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**BULLETIN OF MAY 20, 2007**

**SUNDAY/MAY 20th**  
**7th Sunday of Pascha: The Fathers of the**  
**First Ecumenical Council**

9:10a.m. 3<sup>rd</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> Hours  
9:30a.m. Divine Liturgy; Coffee Hour  
7:00p.m. Vespers

**MONDAY/MAY 21st**  
**Ss. Constantine & Helen, Equal-to-the-**  
**Apostles**

9:10 Hours; 9:30a.m. Divine Liturgy

**THURSDAY/MAY 24th**  
7:00-8:30p.m. Adult Study Class

**FRIDAY/MAY 25th**  
**Leave-Taking of the Ascension**  
**3<sup>rd</sup> Finding of the Head of St. John the**  
**Baptist**

9:30a.m. Akathist to St. John the Baptist

**SATURDAY/MAY 26th**  
**Memorial Saturday**  
9:30a.m. General Memorial Service; Confessions  
5:30p.m. Vigil; Confessions

**SUNDAY/MAY 27th**  
**PENTECOST: THE DESCENT OF THE**  
**HOLY SPIRIT**  
**(50th<sup>h</sup> Day of Pascha & one of "the 12**  
**Great Feasts of the Year")**  
9:10a.m. 3<sup>rd</sup>& 6<sup>th</sup> Hours; 9:30a.m. Divine Liturgy  
followed by Vespers with the Kneeling Prayers;  
Coffee Hour  
4:00p.m. Memorial Service at the Cemetery

**MONDAY/MAY 28th**  
**Day of the Holy Spirit**  
9:10a.m. 3<sup>rd</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup> Hours; 9:30a.m. Divine Liturgy

**Fasting Days**  
Wednesday, May 23<sup>rd</sup> - Wine & oil permitted  
Friday, May 25<sup>th</sup> - Fish, wine & oil permitted



**The Sunday of the Holy Fathers of the**  
**First Ecumenical Council**

On the 7<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Pascha, one week before the Divine Pentecost, we celebrate the Church Fathers of the First Ecumenical (Universal) Council. This was held in the city of Nicea in Asia Minor, presently Turkey in the year 325.

Three-hundred and eighteen bishops gathered together and through them God has given us the Creed of our Faith, called the Nicene Creed. This Creed expresses our basic beliefs about God and His Church.

The question may be asked – what does the witness of the Nicene Fathers have to do with the Pascha season?

The synaxarion of the feast explains: Our Lord Jesus Christ, having put on our human flesh, accomplished the work of salvation and ascended to the throne of the Father. Therefore the Council of the Fathers at Nicea confessed and proclaimed Christ as having the same essence and honor as the Father. The Saints appointed this feast just after the Feast of the Ascension in order to bear witness to the fact that the Son of God truly became man and, being perfect man and perfect God, ascended into heaven and “sat at the right hand of the Majesty on high” (Hebrews 1:3).

### **The Paschal Season of the 50 Days**

- There is no kneeling or making of prostrations either in our homes or at church services until the divine Pentecost (May 27<sup>th</sup>).
- Wednesday and Fridays remain fasting days, but wine and oil are permitted.
- The prayer "O Heavenly King..." is omitted until Pentecost.

### **A Memorial Service at the Cemetery**

Will be held for all the departed on May 27<sup>th</sup>, Pentecost Sunday at 4:00p.m. Please pass the word along.

### **Annual Cemetery Care Envelope**

Every Spring a free will collection is made for the maintenance and beautification of our parish cemetery. Cemetery Care Envelopes may be found on the vestibule stand.

### **May God Give You Wisdom!**

#### **Counsels of Fr. John Krestiankin (+2006)**

- If you continuously read the Holy Scriptures, then your heart and mind will find peace, and you will see everything clearly in life.
- Live every day with God, and He will guide us through life's storms to rest with a peaceful heart. Everything through Him, everything from Him and everything to Him.
- People are allowed to be overcome by the confusion of life so that they might understand that we cannot live without God. Now many have crossed the threshold into the Church, but only outwardly, while inwardly they still place their hope in themselves and in other people. Meanwhile the Lord is waiting for us to cleave to Him like children, with our hearts. Only then will everything change in our lives.
- The Old Russian saying is not without wisdom: measure 7 times and cut once.
- Before taking your medicines, make the sign of the cross over them, just as you would with your foods.

