

Saints Peter and Paul Orthodox Church

Albanian Archdiocese - OCA

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Rev. Nicholas Dellermann – Rector (860-861-7468)

SUNDAY, JULY 9

5th Sunday after Pentecost

Hieromartyr Pancratius, Bishop of Taormina in Sicily

**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 6
Troparion
(St. Pancratius)**

*By sharing in the ways of the Apostles,
thou didst become a successor to their throne.
Through the practice of virtue, thou didst find the
way to divine contemplation, O inspired one of
God;
by teaching the word of truth without error, thou
didst defend the Faith, even to the shedding of thy
blood.
O Hieromartyr Pancratius, entreat Christ God to save
our souls!*

**Tone 4
Kontakion
(Resurrection)**

*My Savior and Redeemer
as God rose from the tomb and delivered the
earth-born from their chains.
He has shattered the gates of hell,
and as Master,
He has risen on the third day!*

**Tone 4
Kontakion
(St. Pancratius)**

*O Pancratius, thou wast revealed as a brilliant
star for the people of Taormina.
Thou wast also shown to be a sufferer for Christ.
Since now thou standest before Him, O blessed
one, pray for those who honor thee.*

Prokeimenon

Tone 4 (Resurrection)

O Lord, how manifold are Thy works; / in wisdom hast Thou made them all. (Ps. 103:26)

V. Bless the Lord, O my soul! O Lord, my God, Thou art very great! (Ps. 103:1)



✧ The Epistle Reading ✧

Romans 10:1-10

Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is that they may be saved. For I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge. For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and seeking to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted to the righteousness of God. For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes. For Moses writes about the righteousness which is of the law, "The man who does those things shall live by them." But the righteousness of faith speaks in this way, "Do not say in your heart, 'Who will ascend into heaven?' (that is, to bring Christ down from above) or, 'Who will descend into the abyss?'" (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead). But what does it say? "The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart" (that is, the word of faith which we preach): that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

Romanëve 10:1-10

Vëllezër, dëshira e zemrës sime, edhe lutja që i bëj Perëndisë për Izraelin, është për shpëtim të tyre. Sepse dëshmoj për ata se kanë zell për Perëndinë, po jo me vetëdije. Sepse duke mos njohur drejtësinë e Perëndisë, edhe duke kërkuar të vendosin drejtësinë e tyre, nuk iu bindën drejtësisë së Perëndisë. Sepse fundi i ligjit është Krishti, për drejtësi te cilido që beson. Sepse Moisiu shkruan për drejtësinë që është prej ligjit: "Se njeriu që bën këto, do të rrojë me anë të tyre". Po drejtësia që është prej besimit thotë kështu: "Mos thuaj në zemrën tënde: Kush do të ngjitet në qiell?" domethënë, që të zbresë Krishtin. Apo: "Kush do të zbresë në humnerën e pafund?" domethënë, që të sjellë lart Krishtin prej së vdekurish. Po ç'thotë? "Fjala është afër teje, në gojën tënde e në zemrën tënde", domethënë, fjala e besimit që predikojmë; se në rrëfesh me gojën tënde Zotin Jisu, edhe në besofsh në zemrën tënde se Perëndia e ngjalli atë prej së vdekurish, do të shpëtosh. Sepse njeriu beson me zemër për drejtësi, edhe me gojë rrëfehët për shpëtim.

К Римлянам 10:1-10

Братия! желание моего сердца и молитва к Богу об Израиле во спасение. Ибо свидетельствую им, что имеют ревность по Боге, но не по рассуждению. Ибо, не разумея праведности Божией и усиливаясь поставить собственную праведность, они не покорились праведности Божией, потому что конец закона--Христос, к праведности всякого верующего. Моисей пишет о праведности от закона: исполнивший его человек жив будет им. А праведность от веры так говорит: не говори в сердце твоём: кто взойдет на небо? то есть Христа свести. Или кто сойдет в бездну? то есть Христа из мертвых возвести. Но что говорит Писание? Близко к тебе слово, в устах твоих и в сердце твоём, то есть слово веры, которое проповедуем. Ибо если устами твоими будешь исповедывать Иисуса Господом и сердцем твоим веровать, что Бог воскресил Его из мертвых, то спасешься, потому что сердцем веруют к праведности, а устами исповедуют ко спасению.

