



# HOLY TRINITY

## ROMANIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH



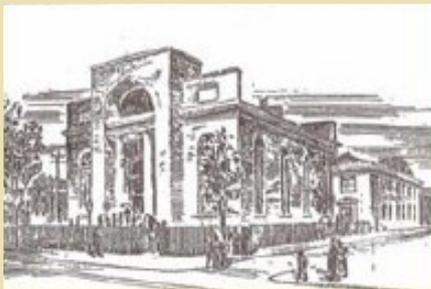
723 N BODINE ST PHILADELPHIA, PA 19123

# CHURCH BULLETIN

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## The 24th Sunday after Pentecost

### Gospel Reading Luke 8: 41 - 56



### HOLY TRINITY ROMANIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH

723 N Bodine St.  
PHILADELPHIA, PA 19123  
Tel./Fax: 215-922-7060  
[www.holytrinityphiladelphia.com](http://www.holytrinityphiladelphia.com)  
V. Rev. Fr. Nicolai BUGA, Rector  
[fr.n.buga@gmail.com](mailto:fr.n.buga@gmail.com)  
Rev. Fr. Timotei AVRAM, Assistant priest  
[fr.timavram@gmail.com](mailto:fr.timavram@gmail.com)  
Fr. Deacon Petru Bogdan MANEA  
[pbmanea81@gmail.com](mailto:pbmanea81@gmail.com)

At that time, there came a man named Jairus, a leader of the synagogue. He fell at Jesus' feet and begged him to come to his house, for he had an only daughter, about twelve years old, who was dying. As he went, the crowds pressed in on him. Now there was a woman who had been suffering from hemorrhages for twelve years; and though she had spent all she had on physicians, no one could cure her. She came up behind him and touched the fringe of his clothes, and immediately her hemorrhage stopped. Then Jesus asked, "Who touched me?" When all denied it, Peter said, "Master, the crowds surround you and press in on you." But Jesus said, "Someone touched me; for I noticed that power had gone out from me." When the woman saw that she could not remain hidden, she came trembling; and falling down before him, she declared in the presence of all the people why she had touched him, and how she had

been immediately healed. He said to her, "Daughter, your faith has made you well; go in peace." While he was still speaking, someone came from the leader's house to say, "Your daughter is dead; do not trouble the teacher any longer." When Jesus heard this, he replied, "Do not fear. Only believe, and she will be saved." When he came to the house, he did not allow anyone to enter with him, except Peter, John, and James, and the child's father and mother. They were all weeping and wailing for her; but he said, "Do not weep; for she is not dead but sleeping." And they laughed at him, knowing that she was dead. But he took her by the hand and called out, "Child, get up!" Her spirit returned, and she got up at once. Then he directed them to give her something to eat. Her parents were astounded; but he ordered them to tell no one what had happened.

### Apostle Reading Ephesians 6: 11 - 18

Brethren, He is our peace; in His flesh He has made both groups into one and has broken down the dividing wall, that is, the hostility between us. He has abolished the law with its commandments and ordinances, that He might create in himself one new humanity in place of the two, thus making peace, and might reconcile both groups to God in one body through the cross, thus putting to death that hostility through it. So He came and proclaimed peace to you who were far off and peace to

those who were near; for through Him both of us have access in one Spirit to the Father. So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are citizens with the saints and also members of the household of God, built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus Himself as the corner-stone. In Him the whole structure is joined together and grows into a holy temple in the Lord; in whom you also are built together spiritually into a dwelling place for God.



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## Synaxarion. Sunday November 8 (The 24th Sunday after Pentecost): Synaxis of the Holy Archangels Michael and Gabriel and All Heavenly Hosts

## “Don’t be afraid; just believe.”

Our Gospel reading this morning is one that affects us as parents; the issue of a sick child is something that none of us ever wants to ever think about, but there is a valuable lesson in the message of our appointed reading today.

The principle character in our reading is a man named Jairus. Jairus was a prosperous man, and was well regarded in his community. We read in St.

Luke’s account that Jairus was the ruler of the synagogue, the equivalent of the president of the congregation, and his duties included conducting synagogue worship and selecting those who are to lead prayers, read scriptures and teach. It is Jairus who invites Jesus to participate in the synagogue services while Jesus is in Capernaum, but as we read this morning, Jairus didn’t go to meet Jesus upon his entry into the city merely to greet Him. Rather, Jairus, a man of authority, went to meet Jesus and begged him to heal his only daughter. He made the bold decision to separate himself from his daughter’s bedside as she lay dying in a desperate measure to ask for Jesus’ help.

