

We would like to welcome all parish visitors and invite you to join us after the Liturgy for Coffee hour.



Orthodox Church of the Mother of God

OCA – Diocese of New York-New Jersey

The Most Reverend MICHAEL, Archbishop of NY and the Diocese of NY & NJ
V. Rev. Dr. Matthew Searfoorce, Rector

Sub-Deacon Edward Dawson Sub-Deacon Vlashi
Parish Council President: Andrew Romanofsky Parish Council Vice President: Holly Dawson



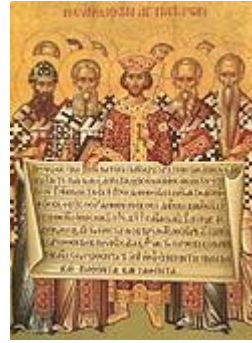
Sunday, June 12, 2016

Gospel: John 17:1-13

Tone 6

Epistle: Acts 20:16-18, 28-36

7th Sunday of Pascha; Commemoration of the Holy Fathers of the First Ecumenical Council



*Glory to
Jesus Christ!*

*Glory
Forever!*

*Commemoration of the
Holy Fathers of the First
Ecumenical Council*

*You are most glorious, O Christ our God!
You have established the Holy Fathers as lights on the earth!
Through them you have guided us to the true faith!
O greatly Compassionate One, glory to You!*

(Troparion — Tone 8)

*The Apostles' preaching and the Fathers' doctrines have established one faith for the
Church. Adorned with the robe of truth, woven from heavenly theology,
It defines and glorifies the great mystery of Orthodoxy!*

(Kontakion — Tone 8)

Today's Commemorated Feasts and Saints

7th Sunday of Pascha — Tone 6. Holy Fathers of the First Ecumenical Council. Afterfeast of Ascension. Ven. Onuphrius the Great (4th c.) and Ven. Peter of Mt. Athos (734). Finding of the Relics (1649) and the second glorification (1909) of Rt. Blv. Anna of Kashin. Ven. Arsenius, Abbot of Konevits (1447). Ven. Onuphry, Abbot of Mal'sk (Pskov—1492). Ven. Bassian and Jonah of Pertomsk (Solovétsky Monastery—1561). Ven. Onuphry and Auxenty of Vologdá (15th-16th c.). Ven. Stephen of Komel', Abbot of Ozérsk Monastery (Vologdá—1542). Ven. John, Andrew, Heraclemon, and Theophilus, Hermits, of Egypt (4th c.).

Prayer Requests

For Health of:

Linda, on her birthday, offered by her husband Richard.

Nicholas & Jaclyn, on their graduation from high school, offered with love by their families.

All graduates, offered by the Sisterhood.

Liturgical Schedule:

Sunday, June 12th
9:30 am: Sunday School
9:40 am: Hours
10:00 am: Divine Liturgy

Saturday, June 18th
6:30 pm: Vespers

Sunday, June 19th
9:40 am: Hours
10:00 am: Divine Liturgy

Saturday, June 25th
6:30 pm: Vespers

Sunday, June 26th
9:40 am: Hours
10:00 am: Divine Liturgy

Saturday, July 2nd
6:30 pm: Vespers

Sunday, July 3rd
9:40 am: Hours
10:00 am: Divine Liturgy

Saturday, July 9th
6:30 pm: Vespers

Bulletin Sponsors:

Trudy & Phil Ellmore
The Jankowski's
Billy D. & John Kuzemchak

Readings:



The Prokeimenon in the 4th Tone:

Blessed are You, O Lord God of our fathers, and praised and glorified is Your name forever! (*Song of the three Holy Children, v. 3*)

vs. For You are just in all that You have done for us! (*Song of the three Holy Children, v. 4*)

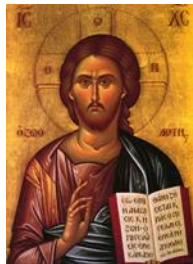
Epistle: Acts 20:16-18, 28-36

In those days, Paul had decided to sail past Ephesus, so that he would not have to spend time in Asia; for he was hurrying to be at Jerusalem, if possible, on the Day of Pentecost. From Miletus he sent to Ephesus and called for the elders of the church. And when they had come to him, he said to them: “You know, from the first day that I came to Asia, in what manner I always lived among you, therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood. For I know this, that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock. Also from among yourselves men will rise up, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after themselves. Therefore watch, and remember that for three years I did not cease to warn everyone night and day with tears. So now, brethren, I commend you to God and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified. I have coveted no one’s silver or gold or apparel. Yes, you yourselves know that these hands have provided for my necessities, and for those who were with me. I have shown you in every way, by laboring like this, that you must support the weak. And remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that He said, ‘It is more blessed to give than to receive.’ And when he had said these things, he knelt down and prayed with them all.

