



**Saint Barbara Greek Orthodox Church**  
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www.stbarbarachurchnc.org  
News & Announcements  
June 23, 2019

*Sunday of All Saints*  
*Κυριακή των Αγίων Παντων*



- Agrippina the Martyr of Rome 6/23/2019
- Holy Martyrs Aristocleus the Priest, Demetrius the Deacon and Athanasius the Reader **6/23/2019**
- The Holy New Archpriest Martyrs Gerasimus of Crete, Neophytos of Knossos, Joachim of Cherronisos, Hierotheos of Lampi, Zachariah of Sitia, Joachim of Petra, Gerasimos of Rethymno, Kallinikos of Kydonia, Melchizedek of Kissamos, Kallinikos of Diopolos, and those Martyred with Them (1821-1822) **6/23/2019**
  - Mark, Bishop of Ephesus **6/23/2019**
  - Etheldreda the Queen **6/23/2019**

**NEWCOMERS AND VISITORS ARE ALWAYS WELCOME**

*Sunday Worship Schedule: Matins 9:00 am & Divine Liturgy at 10:00 a.m.*

*To Our Visitors and Guests*

*We welcome you to worship with us today, whether you are an Orthodox Christian or this is your first visit to an Orthodox Church, we are pleased to have you with us. Although Holy Communion and other Sacraments are offered only to baptized and chrismated (confirmed) Orthodox Christians in good standing with the Church, all are invited to receive the Antidoron (blessed bread) from the priest at the conclusion of the Divine Liturgy. The Antidoron is not a sacrament, but it is reminiscent of the agape feast that followed worship in the ancient Christian Church. After the Divine Liturgy this morning please join us in the Church Hall for fellowship and refreshments. Please complete a Visitor's Card before you leave today and drop it in the offering tray, or give it to one of the parishioners after the service, or mail it to the Church Office.*

## *The Sunday Epistle Reading*

God is wonderful among his saints.

Verse: Bless God in the congregations.

The reading is from St. Paul's Letter to the Hebrews 11:33-40; 12:1-2



Brethren, all the saints through faith conquered kingdoms, enforced justice, received promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched raging fire, escaped the edge of the sword, won strength out of weakness, became mighty in war, put foreign armies to flight. Women received their dead by resurrection. Some were tortured, refusing to accept release, that they might rise again to a better life. Others suffered mocking and scourging, and even chains and imprisonment. They were stoned, they were sawn in two, they were tempted, they were killed with the sword; they went about in skins of sheep and goats, destitute, afflicted, ill-treated - of whom the world was not worthy - wandering over deserts and mountains and in dens and caves of the earth. And all these, though well attested by their faith, did not receive what was promised, since God had foreseen something better for us, that apart from us they should not be made perfect. Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus the pioneer and perfecter of our faith.

Θαυμαστός ὁ Θεὸς ἐν τοῖς Ἁγίοις αὐτοῦ.

Στίχ. Ἐν Ἐκκλησίαις εὐλογεῖτε τὸν Θεόν.

