

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 11, 2020
COMMEMORATION OF THE HOLY FATHERS
OF THE 7TH ECUMENICAL COUNCIL

Commemoration of the Fathers of the Seventh Ecumenical Council.

This Council dealt predominantly with the controversy regarding icons and their place in Orthodox worship. It was convened in Nicaea in 787 by Empress Irene at the request of Thrasios, Patriarch of Constantinople. The Council was attended by 367 bishops.

Almost a century before this, the iconoclastic controversy had once more shaken the foundations of both Church and State in the Byzantine empire. Excessive religious respect and the ascribed miracles to icons by some members of society, approached the point of worship (due only to God) and idolatry. This instigated excesses at the other extreme by which icons were completely taken out of the liturgical life of the Church by the Iconoclasts. The Iconophiles, on the other-hand, believed that icons served to preserve the doctrinal teachings of the Church; they considered icons to be man's dynamic way of expressing the divine through art and beauty.

The Council decided on a doctrine by which icons should be venerated but not worshipped. In answering the Empress' invitation to the Council, Pope Hadrian replied with a letter in which he also held the position of extending veneration to icons but not worship, the last befitting only God.

The decree of the Council for restoring icons to churches added an important clause which still stands at the foundation of the rationale for using and venerating icons in the Orthodox Church to this very day: "We define that the holy icons, whether in color, mosaic, or some other material, should be exhibited in the holy churches of God, on the sacred vessels and liturgical vestments, on the walls, furnishings, and in houses and along the roads, namely the icons of our Lord God and Savior Jesus Christ, that of our Lady the Theotokos, those of the venerable angels and those of all saintly people. Whenever these representations are contemplated, they will cause those who look at them to commemorate and love their prototype. We define also that they should be kissed and that they are an object of veneration and honor (timitiki proskynisis), but not of real worship (latreia), which is reserved for Him Who is the subject of our faith and is proper for the divine nature. The veneration accorded to an icon is in effect transmitted to the prototype; he who venerates the icon, venerated in it the reality for which it stands".

The Council issued also 22 canons relating to administrative and disciplinary matters, condemning Simony (ordination for payment), the election of bishops by secular authority, and the erecting of mixed monasteries. However, and in spite of the recognition of this Council by the Pope, Charlemagne refused to recognize it not only as Ecumenical but altogether. He disapproved of its decision for venerating the icons, and as a result of his hostility, a synod at Frankfurt in 794 condemned the veneration of icons and rejected the entire Council. And it was only by the end of the 9th century that the Council was recognized in the West but without its rules that were contrary to the established practices of the Roman Church.

An Endemousa (Regional) Synod was called in Constantinople in 843. Under Empress Theodora. The veneration of icons was solemnly proclaimed at the St. Sophia's Cathedral. Monks and clergy came in procession and restored the icons in their rightful place. The day was called "Triumph of Orthodoxy." Since that time, this event is commemorated yearly with a special service on the first Sunday of Lent, the "Sunday of Orthodoxy".

GREAT VESPERS

LORD I CALL: Four stikhera of the Resurrection in tone 1, followed by five stikhera for the Fathers

Resurrection, tone 1:

Accept our evening prayers, O holy Lord!

Grant us remission of sins, //

for You alone have manifested the Resurrection to the world.

Encircle Zion and surround her, O people!

Give glory in her to the One Who rose from the dead! //

For He is our God, Who has delivered us from our transgressions!

Come, O people, let us hymn and fall down before Christ,

glorifying His Resurrection from the dead! //

For He is our God, Who has delivered the world from the Enemy's deceit!

Be glad, O heavens!

Sound trumpets, O foundations of the earth!

Sing in gladness, O mountains!

Behold Emmanuel has nailed our sins to the Cross!

Granting life, He has slain death. //

He has resurrected Adam as the Lover of mankind.

Fathers, tone 6:

The seven honorable councils of the Fathers, held at various times,

were brought together under one canon in good order

by Patriarch Germanus the New.

He established and recorded their teachings;

he also presented these Fathers to the Lord

as watchful intercessors for our salvation //

and as fellow-shepherds of the fold.

The book of the Law instructed the sons of Israel

that the seventh day was to be honored,

and they devoted themselves to a shadow and reverenced it.

