

# Saints Peter and Paul Orthodox Church

Albanian Archdiocese - OCA

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SUNDAY, AUGUST 20

11th Sunday after Pentecost

Afterfeast of the Dormition

Prophet Samuel

**Tone 2  
Troparion  
(Resurrection)**

*When Thou didst descend to death, O Life immortal, Thou didst slay hell with the splendor of Thy Godhead. And when from the depths Thou didst raise the dead, all the powers of heaven cried out: "O Giver of life, Christ our God, glory to Thee!"*

**Tone 1  
Troparion  
(Feast)**

*In giving birth thou didst preserve thy virginity. In falling asleep thou didst not forsake the world, O Theotokos. Thou wast translated to life, O Mother of Life, and by thy prayers thou dost deliver our souls from death.*

**Tone 2  
Troparion  
(Prophet Samuel)**

*We celebrate the memory of Thy prophet Samuel, O Lord; through him we beseech Thee: "Save our souls!"*

**Tone 8  
Kontakion  
(Resurrection)**

*Hell became afraid, O almighty Savior, seeing the miracle of Thy Resurrection from the tomb! The dead arose! Creation, with Adam, beheld this and rejoiced with Thee, and the world, my Savior, praises Thee forever.*

**Tone 8  
Kontakion  
(Prophet Samuel)**

*Thou wast a precious gift given to God before thy conception. Thou didst serve Him like an angel from thine infancy, O blessed one. Thou wast granted the charism to announce beforehand future things. Therefore, we cry to thee: "Rejoice, Samuel, Prophet of God and great high priest."*

**Tone 2  
Kontakion  
(Feast)**

*Neither the tomb, nor death, could hold the Theotokos, who is constant in prayer and our firm hope in her intercessions. For being the Mother of Life, she was translated to life by the One Who dwelt in her virginal womb.*



**Tone 2 (Resurrection)**

The Lord is my strength and my song; / He has become my salvation. (Ps. 117:14)

V. The Lord has chastened me sorely, but He has not given me over to death. (Ps. 117:18)

**Tone 3 Prokeimenon (Song of the Theotokos)**

My soul doth magnify the Lord, / and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Savior. (Lk. 1:46-47)

*Next Sunday, we celebrate the memory of Saint Phanourius, and will have a small prayer at the end of the service. I thought it might be nice to be able to familiarize ourselves with his story beforehand.*

## Saint Phanourius

*Commemorated on August 27*

We know nothing for certain about the background of Saint Phanourius, nor exactly when he lived. Tradition says that when the island of Rhodes had been conquered by Moslems, the new ruler of the island wished to rebuild the walls of the city, which had been damaged in previous wars. Several ruined buildings were near the fortress, and stone from these buildings was used to repair the walls at the end of the fifteenth century, or the beginning of the sixteenth.

While working on the fortress, the Moslems uncovered the ruins of a beautiful church. Several icons, most of them badly damaged, were found on the floor. One icon, of Saint Phanourius, looked as if it had been painted that very day. The local bishop, whose name was Nilus, was called to see the icon. It said, "Saint Phanourius."

The saint is depicted as a young soldier holding a cross in his right hand. On the upper part of the cross is a lighted taper. Twelve scenes from his life are shown around the border of the icon. These scenes show him being questioned by an official, being beaten with stones by soldiers, stretched out on the ground while soldiers whip him, then having his sides raked with iron hooks. He is also shown locked up in prison, standing before the official again, being burned with candles, tied to a rack, thrown to the wild animals, and being crushed by a large rock. The remaining scenes depict him standing before idols holding burning coals in his hands, while a demon stands by lamenting his defeat by the saint, and finally, the saint stands in the midst of a fire with his arms raised in prayer.



These scenes clearly revealed that the saint was a martyr. Bishop Nilus sent representatives to the Moslem ruler, asking that he be permitted to restore the church. Permission was denied, so the bishop went to Constantinople and there he obtained a decree allowing him to rebuild the church.

At that time, there was no Orthodox bishop on the island of Crete. Since Crete was under the control of Venice, there was a Latin bishop. The Venetians refused to allow a successor to be consecrated when an Orthodox bishop died, or for new priests to be ordained, hoping that in time they would be able to convert the Orthodox population to Catholicism. Those seeking ordination were obliged to go to the island of Kythera.