Alleluia in the 1st Tone:

The Lord, the God of gods, speaks and summons the earth from the rising of the sun to its setting. (*Psalm 49:1*)

vs. Gather to Me, My venerable ones, who made a covenant with Me by sacrifice! (*Psalm 49:5*)



Gospel: John 17:1-13

At that time, Jesus lifted up his eyes to heaven and said, "Father, the hour has come; glorify your Son that the Son may glorify you, since you have given him power over all flesh, to give eternal life to all whom you have given him. And this is eternal life, that they know you the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent. I glorified you on earth, having accomplished the work which you gave me to do; and now, Father, you glorify me in your own presence with the glory which I had with you before the world was made.

"I have manifested your name to the men whom you gave me out of the world; yours they were, and you gave them to me, and they have kept your word. Now they know that everything that you have given me is from you; for I have given them the words which you gave me, and they have received them and know in truth that I came from you; and they have believed that you did send me. I am praying for them; I am not praying for the world but for those whom you have given me, for they are mine; all mine are yours, and yours are mine, and I am glorified in them. And now I am no more in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, keep them in your name, which you have given me, that they may be one, even as we are one. While I was with them, I kept them in your name, which you have given me; I have guarded them, and none of them is lost but the son of perdition, that the scripture might be fulfilled. But now I am coming to you; and these things I speak in the world, that they may have my joy fulfilled in themselves."



Commemoration of the Holy Fathers of the First Ecumenical Council

On the seventh Sunday of Pascha, we commemorate the holy God-bearing Fathers of the First Ecumenical Council.

The Commemoration of the First Ecumenical Council has been celebrated by the Church of Christ from ancient times. The Lord Jesus Christ left the Church a great promise, “I will build My Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it” (Mt. 16:18). Although the Church of Christ on earth will pass through difficult struggles with the Enemy of salvation, it will emerge victorious. The holy martyrs bore witness to the truth of the Savior’s words, enduring suffering and death for confessing Christ, but the persecutor’s sword is shattered by the Cross of Christ.

Persecution of Christians ceased during the fourth century, but heresies arose within the Church itself. One of the most pernicious of these heresies was Arianism. Arius, a priest of Alexandria, was a man of immense pride and ambition. In denying the divine nature of Jesus Christ and His equality with God the Father, Arius falsely taught that the Savior is not consubstantial with the Father, but is only a created being.

A local Council, convened with Patriarch Alexander of Alexandria presiding, condemned the false teachings of Arius. However, Arius would not submit to the authority of the Church. He wrote to many bishops, denouncing the decrees of the local Council. He spread his false teaching throughout the East, receiving support from certain Eastern bishops.

Investigating these dissensions, the holy emperor Constantine (May 21) consulted Bishop Hosius of Cordova (Aug. 27), who assured him that the heresy of Arius was directed against the most fundamental dogma of Christ’s Church, and so he decided to convene an Ecumenical Council. In 325, 318 bishops representing Christian Churches from various lands gathered together at Nicea.

Among the assembled bishops were many confessors who had suffered during the persecutions, and who bore the marks of torture upon their bodies. Also participating in the Council were several great luminaries of the Church: St Nicholas, Archbishop of Myra in Lycia (December 6 and May 9), St Spyridon, Bishop of Tremithos (December 12), and others venerated by the Church as holy Fathers.

With Patriarch Alexander of Alexandria came his deacon, Athanasius (who later became Patriarch of Alexandria (May 2 and January 18). He is called “the Great,” for he was a zealous champion for the purity of Orthodoxy. In the Sixth Ode of the Canon for today’s Feast, he is referred to as “the thirteenth Apostle.”