I think all of us can identify with Jairus. All of us know the pain and heartache involved with taking care of a child who is ill. Every cough, sneeze, yelp, just hearing the awful wrenching sound of them when they are physically ill and helpless as their body fights being sick, any of us would trade places in a heartbeat to spare them such illness and pain. You can imagine the emotional turmoil that Jairus faced in watching his daughter’s condition grow worse. This is his only daughter, daddy’s little girl, who, at the tender age of 12, is dying. My only daughter Laura is 12 – just a little girl – but in the Middle Eastern culture at the time of Jesus, this was already marrying age. Girls this age were considered to be adults. I couldn’t possibly imagine marrying off Laura at this age, and I certainly couldn’t ever imagine her being terminally ill either. Yet Jairus had all of this on his mind when he sought Jesus for help.

Think for a moment about Jairus’ faith. How strong was it? Unlike the centurion, who knew Jesus didn’t need to be physically present in order for healing to occur, Jairus’



crisis of faith required more of a demand or imposition placed upon the Master. Even the hemorrhaging woman, of whom we also heard about in today’s Gospel, had enough faith to know that just touching the fringe of Jesus’ garment would heal her. Jairus simply didn’t have that same level of faith. What is worse, when Jesus stops amid the crowd to find out who

touched him, Jairus is patiently waiting, knowing all too well he has a small window of opportunity to get Jesus to his daughter before it is too late. His prayer is that of a demand that his own will be done by healing his daughter.

When we pray, my brothers and sisters, is our prayer like Jairus’? Do we pray with a laundry list of demands and wants, and expect that we will get everything we ask because we’re entitled to it? Or do we pray with faith, like the hemorrhaging woman, who knew by faith that she would be healed.

Our prayer life should be focused on allowing us to do the Lord’s will in everything that is set before us. I realize we all pray for the things we want; we need to pray that the Lord gives us what He deems necessary for our salvation. Trust me when I tell you I have prayed hard about different crises all summer, but as I was preparing this homily, it occurred to me that my prayers have been wrongly directed at our Lord. I’ve told him what I want. I’ve prayed for the temporal things of this world that I thought were necessary. I’ve even prayed to our Lord by bargaining with Him – praying that if you give me this, in return, I’ll give you that. I arrogantly prayed with a sense of entitlement. Absolutely wrong. It’s no small wonder that the things I’ve prayed for have not come to fruition. But thanks be to God that we have the ability to correct our actions. Jesus knew all of the feelings Jairus had in his heart, all of his anxieties, all of his fears; yet Jesus responded in His own time to show that faith is the only requirement necessary. Jesus was seemingly unconcerned about Jairus’ needs when he spoke with the hemorrhaging woman, now healed, for it was a golden opportunity for the teacher to teach a lesson about faith,

As Jesus is ready to move on, after having spoken with the healed woman, Jairus sees a friend trying to get through the crowd to speak with him, and instinctively, Jairus knows that bad news is about to pass from his friend's lips when he says, "Your daughter is dead. Don't bother the teacher any longer." (Luke 8:49) Here is the breaking point where Jairus can potentially lose his faith altogether, but Jesus, the ever present comforter, was with him to hear the news, and immediately tells him, like the ever patient and gentle physician, "Do not be afraid, just believe and she will be healed." (Luke 8:50) You can just imagine Jesus' arm around Jairus, expressing words of encouragement that feel like a soothing balm to Jairus' hurting heart. Jesus knows this type of sorrow all too well, for he had the same hurt in His own heart at the grave of his friend, Lazarus, when He arrived at Bethany to visit with Martha and Mary.

Nonetheless, despite the sad news, Jesus accompanies Jairus to his home, along with Peter, James and John, the ever present trio of Jesus' most trusted Disciples. They were the only ones who were allowed into the room, along with Jairus and his wife. I believe Jesus minimized the amount of spectators for several reasons: First for privacy, as any death in the family is a cause for the most intimate of family members to pray and share their sorrow together, for sorrow shared is sorrow diminished. Second, Jesus knew what He was about to do – there was no need for a large public spectacle that would needlessly cause harm to the girl's family. Mostly, Jesus wanted this private moment to exclude those who were unbelievers. He was already being mocked and scorned for saying that she was only sleeping, not dead. This was exactly the group of people he was not willing to entertain; they will ultimately need to decide for themselves if a true miracle occurred, or if it was merely a clever magic trick. It will spark their faith, if they have any; it won't make a difference to the unbelievers if they have no faith in the first place.

