

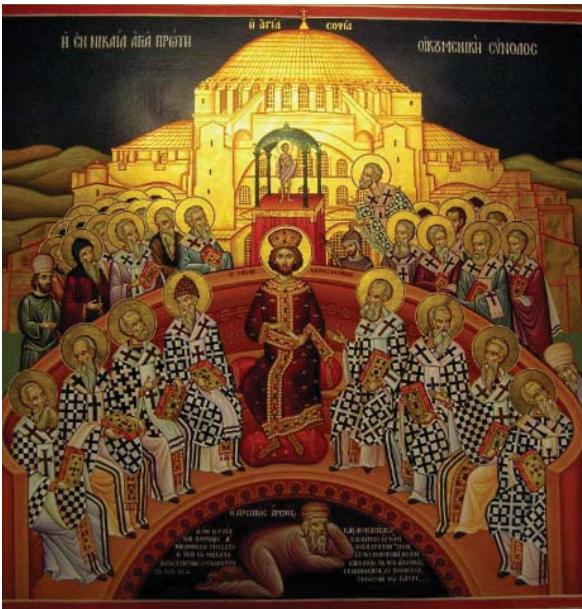
St. John the Baptist Orthodox Church

Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America Diocese of Los Angeles and the West

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May 20, 2018

Fathers of the First Ecumenical Council



On May 20 in the Holy Orthodox Church, we commemorate the Martyrs Thallelaïos the Unmercenary Healer of Phoenicia, and his disciples Alexander and Asterios of Cilicia; Martyr Askellas of Egypt; Venerable Nikitas, John and Joseph of Chios; Lydia 'the seller of purple' of Thyatira and Philippi; Alexis the wonderworker, metropolitan of Moscow; and Venerable Stephen of Piperi in Serbia.

On this day, the seventh Sunday of Pascha, we celebrate the first Ecumenical Council of the 318 God-bearing Fathers, which took place in Nicaea in Bithynia.

Arius, the notorious heretic, began to blaspheme against God and His Son the Word, saying that the latter was not God consubstantial with the Father, but that He was created as a stranger to the Substance of the Father and His glory. Alexander,

the Archbishop of Alexandria, tried to constrain Arius from disturbing the faithful with this teaching; even though Alexander excommunicated him, Arius did not cease his blasphemy, which spread throughout the Church in all nations. Thus, Emperor Constantine the Great called the First Ecumenical Council, which gathered bishops and teachers in the Church from all lands. They all proclaimed, as by one mouth, the equality of the Son of God with the Father in Substance, thus laying down the noble Confession of Faith, The Creed, which we Orthodox Christians recite to this day. The Church regards these divine Fathers as preachers of the Faith next to the holy Apostles.

By the intercessions of the 318 God-bearing Fathers, O Christ God, have mercy on us. Amen.

The Consistent Witness of the Church - *The "Vincentian Canon", AD 434*

“I have continually given the greatest pains and diligence to inquiring, from the greatest possible number of men outstanding in holiness and in doctrine, how I can secure a kind of fixed and, as it were, general and guiding principle for distinguishing the true Catholic Faith from the degraded falsehoods of heresy. And the answer that I receive is always to this effect; that if I wish, or indeed if anyone wishes, to detect the deceits of heretics that arise and to avoid their snares and to keep healthy and sound in a healthy faith, we ought, with the Lord's help, to fortify our faith in a twofold manner, firstly, that is, by the authority of God's Law, then by the tradition of the Catholic Church.

Here, it may be, someone will ask, Since the canon of Scripture is complete, and is in itself abundantly sufficient, what need is there to join to it the interpretation of the Church? The answer is that because of the very depth of Scripture all men do not place one identical interpretation upon it. The statements of the same writer are explained by different men in different ways, so much so that it seems almost possible to extract from it as many opinions as there are men. Novatian expounds in one way, Sabellius in another, Donatus in another, Arius, Eunomius and Macedonius in another, Photinus, Apollinaris and Priscillian in another, Jovinian, Pelagius and Caelestius in another, and latterly Nestorius in another. Therefore, because of the intricacies of error, which is so multiform, there is great need for the laying down of a rule for the exposition of Prophets and Apostles in accordance with the standard of the interpretation of the Church Catholic.