Πρὸς Ἑβραίους 11:33-40, 12:1-2 τὸ ἀνάγνωσμα

Ἀδελφοί, οἱ Ἅγιοι πάντες διὰ πίστεως κατηγωνίσαντο βασιλείας, εἰργάσαντο δικαιοσύνην, ἐπέτυχον ἐπαγγελιῶν, ἔφραξαν στόματα λεόντων, ἔσβεσαν δύναμιν πυρός, ἔφυγον στόματα μαχαίρας, ἐνεδυναμώθησαν ἀπὸ ἀσθενείας, ἐγενήθησαν ἰσχυροὶ ἐν πολέμῳ, παρεμβολὰς ἔκλιναν ἀλλοτρίων. Ἔλαβον γυναῖκες ἐξ ἀναστάσεως τοὺς νεκροὺς αὐτῶν· ἄλλοι δὲ ἐτυμpanίσθησαν, οὐ προσδεξάμενοι τὴν ἀπολύτρωσιν, ἵνα κρείττονος ἀναστάσεως τύχωσιν· ἕτεροι δὲ ἐμπαιγμῶν καὶ μαστίγων πεῖραν ἔλαβον, ἔτι δὲ δεσμῶν καὶ φυλακῆς· ἐλιθάσθησαν, ἐπρίσθησαν, ἐπειράσθησαν, ἐν φόνῳ μαχαίρας ἀπέθανον· περιῆλθον ἐν μηλωταῖς, ἐν αἰγείοις δέρμασιν, ὑστερούμενοι, θλιβόμενοι, κακουχούμενοι - ὧν οὐκ ἦν ἄξιος ὁ κόσμος - ἐν ἐρημίαις πλανώμενοι καὶ ὄρεσιν καὶ σπηλαίοις καὶ ταῖς ὀπαῖς τῆς γῆς. Καὶ οὗτοι πάντες, μαρτυρηθέντες διὰ τῆς πίστεως, οὐκ ἐκομίσαντο τὴν ἐπαγγελίαν, τοῦ θεοῦ περὶ ἡμῶν κρεῖττόν τι προβλεψαμένου, ἵνα μὴ χωρὶς ἡμῶν τελειωθῶσιν. Τοιγαροῦν καὶ ἡμεῖς, τοσοῦτον ἔχοντες περικείμενον ἡμῖν νέφος μαρτύρων, ὄγκον ἀποθέμενοι πάντα καὶ τὴν εὐπερίστατον ἀμαρτίαν, δι' ὑπομονῆς τρέχωμεν τὸν προκείμενον ἡμῖν ἀγῶνα, ἀφορῶντες εἰς τὸν τῆς πίστεως ἀρχηγὸν καὶ τελειωτὴν Ἰησοῦν.

## *The Sunday Gospel Reading*

### **The Gospel According to Matthew 10:32-33; 37-38; 19:27-30**



The Lord said to his disciples, "Every one who acknowledges me before men, I also will acknowledge before my Father who is in heaven; but whoever denies me before men, I also will deny him 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 me is not worthy of me." Then Peter said in reply, "Lo, we have left everything and followed you. What then shall we have?"

Jesus said to them, "Truly, I say to you, in the new world, when the Son of man shall sit on his glorious throne, you who have followed me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. And every one who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or lands, for my name's sake, will receive a hundredfold, and inherit eternal life. But many that are first will be last, and the last first."

### **Ἐκ τοῦ Κατὰ Ματθαῖον Ἁγίου Εὐαγγελίου τὸ Ἀνάγνωσμα 10:32-33, 37-38, 19:27-30**

Εἶπεν ὁ Κύριος τοῖς ἑαυτοῦ μαθηταῖς· Πᾶς οὖν ὅστις ὁμολογήσει ἐν ἐμοὶ ἔμπροσθεν τῶν ἀνθρώπων, ὁμολογήσω καὶ ἐν αὐτῷ ἔμπροσθεν τοῦ πατρὸς μου τοῦ ἐν οὐρανοῖς. ὅστις δ' ἂν ἀρνήσῃται με ἔμπροσθεν τῶν ἀνθρώπων, ἀρνήσομαι αὐτὸν καὶ ἐμπροσθεν τοῦ πατρὸς μου τοῦ ἐν οὐρανοῖς. Ὁ φιλῶν πατέρα ἢ μητέρα ὑπὲρ ἐμὲ οὐκ ἔστι μου ἄξιος· καὶ ὁ φιλῶν υἱὸν ἢ θυγατέρα ὑπὲρ ἐμὲ οὐκ ἔστι μου ἄξιος· καὶ ὃς οὐ λαμβάνει τὸν σταυρὸν αὐτοῦ καὶ ἀκολουθεῖ ὀπίσω μου, οὐκ ἔστι μου ἄξιος. Τότε ἀποκριθεὶς ὁ Πέτρος εἶπεν αὐτῷ· ἰδοὺ ἡμεῖς ἀφήκαμεν πάντα καὶ ἠκολουθήσαμεν σοι· τί ἄρα ἔσται ἡμῖν; ὁ δὲ Ἰησοῦς εἶπεν αὐτοῖς· ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν ὅτι ὑμεῖς οἱ ἀκολουθήσαντές μοι, ἐν τῇ παλιγγενεσίᾳ, ὅταν καθίσῃ ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ἐπὶ θρόνου δόξης αὐτοῦ, καθίσεσθε καὶ ὑμεῖς ἐπὶ δώδεκα θρόνους κρίνοντες τὰς δώδεκα φυλὰς τοῦ Ἰσραὴλ. καὶ πᾶς ὃς ἀφήκεν οἰκίαν ἢ ἀδελφούς ἢ ἀδελφὰς ἢ πατέρα ἢ μητέρα ἢ γυναῖκα ἢ τέκνα ἢ ἀγροὺς ἕνεκεν τοῦ ὀνόματός μου, ἑκατονταπλασίονα λήψεται καὶ ζωὴν αἰώνιον κληρονομήσει. Πολλοὶ δὲ ἔσονται πρῶτοι ἔσχατοι καὶ ἔσχατοι πρῶτοι.

