

The Reading from the Epistle of the Apostle Paul to the Romans (12:6–14)

Brethren, having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, let us prophesy in proportion to our faith; or ministry, let us use it in our ministering; he who teaches, in teaching; he who exhorts, in exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness. Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil. Cling to what is good. Be kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love, in honor giving preference to one another; not lagging in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord; rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation, continuing steadfastly in prayer; distributing to the needs of the saints, given to hospitality. Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse.

The Reading from the Gospel according to St. Matthew (9:1–8)

At that time, Jesus got into a boat, crossed over, and came to His own city. Then behold, they brought to Him a paralytic lying on a bed. When Jesus saw their faith, He said to the paralytic, “Son, be of good cheer; your sins are forgiven you.” And at once some of the scribes said within themselves, “This Man blasphemes!” But Jesus, knowing their thoughts, said, “Why do you think evil in your hearts? For which is easier, to say, ‘Your sins are forgiven you,’ or to say, ‘Arise and walk’? But that you may know that the Son of Man has power on earth to forgive sins”—then He said to the paralytic, “Arise, take up your bed, and go to your house.” And he arose and departed to his house. Now when the multitudes saw it, they marveled and glorified God, who had given such power to men.

Saints Peter & Paul Orthodox Church

Meriden, Connecticut

website: sspeterpaul.org

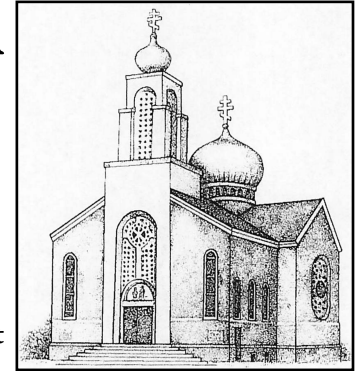
A Parish of the Orthodox Church in America

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6th Sunday after Pentecost—Tone 5
Fathers of the First Six
Ecumenical Councils
July 16, 2023

Hieromartyr Athenogenes, Bishop of Heracleopolis, and his ten disciples (ca. 311). Martyrs Paul and two sisters, Thea and Valentina, at Caesarea in Palestine (308).

Glory to Jesus Christ!

We welcome everyone who has come to this house of the Lord. We especially welcome all guest and newcomers.

Please feel free to follow along with a Divine Liturgy book from the table at the glass doors. For this Sunday and most of the year, we are using the Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom (at the beginning of the book).

Holy Communion is a solemn responsibility: Orthodox Christians who have prepared through Confession, prayer, and fasting may participate. At the end of the Liturgy, everyone is welcome to come forward for a blessing and to share in the blessed bread (called “antidoron,” this blessed bread is used in our prayers but is not itself a sacrament).

Afterward, please join us downstairs for fellowship and refreshment. We look forward to greeting you personally, and we are glad that you are here.

Upcoming Events in Parish Life

We invite anyone to participate in our services online. Visit our website (sspeterpaul.org) for details.

Saturday, July 15	Parish Vigil followed by confessions	5 PM
Sunday, July 16	Divine Liturgy	9:30 AM
	Exploring Orthodoxy after Coffee Hour: On Sunday afternoons, we will take about 30 minutes for a short exploration of Orthodoxy. Each week, we will take a topic of your choosing.	
Wednesdays	Morning Worship	8:15 AM
Wed., July 19	Great Vespers for the eve of St. Elijah	6 PM
Thurs., July 20	Divine Liturgy for the Feast of the Prophet Elijah	9:30 AM
Saturday, July 22	Parish Vigil followed by confessions	5 PM
	Reception into Orthodoxy of Miguel Moll and Julaisa Santiago by Holy Chrismation	10 AM
Sunday, July 23	Divine Liturgy	9:30 AM
	Blessing of Vehicles	
	We practice this blessing as a celebration of the Prophet Elijah, who was carried up to heaven in a fiery chariot. (You can find the account in the Bible: 2[4] Kings 2:1–14.) On a Sunday close to St. Elijah's feast (July 20), we go out from the church to our vehicles to pray that the Lord would keep us safe as we travel. Please open your doors so that your vehicles may be blessed inside and out.	
Tuesday, July 25	Bible Study Online—2nd & 4th Tuesdays: the Gospel of Saint Mark	6:30 PM
Sunday, July 30	Furniture move after coffee hour	
	Calling all able-bodied volunteers: we need to clear space for refinishing the downstairs floors.	
August 1–14	Dormition Fast	

