

July 18, 2021

Sunday of the Fathers of the Six Ecumenical Councils



SAINT GEORGE BYZANTINE CATHOLIC CHURCH

Fighting the Good Fight with Faith

Glory to Jesus Christ! Glory Forever! Slava Isusu Christu! Slava Na Viki!

Proper for this Sunday: Resurrectional Tone 7: pg. 157 & Sunday of the Fathers, pp. 341 – 342

Divine Services for the Week:

SUN., JULY 18 **SUNDAY of the FATHERS of the SIX ECUMENICAL COUNCILS**
8:30 A.M. **DIVINE LITURGY**
David & Suzanne Klacik, Blessings for 5th Wedding Anniversary

TUE., JULY 20 **ST. ELIJAH HOLY DAY**
6:00 P.M. **DIVINE LITURGY, Blessing of cars**

SUN., JULY 25 **NINTH SUNDAY after PENTECOST**
8:30 A.M. **DIVINE LITURGY**
+ Mary Poiarkoff, offered by Erik Fetkovich

Blessing of Cars

St. Elijah ascended into heaven as the Second Book of Kings describes it: "...a fiery chariot, and fiery horses parted them both asunder, and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven." Because of this ascension of Elijah into heaven on a fiery chariot, it became the Byzantine tradition to bless chariots on this day. Eventually, this spread to all types of vehicles. Now each year, we bless our cars on the feast of St. Elijah (July 20). **There will be a Divine Liturgy on this day, Tuesday, July 20, at 6:00 P.M. followed by blessing of the cars. Plan on being here for this special blessing.**

Happy Birthday Greetings This Week:

None for the week

Wedding Anniversaries this Week:

None for the week

Please Pray For Our Sick and Shut-ins

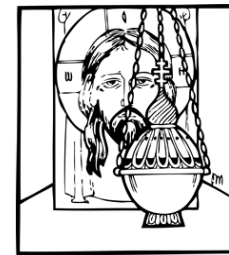
HOME – Eileen Batcha, Rebecca Dickun, Marianne Dove, Jean Herdt, Rebecca Hutcheon, Kevin Joray, Mary Ann Jugan, Neil Jugan, Mary Salamon, John Simunick

Beaver Elder Care (616 Golf Course Road, Aliquippa, PA 15001) – Josephine Maruhnich

Epistle Readers – July 18: Prudy Peya – July 25: JoAnn Hersh

Ushers – Stand in as needed

Troica Holders – July 18: J. Yurosky – July 25: M. Bobanic



THIS WEEK'S SANCTUARY LAMP

July 18 - 24, 2021

Burns before the real presence of our Lord for:

+ Veronica Maruhnich

(In loving memory)

Offered By:

Ed & Isabel Maruhnich

What Jesus Did - And not even here (*Today's Gospel*) does Jesus hold back on the miracle, but it continues as the loaves become fragments. The broken pieces signify that of those the loaves, some remained unreceived. This was in order that those who were absent might also learn what had been done. For this providential purpose, then, Jesus indeed permitted the crowds to get hungry in order that no one might suppose what took place to be as illusion. For this purpose He also caused just twelve baskets to remain over: that Judas, too, might bear one. He wanted all the disciples to know his power. He fed their hunger. In Elijah's case something similar happened, too (*see 1 Kings 17:16*).

(Commentary from St. John Chrysostom)



Sunday of the Fathers of the First Six Ecumenical Councils

“Brethren, remember your leaders, those who spoke to you the word of God; consider the outcome of their lives, and imitate their faith.”



Today we remember the Fathers of the first six Ecumenical Councils, those pastor-bishops who met in various gatherings from the fourth to the seventh centuries to combat heresies and formulate canons, or rules, to guide the Church in holy living. We honor these Fathers – indeed, we honor all the saints – because they are friends of Christ, because they show us Christ. The Fathers committed their lives, many of them as martyrs, to teaching clearly and faithfully the word of God. We are called to consider carefully the outcome of their life and to imitate their faith. We are to follow their examples in never neglecting to do good and to share what we have, for such is the way of the fathers, the way of the saints, and such sacrifices are well-pleasing to God.

