

# Saints Peter and Paul Orthodox Church

Albanian Archdiocese - OCA

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SUNDAY, MAY 14

5th Sunday of Pascha

Sunday of the Samaritan Woman

**Tone 4  
Troparion  
(Resurrection)**

*When the women disciples of the Lord  
learned from the angel the joyous message of Thy  
Resurrection,  
they cast away the ancestral curse  
and elatedly told the apostles:  
“Death is overthrown!  
Christ God is risen,  
granting the world great mercy!”*

**Tone 8  
Troparion  
(Midfeast)**

*In the middle of the feast, O Savior,  
fill my thirsting soul with the waters of piety, as  
Thou didst cry to all:  
“If anyone thirst, let him come to Me and drink!”  
O Christ God, Fountain of our life, glory to Thee!*

**Tone 8  
Kontakion  
(Pentecostarion)**

*The Samaritan Woman came to the well in faith;  
she saw Thee, the Water of wisdom and drank  
abundantly.  
She inherited the Kingdom on high, and is ever  
glorified!*

**Tone 3  
Kontakion  
(Midfeast)**

*Christ God, the Creator and Master of all,  
cried to all in the midst of the feast of the Law:  
“Come and draw the water of immortality!”  
We fall before Thee and faithfully cry:  
“Grant us Thy mercies, for Thou art the Fountain  
of our life!”*

✠ Prokeimenon ✠

**Tone 3 (Pentecostarion)**

Sing praises to our God, sing praises! / Sing praises to our King, sing praises! (Ps. 46:6)

V. Clap your hands, all peoples! Shout to God with loud songs of joy! (Ps. 46:1)



## The Epistle Reading

### **Acts 11:19-26, 29-30**

Now those who were scattered after the persecution that arose over Stephen traveled as far as Phoenicia, Cyprus, and Antioch, preaching the word to no one but the Jews only. But some of them were men from Cyprus and Cyrene, who, when they had come to Antioch, spoke to the Hellenists, preaching the Lord Jesus. And the hand of the Lord was with them, and a great number believed and turned to the Lord. Then news of these things came to the ears of the church in Jerusalem, and they sent out Barnabas to go as far as Antioch. When he came and had seen the grace of God, he was glad, and encouraged them all that with purpose of heart they should continue with the Lord. For he was a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and of faith. And a great many people were added to the Lord. Then Barnabas departed for Tarsus to seek Saul. And when he had found him, he brought him to Antioch. So it was that for a whole year they assembled with the church and taught a great many people. And the disciples were first called Christians in Antioch. Then the disciples, each according to his ability, determined to send relief to the brethren dwelling in Judea. This they also did, and sent it to the elders by the hands of Barnabas and Saul.

### **Veprat e Apostujve 11:19-26, 29-30**

Ata pra që u shpërndanë nga përndjekja që u bë për Stefanin shkuan deri në Finikë e në Qipro e në Antioki, edhe asnjëri s'ia predikonin fjalën, veç vetëm Judenjve. Edhe disa nga ata ishin njerëz Qipriotë e Qireneas, të cilët, si hynë në Antioki, u flisnin Greqishtarëve, duke dhënë lajmin e mirë për Zotin Jisu. Edhe dora e Zotit ishte bashkë me ta; dhe një numër i madh besuan, e u kthyen në Zotin. Atëherë fjala për ata u dëgjua në veshët e kishës që ishte në Jerusalem; edhe dërguan Varnavën të shkojë deri në Antioki. Ai, si erdhi dhe pa hirin e Perëndisë, u gëzua dhe i nxiste të gjithë të qëndronin me dëshirë zemre në Zotin, sepse ishte njeri i mirë dhe plot me Frymë të Shenjtë e me besim. Edhe u shtua mjaft popull në Zotin. Atëherë Varnava doli në Tars, për të kërkuar Saulin; edhe si e gjeti, e pruri në Antioki. Edhe një vit të tërë mblidheshin në kishë dhe mësuan mjaft njerëz; edhe nxënësit në Antioki për të parën herë u quajtën të Krishterë. Prandaj nxënësit vendosën që gjithsecili nga ata, sipas gjendjes së tij, t'u dërgojnë ndihmë vëllezërve që rrinin në Jude, gjë të cilën edhe e bënë, duke ua dërguar pleqve me dorën e Varnavës e të Saulit.