May 23, 2019

Dear Parishioners.

Last summer the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America approved new Policies for the Safety of Youth and Children. St. Barbara must comply with these new policies by September 1, 2019 or we will no longer be allowed to have any youth ministry programs or events.

Compliance is a fairly simple process. First, all youth workers must complete a registration form (and re-register each year). Second, all youth workers must complete online training each year. This training course will be provided by the Archdiocese and will be released soon. Finally, all youth workers must complete a background check every two years. The background check will be performed by the Archdiocese safety vendor, Praesidium.

Youth Workers include anyone working in a youth ministry program or event such as Sunday school, Greek school, HOPE/JOY, youth choir and Greek dance. Parents supervising their own children in the Preschool Sunday school class are not considered youth workers.

Although the training isn't available, I would like to go ahead and start collecting registration forms from our youth workers. If you are a youth worker or are interested in becoming a youth worker, please contact me for the registration form.

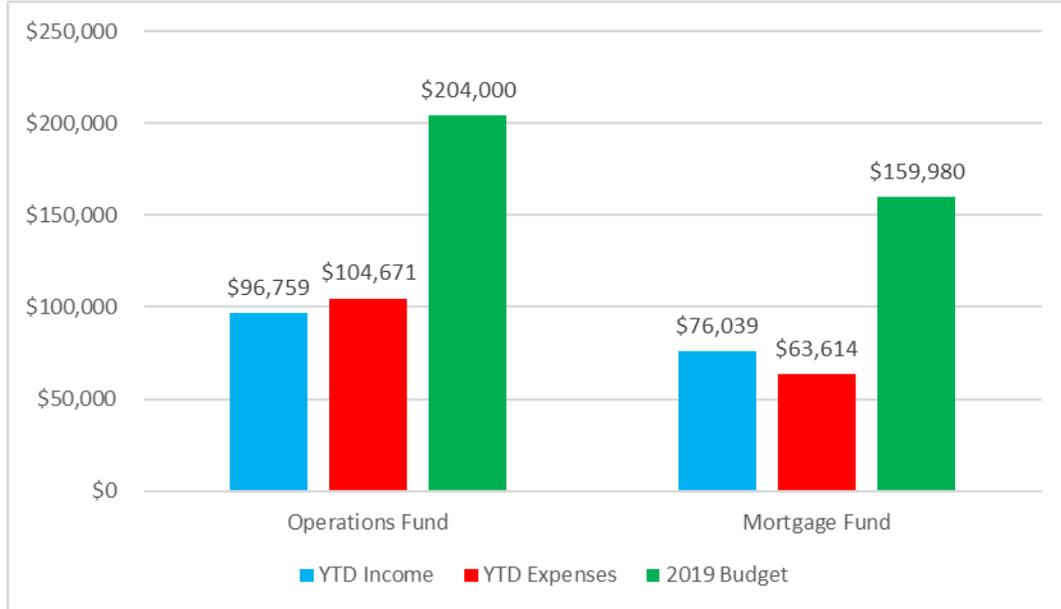
Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions concerning the policies, compliance or whether you are considered a youth worker. I am also including this blog post from GOARCH which has more information about the policies and compliance.

<https://blogs.goarch.org/blog/-/blogs/taking-the-next-step-in-youth-safety>

Christ is Risen!

Kerri Zaferatos  
PC Member of St Barbara Durham

## Parish Financial Summary



Note: The Operations Fund income above is the total of Sunday offering and Stewardship; it excludes the Greek Festival. The Operations Fund pays all Church expenses except for the mortgage payment. The Building Fund includes all Building Fund donations and fundraisers (e.g., Taste of Greece, Gyro Feast). The Building Fund pays our mortgage which is \$12,713.36/month.

