

SUNDAY OF THE FATHERS OF THE  
FIRST ECUMENICAL COUNCIL



*Icon of the Fathers of the First Ecumenical Council*



**May 8, 2016**

**SEVENTH SUNDAY OF PASCHA –**

**SUNDAY OF THE FATHERS OF THE FIRST ECUMENICAL COUNCIL**

**THE HOLY AND ALL-PRAISEWORTHY APOSTLE AND EVANGELIST JOHN THE THEOLOGIAN**

**SCHEDULE OF SERVICES FOR THE WEEK OF MAY 9 – MAY 15**

SATURDAY, MAY 14 – FIFTH ALL SOULS SATURDAY; THE HOLY MARTYR ISIDORE OF CHIOS

9:30 AM – Divine Liturgy & Panakhyda

Please Note: **No Vespers**

SUNDAY, MAY 15 – *PENTECOST SUNDAY - THE DESCENT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT; OUR VENERABLE FATHER PACHOMIUS THE GREAT*

9:30 AM – Divine Liturgy

For All Parishioners

### All Souls Saturdays

Next Saturday is the Fifth All Souls Saturday. There will be a Divine Liturgy and Panakhyda at 9:30 AM for all our beloved departed. If you need to, please update your list with Fr. James. If you haven't already give Father a list, please write the names of all those you wish to be remembered and place in the basket in the back of the church today.

### On The Eucharist

Let us return from that Table like lions breathing out fire, terrifying to the devil!

– St. John Chrysostom

.....  
Not to oppose error is to approve it; and not to defend truth is to suppress it; and indeed to neglect to confound evil men, when we can do it, is no less a sin than to encourage them.

Pope St. Felix III

.....

It was a sad  
and  
disappointing day  
when I discovered my  
Universal Remote Control  
did not,  
in fact,  
control the Universe.

(Not even remotely.)



### Parish Rummage Sale

There will be a rummage sale on Saturday, June 18 to benefit the parish. We are already accepting donations. Volunteers are needed. Please contact Olena Bankston at (619) 567-6967.

# First Council of Nicaea

*Adapted from Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia*

The First Council of Nicaea (Greek: Νίκαια) was a council of Christian bishops convened in Nicaea in Bithynia by the Roman Emperor Constantine I in AD 325. This first ecumenical council was the first effort to attain consensus in the church through an assembly representing all of Christendom, although previous councils, including the first Church council, the Council of Jerusalem, had met before to settle matters of dispute. It was presided over by Hosius of Corduba, a bishop from the West who followed the Pope who was the bishop of Rome and the Patriarch of the West.

Its main accomplishments were settlement of the Christological issue of the nature of the Son of God and his relationship to God the Father, the construction of the first part of the Creed of Nicaea, establishing uniform observance of the date of Easter, and promulgation of early canon law.

## **Overview**

The First Council of Nicaea was the first ecumenical council of the Church. Most significantly, it resulted in the first uniform Christian doctrine, called the Nicene Creed. With the creation of the creed, a precedent was established for subsequent local and regional councils of Bishops (Synods) to create

statements of belief and canons of doctrinal orthodoxy—the intent being to define unity of beliefs for the whole of Christendom.

Derived from Greek (Ancient Greek: οἰκουμένη οἰκουμένῃ “the inhabited earth”), “ecumenical” means “worldwide” but generally is assumed to be limited to the known inhabited Earth, (Danker 2000, pp. 699-670) and at this time in history is synonymous with the Roman Empire; the earliest extant uses of the term for a council are Eusebius’ Life of Constantine 3.6 around 338, which states “he convoked an Ecumenical Council” (Ancient Greek: σύνοδον οἰκουμένην συνεκρότει) and the Letter in 382 to Pope Damasus I and the Latin bishops from the First Council of Constantinople.

One purpose of the council was to resolve disagreements arising from within the Church of Alexandria over the nature of the Son in his relationship to the Father: in particular, whether the Son had been ‘begotten’ by the Father from his own being, and therefore having no beginning, or else created out of nothing, and therefore having a beginning. St. Alexander of Alexandria and Athanasius took the first position; the popular presbyter Arius, from whom

the term Arianism comes, took the second. The council decided against the Arians overwhelmingly (of the estimated 250–318 attendees, all but two agreed to sign the creed and these two, along with Arius, were banished to Illyria).

Another result of the council was an agreement on when to celebrate Easter, the most important feast of the ecclesiastical calendar, decreed in an epistle to the Church of Alexandria in which is simply stated:

We also send you the good news of the settlement concerning the holy pasch, namely that in answer to your prayers this question also has been resolved. All the brethren in the East who have hitherto followed the Jewish practice

will henceforth observe the custom of the Romans and of yourselves and of all of us who from ancient times have kept Easter together with you.

