

# Magnificat

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O champion, captain, and leader,  
supreme commander and Prince of the Heavenly Host,  
deliver from all oppression, sorrow, sickness and grievous sin  
those who sing your praises and cry out to you, O glorious one;  
bodiless, you behold the Eternal in unapproachable light  
and radiate the transcendent glory of the Master  
who, in His love for all mankind,  
for our sake took flesh from the Virgin  
and willed to save the human race.

From Vespers  
Synaxis of the Archangels Michael and Gabriel  
and all the Heavenly Host

We are a Catholic Monastery of the Byzantine Rite, under the jurisdiction of the Eparch of Chicago, and belonging to the Ukrainian Metropolis in the United States of America, which is in union with the Pope of Rome, supreme pastor of the universal Church. We embrace Evangelical poverty, chastity, obedience, and stability of life, according to the Rule of Saint Benedict and the traditions of the Christian East. In our skete at Jacob's Falls, on the shore of Lake Superior in Michigan's Keweenaw Peninsula, we devote ourselves to a common life of prayer and work for the praise, love, and service of God and for the upbuilding of His Kingdom through the arts.

# Heavenly Aid

*Some years ago, an Evangelical friend who was feeling drawn to the ancient faith of the Christian East commented that, whether Catholic or Orthodox, he knew he would be attending Liturgy at St. Michael's, since all the Eastern churches within driving distance of his home bore that name. We observed that this was not altogether surprising; Eastern Christians have often felt the need of heavenly aid...*

Scripture mentions the Archangel Michael by name only briefly. In the Book of Daniel (10:13&21; 12:1) he is described as one of the great princes, the prince of the People of God, who stands with them against their enemies. The Letter of Jude (9) notes that in the legend of his disputation with Satan over the body of Moses he did not resort to insult but, rather, contented himself with calling down the Lord's rebuke upon the Devil. Revelation (12:7-9) recounts a climactic battle in which Michael and the angels with him cast Satan and his angels out of heaven.

Additionally, tradition sees Michael in the sword-bearing angel who barred Balaam's way (Num. 22:22-35) and who appeared to Joshua before the Battle of Jericho (Josh. 5:13-15) identifying himself as the commander of the Lord's armies. Similarly, other martial angels of the Lord, such as the destroyer of Sennacherib's army (2 Kgs. 19:35) and the exterminating angel King David saw at the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite (2 Sam. 24:16-17) call the Archangel to mind.

Indeed, Scripture is replete with unnamed angels who bring messages from God or carry out His will. From these references, and the various apocalyptic traditions current in Palestine and the Jewish Diaspora at the time of Christ and shortly thereafter, the Christian image of St. Mi-

chael began to grow. Thus, we see the Archangel as the champion of God's People, both Jewish and Christian, our leader in the struggle against evil, and a powerful protector against the power of Satan, especially at the approach of death.

Early Christians, however, did not particularly invoke his aid in their earthly battles. The soldier-martyrs, George, Theodore, Demetrius, and others, served as patrons of military exploits; to the Archangel Michael was given the care of the sick. The basilica erected in his honor by Constantine the Great some fifty miles south of Constantinople became a center of healing, with

the infirm spending the night in its precincts hoping to be cured.

The Archangel's shrine at Chonae in Phrygia was of considerably earlier origin. There welled up a spring - predicted, it is said, by the Evangelist John - which gave healing to those who drank its water or poured it upon the area of their affliction while invoking God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and Michael, His servant. Each September 6th the Church still commemorates its miraculous

preservation from the attack of pagans who sought to inundate it by diverting a river.

Protection and preservation are recurring themes in the miracles attributed to St. Michael, and, as the Empire - and Constantinople, itself - increasingly suffered attacks from Barbarians, Arabs, and Turks, his role as champion and leader reasserted itself. Many churches were erected in his honor, and the dedication of one of these - near the baths of Arcadius in Constantinople - is the source of his principal feast, on November 8th, which he shares with the Archangel Gabriel and all the angels of Heaven.

O captains and leaders  
of the Hosts of Heaven,  
we, though unworthy,  
unceasingly entreat you  
to surround us by your prayers  
with the protection of the wings  
of your immaterial glory.  
Preserve us who fall before you  
and earnestly cry aloud:  
Deliver us from all misfortune,  
O Princes of the heavenly armies.