### **WHAT IF?**

- ❖ **Everyone increased their giving by half of a percent of income?**
  - **Stewardship would increase to \$210,000 meeting our goal and taking pressure off of our Festival.**
- ❖ **Everyone increased their giving by one percent of income?**
  - **Stewardship would increase to \$262,604 covering our entire Operations budget and allow us to use the Festival for the mortgage.**
- ❖ **Everyone increased their giving by one and a half of a percent?**
  - **Stewardship would increase to \$315,125 covering our entire Operations budget, allow us to use the Festival for the mortgage and make some very needed repairs.**

## *Explanation of the Feast of All Saints*

Honouring the friends of God with much reverence, the Prophet-King David says, "But to me, exceedingly honourable are Thy friends, O Lord" (Ps. 138:16). And the divine Apostle, recounting the achievements of the Saints, and setting forth their memorial as an example that we might turn away from earthly things and from sin, and emulate their patience and courage in the struggles for virtue, says, "Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every burden, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us" (Heb. 12:1).

This commemoration began as the Sunday (Synaxis) of All Martyrs; to them were added all the ranks of Saints who bore witness (the meaning of "Martyr" in Greek) to Christ in manifold ways, even if occasion did not require the shedding of their blood.

Therefore, guided by the teaching of the Divine Scriptures and Apostolic Tradition, we the pious honour all the Saints, the friends of God, for they are keepers of God's commandments, shining examples of virtue, and benefactors of mankind. Of course, we honour the known Saints especially on their own day of the year, as is evident in the Menologion. But since many Saints are unknown, and their number has increased with time, and will continue to increase until the end of time, the Church has appointed that once a year a common commemoration be made of all the Saints. This is the feast that we celebrate today. It is the harvest of the coming of the Holy Spirit into the world; it is the "much fruit" brought forth by that "Grain of wheat that fell into the earth and died" (John 12:24); it is the glorification of the Saints as "the foundation of the Church, the perfection of the Gospel, they who fulfilled in deed the sayings of the Saviour" (Sunday of All Saints, Doxasticon of Vespers).

In this celebration, then, we reverently honour and call blessed all the Righteous, the Prophets, Apostles, Martyrs, Confessors, Shepherds, Teachers, and Holy Monastics, both men and women alike, known and unknown, who have been added to the choirs of the Saints and shall be added, from the time of Adam until the end of the world, who have been perfected in piety and have glorified God by their holy lives. All these, as well as the orders of the Angels, and especially our most holy Lady and Queen, the Ever-virgin Theotokos Mary, do we honour today, setting their life before us as an example of virtue, and entreating them to intercede in our behalf with God, Whose grace and boundless mercy be with us all. Amen.

## **Kontakion of All Saints**

### **Plagal of the Fourth Tone**

The world offers You, the author of all creation, as the first-fruits of nature, the God-bearing martyrs. O most merciful, by their intercessions, through the Theotokos, maintain Your Church in perfect peace.

## **Κοντάκιον**

### **Plagal of the Fourth Tone**

Ὡς ἀπαρχὰς τῆς φύσεως, τῷ φυτουργῷ τῆς κτίσεως, ἡ οἰκουμένη προσφέρει σοι Κύριε, τοὺς θεοφόρους Μάρτυρας, ταῖς αὐτῶν ἱκεσίαις, ἐν εἰρήνῃ βαθεῖα, τὴν Ἐκκλησίαν σου, διὰ τῆς Θεοτόκου συντήρησον, πολυέλεε.

