



# CHRIST THE SAVIOR ORTHODOX CHURCH

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**BULLETIN OF JUNE 9, 2019**

## A Warm Welcome!

We warmly welcome all our visitors! It's good to have you with us!

## The Pool to be Opened Today – Sunday, June 9

Weather-permitting, following the Divine Liturgy, we will have our annual blessing of the pool and Cross Dive. The pool will be open for swimming until 1pm. A certified life-guard will be on duty, but parents should still watch their children. Be safe and enjoy! Questions? See Fr. John.



## SUNDAY, JUNE 9<sup>TH</sup>

### Holy Fathers of the 1<sup>st</sup> Council

8:40a.m. Hours  
 9:00a.m. Div. Liturgy; Coffee Hour  
 Cross Dive / Open Pool

## SATURDAY, JUNE 15<sup>TH</sup>

5:00p.m. Bible Study  
 6:00p.m. Great Vespers w/ Litiya

## SUNDAY, JUNE 16<sup>TH</sup>

### Holy Pentecost

#### One of the Twelve Great Feasts

8:40a.m. Hours  
 9:00a.m. Div. Liturgy; Coffee Hour  
 Rain date: Cross Dive



## Feast of Pentecost – Sunday, June 16

On Sunday, June 16, we celebrate the Descent of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost, 50 days after Pascha. On this day we have Vespers with Kneeling Prayers immediately following the Liturgy. This is a High Holy Day, no one should miss. There will be Liturgy the next day, dedicated to the Holy Spirit.

## Fast-Free Week

During the week after Pentecost (June 16-23) we do not fast, even on Wednesday and Friday. This week is given to us to celebrate the renewal of the Holy Spirit received on Pentecost.

## Prayer for Graduates – Sunday, June 23

As we come to the conclusion of the academic year, we offer thanks to God for His blessings. This prayer will be offered Sunday, June 23.



## Project Mexico: Anya and Seva Klimitchev

Many thanks to all the donors for your generosity and help! God bless you!



## Supporting A Local Pregnancy Center

A charitable drive, "Bottles of Blessing!", will run from Mother's Day, May 12 to Father's Day, June 16. You can pick up a Baby Bottle to take home and collect your loose change (cash / checks accepted!). To benefit The Grace Center for Maternal and Women's Health in Berlin where women are cared for materially & spiritually.

## Two Suggestions

1) Invite someone new to church; 2) Talk to someone new today.



## Can You Offer a Ride to Church?

Please see Fr. John. Why not fill your empty seat with a fellow traveler to the Kingdom of God?

## Did You Know?

Christ the Savior Mission participates in Amazon Smile, a program in which a small donation is made by Amazon to our church for every purchase you make on Amazon. Using Amazon Smile is easy, quick, and will help support your church. For more info, please see [orthodoxdelmarva.org](http://orthodoxdelmarva.org).



- St. Porphyrios

✝	OPERATING			EARMARKED			ACCOUNTS		READER SCHEDULE	
	THRU 5/31	THIS MONTH	THIS YEAR	THRU 5/31	THIS MONTH	THIS YEAR	OPERATING			
INCOME	45,067	3,019	48,086	14,865	245	15,110	EARMARKED	6,634	6/9	Beth Dunbar
EXPENSE	46,305	9,261	55,566	800	2,085	2,885	SAVINGS	18,839	6/16	Rdr. Nicholas Borodulia
NET	-1,238	-6,242	-7,480	+14,065	-1,840	+12,225	BUILDING	12,000	6/23	Megan Wilkinson
								5,000	6/30	Gabriela Vlahovici-Jones



