

# Saints Peter and Paul Orthodox Church

Albanian Archdiocese - OCA

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SUNDAY, JUNE 16

7th Sunday of Pascha

Holy Fathers of the First Ecumenical Council

Afterfeast of the Ascension

## **Tone 6 Troparion (Resurrection)**

*The Angelic Powers were at Thy tomb;  
the guards became as dead men.  
Mary stood by Thy grave,  
seeking Thy most pure body.  
Thou didst capture hell not being tempted by it.  
Thou didst come to the Virgin,  
granting life.  
O Lord, Who didst rise from the dead,  
glory to Thee.*

## **Tone 4 Troparion (Ascension)**

*Thou didst ascend in glory, O Christ our God,  
granting joy to Thy Disciples by the promise of the Holy Spirit.  
Through the blessing, they were assured  
that Thou art the Son of God,  
the Redeemer of the world!*

## **Tone 8 Troparion (Fathers)**

*Thou didst ascend in glory, O Christ our God,  
granting joy to Thy Disciples by the promise of the Holy Spirit.  
Through the blessing, they were assured  
that Thou art the Son of God,  
the Redeemer of the world!*

## **Tone 8 Kontakion (Fathers)**

*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 piety.*

## **Tone 6 Kontakion (Ascension)**

*When Thou hadst fulfilled the dispensation for our sake,  
and united earth to heaven,  
Thou didst ascend in glory, O Christ our God,  
not being parted from those who love Thee,  
but remaining with them and crying:  
"I am with you, and there is no one against you!"*

## **↻ Prokeimenon ↻**

### **Tone 3 (Song of the Three Holy Children)**

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)*

V. For Thou art just in all that Thou hast done for us! *(v. 4)*

## The Epistle Reading

### **The reading is from Acts of the Apostles 20:16-18, 28-36**

IN THOSE DAYS, Paul had decided to sail past Ephesos, 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 Miletos he sent to Ephesos 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 every one 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.

### **Veprat E Apostujve 20:16-18, 28-36**

Sepse Pavli e kishte parë të udhës të lundrojë anash Efesit, që të mos e humbte kohën në Azi; sepse nxitonte, në ishte e mundur për të, ditën e Pendikostisë të gjendet në Jerusalem. Edhe prej Militës dërgoi në Efes e thirri pleqtë e kishës. Edhe kur këta erdhën tek ai, u tha atyre: Ju e dini që ditën e parë që shkela në Azi se si e shkova gjithë kohën bashkë me ju, Kini pra kujdes për veten tuaj dhe për gjithë tufën, mbi të cilën Fryma e Shenjtë ju vuri ju kujdestarë, që të kullotni kishën e Perëndisë, të cilën e fitoi me gjakun e tij. Sepse unë e di këtë, se pas ikjes sime kanë për të hyrë tek ju ujqër të këqij, të cilët s'kanë për ta kursyer tufën. Edhe prej jush vetë do të ngrihen njerëz duke folur gjëra të shtrembra, që të tërheqin nxënësit pas vetes së tyre. Prandaj rrini zgjuar e sillni ndër mend se tre vjet natë e ditë s'pushova duke këshilluar me lot gjithsecilin. Edhe tani, o vëllezër, ju lë juve në Perëndinë, edhe në fjalën e hirit të tij, i cili mund t'ju ndërtojë e t'ju japë juve trashëgim në mes të gjithë të shenjtëruarve. Argjend ose ar, ose rrobë të askujt nuk dëshirova. Edhe ju vetë e dini se këto duart e mia kanë punuar për nevojat e mia dhe për ata që ishin bashkë me mua. Me çdo mënyrë ju tregova juve se kështu duke u munduar duhet t'u ndihmoni të pafuqishmëve, edhe të kujtoni fjalët e Zotit Jisu, se ai vetë tha: "Lumturi më e madhe është të japë njeriu se të marrë". Edhe si tha këto, u ul në gjunjë e u fal bashkë me ata të gjithë.