Now in the Catholic Church itself we take the greatest care to hold *that which has been believed everywhere, always and by all*. That is truly and properly 'Catholic,' as is shown by the very force and meaning of the word, which comprehends everything almost universally. We shall hold to this rule if we follow universality [*i.e.* oecumenicity], antiquity, and consent. We shall follow universality if we acknowledge that one Faith to be true which the whole Church throughout the world confesses; antiquity if we in no wise depart from those interpretations which it is clear that our ancestors and fathers proclaimed; consent, if in antiquity itself we keep following the definitions and opinions of all, or certainly nearly all, bishops and doctors alike.

What then will the Catholic Christian do, if a small part of the Church has cut itself off from the communion of the universal Faith? The answer is sure. He will prefer the healthiness of the whole body to the morbid and corrupt limb. But what if some novel contagion try to infect the whole Church, and not merely a tiny part of it? Then he will take care to cleave to antiquity, which cannot now be led astray by any deceit of novelty. What if in antiquity itself two or three men, or it may be a city, or even a whole province be detected in error? Then he will take the greatest care to prefer the decrees of the ancient General Councils, if there are such, to the irresponsible ignorance of a few men. But what if some error arises regarding which nothing of this sort is to be found? Then he must do his best to compare the opinions of the Fathers and inquire their meaning, provided always that, though they belonged to diverse times and places, they yet continued in the faith and communion of the one Catholic Church; and let them be teachers approved and outstanding. And whatever he shall find to have been held, approved and taught, not by one or two only but by all equally and with one consent, openly, frequently, and persistently, let him take this as to be held by him without the slightest hesitation. +*St. Vincent of Lerins:*

RESURRECTIONAL APOLYTIKION IN TONE SIX - When Mary stood at Thy grave, looking for Thy sacred body, angelic powers shone above Thy revered tomb. And the soldiers who were to keep guard became as dead men. Thou led Hades captive and wast not tempted thereby. Thou didst meet the Virgin and didst give life to the world, O Thou, Who art risen from the dead, O Lord, glory to Thee.

APOLYTIKION OF THE ASCENSION IN TONE FOUR - Thou hast ascended in glory, O Christ our God, and gladdened Thy Disciples with the promise of the Holy Spirit, making them confident through the blessing that Thou art the Son of God, and Deliverer of the world.

APOLYTIKION OF THE HOLY FATHERS IN TONE EIGHT - Thou, O Christ, art our God of exceeding praise Who didst establish our holy Fathers as luminous stars upon earth, and through them didst guide us unto the true Faith, O most merciful One, glory to Thee.

KONTAKION OF THE ASCENSION IN TONE SIX - When Thou didst fulfill Thy dispensation for our sakes, uniting the terrestrials with the celestials, Thou didst ascend in glory, O Christ our God, inseparable in space, but constant without separation, and crying unto Thy beloved: I am with you, and no one shall be against you.

THE EPISTLE

Blessed art Thou, O Lord, the God of our Fathers. For Thou art just in all Thou hast done.

The Reading from the Acts of the Apostles. (20:16-18, 28-36) - In those days, Paul had decided to sail past Ephesus, so that he might not have to spend time in Asia; for he was hastening to be at Jerusalem, if possible, on the day of Pentecost. And from Miletus he sent to Ephesus and called to him the elders of the church. And when they came to him, he said to them: "Take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to care for the church of God which he obtained with the blood of his own Son. I know that after my departure fierce wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock; and from among your own selves will arise men speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after them. Therefore, be alert, remembering that for three years I did not cease night or day to admonish everyone with tears. And now I commend you to God and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up and to give you the inheritance among all those who are sanctified. I coveted no one's silver or gold or apparel. You yourselves know that these hands ministered to my necessities, and to those who were with me. In all things I have shown you that by so toiling one must help the weak, remembering the words of the Lord Jesus, how He said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'" And when he had spoken thus, he knelt down and prayed with them all.

