

Sunday Bulletin  
December 21<sup>st</sup> 2025 – 28<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost  
Jesus healing ten lepers



Sts. Peter & Paul Ukrainian Orthodox Church  
1025 N Belle Vista Ave, Youngstown, Ohio 44509



Sts. Peter & Paul Ukrainian  
Orthodox Church

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Church Choir  
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Adult Education

St. Mary's Sisterhood

Sts. Peter & Paul Brotherhood

Senior UOL Chapter

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Youth Ministry

Orphanage Mission Ministry

Bingo Team

Fr Mykola Zomchak - Editor

**Website:**

<https://www.stspeterpauluoc.org>

## STS Peter & Paul UOC

*Let us celebrate the Resurrection of Christ*



### Sunday Bulletin

December 21<sup>st</sup> 2025 – 28<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost

Jesus healing ten lepers

## In Memory of Anastasia Mischev - bull 9

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## CHANGEABLE PARTS OF THE DIVINE LITURGY

### Tropar of the Resurrection – Tone 3

Let the heavens rejoice. Let the earth be glad. For the Lord has shown strength with his Arm. He has trampled death by death. He has become the First born of the Dead. He has delivered us from the depths of Hades and has granted the world great mercy.

### Kondak of the Resurrection – Tone 3

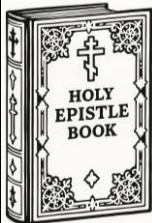
On this day You rose from the tomb, Merciful One, leading us from the gates of death. On this day Adam exults as Eve rejoices. With the prophets and patriarchs, they unceasingly praise the divine Majesty of Your Power.

### Tone 3 Prokeimenon – (Resurrection)

Sing to our God, sing praises. Sing praises to our King, sing praises.

*Verse: clap your hands, all your peoples, shout to God with a joyful voice.*

### The Reading is from the Letter of the Holy Apostle Paul to Colossians 1:12-18



Bretheren, and giving joyful thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of his holy people in the kingdom of light. For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins. The Son is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. For in him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things have been created through him and for him. He is before all things, and in him all things hold together. And he is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything he might have the supremacy.

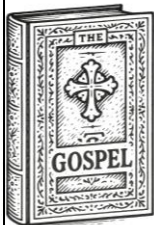
### Alleluia and Verses Tone 3

*V. Arise, O Lord, into Your rest, You and the Ark of Your sanctification! (Ps. 131:8)*

*V. The Lord swore to David a sure oath from which He will not turn back.*

*Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia*

### The Reading is from the Gospel according to St. Luke 17:12-19



As he was going into a village, ten men who had leprosy met him. They stood at a distance and called out in a loud voice, "Jesus, Master, have pity on us!" When he saw them, he said, "Go, show yourselves to the priests." And as they went, they were cleansed. One of them, when he saw he was healed, came back, praising God in a loud voice. He threw himself at Jesus' feet and thanked him—and he was a Samaritan. Jesus asked, "Were not all ten cleansed? Where are the other nine? Has no one returned to give praise to God except this foreigner?" Then he said to him, "Rise and go; your faith has made you well."

## Communion Hymn

Praise the Lord from the heavens, praise Him in the highest! *(Ps. 148:1)*

*Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!*

### MEMORY ETERNAL

#### PLEASE PRAY FOR RESTING OF THE SOULS

Walter Duzzny, Dennis Currie, Julian, Vasyl Zomchak, Heather Rhodes, Joe Zemko, Jeff Ulrich, Judy Cebriak, William Zylka, Serhiy, Pat Mamajack, Arlene Hawryluk, Mary C. Moon, Lidiia Zabrodina, Metro Senedak, Eleanor K. Laise, Julian Naumenko, Patricia Huly, John Senediak, Ann & George Klein.  
Victims of the war in Ukraine.



