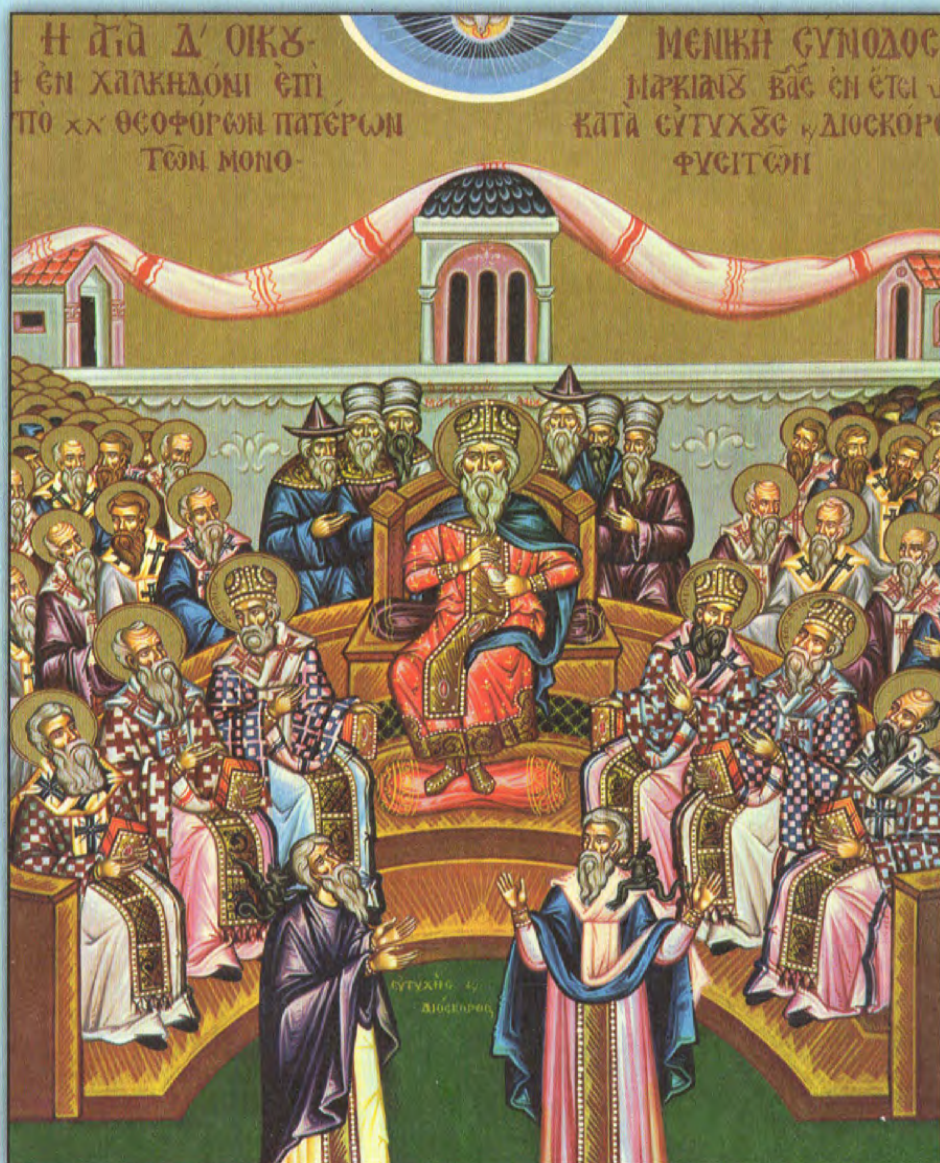


## FATHERS OF THE FIRST SIX ECUMENICAL COUNCILS



*Icon of Fathers of the First Six Ecumenical Councils*



**July 17, 2016**

**9<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST - TONE 8**

*SUNDAY OF THE HOLY FATHERS OF THE FIRST SIX ECUMENICAL COUNCILS  
THE HOLY GREAT MARTYR MARINA*

**SCHEDULE OF SERVICES FOR THE WEEK OF JUNE 18 – JULY 24**

**PLEASE NOTE:** There will be **NO** vespers during the Summer months unless noted in the bulletin.

SUNDAY, JULY 24 – *10<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST; THE HOLY PASSION-BEARERS BORYS AND HLIB, NAMED IN BAPTISM  
ROMAN AND DAVID; THE HOLY MARTYR CHRISTINA OF TYRE*

9:30 AM – Divine Liturgy For All Parishioners

### **Blessing of Automobiles today**

It is a custom of Eastern Christians to have their cars blessed both when newly acquired and on or near the feast of the Prophet Elias (July 20<sup>th</sup>), as he ascended into heaven on a fiery chariot. The blessing will take place immediately after the Divine Liturgy today.

