

Scripture Readings

EPISTLE Titus 3:8-15 Titus, my son, the saying is sure. I desire you to insist on these things, so that those who have believed in God may be careful to apply themselves to good deeds; these are excellent and profitable to men. But avoid stupid controversies, genealogies, dissensions, and quarrels over the law, for they are unprofitable and futile. As for a man who is factious, after admonishing him once or twice, have nothing more to do with him, knowing that such a person is perverted and sinful; he is self-condemned. When I send Artemas or Tychicos to you, do your best to come to me at Nicopolis, for I have decided to spend the winter there. Do your best to speed Zenas the lawyer and Apollos on their way; see that they lack nothing. And let our people learn to apply themselves to good deeds, so as to help cases of urgent need, and not to be unfruitful. All who are with me send greeting to you. Greet those who love us in the faith. Grace be with you all. Amen.

GOSPEL Matthew 5:14-19 The Lord said to his disciples, "You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hid. Nor do men light a lamp and put it under a bushel, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven. Think not that I have come to abolish the law and the prophets; I have come not to abolish them but to fulfill them. For truly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, not an iota, not a dot, will pass from the law until all is accomplished. Whoever then relaxes one of the least of these commandments and teaches men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but he who does them and teaches them shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven."



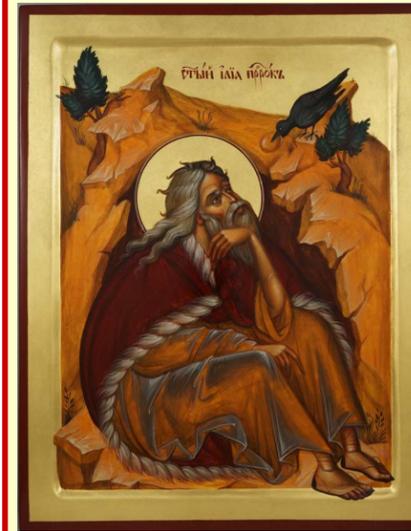
Gospel Reflection: Orthodox Doctrine—Unchanging But Changing All



The commemoration of the Fathers of the Fourth Ecumenical Council gives us pause to reflect on an important element at the heart of our Orthodox faith. Equally important to believing as we do is knowing what precisely we believe. Amid great debates about the nature of Jesus Christ as the God-Man in the first centuries after His life, death and resurrection, the Holy Fathers - guided by the Spirit of God - sorted out many ideas central to the Gospel faith. Though suggested by pious, well-meaning Orthodox teachers and theologians, many of these ideas were incorrect and heterodox in nature. The essential faith of the Church needed to be protected. The Holy Fathers were called upon to proclaim the faith of the Church in clear, convincing and Orthodox terms.

To contradict that faith would place one outside the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church. In today's Gospel passage, Jesus speaks of the permanence of "the law." He informs His disciples that He has not come to abolish it, but to bring it to perfection. The law was the foundation of correct belief and a sign of the covenant of mercy that existed between God and the human family. The Lord emphasizes that whoever dilutes it, relaxes it, tampers with it, and teaches others to do so, "shall be called least in the Kingdom of Heaven." So it is with the truth of our Christian faith. It has been passed down through the centuries, from the hands of the Apostles and Holy Fathers, so that we may live what we believe. In a society increasingly revealing its distaste for absolute values, where moral and doctrinal relativism are in vogue, it is we - the Orthodox believers - who must hold fast to the teaching of the Church, undiluted and unchanged. We do this because, deep in our hearts, we believe it is the truest path to becoming fully human, fully spiritual, and deeply in touch with the living, loving God. Holding fast to the faith of the Fathers, despite our weakness and human fragility, we may be blessed one day to be called "great in the Kingdom of Heaven." O Holy Fathers of the Ecumenical Councils, pray to God that our faith might remain strong and unchanging as is God's presence in our lives!

The Holy Prophet Elijah (July 20)



The Holy Prophet Elijah (Elias) is among the best known of the prophets of the Old Testament. During the reign of King Ahab (mid-800s BC), his wife Jezebel encouraged the Israelites to worship the nature god Baal as well as their own Yahweh. According to the Bible, Elijah went to Ahab's court to demand that worship of Baal cease. He prevailed against Jezebel and established monotheism for the Israelites. He is recognized as a prophet by Christians, Jews, and Muslims for his courageous defense against secular authorities of the worship of the One God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and for his care of the poor and suffering. The following prayer commemorates the holy prophet: "O Lord, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Israel, You alone are God. Your servant and prophet Elijah lived in your presence, and acted on your Word. Help us to drink from the well of his wisdom. Shelter us and lead us to yourself, luring our hearts away from all false gods. Open our eyes to the needs of those suffering. Open our mouths to speak comfort and justice. Open our hearts to your voice in the silence. May we learn, through his holy example, that your

Divine voice comes mostly clearly in stillness and solitude. Send your angels to strengthen us. Send the rain of your grace to quench our thirst. Let us break bread with the starving and bring life to places of death and despair. Send us prophets in our day to herald your Gospel and to announce your mercy to the wounded world. Like Elijah, may we never lose the courage to speak against all that distracts the attention of man from what is godly. Allow us, when we take our final breath, to rise to you in paradise. Those on the mountain of the Transfiguration, saw your Son, the Lord Jesus, in the brilliance of his transforming light. With Him stood the Prophet Elijah. By his intercession, may we be taken into that wondrous light and experience that transformation of our lives. O God of the Prophets, all glory and honor are due unto you, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto the ages of ages. Amen."

