



**Hieromartyr Dionysius the Areopagite** lived originally in Athens. He was raised there and received a classical education. He then went to Egypt, where he studied astronomy at the city of Heliopolis. It was there that he witnessed the solar eclipse that occurred at the moment of the death of the Lord Jesus Christ on the Cross. “Either the Creator of all the world now suffers, or this visible world is coming to an end,” Dionysius said. Upon his return to Athens from Egypt, he was chosen to be a member of the Areopagos (*Athenian high court*).

When the holy Apostle Paul preached at the place on the Hill of Ares, Dionysius accepted his salvific proclamation and became a Christian. For three years Dionysius remained a companion of the holy Apostle Paul in preaching the Word of God. Later on, the Apostle Paul selected him as bishop of the city of Athens. And in the year 57 St Dionysius was present at the repose of the Most Holy Theotokos.

During the lifetime of the Mother of God, Dionysius had journeyed to Jerusalem to meet Her. He wrote to his teacher the Apostle Paul: “I witness by God, that besides the very God Himself, there is nothing else filled with such divine power and grace. No one can fully comprehend what I saw. I confess before God: when I was with John, who shone among the apostles like the sun in the sky, when I was brought before the countenance of the Most Holy Virgin, I experienced an inexpressible sensation. Before me gleamed a sort of divine radiance which transfixed my spirit. I perceived the fragrance of indescribable aromas and was filled with such delight that my very body became faint, and my spirit could hardly endure these signs and marks of eternal majesty and heavenly power. The grace from her overwhelmed my heart and shook my very

spirit. If I did not have in mind your instruction, I should have mistaken Her for the very God. It is impossible to stand before greater blessedness than this which I beheld.”

After the death of the Apostle Paul, St Dionysius continued with his work and went preaching in the West, accompanied by Presbyter Rusticus and Deacon Eleutherius. They converted many to Christ at Rome, and then in Germany, and in Spain. In Gaul, during a persecution against Christians, all three confessors were arrested and thrown into prison. By night St Dionysius celebrated the Divine Liturgy with angels of the Lord. In the morning the martyrs were beheaded. According to an old tradition, St Dionysius took up his head, proceeded with it to the church and fell down dead there.

## **Sunday, October 16**

*Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost*

**Divine Liturgy 9:30 A.M.**

Commemoration of Holy Hierarch Dionysios the Areopagite, Bishop of Athens (†96)

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## **Wednesday, October 19**

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## **Sunday, October 23**

*Nineteenth Sunday after Pentecost*

**Divine Liturgy 9:30 A.M.**

Holy Fathers of the Seventh Ecumenical Council and Venerable Amvrosii of Optina  
(†1891)

*Below, we continue publication of articles about Halloween. It is very important to steer our minds, and especially the minds of our children, towards the traditional Christian worldview and towards having the proper understanding of the things that surround us. In this bulletin, we reprint an article by Holy Hierarch Nikolai (Velimirovich) (†1956), who, being one of the greatest Serbian hierarchs, theologians and writers of the 20th century, lived, taught and fell asleep in the Lord in the US. Some facts which Saint Nikolai brings forth are already known to us. Nevertheless, the moral authority of the saint will not allow some of us to simply wave his arguments away, but rather will make us see their value and importance for all of us who live in the post-Christian western world.*

### **Halloween**

As Orthodox Christians we must carefully examine every aspect of our involvement in the world, its activities, holidays and festivals, to be certain whether or not these involvements are compatible with our Holy Orthodox Faith.

For a while now everything in the outside world is reminding us that Halloween is near: at school our children are busy painting pumpkins, cutting and pasting bats, ghosts and witches and planning the ideal costume in which to go trick-or-treating. Most of our schools, local community organizations and entertainment on television, radio and press will share in and capitalize upon the festival of Halloween. Many of us will participate in this festival by going to costume parties, or by taking our children trick-or-treating in our neighborhood after dark on October 31st. Most of us will take part in the Halloween festivities believing that it has no deeper meaning than fun and excitement for the children.