### **EPARCHIAL SOBOR**

On September 24, there will be an Eparchial Sobor (gathering) held in Chicago at the Cenacle Retreat House. Bishop Bohdan Danylo from Parma will be presiding. The subject will be the “Vibrant Parish” program established by Patriarch Sviatoslav for the entire Church. Each parish must send at least 2 lay representatives along with the pastor. Cost includes airfare and a 1 night stay (\$105.00) at the Cenacle

Between now and Mid-September there will be a special collection taken at each Sunday Liturgy to raise funds for this very important event. Please be generous!

### **Sin Is Not A Legal Problem – Athanasius and the Atonement** *Fr. Stephen Freeman*

I often struggle when people speak of their “sins.” Indeed, it is not unusual to be asked, “Is \_\_\_\_\_ a sin?” The question always makes me feel like a lawyer.

Imagine that, instead of a doctor, you have a lawyer whom you consult for your medical problems. You are having trouble breathing. You’re short of breath and occasionally you cough up blood. You go to your doctor (lawyer) and he examines you. He doesn’t listen to your chest, take x-rays or do a scan. Instead, he asks you some careful questions.

“Have you ever smoked?”

“No,” You answer.

“Have you ever been exposed to asbestos?”

“No,” you reply again. His questions continue in a similar manner.

“Have you always tried to take good care of your health, eaten correctly, and exercised?”

“Yes,” you say.

“Well, then,” he concludes. “I see no problem here.”

“But I can barely breathe and sometimes I cough up blood.”

“Well, clearly it’s not your fault, so I wouldn’t worry too much about it. But how’s that bunion we discussed last time? Have you become truly sorry for buying those cheap shoes?”

Sin is not a legal problem because God is not a lawyer (and neither is a priest if he knows his business). Sin is a death problem. It’s far more like a disease than anything else. St. Athanasius offers this important observation in one of the most central texts in all of patristic thought:

*But men, having turned from the contemplation of God to evil of their own devising, had come inevitably under the law*



of death. Instead of remaining in the state in which God had created them, they were in process of becoming corrupted entirely, and death had them completely under its dominion. For the transgression of the commandment was making them turn back again according to their nature; and as they had at the beginning come into being out of non-existence, so were they now on the way to returning, through corruption, to non-existence again. The presence and love of the Word had called them into being; inevitably, therefore when they lost the knowledge of God, they lost existence with it; for it is God alone Who exists, evil is non-being, the negation and antithesis of good. By nature, of course, man is mortal, since he was made from nothing; but he bears also the Likeness of Him Who is, and if he preserves that Likeness through constant contemplation, then his nature is deprived of its power and he remains incorrupt. So is it affirmed in Wisdom: "The keeping of His laws is the assurance of incorruption." (On the Incarnation, 1.4).

Though the words, "law," "transgression," "commandment," are used in this passage, they do not govern its meaning. Instead, Athanasius gives them a different understanding. As many of the Fathers would do following him, St. Athanasius equates existence with goodness. God is the only truly existing One. Created in His likeness, we are created with a view towards eternal life. When we broke communion with God through sin, we let loose a principle of "corruption" (literally "rot") in our lives. Sin is thus given the meaning of death and corruption, a movement towards non-existence, a return to the dust from which we were made.

