

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

V. Rev. Dr. Matthew Searfoorce, Rector

Sub-Deacon Edward Dawson

Sub-Deacon Vlashi

Parish Council President: Andrew Romanofsky

Parish Council Vice President: Dean Inferrera



**Sunday, July 16, 2017**

Gospel: Matthew 9:1-8

Fathers: John 17:1-13

**Tone 5**

Epistle: Romans 12:6-14

Fathers: Hebrews 13:7-16

**6<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost:**

**Commemoration of the Holy Fathers of the First Six Ecumenical Councils**

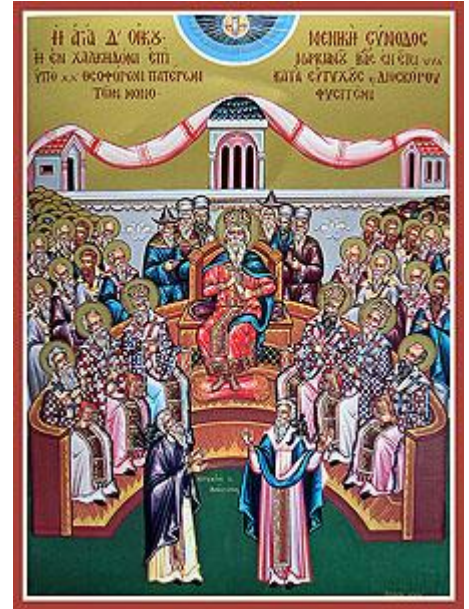
Hieromartyr Athenogenes, Bishop of Heracleopolis, and his ten disciples (ca. 311). Martyrs Paul and two sisters, Chionia (Thea) and Alevtina (Valentina), at Cæsarea in Palestine (308). Martyr Antiochus, Physician, of Sebaste (4th c.). Virgin Martyr Julia of Carthage (ca. 440 or 613)

**Troparion – Tone 8**

*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!*

**Kontakion – 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!*



**Commemoration of the Holy Fathers of the First Six Ecumenical Councils**

## Prayer Requests

**For Health of:**

**Very Reverend Paul Shafran**, celebrated his 95th birthday on Sunday, 2 July 2017, offered by Archbishop Michael and the Diocese of NY/NJ.

**In Memory of:**

**Olga Koss**, offered by her family.

## The Philokalia: Daily Readings

Those who repulse provocations prevent thoughts from entering the spiritual vineyard (of the mind) like marauding animals and ruining it.

- St Elijah the Priest, Gnostic Anthology

*Liturgical Schedule*

**Sunday, July 16<sup>th</sup>**

9:40 am: Hours

10:00 am: Divine Liturgy

**Saturday, July 22<sup>nd</sup>**

6:30 pm: Vespers

**Sunday, July 23<sup>rd</sup>**

9:40 am: Hours

10:00 am: Divine Liturgy

**Saturday, July 29<sup>th</sup>**

6:30 pm: Vespers

**Sunday, July 30<sup>th</sup>**

9:40 am: Hours

10:00 am: Divine Liturgy

**Saturday, August 5<sup>th</sup>**

6:30 pm: Vespers

**Sunday, August 6<sup>th</sup>**

9:40 am: Hours

9:45 am: General  
Confession

10:00 am: Divine Liturgy

**Saturday, August 12<sup>th</sup>**

6:30 pm: Vespers

**Sunday, August 13<sup>th</sup>**

9:40 am: Hours

10:00 am: Divine Liturgy

*Bulletin Sponsors*

*The Family of Olga Koss*

**Readings:**

**The Prokeimenon in the 5<sup>th</sup> Tone:**

Thou, O Lord, shalt protect us and preserve us from this generation forever.

*(Psalm 11:17)*

vs. Save me, O Lord, for there is no longer any that is godly!

*(Psalm 11:1)*

**Another, Tone 4 (Fathers):**

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

**Epistle:** Romans 12:6-14

**Brethren**, having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, in proportion to our faith; if service, in our serving; he who teaches, in his teaching; he who exhorts, in his exhortation; he who contributes, in liberality; he who gives aid, with zeal; he who does acts of mercy, with cheerfulness. Let love be genuine; hate what is evil, hold fast to what is good; love one another with brotherly affection; outdo one another in showing honor. Never flag in zeal, be aglow with the Spirit, serve the Lord. Rejoice in your hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer. Contribute to the needs of the saints, practice hospitality. Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them.