### PRAYER LIST

#### PLEASE PRAY FOR HEALING, COMFORT, AND SPIRITUAL PEACE



Metropolitan Anthony, Archbishop Daniel, Patricia Mogish, Denny Lightner, Dennis Currie, Kevin Finnerty, Alice Dobransky, Ihor Pavlusyk, Jamie Maluk, Judith Tipple, Alexandr, Missouri, Jane, Erica Shonn, Sam, Lorenzo, Rick Wilson, Tom Drabick, Walter Duzzny, Lori, Christine Kline, Larry, Soldier Ivan, Dolly Mehalco, Stephen Shonn, Thelma Zemko, Artur Bohuslav, Lori Hayda, Shirley Duffy, Michele (Senediak) Caulder, Dobrodiyka Lilya, Sandy, Marilyn O'Leary, Harold Owens, Marianne Carmack, Nicholas Yurchyk, Pauline Witkowsky, Eileen Maluk, Peter Anderson, Albert Auden, Boris & Kathleen Vuksanovich, Kathy Zebel. People Suffering from any Illnesses. Ukrainian people suffering from war.

OUR OFFERINGS TO THE LORD	On December 7	On December 14
General:	\$ 888.00	\$ 1544.00
Renovation:	\$ 00.00	\$ 00.00
Online Donations on Tithe.ly	\$ 00.00	\$ 64.00

**Pyrohy Sale ~ \$1,198.00**

**Thanksgiving Donations ~ \$ 5,200.00**

### Bulletin Dedication

*(in memory of a loved one, or in honor for an anniversary)*

<b>Sun Dec 7</b> 1. Dedicated 2. Dedicated	<b>Sun Dec 14</b> 1. Available 2. Available	<b>Sun Dec 21</b> 1. Dedicated 2. Available	<b>Sun Dec 28</b> Not Available	
<b>Sun Jan 4</b> 1. Available 2. Available	<b>Sun Jan 11</b> 1. Available 2. Available	<b>Sun Jan 18</b> 1. Dedicated 2. Available	<b>Sun Jan 25</b> Not Available	

# Liturgical Schedule & Feast Days



## SERVICE AND FEAST DAY SCHEDULE

\* (HEARING CONFESSIONS ON SUNDAYS BEFORE LITURGY 8:30AM - 9:15AM)

- Sunday, December 21, 9:30AM – **Divine Liturgy, 28<sup>th</sup>** Sunday after Pentecost (*Lk 17:12-19*)  
*Jesus healing ten lepers*  
*Rite of Induction to the Office of the Newly Elected Board Members & the Sisterhood Officers*
- Sunday, December 28, 9:30AM – **Divine Liturgy, 29<sup>th</sup>** Sunday after Pentecost (*Lk 14:16-24*)  
*Parable of the Great Banquet*
- Sunday, January 4, 9:30AM – **Divine Liturgy, 30<sup>th</sup>** Sunday after Pentecost  
*The Genealogy of Jesus the Messiah*
- Tuesday, January 6, 6:30PM – Christmas Eve, Great Compline before Nativity,  
Caroling in Church.
- Wednesday, January 7, 9:30AM – Divine Liturgy,  
**THE NATIVITY OF OUR LORD GOD AND SAVIOR JESUS CHRIST - CHRISTMAS.**
- Sunday, January 12, 9:30AM – Divine Liturgy, 31<sup>st</sup> Sunday after Pentecost

## Upcoming dates & events

- December 21 – Baptism & Christmation of Jacob Kornblum
- December 28 (extended) – Due date to submit the names for the *Precious Angels*
- January 4 – **Christmas Play** in the Church.
- January 13 – **Tea & Fellowship with Fr Mykola** at 6pm at Church downstairs
- January 18 – **Fellowship** organized by Erica Shonn in Memory of her father Stephen Shonn

THIS MONTH OUR PARISH CELEBRATES

**HAPPY  
BIRTHDAY!**

## DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

3 Kevin Semchee	14 Martha Woloschak
4 Gheorghiy Kolosovsky	16 Dorothy Villers
6 Mary Zebel	20 Nicholas Yurchyk
6 Sandy Senedak	20 Jacob Kornblum
8 Bernard Gnat	23 Barbara Novicky
8 Emily Hillard	23 Frank Senediak
10 JoAnn Gnat	24 Jerry Zets
10 Thomas Inchak	25 Charles Ames
10 Ashley Woloschak	26 Diane Demetrios
13 Mike Joe Maluk	31 Melissa Crown

May the Lord Bless you with Great Health and  
Joy in Your Heart!

