

# HOLY ANGELS BYZANTINE CATHOLIC CHURCH



September 1, 2024

Beginning of the Indiction, which is the New Year;

15<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost:

Our Venerable Father Symeon the Stylite and Archimandrite, and  
his Mother, Martha;

Synaxis of the Most Holy Theotokos in Diasena;

The Holy Martyr Aithalas, deacon in Persia;

The Forty Holy Martyred Women and Deacon Ammon, their teacher;

The Holy Martyrs Callista and her Brothers, Evodus and  
Hermogen in Nicomedia;

# September 1, 2024

## Schedule of services for the week of September 2 – September 8

**Saturday, September 7 –** *Pre Feast of the Nativity of the Theotokos. The Holy Martyr Sozon; Saturday before the Exaltation of the Holy Cross; Zhyrovyski Icon of the Mother of God*

9:00 AM – Divine Liturgy  
4:00 PM – Confessions  
5:00 PM – Great Vespers with Litija

**Sunday, September 8 –** *Sunday before the Exaltation of the Holy Cross; The Nativity of the Most Holy Theotokos*

7:30 AM – Matins  
9:00 AM – Divine Liturgy

### Catechetical Programs:

E.C.F. Registration for Youth continues...

**Attention Parents!** If you intend on enrolling your children (ages 4 years through 12th grade) in our Eastern Christian Formation youth program, please be sure to fill out forms for registration today.

All completed forms are due **today**. Parents, please be sure to print the information clearly - **one form per child**. Books will be ordered immediately upon the completion of the registration period.

**Catechesis of the Good Shepherd** for pre-ECF age children will also be starting soon. Please talk to Margaret Nguyen or Pani Olena for more information.

### O Physician of Souls and Bodies, we pray for:

Pope Francis, Barbara Alexander, Maria Amaro, Peter Andre, Fr. Christopher Andrews, Harry and Virginia Bowden, Kim Camplisson, Fr. Andriy Chirovsky, Julia Camberos, Dennis Cline, Amy Cohn, Vivian Corr, Maria Cruz, Joe Danscuk, Fr. Daniel Dozier, Gabriel Espedal, Ana Fandrey, Karen Foto, Christine Galgano, Janet Greenwell, Deborah Harris, Michael Havens, Martha Hill, Karen Horn, Doris Huber, Rebecca Huber, Melissa Hunter, Taylor Kessler, Jamie Kohanyj, Juan Lopez, Pauli Martin, Mila Mina, Linda Moffit, Maryann Nagrant, Julia Ohnysty, Genevieve Paquette, Sylvia Parnak, Fr. Lee Perry, Anthony Porrello, Nina Porrello, Peter Porrello, Margaret Raya, Maha Salazar, Gretchen Sharpe, Karen Simonich, Debbie Stark, Tava Tomc, Hong Truong, Pat Walsh, Maria Zhukova, Gianna, Nicole, Subdcn Eddie and his wife Viane.

The entire law and the prophets depend on these two commandments.” To love our God and our neighbor, this is the calling from God that is for each one of us. It manifests differently because each of us have a special vocation to make our lives the greatest gift of ourselves possible. May God be asking you to follow these commandments through a vocation to the priesthood, diaconate, religious or monastic life? Contact the Vocations Office at 206-329-9219 or email: [vocations@ephx.org](mailto:vocations@ephx.org)

A fish that is alive swims against the flow of water.

One that is dead floats down with the water.

A true Christian goes against the current of this sinful age.

A false one is swept away by its swiftness.

### September Birthdays

Angie Bitsko, Rebekah Chambers, Gene Deloux, David Gaccione, Jamie Kohanyi, Stella Kohanyi, Terry Rusnak, Alexander Steinberg, Isla Steinberg

*Many blessed years!*

*Did I miss a birthday? Please let me know.*

## *God's mercy towards the penitent*

“The heralds of the truth and ministers of divine grace, who have explained to us from the beginning right down to our own time each in his own day the saving will of God, say that nothing is so dear and loved by him as when men turn to him with true repentance.

Wishing to show that this is by far the most holy thing of all, the Divine Word of God the Father (the supreme and only revelation of infinite goodness) deigned to dwell with us in the flesh, humbling himself in a way no words can explain. He said, he did, and he suffered those things which were necessary to reconcile us, while we were yet enemies, with God the Father, and to call us back again to the life of blessedness from which we had been alienated. Not only did he heal our diseases with his miracles, and take away our infirmities by his sufferings, and, though sinless, pay our debt for us by his death like a guilty man. It was also his desire that we should aim to become like himself in love of men and in perfect mutual charity, and he taught us this in many ways.

