

# Ss. Peter & Paul Orthodox Church

October 8, 2023

Tone 1



## 18<sup>th</sup> Sunday After Pentecost

*Fathers of the  
7<sup>th</sup> Ecumenical Council  
Ven. Pelagia the Penitent*

### Divine Liturgy

### Readings

*(Readings on Back)*

- ♦ 2 Cor. 9:6-11
- ♦ Luke 7:11-16

## Announcements:

### St. Herman's Meal Project

We will gather in the church basement at 9:00am on Tuesday, October 24th to prepare a meal for the St. Herman's House. All are welcome to come and participate in this outreach effort!

### Holy Land Pilgrimage Presentation

Last year, a handful of our parishioners made a pilgrimage to the Holy Land, and would like to share photos and memories of their trip with us. A brief presentation will be given following/during coffee hour on October 22. Lunch will be provided. All are welcome.

### Thank You

Thank you to everyone who prepared food to share at our Choir Appreciation meal last week. The choir is very important to the life, and future, of our parish and they were humbled at all of the kind words and the meal prepared. Thank you!

## This Week

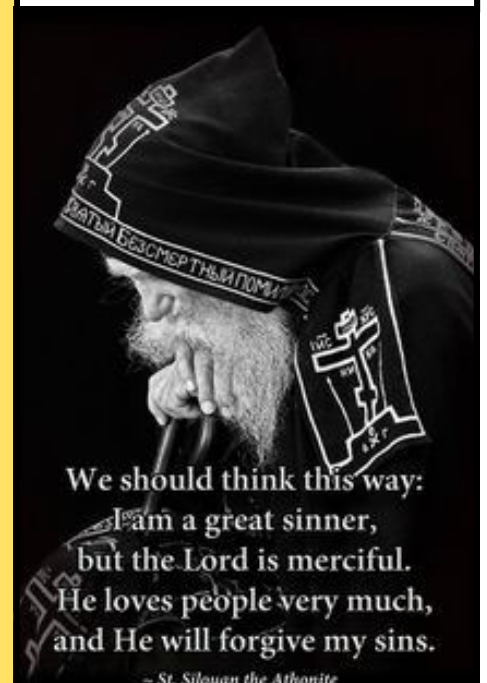
Saturday, October 14

6:00pm - Great Vespers

Sunday, October 15

9:00am - 3rd & 6th Hours

9:30am - Divine Liturgy



## *Meditation on Today's Readings*

When death occurs it saddens our hearts. For man was not created by God to die; but, was created with the possibility of not dying. If Adam never had disobeyed God's Commandment in the Garden of Delight, death would never occurred and man would participated in an eternal life here on earth. Man would never had to face pain, sufferings, mortality and finally death, which became his greatest enemy, because of the Fall and the Disobedience to God's Commandment.

In today's Gospel's reading, we see before our very eyes a mother who accompanies her only begotten son to its tomb. The whole picture moves our hearts. The mother with great pain in her soul accompanies the fruit of her womb to its final resting place. She is surrounded by many people and, yet, she remains by herself with the only thought, the lost of her precious child, who was her only comfort in life as she had lost her husband some time ago.

The situation is dramatic. During this hopeless time, the moment, when she preceded towards the tomb, unexpectedly Christ meets with her. Christ meets with the dead young man and changes the course of life. The Source of Life confronts with the death of His creation, and with authority He commands saying: "Young man, I say to you, rise" (Luke 7:14). Immediately, "the dead sat up rise" (Luke 7:15).

The people of Nain were filled with sacred fear, a deep astonishment and an indescribable admiration, when they witnessed this sensational miracle. They had seen and heard about the many miracles which the Lord had performed. But, this, which took place before their very eyes and only by His commandment, was stunning. They witnessed a dead man being raised from the dead. They saw a fellow countryman, who they thought that was for ever lost, coming back to their society alive and in good health.

The young man was dead, and yet Christ came to him. The young man was speechless, and yet Christ speaks to him. With a simple command Christ grants life to the dead. The Word of Christ is a Word of Life, it is Life giving, it is a Word which is not empty and useless. The Word of Christ is addressed to every person and bears the Fruit of its purpose, to save man.

The Word of Christ is not addressed only to the dead young man of today's Gospel reading, but to all those who are spiritually dead. Christ speaks to every one of us, who under the bondage of sin, have been captured and enslaved in its mortal nets and are led to our moral catastrophe and death.

Many times we hear people saying, that "we live in difficult times and it is impossible to practice Christ's Commandments, to live a virtuous and Christ-like way of life". But, this opinion is completely wrong and it is a deception of Satan. All periods of time have their difficulties and problems. But, in all times Christ is present and alive. He offers true Life to all those who want to follow Him. But, Christ never forces anyone to follow Him. One must follow Christ by his own free will and not by force.