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)*



✠ The Gospel Reading ✠

Matthew 8:28-9:1

When He had come to the other side, to the country of the Gergesenes, there met Him two demon-possessed men, coming out of the tombs, exceedingly fierce, so that no one could pass that way. And suddenly they cried out, saying, "What have we to do with You, Jesus, You Son of God? Have You come here to torment us before the time?" Now a good way off from them there was a herd of many swine feeding. So the demons begged Him, saying, "If You cast us out, permit us to go away into the herd of swine." And He said to them, "Go." So when they had come out, they went into the herd of swine. And suddenly the whole herd of swine ran violently down the steep place into the sea, and perished in the water. Then those who kept them fled; and they went away into the city and told everything, including what had happened to the demon-possessed men. And behold, the whole city came out to meet Jesus. And when they saw Him, they begged Him to depart from their region. So He got into a boat, crossed over, and came to His own city.

Mattheut 8:28-9:1

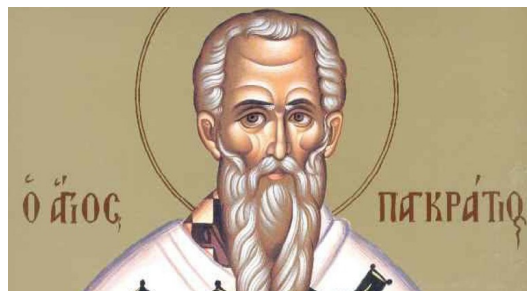
Edhe kur erdhi ai në anën e përtejme, në vendin e Gjergjesinëve, i dolën përpara dy të demonizuar, që dilnin nga varret, fort të egër, kaq sa s'mund të shkonte njeri nga ajo udhë. Edhe ja tek bërtitën duke thënë: Çfarë ka mes nesh dhe teje, o Jisu, bir i Perëndisë? Erdhe këtu përpara kohës që të na mundosh? Edhe larg atyre ishte një tufë e madhe derrash duke kullotur. Edhe demonët i luteshin atij, duke thënë: Po na nxore që këtej, lërna të shkojmë në tufën e derrave. Edhe u tha atyre: Shkoni. Edhe ata dolën e shkuan në tufën e derrave. Edhe ja gjithë tufa e derrave tek u hodh nga gremina në det, edhe ngordhën në ujërat. Edhe barinjte ikën e erdhën në qytet, e lajmëruan për të gjitha edhe për sa u ndodhi të demonizuarve. Edhe ja gjithë qyteti tek doli për të takuar Jisuin; edhe kur e panë atë, iu lutën të ikë nga kufijtë e tyre. Edhe si hyri në lundër, u hodh përtej, e erdhi në qytetin e tij.

От Матфея 8:28-9:1

И когда Он прибыл на другой берег в страну Гergесинскую, Его встретили два бесноватые, вышедшие из гробов, весьма свирепые, так что никто не смел проходить тем путем. И вот, они закричали: что Тебе до нас, Иисус, Сын Божий? пришел Ты сюда прежде времени мучить нас. Вдали же от них паслось большое стадо свиней. И бесы просили Его: если выгонишь нас, то пошли нас в стадо свиней. И Он сказал им: идите. И они, выйдя, пошли в стадо свиное. И вот, всё стадо свиней бросилось с крутизны в море и погибло в воде. Пастухи же побежали и, придя в город, рассказали обо всем, и о том, что было с бесноватыми. И вот, весь город вышел навстречу Иисусу; и, увидев Его, просили, чтобы Он отошел от пределов их. Тогда Он, войдя в лодку, переправился [обратно] и прибыл в Свой город.

