

## SUNDAY OF THE FATHERS AT THE FIRST ECUMENICAL COUNCIL AT NICEA



*Icon of the Holy Fathers at the First Ecumenical Council at Nicea*



**May 28, 2017**

# **SUNDAY OF THE FATHERS OF THE FIRST ECUMENICAL COUNCIL**

## **TONE 6**

*OUR HOLY FATHER NICETAS, BISHOP OF CHALCEDON*

### **SCHEDULE OF SERVICES FOR MAY 29 – JUNE 4**

SATURDAY, JUNE 3 – FIFTH ALL SOULS SATURDAY; THE HOLY MARTYR LUCILLIAN AND HIS COMPANIONS:  
CLAUDIUS, HYPATIUS, PAUL, DIONYSIUS AND VIRGIN PAULA AT BYZANTIUM  
9:30 AM – Divine Liturgy & Panakhyda For all our departed loved ones  
6:00 PM – Great Vespers (Satisfies Sunday obligation)

SUNDAY, JUNE 4 – PENTECOST SUNDAY - THE DESCENT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT;  
*OUR HOLY FATHER METROPHANES, FIRST PATRIARCH OF CONSTANTINOPLE*  
9:30 AM – Divine Liturgy For All Parishioners

### **All Souls Saturdays**

Next Saturday is the Fifth All Souls Saturday. There will be a Divine Liturgy and Panakhyda at 9:30 AM for all our beloved departed. If you need to, please update your list with Fr. James. If you haven't already give Father a list, please write the names of all those you wish to be remembered and place in the basket in the back of the church today.

### **Warm Welcome!**

We warmly welcome all of our visitors! It's good to have you with us!

It was a sad  
and  
disappointing day  
when I discovered my  
Universal Remote Control  
did not,  
in fact,  
control the Universe.

(Not even remotely.)

### **SPECIAL PRESENTATION - JUNE 18**

In the summer of 2016, the sisters of St. Basil the Great organized week long summer camps for middle school children in four different areas in Ukraine. The sisters and seminarians collaborated with volunteers from the U.S. to teach children English language classes and visited orphanages and psychiatric institutions. The sister will be returning this summer to continue their work.

Michael Haritan, a photographer, accompanied the sisters on their trip. He will be at our parish on June 18 and will give a presentation about the trip. He will also have a presentation about his visit to the Chernobyl area. Please plan to stay for this informative event.

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### **Parish Rummage Sale**

There will be a rummage sale on Saturday, June 10 to benefit the parish. We are already accepting donations.

Volunteers are needed.

Please contact Olena Bankston at (619) 567-6967.

# Неділя свв. Отців І Вселенського Собору

*Радість Ісуса  
Йоан 17, 1 – 13*

Щойно ми почули і прийняли до своїх сердець слова молитви Ісуса. Цю молитву Він промовляє, коли наближається Його година, година смерті на хресті і воскресення, година, котра наповнює історію всього людства. Це Його «священича» молитва приношення і заступництва, з якою Він не перестає звертатися до Отця від часу свого вознесення, і саме її Святий Дух актуалізує в Церкві під час кожної Євхаристії.

Але чому Ісус промовляє цю молитву перед нами? Останні її слова виявляють нам одну з причин того: «Отче Святий!.. Тепер же іду до Тебе, і кажу те, у світі буди, щоб вони раділи моїм іменем» (Йо. 17, 11-13). Зізнаймося, що ми відразу думаємо про ту радість, яку хочемо відчувати! Але як можемо мати її «у собі», якщо спочатку зі здивуванням не усвідомимо, що йдеться про Його радість? То якою ж є ця таємнича радість Ісуса в годину, коли Він має добровільно увійти на глибину людського гріха і людської смерті?

Це насправду людська радість Сина Божого, і саме тому Він може розділити її з нами, в нашому теперішньому людському житті. Це також невичерпна радість Бога, радість Отця, Який через Святого Духа виявляє себе в людській істоті свого улюбленого Сина, яку оспівують ангели в ніч Його різдвя, і яка наповнює собою все творіння на світанку воскресення. І коли єдинородний Син переходить від цього світу і йде до того, хто послав Його, як же Він тішиться: «Отче, ось ми: я і діти, яких Ти мені дав» (див. Євр. 2, 13). Цієї радості, безконечно божественної і по-новому людської, Ісус не раз наповнювався під дією Святого Духа (див. Лк 10, 21), але коли настала година – вона триває і зараз – ми всі отримали повноту Його радості – благодать за благодать (див. Йо. 1, 16).