## ANNOUNCEMENTS & GREETINGS:



- **PRECIOUS ANGELS**

Let`s fill the *Christmas Trees* with  
*Precious Angels*

*A great way to Remember and Honor your loved ones.*

There are envelopes in the back of the church for sponsoring the Angels. Please fill out the information on the envelope with your donation.

**Sponsored by the Jr.UOL**

*Return the envelopes to Crystal or Yvonne By Sunday DEC 28<sup>th</sup> !*



- **2025 Church Calendar is available**

Please get a calendar for your home.

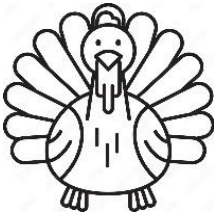
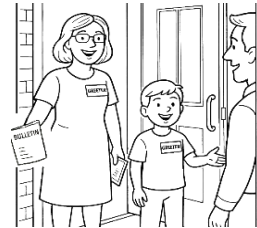
You may take more than one: for your workplace or for someone else etc.

- **CHURCH GREETERS**

**Please consider being a church greeter.**

We need greeters for Dec 28. Jan 4, 7, 18 & 25.

We are trying to get ahead. Call or text - 234-247-1534, Anna



- **THANKSGIVING DONATIONS - \$ 5200.00**

God bless all who donated to the Church this Thanksgiving as a way of Giving Thanks to God for His blessings!

**This year`s Thanksgiving Donations will go towards the Cemetery Perpetual Care Fund.**

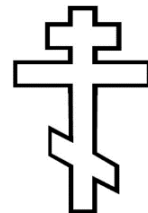
- **REPOSED IN THE LORD**

+ Walter Duzzny

- **CALLING HOURS:** Monday, Dec 29, noon to 1pm

- **FUNERAL SERVICE:** Monday, Dec 29 at 1pm

Followed by interment at Sts. Peter & Paul Cemetery.



*The Calling Hours and the Funeral Service will take place on Monday Dec 29 at the **Cemetery Chapel** at 1300 N Osborn Ave, Youngstown, OH 44509*

## Reflection on the Ten Lepers

In the story of the ten lepers, we see human suffering, divine mercy, and a quiet but piercing question about gratitude. All ten cry out to Jesus from a distance, and all ten are healed. God's mercy is given fully, freely, and without condition. Yet only one returns to give thanks.



This reminds us that God's grace is not earned by gratitude—it is given before it. The healing came first. Thanksgiving came after.

And still, Jesus pauses and asks: *“Where are the nine?”* Not because He needed praise, but because thanksgiving completes the healing of the heart.

The lepers were obedient—they went as Jesus told them, and on the way they were cleansed. But only one recognized that healing is not just physical restoration; it is restored relationship. Gratitude brought him back into communion, back into the presence of Christ, where Jesus tells him, *“Your faith has made you well.”* In the original sense, this means **made whole**, not just cured.

It is also striking that the grateful one is a Samaritan—an outsider. This teaches us that closeness to religious life does not guarantee a thankful heart. Gratitude is not about status, knowledge, or routine; it is about recognition. Do we recognize God's hand in our lives, or do we move on quickly once our prayers are answered?

The story invites us to ask ourselves:

- Do we remember to return to God when things improve?
- Do we see healing as an endpoint—or as an invitation to deeper faith?

Like the Samaritan leper, we are called not only to receive God's mercy but to **return**, fall at Christ's feet, and give glory to God. In doing so, we discover that thanksgiving itself becomes a form of healing. This story leaves us with a quiet but urgent invitation: do not let God's blessings become so familiar that they pass unnoticed. The tragedy is not that the nine were healed and did not return, but that they missed the deeper gift of standing once more in the presence of Christ. Gratitude is not an obligation placed upon us by God; it is the doorway through which we re-enter relationship with Him. When we pause to give thanks—especially after our prayers have been answered—we acknowledge that our lives are sustained not by chance or self-effort, but by mercy. In returning to Christ with thankful hearts, we are not merely healed for a moment; we are drawn into wholeness that endures.

