

HOLY ANGELS BYZANTINE CATHOLIC CHURCH



September 22, 2024

18th Sunday after Pentecost:

The Holy Hieromartyr Phocas, bishop of Sinope;

The Holy Prophet Jonah;

The Venerable Priest Jonah, Father of
Sts. Theophanes the Hymnographer and
Theodore the Branded

September 22, 2024

Schedule of services for the week of September 23 – September 29

Saturday, September 28– *Our Venerable Father and Confessor Chariton*

9:00 AM – Divine Liturgy
4:00 PM – Confessions
5:00 PM – Great Vespers

Sunday, September 29– *19th Sunday after Pentecost; Our Venerable Father Cyriacus the Anchorite*

8:40 AM – 3rd Hour
9:00 AM – Divine Liturgy with Baptism of Giuliana Karako

“...When they had brought their boats to shore, they left everything and followed him.” Have you seen the Lord work in your life in such a powerful way that you would consider leaving everything to follow him? This is the response of the apostles in today’s gospel reading. The Church is fortified by men and women who follow him as priests, deacons, monks and nuns. If you may be hearing this call, contact the Vocations Office at 206-329-9219 or email: vocations@ephx.org

Father Andrei answers the phone.

“Hello, is this Father Andrei?”

“It is.”

“This is the IRS. Can you help us?”

“I can.”

“Do you know a Bohdan Melnyk?”

“I do.”

“Is he a member of your parish?”

“He is.”

“Did he donate \$10,000 to the church?”

“He will.”

FROM THE COUNSELS OF ELDER PHILOTHEOS OF PARA

True happiness is not the honors and pleasures of the body. True happiness is virtue. As many as fight to acquire virtue, to put into practice the commandments of God, these are truly happy.



When the enemy tempts you with thoughts of faithlessness, with all your heart say, “I believe completely whatever the Church believes, whatever Christ says in the Holy Gospels, whatever the Holy Apostles and Holy Fathers said. I don’t, however, believe you, devil, for you are a liar and a thief.



If a man builds a house and leaves it without a roof, this house can’t be used at all. In the same way, if a man acquires all the virtues but not love, the house remains roofless and is of no benefit at all.

O Physician of Souls and Bodies, we pray for:

Pope Francis, Barbara Alexander, Maria Amaro, Peter Andre, Fr. Christopher Andrews, Harry and Virginia Bowden, Kim Camplisson, Patrick Carmack, Fr. Andriy Chirovsky, Julia Camberos, Dennis Cline, Amy Cohn, Vivian Corr, Maria Cruz, Joe Danscuk, Fr. Daniel Dozier, Gabriel Espedal, Ana Fandrey, Karen Foto, Christine Galgano, Janet Greenwell, Deborah Harris, Michael Havens, Martha Hill, Doris Huber, Rebecca Huber, Melissa Hunter, Taylor Kessler, Subdcn Paul Kilroy Jamie Kohanyj, Juan Lopez, Pauli Martin, Mila Mina, Linda Moffit, Maryann Nagrant, Julia Ohnysty, Genevieve Paquette, Sylvia Pasnak, Fr. Lee Perry, Anthony Porrello, Nina Porrello, Peter Porrello, Margaret Raya, Maha Salazar, Gretchen Sharpe, Karen Simonich, Debbie Stark, Tava Tomc, Hong Truong, Pat Walsh, Maria Zhukova, Gianna, Nicole, Subdcn Eddie and his wife Viane.

LIVING IN THE BODY

Going to church for worship is one element in living as a Christian. *Being church* means making an active contribution to the Church's life, being a vital organ in a living body.

The first step in being church is being connected to others in our parish by:

- **Cultivating community** in the "fellowship of the Holy Spirit." Get to know one another in a more than casual way.
- **Treating others as brothers and sisters in the family** of God in Christ. Give others the time and attention we would give to our blood relatives.
- "Above all, **clothing yourselves with love**, which binds everything together in perfect harmony" (Colossians 3:14).



