



## St. Vladimir Orthodox Church

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### Synaxis of All Saints

June 27, 2021

#### **Troparion – Tone 8**

Thou didst descend from on high, O Merciful One! Thou didst accept the three day burial to free us from our sufferings!//  
O Lord, our Life and Resurrection, glory to Thee!

#### **Troparion – Tone 4**

As with fine porphyry and royal purple, Thy Church has been adorned with Thy martyrs' blood shed throughout all the world. She cries to Thee, O Christ God: "Send down Thy bounties on Thy people,// grant peace to Thy habitation and great mercy to our souls!"

#### **Kontakion – Tone 8**

The universe offers Thee the God-bearing Martyrs as the first fruits of creation, O Lord and Creator. By their prayers keep Thy Church, Thy habitation, in abiding peace// through the Theotokos, O most Merciful One!

#### **Prokeimenon – Tone 8**

Pray and make your vows / before the Lord, our God!

*V. In Judah God is known; His Name is great in Israel.*

#### **Prokeimenon – Tone 4**

God is wonderful in His saints, / the God of Israel.

#### **Synaxis of All Saints**

The Sunday following Pentecost is dedicated to All Saints, both those who are known to us, and those who are known only to God. There have been saints at all times, and they have come from every corner of the earth. They were Apostles, Martyrs, Prophets, Hierarchs, Monastics, and Righteous, yet all were perfected by the same Holy Spirit.

The Descent of the Holy Spirit makes it possible for us to rise above our fallen state and to attain sainthood, thereby fulfilling God's directive to "be holy, for I am holy" (Lev. 11:44, 1 Peter 1:16, etc.). Therefore, it is fitting to commemorate All Saints on the first Sunday after Pentecost.

This feast may have originated at an early date, perhaps as a celebration of all martyrs, then it was broadened to include all men and women who had borne witness to Christ by their virtuous lives, even if they did not shed their blood for Him.

Saint Peter of Damascus, in his "Fourth Stage of Contemplation," mentions five categories of saints: Apostles, Martyrs, Prophets, Hierarchs, and Monastic Saints (*Philokalia* [in English] Vol. 3, p.131). He is actually quoting from the *Octoechos*, Tone 2 for Saturday Matins, kathisma after the first stichology.

Saint Nikodemos of the Holy Mountain (July 14) adds the Righteous to Saint Peter's five categories. The list of Saint Nikodemos is found in his book *The Fourteen Epistles of Saint Paul* (Venice, 1819, p. 384) in his discussion of I Corinthians 12:28.

The hymnology for the feast of All Saints also lists six categories: "Rejoice, assembly of the Apostles, Prophets of the Lord, loyal choirs of the Martyrs, divine Hierarchs, Monastic Fathers, and the Righteous...."

Some of the saints are described as Confessors, a category which does not appear in the above lists. Since they are similar in spirit to the martyrs, they are regarded as belonging to the category of Martyrs. They were not put to death as the Martyrs were, but they boldly confessed Christ and came close to being executed for their faith. Saint Maximus the Confessor (January 21) is such a saint.

The order of these six types of saints seems to be based on their importance to the Church. The Apostles are listed first, because they were the first to spread the Gospel throughout the world.

The Martyrs come next because of their example of courage in professing their faith before the enemies and persecutors of the Church, which encouraged other Christians to remain faithful to Christ even unto death.

Although they come first chronologically, the Prophets are listed after the Apostles and Martyrs. This is because the Old Testament Prophets saw only the shadows of things to come, whereas the Apostles and Martyrs experienced them firsthand. The New Testament also takes precedence over the Old Testament.

The holy Hierarchs comprise the fourth category. They are the leaders of their flocks, teaching them by their word and their example.

The Monastic Saints are those who withdrew from this world to live in monasteries, or in seclusion. They did not do this out of hatred for the world, but in order to devote themselves to unceasing prayer, and to do battle against the power of the demons. Although some people erroneously believe that monks and nuns are useless and unproductive, Saint John Climacus had a high regard for them: "Angels are a light for monks, and the monastic life is a light for all men" (LADDER, Step 26:31).

