

Sunday Bulletin  
June 16<sup>th</sup> 2024 – 7<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Pascha,  
of the Fathers of the First Council  
the Ascension of the Lord



Sts. Peter & Paul Ukrainian Orthodox Church  
1025 N Belle Vista Ave, Youngstown, Ohio 44509



Sts. Peter & Paul Ukrainian  
Orthodox Church

Українська Православна  
Церква Святих Петра і Павла  
1025 N. Belle Vista Ave

Youngstown, OH 44509-1616

Phone: 330-799-3830

Email: stspeterpauluoc@gmail.com

Fr. Mykola Zomchak  
*Pastor*

Anna Anderson  
*Choir Director*

Chuck Woloschak  
*President of the Church Council*

**Ministries:**

Altar Servers

Church Choir

Church School

Adult Education

St. Mary's Sisterhood

Sts. Peter & Paul Brotherhood

Senior UOL Chapter

Junior UOL Chapter

Youth Ministry

Orphanage Mission Ministry

Bingo Team

Fr Mykola Zomchak - Editor

**Website:**

<http://www.stspeterpauluoc.org>



## STS Peter & Paul Ukrainian Orthodox Church

*We invite you to a celebration of the  
Resurrection of Christ*



June 16<sup>th</sup> 2024 – 7<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Pascha,  
of the Fathers of the First Council  
the Ascension of the Lord

**Bulletin is dedicated in Memory of  
Russell and Theresa Semchee  
on the anniversary of their repose**

- bull 16

**Bulletin is dedicated in honor of all  
the Fathers of our Parish  
both here on earth and up in heaven**

- bull 14

### The First Antiphon

Oh, clap your hands, all you peoples. Shout to God with loud  
songs of joy! (Ps. 46:1)

**Refrain: Through the prayers of the Theotokos, O  
Savior, save us!**

For the Lord, the Most High is terrible; a great God over all  
the earth. (Ps. 46:2) (Refrain)

He subdued peoples under us, and nations under our feet.  
(Ps. 46:3) (Refrain)

God has gone up with a shout, the Lord with the sound of a  
trumpet! (Ps. 46:5) (Refrain)

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit,  
now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen. (Refrain)

### The Second Antiphon

Great is the Lord and greatly to be praised in the city of our  
God. (Ps. 47:1a)

**Refrain: O Son of God, Who ascended in glory, save us who sing to Thee: Alleluia!**

Mount Zion in the far north is the city of the Great King. (Ps. 47:2) (Refrain)

Within her citadels God is known when He defends her. (Ps. 47:3) (Refrain)

For lo, the kings assembled; they came on together. (Ps. 47:4) (Refrain)

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

*("Only-begotten Son and immortal Word of God... ")*

**The Third Antiphon**

Hear this, all peoples! Give ear, all inhabitants of the world! (Ps. 48:1)

**Tone 4 Troparion**

**You ascended in glory, O Christ our God, granting joy to Your Disciples by the promise of the Holy Spirit. Through the blessing, they were assured that You are the Son of God, // the Redeemer of the world!**

The earth-born and the sons of men, rich and poor together. (Ps. 48:2)

*Troparion of the Feast*

My mouth shall speak wisdom; the meditation of my heart shall be understanding. (Ps. 48:3)

*Troparion of the Feast*

I will incline my ear to a proverb; I will solve my riddle in psalmody. (Ps. 48:4)

*Troparion of the Feast*

God has gone up with a shout; the Lord with the sound of a trumpet! (Ps. 46:5)

*Troparion of the Feast*

*Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit....*

**Tone 6 Troparion (Resurrection)**

The Angelic Powers were at Your tomb; the guards became as dead men.

Mary stood by Your grave, seeking Your most pure body. You captured hell, not being tempted by it. You came to the Virgin, granting life. O Lord, Who rose from the dead, // glory to You.

*...now and ever and to the ages of ages. Amen!*

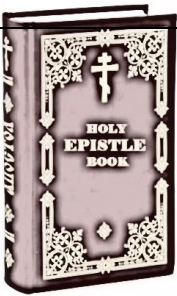
**Tone 6 Kontakion (Ascension)**

When You had fulfilled the dispensation for our sake, and united earth to heaven: You ascended in glory, O Christ our God, not being parted from those who love You, but remaining with them and crying: // "I am with you, and there is no one against you!"



**Tone 7 Prokeimenon**

Be exalted, O God, above the heavens; / and Your glory be over all the earth!  
*V. My heart is steadfast, O God, my heart is steadfast. I will sing and make melody.*



### **The Reading is from the Acts of the Holy Apostles Acts 1:1-12**

The former account I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach, until the day in which He was taken up, after He through the Holy Spirit had given commandments to the apostles whom He had chosen, to whom He also presented Himself alive after His suffering by many infallible proofs, being seen by them during forty days and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God. And being assembled together with them, He commanded them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the Promise of the Father, "which," He said, "you have heard from Me; for John truly baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now." Therefore, when they had come together, they asked Him, saying, "Lord, will You at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?" And He said to them, "It is not for you to know times or seasons which the Father has put in His own authority. But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth." Now when He had spoken these things, while they watched, He was taken up, and a cloud received Him out of their sight. And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as He went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel, who also said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will so come in like manner as you saw Him go into heaven." Then they returned to Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is near Jerusalem, a Sabbath day's journey.