Most of us do not know the historical background of the festival of Halloween and its customs. The feast of Halloween began in pre-Christian times among the Celtic peoples of Britain, Ireland and Northern France. Those pagan peoples believed that physical life was born from death. Therefore, they celebrated the beginning of the “new year” in the fall, on the eve of October 31st and into the day of November 1st, when, as they believed, the season of cold, darkness, decay and death began. Instructed by their priests, the Druids, the people extinguished all hearth fires and lights and darkness prevailed. According to pagan Celtic tradition, the souls of the dead had entered into the world of darkness, decay and death and made total communion with Samhain, the Lord of death, who could be appeased and cajoled by burnt offerings to allow the souls of the dead to return home for a festal visit on this day. The belief led to the ritual practice of wandering about in the dark dressed in costumes indicating witches, hobgoblins, fairies and demons. The living entered into fellowship and communion with the dead by this ritual act of imitation, through costume and the wandering about in the darkness. They also believed that the souls of the dead bore the affliction of great hunger on this festal visit. This belief brought about the practice of begging as another ritual imitation of the activities of the souls of the dead on their festal visit. The implication was that any souls of the dead and their imitators who are not appeased with “treats”, i.e. offerings, will provoke the wrath of Samhain, whose angels and servants could retaliate through a system of “tricks”, or curses.

In the strictly Orthodox early Celtic Church, the Holy Fathers tried to counteract this pagan new year festival by establishing the feast of All Saints on that same day (in the East, this feast is celebrated on another day). The night before the feast (on “All Hallows Eve”), a vigil service was held and a morning celebration of the Eucharist. This custom created the term Halloween. But the remaining pagan and therefore anti-Christian people reacted to the Church’s attempt to supplant their festival by increased fervor on this evening, so that the night before the Christian feast of All Saints became a night of sorcery, witchcraft and other occult practices, many of

which involved desecration and mockery of Christian practices and beliefs. Costumes of skeletons, for example, developed as a mockery of the Church's reverence for holy relics. Holy things were stolen and used in sacrilegious rituals. The practice of begging became a system of persecution of Christians who refused to take part in these festivities. And so the Church's attempt to counteract this unholy festival failed.

This is just a brief explanation of the history and meaning of the festival of Halloween. It is clear that we, as Orthodox Christians, cannot participate in this event at any level (even if we only label it as "fun"), and that our involvement in it is an idolatrous betrayal of Our God and our Holy Faith. For if we imitate the dead by dressing up or wandering about in the dark, or by begging with them, then we have willfully sought fellowship with the spirits whose Lord is not a Celtic Samhain, but satan, the evil one, who stands against God. Further, if we submit to the dialogue of "trick or treat", our offering does not go to innocent children, but rather to satan himself. Let us remember our ancestors, the Holy Christian Martyrs of the early Church, as well as our Serbian New Martyrs, who refused, despite painful penalties and horrendous persecution, to worship, venerate or pay obeisance in any way to idols who are angels of satan. The foundation of our Holy Church is built upon their very blood.

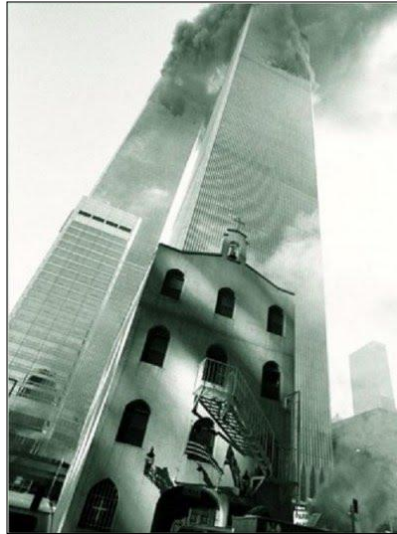
In today's world of spiritual apathy and listlessness, which are the roots of atheism and turning away from God, one is urged to disregard the spiritual roots and origins of secular practices when their outward forms seem ordinary, entertaining and harmless. The dogma of atheism underlies many of these practices, denying the existence of both God and satan. Our Holy Church, through Jesus Christ, teaches that God alone stands in judgment over everything we do and believe and that our actions are either for God or against God. No one can serve two masters. Therefore, let us not, as the pagan Celts did, put out our hearth fires and wander about in the dark imitating dead souls. Let us light vigil lamps in front of our Slava icons, and together with our families, ask God to grant us faith and courage to preserve as Orthodox Christians in these very difficult times, and to deliver us from the evil one.