The emperor Constantine presided over the sessions of the Council. In his speech, responding to the welcome by Bishop Eusebius of Caesarea, he said, “God has helped me cast down the impious might of the persecutors, but more distressful for me than any blood spilled in battle is for a soldier, is the internal strife in the Church of God, for it is more ruinous.”

Arius, with seventeen bishops among his supporters, remained arrogant, but his teaching was repudiated and he was excommunicated from the Church. In his speech, the holy deacon Athanasius conclusively refuted the blasphemous opinions of Arius. The heresiarch Arius is depicted in iconography sitting on Satan’s knees, or in the mouth of the Beast of the Deep (Rev. 13).

The Fathers of the Council declined to accept a Symbol of Faith (Creed) proposed by the Arians. Instead, they affirmed the Orthodox Symbol of Faith. St Constantine asked the Council to insert into the text of the Symbol of Faith the word “consubstantial,” which he had heard in the speeches of the bishops. The Fathers of the Council unanimously accepted this suggestion.

In the Nicene Creed, the holy Fathers set forth and confirmed the Apostolic teachings about Christ’s divine nature. The heresy of Arius was exposed and repudiated as an error of haughty reason. After resolving this chief dogmatic question, the Council also issued Twelve Canons on questions of churchly administration and discipline. Also decided was the date for the celebration of Holy Pascha. By decision of the Council, Holy Pascha should not be celebrated by Christians on the same day with the Jewish Passover, but on the first Sunday after the first full moon of the vernal equinox (which occurred on March 22 in 325).

The First Ecumenical Council is also commemorated on May 29.



Bulletin Sponsors/Prayer Requests: Use the sign-up sheet at the candle stand for the health of, eternal memory of or a Pannikhida for a loved one or friend, for a donation of \$10. Bulletin Sponsors/Prayer Requests will be remembered during Divine Liturgy for the day/week that you signed up for.

Candles/Memorial Candles: Candles may be purchased at the candle stand, suggested donation of \$10 for a large one.

Private Confessions: Can be heard a half hour before any service. See Father Matthew for other times and **General Confession:** Will be at 9:45 am on the first Sunday of the month.

Pannikhida Service: The third Sunday of each month there will be a Pannikhida after Divine Liturgy. If you would like your loved ones to be remembered please give a list of names to Father Matthew before that Sunday for those to be remembered in the month.

Special Announcements for the bulletin can be submitted by E-Mail:
OrthodoxChurchMotherOfGod@outlook.com

The Living Clean Group of Narcotics Anonymous meets every Friday from 8-9:15 pm downstairs in the community room.

The Grey Book Study Meeting Group of Narcotics Anonymous meets every Tuesday from 7-8:00 pm downstairs in the community room.



Orthodox Church of the Mother of God: Parish News

Church School news: Our last class for the school year will be today, Sunday June 12th.



NY/NJ Diocese News

**“...Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God,
and the prisoners were listening to them...” Acts 16:25**

June 12, 2016 Prison Ministry Awareness Sunday

Beloved Brothers and Sisters in Christ: Christ is risen!

We, the Hierarchs of The Assembly of Canonical Orthodox Bishops of the United States of America, by the grace of God, have been blessed to designate the sixth Sunday of Pascha, Sunday, June 12th of this year, to be Prison Ministry Awareness Sunday in all Orthodox parishes in the U.S.A.

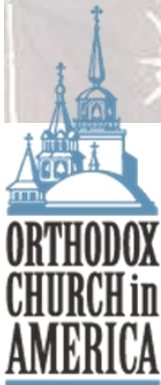
“Never confuse the person, formed in the image of God, with the evil that is in him: because evil is but a chance misfortune, an illness, a devilish reverie. But the very essence of the person is the image of God, and this remains in him despite every disfigurement” (St. John of Kronstadt).

