



# SAINT GEORGE

ANTIOCHIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH  
EL PASO - TEXAS

**His Eminence Metropolitan SABA**

**RT. Rev. Archimandrite Fadi Rabbat**

Pastor

**Rev. Dcn. Miguel 'Michael' Sifuentes**

Deacon

**“And the Disciples were first called Christians in Antioch”. Acts 11:26**

**Tel.: 915-584-9100**

[www.stgeorge-elpaso.org](http://www.stgeorge-elpaso.org)

[office@stgeorge-elpaso.org](mailto:office@stgeorge-elpaso.org)

**“My house shall be called a house of prayer for all nations.” Mark 11:17**

**Eighth Sunday after Pentecost & Eighth Sunday of Matthew**

Our Righteous Fathers Isaacius, Dalmatus, and Faustus; Salome the myrrh-bearer;

Venerable Anthony the Roman, wonderworker of Novgorod

**SUNDAY, AUGUST 3<sup>rd</sup> 2025**

**Tone 7/ Eothinon 8**

**Saturday Vespers Service: 5:00 PM**

**Sunday Service: Orthros (Matins) 9:15 AM, followed immediately by Divine Liturgy (10:30 AM)**

**Sunday Epistle Reader: Johnny Odeh**

**RESURRECTIONAL APOLYTIKION IN TONE SEVEN**

Thou didst shatter death by Thy Cross, Thou didst open paradise to the thief; Thou didst turn the sadness of the ointment-bearing women into joy. And didst bid Thine Apostles proclaim a warning, that Thou hast risen O Christ, granting to the world the Great Mercy.

**APOLYTIKION OF ST. GEORGE IN TONE FOUR**

Since thou art a liberator and deliverer of captives, a help and support of the poor and needy, a healing physician of the sick, a contender and fighter for kings, O great among Martyrs, the victory-clad George; intercede with Christ God for the salvation of our souls.

**KONTAKION OF THE TRANSFIGURATION IN TONE SEVEN**

Thou wast transfigured on the mount, and Thy Disciples, in so far as they were able, beheld Thy glory, O Christ our God; so that, when they should see Thee crucified, they would remember that all Thy suffering was voluntary, and could declare to all the world that Thou art truly the effulgent Splendor of the Father.

**THE EPISTLE**

(For the Eighth Sunday after Pentecost)

*The Lord will give strength to His people. Ascribe to the Lord, O sons of God, ascribe to the Lord honor and glory.*

**The Reading from the First Epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians. (1:10-17)**

*“And they were called Christians first in Antioch” (Acts 11:26)*

Tel: (915)584-9100 / Fax: (915)760-5547  
Address: 120 N. Festival Dr., El Paso, TX 79912

Email: [office@stgeorge-elpaso.org](mailto:office@stgeorge-elpaso.org)  
Website: [www.stgeorge-elpaso.org](http://www.stgeorge-elpaso.org)

Brethren, I appeal to you, by the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree and that there be no dissension among you, but that you be united in the same mind and the same judgment. For it has been reported to me by Chloe's people that there is quarreling among you, my brethren. What I mean is that each one of you says, "I belong to Paul," or "I belong to Apollos," or "I belong to Cephas," or "I belong to Christ." Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul? I thank God that I baptized none of you except Crispos and Gaius; lest anyone should say that you were baptized in my name. (I did baptize also the household of Stephanas. Beyond that, I do not know whether I baptized anyone else.) For Christ did not send me to baptize but to preach the Gospel, and not with eloquent wisdom, lest the cross of Christ be emptied of its power.

