

SOBORNOST

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American Carpatho-Russian Orthodox Diocese

*ECUMENICAL PATRIARCHATE
OF CONSTANTINOPLE*

SERVICES

Wednesday: Lay Vespers 6:30 PM

Saturday: Vespers 5 PM

Sunday: Matins 8:45 AM

Sunday School 9:30 AM

Divine Liturgy 10 AM

May 14, 2023 – 5th Sunday

of Pascha | Sunday of the Samaritan Woman

By Metropolitan Hierotheos of Nafpaktos and Agiou Vlasiou

"God is a Spirit: and those who worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." (Jn. 4:24)

God and all the truth about God is not a revelation of man, but a revelation of God Himself to those who are worthy of revelation. We see this clearly in Holy Scripture and in the lives of the saints, who are "an epistle of Christ." God who has revealed Himself to man, gives him knowledge, and this knowledge of God entails the salvation of man. The Lord told the Jews, "For unless you believe that I am, you will die in your sins" (John 8:24). That is, the presence of Christ as "I am" is the true life for man, while the ignorance of God constitutes the death of man. In the Samaritan woman the Lord revealed Himself and this resulted in her salvation.

In the conversation that Christ had with the woman at Jacob's Well, He revealed the way of the true worship of God. God is a spirit and those who worship Him must worship Him "in spirit and in truth." These words have great depth and it is unfortunate that we will try to interpret it in only a few words.

According to the Patristic Interpretation, the Triune God Manifests Here.



We all know that the Christian God is not a monad or dyad, but a Trinity - Father, Son and Holy Spirit. In the Divine Liturgy we confess: "Father, Son, and Holy Spirit: Trinity, one in essence and undivided." God the Father is "the Father of the Truth, namely, of the Only Begotten Son, and has the Spirit of Truth, the Holy Spirit." Therefore God is known and worshiped in Christ who is the Truth and in the Holy Spirit who is the Spirit of Truth, who proceeds from the Father and is sent through the Son.

According to the teaching of Saint Gregory Palamas, which summarizes the teaching of the Church, the Father is the Speaker, the Son is the Word and the Holy Spirit is the Breath of creation. The Speaker revealed the Word, the Word revealed the Speaker and "manifested and gave" the Holy Spirit who revealed the Trinity of God. The revelation of the Holy Trinity, according to the Athonite Saint, is common, and at the same time gradual, due to human weakness. That is why the Lord in the middle of His activity on earth proclaimed that He is the Son of God and finally revealed the Holy Spirit and His mission. And this is because people were unable to comprehend the trinity of God.

We are brought to the Father through the Son: "No one comes to the Father except through the Son" (John 14:6). And communion with Christ is made by the Holy Spirit. For no one can see Christ without the Holy Spirit, since "no one can say, 'Lord Jesus,' except by the Holy Spirit" (1 Corinthians 12:3). According to Saint Symeon the New Theologian, the Father is the house: "In my Father's house are many mansions" (John 14:2). The Son is the door through which we enter the house: "I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture"(John 10:9). And the Holy Spirit is the key through which we open the door.

It Should be Noted and Highlighted That the Church is the True Place of the Theophany.

And when we truly live in the Church, which is the Body of the God-man Christ ("in Truth") and when we receive the energies of the Holy Spirit ("in Spirit"), then we are true worshipers of God, we acquire the knowledge of God and taste of salvation. This is also evident from the fact that the Church is called Orthodoxy and this, after all, is the true Church. Orthodoxy means "correct glory", that is, the correct teaching of the Triune God. Where there is unadulterated faith, there is true worship, and in order for worship to be true, it must be linked to unadulterated teaching.