### **Alleluia and Verses Tone 8**

V. Look upon me and have mercy on me! (Ps.118:132a)

V. Guide my steps according to Your word! (Ps. 118:133a)

*Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia*

### **The reading is from the Gospel according to St. Luke 24:36-53**

Now as they said these things, Jesus Himself stood in the midst of them, and said to them, "Peace to you." But they were terrified and frightened, and supposed they had seen a spirit. And He said to them, "Why are you troubled? And why do doubts arise in your hearts? Behold My hands and My feet, that it is I Myself. Handle Me and see, for a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see I have." When He had said this, He showed them His hands and His feet. But while they still did not believe for joy, and marveled, He said to them, "Have you any food here?" So they gave Him a piece of a broiled fish and some honeycomb. And He took it and ate in their presence. Then He said to them, "These are the words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms concerning Me." And He opened their understanding, that they might comprehend the Scriptures. Then He said to them, "Thus it is written, and thus it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day, and that repentance and



remission of sins should be preached in His name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And you are witnesses of these things. Behold, I send the Promise of My Father upon you; but tarry in the city of Jerusalem until you are endued with power from on high.” And He led them out as far as Bethany, and He lifted up His hands and blessed them. Now it came to pass, while He blessed them, that He was parted from them and carried up into heaven. And they worshiped Him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy, and were continually in the temple praising and blessing God. Amen.

**Communion Hymn**

**Rejoice in the Lord, O you righteous; praise befits the just! (Ps. 32:1)**  
**Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!**

**Instead of “it is right in truth”**

Magnify, O my soul, Christ the Giver of Life, Who has ascended from earth to heaven!

We the faithful, with one accord, magnify you, the Mother of God, who beyond reason and understanding, gave birth in time to the Timeless One.

**Communion Hymn**

Receive the Body of Christ; taste the fountain of immortality!  
*Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!*

**MEMORY ETERNAL**

**PLEASE PRAY FOR RESTING OF THE SOULS**

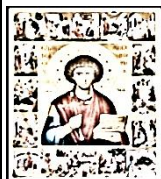
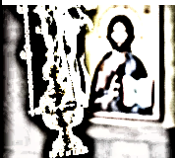
Mary Gula, Mykola Pryhodczenko, Oleksander Dymtro, Mark Vuksanovich, Vladyslav Chudakorov, Anna Adamovich, Soldier Serhiy. All Who died during the war in Ukraine.

**PRAYER LIST**

**PLEASE PRAY FOR HEALING, COMFORT, AND SPIRITUAL PEACE**

Metropolitan Anthony, Archbishop Daniel, Bernard Gnat, Dolly Mehalco, Jeff Ulbrich, Elaine Cartier, Ann & George Klein, David & Richard Scharba, Brittany, Matt, Stephen Shonn, Selma, Thelma Zemko, Artur Bohuslav, Bohdan, Lori Hayda, Shirley Duffy, Michele (Senediak) Caulder, Dobrodiyka Lilya, Sandy, Marilyn O’Leary, Alice Dobransky, Harold

Owens, Dave Zylka, Marianne Carmack, Nicholas Yurchyk, Pauline Witkowsky, Eileen Maluk, Peter Anderson, Albert Auden, Michael Gino Maluk, Boris & Kathleen Vuksanovich, Kathy Zebel. People Suffering from any Illnesses. Ukrainian people who are suffering from war.



**JUNE BIRTHDAYS**

4 Kathleen Vuksanovich	9 Jordan Duzzny
4 David McCormick	11 Joe Novicky
4 Gayle Woloschak	12 Nichole Spencer
5 Mila Woloschak	16 Diane Senedak
5 Frank Senediak	21 Sarah Moon
6 Kaden Crown	21 Sydney Moon
6 Lisa Davis	22 Maria Battisti
7 Catie Rose Duzzny	23 Bobbi Yarosh
7 Michael Duzzny	23 Mike Moon
7 Katherine Battisti	24 Anna Ratliff
8 Nicholas Duzzny	26 Darlene Moon
9 Joe Rimedio	28 Mark C. Demetrius





# Liturgical Schedule & Feast Days

Please contact Fr Mykola to schedule Prayer Services - 330-799-3830

## SERVICE AND FEAST DAY SCHEDULE

- Sunday, June 16, 9:30AM – 7<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Pascha, of the Fathers of the First Council.
- Sunday, June 23, 9:30AM – **Divine Liturgy, PENTECOST – TRINITY SUNDAY**
- Sunday, June 30, 9:30AM – **Divine Liturgy, 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday - All Saints.**
- Sunday, July 7, 9:30AM – **Divine Liturgy, 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday - All Saints of Ukraine**
- Sunday, July 14, 9:30AM – **Divine Liturgy, 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday.**
- Sunday, July 21, 9:30AM – **Divine Liturgy, 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday**