No matter how far someone has fallen, the image of God remains in them. We should see people not as they are, but as they could become through the Holy Orthodox Faith. The Church, through OCPM, offers those in prisons and jails across our country the Life that gives meaning to all life and that Life is able to bring healing to a broken humanity. By assisting Orthodox Christian Prison Ministry each of us is able to visit Jesus in prison. Please remember “these the least of my brethren” by assisting OCPM with this vital ministry. We ask you to please pass a second offering tray on Prison Ministry Awareness Sunday, June 12th and send these gifts to:

**OCPM
Post Office Box 1597
New York, NY 10025**

With blessings and love in our Risen Lord,
+Archbishop Mark of Philadelphia and Eastern Pennsylvania Orthodox Church in America
Liaison to OCPM, Assembly of Canonical Orthodox Bishops of the United States of America
Archpriest Stephen Powley
Executive Director of OCPM

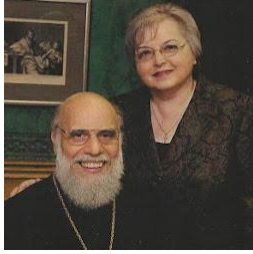
Orthodox Church in America (OCA) News
OCA summer camp schedules announced



The end of the school year brings with it the opening of the Orthodox Church in America’s network of “coast-to-coast” summer camps!

A comprehensive directory of over a dozen summer camping programs, compiled by OCA Youth Director Andrew Boyd, is now available.

Camps that have yet to submit information are invited to do so by contacting Andrew Boyd, OCA Youth Director, at aboyn@oca.org.



The Chakos Family
Serving in Guatemala

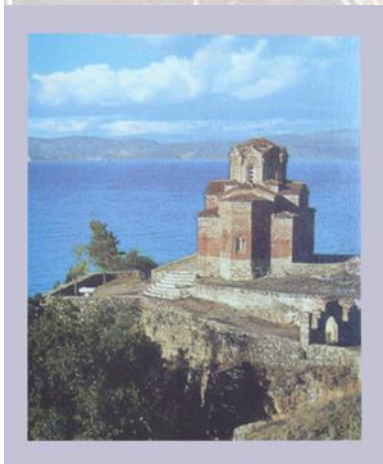
The Very Rev. John Chakos retired last year as the priest of Holy Cross Greek Orthodox Church in Mount Lebanon, PA after 31 years, in order that he and his wife, Presbytera Alexandra, could spend their retirement in helping to establish the first Orthodox seminary in Latin America and build up the fledgling Guatemalan Orthodox Church. He is working under Metropolitan Athenagoras of Mexico City, and together with Fr. Andres Girón, the charismatic leader of the new Guatemalan Orthodox Church.

He left a vibrant, mission-minded church family that has served its large community while also actively getting involved in missionary efforts in Pittsburgh and throughout the world. From assisting the homeless and working poor in the South Hills, Pittsburgh, to building schools in Africa, to teaching and preaching in Central America, Fr. John’s life has been defined by serving God through helping others and by being living examples of love and mercy.

After starting off his adulthood as a High School English teacher for two years, Fr. John and his young wife, Sandy, were inspired by the ideal of serving others abroad, so they joined the Peace Corps shortly after their marriage. They lived in the slums of Rio de Janeiro for almost three years in the 1960s. John taught classes in a local university while Sandy taught sewing and pattern making to impoverished families, who could, in turn, use the skills to earn a living.

In 1971 John Chakos felt that God called him to the priesthood, and he graduated from Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology in 1974. By the grace of God, Fr. John took over as pastor of Holy Cross in 1980, and helped it grow into a highly vibrant, Orthodox community, the largest in the greater Pittsburgh region. Under his leadership, Holy Cross has been instrumental in founding the Three Hierarchs Orthodox Elementary and Middle School (T.H.E.O.S.), several monasteries around the United States, and the Orthodox Church in Indonesia.

Father John has served as a member of the Orthodox Christian Missions Center’s (OCMC) board since 1986, serving as its President for a number of years. Fr. John has led several mission teams to Galilee and Guatemala, and served for six months in Tanzania, where their son Nicholas was a missionary.



Prayers by the Lake, St. Nikolai Velimirovich, LXI:

I hear a voice from the depths saying: a sinless man will walk among the sick and will not become sick. For sinfulness is health and strength, the fullness of health and strength.

