

From the Divine Office

Today let us celebrate the God-bearing Fathers, the mystical spokesmen of the Spirit, who sang a hymn of unity in the midst of the Church. They proclaimed the one Essence of the divine Trinity. They defended Orthodoxy before Arius, and they ceaselessly intercede before God that He take pity on our souls. (Vespers)

O heavenly-minded Fathers, gathered for the Seventh Ecumenical Council, pray constantly to the Trinity to save from all heresy and from eternal judgement those who praise you, that they may receive the Kingdom of Heaven. (Orthros)



**SUNDAY OF THE FATHERS OF NICEA II
OCTOBER 17, 2021**



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Divine Liturgy: Sunday 10:00 AM

Antiphon (3rd)

1: Come, let us sing joyfully to the Lord; let us shout with joy to God our Savior.

O Son of God, who are risen from the dead, save us who sing to You, Alleluia

2: Let us come into His presence with thanksgiving and let us joyfully sing psalms to Him.

Khallisna Ya-Bnallah, Ya Man qama min baynil-amwaat, nahnu muranneemeena Laka. Haleloueya.

3: For God is a great Lord and a great King over all the earth.

O Son of God, who are risen from the dead, save us who sing to You, Alleluia.

Entrance Hymn

Priest: Come, let us worship and bow down before Christ.

People: **O Son of God, who are risen from the dead, save us who sing to You. Alleluia.**

Troparion of the Resurrection (Tone 4) pg. 40

The women disciples of the Lord, having learned from the angel the joyful announcement of the resurrection, and having rejected the ancestral sentence, proudly told the apostles: Death is despoiled. Christ God is risen, bestowing to the world great mercy.

Troparion of the Fathers, (Tone 8)

O Christ our God, You are infinitely glorified for You established our fathers as radiant stars on earth. Through them, you led us to the true faith. O Most Merciful One, glory to You!

Troparion of the Dormition (Tone 1)pg. 15

In giving birth, you have preserved your virginity, and in falling asleep you did not forsake the world, O Mother of God. You have passed to life, being the Mother of Life. Through your intercession, save our souls from death.

Kontakion (Tone 2) Pg. 16

O never failing Protectress of Christians and their ever-present intercessor before the Creator, despise not the petitions of us sinners, but in your goodness extend your help to us who call upon you with confidence. Hasten, O Mother of God, to intercede for us, for you have always protected those who honor you.

Matters of Church Order

During the conflict over images, matters of Church order in place for centuries fell into disuse. The Council restored the earlier practice on:

The selection of bishops (canons 2, 3) – Because of the iconoclastic conflict, the chief qualification for office in the Church had often become the candidate's stance for or against the use of icons. The council mandated the metropolitan of each province to conduct a "diligent examination" to see whether any candidate for the office of bishop "be zealously inclined to read diligently, and not merely now and then, the sacred canons, the holy Gospel, and the book of the divine Apostle, and all other divine Scripture, and whether he lives according to God's commandments, and also teaches the same to his people" (Canon 2). The Council further affirmed that "he who is raised to the episcopate must be chosen by bishops, as was decreed by the holy fathers of Nicaea" (Canon 3). The iconoclastic era had seen regular interference in the choice of bishops by the emperors and their representatives. The council sought to return the choice of bishops to the bishops of the local provinces.

Local synods were to resume meeting twice each year as previously. "And if any prince be found hindering this being carried out, let him be excommunicated. But if any of the metropolitans shall take no care that this be done, he being free from constraint or fear or other reasonable excuse, let him be subjected to the canonical penalties" (Canon 6).

Reform of Morals

Since the passions (pride, greed, lust and the rest) have been a part of our makeup since the Fall, the Church must continually be on the alert to combat abuses. The following areas were addressed by II Nicaea:

Greed – Bishops were forbidden to demand payment in any kind from their clergy or people for ordination or preferment, with the strongest penalties imposed on those who did so. "Let him be dealt with according to the Apostolic Canon which says: If a bishop has obtained possession of his dignity by means of money (the same rule applies also to a presbyter or deacon) let him be deposed and also the one who ordained him, and let him also be altogether cut off from communion, even as Simon the Magician was" (Canon 5). The same rule was applied to monastics in Canon 19.