## Upcoming dates & events

- **Adult study & Fellowship** at 6pm: *to be scheduled*
- Sep 13-15 - **100<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY of Sts. Peter & Paul Parish CELEBRATION**
- July 24-28 - **77<sup>th</sup> Annual UOL Convention**, Philadelphia, PA
- August 24 - **Ukrainian Picnic** – celebrating the **Ukrainian Independence Day** - Aug 24 at 5pm.
- **ALL SAINTS CAMP PROGRAMS 2024:**



- June 19 - 22, 2024 - **St. Nicholas Program** for Special Needs Family Camp
- June 23 - 29, 2024 - **Diocesan Church School Camp** for Children 9 - 13
- June 30 - July 13, 2024 - **Teenage Conference** for Teenagers 13 - 18
- July 21 - 25, 2024 - **Mommy & Me / Daddy & Me** for Children 4 - 8 and their parents

To register for a Camp Program – please visit <https://www.uocyouth.org/campingministry>

OUR OFFERINGS TO THE LORD AS OF	On June 2	On June 9
General:	<b>\$ 2747.00</b>	<b>\$ 1620.00</b>
Renovation:	<b>\$ 521.00</b>	<b>\$ 105.00</b>
Online Donations on Tithe.ly	<b>\$ 20.00</b>	<b>\$ 45.00</b>

## Bulletin Dedication *(in memory or in honor)*

Sun June 2 <u>Dedicated</u>	Sun June 9 <u>Dedicated</u>	Sun June 16 <u>Dedicated</u>	Sun June 23 <u>Dedicated</u>	Sun June 30 <u>Dedicated</u>
Sun July 7 <u>Dedicated</u>	Sun July 14 <u>Dedicated</u>	Sun July 21 <u>Dedicated</u>	Sun July 28 <u>Available</u>	
Sun August 4 <u>Available</u>	Sun August 11 <u>Available</u>	Sun August 18 <u>Available</u>	Sun August 25 <u>Dedicated</u>	

For bulletin dedication please call – 330-799-3830, Fr Mykola

## ANNOUNCEMENT:

Sisterhood is starting our **semi-annual COFFEE DRIVE for Bingo**. Please help, and thanks to all of you for your donations... you have been very generous

- *St Mary`s Sisterhood..*



UKRAINIAN ORTHODOX LEAGUE OF THE USA

DEDICATED TO OUR CHURCH  DEVOTED TO ITS YOUTH

**77th Annual UOL Convention**

**July 24 – July 28, 2024**

**Philadelphia, PA**

**"For we walk by faith, not by sight" Corinthians 5:7**

**REGISTRATION FORMS are in the vestibule of the Church**

## **The Ascension of Our Lord, God, and Savior Jesus Christ**

Protopresbyter George Dion Dragas, PhD, DD, DTh

“And while he was blessing them, he departed and started to ascend to heaven” (Lk. 24:51).

### **The Ascension as the pinnacle of the Feasts of the Lord:**

How bright and wonderful is this Feast! It is the pinnacle of all the Feasts of the Lord, because with it the sacred and saving purpose of the Divine Incarnation and Inhomination of the Word of God is completed. For what purpose did the Son and Word of God become man, and underwent the passion, the death, the resurrection...and the ascension? All these events took place so that the human nature might not remain below on the earth, but be raised to heaven, become deified and glorified according to the Creator’s original design. This, then, was the purpose for which the Son of God condescended to assume within his super-godly person (hypostasis) our human nature, which had fallen from its original condition, in order to renew it with his Crucifixion and Resurrection and to raise it to the heavenly heights with his glorious Ascension, presenting it to God the Father as the super-brilliant trophy of his victory.

### **The Ascension as the triumph of the human nature:**

At the Ascension of Christ God the Father accepted the first-fruits of our humanity, and was well pleased not only for the worthiness of Him who offered it, but also for the purity of the offering. This, then, is the perfect victory against sin. This is the triumph of the human nature. The human nature could not have descended to a lower point than that at which it arrived after the fall of Adam,

but neither could ascend to a higher point than that at which the New (or Last) Adam raised it with his Ascension!

**The Ascension as the final benefit offered by God to man:**

What mind could grasp the real dimensions of this event? The forsaken and feeble human nature, the nature which run away from God and was exiled from paradise, the low, miserable, condemned and captured nature of human beings becomes today more glorious than that of the angels, is made to sit with Christ at the bosom of the Father and is worshiped by every visible and invisible creation! What language could praise the magnitude of this celebration, or to present worthily the enormity of the beneficence of God to human beings? Today the entry into the longed for paradise, the heavenly Jerusalem, is opened to Adam's exiled descendants. Today, the restoration of the new Israel in the Promised Land is accomplished.

