

St. Nicholas Orthodox Christian Church

30 Cross Street - Auburn, New York, 13021 (www.stnicholasauburn.com)

Very Reverend Michael Speck – Parish Priest (315) 246-6051 mspeck100@gmail.com

Office Hours 2:00 PM to 4:00 PM Thursday or any time by appointment

Reverend Deacon David Donch Reverend Deacon Michael W. Speck
Reader Nathaniel Donch

Sr. Warden - Greg Michaels Jr. Warden – Reverend Deacon David Donch
Secretary – Jane Kimak Treasurer – Glenn Peters

Sunday, September 29, 2024

Ven. Kyriakos the Anchorite (556). Martyrs Dadas, Gabelas, and Casdoë (Casdoa) of Persia (4th c.). Ven. Theophanes the Merciful of Gaza.



Saturday, September 28 – 5:00 PM – Great Vespers

**Sunday, September 29 – 9:30 AM - Divine Liturgy followed by
Coffee Hour**

Monday, September 30 – 5:00 PM – Vespers

**Tuesday, October 1 – 8:30 AM Divine Liturgy – Feast of the Protection
of the Holy Theotokos**

Wednesday, October 2 - No Divine Liturgy

Saturday, October 5 - 5:00 PM – Great Vespers

Sunday, October 6 – 8:40 AM – Adult Education

– 9:30 AM - Divine Liturgy and Coffee Hour

We will begin our Adult Education Classes on Sunday, October 6 at 8:40 AM. We will change our format this year and hold classes every other week. On the alternate weeks I will be available for Confessions Sunday mornings at 9:00 AM.

***Donation
\$50 by Ann Bandas for the General Fund***

Pork chop dinner tickets for our October 27 event are available from Greg Michaels.

The Protection of our Most Holy Lady the Mother of God and Ever-Virgin Mary



Commemorated on [October 1](#)

This miraculous appearance of the Mother of God occurred in the mid-tenth century in Constantinople, in the Blachernae church where her robe, veil, and part of her belt were preserved after being transferred from Palestine in the fifth century.

On Sunday, October 1, during the All Night Vigil, when the church was overflowing with those at prayer, the Fool-for-Christ Saint Andrew (October 2), at the fourth hour, lifted up his eyes towards the heavens and beheld our most Holy Lady Theotokos coming through the air, resplendent with heavenly light and surrounded by an assembly of the Saints. Saint John the Baptist and the holy Apostle John the

Theologian accompanied the Queen of Heaven. On bended knees the Most Holy Virgin tearfully prayed for Christians for a long time. Then, coming near the Bishop's Throne, she continued her prayer.

After completing her prayer she took her veil and spread it over the people praying in church, protecting them from enemies both visible and invisible. The Most Holy Lady Theotokos was resplendent with heavenly glory, and the protecting veil in her hands gleamed "more than the rays of the sun." Saint Andrew gazed trembling at the miraculous vision and he asked his disciple, the blessed Epiphanius standing beside him, "Do you see, brother, the Holy Theotokos, praying for all the world?" Epiphanius answered, "I do see, holy Father, and I am in awe."

The Ever-Blessed Mother of God implored the Lord Jesus Christ to accept the prayers of all the people calling on His Most Holy Name, and to respond speedily to her intercession, "O Heavenly King, accept all those who pray to You and call on my name for help. Do not let them go away from my icon unheard." Saints Andrew and Epiphanius were worthy to see the Mother of God at prayer, and "for a long time observed the Protecting Veil spread over the people and shining with flashes of glory. As long as the Most Holy Theotokos was there, the Protecting Veil was also visible, but with her departure it also became invisible. After taking it with her, she left behind the grace of her visitation."

At the Blachernae church, the memory of the miraculous appearance of the Mother of God was remembered. In the fourteenth century, the Russian pilgrim and clerk Alexander, saw in the church an icon of the Most Holy Theotokos praying for the world, depicting Saint Andrew in contemplation of her. The Primary Chronicle of Saint Nestor reflects that the protective intercession of the Mother of God was needed because an attack of a large pagan Russian fleet under the leadership of Askole and Dir. The feast celebrates the divine destruction of the fleet which threatened Constantinople itself, sometime in the years 864-867 or according to the Russian historian Vasiliev, on June 18, 860. Ironically, this Feast is considered more important by the Slavs than by the Greeks.

The Primary Chronicle of Saint Nestor also notes the miraculous deliverance followed an all-night Vigil and the dipping of the garment of the Mother of God into the waters of the sea at the Blachernae church, but does not mention Saints Andrew and Epiphanius and their vision of the Mother of God at prayer. These latter elements, and the beginnings of the celebrating of the Feast of the Protection, seem

to postdate Saint Nestor and the Chronicle. A further historical complication might be noted under (October 2) dating Saint Andrew's death to the year 936.