### **THE GOSPEL**

(For the Eighth Sunday of Matthew)

#### **The Reading from the Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew. (14:14-22)**

At that time, when Jesus went ashore he saw a great throng; and he had compassion on them, and healed their sick. When it was evening, the disciples came to Him and said, "This is a lonely place, and the day is now over; send the crowds away to go into the villages and buy food for themselves." Jesus said, "They need not go away; you give them something to eat." They said to Him, "We have only five loaves here and two fish." And He said, "Bring them here to Me." Then He ordered the crowds to sit down on the grass; and taking the five loaves and the two fish He looked up to Heaven, and blessed, and broke and gave the loaves to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the crowds. And they all ate and were satisfied. And they took up twelve baskets full of the broken pieces left over. And those who ate were about five thousand men, besides women and children. Then Jesus made the disciples get into the boat and go before Him to the other side, while He dismissed the crowds.

### **THE SYNAXARION**

On August 3 in the Holy Orthodox Church, we commemorate the venerable and God-bearing fathers Isaacius, Dalmatus and Faustus of the Dalmaton monastery.

#### *Verses*

By three men, O Most High, is Thy throne surrounded:

One, Faustus; two, Isaacius; three, Dalmatus.

On the third, Dalmatus, Faustus and Isaac died.

At first, Dalmatus was an officer during the reign of Emperor Theodosius the Great whom the emperor held in great esteem. When the spirit awakened in him, Dalmatus despised all earthly things, resigned his rank and took his only son Faustus and, with him, went to the community of Isaacius in the outskirts of Constantinople where they both were tonsured as monks. Dalmatus was completely devoted to a God-pleasing life for which the elder Isaacius rejoiced. When Isaacius approached the hour of death, he appointed Dalmatus as abbot in his place. Later, this community was named after him—the so-called Dalmaton. Dalmatus devoted himself to fasting, at times for forty days. By fasting he conquered the invisible demonic power. He participated in the Third Ecumenical Council in Ephesus in 431 and fought against the Nestorian

heresy. Pleasing God, he died peacefully in the fifth century. His son Faustus supported his father in everything and, after a God-pleasing life, died peacefully in the Dalmaton community.

On this day, we also commemorate Salome the myrrh-bearer; and Venerable Anthony the Roman, wonderworker of Novgorod. By the intercessions of Thy saints, O Christ God, have mercy upon us. Amen.

### **UPCOMING SERVICES – SAVE THE DATES**

The Service of the Small Paraklesis (Intercessory Prayer) to the Most Holy Theotokos will be observed on Friday, August 1<sup>st</sup> and Friday, August 8th at 6:00 PM. This service is observed in preparation for the Dormition of the Theotokos.

The Feast of the Transfiguration of Our Lord, God and Savior Jesus Christ will be observed on Wednesday August 6th with Orthros at 9:30 AM and Divine Liturgy at 10:30 AM.

The Feast of the Dormition of the Theotokos (Falling-asleep of the Mother of Jesus Christ, our Lord) will be observed on Thursday, August 14th with Orthros at 6 PM. and Liturgy at 7 PM.

### **THANK YOU**



A warm thank you and many blessings to Bryan and Annette Haddad and James Millican for donating whole grapes for the blessing of grapes on Transfiguration Wednesday, August 6. The blessed grapes will then be distributed to the parishioners following Liturgy.

It is tradition on the day of Transfiguration we offer the blessing of the grapes; we offer to God things He has given us, in gratitude. The blessing itself also points to the reality of all of creation sharing in this victory of transfiguration and change that Christ brings about through His Life, Death, Resurrection, and Ascension and by the descent of the Holy Spirit upon the Church.

### **ONLINE LITURGICAL GUIDE FOR CHURCH SERVICES**

Being present, prayerful and present in the church community and in the celebration of the Divine Liturgy is key to being orthodox. Please click on the following link to access the liturgical services for Saturday Vespers, Sunday Orthros, Sunday Divine Liturgy, and special services:

<https://www.antiochian.org/liturgicday/4269>

Click on the SELECT DATE in the top calendar. The services will appear under the DAILY LITURGICAL TEXT on the right column. Click on the service you need. You can follow the service using your cell phone or print a copy for your use.

To use your cell phone to access the above information while in church, you can link to the church's Wi-Fi Network. Information is posted at the entrance.