There are many people today who experience a "god" or seek with passion and great desire to meet God. We notice that today there is a great turn in this matter and it has been characteristically said that the 21st century will be a century of

religion. Modern people, tired of pointless searches and traumatic disenchantment, living in a world of despair, are looking for something authentic. But in this new search new mistakes can be made. New false messiahs will intensify the gap between people. That is why the great truth must be proclaimed in every direction, that the search for God outside of Christ, the search for Christ outside the Church, the life of the Church without the radiance of the Holy Spirit and the Church outside of Orthodoxy, lead to delusion and pave the way for new painful adventures. In these modern apocalyptic times, we Orthodox have increased responsibilities. *(from johnsanidopoulos.com)*

Today's Epistle Lesson – The Acts of the Apostles 11:19-26, 29-30 EOB

In those days, those who had been scattered abroad by the oppression that arose in connection with Stephen had traveled as far as Phoenicia, Cyprus, and Antioch, and they were only proclaiming the word to Jews. But some of them, men of Cyprus and Cyrene, spoke to the Greeks and preached the Lord Jesus when they arrived in Antioch. The hand of the Lord was with them, and a great number believed and turned to the Lord. News of these things came to the ears of the Church which was in Jerusalem. So, they sent out Barnabas to go as far as Antioch. When he arrived and saw the grace of God, he rejoiced. He encouraged them all to remain close to the Lord with a resolute heart. Indeed, Barnabas was a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and faith, and many people were added to the Lord. Then Barnabas went out to Tarsus to look for Saul, and when he found him, he brought him to Antioch. So it was that for a whole year, they assembled with the Church and taught many people. The disciples were first called Christians in Antioch. According to their ability, each one of the disciples determined to send relief to the brethren who lived in Judea. This is indeed what they did, sending their gift to the presbyters through the hands of Barnabas and Saul.

Today's Gospel Lesson – Saint John 4:5-42 EOB

At that time, Jesus arrived at a city of Samaria called Sychar, near the parcel of ground that Jacob had given to his son Joseph; and Jacob's well was there. Jesus, tired from his journey, sat down by the well. It was about the sixth hour. A woman of Samaria came to draw water. Jesus said to her, "Give me [something] to drink." (For his disciples had gone away into the city to buy food). The Samaritan woman then said to him, "How is it that you, being a Jew, ask for a drink from me, a Samaritan woman?" (For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans.) Jesus answered her, "If you knew the gift of God, and who it is who says to you, 'Give me a drink,' you would have asked him, and he would have given you living water!" The woman replied, "Sir, you have nothing to draw [water] with, and the well is deep! Where then do you get that living water? Are

you greater than our father Jacob who gave us the well and drank of it himself, as did his children and his livestock?” Jesus replied, “Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again! But whoever drinks of the water that I will give him will never be thirsty again. Not only this, the water that I will give him will become in him a well of water springing up to eternal life.” The woman said to him, “Sir, give me this water, so that I may never be thirsty or come all the way here to draw [water]!” Jesus said to her, “Go, call your husband, and come here.” The woman answered, “I have no husband.” Jesus replied, “You said well, ‘I have no husband,’ for you have had five husbands, and the one whom you now have is not your husband. This you have said truthfully.” The woman said to him, “Sir, I perceive that you are a prophet! Our ancestors expressed adoration on this mountain, and you Jews say that Jerusalem is the place where people should express adoration.” Jesus said to her, “Woman, believe me, a time is coming when neither in this mountain nor in Jerusalem will you express adoration to the Father. You express adoration to what you do not know. We express adoration to what we know, for salvation is from the Jews. But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will express adoration to the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father is seeking such [people] to express adoration to him. God is a spirit, and those who express adoration to him must express adoration in spirit and truth.” The woman said to him, “I know that Messiah is coming, (he who is called Christ). When he comes, he will proclaim all things to us.” Jesus replied, “I am he, the one who is speaking to you.” Just then, his disciples arrived. They were astonished that he was speaking with a woman, yet no one said, “What are you looking for?” or, “Why do you speak with her?” Then, the woman left her water jar, went away into the city, and said to the people, “Come, see a man who told me everything I have done! Could this be the Christ?” The people g [then] went out of the city, and were coming to him. Meanwhile, the disciples urged him, saying, “Rabbi, eat!” But he told them, “I have food to eat that you do not know about.” The disciples then said one to another, “Has anyone brought him something to eat?” Jesus said to them, “My food is to do the will of the one who sent me, and to accomplish his work. Do you not say, ‘There are still four months until the harvest comes?’ Behold, I tell you, lift up your eyes and look at the fields! They are already white for the harvest! [Already], the one who reaps is receiving his wages and gathering fruit a to eternal life; so that both the one who sows and the one who reaps may rejoice together! For in this, the saying is true, ‘One sows, and another reaps.’ I sent you to reap that for which you have not labored. Others have labored, and you have entered into [the rewards of] their labor.” Many of the Samaritans from that city believed in him because of the word of the woman who had testified, “He told me everything that I did!” For this reason, when the Samaritans came to him, they begged him to stay with them. So, he stayed there two days, and many more

