a place to worship. Don't depend on other parishioners to bear your burden! We ask that everyone regularly contribute to the Church whether that be on a weekly, monthly or quarterly basis. Give what you can on a regular and consistent basis, but give even if it is only \$5.00 or \$10.00 a week. We are all members of the Body of Christ and we are all responsible to maintain the church which houses us.

STEWARDSHIP IS ALL OF OUR RESPONSIBILITY!

### Reminder--Parish Library Books

If you have parish library books that have been checked out for over a month, please return them so that others can benefit from the library.

NOTE: Only donations of ORTHODOX books are accepted for the parish library. Please do NOT donate Catholic, Protestant or secular books. Dispose of non-Orthodox books elsewhere or sell them and donate the proceeds to the parish.

### Parish Prayer List

Reader Gennady Barabtarlo—Health  
Ian Johnstone—Health  
Dewey Mundwiller—Recovery from Surgery  
Archimandrite Seraphim—Health

Keep our parishioners, and those who ask us to pray for them in your prayers this month. Contact Fr. Martin to have yourself or your loved ones added to the parish prayer list. Let one of the Fathers know if you, a member of your family, or a friend is ill or hospitalized so that appropriate prayers and visits can be arranged. Please note: Hospitals don't notify clergy of patients, even if you list yourself as a parish member.

### Contact Your Priest if You are Ill or Hospitalized

Contact Fr. Martin to have yourself or your loved ones added to the parish prayer list. Let one of the Fathers know if you, a member of your family, or a friend is ill or hospitalized so that appropriate prayers and visits can be arranged. Please note: Hospitals don't notify clergy of patients, even if you list yourself as a parish member.

### USE eSCRIP

It costs \$0 and benefits the parish. Get Cards at the candle counter. Sign up for the AMAZON rebate program to have a portion of you Amazon purchase donated by them to the parish. Please find sign up instructions next to the stair case in the hall.

### SERVERS WANTED!

Boys may begin to serve in the altar at St. Basil's from the time they begin to go to Confession (usually about 9 years old). We encourage all our boys to serve in the altar! For more information please contact Michael Orlando.

### St. Basil's Parish Facebook Page:

[www.facebook.com/StBasiltheGreatSTLMO](http://www.facebook.com/StBasiltheGreatSTLMO)

For daily edification and updates of interest, like our Facebook Fanpage! "Like" us to appear in your FB Newsfeed

# St. Basil the Great Orthodox Church St. Louis, MO

## A Statement from the Holy Synod

### THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT IS BEING PUBLISHED AT THE DIRECTION OF ARCHBISHOP PETER

We have received instructions that a statement is to be circulated in all parishes and monasteries, of the Russian Church Outside Russia informing our parishioners of decisions of the Holy Synod “concerning the impossibility of further eucharistic communion with the Patriarchate of Constantinople due to their continuous anti-canonical actions”.

This decision was made due to the unlawful decisions of the Synod of the Patriarchate of Constantinople on 11 October:

1. To affirm their intention to “offer autocephaly to the Ukrainian Church”; since our Church in Ukraine has not requested this autocephaly, they are planning to give it to schismatics;
2. To open in Kiev several “stavropegial churches” belonging to the Patriarchate of Constantinople;

3. To restore to hierarchal or priestly rank the leaders of the Ukrainian schism, among whom is Philaret Denisenko, who was defrocked by the Russian Orthodox Church in 1992 and anathematised in 2007, and also to supposedly restore their followers to the communion of the Church;

4. To nullify a Synodal Gramota of the Patriarchate of Constantinople which transferred the Metropolia of Kiev to the jurisdiction of the Moscow Patriarchate in 1686.

This decision of the Holy Synod of the Russian Orthodox Church means that clergy of the Russian Orthodox Church may not concelebrate with clergy of the Constantinople Church, and likewise it is forbidden for clergy and laity of the Russian Orthodox Church to receive communion or participate in any of the Mysteries in churches of the Patriarchate of Constantinople.