## The Epistle Reading

### **1 Corinthians 9:2-12**

If I am not an apostle to others, yet doubtless I am to you. For you are the seal of my apostleship in the Lord. My defense to those who examine me is this: Do we have no right to eat and drink? Do we have no right to take along a believing wife, as do also the other apostles, the brothers of the Lord, and Cephas? Or is it only Barnabas and I who have no right to refrain from working? Who ever goes to war at his own expense? Who plants a vineyard and does not eat of its fruit? Or who tends a flock and does not drink of the milk of the flock? Do I say these things as a mere man? Or does not the law say the same also? For it is written in the law of Moses, "You shall not muzzle an ox while it treads out the grain." Is it oxen God is concerned about? Or does He say it altogether for our sakes? For our sakes, no doubt, this is written, that he who plows should plow in hope, and he who threshes in hope should be partaker of his hope. If we have sown spiritual things for you, is it a great thing if we reap your material things? If others are partakers of this right over you, are we not even more? Nevertheless we have not used this right, but endure all things lest we hinder the gospel of Christ.

### **I Korinthianëve 9:2-12**

Në mos jam apostull në të tjerë, po së paku në ju jam; sepse në Zotin vula e apostolisë sime jeni ju. Përgjigjja ime për ata që më gjykojnë, kjo është. Mos nuk kemi edhe ne pushtet të hamë e të pimë? Mos nuk kemi edhe ne pushtet të marrim me vete një grua nga motrat besimtare, si dhe apostujt e tjerë, dhe vëllezërit e Zotit, dhe Kefai? Apo vetëm unë dhe Varnava nuk kemi pushtet të mos punojmë? Cili shkon ndonjëherë në luftë me shpenzimet e veta? Cili mbjell vresht, edhe nuk ha nga fryti i tij? Ose cili kullot grigjë, edhe nuk ha nga qumështi i grigjës? Mos i flas unë këto vetëm si njeri? Apo nuk thotë këto edhe ligji? Sepse në ligjin e Moisiut është shkruar: "Nuk do t'i lidhësh gojën kaut që shin". Mos për qetë kujdeset Perëndia? Apo për ne në të vërtetë e thotë këtë? Sepse për ne u shkrua, se ai që lëron, me shpresë duhet të lërojë; dhe ai që shin, shin me shpresë se do të ketë pjesë në shpresën e tij. Ne, nëse mbollëm te ju gjërat shpirtërore, punë e madhe është po të korrim gjërat tuaja të mishta? Në qoftë se të tjerë marrin pjesë të këtij pushteti mbi ju, a nuk duhet më tepër ne? Po ne nuk e përdorëm këtë pushtet, por i durojmë të gjitha, që të mos sjellim ndonjë pengesë në ungjillin e Krishtit.

### **1-е Коринфянам 9:2-12**

Если для других я не Апостол, то для вас [Апостол]; ибо печать моего апостольства--вы в Господе. Вот мое защищение против осуждающих меня. Или мы не имеем власти есть и пить? Или не имеем власти иметь спутницею сестру жену, как и прочие Апостолы, и братья Господни, и Кифа? Или один я и Варнава не имеем власти не работать? Какой воин служит когда-либо на своем содержании? Кто, насадив виноград, не ест плодов его? Кто, пася стадо, не ест молока от стада? По человеческому ли только [рассуждению] я это говорю? Не то же ли говорит и закон? Ибо в Моисеевом законе написано: не заграждай рта у вола молотящего. О волах ли печется Бог? Или, конечно, для нас говорится? Так, для нас это написано; ибо, кто пашет, должен пахать с надеждою, и кто молотит, [должен молотить] с надеждою получить ожидаемое. Если мы посеяли в вас духовное, велико ли то, если пожнем у вас телесное? Если другие имеют у вас власть, не паче ли мы? Однако мы не пользовались сею властью, но все переносим, дабы не поставить какой преграды благовествованию Христову.