## Various Times & Various Moments

*In times of joy - give praise to God.*

*In times of hardship - seek God.*

*In moments of peace - bow before God.*

*In times of pain - place your trust in God.*

*And in every moment - live with gratitude toward God.*

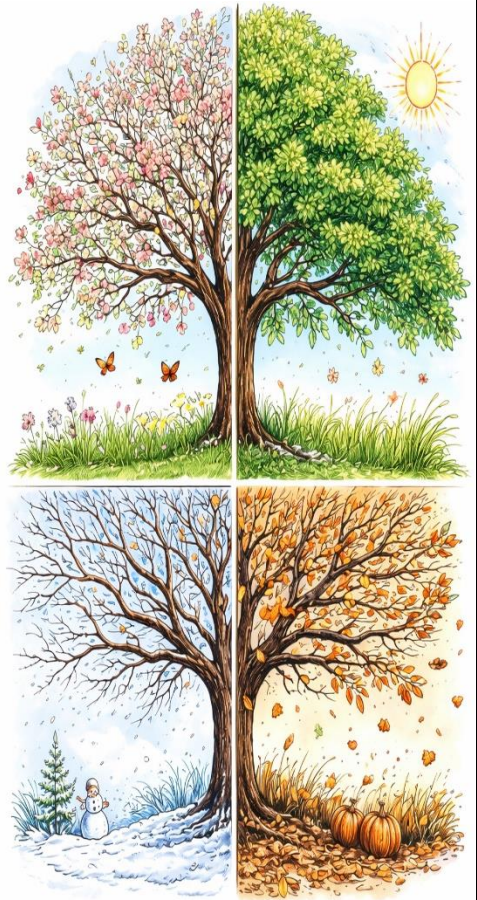
Life unfolds in many seasons, and each season calls us to meet God in a different way. When joy fills our hearts, we are invited to lift our voices in praise, recognizing that every blessing flows from God's loving hand. Praise keeps our joy rooted in humility and transforms happiness into thanksgiving.

When hardship enters our lives, we are called to seek God more deeply. In struggle, we learn that we are not meant to walk alone. Seeking God in difficult moments opens our hearts to His guidance, strength, and quiet reassurance.

In moments of peace, we bow before God. Silence teaches us reverence and trust, reminding us that God is present even when words fail. In stillness, our souls learn to listen and rest in His presence.

When pain weighs heavily upon us, we are asked to place our trust in God. Trust does not deny suffering; it surrenders it. It is an act of faith that believes God is near, even when the road is dark.

And in every moment—whether joyful or painful—we are called to live with gratitude toward God. Gratitude shapes our vision, helping us see God at work in all things. It anchors our hearts in faith and reminds us that God's love remains constant through every season of life.





IN MEMORY

# ANASTASIA MISCHEY

+ DEC 12, 1972

ON THE ANNIVERSARY  
OF HER PASSING AWAY



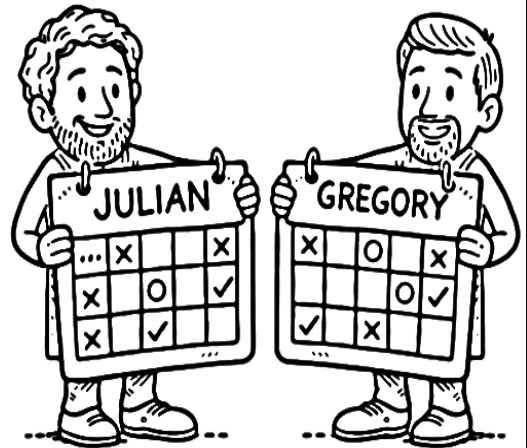
**“BLESSED ARE THOSE  
WHOM YOU HAVE CHOSEN  
AND CEIVED, O LORD”**

SHE IS MISSED  
BY HER SON BENNY MISCHEY  
AND THE FAMILY



# The Difference Between the Julian, Gregorian & Revised-Julian Calendars.

*Why Christmas Is Celebrated on  
December 25 & January 7*



Many people are surprised to learn that Christmas appears on different civil dates, but this difference does **not** come from disagreement about Christ's birth. **All traditional Christian churches celebrate the Nativity on December 25.** The difference depends entirely on **which calendar is used** to determine that date.

## 1. The Julian Calendar: Ancient and Faithful, but Inexact

The **Julian calendar**, introduced in **46 BC** under Julius Caesar, was adopted by the early Church and used for centuries.