Keep in touch with our parish via email and text messages. We have started up a convenient communication service that allows us to share upcoming events, important developments in parish life, and reflections on the Orthodox Christian Faith—without spam, we promise! You can choose to get updates from particular ministries you are interested in, and unsubscribe any time. Sign up today at <https://sspeterpaul.org/news.html>

We Ask Your Prayers

For those who have as their heavenly patron the Great-martyr Marina (July 17) or the Prophet Elijah (July 20).

For those celebrating birthdays: Rebecca Pannone (July 18).

For the Sick & Suffering:

Mka. Evelyn (Kreta)—broke her wrist, needing additional surgery
 Corey (Knap)—nephew of Valentina Knap, recovering from a serious accident
 William (Weidmann)—husband of Adrian, suffering from a chronic immune condition similar to multiple sclerosis
 Steven (Cardillo)—local Neighborhood Association organizer
 Gregory (Mankevich) Christopher (Sullivan)
 Anita (Propheter) Rosemary (Delaney)
 Juliana (Helwig) Douglas (Hedges)
 Irene Lorraine
 Jacob Valerie
 Juliana Katelyn
 Crystal Lilah
 Angela Innocent

Bruce and Stacia
 Cyprian and Dana
 Nicole and Naaman
 Helen and Helene

For Our Shut-Ins:

Yvonne (Rutcho)
 Jennie (Padick)
 Margaret (Savchik)
 Ann (Kreshik)
 Helen (Olsen)

To share news in the bulletin, or to add someone to our prayer list, please contact Fr. Joshua: priest@sspeterpaul.org or 203-237-4539.

If you would like to commemorate loved ones by lighting the cross in church, please contact Alexia Tassmer: 203-284-0856.



Keep in touch with us

VIA EMAIL OR TEXT MESSAGE

- Choose to receive updates from groups you're interested in
- Unsubscribe anytime
- No spam, we promise

sspporthodox.flocknote.com

We respect your time and attention. Messages to the main group—"Everyone"—will be limited to the most important news of the week. You can expect one or two messages each week—no more except in truly extraordinary cases.

Once you are signed up, we encourage you to join groups to keep in touch with the news and ministries closest to your heart. For example:

Giving Thanks

sharing news and photos from our parish life

Wisdom

regular reflections drawn from the well of our Orthodox Christian faith

Bible Study

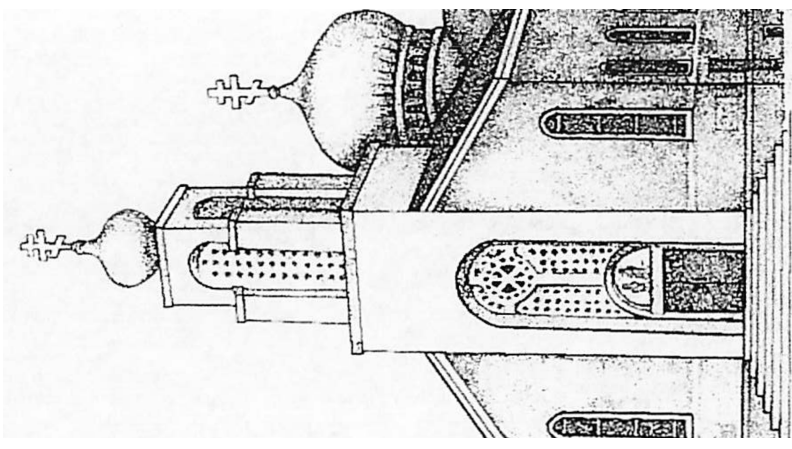
notes and preparation for those wanting to learn more of the Orthodox Faith

