

Assumption of the Holy Virgin Orthodox Church

2101 South 28th St. (corner of 28th St. & Snyder Ave.)
Philadelphia, PA 19145 * Church Phone: (215) 468-3535
Website: <http://www.holyassumptionphilly.org>

<p>Sunday, June 7, 2015 – 1st Sunday After Pentecost Tone 8 - Synaxis of All Saints, Hieromartyr Theodotus</p>
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Rev. Matthew Cantrell, Acting Rector
Rev. Hieromonk Christopher Grecu, Interim Rector

Texts for the Liturgical Service

Troparion (Tone 8)

You descended from on high, O Merciful One! / You accepted the three day burial to free us from our sufferings! / O Lord, our Life and Resurrection, glory to You!

Troparion (Tone 4)

As with fine porphyry and royal purple, / Your Church has been adorned with Your martyr's blood shed throughout all the world. / She cries to You, O Christ God: / "Send down Your bounties on Your people, / Grant peace to Your habitation, and great mercy to our souls!"

Kontakion (Tone 8)

The universe offers You the God-bearing Martyrs, / as the first fruits of creation, O Lord and Creator. / By their prayers keep Your Church, Your habitation, in abiding peace / through the Theotokos, O most Merciful One!

Prokeimenon (Tone 8)

Pray and make your vows before the Lord our God!
vs. In Judah God is known; His Name is great in Israel.

Another Prokeimenon (Saints) (Tone 4)

God is wondrous in His saints, the God of Israel.

Epistle Reading: Hebrews 11:33-12:2

They who through faith subdued kingdoms, worked righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, became valiant in battle, turned to flight the armies of the aliens. Women received their dead raised to life again. Others were tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection. Still others had trial of mockings and scourgings, yes, and of chains and imprisonment. They were stoned, they were sawn in two, were tempted, were slain with the sword. They wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented – of whom the world was not worthy. They wandered in deserts and mountains, in dens and caves of the earth. And all these, having obtained a good testimony through faith, did not receive the promise, God having provided something better for us, that they should not be made perfect apart from us. Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

Alleluia (3x's)

The righteous cried and the Lord heard them, and He delivered them from all their troubles.

Alleluia (3x's)

Many are the afflictions of the righteous, and the Lord will deliver them out of them all. Alleluia (3x's)

Gospel Reading: Matthew 10:32-33, 37-38, 19:27-30

Therefore whoever confesses Me before men, him I will also confess before My Father who is in heaven. But whoever denies Me before men, him I will also deny before My Father who is in heaven. He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he who does not take his cross and follow after Me is not worthy of Me. Then Peter answered and said to Him, "See, we have left all and followed You. Therefore what shall we have?" So Jesus said to them, "Assuredly I say to you, that in the regeneration, when the Son of Man sits on the throne of His glory, you who have followed Me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or lands, for My name's sake, shall receive a hundredfold, and inherit eternal life. But many who are first will be last, and the last first.

Communion Hymns:

Praise the Lord from the heavens! Praise him in the highest!

Rejoice in the Lord, O you righteous! Praise befits the upright! Alleluia (3x's)



Synaxis of All Saints

The Sunday following Pentecost is dedicated to All Saints, both those who are known to us, and those who are known only to God. There have been saints at all times, and they have come from every corner of the earth. They were Apostles, Martyrs, Prophets, Hierarchs, Monastics, and Righteous, yet all were perfected by the same Holy Spirit.

The Descent of the Holy Spirit makes it possible for us to rise above our fallen state and to attain sainthood, thereby fulfilling God's directive to "be holy, for I am holy" (Lev. 11:44, 1 Peter 1:16, etc.). Therefore, it is fitting to commemorate All Saints on the first Sunday after Pentecost.

This feast may have originated at an early date, perhaps as a celebration of all martyrs, then it was broadened to include all men and women who had borne witness to Christ by their virtuous lives, even if they did not shed their blood for Him.

St Peter of Damascus, in his "Fourth Stage of Contemplation," mentions five categories of saints: Apostles, Martyrs, Prophets, Hierarchs, and Monastic Saints (PHILOKALIA [in English] Vol. 3, p.131). He is actually quoting from the OCTOECHOS, Tone 2 for Saturday Matins, kathisma after the first stichology.