- It assumes a year is **365.25 days**
- The true solar year is about **365.2422 days**
- The small difference—about **11 minutes per year**—accumulates over time

Because of this, the Julian calendar slowly drifted:

- By **1582**, it was **10 days off**
- Since **1900**, it has been **13 days behind** the civil calendar

📌 **Important:** When the Church established December 25 as the feast of the Nativity, the Julian calendar was correctly aligned with the seasons.

## 2. The Gregorian Calendar: Correcting the Drift

In **1582**, the **Gregorian calendar** was introduced to correct this drift.

- **10 days were removed** to restore alignment with the solar year
- Leap-year rules were refined:
  - Century years are leap years **only if divisible by 400**

This produced a very accurate calendar and became the **civil calendar used worldwide today**. Gradually, countries across Europe—and later the rest of the world—**adopted the Gregorian calendar for civil life**. The calendar used by governments, schools, and society moved forward.

**Here is the key point:**

👉 **The civil calendar moved — not the Church feast days.**

Some churches **remained on the Julian calendar**, continuing to celebrate feasts on the same traditional dates they always had. However, because the **civil calendar had moved ahead**, those feasts now appeared **later in the civil year**. In 1582 after the civil calendar switched to the Gregorian, 10 days were eliminated, however some Churches kept their calculation according to the Julian calendar and never switched.

### 3. So, why the Dates Differ Today

Because the Julian calendar continues to drift. In 1582 when the Gregorian calendar was applied to the world`s calculation, Christmas that was always celebrated on December 25<sup>th</sup> became January 4<sup>th</sup> because some Churches kept their calculation according to the Julian calendar and never switched. And because of its inaccuracy it continued to drift. Today its January 7. In 2100 year it will be January 8.

- It is currently **13 days behind** the Gregorian calendar

As a result, **December 25 (Julian)** falls on **January 7 (Gregorian)**. This is why **some Orthodox Churches** celebrate Christmas on January 7—while others celebrate it on December 25.

👉 **The feast is the same; only the calendar differs.**

### 4. The Revised Julian Calendar: The Most Important Clarification

In **1923**, the Church introduced the **Revised Julian calendar** to address this issue.

**What is the Revised Julian calendar?**

- It **uses the same fixed feast dates as the Gregorian calendar**
- For feasts like Christmas:
  - **December 25 = December 25** on the civil calendar
- It corrects the Julian calendar's drift while **preserving the Church's liturgical structure**

**The crucial point, according to the Revised Julian Calendar:**

- **Fixed feasts** (Christmas and other feast days, saints' days) follow **Gregorian calendar**
- **Pascha (Easter)** is still calculated using the **traditional Julian method**

📌 This means the Church:

- **Adopted Gregorian accuracy for fixed feasts**
- **Retained Julian tradition for Pascha**

### 5. How Widely Is the Revised Julian Calendar Used?

Today, the **majority of Orthodox Churches** follow the **Revised Julian calendar** for fixed feasts, including: Constantinople, Alexandria, Antioch, Greece, Romania, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Albania.

A **smaller number** continue to use the **Julian calendar** for all feasts, which is why January 7 Christmas still exists.

The parishes of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the USA currently observe two different calendars: the Julian Calendar and the Revised Julian Calendar. There has been no directive from the hierarchs requiring parishes to switch from one calendar to the other. However, a parish may hold a vote on this matter, and after presenting the results to the hierarchs, may receive their blessing to make the change. At present, the majority of parishes within the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the USA have adopted the Revised Julian Calendar.

**So, the different Christmas dates exist only because the world and some churches use different calendars. The feast itself is always December 25, but it appears on different days when viewed through the Gregorian civil calendar.**

# Orthodox Christianity 101

## Emperor Justinian and the 5th Ecumenical Council

In the sixth century, the Byzantine Emperor Justinian wanted to reaffirm the fact that the followers of the council of Chalcedon really believed that Jesus Christ is the incarnate Son and Word of God, one of the Holy Trinity. He wanted to do this primarily to convince those who did not accept the fourth council that its definition did not reintroduce the error of Nestorius. To do this, the Emperor called the council now known as the fifth ecumenical council in Constantinople in 553 which further served to clarify the Orthodox position in regard to the person and action of Christ. The following are some of the key texts of this council:

