

Sts. Peter and Paul Albanian Orthodox Church

First-enthroned of the apostles, teachers of the universe: Entreat the Master of all to grant peace to the world, and to our souls great mercy!

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June 13, 2021

SUNDAY OF THE HOLY FATHERS OF THE FIRST ECUMENICAL COUNCIL AFTERFEAST OF THE ASCENSION

Today 10:00am Divine Liturgy and
Baptism
Wed. 16 7:15pm Bible Study with
GoogleMeet
Sun. 20 10:00am Divine Liturgy
Feast of Pentecost

One must be baptized and chrismated an Orthodox Christian to receive Holy Communion. Guests are invited to receive a blessing at the chalice and partake of the post-Communion bread (Antidoron).

Fast Days: Wednesday and Friday (fasting from meat, fish, eggs, and dairy as you are able. Wine and oil are allowed)

Troparion – Tone 6 (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.*

Kontakion – Tone 6 (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!”*

Prayers for those in our Sts. Peter and Paul community (parishioners, family, friends) can be listed for remembrance in our litanies during the Liturgy. Feel free to give names to Fr. Nicholas - please indicate how each person listed is connected to us (parishioner, family, friend, etc.), as well as why we are praying for them (health, memory, travel, etc.).

Confessions can be heard by appointment. If you need, I will come to you during the week. Please do not hesitate to call for a time to drop by the church or to have me visit you.

Remembrances for both the living and the dead during the prayers of preparation of the Eucharistic Lamb and during the Augmented Litany should be given the week before the desired remembrance so that the names can be put into the bulletin and given to the Deacons for the prayers. Any names of the living that are not marked as sick or traveling will be listed under general prayers.

SCRIPTURE THIS WEEK

Church Lectionary

Today

Acts 20:16-18, 28-36
John 17:1-13

Monday

Acts 21:8-14
John 14:27-15:7

Tuesday

Acts 21:26-32
John 16:2-13

Wednesday

Acts 23:1-11
John 16:15-23

Thursday

Acts 25:13-19
John 16:23-33

Friday

Acts 27:1-44
John 17:18-26

Saturday

Acts 28:1-31
John 21:15-25

Reading the Bible in a Year

June 13: Proverbs 29-31
June 14: Eccl 1-4
June 15: Eccl 5-8
June 16: Eccl 9-12
June 17: Song 1-4
June 18: Song 5-8
June 19: Isaiah 1-4

Children's Word

SAINT ANTIPATER BISHOP OF BOSTRA

If you had a map, you could find New York on it, couldn't you? How about London? Moscow? How about Bostra? Bostra? Have you heard of it?

Bostra was an important city long ago. It's in the country of Syria, where there were once many Christians. Bostra had its own bishop, and in the year 451, that bishop was named Antipater.

Saint Antipater was part of another important bishops' meeting (like we celebrate today). He wrote lots of things, but we only have a little bit of it today.

We don't know too much about Saint Antipater, but we do know that he loved the Church so much. He was another bishop who wanted to make sure that the Christian Church taught the right thing, the one true faith. We can pray to him to help guide our Orthodox Church on the right path! We remember St. Antipater today, June 13th.

How can you find out if you are living within the will of God? Here is the sign: If you are troubled about any thing, this means that you have not completely given yourself over to the will of God. A person who lives in the will of God is not concerned over anything. And if he needs anything, he gives both it and himself over to God. And if he does not receive the necessary thing, he remains calm nevertheless, as if he had it. The soul which has been given over to the will of God is afraid of nothing, not of thunder nor of thieves - nothing. But whatever happens, she says, "Thus it pleases God." If she is sick, she thinks: this means that I need to be sick, or else God would not have given it to me. Thus peace is preserved in both soul and body.

-St. Silouan the Athonite

Like Father, Like Son

Do you listen to your parents? Always? Do you do what they want you to do? Always? Do you always try to make them happy? Always?

Well, sometimes it's hard to always listen to your mother and father, to always do what they ask, to always make them happy. But in the Gospel today, we hear a prayer that our Lord, Jesus Christ, prayed to His Father. Jesus showed that He always listened to His Father. Jesus always did what He came to earth to do. Jesus always did what He was supposed to do.