Troparion  
Synaxis of the Archangels Michael and Gabriel  
and all the Heavenly Host



The current Service highlights the Archangels' actions in salvation history, particularly Gabriel's role in the Annunciation (cf. Lk. 1:5-38); and it offers thanks and praise for their intercession on behalf of mankind. It also provides insight into the nature and functions of the angelic beings, themselves. Taken together, its many hymns and texts provide a sort of epitome of the Church's teaching concerning angels.

Surrounded by incomprehensible, unending, and uncreated light, God exists from all eternity in an ineffable communion of love as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Origin of goodness and love, He did not remain wrapped in self-contemplation, but, desiring to share His light and love, he brought the entire universe from nothingness into being. Before making the visible, material world, He created the unseen realm of immaterial angelic beings. These heavenly incorporeal powers are lesser lights, reflecting the uncreated light of God, in whose presence they stand, offering endless hymns of praise, finding sustenance and the very ground of their being in contemplation of His inexpressible glory.

In our worship here on earth, we are privileged some small share in this divine contemplation. Like the heavenly beings Isaiah (6:1-4) saw in vision, we, too, with great solemnity sing the thrice-holy hymn (cf. Divine Liturgy: Cherubic Hymn) in praise of the Lord of Hosts; and, when we pray (cf. Divine Liturgy: Prayer of the Little Entrance) that the angels may enter and join with us in praising the Lord's goodness, we know the prayer is heard and granted. Though bodiless, their presence is almost palpable, and we can sense their special care for us.

Angels are immortal spiritual intelligences. Unbounded by constraints of time and space, they fly about the world doing God's bidding and

conveying messages to men (*angelos* is Greek for messenger). The Lord has given them a special charge over the world, assigning to each nation (cf. Dan. 10:13; 20) and each human being (cf. Mt. 18:10) a particular angel to be its light and guard. Thus, intimately concerned with the lives of men and their worldly affairs, angels are powerful intercessors on their behalf before the throne of glory.

Belief in angels has become fashionable in our day, even among many who have no formal grounding in traditional religion. But modern sentiment has little to do with the mystical understanding of the Celestial Hierarchies propounded by early Christian thinkers, and popular imagination cannot begin to grasp an

angel's terrible brightness of form when God permits it to appear bodily. (It is not for nothing that angels in Scripture often begin their allocutions with the admonition: Be not afraid!)

Moreover, today's diluted, feel-good pseudognosticism ignores half the story. The Apostle John the Theologian tells

us (Rev. 12:7-9) of a great war in heaven which resulted in Satan and his angels being cast down to earth. And here they remain.

The Gospel narrative abounds with reference to demons and their activity in the world. In some cases this may be due to an ancient lack of understanding as to the nature and causes of disease - and such pre-modern notions would certainly help explain the Archangel Michael's intercession being sought for healing - but not all demonic activity recorded in Scripture is so easily explained away. We are left with a very real sense of evil, present and powerfully active in this world of which Satan is the Prince.

But we face it with courage. We know that Jesus has already overcome the world (cf. Jn. 16:33), that, by His death and resurrection, the

For we wrestle  
not against flesh and blood,  
but against principalities,  
against powers,  
against the rulers of the darkness  
of this world,  
against spiritual wickedness  
in high places.

Eph. 6:12 (KJV)

world has been judged and its prince cast out (cf. Jn. 12:31). Satan's might has been crushed, his authority over us nullified; he has no ultimate power over us – unless we give it to him.

The Devil has been conquered, but not yet annihilated. He sees that his time is short (cf. Rev. 12:12), and his outrage knows no bounds. In his fury he prowls around (cf. 1 P. 5:8-9) seeking our destruction. Essentially powerless, he employs deception, flattery, seduction, to bend us to his will; it would be all too easy to succumb. But we are called to resist, to grapple with evil and not let it overpower us.

The struggle is real warfare. It is a matter of life and death; St. Paul (cf. 2 Tim. 2:3; Rom. 13:12; 1 Thess. 5:8; Eph. 6:13-14; etc.) uses military imagery to emphasize its finality and seriousness. The battle, in fact, belongs to all men, but monks have always seen it as particularly pertaining to them.