*If anyone understands the expression “one Person only of our Lord Jesus Christ” in this sense, that it is the union of many hypostases [or persons], and if he thus attempts to introduce into the mystery of Christ two hypostases or two persons, and after having introduced two persons speaks of one Person only in the sense of dignity, honor or worship ... [and] shall calumniate the holy council of Chalcedon, pretending that it used this expression [one hypostasis and person] in this impious sense .??. let him be anathema.*

*If anyone shall not call in a true acception .??. the holy, glorious and ever-virgin Mary, the Theotokos .??. believing that she bare only a simple man and that God the Word was not incarnate of her .??. [and] shall calumniate the holy synod of Chalcedon as though it has asserted the Virgin to be Theotokos according to the impious sense .??. let him be anathema.*

*If anyone using the expression “in two natures” does not confess that our one Lord Jesus Christ has been revealed in the divinity and in the humanity, so as to designate by that expression a difference of the natures of which an ineffable union is made without confusion, in which neither the nature of the Word was changed into that of the flesh, nor that of the flesh into that of the Word, for each remained what it was by nature, the union being hypostatic [i.e., in the one Person]; but shall take the expression to divide the parties .??. let him be anathema.*

*If anyone does not confess that our Lord Jesus Christ who was crucified in the flesh is true God and the Lord of Glory and one of the Holy Trinity, let him be anathema.*

To further emphasize the point that the Chalcedonian Council was truly orthodox, the Emperor Justinian wrote a doctrinal hymn which is still sung in the Orthodox Church at every divine liturgy. It confesses the Lord Jesus Christ as perfect God and perfect man.

*Only-begotten Son and Word of God, Who for our salvation willed to be incarnate of the holy Theotokos and ever-virgin Mary, Who without change became man and was crucified, Who is one of the Holy Trinity, glorified with the Father and the Holy Spirit, O Christ our God, trampling down death by death, Save us!*

## The Monothelite Controversy

In the seventh century the question of how to understand, define and confess the person and action of Jesus Christ continued to cause divisions among the believers. Some now said that after the Son of God became man, He had just one activity and will—the andric activity and will of the Word-made-flesh. These people, called monothelites, insisted that the One Person of Christ, in uniting the natures of God and Man in His One Person, fused together the human and divine will and activity in such a way that they no longer could be distinguished.

The sixth ecumenical council met in Constantinople in 680–681. Following the teachings of St Maximus the Confessor who was imprisoned and tortured for his doctrines, it decreed that just as Christ is really fully divine and fully



human, the perfect union of Divinity and Humanity in one Person, so also He must have both a real human activity and will and a real divine activity and will according to each of His natures and that these two wills and activities, like the natures themselves, should not be understood to be fused or mingled together into one so as to lose their proper natural characteristics and properties. This decision was based on the fact that since the Son of God remained fully divine in the incarnation, He must continue to have His proper divine activity and will; and that since He became fully human in the incarnation He must also have a complete and perfect human activity and will; and that the salvation of mankind requires that the distinction but not the division or separation of each of these respective activities and wills remain in the incarnate Saviour. The following is part of the definition of faith of the sixth council:

*...in Him are two natural wills and two natural operations without division, without fusion, without change and without separation according to the teaching of the holy fathers. And these two natural wills are not contrary to one another (God forbid!) .... but His human will follows, and not as resisting and reluctant, but rather as subject to His divine and omnipotent will .... For as His most holy and immaculate animated flesh was not destroyed because it was deified but continued in its own state and nature, so also His human will, although deified, was not suppressed, but was rather preserved .... We glorify two natural operations .... in the same Lord Jesus Christ our true God, that is to say a divine operation [or action] and a human operation*

.... For we will not admit one natural operation in God and in the creature. ... believing our Lord Jesus Christ to be one of the Trinity, and after the incarnation our true God we say that His two natures shone forth in His one hypostasis [or person] in which He both performed the miracles and endured the sufferings .... Wherefore we confess two wills and two operations concurring most fitly in Him for the salvation of the human race.

