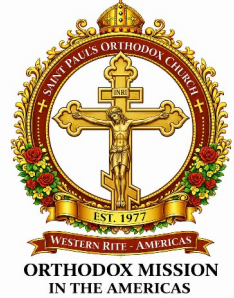




St. Paul's Orthodox Church

Monthly Gazette

September 2026



Parish News

Bp. George has asked everyone to bring friends, relatives, neighbors, etc. to the church to grow our church.

The bake sale normally scheduled during the blessing of the pets and before Christmas have been canceled.

September Birthdays

2 Jack Littell

7 Georgie Halliburton

24 Alex Barker

September Anniversaries

1 Jennifer Tornicasa

Special Prayers

Our Country
Bp. George and Mary
Fr. Walt and Bea
Mary M.
Jack and Mariann
Stevie C.
John and April
The churches in Columbia
The earthquake victims in Columbia

Calendar

The following is the calendar for September, 2026.

Holy Communion is every Sunday at 10:30 a.m.

Morning Prayer and Bible Study Wednesdays at 10:00 a.m.

September

1 – Jennifer Tornicasa's Anniversary

2 - Morning Prayer and Bible Study 10:00 a.m.

2 – Jack Littell's Birthday

6- Holy Communion 10:30 a.m.

7 – Georgie Halliburton's Birthday

9 - Morning Prayer and Bible Study 10:00 a.m.

13- Holy Communion 10:30 a.m.

16 - Morning Prayer and Bible Study 10:00 a.m.

20 - Holy Communion 10:30 a.m.

21 – St. Matthw, Apostle and Evangelist

23 - Morning Prayer and Bible Study 10:00 a.m.

24 – Alex Barker’s Birthday

27 - Holy Communion 10:30 a.m.

29 – St. Michael and all Angels

30 - Morning Prayer and Bible Study 10:00 a.m.

Special Dates

St. Matthew, Apostle and Evangelist

In the Western Rite, St. Matthew is honored as both **Apostle** and **Evangelist**, a man whose life displays the transforming power of Christ’s call and the grace that reshapes a sinner into a herald of the Kingdom. His feast, traditionally kept on **September 21**, carries themes of conversion, vocation, and the universality of the Gospel.

His Calling: Grace That Interrupts

Matthew—also called Levi—was a tax collector, a profession viewed with suspicion and resentment in first-century Judea. In the Western tradition, this detail is never treated lightly. It underscores the radical nature of Christ’s mercy: He calls not the respectable, but the willing; not the perfect, but the receptive.

The English Missal’s collect for St. Matthew captures this beautifully, asking God to grant us grace “to forsake all covetous desires and inordinate love of riches,”

just as Matthew left his tax table without hesitation. His conversion is immediate, decisive, and joyful—a model for every Christian who hears Christ’s voice cutting through the noise of daily life.

His Apostolic Witness: A Gospel for All Nations

Western-Rite tradition emphasizes Matthew’s role in presenting Christ as the fulfillment of the Law and the Prophets. His Gospel begins with a genealogy—a deeply Western instinct, showing Christ’s entry into human history, lineage, and promise. Matthew writes for the Church, but especially for those who must see that Jesus is the long-awaited Messiah.

His Gospel gives us:

- The Sermon on the Mount
- The Beatitudes
- The Great Commission
- The parables of the Kingdom
- The clear teaching on the Church’s authority (“Whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth...”)

In Western liturgy, Matthew’s Gospel is read frequently because it forms the backbone of Christian moral teaching and ecclesial identity.

His Symbol: The Winged Man

In the Western Rite, the four Evangelists are symbolized by the four living creatures of Ezekiel and Revelation. Matthew is represented by the **Winged Man**, signifying the Incarnation—God taking human flesh. His Gospel begins with

Christ's human lineage, so the symbol reflects the mystery of God entering our humanity.

His Martyrdom: Fidelity Unto Death

Western tradition holds that Matthew preached in Ethiopia and was martyred while celebrating the Holy Mysteries. This detail is cherished in Western-Rite spirituality: the Evangelist who wrote of Christ's authority died at the altar, offering the Sacrifice of the Mass. His witness reminds us that the proclamation of the Gospel and the celebration of the Eucharist are inseparable.