Jesus then approaches where the young girl is laid out in the room, and gently takes her by the hand, telling her, "My child, get up!" Immediately, she stands up, and once again, Jesus, the gentle physician and healer of souls and bodies prescribes food and drink for her. This is a point that is unique about the writing of St. Luke. A physician by trade, St. Luke understood the practical need for nourishment for the little girl. She had been ill for some time before actually dying. Now, restored not only to life, but to completely good health, she needs sustenance, as she had not likely eaten anything in a long

period of time. It further shows the nature of the actual miracle, in that she has been raised as flesh and blood, not as a spirit or ghost that would not require food, in the same way Jesus shows His own Disciples after His own Resurrection when He asks for something to eat.

Finally, Jesus admonishes her parents to not tell anyone of what has occurred, but how can something so wonderful be kept a secret? The entire household knew she was dead. The mourners had already started wailing, as is customary in the Middle Eastern culture. How could such a joyous occurrence be kept a secret? Seeing the girl alive, standing upright, talking, eating and drinking is more than enough proof, but her parents simply kept the details of what happened private. It was the disciples told retold the details of the story, which is how it was recorded in the pages of sacred Scripture.

This Gospel reading today is a fine example of what happens when we struggle in faith. Jairus had a measure of faith, but it wavered, and after word was brought to him that his daughter died, his faith was deflated. It was then Jesus' faith that carried Jairus at his lowest point. This is evident in the poem, "Footprints in the sand," where the Lord tells the man, "When you see only one set of footprints at those awful moments in your life, it was then that I carried you."

My brothers and sisters, Jesus is there for us always, not just at the worst moments in our lives. Jesus rejoices with us during our times of happiness, and He feels our pains when we are distressed. Jesus has the ability to carry all of us at our moments of crisis, as long as we don't lose our faith in Him. Jesus will prop us up when we have fallen in faith, and restore us to where He wants us to be. And sometimes, Jesus will use us to prop up others and give them encouragement at their times of crises. The Lord has placed us here together to pray with each other, as well as to support and encourage each other, and to be strong in the Lord at all times. As we continue our journey this day as Disciples of Christ, let us all strive to keep our prayer life simple as did the hemorrhaging woman, who knew, by faith, that the Lord would help her because she believed. Let our own motto be the same words spoken to Jairus, "Don't be afraid; just believe."

**Father Robert Lucas**



## Orthodox Homily on the Angels

Blessings of the Feast of the Holy Archangels and all the Bodiless Powers of Heaven! This is the day we thank God for His work through this church, which God has founded to His glory and our deification and salvation. The Canons of the Church remind us that a church's Patronal Feast, as it is referred to, is second only to Pascha. And this makes sense. Every week of the church year, it is here that we venerate the icons of the holy angels and Archangels. We who are members and regular worshippers of God at Holy Archangels, are given these powerful protectors and intercessors before the throne of Christ God.

The word, "angel," means, "messenger." This is one of the roles they play in our salvation, acting as those sent by God as His messengers and as our protectors. While we venerate and honor the holy angels, in thanksgiving to God, it is to God the Holy Trinity that they direct us to worship—and Him alone.

Interestingly, according to a recent poll, more Americans believe in angels that in God who created the angels. Not surprisingly then, there's also a lot of confusion in our world today regarding the role of the angels: some attribute too much to the holy angels, almost worshipping them in the place of God; others live as if the angels are part of the relics of an ancient mythological past along with fairies and gnomes. Both errors are, of course, false. So who are the angels? They are, first and foremost, the heralds of God's plans, ministers of His divine glory and will, as the meaning of the name in Greek, *angelos*, conveys. Their power comes not from themselves but from God, who created them and all things visible and invisible. Their presence and help as servants of the Most High God is seen throughout salvation history. According to Church Tradition, there are nine ranks of angels: Seraphim, Cherubim, Thrones, Dominions, Virtues, Powers, Principalities, Archangels, Angels.



The leader of these nine ranks is the Archangel Michael. His name means, "Who is like unto God," the name he earned challenging and then casting out Lucifer, Satan, from heaven when he sought to challenge and be equal with God. Our Lord Jesus Christ refers to this event in today's Gospel: "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven" (Lk. 10:18) and the Prophet Isaiah proclaims in the Old Testament readings for the Feast: "How you are fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning!

