



# HOLY TRINITY

## ROMANIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH



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# CHURCH BULLETIN

Vol. 14 No. 48 \* Sunday November 28, 2021 \* Editor: V. Rev. Fr. Nicolai Buga

## The 30th Sunday after Pentecost

### Gospel Reading Luke 18: 18 - 27

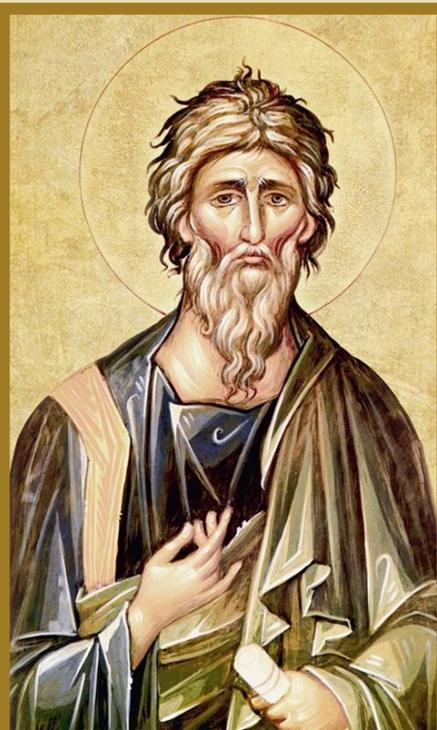
*At that time* a certain ruler asked Him, saying, "Good Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" So Jesus said to him, "Why do you call Me good? No one is good but One, that is, God. You know the commandments: 'Do not commit adultery,' 'Do not murder,' 'Do not steal,' 'Do not bear false witness,' 'Honor your father and your mother.' " And he said, "All these things I have kept from my youth." So when Jesus heard these things, He said to him, "You still lack one thing. Sell all that you have and distribute to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven;

and come, follow Me." But when he heard this, he became very sorrowful, for he was very rich. And when Jesus saw that he became very sorrowful, He said, "How hard it is for those who have riches to enter the kingdom of God! For it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God." And those who heard it said, "Who then can be saved?" But He said, "The things which are impossible with men are possible with God." Then Peter said, "See, we have left all and followed You."

### Apostle Reading Colosians 3: 12 - 18

Brethren, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, put on tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, long-suffering; bearing with one another, and forgiving one another, if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so you also must do. But above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfection. And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to which also you were called in one body; and

be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him. Wives, submit to your own husbands, as is fitting in the Lord.



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**Synaxarion. Sunday November 24, 2019 (The 30th Sunday after Pentecost) - (Fast Day; Fish Allowed):** Holy Hieromartyrs Clement, Bishop of Rome and Peter, Bishop of Alexandria; Great Martyr Catherine. **Saturday November 30:** Holy Apostle Andrew the First-Called, Protector of Romania; Holy Hierarch Andrei Şaguna, Metropolitan of Transylvania; Holy Hierarch Frumentius, Bishop of Ethiopia

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## How to Inherit Eternal Life

*"And a certain ruler asked Him, saying, good Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life" (Luke 18:18-27).*

One man, dear brethren, comes close to Christ. He is not an old man, but rather, young. He is not what might be considered poor. On the contrary, he is very wealthy ... "for he was very rich." His character was not bad; and he was not at all like the other Jews who had tried to tempt and trap Jesus the Teacher. As Mark informs us, he immediately captured the love of Christ ... "then

Jesus beholding him, loved him" (Mark 16:21). He is a righteous young man, and he desires to become perfect. He lives on earth but contemplates the heavens. He possesses much property but he seeks the good things of heaven. He is inflamed with a thirst and intention towards eternal life. And so, the young man bows his knee and puts his question to Jesus Christ "...what should I do to inherit eternal life?"

Eternity. Eternal life. This is the destiny of man. With St. Paul we also confess ... "for here we have no continuing city, but we seek one to come" (Heb. 13:14). It is upon this subject, dear brethren, that we are called to preach to you today.