Thus, ascetics began retiring to the deserts of Egypt and Syria in the third and fourth centuries to carry on the fight unencumbered by the cares and distractions of the world. With prayer, vigils, and fasting, they made war on the demons they saw all about them, and in the battle the desert was their ally. Its vast silences and harsh light allowed the demons no place to hide; clearly seen, they could be more readily overcome.

The simplicity, renunciations, and discipline of monastic life continue to provide the most favorable milieu for pursuing the ongoing fight. To be sure, the demons are mostly to be found within. Our sins of pride, lust, greed, and arrogance, the whole parcel of ills that plague human society, are what drag us down to destruction. The devil first places them within us as thoughts and attitudes, and it is here, in our own minds and hearts, that they must be stopped. It is only

within himself that the monk is able to *bring every thought into captivity to make it obedient to Christ* (2 Cor. 10:5).

Yet, evil is also very much present in the world, and it must be opposed here, as well. It can seem overwhelming, and it is only through prayer that we may fight the battle. To keep it at bay we need heavenly aid.

In 1886 Pope Leo XIII composed a prayer to the Archangel Michael and ordered it added to the prayers he had prescribed two years earlier to be recited throughout the world after every low Mass. The ostensible purpose of these prayers was resolution of the political situation that had made him "prisoner of the Vatican". Leo gave no reason for his addition of the prayer to St.

Wherever your grace casts its shadow,  
O Captain and Archangel Michael,  
the Devil is driven out,  
for Lucifer, the fallen morning star,  
cannot bear to behold your light.  
We, therefore, beg you to quench  
the fiery darts he casts against us  
and deliver us from his temptations.

From Matins  
Synaxis of the Archangels Michael and Gabriel  
and all the Heavenly Host

Michael, but it was later reported by several churchmen who had worked closely with the Pontiff that the prayer's composition had come after his having seen a horrifying vision of the coming century.

In 1930, the unfavorable political situation having been since resolved, Pope Pius XI ordered the prayers retained in intercession for freedom to practice the faith in Russia. Pope Paul VI suppressed the prayers in 1965, probably as an adjunct to his policy of easing relations with the Soviets. Many Catholics kept the prayer as a private devotion, however, a practice endorsed and recommended by Pope John Paul II.

Understanding our task as soldiers of Christ, and knowing our personal powerlessness in the face of the Enemy, we have long recited this prayer at the end of our night Service of Compline. Since the manifestation this past winter of a major threat to religious freedom in our own land, we now recite it after every Service we celebrate.

Holy Michael, the Archangel,  
defend us in the day of battle,  
be our safeguard  
against the wickedness and snares  
of the Devil.

May God rebuke him,  
we humbly pray;  
and you, O Prince of the heavenly host,  
by the power of God  
cast into hell Satan  
and all the evil spirits  
who prowl about the world,  
seeking the ruin of souls.



# Fulfilling a Dream

Sometimes the Lord works in unexpected ways to advance long held dreams. We have seen this happen several times during the twenty-nine years we have struggled in monastic life along this windy shore. Recent developments bring to mind one such occasion a dozen years ago.

From the very beginning of our monastic life at Jacob's Falls, we have seen as our special charism and apostolic work the building up of God's Kingdom through the arts.

We firmly believe that human artistry is a divine gift, given by God that we might all come to know Him better. In creating beauty we exercise and manifest an integral part of our nature. We have been created in the image and likeness of God (cf. Gen. 1:26-27), the Creator of all things. Through worthy exercise of our own creative abilities we express our likeness to Him, render Him thanks and praise for His many blessings, and proclaim his love for the whole world.

Beauty has the power to touch the soul directly, to evoke in the heart feelings of joy, exaltation, or sadness. It can elevate the mind to spiritual matters and make the soul more receptive to the divine. Through their beauty the works of our hands may move others closer to God. Thus, the arts may serve as a sort of bridge between the material and spiritual realms, a potential the Church has long understood and employed.

These thoughts helped move us toward the monastic struggle, and they continue to inform our vision. For much of our community existence, however, our pursuit of our artistic apostolate came mostly through talk. Beyond improving our own chanting of the Services and beautifying – to the extent we were able – our chapel and immediate surroundings we could do little. Mere survival consumed our time and resources.