**Fathers:** Hebrews 13:7-16

**Brethren**, remember those who rule over you, who have spoken the word of God to you, whose faith follow, considering the outcome of their conduct. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever. Do not be carried about with various and strange doctrines. For it is good that the heart be established by grace, not with foods which have not profited those who have been occupied with them. We have an altar from which those who serve the tabernacle have no right to eat. For the bodies of those animals, whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the high priest for sin, are burned outside the camp. Therefore Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people with His own blood, suffered outside the gate. Therefore let us go forth to Him, outside the camp, bearing His reproach. For here we have no continuing city, but we seek the one to come. Therefore by Him let us continually offer the sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His name. But do not forget to do good and to share, for with such sacrifices God is well pleased.

**Alleluia in the 5<sup>th</sup> Tone:**

I will sing of Thy mercies, O Lord, forever; with my mouth I will proclaim Thy truth from generation to generation. *(Psalm 88:1)*

vs. For Thou hast said: “Mercy will be established forever; My truth will be prepared in the heavens.” *(Psalm 44:8)*

**Another, Tone 1 (Fathers):**

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

**Gospel:** Matthew 9:1-8

**At that time,** he crossed over in a boat, and came to his own city. And behold, they brought to him a paralytic, lying on his bed; and when Jesus saw their faith he said to the paralytic, "Take heart, my son; your sins are forgiven." And behold, some of the scribes said to themselves, "This man is blaspheming." But Jesus, knowing their thoughts, said, "Why do you think evil in your hearts? For which is easier, to say, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Rise and walk'? But that you may know that the Son of man has authority on earth to forgive sins" --he then said to the Paralytic--"rise, take up your bed and go home." And he rose and went home. When the crowds saw it, they were afraid, and they glorified God, who had given such authority to men.

**Fathers:** John 17:1-13

**Jesus spoke these words,** lifted up His eyes to heaven, and said: "Father, the hour has come. Glorify Your Son, that Your Son also may glorify You, as You have given Him authority over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as You have given Him. And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent. I have glorified You on the earth. I have finished the work which You have given Me to do. And now, O Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world was. I have manifested Your name to the men whom You have given Me out of the world. They were Yours, You gave them to Me, and they have kept Your word. Now they have known that all things which You have given Me are from You. For I have given to them the words which You have given Me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came forth from You; and they have believed that You sent Me. I pray for them. I do not pray for the world but for those whom You have given Me, for they are Yours. And all Mine are Yours, and Yours are Mine, and I am glorified in them. Now I am no longer in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to You. Holy Father, keep through Your name those whom You have given Me, that they may be one as We are. While I was with them in the world, I kept them in Your name. Those whom You gave Me I have kept; and none of them is lost except the son of perdition, that the Scripture might be fulfilled. But now I come to You, and these things I speak in the world, that they may have My joy fulfilled in themselves.

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*Orthodox Quote of the Day*

In our age of moral and spiritual decline, only the heroic example of righteous men and women is able to ignite a zeal for godly living in accordance with the Divine commandments..

**Hieromonk Seraphim Rose**

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*Commemoration of the Holy Fathers of the First Six Ecumenical Councils*



In the Ninth Article of the Nicea-Constantinople Symbol of Faith proclaimed by the holy Fathers of the First and Second Ecumenical Councils, we confess our faith in "One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church." By virtue of the catholic nature of the Church, an Ecumenical Council is the Church's supreme authority, and possesses the competence to resolve major questions of church life. An Ecumenical Council is comprised of archpastors and pastors of the Church, and representatives of all the local Churches, from every land of the "oikumene" (i.e. from all the whole inhabited world).

The Orthodox Church acknowledges Seven Holy Ecumenical Councils:

The First Ecumenical Council (Nicea I) (May 29, and also on seventh Sunday after Pascha) was convened in the year 325 against the heresy of Arius, in the city of Nicea in Bithynia under Saint Constantine the Great, Equal of the Apostles.

The Second Ecumenical Council (Constantinople I) (May 22) was convened in the year 381 against the heresy of Macedonias, by the emperor Theodosius the Great.

The Third Ecumenical Council (Ephesus) (September 9) was convened in the year 431 against the heresy of Nestorius, in the city of Ephesus by the emperor Theodosius the Younger.