But, O Fathers, who came together in the Seventh Council,

at the behest of God,
Who fashioned the universe in six days and blessed the seventh day,//
you have made the seventh more honorable by laying down a definition of the Faith.

You have enabled all men, O thrice-blessed Fathers,
to come to the knowledge of the Trinity
as the Cause of the world's generation;
for by your mystical reasoning
you established three and four Councils,
and you appeared as champions of Orthodoxy,
for you showed that, while there are four elements,//
it is the Trinity Who created them and made the world.

It would have been enough for Elijah the Prophet
to have bent down only once to give life to the dead son of the woman;
but he knelt and bent seven times.
And in his foresight he prophesied your gathering,
by which you breathed life into the slaying of God the Word,//
by putting to death Arius and his profane companions.

In your wisdom, O venerable Fathers,
you mended the garment of Christ rent by howling dogs;
for you could not bear looking upon the nakedness of his body,
but as Shem and Japheth of old who hid their father's nakedness,
you put to shame that slayer of his father, the wretched Arius,//
and those who foolishly follow his teachings.

Glory..., Fathers, tone 6:

Today let us praise the mystical trumpets of the Spirit,
the God-bearing Fathers,
who stand in the midst of the Church, singing true theology,
praising the changeless Trinity.
They laid low the errors of Arius and upheld the Orthodox Faith.//
They always entreat the Lord to have mercy on our souls.

NOW AND EVER... the Dogmatikon in tone 1:

Let us praise the Virgin Mary!
The gate of heaven, the glory of the world!
The song of the angels, the beauty of the faithful!
She was born of man, yet gave birth to God!
She was revealed as the heaven,
as the temple of the godhead!
She destroyed the wall of enmity!
She commenced the peace; she opened the Kingdom!
Since she is our foundation of faith,

our defender is the Lord Whom she bore!
Courage! Courage! O People of God!
For Christ will destroy our enemies//
since He is all powerful.

3 Old Testament Readings

The reading from the book of Genesis.

And Abram, having heard that Lot his nephew had been taken captive, numbered his own home-born servants three hundred and eighteen, and pursued after them to Dan. And he fell upon them at night, he and his servants who were with him, and he smote them and pursued them as far as Chobal, which is on the left of Damascus. And he recovered Lot his nephew, and all his possessions, and the women and the people. And the king of Sodom went out to meet him after he returned from the slaughter of Chodollogomor, and the kings with him, to the valley of Saby; this was the king's dale. And Melchisedek, king of Salem, brought forth bread and wine, and he was the priest of the Most High God. And he blessed Abram, and said: Blessed be Abram of the Most High God, Who made heaven and earth, and blessed be the Most High God, Who delivered your enemies into your power. **Genesis, (14:14-20)**

The reading from the Book of Deuteronomy.

Thus said Moses to the sons of Israel: Behold, God has delivered the land before you; go in and inherit the land which I swore to your fathers Abraham and Issac and Jacob, to give it to them and to their seed after them. And I spoke to you at that time, saying: I shall not be able by myself to bear you. The Lord your God has multiplied you, and behold, you are today as the stars of heaven in multitude. The Lord God of your fathers add to you a thousandfold more than you are, and bless you as He has spoken to you. So I took of you wise and understanding and prudent men, and I set them to rule over you as rulers of thousands, and rulers of hundreds, and rulers of tens, and instructors for your judges. And I commanded your judges at that time, saying: Hear causes between your brethren, and judge justly between a man and his brother, and the stranger that is with him. You shall not have respect to persons in judgment, you shall judge small and great equally; you shall not shrink from before the person of a man, for the judgment is God's. **Deuteronomy, (1:8-11, 15-17)**

The Reading from the Book of Deuteronomy.