One who is sinless does not die. And if a sinless man dies on account of the sins of others, he will return to life. Like all diseases -- death too is a disease that sin causes. And just as no disease has power over one who is sinless, so neither does death have any power over him. Truly, sons of earth, even death is nothing more than a disease.

Let one who is master over sin arise, and he will be master over sickness as well, and he will heal the sick and resurrect the dead.

Indeed, sinlessness means an abundance of life, but sinfulness -- a dearth of life. Toss red-hot embers onto green grass, and they will not start a fire. But grass desiccated of its life juice will catch fire from the same red-hot embers. Sickness is even more powerless against one who is sinless than fire is to green grass.

One who is sinless has an abundance of life, and gives it;¹ one who is sinful has a dearth of life, and steals it. Whoever has an abundance of life, to him still more is given. Whoever has a dearth of life, from him it is taken away. And the more of it he steals, the less of it he will have. Truly, life is a gift and is only to be given, and through perpetual giving it is multiplied. But one who steals it will shrivel more and more, until he pines away into nothingness.²

Over the mountain grass a whisper wanders: sin and sickness can neither devour nor consume life; they can only usurp and take the place of life.

Over the emerald lake a murmur ripples: an abundance of life is stronger than an abundance of sins; and abundance of life both drives out sin and takes the place of sin.

Wandering everywhere all over the earth, a whisper walks: life and sickness relate to one another the way existence and nonexistence do; the realm of the one knows nothing of the realm of the other.

Rustling everywhere throughout the starry universe, a murmur rustles: connection with God purges one of sin; connection with God cures one of sickness; connection with God delivers one from death.

The prophets and wise men exclaim what the angels whisper: whoever is connected to life, will live; whoever is connected to death, will die. Whoever knows life, life likewise knows; whoever knows death, death likewise knows. Life has no eyes for death, nor does death have eyes for life.

Behold, how the presence of the One who came down from heaven heals those who have confessed Life, and how it deadens those, who have confessed death!

Behold, how the Son of the Virgin is brimming with Life, and how He bestows it on those sons of women, who have reverted to virginal modesty and have begun to beseech life of the Giver of Life!

Behold, how easy it is for the Brimming One to pour out, for the Sinless One to absolve sins, for the Healthful One to heal, and for the Life-bearing One to resurrect the dead!

O my soul, arise and walk. Behold, your sins are forgiven. Behold, you are healed of your infirmity, and death is about to flee.

In that tiny portion of territory, which your sin and sickness have not yet seized, stand tall, my soul. And all your former territory, stolen by nonexistence, will be yours once more.

O dear and most gracious Lord, I believe and I confess that You are life.

Just absolve my sins, my Glory, and all the rest will be given to me by You Yourself.

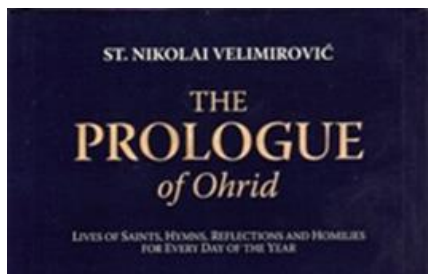
Sayings of the Ascetics of the Orthodox Church, LXI:

II. The Realities of the Spiritual World

The Holy Scriptures

When you begin to read or listen to the Holy Scriptures, pray to God thus: "Lord Jesus Christ, open the ears and eyes of my heart so that I may hear Thy words and understand them, and may fulfill Thy will." Always pray to God like this, that He might illumine your mind and open to you the power of His words. Many, having trusted in their own reason, have turned away into deception.

+ *St. Ephraim the Syrian*



1. The Venerable Onuphrius the Great

This saintly hermit had been living in the desert for sixty full years when the monk Paphnutius visited him. His hair and beard reached to the ground and his body, due to a long period of nakedness, was covered with long hair. All his hair was white as snow and his entire appearance was brilliant, sublime and awesome. Seeing Paphnutius, Onuphrius called him by name and recounted to him his [Onuphrius's] life in the wilderness. His guardian angel had appeared to him and brought him to this