### **Iconoclastic Controversy**

In the eighth and ninth centuries the question of the person and nature of Christ continued in the controversy over the veneration of the holy icons in the Church. At this time many were found, including emperors and secular rulers, who claimed that the veneration of icons is wrong because it is the sin of idolatry. They claimed that as God is invisible and has commanded in the Old Testament law that men are not to make “graven images,” so it is wrong to depict and to honor images of Christ and the saints.

The defenders of the veneration of the holy icons, led by Saints John Damascene and Theodore Studion, claimed that the central point of the Christian faith is that “the Word became flesh and dwelt among us” and that “we have beheld His glory” ([Jn 1.14](#)). Referring to the holy scriptures they insisted that belief in the incarnation of the Son of God calls for the veneration of icons since Jesus Christ is a real man with a real human soul and body, and as such can be depicted. They said that those who were against the holy icons reduced the incarnation to a “fantasy” and denied the true humanity of the Son of God in His coming to man. Thus they made reference to the words of Jesus Himself in His dialogue with Philip:

*Philip said to Him, “Lord, show us the Father and we shall be satisfied.”*

Jesus said to him, “Have I been with you so long, and yet you do not know me, Philip? He who has seen me has seen the Father; how can you say, ‘Show us the Father?’” ([Jn 14.8–9](#)). The defenders of the propriety of icon veneration also referred to the apostolic writings of Saint John and Saint Paul: *That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon and touched with our hands concerning the Word of Life the Life was made manifest, and we saw it . . . . the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the likeness [in Greek: eikon] of God ([2Cor 4.4](#)). He is the image [eikon] of the invisible God, the first born of all creation; for in Him all things were created, in heaven and on earth all things were created through Him and for Him . . . . for in Him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell (Colossians 1.15–20). In many and various ways God spoke of old to our fathers by the prophets, but in these last days He has spoken to us by a Son, whom He appointed the heir of all*

*things, through whom also He created the world. He is the reflection of the glory of God and the express image of His person, upholding the universe by the word of His power (Hebrews 1.1–3).*

The seventh ecumenical council in Nicea in 787 officially declared that the Christian faith is to be proclaimed “in words and images.” And while making clear the teaching that holy icons may be made; that they are not to be worshipped-for only God Himself is worthy of worship-but are to be venerated and honored; the seventh council also made the following statement about Christ in reference to the veneration of icons:

.... we keep unchanged all the ecclesiastical traditions handed down to us, whether in writing or verbally, one of which is the making of pictorial representations, agreeable to the history of the preaching of the Gospel, a tradition useful in many respects, but especially in this, that so the incarnation of the Word of God is shone forth in real and not merely in phantasy, for these have mutual indications and without doubt have also mutual significations.

In later times the doctrines of the real divinity and real humanity of Jesus Christ was witnessed and defended by such saints as Simeon the New Theologian (d. 1022) and Gregory Palamas, the Archbishop of Thessalonika (d. 1359) in their teachings about the real sanctification and deification of man through living communion with God through Jesus Christ in the Holy Spirit in the Church. In and through Christ, the Word incarnate, human persons can be filled with the Spirit of God and can be in genuine communion with God the Father, participating in the uncreated being, life and light of the Most Blessed Trinity. If Jesus Christ were not true God and true Man, this would be impossible. But it is not impossible. It is man’s experience of salvation and redemption in the life of the Church of Christ.

## **Redemption**

### **And He was crucified for us under Pontius Pilate, and suffered, and was buried.**

Although Jesus did not sin and did not have to suffer and die, he voluntarily took upon himself the sins of the world and voluntarily gave himself up to suffering and death for the sake of salvation. This was his task as the Messiah-Saviour:

*“The Spirit of the Lord is upon me to bring good tidings to the afflicted ... to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to those who are bound ... to comfort all who mourn ... to give them a garland instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning” (Is 61.1–3).*

And at the same time, Jesus had to do this as the suffering servant of Yahweh-God.

*He was despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief, and as one from whom men hide their faces he was despised. and we esteemed him not.*

Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows, yet we esteemed him stricken, smitten by God and afflicted.

But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities, upon him was the chastisement that made us whole, and by his stripes [i.e., wounds] we are healed.

All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned everyone to his own way; and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all.

He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth; like a lamb led to the slaughter, and like a sheep that before his shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth.