### **The Parish Synodicon**

May 21, 1985 Julia Grigorieff  
May 22, 1939 Ephraim Demianov  
May 22, 1951 Joseph Fenuck  
May 23, 1925 John Korolovich  
May 23, 1954 Wasyl Mlinetz  
May 23, 1962 Thomas Cimpko  
May 24, 1941 Semeon Kozak  
May 27, 1977 Julian Sudillo  
May 27, 1988 Tatiana Shvidrik



### **12th Annual Church Run – Sat. June 2<sup>nd</sup>**

Last year our parish joined other local parishes in this Run. More information will be posted or speak with Daniel Torrisi.

### **Series of Adult Education Classes**

The topic will be a study of The Delights and Riches of the Divine Pentecost. We will meet in the Conference Room. Time 7:00 to 8:30p.m. All are invited!

Thurs., May 24: Part I: Sinai & The Upper Room  
Revelation of the Trinity

Thurs., May 31: Part II: The Holy Spirit as Person  
The Gifts of the Holy Spirit

Thurs., June 7: Part III: The Apostles' Baptism  
The Church's Birthday

### **Parish Picnic – Sunday, Aug. 19<sup>th</sup>**

Reserve the date for a parish picnic at the Village Recreation and Swim Club in East Brunswick. A great day of fun and fellowship is being planned!

### **Offerings for the Week of May 20<sup>th</sup>**

Olive Oil – in memory of Emilia; in memory of Michael; for the health of Narcis (birthday); in memory of Joan; for the health of June Lopac (birthday).

Wine – for the health of Mary; for a safe journey.

Flowers – for the health of Kachek family.

Litya Breads – for the health of Mary and Zena.

### **Fast Free Week**

Pentecost Week, no fasting on Wed., May 30<sup>th</sup> or Fri., June 1<sup>st</sup>.

### **Ss. Peter & Paul Lent**

Begins June 4<sup>th</sup> thru June 29<sup>th</sup>. Be mindful of this as you plan your June calendar of events.

## **ON THE ASCENSION OF CHRIST**

**By Metropolitan Hierotheos of Nafpaktos**



The Greek word for 'ascension' is 'analsipsis'. This word is used to point to the ascent of the Godman to heaven where He sits with God the Father. He was always sharing the throne with His Father, but now He is incarnate sharing the throne. Observing Christ's Ascension to heaven, we are looking at a "peculiar racecourse", because the creator of the world borne up in a human chariot (St. Epiphanius of Cyprus).

Aside from the word 'ascension', Holy Scripture uses the word 'anodos', 'going up'. "God is gone up with a merry noise". Yet there is a difference between the ascension and the going up, which points to the mystery of this event. We use the verb 'ascended' chiefly to refer to the divinity, and the verbs 'is lifted up' and 'is assumed' to indicate human nature, the human body. Therefore sometimes 'lifted up', sometimes 'ascending' is used, so that we will believe that Christ is God and man, in one person. These different words indicate the mystery of the Godman (St. Diadochos of Photiki).

Christ is the first and only one who has gone up to Heaven with the body which He assumed from the Panagia. On this subject we have assurance from Christ Himself, Who said: "No one has ascended to heaven but the one who came down from heaven, the Son of Man who is in heaven" (Jn. 3, 13). The word 'no one' does not permit of any doubt, because it came from the undecitful mouth of the Lord. To be sure, according to the interpretation of the Fathers of the Church, the Panagia too ascended to heaven with her body, but this happened after Christ's Ascension, precisely because it was from her body that Christ became incarnate. But even in this case the body of the Panagia receives deification, while Christ's Body is a source of uncreated grace.

Christ's assurance that no one has ascended into heaven but Himself seems as if it came in contrast to the witness of Holy Scripture that the Prophet Elijah also ascended to heaven. However, if we give careful attention both to the text of Holy Scripture and the interpretations of the holy Fathers, we shall discover that there is no contradiction.