### **Деяния 11:19-26, 29-30**

Между тем рассеявшиеся от гонения, бывшего после Стефана, прошли до Финикии и Кипра и Антиохии, никому не проповедуя слово, кроме Иудеев. Были же некоторые из них Кипряне и Киринейцы, которые, придя в Антиохию, говорили Еллинам, благовествуя Господа Иисуса. И была рука Господня с ними, и великое число, уверовав, обратилось к Господу. Дошел слух о сем до церкви Иерусалимской, и поручили Варнаве идти в Антиохию. Он, прибыв и увидев благодать Божию, возрадовался и убеждал всех держаться Господа искренним сердцем; ибо он был муж добрый и исполненный Духа Святого и веры. И приложилось довольно народа к Господу. Потом Варнава пошел в Тарс искать Савла и, найдя его, привел в Антиохию. Целый год собирались они в церкви и учили немалое число людей, и ученики в Антиохии в первый раз стали называться Христианами. Тогда ученики положили, каждый по достатку своему, послать пособие братьям, живущим в Иудее, что и сделали, послав [собранное] к пресвитерам через Варнаву и Савла.

### **Tone 4**

Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

V. Go forth, prosper and reign, for the sake of meekness, righteousness and truth! *(Ps. 44:3b)*

V. For Thou lovest righteousness, and hatest iniquity. *(Ps. 44:6)*



**John 4:5-42**

So He came to a city of Samaria which is called Sychar, near the plot of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph. Now Jacob's well was there. Jesus therefore, being wearied from His journey, sat thus by the well. It was about the sixth hour. A woman of Samaria came to draw water. Jesus said to her, "Give Me a drink." For His disciples had gone away into the city to buy food. Then the woman of Samaria said to Him, "How is it that You, being a Jew, ask a drink from me, a Samaritan woman?" For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans. Jesus answered and said to her, "If you knew the gift of God, and who it is who says to you, 'Give Me a drink,' you would have asked Him, and He would have given you living water." The woman said to Him, "Sir, You have nothing to draw with, and the well is deep. Where then do You get that living water? Are You greater than our father Jacob, who gave us the well, and drank from it himself, as well as his sons and his livestock?" Jesus answered and said to her, "Whoever drinks of this water will thirst again, but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst. But the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life." The woman said to Him, "Sir, give me this water, that I may not thirst, nor come here to draw." Jesus said to her, "Go, call your husband, and come here." The woman answered and said, "I have no husband." Jesus said to her, "You have well said, 'I have no husband,' for you have had five husbands, and the one whom you now have is not your husband; in that you spoke truly." The woman said to Him, "Sir, I perceive that You are a prophet. Our fathers worshiped on this mountain, and you Jews say that in Jerusalem is the place where one ought to worship." Jesus said to her, "Woman, believe Me, the hour is coming when you will neither on this mountain, nor in Jerusalem, worship the Father. You worship what you do not know; we know what we worship, for salvation is of the Jews. But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him. God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth." The woman said to Him, "I know that Messiah is coming" (who is called Christ). "When He comes, He will tell us all things." Jesus said to her, "I who speak to you am He." And at this point His disciples came, and they marveled that He talked with a woman; yet no one said, "What do You seek?" or, "Why are You talking with her?" The woman then left her waterpot, went her way into the city, and said to the men, Come, see a Man who told me all things that I ever did. Could this be the Christ? Then they went out of the city and came to Him. In the meantime His disciples urged Him, saying, "Rabbi, eat." But He said to them, "I have food to eat of which you do not know." Therefore the disciples said to one another, "Has anyone brought Him anything to eat?" Jesus said to them, "My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me, and to finish His work. Do you not say, 'There are still four months and then comes the harvest'? Behold, I say to you, lift up your eyes and look at the fields, for they are already white for harvest! And he who reaps receives wages, and gathers fruit for eternal life, that both he who sows and he who reaps may rejoice together. For in this the saying is true: 'One sows and another reaps.' I sent you to reap that for which you have not labored; others have labored, and you have entered into their labors." And many of the Samaritans of that city believed in Him because of the word of the woman who testified, "He told me all that I ever did." So when the Samaritans had come to Him, they urged Him to stay with them; and He stayed there two days. And many more believed because of His own word. Then they said to the woman, "Now we believe, not because of what you said, for we ourselves have heard Him and we know that this is indeed the Christ, the Savior of the world."