By oppression and judgement he was taken away .... And they made his grave with the wicked, and with a rich man in his death, although he had done no violence, and there was no deceit in his mouth.

Yet it was the will of the Lord [Yahweh] to bruise him; he has put him to grief; when he makes himself an offering for sin, he shall see his offspring, he shall prolong his days; the will of the Lord shall prosper in his hand; he shall see the fruit of the travail of his soul and be satisfied; by his knowledge shall the righteous one, my servant, make many to be accounted righteous; and he shall bear their iniquities.

Therefore I will divide him a portion with the great and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he poured out his soul to death, and was numbered with the transgressors; yet he bore the sin of many [or the multitude] and made intercession for the transgressors.

[\(Is 53\)](#)

These words of the prophet Isaiah written centuries before the birth of Jesus tell the story of his Messianic mission. It began officially before the eyes of all in his baptism by John in the Jordan. By allowing himself to be baptized with the sinners though he had no sin, Jesus shows that he accepts his calling to be identified with the sinners: “the Beloved” of the Father and “the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world” ([Jn 1.29](#); [Mat 3.17](#)).

Jesus begins to teach, and on the very day and at that very moment when his disciples first confess him to be the Messiah, “the Christ, the Son of the Living God,” Jesus tells immediately of his mission to “go to Jerusalem and suffer many things .... and be killed, and on the third day be raised” ([Mt 16.16–23](#); [Mk 8.29–33](#)). The apostles are greatly upset by this. Jesus then immediately shows them his divinity by being transfigured before them in divine glory on the mountain in the presence of Moses and Elijah. He then tells them once more: “The Son of Man is to be delivered into the hands of men, and they will kill him, and he will be raised on the third day” ([Mt 17.1–23](#); [Mk 9.1–9](#)).

The powers of evil multiplied against Christ at the end: “The kings of the earth counsel together against the Lord and His Christ” ([Ps 2.2](#)). They were looking for causes to kill him. The formal reason was blasphemy, “because you, being a man, make yourself God” ([Jn 10.31–38](#)). Yet the deep reasons were more personal: Jesus told men the truth and revealed their stubbornness, foolishness, hypocrisy, and sin. For this reason every sinner, hardened in his sins and refusing to repent, wishes and causes the crucifixion of Christ.

The death of Jesus came at the hands of the religious and political leaders of his time, with the approval of the masses: when Caiaphas was high priest, “under Pontius Pilate.” He was “crucified for us .??. and suffered and was buried” in order to be with us in our sufferings and death which we brought upon ourselves because of our sins: “for the wages of sin are death” ([Rom 6.23](#)). In this sense the Apostle Paul writes of Jesus that “having become a curse for us” ([Gal 3.13](#)), “for our sake he (God the Father) made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God” ([2Cor 5.21](#)).

The sufferings and death of Christ in obedience to the Father reveals the super-abundant divine love of God for his creation. For when all was sinful, cursed, and dead, Christ became sin, a curse, and dead for us-though he himself never ceased to be the righteousness and blessedness and life of God Himself. It is to this depth, of which lower and more base cannot be discovered or imagined, that Christ has humiliated himself “for us men and for our salvation.” For being God, he became man; and being man, he became a slave; and being a slave, he became dead and not only dead, but dead on a cross. From this deepest degradation of God flows the eternal exaltation of man. This is the pivotal doctrine of the Orthodox Christian faith, expressed over and again in many ways throughout the history of the Orthodox Church. It is the doctrine of the *atonement*-for we are made to be “at one” with God. It is the doctrine of redemption-for we are redeemed, i.e., “bought with a price,” the great price of the blood of God ([Acts 20.28](#); [1Cor 6.20](#)).

*Have this mind among yourselves which you have in Christ Jesus who, though He was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a servant [slave], being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, He humbled Himself and became obedient unto death, even death on a cross. Therefore God has highly exalted Him and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father ([Phil 2.5–11](#)).*

In contemplating the saving and redeeming action of Christ, it has become traditional to emphasize three aspects which in reality are not divided, and cannot be; but which in theory (i.e., in the vision of Christ’s being and activity as the Saviour of the world) may be distinguished. The first of these three aspects of the redeeming work of Christ is the fact that Jesus saves mankind by providing the perfect image and example of human life as filled with the grace and power of God.