+Bp. George

### St. Demetrius Saturday (Oct 21/Nov 3)

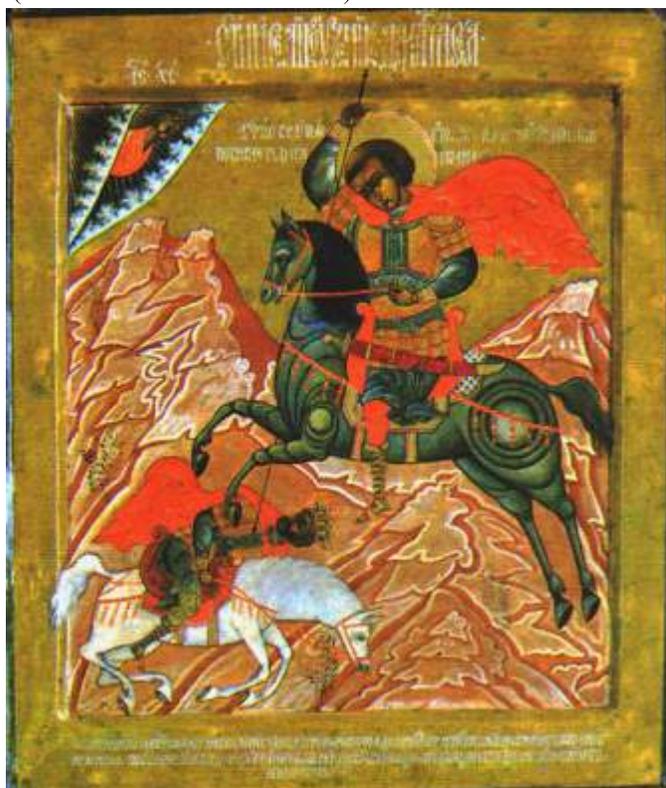
In the spiritual experience of the Russian Church, veneration of the holy Great Martyr Demetrius of Thessalonica is closely linked with the memory of the defense of the nation and Church by the Great Prince of Moscow, Demetrius of the Don (May 19).

St Demetrius of the Don smashed the military might of the Golden Horde at the Battle of Kulikovo Field on September 8, 1380 (the Feast of the Nativity of the Most Holy Theotokos), set between the Rivers Don and Nepryadva. The Battle of Kulikovo, for which the nation calls him Demetrius of the Don, became the first Russian national deed, rallying the spiritual power of the Russian nation around Moscow. The “Zadonschina,” an inspiring historic poem written by the priest Sophronius of Ryazem (1381), is devoted to this event.

Prince Demetrius of the Don was greatly devoted to the holy Great Martyr Demetrius. In 1380, on the eve of the Battle of Kulikovo, he solemnly transferred from Vladimir to Moscow the most holy object in the Dimitriev cathedral of Vladimir: the icon of the Great Martyr Demetrius of Thessalonica, painted on a piece of wood from the saint’s grave. A chapel in honor of the Great Martyr Demetrius was built at Moscow’s Dormition Cathedral.

The St Demetrius Memorial Saturday was established for the churchwide remembrance of the soldiers who fell in the Battle of Kulikovo. This memorial service was held for the first time at the Trinity-St Sergius monastery on October 20, 1380 by St

Sergius of Radonezh, in the presence of Great Prince Demetrius of the Don . It is an annual remembrance of the heroes of the Battle of Kulikovo, among whom are the schemamonks Alexander (Peresvet) and Andrew (Oslyab). (from [www.orthochristian.com](http://www.orthochristian.com))



# St. Basil the Great Orthodox Church St. Louis, MO

## October Parish Work Day

### Parish Work Day



Last month, many of our parishioners spent their Saturday mornings working at St. Basil's as part of several work parties called by our priests. The main project was to build a path around the church to be used for processions.

The first Saturday consisted of laying the groundwork. Parishioner John Malcolm Royse had scoured a path into the ground which was filled in

with gravel by members of the work party. The second Saturday was spent covering the gravel path with landscape fabric and a thick layer of dark mulch. Two picnic areas are included in the design, one by the Trapeza hall and the other beside the newly constructed sandbox — the latter picnic area is still a work-in-progress. Parishioners toiled away in the heat and cold working dutifully to complete our path.

Father Martin comments: "What a wonderful job was recently completed in building a much-needed walk way around the church. In just two Saturday's our parishioners, led by John Malcolm, constructed a processional track." This path will be

appreciated on various liturgical occasions. As Father Martin explains: "[the path] allows us to make traditional cross processions around the church on Great Feasts, such as the Parish Feast Day, Palm Sunday, Pascha, during Bright Week and on other festal occasions." This project could not have been completed with the help of only a few people, and we are thankful that we had many parishioners helping to complete this project. Father Martin, further commenting on the path, states "This is a significant accomplishment, and I would like to thank all who helped with this important project."