### **Tone 8**

Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

V. May the Lord hear thee in the day of trouble! May the name of the God of Jacob protect thee! *(Ps. 19:1)*

V. Save the King, O Lord, and hear us on the day we call! *(Ps. 19:9)*

### **Tone 2**

V. Arise, O Lord, into Thy rest, Thou and the Ark of Thy sanctification! *(Ps. 131:8)*



## The Gospel Reading

### **Matthew 18:23-35**

Therefore the kingdom of heaven is like a certain king who wanted to settle accounts with his servants. And when he had begun to settle accounts, one was brought to him who owed him ten thousand talents. But as he was not able to pay, his master commanded that he be sold, with his wife and children and all that he had, and that payment be made. The servant therefore fell down before him, saying, 'Master, have patience with me, and I will pay you all.' Then the master of that servant was moved with compassion, released him, and forgave him the debt. But that servant went out and found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred denarii; and he laid hands on him and took him by the throat, saying, 'Pay me what you owe!' So his fellow servant fell down at his feet and begged him, saying, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you all.' And he would not, but went and threw him into prison till he should pay the debt. So when his fellow servants saw what had been done, they were very grieved, and came and told their master all that had been done. Then his master, after he had called him, said to him, 'You wicked servant! I forgave you all that debt because you begged me. Should you not also have had compassion on your fellow servant, just as I had pity on you?' And his master was angry, and delivered him to the torturers until he should pay all that was due to him. So My heavenly Father also will do to you if each of you, from his heart, does not forgive his brother his trespasses."

### **Mattheut 18:23-35**

Prandaj mbretëria e qiejve ngjau me një njeri mbret, që deshi të bënte llogaritë me shërbëtorët e tij. Edhe kur zuri të bënte llogaritë, i prunë një huamarrës që i detyrohej dhjetë mijë talanta. Edhe pasi ai nuk kishte t'i jepte, i zoti urdhëroi të shitet ai, edhe gruaja e tij, edhe fëmijët e gjithë ç'kishte, edhe të paguhej detyrimi. Po shërbëtori i ra ndër këmbë, e i lutej, duke thënë: Zot, bëhu zemërgjerë me mua, edhe do të t'i laj të gjitha. Edhe të zotit, si iu dhimbs ai shërbëtor, e lëshoi, edhe ia fali detyrimin. Po ai shërbëtor, si doli, gjeti një nga shokët e tij shërbëtorë që i detyrohej atij njëqind dinarë; edhe si e zuri, po e mbyste, duke thënë: Më jep detyrim që më ke. Atëherë shoku i tij shërbëtor i ra ndër këmbë, e i lutej, duke thënë: Bëhu zemërgjerë me mua, edhe do të t'i jap të gjitha. Edhe ai nuk donte, po shkoi dhe e hodhi në burg, deri sa t'i jepte detyrimin. Edhe shokëve të tij shërbëtorë, kur panë se ç'u bë, u erdhi fort keq; edhe erdhën e i rrëfyen të zotit me hollësi gjithë sa u bënë. Atëherë i zoti e thirri pranë e i tha: Shërbëtor i lig, gjithë atë detyrim ta fala ty, sepse m'u lute. A nuk duhej edhe ti ta përdëlleje shokun tënd shërbëtor, siç të përdëlleva edhe unë ty? Edhe i zoti u zemërua, edhe e dha në duart e torturuesve, deri sa të lante gjithë detyrimin që i kishte. Kështu edhe Ati im qiellor do t'jua bëjë juve, në qoftë se secili prej jush, nga zemra e tij, nuk i fal vëllait të tij fajet e tij.

### **От Матфея 18:23-35**

Посему Царство Небесное подобно царю, который захотел сосчитать с рабами своими; когда начал он считаться, приведен был к нему некто, который должен был ему десять тысяч талантов; а как он не имел, чем заплатить, то государь его приказал продать его, и жену его, и детей, и всё, что он имел, и заплатить; тогда раб тот пал, и, кланяясь ему, говорил: государь! потерпи на мне, и всё тебе заплачу. Государь, умилосердившись над рабом тем, отпустил его и долг простил ему. Раб же тот, выйдя, нашел одного из товарищей своих, который должен был ему сто динариев, и, схватив его, душил, говоря: отдай мне, что должен. Тогда товарищ его пал к ногам его, умолял его и говорил: потерпи на мне, и всё отдам тебе. Но тот не захотел, а пошел и посадил его в темницу, пока не отдаст долга. Товарищи его, увидев происшедшее, очень огорчились и, придя, рассказали государю своему всё бывшее. Тогда государь его призывает его и говорит: злой раб! весь долг тот я простил тебе, потому что ты упросил меня; не надлежало ли и тебе помиловать товарища твоего, как и я помиловал тебя? И, разгневавшись, государь его отдал его истязателям, пока не отдаст ему всего долга. Так и Отец Мой Небесный поступит с вами, если не простит каждый из вас от сердца своего брату своему согрешений его.