Then, shortly after Christmas in 1999, we received a very generous and unsolicited gift from a long-time friend of the monastery. The moneys were to be used, among other things, as

seed for a performing arts center. The donation allowed for the location and restoration of a vintage concert grand piano and the construction of a modest recital room to house it. The resulting new wing of the monastery, to the north of our original structures, was completed in the spring of 2001; soon after we took delivery of the rebuilt Mason & Hamlin piano. The presence of this fine instrument inspired and gives continued impetus to our occasional recital series, Music at the Monastery.

The same gift also made possible the early retirement of the mortgage engendered by the first phase of the monastery's expansion toward the south, thereby propelling us into accelerated design work on the monastic church. Here, too, artistry and beauty were of prime concern. As heirs of the rich and ancient tradition of Byzantine Christianity, music and visual art are integral to our worship and its environment. We made every effort within our means to insure that the new structure would be beautiful, as well as functional, and that its acoustics would be conducive to singing the chant that characterizes our worship. In general, we are very pleased with the results; so, too – judging from the number of passersby who stop to take pictures – are the many visitors to our area.

Approaching from the east, travelers first see the church from a mile away, across the waters of Great Sand Bay, its cross and dome gleaming in the morning sun like a jewel upon a swath of velvet. The golden dome makes several increasingly prominent appearances as one approaches, and then it disappears behind the trees we were able to preserve on the site. Indeed, the occasional customers at the Jampot who ask the whereabouts of the dome they had seen across the water are often somewhat shocked to learn that they had already passed it by.

Those who do stop observe – and photo – the church at best vantage from the small parking area across the highway. Though profoundly unlike any other building in the area, it seems peacefully at home among the Keweenaw's





pines and maples. Shingle-clad, with a central, dome-surmounted, tower, its covered entry up the ramp on the left, and its detached bell tower standing forward of the adjacent living quarters to the right, the structure incorporates numerous design elements common to country churches in the Carpathian Mountains of western Ukraine. The large Byzantine/Slav cross prominently mounted on the building's eastern-most projection testifies to the spiritual heritage of the community that worships there; the knowledgeable observer will quickly intuit the interior arrangement of the edifice and the nature of the rites it enshrines.

Our Faith is our most precious possession, and the worship that gives it form and expression is our most important endeavor; everything surrounding it should be as beautiful as possible. The challenge of singing the Services day

in and day out and of beautifying our church are ongoing, but the struggle continues to bear fruit. God is merciful, and, despite our multiple inadequacies, He provides for improvement and growth; the seeds we plant produce fruit, and the foundations we lay get built upon – in His time and according to His will.

Thus, a major feature of the monastic church will, in the coming year, attain to its intended function.

Bells have been used as an adjunct to Christian worship from as early as the sixth century. In early Irish monasteries rustic hand bells served as a signal for rousing the brethren from sleep and summoning them to gather for the customary times of common prayer. In larger monasteries the necessity of calling those working further afield required larger bells at fixed locations.

Their use spread across northern Europe, and by the tenth century they were a common feature in churches – parochial as well as monastic – throughout the West.

At the Baptism of Rus in 988, the eastern Slavs received Christianity in its Byzantine tradition from the Roman Empire of the East. Here the use of bells was not widespread, the *semantron* – a wooden plank or metal bar that resounds when struck with a mallet – being the signal used in its monasteries. Kievan Rus also maintained extensive contacts with the West, however, and from there it gradually adopted the use of bells into its religious and cultural heritage. Characteristically, it invested them with a greater significance than they enjoyed in the West.

In the Byzantine/Slav tradition bells are sometimes called “singing icons”; their sound defines and colors the acoustic space of a church much as painted icons do its visual space. They not only call the faithful to prayer, they also highlight certain parts of the Services for those not able to be physically present in the church that they may turn their hearts appropriately toward prayer. Their sound is expressive of Christian joy, and it strengthens the resolve of the faithful in their battle against the forces of evil. The prayer for their blessing even asks that the sound of their ringing be given the power to disperse storms. Certainly, it serves to quell the storms within us and to calm our souls with

the assurance of Church’s ongoing prayer on our behalf and its unceasing glorification of the all-good and all-loving Creator.

Thus, the bell tower is a prominent feature in the design of our monastic church. It stands sturdily forward of the main structure and was built to accommodate a large complement of bells. It is a powerful presence, strongly felt by those entering the church for prayer. We thank God that the way has now been provided for its impact to be more than visual.