## THE FIRST COUNCIL OF NICAEA

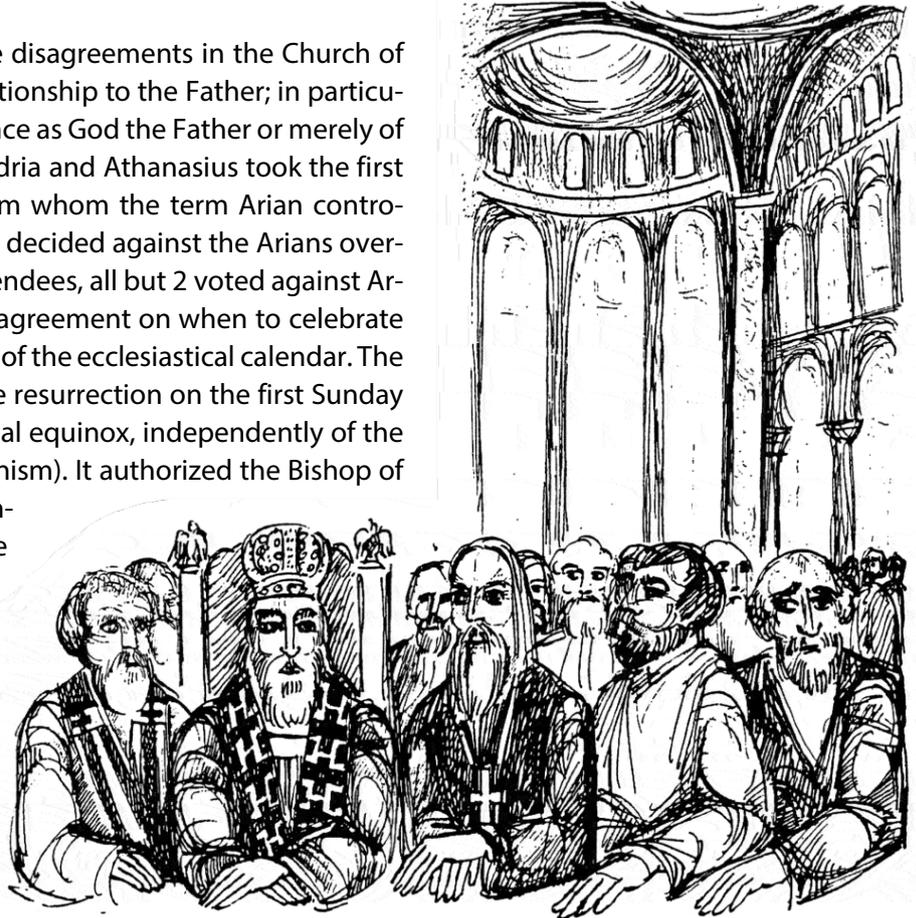
*From Wikipedia.org*



The First Council of Nicaea, held in Nicaea in Bithynia (present-day Iznik in Turkey), convoked by the Roman Emperor Constantine I in 325, was the first Ecumenical council of the Christian Church, and most significantly resulted in the first uniform Christian doctrine, called the Nicene Creed. With the creation of the creed, a precedent was established for subsequent 'general (ecumenical) 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.

The purpose of the council was to resolve disagreements in the Church of Alexandria over the nature of Jesus in relationship to the Father; in particular, whether Jesus was of the same substance as God the Father or merely of similar substance. St. Alexander of Alexandria and Athanasius took the first position; the popular presbyter Arius, from whom the term Arian controversy comes, took the second. The council decided against the Arians overwhelmingly (of the estimated 250-318 attendees, all but 2 voted against Arius). Another result of the council was an agreement on when to celebrate the Resurrection, the most important feast of the ecclesiastical calendar. The council decided in favor of celebrating the resurrection on the first Sunday after the first full moon following the vernal equinox, independently of the Hebrew Calendar (see also Quartodecimanism). It authorized the Bishop of Alexandria (presumably using the Alexandrian calendar) to announce annually the exact date to his fellow bishops.

The Council of Nicaea was historically significant because it was the first effort to attain consensus in the church through an assembly representing all of Christendom. "It was the first occasion for the development of technical Christology." A precedent was set for subsequent general councils to create creeds and canons.



### OUR THOUGHTS

*By Abbot Tryphon*

"Our life depends on the kind of thoughts we nurture. If our thoughts are peaceful, calm, meek, and kind, then that is what our life is like. If our attention is turned to the circumstances in which we live, we are drawn into a whirlpool of thoughts and can have neither peace nor tranquility (Elder Thaddeus of Vitovnica)".