When using the red Service Book found in the church pews, the general services can be found on the following pages:

- **Vespers**, page 24 – 43      - **Orthros**, pages 44 – 80      - **Liturgy**, pages 91 - 127

### **HOLY BREAD IS OFFERED BY:**



Bryan and Annette Haddad for the memorial service of their beloved parents Salim and Namnoume Haddad and sister Nawal (Haddad) Dockstader, and for the health of the Haddad and extended family.

### **WELCOME HOME!**



*“There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism; on God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.” Eph. 4:4-6*

We welcome Eloise “Ann” Najette Martin, who was received through baptism to the Holy Orthodox church on Saturday, July 26, 2025. Chosen saint's name is in "quotations". Her parents are Victor and Julianna (Khoury) Martin.

God grant Ann many years! (Psalm 91:16, Proverbs 3:16)



### **PRAYER FOR STUDENTS RETURNING TO SCHOOL**

This coming week and month starts the beginning of the new school year for public, private, homeschool and college. All students returning to school are asked to be present on Sunday, August 3rd, so Fr. Fadi can pray over you as you start your school year.

### **TEEN SOYO**

Calling all Teens!

Our Parish is blessed with many amazing youths and you are needed!

If you are in 7th grade and up to the age of 19, please join us for a Teen SOYO meeting on Sunday, August 3rd, 2025 immediately following Divine Liturgy in the conference room. We will be holding elections for the upcoming year. If you'd like to run for office, please contact me directly at (915) 373-2259.

Many thanks to the outgoing officers for all of their hard work and dedication.

In Christ,  
Anne Thomas, Teen SOYO Advisor

## **BUTTER BREAD**

The ladies will be baking butter bread this coming Saturday August 2<sup>nd</sup> from 10 A.M to 2 P.M. If you would like to place an order, please contact Jameelie Dayoub at 915-497-5582. They will be selling 2 loaves for \$15.

## **FESTIVAL DATES – OCTOBER 25 & 26, 2025**

The St. George Annual Feast of the Middle East Festival is scheduled for Saturday, October 25 and Sunday, October 26. PLEASE MARK YOUR CALENDARS. All hands-on deck! Everyone's help will be needed to make the festival a successful event. Further details will be issued as they are provided.

## **COFFEE HOUR & FELLOWSHIP**



Please join us after church on Sundays for Coffee Hour in the small conference room in the Summit Hall.

If you are interested in sponsoring a Coffee Hour, please place your name on the SIGN-UP BOARD located in the small Hall in the Summit Hall.



## **TEACHINGS FROM METROPOLITAN SABA**

For planning purposes, note that the weekly teachings will go on summer hiatus until September.

## **MESSAGE FROM THE ARCHDIOCESE OFFICE**

As a reminder, the Archdiocese Headquarters has created a special charitable account to raise funds for the survivors and surviving family members of the terrorist attack on our Prophet Elias Church in Damascus.

His Eminence Metropolitan Saba introduces the “[2025 Prophet Elias Church of Damascus, Syria Relief Fund](#)” in his latest pastoral letter (PDF version in the link).

## **Homily by Fr. Fadi Rabbat**

The Homily for the Seventh Sunday of Matthew given by Fr. Fadi on Sunday, July 27, is being shared with you, and it is located at the end of the church bulletin.

## **THE ADULT STUDY GROUP**

Our entire lives are faced with situations in which we must make choices. Frequently, these occasions force us to choose between an action or thought or word which is virtuous or an action, thought or word which is immoral or vile. Often, the choices are not clearly defined. The moral choice may chaff or cause

difficulties, while the immoral choice often seems quite reasonable. We must constantly be on guard as we make these choices. In reality, these choices must be seen as a battle.

