

Readings:

- **Hebrews 11:33-12:2**
- **Matthew 10:32-33, 37-38; 19:27-30**

Brethren, who through faith conquered kingdoms, enforced justice, received promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched raging fire, escaped the edge of the sword, won strength out of weakness, became mighty in war, put foreign armies to flight. Women received their dead by resurrection. Some were tortured, refusing to accept release, that they might rise again to a better life. Others suffered mocking and scourging, and even chains and imprisonment. They were stoned, they were sawn in two, they were killed with the sword; they went about in skins of sheep and goats, destitute, afflicted, ill-treated - of whom the world was not worthy - wandering over deserts and mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth. And all these, though well attested by their faith, did not receive what was promised, since God had foreseen something better for us, that apart from us they should not be made perfect. Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus the pioneer and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.

The Lord said to his disciples, "Every one who acknowledges me before men, I also will acknowledge before my Father who is in heaven; but whoever denies me before men, I also will deny him before my Father who is in heaven. He who loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; and he who loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me; and he who does not take his cross and follow me is not worthy of me." Then Peter said in reply, "Lo, we have left everything and followed you. What then shall we have?" Jesus said to them, "Truly, I say to you, in the new world, when the Son of man shall sit on his glorious throne, you who have followed me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. And every one who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or lands, for my name's sake, will receive a hundredfold, and inherit eternal life. But many that are first will be last, and the last first."

Saturday service: Vespers – 6:30 PM**Sunday service:**

Hours – 9:40 AM **Divine Liturgy** – 10:00 AM
Private Confession – Half hour before any service. See Fr Matthew for other times.
General Confession – 9:45 AM on the first Sunday of each month
Pannikhidas – after Divine Liturgy 3rd Sunday of each month

Coffee hour – after Liturgy

(Church School has ended for the school year.)

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

Announcements:

- There will be a meeting of the Parish Council today after coffee hour.
- Volunteers are needed to clean the church. Please use the sign-up sheet on the bulletin board, downstairs, to indicate when you can help.

Special Announcements:

- Upcoming bulletins can be sponsored; this can be done with the sign-up sheet at the candle stand.
- Special Announcements for the bulletin can be submitted by E-Mail to: Bulletin@ChurchMotherOfGod.org



See us on the web at: ChurchMotherOfGod.org/bulletin
 E-Mail us at: Bulletin@ChurchMotherOfGod.org

The Sunday following Pentecost is dedicated to All Saints:

Both those who are known to us, and those who are known only to God are remembered today. There have been saints at all times, and they have come from every corner of the earth. They were Apostles, Martyrs, Prophets, Hierarchs, Monastics, and Righteous, yet all were perfected by the same Holy Spirit. The Descent of the Holy Spirit makes it possible for us to rise above our fallen state and to attain sainthood, thereby fulfilling God's directive to *"be holy, for I am holy"* (Lev. 11:44, 1 Peter 1:16, etc.). Therefore, it is fitting to commemorate All Saints on the first Sunday after Pentecost.

This feast may have originated at an early date, perhaps as a celebration of all martyrs, then it was broadened to include all men and women who had borne witness to Christ by their virtuous lives, even if they did not shed their blood for Him. St Peter of Damascus, in his *"Fourth Stage of Contemplation,"* mentions five categories of saints: **Apostles, Martyrs, Prophets, Hierarchs, and Monastic Saints** (PHILOKALIA [in English] Vol. 3, p.131). He is actually quoting from the OCTOECHOS, Tone 2 for Saturday Matins, kathisma after the first stichology. St Nicodemus of the Holy Mountain (July 14) adds the **Righteous** to St Peter's five categories. The list of St Nicodemus is found in his book THE FOURTEEN EPISTLES OF ST PAUL (Venice, 1819, p. 384) in his discussion of I Corinthians 12:28.

The hymnology for the feast of All Saints also lists six categories: *"Rejoice, assembly of the Apostles, Prophets of the Lord, loyal choirs of the Martyrs, divine Hierarchs, Monastic Fathers, and the Righteous...."* Some of the saints are described as **Confessors**, a category which does not appear in the above lists. Since they are similar in spirit to the martyrs, they are regarded as belonging to the category of Martyrs. They were not put to death as the Martyrs were, but they boldly confessed Christ and came close to being executed for their faith. St Maximus the Confessor (January 21) is such a saint.

The order of these six types of saints seems to be based on their importance to the Church. The Apostles are listed first, because they were the first to spread the Gospel throughout the world. The Martyrs come next because of their example of courage in professing their faith before the enemies and persecutors of the Church, which encouraged other Christians to remain faithful to Christ even unto death. Although they come first chronologically, the Prophets are listed after the Apostles and Martyrs. The Monastic Saints are those who withdrew from this world to live in monasteries, or in seclusion. They did not do this out of hatred for the world, but in order to devote themselves to unceasing prayer, and to do battle against the power of the demons. Although some people erroneously believe that monks and nuns are useless and unproductive, St John Climacus had a high regard for them: *"Angels are a light for monks, and the monastic life is a light for all men"* (LADDER, Step 26:31). The last category, the Righteous, are those who attained holiness of life while living *"in the world."* Examples include Abraham and his wife Sarah, Job, Sts Joachim and Anna, St Joseph the Betrothed, St Juliana of Lazarevo, and others.

The feast of All Saints achieved great prominence in the ninth century, in the reign of the Byzantine Emperor Leo VI the Wise (886-911). His wife, the Holy Empress Theophano (December 16) lived in the world, but was not attached to worldly things. She was a great benefactor to the poor, and was generous to the monasteries. She was a true mother to her subjects, caring for widows and orphans, and consoling the sorrowful.

Even before the death of St Theophano in 893 or 894, her husband started to build a church, intending to dedicate it to Theophano, but she forbade him to do so. It was this emperor who decreed that the Sunday after Pentecost be dedicated to All Saints. Believing that his wife was one of the righteous, he knew that she would also be honored whenever the Feast of All Saints was celebrated.

Sunday Bulletin

Church of the Mother of God

"The Joy of All the Sorrowful"

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**Glory to
Jesus Christ**

**Glory
Forever**

*The universe offers You the God-bearing martyrs,
As the first fruits of creation, O Lord and Creator.
Through the Theotokos, and their prayers establish Your Church in peace!*
Kontakion

Today the Church remembers:

1st Sunday After Pentecost • All Saints • Synaxis of the Holy, Glorious and All-praised Twelve Apostles: Peter, Andrew, James and John, the sons of Zebedee, Philip, Bartholomew, Thomas, Matthew, James, the son of Alphaeus, Jude, the brother of James, Simon the Zealot, and Matthias (1st c.) • St. Peter, Prince of Ordinsk (Rostov—1290) • Translation of the Relics of St. Sophrony, Bishop of Irkutsk (1918)

June 30, 2013

1st Sunday After Pentecost

Tone 8 of the Octoechos