(Instead of "It is truly meet...", we sing:)

*The Angels, as they looked upon the Dormition of the Virgin,  
were struck with wonder,  
seeing how the Virgin went up from earth to heaven.*

*The limits of nature are overcome in thee, O Pure Virgin:  
for birthgiving remains virginal, and life is united to death;  
a virgin after childbearing and alive after death,  
thou dost ever save thine inheritance, O Theotokos.*

### Communion Hymn

Praise the Lord from the heavens, praise Him in the highest! (Ps. 148:1)  
I will receive the cup of salvation and call on the Name of the Lord. (Ps. 115:4)  
Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

*Continued from page 2*

It so happened that three young deacons had traveled from Crete to Kythera to be ordained to the holy priesthood. On their way back, they were captured at sea by Moslems who brought them to Rhodes to be sold as slaves. Lamenting their fate, the three new priests wept day and night.

While in Rhodes the priests heard of the miracles performed by the holy Great Martyr Phanourius. They began to pray to him with tears, asking to be freed from their captivity. Each of the three had been sold to a different master, and so remained unaware of what the others were doing.

By the mercy of God, each of the priests was allowed by his master to pray at the restored church of Saint Phanourius. All three arrived at the same time and prostrated themselves before the icon of the saint, asking to be delivered from the hands of the Hagarenes (Moslems, descendants of Hagar). Somewhat consoled, the priests left the church and returned to their masters.

That night Saint Phanourius appeared to the three masters and ordered them to set the priests free so that they could serve the Church, or he would punish them. The Moslems ignored the saint's warning, believing the vision to be the result of sorcery. The cruel masters bound the priests with chains and treated them even worse than before.

Then Saint Phanourius went to the priests and freed them from their shackles, promising that they would be freed the next day. Appearing once more to the Moslems, the holy martyr told them severely, "If you do not release your slaves by tomorrow, you shall witness the power of God!"

The next morning, all the inhabitants of the homes where the priests were held awoke to find themselves blind, paralyzed, and in great pain. They considered what they were to do, and so decided to send for the priests. When the three priests arrived, they asked them whether they could heal them. The priests replied, "We will pray to God. May His will be done!"

Once more Saint Phanourius appeared to the Hagarenes, ordering them to send to the church a document granting the priests their freedom. He told them that if they refused to do this, they would never recover their sight or health. All three masters wrote letters releasing the priests, and sent the documents to the church, where they were placed before the icon of Saint Phanourius.

Before the messengers returned from the church, all those who had been blind and paralyzed were healed. The priests joyfully returned to Crete, carrying with them a copy of the icon of Saint Phanourius. Every year they celebrated the Feast of Saint Phanourius with deep gratitude for their miraculous deliverance.

The saint's name sounds similar to the Greek verb "phanerono," which means "to reveal" or "to disclose." For this reason, people pray to Saint Phanourius to help them find lost objects. When the object is recovered, they bake a sweet bread and share it with the poor, offering prayers for the salvation of saint's mother. Her name is not known, but according to tradition, she was a sinful woman during her life. Saint Phanourius has promised to help those who pray for his mother in this way.