**Joanit 4:5-42**

Vjen pra në një qytet të Samarisë që quhet Sihar, afër vendit që i dha Jakovi Josifit, birit të tij. Edhe atje ishte një pus i Jakovit. Jisui pra, pasi ishte i lodhur nga rruga, ishte ulur kështu pranë pusit. Ora ishte rreth së gjashtës. Vjen një grua nga Samaria të nxjerrë ujë. Jisui i thotë asaj: Jepmë të pi. Sepse nxënësit e tij kishin shkuar në qytet për të blerë ushqime. I thotë pra atij gruaja samaritane: Si ti, duke qenë Jude, kërkon të pish prej meje, që jam një grua samaritane? Sepse Judenjtë nuk shkojnë me Samaritanët. Jisui u përgjigj e i tha asaj: Po të dije dhuratën e Perëndisë, edhe cili është ai që të thotë: Jepmë të pi, ti do të kërkoje prej tij, edhe ai do të të jepte ty ujë të gjallë. Gruaja i thotë: Zot, as kovë nuk ke, edhe pusi është i thellë; nga e ke ti pra ujin e gjallë? Mos je ti më i madh se ati ynë Jakov, i cili na ka dhënë pusin, edhe vetë ai piu nga ky, edhe të bijtë e tij, edhe bagëtitë e tij? Jisui u përgjigj e i tha asaj: Kushdo që pi nga ky ujë, do të ketë etje përsëri. Por ai që pi nga uji që do t'i jap unë, nuk do të ketë etje për jetë; por uji, që do

t'i jap unë, do t'i bëhet burim uji që gufon në jetë të përjetshme. Gruaja i thotë: Zot, jepmë këtë ujë që të mos kem etje, as të mos vij këtu të nxjerr ujë. Jisui i thotë asaj: Shko, thirr burrin tënd, dhe eja këtu. Gruaja u përgjigj e tha: S'kam burrë. Jisui i tha asaj: Mirë the se s'kam burrë. Sepse kishe pesë burra, edhe ai që ke tani, nuk është burri yt; këtë e the të vërtetë. Gruaja i thotë: Zot, po shoh se ti je profet. Etërit tanë në këtë mal u falën, e ju thoni se në Jerusalem është vendi, ku duhet falur. Jisui i thotë asaj: Grua, besomë se vjen një orë, kur nuk do t'i faleni Atit as në këtë mal, as në Jerusalem. Ju i faleni atij që nuk dini, ne i falemi atij që dimë; sepse shpëtimi është nga judenjtë. Por vjen një orë, edhe tani është, kur falësit e vërtetë do t'i falen Atit në frymë e në të vërtetë; sepse Ati të tillë i kërkon ata që i falen atij. Perëndia është frymë, dhe ata që i falen duhet të falen në frymë e në të vërtetë. Gruaja i thotë: E di se vjen Mesia, ai që quhet Krisht; kur të vijë ai, do të na tregojë për të gjitha. Jisui i thotë asaj: Unë që po të flas jam ai. Edhe në këtë çast erdhën nxënësit e tij, dhe u çuditën se fliste me një grua; po asnjë s'tha: Ç'kërkon? apo: Ç'flet me të? Gruaja pra la shtambën e saj dhe shkoi në qytet: edhe u thotë njerëzve: Ejani shihni një njeri, që më tha gjithë sa kam bërë. Vallë, mos është ky Krishti? Dolën pra nga qyteti, dhe po vinin tek ai. Edhe ndërkohë nxënësit i luteshin, duke thënë: Rabbi, ha. Po ai u tha atyre: Unë kam një ushqim për të ngrënë, që ju nuk e dini. Nxënësit pra i thoshin njëri-tjetrit: Mos i pruri njeri të hajë? Jisui u thotë atyre: Ushqimi im është të bëj dëshirën e atij që më ka dërguar, edhe të mbaroj punën e tij. Nuk thoni ju se janë edhe katër muaj dhe vijnë të korrat? Ja tek po ju them juve, ngrini përplotë sytë tuaj, edhe shihni arat se janë tashmë të bardha për t'u korrur. Edhe ai që korr merr pagë, edhe mbledh fryt për jetë të përjetshme, që të gëzohen bashkë edhe ai që mbjell edhe ai që korr. Sepse për këtë e vërtetë është fjala, se tjetër është ai që mbjell, edhe tjetër ai që korr. Unë ju dërgova ju të korrni atë për të cilën ju s'jeni munduar; të tjerë u munduan, edhe ju hytë në mundimin e tyre. Edhe prej atij qyteti shumë nga samaritanët besuan tek ai për fjalën e gruas që dëshmoi se më tha gjithë sa kam bërë. Samaritanët pra, si erdhën tek ai, i luteshin të rrijë pranë tyre. Edhe qëndroi atje dy ditë. Edhe shumë më tepër njerëz besuan për fjalën e tij. Edhe gruas i thoshin se nuk besojmë më për fjalën tënde; se ne e dëgjuaam dhe e njohëm se ky është me të vërtetë Shpëtimtari i botës, Krishti.