We nurture the relationships in the parish or the eparchy when we:

- ✘ **Share our lives** – Authentic fellowship calls for more than coffee-hour courtesies. Grow to the stage when you can share your troubles as well.
 - ✘ **Learn together** - Take part in adult formation, retreats, or workshops to encourage others as well as to improve our own spiritual life.
 - ✘ **Work together** - Join in parish projects or committees to support the work of others as well as to make our own contribution. "*So then, whenever we have an opportunity, let us work for the good of all, and especially for those of the family of faith*" (Galatians 6:10).
 - ✘ **Encourage each other** – by supporting their efforts, praying for their concerns and building them up in the eyes of others. "*Love one another with mutual affection; outdo one another in showing honor*" (Romans 12:10).
 - ✘ **Bear one another's burdens** – Be accepting of the weaker community members. There is no "perfect" church: every parish is made up of "saints" who are sinners, each with their own weaknesses and infirmities. "*Bear one another's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ*" (Galatians 6:2).
 - ✘ **Admonish one another** – Do not shrink from confronting "family members" who are hurting others by promoting conflicts, pettiness, or legalism. "*My friends, if anyone is detected in a transgression, you who have received the Spirit should restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness. Take care that you yourselves are not tempted*" (Galatians 6:1).
 - ✘ **Protect the unity of the church** – by avoiding gossip or cliques, and speaking ill of others.
 - ✘ **Restore broken relationships** – when they occur by admitting our faults. No project or program is worth harming the family's inner life. "*If anyone has a complaint against another, forgive each other; just as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive*" (Colossians 3:13).
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THE VENERATION OF ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST ACCORDING TO THE BYZANTINE TRADITION

In the Byzantine Tradition St. John the Baptist is venerated above all other Saints and right below the Angels. Of course, we do not include the Blessed Mother of God, the Theotokos, who being “more honorable than the Cherubim and beyond compare more glorious than the Seraphim,” enjoys a unique veneration (hyperdulia) over and above all the Angels and Saints.

The greatness and the veneration of St. John the Baptist, who at the time of his conception the Archangel Gabriel prophesied would be “great in the sight of the Lord” (Lk. 1 :14), is based on :

1) the direct testimony of Christ, 2) his austere ascetical life, and 3) his testimony of blood in defense of divine rights.

1. St. John the Baptist was sent by God “in the power of Elijah” (Mt. 17:9-13) to prepare the people for the coming of the promised Messiah (Mal. 3:1). In his role as God’s messenger (in Greek-angel) he was expected to point out to the people their Redeemer, the “Lamb of God that takes away the sins of the world” (In. 1 :29).

He also was to baptize Jesus Christ in the Jordan River, initiating our Lord in His messianic mission (Mt. 3:13-15).

In this way the Baptist was the last of the Prophets (Mt. 11 :13), uniting by his mission the Old and New Testaments. He was also the Precursor (Forerunner) of Christ. Since he baptized Jesus, he was surnamed the Baptist. As the messenger (angel) of God he was to announce the arrival of the Kingdom of Heaven in the person of Jesus Christ. Rightly then, our Lord testified of St. John the Baptist: “I tell you that of all the children born of women there is no one greater than John” (Lk. 7:28).

To these words of exaltation St. Theodore Studite (d. 826) adds: “Is there need for us to extol John the Baptist when he was so highly extolled by Christ Himself, Who is the Truth and the Eternal Word of God?” (cf. P.G. 99, 748).

2. The second reason for St. John’s early veneration was his innocent and austere life in the desert, for which he was hailed by the Fathers as an “earthly angel in human body” (St. Sophronius, P.G. 87, 3340).

Filled with the Holy Spirit from his mother’s womb (Lk. 1 :15), St. John the Baptist spent all the years of his youth in the desert, preparing himself

with fasting and prayer for his unique mission.

When he appeared in the Jordan region to preach penance, he was clothed in a garment of camel’s hair (Mt. 3:1-6), which was the traditional garb of the Prophets.

John came out from his solitude as a “voice crying in the desert” (In. 1 :23), preaching moral reform in preparation for the advent of the Messiah:

” Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is close at hand” (Mt. 3:2). He gathered a group of disciples and, having initiated them into the ascetical life, he taught them how to pray. In this way St. John the Baptist was an inspiration to the Desert Fathers, who considered him as their Founder and true model of the eremitical life. To quote once more St. Sophronius of Jerusalem, St. John the Baptist “went into the desert to imitate not men but the angels” (cf. P.G. 87, 3352).