In addition to the path, during the second of the two work Saturdays, the first steps of a future project were also laid out. A handful of men from the parish completed the laborious task of moving dozens of large rocks to the vicinity of the cross in the field in front of the church. The stones will be used to build a wall surrounding the cross. To get involved in this project, please contact John Malcolm Royse.



Some helpers at the October Work Day.

Top left photo. Left to right: Molly Clark, Florita Nichols, Melania Alexkseev and Martha Alexkseev

Middle photo inset: Molly Clark, William VanRonzelen

Right photo: Fr. Sergii



# St. Basil the Great Orthodox Church St. Louis, MO

## Feast of the Archangel Michael

cont'd from page 1) the slightest slackening brings the danger that they might gain the upper hand and enslave our mind and conscience to themselves. Therefore the ascetic struggler must always stand on the divine watch.

We cannot accuse the just judge Who rules the world that this life of ours gives us more of what is burdensome than what is pleasant. In this is the very privilege which gives us supremacy over all other animal creatures. No matter what their advantage is, no matter how sound and excellent any of them may be, none of them deserve praise and glory. They do what they were born to do, are not guided by reason, and perhaps do not even understand what they do. All honor and glory is due the Artist Who made them wisely. Because honor goes to the artisan for his artfully crafted clay vessel, the clay cannot share that honor with him.

But the Creator had another wise dispensation for us. By assigning us labor and struggle, and placing at every step of our way some hindrances for us to overcome, He has prepared for us honor and glory, which we can receive after we have been victorious over them. By this do we glorify the Artist Who has ordered this for us most wisely, and we glorify ourselves also for being able to use His gifts of reason and freewill to our own benefit.

If we were to consider our appointed struggle to be burdensome, then we should be ashamed to have been created human, and wish that we were turned into irrational beasts, or into trees or stones; but who would dare to so debase mankind's glory?

Or if you should consider this struggle burdensome and refuse to strive for the acquisition of victorious honors, this would be your own choice. Relax your arms and knees and give yourself over to perpetual reclining and comfort—think only about food and drink, serve your belly, indulge your senses, allow your mind to stop its action, and put all the powers of your soul to sleep. Let us see what good comes of it. The spirit will be weighed down with despondency and sad boredom, the body will be weakened and distressed by sickness, the soul will be encumbered by vices, and the conscience will be agonized by its own criticism, reproach, and anxiety. You will be superfluous to your own self, harmful to others, and a feckless burden on the earth.

But to be always engaged in ascetic struggles, fear, and vigilance is oppressive and harsh. It would surely be so if those ascetic struggles did not contain some sweetness and consolation. But ascetic labor of virtue is good and sweet in and of itself. By its very exercise, and, if it could be said, by its

exhaustion of us it strengthens our fiber, forestalls painful consequences, and fills the spirit with peace, which in turn lightens the virtuous ascetic's work instead of making it heavier. Why is it that we do not deem great labors expended for the sake of material gain difficult as long as the profits come into our hands?

We cannot say that we have been assigned great exertion without also being given sufficient strength, reliable weapons, or commensurate reward. The supreme Administrator of the world has provided all the necessary talents. No one can blame His justness. One person received five talents, but you were given only one. For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required: and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more. (Lk. 12:48). You who have received one talent can reap its benefits with less work—only do not bury it in the ground of slothfulness, and have praiseworthy zeal, so that you might be comparable to the one who received a greater number of talents. Diligence conquers all, while slackness puts all capabilities to death.

Remember that you are a member of the Church Militant on earth—do not trespass the boundaries assigned to you by providence. All the descendents of Adam have gone this way. No one in this life has ever obtained direct honor and glory in any way other than the courageous fulfillment of his calling. Remember that you are a member of the Church Militant on earth, so that you can also attain and be numbered among the hosts of the Church Triumphant in heaven. A glorious finish awaits your small ascetic struggle, and an endless reward will be granted for your temporary labors.

Can those who rest in God's bosom complain about the labors and ascetic struggles they bore on earth? Already feeling the unspeakable delight and blessedness which we hope for but have not yet achieved, they doubtlessly accept together with the Apostle (Rom. 8:18) that all their former sufferings are nothing compared to the reward God's graciousness has conferred upon them, and they would not refuse a thousand times more suffering just to receive that reward.