place in the wilderness. For a long time he had eaten only vegetables, which could rarely be found in the wilderness. After he had endured violent combat with the temptations of the demons, and his heart had been completely strengthened in the love of God, an angel of God brought him bread for nourishment. Besides that, by the good providence of God, there grew up next to his cell a palm tree that brought forth dates abundantly, and a spring of living water began to flow there. "However," Onuphrius said: "I mostly nourish myself and quench my thirst with the sweet words of God." To Paphnutius's question as to how he received Holy Communion, the hermit answered that an angel of God brought him Holy Communion every Saturday. The next day the elder told Paphnutius that it was the day of his departure from this world; he knelt down, prayed to God and gave up his spirit unto God. At that moment Paphnutius saw a heavenly light illuminating the body of the reposed saint and heard the singing of angelic hosts. Having honorably buried the body of Onuphrius, Paphnutius returned to his monastery, that as a living witness he might narrate to others, for their benefit, the wondrous life of this man and the greatness of God's providence toward those who have completely given themselves over to the service of God. Onuphrius died in the year 400 A.D.

2. Venerable Peter the Athonite

Peter was a Greek by birth and a soldier by profession. Once, in battle against the Arabs, Peter was captured, bound in chains, and cast into prison. Peter remained imprisoned a long time in the town of Samara on the Euphrates River, and he constantly prayed that God would free him from prison and take him to a wilderness, where he would dedicate himself completely to a life of prayerful asceticism. St. Simeon the Receiver of God, together with St. Nicholas, appeared to him in prison and touched his iron chains with his staff; they melted like wax and Peter suddenly found himself in a field outside the town. He immediately set out for Rome, where he was tonsured a monk by the pope himself at the tomb of St. Peter. After this he again departed by boat for the east. The All-Holy Birth-giver of God, along with St. Nicholas, appeared to him in a dream, and the Birth-giver of God told St. Nicholas that she had designated Mt. Athos for Peter to live on in asceticism. Up to this time Peter had never heard of Mount Athos. Disembarking therefore on the Holy Mountain, Peter settled in a cave, where he remained for fifty-three years in difficult ascetic labors, in a struggle with hunger and thirst, with heat and cold, and especially with demonic powers, until he had overcome all with the help of God. After he had endured the first temptations and had successfully passed the first difficult tests before God, an angel of God began to bring him bread every forty days.

On several occasions, the tempter--the devil--appeared to him under the guise of an angel of light, but Peter repelled him with the sign of the Cross and the name of the All-Holy Birth-giver of God. About a year before his death he was discovered by a hunter who was hunting deer around Athos, and from the mouth of the saint heard his life's story. He died in the year 734 A.D. His relics were translated to Macedonia.

3. The Venerable Timothy the Egyptian Hermit

Timothy first lived a life of asceticism in the Thebaid and then withdrew into the wilderness, where he lived for thirty years. Having pleased God, he died peacefully.

4. The Venerable Bassian and Jonah

Bassian and Jonah were monks of the Solovki Monastery. They drowned and were washed ashore in the year 1651 A.D. Over their graves a sign appeared, and because of this a church was built. The Petrominsk Monastery was subsequently established there. Once, when Tsar Peter the Great was saved from a tempest, he remained there for three days, made a cross, and erected it on the shore.

Hymn of Praise

The Venerable Peter the Athonite

Saint Peter in the fearful wilderness
Of all earthly riches was deprived,
But through tearful prayer he overcame
All the rich illusions of the devil.
His heart he bridled and to God raised it;
His mind he set upright and to heaven uplifted it.
Immobile as a rock among the cliffs,
Wearied by hunger and all-night vigils,
He directed himself toward every good,
As a fleshless one in earthly flesh.
On Mt. Athos, for half a century,
In prayer he spoke only with God.
From age he turned as white as snow;
No man he saw, nor did he desire to.
To him God revealed the window of heaven;
Countless miracles he saw,
The Mother of God and God's angels,
And the all-wonderful saints of God.
To him the Lord an angel sent
Who gave him Holy Communion from heaven,
Until Peter made himself a spiritual giant,
A city on a high mountain,
To be a teacher throughout the ages,
To the holy monks, a wonderful example.