**The Ascension as the final victory of Christ for man:**

Today, on the Mount of Olives Heaven and earth kiss each other and angels and human beings are united. Here the chorus of the Apostles greets their sweet Teacher with joy on his departure from them, and the Orders of the Angels salute the King of the Heavens with ineffable elation and joy. Here the captivity, which the victor of death captivated with his ascension to the heights, i.e. the souls of the just who have been redeemed, have their eyes on their Redeemer with feelings of exhilaration and joy. Here also, His Mother, the most pure Virgin, greets and sends off her beloved Son who is ascending into Heaven, where God the Father welcomes his Only-begotten Son and makes him sit on his right. Here too, at the prestigious Mount of Olives, we are called to ascend with our minds and become eye-witnesses to the great and wondrous events which take place, having as our guide Luke the theologian, who alone among the Evangelists narrates with brevity but also with priestly and solemn fashion the glorious Ascension of our Lord and God and Savior Jesus Christ.

**Why did the Ascension take place 40 days after and not immediately after the Resurrection?**

The leader of life, who loosened the bonds of death by his Resurrection, met with his disciples for 40 days and confirmed his Resurrection to them by means of several proofs. He did not ascend into heaven on the day he rose again, because such an event would have raised doubts and questions. Had he done that, many of the unbelievers would be in a position to project the argument that the Resurrection was one more dream of pious aspirations which easily emerge and more easily disappear. For this reason, then, Christ remained for 40 days on the earth, and appeared to his disciples repeatedly, showing them the marks of his wounds, explaining to them the prophecies which he fulfilled in his life and sufferings as man, and even eating with them.

**Why did the Risen Christ eat broiled fish and honey?**

The Gospel for today's Feast tells us that the Risen Christ asked for and ate "a piece of broiled fish and from honey of a honeycomb" (Luke 24:42). Why is this detail mentioned? According to the church tradition this detail has a very important allegorical meaning. As regards the fish, we know that although it lives in the salty sea, it is not salty, but sweet. In the same manner Christ, who lived in the 'salty sea of sin' of this world, "he did not commit any sin, and no guile was found in his mouth" (Is. 53:9). Also, Christ remained even more voiceless than the fish when he endured his saving passion and received unheard-of torture and unmentionable insult. As regards the honey and the beeswax, we know that the honey is sweet and the beeswax is illuminative, and for this reason they are considered to be symbols of the spiritual pleasure and illumination which the Risen Christ transmits to the faithful. Also, honey and beeswax symbolize, the former, the cure of the great bitterness of sin which is symbolized by the gall that was offered to the Lord at his passion and, the



latter, the diluteness of the dense darkness of sin which was symbolized by the darkness which took place at the Lord's crucifixion.

### **Why did the Ascension take place on the Mount of Olives?**

Once Christ had confirmed his Resurrection from the dead to his disciples through his mellifluous teaching, and enlightened their minds and warmed their hearts by his presence, he led them on the 40th day after the Resurrection to the Mount of Olives which lies east of Jerusalem. The Ascension ought to take place from this Mount, because according to an ancient tradition, it is here that the Lord will return bodily and with glory on the last Day when he will judge the world. It is here that the righteous will receive the great mercy and here also that the sinners will grieve with an inconsolable lamentation. These two opposite conditions of humanity are denoted by the name of this Mount, because its peaks are called Mount of Olives and its foot Valley of Wailing. This is also what was pre-signified by the oracle of the prophet Zachariah which explicitly states:

### **Why the Apostles and the Theotokos had to be present at that time?**

The Lord led his disciples on this Mount and the Theotokos who gave birth to him as man, so that they could see with their own eyes his glorious Ascension. His Mother after the flesh had to be present at that great glorification of her Son, so that she who had been gravely wounded in her soul for his passion above all others, might commensurably rejoice by seeing her Son ascending into heaven with glory, being worshiped as God by the Angels and being seated on the throne of the Most High above all principalities and authorities. The divine Apostles had to be there also, that might become eye-witnesses of the Lord's Ascension, be informed that their Divine Teacher who is now ascending into heaven, had initially come down from there and that he will wait for them there as the true Son of God and Savior of the world.

### **How did this utterly unfamiliar and unique event of the Ascension of Christ occur?**

They had already arrived at the middle peak of the Mount. The city of Jerusalem stretched in front of them. The hole where the Cross had stood was still open. So was also the entrance to the Grave of the Savior, since the great stone that had been used to seal it was still lying on the ground. And then, the Savior turns his back to the ungrateful city of Jerusalem and his glance looks to the East, as David joyfully sings in one of his psalms: "Sing to the Lord who is going up to the heaven of the heaven towards the East" (Psalm 67:34). And as he takes leave of his Disciples he raises his immaculate hands and blesses them for the last time – those hands with which he recreated the man whom he created at the beginning, and which he stretched on the cross out of love for humanity and united those that had been severed, i.e. those which had been diversified. Just as the eyes of the disciples could not be satisfied enough in seeing the divine and mellifluent face of their Lord, suddenly he began to ascend into heaven. Their glance remained nailed, as it were, on that paradoxical and inexplicable display of the bodily Ascension of the Lord, until he was concealed by the luminous cloud.