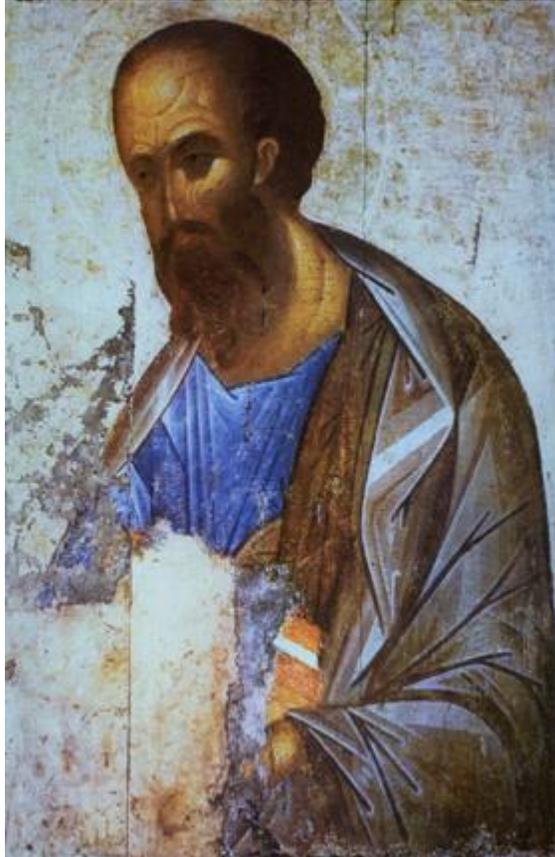
## *Stewards as of June 10, 2019*



**Our 2019 Stewardship drive is off to a great start. We have 127 Stewards as of June 10, 2019, almost 80% of our goal of 160 for the year. Thank you. Please help us meet our goal very soon by pledging your support. Your time, talents and treasure are critical to the success of our Ministries. Please give prayerful consideration to your 2019 contribution as soon as possible. Stewardship is the primary source of the funding for our Ministries and operating obligations.**

John & Elly Ackerly	Sharan Dababnah	Johnny & Catherine Mariakakis	Keith & Alexia Rheinhardt
Susan Alexander	George & Helen Dais	Dr. Pete & Joan Marinos	Al & Christine Safarikas
Alec and Frances Alexiades	Gus & Vanessa Demetriades	Azeb Martin	Peter Saloupis
Matt & Vickie Amos	Anne Dennos	Dr. Nikolaos Maurogiorgos & Dr. Marjory Charlot	Vaia Sigounas & Adam Silverstein
Alexander & Laurel Arapoglou	George & Patricia Dennos	Panayiotis Mavroidis & Dimitra Sakellaris	Nick Simos
Dr. Marina Arvanitis	Betty Bouchlas Dorton	Rodney & Katharine Meadows	Dr. Charles Stamitoles
Basile & Mary Bakis	Brian & Maria Easton	Gus & Yael Megaloudis	Mattheos & Marika Stavrakakis
George & Marie Bakis	Laurice Ferris	Matthew & Tina Megaro	Andrea Stoney
Nicholas & Eugenia Balafas	Dimitra Fitzherbert	John & Dawn Mehalek	William & Jennifer Sullivan
Effie Barbee	David Flynn & Sabina Borza Flynn	Nicholas Mermigas	Marian P. Sunas
Lance & Maria Barton	Dr. Crist & Maria Frangakis	David & Courtney Napier	Senait Tesfatsion
Thalia Becak	Socratis & Alik Gerondelis	Larry & Hope Odzak	Rebecca Theophanous
Tamar Beridze	Dr. George & Dr. Amy Glekas	Richard Oladipo	Charalmbos & Cathy Tragas
John Biggs & Diana Dobrica	Jim & Evy Glekas	Cindy Paliouras	Donna Trohanis
Agape Blackley	Christopher Goodwin	Jim & Helen Paliouras	Tryphon & Suzanne Tryphonos
Barbara Bonfiglio	Leonard & Elaine Goodwin	John & Dena Paliouras	Lou Tsipis
Marilyn Boska	Paul Kacoyanis	Niko Paliouras	Dr. Dimitrios Varelas
Nick Bourbous	Ed & Eve Kantner	Peter & Evelyn Panos	Georgina Varelas
Katherine Marie Callahan	Antonios & Claire Karamalegos	Yuri & Elena Panov	John Varelas
Manuel & Carole Capsalis	George & Karen Karas	James & Stella Pantelidis	Demi Vlachos
Sophie Carr	Dr. Thomas & Zoe Kash	Kleanthis & Angelika Papanickas	Helen Vurnakes
Thomas & Zoe Cash	Dr. Kenneth & Karen Korach	Matina Papazoglou	James & Frances Vurnakes
Andrew & Cheryl Christakos	Helen Koutouzakis	Katherine Pappas	Ray & Eleni Walter
Dr. Arthur Christakos	James Koutsis	Dr. Ted & Theky Pappas	Alexa Waters
Eleni Christakos	Dr. Andrew Kuyper	George Pashales	Preston & Catherine Wilson
Lia Christakos	Dr. Lee & Pauline Kuyper	Wes Platt & Catherine Constantinou	Diane Winans
George & Deborah Christie	Elias & Madeline Lambiris	Daniel & Lori Przybyl	Robert & Roberta Wippich
Dr. Bessie Chronaki	Catherine Lewis	Olgha Qaqish	Grace Witham & Nick Brantley
Erie Cocolas	George Livanos & Renee Lisander	Angela Quint	Jonathan & Maria Wood
Costa Constantinou	Katherine Livas		Betsy Xenakis
Lou Constantinou	Thalia Lyras		Dino & Kerri Zaferatos
Dean Costas	Fr. Stavroforos Mamaies		Christina Zehia
	Daniel & Hrisavgi Mangum		Tony & Evelyn Zehia