PRAYERS	Birthdays, Names-days, & Anniversaries	SCRIPTURE THIS WEEK
<i>For Those Who Have Fallen Asleep</i>		<b>Church Lectionary</b>
<p>Newly Departed Nikoli, Newly Departed Alex, Newly Departed James, Priest George, Andrew</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>August 20 - 26 Denise Gormly (B) Lydia Shaloka (B) Rdr. Greg Shaloka (B) Dcn. Greg &amp; Kathryn Vrato (A)</p> <p><b><u>Seven-Day Vigil Candles</u></b></p>	<p><u>Today</u> 1 Corinthians 9:2-12 Matthew 18:23-35</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, Angeliki, Melod, Olgay, Ruth, Fr. Jerry, Naomi, Terry, Naomi, Annette, Tatiana, Aleena, Lester Jr., Natalia, Otari, Lasha, Fr. Nikolas, Imani, Gabriel, Aaron, Jordany, Nassan, Alqiviadhi, Marina, Sophia, Fr. Maxwell,</p>	<p>Llukan Dylgjeri – health Michael Mogilevich - 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><u>Monday</u> 2 Corinthians 5:10-15 Mark 1:9-15</p> <p><u>Tuesday</u> 2 Corinthians 5:15-21 Mark 1:16-22</p>
<i>Prayers In General</i>		
<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, Sophia, Michael, Rafael, Bob, Barbara, Sandra, Enoch, John, Victoria, Melenie, Grace, Michael, Barbara, Giorgi, Molly, Jim, Chloe, Alma-Anastasia, Marianthi, Marsha, Ann,</p>		<p><u>Wednesday</u> Philippians 2:5-11 Luke 10:38-42; 11:27-28 2 Corinthians 6:11-16 Mark 1:23-28</p> <p><u>Thursday</u> 2 Corinthians 7:1-10 Mark 1:29-35</p>
<i>[To be inserted after the petition for the living]</i>		
<p>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><u>Friday</u> 2 Corinthians 7:10-16 Mark 2:18-22</p>
<i>[Petitions at Augmented Litany]</i>		
<p>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><u>Saturday</u> 1 Corinthians 1:26-29 Matthew 20:29-34</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>August</b> 20 Sharon Spause 27 Tina Marlos Tsiadis</p> <p><b>September</b> 03 Bacon Memorial 10 Murianka Memorial 17 Douris Memorial 24 Tish Deslogese</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><b><u>Reading the Bible in a Year</u></b></p> <p>Aug 20: Tobit 1-5 Aug 21: Tobit 6-10 Aug 22: Tobit 11-14 Aug 23: Judith 1-4 Aug 24: Judith 5-8 Aug 25: Judith 9-12 Aug 26: Judith 13-16</p>

## Playing Pretend Christian

August 14, 2023 · Fr. Barnabas Powell



It's easy to do! And that should be your first clue that something is very deeply wrong with you! Yes, you. Actually, I mean me!

I'm talking about the ease at which we will say we believe and then live as if that statement isn't true at all! It's easy to do; just get cut off in traffic and see how quickly your pious words ring hollow in the face of your losing your peace over traffic!

It's easy to fall into that way of living. And there is an ugly word that describes this tendency of we humans to say we believe and then turn around and act in the opposite manner – Hypocrite!

Look at our Gospel Lesson this morning in Matthew 23:13-

22:

*The Lord said to the Jews who had come to him, “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for you devour widows’ houses and for a pretense you make long prayers; therefore you will receive the greater condemnation. But woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! because you shut the kingdom of heaven against men; for you neither enter yourselves, nor allow those who would enter to go in. Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for you traverse sea and land to make a single proselyte, and when he becomes a proselyte, you make him twice as much a child of hell as yourselves. Woe to you, blind guides, who say, ‘If any one swears by the temple, it is nothing; but if any one swears by the gold of the temple, he is bound by his oath.’ You blind fools! For which is greater, the gold or the temple that has made the gold sacred? And you say, ‘If any one swears by the altar, it is nothing; but if any one swears by the gift that is on the altar, he is bound by his oath.’ You blind men! For which is greater, the gift or the altar that makes the gift sacred? So he who swears by the altar, swears by it and by everything on it; and he who swears by the temple, swears by it and by him who dwells in it; and he who swears by heaven, swears by the throne of God and by him who sits upon it.”*

This passage is one of my favorite passages that we often read during Holy Week. It is read at the time we are remembering how the Lord confronted the leaders who were supposed to be pious and honest with the fact that they were impious and dishonest. That truth-telling to the guys in charge got Jesus in a lot of trouble.

And here in this passage, the Lord delivers several “woes” to the Pharisees. Remember, the Pharisees were the most strict and the most observant of the whole of Tradition. They were the Orthodox of the Faith in Jesus’ day. And the Lord confronts them!