### **How utterly unfamiliar and unique was the majesty of this Ascension!**

Elijah had also ascended into heaven, as Scripture relates; but this ascension took place by means of a fiery chariot and fiery horses, because Elijah was a mere man and needed help in order to ascend above the earth. Christ, however, was a God-man and ascended by himself, by virtue of his own omnipotence. As regards that cloud, it had to do with the Holy Spirit, just as it happened with the transfiguration of Christ. Just as his descend and becoming man were wrought "through the Holy Spirit, according to the message of Archangel Gabriel" ("The Spirit of the Lord will come upon you and the power of the Most High will overshadow you," Luke 1:35), so now he "co-ascends" with him

(the Holy Spirit) because He follows him and coexists with him, being coessential (“homoousion”) with him and being worship and glorified with him.

### **Why were those two anthropomorphic and white-dressed Angels sent?**

While the holy Apostles were gazing with astonishment at the heavenly sight, two men appeared to them dressed in white garments. These two men were angels, who had assumed a human form in order to avoid scaring the disciples. They were dressed in white so that their chastity might be manifest, as well as the enlightening and joyous message which they were sent to deliver. They were sent by Christ on his Ascension, in order to console them at the moment of their sorrow for his departure, but also to enlighten them that their Lord who is now invisible is seating at the right side of God the Father and that he will descend on the earth once again in order to judge all human beings, the living and the dead.

### **What is the message of the Angels dressed in white?**

“Men of Galilee,” they told them, “why do you stand with your gaze ailed on the sky?” This Jesus, whom you see today being taken up, will return to judge the world and his return will be the same with his Ascension.” In other words, he will come from heaven wearing the same immaculate Body, which he assumed from the bloods of the pure Virgin, and which will bear upon it the marks from the wounds which he received at his passion. Right now it is only you who see him ascending to heaven, but when he returns, all the races of the earth will see him descending from there with glory upon the clouds. His glorious condescension will become the cause of blessedness and joy for those who lived righteously. For the sinners, however, it will be the cause of sorrow and calamity.

### **What was the impact of the Ascension for the Apostles and the small flock of the first Church?**

Having heard this message, the Apostles worshiped the Savior on his Ascension and, then, joyfully returned to Jerusalem. Their joy was great, because they had definitely learned that their divine Teacher was true God who ascended into heaven, not because he abandoned the earth, but in order to unite it with heaven. Their joy was also great because they received the blessing of their Savior on his Ascension. It was with this blessing that the numerically small Church of the disciples greatly increased its numbers in a relatively short space of time and, having received the grace of the Spirit, was established as the great Church throughout the earth.

### **What was the impact of the Ascension on the orders of the Angels in heaven?**

While these things occurred on the earth because of the Ascension, the Angels mounted a great celebration in heaven. The Angels which served the Savior on the earth and now accompanied him on his ascension called out the orders above to open the heavenly gates for the King of Glory to enter in. As David sings, “Lift up your heads, O gates, and be lifted up, O ancient doors, that the King of Glory may come in” (Ps. 23:7). Since through his saving passion Christ the Savior became more glorious and highly exalted –as the Apostle Paul actually puts it, “Having humbled himself and having become obedient unto death, indeed a death by crucifixion, God exalted him highly and granted him the name which is above all” (Phil. 2:9) –for this reason the gates of heaven ask to become higher in order to welcome him more fittingly. Also, because the glory of the victor of Hades and death, which could not be contained by the small space of the earth, but filled the heavens, the Angels ask that they too be expanded on his appearance! At the same time, the heavenly hierarchies of the Angels, seeing the human body to be transferred above them, were seized by dazzle and amazement; because, just as a human being is seized by amazement of fear on seeing an angel on the earth, so the bodiless Angels, seeing a body to be raised on a cloud, seek with amazement to learn about this paradoxical display, and to be twice assured about the identity of this King of Glory. Hearing, then, that he is the Lord,

who is powerful in battles, who fought the devil and defeated him and who is now ascending into heaven, they wonder how this superbly luminous body is dressed in royal purple and ask, “Who is this that comes from Edom, in crimsoned garments from Bosor, who is glorious in his apparel?” (Is. 63:1)? In other words, who is this earthly person, who comes wearing a flesh which is like a superbly bright, royal purple dress? Because, Edom means earthly and Bosor means flesh, and the point of reference here is the glorified Body of Christ the King which appeared to be red in his Ascension into heaven due to the marks of the wounds on his immaculate side, his hands and his feet.

