

Saint Nicholas Serbian Orthodox Church
971 St. Clair Rd, Johnstown, PA 15905
Rev. Presbyter Dragan Vukovic
(814) 244-4063

**The Holy Fathers of the First Ecumenical Council
(06.16.2024.)**

These words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee: As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him. And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent. I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.

I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world: thine they were, and thou gavest them me; and they have kept thy word. Now they have known that all things whatsoever thou hast given me are of thee. For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me. I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine. And all mine are thine, and thine are mine; and I am glorified in them. And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are. While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name: those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the scripture might be fulfilled. And now come I to thee; and these things I speak in the world, that they might have my joy fulfilled in themselves.

God's Holy Church is currently celebrating the Feast of the Ascension of the Lord Jesus Christ with great joy. The Feast of the Ascension is a major feast of the Lord. Jesus' Ascension into heaven is worthy of believers' full attention. Jesus' presence in human bodily form was complete. Jesus always was, is and always will be. Believers now await and prepare for His glorious return and the final judgment.

Preparation for Jesus' return includes believers seeking to remain constantly united with Christ. Unity with Christ is accomplished by constant prayer. Purposeful fasting facilitates unity with Christ.

Partaking of the Precious Body and Blood of Jesus Christ unites and fills the believer with Jesus. Frequently partaking of the Precious Body and Blood assures and maintains unity with Christ.

Believers unite with Jesus Christ at Baptism. Growth in Christ is to continue throughout life. Believers grow in and through God's Holy Church. The Church provides the teachings and nourishment for the journey to God's Kingdom.

Believers active in the life in Jesus Christ experience Christ's love, goodness and mercy. The Church enables the believer's understanding of Jesus Christ to increase as the believer grows in Christ.

Maturing in Christ is a life-long experience. There is always more to know and understand about Jesus Christ. The Evangelist John said centuries ago the world could not contain the books that would be written of all the things Jesus did. (Jn.21:25)

Our relationship with Jesus Christ defines our relationship with others. The degree we love Jesus Christ is manifested in our personal relationships. The degree Jesus fills our heart, mind and soul comes alive in our relationships.

The hope we have in Jesus Christ will govern our actions. The way we prepare for Jesus Christ's return is proof of our understanding, love and respect for Jesus Christ. We are to love and forgive others as Jesus forgives and loves us.

At Baptism believers confess belief in Jesus Christ as King and as God. The days of earthly life following baptism are to be lived in fully honoring Jesus Christ as King and our God.

Jesus' teachings and standards are authoritative. By confessing belief in Jesus Christ as King and God, we are expected to make Jesus' teachings and standards increasingly a part of our daily lives.

Being mindful of Jesus' suffering and death on the Cross has a central place in the hearts and souls of believers serving Jesus as King and as God. Jesus is worthy of unending gratitude for the love demonstrated by ascending the Cross.

The Feast of the Ascension is a defining moment for believers always to consider. The Feast of the Ascensions heightens awareness of Jesus Christ's return and glorious Second Coming.

The Feast of the Ascension speaks to the urgency and importance of preparing and being prepared for Jesus' return and final judgment. Serious believers want to be in good standing with Jesus Christ at His return and final judgment.

How we live in the time ahead will influence the outcome of the great and final judgment. The remaining days of our earthly lives will be an essential part of the record for the final judgment.

Constant repentance affords believers the opportunity to remain united with Jesus Christ. Repentance is the way to prepare for the Great and Final Judgement.

Keeping the heart, mind and soul filled with love for Christ is the way to prepare.

The Lord Jesus Christ is ever-present to forgive and welcome the repentant believer.

Heeding the urgency to repent ensures the believer will be prepared and ready when Jesus returns for the Final Judgment.

No one knows the time of Christ's return. Believers are not normally aware of the moment of their last breath. Believers are behooved to use each moment of life to repent and be firmly united with Jesus Christ.

The Sunday of the Holy Fathers of the First Ecumenical Council. Holy Martyr Lucillian and those with him. June 2/June 16, 2024. Hidden Valley, Pennsylvania. Father Rodney Torbic

Sunday Of The Fathers Of The First Ecumenical Council



Introduction

The seventh Sunday after the Feast of Holy Pascha is observed by the Orthodox Church as the Sunday of the Fathers of the First Ecumenical Council. This day commemorates the 318 God-bearing

Fathers who gathered in Nicaea in 325 at the request of the Emperor, Saint Constantine the Great, to address the heresy of Arianism together with other issues that concerned the unity of the Church.