Але як у нас може перебувати радість Ісуса, якщо часто стаємо жертвами, а то й співучасниками таких великих терпінь і несправедливості? А радість Ісуса саме у тому, що Він узав на себе біди всього світу. В годину своєї смерті на хресті і свого воскресення Він з'єднався з нашим терпінням, прийняв його на себе, аби звільнити нас від нього. Бо Його радість – це ми, Його радість у тому, щоб любити нас, кожного зокрема, і могли давати нам життя. Його радість – це радість «доброго самарянина», що повертає життя людині, смертельно пораненій людьми. Якщо ми віримо в Його любов, Його радість дається нам, і вона може переіменувати все те, що ми терпимо. Будь-яке терпіння – абсурдне, але якщо ми несемо його з Ісусом, адже це терпіння є насправду Його, нас огортає Його любов. Його радість стає нашою радістю: разом з Ним ми можемо давати життя, любити людей, як Він нас полюбив.

А для того, щоб могли розділити з нами свою радість, Йому треба було зазнати страждання і перетерпіти людську смерть (Євр. 2, 8-9). Та якби Христос був усього лише людиною, Він не зміг би спасти нас від гріха і смерті. Лише живий Бог може перемогти смерть, лише любов зціляє рани, завдані гріхом. Христос приніс нову надзвичайну дійсність. Вона полягає в тому, що Син Божий став людиною, аби всі люди «стали учасниками Божої природи» (2 Пт. 1, 4). Саме це фундаментальне переконання апостолів проголосив І Вселенський Собор у Нікеї (325 р.): Христос є Сином Божим, і Він має одну й ту саму Божу природу, що й Отець. То ж від часу свого вознесення Ісус не перейшов куди-інде, а, залишаючись завжди з нами, дає нам життя, яке отримує від Отця. І ми йдемо по життю з вірою, адже тепер «наше життя захищене з Христом у Бозі» (Кол. 3, 3).

Єднаючись у молитві з Ісусом, наполегливо просімо Отця, щоб зіслав на нас і на всіх людей свого Духа, «життя подателя». Ісус каже: «В ім'я моє досі ви не просили нічого. Просіте ж – і ви одержите, щоб раділи вашим іменем» (Йо. 16, 24).

Жан Корбон, *Це називається світанком*, Львів, Свічадо 2007



## BAPTISM AND THE FINAL DESTRUCTION OF DEMONS

Fr. Stephen Freeman

“Final” is not a word you often hear in Christian teaching. Most Christians leave the final things until, well, the End. But this is not the language of the fathers nor of the Church. A good illustration can be found in the Orthodox service of Holy Baptism. During the blessing of the waters the priest prays:

*And grant to [this water] the grace of redemption, the blessing of Jordan. Make it the fountain of incorruption, the gift of sanctification, the remission of sins, the remedy of infirmities; the final destruction of demons, unassailable by hostile powers, filled with angelic might. Let those who would ensnare Your creature flee far from it. For we have called upon Your Name, O Lord, and it is wonderful, and glorious, and awesome even to adversaries.*

What can it possibly mean to ask that the waters be made “the final destruction of demons”?

The nature of the waters of Baptism reveals the Orthodox understanding of the world. These waters, now in a font, are none other than the waters of the Jordan. They are an incorruptible fountain and all the things we ask for. They are the final destruction of demons because they are nothing other than Christ’s Pascha. The waters of the font are Christ’s death on the Cross and His destruction of Hades. They are the resurrection of the dead.

For this reason St. Paul can say:

*Do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we should walk in newness of life (Rom. 6:3-4).*

The realism of St. Paul’s teaching on Baptism is mystical realism (to coin a phrase). These

waters become those waters. This event becomes that event. This time is now that time. Christ’s death now becomes my death. Christ’s resurrection now becomes my resurrection.

How utterly and uselessly weak is the thought that Baptism is merely an obedience to a command given by Christ! The idea that nothing happens in Baptism is both contrary to Scripture and a denial of the very nature of our salvation.

**The anti-sacramentalism (and non-sacramentalism) of some Christian groups is among the most unwittingly pernicious of all modern errors.** Thought to be an argument about a minor point of doctrine, it is, instead, the collapse of the world into the empty literalism of secularity. In the literalism of the modern world (where a thing is a thing is a thing), nothing is ever more than what is seen. Thus every spiritual reality, every mystery, must be referred elsewhere – generally to the mind of God and the believer. Christianity becomes an ideology and a fantasy. It turns religious believing into a two-storey universe.