St Nicodemus of the Holy Mountain (July 14) adds the Righteous to St Peter's five categories. The list of St Nicodemus is found in his book THE FOURTEEN EPISTLES OF ST PAUL (Venice, 1819, p. 384) in his discussion of I Corinthians 12:28.

The hymnology for the feast of All Saints also lists six categories: “Rejoice, assembly of the Apostles, Prophets of the Lord, loyal choirs of the Martyrs, divine Hierarchs, Monastic Fathers, and the Righteous...”

Some of the saints are described as Confessors, a category which does not appear in the above lists. Since they are similar in spirit to the martyrs, they are regarded as belonging to the category of Martyrs. They were not put to death as the Martyrs were, but they boldly confessed Christ and came close to being executed for their faith. St Maximus the Confessor (January 21) is such a saint.

The order of these six types of saints seems to be based on their importance to the Church. The Apostles are listed first, because they were the first to spread the Gospel throughout the world.

The Martyrs come next because of their example of courage in professing their faith before the enemies and persecutors of the Church, which encouraged other Christians to remain faithful to Christ even unto death.

Although they come first chronologically, the Prophets are listed after the Apostles and Martyrs. This is because the Old Testament Prophets saw only the shadows of things to come, whereas the Apostles and Martyrs experienced them firsthand. The New Testament also takes precedence over the Old Testament.

The holy Hierarchs comprise the fourth category. They are the leaders of their flocks, teaching them by their word and their example.

The Monastic Saints are those who withdrew from this world to live in monasteries, or in seclusion. They did not do this out of hatred for the world, but in order to devote

themselves to unceasing prayer, and to do battle against the power of the demons. Although some people erroneously believe that monks and nuns are useless and unproductive, St John Climacus had a high regard for them: “Angels are a light for monks, and the monastic life is a light for all men” (LADDER, Step 26:31).

The last category, the Righteous, are those who attained holiness of life while living “in the world.” Examples include Abraham and his wife Sarah, Job, Sts Joachim and Anna, St Joseph the Betrothed, St Juliana of Lazarevo, and others.

The feast of All Saints achieved great prominence in the ninth century, in the reign of the Byzantine Emperor Leo VI the Wise (886-911). His wife, the Holy Empress Theophano (December 16) lived in the world, but was not attached to worldly things. She was a great benefactor to the poor, and was generous to the monasteries. She was a true mother to her subjects, caring for widows and orphans, and consoling the sorrowful.

Even before the death of St Theophano in 893 or 894, her husband started to build a church, intending to dedicate it to Theophano, but she forbade him to do so. It was this emperor who decreed that the Sunday after Pentecost be dedicated to All Saints. Believing that his wife was one of the righteous, he knew that she would also be honored whenever the Feast of All Saints was celebrated.

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The Orthodox Church in America’s 18th All-American Council (AAC) will be held July 20-24, 2015 in Atlanta, GA. As of Friday, June 5, 2015 the Hilton Atlanta Hotel (site of AAC) is fully booked and an additional hotel – the Hyatt Regency – is now accepting reservations for council participants.

If you are interested in attending, please see Matt Andrews or Dan Herbert for further information, or logon to the OCA’s website at www.oca.org.

This 18th AAC will be voting on Major Proposed Revised Statues & Resolutions that will affect the both the Dioceses and our local parishes!

Weekly Schedule and Calendar of Events

Saturday: Great Vespers – **There will be no Vespers served during the summer (June 1 to August 31).**

Sunday: June 14 – Synaxis of the Saints of North America
Reading of Hours – 9:40am
Divine Liturgy – 10:00am
Fellowship & Coffee Hour follow the Divine Liturgy

June 24: Nativity of the Holy Glorious Prophet, Forerunner and Baptist of the Lord, John

June 29: The Holy Glorious and All-Praised Leaders of the Apostles, Saints Peter and Paul

July 15: Equal of the Apostles Great Prince Vladimir, in Holy Baptism Basil, the Enlightener of the Russian Land

July 20-24: The OCA's 18th All-American Council – Atlanta, GA

August 1: Procession of the Honorable Wood of the Life-Giving Cross of the Lord (First of the three “Feast of the Savior” in August)

August 6: The Holy Transfiguration of our Lord God and Savior Jesus Christ (the Second of the three “Feast of the Savior” in August)

