

"You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven."

Message from Fr. Michael...

Dearly Beloved Faithful:

As we read from the scriptural passage above, from the Gospel of St. Matthew, the Lord directs that our light is to shine before our brethren. In doing so, our brethren may see our good works. When our good works are seen by others, we are giving God the glory. Our heavenly Father looks upon us with His tender mercy and send His grace upon us. Our Lord is omniscient and omnipotent. He is all knowing and mighty.

On this blessed Sunday of the Holy Fathers, we recognize their good works. As they proved to be vigilant candles of the Faith, we admire their brightness from their unextinguishing flame. Fathers who came together in the Seven Ecumenical Councils, that is: as written in Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America web site from reading borrowed from the Holy Transfiguration Monastery of Brookline, Massachusetts: "the First Council, of the 318 Fathers who assembled in Nicaea in 325 to condemn Arius, who denied that the Son of God is consubstantial with the Father; the Fathers of the First Council also ordained that the whole Church should celebrate Pascha according to the same reckoning; the Second Council, of the 150 Fathers who assembled in Constantinople in 381 to condemn Macedonius, Patriarch of Constantinople, who denied the Divinity of the Holy Spirit; the Third Council, of the 200 Fathers who assembled in Ephesus in 431, to condemn Nestorius, Patriarch of Constantinople, who called Christ a mere man and not God incarnate; the Fourth Council, of the 630 who assembled in Chalcedon in 451, to condemn Eutyches, who taught that there was only one nature, the divine, in Christ after the Incarnation, and Dioscorus, Patriarch of Alexandria, who illegally received Eutyches back into communion and deposed Saint Flavian, Patriarch of Constantinople, who had excommunicated Eutyches; the Fifth Council in 553, of the 165 who assembled in Constantinople for the second time to condemn Origen and Theodore of Mopsuestia, the teacher of Nestorius; the Sixth Council in 680, of the 170 who assembled in Constantinople for the third time, to condemn the Monothelite heresy, which taught that there is in Christ but one will, the divine; and the Seventh Council in 787, of the 350 who assembled in Nicaea for the second time to condemn Iconoclasm."

As we draw inspiration from recognizing the works of these Fathers of the Ecumenical Councils, we realize that we, too, have the spiritual responsibility to also be beacons of light that may lead others out of darkness. Can we lead others out of the desert to an oasis of faith? May our brilliance glow greater than our shining sun so that such illumination opens the eyes of the spiritually blind?

Let us be a lighthouse of the faith. Let us prevent those who are on the vast sea of pride and selfishness from crashing into the shoreline coastal rocks of faithlessness. May our spiritual light continue to shine before all people. May we inspire all who witness its glow to follow Christ. Through the prayers and intercession of St. Euphemia, the Great Martyr, whose feast day was Friday, we ask our Lord to hear our petitions and may our Lord grant His mercy upon us all.

Prayerfully beaming I remain,
Yours in His service,
+Fr. Michael

The Glorious Prophet Elias (Elijah)



Elias of great fame was from Thisbe or Thesbe, a town of Galaad (Gilead), beyond the Jordan. He was of priestly lineage, a man of a solitary and ascetical character, clothed in a mantle of sheep skin, and girded about his loins with a leathern belt. His name is interpreted as "Yah is my God." His zeal for the glory of God was compared to fire, and his speech for teaching and rebuke was likened unto a burning lamp. From this too he received the name Zealot. Therefore, set aflame with such zeal, he sternly reprov'd the impiety and lawlessness of Ahab and his wife Jezebel. He shut up heaven by means of prayer, and it did not rain for three years and six months. Ravens brought him food for his need when, at God's command, he was hiding by the torrent of Horath. He multiplied the little flour and oil of the poor widow of Sarephtha of Sidon, who had given him hospitality in her home, and when her son died, he raised him up. He brought down fire from Heaven upon Mount Carmel, and it burned up the sacrifice offered to God before all the people of Israel, that they might know the truth. At the torrent of Kisson, he slew 450 false prophets and priests who worshipped idols and led the people astray. He received food wondrously at the hand of an Angel, and being strengthened by this food he walked for forty days and forty nights. He beheld God on Mount Horeb, as far as this is possible for human nature. He foretold the destruction of the house of Ahab, and the death of his son Ohozias; and as for the two captains of fifty that were sent by the king, he burned them for their punishment, bringing fire down from Heaven. He divided the flow of the Jordan, and he and his disciple Elisseus passed through as it were on dry land; and finally, while speaking with him, Elias was suddenly snatched away by a fiery chariot in the year 895 B.C., and he ascended as though into heaven, whither God most certainly translated him alive, as He did Enoch (Gen. 5:24; IV Kings 2: 11). But from thence also, after seven years, by means of an epistle he reproached Joram, the son of Josaphat, as it is written: "And there came a message in writing to him from Elias the Prophet, saying, Thus saith the Lord God of David thy father, Because thou hast not walked in the way," and so forth (II Chron. 21:12). According to the opinion of the majority of the interpreters, this came to pass either through his disciple Elisseus, or through another Prophet when Elias appeared to them, even as he appeared on Mount Tabor to the disciples of Christ (see Aug. 6).

