



## Parish Information Bulletin

### Program for 3—9 NOVEMBER 2024

SUNDAY 3 NOVEMBER	<b>5TH SUNDAY OF LUKE, Luke 16: 19-31</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>7.30am</b> Orthros and Divine Liturgy</li></ul>
<b>2024 SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASSES FOR ALL AGES</b> (A free voluntary program organised by the Church) <b>Lessons take place in the building behind the church and begin at 10.30am until Church dismissal.</b> We have classes for ages ranging from 5yrs to teenage years. Lessons are taught in a relaxed, friendly environment. Please bring your children along to learn of their rich Orthodox faith and come close to God and His Love.	
MONDAY 4 NOVEMBER	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>9.00am</b> Service of Holy Unction</li><li>• <b>10.00am</b> Meeting of Elderly Citizens in Church Hall</li></ul>
WEDNESDAY 6 NOVEMBER	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>5.00pm</b> Paraklesis to the Theotokos</li></ul>
THURSDAY 7 NOVEMBER	<b>★ TEENAGE YOUTH GROUP</b> (In Church Hall upstairs behind Church) <b>ALL TEENAGERS WELCOME</b> <i>In Church Coffee Room on side of the Church</i>
FRIDAY 8 NOVEMBER <i>Synaxis of the Archangels Michael and Gabriel</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>7.30am</b> Orthros and Divine Liturgy</li></ul>
SATURDAY 9 NOVEMBER <i>St Nectarios the Wonderworker</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>7.30am</b> Orthros and Divine Liturgy</li></ul>
SUNDAY 10 NOVEMBER	<b>GOSPEL READING: Luke 10: 25-37</b> <b>EPISTLE READING: Galatians 1: 11-19</b>

### Telephone Contact Numbers

St Vasilios Church  
9387 7693

Fr Athanasios  
9383 4151

Fr Ephraim  
0490 378 215

Website:  
[stvasiliosbrunswick.com](http://stvasiliosbrunswick.com)

Fr Athanasios and  
Fr Ephraim are available  
at the Church every  
Monday to Friday  
between 4.00 and 6.00pm  
for Holy Confession and  
any spiritual need.

### From Writings Of Saint Nectarios

#### Prayer

TRUE PRAYER is undistracted, prolonged, performed with a contrite heart an alert intellect. The vehicle of prayer is everywhere humility, and prayer is a manifestation of humility. For being conscious of our own weakness, we invoke the power of GOD. PRAYER unites one with GOD, being a divine conversation and spiritual communion with the Being that is most beautiful and highest.

PRAYER IS FORGETTING EARTHLY THINGS, AN ASCENT TO HEAVEN. THROUGH PRAYER WE FLEE TO GOD.

PRAYER is truly a heavenly armour, and is alone can keep safe those who have dedicated themselves to God. Prayer is the common medicine for purifying ourselves from the passions, for hindering sin and curing our faults. Prayer is an inexhaustible treasure, an unruffled harbor, the foundation of serenity, the root and mother of myriads of blessings.



### The Synaxis of the Archangels Michael and Gabriel and all the Heavenly Powers 8 November

Metropolitan Panteleimon of Antinoes

The love of Almighty God is a quality which is externalized through the creation, from non-being, of both the invisible world, or that of the angels, and the creation of the material and visible universe. The culmination of the whole creative love of God was expressed with the formation of human beings and finally with the salvation of our race in Christ.

The world of the angels was the first creative act of God. The holy angels are noetic creations, immaterial spirits which are forever in motion. Angels are free and independent spirits: they had the choice to remain firmly in their holiness or to turn to wickedness, as was the case with Lucifer, who conceived evil, and with all those angels who followed him and fell. The angels are bodiless and serve God, ceaselessly praising His sanctity and limitless power. God created

angels in the beginning to be immortal and strangers to both corruption and death. They are, however, capable of change, as regards their nature and their outlook, that is they have the ability to alter their nature and to make the leap from good to evil. They take their glory and brightness from God. Angels are circumscribed, they aren't able to be everywhere at once, as is the case with God.

According to the sacred Tradition of the Church, angels are separated into three classes and nine celestial orders. The first class contains: the seven-winged seraphs, the many-eyed cherubs and the thrones; the second has the dominions, strongholds and powers, while the third consists of the principalities, archangels and angels. Today, the Church celebrates the Synaxis of the Archangels. Synaxis means 'assembly' or 'conclave'. Why do we celebrate the assembly of the Archangels and all the Heavenly Angelic Powers?

