

THE TROPHYBEARER

Pastoral Thoughts

The other day, I watched a television show about the building of the Hoover Dam. This marvel was the child of one man, which was made possible by the co-working of three companies and was completed by countless workers. It is indeed remarkable to see such work being done. While watching this program, I realized that our salvation was also completed similarly. The death and Resurrection of Jesus Christ grant us the salvation of new life. The Grace and Descent of the Holy Spirit allow us to participate in this salvation. The saints of the Church tell us by their words and show us by their actions the way to this salvation. My brothers and sisters, in the Lord, the final feast of the Paschal period, we celebrate all those who lived the life that the Resurrected Christ, through the power of the Holy Spirit, calls us to live. Let us take a few moments to examine who these saints are, their qualities, and how we can enter their ranks.

Who are the Saints? Their occupations are varied. Some were Emperors, Patriarchs, Bishops, Priests, Clergy, Laity and Farmers. The Saints are from all walks of life. There are also different kinds of saints. Some are martyrs, fathers, mothers, righteous, elders, hierarchs, and theologians. So, we can see that anyone can be a saint.

What are the qualities of the saints? They were people of faith who believed enough to witness and die for Christ. They were people of persecution. Physical persecution in that they were fed to lions, burnt at the stake, killed by the sword, and even crucified. Psychological in that they were abandoned by loved ones and even persecuted by loved ones. They gave everything of themselves to God. They did not live a life of pleasure, cared for all men, including persecutors, and put nothing before God. They lived like God and became God-like. They gave everything of themselves to their fellow man. They loved man and tried to bring him into a relationship with God. They sold all they had and gave to the poor. By living good lives, they brought God's mercy to His people, peace to the Church, and God's compassion to men. What is their reward? Glory in that they became gods by grace by achieving the goal of humanity and being joined to the Resurrection of Christ, thus having eternal life. They received a hundredfold what they lost.

How can we become saints? The first tool in our arsenal is prayer, which is a conversation with God (both corporate and personal). Next is Holy Communion, which is food for the whole person and is the medicine of immortality. Third is fasting, which cleanses the body and the soul and shows mastery of the soul over the body. The fast of Apostles begins on Monday and offers us an excellent opportunity to use this tool. Fourth is almsgiving. Giving to the poor is like giving to Christ. Finally, it is bearing witness. Bearing witness shows what it is to be Christian by acting as though Christ is present. It makes us live as Christ even when it is difficult for Christians and non-Christians alike to act this way.

So, we can see that on this final feast, we venerate those who have incorporated the Resurrection into their lives. They gave of themselves so that others could see Christ in their lives. Some were killed, while others bore witness to old age. Their example to us is timeless. All generations who live as they live will be rewarded by being first in the Kingdom of Heaven. We can be like them only when we live like them. My Brothers and Sisters in the Lord, the time of the saints is not over. The Church constantly renews herself through present-day saints. We can also become saints by living as God calls us to live. By giving of ourselves in prayer and almsgiving, by restoring the balance within us with fasting and Holy communion, by bearing witness to this new life to others, we can inherit the rewards promised to us by Christ and hear him say, "Well done, O good and faithful servant! Enter into the joy of your Lord."



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PARISH NEWS

Epistle Readers

Anyone wishing to become an Epistle Reader, Please Contact Father Michael

Sunday, June 2, 2024:

Sunday of the Samaritan Woman: Alexa Florence

Sunday, June 9, 2024:

Sunday of the Blind Man: Loukia Constantinides

Sunday, June 16, 2024:

Sunday of the Fathers of the 1st Ecumenical Council:

Mary Rankin

Sunday, June 23, 2024:

Pentecost:

Scott Florence

Sunday, June 30, 2024:

All Saints:

Georjean Pitsoulakis

Evening Meal Volunteers

June 26, 2024:

Fr. Michael and Presbytera Maria

Constantinides

July 24, 2024:

Penny McGimpsey and Nancy N. Coin

Anyone interested in taking part in this worthwhile ministry should contact Mary Winters at 563-726-2880

PARISH COUNCIL SUNDAY DUTY SCHEDULE

Sunday, June 2, 2024: Tom Bakeris, Nick Coin, Mariellen Crosson, and Vickie Pyevich

Sunday, June 9, 2024: Mary Kay Eckert, Gus Pappas, Ted Pitsoulakis and Diana Spurgetis

Sunday, June 16, 2024: Kathy Begyn, Joe Burmeister, Dennis Spurgetis, and Mary Rankin

