

If Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain... 1 Corint. 15:14



# ST. NICHOLAS

Serbian Orthodox Church

971 St. Clair Road, Johnstown, PA 15905 ■ 814-255-1853; Parish Priest : *Rev. Dragan Zaric*



## *Sunday of the Fathers of the First Ecumenical Council*

**Kontakion** - 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.

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*Weekly Bulletin - Sunday May 14, 2017*

## **Sunday, May 15/28, 2017. Sunday of the Fathers of the First Ecumenical Council (Venerable Pachomius the Great; Venerable Achillas)**

- **Liturgical Readings:** *Gospel St. John ( 17, 1-13).*  
*Epistle: Acts.( 20:16-18, 28-36 ).*
- **Donations reserved May 21, 2017:**  
Offering \$920.00 Candles \$24.00

Donation in memory of Milos & Milka Tumbas for \$199 from Dianna Dunnington  
Building Fund Donation in memory of Dr Robert Mrkich for \$100 from Eli Cvijanovich  
111<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Donations – Kolo \$1000, Choir \$250, Men's Club \$200, \$100 from Sylvia Holt and Danica Wess. \$50 from George Raslevich, Mary Heck, Steve Purich. \$40 Suzette & Richard Gardenhour. \$30 from Olga Lucas. \$20 from Bill & Mary Kelly, Lazo Gjurich, Gary, Rose & Kristina Marinkovich. \$10 from George Lambrinos, Julia Lambrinos, Pat Niel, Helene Gleason. \$5 from Dusan Kelic  
Large Candle donations in memory of Donna Trbovich Wharton, Benjamin Kaseler, Nancy Adams, Mildred Krzanowsky and Nikola, Milka & Nick Jr Todorich

**\*\*\* Next Fish Fry is June 9<sup>th</sup>\*\*\***

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### **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**

**Troparion** -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** -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. ([www.goarch.org](http://www.goarch.org))

### **• The reading is from Acts of the Apostles 20:16-18, 28-36**

IN THOSE DAYS, Paul had decided to sail past Ephesos, so that he might not have to spend time in Asia; for he was hastening to be at Jerusalem, if possible, on the day of Pentecost. And from Miletos he sent to Ephesos and called to him the elders of the church. And when they came to him, he said to them: "Take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to care for the church of God which he obtained with the blood of his own Son. I know that after my departure fierce wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock; and from among your own selves will arise men speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after them. Therefore be alert, remembering that for three years I did not cease night or day to admonish every one with tears. And now I commend you to God and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up and to give you the inheritance among all those who are sanctified. I coveted no one's silver or gold or appar

el. You yourselves know that these hands ministered to my necessities, and to those who were with me. In all things I have shown you that by so toiling one must help the weak, remembering the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, 'it is more blessed to give than to receive.' " And when he had spoken thus, he knelt down and prayed with them all.

### **Fathers of the 1st Council**

#### **The Gospel According to John 17:1-13**

At that time, Jesus lifted up his eyes to heaven and said, "Father, the hour has come; glorify your Son that the Son may glorify you, since you have given him power over all flesh, to give eternal life to all whom you have given him. And this is eternal life, that they know you the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent. I glorified you on earth, having accomplished the work which you gave me to do; and now, Father, you glorify me in your own presence with the glory which I had with you before the world was made.

"I have manifested your name to the men whom you gave me out of the world; yours they were, and you gave them to me, and they have kept your word. Now they know that everything that you have given me is from you; for I have given them the words which you gave me, and they have received them and know in truth that I came from you; and they have believed that you did send me. I am praying for them; I am not praying for the world but for those whom you have given me, for they are mine; all mine are yours, and yours are mine, and I am glorified in them. And now I am no more in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, keep them in your name, which you have given me, that they may be one, even as we are one. While I was with them, I kept them in your name, which you have given me; I have guarded them, and none of them is lost but the son of perdition, that the scripture might be fulfilled. But now I am coming to you; and these things I speak in the world, that they may have my joy fulfilled in themselves."

St. Nicholas Serbian Orthodox Church School, May 28, 2017

#### ***How should I live my life?***

*Article by Sunday school teacher Mr. Carlos G.*

*"Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I have become sounding brass or a clanging cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, but have not love, it profits me nothing. Love suffers long and is kind; love does not envy; love does not parade itself, is not puffed up,, does not behave rudely, does not seek its own, is not provoked, thinks no evil, does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth; bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.*

*Love never fails. But whether there are prophecies, they will fail; whether there are tongues, they will cease; whether there is knowledge, it will vanish away. For we know in part and we prophesy in part.*

*But when that which is perfect has come, then that which is in part will be done away. When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things. For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part, but then I shall know just as I also am known. **And now abide faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love. Pursue love.....1Cor 13***

Soon the Church School year will be coming to a close, and we will venture on our vacations and camps. Before we end the church school year and continue our daily journey this summer, let us look at the passage that St. Paul wrote to the Corinthians. He writes that we should abide in faith, in hope, and in love, and the greatest of these is love. St. Paul does not write about love the emotion, for this type of love is temporary and goes away when trials and tribulations face us in daily life. Instead, St. Paul talks about love in the form of kindness, patience, forgiveness of others, and endurance of all hardships and sufferings for the love of our Lord, Jesus Christ. Love is the ultimate virtue for God is love; love is eternal; and love awaits us in paradise. As we approach the end of our earthly journey, we come to realize that love is the most important virtue that the soul can possess and the most important virtue that we can share with our family, with our church community, with our friends, with the poor, the sick, and the suffering.

St. Paul writes, without love we are nothing; without love, it profits me nothing. Let us look at several more examples:

What have you gained if you have all the money in the world, but have not love. You have nothing.

What have you gained if you have all the power you want, but have not love. You have nothing.

What have you gained if you are very popular, but have not love. You have nothing.

What have you gained if you are healthy, but have not love. You have nothing.

What have you gained if you win arguments all the time, but have not love. You have nothing.

What have you gained if you have your own way all the time at the expense of others, but have not love. You have nothing.

What have you gained if you wrapped up in your projects, hobbies, or selfish ambitions but have not love. You will eventually find out that you have nothing, literally nothing.

St. Paul writes the truth about love. He commands us to pursue love, for love continues into the age to come and love is fulfilling. Love is what we can take to heaven when we pass away, and love is what we can offer to our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, love God with your whole heart, mind, soul, and strength; and love your neighbor as yourself. This is how we should live our lives. Remember, in Christ, I live; in Christ, I trust, in Christ I place my hope; and in Christ I love my God and my neighbor. Ask the Lord for the grace to know and to understand how to love the way He wants us to love, for to love, is to honor the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. With love, you have everything.

All Holy Mother of God, Save Us.

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### **SAINT ACHILLEUS, BISHOP OF LARISSA**

Achilleus, this great hierarch and miracle-worker, was born in Cappadocia. He participated in the First Ecumenical Council [Nicaea, 325 A.D.] at which he shamed the heretics and, by his learning as well as by his sanctity, he commanded great astonishment. Taking a rock, St. Achilleus shouted to the Arians: "If Christ is a creation of God, as you say, then say: 'let oil flow from this rock.'" The heretics remained silent and were amazed at such a request from St. Achilleus. Then, again the saint said:

"And if the Son of God is equal to the Father, as we believe, let oil flow from this rock." And, indeed oil did flow to the amazement of all. St. Achilleus died peacefully in Larissa in the year 330 A.D.

When the Macedonian King Samuel conquered Thessaly he translated the relics of Achilleus to Prespa to an island in a lake which was called and even today is still called Achilleus or Ailus. (Prologue)