### **Why were the marks from the wounds retained on the Risen Body of Christ?**

How was it that the wounds on that incorruptible body were visible? This was a matter of economy, and its purpose was to manifest the ineffable and excelling love for man of the God-man. He consented not only to receive these wounds, but also to retain them after his Resurrection on his incorruptible body in a paradoxical manner and to show them on his Ascension to the world of the Angels as the symbols of his passion and as the indelible proofs of his love for us human beings. In addition, he retained the wounds of his incorruptible body, in order to persuade us that we should never forget his passion, but keep it always before us, so that our heart might overflow with gratitude and sacred feelings towards him. Nothing else, says St. John Chrysostom, can beget inside us these saving results as seeing God carrying the traces of the Cross as far as the throne of his Majesty. According to St. Augustine, the God-man preserved his wounds in heaven in order to show that he will not forget us even in the condition of his glory –which, in any case, is also affirmed by the head-prophet: “Behold on my hands I inscribed your walls, so that they remain in front of me for ever“ (Is. 49:16). In other words, he will never forsake us, because he has written our names on his hands and will intercede for us before God the Father. He may have also retained his wounds in order to teach us that only through sufferings and sorrows will be able to enter the kingdom of heaven. If the God-man was exalted through suffering crucifixion, and if he was glorified by an ignominious death, then, how can we enter into this glory without walking on the narrow path of virtue, and without enduring sorrows and temptations in fighting the good fight? This is quite impossible.

### **The Ascension as a universal joy embracing heaven and earth.**

We see, then, that in today’s Feast of the Ascension of Christ, the joy is universal because it extends to both heaven and earth. The Angels rejoice in heaven, because they welcome their King. Human beings also jubilate on the earth, because their entry into the heavenly Jerusalem is now allowed. “All nations clap your hands, shout with a loud voice of elation unto God” (Ps. 46:2). Let us rejoice today, on the day of universal joy, seeing our Lord ascending where he was not before and opening once for all the gates of the heavens so that our human nature, which he bought with his most precious blood, may enter in with him. What a great comfort this is in our hearts, seeing Him who became for us life and light, faithful friend and powerful protector, who truly loved us and shed his Blood for us, and sat at the throne of the Godhead, and gave us the assurance that he will come again sometime in the future in order to take us there too! He himself gave us with his Ascension the confirmation of this truth and the living hope that we too will ascend there and we will never again be separated from him. Our union with him will be like that of the members of a body with its head, since we are the members of his body and he is the Head of us all. If he was resurrected bodily, we too will be resurrected bodily if we so wish. If he was glorified which being in the flesh, we too will be glorified with the flesh and will walk there, where our Lord is, provided that we behave prudently.

### **The implications of the Ascension of Christ for the Christians:**

a) Christians ought to be united with Christ, loving him and keeping his commandments. Since the joy for the gifts of Christ granted to us is true, and the hope that we too will enter into that

dwelling place of light and live the blessed life is also assured, we ought to be united with him already in this life, knowing that he is the source of light and life. There is no other way for us to achieve this, except to love him with all our soul, and to keep his saving commandments. When we do this we become God's dwelling place and begin to experience the true joy of life, recognizing the benefits of his grace and realizing that our joy will be completed when we too participate in his ascension and the glory of his presence and co-reign with him for ever. And this is not all, because we will also sit on the throne of his divine Majesty, as this was explicitly revealed by the truthful mouth of our Savior, which said: "To him who wins, I will grant him to sit with me at my throne, just I won and sat with my Father at his throne" (Rev. 3:21). This is the glory that we will receive if we conquer the passions. We will rise and arrive where the Savior led today his nature, which is related to us, namely, his human bodily existence.

b) Christians ought to live on earth as citizens of heaven. Who, then, would deny, that even if we had a thousand souls and lives, and had to suffer a thousand deaths, would should accept these with absolute eagerness, in order to enjoy even one day of that ineffable glory? Which earthly benefit could constrain our hearts on this earth, which our Savior left, since our citizenship is in heaven and since the ineffable glory awaits us there? Our Lord ascended into heaven, and we here can follow him, remaining united with him through faith and virtue. Certainly, much labor is required of us if we are to ascend to that great height. We are encouraged, however, by the fact that our Lord who ascended there supplies us with strength so that we can succeed. The only thing that he expects of us is to have a willing disposition, and he admonishes us to turn a deaf ear to anything earthly, so that we can be more transportable in our journey above. This means that we are called to leave earthly things on the earth, and to take off our coats of skin, which we put on account of our sin. As the Prophet Elijah threw off his wooskin when the time came for him to ascend to heaven, so should we shake off every agonizing, material endeavor and be detached from a servile attachment to the earth, so that we can easily ascend to the heavenly places. How can we worthily prepare ourselves to rise to the clouds and to go out to meet with our Lord, when he comes with all his royal glory? On that great and celebrated Day, all human beings will be resurrected. Not all of them will be snatched by clouds to go out to meet the Lord in the air. This will happen only to those who kept the commandments of Christ and loved him with all their heart (I Thess. 4:16-17); because only these Christians will be deemed worthy to enjoy such a glory, and only to them will be granted to enjoy that eternal and ineffable blessedness.