### **Деяния 20:16-18, 28-36**

ибо Павлу рассудилось миновать Ефес, чтобы не замедлить ему в Азии; потому что он поспешал, если можно, в день Пятидесятницы быть в Иерусалиме. Из Милита же послав в Ефес, он призвал пресвитеров церкви, и, когда они пришли к нему, он сказал им: вы знаете, как я с первого дня, в который пришел в Асию, все время был с вами, Итак внимайте себе и всему стаду, в котором Дух Святой поставил вас блюстителями, пасти Церковь Господа и Бога, которую Он приобрел Себе Кровию Своею. Ибо я знаю, что, по отшествию моем, войдут к вам лютые волки, не щадящие стада; и из вас самих восстанут люди, которые будут говорить превратно, дабы увлечь учеников за собою. Посему бодрствуйте, памятуя, что я три года день и ночь непрестанно со слезами учил каждого из вас. И ныне предаю вас, братия, Богу и слову благодати Его, могущему назидать [вас] более и дать вам наследие со всеми освященными. Ни серебра, ни золота, ни одежды я ни от кого не пожелал: сами знаете, что нуждам моим и [нуждам] бывших при мне послужили руки мои сии. Во всем показал я вам, что, так трудясь, надобно поддерживать слабых и памятовать слова Господа Иисуса, ибо Он Сам сказал: 'блаженнее давать, нежели принимать'. Сказав это, он преклонил колени свои и со всеми ими помолился.

### **Tone 1**

Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

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

V. Gather to Me My venerable ones, who made a covenant with Me by sacrifice! (Ps. 49:6)

## ✠ The Gospel Reading ✠

### **The Gospel According to John 17:1-13**

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

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

### **Ungjilli Sipas Joanit 17:1-13**

Këto foli Jisui; pastaj ngriti sytë e tij në qiell e tha: Atë, erdhi ora, lavdëro Birin tënd, që të të lavdërojë edhe yt Bir, siç i dhe pushtet mbi çdo mish, që t'u japë jetë të përjetshme gjithë atyre që ia ke dhënë. Dhe kjo është jeta e përjetshme, që të të njohin ty të vetmin Perëndi të vërtetë; edhe Jisu Krishtin që dërgove. Unë të lavdërova mbi dhe, punën që më dhe të bëj e mbarova. Edhe tani lavdëromë ti, o Atë, pranë teje, me lavdinë që pata pranë teje para se të ishte bota. Emrin tënd ua zbulova njerëzve që më dhe prej botës. Të tutë ishin e m'i dhe, dhe fjalën tënde e ruajtën. Tani e njohën se gjithë sa më ke dhënë janë prej teje. Sepse fjalët që më dhe, ua dhashë atyre; edhe ata i morën dhe e njohën me të vërtetë se prej teje dola; edhe besuan se ti më dërgove. Unë lutem për ata; nuk lutem për botën, po për ata që më dhe, sepse janë të tutë. Edhe gjithë të miat janë të tuat, edhe të tuat janë të miat; edhe u lavdërova në to. Edhe nuk jam më në botë, po këta janë në botë, edhe unë po vij tek ti. Atë i shenjtë, ruaji në emrin tënd ata që më dhe, që të jenë një si ne. Kur isha bashkë me ata në botë, unë i ruaja në emrin tënd; ata që më dhe i ruajta, edhe asnjë nga ata s'humbi, veç i biri i humbjes, që të përmbushet Shkrimi. Edhe tani po vij tek ti, edhe i flas këto në botë, që ta kenë gëzimin tim të plotë në veten e tyre.

### **От Иоанна 17:1-13**

После сих слов Иисус возвел очи Свои на небо и сказал: Отче! пришел час, прославь Сына Твоего, да и Сын Твой прославит Тебя, так как Ты дал Ему власть над всякою плотью, да всему, что Ты дал Ему, даст Он жизнь вечную. Сия же есть жизнь вечная, да знают Тебя, единого истинного Бога, и посланного Тобою Иисуса Христа. Я прославил Тебя на земле, совершил дело, которое Ты поручил Мне исполнить. И ныне прославь Меня Ты, Отче, у Тебя Самого славою, которую Я имел у Тебя прежде бытия мира. Я открыл имя Твое человекам, которых Ты дал Мне от мира; они были Твои, и Ты дал их Мне, и они сохранили слово Твое. Ныне уразумели они, что все, что Ты дал Мне, от Тебя есть, ибо слова, которые Ты дал Мне, Я передал им, и они приняли, и уразумели истинно, что Я исшел от Тебя, и уверовали, что Ты послал Меня. Я о них молю: не о всем мире молю, но о тех, которых Ты дал Мне, потому что они Твои. И все Мое Твое, и Твое Мое; и Я прославился в них. Я уже не в мире, но они в мире, а Я к Тебе иду. Отче Святыи! соблюди их во имя Твое, [тех], которых Ты Мне дал, чтобы они были едино, как и Мы. Когда Я был с ними в мире, Я соблюдал их во имя Твое; тех, которых Ты дал Мне, Я сохранил, и никто из них не погиб, кроме сына погибели, да сбудется Писание. Ныне же к Тебе иду, и сие говорю в мире, чтобы они имели в себе радость Мою совершенную.