Historically significant as the first effort to attain consensus in the church through an assembly representing all of Christendom, the Council was the first occasion where the technical aspects of Christology were discussed. Through it a precedent was set for subsequent general councils to adopt creeds and canons. This council is generally considered the beginning of the period of the First seven Ecumenical Councils in the History of Christianity.



MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL OF NICE PRESENTING THEIR DECISION TO THE EMPEROR CONSTANTINE: FOURTH CENTURY.

FROM AN EARLY GREEK MANUSCRIPT.

# The Great Feast of the Ascension: The Event Between Events

Fr. Vladimir Berzonsky

*“Thou hast ascended in glory bringing joy to Thy disciples with the promise of the Holy Spirit, O Lord! Glory to Thee!”*

I find it odd that the great and joyful feast of the Ascension is often not well attended by our faithful. Understandably they are yet not over the euphoria of Pascha. Even forty days is not ample time to greet one’s friends and family with the joy of the Resurrection of Christ, and maybe some of the paschal foods have yet to be consumed. Also, Holy Pentecost is only ten days away. Still, no other feast of the church year so epitomizes our present state than that of the Ascension.

We are living in a condition between events. The Lord Jesus has already been on earth. He announced Himself on Palm Sunday, spending each weekday in the temple precincts preaching, teaching, healing, and showing by example what God had intended when the Trinity created the human being, only to be arrested, tried, crucified and glorified. As He proclaimed from the Cross, “It is accomplished.” No, Satan had not been obliterated—that’s not the way God works—but like a wild animal driven back into a cave by brandishing a flaming torch, the decisive battle with the evil one was achieved. Once defeated, the devil need have no hold over us unless we permit him to do so.

After that the gift of the Holy Spirit was given to the Church and Christ’s apostles on Holy Pentecost. The Advocate shall descend on the faithful as an *aperitif* of our life in the Spirit. That event lies ahead, ten days hence. We shall *live by the Spirit*, because we already *walk in the Spirit* (Galatians 5:25)—another instance of “already” and “not yet.” Already we had through the experience of the Upper Room that first day of the week received the Holy Spirit when the Lord Jesus “breathed on them, and said to them, ‘Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven’” (John 20:22). Then the Spirit came upon the Church as the seal and guardian of grace. On Pentecost, the Spirit

came upon them again as individual agents of holiness, commissioning them with the mission to “make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit” (Matthew 28:19).

Study the icons of the two feasts. Unlike their orderly and somewhat stolid seating across from one another on the Pentecost icon, you will find in the Ascension icon that the apostles appear somewhat disorganized, standing on the Mount of Olives. Some stare into the clouds, other discuss the meaning of the event—in a word, much like any who live by faith, never doubting, continually advancing, and always obeying the One who invited them to “Follow Me.” Just as they had followed Him down the hillside from Bethany into Jerusalem, so they are climbing the same hill, trailing behind Him until they are left on their own no longer to walk behind Him, but alongside His constant albeit invisible presence, inviting all who will listen to accept the Lord’s invitation to His Father’s Kingdom.

It would seem to me that we would identify with the apostles on the Ascension icon more than with any other time frame. Our lives are between births—from our mothers’ wombs through the tombs and into a new birth in the Kingdom of heaven. Whatever stage we find ourselves—from the cradle to the schoolhouse, from children to teenagers, from the teen years to college and the job scene, from dating to marriage, from parenthood to empty nest, from retirement to the conclusion of life—there is never a time when we can assume or even pretend that we’re here on earth to stay. Or maybe we just prefer to ignore the reality that we’re always “on the way.”



St. Thomas More  
Patron of Religious Freedom  
*Pray for Us*

## **O God our Creator,**

from your provident hand we have received  
our right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.  
You have called us as your people and given us  
the right and the duty to worship you, the only true God,  
and your Son, Jesus Christ.  
Through the power and working of your Holy Spirit,  
you call us to live out our faith in the midst of the world,  
bringing the light and the saving truth of the Gospel  
to every corner of society.

We ask you to bless us  
in our vigilance for the gift of religious liberty.  
Give us the strength of mind and heart  
to readily defend our freedoms when they are threatened;  
give us courage in making our voices heard  
on behalf of the rights of your Church  
and the freedom of conscience of all people of faith.