**That process of death and corruption is not a punishment – it is a consequence.** God does not say, "In the day you eat of it, I will kill you." He warns, "You will surely die." Athanasius again:

*But since the will of man could turn either way, God secured this grace that He had given by making it conditional from the first upon two things— namely, a law and a place. He set them in His own paradise, and laid upon them a single prohibition. If they guarded the grace and retained the loveliness of their original innocence, then the life of paradise should be theirs, without sorrow, pain or care, and after it*

*the assurance of immortality in heaven. But if they went astray and became vile, throwing away their birthright of beauty, then they would come under the natural law of death and live no longer in paradise, but, dying outside of it, continue in death and in corruption. This is what Holy Scripture tells us, proclaiming the command of God, "Of every tree that is in the garden thou shalt surely eat, but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil ye shall not eat, but in the day that ye do eat, ye shall surely die."*

"Ye shall surely die"— not just die only, but remain in the state of death and of corruption. (On the Incarnation, 1.3).

Again, the text here uses the term "law," but his sense of it is not of a rule that is broken, but of a principle at work. Indeed, the translator uses the term "natural law," though the Greek actually says, "the death which is according to nature." Sometimes translators insert unnecessary confusion by the forensic mentality that has so governed Western Christian thought.

What should be noted is the interior of Athanasius' thought. For many, the very hint of law would drive them towards the notion of rules broken and punishment incurred. As such, none of the language of death, corruption, being, non-existence, would be necessary or even come to mind. But the force of everything Athanasius is saying is predicated on ontology – the question of being. The "mechanics" of sin are understood in terms of being and the loss of communion bringing about a fall towards non-being. There is simply no use of the imagery common to forensic thought.

So, you go to your doctor and say, "I can't breathe well and I'm coughing up blood." He runs scans and tests, comes back and says, "You have cancer. I'll need to operate and do some other things." And you complain, "But I never smoked! I was never around asbestos! I took care of myself, ate well and exercised." So the doctor says, "Well, then. Legally you shouldn't have cancer, but you do. **And if I don't treat you, you'll die.**"

This is the true atonement. Being made one (at-one-ment) with the Living God, we have life, not according to reward, nor according to the law, but according to the God/Man who took our dying nature upon Himself and endured death. Trampling down death, He rose again that all who are united to Him might trample down death and rise as well.

## ЄДИНИЙ ПОРЯТУНОК

Для всіх Єдиний Порятунки.

Після чудесного нагодування п'яти тисяч людей, Ісус пішов на гору молитися, а учням сказав переплисти човном на другий бік Галилейського моря. Наступила ніч і на морі здійнялася буря. Апостоли боролися з вітром і хвилями, та не могли причалити до берега. І ось, під ранок, вони побачили постать, що ступала по воді. Апостоли від жаху закричали, бо думали, що це привид, який хоче погубити їх в розбурханому морі. Ісус заспокоїв їх словами: „Це я, не бійтеся!” Апостол Петро засумнівався, що це Господь, не вірив. І що б розвіяти сумніви попросив Ісуса дозволу прийти до Нього по воді. Спочатку Петро йшов по воді, але тому, що віра його була слабка, став тонути і закричав: „Господи, рятуй мене!” Ісус простягнув йому руку, витягнув з води і сказав: „Маловіре, чого засумнівався?”

У цьому святому Євангелії від Матея, ми маємо три повчання для нас:

1. Про Божу всемогутність – ходіння по воді і втихомирення бурі всупереч законам природи.
2. Про віру сильну і недовір'я.
3. Про допомогу і порятунок від Бога у важких обставинах життя.

На розбурханому морі апостоли почували себе покинутими і безпомічними. Але Ісус пам'ятав про них. Він зійшов з гори і не маючи човна, йшов по поверхні води, втихомирив бурю, врятував апостолів, а зокрема Петра, що сумнівався.

Чи не таке і в нас, коли життєве море приносить нам випробування, труднощі? Тоді нам здається, що Бог нас покинув, що ми одні і немає виходу, що порятунку немає і ми загинемо. Треба лише пам'ятати і вірити, що маємо Єдиний Порятунки — Ісус Христос.

Він завжди прийде нам на допомогу, коли з вірою закликаємо: „Господи, рятуй мене!” А діставши підтримку і допомогу Божу, не сумніваймося, що це Він нас врятував, не думаймо, що це збіг обставин, або неминуче. Богові віддають або все, або нічого. Бо коли ми починаємо вагатися, коли наші думки роздвоюються, тоді основа життя руйнується, вислизає з-під ніг, як у апостола Петра і тоді ми гинемо духовно, стаємо маловірами, або зовсім втрачаємо віру.