*“Orthodox Church of the Mother of God: Joy of all the Sorrowful” founded in 1966*

The Fourth Ecumenical Council (Chalcedon) (July 16) was convened in the year 451, against the Monophysite heresy, in the city of Chalcedon under the emperor Marcian.

The Fifth Ecumenical Council (Constantinople II) (July 25) “Concerning the Three Chapters,” was convened in the year 553, under the emperor Justinian the Great.

The Sixth Ecumenical Council (Constantinople III) (January 23) met during the years 680-681, to fight the Monothelite heresy, under the emperor Constantine Pogonatos.

The fact that the Seventh Ecumenical Council (Nicaea II) is not commemorated today testifies to the antiquity of today’s celebration. The Seventh Council, commemorated on the Sunday nearest to October 11, was convened at Nicaea in the year 787 against the Iconoclast heresy, under the emperor Constantine and his mother Irene.

The Church venerates the Holy Fathers of the Ecumenical Councils because Christ has established them as “lights upon the earth,” guiding us to the true Faith. “Adorned with the robe of truth,” the doctrine of the Fathers, based upon the preaching of the Apostles, has established one faith for the Church. The Ecumenical Councils, are the highest authority in the Church. Such Councils, guided by the grace of the Holy Spirit, and accepted by the Church, are infallible.

The Orthodox Church’s conciliar definitions of dogma have the highest authority, and such definitions always begin with the Apostolic formula: “It seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us...” (Acts 15: 28).

The Ecumenical Councils were always convened for a specific reason: to combat false opinions and heresies, and to clarify the Orthodox Church’s teaching. But the Holy Spirit has thus seen fit, that the dogmas, the truths of faith, immutable in their content and scope, constantly and consequently are revealed by the conciliar mind of the Church, and are given precision by the holy Fathers within theological concepts and terms in exactly such measure as is needed by the Church itself for its economy of salvation. The Church, in expounding its dogmas, is dealing with the concerns of a given historical moment, “not revealing everything in haste and thoughtlessly, nor indeed, ultimately hiding something” (Saint Gregory the Theologian).

A brief summary of the dogmatic theology of the First Six Ecumenical Councils is formulated and contained in the First Canon of the Council of Trullo (also known as Quinisext), held in the year 692. The 318 Holy Fathers of the First Ecumenical Council are spoken of in this Canon I of Trullo as having: “with unanimity of faith revealed and declared to us the consubstantiality of the three Persons of the Divine nature and, ... instructing the faithful to adore the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit with one worship, they cast down and dispelled the false teaching about different degrees of Divinity.”

The 150 Holy Fathers of the Second Ecumenical Council left their mark on the theology of the Church concerning the Holy Spirit, “repudiating the teaching of Macedonius, as one who wished to divide the inseparable Unity, so that there might be no perfect mystery of our hope.”

The 200 God-bearing Fathers of the Third Ecumenical Council expounded the teaching that “Christ, the Incarnate Son of God is One.” They also confessed that “she who bore Him without seed was the spotless Ever-Virgin, glorifying her as truly the Mother of God.

The 630 Holy Fathers of the Fourth Ecumenical Council decreed that “the One Christ, the Son of God... must be glorified in two natures.”

The 165 God-bearing Holy Fathers of the Fifth Ecumenical Council “in synod anathematized and repudiated Theodore of Mopsuestia (the teacher of Nestorius), and Origen, and Didymus, and Evagrius, renovators of the Hellenic teaching about the transmigration of souls and the transmutation of bodies and the impieties they raised against the resurrection of the dead.”

The 170 Holy Fathers of the Sixth Ecumenical Council “taught that we ought to confess two natural volitions, or two wills [trans. note: one divine, and the other human], and two natural operations (energies) in Him Who was incarnate for our salvation, Jesus Christ, our true God.”

In decisive moments of Church history, the holy Ecumenical Councils promulgated their dogmatic definitions, as trustworthy delimitations in the spiritual battle for the purity of Orthodoxy, which will last until such time, as “all shall come into the unity of faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God” (Eph. 4: 13). In the struggle with new heresies, the Church does not abandon its former dogmatic concepts nor replace them with some sort of new formulations. The dogmatic formulae of the Holy Ecumenical Councils need never be superseded, they remain always contemporary to the living Tradition of the Church. Therefore the Church proclaims:

“The faith of all in the Church of God hath been glorified by men, which were luminaries in the world, cleaving to the Word of Life, so that it be observed firmly, and that it dwell unshakably until the end of the ages, conjointly with their God-bestown writings and dogmas. We reject and we anathematize all whom they have rejected and anathematized, as being enemies of Truth. And if anyone does not cleave to nor admit the aforementioned pious dogmas, and does not teach or preach accordingly, let him be anathema” (Canon I of the Council of Trullo).