The last category, the Righteous, are those who attained holiness of life while living "in the world." Examples include Abraham and his wife Sarah, Job, Saints Joachim and Anna, Saint Joseph the Betrothed, Saint Juliana of Lazarevo, and others.

The feast of All Saints achieved great prominence in the ninth century, in the reign of the Byzantine Emperor Leo VI the Wise (886-911). His wife, the Holy Empress Theophano (December 16) lived in the world, but was not attached to worldly things. She was a great benefactor to the poor, and was generous to the monasteries. She was a true mother to her subjects, caring for widows and orphans, and consoling the sorrowful.

Even before the death of Saint Theophano in 893 or 894, her husband started to build a church, intending to dedicate it to Theophano, but she forbade him to do so. It was this emperor who decreed that the Sunday after Pentecost be dedicated to All Saints. Believing that his wife was one of the righteous, he knew that she would also be honored whenever the Feast of All Saints was celebrated.

### **Epistle: Hebrews 11:33-12:2**

Who through faith subdued kingdoms, worked righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, became valiant in battle, turned to flight the armies of the aliens. Women received their dead raised to life again. Others were tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection. Still others had trial of mockings and scourgings, yes, and of chains and imprisonment. They were stoned, they were sawn in two, were tempted, were slain with the sword. They wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented – of whom the world was not worthy. They wandered in deserts and mountains, in dens and caves of the earth. And all these, having obtained a good testimony through faith, did not receive the promise, God having provided something better for us, that they should not be made perfect apart from us. Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which

so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

### **Gospel: Matthew 10:32-33, 37-38; 19:27-30**

Therefore whoever confesses Me before men, him I will also confess before My Father who is in heaven. But whoever denies Me before men, him I will also deny before My Father who is in heaven. He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he who does not take his cross and follow after Me is not worthy of Me. Then Peter answered and said to Him, "See, we have left all and followed You. Therefore what shall we have?" So Jesus said to them, "Assuredly I say to you, that in the regeneration, when the Son of Man sits on the throne of His glory, you who have followed Me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or lands, for My name's sake, shall receive a hundredfold, and inherit eternal life. But many who are first will be last, and the last first.

### **Service Schedule for the week of June 27**

**Today** – 9:45 AM Hours, 10:00 AM Divine Liturgy and Pentecostal prayers followed by Coffee Hour in Daria Hall

**Monday June 28** – 7:00 PM Vespers with Litya **SS PETER & PAUL**

**Tuesday June 29** – 9:30 AM Divine Liturgy **SS PETER & PAUL**

**Saturday July 3** – 5:00 PM Vespers followed by Confession

**Sunday July 4** – 10:00 AM Divine Liturgy followed by Coffee Hour

### **Weekly Giving**

June 20 – 62 adults, 16 youth, \$3,941

### **Parish Announcements**

The FOCA Club will have a meeting today during Coffee Hour in Daria Hall.

Archbishop Michael will visit the parish for our St. Vladimir Feast Day on

Saturday July 17 – Vespers followed by Potluck Supper

Sunday July 18 – Divine Liturgy followed by a Social (not a formal dinner) in Daria Hall

Sign-up sheets are in the back of the church for the Potluck Supper on July 17 and the Social on July 18. There is no charge for the Social, however, a donation basket will be available. The Social will be an enhanced Coffee Hour with appetizers and various foods to choose from, along with beverages, wine, and desserts. Vladika will gladly accept contributions from the various church organizations for the Distinguished Diocesan Benefactor Fund.

MOSAIC ICON: If you will be making a donation, please write "Mosaic Icon" in the memo portion of your check so we make sure to properly account for all donations, and either turn in your donation at the candle desk or send it to Father Volodymyr at the rectory. If you have any questions please see Father Volodymyr or a member of the Parish Council.

Please see a member of the FOCA Club if you are interested in purchasing a mural block (Daria Hall); funds will be used for Daria Hall improvements. Donors will have a brass nameplate added to the commemoration boards on the sides of the mural – either "Donated By" or "In Memory Of", with the names inscribed as designated by the donor. Thank you!