He taught it when he proclaimed, ‘I came not to call the righteous but sinners, to repentance.’ And again, ‘Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick.’ He also said that he had come to seek and to save the lost sheep; and on another occasion, that he had been sent to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. In the same way, in the parable of the lost coin, he referred in a symbolic way to the fact that he had come to restore in men the royal likeness which had been lost by the evil-smelling filthiness of passions. Likewise, he said: ‘Just so, I tell you, there is joy in heaven over one sinner who repents.’

He taught it when he brought relief, with oil, wine and bandages, to the man who had fallen among thieves and had been stripped of all his clothing and left half-dead from his injuries. Having placed him on his own beast, he entrusted him to the innkeeper; after paying what was needed for his care, he promised that when he came back he would repay whatever more was spent.

He taught it when he said that the prodigal son’s all-loving father took pity on him and kissing him as he came running back repentant, clothed him once more with the beauty of his glory, and did not reproach him in any way for what he had done.

He taught it when he found the sheep which had strayed from the divine flock of a hundred, wandering over hills and mountains. He did not drive it or beat it but brought it back to the fold. In his mercy, placing it on his shoulders, he restored it, with compassion, unharmed to the rest of the flock.

He taught it when he cried, ‘Come to me all who labour and are heavy laden and I will give you rest’, and ‘Take my yoke upon you.’ By ‘yoke’ of course he meant ‘commandments’ or a life lived according to the principles of the gospel; by ‘burden’ he meant the labour which repentance seems to involve. ‘For my yoke,’ he says, ‘is easy and my burden light.’

Again teaching divine righteousness and goodness he commanded, ‘Be holy, be perfect, be merciful as your heavenly Father is merciful’, and, ‘Forgive and it shall be forgiven you’ and ‘whatever you wish that men would do to you, do so to them’.”

*A reading from the letters of St Maximus the Confessor (Letter II)*

# HAPPY (CHURCH) NEW YEAR!

*By Fr. Joseph Huneycutt (adapted for the upcoming year)*

*Make Yours Acceptable to the Lord!*

It seems odd saying “Happy New Year” in September, but that’s when the Church marks Her annual beginning. September 1st is, for the Church, the first day of a New Year. A pious tradition of the Church holds that Jesus of Nazareth began preaching the good news of His mission on September 1st. When our Lord entered the Synagogue, He was given the book of the Prophet Isaiah to read, and He opened it and found the place where it is written:

*The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord.*

*And he closed the book, and gave it back to the attendant, and sat down; and the eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him. And he began to say to them, “Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing” (Luke 4:18-21).*

Tradition also holds that it was during the month of September that the Hebrews entered the Promised

Land. And, the custom of beginning a new year with autumn was common in Biblical and Mediterranean lands because the summer harvest was completed, the crops were stored, and it was a time when people began preparing for a new agricultural cycle. It was an appropriate time for a new beginning. This is evident in the services for the New Year as the Church beseeches God for fair weather, seasonable rains, and an abundance of the fruits of the earth.

As we begin this new year it should be noted that the Church Calendar is loaded with important events -- especially the 12 Great Feasts, the Four Fasts, and PASCHA. Also, each day of the Church Year is set aside to honor Saints; many of whom died on that particular date. Similar to our personal calendars where we mark the earthly birthdays of family and friends, the Church remembers the Saints on their “heavenly birthday” -- the day they passed from this life to Paradise.

Liturgically, the Church Year begins and ends with the Mother of God. The first Great Feast of the Year, September 8th, honors her birth; the last Great Feast of the Year, August 15th, remembers her falling asleep. Between these two Great Feasts the Church

marks 10 other major Feasts and PASCHA, the Feast of Feasts.

Here's a list of those Feasts, including their dates for the coming year:

Nativity of the Theotokos, September 8th

Elevation of the Holy Cross, September 14th

Entry of the Theotokos in the Temple, November 21st

Nativity of Christ (Christmas), December 25<sup>th</sup> – preceded by a 40-day fast which begins on St Philip's Day, November 15<sup>th</sup>  
Baptism of Christ (Theophany), January 6th

Meeting of Christ in the Temple, February 2nd

Annunciation of the Theotokos, March 25th

Entry into Jerusalem (Palm Sunday) April 13, 2025 – preceded by the Great Fast and followed by Passion Week

PASCHA - April 20, 2025

Ascension of our Lord, May 29, 2025

Pentecost Sunday, June 8, 2025

Transfiguration of our Lord, August 6th

Falling Asleep of the Theotokos (Dormition), August 15<sup>th</sup> – preceded by a 2-week fast which begins on August 1st

The dates for Palm Sunday, PASCHA, Ascension, and Pentecost vary each year. In 2025, Eastern Orthodox Christians and those Eastern

Catholics who follow the Julian Calendar will – yet again – celebrate PASCHA at the same time the Catholic and Protestant churches celebrate Easter, April 20th. The Apostles' Fast can vary in length. It begins on the Monday after All Saints Sunday (the first Sunday after Pentecost) and ends with the Feast, June 29th.

