

✠ St. Gregory's Journal ✠

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St. Gregory the Great Orthodox Church
A Western Rite Congregation of the Antiochian Archdiocese
13407 Roxbury Rd., Silver Spring, MD - stgregoryoc.org

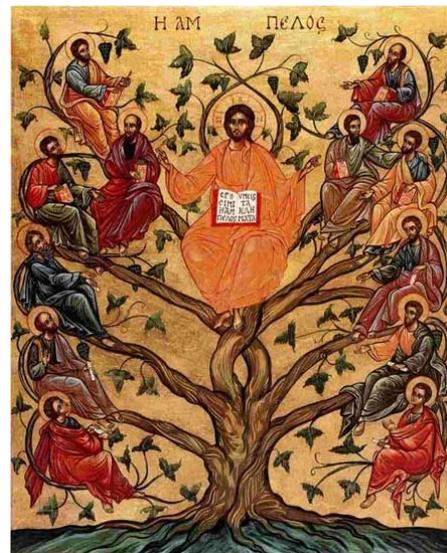
*An excerpt
from a
homily by
St. Peter
Chrysologus
d. 450*

Christ promises that He will be in the midst of two or three who are gathered, and that He will give everything they request of Him. [Matt. 18:20, 21:22] If this is so, where are those who presume that the congregation of the Church can be disregarded, and assert that private prayers should be preferred to those of an honorable assembly?

If He denies nothing to so small a group will He refuse anything to those who ask for it in the assemblies and congregation of the Church? This is what the Prophet believed, and what he exults over having obtained when he states: *I will praise thee, O Lord, with my whole heart, in the council of the just, and in the congregation.* [Ps. 111:1] The man who hears that everything he will ask for in the council of the saints will be granted praises with his whole heart.

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Some, however, endeavor to excuse under an appearance of faith the idleness which prompts their contempt for assemblies. They omit participation in the fervor of the assembled congregation, and pretend that they have devoted to prayer the time they have expended upon their household cares. While they give themselves up to their own desires, they condemn and despise divine arrangements. These are men of the sort who

tear apart the Mystical Body of Christ and scatter its members. They do not suffer the form of its Christlike appearance to develop to its full beauty.

It is true that individual members have, each one, their own function to perform. But they will fulfill these respective functions best if they are joined together and compacted and attain to the full beauty of the fully developed Body. This, therefore, is the difference between the glorious richness of a congregation and the presumptuous vanity of separation which springs either from ignorance or negligence: that from the health and praiseworthiness of the entire body a beautiful unity arises, while from the separation of its members there springs base, deadly, and hideous ruin.

Man, consider either the separation of the joints in your own body or the joining together of the separate members. Has it taught you anything else than this, that you should live both as one man compounded of many parts and as one man in many members? The eye is precious for the healthy functioning of the members - but only if it remains in the body. Otherwise, when it fails the body it also fails itself. All the other members are indebted

to the eye for the service of light which it furnishes. But the eye itself perceives, too, that it owes to the body the fact that it is a light. When united with the members it provides a service for them; plucked out of the body, it itself does not see.

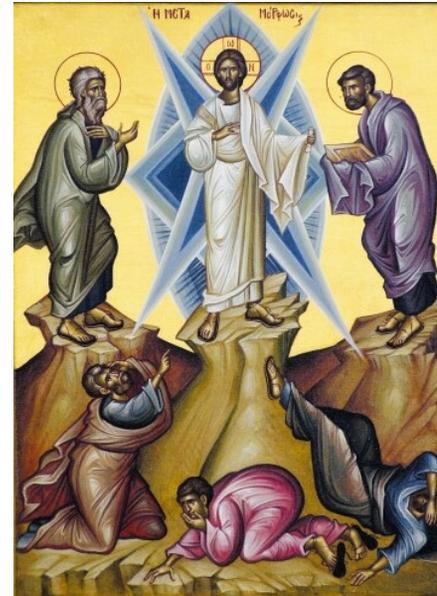
Whoever he is who thinks that he is something, let him be instructed by such an example and remain in the Church, that he may be something. Otherwise, when he fails the Church, he soon terminates his own importance... The Law was given not for one, but for all. So, too, Christ came not for one or to one, but to all and for all. He desired to bring all things together into a unity which alone is good and pleasant. The Prophet, aware of the future, assures us: *Behold how good and pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity.* [Ps. 133:1] For not singularity, but unity, is acceptable to God. The Holy Spirit descended upon the Apostles with all His welling fountain when they were assembled together. This occurred after the Apostles had been instructed by the Lord's own commandment to wait in a group for the Spirit's coming.