#### **От Иоанна 4:5-42**

Итак приходит Он в город Самарийский, называемый Сихарь, близ участка земли, данного Иаковом сыну своему Иосифу. Там был колодезь Иаковлев. Иисус, утрудившись от пути, сел у колодезя. Было около шестого часа. Приходит женщина из Самарии почерпнуть воды. Иисус говорит ей: дай Мне пить. Ибо ученики Его отлучились в город купить пищи. Женщина Самарянская говорит Ему: как ты, будучи Иудей, просишь пить у меня, Самарянки? ибо Иудеи с Самарянами не сообщаются. Иисус сказал ей в ответ: если бы ты знала дар Божий и Кто говорит тебе: дай Мне пить, то ты сама просила бы у Него, и Он дал бы тебе воду живую. Женщина говорит Ему: господин! тебе и почерпнуть нечем, а колодезь глубок; откуда же у тебя вода живая? Неужели ты больше отца нашего Иакова, который дал нам этот колодезь и сам из него пил, и дети его, и скот его? Иисус сказал ей в ответ: всякий, пьющий воду сию, возраждет опять, а кто будет пить воду, которую Я дам ему, тот не будет жаждать вовек; но вода, которую Я дам ему, сделается в нем источником воды, текущей в жизнь вечную. Женщина говорит Ему: господин! дай мне этой воды, чтобы мне не иметь жажды и не приходиться сюда черпать. Иисус говорит ей: пойди, позови мужа твоего и приди сюда. Женщина сказала в ответ: у меня нет мужа. Иисус говорит ей: правду ты сказала, что у тебя нет мужа, ибо у тебя было пять мужей, и тот, которого ныне имеешь, не муж тебе; это справедливо ты сказала. Женщина говорит Ему: Господи! вижу, что Ты пророк. Отцы наши поклонялись на этой горе, а вы говорите, что место, где должно поклоняться, находится в Иерусалиме. Иисус говорит ей: поверь Мне, что наступает время, когда и не на горе сей, и не в Иерусалиме будете поклоняться Отцу. Вы не знаете, чему кланяетесь, а мы знаем, чему кланяемся, ибо спасение от Иудеев. Но настанет время и настало уже, когда истинные поклонники будут поклоняться Отцу в духе и истине, ибо таких поклонников Отец ищет Себе. Бог есть дух, и поклоняющиеся Ему должны поклоняться в духе и истине. Женщина говорит Ему: знаю, что придет Мессия, то есть Христос; когда Он придет, то возвестит нам все. Иисус говорит ей: это Я, Который говорю с тобою. В это время пришли ученики Его, и удивились, что Он разговаривал с женщиною; однакож ни один не сказал: чего Ты требуешь? или: о чем говоришь с нею? Тогда женщина

оставила водонос свой и пошла в город, и говорит людям: пойдите, посмотрите Человека, Который сказал мне все, что я сделала: не Он ли Христос? Они вышли из города и пошли к Нему. Между тем ученики просили Его, говоря: Равви! Ешь. Но Он сказал им: у Меня есть пища, которой вы не знаете. Посему ученики говорили между собою: разве кто принес Ему есть? Иисус говорит им: Моя пища есть творить волю Пославшего Меня и совершить дело Его. Не говорите ли вы, что еще четыре месяца, и наступит жатва? А Я говорю вам: возведите очи ваши и посмотрите на нивы, как они побелели и спели к жатве. Жнущий получает награду и собирает плод в жизнь вечную, так что и сеющий и жнущий вместе радоваться будут, ибо в этом случае справедливо изречение: один сеет, а другой жнет. Я послал вас жать то, над чем вы не трудились: другие трудились, а вы вошли в труд их. И многие Самаряне из города того уверовали в Него по слову женщины, свидетельствовавшей, что Он сказал ей все, что она сделала. И потому, когда пришли к Нему Самаряне, то просили Его побыть у них; и Он пробыл там два дня. И еще большее число уверовали по Его слову. А женщине той говорили: уже не по твоим речам веруем, ибо сами слышали и узнали, что Он истинно Спаситель мира, Христос.