About the ascent of the Prophet Elijah it says in Scripture "suddenly a chariot of fire appeared with horses of fire and separated the two of them; and Elijah was taken up by a whirl-

wind as if to heaven" (2 Kings 2, 11). But about Christ's Ascension it says: "So then after the Lord had spoken to them, he was received up into heaven, and sat down at the right hand of God" (Mk. 16, 19). So then we see in the case of the prophet Elijah the phrase "as if to heaven" is used, while in the case of Christ it is "into heaven".

The Fathers of the Church pointing out this difference say that it is a matter not only of a different expression, but of a theological difference. The "as if to heaven" has the sense of doubt, while "into heaven" has the truth (St. Epiphanius). Therefore it is not a matter of the same thing. Christ's ascent into heaven leaves no room for doubt, since the phrase is straightforward.

In addition to this difference, it seems that there is also another greater one. According to the Fathers of the Church, although the Prophet Elijah was taken up with his body, still he did not ascend to Heaven, where God is, but to another "space". According to St. John Chrysostom, the Prophet Elijah is now in the earthly Paradise, from which Adam fell because of his disobedience and his transgression of God's command. St. Neilos maintains that he is in the ether, which is higher than the air, but lower than heaven.

St. Gregory Palamas, with his theological penetration, is more analytical and gives more extensions to this event. He says that, as there were also many resurrections before Christ, there were also many ascensions before Christ's Ascension. In the Old Testament it says that a spirit took the Prophet Jeremiah up, an angel took Abbakum, but most of all, the Prophet Elijah was taken up in a fiery chariot. The ascensions of all of these were "a sort of transfer", that is a transfer which somehow lifted them from the earth, but did not take them out of it. In other words, none of them passed beyond the earth's atmosphere. Likewise, all who were lifted up and returned to the earth, died again a little later. Christ, however, was resurrected and death had no power over Him, and because He ascended into heaven, every height is lower than He is.

From these patristic words we can conclude that the Ascension of the Prophet Elijah in a fiery chariot was like a change of place, a sort of death, which shows approximately how people would have departed if Adam had not sinned and death had not entered the world. At any rate, all these things confirm that no one has gone up to heaven except Christ.



# Behind the Scenes in forming the Creed

The Church sometimes has special problems, and bothered constantly; It happens when someone "bends" the Truth. This is called 'heresy.' One heresy started when a sneaky priest (Arius was his name) Decided to preach that Jesus Christ and God were not the same. We can't know for sure why Arius felt the need to say what he said, But he wanted to be Patriarch, and Alexander was elected instead.

Let me explain this heresy more, in case you don't understand. If we say that Jesus Christ was not both God and Man, Then how could we believe He died to save us all from sin? Or how could we believe He founded the Orthodox Church we are in?



All of a sudden the people were taking one side or another, And when the Patriarch was told, he sighed and said, "Oh Brother!" He called Arius and told him, "Pack your bag and start making tracks." "OK, I'll go: But you better watch out when I decide to come back."