In that prayer, Jesus says that He has finished His work. And what was His work? Well, it was to show the world how much God loves us. It was to give the world eternal life, to invite us to be with Him forever in heaven. That was Christ's job here, and He did it perfectly.

We know that Jesus Christ is perfect. He's the one person who never made any mistakes. But remember, He was a person, too! He didn't like to be hurt. He didn't like to be made fun of. He didn't like to be sad. But He did what God the Father wanted...always. Let's ask Him to help us listen to God, too!

June

13 - 10:00am Divine Liturgy with Baptism

16 - 7:15pm Bible Study with GoogleMeet

20 - 10:00am Divine Liturgy *Feast of Pentecost*

23 - 7:15pm Bible Study with GoogleMeet

27 - 10:00am Divine Liturgy *Feast of Ss. Peter & Paul*

30 - 7:15pm Bible Study with GoogleMeet

July

02 - 6:00pm Fun Night

04 - 10:00am Divine Liturgy with Baptism

07 - 7:15pm Bible Study with GoogleMeet

11 - 10:00am Divine Liturgy with Baptism

A Prayer for the Week

Dear Lord, Today we hear the Church sing "O Christ our God, upon fulfilling Your dispensation for our sake, You ascended in Glory, uniting the earthly with the heavenly. You were never separate but remained inseparable, and cried out to those who love You, "I am with you and no one is against you." Please help me enter into this liturgical rhythm of living every day so that I won't go to sleep to Your ultimate purpose for my life! Amen

Epistle

Acts 20:16-18, 28-36

For Paul had decided to sail past Ephesus, so that he would not have to spend time in Asia; for he was hurrying to be at Jerusalem, if possible, on the Day of Pentecost. From Miletus he sent to Ephesus and called for the elders of the church. And when they had come to him, he said to them: "You know, from the first day that I came to Asia, in what manner I always lived among you, Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood. For I know this, that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock. Also from among yourselves men will rise up, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after themselves. Therefore watch, and remember that for three years I did not cease to warn everyone night and day with tears. So now, brethren, I commend you to God and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified. I have coveted no one's silver or gold or apparel. Yes, you yourselves know that these hands have provided for my necessities, and for those who were with me. I have shown you in every way, by laboring like this, that you must support the weak. And remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that He said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'" And when he had said these things, he knelt down and prayed with them all.

Gospel

John 17:1-13

Jesus spoke these words, lifted up His eyes to heaven, and said: "Father, the hour has come. Glorify Your Son, that Your Son also may glorify You, as You have given Him authority over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as You have given Him. And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent. I have glorified You on the earth. I have finished the work which You have given Me to do. And now, O Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world was. I have manifested Your name to the men whom You have given Me out of the world. They were Yours, You gave them to Me, and they have kept Your word. Now they have known that all things which You have given Me are from You. For I have given to them the words which You have given Me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came forth from You; and they have believed that You sent Me. I pray for them. I do not pray for the world but for those whom You have given Me, for they are Yours. And all Mine are Yours, and Yours are Mine, and I am glorified in them. Now I am no longer in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to You. Holy Father, keep through Your name those whom You have given Me, that they may be one as We are. While I was with them in the world, I kept them in Your name. Those whom You gave Me I have kept; and none of them is lost except the son of perdition, that the Scripture might be fulfilled. But now I come to You, and these things I speak in the world, that they may have My joy fulfilled in themselves.

We are Called to be a Holy People

If we are to be true to our calling as the children of God, we must live in imitation of Christ. We must imitate His meekness and humility. We must love others just as did He. We must be willing to be transformed, and made whole, that others can see in us, the Light of Christ. To do this, we must pray and fast, seeking the help that only Christ can give us. That which is impossible with us, is possible with the help of Christ. Only Christ can ignite our soul for love of God, but we must cooperate by making our hearts open to Him.

We must not allow ourselves to be complacent in our journey into the Heart of God. Our Christian faith demands that we take heaven violently, storming heaven as it were. Only when we are ruthless towards ourselves, and quick to condemn ourselves as the worst of sinners, will we truly be flooded with the grace needed to be transformed and made whole. Like the Holy Apostle Paul, we must see ourselves as the worst of sinners, and like Paul must see that any good we do, is Christ in us.