Тому відкиньмо сумніви і з вірою і надією уповаймо на поміч Божу у всіх обставинах життя. Бо, „І все, чого проситимете в молитві з вірою — одержите!” (Мт. 21,22)

## THE ONLY SALVATION

There is only One Salvation for everyone.

After miraculously feeding five thousand people, Jesus went up the mountain to pray. He told his disciples to take the boat and sail to the other side of the Sea of Galilee. Night was approaching and a storm arose on the sea. The apostles fought with the high winds and waves but could not reach the shore. Just before dawn, they saw a figure walking on the water. The apostles cried out in fear for they thought that this was a ghost which wanted to drown them in the stormy sea. Jesus calmed them, saying: "It is I, do not be afraid!" The apostle Peter doubted that this was the Lord; he did not believe. In order to dispel his doubt, Peter asked Jesus to allow him to walk on the water towards Him. At first, Peter walked easily on the water, but because his faith was weak, he began to sink and cried out: "Lord, save me!" Jesus extended His hand and pulled Peter out of the water and said: "How little faith you have! Why did you falter?"

In this Holy Gospel according to Matthew, we find three teachings:

1. How almighty God is - walking on the water and calming the stormy sea, able to control the laws of nature.
2. About strong faith and distrust.
3. About help and rescue from God during the difficult times of our life.

On the stormy sea, the apostles felt abandoned and helpless. But Jesus remembered them. He came down from the mountain, and not having a boat, He walked across the turbulent water, saved the apostles, especially Peter, who doubted.

Is it not the same with us, when the sea of life brings us trials and difficulties? Then it seems to us that God has abandoned us, that we are alone and have no way out, that there is no rescue and we will die. We need to remember and believe that we have One Salvation – Jesus Christ.

He will always come to our rescue when we ask in faith: "Lord, save me!" And, receiving God's support and help, let us not doubt that it is He Who saved us, thinking that this was coincidence or inevitable. We give God everything or nothing. For when we begin to falter, when our thoughts are divided, then the basis of life is ruined, it slides out from under our feet. Then, like the apostle Peter we will die spiritually, abandoning our faith or losing it completely.

Let us cast out doubt and, with faith and hope, rely on the help of the Lord in all aspects of life. For, "You will receive all that you pray for, provided you have faith!" (Mt. 21, 22)

We are in the process of forming the following committees: Pastoral, Finance, Stewardship, and Social. Council members: must be 18 years old or older; must be a Catholic in good standing; would be required to attend one monthly Council meeting. It is hoped that membership of all four Councils will be determined by the end of July. Since membership on any of these committees places one in a leadership role, it carries with it a responsibility of currently being an active committed parishioner.

### ПРИГАДУЄМО УСІМ ПАРАФІЯНАМ

*Щоб гідно приймати Святі Тайни парафіянин повинен жити за правилами віри та поважно підготуватися. Добрі (віддані) парафіяни є ті котрі:*

1. В неділі й свята беруть участь в Святій Літургії
2. Знають загальні правди й молитви нашої віри
3. Записані до парафії
4. Жертвують час, таланти і матеріально підтримують парафію і заповнили щорічне заповнення пожертви

### A REMINDER TO ALL PARISHIONERS

*Reception of the Sacraments requires the committed practice of the faith and serious preparation. Committed parishioners are those who:*

1. Attend Divine Liturgy on all Sundays and Feast Days
2. Know and understand the basic prayers and tenets of our faith
3. Have enrolled in the parish
4. Give of their time, talents and financial resources and have filled out the annual pledge form

### **WHAT IS A FIRST-PORTION GIVER?**

A First-Portion Giver is a believer who offers a first-portion of his time, talent, and financial resources out of grateful recognition of the fact that all he has, he holds in trust from God.



**TIME**

A First Portion Giver offers a first portion of his *time*.

“Let us spur one another on toward love and good deeds. Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing. But let us encourage one another...”

Hebrews 10:24-25



**TALENT**

A First Portion Giver offers a first portion of his *talent*.

“There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit. There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. There are different kinds of working, but the same God works all of them in all men.”

1 Corinthians 12:4-6



**RESOURCES**

A First Portion Giver offers a first portion of his *treasure*.