Brethren, suppose that man is evil to himself, and because of his shortcomings foolishly self-sufficient. Suppose that thus he seeks life outside the church. He loses divine gifts, he spoils the outpouring of grace, he cheats himself of the benefits of charity. The blessing of that unity will not await him. The Prophet testifies that that life is only in the Church: *Behold how good and pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity...For there the Lord hath commanded blessing, and life forevermore.*

Parish News

Summer is a time, not only for vacations, but also for church conferences and pilgrimages. Our Parish Life Conference (for the dioceses of Charleston and the Mid-Atlantic and Washington and New York) has just ended and Fr. Raphael and Kh. Catherine

have returned from their visit to the Phillippines. Nathan and Ben Caldwell will spend a week at Antiochian Village camp this month, and the bi-annual Western Rite Conference will be held in Ft. Worth, Texas (hosted by St. Peter's parish) August 7-10. Fr. Nicholas will attend the Clergy Symposium, also held at the Village, and will present a workshop on providing pastoral care to those with mental health issues. Fr. Nicholas and Kh. Becky will be on pilgrimage to the sites associated with early saints of the

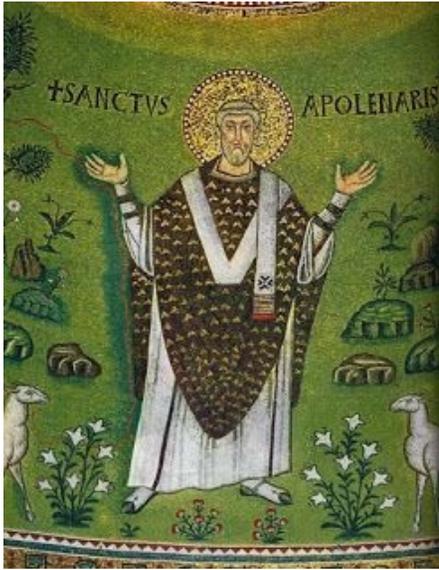


Church in Scotland and England (particularly on the isles of Iona and Lindisfarne) the last week of August. Before anyone leaves for vacation, please speak with Fr. Nicholas about attending the nearest Orthodox church.

There are two major holy days in August - the Feast of the Transfiguration of Our Lord and the Assumption (Dormition) of the Blessed Virgin Mary. We will celebrate these feasts with Vespers at 7PM, Liturgy at 7:30, and a potluck supper following on Monday, August 6 and on Tuesday, August 14.

St. Apollinaris, Bishop & Martyr Feast Day ~ July 23

In the first century of Christianity, the good news of Jesus Christ was taken to many parts of the civilized world, especially to the boundaries of the great Roman Empire which extended from Syria



to Britannia. First the Apostles, then their disciples, and then other missionaries followed our Lord's command to *go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature*. [Mark 16:15]

For some of those who helped to spread the Gospel we have clear, written accounts, such as that in the letters of St. Paul and the legal transcriptions of the trials of some martyrs (such as St. Cyprian of Carthage). But for many others,

we have only the stories that were passed on orally about a holy person and his deeds and the evidence of how that holy person was revered and venerated in his time and in later years.

The latter is how we know of St. Apollinaris, who was Bishop of the city of Ravenna in the first century. Stories of his deeds were written down years later and many of these may be in the realm of legend, but there is no doubt that the saint existed and that he brought Christianity to many who were receptive to his message.

Native of Antioch, Apollinaris is said to have been a disciple of the Apostle Peter. After St. Peter had served in that city as Bishop and then went to Rome to serve there (and ultimately to be martyred there), Apollinaris went with him. St. Peter ordained him and consecrated him to be the bishop of the city of Ravenna, some 175 miles north of Rome. Ravenna had become an important city when Augustus, the first Roman Emperor, made it a major military station for the Roman navy, so it was a good place for expanding the faith beyond Rome.