If it were possible for us mortals to imagine the desire of those blessed spirits in heaven, it would no longer be anything for themselves—now their only desire and prayer is for us. Because of their like nature to us, and because they know about human temptations from their own experience, they zealously strive with all their souls to bring us into their most pure assembly; and, if it can be put in this way, the only thing that worries them is that we might deprive ourselves of their blessed lot through our weakness, and end up in the misfortunate lot. (cont'd page 6)

# St. Basil the Great Orthodox Church St. Louis, MO

## Epistle on the Nativity Fast

If the eye of our mind were more penetrating, we would see ourselves surrounded by Angels as beneficent spirits. They have left the peacefulness of paradise to serve for our salvation. Although our effort against vice and our refusal to give in to temptation may come from our enlightenment and good conscience, I nevertheless believe that they partly owe their success to the ready aid of our Guardian Angels who have been appointed by the Lord's Providence to protect us. I see with the eyes of faith that when a sinner rises from his fall, the most pure spirits help him to rise; and when the virtuous soul

separates from its body, they receive it in their arms, and joyfully clapping their wings, carry it speedily to God's bosom.

Confirming ourselves in this way of thinking, supporting ourselves by holy desires and prayers, and encouraging ourselves by Angelic service, we must carry our ascetic labors through with all courage and vigor, so that we would become not shameful members of the militant Church on earth, but worthy members of the Church Triumphant in Heaven. Amen. (from [www.orthochristian.com](http://www.orthochristian.com))

### **An Epistle for the Beginning of the Nativity Fast**

by Metro;olitan Longin of Saratov and Volsk

Dear brothers and sisters!

We have entered the days of the Nativity Fast, that period of preparation for one of the greatest feasts of the Orthodox Church: the radiant and joyful day of the Nativity of Christ. In his daily life, modern man is immersed in his usual earthly deeds, cares, and concerns. It can be difficult for him to put aside all earthly things and turn to the heavenly, eternal, and Divine. The law of the Gospel is known and accessible to all, but man in his weakness often stumbles and commits sin. The more his soul is burdened, clinging to the earth, the more difficult it becomes for him to perceive the spiritual.

The Church, therefore, has wisely established a time of fasting for Christians: a time of penitential introspection, of work on oneself, and of conforming oneself to the traditions, foundations, and rules of the Church, including the ecclesiastical canons. In this regard, modern society's attitude towards the fast is no exception: one hears questions about whether it is necessary, about whether one can forego, mitigate, or shorten it. But it is characteristic of the true Christian to be completely obedient to the Mother Church, accepting that which it has established and which has been observed by its faithful children for centuries.

People with an inadequate conception of church life often perceive the fasts as being concerned exclusively with limitation in food, in both quantity and quality. But fasting is primarily a spiritual matter. Today the spirit of sacrifice and the capacity for self-denial are dying out. Fasting is the best means of reviving this spirit, through restraining the flesh and resisting its insistent demands.

Yet it should go without saying that bodily fasting alone, such as abstaining from foods of animal origin, is incomplete and incorrect. Spiritual fasting is essential: the rejection of entertainments, amusements, and of everything that in

ordinary, non-fasting, times might sting a Christian's conscience. In order to understand the fast's essence, its true content, one should spend as much time as possible in church throughout the duration of the fast and be more diligent in fulfilling one's personal rule of prayer. During this time it is especially important to live to the fullest possible extent within the mysteriological, grace-filled life of the Church by approaching the Mysteries of Confession and Communion more frequently.

I know well how difficult fasting can be for Christians living amidst the world. They often meet with incomprehension from friends and colleagues – and not only incomprehension, but rejection and even ridicule. This sometimes causes the cowardly desire to abandon the fast, so as not to appear strange in people's eyes or to stand out from their surroundings. But it should be firmly understood that the steadfast observance of church rules by Christians, although it might seem unusual to non-churchgoers, will command their involuntary respect. Our fasting itself can become a wordless sermon for many, reminding them of our faith and of that great and majestic event for which we are preparing by means of this fast.

I sincerely wish you to complete the course of this fast with spiritual profit, peering attentively into your souls and hearts during these days in order to cleanse them of everything that could hinder God – Who became Man for our sake and our salvation by descending from heaven to earth – from entering and making His abode in them. We will render to the Lord only the small labor of abstinence that is within our powers, and He will grant us His great and incomparable spiritual joy – the joy of the living knowledge that God has appeared unto us in order to be with us always, never leaving those who have put their trust in Him, through the joy of Christ's radiant Nativity.

The humble LONGIN,  
By the mercy of God, Bishop of Saratov and Volsk,  
2003  
(from [www.pravmir.com](http://www.pravmir.com))