*“Orthodox Church of the Mother of God: Joy of all the Sorrowful” founded in 1966*

In addition to their dogmatic definitions, the Holy Fathers of the Ecumenical Councils exerted great efforts towards the strengthening of church discipline. Local Councils promulgated their disciplinary canons according to the circumstances of the time and place, frequently differing among themselves in various particulars.

The universal unity of the Orthodox Church required unity also in canonical practice, i.e. a conciliar deliberation and affirmation of the most important canonical norms by the Fathers of the Ecumenical Councils. Thus, according to conciliar judgment, the Church has accepted: 20 Canons from the First, 7 Canons from the Second, 8 Canons from the Third, and 30 Canons from the Fourth Ecumenical Synods. The Fifth and the Sixth Councils concerned themselves only with resolving dogmatic questions, and did not leave behind any disciplinary canons.

The need to establish in codified form the customary practices during the years 451-680, and ultimately to compile a canonical codex for the Orthodox Church, occasioned the convening of a special Council, which was wholly devoted to the general application of churchly rules. This was convened in the year 692. The Council “in the Imperial Palace” or “Under the Arches” (in Greek “en trullo”), came to be called the Council in Trullo. It is also called the “Quinisext” [meaning the “fifth and sixth”], because it is considered to have completed the activities of the Fifth and Sixth Councils, or rather that it was simply a direct continuation of the Sixth Ecumenical Council itself, separated by just a few years.

The Council in Trullo, with its 102 Canons (more than of all the Ecumenical Synods combined), had a tremendous significance in the history of the canonical theology of the Orthodox Church. It might be said that the Fathers of this Council produced a complete compilation of the basic codex from the relevant sources for the Orthodox Church’s canons. Listing through in chronological order, and having been accepted by the Church the Canons of the Holy Apostles, and the Canons of the Holy Ecumenical and the Local Councils and of the holy Fathers, the Trullo Council declared: “Let no one be permitted to alter or to annul the aforementioned canons, nor in place of these put forth, or to accept others, made of spurious inscription” (2nd Canon of the Council in Trullo).

Church canons, sanctified by the authority of the first Six Ecumenical Councils (including the rules of the Seventh Ecumenical Council in 787, and the Constantinople Councils of 861 and 879, which were added later under the holy Patriarch Photius), form the basis of THE RUDDER, or KORMCHAYA KNIGA (a canon law codex known as “Syntagma” or “Nomokanon” in 14 titles). In its repository of grace is expressed a canonical norm, a connection to every era, and a guide for all the local Orthodox Churches in churchly practice.

New historical conditions can lead to the change of some particular external aspect of the life of the Church. This makes creative canonical activity necessary in the conciliar reasoning of the Church, in order to reconcile the external norms of churchly life with historical circumstances. The details of canonical regulation are not fully developed for the various eras of churchly organization at all once. With every push to either forsake the literal meaning of a canon, or to fulfill and develop it, the Church again and again turns for reasoning and guidance to the eternal legacy of the Holy Ecumenical Councils, to the inexhaustible treasury of dogmatic and canonical truths.



**Bulletin Sponsor:** 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. Sponsors will be remembered during Divine Liturgy for the day/week that you signed up for.

**Memorial Candles:** Candles 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.

**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](mailto:OrthodoxChurchMotherOfGod@outlook.com) ; [reader.charles@hotmail.com](mailto:reader.charles@hotmail.com) or [rsub-deacon.vlashi@outlook.com](mailto:rsub-deacon.vlashi@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 Step 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

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### Wisdom of the Church Fathers

" all work, as great as it is, which is not accomplished with humility and spiritual knowledge, is no use to its author..."