believed because of his word. Then they said to the woman, “Now we believe, not because of what you said, but because we have heard for ourselves and [we] know that this is indeed the Savior of the world, the Christ.”

Homily on the Fifth Eothinon Gospel - Luke 24:13-35

By Metropolitan Hierotheos of Nafpaktos and Agiou Vlasiou

The Gospel read today during Matins refers to the appearance of Christ to the two disciples, who are not numbered among the circle of the Twelve, but instead they are among the circle of the Seventy, as they were on their way to Emmaus, a small city near Jerusalem. One of the disciples mentioned in the Gospel is Cleopas, the other, according to the tradition preserved for us, is Luke the Evangelist himself, who recorded the event.

First of all, what one finds when reading the Gospels that describe the Resurrection of Christ, is that all the descriptions are simple, plain, they do not express emotions or grand doctrines, they even express the disbelief of the disciples. All this shows the truth of the descriptions. There is nothing unnecessary, excessive, emotional. Everything is natural and true.

The two disciples are saddened by the events that preceded them, namely the Passion of Christ and His Crucifixion. Christ approaches them, He does not reveal His divinity, He conceals His glorious face, He converses with them, He accepts their weakness, and gradually He removes their sorrow from them and leads them to the great revelation, that He Himself is the resurrected Christ, as it was foretold in the Scriptures. The two disciples express their doubts saying: "We had hoped that He was the one who was going to redeem Israel." And of course they said this because they had other notions about the Messiah Christ, that he would expel the occupiers and liberate Israel. These were secular national notions. But Christ did not come into the world to create another, perhaps a better worldly political situation, but to renew the world and resurrect humanity, to give us that which no one else could give.

The important thing is that Christ gradually and progressively raised them to the great revelation. At first He referred to what the Prophets said and He analyzed it, then, when they arrived at the house, at the time He blessed the bread, He opened their eyes and they recognized Him. At that moment, Christ vanished from their sight. When He revealed Himself to them, His presence was no longer needed, for He had just entered them. This gradual, progressive revelation which happened to the disciples on the road to Emmaus shows slightly the course of the Divine Liturgy. First we hear the Apostolic and Gospel readings, then the sermon about these readings, and then we enter the Divine Liturgy where there is the possibility,

if there are Orthodox ecclesiastical prerequisites, to taste the Body and Blood of Christ, and we gain a personal communion and knowledge of God.

But this progressive and gradual revelation of Christ is not an external event but an inner experience, for as the Gospel says, while He spoke and opened their hearts to the word of God, they felt internally the energy of the words as a burning and then their spiritual eyes opened and they recognized him. Therefore, all spiritual and ecclesiastical events take place within the heart.

The Saints had such experiences, even the Old Testament Prophets, such as the Prophet Elijah. And he was a Prophet who had seen God, for he was made worthy to see the pre-incarnate Christ, which is precisely why he attended the Transfiguration of Christ.