Bishop Apollinaris arrived in the city with a clear mission but without knowing anyone. He accepted the hospitality of a Roman soldier, Irenaeus, who must have shown some curiosity about this new religion. Irenaeus' curiosity was greatly rewarded when the bishop, through the power of the Holy Spirit and with many prayers, was able to heal Irenaeus' blind son. This family became the first in Ravenna to accept Christ.

Bishop Apollinaris began to preach to others, teaching them about the love, mercy and forgiveness of God and many were converted from the worship of the state gods. Other miracles of healing took place and one of those healed - Teckla, the wife of a tribune - made her home available for what would become the first house church in the city.

As word spread of this holy man, the miraculous things he was doing, and the things he was teaching, many were converted but there were those of the city who did not approve. Worshiping the traditional gods of the Roman people was both a religious matter and a matter of patriotism. Sacrifices to these gods (such as Jupiter, Mars, Venus, Diana, etc.) were made for aid in personal matters (such as for conceiving a child) and offering incense to the emperors, who were considered to be divine, ensured the stability of the Empire. This new religion, in the minds of many, presented a threat to this stability and so Christians were held in suspicion by many and thoroughly rejected by others.

In this first century, persecution of Christians was not widespread. Although the fact that Emperor Nero blamed the great fire of Rome on the Christians brought about the first government-sponsored persecution, it was not until rulers such as Decius and Diocletian in the 3rd century that there was active persecution of the followers of Christ. In St. Apollinaris' time, the pagan priests, local government officials, and even ordinary citizens could attack Christians if they were offended by Christian beliefs and actions.

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Address Correction Requested

Bishop Apollinaris suffered at the hands of the officials and citizens of Ravenna four times and was banished from the city. Each time, he was helped to recover from his tortures and, through his persuasive preaching, converted many to Christ. And each time (sometimes after staying away for a period of time), he returned to his flock in Ravenna to resume his episcopal duties. When complaints about the bishop were sent to the Emperor Vespasian, he responded that the Roman gods were powerful enough to defend themselves against this Christian “magician”.

After the final time of being beaten by his persecutors, St. Apollinaris lived for seven days before falling asleep in the Lord on July 23, sometime before the end of the first century. His body was first buried at Classis, a suburb about four miles from the city; his relics were moved in the church built over that site in 549, and pilgrimages began by Christians seeking his intercessions. All early martyrologies contain his name and as veneration continued through the centuries churches were also built in his honor in Germany, France, and Bohemia. The Basilica of Sant’ Apollinare in Classe contains some of the most beautiful mosaics in Christendom.

St. Apollinaris was nothing if not persistent. He took seriously his responsibility to preach the Gospel as a bishop and a missionary and, despite numerous torments and banishments, he fulfilled this responsibility without fail. May we follow his example. *Holy Apollinaris, pray for us.*

Resources: Lives of the Fathers, Martyrs and Other Saints by Rev. Alban Butler; Prologue From Ochrid by St. Nikolai;; online articles from the Orthodox Church in America and Wikipedia.