St. Symeon the New Theologian



### NY/NJ Diocese News

Raising Our Young People  
As A Generation  
of Disciples and Leaders

Conference Leader:  
Very Reverend Dr. Joseph Purpura

#### 2017 DIOCESAN CHURCH SCHOOL CONFERENCES

The annual **Church School Conference** is designed to provide guidance and assistance, with an opportunity for sharing and cooperation, among teachers and others interested or involved in parish religious education programs. It is highly recommended that all clergy and church school coordinators attend this valuable resource. There are two dates and locations of the conference to enable maximum participation. **On Saturday, 12 August, a conference for the New Jersey & New York City Deaneries will be in Paramus NJ. On Saturday, 26 August, the New York State Deanery conference will be in Elmira Heights NY.** Conference flyers with additional information are available in the "Upcoming Events" section of the diocese webpage.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY: Father Paul Shafran

**Very Reverend Paul Shafran** celebrated his **95th birthday on Sunday, 2 July 2017**, giving thanks to God for his many blessings which include the ability to continue serving at the altar. Following the Divine Liturgy that morning, the parish of **Saint Vladimir in Trenton NJ** (where Father Paul is Pastor Emeritus, retired) honoured and blessed him with the singing of "**Many Years!**" A celebration followed in the fellowship hall and a birthday cake was enjoyed by all. The previous day his extended family gathered for an in-home celebration with toasts and photo-trips down memory lane.

#### Congratulations to:

**Presbyter Terenti Wasielewski**, awarded the Gold Cross, by His Eminence, Archbishop Michael, in Saint Nicholas Church, Cohoes NY, on Sunday, July 9, 2017. "Axios! Axios! Axios!"

May God protect and preserve His servant, the Presbyter Terenti, for many blessed years! "Mnogaya Lyeta!"



***Orthodox Church in America (OCA) News***  
**19th All-American Council web site goes “live”**

A special site featuring a wealth of information and resources related to the forthcoming 19th All-American Council [AAC] of the Orthodox Church in America went “live” on the OCA web site on Friday, July 14, 2017.

The AAC theme—“For the Life of the World”—is derived from Protopresbyter Alexander Schmemmann’s classic work of the same name.

“The web site will be of tremendous assistance in preparing the faithful, and especially AAC delegates and observers, for the gathering, which will convene in Saint Louis, MO July 23-27, 2018,” said Archpriest Eric G. Tosi, OCA Secretary. “A new AAC Facebook page also has been launched.”

On-line registration for both the AAC and hotel will be available January 1, 2017 through a dedicated and secure section of the site.

“All AAC related resources—agenda, handbook, instructions and registration—will be available on the site, enabling participants to download and print out copies to bring with them to the Council,” Father Eric explained. “Beginning January 1, the site will feature a dedicated section for submitting resolutions and Statute revisions for consideration by AAC delegates.”

Other AAC site highlights will include

An introductory video by His Grace, Bishop Paul of Chicago and the Midwest, who chairs the Preconciliar Commission.

Articles on the history of the Orthodox Church in the Saint Louis area and the Kansas City Deanery of the Diocese of the Midwest.

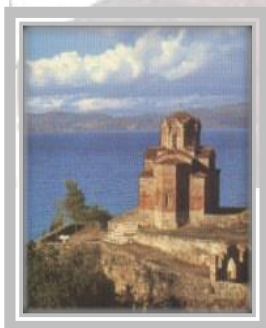
A section dedicated to the AAC youth program, which will be available shortly. Youth program volunteers may register through the site. Beginning January 1, youth delegate registration also will be available on-line. A separate posting on the AAC youth program, which will be directed by Priest Benjamin Tucci, will provide details on the youth program agenda, expectations, and costs and offer suggestions on how youth can raise funds to participate in the AAC.

A series of frequently asked questions about the AAC in general and the 19th AAC in particular, slated to be released in the fall.

“In the months ahead, the OCA web site will announce the latest updates, resources and information as they appear on the AAC site,” Father Eric added. “In the meantime, we hope that all of the Church’s faithful take advantage of the AAC site for the latest information with regard to the 19th AAC in a Church-wide effort to expand the work of the Church ‘for the life of the world’ and its salvation.”