One of the reasons our churches are filled with icons is to aid us in this task. In worship we are surrounded by a great cloud of witnesses, a tremendous company of those who teach us in word and deed the way of Christ. Many of them were mistreated by the world. Like their Lord Christ, they met their end in dishonor, “dying outside the city,” far removed from fame or fortune. For here they had no lasting city, but rather they sought a city which is to come. As a community of faithful, we are to remember them, we cling to their relics, we venerate their icons, because we know that they’re not simply dead and gone, buried and forgotten. We know that in Christ they live! Dwelling in the fullness of His presence, they are in a certain profound sense more alive than we are in our present struggles.

And so we ask their prayers, that our lives may become more deeply rooted in the life and love of Christ, just as theirs are. We remember them this day and every day. In the words of St. John of Damascus, who wrote in the eighth century: “Let us carefully review the life of these men, and let us emulate their faith, love, hope, zeal, and way of life, and endurance of sufferings and patience even to (the shedding of) blood, in order that we may be sharers with them in their crowns of glory.” Amen.



Save the Date

St. George’s annual picnic will be on Sunday, August 29.
More details to follow.

A Note from Father Geoff

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

St. Paul's third "Fruit of the Spirit" found in Galatians 5.22 is "peace." Peace is a virtue that is invoked over and over again in our Byzantine liturgies: "In peace let us pray to the Lord," the deacon intones. "Peace be with all," the celebrant pronounces.

In the mind of the Biblical writers, the Hebrew concept of "peace" - *shalom* - is not simply the absence of conflict or the ending of hostilities (though it includes those things). Rather, *shalom* is an expansive understanding of "peace." It includes the concept of one's needs being met, of reconciliation with God and with others, an end to enmity and strife, and a peace within one's own heart and soul.

In short, *shalom* describes the Kingdom of God in its fullness. It is the state of peace that we can expect on the Last Day when God has put all his enemies under his feet. (See 1 Cor. 15:25) But it is a peace that begins *now*, since Christ has given it to us. Jesus told his disciples: "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled..." (John 14.27)

And when he greeted the Apostles on Easter evening - the Apostles who had fled during his passion and death - Jesus offers them twice a greeting of "Peace be with you!" " *Shalom*." (John 20.19-20) St. Paul often addressed his spiritual children with a greeting of "grace and peace" from God. (Romans, 1 & 2 Corinthians, Galatians, etc.)

And *Shalom* - Biblical peace - is active. It is a peace that we are called to participate in, as when Jesus says, "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called children of God." (Mt. 5:9) You and I are called to express God's reign of peace through our lives. In the words of grace we offer others. In our deeds, which are to be deeds of mercy and compassion. By our forgiveness of wrongs, seeking the good of our neighbors, loving our enemies, lifting up the downtrodden, feeding the hungry, working for justice.

All of our words of grace and actions of mercy are part of the "Peace of Christ" which has been poured into our hearts to overflowing. And as it overflows in us, may it spill out of us into the world around us so that the world may see *through* us to the Lord who loves them and calls them to himself.

In the Peace of Christ,

Fr. Geoff

Eighth Sunday after Pentecost

Jesus said, "They need not go away; you give them something to eat." They said to Him, "We have only five loaves here and two fish." And He said, "Bring them here to Me." Then He ordered the crowds to sit down on the grass; and taking the five loaves and the two fish He looked up to heaven, and blessed, and broke and gave the loaves to the crowds.

Today's Gospel reading from the holy apostle and evangelist Matthew relates to us the feeding of the five thousand and the miraculous multiplication of loaves and fishes. This miracle teaches us several things that are helpful in our journey of faith. We can see how this miracle is also a revelation of the Savior's divinity, of the power of Christ. The miracle takes place when the day is already far spent, but Christ is not limited by time; He is the Lord of Time. Where does this miracle take place? In a desert place, in the wilderness; therefore Christ is also the Lord of Space. He blesses and multiplies bread and fish; He is also the Lord of Land and Sea.

We see in this miracle how Christ not only feeds us with material food, but also with spiritual food, for, as it is written in the Holy Scriptures, "man shall not live by bread alone". Look at the numbers mentioned in this Gospel. Why five loaves? The number five, as we read in the Psalms and in the prayers of thanksgiving after communion, represent our five senses. These five senses are fed by Christ, the Bread of Life.