The battle between good and evil began even before the creation of the world and will continue until the day of Final Judgment. Actually, this battle began in Heaven. But, in Heaven, the battle is finished, with the complete defeat of evil. Now the site of the battle has been transferred into the world, more precisely into our minds and hearts. As we shall see, the good angels, and in particular our Guardian Angels, actively and every hour are helping us in our battle against evil. These are the angels who stood with Archangel Michael and defeated the forces of Lucifer in a time before history.

Read the message to see how Michael and his host defeated the forces of evil and roused Lucifer and his followers out of Paradise, which is located at the end of the church bulletin.

In Christ,

Dr. Sandra Edwards, Master of Theological Studies (MTS).

Instructor, The Adult Study Group

### **DONATIONS AND MEMORIALS**

For donations made for the health of or in memory of, please make checks payable to: St. George Orthodox Church. In the purpose line write 'Donation.' Attach a note specifying what the donation is for. You may drop off the check(s) in an envelope at the church mailbox or mail it to: St. George Antiochian Orthodox Church, 120 N Festival Dr, El Paso, TX 79912.

You may also use the PayPal donation option located at the bottom of the church web site:

<https://www.stgeorge-el Paso.org/>

Please note that in addition to making the donation for the health of or in memory of, one may also specify the donation(s) be designated towards the church maintenance account or icon project fund. Thank you for your generous donation(s).

### **WHO CAN RECEIVE COMMUNION IN AN ORTHODOX CHURCH?**

Only Orthodox Christians who prepared for Communion through confession, prayer, and fasting can go up to the chalice to receive the Holy Eucharist from the priest. When you approach the chalice and the Priest or Deacon say, 'The servant of God,...', please say your first name or that of your saint.

All visitors are welcomed to worship with us; however, non-Orthodox Christians may not partake of the Holy Eucharist but rather wait till the Dismissal of the Divine Liturgy and partake of the blessed bread (called Antidoron in Greek) placed in front of the Solea.

### **CHURCH ETIQUETTE – THE DO'S AND DON'TS - MOST HELPFUL!**

The attached web site is a guide for how to show proper respect and reference in church. This guide is also meant for personal reflection, not as a means of judging others. Keep in mind that there are different traditions even among the Orthodox faith. We come to church to pray and worship God above all else, and that should be our only focus.

<https://antiochianprodsa.blob.core.windows.net/websiteattachments/ChurchEtiquetteBooklet.pdf>



## LIGHTING CANDLES IN FRONT OF THE ICONOSTASIS



It has been customary for parishioners in veneration to light candles and place them at the foot of the iconostasis. However, the Fire Department recently conducted their annual review of the church premises and asked that we refrain from hereon. The reason being that plastic candle containers can catch fire and cause the wood iconostasis to catch fire. We therefore ask parishioners to place lighted candles in the candle stands located in the Narthex (church entrance).

This being the case, it does provide the opportunity to donate towards the purchase of two traditional candle holders that can be placed in front of the iconostasis, one on the right and one on the left.

**If you wish to make a monetary donation towards the candle holders in memory of a loved one(s) and/or the health of your family, please contact Fr. Fadi at (973) 780-0221.** Please address your check to St. George Church, earmarked candle holders.

## ST GEORGE ICON PROJECT



From the Prayer behind the Ambon from the Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom “...*sanctify those who love the beauty of Thy house.*”

Icons are representations of the Heavenly. They are expressions of Orthodox faith, teaching, and worship. The Orthodox Church uses icons to assist in worship. Icons are a ‘window to heaven’ and they help us to focus on divine things.

Fr. Fadi is overseeing the Icon Project to have icons written on the bare interior walls in the church. This project continues beautifying the Church for the glory of God. **If you wish to make a monetary donation towards the Icon Project in memory of a loved one(s) and/or the health of your family, please contact Fr. Fadi at (973) 780-0221.** Please address your check to St. George Church, earmarked Icon Project Donation.

A warm thank you to all who have donated toward the Icon Project. Based on your gifts from the heart there will be more icons to come.