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***Prayers by the Laker, St. Velimirovich, XV:***



*White doves fly over my blue lake, like white angels over the blue heaven. The doves would not be white nor would the lake be blue, if the great sun did not open its eye above them.*

*O my heavenly Mother, open Your eye in my soul, so that I may see what is what--so that I may see who is dwelling in my soul and what sort of fruits are growing in her.*

*Without Your eye I wander hopelessly through my soul like a wayfarer in the night, in the night's indistinguishable gloom. And the wayfarer in the night falls and picks himself up, and what he encounters along the way he calls "events."*

*You are the only event of my life, O lamp of my soul. When a child scurries to the arms of his mother, events do not exist for him. When a bride races to meet her bridegroom, she does not see the flowers in the meadow, nor does she hear the rumbling of the storm, nor does she smell the fragrance of the cypresses or sense the mood of the wild animals--she sees only the face of her bridegroom; she hears only the music from his lips; she smells only his soul. When love goes to meet love, no events befall it. Time and space make way for love.*

*Aimless wanderers and loveless people have events and have history. Love has no history, and history has no love.*



When someone makes their way down a mountain or climbs up a mountain without knowing where he is going, events are imposed upon him as though they were the aim of his journey. Truly, events are the aim of the aimless and the history of the pathless.

Therefore the aimless and the pathless are blocked by events and squabble with events. But I tranquilly hasten to You, both up the mountain and down the mountain, and despicable events angrily move out of the way of my footsteps.

If I were a stone and were rolling down a mountain, I would not think about the stones against which I was banging, but about the abyss at the bottom of the steep slope.

If I were a mountain stream, I would not be thinking about my uneven course, but about the lake that awaited me.

Truly terrifying is the abyss of those who are in love with the events that are dragging them downward.

O heavenly Mother, my only love, set me free from the slavery of events and make me Your slave.

O most radiant Day, dawn in my soul, so that I may see the aim of my tangled path.

O Sun of suns, the only event in the universe that attracts my heart, illuminate my inner self, so that I may see who has dared to dwell there besides You--so that I may eradicate from it all the fruits that seem sweet from the outside, but smell rotten in their core.

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### *Sayings of the Ascetics of the Orthodox Church, CXV:*

#### **III. Us and Our Neighbors**

##### *On Forgiveness of Insults*

We all have to die, beloved brethren, and it will be hard for us if, while we are in this world, we do not love each other, if we are not reconciled to our enemies, whom we have offended, and if one has grieved another, if we do not forgive him. Then we will not have eternal blessedness in that world, and the heavenly Father will not forgive our sins.

**St. Peter of Cetinje, Letter to Radulovichs, 1805**



### *The Morning Offering – Daily Inspiration by Abbott Tryphon*

#### **The Critic**

*The critic, fearing he will fail, does nothing*

It is easy to be critical of another person, finding fault with what we perceive they are doing, have done, or have not done. Yet the man who points out how another man has stumbled, finding fault in something he himself has not done, and in what he himself thinks he could have done better, is in reality the one at fault. It is the one who has done the work whom he criticizes.

The doer of the work may have stumbled, or perhaps could have done a better job, but he must receive credit for having tried. This man still deserves credit, for he is the one who put forth the effort, whereas the critic has done nothing, and, knowing he has done nothing, wishes to take the spotlight off himself, pointing, instead, to the doer.

The credit belongs to the man who has erred, and who perhaps comes up short again and again. He knows that without chancing some error or failure, no deed will ever be done. This man takes up a worthy deed with great enthusiasm, even in spite of the fact he may fail. The critic, fearing he will fail, does nothing. The critic will never know either defeat or victory.



### *Daily Reflection*

#### **We Are All Works-In-Progress**

*“For we are God’s fellow workers; you are God’s field, God’s building. According to the grace of God given to me, like a skilled master builder I laid a foundation, and another man is building upon it. Let each man take care*

*how he builds upon it. For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ.” (1 Cor 3: 9-11)*





I find this so encouraging, to be called “God’s field,” and “God’s building,” in this whole messy business of life. What the great Apostle Paul is telling me here is that I am called both to growth and progress, through it all. We are all God’s precious works-in-progress, in this life. And, as it happens with any project in this life, it’s about progress, not perfection, while we’re at it.

There is, however, one “perfect” part of this work-in-progress that I am, and that is, my “foundation”: Jesus Christ. He lends stability to the whole mess that is my “progress” and “growth,” through my ups and downs. So let me re-connect with Him this morning, as I often say, in heartfelt prayer, however feeble or brief, that I may move forward today, from my Foundation and Rock. “Lord, Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me, the sinner!”

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### *Holy Orthodox Quotes*

“Dispassion doesn’t mean to be no longer be attacked by demons but being attacked by them, to remained unconquered.”

**-St Diadochos of Photiki**

#### **Galatians 2:20**

I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.†

#### **Galatians 5:24-25**

And those who are Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.

