



WEEKLY BULLETIN

BULLETIN BUILDER

Assumption Greek Orthodox Church

October 11, 2020: Sunday of the 7th Ecumenical Council – The Sower

SAINTS: **Philip** the Deacon & one of the 70 Apostles; **Nectarios, Arsakios, Sisinios** and **Philotheos Kokkinos**, Patriarchs of Constantinople; **Theophanes** the Confessor & Bishop of Nicaea; **Kenneth** the Irish, **Ethelburga**, Abbess of Barking; **Jonas** of Pergamos; **Zenais** and **Philonilla**; **Germanos** the Athonite; All-Saints in **Kios**; All-Fathers of the **7th Ecumenical Council**

ANNOUNCEMENTS

October Food Fest: Order & Pay Online by Oct 21st at: www.foodfest.assumptionnh.org or 603-623-2641

Paraklesis to Panagia (Supplication to Virgin Mary): Wednesday, **October 14th**, at **5:00 PM**

REGISTER CHILDREN ONLINE for Greek School: www.greekschool.assumptionnh.org/registration

Greek School: **Wednesdays 4:00 - 5:30 PM** (classes 5 & 6) & **Thursdays 4:00 - 7:15 PM** (classes 1, 2, 3 & 4)

Gospel and Epistle Readings

Matins Gospel Reading - *Seventh Orthros Gospel, John 20:1-10*

On the first day of the week Mary Magdalene came to the tomb early, while it was still dark, and saw that the stone had been taken away from the tomb. So she ran, and went to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved, and said to them, "They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid him." Peter then came out with the other disciple, and they went toward the tomb. They both ran, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first; and stooping to look in, he saw the linen cloths lying there, but he did not go in. Then Simon Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb; he saw the linen cloths lying, and the napkin, which had been on his head, not lying with the linen cloths but rolled up in a place by itself. Then the other disciple, who reached the tomb first, also went in, and he saw and believed; for as of yet they did not know the scripture, that he must rise from the dead. Then the disciples went back to their homes. AMEN

Epistle Reading - *St. Paul's Letter to Titus 3:8-15*

TITUS, my son, the saying is sure. I desire you to insist on these things, so that those who have believed in God may be careful to apply themselves to good deeds; these are excellent and profitable to men. But avoid stupid controversies, genealogies, dissensions, and quarrels over the law, for they are unprofitable and futile. As for a man who is factious, after admonishing him once or twice, have nothing more to do with him, knowing that such a person is perverted and sinful; he is self-condemned. When I send Artemas or Tychicos to you, do your best to come to me at Nicopolis, for I have decided to spend the winter there. Do your best to speed Zenas the lawyer and Apollos on their way; see that they lack nothing. And let our people learn to apply themselves to good deeds, so as to help cases of urgent need, and not to be unfruitful. All who are with me send greeting to you. Greet those who love us in the faith. Grace be with you all. AMEN

Gospel Reading - *Sunday of the 7th Ecumenical Council, Luke 8:5-15*

The Lord said this parable: "A sower went out to sow his seed; and as he sowed, some fell along the path, and was trodden under foot, and the birds of the air devoured it. And some fell on the rock; and as it grew up, it withered away, because it had no moisture. And some fell among thorns; and the thorns grew with it and choked it. And some fell into good soil and grew, and yielded a hundredfold." And when his disciples asked him what this parable meant, he said, "To you it has been given to know the secrets of the kingdom of God; but for others they are in parables, so that seeing they may not see, and hearing they may not understand. Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God. The ones along the path are those who have heard; then the devil comes and takes away the

word from their hearts, that they may not believe and be saved. And the ones on the rock are those who, when they hear the word, receive it with joy; but these have no root, they believe for a while and in time of temptation fall away. And as for what fell among the thorns, they are those who hear, but as they go on their way they are choked by the cares and riches and pleasures of life, and their fruit does not mature. And as for that in the good soil, they are those who, hearing the word, hold it fast in an honest and good heart, and bring forth fruit with patience." As he said these things, he cried out "He who has ears to hear, let him hear." AMEN

Which one are you?



Our Lord was teaching unceasingly. On the mount, in the valley, by the lake, at the town squares, by the fountain, in homes, at synagogues, in the Temple. However, not everyone received His Word the same way. Some (like the crowds) thought He was a great prophet and healer. Some others (like Judas), thought He was the next King and liberator of Israel from the Romans. Some others (like Peter), realized He was the Messiah, the Son of God. Everyone heard the same Word and witnessed the same miracles. Yet, each understood something different. The same happens today. Many hear the Holy Gospel, but each perceives something else, and some nothing at all!

Our Lord today uses a PARABLE, that of the SOWER, to prophecy how His Word will be received among men. In it, He separates all people into **four categories**, from which **only one will be saved!** First, are those whose hearts are hard (like the trotted path). In them, the seed (the Word) cannot grow roots, but rather birds (the devil) steal it. They do not produce any fruits (love for God and fellow man) but instead they say, **“the Word of God does not apply in our days and circumstances.”** Next up, are those whose hearts are like a field with rocks (our wishes). In them, the Word takes a little root, but stops when it runs up against these rocks (the wishes). Then the Word dies. **These are the people who say they believe, but on the first obstacle they give up.** Their personal property and peace of mind are more important than following Christ. Next up, are those whose hearts are like a field of weeds (temptations of the flesh). There, the Word grows for a while, but soon it gets choked by their secular way of life and dies. For this group, **the flesh is more powerful than the spirit.**

Finally, there is the fourth group, “the good soil.” For them, the Word takes root inside their heart. They have thrown out the rocks (their will), have uprooted the weeds (their temptations), have chased away the birds (the devil) and they accept and apply the Word willingly. **How can we also be “the good soil”?** By attending Church, by reading Scripture on our own, by receiving Holy Communion, by cleansing anything sinful from our hearts through Holy Confession, by doing ministry for God and our fellow man, but most importantly by **confessing Christ and being willing to suffer for Him.** Yes, it is about exercising virtues and fighting sins, but above all it is about being willing to **pick up our Cross and follow Christ!** During the time of this pandemic we are all being tested by God to show which group we belong to. **Are we fighting for Christ or are we giving up?**

All of us have heard the Word of God. However, only few make changes and truly put it to work. This is why He says at the end: **“those who have ears, let them hear.”** AMEN

Lives of Saints



Sunday of the 7th Ecumenical Council

On the Sunday that falls on or immediately after the 11th of October, we remember the 350 holy Fathers of the 7th Ecumenical Council, of Nicaea. It took place in 787 AD under the Patriarch Tarasios and the reign of the Empress Irene and her son, Constantine Porphyrogenitos. Its aim was to refute the Iconoclast heresy, which at first had received imperial support, starting with the Edict of Emperor Leo the Isaurian, issued in 726. Many of the holy Fathers who condemned Iconoclasm at this holy Council later died as Confessors and Martyrs for the holy Icons during the second assault of Iconoclasm in the ninth century, especially during the reign of Leo the Armenian and Theophilos.

Wisdom of the Fathers

His is truly the Sower of all that is good, and we are His farm. The whole harvest of spiritual fruits is by Him and from Him. He taught us this when He said, “Without me you can do nothing.”

St. Cyril of Alexandria - Commentary on Luke, Homily 41. Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture. InterVarsity Press, 132.