This weekly bulletin insert complements the curriculum published by the Department of Christian Education of the Orthodox Church in America. This and many other Christian Education resources are available at <http://dce.oca.org>.



**In II Corinthians 7: 1-10 Saint Paul expresses his joy at being reconciled with the believers who belong to the church in Corinth.**

There had been a serious breach between Paul and the Corinthian Christians. When a member of the church leveled false accusations against him, some of the other members sided with the accuser, causing Paul great pain not only personally but also because of his concern for the salvation of anyone who would take part in slander.

Now, however, the accuser has repented and has been punished by the majority of the church's members in some way that isn't described. It was apparently not the most serious punishment they could have meted out, since other members wanted to impose a more severe penalty on him. But Paul has shown his loving and generous heart by advising the Corinthians now to "turn to forgive and comfort him, or he may be overwhelmed by excessive sorrow" (2:6).

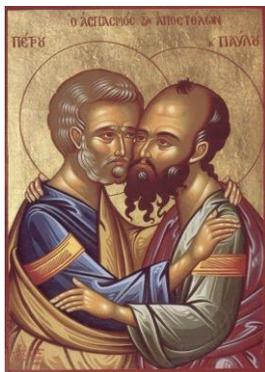
It has been an unpleasant period for Paul. He writes of being "afflicted at every turn—fighting without and fear within" (7:5). The "fighting" probably refers to difficult confrontations not only with pagans but with some in the Macedonian churches. The inner "fear" refers to his uncertainty about the Corinthians. He had written them a "stern letter" about the accusations against him, and is not sure how they have taken it. We see that, like many of us, Paul is not always certain that he has done the right thing. He says, "For even if I made you sorry with my letter, I do not regret it (though I did regret it), for I see that that letter grieved you..." (7: 8).

Paul's momentary regret at having written the letter is overcome by his love and care for the Corinthians. He is relieved and glad that the church members want reconciliation, but rejoices even more that the letter did what he hoped it would: it "grieved" them in a way that led to repentance. Here Paul writes about the distinction between godly grief and worldly grief.

Godly grief leads us to realize we have sinned not just against other people, but against God. We put ourselves under judgment, we repent, and then we can turn from the sin we now hate and trust God to guide us and forgive us. This grief enables us, like the Corinthians, to be reconciled with everyone.

Worldly grief makes us regret our sin because it pains us—it brings us punishment, or upsets our life. We don't recognize that in sinning we are opposing and rejecting God, and so we work to escape the pain, but not to turn toward God.

Paul could hardly be more blunt about the difference between the two kinds of grief. Worldly grief quite simply leads to death. But godly grief, the kind he was so happy to see in the Corinthians, "produces a repentance that leads to salvation and brings no regret" (7: 10).