We recently commissioned the Verdin Bell Company of Cincinnati to equip the tower with a set of thirty-six bronze bells. The bells are to be cast and tuned in the Netherlands and will range in diameter from 29-1/2 to 7-7/8 inches and from 550 to 24 pounds in weight. When installed, the three-octave carillon will serve the various liturgical bell functions traditional to the Byzantine/Slav Churches and also allow for performance of recitals and concerts that can be shared by all who pass by. Thus, not only will it enrich our worship and enlarge the acoustic space of our little church, it will further the monastery’s artistic apostolate, as well.

While remaining deeply grateful to the parish that donated the antique bell that has provided our call to worship these past nine years, we rejoice at the coming realization of this long-held intent.



# At the Jampot



Summer was warmer than usual here, but nowhere near as hot as many other places in the mid-West. Visitors from Iowa, Illinois, and Missouri, and even Wisconsin and Minnesota, were quick to console us as we complained when the thermometer approached eighty. Still, we were grateful when temperatures dropped to the low seventies after Labor Day.

The warm weather brought many visitors to our area. Jampot was filled to capacity most days of July and August, often with people waiting to get in. Some very busy Saturdays required a few days of recovery time, but for the most part, we were able to keep our bakery shelves fairly full. Jam production fell behind, however, and at one point there was a four-foot gap in the shelf. Although reduced in size, a hole still remains, as some berries have been depleted, and, of necessity, we concentrate our limited production time on the most popular varieties. Still, there is much to select from.

Holy Week's false spring and subsequent frosts resulted in a less than bumper berry crop. Wild Strawberries were scarce and pincher-

ries and bilberries nonexistent; blueberries were spotty, and most wild apple trees dropped their fruit. We had slightly better than average rainfall during the summer, however, and thimbleberries and raspberries did very well, although their season was brief because of the heat. Blackberries and chokecherries also abounded, and

we filled our quotas earlier than usual.

Although the shortages - of domestic fruit, as well as wild - have resulted in some adjustment in pricing and offerings, we generally have adequate supplies of stock on hand to carry us through Christmas and the first of the year.

Meanwhile, two beautiful and very busy weeks remain in the season before Jampot closes its doors on October 13. We hope you will be able to visit us during these brisk and gorgeous days of autumn. In any case, you will want to carefully peruse the items offered for shipping on the following pages.

This year, in addition to our usual line of fruitcakes, preserves, and confections, we are offering color prints of a Scoofy painting that appeared in a recent *Magnificat*; we hope to be able to make other examples of this engaging art available in future years. Look, also, for improved packaging on some of our confections. As always, we strive to provide the very best in quality and service.

HOLY TRANSFIGURATION SKETE  
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# Into Year Thirty

These brilliant days, as the year begins its descent toward winter, always bring back a flood of memories. The cooling temperatures, the riot of color, the freshness of the air, the very quality of the light, call to mind our first days on the shore of the Great Lake. Coming to Jacob's Falls at the end of summer to begin building this monastery should have engendered a certain degree of anxiety – the finances were largely nonexistent and the prospects far from clear. Yet we recall those days as being exciting and joyful, and filled with a profound sense of peace. Blissfully unaware of the manifold difficulties that lay ahead, we set about doing the work the Lord had placed before us, confident that He would provide what would be needed – within us, as well as without.

Surveying the twenty-nine years that have past since those golden days, we note the naiveté and innocence of worldly ways that sometimes got us into trouble, the many obstacles overcome,

and the few that required an alteration of course; we marvel at the distance come, the plans fulfilled, the goals achieved. Mindful, too, of ongoing difficulties, recurring frustrations, unfulfilled dreams, and the likelihood of entirely unforeseen troubles yet to come, we abide in peace, confident of the Lord's never-failing love.

So, we approach our thirtieth winter on this sometimes-severe shore with serenity of heart. Grateful for the mercies of the past, we look toward the future and press on toward the fulfillment of another long held dream. The project at hand is huge, and other tasks remain, as well. Communication and writing will fill the coming winter's peace. We pray the Lord make good our lack.

We pray He also give you peace, as you tread the ways marked out for you. His paths are seldom easy, but the Lord strengthens us for the journey, and unfailingly leads us home.