

October 17: The Holy Prophet Hosea (820 BC)

His name means "God is Help." He is the first and earliest of the twelve Minor Prophets. At the Lord's command he married a harlot, who was repeatedly unfaithful to him despite his love and faithfulness toward her. In his prophetic writings he shows this marriage as an image of God's faithful care for His unfaithful people.

Holy Martyrs Cosmas and Damian, the Unmercenaries of Cilicia (4th c.)

The Church commemorates three pairs of brothers named Cosmas and Damian, all counted among the Unmercenary Physicians. The first reposed in peace and are commemorated on November 1; the second were stoned to death in Rome, and are commemorated on July 1; the third pair, commemorated today, were Arab doctors. They embraced the Christian faith together and thereafter cared for the sick in the name of the Lord Jesus, performing many miraculous healings. They were handed over to the governor Lysias by jealous pagans. When the governor accused them of healing by sorcery, they replied 'We have no sort of magic, nor use any, but we have the power of Christ to save us and all who call upon His holy Name.' The governor first attempted to bribe them to deny Christ then, when this was useless, subjected them to many tortures. Finally they were beheaded. Their holy relics continued to perform many miracles of healing.

from St. Andrew of Crete's Homily on Palm Sunday:

So let us spread before His feet, not garments or soulless olive branches, which delight the eye for a few hours and then wither, but ourselves, clothed in His grace, or rather, clothed completely in Him. We who have been baptized into Christ must ourselves be the garments that we spread before Him...

Let us spread the thoughts and desires of our hearts under His feet like garments, so that entering us with the whole of His being, He may draw the whole of our being into Himself and place the whole of His in us.

St. Ignatios of Antioch Melkite Church

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Sunday of the Fathers of the 7th Council

Tone: 4

October 17, 2010

Eothonon: 10

Today

Sunday of the Fathers of the Second Council of Nicea, or Seventh Ecumenical Council

Commemoration of the Holy Prophet Hosea, St. Andrew of Crete, and the Holy Martyrs Cosmas and Damian, the Unmercenaries of Cilicia

Coffee hour 30 min. class: *The Philokalia*

This Week

Oct. 19, Tues. Final Lossky class, 6:30 PM

October

Oct. 23, Sat. Liturgy of St. James, 10 AM

Oct. 24, Sun. Priesthood Appreciation Dinner, sponsored by the Serra Club—see bulletin board for more info.

Oct. 28, Thurs. Ladies Lunch, 11:30 AM, place TBA

November

Nov. 21, Sun. Entrance of the Theotokos to the Temple

On going: 40 Days for Life, a peaceful prayer vigil at Planned Parenthood on Broad St., from Sept. 22 to Oct. 31.

*Publicans' Prayers on 2nd and 4th Fridays at 11:00 AM
And at 5:00 PM on first Saturdays*

Sunday

*Orthros 9:15 AM
Divine Liturgy 10:00 AM*

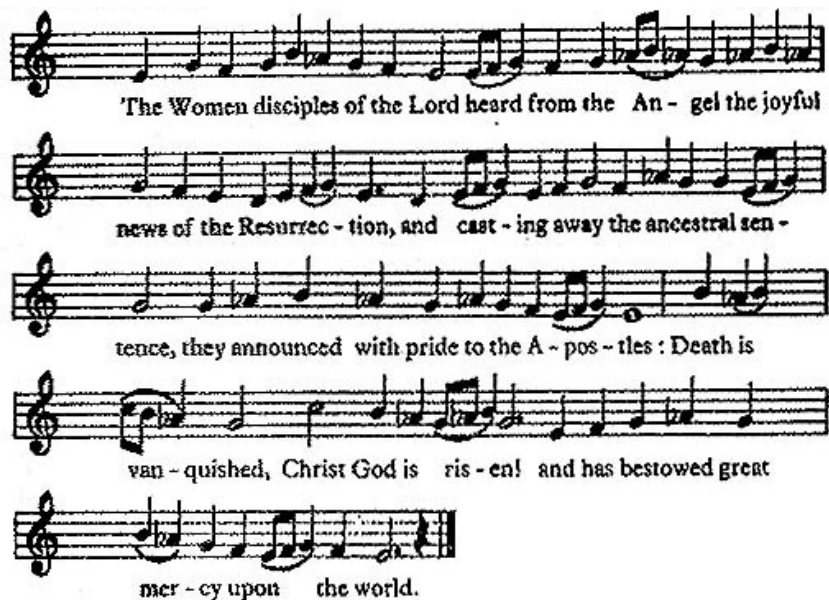
Daily

Vespers 5:30 PM

This Sunday's Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom

Hymns:

Troparion of the Resurrection, Tone 4



'The Women disciples of the Lord heard from the An - gel the joyful
news of the Resurrec - tion, and cast - ing away the ancestral sen -
tence, they announced with pride to the A - pos - tles : Death is
van - quished, Christ God is ris - en! and has bestowed great
mer - cy upon the world.