Sunday, June 23, 2024: Tom Bakeris, Nick Coin, Mariellen Crosson, and Vickie Pyevich

Sunday, June 30, 2024: Mary Kay Eckert, Gus Pappas, Ted Pitsoulakis and Diana Spurgetis

Sunday, June 2, 2024: Open
Sunday, June 9, 2024: Open
Sunday, June 16, 2024: Open
Sunday, June 23, 2024: Open
Sunday, June 30, 2024: Open

COFFEE HOUR HOSTS

Sunday, June 2, 2024: Open
Sunday, June 9, 2024: Open
Sunday, June 16, 2024: Open
Sunday, June 23, 2024: Open
Sunday, June 30, 2024: Open

DONATION OPPORTUNITIES

1. For those who wish to help those who are affected by the war in the middle east: <https://iocc.org/where-we-work/jerusalem-west-bank-and-gaza>
2. Have you remembered to help the needy and hungry? Please contribute food to the church. They are still running dangerously short.

LIVES OF THE SAINTS

Sunday of the Samaritan Woman (June 2)

One of the most ancient cities of the Promised Land was Shechem, also called Sikima, located at the foot of Mount Gerazim. There the Israelites had heard the blessings in the days of Moses and Jesus of Navi. Near to this town, Jacob, who had come from Mesopotamia in the nineteenth century before Christ, bought a piece of land where there was a well. This well, preserved even until the time of Christ, was known as Jacob's Well. Later, before he died in Egypt, he left that piece of land as a special inheritance to his son Joseph (Gen. 49:22). This town, before it was taken into possession by Samaria, was also the leading city of the kingdom of the ten tribes. In the time of the Romans it was called Neapolis, and at present Nablus. It was the first city in Canaan visited by the Patriarch Abraham. Here also, Jesus of Navi (Joshua) addressed the tribes of Israel for the last time. Almost three hundred years later, all Israel assembled there to make Roboam (Rehoboam) king.

When our Lord Jesus Christ, then, came at midday to this city, which is also called Sychar (John 4:5), He was wearied from the journey and the heat, and He sat down at this well. After a little while the Samaritan woman mentioned in today's Gospel passage came to draw water. As she conversed at some length with the Lord and heard from Him secret things concerning herself, she believed in Him; through her many other Samaritans also believed.

Concerning the Samaritans we know the following: In the year 721 before Christ, Salmanasar (Shalmaneser), King of the Assyrians, took the ten tribes of the kingdom of Israel into captivity, and relocated all these people to Babylon and the land of the Medes. From there he gathered various nations and sent them to Samaria. These nations had been idolaters from before. Although they were later instructed in the Jewish faith and believed in the one God, they worshipped the idols also. Furthermore, they accepted only the Pentateuch of Moses, and rejected the other books of Holy Scripture. Nonetheless, they thought themselves to be descendants of Abraham and Jacob. Therefore, the pious Jews named these Judaizing and idolatrous peoples Samaritans, since they lived in Samaria, the former leading city of the Israelites, as well as in the other towns thereabout. The Jews rejected them as heathen and foreigners, and had no communion with them at all, as the

Samaritan woman observed, "the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans" (John 4:9). Therefore, the name Samaritan is used derisively many times in the Gospel narrations. After the Ascension of the Lord, and the descent of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, the woman of Samaria was baptized by the holy Apostles and became a great preacher and Martyr of Christ; she was called Photine, and her feast is kept on February 26.

Sunday of the Blind Man (June 9)

The Lord Jesus was coming from the Temple on the Sabbath, when, while walking in the way, He saw the blind man mentioned in today's Gospel. This man had been born thus from his mother's womb, that is, he had been born without eyes (see Saint John Chrysostom, Homily LVI on Matthew; Saint Irenaeus, Against Heresies, Book V:15; and the second Exorcism of Saint Basil the Great). When the disciples saw this, they asked their Teacher, "Who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind?" They asked this because when the Lord had healed the paralytic at the Sheep's Pool, He had told him, "Sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee" (John 5:14); so they wondered, if sickness was caused by sin, what sin could have been the cause of his being born without eyes. But the Lord answered that this was for the glory of God. Then the God-man spat on the ground and made clay with the spittle. He anointed the eyes of the blind man and said to him, "Go, wash in the Pool of Siloam." Siloam (which means "sent") was a well-known spring in Jerusalem used by the inhabitants for its waters, which flowed to the eastern side of the city and collected in a large pool called "the Pool of Siloam."