Saint Seraphim of Sarov said, "acquire inner peace, and thousands around you will be saved", for having been created in the image of God, and we are part of the Divine thought that was made material in time and space. We not only influence those around us with our thoughts, but we even influence the cosmos. If we focus on the negative, those negative thoughts impact everyone around us, and even the whole world. The Elder Thaddeus tells us we can be either very good, or very bad, depending on the thoughts and desires we breed.

There is a lot that is wrong with the world, but it begins with us. If there is to be peace in our world, it must begin with me. If hatred, anger, envy, lust, and spite, are to end, it must end with me. When we allow destructive thoughts to destroy our peace, the peace around us is destroyed. We cannot blame the world, or even those around us, for that which happens around us, radiates from us. Blame for all that is wrong with the world, cannot be placed beyond our own hearts.

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## WHEN CHURCH IS OPTIONAL, YOU SET UP YOUR KIDS TO FAIL

Blake Laberee / From Patheos.com / May 13, 2019

*The following article is written by a Baptist Minister in the Pacific Northwest. Although it reflects certain theological misunderstandings questionable from an Orthodox Christian view; the core of the article is sound and expresses the concerns of many clergy. The common disregard for the holiness of Sunday is rampant in our society. Many parents are complicit in this spiritual downfall and have caved in to secular society rather than being faithful to the teachings of the Christian Church.*

"Hey Pastor, I just wanted to let you know that we won't be at church for the next three months because my girl is playing ball and they have games on Sunday and practices throughout the week."

My heart sank into my stomach. I wouldn't call it shock, because I had heard this statement, or at least something like this, dozens of times from different parents over the years. Sports, plays, bands, fundraisers, on and on went the list of programs and distractions that would inevitably take the family out of church for a season. "Well, let me encourage you to reconsider that", I began.

But there was no talking him down. I explained in a hushed tone the importance of his role as a father to set the standard for his children. I talked about the importance of putting the Lord first. I talked about the importance of \*GULP\* attending the local church (Heb 13:17). But, standing before me was a father and husband who, instead of leading his family in holiness was choosing to inflict them with spiritual wounds.

"Well they are saved, so what else is there?" he said, jovially.

I felt my face go flush. "What else is there?" I asked. "Life! The Gospel is for all of life; not just a 'get-out-of-hell-free' card. Being here as a family will do far more for them in the long run than sports. Trust me."

He snapped back, this time with a more serious tone, "Well, they [his kids] need to learn teamwork and stuff." We exchanged a few more words and then he walked out – his children and wife in tow. We saw the kids at a couple more youth events and then never again.



Pastorally I still ache thinking about that exchange and others like it. As a believer who considers the gathering of the saints as a commanded, valuable, necessary privilege of grace; I had always struggled with these talks – I suppose I still do. I am stupefied at how readily professing believers throw God on the backburner – especially when the heart of their children is on the line.

Where did we go wrong? How can we sing on Sunday morning that Jesus is my "all-in-all" and then decide to sacrifice the glorious, life-giving truths of the Gospel on the bloody alter of hobbies? At what point did so many professing Christians parents exchange the instruction, "keep your eyes on Jesus" for "Keep your eyes on the ball"?

Oh great, another blog post about the evils of hobbies... I should say this, there is nothing inherently wrong with sports or any other kind of hobby, so long as it doesn't violate God's law. I am a huge Phillies baseball fan and an avid hunter (If you didn't dislike me up to this point – you probably do now).

I wrestled with the tensions between hobbies and church for years. Swinging from one end of the pendulum – it doesn't matter, to the other – all hobbies are evil and pull people away from God. I would like to think today, through studying God's Word, I now have a more biblical understanding.

I do not believe that skipping out on the Lord's Day services is ever appropriate unless divinely organized (sickness, hospitalization, etc.) Sunday is a special day for God's people and ought not be treated like a second Saturday. This means that hobbies should fall second to the things of God. This thought is certainly counter-cultural. My unsaved family thinks I'm crazy, because every hunting season I come down out of the mountains with my wife and daughters, shower at a truck stop, and attend the service at a small rural church in the nearest town – effectively "wasting" the entire day... and I love it every time. Admittedly, there are times when I am driving down the mountain pass and thoughts of the big muley bucks I'm missing out on trot through my mind, but then the truth hits me, "Glorious are you [God], more majestic than the

mountains full of prey" (Ps 76:4). Hobbies and convenience are no reason to disobey clear commands (Heb 10:25) – not even hunting season. I don't ever want my girls thinking that we vacation from God.