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<h1>July 2018</h1>						<i>Sunday Services: Matins at 9AM, Sung Mass at 9:30AM</i>
1 Fifth Sunday after Pentecost; of the Octave of Ss. Peter & Paul <i>G</i>	2 Visitation of the BVM; St. John Maximovitch, BC, 1966; of the Octave of Ss. Peter & Paul	3 of the Octave of Ss. Peter & Paul	4 of the Octave of Ss. Peter & Paul <i>(Independence Day)</i>	5 of the Octave of Ss. Peter & Paul	6 Octave Day of Ss. Peter & Paul	7 Ss. Cyril & Methodius (B), CC, 9th c. <i>Vespers at 6pm</i>
8 Sixth Sunday after Pentecost; St. Kilian of Wurzburg, BM, 689 <i>G</i>	9	10 VII Holy Brothers, Mm, c. 165; St. Joseph of Damascus, 1860	11 Solemnity of St. Benedict, Ab, c. 540; St. Pius I, PM, c. 154	12 Ss. Nabor & Felix, Mm, 303	13 St. Anacletus, PM, 1st c.	14 <i>Vespers at 6pm</i>
15 Seventh Sunday after Pentecost; St. Vladimir of Kiev, KC, 1015; St. Henry, C, 1024 <i>G</i>	16 Our Lady of Einsiedeln	17 St. Alexis, C, 5th c.	18 St. Sergius, Ab, 1392; Ss. Symphorosa & her Seven Sons, Mm, c. 138	19 St. Seraphim of Sarov, PrC, 1833	20 St. Elias the Prophet, 9th c. BC; St. Margaret of Antioch, VM, 304	21 St. Praxedes of Rome, V, 2nd c. <i>Vespers at 6pm</i>
22 Eighth Sunday after Pentecost; St. Mary Magdalene, Penitent, 1st c. <i>G</i>	23 St. John Cassian, Ab, 433; St. Appollinaris, BM, 1st c.	24 Vigil of St. James; St. Christina, VM; Ss. Romanus & David, Mm, 1015	25 St. James the Greater, Apostle, 44; St. Christopher, C, 251	26 St. Anne, Mother of the BVM, 1st c.; St. Jacob Netsvetov, C, 1864	27 St. Panteleimon, c. 305	28 Ss. Nazarius, Celsus Mm, Ss. Victor, PM & Innocent PC, 5th c. <i>Vespers at 6pm</i>
29 Ninth Sunday after Pentecost; St. Martha of Bethany, V, 1st c. <i>G</i>	30 Ss. Abdon & Sennen, Mm, c. 303	31 St. Germanus of Auxerre, BC, 448				

Confessions may be made during the Psalms at Matins, following Vespers, and by appointment.

Coffee Hour follows Sunday Liturgy. Christian Education for all is offered during Coffee Hour.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<h1>August 2018</h1>						<i>Sunday Services: Matins at 9AM, Sung Mass at 9:30AM</i>
			1 St. Peter's Chains; Holy Maccabees, Mm, c. 160 BC; St. Ethelwold, BC, 984	2 St. Stephen I, PM, 257	3 Finding of St. Ste- phen the Proto- martyr, 415; St. Nicodemus, M, 1 st . c.	4 <i>Vespers at 6pm</i>
5 Tenth Sunday after Pentecost; Our Lady of the Snows (435); St. Oswald, KM, 642 <i>G</i>	6 Transfiguration of Our Lord; Ss. Sixtus II PM, Felicissimus, 285 <i>Mass at 7:30pm W</i>	7 Holy Name Day; St. Donatus of Arezzo, BM, 362	8 Ss. Cyriacus, Largus & Smaragdus, Mm, 304	9 St. Romanus, M, 258	10 St. Laurence, Deacon M, 258	11 Ss. Tiburtius & Susanna, Mm, 3 rd c.; St. Philomena, VM, c. 304 <i>Vespers at 6pm</i>
12 Eleventh Sunday after Pentecost <i>G</i>	13 St. Maximus the Confessor, CD, 662; Ss. Hippolytus & comp., Mm, 235	14 Vigil of the Assumption; St. Eusebius, PrC, c. 300 <i>Mass at 7:30pm W</i>	15 Assumption of the BVM	16 St. Joachim, Father of the BVM, C, 1 st c; of the Oct. Of the Assumption	17 of the Octave of the Assumption	18 of the Octave of the Assumption; St. Helena, 330; St. Agapitus, M, 272 <i>Vespers at 6pm</i>
19 Twelfth Sunday after Pentecost; of the Oct. of the Assumption <i>G</i>	20 of the Oct. of the Assumption	21 of the Oct. of the Assumption	22 Octave Day Assumption; Ss. Timothy, M, Hippolytus, BM & Symphorian, M, 3 rd c.	23 Vigil of St. Bartholomew	24 St. Bartholo- mew, Apostle, 1st c.	25 St. Hilda, V, 680 <i>Vespers at 6pm</i>
26 Thirteenth Sunday after Pentecost; St. Zephyrinus, PM, 219 <i>G</i>	27 St. Caesarius of Arles, BC, 542	28 St. Augustine of Hippo, BCD, 430; St. Moses the Black, C, 405	29 Beheading of St. John the Baptist; St. Sabina, M, c. 125	30 Ss. Felix & Adauctus, Mm, 304; St. Fiacre the Hermit, C, 670	31 St. Aidan of Lindisfarne, BC, 651	

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