How you are cut down to the ground, you who weakened the nations!" (Is. 14:12).

God sent the Archangel Michael to lead the Israelites as a cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night as a sign of God's protection and presence in the Exodus. He appeared to Joshua before the battle of Jericho (Josh. 5), and he transported the Prophet Habakkuk to feed Daniel in the lion's den (Dan. 12). St. Michael bears a flaming sword, symbol of God's victory over evil.

Satan, attempted to make himself equal with God, to challenge God, his Creator. He divided the angelic powers, as sin always divides, bringing a third of the angelic host with him (the demons that tempt and serve the evil one). Hence, Satan's temptation to Adam and Eve in the same vein: tempting them through deception to disobedience and, therefore, departure from life with God, promising them that they would "...be like God, knowing good and evil" (Gen. 3:5).

The Archangel Michael is the faithful, courageous, and humble angelic response to such insufferable pride. But not only is he an answer to Satan, but to modern man as well, who in his ideal of humanistic independence and autonomy sets himself up to know more than God, to make God subjective to his or her own ideals or whims, to believe he can make his own path to God instead of following the Way God has revealed that leads to life. In his pride, modern man seeks to make God subject to and the product of the limitations of human reason.

Since pride caused our departure from sharing in the divine life and continues to be our chief temptation from which so many other sins and vices emanate, St. Michael, is, then, a reminder of the central place of humility necessary for true enlightenment and illumination for those who wish to share in God's Kingdom. God Himself is humble. In the beginning, God spoke creation into being by His Word. He became flesh to enter into human nature and redeem it, entering death to defeat it. The Incarnation is the supreme example of God's condescension and humility.

This revelation of the Incarnation, God calling us back to paradise, life with Him, is the particular province of the Archangel Gabriel, who reveals the fulfillment of Isaiah's prophesy that a virgin will be with child and that His name will be Emmanuel, "God with us" (Is. 7:14).

Appropriately, Gabriel, whose name means "Might of God," is often depicted in the holy icons holding a branch from paradise His revelation to the Virgin Mary proclaims the return to paradise, the return to grace that Christ's Incarnation and defeat of death accomplish. He announces the invitation to return to God's presence through participation in His divine life. Sometimes, he is iconographically also shown bearing an orb with Christ's image in it, symbolic of his role as the revealer of God's divine presence and will as it pertains to our salvation.

St. Raphael's name means, "God heals," reminds us of God's miraculous healing and salvation, both temporal and eternal, in this life and, ultimately, in the life to come with God in heaven.

The angels and Archangels, the holy protectors of this mission church, are stunning in their power, their otherworldliness, reflective of the Kingdom of Heaven, which we see in the holy icons here. But all of this immaterial glory is but a reflection of the uncreated glory of God, the light that illumines them and all the Saints, the glory which God in His mercy and love for us as Holy Trinity, invites us to share in and grow us in as we become partakers of His divine nature.

The Archangels are an ever-present reminder to us that God calls all to salvation, to new life in Him. This is His great love for us, as we read in today's Epistle, "What is man that You are mindful of him, Or the son of man that You take care of him. You have made him a little lower than the angels; You have crowned him with glory and

honor and set him over the works of Your hands." Every divine service, we join our voices with these our holy patrons, the angels and archangels, to proclaim God's salvation and commune with Him and all the heavenly host. The holy angels are also our guides and protectors; they continuously direct us to Christ, the Author of all life,

Life and Reality Itself, for "Who is like unto God"? In their obedience they remind us of our divine calling to come outside ourselves and our self-focus, our egos, to love and to serve, glorifying God the Holy Trinity in all things, to become like the angels in our desire to see God's will accomplished in us and the world around us.

The question, then, that we ask ourselves today on their synaxis is the same question asked in St. Michael's name: "Who is like unto God?" Do we live out this humble question in our daily lives? Do we acknowledge in our actions that there is no other God but He who has revealed Himself to the world as Holy Trinity, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, through the Incarnation of His Word, Jesus Christ? Do we strive to reflect in our daily lives this truth: that no one is God's equal, that He is the One "who was, and is, and is to come," the One who saves, the only Lover of mankind? Do we live out this truth by prioritizing our life in Christ and His Church? Those who live out this truth are those who consciously strive, beseeching God, to live to His glory and do His will, to become possessors of angelic courage and humility as witnesses of Christ and His truth in our world today.

