

Encyclical by His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros of America: Feast of the Synaxis of the Holy Archangels



Feast of the Synaxis of the Holy Archangels

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‘Ορᾶτε μὴ καταφρονήσητε ἐνὸς τῶν μικρῶν τούτων· λέγω γὰρ ὑμῖν ὅτι οἱ ἄγγελοι αὐτῶν ἐν οὐρανοῖς διὰ παντὸς βλέπουσι τὸ πρόσωπον τοῦ πατρός μου τοῦ ἐν οὐρανοῖς. (κατά Ματθαίον 18:10)

Take care that you do not look down on any of these little ones, for I tell you that their Heavenly Angels forever behold the face of My Father Who is in Heaven. (Matthew 18:10)

To the Most Reverend Hierarchs, the Reverend Priests and Deacons, the Monks and Nuns, the Presidents and Members of the Parish Councils of the Greek Orthodox Communities, the Distinguished Archons of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, the Day,

Afternoon, and Church Schools, the Philoptochos Sisterhoods, the Youth, the Hellenic Organizations, and the entire Greek Orthodox Family in America,

Beloved Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

The Feast of the Holy Archangels - Ἡ σύναξις τῶν Ἀρχιστρατήγων Μιχαὴλ καὶ Γαβριήλ - is a moment when the Church pauses to reflect on the spiritual realities that surround us. If you were to begin counting the number of Angels that are mentioned in the Holy Scripture, your powers of arithmetic would be severely challenged. Just one expression in the Book of Revelation (5:11), "ten thousands of ten thousands and thousands of thousands," gives a glimpse of a number beyond all counting.

Therefore, when we think of our wonderful Archdiocesan Institution of Saint Michael's Home, we think of angels, those members of our community whose lives may now be reduced in size, but not in content. They form a cohort of angelic faces whose service to our communities is remembered with love. Indeed, they are among the "little ones" spoken of by our Lord, whose Angels are forever in the presence of God and behold His divine countenance. And the smiles of these elder members of our Church offer unto us a glimmer of that divine glory and joy.

Saint Michael's Home - founded in 1958 under the blessed leadership of the ever-memorable Archbishop Michael, is a growing and active institution of our Archdiocese that is most worthy of our support and our patronage. I pray that as you consider the miraculous presence of the Holy Angels in your lives on the present Feast, you will also consider giving a little miracle to those "angels in the flesh" who dwell together in the loving community that we call Saint Michael's Home.

With paternal love in our Lord Jesus Christ,



† ELPIDOPHOROS

Archbishop of America