## PROJECT FOR THE HOLY RELIC OF ST. RAPHAEL, BISHOP OF BROOKLYN (1860-1915)

Fr. Fadi is overseeing a new project to have an altar placed in the right alcove in the church, in front of the icon of Ss. Peter and Paul, which will consist of a carved wood stand holding the written icon of St. Raphael of Brooklyn by Odisea Bifsha, and inside of the icon his relic, removed from the old antimension, and on each side of the icon stand two candle stands so that his relic can be venerated by the faithful. The cost of this project is

estimated at around \$8,000. Your gifts from the heart are graciously appreciated in support of the altar for St. Raphael of Brooklyn.

If you wish to make a monetary donation towards the Holy Relic of St. Raphael Project in memory of a loved one(s) and/or the health of your family, please contact Fr. Fadi at (973) 780-0221. Please address your check to St. George Church, earmarked St. Raphael Altar Project Donation.

**2025 MEMBERSHIP PLEDGE (TITHING)**  
**TO ST. GEORGE ANTIOCHIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH**

*"Return to Me and I will return to you," says the Lord Almighty....Return now in this," says the Lord Almighty, "and see if I will not open for you the floodgates of heaven and pour out for you a blessing until it is overflowing."* – Malachi 3:8-10  
The minimum financial contribution of at least \$500.00 pledge per Baptized or Chrismated Orthodox person, ages 18 and older is required or \$1000 per family (or more from the gift of the heart). **This pledge goes toward the support and maintenance of St. George church.** You can either pay your pledge immediately, or make payments throughout the year, however, the final amount must be met by December 31st of each year. The met pledge of \$500.00 makes you eligible to vote at the Annual General Assembly of Voting Members in January 2026. Please make check payable to St. George Church in the donated amounts. In the purpose line indicate **Church Pledge.**

If you did not receive a pledge envelope box, please contact Tony Dayoub, Church Treasurer.

If you have financial difficulties, please see the priest for available options.



**PRAYER FOR THE SICK**

Please let us know if you are ill and/or hospitalized by contacting Fr. Fadi Rabbat. We too will add your name to the prayer list for Sunday's Divine Liturgy.

**CONTACT INFORMATION**

**For Pastoral needs, emergencies, visitation to hospital, homes, and prayer/holy communion during the year, contact Fr. Fadi Rabbat directly and not through the Deacon. Fr. Fadi will not visit without permission extended to him from the sick person and/or their family.**

**Confessions are by appointment with Fr. Fadi Rabbat. PLEASE contact Fr. Fadi TWO days in advance to ensure his schedule is free.**

Fr. Fadi Rabbat at:  
Cell phone: 973.780.0221  
Email: [fadi.rabbat@icloud.com](mailto:fadi.rabbat@icloud.com)

Rev. Dcn. Michael Sifuentes at **Cell Phone:** (915)309-1511    **Email:** [deacon@stgeorge-elpaso.org](mailto:deacon@stgeorge-elpaso.org)

**CHURCH BULLETIN STAFF**

The RT. Rev. Archimandrite Fadi Rabbat, Chief Editor  
Rev. Dcn. Michael Sifuentes, Editor



Vanessa Salloum, Assistant Editor  
Jameelie Dayoub, Web Site Poster

Please note the weekly church bulletin is always posted on the church web site page at:

<https://www.stgeorge-elpaso.org/>

**Homily for the Seventh Sunday of Matthew**  
**by Fr. Fadi Rabbat**

In the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit one God, Amen.

Beloved in Christ,

Today's Gospel really touches us deeply because it shows us how much Jesus cares for each of us. We see two stories—two miracles—that remind us that Jesus is always ready to listen and to help, especially when we come to Him with faith and humility.

The two blind men cry out to Jesus, "Have mercy on us, Son of David." Think about that for a moment. They didn't just quietly hope for help; they cried out loudly, persistently. They knew Jesus had the power to heal, and they trusted that He could do what they needed. Their faith was simple but powerful. They believed Jesus could give them sight again. And Jesus, seeing their faith, responds with compassion. He asks, "Do you believe I can do this?" And they answer, "Yes, Lord." That simple 'yes' opened the way for their healing.