Just as we light lampadas and candles before holy icons, symbolizing the Light of Christ, so too must we struggle each and every day to let the Light of Christ shine forth in us. If we live our Christian faith with little effort, the Light will be dim, and neither the angels in heaven, or those who come in contact with us, will notice anything different from the unbeliever. We are, as Christians, called to be a holy people, living "not of this world", but ever in the Kingdom that is to come.

Love in Christ,
Abbot Tryphon

Why Ascend Into Heaven Like This?

June 10, 2021 · Fr. Barnabas Powell

Today is the Feast of the Ascension, and this Feast begs the question: What is this whole ascending from the Mount of olives all about? Why didn't Jesus just "POOF" disappear and go to the Father's side? Why all these theatrics?

It is almost axiomatic that any truth or tradition sufficiently removed from its Source or Cause tends toward superstition and nostalgia. And given enough time and thoughtlessness, it can even become the exact opposite of its original intent. This is proven true time and time again across all cultures, tribes, and languages. It's just the common challenge of all people.

And when this sad state of affairs is allowed to continue unchecked and uncorrected, the group gripped by such an impoverished understanding always (and I mean "always") diminishes to the point of both irrelevance and eventual disappearance.

Look at our lesson today in Luke 24:36-53:

At that time, Jesus, having risen from the dead, stood in the midst of his disciples and said to them, "Peace to you." But they were startled and frightened, and supposed that they saw a spirit. And he said to them, "Why are you troubled, and why do questionings rise in your hearts? See my hands and feet, that it is I myself; handle me, and see; for a spirit has not flesh and bones as you see that I have." And when he said this, he showed them his hands and his feet. And while they still disbelieved for joy, and wondered, he said to them, "Have you anything here to eat?" They gave him a piece of broiled fish, and he took it and ate before them.

Then he said to them, "These are my words which I spoke to you, while I was still with you, that everything written about me in the law of Moses and the prophets and the psalms must be fulfilled. Then he opened their minds to understand the scriptures, and said to them, "Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead, and that repentance and forgiveness of sins should be preached in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things. And behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you; but stay in the city, until you are clothed with power from on high."

Then he led them out as far as Bethany, and lifting up his hands, he blessed them. While he blessed them, he parted from them, and was carried up into heaven. And they worshiped him, and they returned to Jerusalem with great joy, and were continually in the temple blessing God.

In this passage the Lord affirms His physical resurrection ("Have you anything here to eat?"); He "opened their minds to understand the scriptures" and told them to wait in Jerusalem until they received the power to carry out His command to witness to the World.

Please notice the significance of this Feast in two very important revelations: He ascended physically and He ascended slowly.

- Physically to leave the world with such a visual icon of the value, beauty, and dignity of the human body that we would never mistake it for a mere "shell" or "prison of the flesh." Jesus took His physical, human, although glorified, Body into the mid-most mystery of the Trinity – We have a Man in heaven! And that means that since we, in the Church are called the Body of Christ, we, too, will have our bodies glorified and transfigured by our intimate communion with Him Who is Glorified and Transfigured. Jesus ascended, not for Himself, but to show us our destiny in Him!
- Slowly, so He could make an open spectacle of His victory over mortality and that serpent "the prince of the power of the air." (Ephesians 2:2) Just as the priest processes the Body and Blood of Christ through the people in the Great Entrance, so our Lord "processed" His Body through the sky to inaugurate the sharing of His life to the whole world! Victory over our last enemy, death, is both accomplished and celebrated!

Today, as we celebrate this glorious Feast of the Lord, let's do the hard work of holding to this powerful icon of the Lord's physical Body ascending to the right hand of the Father. Being Orthodox on Purpose means we don't hide from this amazing miracle the Lord does for our benefit to remind us who we really are and who we are meant to be!

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 отшествии 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.

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 Святой! 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.