Choir

coordinating the activity of our choir

Children's Ministry

working with our families to help our children grow in faith



Hymns of the Day

Tone 5 Troparion *(Resurrection)*

Let us, the faithful, praise and worship the Word,
co-eternal with the Father and the Spirit,
born for our salvation from the Virgin;
for He willed to be lifted up on the Cross in the flesh,
to endure death,
and to raise the dead//
by His glorious Resurrection.

Tone 8 Troparion *(Fathers)*

You are most glorious, O Christ our God!
You have established the Holy Fathers as lights on the earth.
Through them You have guided us to the true Faith.//
O greatly compassionate One, glory to You!

Tone 5 Kontakion *(Resurrection)*

You descended into hell, O my Savior,
shattering its gates as Almighty,
resurrecting the dead as Creator,
and destroying the sting of death.
You have delivered Adam from the curse, O Lover of man,//
and we cry to You: "O Lord, save us!"

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit;

Tone 8 Kontakion *(Fathers)*

The Apostles' preaching and the Fathers' doctrines have established one
Faith for the Church.
Adorned with the robe of truth, woven from heavenly theology,//
It defines and glorifies the great mystery of piety.

now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

Tone 6 Kontakion — *Steadfast Protectress*

Prokeimenon in the Fifth Tone

You, O Lord, shall protect us / and preserve us from this generation forever. *(Ps. 11:7)*

Verse: Save me, O Lord, for there is no longer any that is godly!
(Ps. 11:1a)

Tone 4 Prokeimenon (Song of the Three Holy Children)

Blessed are You, O Lord God of our fathers, / and praised and glorified is Your Name
forever! *(Song of the Three Holy Children, v. 3)*

Alleluia

Verse: I will sing of Your mercies, O Lord, forever; with my mouth I will proclaim
Your truth from generation to generation. *(Ps. 88:1-2)*

Verse: For You have said: Mercy will be established forever; Your truth will be
prepared in the heavens. *(Ps. 88:3)*

Verse: The Lord, the God of gods, speaks and summons the earth from the rising of
the sun to its setting. *(Ps. 49:1)*

Communion Hymn

Praise the Lord from the heavens, praise Him in the highest!
(Ps. 148:1)

Rejoice in the Lord, O you righteous; praise befits the just! *(Ps. 32:1)*
Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

Notes on the Week

As we affirm in the Creed (established at the first two Ecumenical Councils of Nicaea), we believe in "one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church." The Ecumenical Councils, which we commemorate today, are a central activity of this Church, where archpastors of the whole church throughout the world ("ecumene" in Greek) assembled under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. These Councils were called whenever some teaching arose that presented Jesus Christ differently from how the apostles preached him. We call the leaders of these Councils "Holy Fathers" because they acted as our spiritual fathers: courageously protecting the people from what is harmful, lovingly teaching us what is good and necessary for our salvation. From 325 to 681, these Fathers met in Council six times in response to different crises. The seventh, II Nicaea, met in 787, after this commemoration of the First Six Councils had already begun.

What we have received from these Fathers of the Councils is a sure framework and guideline for our Faith. Thanks to them, we confidently pray to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Thanks to them, we recognize that Jesus Christ is both the Son of the Father, "begotten before all ages," fully God in every way, but also fully human, like us in every way but sin.

So we are given sure knowledge of God through the Fathers, but this is only a starting point. The Fathers themselves personally knew God through prayer, repentance and faithful service. The Creed and the formulations of the Councils give us the framework and the guideline, so we know when we are hearing the Truth or one of many attractive falsehoods; but it is up to us to come to know God ourselves, following the lives and teachings of the Holy Fathers, and all the holy men and women in every generation who have known and loved God.