THE GOSPEL

The Reading from the Holy Gospel according to St. John. (17:1-13)

At that time, Jesus lifted up His eyes to heaven and said, "Father, the hour has come; glorify Thy Son that the Son may glorify Thee, since Thou hast given Him power over all flesh, to give eternal life to all whom Thou hast given Him. And this is eternal life, that they know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ Whom Thou hast sent. I glorified Thee on earth, having accomplished the work which Thou gavest Me to do; and now, Father, glorify Thou Me in Thy own presence with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was made. I have manifested Thy Name to the men whom Thou gavest Me out of the world; Thine they were, and Thou gavest them to Me, and they have kept Thy word.

Now they know that everything that Thou hast given Me is from Thee; for I have given them the words which Thou gavest Me, and they have received them and know in truth that I came from Thee; and they have believed that Thou didst send Me. I am praying for them; I am not praying for the world but for those whom Thou hast given Me, for they are Thine; all Mine are Thine, and Thine 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 Thee. Holy Father, keep them in Thy Name, which Thou hast given Me, that they may be one, even as We are one. While I was with them, I kept them in Thy Name, which Thou 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 Thee; and these things I speak in the world, that they may have My joy fulfilled in themselves.”



“We could take a cue from Orthodoxy, whose priests stand with their backs to their congregation, leading a liturgy that is neither clever nor impassioned, but simply beautiful, like stone smoothed by centuries of rhythmic tides. It’s an austere ritual, in the sense of – there’s nothing new here; it’s sublime, in the sense of – creating a clearer view into Heaven. The priest can be any priest. Who he is, what he looks like, how he speaks, and what he thinks matter little. He hasn’t written the service that he officiates. It isn’t about him or his prowess. He’s an interchangeable functionary draped in brocaded robes, obscured by incense, and, as such, never points to himself, a flawed human, pointing ever and only to the Perfection of the Mysterious Divine. That is the role of every priest or preacher – invisibility, while making God seen.”

- Quote from a Ch. 6 Maryland TV Newscast on the Glory of the Liturgy of the Orthodox Church

ANNOUNCEMENTS

St. Herman of Alaska Scholarship Fund - St. Herman's Scholarship Fund has been established to help students who wish to pursue or are currently pursuing full time study in an institution of learning (two or four year college or university) or a vocational institute. It was created for the purpose of helping young people who have recently graduated from high school or are already in college. Each year a student will be selected to receive a stipend of \$2,000. In order to be eligible for the stipend, a student should be a member in good standing at St. John the Baptist Orthodox Church in Post Falls or at Christ the Savior Orthodox Church in Spokane or at Holy Myrrhbearers Orthodox Church in Bonners Ferry, and a full time student at a high school or college with a minimum grade point average of 3.0 on a 4 point scale. Academic excellence, financial need and church/community service will be taken into account in the awarding of the stipend. Please see Fr. Mark or Barbara Garbinski for an application form. June 11th is the deadline.

Landscape Beautification Project Next Saturday - I would like to remind all of you that the "beautify our church" project is under way! This a great opportunity for all of us to come together and use our hands to make our church even more beautiful.

You pick and buy a flower of your choosing (has to be perennials) bring it to church and plant it.

We are encouraging families with children, to come and be a part of this fun day. Just imagine the impact this could have on them. Your kids will plant a flower that they got to pick out, and every time they walk up to church, they will remember "I planted that, that was my flower."

This project gives individuals an opportunity to have a different sense of ownership to the church. This isn't just a let's plant flowers day. It's a, let's take care of our church, give back to it as it has given to us, and let us do it in the company of our fellowship. Let our hands, be the hands doing beautiful work for the house of God.

Preparations began have already begun, but the BIG day is next Saturday, the 26th of May. There will be a BBQ, planting, laughter and joy. Here is the link for items or things needed for the project.