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

*Magnify, O my soul, Christ the Giver of Life, Who hath ascended from earth to heaven!*

*We the faithful, with one accord, magnify thee, the Mother of God, who, beyond reason and understanding, ineffably gave birth in time to the Timeless One.*

### **Communion Hymn**

Praise the Lord from the heavens, praise Him in the highest! *(Ps. 148:1)*

Rejoice in the Lord, O you righteous; praise befits the just! *(Ps. 32:1)*

Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

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

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

The Commemoration of the First Ecumenical Council has been celebrated by the Church of Christ from ancient times. The Lord Jesus Christ left the Church a great promise, "I will build My Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it" (Mt. 16:18). Although the Church of Christ on earth will pass through difficult struggles with the Enemy of salvation, it will emerge victorious. The holy martyrs bore witness to the truth of the Savior's words, enduring suffering and death for confessing Christ, but the persecutor's sword is shattered by the Cross of Christ. Persecution of Christians ceased during the fourth century, but heresies arose within the Church itself. One of the most pernicious of these heresies was Arianism. Arius, a priest of Alexandria, was a man of immense pride and ambition. In denying the divine nature of Jesus Christ and His equality with God the Father, Arius falsely taught that the Savior is not consubstantial with the Father, but is only a created being.

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

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

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

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

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

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

*Continued on page 7*

PRAYERS	Birthdays, Names-days, & Anniversaries	SCRIPTURE THIS WEEK
<p style="text-align: center;"><i>For Those Who Have Fallen Asleep</i></p>		
<p>Newly Departed Martin, Newly Departed Tom, Newly Departed Archpriest John</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 conflicts in Ukraine, Armenia, and the Middle East: 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>Marena Rubis – B Kyprian Dellermann – B Nick Desloges - B</p> <p><b><u>Seven-Day Vigil Candles</u></b> Llukan Dylgjeri – health Tina Murianka - Health</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><b><u>Church Lectionary</u></b></p> <p><u>Today</u> Acts 20:16-18,28-36 John 17:1-13</p> <p><u>Monday</u> Acts 21:8-14 John 14:27-15:7</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><i>For Those Who Are Sick And Home-bound</i></p>		
<p>Virginia, Denise, Marie, James, Alexandra, Andrew, Christina, Louise, Porter, Alvin, Tracy, Kathy, Andrew, Maria, Helen, John, Nina, Sophia, Spresha, Kristin, Niko, Spiro, Angjeliki, Melod, Olgay, Ruth, Terry, Naomi, Annette, Tatiana, Lester Jr., Natalia, Otari, Lasha, Fr. Nikolas, Llukan, Marina, Sophia, Fr. Maxwell, Christina, Anastasia, Mary, Elena, Tatiana, Lauren, Tracy, Anita, Sandi, Anibal, Kakha, Christina, Jane, Vano</p>		<p><u>Tuesday</u> Acts 21:26-32 John 16:2-13</p> <p><u>Wednesday</u> Jude 1:1-25 John 14:21-24</p> <p><u>Thursday</u> Acts 25:13-19 John 16:23-33</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Prayers In General</i></p>		
<p>The community of Ss. Peter &amp; Paul Miami, 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, Michael, Rafael, Bob, Barbara, Sandra, Enoch, John, Victoria, Melenie, Grace, Michael, Barbara, Giorgi, Molly, Jim, Chloe, Marsha, Ann, Lilly, Stephen, Gela, Gabriel Joseph, Lombrino, Kondakciu, Diana, Tyler, Alexi, Nora, Sophia</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 conflicts in Ukraine, Armenia, and the Middle East.</p> <p><i>[Petitions at Augmented Litany]</i> Again we pray for a cessation of the hostilities in Ukraine, Armenia, and the Middle East, and that reconciliation and peace will flourish in these places, we pray thee, hearken and have mercy.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>COFFEE HOUR</b></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 27:1-44;28:1 John 17:18-26</p> <p><u>Saturday</u> I Thessalonians 4:13-17 John 21:14-25</p> <p><b><u>Reading the Bible in a Year</u></b></p> <p>June 16: Eccl 9-12 June 17: Song 1-4 June 18: Song 5-8 June 19: Isaiah 1-4 June 20: Isaiah 5-8 June 21: Isaiah 9-12 June 22: Isaiah 13-16</p>



## ON PEACE OF HEART

*Metropolitan Seraphim (Joanta) of Germany and Central Europe*

Brothers and sisters, unfortunately, in the modern world the gap between rich and poor countries is increasing, and the folly into which contemporary man is falling because of money is beyond limits. That is why the number of conflicts of all kinds is growing all over the world and armed attacks are often committed in the name of religion. From whence come wars and fightings among you? come they not hence, even of your lusts that war in your members? Ye lust, and have not: ye kill, and desire to have, and cannot obtain: ye fight and war, yet ye have not, because ye ask not. Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts (Jas. 4:1–3). Thus, man, maddened by his pleasures, destroys God's Creation, mercilessly exploiting his fellow human beings and ruining himself as well.