Sometimes, we might feel hesitant or unsure about asking God for help. But today, Jesus is asking us—do you believe that I am able to do this? Do you trust in My mercy? He's always ready to answer that trust, to touch our lives and heal what is broken.

Then, we see Jesus healing the man possessed by a demon who couldn't speak. When the demon leaves, the man begins to speak, and everyone marvels. But the Pharisees, instead of recognizing the power of God at work, accuse Jesus of doing miracles by the prince of demons. How blind they are! They refuse to see what is right in front of them. Their hearts are closed, and that keeps them from truly seeing Jesus for who He is.

This makes us think about our own hearts. Are we open to recognizing Jesus's work in our lives? Or are we sometimes quick to judge or dismiss what God is doing? Jesus's miracles are signs of His love and divine power. They invite us to believe and trust more deeply in Him.

As Jesus goes about His ministry—teaching, healing, and preaching—the Gospel reminds us that His mission is for everyone. He cares about every person, every city, every village. His love is for all of us, no matter where we come from or what we've been through.

So, today, I want to invite each of us to reflect on our own faith. Are we truly trusting Jesus with our needs? Are we bringing our struggles, our pain, our hopes to Him with confidence? Like those blind men, we need to cry out to Jesus and believe that He can do something good for us.

And just as those men went out and told others what Jesus had done, we too are called to share His love with those around us. Our lives should reflect His mercy and compassion, so that others can see Jesus through us.

Let's remember, Jesus is always ready to listen, to heal, and to bring new life. He loves us more than we can imagine. So, let's approach Him with faith, humility, and gratitude, trusting that He will never turn us away.

May the Lord help us to open our eyes to His presence, to trust more deeply in His mercy, and to be witnesses of His love in the world. Amen.

# AN ORTHODOX PERSPECTIVE ON ANGELS

**The Last chapter, and the**

**Saddest.....**

This presentation is Part I of the final chapter on angels. Part II follows next week.

## The Fallen Angels

In the beginning God created all angels as benevolent, celestial beings. They were created with the gift of free will. As man was given free will, so were the angels. They could choose to obey God or, they could, follow their own will, exercise personal freedom and oppose what God wanted. Lucifer was one of those angels that rebelled and misused his God-given freedom.

Saint John of Damascus tells us the following:

"Lucifer was not made wicked in nature but was good, and made for good ends, and received from his Creator no trace whatever of evil in himself. But he did not sustain the brightness and the honor which the Creator had bestowed on him. Of his free choice, he changed from what was in harmony, to what was at variance with his nature, and became provoked against God; thus, he was the first to depart from good and become evil. For evil is nothing else than the absence of goodness, just as darkness also is the absence of light. For goodness is the light of the mind, and, similarly, evil is the darkness of the mind.... Evil began with Satan.

"Now along with him an innumerable host of angels, who were under him, were seduced to follow him, were torn away, imitated him, and shared in his fall. Therefore, being of the same nature, they became wicked, turning away at their own free choice from good to evil."

Lucifer was filled with pride and boasted that he would establish his throne on the clouds of heaven and become equal to God. Isaiah writes, "*How you are fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, who rose up in the morning! He who sends for all the nations is crushed to the earth. For you said in your mind, 'I will ascend into heaven; I will place my throne above the stars of heaven. I will sit on a lofty mountain, on the lofty mountains*

*toward the north. **I will** ascend above the clouds; **I will** be like the Most High.' But now you shall descend to Hades, to the foundations of the earth..." (Isaiah 14: 12-15).*

[Note the five "**I wills**" in the above passage. Because he pursued his own will, Satan is both fallen from heaven, and he is defeated and dethroned from his demonic lordship over the world by the ministry of Christ and His disciples: "Behold, I give you the authority to trample on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of **the enemy** (Satan), and nothing shall by any means hurt you" (v. 19).