<https://members.stjohnorthodox.org/wordpress/2018/05/02/flowers-and-beautification/>

Bring yourself, flowers, tools, good spirits and a ton of smiles. If you are unable to contribute to the project, you are still welcomed. Many hands make much work light. Plus, you will be missed.

Questions or concerns please feel free to contact me (Michelle Molloy) 208-627-9947.

I can't wait to see you there. Always with love Michelle Molloy

House / Duplex needed ASAP for Sebastian and Sorrelle - Reader Sebastian and Sorelle Horton have exactly two weeks to move into a new home. Their one year lease is up on May 31st, and the owners have other plans for the home. Every promising lead they have found thus far, turns up taken at the last moment. If anyone in the parish knows of any house or duplex in the area with a minimum of 2 bedrooms and 1.5 bathrooms, they would be grateful if you would contact them right away. Sorelle is pregnant and due in September, so, with a family of four, the more space they have the better. They have excellent credit and a maximum budget of \$1100/month. As always, your prayers for the Hortons are welcome and encouraged! If you have any leads or questions, please contact Sebastian at 208-627-8866 or via email at: all_that_is_tennis@yahoo.com

SCHEDULE OF SERVICES & EVENTS

Saturday, May 19: St. John-Beautification Work Day 10:00am; Seeker's class 4:30pm; Great Vespers at St. John's 6:00pm

Sunday, May 20: Fathers of the First Ecumenical Council - Orthros 9:00am, Divine Liturgy 10:00am, Sunday School and Lunch following

Monday, May 21: Youth Swing: 7:00pm

Wednesday, May 23: Vespers 6:00pm

Thursday, May 24: Just for Kix 6:00pm

Friday, May 25: Spiritual Circle 9:30am

Saturday, May 26: St. John-Beautification Work Day 10:00am; Seeker's class 4:30pm; Great Vespers w/Missions talk from Fr. Chris at St. John's 6:00pm

Sunday, May 27: +PENTECOST - Orthros 9:00am, Divine Liturgy 10:00am, Sunday School and Lunch following

EPISTLE READERS

May 20 Reader David Gencarella

June 3 Reader Mark Fellegy

May 27 Tabitha Townsend

June 10 Reader Sebastian Horton

LUNCH TEAM

May 20: Team 3: Joy Corey, Tecca family, Roth family, Gencerella family & Knoles family

May 27: Team 4: Mannion family, Nicky Nolan and Jack, Photios & Walden family

June 3 Team 1: Schaefer family, Gallatin family & Phillips family.

June 10: Team 2: Purviance family, Bardwell family, Jenny Dancy & Sandford family

CLEANING ROTATION (nave, narthex, hallway and upstairs restrooms)

Week of 5/20 Jeanne Rickert

Week of 6/3 Dn. Joseph & Susan Mannion

Week of 5/27 Mary Jo Neyman

Week of 1/10 Joy Corey

PRAYERS FOR THE LIVING: Doug (friend of Jenny Dancy), Nicky Nolan, David Basaraba, Kerry (Mechele-Piama Holmen's brother), Barbara Garbinski, Kh. Joanna Townsend, Dale Ayoub, Kandi, the mother of Joy's grandson, John, Cindy (Tiffani Gallatin's mom), Marina (Jeane Wood's mother), Chad Solsvik (friend and neighbor of Schaefer's), Shirley Myers, Kaitlin Weisman, Helen Odell, Barbara Schaefer, Metropolitan Paul Yazigi and Metropolitan Youhanna Ibrahim (hostages in Syria), Suffering Christians throughout the Middle East

PRAYERS FOR THE DEPARTED: George (Joseph) Nolan, Evelyn Pippy, Victims of Abortion, Departed Christians throughout the world who have died for their Faith.



A Note Regarding Holy Communion

Since we understand Communion to mean that we have all things in common, sharing an identical Faith, only those who are members of the Orthodox Church who have prepared themselves through prayer, fasting and recent confession may participate in Holy Communion. (We invite all, however, to partake of the blessed bread which is distributed at the dismissal.) Please see the pastor for inquiries on how to become a member.