As a help in controlling these and other financial abuses, the Council mandated the appointment of an economos in each eparchy. If the local bishop did not do so, the metropolitan or patriarch was to make the appointment himself (Canon 11).

Bishops and the heads of monasteries were forbidden to sell Church properties, or give them over to their relatives or to local rulers. "The bishop or hegumen doing this shall be turned out, the bishop from his eparchy and the hegumen from his monastery" (Canon 12). Properties thus alienated by the iconoclasts were to be restored (Canon 13)

Vanity - During the struggle over icons simplicity in dress and lifestyle became a sign of those who supported icons. Their opponents mocked clergy who lived simple. The Council warned all clergy to avoid expensive or showy dress "For from early times every man in holy orders wore modest and somber clothing; truly whatever is worn, not so much because of necessity, as for the sake of outward show, savors of dandyism, as says Basil the Great" (Canon 16).

Lust – Outright sexual impropriety was not addressed by the council. The appearance of impropriety was the subject of several canons. Women were not to live or work in bishop's houses or men's monasteries (Canon 18). Monks or priests were not to eat privately with women (Canon 22).

"Double monasteries," where monks and nuns shared common public areas but had separate living quarters, were no longer permitted "for in thus living together adultery finds its occasion" (Canon 20).

DIVINE LITURGY INTENTIONS

- Today** **Healing of Archie Opatka**
+**Peter Solitro.** Requested by Antoinette Arraj
+**Carol McNeil.** Requested by Fr. Bryan and Family
- Oct 24** **Healing of Archie Opatka**
+**Peter Solitro.** Requested by Lisa Jagielski
- Oct 31** **Healing of Archie Opatka**
+**Peter Solitro.** Requested by Ron & Dick Abraham
- Nov 7** +**Peter Solitro.** Requested by Marilyn & Zenon Tencza

This morning's Coffee Hour is hosted by Eli Franz
Next Sunday's Coffee Hour is hosted by Andy & Jocelyn Aulo

Last Week's Collection

Weekly	\$1,652
Candles	\$ 10
Coffee Hr.	\$ 34
Stole	\$ 100
Donations	\$ 75
TOTAL	\$1,871



FUNDRAISER

There will be a fundraiser on Saturday November 20 from 2:30-6:30PM to benefit the Opatka family as Archie battles heptoblastoma. The fundraiser will be held at the Millbury VFW, 16 South Main St. Millbury. Tickets are \$10 and include dinner. If you would like to purchase tickets, please see Nick Rahall (508) 826-9346. Please go to archiesarmy.net to learn more. "Physician of our souls and bodies, heal, bless and have mercy on Your child Archie!"

We will have a meeting/lunch on **October 31** after the Divine Liturgy to review the Picnic and see where we can do things better.

As previously reported, we generated **\$12,223.23** in **gross receipts** from the Picnic! We had expenses of **\$3,133.87**, bringing our net profit to **\$9,089.36**. This was due to the incredible generosity and hard work of so many people! While the money we generated is important, I believe that people coming together to work and visit with each other is priceless. I never cease to be humbled by your commitment to the parish and each other.

God bless you for your hard work and generosity to our Parish!

PARISH COUNCIL

As previously stated, I would like to form a Parish Council this fall. It is an important part of parish life. For a parish of our size, I think seven people will be enough, at least to begin. We will elect three members and I will appoint two. Currently, we have both a Finance & Building committee. Each of these committees will have a representative on the Council.

I will be sending a ballot in the mail in the next couple of weeks. Rather than go through a nomination process followed by an election, we will just have the election. The top three vote getters will be elected to the Council. Should someone not wish to serve, we will go to the person who received the next largest number of votes. We will meet once a quarter and expand that when required.

Please remember that the Parish Council, like all of the councils, is an advisory body. It's purpose is to advise the pastor on elements of church life. It is not a governing body. Problems often arise when that distinction is not understood by all, including the pastor.