### *June 24 – 29 Holy Apostles Fast*

*24 – Monday – Nativity of Saint John – 9 am*

*29 – Saturday – Saints Peter and Paul – 9 am*

*30 – Sunday – Feast of the Holy Apostles – 9 am*

### *Νηστεία για τους Αγίου Αποστόλους από 24 έως 29 Ιουνίου*

*24 – Δευτέρα – Γενέθλιον του Προδρομου – 9 π.μ.*

*29 – Σάββατο – Πέτρου και Παύλου των Αποστόλων – 9 π.μ.*

*30 – Κυριακή – Συναξίς των Αποστόλων – 9 π.μ.*

The **Apostles Fast**, also called the **Fast of the Holy Apostles**, the **Fast of Peter and Paul**, or sometimes **St. Peter's Fast**,<sup>[1]</sup> is a fast. In the Byzantine tradition, the Fast begins on the second Monday after Pentecost (the day after All Saints' Sunday). It continues until the Feast of Saints Peter and Paul on June 29. Its duration varies from eight to forty-two days because of the moveable nature of Pascha (Easter).

**Practice :** The Apostles Fast is not as severe as Great Lent or the Dormition Fast, but entails fasting from red meat, poultry, meat products, eggs, dairy products, fish, oil, and wine. For many Orthodox, fish, wine and oil are allowed on all days except Wednesdays and Fridays.<sup>[4]</sup> Some other Orthodox, such as the Antiochians<sup>[5]</sup>, have slightly more strict rules, with fish only allowed on certain weekends. These fasting rules are much the same as those observed during the Nativity Fast.

As with the three other fasting seasons of the church year, there is a Great Feast that falls during the Apostles Fast; in this case, the Feast of the Nativity of St. John the Baptist (June 24).

**Duration of the Fast :** The length of the Fast is variable, being determined by the date of Pascha (Easter). Eight weeks after Pascha comes the Sunday of All Saints. The next day, Monday, the Fast of the Holy Apostles begins. The Fast lasts until June 29, the Feast of the Holy Apostles Peter and Paul. In other words, depending on the date of Pascha, the Apostles Fast can begin as early as May 18 or as late as June 21. Thus, it may be as short as eight days or as long as forty-two days in duration. The Apostles Fast may not be observed at all in certain years for those Orthodox using the new calendar as the second Monday after Pentecost may fall on or after June 29, but it is always observed by the Orthodox using the traditional calendar. For those who follow the traditional Julian calendar, June 29 falls on the Gregorian calendar date of July 12.



## Nativity of the Forerunner John the Baptist – Services Monday June 24 at 9:00 am

### Reading

He that was greater than all who are born of women, the Prophet who received God's testimony that he surpassed all the Prophets, was born of the aged and barren Elizabeth (Luke 1: 7) and filled all his kinsmen, and those that lived round about, with gladness and wonder. But even more wondrous was that which followed on the eighth day when he was circumcised, that is, the day on which a male child receives his name. Those present called him Zacharias, the name of his father. But the mother said, "Not so, but he shall be called John." Since the child's father was unable to speak, he was asked, by means of a sign, to indicate the child's name. He then asked for a tablet and wrote, "His name is John." And immediately Zacharias' mouth was opened, his tongue was loosed from its silence of nine months, and filled with the Holy Spirit, he blessed the God of Israel, Who had fulfilled the promises made to their fathers, and had visited them that were sitting in darkness and the shadow of death, and had sent to them the light of salvation. Zacharias prophesied concerning the child also, saying that he would be a Prophet of the Most High and Forerunner of Jesus Christ. And the child John, who was filled with grace, grew and waxed strong in the Spirit; and he was in the wilderness until the day of his showing to Israel (Luke 1:57-80). His name is a variation of the Hebrew "Johanan," which means "Yah is gracious."

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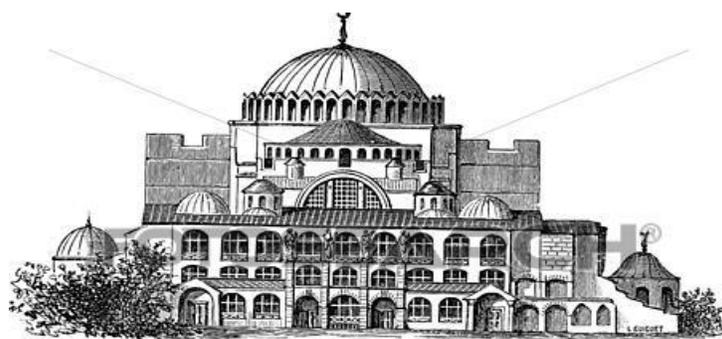
## Peter and Paul, the Holy Apostles – Services Saturday June 29 at 9:00 am