The most positive reality is death. All else is relative — wealth and glory; happiness and unhappiness; joy and sorrow; progress and regression. Death blows everywhere. You can fall asleep at night and not wake in the morning. You can travel by car, train, ship, to any place and there you might meet death. You pay a visit to the cemetery and see relatives buying a burial plot for a man who just yesterday contracted for land on which to build. You leave the noise and clamor of the city to catch your breath and you return home melancholy, because you witnessed an accident in which many people were killed. On the earth, the sea, and in the air — death hovers over all, waiting, sifting, sharpening its edges to rake in thousands every day. Paul calls death "...the last enemy whom only Jesus Christ will diminish in the consummation of the ages" (I Cor. 15). The Greek poet Valsoritis, in one of his poems, likens death to the farmer who, instead of furrowing, digs graves with his plow ...

Death. Graves. They are everywhere. All over we can hear the tears of mourning. In the face of this horrible sight of death, man stops and asks: What lies beyond the grave?



Is it more than just worms and decomposition?

The answer of a materialist or an atheist, both of them answering negatively, would probably be, "pious and impious, righteous and unrighteous, St. Paul and Nero, society's benefactor and the town drunkard, all of them end up in nowhere ... in zero." Of course, the opinions of the materialist and atheist are unacceptable for us. Unacceptable

not only for the faithful, but for all peoples morally and intellectually endowed. An intelligent scientist for example, when constructing a gigantic engine, never puts even one tiny wheel on the engine without a definite purpose. The millions of wires and complicated panel system of Apollo 15, as explained by experts on T.V. all served a separate and definite purpose. When man, dear brethren, is careful not to build anything useless, is it not also possible to believe that God, the All-Wise Creator, would be even more careful in creating all things with a purpose? The psychology of all the races affirms this. During the centuries, all mankind throughout the world, regardless of education or social conditions (including the semi-savage in the African jungles), has some innate proclivity affirming the idea of immortality. All religious cults have an equal purpose — to befriend the divine — in order to ascertain a forbearing judgement in the eternal life. One of the second century apologists of the Church wrote: "I am immortal, and even if I burn, or if vultures consume my flesh, leaving not one molecule of my bodily existence, still I exist and will continue to live in the treasure-house of the wealthy Lord." Thus it speaks to pure philosophy and its representatives. Cicero once said ... "nature did not put us on this world to be residents forever, but for a short time. That day on which I will immigrate to the heavenly company, to that council of souls, and will leave far behind my troubles and the pollutions of the earth; that day is for me very desirable." Socrates, during the last hours of his life, locked in his jail cell, discussed the subject of death with his disciples. He tries to convince them not to worry, because as soon as he drinks the hemlock, he will leave and arrive in the land of prosperity and bliss, where righteousness reigns supreme. Socrates believes that he will meet judges bereft of human inabilities, unlike the judges of Athens. They will judge him with a

righteous judgment which he failed to receive on earth. The philosopher believes that there he will meet Mino, the Rodamamthyn and Aiakon. They will judge him. With such faith in eternal life and the last judgement, Socrates closed his eyes to the earth, only to open them in the heavens.

But, dear brethren, above the voices of logic, of conscience, of the universal witness of man; above the voices of the philosophers is heard one voice — the voice of the Only-Begotten, Jesus of Nazareth, descended from heaven. It is the voice of Jesus Christ, speaking repeatedly in the Gospels — please, I beg you, open it and you will see written many times — life everlasting, kingdom of heaven, kingdom of God, blessedness, life without end, above Jerusalem, etc. Christ was on the cross and He called the repentant thief to paradise ... "amen, I say that today thou shalt be with Me in Paradise" (Luke 23:3-4).

What is paradise? And eternal life? Are they gardens and virgin forests, with running rivers, the land of milk and honey? Is it filled with fair-cheeked virgins, spicy foods, and plenty to drink? Of course not, my brothers. Christ assured us that there exists eternal life beyond the grave. But He also said that none of the mundane pleasures exist there, nor can they even compare with what does exist in life ever after. The Gospel does not afford us another description, because the Kingdom of God and life in that kingdom are beyond the description of words. For example, it would be like trying to explain to an illiterate villager in Africa, the twentieth century automation as enjoyed by a Fifth Avenue millionaire in New York City. I doubt that the villager would ever understand, even if he used his wildest imagination.