Thus said Moses to the sons of Israel: Behold, the heaven, and the Heaven of heaven, belong to the Lord your God, the earth and all things that are therein. Yet the Lord chose your fathers to love them, and above all nations, as at this day He chose you out of their seed after them. Therefore you shall circumcise the hardness of your heart, and you shall not harden your neck. For the Lord our God, He is God of gods, and Lord of lords, the great, and strong, and terrible God, Who does not respect persons, nor will He by any means accept a bribe; executing judgment for the stranger and orphan and widow, and He loves the stranger to give him food and raiment. You shall fear the Lord your God, and serve Him, and shall swear by His Name. He is your boast, and He is your God, Who has wrought for you these great and glorious things, which your eyes have seen. **Deuteronomy, (10:14-21)**

APOSTIKHA: All stikhera of the Resurrection in tone 1:

We have been freed from sufferings by Your suffering, O Christ.
We have been delivered from corruption by Your Resurrection.//
O Lord, glory to You!

Let creation rejoice!
Let the heavens be glad!
Let the nations clap their hands with gladness,
for Christ our Savior has nailed our sins to the Cross.
Slaying death, He has given life.//
He has resurrected fallen Adam as the Lover of mankind.

As King of heaven and earth,
You were voluntarily crucified in Your love for mankind.
Hell was angered when it met You below.
Adam rose seeing You, the Creator, under the earth.
O Wonder! How has the Life of All tasted death?
You enlightened the world which cries://
“O Lord, Who rose from the dead, glory to You!”

The myrrhbearing women came with haste to Your tomb,
bearing myrrh and lamenting.
Not finding Your most pure body,
they learned from the angel of the new and glorious wonder.
They told the Apostles://
“The Lord is risen, granting the world great mercy.”

GLORY...for the Fathers, tone 4:

Today we, the Orthodox, celebrate the annual memory
of the God-bearing Fathers who assembled in Nicea.
They laid low the godless doctrines of Arius,
driving him from the unity of the Catholic Church,
and teaching us how to confess the consubstantial and co-eternal Son of God.
They expressed this clearly in the Symbol of Faith,
and we follow their divine doctrines,
believing in and serving the Son with the Father and the all-Holy Spirit,//
the consubstantial Trinity and one Divinity.

NOW AND EVER...the Theotokion of the Resurrection in tone 4:

Look on the entreaties of your servants, O Blameless One!
Stop all the terrible attacks against us,
freeing us from every affliction,
for we have only you as our sure and firm anchor!
Do not let us be put to shame, O Lady,

for we call on you for our intercession!
Hasten to pray for those who call in faith:
“Rejoice, O Lady, Help of all://
the Joy and Shelter and Salvation of our souls!”

Troparia

Resurrection, tone 1

When the stone had been sealed by the Jews;
while the soldiers were guarding Thy most pure Body;
Thou didst rise on the third day, O Savior,
granting life to the world.
The powers of heaven therefore cried to Thee, O giver of Life:
Glory to Thy Resurrection O Christ!
Glory to Thy Kingdom!
Glory to Thy dispensation, O Thou who lovest mankind.

Fathers, tone 8

You are most glorious, O Christ our God!
You have established the Holy Fathers as lights on the earth.
Through them You have guided us to the true Faith.//
O greatly compassionate One, glory to You!

Resurrectional Dismissal Theotokion, tone 8

For our sake You were born of the Virgin
and endured crucifixion, O Good One, destroying death by death.
Revealing the Resurrection as God, do not despise the work of Your hand!
Reveal Your love for man, O Merciful One, and accept the Theotokos praying for us,//
and save the despairing people, O our Savior!

DIVINE LITURGY

TROPARIA

Resurrection, tone 1

When the stone had been sealed by the Jews;
while the soldiers were guarding Thy most pure Body;
Thou didst rise on the third day, O Savior,
granting life to the world.
The powers of heaven therefore cried to Thee, O giver of Life:
Glory to Thy Resurrection O Christ!
Glory to Thy Kingdom!
Glory to Thy dispensation, O Thou who lovest mankind.

Fathers, tone 8

You are most glorious, O Christ our God.
You have established the Holy Fathers as lights on the earth.
Through them you have guided us to the true faith.
O greatly Compassionate One, glory to You!

KONTAKIA

Resurrection, tone 1

As God, Thou didst rise from the tomb in glory,
raising the world with Thyself.
Human nature praises Thee as God, for death has vanished.
Adam exults O Master!
Eve rejoices, for she is freed from bondage, and cries to Thee;
Thou art the Giver of Resurrection to all, O Christ.