Grant, we pray, O heavenly Father,  
a clear and united voice to all your sons and daughters  
gathered in your Church  
in this decisive hour in the history of our nation,  
so that, with every trial withstood  
and every danger overcome—  
for the sake of our children, our grandchildren,  
and all who come after us—  
this great land will always be “one nation, under God,  
indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.”

We ask this through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

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### **WARNING: SENSE OF HUMOR NEEDED! “NO EXCUSE SUNDAY”**

*Author Unknown*

To make it possible for everyone to attend church next Sunday, we are going to have a special "No Excuse Sunday." Cots will be placed in the foyer for those who say, "Sunday is my only day to sleep in." There will be a special section with lounge chairs for those who feel that our seats are too hard. Eye drops will be available for those with tired eyes from watching TV late Saturday night. We will have steel helmets for those who say, "The roof would cave in if I ever came to church." Blankets will be furnished for those who think the church is too cold and fans for those who say its too hot. Scorecards will be available for those who wish to list the hypocrites present. Relatives and friends will be in attendance for those who can't go to church and cook dinner, too. We will distribute "Stamp Out Stewardship" buttons for those who feel that the church is always asking for money. One section will be devoted to trees and grass for those who like to seek God in nature. Doctors and nurses will be in attendance for those who plan to be sick on Sunday. The sanctuary will be decorated with both Christmas poinsettias and Easter lilies for those who never have seen the church without them. We will provide hearing aids for those who can't hear the preacher and cotton for those who can!





## *Congratulations!*

to all those celebrating the civil holiday of "Mother's Day" – mothers, grandmothers, mothers-in-law, godmothers –

***Многая і Благая Літа!***

***Many Blessed Years!***

### *A Mother's Prayer*

*O Lord Jesus Christ our God Who came into this world not to be ministered to but to minister and to give Your life as a ransom for many. Help me, I beseech You in my ministry of caring for the children You have given me. Enable me to be patient in tribulations, to instruct with a meek and gentle spirit, to reprimand with inner tranquility and a sober mind, and to serve in humility of heart with love. May I thus live in You alone, by You alone and for You alone showing forth Your virtues and leading my family upon the path of Your saving commandments. That we may glorify You together with Your Father Who is without beginning and Your all-holy Spirit both in this world and that which is to come. Amen.*

*Live your life while you have it;  
Life is a precious gift - make  
each day count.*

*- Florence Nightingale*

*Live with such joy that your  
day becomes a perfect memory,  
Laugh so deeply that your soul  
sings, and most of all, Love  
yourself for who you are - you  
are a wonderful person!*

### **PARISHIONERS THAT ARE HOME BOUND**



If you or a loved one cannot make it to Church, Fr. James would be more than pleased visit at your home, in the hospital, at a nursing home, or any other place. It is no inconvenience at all.

Please be sure to schedule a visit.

### **Pastor:**

Fr. James Bankston: (619) 905-5278

### **Pastoral Council:**

Vladimir Bachynsky: (619) 865-1279

Mark Hartman: (619) 446-6357

Luke Miller: (858) 354-2008

### **Social Committee Chair:**

Vacant

### **Finance Committee:**

Bohdan Kniahynyckyj: (619) 303-9698



**Українська Греко-Католицька Церква  
Святого Йоана Хрестителя  
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Ukrainian Greco-Catholic Church**

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***True God of True God***

We very confidently prove the true catholic faith out of the Holy Scriptures. We place it as a candle on a candlestick. We assert that the Son is naturally and essentially the Son of the Father, of the same substance with Him, His Only-begotten Wisdom, the true and only Word of God; that He was not made nor created, but begotten of one substance with the Father. Therefore, we say that He is true God, being of one substance with God the Father. Whereas the gods mentioned by the Psalmist in the passage, "I have said, you are gods" (Ps 82: 6), are only entitled to that description so far as they are partakers of divine grace, which the Son bestows upon them from the Father through the Holy Spirit. The Son is the representation of the Person of the Father (Heb 1: 3). He is Light of Light. He is the true and genuine Power and Image of His Father's substance, according to what He says of himself, "He that has seen me

has seen the Father" (Jn 14: 9). He always was, and is, and never was not; for the Word and Wisdom of the Father must certainly be eternal as well as the Father. . . There is an extraordinary heresy, which contains such unreasonable ideas, and which, instead of godly discourses, amasses together gross blasphemies. Suppose we were to ask anyone that has examined and compared our Creed and this together, which of them he thinks the more reasonable, and the more suitable to the attributes of God...

... Of these two expositions, which is more worthy of God the Father, and of His Son our Lord Jesus Christ, let anyone judge.

*St. Athanasius the Great,  
Champion of the Council of Nicea*

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