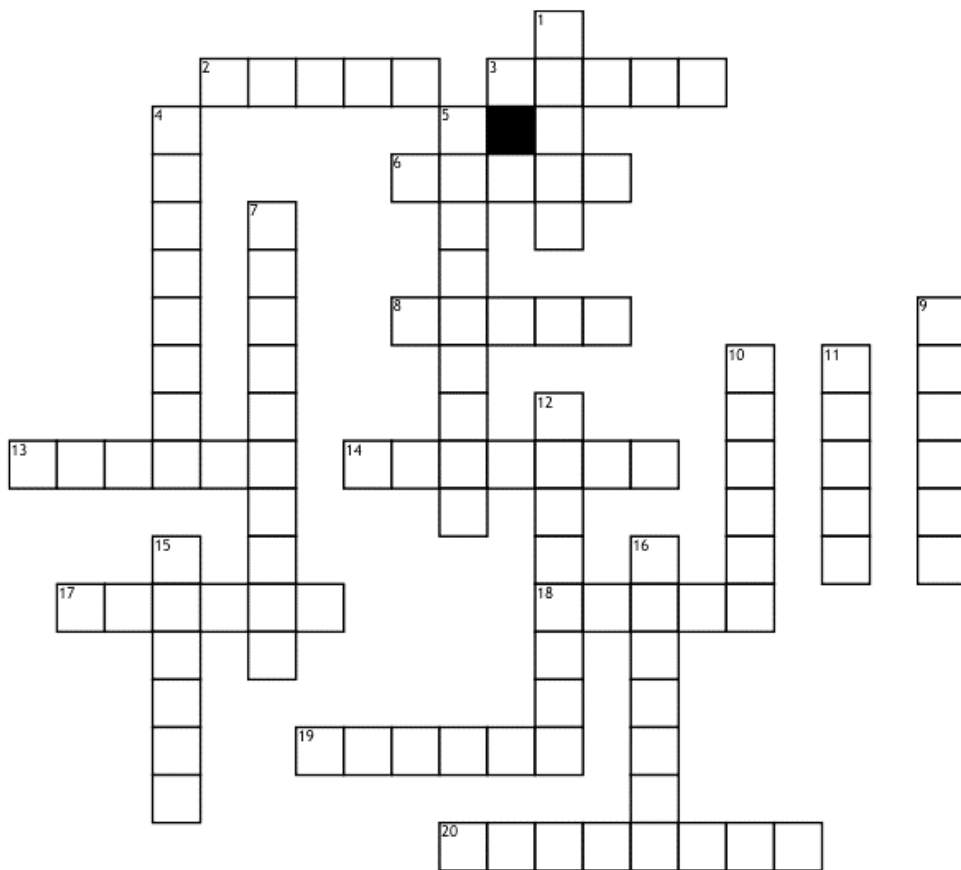
#### **The true celebration of the Feast of the Ascension of Christ.**

Today's happy Feast of the Ascension of our Lord invites us all who wish to celebrate it truly to do what the holy Apostles did after the Ascension. They worshiped their Teacher on his ascension and returned to Jerusalem (Luke 24:52), i.e. to the house of peace (because this is the meaning of the name Jerusalem). Likewise, we too should return to our homes and make peace with all. The Apostles were in the temple glorifying God and waiting for the descent of the Holy Spirit (verse 53). We should thank our Savior because he gave us the opportunity to celebrate his Ascension and to beseech him from the depths of our heart to make us worthy to celebrate the holy Pentecost as well and be renewed with the grace of the Holy Spirit. It is with this grace that we shall be able to continue the struggle for virtue and to do works which are worthy of our heavenly calling and finally to enter into the great joy of the coming of our Lord.

<https://www.holycrossoca.org/newslet/1205.html>

*"Peace to you"* Luke 24:36

# Between Resurrection and Ascension



## Across

2. Thomas wanted to put his fingers on what for proof that Jesus has risen?  
 3. In Luke 24.37 - the disciples were terrified thinking they had seen what?  
 6. 'Do You love me?' - Jesus question to which disciple?  
 8. The Lord himself stood among them and said to them, '\_\_\_\_\_ be with you!'  
 13. Jesus promised his disciples the gift of what?  
 14. What were seven disciples doing when Jesus appeared at Lake Tiberias?  
 17. Matthew tells us that the Chief Priests gave a large sum of money to the guards at the tomb to report what about Jesus' body?

18. What hid Jesus from sight at his Ascension

19. Who was missing when the Risen Jesus first appeared to the disciples?

20. Jesus said, 'The writings of the \_\_\_\_\_ and the Psalms has come true.'

## Down

1. Jesus told Peter, 'Take care of my \_\_\_\_\_.'

4. Mary Magdelien was first to meet the Risen Jesus - who did she think he was?

5. Happening 50 days after Jesus' Resurrection.

7. 'He opened their minds to understand the \_\_\_\_\_.'