His Legacy in the Western Rite

St. Matthew stands as:

- **A model of conversion**
- **A teacher of Christian ethics**
- **A witness to Christ's fulfillment of the Old Covenant**
- **A martyr of the altar**
- **An Evangelist whose words shape the rhythm of Western liturgy**

His feast invites the faithful to examine their own hearts: What tables must we leave behind? What attachments must we surrender? And how might we, like Matthew, use our gifts—ordinary or unexpected—to proclaim Christ's Kingdom?

St. Michael and All Angels

In Western tradition, St. Michael is honored as:

- **Protector of the Church**
- **Defender against evil**
- **Guardian of the faithful**
- **Leader of the angelic armies**

The English Missal's collect for the feast asks God to "grant that as Thy holy angels always serve and worship Thee in heaven, so by Thy appointment they may succor and defend us on earth." This captures the Western-Rite emphasis on the angels' active ministry: they are not distant beings, but present helpers.

St. Michael's victory over the dragon in Revelation is read at Mass on this feast, reminding the faithful that spiritual warfare is real, but Christ's triumph is assured.

All Angels: Messengers, Guardians, Worshipers

The Western Rite recognizes the nine choirs of angels—Seraphim, Cherubim, Thrones, Dominions, Virtues, Powers, Principalities, Archangels, and Angels—each fulfilling a distinct role in God's providence.

Their ministries include:

- **Guarding the faithful**
- **Carrying out God's will**
- **Delivering divine messages**
- **Protecting nations and parishes**
- **Joining the Church in worship**

In Western liturgy, angels are mentioned constantly: in the Preface of the Mass, in the Sanctus (“with angels and archangels”), and in the prayers for protection. The feast highlights this ever-present companionship.

The Western-Rite Emphasis: Worship Joined to Heaven

One of the most beautiful Western insights is that the angels are not merely warriors—they are worshippers. The feast of St. Michael and All Angels reminds the faithful that every Mass is an entrance into heavenly worship.

The Western tradition teaches that:

- Angels surround the altar
- They join the priest in offering the Holy Sacrifice
- They bear the prayers of the faithful before God
- They rejoice whenever Christ is adored

This is why the feast is so closely tied to the Eucharist: St. Michael is traditionally seen as the guardian of the Church’s worship, defending the sanctity of the altar.

St. Michael’s Patronage in the West

Western Christians have long invoked St. Michael for:

- **Protection in danger**
- **Courage in spiritual struggle**
- **Strength in temptation**
- **Peace at the hour of death**

The ancient Western prayer, “*St. Michael the Archangel, defend us in battle...*”—though modern in its familiar form—reflects a much older instinct: to call upon the captain of God’s armies for help in the daily combat of the Christian life.

The Feast's Message for the Faithful

St. Michael and All Angels remind us that:

- The Church is surrounded by heavenly allies
- Our worship is joined to the liturgy of heaven
- Evil is real, but Christ's victory is final
- God's providence is active, personal, and protective
- Every Christian has angelic guardians appointed by God

The feast invites us to live with confidence, courage, and reverence—knowing that the angels stand with us, and that St. Michael leads the hosts of heaven in the service of Christ our King.

Liturgy of St. Tikhon

An Order for Prime

Prime is one of the traditional **Little Hours** of the Western Church, prayed early in the morning—typically around 6 a.m. In Western-Rite Orthodox usage, Prime is not part of the Eucharistic liturgy itself but belongs to the **Daily Office**, just as in the classical Anglican and pre-Reformation Western tradition.

Although the St. Andrew Service Book does not print Prime, Western-Rite parishes often use the traditional form drawn from the English Office tradition, adapted for Orthodox use.

1. Purpose of Prime

Prime serves three main functions in Western spirituality:

- **Sanctifying the first labor of the day**
- **Asking God's protection and steadiness**
- **Recalling the discipline of Christian life** (Prime historically included the "Table of Duties" or reminders of Christian conduct)

In Western-Rite Orthodox practice, Prime is valued for its simplicity and its grounding effect at the start of the day.

2. Structure of Prime (Traditional Western Form)

A typical Western-Rite Order for Prime includes:

Opening Versicles

- *O Lord, open thou our lips.*
- *And our mouth shall show forth thy praise.*

Psalmody

Prime traditionally includes **Psalm 53**, **Psalm 118:1–32**, or a set of short psalms depending on the day. The psalmody is the heart of the hour—sanctifying the morning with Scripture.