Therefore, the Saviour sent the blind man to this pool that he might wash his eyes, which had been anointed with the clay-not that the pool's water had such power, but that the faith and obedience of the one sent might be made manifest, and that the miracle might become more remarkable and known to all, and leave no room for doubt. Thus, the blind man believed in Jesus' words, obeyed His command, went and washed himself, and returned, no longer blind, but having eyes and seeing. This was the greatest miracle that our Lord had yet worked; as the man healed of his blindness himself testified, "Since time began, never was it heard that any man opened the eyes of one that was born blind," although the Lord had already healed the blind eyes of many. Because he now had eyes, some even doubted that he was the same person (John 9:8-9); and it was still lively in their remembrance when Christ came to the tomb of Lazarus, for they said, "Could not this man, who opened the eyes of the blind man, have caused that even this man should not have died?" Saint John Chrysostom gives a thorough and brilliant exposition of our Lord's meeting with the woman of Samaria, the healing of the paralytic, and the miracle of the blind man in his commentaries on the Gospel of Saint John.

The Sunday of the Father's (May 4)

The heresiarch Arius was a Libyan by race and a protopresbyter of the Church of Alexandria. In 315, he began to blaspheme against the Son and Word of God, saying that He is not true God, consubstantial with the Father, but is rather a work and creation, alien to the essence and glory of the Father, and that there was a time when He was not. This frightful blasphemy shook the faithful of Alexandria. Alexander, his Archbishop, after trying in vain to correct him through admonitions, cut him off from communion and finally in a local council deposed him in the year 321. Yet neither did the blasphemer wish to be corrected, nor did he cease sowing the deadly tares of his heretical teachings; but writing to the bishops of other cities, Arius and his followers requested that his doctrine be examined, and if it were unsound, that the correct teaching be declared to him. By this means, his heresy became universally known and won many supporters, so that the whole Church was soon in an uproar.

Therefore, moved by divine zeal, the first Christian Sovereign, Saint Constantine the Great, the equal to the Apostles, summoned the renowned First Ecumenical Council in Nicaea, a city of Bithynia. It was there that the shepherds and teachers of the Church of Christ gathered from all regions in the year 325. All of them, with one mouth and one voice, declared that the Son and Word of God is one in essence with the Father, true God of true God, and they composed the holy Symbol of Faith up to the seventh article (since the remainder, beginning with "And in the Holy Spirit," was completed by the Second Ecumenical Council). Thus they anathematized the impious Arius of evil belief and those of like mind with him, and cut them off as rotten members from the whole body of the faithful.

Therefore, recognizing the divine Fathers as heralds of the Faith after the divine Apostles, the Church of Christ has appointed this present Sunday for their annual commemoration, in thanksgiving and unto the glory of God, unto their praise and honour, and unto the strengthening of the true Faith.

The Sunday of the Father's (May 4)

Honouring the friends of God with much reverence, the Prophet-King David says, "But to me, exceedingly honourable are Thy friends, O Lord" (Ps. 138:16). And the divine Apostle, recounting the achievements of the Saints, and setting forth their memorial as an example that we might turn away from earthly things and from sin, and emulate their patience and courage in the struggles for virtue, says, "Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every burden, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us" (Heb. 12:1). This commemoration began as the Sunday (Synaxis) of All Martyrs; to them were added all the ranks of Saints who bore witness (the meaning of "Martyr" in Greek) to Christ in manifold ways, even if occasion did not require the shedding of their blood.

Therefore, guided by the teaching of the Divine Scriptures and Apostolic Tradition, we the pious honour all the Saints, the friends of God, for they are keepers of God's commandments, shining examples of virtue, and benefactors of mankind. Of course, we honour the known Saints especially on their own day of the year, as is evident in the Menologion. But since many Saints are unknown, and their number has increased with time, and will continue to increase until the end of time, the Church has appointed that once a year a common commemoration be made of all the Saints. This is the feast that we celebrate today. It is the harvest of the coming of the Holy Spirit into the world; it is the "much fruit" brought forth by that "Grain of wheat that fell into the earth and died" (John 12:24); it is the glorification of the Saints as "the foundation of the Church, the perfection of the Gospel, they who fulfilled in deed the sayings of the Saviour" (Sunday of All Saints, Doxasticon of Vespers).

