

IC RC NT KA SAINTS PETER AND PAUL ORTHODOX CHURCH

A Parish of the Orthodox Church in America
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GLORY TO JESUS CHRIST! GLORY TO GOD FOR ALL THINGS!

July 10, 2011 4th Sunday of Pentecost

July 16 Saturday
July 17 Holy Fathers of the first six Ecumenical Councils

Divine Liturgy 9:30 am
Great Vespers 4:00 pm
Divine Liturgy 9:30 am

Saints of the Day: The Placing of the Precious Robe of the Lord at Moscow (1625). Holy 45 Martyrs at Nicopolis in Armenia, including Leontius, Maurice, Daniel, Anthony, Alexander, Anicetus, Sisinius, Meneus, and Belerad (319). Venerable Anthony of the Kiev Caves (1073). New Hieromartyrs Priests Peter and Stephen, Deacons Gregory and Nestor (1918). Venerable Eumenes (1920) and Parthenius (1905) of Gortyna. Venerable Silouan of the Far Caves in Kiev (13-14 c). Martyr Apollonius of Sardis (3 c). Martyrs Bianor and Silvanus of Pisidia (4 c). 10,000 Fathers of the desert and caves of Scetis martyred by the impious Patriarch Theophilus of Alexandria (398). Translation of the relics (1609) of Saint Basil, Bishop of Ryazan (1295). Saint Gregory, Bishop of Assos near Ephesus (1150). New Hieromartyr Archpriest Joseph of Damascus and companions (1860). Synaxis of All Saints of Vatopedi Monastery, Mount Athos. Saint Etto, Bishop of Dompierre (670).

God Grant Many Years! Prayers for the health of Matushka Barbara Pavelchak and Virginia Calin were offered July 3 at Liturgy at the request of Bishop MICHAEL.

God Grant Many Years! Prayers for the health of Mary Ann Williams, David Pellack and Susanna Kappanadze were offered today at Liturgy and Moleben at the request of Father John Udics.

Please remember in your prayers: Susan, Ada, Don, Rea, Daniel, Aaron, Archpriest Jason, Mother Raphaela, Priest Sergius, Mark, Jennifer, Nina, Nadine, Helen, Anna, Thomas, Archpriest Vincent, John, Catherine, Ron, Albert, Michael, Gregory, Emma, Cathy, John, Mykola, Dan, Wayne, Nina, Dan, Isaiah, Robert, Robert, Kevin, Andrew, David, Warren, Michael, Archimandrites Athanasy, Isidore, Pachomy and Nectarios.

Memory Eternal. Prayers for the repose of the souls of Julianne, Michael and Elaine Carrol were offered today at Liturgy and Litiya at the request of Denise Wolfsheimer.

Memory Eternal. Prayers for the repose of the soul of uncle Joe Kushner were offered at Liturgy and Litiya today at the request of Father John Udics.

Memory Eternal. Prayers for the repose of the souls of Anna Byrda, Michael Alexczuk and Ludmilla Sopiski were offered at Liturgy and Litiya today.

Thank you! to everyone who participated in our parish picnic on the 4th of July. It was wonderful! The food was excellent! the grillers did a grate job! the pot was really lucky with the amazing variety of home-made delicacies! the gentle sound of polka music dancing in the air was fun! our parishioners and visitors were most companionable! Even the weather was fine. All the comments were raves! We'll have to do this again soon!

A word from the desert. One of the fathers who had gone to Constantinople to attend to some necessary business said to me: While I was sitting in the church, a man who was illustrious in the worldly sense but also a great lover of Christ came in; and when he saw me, he sat down. He then began asking about the salvation of the soul. I told him that the heavenly life is given to those who live life the earthly life in a seemly way.

"You have spoken well, father," he said. "Blessed is the man whose hope is in God and who presents himself as an offering to God. I am the son of a man who is very distinguished by the standards of the world. My father was very compassionate and distributed huge sums among the poor. One day he called me; showing me all his money, he said to me: `Son, which do you prefer; that I leave you my money, or that I give you Christ as your guardian?' Grasping the point he was making, I said I would rather have Christ; for everything that is here today shall be gone tomorrow. Christ remains forever. So from the moment he heard me say that, he gave without sparing, leaving very little for me when he died. So I was left a poor man and I lived simply, putting my hope in the God whom he bequeathed to me."

"There was another rich man, one of the leading citizens, who had a wife who loved Christ and feared God; and he had one daughter, his only child. The wife said to the husband: `We have only this one daughter, yet the Lord has endowed us with so many goods. What does she lack? If we seek to give her in marriage to somebody of our own rank whose way of life is not praiseworthy, it shall be a continual source of affliction to her. Let us rather look for a lowly man who fears God; one who will love her and cherish her according to God's holy law.' He said to her, `This is good advice. Go to church and pray fervently. Sit there, and whoever comes in first, he it is whom the Lord has sent.'"

"This she did. When she had prayed, she sat down and it was I who came in at that moment. She sent a servant to call me straightaway and she began asking me where I was from. I told her that I was from this city, the son of such-and-such a man. She said, `He who was so generous to the poor? And have you a wife?' I said I had not. I told her what my father had said to me and what I had said to him. She glorified the Lord and said, `Behold, the Good Guardian whom you chose has sent you a bride - and riches, so that you may enjoy both in the fear of God.' I pray that I might follow in my father's footsteps to the end of my days."

