

SOBORNOST

St. Thomas the Apostle Orthodox Church

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American Carpatho-Russian Orthodox Diocese

*ECUMENICAL PATRIARCHATE
OF CONSTANTINOPLE*

SERVICES

Wed: Moleben to the Theotokos 6:00 AM

Friday: Moleben to the Cross 6:00 AM

**Saturday: Confession 5:00 PM,
Great Vespers 5:30 PM**

Sunday: Matins (Orthros) 8:45 AM

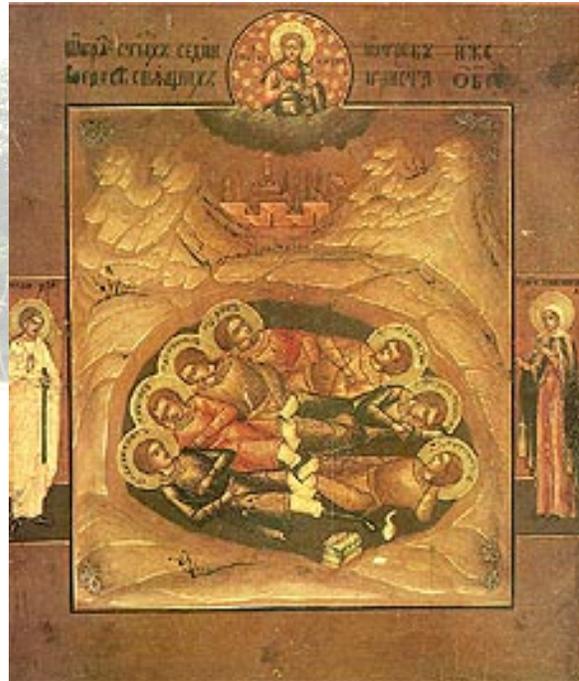
Children's Sunday School 9:30 AM | Divine Liturgy 10:00 AM.

August 4, 2019 – 7th Sunday After Pentecost | Seven Holy Youths "Seven Sleepers" of Ephesus

The Seven Youths hid themselves in a certain cave near Ephesus in the year 250, to escape the persecution of Decius. By divine grace, a sleep came upon them and they slept for 184 years, until the reign of Saint Theodosius the Younger, when the doctrine of the resurrection was being assailed by heretics. They then awoke, that is, were resurrected, confirming in the sight of all the bodily resurrection; and again after a short time, by divine command, they reposed in the Lord in the year 434.

Contemporary Veneration of the Seven Holy Sleepers Among Orthodox

Pious devotion to the Seven Holy Sleepers of Ephesus is more common in the private devotions of Orthodox Christians than in public. Though one finds remnants of churches and monasteries dedicated to them in the first thousand years of Christianity, it is not popular these days to dedicate churches to them. One would be hard-pressed to find a church dedicated to them today or even find an icon of them in churches, though they do exist. Typically icons of the Holy Seven Youths are found in homes, and in Greece especially, they are placed in homes when one suffers from sleeplessness. In fact, in the Euchologion (Book of Needs)



there is a prayer for those suffering from insomnia titled "Prayer for the Sick and Those Who Cannot Sleep, Known as that of the Seven Holy Youths". This prayer is not very old, as it mentions St. Athanasios of Athos (c. 950). (*from johnsanidopoulos.com*)

Today's Epistle Lesson – St. Paul's Letter to the Romans 15:1-7

Brethren, we who are strong ought to bear with the scruples of the weak, and not to please ourselves. Let each of us please *his* neighbor for *his* good, leading to edification. For even Christ did not please Himself; but as it is written, "The reproaches of those who reproached You fell on Me." For whatever things were written before were written for our learning, that we through the patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope. Now may the God of patience and comfort grant you to be like-minded toward one another, according to Christ Jesus, that you may with one mind *and* one mouth glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore receive one another, just as Christ also received you, to the glory of God.

Today's Gospel Lesson – Saint Matthew 9:27-35

At that time, two blind men followed Jesus, crying out and saying, "Son of David, have mercy on us!" And when He had come into the house, the blind men came to Him. And Jesus said to them, "Do you believe that I am able to do this?" They said to Him, "Yes, Lord." Then He touched their eyes, saying, "According to your faith let it be to you." And their eyes were opened. And Jesus sternly warned them, saying, "See *that* no one knows *it*." But when they had departed, they spread the news about Him in all that country. As they went out, behold, they brought to Him a man, mute and demon-possessed. And when the demon was cast out, the mute spoke. And the multitudes marveled, saying, "It was never seen like this in Israel!" But the Pharisees said, "He casts out demons by the ruler of the demons." Then Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people.