St. Paul, because of his holiness and by the virtue of his invaluable service to the Church, was caught up by the Spirit in a vision of Paradise. But when he returned to earth, he was unable to explain with human understanding the condition of that life ... "How he was caught up into paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter" (II Cor. 12:1-6). Elsewhere Paul writes: "But it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor Ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him" (I Cor. 2:9).

Brethren, eternal life exists, but who from amongst us will attain it? Study this question before us. Now, the answer depends upon the examinations of life's trials and tribulations. Amen.

**Rev. Fr. George Dimopoulos**

## **HOLY TRINITY'S** **Liturgical Schedule** **from November 28** **to December 6,** **2021**

### **Sunday November 28** **(30<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost** **- fish allowed):**

9:00 am - Matins  
10:00 am - Divine Liturgy  
11:00 am - Sunday School  
12:00 pm - Coffee Hour

### **Tuesday November 30** **Holy Apostle Andrew** **(fish allowed):**

9:00 am - Matins  
10:00 am - Divine Liturgy  
12:00 pm - Coffee Hour

### **Wednesday December 1 —** **Romania's National Day**

### **Sunday December 5** **(27<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost** **- fish allowed):**

9:00 am - Matins  
10:00 am - Divine Liturgy  
11:00 am - Sunday School  
12:00 pm - Coffee Hour

### **Monday December 6 —** **Saint Nicholas the Wonder-** **worker (fish allowed):**

9:00 am - Matins  
10:00 am - Divine Liturgy  
12:00 pm - Coffee Hour

## Saint Andrew the Apostle – Protector of Romania and of the National Cathedral



Saint Andrew, whom the Orthodox tradition calls *Protokletos*, that is “the First-called” to the apostleship, enjoys a special honour in Romania. He is the protector saint not only of many monasteries and churches, but also the Apostle of Romanians or the Enlightener of Romanian people and their national patron saint. This is why on November 30 Orthodox Romanians all over the world celebrate him joyfully.

Born in Bethsaida in the early first century AD. on the Sea of Galilee [Jn. 1:44], Saint Andrew was the son of Jonah, or John [Mt. 16:17; Jn. 1:42], and the younger brother of Simon Peter, the Apostle. Surprisingly, his name is not of a Hebrew origin, but Greek: Andrew (from the Greek word “ἀνδρεία”, *andreia*, that means *manliness, courage, bravery*, from ἀνήρ, ἀνδρός, *aner, andros*, “man”). This could be the indicative of a certain cultural openness in his family that cannot be ignored. It seems that in Galilee, the Greek language and culture were quite present, and Greek names appear to have been common among the Jews since the second or third century BC.

Before becoming an apostle of the Lord, Andrew was a disciple of Saint John the Baptist. According to the Gospel of John, after the Lord’s Baptism in the Jordan river, he saw the Baptist pointing to Jesus and saying, “Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world” [Jn. 1:29]. one day he heard John the Baptist proclaiming Jesus as: “the Lamb of God” [Jn 1:36]. Andrew was so

impressed by this proclamation that he immediately recognized Jesus as the Messiah. Therefore, along with another unnamed disciple of John the Baptist (John the Evangelist), Andrew followed Christ [Jn. 1:35-40]. The Evangelist says that “they saw where he was staying; and they stayed with him that day...” [Jn 1: 37-39]. Subsequently, he has introduced Him to his brother Peter: “We have found the Messiah, which is translated Christ” [Jn. 1:41].

Both Andrew and his brother Peter were fishermen by trade. The kinship between them, as well as the joint call that Jesus addressed to them, are explicitly mentioned in the Gospels. One day, as the Lord was walking by the Sea of Galilee — the Gospel of Matthew says —, He saw two brothers, Simon who is called Peter and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea; for they were fishermen. And He said to them, “Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men” (in Greek: χαλιείς ἀνθρώπων, *halieis anthropon*; Mt 4: 18-19; Mk 1: 16-17).