"And He (Jesus) said to them, "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven". (Luke 10:18)

"How has Lucifer, that rose in the morning, fallen from heaven! He that sent orders to all the nations (indicating an understanding that Lucifer was of the Hierarchy of angels known as Principalities – see lesson # 8 from July 6)) is crushed to the earth.

Lucifer fell from glory as the Lord reminds us in the Gospel, "I was beholding Satan as lightning having fallen out of the heaven (Luke 10:18)."

This eviction from Heaven followed the epic battle which took place there between the forces of evil led by Lucifer and the Faithful Angelic Host led by the Archangel Michael. This is described in the book of Revelation with the following details: "There occurred a war in the heavens. Michael (the Archangel) and his angels fought against the dragon, and the dragon and his angels fought against them. However the dragon and his followers did not prevail, and there was no room for them in heaven. The great dragon was cast down, that ancient snake, known as devil and Satan ... and his angels were also cast down with him" (Revelation 12:7-9). Peter writes that the final judgment is still coming for these fallen angels. "Those angels who kept not their first place, but deserted their own habitation, He hath kept in everlasting abodes under darkness until the judgment of the great day (Jude 1:6)" After this, these fallen angels assumed a black and dismal appearance instead of their previous radiance and became demons.

**Saint Dionysus the Areopgite** says, "If they are called evil, it is not in respect of their being, since they own their origin to the Good and were the recipients of a good being, but rather because this being is now lacking in them by virtue of the inability, as Scripture puts it, 'to keep their first place.' For I ask you, in what way are the demons evil except in the fact that they have put an end to the habit and the activity of divine good things? Their evil consists in the lack of angelic virtues!...If they are declared evil, the reason lies in them, their move away from what befits them....What has happened to them is that they have fallen away from the complete goodness granted to them....They are called evil because of the deprivation, the abandonment, the rejection of the virtues which are appropriate to them. Thus, there has been prepared for the devil and his demons, and those who follow him, everlasting punishment."

Archangel Michael with the obedience and loyalty of a dutiful servant to God, protected his own glory as well as the glory of the other angelic powers. He was appointed by God as

chief among the angelic powers. He summoned the angelic powers uniting them proclaiming, *"Let us attend! Let us stand well! Let us stand with fear!"*. He praised and exalted God, the King of the universe, and chanted along with the other angelic power the divine hymn *"Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord of Sabaoth, heaven and earth are full of Thy glory."* These words he issued as a rallying cry for those who had not rebelled against God are words we hear in every Divine Liturgy.

On November 8<sup>th</sup>, we celebrate the victory achieved on this day called the Synaxis of the Angels.

**St. John of Damascus** tells us, "Of the future both the angels of God and the demons are alike ignorant; yet they make predictions, because God reveals the future to angels and commands them to prophesy, and so what they say comes to pass. But the demons also make predictions, sometimes because they see what is happening at a distance, and sometimes merely making educated guesses. Hence much of what they say is false, and they should not be believed, even although they do often, in the way we have said, tell what is true; besides, they know the Scriptures.



"All wickedness, then, and all impure passions are the work of their mind. But while the liberty to attack man has been granted to them, they have not the strength to consistently conquer man without man's full cooperation. We have it in our power to receive and yield or not to receive/yield to their attack.

The battle between good and evil began even before the creation of the world. Remnants of the struggle will persist on earth until the Day of the Final Judgment. Although the battle in heaven is finished, with the complete defeat of evil there, the site of the battle has re-located to the world, more precisely into our minds and hearts. As we know, the good angels, and in particular our Guardian Angels, actively help us in our battle against evil. Adapted from The Great Synaxaristes of the Orthodox Church -Trans from Greek by Holy Apostles Convent, Buena Vista, Colorado; 'An Exact Exposition of the Orthodox Faith', Book II, Chapter IV, by Saint John of Damascus