Commemoration of The Great and Holy Feast of Pascha

Arius was a protopresbyter of the Church of Alexandria, and in 315, he began to blaspheme against the Son of God saying that He was not the true God, consubstantial with the Father, but rather a work or creation of God and different from the essence and glory of the Father. He also taught that the Son of God had a beginning. These teachings shook the faithful at Alexandria. The Bishop of Alexandria, Alexander, attempted to correct Arius through admonitions, cut him off from communion, and finally deposed him in 321 through a local council. Arius continued with his heretical teachings, creating controversy and division in the churches of other cities, which led to a theological and ecclesiastical crisis throughout the Christian Church.

Moved with divine zeal and concern for unity, the Emperor Constantine the Great, equal to the Apostles, summoned the First Ecumenical Council in Nicaea, a city of Bithynia. It was in this place that the bishops of the Church gathered in 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. The Fathers composed the holy symbol of Faith, the Nicene Creed:

"We believe in one God. The Father Almighty. Maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible. And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the only begotten, begotten of the Father before all ages. Light of Light; true God of true God; begotten not made; of one essence with the Father, by whom all things were made; who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven, and was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary, and became man. And He was crucified for us under Pontius Pilate, and suffered, and was buried. And the third day He rose again according to the Scriptures; and ascended into heaven, and sits at the right hand of the Father; and he shall come again with glory to judge the living and the dead; whose Kingdom shall have no end."

The Fathers also anathematized Arius for his heretical beliefs and teachings, cutting him off from the Church.

Recognizing the divine Fathers of the First Ecumenical Council 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 honor, and unto the strengthening of the true Faith.

Icon of the Sunday of the Fathers of the First Ecumenical Council

The icon of the Sunday of the Fathers of the First Ecumenical Council depicts Saint Constantine together with the God-bearing Fathers and Saints of the Church who attended the Council and affirmed the unity of the Faith through the Nicene Creed. The Fathers are shown holding the text of the Creed, also referred to as the Symbol of Faith.

Orthodox Christian Celebration of the of the Sunday of the Fathers of the First Ecumenical Council

The Sunday of the Fathers of the First Ecumenical Council is celebrated with the Divine Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom. This is the first Sunday after the leave-taking or apodosis of Pascha, and the celebration of the Feast of the Ascension. The services of Vespers, Orthros, and the Divine Liturgy include hymns of both the Ascension and in commemoration of the Fathers.

Scripture readings for the feast are the following: At the Divine Liturgy: [Acts 20:16-18, 28-36](#) and [John 17:1-13](#).

Hymns of the Feast

Apolytikion (Plagal of the Fourth Tone)

You are greatly glorified, O Christ our God, who established our Fathers as luminaries upon the earth, and through them led us all to the true Faith. O Most compassionate, glory to You.

Kontakion (Plagal of the Fourth Tone)

The Church was strengthened into one faith through the preaching of the Apostles and the doctrines of the Fathers. The Church is robed in truth woven of the word of God from above. It teaches truth, and glorifies the great mystery of faith.

Services this Week

- **Saturday (06.22.2024.)**
 - St Cyril of Alexandria – Memorial Saturday
 - Divine Liturgy starts at 09:30 AM
- ***Pentecost – Trinity Sunday (06.23.2024.)***
 - *Divine Liturgy starts at 09:30 AM*
- **Pentecost Monday (06.24.2024.)**
 - Holy Apostles Bartholomew and Barnabas
 - *Divine Liturgy starts at 09:30 AM*
- **Pentecost Tuesday (06.25.2024.)**
 - Ven. Onuphrius the Great; Ven. Peter of Mount Athos
 - *Divine Liturgy starts at 09:30 AM*

Donations June 9, 2024

Offering - \$ 972.00 Candles - \$134.00 Donations - \$100

Large Candles

For Health of Olga Lucas from Sharon & Jim Urban
(2) IMO Devich & Lovrich Families from Tom & Carole McAllister
IMO Christine Bulich, Louis & Mary Daley from Olga Bulich
IMO Charles Bulich from Olga Bulich
IMO of Bartis & Pavich Families from Joe Bartis



TODAY – Sunday, June 16th



Birthday celebration for our Petar Vukovic who will be 7 on June 17th and Kum Peti Gjurich who will be 97 on June 18th. Join us for a Birthday Luncheon following Divine Liturgy.

 **Sunday, June 23rd** 

Please join us in celebrating Sam Ribaric's High School graduation in the church hall following Divine Liturgy
Everyone is welcome!

UPCOMING EVENTS

Band of Brothers – July 11-13th and 17 – 20th

JOIN US FOR

Taste of Serbia
SATURDAY, AUGUST 10TH 2024



Johnstown Slavic Festival – September 20-21st