When someone forgets God and no longer lives according to His commandments, which were given to mankind in order to cultivate life and protect it, and, even worse, puts himself (in his extreme madness) in God's place, he already lives and acts against his own nature, against his own kind and against all Creation. He is guided by the motto: "If there is no God, everything is permitted."<sup>1</sup> But another, no less terrible extreme is the instrumentalization of faith, turning it into an ideology—when a person condemns his neighbors, excludes them from his social circle and even kills others in the name of his faith. Without realizing it he thereby denies both faith and God Himself. Unfortunately, all religions and denominations face such a fundamentalist and violent environment. We Orthodox Christians cannot act by force or by prohibitions against all these deviations. Because our weapon is spiritual and, above all, it is in the power of a personal example.

We Christians believe that our Lord Jesus Christ came into this world to save people by the example of His life, which He sacrificed for all mankind. Christ did not reject or condemn anyone. On the contrary, He called everyone to Himself: Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For My yoke is easy, and My burden is light (Mt. 11: 28–30). To be disciples of Christ means to follow His example, being zealous in prayer and practicing asceticism in order to acquire a meek, humble and peaceful heart, free from the passions that cause people to lose peace of mind.

That is why Christian spirituality appeals to the human heart, so that it can become like the heart of Christ our Lord, Who became a man. But why exactly to the heart, and not to the mind, which is so exalted by the modern world? Because the heart is the center of the human being, and it is in it that we find existential unity with all Creation. All of people's physical and mental powers are concentrated in the human heart. That is why our spiritual life should embrace the heart. Then we will feel joy and unity with everyone and everything. The most significant sign of such an inner spiritual state is the feeling of love and compassion for fellow human beings, for animals and for all living things, as the seventh-century monk St. Isaac the Syrian used to say.

As opposed to this, if someone is in a state of sin, his heart loses its inner integrity and unity. Such a person also loses his inner balance and peace, becoming selfish, withdrawing into himself, distancing himself from others and forgetting them. He begins to be afraid of others, to view them as enemies and oppose them. Others fall prey to such a man with a sullied heart, and he attacks them in his selfish, mercenary interests.







But how can we change our hearts to make them realize the presence of God in our lives and see fellow human beings around us? The pursuit of peace of mind, happiness, and self-fulfillment are fundamental human needs. For Christians, peace of heart is a gift from God, a result of the work of the grace of God in accordance with the measure of our faith. The Orthodox faith that we confess should not be reduced to intellectual knowledge or some sentimental emotions. It obliges believers to live according to the Divine commandments. God is hidden in His commandments. He who fulfills the commandments of Christ lovingly bears Christ in his heart, and with Him the whole of humanity.

A merciful heart is acquired primarily through prayer. For a believer, prayer is the breath, the "oxygen" of his life. Without regular prayer your soul becomes hardened and insensitive to God and your neighbors, and faith turns into an ideology, even if you do not realize it. However, only prayer performed by the mind in the heart is true, authentic prayer that transforms the human heart and makes it like that of Christ. The practice of such prayer requires not only concentrated attention, but also an ascetic life and abstinence in everything, especially in food.

Because it is impossible to pray properly when your stomach is full. That is why the ancient Orthodox tradition recommends observing fasts. Moderation in itself is a great virtue and a true benefit for the health of the soul and the body. In addition, fasting has social consequences, especially in an unfair world like ours. Thus, a believer purifies his heart through prayer and abstinence, and it is made calm by the grace of God. Such a person begins to radiate peace, becoming a peacemaker: Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God (Mt. 5:9). In our age we really need such people. Let's strive for this. Amen.