The year of death might not be quite reliable, or the assertion that he survived to a ripe old age after the vision of his youth, or that his vision involved some later pagan Russian raid which met with the same fate. The suggestion that Saint Andrew was a Slav (or a Scythian according to other sources, such as S. V. Bulgakov) is interesting, but not necessarily accurate. The extent of Slavic expansion and repopulation into Greece is the topic of scholarly disputes.

In the *Prologue*, a Russian book of the twelfth century, a description of the establishment of the special Feast marking this event states, "For when we heard, we realized how wondrous and merciful was the vision... and it transpired that Your holy Protection should not remain without festal celebration, O Ever-Blessed One!"

Therefore, in the festal celebration of the Protection of the Mother of God, the Russian Church sings, "With the choirs of the Angels, O Sovereign Lady, with the venerable and glorious prophets, with the First-Ranked Apostles and with the Hieromartyrs and Hierarchs, pray for us sinners, glorifying the Feast of your Protection in the Russian Land." Moreover, it would seem that Saint Andrew, contemplating the miraculous vision was a Slav, was taken captive, and became the slave of the local inhabitant of Constantinople named Theognostus.

Churches in honor of the Protection of the Mother of God began to appear in Russia in the twelfth century. Widely known for its architectural merit is the temple of the Protection at Nerl, which was built in the year 1165 by holy Prince Andrew Bogoliubsky. The efforts of this holy prince also established in the Russian Church the Feast of the Protection of the Mother of God, about the year 1164. At Novgorod in the twelfth century there was a monastery of the Protection of the Most Holy Theotokos (the so-called Zverin monastery) In Moscow also under Tsar Ivan the Terrible the cathedral of the Protection of the Mother of God was built at the church of the Holy Trinity (known as the church of Saint Basil the Blessed).

On the Feast of the Protection of the Most Holy Theotokos we implore the defense and assistance of the Queen of Heaven, "Remember us in your prayers, O Lady Virgin Mother of God, that we not perish by the increase of our sins. Protect us from every evil and from grievous woes, for in you do we hope, and venerating the Feast of your Protection, we magnify you."

The Significance of the Protection of the Theotokos: A Celebration of Divine Protection

On October 1st, Orthodox Christians around the world gather to celebrate the Protection of the Theotokos, a significant feast day in the Eastern Orthodox Church. This feast commemorates a profound and miraculous event in Christian history and serves as a reminder of the importance of seeking the intercession and protection of the Virgin Mary. In this article, we will explore the historical and spiritual significance of the Protection of the Theotokos and why it remains a cherished celebration in the Orthodox Christian calendar.

The feast of the Protection of the Theotokos traces its origins to an event that took place in the city of Constantinople (modern-day Istanbul) in the 10th century. According to tradition, in the year 911, during a time when the city was threatened by enemy forces, Saint Andrew the Fool-for-Christ witnessed a vision. In this vision, he saw the Virgin Mary, surrounded by a host of angels, spreading her protective veil over the entire city and its people.

This miraculous vision was seen not only by Saint Andrew but also by his spiritual father, Saint Epiphanius, and many others who were present at the Blachernae Church. In response to this heavenly apparition, the people of Constantinople fervently prayed for the protection of the Theotokos, and their prayers were answered. The city was miraculously saved from its impending doom through the intercession of the Theotokos.

The Protection of the Theotokos is not merely a historical event to be commemorated; it carries profound spiritual significance for Orthodox Christians. Here are some key aspects of its importance:

Intercession of the Theotokos

The Virgin Mary holds a unique place in Christian theology as the Mother of God (Theotokos). Orthodox Christians believe that she continues to intercede on behalf of humanity, bringing our prayers and supplications to her divine Son, Jesus Christ. The feast reminds believers of the powerful role Mary plays as a mediator between humanity and God.

Divine Protection

The miracle of the protective veil symbolizes the maternal care and divine protection that the Theotokos extends to the faithful. Just as she shielded the city of Constantinople from harm, she is believed to offer spiritual protection to those who turn to her in times of need.

Faith and Trust

The Protection of the Theotokos serves as a reminder of the importance of faith and trust in God's providence. The people of Constantinople turned to prayer and placed their trust in the Theotokos, ultimately witnessing a miraculous intervention. This encourages believers to have faith that, through the intercession of the Virgin Mary, God is attentive to their needs and will provide protection and guidance.

Unity in Worship

The feast day of the Protection of the Theotokos unites Orthodox Christians in a common celebration of faith. It transcends cultural and national boundaries, reminding believers of their shared spiritual heritage and the universal presence of the Theotokos in the life of the Church.

The Protection of the Theotokos is a celebration of divine intervention, maternal care, and the enduring intercession of the Virgin Mary in the lives of Orthodox Christians. Beyond its historical significance, this feast serves as a reminder of the importance of faith, trust, and unity in the worship of the Mother of God. As Orthodox Christians gather on October 1st to commemorate this event, they do so with a deep sense of gratitude for the protection and guidance that the Theotokos offers to all who turn to her in prayer and devotion.