Troparion of the Fathers, 8th Tone

O Christ our God, you are infinitely glorified for You established our fathers as radiant stars on earth. Through them, You led us to the true faith. O Most Merciful One, glory to You!

Troparion of our patron, St. Ignatios of Antioch

Kontakion of the season: *O never-failing Protectress...*

Epistle of the Fathers, Titus 3: 8-15

PROKIMENON (Tone 4) Dn. 3: 26, 27

Blessed are you, O Lord, of our fathers, and Your name is worthy of praise and glorious forever.

Stichon: For You are just in all You have done to us, and all Your works are true and Your ways right.

both in houses and by the wayside, to wit, the figure of our Lord God and Savior Jesus Christ, of our spotless Lady, of the honorable Angels, of all Saints, and of all pious people.

“For by so much more frequently as they are seen in artistic representation, by so much more readily are people lifted up to the memory of their prototypes, and to a longing after them; and to these should be given due salutation and honorable reverence, not indeed that true worship of faith which pertains alone to the divine nature; but to these, as to the figure of the precious and life-giving Cross and to the Book of the Gospels and to the other holy objects, incense and lights may be offered according to ancient pious customs.”

For the honor which is paid to the image passes on to that which the image represents, and he who reveres the image reveres in it the subject represented. Thus, the icon is a true image, a window to heaven and a light which guides us there. In that sense it takes the same role as the pillar of fire which guided Israel through the wilderness to the Promised Land and the star which led the Wise Men to Christ. The icon is not intended to serve as a photograph of an earthly scene. Nor does it merely awaken in us the sense of ages past. Rather, the icon is there to lead our hearts to the King of Kings, to the brilliant glory of the Age to Come.

The icon is a holy image, a door to heaven. It tells us that our Lord Jesus Christ and His great cloud of witnesses are present, on hand, on high, with us. Therefore, it is indispensable for those who sincerely pursue and desire the fullness of Christian worship.

Excerpts from an article which is available as a printed booklet from Conciliar Media, a department of the Antiochian Archdiocese

O inspired Fathers, gathered for the Seventh Ecumenical Council, pray constantly to the Trinity to save from all heresy and from eternal judgment those who praise you, that they may receive the Kingdom of heaven.

Exapostilarion

Thirdly, he shows that we do not worship icons, for worship belongs to God alone, but we venerate or show honor to them, for the image is one thing, and the thing depicted is another," and he cites the veneration given in Scripture to the rod of Aaron, the jar of manna, and holy places like Mt. Sinai or Golgotha.

Finally, this Holy Father answers those that believe matter is in some way "bad." He begins by quoting Scripture: "*And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us.* It is obvious to everyone that Flesh is matter, and that it is created. I salute matter and I approach it with reverence, and I worship that through which my salvation has come. I honor it, not as God, but because it is full of divine grace and strength."

Icons in our churches and homes are, in the words of St. John "opened books to remind us of God." (indeed, an icon is a painted image of Christ just as Scripture is a written image of the Saviour.) This is why Timothy (Fr. Kallistos) Ware writes in *The Orthodox Church*: He who lacks learning or leisure to study works of theology has only to enter a church to see unfolded before him on the walls all the mysteries of the Christian religion. If a pagan asks you to show him your faith, said John of Damascus, take him into church and place before him the icons."

Fr. Alexey Young www.roca.org

In A.D. 787, the leadership of the entire Christian Church convened what is called the Seventh Ecumenical Council. After a thorough and lengthy examination of the Holy Scriptures and a consideration of the tradition bearing on the making and use of icons, this body decreed:

"We, therefore, following the royal path-way and the divinely inspired authority of our Holy Fathers and the traditions of the Church (for, as we all know, the Holy Spirit indwells her), define with all certainty and accuracy that just as the figure of the precious and life-giving Cross, so also the venerable and holy images, as well in painting and mosaic as of other fit materials, should be set forth in the holy Churches of God, and on the sacred vessels and on the vestments and on hangings and in pictures

READING from the Epistle of St. Paul to Titus:

My son Titus, this saying is true, and in this matter I want to insist that those who believe in God be careful to excel in good works: these are good and useful to people. But avoid foolish controversies and genealogies and quarrels, and disputes about the Law, for they are useless and futile.

Avoid a factious man after warning him once or twice, knowing that such a man is perverted and sins, since he is condemning himself.