Little Chapter

A brief reading, often from Proverbs or St. Paul, emphasizing diligence, sobriety, and steadfastness.

Responsory

A short call-and-response, such as: *O Christ, Son of the living God, have mercy upon us. Thanks be to God.*

The Hymn

The classic hymn for Prime is *Jam lucis orto sidere* (“Now that the daylight fills the sky”), a prayer for purity and protection.

The Collect

The collect is the distinctive Western element. A typical Prime collect asks God to keep the faithful from sin and guide their work:

O Lord God Almighty, who hast brought us to the beginning of this day; defend us in the same with Thy mighty power, and grant that this day we fall into no sin, neither run into any kind of danger; but that all our doings may be ordered by Thy governance, to do always that is righteous in Thy sight; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

This collect is deeply characteristic of Western spirituality—practical, moral, and focused on daily holiness.

Conclusion

- *The Lord be with you.*
- *And with thy spirit.*
- Final blessing or dismissal.

3. How Prime Fits the St. Tikhon’s Liturgy

Prime is **not** part of the Mass itself (as confirmed by the St. Andrew Service Book’s contents, which list Matins, Vespers, and the Liturgy but not Prime). Instead:

- It may be prayed **privately** by clergy and laity.
- It may be prayed **corporately** in Western-Rite monasteries.

- It may be used **before weekday Mass** as a devotional preparation.
- It harmonizes perfectly with the ethos of the Liturgy of St. Tikhon, which preserves the Anglican patrimony.

Prime's tone—calm, disciplined, and focused on sanctifying daily work—complements the Western-Rite Eucharistic spirituality beautifully.

4. Why Western-Rite Orthodox Parishes Value Prime

Prime is cherished because it:

- anchors the day in prayer
- reinforces Christian moral discipline
- connects the parish to ancient Western monastic practice
- provides a short, accessible office for busy laypeople
- harmonizes with the English Missal and Anglican Office tradition

It is one of the simplest and most practical hours of the Western Office.

Joke of the Month

Father Ambrose was preparing for the Sunday Mass according to the English Missal when young Peter marched into the sacristy looking very determined.

“Father,” Peter announced, “I need to talk to you about the *collects*.”

Father Ambrose paused mid-vesting. “The collects? What about them?”

“Well,” Peter said, “Mom told me that in the Western Rite we pray the collect to ‘collect’ our thoughts.”

“That’s one way to put it,” Father Ambrose replied.

Peter nodded. “So I’ve been listening very carefully.”

“That’s good,” Father Ambrose said.

Peter frowned. “But Father... every Sunday you say, ‘Let us pray,’ and then you pray a collect that is *very* short.”

Father Ambrose smiled. “Yes, that’s the beauty of them—brief, precise, and full of meaning.”

Peter crossed his arms. “Well, I don’t think they’re collecting enough.”

Father Ambrose blinked. “Not enough?”

“No,” Peter said. “If they’re supposed to collect all our thoughts, I think we need at least three more. Maybe four. My thoughts are everywhere.”

Father Ambrose chuckled. “Peter, that’s why we have the homily.”

Peter brightened. “Oh! So the homily is the *overflow bin*?”

Father Ambrose sighed happily. “Exactly. And some Sundays, it’s a very large bin.”

The Psalms

Psalms 2 and 3

Psalm 2

Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing?

2 The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD, and against his anointed, saying,

3 Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us.

4 He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: the LORD shall have them in derision.

5 Then shall he speak unto them in his wrath, and vex them in his sore displeasure.

6 Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion.

7 I will declare the decree: the LORD hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee.

8 Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession.

9 Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel.

10 Be wise now therefore, O ye kings: be instructed, ye judges of the earth.

11 Serve the LORD with fear, and rejoice with trembling.

12 Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in him.

Psalm 2 is one of the great **Royal Psalms** of the Western tradition. In the Western Rite, it is read as a prophetic proclamation of **Christ's Kingship**, the rebellion of the nations, and the ultimate triumph of God's Anointed. It appears frequently in Western liturgical and patristic writings, especially in Advent, Christmastide, and feasts of Christ the King.