*(Instead of "It is truly meet...", we sing the following)*

The Angel cried to the Lady, full of grace:  
"Rejoice, O pure Virgin! Again, I say: Rejoice,  
thy Son is risen from His three days in the tomb!  
With Himself He has raised all the dead."  
Rejoice, O ye people!

Shine, shine, O new Jerusalem!  
The glory of the Lord has shone on thee.  
Exult now, and be glad, O Zion!  
Be radiant, O pure Theotokos,  
in the Resurrection of thy Son!

### Communion Hymn

Receive the Body of Christ; taste the fountain of immortality!  
Praise the Lord from the heavens, praise Him in the highest! *(Ps. 148:1)*  
Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

## Sunday of the Samaritan Woman

The Holy Martyr Photina (Svetlana) the Samaritan Woman, her sons Victor (named Photinus) and Joses; and her sisters Anatola, Phota, Photis, Paraskev , Kyriake; Nero's daughter Domnina; and the Martyr Sebastian: The holy Martyr Photina was the Samaritan Woman, with whom the Savior conversed at Jacob's Well (John. 4:5-42).

During the time of the emperor Nero (54-68), who displayed excessive cruelty against Christians, Saint Photina lived in Carthage with her younger son Joses and fearlessly preached the Gospel there. Her eldest son Victor fought bravely in the Roman army against barbarians, and was appointed military commander in the city of Attalia (Asia Minor). Later, Nero called him to Italy to arrest and punish Christians.

Sebastian, an official in Italy, said to Saint Victor, "I know that you, your mother and your brother, are followers of Christ. As a friend I advise you to submit to the will of the emperor. If you inform on any Christians, you

