



CONVENT OF THE  
HOLY ANGELS

APHIDNAI, ATTICA, GREECE



PATRONAL FEAST

November 8, 2017

THE HOLY ANGELS IN OUR LIVES

7

For Edification and Consolation

**“They all saw the face of their Priest shining with joy and radiating light!”\***

**“Alleluia”**

**I**n a village in Greece, Father Michael went one Saturday morning to his parish Church to celebrate the Divine Liturgy, which would be followed by a Memorial Service.

**H**e read the preparation prayers and put on his vestments. **W**ith the prosphora and Communion wine, he performed the Proskomide.



**H**e was still the only one in the Church. **S**o, without further ado, he began Orthros and completed it by himself.

**H**e finished by singing the Great Doxology, but still no one else had arrived—not even old Georgios, who would help out with the chanting.

**H**e sat down in the Altar and waited.

**S**oon, he began to hear heavenly psalmody: the melodic chanting of “Alleluia” repeated approximately nine times in the Plagal of the First Tone (the familiar “Alleluia” that we hear at the end of the reading of the Epistles).

**A**stonished and in wonderment, he went out to the Beautiful Gate. **H**e did not see anyone, and the chanting died down. **A**t a loss, he returned to his seat.

**B**ut then, the mellifluous heavenly voices of

the Angelic Orders soon began the “Alleluia” again, in so many tones and with such sweetness that the exhilarating music was more than he could bear, and he fell unconscious to the ground.

**H**e was brought to his senses by the water sprinkled on his face by the chanter and Christians who had arrived in the meantime, and who assuredly were concerned why their Priest had fainted.

**P**apa-Michalis (as he was affectionately called) raised himself and, without telling them what had happened, began the Liturgy with the exclamation “Blessed is the Kingdom...”

**T**hey all saw the face of their Priest shining with joy and radiating light!

**A**s for him, for the rest of his life he yearned to hear if but once more the otherworldly music of the Angels singing “Alleluia.”

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**G**od heard his prayer and vouchsafed him this gift, but only at the hour when he departed this vain world for the other, heavenly one.

**B**lessed was his Presbytera who was there to see and hear it...

**T**hroughout the entire night she was at her Priestly husband's side, knowing that it would be his last. **S**he did not allow any of their many children to stay. **A**sking them to leave the room, she remained alone with her husband.

**S**he began to do prostrations (she must have done over 4,000 prostrations over the course of the night) and to beseech the Archangels, and in





particular the Archangel Michael, to come to take Papa-Michalis' soul.

It was then that she beheld the Chief Commander Michael, together with many other Angels, and heard the angelic singing of the “Alleluia” in the Plagal of the First Tone. And she saw Papa-Michalis, profoundly moved, with tears in his eyes, with a joyous and radiant face and making the sign of the Cross, departing for eternity, where at the heavenly Altar he would continue to celebrate the Liturgy of the Love and Glory of the eternal God.

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**Presbytera** herself recounted the above to me in the summer of 1968, when she asked me to serve a Forty-day Memorial Service—my first—for Papa-Michalis.



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(\*) Protoperbyter Stephanos K. Anagnostopoulos, *Spiritual Reflections on the Beatitudes* [in Greek](Piraeus: 2009), pp. 254-255.