My beloved, we must live in our hearts the Orthodox ecclesiastical life and especially the blessing of the Divine Eucharist. How this will be done will be shown by our inspired spiritual fathers. *(from johnsanidopoulos.com)*

A Word From the Holy Fathers

Throughout this current season of fifty days we celebrate the resurrection of our Lord and God and Savior Jesus Christ from the dead, proving by the length of this feast its superiority over the others. For if these fifty days also include the yearly commemoration of the ascension into heaven, it too shows the distinction between the risen Master and those of His servants who have from time to time been brought back to life. All who were raised from the dead were raised by other people, and when they died again, returned to the earth. But when Christ rose from the dead, death no longer had any power over Him (Rom. 6:9). He alone resurrected Himself on the third day and, instead of returning again to the earth, He ascended into heaven, making our human substance share the same throne as the Father, being equally divine. He alone became the beginning of the coming resurrection of all (Col. 1:18), the first fruits of them that slept (1 Cor. 15:20), the firstborn from the dead (Col. 1:18), and the Father of the world to come (Is. 9:6 LXX). “As in Adam all,” sinners and the just, “die, so in Christ shall all,” both sinners and the just, “be made alive.” But every man in his own order: Christ the first fruits; afterward they that are Christ’s at His coming. Then comes the end, when He shall have to put down all rule and all authority and power and put all His enemies under His feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death” (1 Cor. 15:22-26), at the time of the General Resurrection, “at the last trump” (1 Cor. 15:52). “For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality” (1 Cor. 15:53).

The Lord's bounty has procured this bounty for us, and that is why it is the only feast we keep for so many days, seeing that it is immortal, indestructible, and eternal, and thus prefigures the future blessedness of the saints, whence pain, sorrow, and sighing shall flee away (Is. 35:10 LXX). In that place inspired, unchanging joy and celebration will be unceasing, for it is the dwelling place of those who truly rejoice. For this reason the grace of the Spirit ordained that before this present season we should pass the holy forty days in fasting, vigil, prayer, and all kinds of training in the virtues. Through those forty days He shows that in this world the life of those who are being saved consists only of repentance and a way of life pleasing to God. By means of these fifty days through which we are now passing, however, He demonstrates the ease and enjoyment which await those who have lived here and now in struggles for God's sake.

This is why Lent lasts for forty days and is closely linked with the commemoration of the Lord's saving passion, and fasting comes to an end after seven weeks. This season, on the other hand, is for fifty days, and includes the Lord's ascension from earth to heaven and the descent and distribution of the divine Spirit. This present age is divided into weeks of seven days, is made up of four seasons, four parts and four elements, and upon those who make themselves sharers in Christ's sufferings through their deeds here and now, it bestows the feast of Pentecost, which begins in the eighth week and ends in the eighth week, going beyond the honorable numbers seven and four. This feast bears witness, through the Lord's resurrection of the human race, when those who are worthy will be raised up in the clouds to meet the Lord, and thereafter shall be ever at rest with God (cf. 1 Thess. 4:17).

All this will come in due course. Meanwhile the Lord, before His passion and resurrection, was preaching the Good News of the kingdom and showing His disciples that those worthy of faith and of the eternal inheritance offered by Him would not be chosen just from among the Jews but from the Gentiles as well...

I have dealt very briefly with the subject so far, and I shall now pass over the rest of the Gospel passage, for I see that time is pressing you to attend to physical needs and the business of daily life. But think about this Samaritan woman. As soon as she heard the words of the Gospel, which we too proclaim to your charity, she immediately despised her body's necessities. Straightaway she left her water pot and her house, ran to the city and, having persuaded the Samaritans, returned with them to Christ. The words, "Come, see" actually mean, "Follow me and I shall lead you and show you now the Savior who has come into the world,"

At that time she urged people in this manner and brought them to Christ. However, by abandoning her water pot and her house, she teaches us to value the benefit of the Lord's teaching more highly even than absolute necessities. The

Lord too referred to His teaching as the “good part” when He spoke to Martha in defense of Mary, who was listening to His word (Luke 10:41). If we have to despise necessary things, how much more must we hold unnecessary things in contempt? What forces you away from listening to words beneficial to your soul? Your care for your home, your children, or your wife? Your own or your family's grief or joy? Buying or selling property? The use, or rather misuse, of your possessions? But listen intelligently to the apostolic teaching, “Brethren, the time is short: it remains, that both those who have wives behave as though they had none, and those who weep, as though they do not weep, and those who rejoice, as though they do not rejoice, and those who buy as though they do not possess, and those who use this world as not abusing it; for the fashion of this world passes away” (1 Cor. 7:29-31).