The psalm has three major Western themes: **the rebellion of the world, the enthronement of Christ, and the call to wise submission.**

1. “Why do the nations so furiously rage together?” — The Rebellion of the World

Western tradition reads the opening of Psalm 2 as a description of humanity’s resistance to God’s rule. The nations “rage,” the peoples “imagine a vain thing,” and earthly rulers “take counsel together” against the Lord and His Christ.

In Western commentary, this is not merely political rebellion—it is **spiritual rebellion**, the human desire to cast off God’s commandments and live without His authority.

The psalm reveals the futility of this rebellion. The nations plot, but their plotting is “vain”—empty, powerless, doomed.

2. “He that dwelleth in heaven shall laugh them to scorn.” — God’s Unshakable Sovereignty

Western liturgical tradition emphasizes the contrast between earthly chaos and heavenly calm. While the nations rage, **God sits enthroned**, unshaken and unthreatened.

This divine laughter is not mockery but **the serene confidence of God’s eternal rule**. Nothing can overthrow His purpose or His Christ.

Western Fathers often note that this verse comforts the faithful: the Church may face opposition, but God is not anxious. His plan stands firm.

3. “I have set my King upon my holy hill of Sion.” — The Enthronement of Christ

This is the heart of the psalm in Western tradition.

God declares that He has installed His King—**Christ**—on Zion. Western commentators see this as:

- Christ’s **Incarnation** (His coming into the world)

- Christ's **Resurrection** (His victory over death)
- Christ's **Ascension** (His enthronement at the Father's right hand)
- Christ's **Eternal Kingship** over the Church

Psalm 2 is therefore read as a coronation hymn. In the Western Rite, it is one of the clearest Old Testament prophecies of Christ's divine sonship and royal authority.

4. "Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee." — The Divine Sonship

Western tradition treats this verse as a direct revelation of Christ's eternal relationship with the Father.

It is quoted in the New Testament to show:

- Christ is **eternally begotten**, not created
- His kingship is divine, not merely human
- His authority is absolute and universal

In Western liturgy, this verse appears in Christmas and Epiphany themes, connecting the psalm to the revelation of Christ's identity.

5. "Ask of me, and I shall give thee the nations for thine inheritance." — Christ's Universal Kingdom

Western commentators emphasize that Christ's kingdom is not limited to Israel. The Father promises Him **all nations**, fulfilling the Great Commission:

"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations..."

Psalm 2 is therefore missionary in character. It proclaims that Christ's reign extends over every people, every land, every age.

6. **“Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron.” — Judgment and Justice**

In Western tradition, this verse expresses Christ’s role as **Judge of the living and the dead**.

The “rod of iron” symbolizes:

- perfect justice
- unbreakable authority
- the final defeat of evil

Western liturgy often pairs this psalm with Advent themes of Christ’s coming judgment.

7. **“Serve the Lord in fear... kiss the Son.” — The Call to Wise Submission**

The psalm ends with an invitation—not a threat.

Western tradition reads this as a call to:

- reverence
- obedience
- humility
- joyful submission to Christ the King

“Kiss the Son” is interpreted as an act of homage, loyalty, and love—like kissing the hand of a sovereign. It is the Western Rite’s reminder that Christ’s rule is not oppressive but life-giving.

The psalm closes with a promise:

“Blessed are all they that put their trust in Him.”

This is the Western-Rite heart of Psalm 2: **True peace comes from trusting Christ’s kingship.**

Why Psalm 2 Matters in the Western Rite

Psalm 2 is foundational because it:

- proclaims Christ's divine kingship
- reveals the futility of rebellion against God
- comforts the faithful with God's sovereignty
- calls all nations to Christ
- unites Advent, Christmas, Epiphany, and Ascension themes
- expresses the Western emphasis on order, authority, and divine governance

It is one of the psalms that most clearly expresses the Western-Rite vision of Christ as **King, Judge, and Savior**.

Psalm 3

Lord, how are they increased that trouble me! many are they that rise up against me. Many there be which say of my soul, There is no help for him in God. Selah.

But thou, O Lord, art a shield for me; my glory, and the lifter up of mine head.

I cried unto the Lord with my voice, and he heard me out of his holy hill. Selah.

I laid me down and slept; I awaked; for the Lord sustained me.