The Desert Fathers, imbued with this great admiration, were the first to promote the veneration of the Baptist among the people of the East as well as the West.

3. The early veneration of St. John the Baptist was also enhanced by the repeated recovery of his relics, which were glorified by God with numerous miracles.

The popularity of the Baptist was testified to not only by all the Evangelists, but also by a contemporary Jewish historian, Joseph Flavius, who, around 90 A.D., recorded that on account of the Baptist’s popularity King Herod Antipas feared an uprising of the people. He continued:

” Herod ordered to kill this John, surnamed the Baptist, although he was a just man and had encouraged the Jewish people to a virtuous life as they kept coming to him to be baptized. He exhorted them to be just toward each other, and devoted to God” (cf. Jewish Antiquities VIII, 5). After St. John’s beheading, the disciples took his body and, according to oral tradition, they buried it in the Samaritan town of Sebaste, outside of Herod’s jurisdiction (cf. St. Jerome, PL 25, 1156). Soon the Baptist’s tomb became a great attraction for pilgrims, since God glorified His faithful servant with many miracles. This was the reason why Emperor Constantine the Great (d. 337 A.D.) ordered a magnificent basilica to be built over John’s tomb in Sebaste.

Unfortunately, in a futile effort to restore

paganism, Emperor Julian the Apostate (361-363) burnt the venerable relics and dispersed their ashes in the wind (cf. Theodoret, P.G. 82, 1092). Nevertheless, the grave of St. John the Baptist continued to be venerated until the final defeat of the Crusaders in the 12th century.

According to another pious tradition, Venerable Johanna, the wife of Herod's steward Chuza (Lk. 8:3), took the head of St. John the Baptist and buried it on the Mount of Olives, near Jerusalem.

Almost 300 years later, the venerable head was found for the first time (confirmed by a miracle), and transferred to Emessa, Syria. After some time the heretics took possession of John's head and concealed it in some monastery. In 453 A.D. it was discovered for the second time in the Arian monastery of Spelaion, near Emessa, and solemnly transferred to Constantinople.

During the iconoclast repressions (the eighth century), the venerable relic was taken by some monks and hidden in Comana, the Province of Pontus, where St. John Chrysostom died (d. 407).

During the reign of Emperor Michael III, in 857, it was discovered for the third time and once again solemnly brought back to Constantinople, where it was deposited in the church of the imperial palace.

St. John's head finally disappeared during the Fourth Crusade (1204 A.D.), when it was taken by crusaders to the West. At the present time several churches in Western Europe claim its possession.

It would be hard to prove which of them is authentic.

The veneration of St. John the Baptist is very ancient and became widespread in the East and the West from the early centuries. In the Byzantine Rite every Tuesday is dedicated to his memory, with some special commemorative days:

1) On January 7th-THE SYNAXIS OF ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST, the most ancient feast in commemoration of him who "baptized Our Lord in the Jordan River."

2) On February 24th-THE FIRST AND THE SECOND FINDING OF THE VENERABLE HEAD, in commemoration of the first discovery of the precious relic in Jerusalem and then, for the second time, in Spelaion, near Emessa. It was on February 24, 457, that the venerable head of the Baptist was solemnly transferred to Constantinople and deposited in the church of Prodomos (Precursor) for public veneration.

3) On May 25th-THE THIRD FINDING OF

THE VENERABLE HEAD is observed, since it was on May 25, 857, that the precious relic was solemnly translated from Comana back to Constantinople.

4) On June 24th we celebrate the feast of THE NATIVITY OF ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST, which was introduced at the end of the fourth century.

5) Also since the fourth century we celebrate the feast of THE BEHEADING OF ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST on August 29th, the anniversary of the dedication of his church in Sebaste. The Byzantine Church, in commemoration of John's beheading, prescribes a fast on that day.

6) On September 23rd-THE CONCEPTION OF ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST is commemorated, on account of the special intervention of God in his birth (Lk. 1 :5-25) . The Roman Church discontinued this commemoration by the end of the 15th century.

The liturgical veneration of St. John the Baptist in the Byzantine Rite received its definite form by the ninth century. There are some ancient sticheras in honor of the Baptist, perhaps from as early as the end of the fourth century. But, the main glorifiers of St. John were the famous Byzantine hymnographers of the eighth century: St. Germanus of Constantinople (d. 733), St. Andrew of Crete (d. 740), and St. John Damascene (d. 749) . Two ninth century hymnographers, the holy nun Cassia and the holy monks of Studion, also contributed to the Baptist's liturgical veneration.