In this celebration, then, we reverently honour and call blessed all the Righteous, the Prophets, Apostles, Martyrs, Confessors, Shepherds, Teachers, and Holy Monastics, both men and women alike, known and unknown, who have been added to the choirs of the Saints and shall be added, from the time of Adam until the end of the world, who have been perfected in piety and have glorified God by their holy lives. All these, as well as the orders of the Angels, and especially our most holy Lady and Queen, the Ever-virgin Theotokos Mary, do we honour today, setting their life before us as an example of virtue, and entreating them to intercede in our behalf with God, Whose grace and boundless mercy be with us all. Amen.

2024 JUNE

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
						1
<p>2</p> <p>Sunday of the Samaritan Woman 8:30 a.m. Orthros 9:30 a.m. Divine Liturgy</p>	3	4	<p>5</p> <p>Fast Day 8:00 a.m. Men's Fellowship Group @ Coffee House (1315 Jersey Ridge Road, Davenport, IA) 11:00 a.m. "In-Person" Orthodox Study Forum 7:00 p.m. Zoom Orthodox Study Forum</p>	<p>6</p> <p>7:00 p.m. Book Study: "The Screwtape Letters" by C. S. Lewis (join us either in person (in our parish library) or via zoom)</p>	<p>7</p> <p>Fast Day</p> <p>6:00 p.m. Rehearsal</p>	<p>8</p> <p>+Sacrament</p>
<p>9</p> <p>Sunday of the Blind Man 8:30 a.m. Orthros 9:30 a.m. Divine Liturgy</p>	10	11	<p>12</p> <p>Fast Day 8:00 a.m. Men's Fellowship Group @ Coffee House (1315 Jersey Ridge Road, Davenport, IA) 11:00 a.m. "In-Person" Orthodox Study Forum 7:00 p.m. Zoom Orthodox Study Forum</p>	<p>13</p> <p>The Ascension of the Lord 8:30 a.m. Orthros followed by the Divine Liturgy at Assumption Church 7:00 p.m. Book Study: "The Screwtape Letters" by C. S. Lewis (join us either in person (in our parish library) or via zoom)</p>	<p>14</p> <p>Fast Day 8:00 a.m. Women's Fellowship Group @ Coffee House (1315 Jersey Ridge Road, Davenport, IA) 6:00 p.m. Rehearsal</p>	<p>15</p> <p>+Sacrament</p>
<p>16</p> <p>Sunday of the Fathers of the 1st Ecumenical Council 8:30 a.m. Orthros 9:30 a.m. Divine Liturgy</p>	17	<p>18</p> <p>6:30 p.m. Parish Council Meeting</p>	<p>19</p> <p>Fast Day 8:00 a.m. Men's Fellowship Group @ Coffee House (1315 Jersey Ridge Road, Davenport, IA) 11:00 a.m. "In-Person" Orthodox Study Forum 7:00 p.m. Zoom Orthodox Study Forum</p>	<p>20</p> <p>7:00 p.m. Book Study: "The Screwtape Letters" by C. S. Lewis (join us either in person (in our parish library) or via zoom)</p>	<p>21</p> <p>Fast Day</p>	<p>22</p> <p>Saturday of Souls 8:30 a.m. Orthros followed by the Divine Liturgy</p>
<p>23</p> <p>Pentecost 8:30 a.m. Orthros 9:30 a.m. Divine Liturgy</p>	<p>24</p> <p>Fast Free</p>	<p>25</p> <p>Fast Free</p>	<p>26</p> <p>Fast Free 8:00 a.m. Men's Fellowship Group @ Coffee House (1315 Jersey Ridge Road, Davenport, IA) 11:00 a.m. "In-Person" Orthodox Study Forum 7:00 p.m. Zoom Orthodox Study Forum</p>	<p>27</p> <p>Fast Free</p> <p>7:00 p.m. Book Study: "The Screwtape Letters" by C. S. Lewis (join us either in person (in our parish library) or via zoom)</p>	<p>28</p> <p>Fast Free</p>	<p>29</p> <p>Saints Peter and Paul 8:30 a.m. Orthros followed by the Divine Liturgy at Saint George</p>
<p>30</p> <p>Sunday of All-Saints Synaxis of the 12 Apostles 8:30 a.m. Orthros 9:30 a.m. Divine Liturgy</p>						

2023 ANNUAL IMPACT REPORT



METROPOLIS
OF CHICAGO



IN THIS ISSUE:

- Highlighting the Vision for Growth
- Budget and finance overview
- Sacramental trendlines for the year
- Reflections from parish priests
- Ministry/Program successes
- Interviews and community photos
- AND SO MUCH MORE!



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