I believe that the problem is not the sport or hobby itself – the problem is often the forgetfulness of the parents.

### **Parents Have Forgotten Who Is Responsible for Their Kid's Spiritual Well-Being.**

Children are a heritage and a blessing from the Lord (Ps 127:3-5), and as gifts from the Lord they are to be handled and cared for as precious beings made in His image (Gen 1:27). It is the parents that are commanded in scripture to discipline their children (Prov 25:19) and teach them what they are to know about God (Prov 22:6, Duet 6:7). It is the parent's responsibility to introduce their child to the scriptures, "...which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus." (2 Tim 3:14-17). Oddly, in all of the passages we read about raising children, nowhere are these responsibilities shifted to the church. If I must give an account for my family, then I must take these responsibilities seriously.

### **Parents Have Forgotten the Purpose of Youth Ministry.**

We can argue the validity of youth ministry all day, but most of us should at least agree, as mentioned above, youth group is not an acceptable substitute for Godly living and training at home. I am the first to recognize that there are a lot of bad youth programs out there. However, youth ministry, in its purest form is to come along side parents in helping to equip, meet, and reinforce the spiritual needs and habits of their children. Unfortunately, instead of being used as a helpful tool, youth ministry is often used as a substitute spiritual guide. It is a sad day when spiritual care of kids is pawned off onto the church, who having them for an hour or two each week is supposed to make up for the lack of spiritual vitality and leadership at home. Is it any wonder that kids get "board" and fall away? It is even less of a wonder that upon the child falling away the blame is often placed directly on the lap of the church. Imagine if parents took to regularly praying with, studying with, and investing spiritually into their kids!

### **Parents Have Forgotten the Purpose of the Local Church Gathering.**

When parents choose to enroll their children in programs that will directly violate the clear

commands of Hebrews 10:25, it is a sign that they have forgotten the purpose of the local gathering. It's easy to say "\_\_\_\_\_ " is more fun than church, the kids enjoy it more; forgetting, of course, that the purpose of the church is not to entertain you! Gathering together fulfills a much greater purpose than simply something to do on Sunday morning (as long as nothing else is going on.) Mark Dever summarizes the purpose of the church gathering in this way: "The proper ends for a local congregation's life and actions are the worship of God, the edification of the church, and the evangelization of the world. These three purposes in turn serve the glory of God." (A Theology for the Church, p. 809)

### **Parents Have Forgotten Their Greater Affection**

Most Christians profess that they love God. 1 John 4:19 reminds us that, "we love because he first loved us." In fact, love for God and love for others is the most prominent mark of believers (John 13:15). Jesus says in John 14:5, "If you love me, keep my commandments." Simply put, the Christians life is marked by love.

Consider the fact that Jesus lived, died and rose on your behalf. ... You who were once dead in your trespasses and sins have been made alive (Eph 2:1). When you were born again, Christ took out that old stone heart and replaced it with a heart of flesh that would worship, honor, communion with, and glorify Him (Ez 11:19). You were bought with a price, believer, and you are no longer your own (1 Cor 6:20). Jesus and His commands are EVERYTHING to the believer and it is that love and passion for Jesus that we should be demonstrating and passing down to our children. Friend, as much as I like baseball and hunting – neither of those have done what Jesus has done for me.

When I pull my children away from the things of God for the sake of hobbies, I am not loving God and I am not loving them. I am programming them to be satisfied with lesser affections – I am programming them to fail.

### **Conclusion**

Parents, we need to stop "programming" our children to fail in spiritual things by substituting spiritual things with an excess of programs (say that 10X fast), and get back to reminding ourselves of our responsibilities and showing our children that true joy is found in the presence of King Jesus (Ps 16:11).