The most famous ecomium in honor of St. John the Baptist belongs to St. Sophronius of Jerusalem (d. 638), which supplied the hymnographers with some lofty expressions (cf. P.G. 87, 3321f.).

Here the panegyric of St. Andrew of Crete, delivered on the feast of the Beheading (cf. P.G. 97, 1109f.), should also be mentioned as well as two eulogies of St. Theodore Studite (d. 826)-one for John's Nativity, and another for his Beheading (cf. P.G. 99, 747f.) .

There are some earlier eulogies of St. John the Baptist, starting with that of St. John Chrysostom (d. 407) , and continuing with those of some famous orators like Antipater of Bostra (d. ca. 458) or Basil of Seleucia (d. 459) . All the Fathers were convinced that "to praise the Baptist meant to praise Jesus, for he gave a moving witness to Our Savior!"

<https://archpitt.org/the-veneration-of-st-john-the-baptist-according-to-the-byzantine-tradition/>

WORDS EVERY CHRISTIAN SHOULD KNOW

Holiness consists not only in the absence of evil or sin: holiness is the presence of higher spiritual values, joined to purity from sin. God is the only one holy by nature. He is the Source of holiness for angels and men. Men can attain holiness only in God, “not by nature, but by participation, by struggle and prayer” (St. Cyril).

Asceticism is man’s struggle to keep the commandments of Christ. It encompasses not only his bodily and spiritual effort, but also the method by which he passes through the three stages of the spiritual life, namely: purification, illumination, and deification (union with God).

Purification refers to the process by which one is cleansed from the passions through: 1) the rejection of all evil thoughts and desires from the mind and heart, 2) the turning of the soul’s three powers (reason, desire, and will) towards God, and 3) the overcoming of self-love by love for God and neighbor.

Illumination refers to the process by which the grace of the Holy Spirit, received in Baptism, enlightens the person purified (or at least being purified) of the passions to the true knowledge of God and creation. Illumination is seen primarily in the gift of discernment by which one distinguishes between 1) what is from God or above nature, 2) what is according to nature or good, and 3) what is unnatural or evil.

Deification is union with God, the goal of Christian life; experienced in part during this life, but more fully and unendingly in the next. Scripture says that God is a consuming fire. When man is united with God in the state of pure prayer, he becomes entirely engulfed in the flame of divine love and sees the Uncreated Light of Divinity. This state cannot be described in words but is known only through experience. Union with God imparts immeasurable love, humility, and thankfulness. Deification is what man was created for from the beginning; it is what makes man truly man.

Ten Commandments for a Happy Church

1. Speak to people. Speak to everyone, especially to those whom you don't know. There is nothing quite so nice as a cheerful word of greeting.
2. Smile at people. It takes 72 muscles to frown and only 14 to smile. Your smile is one of your finest assets. Use It! It doesn't cost a thing!!
3. Call people by name. The sweetest music to any person's ears is the sound of his or her own name. If you don't know the person's name, introduce yourself and likely the person will respond with his or her name.
4. Be friendly and helpful. If you want friends, learn to be a friend. Everyone needs them. No one has too many.
5. Be cordial. Try to speak and act as if everything you do is a genuine pleasure.
6. Be genuinely interested in people. Try to like everybody and everybody will like you. Do not limit yourself to a few friends when there are so many likable people about you.
7. Be generous with praise. And be just as sparing with criticism.
8. Be considerate of the feelings of others. Usually, there are three sides to a controversy: yours, the other person's, and the right one. Try to see them all.
9. Be alert to give service. What we do for others counts most in life. Try giving yourself away. It's fun!
10. Develop a sense of humor. To this good sense of humor, add a generous dose of patience and a dash of humility. Then get ready to receive many blessings. They're sure to come!

Saint Phocas of Sinope

Saint Phocas, bishop of Sinope, was known for the many miracles he worked and for his apostolic zeal in shepherding the flock of Sinope. He contested for the Faith during the reign of the Emperor Trajan, in the year 102, when he was burned to death in a bath-house. A homily in his honour was composed by Saint John Chrysostom on the occasion of the translation of his relics to Constantinople. The translation of his holy relics from Pontus to Constantinople about the year 404 A.D. is celebrated on July 23. His primary feast is on September 22.