The reality of the Incarnate God was not obvious to those around Him: no surgery would have revealed His Godhood. The proclamation of the Gospel, from its most primitive beginnings (“the Kingdom of God is at hand”), announces the in-breaking of a mystical reality. Many modern theologians misunderstand Christ’s (and St. John the Baptist’s) preaching on the Kingdom to refer to an imminent end of the age. They hear, **“The Kingdom of heaven is at hand,”** to mean, **“the End of the world is near.”** Thus we have protestant theologians creating an “interim ethic” to cover Christian activity in the “in-between” period – between Christ’s first coming and His second. **If the coming of the incarnate God into the world did not**

**fundamentally alter something, then the preaching of Jesus was in vain and radically misunderstood by His disciples.**

The Gospels presume and proclaim at every turn that in Christ, the Kingdom of God is present. Christ says, “But if I cast out demons with the finger of God, surely the kingdom of God has come upon you” (Lk 11:20). There is a mystery at work in the presence of the Kingdom. Christ makes statements such as that just quoted, but also frequently says that the Kingdom of God has come near. The Kingdom is a reality and a presence that has both come near us, and come upon us. But in neither case does it simply refer to a later “someday.” The urgency of the proclamation of the Kingdom is not caused by the soon approach of an expected apocalypse. Its preaching is urgent because its coming has already begun!

**The sacraments of the Church (indeed the Church itself) should never be reduced to “holy moments” or “instances of miracles” in the life of an otherwise spiritually inert world. If bread and wine become the Body and Blood of Christ, then the Kingdom of God has come upon us! And nothing less.**

The sacramental life of the Church is not an aspect of the Church’s life – it is a manifestation of the whole life of the Church. It is, indeed, the very character and nature of the Church’s life. The Church does not have sacraments – the Church is a sacrament. **We do not eat sacraments or just participate in the sacraments – we are sacraments.** The sacraments reveal the true character of our life in Christ. This is why St. Paul can say:

*I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live, yet not I but Christ liveth in me, etc. (Galatians 2:20)*

I am...nevertheless I...yet not I...but Christ.... This is the language of the mystical reality birthed into the world in the Incarnation of Christ. Thus we can say: This is the Body

of Christ...nevertheless you see bread...but it is not bread...but Christ’s Body sacrificed for you. This is the Hades of Christ’s death and the Paradise of His resurrection...nevertheless it is the water of Baptism...but it is not water... but Christ’s death and resurrection into which you are baptized.

And so we see the whole world – for the “whole world is sacrament” – in the words of Patriarch Bartholomew. We struggle with language to find a way to say “is...nevertheless...yet not...but is.” This is always the difficulty in expressing the mystery. It is difficult, not because it is less than real, but because of the character and nature of its reality. Modern Christian thought and language that simply dismiss the mystery and postpone its coming, or deny the character of its reality, change the most essential elements of the Christian faith and inadvertently create a new religion.

But we have been taught something different. We have been given the Final Destruction of Demons, the Mystical Supper, the Kingdom of God. Why should we look for something less?



# First Council of Nicaea

*Adapted from Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia*

The First Council of Nicaea (Greek: Νίκαια) was a council of Christian bishops convened in Nicaea in Bithynia by the Roman Emperor Constantine I in AD 325. This first ecumenical council was the first effort to attain consensus in the church through an assembly representing all of Christendom, although previous councils, including the first Church council, the Council of Jerusalem, had met before to settle matters of dispute. It was presided over by Hosius of Corduba, a bishop from the West who followed the Pope who was the bishop of Rome and the Patriarch of the West.

Its main accomplishments were settlement of the Christological issue of **the nature of the Son of God and his relationship to God the Father**, the construction of the first part of the Creed of Nicaea, establishing uniform observance of the date of Easter, and promulgation of early canon law.

## Overview

The First Council of Nicaea was the first ecumenical council of the Church. Most significantly, it resulted in the first uniform Christian doctrine, called the **Nicene Creed**. With the creation of the creed, a precedent was established for subsequent local and regional councils of Bishops (Synods) to create statements of belief and canons of doctrinal orthodoxy—the intent being to define unity of beliefs for the whole of Christendom.

Derived from Greek (Ancient Greek: οἰκουμένη οἰκουμένη “the inhabited earth”), “ecumenical” means “worldwide” but generally is assumed to be limited to the known inhabited Earth, (Danker 2000, pp. 699-670) and at this time in history is synonymous with the Roman Empire; the earliest extant uses of the term for a council are Eusebius’ Life of Constantine 3.6 around 338, which states “he convoked an Ecumenical Council” (Ancient Greek: σύνοδον οἰκουμένην συνεκρότει) and the Letter in 382 to Pope Damasus I and

the Latin bishops from the First Council of Constantinople.

One purpose of the council was to resolve disagreements arising from within the Church of Alexandria over the nature of the Son in his relationship to the Father: in particular, whether the Son had been ‘begotten’ by the Father from his own being, and therefore having no beginning, or else created out of nothing, and therefore having a beginning. St. Alexander of Alexandria and Athanasius took the first position; the popular presbyter Arius, from whom the term Arianism comes, took the second. The council decided against the Arians overwhelmingly (of the estimated 250–318 attendees, all but two agreed to sign the creed and these two, along with Arius, were banished to Illyria).