Each parish also celebrates its “altar feast” on the day set aside for its Patron Saint, Feast, or Name.

The wall calendars that most parishes make available each fall include many of the daily Saints and readings for the year. Also, most people have their own Patron Saint – or “nameday” – to remember, as well as other favorite and family Saints' days.

Why not start the New Year off right? Mark your personal calendar with the Feasts, Fasts, and Saints days of the Church. Make a resolution to participate in the liturgical cycle of the Church. Unlike mundane New Year's resolutions, marking your calendar, keeping the Feasts and Fasts, and embarking for a new life within the annual life of the Church is a wonderful way to sanctify time. Let's all join together in making this an “acceptable year of the Lord!”

**HAPPY NEW YEAR!**

# Rehabilitating Saint Simeon the Stylite

by Elizabeth Klein

January 07, 2020

<https://churchlifejournal.nd.edu/articles/rehabilitating-saint-simeon-the-stylite/>

Simeon the Stylite, famed for standing on a pillar for over 30 years in the middle of the 5th century, is something of a joke for moderns. He has been deemed irrelevant, self-flagellating, and bizarre. For example, Edward Gibbon, in his famous *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, writes the following about Simeon's life:

*A prince, who should capriciously inflict such tortures, would be deemed a tyrant; but it would surpass the power of a tyrant to impose a long and miserable existence on the reluctant victims of his cruelty . . . a cruel, unfeeling temper has distinguished the monks of every age and country: their stern indifference, which is seldom mollified by personal friendship, is inflamed by religious hatred; and their merciless zeal has strenuously administered the holy office of the Inquisition.*

Even the much more favorably disposed St. Francis de Sales puts Simeon in the category of saints whose lives have “more material for us to marvel at than to imitate.”[1] So what of this curious saint? Is he just an oddity of ages past, at best a sort of unicorn among saints, whose only purpose was to dazzle us for a brief moment and at worst a holier-than-thou voluntary martyr who set a precedent for every sort of religious cruelty, as Gibbon supposes?

The historical records of his life and cult point us in a very different direction. First of all, unlike some saints of late antiquity, Simeon's life is on historically solid ground. Of the three written accounts of his life which come down to us, two of them are written by his contemporaries (Theodoret of Cyrrhus and Antonius), both of whom saw Simeon while he was alive. Antonius knew the saint well. Simeon really did stand on that pillar, and bear

the sufferings that came with it. Not only do we have eyewitness accounts of his sanctity, but Simeon was an extremely popular saint in his own time. According to his biographers, Simeon enjoyed worldwide fame and people from all quarters sought him out for his counsel, for his blessing and for healing. The archeological record supports this claim, as many pilgrimage tokens[2] featuring his likeness have survived dating from hundreds of years after his death, and indeed the base of his pillar stood until modern times.[3] Simeon also inspired many imitators—other stylites (such as St. Daniel the Stylite) and, even later, dendrites (those who lived in trees).

So why is Simeon such a scandal to us today? And what was he doing on top of that pillar, anyway? To understand Simeon's exploits, we must first understand that traditionally speaking, standing is the posture of prayer (it is hard to miss this point if you have ever attended an Eastern liturgy). Simeon was a true embodiment of the monastic ideal to “pray without ceasing” (1 Thess. 5:16). Simeon's aim in climbing the pillar was not, therefore, to be a spectacle, but to set himself apart and to commit himself to prayer and to penance with his whole body at all times. The fact that his pillar got taller and taller as time went on did serve as a striking visual reminder of the intermediary power of prayer (since Simeon was *literally* suspended between heaven and earth, like Christ on the cross), but it was not an act of pride or showmanship. In fact, two monks who accused Simeon of practicing a flashy and novel form of asceticism found themselves humbled when they finally beheld the saint, when they were too timid to ascend to the pillar's treacherous height themselves.[4]

Theodoret of Cyrrhus explains the need for Simeon's pillar in this way: just as God deigned

for strange and startling signs to be manifested through his prophets (e.g. Hosea's marriage to a prostitute, and Ezekiel laying on his side for 40 days), so God also ordained Simeon's pillar to be a sign (perhaps even a sign of contradiction).[5] If Simeon is a scandal to us, therefore, the true scandal is that we do not believe in the power of prayer like Simeon did. To dedicate one's whole life to the perpetual contemplation of God, to persistent supplication, to earnest self-mastery is, to us, absurd. Although Christ tells us that Mary, who sits motionless at his feet, has the better part than Martha, who busies herself with many works (cf. Lk. 10:42), do we believe it? If we do not, then Simeon is just a fanatic on a pole.