A word from the desert: Abba Poemen said: If a man remembered that it is written, "By your words you will be justified and by your words you will be condemned" (Matthew 12:37), he would choose to be silent.

A word from the desert. If you love your neighbor, then all of heaven will love you. If you are united in spirit with your fellow creatures, then you will be united with God and all the company of heaven; if you are merciful to your neighbor, then God and all the angels and saints will be merciful to you. If you pray for others then all of heaven will intercede for you. The Lord our God is holy; be holy yourself also. Saint John of Kronstadt

A word from the desert: Our life can be likened to a deep ditch, which in times of rain fills up so much that it cannot be crossed, and at other times it dries up and no water flows in it. The Holy Fathers praised the life that flows like a small stream which flows continually, never running dry. This small stream is good because it is easy to cross and because it is pleasing and healthy, its water being good for drinking since it flows peacefully and is never murky. Saint Ambrose of Milan

THE HOLY FORTY-FIVE MARTYRS: LEONTIUS, MAURICE, ALEXANDER, SISINIUS AND OTHERS. During the reign of the wicked Emperor Licinius, who ruled the eastern half of the Byzantine Empire, there was a great persecution of Christians. In Armenian Nicopolis, St. Leontius, with several of his friends, appeared before Lysius, the representative of Emperor Licinius and declared that they were Christians. "And where is your Christ?" Lysius asked. "Was He not crucified and did He not die?" To that St. Leontius replied: "Since you know that our Christ died, know also that He resurrected from the dead and ascended into heaven." After a lengthy discussion about the Faith, Lysius scourged them and threw them into prison and gave them neither food nor drink. Vlassina, a benevolent Christian woman brought them water and handed it to them through the window of the prison. An angel of God appeared to comfort and encourage them. When the time came for sentencing, two jailers and many others appeared before Lysius as converted Christians, totaling forty-five in number. The judge sentenced all of them to death but in this manner: first, that their arms and feet be severed with an axe and then they be thrown into the fire. This horrible two-fold punishment was carried out and the souls of the holy martyrs took flight to their Lord entering into eternal life. They honorably suffered and inherited the Kingdom in the year 319 A.D.

VENERABLE ANTHONY OF THE MONASTERY OF THE CAVES IN KIEV was the founder and father of monasticism in Russia. He was born in the small town of Chernigov and, at an early age, left his home and went to Athos, the Holy Mountain, where he was tonsured a monk and lived a life of asceticism in the Monastery Esfigmenou. In obedience to a heavenly appearance, the abbot sent Anthony to Russia to establish monasticism. Anthony chose a cave near Kiev. When those who were desirous of a monastic life gathered around him, he then appointed Theodosius as abbot and he remained in the cave as a Silentary. By the blessing of God, the monastery increased and became the parent-monastery of Russian monasticism. Anthony endured much evil both from men and demons but he conquered all by his humbleness. He possessed the great gift of discerning thoughts and the future and healed the sick. He presented himself to the Lord in the year 1073 A.D. at the age of ninety, leaving his spiritual nursery to bring beneficial fruits to the Orthodox people of Russia throughout the ages.

THE TRANSLATION OF THE HONORABLE VESTURE [ROBE] OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST. At the time of the suffering of our Lord Jesus for mankind, there was to be found among the ranks of the Roman army in Jerusalem a Georgian named Elioze from the town of Mtskheta. His mother had heard of Christ and, in her heart, believed in Him. Seeing her son off to the army in Palestine, she counseled him not to do anything against Christ. When the Lord was nailed to the Cross, the sound of the hammer on Golgotha reached the ears of Elioze's mother in the town of Mtskheta. Hearing this sound, she cried out: "Woe is me because I did not die before this time. Death would have rescued me from this dreadful sound!" Saying this, she fell dead. Elioze, at that time, was beneath the Cross and with the other soldiers cast lots for the tunic [robe] of Christ. He won the vesture and brought it to Mtskheta and gave it as a gift to his sister Sidonia. She, having heard about the death of the Lord and that her brother was a participant of the shedding of innocent blood, fell dead holding the tunic of the Lord firmly in her hands and no one was able to tear it away but were compelled to bury the tunic with her. A cedar tree sprouted from her grave from which poured forth a sweet-smelling healing myrrh. In time, the cedar tree fell and the place was forgotten. Following her prayer, Saint Nina, found this place with the help of a pillar of fire. The baptized Emperor Mirian erected a church there dedicating it to the Holy Apostles. In the year 1625 A.D., the Shah Abbas took this tunic and sent it to Moscow as a gift to Prince Michael Feodorovitch and Patriarch Philaret. This tunic was placed in the Cathedral Church of the Dormition of the Blessed Virgin in Moscow.

REFLECTION by Saint Nikolai of Zhicha

The thought of death is like a downpour of cold rain, which extinguishes the fire of passions. The Psalmist David says: "For when he dies he shall carry nothing away: his glory shall not descend after him" (Psalms 49:17). Who would not be ashamed when he sometimes sees, even among the unbelievers, a better comprehension of our earthly nothingness than with some Christians? When Caliph Saladin died, a crier [telal] went before his coffin with a spear in his hand and, on the spear one of the emperor's shirts, and he cried out: "O great Saladin who conquered all of Asia and because of that caused many nations to tremble before him and who conquered emperors: behold of all his glory and of all his subjects he takes nothing with him except this miserable shirt."