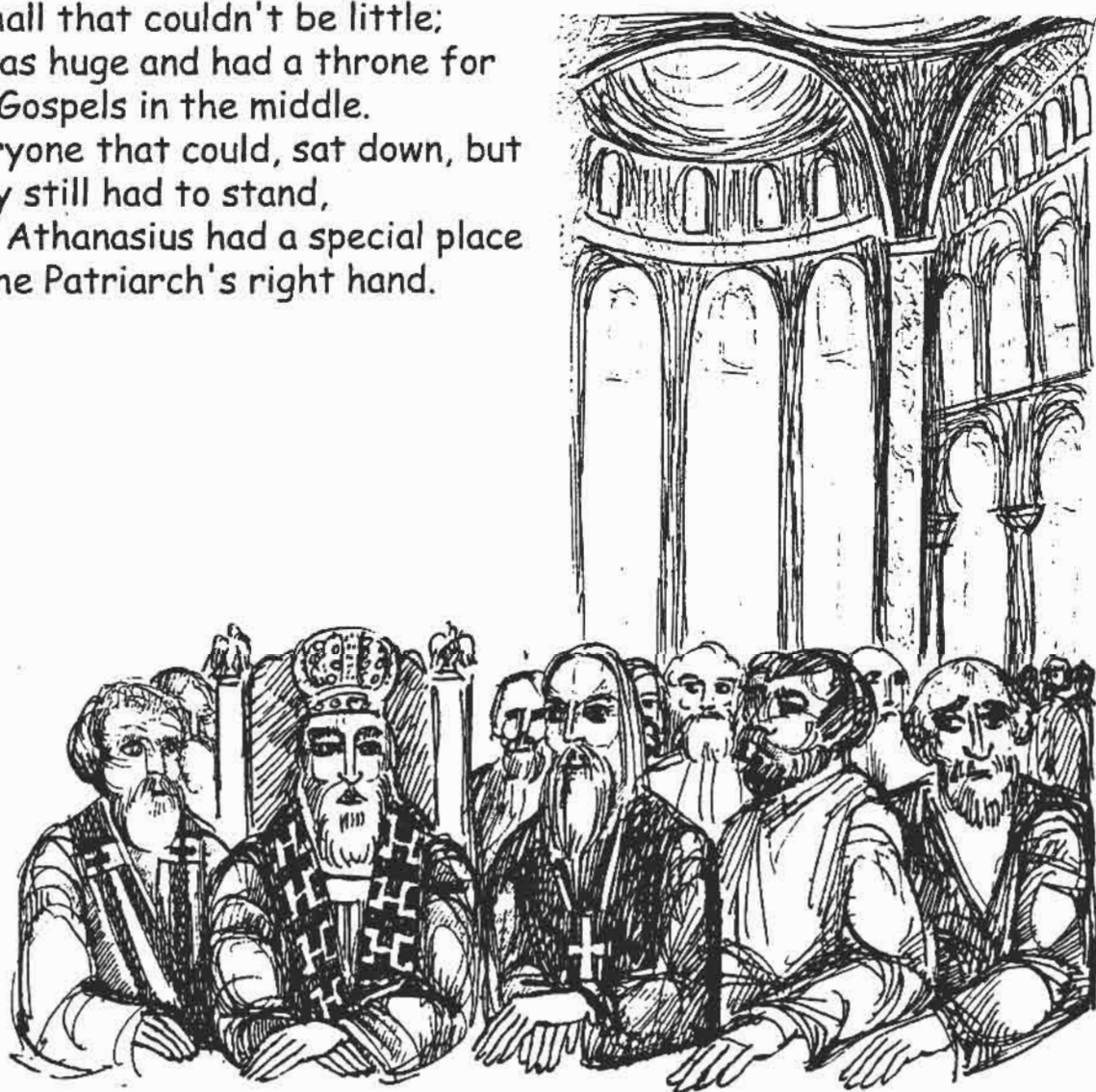
Arius went to Syria, just out of the Patriarch's reach.

"I'll get even with him," he thought, "for telling me I can't preach." His good friend Bishop Eusebius said, "If you want to be real mean, we can get Alexander in trouble with Emperor Constantine."

"We'll get the emperor to let me come back; I'm sure he'll say o.k."  
But although he tried his best, The Patriarch still said, "No way!"  
Constantine's advisor thought the best thing to do was call  
An Ecumenical Council and settle this once and for all.

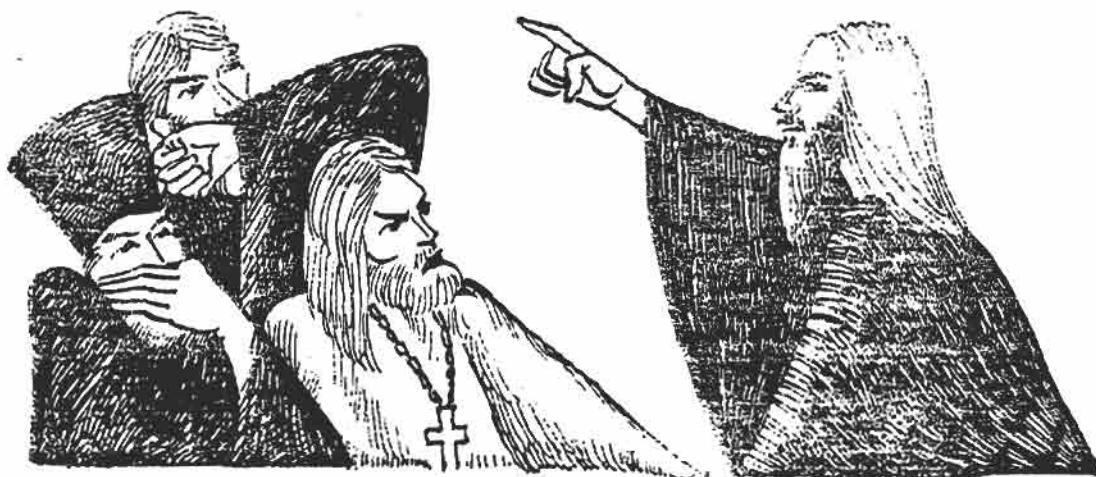
Three hundred eighteen bishops would come (that was quite a few),  
And priests and deacons and acolytes were planning on coming too.  
Everything was ready; soon they would all arrive  
At the city of Nicea in the Year 325.

