

May 31, 2009

Fr. Caleb Abetti
Priest (603.219.1711)

Susanna Toolan
President

✠ ✠ ✠ **Service Schedule** ✠ ✠ ✠

Sunday, May 31st, 7th **SUNDAY OF PASCHA – Tone 6. Fathers of the First Ecumenical Council. Afterfeast of the Ascension.** Apostle Hermes of the Seventy (1st c.). Martyr Hermias at Comana (2nd c.). Martyr Philosphus at Alexandria (3rd c.).
3rd and 6th Hours: 9:10 am.
Divine Liturgy: 9:30 am.
Epistle: Acts 20:16-18, 28-36; Gospel: John 17:1-13.

Wednesday, June 3rd

Daily Vespers, 5:30 pm. Meal and Group Study to follow: Chekhov short stories.

Saturday, June 6th

Great Vespers of the Resurrection, 5:00 pm.

Sunday, June 7th **FEAST OF THE HOLY TRINITY – Tone 7. Pentecost.** Hieromartyr Theodotus, Bishop of Ancyra (303). Hieromartyr Marcellinus, Pope of Rome, and with him Claudius, Cyrenus, and Antonina (304). Hieromartyr Marcellus, Bishop of Rome, and those with him: Sisinius and Cyriacus.

✠ ✠ ✠

**The marriage of Donna Vernal and Malcolm Sawyer will be celebrated
Sunday, June 14th at 1:00 pm. at Saint Jacob of Alaska Church.
A potluck reception will follow. There will be a sign-up list for potluck dishes.**

✠ ✠ ✠

Prospora Bakers

We need one or two more people who would like to learn to bake Prospora and are willing to make Prospora every three or four weeks. Please see David Brosell if you are interested.

✠ ✠ ✠

“God does not demand of man not to have thoughts at all passing through his mind while praying. Rather He demands that man pays no attention to them or relish them. And you, brother, do not aspire not to have your thought distracted at all, but transform it from an evil to a righteous thought. So if your mind is occupied with divine matters, this is a higher degree of prayer, but the mind cannot always be occupied with contemplating God except by frequent prayer.”

– St. Isaac the Syrian, in “The Four Books”, 1.7.8-11)

–

✠ ✠ ✠

Commemoration of the Holy Fathers of the First Ecumenical Council Commemorated on May 31 (from oca.org)

On the seventh Sunday of Pascha, we commemorate the holy God-bearing Fathers of the First Ecumenical Council.

The Commemoration of the First Ecumenical Council has been celebrated by the Church of Christ from ancient times. The Lord Jesus Christ left the Church a great promise, “I will build My Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it” (Mt. 16:18). Although the Church of Christ on earth will pass through difficult struggles with the Enemy of salvation, it will emerge victorious. The holy martyrs bore witness to the truth of the Savior's words, enduring suffering and death for confessing Christ, but the persecutor's sword is shattered by the Cross of Christ.

Persecution of Christians ceased during the fourth century, but heresies arose within the Church itself. One of the most pernicious of these heresies was Arianism. Arius, a priest of Alexandria, was a man of immense pride and ambition. In denying the divine nature of Jesus Christ and His equality with God with Father, Arius falsely taught that the Savior is not consubstantial with the Father, but is only a created being.

A local Council convened with Patriarch Alexander of Alexandria presiding, condemned the false teachings of Arius. However, Arius would not submit to the authority of the Church. He wrote to many bishops, denouncing the decrees of the local Council. He spread his false teaching throughout the East, receiving support from certain Eastern bishops.

Investigating these dissensions, the holy emperor Constantine (May 21) consulted Bishop Hosius of Cordova (Aug. 27), who assured him that the heresy of Arius was directed against the most fundamental dogma of Christ's Church, and so he decided to convene an Ecumenical Council. In 325, 318 bishops representing Christian Churches from various lands gathered together at Nicea.

Among the assembled bishops were many confessors who had suffered during the persecutions, and who bore the marks of torture upon their bodies. Also participating in the Council were several great luminaries of the Church: St. Nicholas, Archbishops of Myra in Lycia (Dec. 6 and May 9), St. Spyridon, Bishop of Tremithos (Dec. 12), and others venerated by the Church as holy Fathers. With Patriarch Alexander of Alexandria came his deacon, Athanasius (who later became Patriarch of Alexandria [May 2 and Jan. 18]). He is called “the Great”, for he was a zealous champion for the purity of Orthodoxy. In the Sixth Ode of the Canon for today's Feast, he is referred to as “the thirteenth Apostle”.

The emperor Constantine presided over the sessions of the Council. In his speech, responding to the welcome by Bishop Eusebius of Caesarea, he said, “God has helped me cast down the impious might of the persecutors, but more distressful for me than any blood spilled in battle is for a soldier, is the internal strife in the Church of God, for it is more ruinous.”

Arius, with seventeen bishops among his supporters, remained arrogant, but his teaching was repudiated and he was excommunicated from the Church. In his speech, the holy deacon Athanasius conclusively refuted the blasphemous opinions of Arius. The heresiarch Arius is depicted in iconography sitting on Satan's knees, or in the mouth of the Beast of the Deep (Rev. 13).

The Father's of the Council declined to accept a Symbol of Faith (Creed) proposed by the Arians. Instead, they affirmed the Orthodox Symbol of Faith. St. Constantine asked the Council to insert into the text of the Symbol of Faith the word “consubstantial,” which he heard in the speeches of the bishops. The Fathers of the Council unanimously accepted this suggestion...The Council also issued Twelve Canons on questions of churchly administration and discipline. Also decided was the date for the celebration of Pascha. By decision of the Council, Holy Pascha should not be celebrated by Christians on the same day with the Jewish Passover, but on the first Sunday after the first full moon of the vernal equinox (which occurred on March 22 in 325).

Sunday of the Blind Man

Tone 5 Troparion (Resurrection)

Let us, the faithful, praise and worship the Word,
co-eternal with the Father and the Spirit,
born for our salvation from the Virgin;
for He willed to be lifted up on the Cross in the flesh,
to endure death
and to raise the dead//
by His glorious Resurrection.

Tone 4 Kontakion (from the Pentecostarion)

I come to You, O Christ, blind from birth in my spiritual eyes,
and call to You in repentance://
“You are the most radiant Light of those in darkness.”

Tone 8 Kontakion (Pascha)

You descended into the tomb, O Immortal,
You destroyed the power of death.
In victory You arose, O Christ God,
proclaiming: “Rejoice!” to the Myrrhbearing Women,//
granting peace to Your Apostles, and bestowing resurrection on the fallen.