Communion Hymn

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



| PRAYERS | Birthdays, Names-days, & Anniversaries | SCRIPTURE THIS WEEK |
|--|---|--|
| <i>For Those Who Have Fallen Asleep</i> | | Church Lectionary |
| <p>Newly Departed Thomas, Newly Departed Nikoli, Newly Departed Sue,</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>July 9 – July 15 Nick Muzekari (B) Michelle Murianka (B) Jeanie Speero (B) Protodeacon Gregory (A)</p> <p><u>Seven-Day Vigil Candles</u></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> Romans 10:1-10 Matthew 8:28-9:1</p> <p><u>Monday</u> Galatians 5:22-6:2 Matthew 4:25-5:12 Romans 16:17-24 Matthew 13:10-23</p> <p><u>Tuesday</u> 1 Corinthians 1:1-9 Matthew 13:24-30</p> <p><u>Wednesday</u> 1 Corinthians 2:9-3:8 Matthew 13:31-36</p> <p><u>Thursday</u> 1 Corinthians 3:18-23 Matthew 13:36-43</p> <p><u>Friday</u> 1 Corinthians 4:5-8 Matthew 13:44-54</p> <p><u>Saturday</u> Galatians 1:11-19 John 10:1-9 Romans 9:1-5 Matthew 9:18-26</p> <p><u>Reading the Bible in a Year</u></p> <p>July 09: Jeremiah 17-20 July 10: Jeremiah 21-24 July 11: Jeremiah 25-28 July 12: Jeremiah 29-32 July 13: Jeremiah 33-36 July 14: Jeremiah 37-40 July 15: Jeremiah 41-44</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, Nina, Sophia, Jim, Spresha, Kristin, Niko, Spiro, Angjeliki, Melod, Olgay, Ruth, Fr. Jerry, Naomi, Terry, Naomi, Annette, Tatiana, Aleena, Lester Jr., Natalia, Otari, Lasha, Fr. Nikolas, Imani, Gabriel, Aaron, Jordany, Nassan,</p> | | |
| <i>Prayers In General</i> | | |
| <p>The community of Ss. Peter & 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, Sophia, Michael, Rafael, Bob, Barbara, Ansley and the newborn Baylor, 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"> • care for our spiritual well-being, • unite us in a zealous confession of our holy faith, • commit us in loving service to one another in bright witness to the glory of Your holy Name. <p>Hear us and have mercy.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">COFFEE HOUR</p> <p>July 09 Sunday School Students 16 23 30</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> | |

Divided Against Yourself

July 4, 2023 · Fr. Barnabas Powell



“E Pluribus Unum” Out of the Many – One. This is the motto of the United States of America, a republic founded in 1776 after a war of Independence from the British Empire. Of course, now the story of the founding of our Republic has come under fire in the last several years by those who “want to change the narrative” of the beginning of our country. They argue that “really, the Revolution was fought to perpetuate slavery and white privilege.” Works like the “1619 Project” sponsored by the New York Times, attempt to

“retell” the story of our founding, but this retelling isn’t meant to be taken as “true fact” but a different narrative. Huh?

By the way, this is what the author of the “1619 Project said, so it isn’t conjecture.

There are nuanced and honest ways to see how this nation has always worked for a “more perfect union” with stumbles, mistakes, injustices, and victories, courage, and hope for the whole world. But the notion that there could be a place where all people, regardless of their “tribe” or “status”, could live as a united nation is solidly founded on the vision of God for humanity. Just read John’s Revelation of Jesus Christ, and look into heaven where “out of every kindred, tribe, and tongue” all the people are united to adore the Risen Lord of Glory.

Look at our lesson today in Matthew 12:14-16; 22-30:

At that time, the Pharisees took counsel against Jesus, how to destroy him. Jesus, aware of this, withdrew from there. And many followed him, and he healed them all, and ordered them not to make him known.

Then a blind and dumb demoniac was brought to him, and he healed him so that the dumb man spoke and saw. And all the people were amazed, and said, “Can this be the Son of David?” But when the Pharisees heard it they said, “It is only by Beelzebul, the prince of demons, that this man casts out demons.” Knowing their thoughts, he said to them, “Every kingdom divided against itself is laid waste, and no city or house divided against itself will stand; and if Satan casts out Satan, he is divided against himself; how then will his kingdom stand? And if I cast out demons by Beelzebul, by whom do your sons cast them out? Therefore they shall be your judges. But if it is by the Spirit of God that I cast out demons, then the kingdom of God has come upon you. Or how can one enter a strong man’s house and plunder his goods, unless he first binds the strong man? Then indeed he may plunder his house. He who is not with me is against me, and he who does not gather with me scatters.”

The jealous religious leaders of Jesus’ day were desperate to discredit Him in the eyes of the people. But that’s what self-serving leaders always do. They desire control over the population because the

population outnumbered them 1000 to 1. They know if they lose control, they will lose everything. And they love being in charge.

So, these short-sighted leaders insisted that the great authority Jesus displayed by setting people free from demonic control was actually a “trick” of the Devil to confuse the people and draw them away from their “wonderful” leaders.

But, Jesus knew their thoughts, and He confronted these men with their shallow hypocrisy. And He revealed why they were so desperate to defend their “status quo.” Watch closely.

Jesus tells them a kingdom divided against itself will destroy itself. And that’s always true. A nation that is increasingly divided is in real trouble. When the constant communication is “us vs. them” this is a symptom of the fear of the leaders in losing control; it is a symptom of a people forgetting the “Why” of their nation. It reveals the desperation of the provocateurs that they are trying to destroy so they can gain power. And it’s a dangerous time. So, if the Devil is casting out the Devil, like the enemies of Jesus are suggesting, then the Devil’s kingdom is crumbling. Makes no sense.