## ..... News From All The Ends Of The Earth .....

**Peć, Serbia:** Patriarch Irinej of the Serbian Orthodox Church backed on Friday the right of northern Kosovo Serbs to defend themselves by putting up roadblocks. He called on the local Serb population to persist in the fight for their rights. The spiritual leader of the Serb Orthodox Christians was in Kosovo on the occasion of the Feast of the Protection of the Theotokos, which is one of the medieval monastery's feast day. In a statement for reporters after the Liturgy, Patriarch Irinej called on northern Kosovo Serbs to persist until, as he said, strongmen come to realize that Serbs are defending their country and that they put up barricades on their own land, in order to protect their homes and area in which they have been living for centuries.

**New York, NY:** The Port Authority of New York and New Jersey and the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America officially signed an agreement on rebuilding the church of St. Nicholas, which was destroyed in the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. Governor Andrew M. Cuomo today announced that he, joined by Port Authority Executive Director Chris Ward, representatives of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese and St. Nicholas Parish and Majority Leader Dean Skelos, signed the agreement that permits the rebuilding of the Church with a nondenominational bereavement center at the east end of Liberty Park, at 130 Liberty Street. The agreement follows a four-month independent engineering study commissioned by the Port Authority and the

Archdiocese, which found that the Church could be built on the site with minor modifications to the original plan and with no impact on the World Trade Center construction schedule. “We lost St. Nicholas Church in the destruction of September 11 and for too long its future has been uncertain,” Governor Cuomo said. “Rebuilding St. Nicholas Church, with a nondenominational bereavement center, is not just good news for the Greek Orthodox community, but for all New Yorkers. With this agreement, we are continuing New York’s collective healing, restoration, and resurgence. Now we are finally returning this treasured place of reflection to where it belongs.” The original Church was founded in 1916.



## ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. October bulletin covers’ sponsors are the Kunch family — anniversary.
2. Holy Archangel Michael Church in Niles, IL, is hosting a DDD Dinner this year. The dinner is on Sunday, Oct. 30. DDD donation forms and dinner information can be found in the narthex. Those who would like to donate must let Fr Sergii know today.
3. Our Soup Sale is next Saturday, October 22. Please bring your soups and other products by 9:00 that Saturday morning. If this is inconvenient, call to make other arrangements.
4. Next Sunday, October 23, we collect non-perishable food products for Hobart Food Pantry. Please bring at least one item per family member.
5. The following letter was sent out Protopresbyter Frank Miloro to all parishes:

*Dear Fathers:*

*I am happy to release the following information regarding our diocesan-wide flood relief collection for Holy Ghost Church in Manville, NJ, and St. John Church in Rahway, NJ.*

*To date, a total of \$43,536.21 was received at the Chancery. This includes a magnanimous gift of \$10,000 from our Locum Tenens, Archbishop Demetrios, and \$2,000 that was given to the affected churches by two parishes that forwarded their donation directly instead of to the Chancery.*

*You have given hope and support to people who are suffering dismal conditions that have severely disrupted the week-to-week life in their parishes, and will continue to do so for weeks to come. We are grateful to Father Dean Michael Rosco who personally gave his time and efforts*

*to the clean-up.*

☞ We have discussed in the past the importance of standing while praying in the church. Now, let us approach it from another end: when should we not be sitting in church? We should not sit, nor allow our children to sit at the following times during the Divine Liturgy: when the priest is incensing before the Liturgy and during it, when the priest exclaims in the beginning of the service “Blessed is the Kingdom...”, during the Small Entrance with the Gospel, beginning from the singing of the Trisagion (“Holy God...”) and till the completion of the reading of the Gospel, during the Great Entrance (when the Holy Gifts are brought from the Proskomedia Table to the Holy Altar Table), during the anaphora (from when we sing “A mercy of peace...” till after the singing of “You are truly deserving of glory, O Birth-giver of God...”), during the singing of “Our Father...”, when the priest comes out with the Cup for the communion of the faithful and during the dismissal. If due to illness you are unable to stand even during the above-mentioned times, then, if you can, try to raise yourself up at least when the priest exclaims in the beginning of the service “Blessed is the Kingdom...”, during the reading from the Gospel, during the Great Entrance and when the priest comes out with the Holy Cup to distribute communion.