His first Woe” to this group concerns how these so-called “very religious” people treated the helpless and needy. These “very religious” people were “devouring” the homes of widows. What a powerfully colorful phrasing. What could be worse than taking the home from a widow? And, especially in that culture, when a woman lost her husband in death, she was often made impoverished by this sad event. But Jesus confronts these “very religious” people and says they take advantage of the weak and needy then turn around and make a show of long prayers. Disgusting! And then the Lord tells them they would receive “the greater condemnation.” Let’s all agree, we don’t like these people!

The next Woe hits a little closer to home. These “very religious” people were not willing to enter the Kingdom of God. But they didn’t stop there with their cowardice. No! They then proceeded to prevent others from coming into the Kingdom as well!

Then Woe #3 accuses these “very religious” people of going out of their way to make others “very religious” people like themselves but twice as bad!

Woe #4 sees the Lord finally calling these “very religious” people for what they truly were – “blind guides.” He

reveals that they were really nothing but money-loving monsters to the point that they considered the Holy Place nothing, but the offering brought to the Holy Place everything.

Jesus wasn't pulling any punches with these leaders at all. And we all agree, we don't like these people, those lousy Pharisees!

But wait, before we jump on the bandwagon hating on "those very religious" people, let's check our own hearts. Do I come to church often but neglect to be generous to those in need? Do I ever live in such a way that those who see my life decide not to be Orthodox because of my choices and priorities? Have I ever worked really hard to convince someone else to adopt my opinions or perspective and those opinions and perspectives were more important to me than the Faith? What about times when I've been afraid of giving sacrificially because I valued my physical comfort more than my trust that God would take care of me? Maybe I'm not so different than these Pharisees that Jesus clearly confronts. Time to repent!

As we approach the Feast of the Dormition tomorrow, the Church has us call to mind the great Prophet Micah. St. Micah the Prophet served the people of Israel 8 centuries before the coming of Christ, and he marked his ministry with the same kind of straightforward preaching that Jesus displays today. He confronted the kings of Judah with their hypocrisy and demanded that these leaders do more than pay lip service to the wisdom of God.

Today, it's easy to see the hypocrisy in others and say "naughty, naughty" to them. It's much more difficult to allow the wisdom of God to confront the hypocrisy in my own soul. But that's where we each have to start if our words and our actions are ever going to be in sync! I have to start with my own heart, and my own life, and allow the Holy Spirit to uncover WHY I say one thing but then do another. I will only, truly, have a real and Normal Orthodox Life when I start facing my own hypocrisy!

### **Prayer for the Week**

**With the Holy Spirit's beams were you enlightened, setting forth in prophecy the condescension of Christ God, O blest Micah; and by His grace we who revere you are saved from eternal death.**

*<https://blogs.ancientfaith.com/faithencouraged/2023/08/playing-pretend-christian/>*



## **I Once was Lost, but now I am Found (Luke 15:10)**

If we allow ourselves to belittle anyone, either because of their appearance or because of their state in life, we dismiss the truth that God can, in His Divine Providence, transform anyone into a saint. The person who seems to have succumbed to a worldly life, appearing covered in tattoos, nose rings, and orange hair, could be in the process of coming into an awareness of God, and our judging them, or shunning them, could hamper this process. Human weakness can be changed by divine power. We must recognize this truth so that we never condemn another, or judge another.

We must always remember that it is God Who has shown mercy on us, and it is this same God Who wishes that all come to the knowledge of the truth and be saved. He is able to help all. "And if in His providence He does not deliver all men together from their passions, yet like a good and loving physician, He heals with individual treatment each of those who are trying to make progress (St. Maximos the Confessor)." If we judge others by their appearance, or by their lifestyle, we forget that we belong to Christ because He first loved us. It was I who was lost but have been found.

With love in Christ,  
Abbot Tryphon

*<https://abbottryphon.com/belittle-no-one-2/>*



## June/July Events

### August

20 – 10:00am Divine Liturgy  
23 – 7:15pm Bible Study via GoogleMeets  
27 – 10:00am Divine Liturgy (Education Sunday)  
30 – 7:15pm Bible Study via GoogleMeets