Another result of the council was an **agreement on when to celebrate Easter**, the most important feast of the ecclesiastical calendar, decreed in an epistle to the Church of Alexandria in which is simply stated:

*We also send you the good news of the settlement concerning the holy pasch, namely that in answer to your prayers this question also has been resolved. All the brethren in the East who have hitherto followed the Jewish practice will henceforth observe the custom of the Romans and of yourselves and of all of us who from ancient times have kept Easter together with you.*

Historically significant as the first effort to attain consensus in the church through an assembly representing all of Christendom, the Council was the first occasion where the technical aspects of Christology were discussed. Through it a precedent was set for subsequent general councils to adopt creeds and canons. This council is generally considered the beginning of the period of the First seven Ecumenical Councils in the History of Christianity.

**A Reminder about Standing on all Sundays  
and from Pascha to Pentecost**

This is not an innovation, rather it is the explicit reiteration of a long tradition and teaching of the early church about the nature of the celebration of the Lord's Day (i.e. Sunday.) This proscription of the church dates from the time of the Ecumenical Council of Nicaea (325 AD.) There was a divergence in practice in various places and the church identified the need to emphasize the resurrectional character of the Lord's Day. The fact that an Ecumenical Council discussed and eventually issued a Canon (rule), which has never been negated, on this subject shows the importance in the eyes of the church fathers.

To be very clear – This canon of the First Ecumenical Council applies to Every Sunday of the Year! One should **NOT** kneel during Divine Services on **ANY** Sunday (personal custom nor the practice of the Latin Church notwithstanding).

**Пригадуємо що стоїмо підчас Служби  
Божої кожної Неділі року і кожного дня  
від Великодня до Неділі П'ятдесятниці**

Це не є нова вигадка а виразне повторення стародавнього звичаю і повчання стародавньої Церкви про праведне додержування Господнього Дня (Неділя). Це повчання ще із Собору Нікеї (325р). Були різні звичаї в різних місцевостях і Церква рішила наголосити Христове Воскресення кожної Неділі. Ця справа була така важлива що Церковні Отці рішили надати закон.

Вияснюємо – Цей Канон Нікеї стосується кожної Неділі в році! Не клякаємо під час неділішньої Служби Божої (не залежно від особистого звичаю ані Римо-Католицької традиції.)

**Sunday offering for May 21**

Amount	Number
\$5.00	1
\$10.00	1
\$15.00	2
\$20.00	2
\$40.00	2
\$43.00	1 (loose)
\$50.00	1
\$75.00	1
<u>\$105.00</u>	<u>1</u>
\$438.00	

Parishioner Total: \$438.00

Average / parish household (43): \$5.62

Weekly Stewardship Goal: \$2200.00

**Shortfall: <\$1762.00>**

**PARISH COMMITTEES  
FINANCE COMMITTEE:**

Myra Heltsley  
Stephen Hojsan  
Maria Hughes

**PASTORAL COUNCIL:**

Vladimir Bachynsky  
Olena Bankston  
Gabriel Espedal  
Mark Hartman  
Luke Miller

**STEWARDSHIP (FUNDRAISING) COMMITTEE:**

Susan Avant  
John Heltsley (*fundraising consultant*)

**SOCIAL COMMITTEE**

Olena Bankston  
Olga Fedunyak  
Mary Kitt  
Michael Miller  
Olga Miller  
Lubomyra Yoldas





**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

***Revealing His Name***

When the Savior declares that He has made known the name of God the Father, it is the same as saying that He has shown the whole world His glory. How did He do this? By making Himself known through His wonderful works. The Father is glorified in the Son as in an image and type of His own form, for the beauty of the archetype is seen in its image. The only Son then has made Himself known, and He is in His essence wisdom and life, the creator of the universe; He is immortal and incorruptible, pure, blameless, merciful, holy, good. His Father is known to be like Him, since He could not be different in nature from His offspring. The Father's glory is seen, as in an image and type of His own form, in the glory of the Son.

To call God "Father" is more exact than to call Him "God." The word "God" signifies His

dignity, but the word "Father" points to the distinctive attribute of his Person. If we say "God" we declare Him to be Lord of the universe. If we call him "Father" we show the way in which He is distinct as a Person, for we make known the fact that He has a Son. The Son himself gave God the name of Father, as being in some sense the more appropriate and truer appellation, when He said, not "I and God" but I and the Father are one, and also, with reference to Himself, On him has God the Father set his seal. And when He commanded His disciples to baptize all nations, He did not tell them to do this in the name of God, but expressly ordained that they were to do it in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

*St. Cyril of Alexandria*

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