Today, one miracle of this saint is also commemorated. The Arabs captured a man named Pontinus. The Arabs shackled him, bound his hands to his back and left him to die. Lying on his stomach on the ground, and not being able to move, Pontinus cried out: "O Holy Martyr Phocas have mercy on me and save me!" Saying this he fell asleep and, in a dream, saw Saint Phocas approaching him, touched him by the hand and said: "The Lord Jesus Christ forgives you!" When the man awoke, he found himself loosed from all bonds and free. He arose and departed for his home and took St. Phocas as the patron saint of his household.

St. John Chrysostom's homily speaks little of the life of St. Phocas. He begins by speaking of the festival that is being celebrated encouraging everyone to participate and come and venerate his holy relics. The Psalm read for the occasion leads him to digress onto the issue of Christ's nature and to address the heresy of the Anomoeans that Christ and God are not equal. This takes up the bulk of the homily.

Table of Contents (of the homily):

1. Yesterday a martyr from Pontus was escorted through the main areas of the city; today he is being escorted across the sea to his own resting place. Not everyone was present yesterday to receive his blessing.
2. John encourages everyone to attend today's festival and make their way to the tomb, where the imperial couple will participate. The power of the martyrs is such that it draws people of all backgrounds and is the Church's crown. The martyrs are not honored by the size of the crowd; rather the crowd is blessed by them.
3. Today's festivities involve setting out on the sea with lamps which will reflect in the water. The church is packed. The Church is likened to a merchant ship.
4. Today's Psalm leads us into battles against heretics. The attack is not against the person but the heresy. In doing this, John imitates Christ.
5. The example of King Jeroboam.
- 6-8. The audience is asked to pay attention, as John is about to wrestle with heretics. The heretics interpret Scripture in a way that suits them. Christ's true nature is not affected by their claims.
- 9-11. Scripture is not responsible for the heretics' interpretation, but the mind of those doing the interpreting. In their desire to show that the Son is less than the Father, they attribute different labels, saying that "God" refers to the one, and "Lord" to the other. John uses logic to show that "God" and "Lord" are one and the same.
12. The audience is asked to remember what has been said and to take the arguments of the sermon home to their wives for the dinner table.

Read the complete homily of Saint John Chrysostom [here](#)

Apolytikion in the Fourth Tone

As a sharer of the ways and a successor to the throne of the Apostles, O inspired of God, thou foundest discipline to be a means of ascent to divine vision. Wherefore, having rightly divided the word of truth, thou didst also contest for the Faith even unto blood, O Hieromartyr Phocas. Intercede with Christ our God that our souls be saved.

Kontakion in the Second Tone

The Master hath established thee as a divinely-radiant, luminous, and spiritual sun shining upon the multitude of the church's faithful, O glorious Martyr Phocas; for He hath accepted thy life, faith, and contests as fragrant myrrh, since He alone is abundant in mercy.

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Parish Advisory Council:

Bruce Bitsko, Nelson Chase, Fr. Deacon Jonathan Deane, Joel Espedal, Janet Greenwell, Daniele Laman, Olena Bankston

Finance Council:

Al Aparicio, Fr. Deacon Jonathan Deane, Bob Greenwell, Paul Washicko

Bless, O Lord, the worship and Stewardship of your faithful servants:

Adult tithes: \$1710.00; Loose Change: \$64.00; Non-Parishioner: \$30.00; **Total: \$1804.00**

Vocation Icon: This week: Aparicio Family

Next week: Andre Family

Please sign up in the narthex to host the vocation icon.

THE BYZANTINE CATHOLIC EPARCHY OF PHOENIX

SUBSCRIBES TO THE
*Charter for the Protection of
Children and Young People*

adopted by the United States Catholic Conference of Bishops.

The Eparchy, within all its parishes, institutions and programs, is committed to assuring a safe environment in ministry for its children and vulnerable adults that conforms to the Charter for Protection of Children and Young People.

For additional information regarding the eparchial Safe Environment Program or to report any incidents of concerns, please contact:

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