Thenceforth, the two brothers were disciples of Christ. On a subsequent occasion, prior to the final call to the apostolate, they were called to a closer companionship, and then they left all things to follow Jesus. At the beginning of Jesus’ public life, Andrew and Peter occupied the same house at Capernaum [Mk. 1:21-29].

Andrew certainly enjoyed great prestige among the

apostles, and within the early Christian communities as well. He comes second in the list of the Twelve, as in Matthew (10: 1-4) and in Luke (6: 13-16); or fourth, as in Mark (3: 13-18) and in the Acts (1: 13-14). In the Gospel traditions, he is referred to as being present on some important occasions as one of the disciples more closely attached to Jesus. Thus,

the Gospel mentions Andrew's name in particular on three occasions that tell us something more about this man. The first one is in connection with the miracle of the multiplication of the five loaves and two small fish which took place in Galilee. On that occasion, it was Andrew who pointed out to Jesus the presence of a young boy who had with him five loaves and two fish: not much, he thought, for

the multitudes who had gathered in that place. [Jn.6: 8-9]. As Pope Benedict XVI underlines, "in this case, it is worth highlighting Andrew's realism. He noticed the boy, that is, he had already asked the question: 'but what good is that for so many?' and recognized the insufficiency of his minimal resources." "Jesus, however, knew how to make them *Gothic Wars from the Third Century to Alaric*, pg. 14).

When Herodotus wrote his *Histories* in the 5th century BCE, Greeks distinguished *Scythia Minor* (Lesser Scythia) on the west shore of the Black Sea (nowadays Dobrogea in Romania) from a Greater Scythia, *Scythia Major*, located on the North shore of the Black Sea (nowadays Crimea and Western Ukraine). However, Eusebius does not tell us which Scythia was he referring to when speaking of St. Andrew's area of preaching.

According to *New World Encyclopedia* which quotes Hippolyte of Antioch, (died c. 250 CE) in his *On Apostles*, Origen in the third book of his *Commentaries on the Genesis* (254 CE), Eusebius of Caesarea in his *Church History* (340 CE), and other different sources, like the *Usaard's Martyrdom* written between 845-865, *Jacobus de Voragine* in *Golden Legend* (c. 1260), Saint Andrew preached in *Scythia Minor*. There are toponyms and numerous very old traditions (like carols) related to Saint Andrew, many

of them having probably a pre-Christian substratum. There exists a cave where he supposedly preached, which has been identified and called "Saint Andrew's Cave" ["Saint Andrew, [http://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/p/index.php?title=Saint\\_Andrew&oldid=951032](http://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/p/index.php?title=Saint_Andrew&oldid=951032) (accessed September 13, 2014)].



Centuries before St. Andrew's arrival in *Scythia Minor* important Greek colonies had been founded at *Histria* (6th century BC), *Tomis* (Constanța) and *Callatis Mangalia*). Exiled by Emperor Augustus to *Tomis* — where he died seven years later —, the Roman poet *Ovid* (43 BC. - 18 CE.), sent to his friends in Rome his famous *Epistulae ex*

*Ponto* (*Letters from the Black Sea*) poems *ex Ponto* (*from the Black Sea*), such as "Tristia", that help us to better understand the *Scythia Minor's* socio-cultural environment of first century CE. About three decades after Ovid's death, in the mid first century, St. Andrew reached the banks of the Danube and was warmly received by the crowds "excited by his words," as Pope Pius II puts it, based on some historical sources that were available to the great Renaissance scholar. Out of this world "barbaric", he returned to Thrace, Greece and Achaia, where he also preached.

Andrew is said to have been caught, tortured and martyred by crucifixion at *Patras* (*Patrae*), near *Corinth*, in *Achaia*. Though early texts, such as the *Acts of Andrew* known to *Gregory of Tours*, describe Andrew bound, not nailed, to a Latin cross of the kind on which Christ was crucified, a tradition grew up that Andrew had been crucified on a X-shaped cross, called *Crux decussata*, and commonly known as "Saint Andrew's Cross".

**Aurelian Iftimiu**

**Source:** <https://basilica.ro/>