The angels are here to help us, to guard us from the evil one and his minions, and to guide us in the way of truth and life that is Christ God. He has given us at Holy Archangels such powerful protectors and intercessors that we may have boldness and faith to vanquish sin and the passions from our lives and join the angelic chorus in proclaiming, "Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord God Almighty, who was, and is, and is to come." Holy Archangels Michael, Gabriel, and all the angelic hosts, intercede for us before the merciful God, to save our souls!

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**Fr. Robert Miclean**

(Source: [www.orthodoxannapolis.org](http://www.orthodoxannapolis.org))

## Holy New Confessors and Martyrs of Năsăud

On November 12th, the Romanian Orthodox Church commemorates the Holy Confessors and Martyrs of Năsăud, whom the Holy Synod canonized in May 2008.

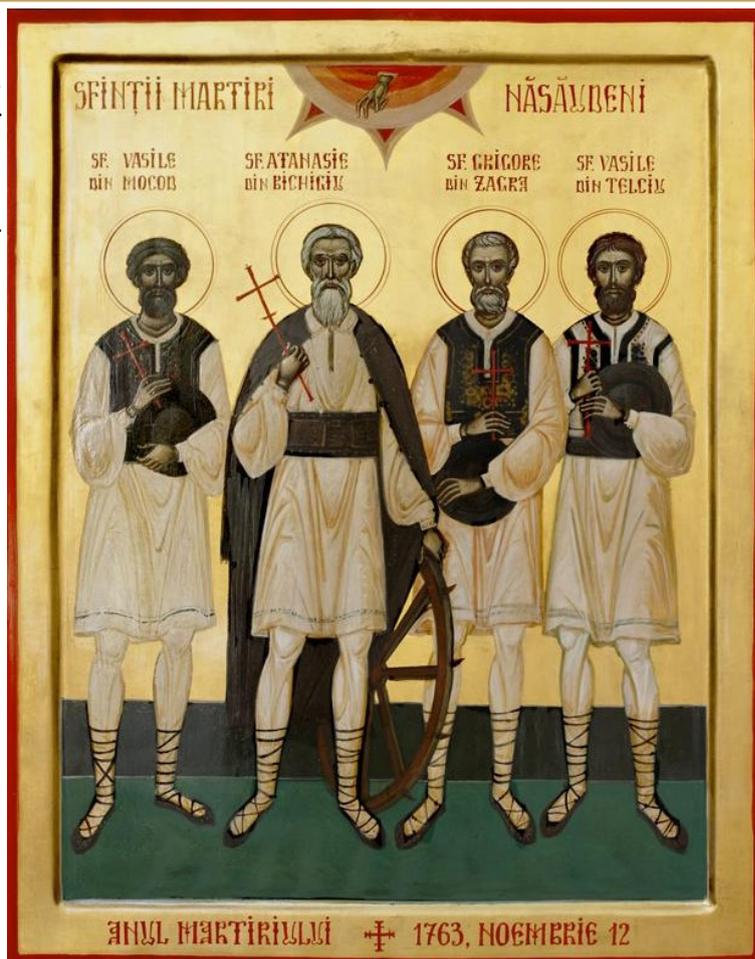
These are the Holy Martyrs of Năsăud County, Transylvania, Atanasie Todoran, Vasile Dumitru from Mocod, Grigore Manu from Zagra and Vasile Oichi from Telciu, Năsăud County, who died to defend the Orthodox faith in Transylvania, on November 12, 1763.

Holy Martyr Athanasius Todoran was born in Bichigiu village, Sălăuța valley, Năsăud county of Transylvania, to a family of Orthodox Christians. Few things are known about his childhood; it is only known that he was an outstanding person in his community, an educated person, who has been administrator and tax collector in the communes on Bichigiu and Sălăuța valleys.

Given his virtues and courage, ever since his youth he has been a member of a military regiment of the Imperial Army, in charge with the defence of Vienna. Hence, as his retirement was postponed, he left the army and went back home. Followed by the Habsburg authorities, he took refuge in Țibleș Mountains, in Maramureș and Chioaru land. While in this exile, he always prayed God for him and for his fellow human beings who were suffering and in all kind of humiliations.

His pains grew when the ones of other faiths caught and imprisoned him for a few years in the Hoopers' Tower, in Bistrița citadel. Once released from prison, he went back to Bichigiu village, where the Orthodox faith of his forerunners was threatened by uniatism. Thus, because the village had no Orthodox priest, he firmly refused to confess to and take Holy Communion from a uniate priest.