I will not be afraid of ten thousands of the people, that have set themselves against me round about.

Arise, O Lord; save me, O my God: for thou hast smitten all mine enemies upon the cheek bone; thou hast broken the teeth of the ungodly.

Psalm 3 is the first psalm in the Psalter explicitly labeled “**A Psalm of David, when he fled from Absalom his son.**” In the Western tradition, this historical note is not merely background—it is part of the psalm's spiritual meaning. Psalm 3 is a

morning prayer of trust, prayed in danger, prayed in distress, prayed when enemies seem overwhelming.

In the Western Rite, Psalm 3 is deeply associated with:

- **Morning prayer** (Prime and Matins)
- **Confidence in God amid adversity**
- **The spiritual battle of the Christian life**
- **Christ's Resurrection**, because of its morning theme

It is one of the psalms that teaches the Western instinct of *calm trust in God's protection*.

1. "Lord, how are they increased that trouble me." — The Weight of Affliction

Western commentators begin with the psalm's realism: David is surrounded, betrayed, and hunted. The Western tradition sees this as a picture of:

- the believer surrounded by temptations
- the Church surrounded by worldly hostility
- Christ surrounded by His persecutors

The psalm does not hide the severity of the situation. It names it plainly. This honesty is characteristic of Western spirituality: the faithful do not pretend danger is small, but they trust God is greater.

2. "Many there be which say of my soul, 'There is no help for him in God.'" — The Voice of Despair

In Western interpretation, this line represents the **temptation to hopelessness**. The enemy's greatest weapon is not force but discouragement.

Western Fathers often note that the devil's whisper is always the same: "You are abandoned. God will not help you."

Psalm 3 answers that lie with faith.

3. “But Thou, O Lord, art my defender.” — God as Shield

This is the turning point of the psalm.

The Western Rite emphasizes three titles David gives God:

- **My Shield** — protection
- **My Glory** — honor restored
- **The Lifter Up of My Head** — dignity renewed

These are profoundly Western images: God is not only protector but restorer of order, dignity, and rightful kingship.

The psalm teaches that the believer’s confidence is not in circumstances but in God’s character.

4. “I laid me down and slept, and rose up again.” — Morning Resurrection

This verse is central to Western liturgical use.

David sleeps in danger but wakes in safety. The Western tradition sees this as:

- **a symbol of Christ’s burial and Resurrection**
- **a pattern of Christian daily life**
- **the reason Psalm 3 is used in morning prayer**

The believer lies down in vulnerability and rises in God’s protection. Every morning becomes a small Easter.

5. “I will not be afraid of ten thousands of the people.” — Courage from God

Western spirituality emphasizes that courage is not self-generated. It comes from knowing God is present.

David’s confidence is not bravado—it is theological. He fears no multitude because God is his shield.

This verse is often connected to the Western theme of **spiritual warfare**: the Christian faces many enemies (passions, temptations, sins), yet stands firm because God defends him.

6. “Arise, O Lord; save me, O my God.” — The Cry for Deliverance

In Western liturgical tradition, this cry echoes the Church’s prayer in times of trial. The psalm uses bold imagery—God striking the enemies and breaking the teeth of the wicked. Western commentators interpret this spiritually:

- God destroys the *power* of evil
- He breaks the *bite* of temptation
- He renders the enemy unable to devour the faithful

This is not vindictiveness but the triumph of divine justice.

7. “Salvation belongeth unto the Lord.” — The Western Doctrine of Grace

The psalm ends with a profoundly Western affirmation:

- Salvation is God’s work
- Deliverance is God’s gift
- Blessing flows from God to His people

This closing line is the Western-Rite heart of Psalm 3: **The believer rests in God’s protection, not his own strength.**

Why Psalm 3 Matters in the Western Rite

Psalm 3 is cherished because it:

- is a morning psalm of trust
- expresses the Western theme of divine order restored
- reflects Christ’s Resurrection in its “sleep and rising”

- teaches courage in spiritual warfare
- proclaims salvation as God's work alone
- fits naturally into the rhythm of the Daily Office

It is one of the psalms that best expresses the Western-Rite spirit of **calm confidence in God's protection**, even when surrounded by enemies.

If you need a Bible to delve further into these Psalms, please contact Bp. George.

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