




Parish Information Bulletin

Program for 1—7 June 2025

SUNDAY 1 JUNE	HOLY FATHERS OF THE FIRST ECUMENICAL COUNCIL, John 17: 1-13 <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 7.30am Orthros and Divine Liturgy
2025 SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASSES FOR ALL AGES (A free voluntary program organised by the Church) Lessons take place in the building behind the church and begin at 10.30am until Church dismissal. We have classes for ages ranging from 5yrs to teenage years. Lessons are taught in a relaxed, friendly environment. Please bring your children along to learn of their rich Orthodox faith and come close to God and His Love.	
MONDAY 2 JUNE	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 9.00am Service of Holy Unction• 10.00am Meeting of Elderly Citizens in Church Hall
WEDNESDAY 4 JUNE	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 5.00pm Paraklesis to the Theotokos
THURSDAY 5 JUNE	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 8.00—9.00pm <div>TEENAGE YOUTH GROUP ALL TEENAGERS WELCOME Join the group and learn about your faith, make friends, enjoy refreshments, in a friendly, relaxing environment. * In downstairs classroom behind the Church building</div>
SATURDAY 7 JUNE <i>Saturday of Souls</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 7.30am Orthros and Divine Liturgy
SUNDAY 8 JUNE	GOSPEL READING: John 7: 37-52, 8:12 EPISTLE READING: Acts 2: 1-11

Telephone Contact Numbers

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Fr Athanasios and
Fr Ephraim are available
at the Church every
Monday to Friday
between 4.00 and 6.00pm
for Holy Confession and
any spiritual need.

Pentecost Kneeling Prayers

"The Lord Jesus Christ sowed a most precious seed in the field of this world," writes St Nikolai Velimirovich, "but the power of the Holy Spirit was needed to come upon it, to give it warmth and light, and make it grow."

At Pentecost, Orthodox Christians celebrate the descent of the Holy Spirit on the disciples and on the whole of the earth. Towards the conclusion of the Pentecost Divine Liturgy, it is the recent practice that the prayers of the Vespers service for the commemoration of the Holy Spirit on the next day are read. During these prayers, the clergy and the laity kneel for the first time since Pascha fifty days prior.

There are seven prayers which are read during the three times the church kneels. The first two prayers, addressing God the Father, are read together. These two prayers recall all that the Father has done for us through Creation, the Ministry of Christ and the sending down of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. In these prayers we seek forgiveness, freedom from oppression and that our prayers may be heard.

The next two prayers are read together with the church kneeling. These implore Christ "as the reflection of the Father" who sent down the grace of the Holy Spirit to the Apostles to also grant us the Holy Spirit. This is asked for our support in the spiritual life and protection from the things of the world.

Finally, the last three prayers are read. These prayers are longer, and focus on life and death in Christ. We remember Christ's harrowing of Hades and defeat of death, the Judgement which is to come, as well as those who have departed. In concluding these prayers, we are brought back to the present, seeking that our prayers may be answered and that we have a peaceful night.

While the Holy Spirit is not directly addressed in these prayers, it is "present everywhere and filling all things". What is sought from the Father and the Son is now accomplished after Pentecost through the Grace of the Holy Spirit.

Source: *Lychnos* <https://lychnos.org/pentecost-kneeling-prayers>

Prayer for the Dead

The deceased are remembered at a special service called "Saturday of the Souls" held four times a year: the two Saturdays prior to Great Lent, the first Saturday of Great Lent, and the Saturday before Pentecost. Orthodox believe that it is the duty of the living to remember and pray for the deceased. A general prayer is said for specific individuals and all unknown souls who have no one to pray for them. Parishioners bring small dishes of kollyva to the church and submit a list of first names of the deceased loved ones to the priest

HOLY FATHERS OF THE FIRST ECUMENICAL COUNCIL, John 17: 1-13

by V. Rev. Archimandrite Panteleimon P. Lampadarios
Patriarchal Vicar of Alexandria

Health is considered to be one of God's most important gifts to man. Man's body, according to the teachings of the Orthodox Church, is the temple of God. It is the living vessel of the Divinity from which the radiance of the Divine Glory shines. St. Paul teaches us saying, "Your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which you have of God, and you are not your own" (1 Corinth. 6:19). Whatever we have, we have it from God. Nothing belongs to man, even his own body.