BUT, if God’s power is being displayed in crushing the power of the devil in people’s lives then the Kingdom of God has actually come among them, and they better pay attention to this Man that has authority over the demons, nature, and even death itself! The Lord offers them a clear invitation, and He offers that same invitation to us today: You’re either for Him or against Him. There is no neutral territory.

The Lord again confronts the spiritual blindness of His day and our day as well. He offers us true freedom from the bondage of the fear of death and He invites us to see our unity, not in our customs, cultures, or language, but in our fidelity to Him as He makes us a “new nation” made up of everyone invited to the Kingdom of God.

Nowhere is this clear message more plain than in the longest canon the Orthodox Church prays every year during Great Lent. The Great Canon of St. Andrew of Crete is a masterpiece of laying out the damning slavery of sin and the freedom won through repentance and turning towards Christ. We chant this canon over several days during Great Lent and I encourage you to read it as often as you can. St. Andrew is commemorated today, and I find it uniquely fitting that this minstrel of repentance would be remembered on July 4, the day of the celebration of Independence for the US. It reminds me of the passage in 2 Chronicles 7:14. This is a passage that we must embrace in our country if we hope to pass through the madness of our current chaos – “If My people, who are called by my name will humble themselves, and pray and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and forgive their sins and heal their land.”

Today, Jesus makes it clear to the people of His day and to us right here, right now. There are two kingdoms – the kingdom of selfish slavery, and the Kingdom of God. Only two. And our peace and unity and the highest aspirations of humanity are only found in the Kingdom of God. That is the only place of true unity, peace, justice, and love. All other lesser “kingdoms” always disappoint and fail. So, if you were to take inventory of your own life, your decisions, and your day-to-day routines, do they reveal your citizenship in God’s Kingdom or the always unstable kingdom of yourself? Are you reorienting your life daily so that you can live in the true “land of the free, and the home of the brave?” That’s the only way to know a Normal Orthodox life.

Prayer for the Week

A model of faith and the image of gentleness, the example of your life has shown you forth to your sheep-fold to be a master of temperance. You obtained thus through being lowly, gifts from on high, and riches through poverty. Andrew, our father and priest of priests, intercede with Christ our God that He may save our souls.

June/July Events

July

09 – 10:00am Divine Liturgy
12 – 7:15pm Bible Study via GoogleMeets
16 – 10:00am Divine Liturgy
19 – 7:15pm Bible Study via GoogleMeets
23 – 10:00am Divine Liturgy
26 – 7:15pm Bible Study via GoogleMeets
30 – 10:00am Divine Liturgy

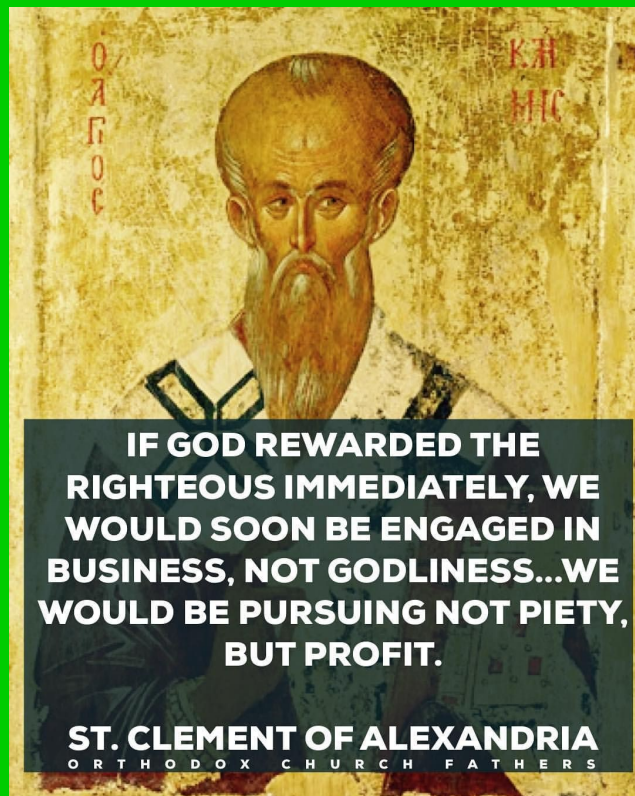
August

02 – 7:15pm Bible Study via GoogleMeets
06 – 10:00am Divine Liturgy
Feast of the Transfiguration of Our Lord
09 – 7:15pm Bible Study via GoogleMeets
11 – 6:00pm Fun Night
13 – 10:00am Divine Liturgy
15 – 9:00am Divine Liturgy
Feast of the Dormition of the Most Holy Theotokos
16 – 7:15pm Bible Study via GoogleMeets
20 – 10:00am Divine Liturgy
23 – 7:15pm Bible Study via GoogleMeets
27 – 10:00am Divine Liturgy
30 – 7:15pm Bible Study via GoogleMeets

Can't join us in person?