Apolytikion in the Fourth Tone

The incarnate Angel, the Cornerstone of the Prophets, the second Forerunner of the Coming of Christ, the glorious Elias (Elijah), who from above, sent down to Elisha the grace to dispel sickness and cleanse lepers, abounds therefore in healing for those who honor him.

Kontakion in the Second Tone

O Prophet and foreseer of the great works of God, O greatly renowned Elias (Elijah), who by your word held back the clouds of rain, intercede for us to the only Loving One.

Sunday of the Holy Fathers

On the Sunday that falls from the 13th to the 19th of the present month, we chant the Service to the Holy and God-bearing Fathers who came together in the Seven Ecumenical Councils, that is: the First Council, of the 318 Fathers who assembled in Nicaea in 325 to condemn Arius, who denied that the Son of God is consubstantial with the Father; the Fathers of the First Council also ordained that the whole Church should celebrate Pascha according to the same reckoning; the Second Council, of the 150 Fathers who assembled in Constantinople in 381 to condemn Macedonius, Patriarch of Constantinople, who denied the Divinity of the Holy Spirit; the Third Council, of the 200 Fathers who assembled in Ephesus in 431, to condemn Nestorius, Patriarch of Constantinople, who called Christ a mere man and not God incarnate; the Fourth Council, of the 630 who assembled in Chalcedon in 451, to condemn Eutyches, who taught that there was only one nature, the divine, in Christ after the Incarnation, and Dioscorus, Patriarch of Alexandria, who illegally received Eutyches back into communion and deposed Saint Flavian, Patriarch of Constantinople, who had excommunicated Eutyches; the Fifth Council in 553, of the 165 who assembled in Constantinople for the second time to condemn Origen and Theodore of Mopsuestia, the teacher of Nestorius; the Sixth Council in 680, of the 170 who assembled in Constantinople for the third time, to condemn the Monothelite heresy, which taught that there is in Christ but one will, the divine; and the Seventh Council in 787, of the 350 who assembled in Nicaea for the second time to condemn Iconoclasm.

FATHER MICHAEL REQUESTS...that we, as a faithful community keep the following individuals in our prayers: Michalena (Skiadas) Sukenik, Suzanne Vaishnani, daughter of Ted Simon, and Presbytera Magdalena Michalopoulos. Please notify Fr. Michael if you have anyone else who should be included for special prayers. May they be under the grace and tender watch of our Lord.

Please be advised that the 2 air conditioning units in the front of the church will be set at 70 degrees and **will remain on throughout the services** for the remainder of the summer season. This is the same temperature the church heat is set at during the winter months. The two units in the back may be turned off as the need arises; the units in the front will remain on and will not be altered. **Please do not interrupt the services regarding the front units.** The altar area contains hot spotlights, candles, burning charcoal, and other sources of heat which make it exceptionally warm when combined with the vestments worn. Parishioners are welcome to bring a sweater if there are any concerns.

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 is reserved for baptized and chrismated (confirmed) Orthodox Christians, all are invited to receive the "ANTIDORON" (blessed bread) which is not a sacrament, but is a reminder of the "agape feast" that followed worship in the early Church. After the Divine Liturgy this morning, please join us in the Church Hall for fellowship and refreshments. We hope that you will return often to worship with us, to grow in Christ and in our Orthodox Faith. For any spiritual, religious, or sacramental matters, please contact Fr. Michael (607) 795-1474. For any building, facility or church property issues, please contact Parish Council President Steve Anastos, (607) 296-9799. Deadline for suggestions for the bulletin is 12:00 noon on Thursday.