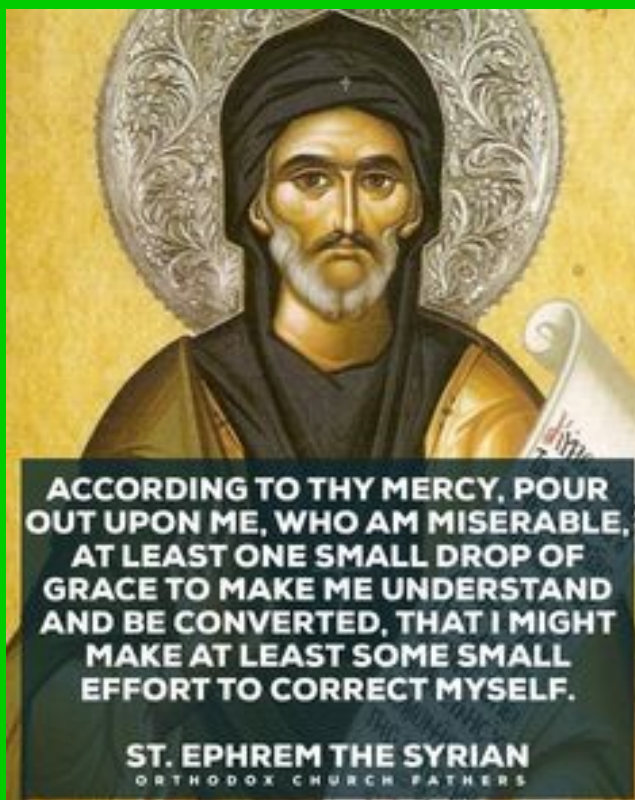
### September

03 – 10:00am Divine Liturgy  
06 – 7:15pm Bible Study via GoogleMeets  
08 – 9:00am Divine Liturgy  
*Feast of the Nativity of the Most Holy Theotokos*  
6:00pm Fun Night  
10 – 10:00am Divine Liturgy  
13 – 7:00pm Vespers Liturgy  
*Feast of the Exultation of the Precious Cross*  
17 – 10:00am Divine Liturgy  
20 – 7:15pm Bible Study via GoogleMeets  
24 – 10:00am Divine Liturgy (Education Sunday)  
27 – 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 Time is Now to Get Young Students the Supplies They Need to Learn!**

***WE HAVE REACHED HALF OF OUR \$600 MINIMUM GOAL! THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROSITY!***

The upcoming school year is right around the corner, but there is still time for you to join our Back-to-School Backpack and Supply Kit Drive!

So far, 39 parishes across the country have donated over 960 supply kits and 1,960 backpacks so children can have all that they need to be successful in school.

With child poverty rates hovering at about 17% nationwide, chances are that you or your kids cross paths with a child whose family struggles to provide these essential items.

By joining FOCUS North America's Back-to-School Backpack and Supply Kit Drive, you can be the answer to prayer for a young student, but the time to act is now! September 1st is the deadline for making an impact in the life of a child.

Please consider a donation to the FOCUS (Fellowship of Orthodox Christians United to Serve) Back to School Backpack Program. We hope to assist students in the School District of Philadelphia by providing them with new backpacks filled with school supplies. A donation of \$25 will cover the cost of 1 backpack filled with supplies.

You may donate by a check to Ss. Peter and Paul Orthodox Church with "2023 Backpack Program" written on the memo line, or cash, either of which may be given to Tina Tsiadis, [kmarlos@me.com](mailto:kmarlos@me.com) or 330-933-6987. Donations will be accepted until September, 2023. Donations can also be made through Venmo, just make sure that they are marked for the Backpack Program.

# CHILDREN BAPTIZED DURING ALBANIAN ORTHODOX SUMMER CAMP

*Apollonia, Fier County, Albania, August 7, 2023*



*Photo: orthodoxianewsagency.gr*

Every year, the Albanian Orthodox Church holds summer camps throughout the country, and these camps often help dozens of children convert to Christ in His Holy Orthodox Church.

In July 2019, OrthoChristian reported about the mass Baptism of 11 boys who were participating in a Church camp.

And this year, more than a dozen children were baptized just during the camps run by one diocese.



*Photo: orthodoxianewsagency.gr*

With the blessing of His Eminence Metropolitan Nikola of Apollonia and Fier, the diocese ran a daily camp this summer, during which 16 children were baptized, reports the Diocese of Apollonia and Fier. 12 children were baptized in a village near Berat in November 2019, and another nine in another village later that month. More than a dozen women were also baptized in August 2021.