### Reading

The divinely-blessed Peter was from Bethsaida of Galilee. He was the son of Jonas and the brother of Andrew the First-called. He was a fisherman by trade, unlearned and poor, and was called Simon; later he was renamed Peter by the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, Who looked at him and said, "Thou art Simon the son of Jonas; thou shalt be called Cephas (which is by interpretation, Peter)" (John 1:42). On being raised by the Lord to the dignity of an Apostle and becoming inseparable from Him as His zealous disciple, he followed Him from the beginning of His preaching of salvation up until the very Passion, when, in the court of Caiaphas the high priest, he denied Him thrice because of his fear of the Jews and of the danger at hand. But again, after many bitter tears, he received complete forgiveness of his transgression. After the Resurrection of Christ and the descent of the Holy Spirit, he preached in Judea, Antioch, and certain parts of Asia, and finally came to Rome, where he was crucified upside down by Nero, and thus he ascended to the eternal habitations about the year 66 or 68, leaving two Catholic (General) Epistles to the Church of Christ.

Paul, the chosen vessel of Christ, the glory of the Church, the Apostle of the Nations and teacher of the whole world, was a Jew by race, of the tribe of Benjamin, having Tarsus as his homeland. He was a Roman citizen, fluent in the

Greek language, an expert in knowledge of the Law, a Pharisee, born of a Pharisee, and a disciple of Gamaliel, a Pharisee and notable teacher of the Law in Jerusalem. For this cause, from the beginning, Paul was a most fervent zealot for the traditions of the Jews and a great persecutor of the Church of Christ; at that time, his name was Saul (Acts 22:3-4). In his great passion of rage and fury against the disciples of the Lord, he went to Damascus bearing letters of introduction from the high priest. His intention was to bring the disciples of Christ back to Jerusalem in bonds. As he was approaching Damascus, about midday there suddenly shone upon him a light from Heaven. Falling on the earth, he heard a voice saying to him, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me?" And he asked, "Who art Thou, Lord?" And the Lord said, "I am Jesus Whom thou persecutest; it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks." And that heavenly voice and brilliance made him tremble, and he was blinded for a time. He was led by the hand into the city, and on account of a divine revelation to the Apostle Ananias (see Oct. 1), he was baptized by him, and both his bodily and spiritual eyes were opened to the knowledge of the Sun of Righteousness. And straightway- O wondrous transformation! - beyond all expectation, he spoke with boldness in the synagogues, proclaiming that "Christ is the Son of God" (Acts 9:1-21). As for his zeal in preaching the Gospel after these things had come to pass, as for his unabating labors and afflictions of diverse kinds, the wounds, the prisons, the bonds, the beatings, the stonings, the shipwrecks, the journeys, the perils on land, on sea, in cities, in wildernesses, the continual vigils, the daily fasting, the hunger, the thirst, the nakedness, and all those other things that he endured for the Name of Christ, and which he underwent before nations and kings and the Israelites, and above all, his care for all the churches, his fiery longing for the salvation of all, whereby he became all things to all men, that he might save them all if possible, and because of which, with his heart aflame, he continuously traveled throughout all parts, visiting them all, and like a bird of heaven flying from Asia and Europe, the West and East, neither staying nor abiding in any one place - all these things are related incident by incident in the Book of the Acts, and as he himself tells them in his Epistles. His Epistles, being fourteen in number, are explained in 250 homilies by the divine Chrysostom and make manifest the loftiness of his thoughts, the abundance of the revelations made to him, the wisdom given to him from God, wherewith he brings together in a wondrous manner the Old with the New Testaments, and expounds the mysteries thereof which had been concealed under types; he confirms the doctrines of the Faith, expounds the ethical teaching of the Gospel, and demonstrates with exactness the duties incumbent upon every rank, age, and order of man. In all these things his teaching proved to be a spiritual trumpet, and his speech was seen to be more radiant than the sun, and by these means he clearly sounded forth the word of truth and illumined the ends of the world. Having completed the work of his ministry, he likewise ended his life in martyrdom when he was beheaded in Rome during the reign of Nero, at the same time, some say, when Peter was crucified.



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