When I send Artemas or Tychicus to you, make every effort to meet me at Nicopolis, for I have decided to spend the winter there. Help Zenas the lawyer and Apollos on their way, taking care that they lack nothing. And let our people also learn to excel in good works, in order to help cases of urgent need so that they may not be unfruitful. All my companions greet you. Greet those who love us in the faith. The grace of God be with all of you. Amen.

ALLELUIA (Tone 7) Ps.43: 2; 33: 18

O God, our ears have heard, our fathers have declared to us the deeds you did in their days, in the days of old.

Stichon: The just cried out, and the Lord heard them, and he delivered them from all their trials.

Gospel of the 4th Sunday of Holy Cross, Luke 8: 5-15 ***(Parable of the Sower)***

THE HOLY GOSPEL ACCORDING TO ST. LUKE THE EVANGELIST

THE Lord told this parable: "The sower went out to sow his seed. And as he sowed, some seed fell by the wayside and was trodden under foot, and the birds of the air ate it up. And other seed fell upon the rock, and as soon as it had sprung up it withered away, because it had no moisture. And other seed fell among thorns, and the thorns sprang up with it and choked it. And other seed fell upon good ground, and sprang up and yielded fruit a hundred-fold." As he said these things he cried out, "He who has ears to hear, let him hear! "But his disciples then began to ask him what this parable meant. He said to them, "To you it is given to know

the mystery of the kingdom of God, but to the rest in parables, that 'Seeing, they may not see, and hearing they may not understand.' Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God. And those by the wayside are they who have heard; then the devil comes and takes away the word from their heart, that they may not believe and be saved. Now those upon the rock are they who, when they have heard, receive the word with joy; and these have no root, but believe for a while, and in time of temptation fall away. And that which fell among the thorns, these are they who have heard, and as they go their way are choked by the cares and riches and pleasures of life, and their fruit does not ripen. But that upon good ground, these are they who, with a right and good heart, having heard the word, hold it fast, and bear fruit in patience." Having said this, he cried out: "He who has ears to hear, let him hear!"

Hymn to the Theotokos: *It is truly right.*

Kinonikon: *Praise the Lord...*

The Seventh Ecumenical Council and Icons

On the Sunday following October 10, there is celebrated a commemoration of the 350 Fathers who attended the Seventh Ecumenical council held at Nicea in the year 787, in which the question of Iconoclasm was settled. Emperor Leo the Isaurian had originated a campaign against religious images in 726: he had ordered all representations of Christ and his saints to be torn from the walls of churches and burned, and all bronze, silver and gold statues to be melted and converted into coins that would bear his effigy. A monk named Stephen presented one of these coins to the Emperor and asked him: "Sire, whose image is this?" "It is mine," answered the emperor. Whereupon the monk threw the coin on the ground and trampled it. He was seized by the imperial attendants and condemned to a cruel death. "Alas," cried the holy religious, "if I am punished so severely for dishonoring the image of a mortal monarch, what punishment do they deserve who burn the image of Jesus Christ!"

...In 787, the Second Council of Nicea established the doctrine of the Church, confirmed eight hundred years later by the council of Trent: "Images of Christ, of His Virgin Mother and of other saints should be made and preserved. Due honor and veneration should be given to them, not that any power or virtue is believed to be in them, on account of which they would need to be honored, or that any prayer should be addressed to them as had been done formerly by heathens who placed their hope in idols: but because the honor they receive refers to the subjects they represent, so that by kissing images, uncovering our heads or kneeling before them, we adore Christ and venerate his saints whose likeness they represent." (Session 25)

Archbishop Joseph Raya, *Byzantine Daily Worship*

One of the greatest defenders of icons, the Holy Father St. John of Damascus (see "Orthodox America," Vol. II, no. 1), gave an eloquent explanation of icons in three treatises called *Against Those Who Attack The Divine Images*. Very briefly summarized here, St. John expresses the consistent thought of the Church from the time of the Apostles to the Seventh Council.

First he reminded his readers that "no created thing can be adored in place of the Creator." God forbade the making of idols he says, because "it is impossible to make an image of the immeasurable...invisible God." Yet at the same time, "under the Old Covenant God commanded images to be made: first the tabernacle, and then everything in it"--which included images of angels surmounting the Ark. These images were not idols because they were not worshipped.

Secondly, he explains how God can be portrayed now because He took upon Himself flesh and became man. "If we attempted to make an image of the invisible God, this would be sinful indeed," he writes, and "if we made images of men and believed them to be gods...we would be truly impious. We do neither of these things. But we are not mistaken if we make the image of God incarnate, Who was seen on earth in the flesh, associated with men, and in His unspeakable goodness assumed the nature, feeling, form, and color of our flesh."