August 15: The Dormition of our Most Holy Lady the Mother of God and Ever-Virgin Mary (Feast Day of our Parish)

August 16: Translation of the Image “Not-Made-By-Hands” of our Lord Jesus Christ from Edessa to Constantinople (the Third of three “Feast of the Savior” in August)

August 29: The Beheading of the Holy Glorious Prophet, Forerunner and Baptist of the Lord, John

Announcements

Welcome Rev. Hieromonk Christopher Grecu. The parish would like to welcome Father Christopher to our church. Father Christopher comes to us from the Romanian Episcopate and has been given permission to serve at our parish from the Most Reverend Nathaniel, Archbishop of Detroit and the Romanian Episcopate and his Grace Archbishop Mark of the Diocese of Eastern Pennsylvania. Father Christopher is no stranger to Holy Assumption. He filled-in and served as a substitute priest when Father John Udics was either on vacation or unable to serve Liturgy. **Father Christopher will only be available to serve Sunday Divine Liturgy.** Please introduce yourself and give Father Christopher a warm South Philly welcome.

If anyone is in need of a priest: With Father Matthew on a leave of absence until August 31 and **Father Christopher only performing Sunday Divine Liturgy,** please contact any one of the following priest if you request to arrange sacraments, instructions, counseling, home visits, sick calls, hospital visits or funeral arrangements:

Rev. Victor Gorodenchuk – St. Stephen’s Cathedral – Philadelphia, PA
Home# 215.745.3232 Parish Office# 215.342.0866
Email: dean@ststephenscathedral.org

OR

Very Rev. John Perich – St. Herman of Alaska Church–Gradyville, PA
Home# 610.494.6117 Parish Office# 610.459.5310

Welcome to all of our visitors & guest worshipping with us today. A warm welcome to all of our visitors and guest who have joined us today in celebrating the Divine Liturgy. Please join us in the church basement for our Fellowship and Coffee Hour.

No Vespers served during the summer. Vespers will not be served on Saturdays or during the weekday the day before a feast day during the summer months (June 1 to August 31).

Bible Study – Tuesday, June 16 at 6:30pm in church basement. The Bible Study Group will continue to get together and informally meet over the summer. The next meeting the group will discuss the Book of the Prophet Zechariah.

Please ensure that your Mobile Phone is turned off (or at least set on vibrate) during the Divine Liturgy! Thank You!!!

Announcements (cont.)

Sign up sheets for Coffee Hour, Cleaning and Epistle & Hours Reading. Sign up sheets for the above items are posted on the bulletin board in the church basement. The sheets have been pretty bare over the past few weeks. Please be considerate and volunteer to assist with some of the parish responsibilities. Your time is very much appreciated!

Special weekly collections taken after Gospel or Sermon. In addition to our general collection, the parish takes a special collection each week to fund certain parish projects. Please be generous with your offering. Every little bit counts. The special collections are as follows:

- First Sunday of every month – Kitchen Fund Project
- Second Sunday of every month – Youth Fund
- Third Sunday of every month - Restoration/Maintenance Fund
- Fourth Sunday of every month – Charity Giving

Note: if there is a Fifth Sunday during a month, the special collection is earmarked for the Kitchen Fund Project, unless otherwise noted and stated by the Parish Council.

Tomorrow (June 8) Begins of the Apostles' (Saints Peter and Paul) Fast! After a Fast Free week this past week as prescribed by the church after the Feast of Pentecost, we begin the Fast of the Apostles (also known as Saints Peter and Paul Fast). This year, the Apostles' Fast will last exactly three weeks and conclude on Monday, June 29 with the Feast Day of The Holy Glorious and All-Praised Leaders of the Apostles, Saints Peter and Paul. Please make every effort to do your best to adhere to your fasting practice over the next few weeks.

Prayers for the Faithful and Departed

Living: Zara Albrecht and Jack Drimak on their birthdays this week.
May God Grant Them Many Blessed Years!

Departed: For the newly handmaiden of God who has fallen asleep in the Lord: Emma Burychka. **May Her Memory Be Eternal!**

Also, please remember all those military personnel who sacrificed their lives during the D-Day Invasion (June 6) of France & Europe and fought the Axis Powers in World War II.
May Their Memories Be Eternal!