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PRAYERS	Birthdays, Names-days, & Anniversaries	SCRIPTURE THIS WEEK
<i>For Those Who Have Fallen Asleep</i>		<b>Church Lectionary</b>
<p>Newly Departed Margaret, Newly Departed David, Newly departed Miles</p> <p><i>[To be inserted after the petition for the departed]</i>            Again we pray for those who have lost their lives because of the war in Ukraine: that the Lord our God may look upon them with mercy, and give them rest where there is neither sickness, or sorrow, but life everlasting.</p>	<p>May 7 - 13 Lana Burgos (B)</p> <p><b><u>Seven-Day Vigil Candles</u></b></p> <p>Seven-Day Vigil Candles are used for the Eternal Light that hangs above the Royal Doors and are often placed in front of the icons of Christ or the Birth-giver of God. If you would like to donate a Seven-Day Vigil Candle, Please include the name or names of those for whom the candle is donated, and we will place them in this section for special prayers.</p>	<p><u>Today</u> Acts 11:19-26, 29-30 John 4:5-42</p> <p><u>Monday</u> Acts 12:12-17 John 8:42-51</p> <p><u>Tuesday</u> Acts 12:25-13:12 John 8:51-59</p> <p><u>Wednesday</u> Acts 13:13-24 John 6:5-14</p> <p><u>Thursday</u> Acts 14:20-27 John 9:39-10:9</p>
<i>For Those Who Are Sick And Home-bound</i>		
<p>Virginia, Denise, Olvian, Marie, James, Alexandra, Andrew, Christina, Louise, Porter, Alvin, Tracy, Kathy, Andrew, Maria, Helen, John, Tom, Nina, Sophia, Jim, Spresha, Kristin, Niko, Spiro, Angjeliki, Melod, Olgay, Ruth, Fr. Milorad, Naomi, Terry, Naomi, Annette, Tatiana, Aleena, Lester Jr., Luke and his family, Natalia, Otari, Lasha</p>		
<i>Prayers In General</i>		
<p>Fr. Dennis and his family, Fr. Ioan, Christian, Michael, Erica, Kaida, DuDash family, Michael, Robert, Ally, Steve, Jake and Amanda and their children, Katherine, Ron, Anthony, Volodymyr, Nick, Sophia, Michael, Rafael, Bob, Barbara, Juliya and the child born of her, Ansley and the child to be born of her, Sandra, Enoch, John, Victoria, Melenie, Grace, Michael, Barbara, Giorgi, Molly, Jim, Chloe</p> <p><i>[To be inserted after the petition for the living]</i>            Again we pray for mercy, life, peace, health, salvation, for those who are suffering, wounded, grieving, or displaced because of the war in Ukraine.</p> <p><i>[Petitions at Augmented Litany]</i>            Again we pray for a cessation of the hostilities against Ukraine, and that reconciliation and peace will flourish there, we pray thee, hearken and have mercy.</p> <p>We give thanks to You, O Lord our God, Who in Your mercy and providential care, has called forth Archimandrite NIKODHIM to become a shepherd of wisdom and strength for our Albanian Archdiocese. We ask that You Bless Father NIKODHIM as he readies himself to become our future archpastor so he may:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• care for our spiritual well-being,</li> <li>• unite us in a zealous confession of our holy faith,</li> <li>• commit us in loving service to one another in bright witness to the glory of Your holy Name.</li> </ul> <p>Hear us and have mercy.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>COFFEE HOUR</b></p> <p><b><u>May</u></b> 14 – Dellermann Family 21 – 28 – Pat Lane</p> <p><b><u>June</u></b> 04 11 18 25</p> <p>Coffee Hour is a wonderful chance for us to get together to break bread and spend time with each other, to celebrate those whom we have held memorials for, and to come together as the family of God outside of worship. To sign up, to host a coffee hour, contact Fr. Nicholas or Donna Bacon.</p>	<p><u>Friday</u> Acts 15:5-34 John 10:17-28</p> <p><u>Saturday</u> Acts 15:35-41 John 10:27-38</p> <p><b><u>Reading the Bible in a Year</u></b></p> <p>May 14: Psalms 61-64 May 15: Psalms 65-68 May 16: Psalms 69-72 May 17: Psalms 73-76 May 18: Psalms 77-80 May 19: Psalms 81-84 May 20: Psalms 85-88</p>

## Are You In The Light?

May 8, 2023 · Fr. Barnabas Powell

Christ is risen!

We've heard so much about "light" and "darkness" and stories of people having near-death experiences and seeing a "light" at the end of a tunnel and being drawn to that "light." And not to mention the common fear of children of the dark, the popularity of "night lights" (we even have a night light that has a "stained glass" version of an icon of the Theotokos in our daughter's room). We, humans, like to see where we are going! We are not big fans of being "in the dark!"



And that really isn't a complicated notion at all, is it? No one likes to hit their shin on the corner of the coffee table in the middle of the night.

Well, if that's true of my physical life, it shouldn't surprise anyone that this is even more true in my spiritual life. All of this is together! Stumbling into confused spiritual darkness has even more serious complications and consequences than even the dangers of physical darkness.

In our Scripture Lesson today, the Apostle John writes about this very truth. Look at our lesson in I John 1:1-7:

*THAT WHICH WAS from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon and touched with our hands, concerning the word of life – the life was made manifest, and we saw it, and testify to it, and proclaim to you the eternal life which was with the Father and was made manifest to us – that which we have seen and heard we proclaim also to you, so that you may have fellowship with us; and our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ. And we are writing this that our joy may be complete.*

*This is the message we have heard from him and proclaim to you, that God is light and in him is no darkness at all. If we say we have fellowship with him while we walk in darkness, we lie and do not live according to the truth; but if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin.*

God IS light and there IS NO darkness in Him. So, where you find spiritual darkness, you find persons who are either unaware of the Light God offers or have purposefully chosen to ignore the "light." In fact, if you say you are "in fellowship" (the Greek word is 'koinonia' pronounced 'keenoNEEa') and act like you are not informed by His light then you are not being truthful. By the way, you're not being untruthful to God; He knows you better than you know yourself. And, you're not usually being untruthful to those who are around you; we can tell you're not being honest. No, the person you're being untruthful to is yourself, and that's the biggest problem we humans have!

The Apostle goes on to say that being in God's light leads to "koinonia," communion, and fellowship with "one another" and here his meaning is two-fold. We have "koinonia" with God and we have "koinonia" with our brothers and sisters who also have "koinonia" with God. The Light allows true and honest communion both horizontally and vertically! The Light of God creates, allows, informs, educates, and strengthens honest, growing, and healthy relationships.