The council took place in a beautiful hall that couldn't be little;  
It was huge and had a throne for the Gospels in the middle.  
Everyone that could, sat down, but many still had to stand,  
And Athanasius had a special place at the Patriarch's right hand.



First the bishops were seated; then the others sat down,  
And then the Emperor entered in a purple robe and crown.  
Even though he was emperor, Constantine still knew,  
He wasn't a Christian and wouldn't sit down until they asked him to.

The first to speak was Arius, and although almost sixty years old,  
He was still a persuasive speaker, which made him exceedingly bold.  
Athanasius listened quietly as the words hit his ears like thunder,  
But then it was that Arius made his biggest blunder.

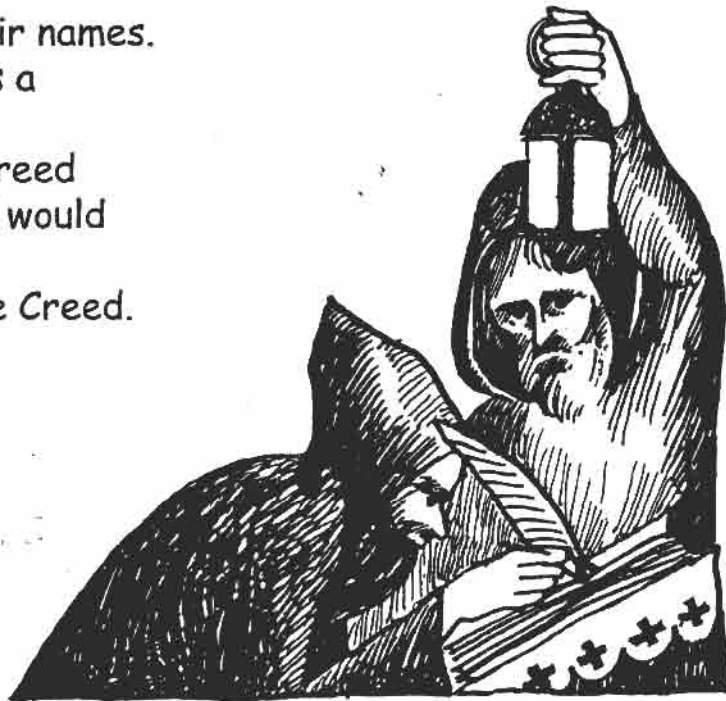


"Jesus Christ is not God!" he said in a high, shrill tone;  
Then the bishops drew back in horror with sighs, gasps and groans.  
When Eusebius saw that Arius had made a big mistake,  
He shouted, "You mean *nearly* God, don't you, for goodness sake?"

But the bishops muttered angrily as Arius took his seat;  
Then with a sign from the Patriarch, Athanasius jumped to his feet.  
Athanasius began his argument, his speech was detailed and long.  
And when he was through the bishops were sure that Arius was very wrong.

Then the bishops went to work, writing the church's views,  
Expressing exactly the Orthodox Faith so no one would be confused.  
At last the paper was finished and ready for all to sign,  
But Eusebius and a few others weren't eager to change their mind.

Seeming to agree, they signed,  
But later that night they came  
And bribed the guards  
and snuck inside  
And quickly erased their names.  
That evening there was a  
banquet  
And there everyone agreed  
That this great council would  
always be known  
For forming the Nicene Creed.



by **Barbara Heckman**  
illustrated by Elena Basilevsky