For Their Blessed Repose

Panaotis Katsoyannis (40 Days)

George C. Papavizas (40 Days)

Freida Katsoyannis (3 Years)

May they rest in peace and rise in glory and may their memory be eternal.

40-Day Blessing

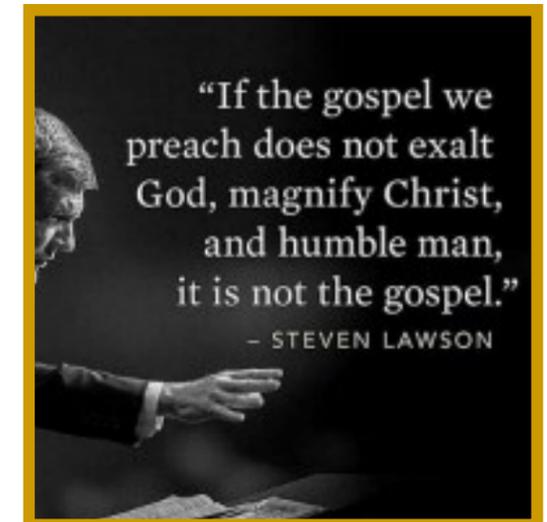
Daniel Andrew, son of

Haris and Shanna Sakellarides

Charalampos Alexandros, son of

Georgios Amanakis and Helenie Kefalakes

May God grant them many and blessed years!



Save, Have Mercy On, and Protect

His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros, His Eminence Metropolitan +Panteleimon; His Eminence Archbishop +Pavlos of Aleppo and His Eminence Mar +Gregorios Ioanna of Aleppo, who were kidnapped; Metropolitan +Kallistos of Diokleia, Holly Dubois, Alexander Falsken, Andrew Katson, Steve Stathes, Anatoly Seraphim, Jessica, Amanda Lawrence, Ourania Mantzouranis, Maria Kritzas, Cathy, Janie Pappas, Eleni Gourmani, Angela Apidououlos, the child of God Amelia Marghi, the child of God Seraphina Marie Vasilatatos, Adib Marghi, Betty Jean Dubard, Nicholas Ellis, Katherine Ellis, Kelly, Jon Wood, Tom Dale, Bill Pastis, Evangelia Pantazakos, George Dizelos, Constantina Speris;



Saints Julitta and Kyriakos (July 15) (The relics of these Martyr-saints are in our Holy Altar.)

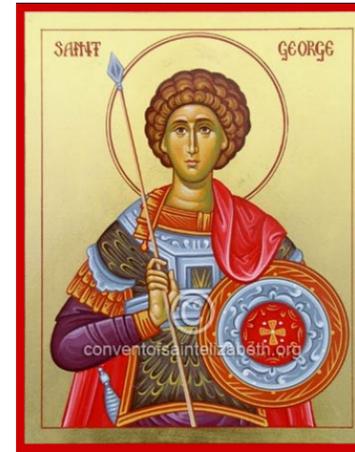
The Holy Martyrs Julitta and Kyriakos lived in the city of Iconium in the province of Lykaoneia in Asia Minor. St Julitta was descended from an illustrious family and was a Christian. Widowed early on, she raised her three-year old-son Kyriakos (Quiricus). During the time of the persecution against Christians initiated by the emperor Diocletian (284-305 AD), St Julitta with her son and two trustworthy servants departed the city, leaving behind her home, property, and servants. Concealing her noble rank, she hid out first at Seleucia, and then at Tarsus. There around the year 305 AD she was recognized, arrested and brought to trial before governor Alexander. Strengthened by the Lord, she fearlessly answered the judge's questions, and she firmly confessed her faith in Christ. The governor gave orders to beat the Saint with rods. During her torments, St Julitta kept repeating, "I am a Christian, and will not offer sacrifice to demons". The little boy Kyriakos cried, seeing his mother being tortured, and wanted to go to her. The governor Alexander tried to sit him on his lap, but the boy broke free and shouted, "Let me go to my mother, I am a Christian". The governor flung the boy from the high tribunal and kicked him down the stone steps. The boy struck his head on the sharp edges and died. The mother, seeing her lacerated son, gave thanks to God that He had permitted her child to be perfected before her, and to receive the unfading crown of martyrdom. After many cruel tortures, they beheaded St. Julitta with a sword. The relics of Sts. Kyriakos and Julitta were uncovered during the reign of St Constantine the Great (commemorated. May 21). In honour of these holy martyrs a monastery was built near Constantinople, and not far from Jerusalem a church was built. In popular custom, Sts. Kyriakos and Julitta are prayed to for family happiness, and the restoring of sick children to health.