The "darkness" does just the opposite.

The story of St. Arsenios the Deacon provides a powerful example of being in the light even in physical darkness. St. Arsenios was a deacon in Rome in the 5th century and was the tutor to the sons of the Emperor. Being in the palace of the king had Arsenios surrounded with numerous temptations to sin and to be distracted from his one, true desire for salvation. Eventually, Arsenios left the palace to become a monk. During this time, one of the other monks passed by Arsenios' cell while he prayed and was astounded to see St. Arsenios appeared to be a single flame as he prayed. St. Arsenios would end his life as a complete recluse and those who visited him said his regular discipline was to turn his back on the setting sun at the end of the day and would not sit down and end his prayers until the sun, once again shone on his face the next day. He fell asleep in the Lord at the age of 95 in 449 AD. Filled with the light of piety and devotion, St. Arsenios was never confused by darkness because he was always in the Light!

So, today, are you in "the Light?" It isn't just a "lucky thing" that the highest season of our Christian Year, the season of Pascha, begins with the words "Come, receive the Light from the Light that is never overtaken by night, and glorify Christ Who is risen from the dead." Being in the light of the victory of Christ over the ultimate darkness of death is the absolutely only way to have a real, growing, and healthy relationship with God and with those around me. The darkness, and it's a defeated darkness at that, can only separate, make us more self-centered, and more unhealthy in our relationships. And the greatest tragedy of all that is that this result can only occur if I allow it. The Light always drives the darkness away. All I have to do is turn toward Him Who IS Light Himself! Do that today and watch as all your relationships start reflecting your growing relationship with God as you live in the light of a Normal Orthodox Life!

### **Prayer for the Week**

**With the rivers of your tears, you have made the barren desert fertile. Through sighs of sorrow from deep within you, your labors have borne fruit a hundred-fold. By your miracles you have become a light, shining upon the world. O Arsenios, our Holy Father, pray to Christ our God, to save our souls.**

<https://blogs.ancientfaith.com/faiithencouraged/2023/05/are-you-in-the-light/>

*Sunday of the Samaritan Woman Continued*

will receive their wealth. I shall write to your mother and brother, asking them not to preach Christ in public. Let them practice their faith in secret."

Saint Victor replied, "I want to be a preacher of Christianity like my mother and brother." Sebastian said, "O Victor, we all know what woes await you, your mother and brother." Then Sebastian suddenly felt a sharp pain in his eyes. He was dumbfounded, and his face was somber.

For three days he lay there blind, without uttering a word. On the fourth day he declared, "The God of the Christians is the only true God." Saint Victor asked why Sebastian had suddenly changed his mind. Sebastian replied, "Because Christ is calling me." Soon he was baptized, and immediately regained his sight. Saint Sebastian's servants, after witnessing the miracle, were also baptized.

Reports of this reached Nero, and he commanded that the Christians be brought to him at Rome. Then the Lord Himself appeared to the confessors and said, "Fear not, for I am with you. Nero, and all who serve him, will be vanquished." The Lord said to Saint Victor, "From this day forward, your name will be Photinus, because through you, many will be enlightened and will believe in Me." The Lord then told the Christians to strengthen and encourage Saint Sebastian to persevere until the end.



All these things, and even future events, were revealed to Saint Photina. She left Carthage in the company of several Christians and joined the confessors in Rome.

At Rome the emperor ordered the saints to be brought before him and he asked them whether they truly believed in Christ. All the confessors refused to renounce the Savior. Then the emperor gave orders to smash the martyrs' finger joints. During the torments, the confessors felt no pain, and their hands remained unharmed.

Nero ordered that Saints Sebastian, Photinus and Joses be blinded and locked up in prison, and Saint Photina and her five sisters Anatola, Phota, Photis, Paraskev  and Kyriake were sent to the imperial court under the supervision of Nero's daughter Domnina. Saint Photina converted both Domnina and all her servants to Christ. She also converted a sorcerer, who had brought her poisoned food to kill her.

Three years passed, and Nero sent to the prison for one of his servants, who had been locked up. The messengers reported to him that Saints Sebastian, Photinus and Joses, who had been blinded, had completely recovered, and that people were visiting them to hear their preaching, and indeed the whole prison had been transformed into a bright and fragrant place where God was glorified.