We stream our services on our YouTube Channel:

<https://www.youtube.com/@sspeterpaulorthodoxhurcho1810>



The Role of Doubt in the Development of Faith



At an age when many of my contemporaries are grandfathers, or even great grandfathers, I've discovered the truth of something I read about while still a college student. Grandparents are often more sympathetic to the burdens and challenges that young people face than their own parents. Age seems to mellow us out and make us more sympathetic to the challenges young people face. We become less judgmental because we've been down the same road and know that, in the end, these young people will come out just fine.

Some time ago I had the mother of a boy of about thirteen arrive at the monastery, son in tow. She was upset because her son had declared himself an atheist and she was afraid he was in danger of eternal damnation. I sat down with the boy and told him that each one of us had to come to a personal awareness of the reality of God for ourselves. Doubting the existence of God, I told him, is all part of building a personal relationship with God. If we

simply go through the motions without seeking a real relationship, we might as well be atheists. My own youth was filled with great spiritual struggle as I sought to fill the void I felt within my heart.

Most young people struggle with questions about eternal things. It is part of relationship building. Like the young lad who visited with his mom, I struggled with doubt. The only difference was that my struggle happened during my college days. It was a period of time when I was filled with anxiety for the future and fearful of making the wrong decisions. I understand the issues facing young people today because I was a young man with the same fears and struggling with many of the same issues.

Knowing as I do now the importance of being honest, I told the mother to let her son explore for himself the reality of God. It was better for him to question the existence of God than to simply feign belief. At the same time I told the boy he needed to attend church with his family because it was important to be obedient to his parents and supportive of his younger brother. After all, one does not tell his parents that he's not going to attend school just because he doesn't see his studies as important.

The God this boy was rejecting is the very false image of God that I have long rejected. The God I have come to know personally is not the same god I rejected in my youth. The God revealed in Jesus Christ is the One Whom I've personally experienced and Who first sought me out.

If we are to have a personal relationship with God we must be open and honest and unafraid to question. The Lord wants us to be real with Him. Like the sound relationship that one sees in a long and successful marriage, a relationship with God must first and foremost be based in honesty and truth. Love and trust come with time and experience. Our relationship with God is something that builds over time, like all relationships.

These sixty-eight years have led to a great deal of peace in my heart and an ever growing love for the God that first loved me. I KNOW God exists because I've experienced His great love in a personal way. It is now my heartfelt desire to share my love for God with the youth of today. They, like me, need to discover God for themselves and build upon a relationship that began with their inception.

With love in Christ,
Abbot Tryphon

<https://abbottryphon.com/the-reality-of-god-5/>

Hieromartyr Pancratius, Bishop of Taormina in Sicily

The Hieromartyr Pancratius, Bishop of Taormina, was born when our Lord Jesus Christ yet lived upon the earth. The parents of Pancratius were natives of Antioch. Hearing the good news of Jesus Christ, Pancratius' father took his young son with him and went to Jerusalem in order to see the great Teacher for himself. The miracles astonished him, and when he heard the divine teaching, he then believed in Christ as the Son of God. He became close with the disciples of the Lord, especially with the holy Apostle Peter. It was during this period that young Pancratius got to know the holy Apostle Peter.

After the Ascension of the Savior, one of the Apostles came to Antioch and baptized the parents of Pancratius together with all their household. When the parents of Pancratius died, he left behind his inherited possessions and went to Pontus and began to live in a cave, spending his days in prayer and deep spiritual contemplation. The holy Apostle Peter, while passing through those parts, visited Pancratius at Pontus. He took him along to Antioch, and then to Sicily, where the holy Apostle Paul then was. There the holy Apostles Peter and Paul made Saint Pancratius Bishop of Taormina in Sicily.

Saint Pancratius toiled zealously for the Christian enlightenment of the people. In a single month he built a church where he celebrated divine services. The number of believers quickly grew, and soon almost all the people of Taormina and the surrounding cities accepted the Christian Faith.

Saint Pancratius governed his flock peacefully for many years. However, pagans plotted against the saint, and seizing an appropriate moment, they fell upon him and stoned him. Thus, Saint Pancratius ended his life as a martyr.

The saint's relics are in the church named for him in Rome. He is also commemorated on February 9.