Veprat e Apostujve 20:16-18, 28-36

Sepse Pali kishte vendosur të lundronte pa u ndalur në Efes, që të mos humbiste kohë në Azi; sepse nxitonte që të ndodhej, po të ishte e mundur, në Jeruzalem ditën e Rrëshajëve. Nga Mileti dërgoi në Efes për të thirrur pleqtë e kishës. Kur ata erdhën tek ai, ai u tha atyre: “Ju e dini dita e parë që hyra në Azi si kam jetuar midis jush për të gjithë këtë kohë, Tregoni kujdes, pra, për veten tuaj dhe për gjithë tufën, në mes të së cilës Fryma e Shenjtë ju ka vënë ju kujdestarë që të kullotni kishën e Perëndisë, të cilën ai e ka fituar me gjakun e tij. Në fakt unë e di se, pas largimit tim, do të hyjnë midis jush ujqër grabitqarë, që nuk do ta kursejnë tufën, edhe vetë midis jush do të dalin njerëz që do të flasin gjëra të çoroditura që të tërheqin pas vetes dishepujt. Prandaj rrini zgjuar, dhe mbani mend se për tre vjet me radhë, ditë e natë, nuk pushova kurrë të paralajmëroj secilin me lot. Dhe tani, o vëllezër, unë po ju lë te Perëndia dhe te fjala e hirit të tij, që është në gjendje t’ju ndërtojë dhe t’ju japë trashëgimin në mes të të gjithë të shenjtëruarve. Unë nuk kam dashur as argjend, as ar, as rrobat e ndonjërit. Dhe ju vetë e dini se këto duar kanë punuar për nevojat e mia dhe për ata që ishin bashkë me mua. Dhe në çdo gjë ju kam treguar se, duke u munduar në këtë mënyrë, duhet të ndihmohen të lëngatët dhe të kujtohen fjalët e Zotit Jezus, i cili tha: Ka më shumë lumturi të japësh sesa të marrësh!!” Dhe, si kishte thënë këto gjëra, u ul mbi gjunjë dhe u lut me ata të gjithë.

Gjoni 17:1-13

Jezusi tha këto gjëra, pastaj i ngriti sytë drejt qiellit dhe tha: “O Atë, ora ka ardhur, përlëvdo Birin tënd, që edhe Biri yt të të përlëvdojë, sepse ti i ke dhënë pushtet mbi çdo mish, që t’u japë jetë të përjetshme të gjithë atyre që ti ia ke dhënë. Dhe kjo është jeta e përjetshme, të të njohin ty, të vetmin Perëndi të vërtetë, dhe Jezu Krishtin që ti ke dërguar. Unë të kam përlëvduar mbi tokë; unë e kam kryer veprën që më ke dhënë të bëj. Tani, pra, më përlëvdo, o Atë, pranë teje, me lavdinë që unë e kisha pranë teje para se të bëhej bota. Unë ia kam dëftuar emrin tënd njerëzve që ti m’i ke dhënë nga bota; ishin të tutë dhe ti m’i ke dhënë; dhe ata e kanë zbatuar fjalën tënde. Tani ata kanë njohur se të gjitha gjërat që ti më ke dhënë vijnë prej teje, sepse ua kam dhënë atyre fjalët që ti më ke dhënë mua; dhe ata i kanë pranuar dhe kanë njohur se me të vërtetë unë dola nga ti, dhe kanë besuar se ti më ke dërguar. Unë lutem për ta, nuk lutem për botën, po për ata që më ke dhënë, sepse janë të tutë. Dhe të gjitha gjërat e mia janë të tuat, dhe gjërat e tua janë të miat; dhe unë jam përlëvduar në to. Tani unë nuk jam më në botë, por ata janë në botë, dhe unë po vij te ti. O Atë i shenjtë, i ruaj ata në emrin tënd, ata që më ke dhënë, që të jenë një sikurse ne! Kur isha me ata në botë, unë i kam ruajtur në emrin tënd; unë i kam ruajtur ata që ti më ke dhënë dhe askush nga ata nuk ka humbur, përveç birit të humbjes, që të përmbushej Shkrimi. Por tani unë po vij te ti dhe i them këto gjëra në botë, që gëzimi im të bëhet i plotë në ta.