The path which the people of Nain followed led the young man to his grave. The path which one follows far away from Christ leads to spiritual death and finally to eternal death. When one meets with Christ and listens to His voice, then his soul is filled with Life. When one opens his heart to Christ, Who is always standing next to you, then, no matter how many sins one has, through true repentance and holy confession, they will be forgiven. Man's soul is cleansed from every stain and filth, both of soul and body.

As long as we walk in the path of life, we have the opportunity and hope to meet with Christ. We must never be discouraged. But, again, we must never delay our repentance and our return to Christ our God.





## Today's Saints

Today the Church remembers the 350 holy Fathers of the Seventh Ecumenical Council under the holy Patriarch Tarasius (February 25).

The Synod of 787, the second to meet at Nicea, refuted the Iconoclast heresy during the reign of Empress Irene and her son Constantine VI.

Disputes concerning the Person of Christ did not end with the sixth Council in AD 681, but continued through the eighth and ninth centuries. This time, the controversy focused on icons—pictures of Christ, the Theotokos, the saints, and holy events—and lasted for 120 years, starting in AD 726. Icons were kept and venerated in both churches and private homes. The two groups in the controversy were:

Iconoclasts, also called "icon-smashers," they were suspicious of any art depicting God or humans; they demanded the destruction of icons because they saw icons as idolatry.

Iconophile, also called "venerators of icons," they defended the place of icons in the Church.

The controversy, however, was more than a struggle over different views of Christian art. Deeper issues were involved, and it is these the Council addressed: The character of Christ's human nature, the Christian attitude toward matter, and the true meaning of Christian redemption and the salvation of the entire material universe.

The Council decreed that venerating icons, having them in churches and homes, is what the Church teaches. They are "open books to remind us of God." Those who lack the time or learning to study theology need only to enter a church to see the mysteries of the Christian religion unfolded before them.

Furthermore, icons are necessary and essential because they protect the full and proper doctrine of the Incarnation. While God cannot be represented in His eternal nature ("...no man has seen God", John 1:18), He can be depicted simply because He "became human and took flesh." Of Him who took a material body, material images can be made. In so taking a material body, God proved that matter can be redeemed. He deified matter, making it spirit-bearing, and so if flesh can be a medium for the Spirit, so can wood or paint, although in a different fashion.

### Prayers Appreciated for:

#### Living:

Marge

Tina, Katherine,  
Paula, Marianne,  
Suleiman, Steve

#### Departed:

#### Tall Candles

Tall candles are available to sponsor for \$15ea.

Contact Fr. Joseph for details.

### WEEKLY READINGS

#### **Monday, Oct. 9**

*St. Tikhon, Enlightener of North America*

Philippians 1:1-7  
Luke 7:36-50

#### **Tuesday, Oct. 10**

*St. Ambrose of Optina*

Philippians 1:8-14  
Luke 8:1-3

#### **Wed, Oct. 11**

*Synaxis of the Optina Elders*

Philippians 1:12-20  
Luke 8:22-25

#### **Thurs, Oct. 12**

*St. Cosmas the Hymnographer*

Philippians 1:20-27  
Luke 9:7-11

#### **Friday, Oct. 13**

*St. Florentius of Thessalonica*

Philippians 1:27-2:4  
Luke 9:12-18

#### **Saturday, Oct. 14**

*St. Paraskevi of Serbia*

1 Cor. 15:58-16:3  
Luke 6:1-10

**Troparion** - Most glorious art Thou, O Christ our God, Who hast established the Holy Fathers as luminaries on the earth. By them Thou hast guided us on the path of the True Faith. O Most Merciful One, glory to Thee!

**Kontakion** - The Son, Who shone forth ineffably from the Father, was born of a woman, in two natures. Beholding Him, we do not deny the image of His form, but depicting it piously, we revere it with faith. Therefore, the Church, holding the True Faith, venerates the Icon of Christ's Incarnation.



## *Today's Scripture Readings*

### **Epistle: 2 Corinthians 9:6-11**

But this I say: "He who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully." So let each one give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to make all grace abound toward you, that you, always having all sufficiency in all things, may have an abundance for every good work. As it is written: "He has dispersed abroad, He has given to the poor; His righteousness endures forever." Now may He who supplies seed to the sower, and bread for food, supply and multiply the seed you have sown and increase the fruits of your righteousness, while you are enriched in everything for all liberality, which causes thanksgiving through us to God.

### **Gospel: Luke 7:11-16**

Now it happened, the day after, that He went into a city called Nain; and many of His disciples went with Him, and a large crowd. And when He came near the gate of the city, behold, a dead man was being carried out, the only son of his mother; and she was a widow. And a large crowd from the city was with her. When the Lord saw her, He had compassion on her and said to her, "Do not weep." Then He came and touched the open coffin, and those who carried him stood still. And He said, "Young man, I say to you, arise." So he who was dead sat up and began to speak. And He presented him to his mother. Then fear came upon all, and they glorified God, saying, "A great prophet has risen up among us"; and, "God has visited His people."

*Glory to Thee, O Lord, glory to Thee!*

## **Ss Peter & Paul Orthodox Church**

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