Through Christ's Sacrifice on the Cross, man has been freed from the chains of sin, which caused the deterioration of man's bodily and spiritual health and in addition, brought death upon the human race.

"For you are bought with a price" (1 Corinth. 6:20). Christ bought us from the course of the Law with His own Precious Blood. Because our body and soul belong to Christ, it is our duty to live according to His Will; and furthermore, to take care of our health. Thus St. Paul concludes saying, "Glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's" (1 Corinth. 6:20).

In the same and equal manner we must take care of our spiritual health. The soul is affected by our personal sins, and by heresy, which is the worst type of spiritual illness.

Every sin which man commits can be cured by repentance and the Forgiving Grace of God, which is granted through the Holy Sacrament of Holy Confession. Heresy, on the other hand, is the complete alienation of man from God. Heresy is the fruit of man's pride. Heresy builds up the impenetrable wall of impenitence, which prevents man to return to salvation. And although God forgives all sins committed by man, the sin of heresy is unforgivable and brings eternal punishment and condemnation upon those who insist in their heresy.

Our Lord Jesus Christ has assured us saying, "I say unto you, All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men. And whosoever speaks a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but whosoever speaks against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come" (Matt. 12:31-32). See the Lord's philanthropy! All sins and blasphemies He forgives, because they are the result of man's weakness. But the sin against the Holy Spirit, He does not forgive; neither in this world, nor in the world to come.

Heresy twists the true teachings and does not respect the Word of God, Holy Scripture, Holy Apostolic Traditions, or the teachings of the theophoric and God-inspired Holy Fathers. It strives, under the influence of pride and man's logic, to give logical answers and interpretations to the Divine Revelation, ignoring the fact that Faith does not belong to the level of "logic", but it enters into the sphere of "above logic".

Faith is something, which is not understood by simple logic; it is not the result of knowledge, nor the accomplishment of philosophy. Faith is accepted with the hope in the divine promises. St. Paul teaches us saying, "Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen" (Heb. 11:1).

Throughout Holy Scriptures we find the teachings which urge us to preserve the true faith. In the Book of Acts we read, "And as they (Paul and Timothy) went through the cities, they delivered them the decrees to keep, that were ordained of the apostles and the elders which were at Jerusalem" (Acts 16:4). Also very important, are the last instructions of St. Paul given to the Bishops and Presbyters of the Church of Asia Minor: "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over which the Holy Ghost has made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he has purchased with his own blood. For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them" (Acts 20:28-30). Even our Lord and Saviour Himself warns us about the coming of pseudo-christs and pseudo-prophets. "For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect" (Matth. 24:24).

False christs, false prophets and false apostles are the heretics, who by their own will and in their own knowledge twist the truths of the Holy Gospel. They present one part of the truth, as been the whole truth.

The Holy Fathers of the Orthodox Church, participating in the Ecumenical or local Councils, had full conscience of the responsibility that they must preserve the Truth of Divine Revelation, just as it was revealed by God and had been passed down by the Apostles and eye witnesses of His life on earth. At the same time they had to be aware for themselves and for the whole flock from any false teachings coming from heretics. They believed that they had the responsibility, not only before God, but also before their flock, and they struggled to build up and to strengthen the faithful in the true faith of Christ.

The Holy Fathers with their personal example, their teachings, their kindness, their warm zeal and self-denial gave courage to the faithful during times of persecution and tribulation. With their virtuous life and struggle for Orthodoxy, they became the athletes of Christ in the stadium of the Church.

We, the Orthodox Christians, today, honour and give gratitude to all those who struggled for Orthodoxy. Let us pray to our loving God to give us strength and faith, so that we also be able to defend the Apostolic Faith, imitating those holy men, who sacrificed even their own lives for the Truth, and became Shepherds and Teachers of the Church.