What does it mean that “the time is short”? Life is brief, death is near, this world is passing away, and there is another one that lasts forever. The things that convey us with certainty into that world are despising this present world, preparing for the one to come, as far as possible living here according to the order of that world, and fleeing as far as we can from what is harmful in this present life. When enemies make frequent attacks on the lands outside our city, it is as if we did not possess our own fields, and most of the time we abandon them and sit safely inside. Then when the enemies temporarily withdraw, for a little while we make use of the paths in front of the town, without misusing them, for we see that time is short. In the same way, the apostle rightly exhorts us to use this world but not abuse it, for he sees our invisible enemies' harmful influence and our imminent destruction. “For the fashion of this world,” he says, “passes away.” The things of the present have no actual existence but are, as it were, just outward forms, which come to pass but have no real being, as they are short-lived, fleeting phenomena. Anyone who wants to possess them will never be able to, for they are like the shadow of a waterless summer cloud scudding by, driven along by the wind. So the aim of the apostle's counsel is to reveal the intention of each one of us and to give a token whereby we can recognize teaching that comes from God. As I have said already, even if someone wishes to possess the things of the present, they are impossible to acquire, for two reasons. Not only is this world passing away, but so is each one of us who uses this world, and sometimes we depart before our worldly possessions pass away. Everyone passes through life along a road which is affected by many different factors and which will leave him. One of two things happens: either the road reaches its end before he does and he can no longer keep what he has acquired, or else he reaches his final end before this road of life, and can no longer hold on to any of this life's goods. Man is mortal, and he is bound up with the concerns of this life, which are themselves subject to change. Anyone united with

what is changeable either suffers all manner of reverses and loses what he has, such as riches, splendor and pleasure, or else he dies and brings upon himself the greatest change of all, departing naked and abandoning all the goods of this present life and his hopes for them. He may leave them to his children, but what joy does that bring him? He is no longer aware of what happens here, and his children, too, fall in one way or the other.

The end of those who are devoted to this world is always misfortune, since they are eventually carried away naked, leaving everything they loved here. By contrast, for those who despise this world's goods and seek to learn about the world to come and hasten to do what serves to attain it, death does not inflict loss when it comes, but rather it conveys them away from what is vain and unstable to the day without evening, undying life, inexhaustible riches, unfading joy, eternal glory, and things that truly exist and remain forever unchanged.

May we all attain to this, by the grace and love for mankind of Him who bowed the heavens and came down for our sake, not just down as far as us but as far as the souls shut up in the depths. He quickly came up from that place by His resurrection and the restoration of all things to life, and bestowed on us through Himself enlightenment, knowledge, and the hope of heavenly, eternal things, in which He is glorified unto the ages of ages. Amen.

– St. Gregory Palamas, *Homily 19*

Saint Leontios, Patriarch of Jerusalem

Saint Leontios came from Tiberiopolis in Phrygia, and was born to wealthy and pious parents around the second half of the 12th century AD. When his father died, after leaving his hometown and studying under a pious priest, he came to the Monastery of Ptelidi, where he became a monk. Later he went to Constantinople and became associated with the Metropolitan of Tiberias, to whom he submitted. After following his elder, who was returning to his Diocese, he sailed with him to Patmos, to worship at the Monastery of Saint John the Theologian. He then started his journey to Cyprus, but the will of God led him back to Patmos. There, with the spiritual guidance of the abbot of the monastery, Theoktestos, a man experienced in spiritual matters, he became a model of brotherly love and humility. When the abbot Theoktestos died, Leontios was elected his successor by a unanimous decision of the monks.