He has always manifested his faith in God and desire for justice and truth. Therefore, from 1761-1762 he held talks with the government in Vienna, together with some other leaders, for the militarisation of 21 communes in Bichigiu,



Sălăuța and Great Someș valleys. He went to Vienna together with other Romanians where the pact with the government was concluded and where they were assured that, after joining the frontier guard, the Romanians from Năsăud area would enjoy more facilities and would not be forced to give up their faith.

When he came back home expecting to enjoy the results of the agreement, Athanasius realised that the Romanians' demands were not taken into account, so that he started openly opposing the attempts of conversion to the papal church.

On 10 May 1763, the fight flags were to be blessed and nine companies of the recently set up frontier guard were to be sworn in in Salva locality, at the place called "At the Marsh". General Bukov, sent by the Court of Vienna to survey and accelerate the conversion of the Romanians to Catholicism in Transylvania, came to attend the swearing in of the frontier guards of Năsăud and the blessing of the flag, accompanied by the uniate bishop. At that time of hard trials for the Orthodox Christians, when the militaries were prepared to swear in, "old Tănase Todoran", aged 104 at the time, came in front of the crowd riding a horse and delivered a speech for the Romanian frontier guards. He said: "*We have been frontier guards for two years and we have not received papers from the empress to confirm we were free people, as we were promised!... So, we shall not bear arms to see our holy faith mocked! Let down your arms!*".

The passionate words of the pious old man bore fruits in the hearts of his listeners and so the soldiers who were about to swear in the oath of faith to Vienna took Athanasius' side and put down their arms.

Soon afterwards, the authorities undertook investigations in order to punish the Saints confessors. Thus, on 12 November 1763, the supporters of the centuries old faith and of the freedoms of the Romanian people were tortured on the same plateau of Salva. The bones of the righteous martyr Athanasius were broken with a wheel from head to toes and his head was tied to a wheel, "because he hindered the people to convert to uniatism and join the frontier guard...". Three other faithful died a martyr's death together with him: Basil from Mocod, Gregory from Zagra and Basil from Telciu. Nineteen other Orthodox Christians were whipped, many of them to death. The heads of the martyr saints were put on pillars at the gates of the houses were they had lived and pieces of their bodies cut to pieces were laid at crossroads. This was the martyr's death of the worth of remembering Holy Martyr Athanasius, who shed his blood for the faith of the forefathers and for the rights of his Romanian brothers from Transylvania. His suffering and those of those who died together with him have been always honoured in the souls of the Orthodox faithful of Năsăud area. The Holy Synod of the Romanian Orthodox Church, through the *Tomos* of 22 October 2007, placed them among the saints, celebrated on 12 November

Through their holy prayers, Lord Jesus Christ, our God, have mercy on us. Amen.

**Adrian Iftimiu**

(Source: <https://basilica.ro/en>)

## He Is Worthy! Axios!



From October 31 to November 1, 2020, His Eminence Nicolae, Archbishop of the Romanian Orthodox Archdiocese of the United States and Metropolitan of the Romanian Orthodox Church in the Americas, visited Holy Trinity Romanian Parish in Philadelphia, PA.

The main purpose of his visit was the ordination to the holy diaconate of the theologian Petru Bogdan Manea, the chanter of our church. The event took place on Sunday, November 1, during the Holy and Divine Liturgy, starting at 10 am.

The priests and believers of the Holy Trinity Romanian Orthodox Church in Philadelphia, PA congratulate the newly ordained deacon, Father Petru Bogdan Manea, wishing him many years ahead. May the Grace of God who "heals the helpless and fulfills the needy," descend upon him blessing him with many accomplishments and a fruitful ministry in Christ's Field!

He is worthy! Vrednic este! Axios! Dignus est!

**V. Rev. Fr. Nicolai Buga**

# HOLY TRINITY'S Liturgical Schedule from November 8 to November 15, 2020

## Sunday November 8 (24<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost) - Synaxis of the Holy Archangels Michael and Gabriel:

9:00 am — Matins

10:00 am — Divine Liturgy

11:00 am — Sunday School

12:00 pm — Pre-Advent

Fraternal Meal

## Saturday November 14: Pre-Advent Day

## Sunday November 15 (25<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost) - Nativity Fast (Advent) Begins:

9:00 am — Matins

10:00 am — Divine Liturgy

11:00 am — Sunday School

12:00 pm — Coffee Hour