9. During the 40 days he \_\_\_\_\_ the disciples.

10. Jesus repeated told his disciples not to be \_\_\_\_\_

11. At Emmaus Cleopas and partner recognised the Risen Jesus when he broke what?

12. In Mark 16.17 Jesus tell his disciples that whoever believes will have power to perform what?

15. On the day of Resurrection the disciples were gathered behind \_\_\_\_\_ doors.

16. Then Jesus said to them, 'How \_\_\_\_\_ you are, how slow to believe.'

# Happy Father's Day

The righteous  
man walks in  
his integrity;  
**His children  
are blessed  
after him.**

PROVERBS 20:7

**Dear Fathers,** on this special day, we honor and celebrate you. Your strength, wisdom, and unwavering faith serve as a guiding light for your families and communities. As fathers, you reflect God's love and compassion, nurturing and leading with grace and humility. May the Lord bless you abundantly, granting you peace, joy, and the continued strength to fulfill your noble role. Thank you for your dedication and for being an example of Christ's love in the world. Happy Father's Day!



**In Loving Memory of Fathers Who Have Passed Away,** on this Father's Day, we remember and honor the fathers who are no longer with us. Their love, wisdom, and faith continue to inspire and guide us, even though they are no longer physically present. We give thanks to God for the time we shared with them and for the everlasting impact they had on our lives. Though they are gone, their spirit lives on in our hearts and memories. May they rest in eternal peace in the presence of our Heavenly Father, and may we find comfort in knowing that one day we will be reunited with them in God's Kingdom.



The Importance of the **Fifth Commandment** "**Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long upon the land which the Lord your God is giving you.**" (Exodus 20:12):

1. **\*Family as the Domestic Church\***: In Orthodox Christianity, the family is often referred to as the "domestic church." Honoring parents is seen as a fundamental aspect of living a life in Christ within the family unit. It is through the family that children first learn about God, prayer, and Christian virtues.

2. **\*Respect for Authority and Tradition\***: The Orthodox faith places a high value on tradition and the continuity of the faith passed down through generations. By honoring their parents, children show respect for the authority and wisdom of those who came before them, preserving the faith and traditions of the Church.

3. **\*Spiritual Formation\***: Parents are the primary educators of their children in matters of faith and morality. Honoring them includes listening to their guidance, following their example, and adhering to the spiritual practices they teach. This forms the foundation of a person's spiritual life and relationship with God.

4. **\*Icon of the Holy Trinity\***: The family is seen as a reflection of the Holy Trinity. Just as the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit exist in a perfect relationship of love and unity, so too should the relationships within a family be marked by mutual love, respect, and honor. Honoring parents is a way of participating in this divine harmony.

5. **\*Blessing and Longevity\***: The promise associated with the commandment, "that your days may be long in the land which the Lord your God is giving you," is understood as a divine blessing. It emphasizes that a life lived in respect and honor of parents aligns with God's will and brings about His blessings, both spiritual and material.

6. **\*Healing and Reconciliation\***: In cases where relationships with parents are strained or broken, the commandment calls for efforts towards healing and reconciliation. The Orthodox faith emphasizes forgiveness, repentance, and the restoration of relationships, mirroring God's infinite mercy and love.

7. **\*Community and Social Order\***: Honoring parents contributes to a well-ordered and harmonious society. It fosters a culture of respect and care within the broader community, reflecting the Orthodox understanding of humanity as a single family under God.

8. **\*Role of Elders\***: In Orthodoxy, honoring parents extends to honoring elders and all those in positions of spiritual authority, such as priests and bishops. It recognizes the wisdom and guidance provided by those who have dedicated their lives to God's service.

Practical Application:

- **\*Prayer and Remembrance\***: Regular prayer for one's parents, both living and deceased, is a practice encouraged in Orthodox families.

- **\*Obedience and Respect\***: Showing obedience and respect in daily interactions with parents as a reflection of one's obedience to God.

- **\*Care and Support\***: Providing care and support to aging parents as a tangible expression of honor and gratitude.

- **\*Transmission of Faith\***: Parents are encouraged to actively transmit the faith to their children through teaching, example, and participation in the sacraments and life of the Church.

The Fifth Commandment holds profound importance in Orthodox Christianity as it encapsulates the principles of love, respect, and continuity within the family and the Church. It calls for honoring parents as a reflection of one's devotion to God and commitment to living out the Christian faith.

IN MEMORY OF

**RUSSELL SEMCHEE**

(+ JUNE 23, 2012)

**THERESA SEMCHEE**

(+ MAY 9, 2014)

**ON THE ANNIVERSARY  
OF THEIR REPOSE**



**MEMORY ETERNAL**

**“BLESSED ARE THOSE WHOM YOU HAVE  
CHOSEN AND RECEIVED, O LORD”**

LOVINGLY REMEMBERED BY:

THEIR CHILDREN

RICH, KAREN, KEVIN, RUSS JR, MIKE

GRANDCHILDREN & FAMILY