Reflection

Great and wonderful is the Mystery [Sacrament] of Holy Communion. Even anchorites [recluses] and hermits craved for nothing so much as to be given the possibility to receive Holy Communion. St. Mary of Egypt begged St. Zosimas to bring her the Holy Mysteries by the Jordan and commune her. Returning from visiting St. Onuphrius, the Venerable Paphnutius found a humble community of four young ascetics in the desert. When Paphnutius asked them whether and how they received Holy Communion, they replied that an angel of God visited them every Saturday and Sunday and gave them Holy Communion. Paphnutius remained until the following Saturday and was personally convinced. When Saturday dawned the entire community was filled with an indescribable, wonderful fragrance, and while they were at prayer, an angel of God in the form of a handsome young man, as bright as lightning, appeared with the All-pure Mysteries. Paphnutius became frightened and fell to the ground in fear. But they raised him up and brought him to the angel, so that he, along with them, received Communion from the hand of the angel. According to his own testimony, St. Onuphrius received Holy Communion from the hand of an angel, as did many other anchorites and hermits. Therefore, it is completely erroneous to think that solitaries and hermits did not receive Holy Communion. God, Who provided for their bodily nourishment, did not leave them without the Life-giving nourishment of the Body and Blood of Christ the Lord.

Contemplation

To contemplate the miraculous multiplying of the bread in the wilderness: *And when it was evening, his disciples came to Him saying: This is a desert place, and the time is now past; send the multitude away that they may go into the villages, and buy themselves victuals* (St. Matthew 14:15):

1. How the Lord fed five thousand people with the five blessed loaves;
2. How He is that Living Bread Who alone can miraculously feed my hungry soul, which all the rest of the world together cannot feed.

**Homily:
About the palace and the hut**

“The house of the wicked shall be overthrown but the hut of the righteous shall flourish” (Proverbs 14:11).

The palace of Herod lies in ruins, but the cave of the Child of Bethlehem remains. The crowns of the caesars have been lost, but the bones of the martyrs have been preserved. The palaces of the pagan kings have been transformed into piles of stone and dust, but the caves of the ascetics have grown into most beautiful churches. The golden idols have been scattered into nothing, but the chains of the Apostle Peter are preserved as a holy relic. The powerful Roman Empire is now only a tale of the dead, while the hut of Christianity, the Holy Church, is today the most powerful realm in the world. Where are the Jews, the murderers of God? They are dispersed throughout the world. Where are the powerful Romans? In the grave. Where is the power of bloody Nero? Where is the power of the evil Diocletian and the depraved Maximian? Where is the success of Julian the Apostate? Where are those high towers? They are where the tower of Babel is--beneath dust and ashes, beneath shame and damnation.

Go about your own city and inquire how many homes of the godless are excavated? How many huts of the righteous have grown into beautiful houses? Brethren, heaven and earth are founded on justice, on God's steadfast justice. That is why all the pagan creations are like arrogant bubbles, which burst and are trampled on by passers-by. The palaces of the pharaohs and the Babylonians are like trampled bubbles, while the tent of the righteous Abraham flourishes and blossoms in eternity. O my brethren, how all-powerful and long lasting is justice, and how noisy and transient is injustice, like a storm on a summer's day!

O Righteous Lord, how magnificent and consistent You are in the exercise of Your justice.

To Thee be glory and praise forever. Amen.



***The Morning Offering – Daily Inspiration with Abbott
Tryphon***

To Forgive Others

Forgiveness is the cure for judgment, anger, and resentment

Our Lord Jesus Christ told us: “Judge not, and you shall not be judged. Condemn not, and you shall not be condemned. Forgive, and you shall be forgiven (Luke 6:37).” In the Our Father, the very prayer given to His disciples after Christ was asked to teach them to pray, we say the words “forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors”. These strong words make it clear that we are to forgive others if we expect God to forgive us.

Saint Tikhon of Zadonsk, in his book, “Journey to Heaven”, says: “Do we forgive our neighbors their trespasses? God also forgives us in His mercy. Do we refuse to forgive? God, too, will refuse to forgive us. As we treat our neighbors, so also does God treat us. The forgiveness, then, of your sins or unforgiveness, and hence also your salvation or destruction, depend on you yourself, man. For without forgiveness of sins there is no salvation.”

Throughout Christ's ministry He emphasized the need for us to be willing to forgive others, for if we expect to be forgiven, we must nurture a forgiving heart. If we hold grudges, and remember wrongs, we poison our souls, and love has no place in us.

