

SOBORNOST

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American Carpatho-Russian Orthodox Diocese

*ECUMENICAL PATRIARCHATE
OF CONSTANTINOPLE*

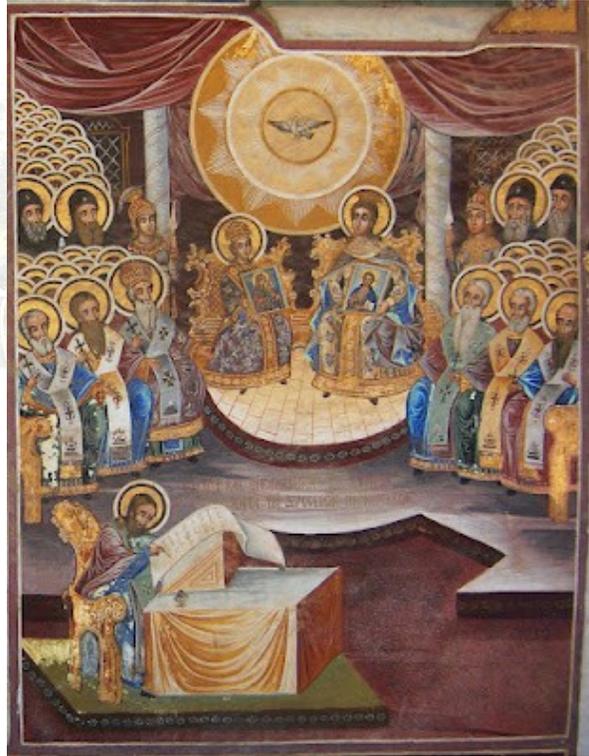
SERVICES

**Wednesday: Moleben to the
Theotokos 6 AM**

Friday: Moleben to the Cross 6 AM

Saturday: Confession 4:30 PM
Great Vespers 5:00 PM

Sunday: Matins (Orthros) 8:45 AM
Divine Liturgy 10:00 AM



October 17, 2021 – 17th Sunday After Pentecost Commemoration of the Holy Fathers of the Seventh Ecumenical Council

By Metropolitan Hierotheos of Nafpaktos and Agiou Vlasiou

The Apostle Paul, beloved brethren, once speaking to the Presbyters of the Church of Ephesus, told them that he knew well that after his departure the wild wolves would invade among them, who will show no pity to the flock, and from among the members of the Church people will emerge who will speak perversions to distract the disciples and have them with them (cf. Acts 20:29-30).

This was seen throughout the history and life of the Church, as various heretics appeared, who ended up in non-orthodox teachings and created problems in the Church of Christ.

The devil always fights the Church, hates the person of Christ and wants to alter His teachings. From this perspective one must view heresies.

It is true that heretics used philosophy and reflection on theological issues, but the problem is that they did not have a pure heart in which God could act, according to the beatitude of Christ: "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God"

(Matt. 5:8), which means that demons act within an impure heart. Thus, in the end, heresy is demonic energy.

In the 8th century there appeared another heresy, which was called Iconoclasm, that was against the iconographic depictions of sacred icons. Christians painted the icons of Christ, the Panagia and the Saints and kissed them, asking for Grace from Christ. However, the Nestorians, the Paulicians and the Monophysites rejected the veneration of the sacred icons, because they had a problem with the human nature of Christ, for their own reasons.

Thus, Emperor Leo III the Isaurian issued in 726 and 730 two decrees against the sacred icons and forbade their veneration. This was also done later by the Emperor Constantine Kopronymos. The Orthodox Fathers fought against these decisions, because they knew from their experience the great power of Christ, the Panagia and the Saints who are depicted, and the value of the icons.

In the year 787 the Seventh Ecumenical Synod convened in Constantinople, by decision of the Empress Irene the Athenian and her son Constantine, which was presided over by Patriarch Tarasios of Constantinople. This Synod annulled the iconoclastic Synod that took place in 754 under Constantine Kopronymos, anathematized the heretical iconoclasts and established the Orthodox teaching for the sacred icons.