Metropolitan Seraphim (Joanta) of Germany and Central Europe  
 Translation from the Russian version by Dmitry Lapa  
 Mitropolia-ro.de  
 6/15/2024

1 Paraphrased from Dostoevsky's, The Brothers Karamazov.—OC.

<b>June Events</b>	
<p><b>June</b>            16 – 10:00am Divine Liturgy            19 – 12:00pm Sixth Hour                7:15pm Bible Study via GoogleMeets            21 – 7:30am Matins                6:00pm Fun Night            23 – 10:00am Divine Liturgy <i>Feast of Pentecost</i>            26 – 12:00pm Sixth Hour                7:15pm Bible Study via GoogleMeets            28 – 7:30am Matins                <b>Bishop's Visit</b>            29 – 9:00am Divine Liturgy <i>Feast of Ss. Peter &amp; Paul</i>                Luncheon with His Grace                1:00pm                6:00pm Vespers            30 – 10:00am Divine Liturgy                Luncheon with His Grace</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Can't join us in person?</b>            We stream our services on our YouTube Channel:  <a href="https://www.youtube.com/@sspeterpaulorthodoxhurcho1810">https://www.youtube.com/@sspeterpaulorthodoxhurcho1810</a></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Want to donate by Venmo?</b>            St Peter St Paul Alb Orth Ch James Schaeffer</p>	 •  •   <p><i>...the Lord does not seek the monk or the layperson, the scholar or the simpleton, the rich man or the pauper, but only the heart that thirsts for God, full of a sincere desire to be true to Him and His commandments!</i></p> <p><i>Venerable Ephraim the Syrian</i></p>  •  • 

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The Fathers of the Council declined to accept a Symbol of Faith (Creed) proposed by the Arians. Instead, they affirmed the Orthodox Symbol of Faith. Saint Constantine asked the Council to insert into the text of the Symbol of Faith the word “consubstantial,” which he had heard in the speeches of the bishops. The Fathers of the Council unanimously accepted this suggestion. In the Nicene Creed, the holy Fathers set forth and confirmed the Apostolic teachings about Christ’s divine nature. The heresy of Arius was exposed and repudiated as an error of haughty reason. After resolving this chief dogmatic question, the Council also issued Twelve Canons on questions of churchly administration and discipline. Also decided was the date for the celebration of Holy Pascha. By decision of the Council, Holy Pascha should not be celebrated by Christians on the same day with the Jewish Passover, but on the first Sunday after the first full moon of the vernal equinox (which occurred on March 22 in 325). The First Ecumenical Council is also commemorated on May 29.

## **Authenticity and the Authority of the Church**

If she is true to herself, the Church acts with an authority that is grounded in love. She holds within her realm the authority to make her people the children of God. She has the authority to forgive, and the capacity to love. And just as her Head, Jesus Christ, she exists to serve, and not to be served. She guides her people with love, recognizing that each person is unique, and is to be ministered to with an authority that is based on serving, not being served.

Christianity itself is in crisis, and many people are embracing the materialist approach of self-help, rather than ascetic struggle and self-denial. Increased numbers of young people are turning to atheism, or wandering in a wasteland of spiritual confusion, having witnessed the betrayal of Christian morality and faith by many religious leaders.

“The incarnation of Christ was considered and was celebrated by the Fathers of the Church and the worshipping ecclesiastical community as the abolishing of religion and its transformation into a Church. In fact, the memorable Father John Romanides had said in the most categorical way that Christ became human, in order to free us of the illness of religion (Metropolitan Hierotheos of Nafpaktos).”

Until we put off religion, and put on Christ, we will continue to fail in our vocation as servants. Unless the Church demonstrates, with holiness and humility, and in imitation of the Image of Our Saviour as servant, the Church will have become nothing but a religion that has lost her way, and the authentic witness of Christ will have been lost. The youth of today are drawn to authenticity, and until they see Christ in the lives of churchmen who are living icons of Christ, and who are loving, humble servants of this very Christ, they will continue looking for truth in a wasteland of spiritual confusion. The Church must proclaim the Good News in all humility and love, for “the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve (Mark 10:45),”

With love in Christ,  
Abbot Tryphon

### *Those Winter Sundays*

Robert Hayden, 1913 - 1980

Sundays too my father got up early  
and put his clothes on in the blueblack cold,  
then with cracked hands that ached  
from labor in the weekday weather made  
banked fires blaze. No one ever thanked him.

I'd wake and hear the cold splintering, breaking.  
When the rooms were warm, he'd call,  
and slowly I would rise and dress,  
fearing the chronic angers of that house,

Speaking indifferently to him,  
who had driven out the cold  
and polished my good shoes as well.  
What did I know, what did I know  
of love's austere and lonely offices?



It is a special thing to be a father.

***Happy Father's Day, to all fathers and godfathers.***