“Concerning the collection for the saints..., on the first day of the week, each one of you should set aside a sum of money in proportion to the income God has given you...”

1 Corinthians 16:2

*This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy; Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, Traitors, heady; highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away.*

— 2 Timothy 3:1-5

How mistaken are those people who seek happiness outside of themselves, in foreign lands and journeys, in riches and glory, in great possessions and pleasures, in diversions and vain things, which have a bitter end! In the same thing to construct the tower of happiness outside of ourselves as it is to build a house in a place that is consistently shaken by earthquakes.

Happiness is found within ourselves, and blessed is the man who has understood this.

Happiness is a pure heart, for such a heart becomes the throne of God. Thus says Christ of those who have pure hearts: "I will visit them, and will walk in them, and I will be a God to them, and they will be my people." (II Cor. 6:16) What can be lacking to them? Nothing, nothing at all! For they have the greatest good in their hearts: God Himself!

*(St. Nektarios of Aegina, Path to Happiness, 1)*

*The soul that loves God has its rest in God and in God alone. In all the paths that men walk in the world, they do not attain peace until they draw nigh to hope in God.*

*(St. Isaac the Syrian, Homily 56, 89)*

## Sunday offering for July 10

Amount	Number
\$10.00	1
\$15.00	2
\$20.00	3
\$25.00	1
\$39.00	1 (loose)
\$40.00	3
\$50.00	1
\$80.00	1
\$85.00	1
\$100.00	1
\$150.00	1
\$400.00	1
<hr/>	
\$1149.00	

Parishioner Total: \$1139.00

Visitors: \$10.00

Average / parish household (42): \$14.60

Weekly Stewardship Goal: \$2200.00

**Deficit: (\$1061.00)**

**Year-to-date deficit: (\$29,072.00)**

### PARISHIONERS THAT ARE HOME BOUND



If you or a loved one cannot make it to Church, Fr. James would be more than pleased visit at your home, in the hospital, at a nursing home, or any other place. It is no inconvenience at all.

Please be sure to schedule a visit.

### Pastor:

Fr. James Bankston: (619) 905-5278

### Pastoral Council:

Vladimir Bachynsky: (619) 865-1279

Mark Hartman: (619) 446-6357

Luke Miller: (858) 354-2008

### Social Committee Chair:

Vacant

### Finance Committee:

Bohdan Kniahynyckyj: (619) 303-9698





**Українська Греко-Католицька Церква  
Святого Йоана Хрестителя  
St. John the Baptizer  
Ukrainian Greco-Catholic Church**

4400 Palm Avenue  
La Mesa, CA 91941  
Parish Office: (619) 697-5085

**Website:** [stjohnthebaptizer.org](http://stjohnthebaptizer.org)

**Pastor:** Fr. James Bankston  
[frjames@mac.com](mailto:frjames@mac.com)  
Fr. James' cell phone: (619) 905-5278

***Boast Only of the Lord***

The wise man must not boast of his wisdom, nor the strong man of his strength, nor the rich man of his riches. What then is the right kind of boasting? What is the source of man's greatness? Scripture says: The man who boasts must boast of this, that he knows and understands that I am the Lord. ... Boasting of God is perfect and complete when we take no pride in our own righteousness but acknowledge that we are utterly lacking in true righteousness and have been made righteous only by faith in Christ.

Paul boasts of the fact that he holds his own righteousness in contempt and seeks the righteousness in faith that comes through Christ and is from God. He wants only to know Christ and the power of His resurrection and to have fellowship with His sufferings by taking on the likeness of his death, in the hope that somehow he may arrive at the resurrection of the dead.

Here we see all arrogant pride laid low. Hu-

manity, there is nothing left for you to boast of, for your boasting and hope lie in putting to death all that is your own and seeking the future life that is in Christ. Since we have its first fruits we are already in its midst, living entirely in the grace and gift of God. It is God who is active within us, giving us both the will and the achievement, in accordance with his good purpose.

God rescues us from dangers beyond all human expectation. We felt within ourselves that we had received the sentence of death, so that we might not trust ourselves but in God, who raises the dead; from so great a danger did He deliver us, and does deliver us; we hope in Him, for He will deliver us again.

*St. Basil the Great*

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