A Word From the Holy Fathers

When by such faith and knowledge the saints have embraced this true life, they receive, doubtless, the joy which is in heaven; for which the wicked not caring, are deservedly deprived of the blessedness arising from it. For, 'let the wicked be taken away, so that he shall not see the glory of the Lord (Is. 26:10 LXX).' For although, when they shall hear the universal proclamation of the promise, 'Awake, sleeper, and arise from the dead (Eph. 5:14),' they shall rise and shall come even to heaven, knocking and saying, 'Open to us (Matt. 25:11);' nevertheless the Lord

will reprove them, as those who put the knowledge of Himself far from them, saying, 'I know you not.' But the holy Spirit cries against them, 'The wicked shall be turned into hell, even all the nations that forget God. (Luke 13:25; Ps. 9:17).' Now we say that the wicked are dead, but not in an ascetic life opposed to sin; nor do they, like the saints, bear about dying in their bodies. But it is the soul which they bury in sins and follies, drawing near to the dead, and satisfying it with dead nourishment; like young eagles which, from high places, fly upon the carcasses of the dead, and which the law prohibited, commanding figuratively, 'You shall not eat the eagle, nor any other bird that feeds on a dead carcass (Lev. 11:13);' and it pronounced unclean whatsoever eats the dead. But these kill the soul with lusts, and say nothing but, 'let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die (Is. 22:13).' And the kind of fruit those have who thus love pleasures, he immediately describes, adding, 'And these things are revealed in the ears of the Lord of Hosts, that this sin shall not be forgiven you until you die (Is. 22:14).' Yea, even while they live they shall be ashamed, because they consider their belly their lord; and when dead, they shall be tormented, because they have made a boast of such a death. To this effect also Paul bears witness, saying, 'Meats for the belly, and the belly for meats; but God shall destroy both it and them (1 Cor. 6:13).' And the divine word declared before concerning them; 'The death of sinners is evil, and those who hate the righteous commit sin (Ps. 33:21 LXX).' For bitter is the worm, and grievous the darkness, which wicked men inherit.

– St. Athanasius the Great, Archbishop of Alexandria, *Festal Letter VII*

HYMN OF PRAISE: THE SEVEN HOLY YOUTHS OF EPHEBUS

By St. Nikolai Velimirovich

When the last rays of the sun turned the west bloody red,
Seven Youths, to God prayed,
That, on the morrow again find themselves alive and healthy,
Before Emperor Decius, brought forth to torture.
And lay down to sleep a long dream, a deep dream,
Time walked by a wide step.

One morning, from the east, the sun dawned
And the Seven from their deep sleep awakened.
And Jamblichus the youngest, to Ephesus hurried
To see, to hear, about everything he inquired,
Does Decius, even them, seek to slaughter,
And bread to buy for the Seven of them.

But behold, what kind of miracle: this is not the gate!
And even the town is totally different!

Everywhere, beautiful churches, domes, crosses,
Jamblichus asks himself: are those not dreams?
Nowhere a familiar face, nowhere kinsmen,
There are no persecutions; there are no martyrs.

"Tell me brethren, the name of this town,
And tell me the name of the emperor, who now reigns?"
Thus Jamblichus inquires.
The people, at him, look,
And about him, everyone judges differently.

"This town is Ephesus, now and before,
In Christ, reigns Emperor Theodosius."
This Antipater [The Consul] heard and [Martin] the graying bishop,
The entire town was perplexed,
Everyone, to the cave hurries.
And saw the miracle, glorified God,
And the resurrected servants of Christ the Resurrected One.

Social Team for August 11

Team 1 is up next week – Blaydoe P., Chumak, Connour, Samson. Thank you!

Service Schedule for the Coming Week

Fr. Joseph is out of town; if you need a priest, please contact Fr. Peter Zarynow (301-299-5120). Divine Liturgy, today, August 4, is being served by Fr. John Fedornock. Fr. Joseph will be back to serve Divine Liturgy on August 6 (Feast of the Transfiguration) at 9:00 AM (although Wednesday and Friday morning services this week are canceled due to scheduling conflicts).

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In Your Prayers – Please Remember... His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch BARTHOLOMEW, His Eminence Metropolitan GREGORY, Fr. Joseph & Family, Greek Orthodox Archbishop Paul Yazigi of Aleppo, Syriac Orthodox Archbishop Yohanna Ibrahim of Aleppo, His Grace Bishop Neofitos of Nyeri and Mt. Kenya, Fr. John & Pani Betty Jean Baranik, Presbytera Katie Baker and family, Dn. Steve Hall, Santiago Alzugaray, Jeffrey Carey, Tatyana and Slava Chumak & family, Xenia Chilkowich, Jon Church, Ramius Connour, Curtis Cooper, Luke Cooper, Tina Crull, Mary Diane David, Ron Dominecki, Linda A. Georgiev, Heather Himler, John Homick, Cameron Houk, Helen Janowiak, John M. Janowiak, Tucker Karl and family, Robert & Pam Karpin, Andrew Kinn, Kopan family, Brian, Helen, and Luke Mahony, Valentina Makowelski, Susan Matula, Anna Meinhold, Dn. Henry Middleton, David & Kathryn Newman, Bobby Nutter & Family, Henry & Lisa Osborne, Westin Perry & Parents, John Reece, Mary Reed, Chris & Kaitlin Rixey, Jerry Von Ronne, Anne Rosario, James, Theodore and Christina Ristas, Samson Family, Sharon Sheptak, Alexander Shostko, Bernie Takabayashi & family, Dawn & Faith Ulmschneider, Lydia Vita, Christine, Marshall, Nathaniel, Subdcn. Nectaros and Ia, the Syrian Christians displaced by war, Mother Virginia Marie and the Carmelite Nuns of Port Tobacco, and all those in need of our prayers. (Please advise Fr. Joseph of changes.)