This Ecumenical Synod was based on the teachings of Basil the Great, Patriarch Germanos of Constantinople and especially of Saint John of Damascus. According to Orthodox teaching, one thing is true worship which is ascribed only to God, to the "divine nature", and not to icons and saints, and another is the honorary veneration ascribed to sacred icons. In fact, this honorable veneration goes beyond the image to the prototype. This means that when we kiss the sacred icons we do not venerate the matter of which they are made, but the hypostasis of the person imaged, that is, the one who is depicted.

An Orthodox icon teaches the mystery of the incarnation of the Son and Word of God, and the denial of the honorable veneration of the icon of Christ is, in fact, a denial of His incarnation. Also, the Saints are depicted and honored, because they are members of the Body of Christ and in them they have the Grace of God. Icons function as the bearers of divine Grace, in the way that the human nature of Christ acted in the divine nature of the Word. That is why they work miracles. This, in a nutshell, is the theology of the sacred icons, in fact it is the theology of the incarnation of Christ, as confessed in the Ecumenical Synods, and of the Saints as members of His glorious body.

Also important in this Synod is that it spoke of Christ as married to the Holy Church, is with His Disciples throughout the ages, to whom He granted the light of

His knowledge, and redeemed them from the darkness of idolatrous madness. And it is from this gift and the tradition of the Church that the heretics were removed by the deceitful enemy.

These and many more things show the difference between the Holy Fathers and the heretics. That is why in this Synod all the heretics are anathematized by name, from Arius to the then heretics, and the Orthodox teaching is proclaimed for the honorary veneration of the sacred icons.

In one point of the Acts it is written: "We salute the voices of the Lord and of his Apostles and Prophets through which we have been taught to honor and magnify...." This phrase shows the great difference between the empirical theologians, who are the Fathers of the Church, and the philosophical theologians, who, because they have an impure heart, act in accordance with evil spirits.

The empirical theologians, as observed by the Prophets, the Apostles and the Fathers, know from experience that when one arrives at the vision of the glory of God in the hypostasis of the Word, one sees the divine Light, which is above comprehension, above the senses, where no reflection, no fantasy, no delusion can exist. After this revelatory experience, however, they can depict Christ, the Panagia and the Saints, but they know very clearly that uncreated phrases are different, that is, the revelatory experience, from created images which is something else, which depicts this uncreated glory, without being fully able to express it.

The empirical theologians also know that those who kiss and venerate the sacred icons receive Grace from God, according to their own spiritual condition, and in this way the flame ignites in them, the desire for the vision of the uncreated glory of God.

From this perspective we kiss the Honorable Cross, the sacred icons of Christ, the Panagia and the Saints, the sacred relics, the blessed sacred objects, and we glorify Christ who became man, divinized human nature and made us members of the Church, members of His glorious Body. *(from johnsanidopoulos.com)*

Today's Epistle Lesson – St. Paul's Second Letter to the Corinthians 6:16-7:1

Brethren, what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For you are the temple of the living God. As God has said: "I will dwell in them and walk among them. I will be their God, and they shall be My people." Therefore "Come out from among them and be separate, says the Lord. Do not touch what is unclean, and I will receive you." "I will be a Father to you, and you shall be My sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty." Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.

Today's Gospel Lesson – Saint Luke 8:5-15

The Lord said, “A sower went out to sow his seed. And as he sowed, some fell by the wayside; and it was trampled down, and the birds of the air devoured it. Some fell on rock; and as soon as it sprang up, it withered away because it lacked moisture. And some fell among thorns, and the thorns sprang up with it and choked it. But others fell on good ground, sprang up, and yielded a crop a hundredfold.” When He had said these things He cried, “He who has ears to hear, let him hear!” Then His disciples asked Him, saying, “What does this parable mean?” And He said, “To you it has been given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God, but to the rest *it is given* in parables, that ‘Seeing they may not see, and hearing they may not understand.’ “Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God. Those by the wayside are the ones who hear; then the devil comes and takes away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved. But the ones on the rock *are those* who, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no root, who believe for a while and in time of temptation fall away. Now the ones *that* fell among thorns are those who, when they have heard, go out and are choked with cares, riches, and pleasures of life, and bring no fruit to maturity. But the ones *that* fell on the good ground are those who, having heard the word with a noble and good heart, keep *it* and bear fruit with patience.