St. Vladimir, Holy Equal to the Apostles Baptizer of the Kievan Rus' (July 15)

The holy and right-believing St. Vladimir, Baptizer of Kievan Rus' (958-1015) was the Grand Prince of Kiev when Orthodoxy was introduced into present day Russia and Ukraine. He is also the grandson of St. Olga, and the father of Sts. Boris and Gleb the Passion-Bearers (and the first saints of the Russian lands). He is commemorated by the Orthodox, Anglican, and Roman Catholic Churches on July 15. St. Vladimir was a devout pagan in his early life. He was a great conqueror who had many wives and erected many pagan statues in the lands that he ruled over. Upon finding out that other faiths existed beyond his own paganism, he decided to send his envoys out into the world to find out what was true faith on earth. His envoys met with Muslims, but felt that there was no joy among them, and that their faith was very mechanical. The envoys also met with Jews and Catholics, but were still unimpressed. Everything changed, however, when the envoys arrived in Constantinople. Upon attending Divine Liturgy in Hagia Sophia, the envoys said, "We no longer knew whether we were in heaven or on earth." Taking the word of his envoys, St. Vladimir had himself and his nation baptized into the Orthodox Church. St. Vladimir changed completely after his baptism. He destroyed all the pagan statues that stood in Kievan Rus', and replaced them with churches. He also attempted to live in peace as much as possible with his neighbors and had only one wife. He is a true example of the transforming power of God's love.

Apolytikion: Holy Prince Vladimir, you were like a merchant in search of fine pearls. By sending servants to Constantinople for the Orthodox Faith, you found Christ, the priceless pearl. He appointed you to be another Paul, washing away in baptism your physical and spiritual blindness. We celebrate your memory, asking you to pray for all Orthodox Christians and for us, your spiritual children.

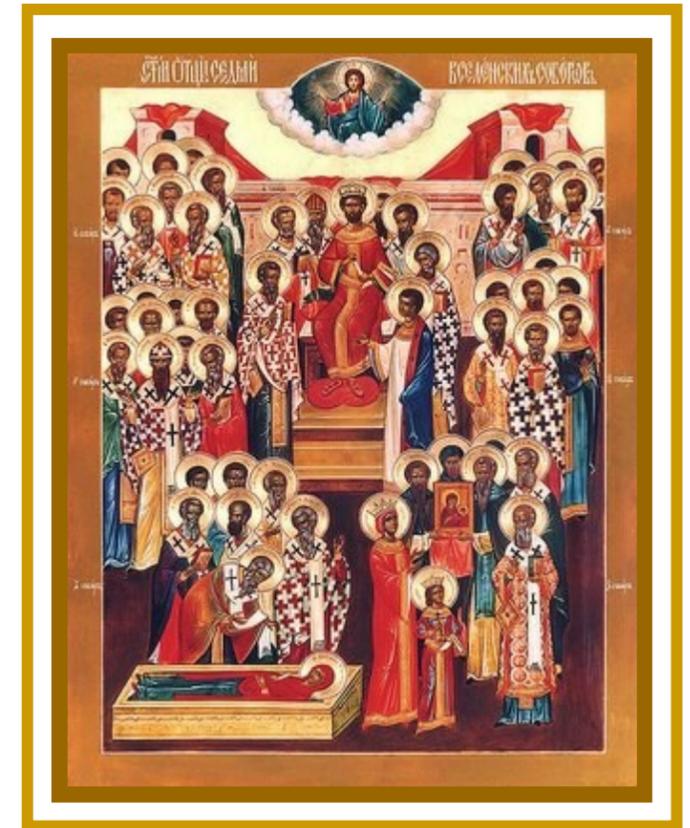


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SUNDAY OF THE 630 HOLY FATHERS OF THE COUNCIL OF CHALCEDON

JULY 14, 2019

Resurrectional Apolytikion Tone 3

Come rejoice all ye Heavens and be glad all ye on earth. For by His power the Lord created might. By His Death He conquered death; for He became the first born of the dead. From the depths of Hades, He delivered us; and He granted to mankind His great mercy.

Apolytikion to St. George

O Trophy-Bearer, Great Martyr George, who freed captives, supported the poor, healed the sick, was a champion of kings, intercede with Christ God that our souls be saved!

Ἀπολυτίκιον

Ὡς τῶν αἰχμαλώτων ἐλευθερωτῆς, καὶ τῶν πτωχῶν ὑπερασπιστῆς,
ἀσθενούντων ἰατρός, βασιλέων ὑπέρμαχος, Τροπαιοφόρε Μεγαλομάρ-
τυς Γεώργιε, πρέσβευε Χριστῷ τῷ Θεῷ, σωθῆναι τὰς ψυχὰς ἡμῶν.