

ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST ORTHODOX CHURCH

ORTHODOX CHURCH IN AMERICA

A PARISH OF THE DIOCESE OF NEW YORK AND NEW JERSEY

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Department of
CHRISTIAN EDUCATION
ORTHODOX CHURCH IN AMERICA

The First Ecumenical Council

Today we remember the Fathers of the First Ecumenical Council, convened at Nicaea in 325. The results of the Council were very important, but so was its personal meaning for those who attended, as Father Alexander Schmemmann described:

For the first time, after centuries of semi-subterranean existence, prelates gathered from all parts of the Church, many still with the marks of wounds and mutilations received under [the persecutions of the emperor] Diocletian. The unprecedented magnificence of their reception and the hospitality and kindness of the emperor [Constantine] confirmed their joyous assurance that a new era had begun and that Christ was indeed victorious over the world. Constantine himself was the first to interpret the council in this way.

The great accomplishment of the Council was to refute Arianism, a widely-held heresy that threatened to divide the Church. It was a dispute, as the emperor said, that was "more dangerous than war and other conflicts" because it called into question Jesus' ability to be our Savior.

The Arians claimed that Jesus was not eternal, not equal to His Father, but a created being. The Church insisted that He had to be the divinely powerful Son of God in order to be able to save us. So, opposing Arianism, the Fathers of the Council at Nicaea proclaimed that Jesus Christ is of the same substance as His Father, and there was never a time when He did not exist. His perfect divinity, therefore, was able to assume perfect humanity, and save all who are human.

This teaching is squarely Biblical. In one verse of the reading

Intercessory Prayers

We pray for all our fellow parishioners, and we pray especially for those who are incapable of being with us in church. Please keep in your prayers our Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

Genevieve Bobenko, Mary Fechisin, Andrew Fabian, Edward Fedush, Mary Hadginske, Helen Kurnewitz, Margaret Lawler, Kathleen Lazorczyk, Marian Nagel, MaryAnn Rabakozi, Helen Rahnefeld, Anna Rozanovich, Nadia Sojka, Maryann Stagen, Eva Stashitsky, Ann Velebir.

chosen for this day, John 17:5, Jesus prays, "And now, Father, glorify me in thy own presence with the glory which I had with thee before the world was made." Father and Son have the same glory, and have had it forever.

Despite its clear Biblical basis, there are many who don't accept the Church's teaching, including Unitarians, Jehovah's Witnesses, and the Mormons whose work is so generously supported by the devout Marriott family's hotel empire. Even immediately after the decisive declarations of Nicaea, there was conflict. Saint Athanasius was the hero of the Council because he formulated the term "homoousion" (meaning "of one substance" and referring to Christ and His Father.) But Athanasius was hounded ever after by his Arian enemies; they managed to get him condemned and exiled.

The truth established at Nicaea remains basic to our faith. But then, as now, truth was accompanied by deceitfulness and the persecution of truth tellers. We must take comfort, as fourth century Orthodox Christians also had to do, in another verse (16:33b) from John's Gospel: "In the world you have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world."



Announcements

◆ The upcoming **Parish Council Conference** for our deanery will take place this Saturday, June 18 at Christ the Saviour Church in Paramus. Since it is Memorial Saturday, Divine Liturgy will be served at 8:30am. The first session of the conference will take place from 11am to 1pm. After lunch, the second session will be held from 2-4pm. All board of trustees members are strongly encouraged to attend this conference, since the primary topic is the changing methodology of parish financial support of the diocese and the central church administration. Our diocesan treasurer, Matushka Mary Buletza Breton will be the presenter. Please let Fr. Igor know about your plans of attending by tomorrow, Monday, June 13, since the host parish needs to know how many parishioners will be coming.

Birthday Greetings

Happy 2nd birthday to **Sofia Kseniuk**, who celebrates her birthday today, and to **Kerri Czech**, whose birthday is tomorrow. May God grant both of you good health and happiness for Many Years! Mnohaja Lita!

Welcome Visitors

We welcome all visitors to our Divine Liturgy. It is our joy to have you with us today. If this is your first visit to our parish, we welcome you and invite you to return as often as you are able.

While Holy Communion may only be received by prepared Orthodox Christians, our non-Orthodox guests are welcome to join us in venerating the Cross, receiving blessed bread at the conclusion of the Divine Liturgy, and for fellowship in our Church Hall after the service.



June 12, 2016

7th SUNDAY OF PASCHA
Holy Fathers
of the 1st Ecumenical Council
Afterfeast of the Ascension

- 8:50am – Hours
- 9:00am – Divine Liturgy
Epistle: Acts 20:16-18, 26-36
Gospel: Jn. 17:1-13
- Coffee Hour – everyone is invited for a fellowship following the service.

Schedule of Services

SATURDAY, JUNE 18 - MEMORIAL SATURDAY

5:30pm - Panikhida
6:00pm - Great Vespers with Litya

SUNDAY, JUNE 19 - HOLY PENTECOST

9:00am - Divine Liturgy & Vespers with kneeling prayers