A Word From the Holy Fathers

Our Lord Jesus Christ chose His disciples not from the wise, not from the noble, not from the rich or the famous, but from among fishermen and tentmakers and poor and illiterate men. This was to make clear to all that neither poverty, nor lack of learning, nor lowly origins, nor anything else of that sort is an impediment to acquiring virtue and understanding the divine sayings and the mysteries of the Spirit. But even the poorest and lowliest and least educated person, if he gives proof of eagerness and an appropriate inclination towards what is good, can not only come to know the divine teaching but also become a teacher himself through God's grace. And the things that hinder us from understanding and grasping the meaning of spiritual teachings are our own indifference and the fact that we cling with all our might to the fleeting concerns of this life. As a result, we do not allow space or time for listening and studying and recalling to mind what we have heard, nor do we care about the things which are to come and things eternal.

Nothing demonstrates this more clearly than today's Gospel reading. After the Lord had addressed the people using a parable, the disciples approached Him privately and sought to learn the purpose and meaning of the parable He had related on that occasion. They asked why He spoke to the people in parables which were not readily comprehensible. Then the Lord answered them, “Unto you

it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God, but to others in parables, that seeing they might not see, and hearing they might not understand” (v. 10).

One might be so bold as to ask Him, “Why is this, Lord? You are the only Guide of all men, the only universal Master and Provider, only Father and Savior of all, the light of those lying in the darkness of ignorance, the light that “illumines every man who comes into the world” (Jn. 1:9); do You now only illumine Your chosen disciples, and speak obscurely to the rest, lest they should understand and be enlightened?” “Yes,” replies the Lord, “man is the only living creature in this world that I wished to create with freedom of choice. I did not come into the world to destroy this handiwork of Mine which had been spoiled, but to rescue it. For that reason, I never draw anyone by force. According to My righteous judgment, only those people who choose, long and seek to put the knowledge of salvation into practice are worthy to be enlightened. 'For every one who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it shall be opened' (Luke 11:10). In My surpassing love for mankind, however, I also address those outside this category, without making Myself clear, that I might give them motivation and encouragement to choose and learn how to search out My teaching in order to practice it. For in this way it will be granted to them too to know the mysteries of God's kingdom. This knowledge,” He says, “has been given to you who seek more diligently on your own account to put into action what you have learned. For it is not mere knowledge that is good, but knowledge translated into deeds, and action in accordance with reason. 'For not the hearers of the law,' says the Scripture, 'but the doers of the law shall be justified' (Rom. 2:13).”

- St. Gregory Palamas, *Homily 47.1-3*

Commemorated Today: Prophet Hosea

The Holy Prophet Hosea the first of the minor prophets, belonged to the tribe of Issachar. He lived during the ninth Century before Christ, in the kingdom of Israel. He was a contemporary of the holy Prophets Isaiah, Micah and Amos. During this time, many of his fellow Israelites had forgotten the true God, and worshiped idols. The holy Prophet Hosea attempted to turn them again to the faith of their Fathers by his wise counsels. Denouncing the iniquities of the people of Israel (i.e. the northern kingdom Israel), the prophet proclaimed to them great misfortunes from a foreign people and their removal into captivity by Assyria.

Almost a thousand years before the coming of the Savior, and through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, the prophet foretold the end of sacrificial offerings and of the priesthood of Aaron (Hos. 3:4-5), and that the knowledge of the True God would spread through all the earth (Hos. 2:20-23). Hosea spoke also about Christ, how He would return from out of Egypt (Hos. 11:1; compare Mt. 2:15), that

He would be resurrected on the third day (Hos. 6 and especially Hos.6:2; compare with 1 Cor.15:4), and that He would conquer death (Hos.13-14. Compare 1 Cor.15:54-55).