When God created the angels, He gave them complete freedom over their thinking. They had to show, however, that they were worthy of the honor with which they'd been invested. This is why their faith was tested. One of them, Lucifer, the first in all the ranks of the angels, the most splendid, most powerful and brilliant, succumbed to overweening pride and thought he could supplant God and place his own throne above that of God. That was his sin: his great pride. He revolted against God and took with him a large number of angels who, with their fall, were transformed from lambent angels into dark ones, from holy to wicked. When the evil angels, the demons, fell, all the ranks of the heavenly powers assembled and the Archangel Michael stood in the middle and cried aloud: 'Let us stand aright. Let us stand in fear of God'. Immediately all the holy angels proved their loyalty to God and refused to follow the wicked thinking of Lucifer. This is the event we celebrate today. We don't celebrate the fall of the evil angels, but the convocation of the holy ones who demonstrated their true and unshakable loyalty to the one True God and Creator of all things. The holy angels came together to express their loyalty to the Creator, and since then they've remained firm in holiness and goodness.

Today's feast of the Archangels reminds us of two things. First, if the angels who fell into pride lost their merit and brightness through sin, how much more true is this of us Orthodox Christians, if we don't meet the requirements of virtue? If such an irreparable calamity could befall Lucifer, because he wasn't watchful and turned to wickedness, how much more will some such catastrophe occur to those who of their own volition remain bound to sin?

Secondly, we should learn from the example of the angels. Society today is a constant challenge and every day we have to confess our loyalty to Christ. When sin, however it presents itself, casts its enticing snares to trap us, then we have to be firm in the virtues. We have to cry aloud in faith: 'Let us stand aright, let us stand in fear of God', so that what happened to Lucifer doesn't happen to us as well.

We have to resist evil every day, because our struggle isn't against flesh and blood but against the authorities and powers of darkness of this age. In this engagement, we have the holy angels on our side, continuously praying to the Lord for our salvation. Amen

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#### 5TH SUNDAY OF LUKE, Luke 16: 19-31

"Brethren, you are all the Body of Christ, and individually members thereof" (1 Cor. 12:27). Thus begins today's Epistle reading. We are all different, we all have a different role to play according to our personal abilities, but ultimately, we are all one body, we are all connected, and we all have need of one another. In the Book of Genesis, the first thing God says of man after his creation is, "it is not good for man to be alone" (2:18). We were created in the image of God — in the image of a God who is, not a monad, but a Trinity, in the image of a God who exists eternally as a communion of Persons. One human being alone is not a person, but an individual; in order to be a person there must also be another person with whom to be in communion. For me to live as if the other doesn't exist, then, is something unnatural, something that undermines my humanity and extinguishes the image of God within me. One could say that this type of selfishness is a form of atheism.

This, then, is also the message of today's Gospel reading. The poor Lazarus sat outside the house of the rich man, hungry and wounded — even the dogs showed him compassion by licking his sores, but the rich man was entirely indifferent to his plight, as if Lazarus was altogether invisible. He lived entirely for himself; he lived, in other words, as an individual, not as a person. This is why only Lazarus is mentioned by name, whereas the rich man remains anonymous, because a name belongs to a person and expresses a personal existence.

And this condition continues also in the next life. After his death, Lazarus finds himself in Paradise. However, the Gospel here does not refer to it as Paradise, but as the Bosom of Abraham. In other words, Lazarus finds himself in the company of saints, as a person in communion with other persons. The anonymous rich man, however, finds himself alone in Hades. He is not even in the company of sinners, but is tormented by the flame of isolation.

When the rich man asks Abraham for a moment of communion — for Lazarus to come near him, even for just a second — Abraham tells him that this is impossible, because "between us and you a great chasm hath been firmly fixed, so that those wishing to pass through from this place to you are not able, nor may they pass through from that place to us" (Luke 16:26). This chasm did not appear there in the next life, nor did God put it there. The chasm was created by the rich man himself, before his death, through his egotism and indifference. The difference is that, before death, the rich man was still in a position to close the chasm — by repentance, by charity, by some act of love and concern. After death, however, the chasm becomes "firmly fixed" and remains as a permanent obstacle.

Seeing that there was no hope for him, he begs Abraham to send Lazarus to his five brothers in order that they might believe and not meet the same end. Abraham tells him that they already have all they need to be saved, and that "they will not be persuaded even if one should rise from the dead" (v. 31). Here, of course, reference is made to Christ, who truly rose from the dead, and on this we could say many things — how, for example, the five brothers symbolise the five books of Moses; in other words, the Jewish people, who refused to believe in the Messiah even after he rose from the dead. The basic point I wish to underline here, however, is that we already have all we need in order to believe, in order to correct ourselves, in order to repent. Let us not wait for anything further. Today is the day we begin our return to the Lord, today is the day we begin to close the chasms we in so many ways have opened between ourselves and our fellow man. Let us begin today to live as persons, not individuals, because if tomorrow never comes, our chasms will remain firmly fixed.