Saint Leontios oversaw the material needs of the monastery and the island of Crete. The Monastery of the Holy Apostle and Evangelist John was based in Crete, inside the ancient city of Aptera, above the Turkish fortress Isdezin (Kalami), which was then part of the Monastery of Patmos.

Taking care of the affairs of the monastery, Saint Leontios went to Constantinople. There he gained the respect and esteem of the emperor Manuel Komnenos (1118-1180) who proposed for him to become a Bishop of Russia or Cyprus but Saint Leontios humbly refused. However, when he was offered the throne of Jerusalem, Leontios could not refuse and became Patriarch of Jerusalem in 1170, at a time when the Orthodox Church was being tested by Latin rule.

Due to the rebuke he gave the new emperor Andronikos Komnenos, Leontios was exiled and died of old age on May 14, 1190. His memory is celebrated in Patmos and Jerusalem on May 14. A Divine Office in his honor was published in Jerusalem in 1912. (*from johnsanidopoulos.com*)

Martyrs Justa, Justina and Henedina of Cagliari

St. Justa was probably a virgin martyred with her maids Justina and Henedina at Cagliari in Sardinia under Hadrian about 130. The town of Santa Giusta is named after her; it was the seat of a bishopric in medieval Sardinia. (*from Medieval-Religion archives*)

Also Commemorated Today

Martyr [Isidore](#) of Chios (251).

St. [Isidore](#), fool-for-Christ, wonderworker of Rostov (1474).

St. Matthew, Hieromonk of Yaramsk in Vyatka (1927).

New Hieromartyr Peter priest (1939).

New Hieromartyr [Alexander](#) (Bogoslavsky), priest of Sidorovskoye (1942)

New Hieromartyr Isidore, Bishop of Mikhailov

Venerable Nicetas, bishop of Novgorod and recluse of the Kiev Caves (1108).

Martyr [Maximus](#), under Decius (250).

Venerable [Serapion](#) the Sindonite, monk, of Egypt (542).

New Martyr John-Raiko of Shumena, Bulgaria (1802)) (Greek).

New Martyr Mark of Crete, at Smyrna (1643) (Greek).

First opening of the relics (1846) of St. Tikhon of Zadonsk (1783).

St. Aprunculus, bishop of Clermont in Gaul (Gaul).

Sts. Alexander, Barbarus, and Acolythus, martyred at the Church of Holy Peace by the Sea in Constantinople (Greek).

St. Andrew, abbot of Raphael (Tobolsk) (1820).

St. Carthage (Carthach Mochuda) the Younger, founder & first abbot of Lismore (637)

Martyr [Boniface](#) of Tarsus (c. 307)

St. Boniface, bishop of Ferentino (6th c.)

Érembert, bishop of Toulouse (c. 672)

Martyr Hallvard of Oslo (c. 1043)

St. Tuto (Totto), bishop of Regensberg (930)

Martyr [Dyvan](#) (Damian) of Wales (2nd c.)
Martyr [Pontius](#) of Cimiez (258)(France)
St. Pever, priest in Brittany of Welsh origin (unk)

Social Team for May 21

Team 4 – Vallandingham, Tony Papadakis, Andrew and Katy, Joseph Frey. Thank you!

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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, Bennett family, Tatyana & Slava Chumak & family, Luke & Marlena Cooper, Roberta Corson, Jon Church, Tina Crull, Mary Diane David, Marlene Doukas, Linda A. Georgiev, Sandi Hebel, Howl family, Helen P. Janowiak, John M. Janowiak, Andrew Kinn, Kopan family, Helen, Brian, Luke and Mia Mahony, Valentina Makowelski, Susan Matula, David & Kathryn Newman, Bobby Nutter & family, Nicholas Pavlik, Weston Perry & family, John Reece, Mary Reed, Marge Rusnak, Rose Song, Fr. Nectarios & Ia, Mother Virginia Marie & the Carmelite Nuns of Port Tobacco, the suffering people of Ukraine, and those in need of our prayers. (Please advise Fr. Joseph of changes.)