Fathers, tone 6

The Son who shone forth from the Father
was ineffably born, two-fold in nature, of a woman.
Having beheld Him, we do not deny the image of His form,
but depict it piously and revere it faithfully.
Thus, keeping the True Faith,
the Church venerates the icon of Christ Incarnate.

Steadfast Protectress of Christians

Steadfast protectress of Christians,
Constant advocate before the creator:
Do not despise the cry of us sinners,
But in your goodness come speedily to help us who call on you in faith.
Hasten to hear our petition and to intercede for us, O Theotokos,
For you always protect those who honor you.

PROKEIMENON, tone 1: Let Thy mercy, O Lord, be upon us as we have set our hope on
Thee.

vs. Rejoice in the Lord, O ye righteous! Praise befits the just!

2nd PROK., tone 4: Blessed art Thou, O lord God of our fathers and praised and glorified is
Thy Name forever!

EPISTLES: (188) 2 Corinthians 9:6-11 Brethren, he who sows sparingly shall also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully shall also reap bountifully. So let each man give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to make all grace abound toward you, that you, always having all sufficiency in all things, have an abundance for every good work. As it is written: "He hath dispersed abroad, He hath given to the poor; His righteousness remains forever." Now may He who supplies seed to the sower, and bread for food, supply and multiply the seed you have sown and

increase the fruits of your righteousness, being enriched in everything to all bountifulness, which causes through us thanksgiving to God.

(334) Hebrews 13:7-16 Brethren, remember them which rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith follow, considering the outcome of their conduct. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, and today, and forever... Do not be carried about with divers and strange doctrines. For it is good that the heart be established by grace, not with meats which have not profited those who have been occupied with them. We have an Altar from which those who serve the tabernacle have no right to eat. For the bodies of those beasts, whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the high priest for sin, are burned outside the camp. Therefore Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people with His own Blood, suffered outside the gate. Therefore let us go forth unto Him, outside the camp, bearing His reproach. For here we have no continuing city, but we seek the one to come. Therefore by Him let us continually offer the sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His Name. But do not forget to do good and to share, for with such sacrifices God is well pleased.

Alleluia in the first tone: God gives vengeance to me, and subdues people under me!

vs. He magnifies the salvation of the King and deals mercifully with David, His anointed, and his seed forever.

vs. The Lord, the God of gods, speaks and summons the earth from the rising of the sun to its setting.

GOSPELS: (30) Luke 7:11-16 At that time, it happened, the day after, that He went into a city called Nain; and many of His disciples went with Him and a large crowd. And when He came near the gate of the city, behold, a dead man was being carried out, the only son of his mother; and she was a widow. And a large crowd from the city was with her. When the Lord saw her, He had compassion on her and said to her, "Do not weep." Then He came and touched the open coffin, and those who carried him stood still. And He said, "Young man, I say to you, arise." So he who was dead sat up and began to speak. And He presented him to his mother. The fear came upon all, and they glorified God, saying, "A great prophet has risen up among us"; and "God has visited His people." **(56) John 17:1-13 (Fathers)** Jesus spoke these words, lifted up His eyes to heaven, and said: "Father, the hour has come. Glorify Your Son, that Your Son also may glorify You, as You have given Him authority over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as You have given Him. And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent. I have glorified You on the earth. I have finished the work which You have given Me to do. And now, O Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world was. I have manifested Your name to the men whom You have given Me out of the world. They were Yours, You gave them to Me, and they have kept Your word. Now they have known that all things which You have given Me are from You. For I have given to them the words which You have given Me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came forth from You; and they have believed that You sent Me. I pray for them. I do not pray for the world but for those whom You have given Me, for they are Yours. And all Mine are Yours, and Yours are Mine, and I am glorified in them. Now I am no longer in the

world, but these are in the world, and I come to You. Holy Father, keep through Your name those whom You have given Me, that they may be one as We are. While I was with them in the world, I kept them in Your name. Those whom You gave Me I have kept; and none of them is lost except the son of perdition, that the Scripture might be fulfilled. But now I come to You, and these things I speak in the world, that they may have My joy fulfilled in themselves.

COMMUNION HYMNS: Praise the Lord from the heavens, praise Him in the highest. Rejoice in the Lord, O you righteous! Praise befits the just. Alleluia...