The prophesies of Saint Hosea are included in the book that bears his name. The prophetic service of Saint Hosea continued for more than sixty years. The God-inspired prophet died in deep old age, having devoted all his life to fulfilling the Will of God. (*from oca.org*)

Monastic Martyr Andrew of Crete Who Is in Krisi

The Hieromartyr Andrew of Crete lived during the reign of the iconoclast emperor Constantine Koprnyomos (741-775), who ordered Christians, under penalty of death, to remove the holy icons from their churches and homes. Believers, who fearlessly resisted the impious iconoclast, and held firmly to the traditions of the holy Fathers, were locked in prison. When the venerable Andrew heard that the emperor was throwing virtuous and pious Christians into prison instead of thieves and robbers, he went to the Church of the Great Martyr Mamas (September 2) in Constantinople and in front of everyone, denounced the heretic for persecuting the true Faith.

In an attempt to justify himself the emperor said that it was folly to bestow veneration on wood and paint. To this the monk replied that whoever suffers for holy icons suffers for Christ, but whoever reviles the icon upon which Christ is depicted, offers insult to Christ Himself. The enraged iconoclast gave orders to torture Saint Andrew without mercy.

As he was being dragged through the streets to the place of execution, someone cut off the saint's feet. As a result, Saint Andrew was freed from his torments by death. His honorable relic was cast into the place reserved for the wicked and murderers, and remained there for some time amid the dead bodies of criminals. Then twelve demon-possessed men came from various parts of Constantinople, as if in unison, and together they went and took the holy relic, and buried him in a sacred place, which is known as Krisi ("Judgment"). And for having found and buried him, they were liberated from the demons. (*adapted from oca.org*)

Parenting Workshop at Holy Resurrection (Potomac) on Nov. 6
On Saturday 06 November our HROC parish Family will be hosting the final Diocesan Parenting Workshop. The Workshops are designed to help parents learn more about the "craft" of parenting and help them raise their children in the Faith. The Workshops focus on the ways parents can help their children stay faithful to Christ and His Church. The schedules include presentations by Metropolitan Gregory and Fr. Stephen Loposky (director of Camp Nazareth), moderated small

group discussions, Q&A Sessions, and lunch. The Workshops are specifically for parents (of any age), but all are welcome to attend. In addition, each Workshop has a component for children ages 5-18 which includes its own curriculum and set of activities. This year's kids' component focuses on the Story of Noah. All children 5-18 are welcome to come and participate in the activities planned for them. They began in 2019, continued in online form in 2020, and are now beginning again. The Parenting Workshops are an exciting and important endeavor. We know our parents and children face challenges in their lives of faith. His Eminence Metropolitan Gregory invites you to join him in support of our parents as our Diocese continues this initiative to help them in their parental vocation. For more information about the Workshops look for the Diocesan Parenting Workshop Series logo on our Diocesan website, www.ACROD.org

If you plan to attend, contact Fr. Peter Zarynow directly, via email (frzarynow@gmail.com). There is no cost to attend, but he needs reservations so that he have the correct amount of materials. A light snack will be provided during check in as well as lunch. Thank you!

Social Team for October 24

Team 5 is up next week – Vallandingham, Karbowsky, Magnelli, Tony Papdakias.
Thank you!

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Diocesan Website: <http://www.acrod.org>

Camp Nazareth: <http://www.campnazareth.org>

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You Tube: <https://youtube.com/acroddiocese>

In Your Prayers – Please Remember... His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch BARTHOLOMEW, His Eminence Metropolitan GREGORY, Fr. Joseph & Family, His Grace Bishop Neofitos of Nyeri & Mt. Kenya, Tatyana & Slava Chumak & family, Luke & Marlena Cooper, Tina Crull, Mary Diane David, Howl family, Andrew Kinn, Kopan family, Valentina Makowelski, Susan Matula, Anna Meinhold, David & Kathryn Newman, John Reece, Mary Reed, Sandy Tucker, Dcn. Nectaros & Ia, Mother Virginia Marie & the Carmelite Nuns of Port Tobacco, and those in need of our prayers. (Please advise Fr. Joseph of changes.)