#### **Romans 6:6, 11-13, 19, 22-23**

knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin.† Likewise you also, reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord.† Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body, that you should obey it in its lusts.† And do not present your members as instruments of unrighteousness to sin, but present yourselves to God as being alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God.† I speak in human terms because of the weakness of your flesh. For just as you presented your members as slaves of uncleanness, and of lawlessness leading to more lawlessness, so now present your members as slaves of righteousness for holiness.† But now having been set free from sin, and having become slaves of God, you have your fruit to holiness, and the end, everlasting life.† For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.†

#### **Romans 8:35-39**

Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written: “For Your sake we are killed all day long; We are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.” Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come,† nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

#### **Revelation 12:10-11**

Then I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, “Now salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren, who accused them before our God day and night, has been cast down. And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives to the death.

#### **1 John 4:3-4**

and every spirit that does not confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is not of God. And this is the spirit of the Antichrist, which you have heard was coming, and is now already in the world.† You are of God, little children, and have overcome them, because He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world.

#### **Wisdom of Sirach 23:1-7**

O Lord, Father and Master of my life, Do not leave me to their counsel, Nor let me fall because of them.† Who will set whips over my thoughts And the discipline of wisdom over my heart, So they may not spare me in my errors, nor neglect me in my sins? Lest my mistakes be multiplied And my sins abound. Then I would not fall before my

adversaries, And my enemy would not rejoice over me. O Lord, Father and the God of my life, do not give me haughty eyes, But turn me away from evil desire. Do not let gluttony or lust overcome me, Nor give me up to a shameless soul. My children, hear the teaching of my mouth, For he who keeps it will not be conquered.

**Wisdom of Sirach 2:1-18**

My son, if you draw near to serve the Lord, Prepare your soul for temptation.† Set your heart right and be steadfast, And do not strive anxiously in distress. Cleave to Him and do not fall away, That you may be honored at the end of your life. Accept whatever is brought upon you, And in exchange for your humiliation, be patient; Because gold is tested in fire And acceptable men in the furnace of abasement. Believe in Him, and He will help you; Make your ways straight and hope in Him. You who fear the Lord, wait for His mercy, And do not turn aside, lest you fall. You who fear the Lord, believe in Him, And your reward will not fail. You who fear the Lord, hope for good things And for everlasting gladness and mercy. Consider the ancient generations and see: Who believed in the Lord and was put to shame? Or who stood fast in His fear and was forsaken? Or who called upon Him and was overlooked? Because the Lord is compassionate and merciful, He forgives sins and saves in time of affliction. Woe to cowardly hearts and weakened hands, And to a sinner who walks on two paths!† Woe to a fainting heart, because it does not believe! Therefore it will not be sheltered. Woe to you who have lost your patient endurance! What will you do when the Lord visits you? Those who fear the Lord will not disobey His words, And those who love Him will keep His ways. Those who fear the Lord will seek His approval, And those who love Him will be filled with the law. Those who fear the Lord will prepare their hearts And will humble their souls before Him. We will fall into the hands of the Lord And not into the hands of men; For as His majesty is, so is His mercy.

**Luke 22:40, 45-46**

When He came to the place, He said to them, “Pray that you may not enter into temptation.” When He rose up from prayer, and had come to His disciples, He found them sleeping from sorrow. Then He said to them, “Why do you sleep? Rise and pray, lest you enter into temptation.”

**1 Corinthians 10:12-13**

Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall. No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it.

**Matthew 6:13**

And do not lead us into temptation, But deliver us from the evil one. For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.†

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*Ancient Christian Wisdom*

It is fitting, then, not only to be called Christians, but to be so in reality. For it is not the being called so, but the being really so, that renders a man blessed.

+ **St. Ignatius of Antioch**

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*Through the Grace of God – Orthodox Christianity*

**St Silouan The Athonite: God’s Mercy**

“When God wants to have mercy on someone, He inspires someone else to pray for him, and He helps in this prayer.”

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*Daily Readings with Early Church Fathers and Mothers*

**"Hopelessness" by St. Isaac the Syrian**

Do not fall into despair because of stumbling. I do not mean that you should not feel contrition for them, but that you should not think them incurable. For it is more expedient to be bruised than dead. There is, indeed, a Healer for the man who has stumbled, even He Who on the Cross asked that mercy be shown to His crucifiers, He Who pardoned His murders while He hung on the Cross. ‘All manner of sin,’ He said, ‘and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men,’ that is, through repentance.