What about the two fishes? They represent the two parts of the New Testament, the Gospels and the Epistles, which were written by fishermen, who became fishers of men, for we are spiritually fed by their writings.

Why twelve baskets of fragments? They represent the twelve Apostles who preach to the ends of the universe, the fragments who feed our souls with the words of Christ through the Holy Spirit.

As we meditate upon this Gospel reading, let us open our minds and souls to Christ our True God that we too may be fed and satisfied with the Bread of Life.

Sanctuary Candle Dates Open:

There are many open dates available for you to sponsor with your intention in memory of a deceased loved one or for the health and well-being of a friend or loved one. Please sign-up in the Narthex.



Glory to Jesus Christ! Glory Forever!

The Journey's End is Knowledge of God

The holy prophet Elias is remarkable among the prophets and fathers for many reasons. Our Church has reflected often on the life of this great prophet, marveling at his power over nature and his boldness before God and men. The texts for this feast call him the 'second fore-runner', and 'pure one'.

He is a fore-runner of the coming of Christ, a figure of John the Fore-runner, and of the Savior himself. He stands between God and man, calling all to faith and fidelity. Against idolatry and injustice, he is an uncompromising prophet of singular dedication.

Reflecting upon Elias' ascension in the chariot of fire, we see that Elias is not yet dead, but has ascended bodily into heaven. But all men must die, so his earthly mission must not yet be complete. So, we answer that Elias will return before the second coming of Christ, acting as a 'second fore-runner'. Elias will call us to prepare for the great day of the Lord's return. Then, it is said, he will suffer martyrdom, and die, giving his life in witness to the presence of the Lord.

But that is not Elias' only mission. In the canon for the feast, the prophet is called 'pure one', a title we hear often in reference to Mary the Mother of God (the Most Pure One) whom he also prefigures. Elias led a life of ascetic prayer, fasting on Carmel, wandering in the desert, wrapped in stillness upon Horeb. Our Orthodox Church has seen him also as a fore-runner of the Mother of God, because Elias in virginity and purity became, in the flesh, worthy of the vision of God's presence. Elias upon the mountain, fasting and praying, has become the icon of the hesychast at prayer. Not in earthquake, mighty wind, or many words; but in the "sound of sheer silence" Elias has encountered God. And this miracle while yet in the flesh! Even today, Elias stands in the body, before the throne of God in heaven. How is this possible? We do not know, but we are glad to wonder, at God whose generosity seems beyond all we might hope for.

Those of the East, who practice prayer of stillness, hesychastic prayer, see in the holy prophet proof, that yet in this life, yet in the body, God can reveal his glory to his servants. Those who in purity of heart, and inner stillness, wait upon God and yearn to enter into the his presence are filled with hope as they recall the gifts given to this prophet. Elias has known in the flesh the fulfillment of the beatitudes, for 'pure in heart, he sees God'.

Silence is discovered by those who know purity of heart. Purity of heart is the crown of the passions conquered. The weapons for this battle are the practice of the virtues and asceticism. This road is formidable and often frightening (Elias found it terrifying), but the journey's end is knowledge of God.

The 'Praises' of the Feast of Elias sums up this spiritual journey, for Elias who "by conquering of the passions" is brought into God's presence. An "angel in the flesh" and a "heavenly man" he dwells among the saints.



SAINT GEORGE BYZANTINE CATHOLIC CHURCH



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Facilities Supervisor: John Poiarkoff

Holy Mystery of Reconciliation Before and after Liturgies
 Holy Mysteries of Initiation Contact the church office
 Holy Mystery of Anointing Ask prior to surgery or serious illness
 Holy Mystery of Marriage Contact the church office eight months prior to wedding
 Religious Education Classes September through May, following Sunday Divine Liturgy
 St. George Ladies' Guild & Men's Club Everyone welcome to participate

Those who have truly decided to serve the Lord God should practice the remembrance of God and uninterrupted prayer to Jesus Christ, mentally saying: "Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me, a sinner."

St. Seraphim of Sarov