

**ICONS: NOT FOR THE EYE BUT FOR THE HEART**

**I**cons are the artistic heritage of the church. Many edifices are covered inside with icons, not so much as decorative pieces, but to assist in worship, prayer and meditation. It has been said that an icon is not so much a painting as it is a “presence.”

It took centuries for the Church to define and accept the role of iconography. After years of conflict, the Seventh Ecumenical Council in 787 at Nicea proclaimed that icons are to be honored like other material symbols such as the Holy Cross of our Lord. And in 843 the final victory over the use of icons was established and the First Sunday of the Great Fast designated as a time of triumph of the true faith over heresy.

One of the champions in the defense of icons was St. John of Damascus. He wrote in the eighth century, “The old God was not depicted at all. But now that God has appeared in the flesh and lived among men, I make an image of the God who can be seen. I do not worship matter but I worship the Creator of matter, who for my sake became material and deigned to dwell in matter, effecting my salvation.”

The teaching aspect of iconography was well described by St. Nilus of Sinai (5th Century): “Let the hand of the artist fill the Church on both sides with images from the Old and New Testaments, in order that those who cannot read the Divine Scriptures should, by looking at the painted images, bring to mind the valiant deeds of those who served God with all sincerity and be themselves incited to rival the glorious and memorable exploits through which they exchanged earth for heaven . . .”



SUNDAY OF ORTHODOXY

**WEEKLY PARISH BULLETIN**

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**TODAY'S READINGS**

**GOSPEL:** John 1, 43-51;

**EPISTLE:** Hebrew 11, 24-26; 11, 32-40; 12, 1-2;

**TODAY WE CELEBRATE:**

**THE HOLY SEVEN PRIESTLY-MARTYRS IN CHERSON: BASIL, EPHREM, EUGENIUS, ELPIDUS, AGATHADORUS, AETHERIUS, AND CAPITO**

All of them were bishops in Cherson at different times. All suffered and were martyred at the hands of unbelievers, whether they were Jews, Greeks or Scythians, except Aetherius, who died peacefully. All of them were sent by the Patriarch of Jerusalem as missionaries to bring the light of the Gospel to these wild and uncivilized areas. They were tortured and suffered for their Lord. In Cherson, Basil raised the son of a prince from the dead which embittered the Jews and they, in turn, brought an accusation against him. He was tied and bound by the feet and dragged through the streets until his soul departed him. Ephrem was beheaded. Eugenius, Elpidus and Agathadorus were beaten with rods and stoned until they gave up their souls to God. Aetherius lived during the reign of Emperor Constantine the Great. He governed the Church in freedom and peace, erected a large church in Cherson, and died peacefully. When the last of them, Capito, was appointed bishop for the wild and savage Scythians, they sought a sign from him that they may believe. They suggested that he enter into a fiery furnace and, if he was not consumed, they would all believe in Christ. With fervent prayers and hope in God, Capito placed his episcopal pallium over his shoulders, signed himself with the sign of the cross, and entered into the flaming hot furnace, keeping his heart close to God. He remained in the flames for about an hour without any injury or damage, either to his body or to his vesture. He came out in good health. Then, at once, all of them cried out: "One is God, the God of the Christians, great and mighty, Who protects His servant in the flaming furnace." The entire city and all the vicinity were then baptized. This miracle was spoken of at length at the First Ecumenical Council [Nicaea, 325 A.D.]. The participants in the Council all glorified God and praised the steadfast and solid faith of St. Capito. It happened that while Capito was traveling along the Dnieper river, he was captured by the pagan Scythians and was drowned. All these seven priestly-martyrs suffered during the early years of the fourth century.

**Dear Brothers and Sisters, Today, a second collection plate will be passed around for donations to the St.Sava School of Theology in Libertyville.**

**Every Saturday during the Lent we will have Vesper Service in our Church at 6:00PM.**

**HOMILY**

**About the hand of the betrayer**

*"And yet behold, the hand of the one who is to betray Me is with Me on the table(Lk. 22:21).* It is most difficult for a general to wage war when he has an enemy within the camp; not only external enemies, but internal enemies among his own. Judas was considered among his own. However, he was the enemy from within. Rows of enemies crowded and closed ranks around Christ and, from within, Judas was preparing betrayal. His hand was on the table which Christ blessed, and his thoughts were aligned with the enemies where darkest evil, hatred and malice seethed against the gentle Lord. Is it not also the same today, that the hand of the many traitors of Christ are at the table with Him? Which table is not Christ's? On what table are not His gifts? He is the Householder and He nourish-

**THERE IS NO RIGHT WAY TO DO WRONG THING.**

es and feeds His guests. The guests have nothing of their own, nothing! All good and all abundance which is given to them is given to them by the hand of Christ. Therefore, is it not so that Christ is present at every table as a Householder and as a Servant? Therefore, are not those also the hands of all who even today betray Christ on the table together with Him? They eat His bread and they speak against Him. They warm themselves by His sun and they slander His name. They breathe His air and they rise up against His Church. They live off His mercy and they banish Him from their homes, from their schools, from their courts, from their books and from their hearts. They trample His commandments willfully, maliciously and ridicule His law. Are they not then the betrayers of Christ and the followers of Judas? Do not be afraid of them! God did not command that we be afraid of them but wait to see their end. Our Lord was not afraid of Judas nor is He afraid of all the traitorous hordes until the end of time. He knows their end and He already has His victory in His hands. Therefore, do not you be afraid either. Adhere faithfully to Christ the Lord, both when it appears to you that His causes succeed and go forward in the world and then, again, when it appears to you that His causes collapse and perish. Do not be afraid! If you become frightened, perhaps your hand will be found clenched under the hand of Judas at the table of Christ. O Lord, All-Victorious, sustain us with Your power and mercy.

**⊕ Pittsburgh Deanery Lenten Vespers are at 5 PM ⊕**

**March 27 - ALIQUIPPA - St. Elijah - Fr. Rodney Torbic**

April 3 - MIDLAND - St. George - Fr. Rajko Kosic

April 10 - STEUBENVILLE - Holy Resurrection - Fr. Milan Krstic

April 17 - CARMICHAELS - St. George - Fr. Rade Merick

April 24 - PITTSBURGH - Holy Trinity Cathedral - Fr. Dragan Zaric



SARRIS CANDY pickup can be done on Wednesday, March 23rd any time after 7:00 pm.

On Friday, March 25<sup>th</sup>, we will have:

SERVICE OF HOURS .....9:00AM; CONFESSION .....9:30AM;

PRESANCTIFIED LITURGY .....9:45AM.

**SAVE THE DATES:**

**VESPER SERVICES and DINNER will be held on Sunday, March 27<sup>th</sup>**

CHURCH SCHOOL- The last day of Church School will be on Sunday, May 1<sup>st</sup>

ANNUAL DAN RALICH GOLF TOURNAMENT- Saturday, May 7<sup>th</sup>

SPRING FOOD FESTIVAL- May 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup>

TEA and TREASURE BASKETS fundraiser Sunday, June 26th from 1pm-3:30 pm

Give rest O Lord to thy departed servant ANN BALJAK may his soul rest in peace.

Our deepest sympathy are extended to his family, kumovi and friends.

VJECNAJA PAMJAT!

**VISITS:**

**March 15<sup>th</sup> - Friendship Ridge - Sarah Jerich, Helen Belich, Cynthia**

Bratich, Ann Belich, Joe and Carol Kascur, Robin Lapcevich

**March 17<sup>th</sup> - Villa St. Joseph - Slavka Nikolic**