Nero then gave orders to crucify the saints, and to beat their naked bodies with straps. On the fourth day the emperor sent servants to see whether the martyrs were still alive. But, approaching the place of the tortures, the servants fell blind. An angel of the Lord freed the martyrs from their crosses and healed them. The saints took pity on the blinded servants, and restored their sight by their prayers to the Lord. Those who were healed came to believe in Christ and were soon baptized.

In an impotent rage Nero gave orders to flay the skin from Saint Photina and to throw the martyr down a well. Sebastian, Photinus and Joses had their legs cut off, and they were thrown to dogs, and then had their skin flayed off. The sisters of Saint Photina also suffered terrible torments. Nero gave orders to cut off their breasts and then to flay their skin. An expert in cruelty, the emperor readied the fiercest execution for Saint Photis: they tied her by the feet to the tops of two bent-over trees. When the ropes were cut the trees sprang upright and tore the martyr apart. The emperor ordered the others beheaded. Saint Photina was removed from the well and locked up in prison for twenty days.

After this Nero had her brought to him and asked if she would now relent and offer sacrifice to the idols. Saint Photina spit in the face of the emperor, and laughing at him, said, "O most impious of the blind, you profligate and stupid man! Do you think me so deluded that I would consent to renounce my Lord Christ and instead offer sacrifice to idols as blind as you?"

Hearing such words, Nero gave orders to again throw the martyr down the well, where she surrendered her soul to God (ca. 66).

On the Greek Calendar, Saint Photina is commemorated on February 26.



## The Danger of Proudful Self-Assurance

There is a minefield many do not notice, one that masquerades as the spiritual life. Academic theology, although it can be used in service to the Church, has also been the spiritual destruction of many. True theology comes from the mastery of prayer, and is not associated with academic pursuits. When theology becomes our philosophy we are no different than the pagans, and we give birth to pride, and self-assurance can become the minefield that brings about the destruction of our soul.

The true theologian is one who, through mastery of prayer, and the cultivation of humility, finds God noetically, in the heart. "The devil does not hunt after those who are lost; he hunts after those who are aware, those who are close to God. He takes from them trust in God and begins to afflict them with self-assurance, logic, thinking, criticism. Therefore we should not trust our logical minds. Never believe your thoughts (Elder Paisios of Mount Athos)."

Like the academic theologian, a monk who thinks himself an authority on monastic life, but who has not lived in obedience to an elder, knows nothing of monasticism. For it can not be studied from afar, but must be lived out in community, under obedience.

The acquisition of a humble and contrite heart are both at the heart of Orthodox monasticism and theology, without which one can know nothing. Saint John Chrysostom said in warning to those who would seek out the things of God without humility, "The path to hell is paved with the skulls of priests." No one, perhaps especially the clergy, are immune to the temptation to think they know the things of God, when in fact they know only the pride that has taken root in the academic pursuit of God. We must all guard our hearts, ripping away all traces of pride, for only then will we become true theologians. Theology without God, is but philosophy. Monasticism without ascetic struggle and obedience, is nothing but an alternative lifestyle.

With love in Christ,  
Abbot Tryphon

<https://abbottryphon.com/self-assurance/>

### May Events

#### May

- 14 – 10:00am Divine Liturgy  
1:30pm Blessing of the Graves  
(Magnolia)
- 17 – 7:15pm Bible Study via GoogleMeets
- 21 – 10:00am Divine Liturgy  
1:30pm Blessing of the Graves  
(Forrest Hills)
- 24 – 6:30pm Vespertal Liturgy *Feast of Ascension*
- 28 – 10:00am Divine Liturgy
- 29 – Blessing of the Graves  
(Fernwood)
- 31 – 7:15pm Bible Study via GoogleMeets

#### Can't join us in person?

We stream our services on our YouTube Channel:

<https://www.youtube.com/@sspeterpaulorthodoxchurchoi8io>



### St Paisios

(12 July)

"If you want to help the Church, it is better to try to correct yourself, rather than be looking to correct others. If you manage to correct yourself, one small part of the Church is immediately corrected. Naturally, if everyone did the same, the body of the Church would be in good health. But, today, people concern themselves with anything but themselves. You see, judging others is easy, whereas working on yourself takes effort."

SMG