“The drunkard, the fornicator, the proud – he will receive God’s mercy. But he who does not want to forgive, to excuse, to justify consciously, intentionally... ..that person closes himself to eternal life before God, and even more so in the present life. He is turned away and not heard (Elder Sampson of Russia).”

As we are quick to forgive our neighbors, so God also forgives us in His great and loving mercy. If we refuse to forgive, God, too, will refuse to forgive us. Our salvation or destruction, depend on our willingness to forgive others, for without forgiveness of sins there is no salvation.

With love in Christ,
Abbot Tryphon



Daily Reflection From “Tolerance” to Acceptance



“We who are strong ought to bear/tolerate (βαστάζειν) the failings of the weak, and not to please ourselves. Each of us must please our neighbor for the good purpose of building up the neighbor... May the God of steadfastness and encouragement grant you to live in harmony with one another, in accordance with Christ Jesus, so that together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Accept/receive (προσλαμβάνεσθε) one another, therefore, just as Christ has accepted you, for the glory of God.” (Rom 15: 1-2, 5-7)

So in this passage the Apostle calls us, first, to “bear” or tolerate (from the Latin “tolerate,” meaning “to bear, endure”), but then he goes on to ask us to do even more: He says, “accept” one another, just as Christ accepted us, all of us, having “tolerated” or “carried” our entire humanity and its sins.

Today let me not only “bear” others, as a burden, but also and more so "accept" them, as a gift, “for the good purpose of building up” the other, whoever he or she may be throughout my day. Let me embrace the “good purpose” today, which the Apostle spells out for me: “so that we may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.” Amen!

The Philokalia: Daily Readings

Faith is knowledge that cannot be rationally demonstrated. If such knowledge cannot be rationally demonstrated, then faith is a supra-natural relationship through which, in an unknowable and so undemonstrable manner, we are united with God in a union which is beyond intellection.

+ *St Maximus the Confessor, 500 Various Texts*

Daily Readings with Early Church Fathers and Mothers

"Being Quiet"

Antony said, "He who sits alone and is quiet has escaped from three wars: hearing, speaking, seeing; but there is one thing against which he must continually fight: that is, his own heart."

June – 2016

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2	3 8:00-9:15pm –Living Clean NA Group Mtg.	4 6:30pm Vespers
5 Blind Man 9:30am Sunday School 9:40am Hours 10:00am Divine Liturgy/Social	6	7 7:00-8:00pm – The Grey Book Study Mtg. NA Grp	8 Leavetaking Pascha/Forefeast Ascension 6:30 pm: Vespers Liturgy w/Abp. Michael, for the Ascension of our Lord	9 Ascension of Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ	10 8:00-9:15pm –Living Clean NA Group Mtg.	11 Holy Apostles Bartholomew and Barnabas 6:30pm Vespers
12 Fathers of the 1st Ecumenical Council 9:30am Sunday School (Last class for the school year) 9:40am Hours 10:00am Divine Liturgy/Social	13	14 7:00-8:00pm – The Grey Book Study Mtg. NA Grp	15 Marianica Icon	16	17 Leavetaking Ascension 8:00-9:15pm –Living Clean NA Group Mtg.	18 Memorial Saturday/Bogoliubskaya Icon 6:30pm Vespers
19 Feast of the Holy Trinity/Holy Apostle Jude, Brother of the Lord 9:40am Hours 10:00am Divine Liturgy / Social	20 Holy Spirit/Hodogitria Icon at Mt Athos	21 3rd Day Holy Trinity 7:00-8:00pm – The Grey Book Study Mtg. NA Grp	22	23 Vladimir Icon	24 Nativity of St John the Baptist 8:00-9:15pm –Living Clean NA Group Mtg.	25 Leavetaking Pentecost 6:30pm Vespers
26 All Saints/Tikhvin & Sedmiyezerskaya Icon 9:40am Hours 10:00am Divine Liturgy / Social	27	28 Three Hands Icon 7:00-8:00pm – The Grey Book Study Mtg. NA Grp	29 Holy Apostles Peter and Paul	30 Balykinskaya Icon		