FOOD FAIR

St. Basil the Great Melkite Church in Lincoln, RI is having a Food Fair on October 23 & 24.
Please see the flyers on the bulletin boards for more details.

Restoring the Tradition

The Second Council of Nicaea - the seventh ecumenical council - which we remember every October is chiefly known for formally recognizing the use of icons as a consequence of the Incarnation. If the Word of God could take on human nature, He could be depicted in images. In effect, the Council taught, the Incarnation restricted the Old Testament ban on "graven images" (see Ex 20:4).

The Council, held in AD 787, decreed that, "As the sacred and life-giving cross is everywhere set up as a symbol, so also should the images of Jesus Christ, the Virgin Mary, the holy angels, as well as those of the saints and other pious and holy men be embodied in the manufacture of sacred vessels, tapestries, vestments, etc., and exhibited on the walls of churches, in the homes, and in all conspicuous places, by the roadside and everywhere, to be revered by all who might see them. For the more they are contemplated, the more they move to fervent memory of their prototypes. Therefore it is proper to accord to them a fervent and reverent adoration, not, however, the veritable worship which, according to our faith, belongs to the Divine Being alone - for the honor accorded to the image passes over to its prototype, and whoever venerates the image venerates in it the reality of what is there represented."

While the veneration of two icons was officially accepted by the Greek and Latin Churches at this council, it did not mark the end of iconoclasm. Beginning in 811, the Byzantine army had suffered a series of military defeats at the hands of the Bulgars. One emperor had been killed in battle and his two successors forced to abdicate because of military losses. In 814, the new emperor, Leo the Armenian, reasoned that "all the emperors who took up images and venerated them, met their death either in revolt or in war; but those who did not venerate images all died a natural death, remained in power until they died, and were then laid to rest with all honors." As a result, he decreed a revival of iconoclasm, which continued until the "Triumph of Orthodoxy" in 843, which we celebrate on the First Sunday of the Great Fast.

Consequences of the Council's Teaching

In addition to its dogmatic decrees, Nicaea II issued a number of canons, some connected to its doctrine on icons; others dealing with various questions of Church discipline. The issues relating to the matter of icons include:

The use of relics (Canon 7) – Since the Roman persecutions of the first centuries, it was customary to erect altars over the tombs of – or at least the relics of – the martyrs and other saints. During the era of iconoclasm altars had been consecrated without the usual relics which the iconoclasts saw as idolatrous. Nicaea II mandated that the practice be revived and that relics be inserted in any altars consecrated without them, “For as they took out of the churches the presence of the venerable images, so likewise they cast aside other customs, which we must now revive and maintain in accordance with the written and unwritten law. We decree therefore that relics shall be placed with the accustomed service in as many of the sacred temples as have been consecrated without the relics of the Martyrs.”

Iconoclastic books (Canon 9) – Copies of iconoclastic writings were to be withdrawn from circulation, “And if anyone is found hiding such books, if he be a bishop or presbyter or deacon, let him be deposed; but if he be a monk or layman, let him be anathema.”

Prokimenon

Reader: Blessed are You, O Lord, God of our fathers, and Your name is worthy of praise and glorious forever.

People: Blessed are You, O Lord, God of our fathers, and Your name is worthy of praise and glorious forever.

Verse: For You are just in all you have done to us, and all Your works are true and Your ways right.

People: Blessed are You, O Lord, God of our fathers, and Your name is worthy of praise and glorious forever.

Reader: Blessed are You, O Lord, God of our fathers,

People: And Your name is worthy of praise and glorious forever.

Epistle: Tit 3:8-15

Alleluia Verses

O God, our ears have heard, our fathers have declared to us the deeds You did in their days, in the days of old.

Verse: The just cried out, and the Lord heard them, and He delivered them from all their trials.

Gospel: Lk 8:5-15

There are registration forms for religious education on the table at the rear of the church. Please take one and register your children. Once we know how many children we have, we can put classes together. We will begin having classes once a month beginning November 7 and expand from there. Please reach out to me if you have any questions.

Fr. Bryan