But if we understand Simeon's life not only as one of perpetual prayer but also of sacrifice, Simeon can be adopted as the perfect saint for our modern times. What do we need more in our fast-paced, demanding, screen-filled lives than someone who achieves holiness *without moving*? Simeon can serve for us an icon of a saint who planted himself where God had put him and remained there, believing that God could work through the most banal circumstance, that of a man standing still, opening his heart to God.

Simeon's life also reminds us of a very important lesson that we tend to forget: we cannot escape suffering (despite all the advances of modern science), and indeed [suffering is the means of union with Christ](#). Simeon essentially *did nothing*, he did not move, he did not marry, he did not have a job and yet he suffered immensely, standing still in rain and snow, pushing his physical body to its limits. And when we, like Simeon, embrace that suffering, it can transform us. This meaning of suffering is beautifully captured by my favorite story from Simeon's life. A "king of the Arabs,"[6] as Antonius calls him, comes to see Simeon and to ask for his prayers. Simeon has a rope tied tightly around his waist and, because it is gnawing at his flesh, maggots have taken

up residence. One of these maggots falls from atop the pillar to the feet of the king.

Our initial reaction to this setup of this story is one of disgust. We want to turn away from this suffering, and from this seemingly needless penitential fervor. Our reaction to this extreme instance of suffering, however, is only an amplified version of our reaction to all suffering, of our modern tendency to disguise, bury and turn away from the harshest realities of life, and especially of death. But the pilgrim king is seeking in earnest, and he does not recoil. Seeing that something has fallen from the saint, he picks it up—and, to our surprise, he finds that what he has in his hand is not a worm, but a pearl. The king interprets this sign as one of forgiveness and blessing brought about by Simeon's ceaseless prayer. In other words, Simeon's suffering has been transfigured by his love of Christ into something precious; his suffering has become the pearl of great price (cf. Matt. 13:45-46).

[1] St. Francis de Sales. *Introduction to the Devout Life* (New York: Image, 2014), 98.

[2] See, for example, [this one](#), which dates from around 300 years after the death of Simeon.

[3] The pillar is believed to have been recently destroyed or [damaged by ISIS](#) attacks in Syria.

[4] "The Life of Daniel the Stylite" in *Three Byzantine Saints* (Yonkers, NY: SVS, 1977), 6.

[5] "The Life of Simeon Stylites by Theodoret, bishop of Cyrhus" in *The Lives of Simeon Stylites*, (Kalamazoo, MI: Cistercian, 1992), 12.

[6] "The Life and Daily Mode of Living of Blessed Simeon the Stylite by Antonius" in *Lives of Simeon*, 18.

## Holy Angels Byzantine Catholic Church

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### Parish Advisory Council:

Bruce Bitsko, Nelson Chase, Fr. Deacon Jonathan Deane, Joel Espedal, Janet Greenwell, Daniele Laman, Olena Bankston

### Finance Council:

Al Aparicio, Fr. Deacon Jonathan Deane, Bob Greenwell, Paul Washicko

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### **Bless, O Lord, the worship and Stewardship of your faithful servants:**

Adult tithes: \$1160.00; Loose Change: \$48.00; Non-Parishioner: \$30.00; Church Usage: \$200.00;  
Settlement Proceeds: \$26.37; **Total: \$1464.37**

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**Vocation Icon:** This week: Greenwell Family

Next week: Washicko Family

**Please sign up in the narthex to host the vocation icon.**

THE BYZANTINE CATHOLIC EPARCHY OF PHOENIX

SUBSCRIBES TO THE

*Charter for the Protection of  
Children and Young People*

*adopted by the United States Catholic Conference of Bishops.*

*The Eparchy, within all its parishes, institutions and programs, is committed to assuring a safe environment in ministry for its children and vulnerable adults that conforms to the Charter for Protection of Children and Young People.*

*For additional information regarding the eparchial Safe Environment Program or to report any incidents of concerns, please contact:*

*Fr. Dcn. Michael Hanafin*

*Victim Assistance Coordinator*

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