The Weekly Forerunner

St. John the Baptist Orthodox Church
301 Struthers Liberty Rd
Campbell, OH 44405

May Bulletin Sponsor
In memory of my husband George Kolesar – Given by Barbara Kolesar

Liturgical & Events Schedule

Sunday, May 24
9:15-9:45 AM: Confessions by app't
9:35 AM: Hours
10:00 AM: Divine Liturgy / Social

Saturday May, 30
5:15-5:45 PM: Confessions by app't
6:00 PM: Vespers with Litia

Sunday, May 31
9:35 AM: Hours
10:00 AM: Divine Liturgy / Kneeling Prayers / Social

SPECIAL COLLECTION MAY:

St. Tikhon's Seminary

MAY SOCIAL SCHEDULE

May 24– Council
May 31-Rusnak Social

MAY READER SCHEDULE

May 24– Reader Nick Vansuch
May 31– Robert Willison

John 17:1-13 (Gospel)

Jesus spoke these words, lifted up His eyes to heaven, and said: "Father, the hour has come. Glorify Your Son, that Your Son also may glorify You, as You have given Him authority over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as You have given Him. And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent. I have glorified You on the earth. I have finished the work which You have given Me to do. And now, O Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world was. I have manifested Your name to the men whom You have given Me out of the world. They were Yours, You gave them to Me, and they have kept Your word. Now they have known that all things which You have given Me are from You. For I have given to them the words which You have given Me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came forth from You; and they have believed that You sent Me. I pray for them. I do not pray for the world but for those whom You have given Me, for they are Yours. And all Mine are Yours, and Yours are Mine, and I am glorified in them. Now I am no longer in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to You. Holy Father, keep through Your name those whom You have given Me, that they may be one as We are.While I was with them in the world, I kept them in Your name. Those whom You gave Me I have kept; and none of them is lost except the son of perdition, that the Scripture might be fulfilled. But now I come to You, and these things I speak in the world, that they may have My joy fulfilled in themselves.

61st Anniversary of Repose: Metropolitan Leonty, an Archpastor of the Midwest

May 14, marks the marks the 61st anniversary of the repose of Metropolitan Leonty (Turkevich). He dedicated nearly 60 years of his life to priestly and episcopal service to the Church in America and was hierarch of the Diocese of the Midwest from 1933-1950, before his election as Primate of the Orthodox Church in America from 1950 to 1965.

Born in Volhynia on August 8, 1876, and ordained in 1905, Father Leonid Turkevich was appointed rector of the newly opened theological seminary and pastor of Saint Mary Church in Minneapolis, MN by Saint Archbishop Tikhon of the Aleutians and North America in August 1906. On October 27 of the same year, Father Leonid and his wife Anna arrived in Minnesota, where he immediately devoted himself to the formation of the future pastors for the North American flock and shepherding the parish that had been brought into Orthodoxy some 15 years earlier by Saint Alexis Toth. Father Leonid's bright intellect and strong ecclesiastical erudition, molded by his ***Con't Pg 3***

PLEASE KEEP OUR ELDERS OF THE CHURCH & SHUT-INS IN YOUR PRAYERS

Send a "Thinking of You" card or remember their Birthday with a card. If anyone needs to be added, please contact Fr. Andrew.

Mrs. Mary Fredericks
648 Dumont Ave
Campbell, OH 44405

Matushka Helen Psinka
c/o Concordia Villa St. Joseph
1030 W State Street / Room 1B49
Baden, Pa, 15005

Mrs. Dorothy Shirilla
8362 Van Dr.
Poland, OH 44514

Joan Cross
97 Butler Street / Apt 1-rear
Brooklyn , NY 11201

Mildred Wilfong
153 Runnemede Dr
Boardman, OH 44512

Mrs. Audrey Chengelis– UPDATED
c/o Assumption Village
9800Market Street / Room 1402
North Lima, OH 44452

Emilia Yannitto
8017 Salinas Tr.
Boardman, OH 44512-5402

Mrs. Pauline Fesz
488 Harmony Lane
Campbell, OH 44405

George Horodnic, Sr.
c/o Briarfield Manor
461 South Canfield-Niles Rd / Room 101
Austintown, OH 44515

Mrs. Julia Simko
c/o Woodlands @ Hampton Woods
1525 E Western Reserve Rd /
Room 1101
Poland, OH 44514

Carol Ruff
2207 Birch Trail Blvd
Youngstown, OH 44515-4910

Sue Kennedy
593 Hyatt Ave
Campbell, OH 44405-1479

Ann Cvercko
1875 Mallard Land
North Lima, OH 44452

His Beatitude Metropolitan Tikhon Sends Letter of Congratulations to the Newly Elected Patriarch Shio of All Georgia

On May 11, 2026, His Beatitude Metropolitan Tikhon sent a letter of congratulations to newly elected His Holiness Patriarch Shio, Catholicos-Patriarch of All Georgia, and Archbishop of Mtskheta and Tbilisi.

Your Holiness, beloved brother and concelebrant in the Lord's Mysteries,

I write to extend to Your Holiness my heartfelt congratulations on your election as Catholicos-Patriarch of All Georgia.

The Georgian Orthodox Church, with her ancient apostolic heritage and steadfast witness through centuries of trial and endurance, occupies a cherished place within the family of the Holy Orthodox Churches. At this important moment in the life of your Church, I pray that the Lord will grant Your Holiness wisdom, strength, peace, and abundant grace as you assume this sacred ministry.

Your election follows the blessed and remarkable ministry of His Holiness Patriarch Ilia II of thrice-blessed memory, whose faithfulness, pastoral love, and spiritual leadership inspired generations of Orthodox faithful both in Georgia and throughout the Orthodox world. I am confident that, strengthened by the prayers and example of your venerable predecessor, as well as by the intercessions of the holy saints of Georgia, Your Holiness will continue to guide the Georgian Church with steadfast faith and fatherly care.

Please be assured of my prayers for Your Holiness and for the clergy, monastics, and faithful of the Georgian Orthodox Church during this new chapter in her life. I also pray that the fraternal relations between the Georgian Orthodox Church and the Orthodox Church in America may continue to grow and strengthen in the years ahead for the building up of Christ's Holy Church and the proclamation of the Gospel.

Once again, please accept my heartfelt congratulations and fraternal love. May the Lord grant Your Holiness many blessed years.

Your brother in Christ,

+Tikhon

Archbishop of Washington

Metropolitan of All America and Canada

JUNE Candle & Bulletin Sponsors

NOTE: If anything is missing from the Sponsorships please contact Fr. Andrew ASAP

Bulletin: OPEN
Wine: OPEN
Incense: OPEN
Iconostasis Candles & Eternal Light: OPEN
Altar Candles: OPEN
Tetrapod Candles:OPEN
St. Herman Candles: Commemorating all who participate in the maintenance of the church, the teachers, singers and those who participate in social events. Praying for everyone to love one another.– Given by Anonymous
St. Panteleimon Icon Candles: OPEN
Protection Icon Candles: OPEN
St. John the Baptist Candles: OPEN
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$50 per month	$30 per month	$25 per month
*Wine	*St. Herman candles	Incense
*Bulletin	*St. Panteleimon Icon candles	Flowers– **NEW UPDATED PRICE / DECREASED**
*Iconostasis Candles & Eternal Light	*Protection Icon candles	
*Altar Candles	*St. John the Baptist candles	
*Tetrapod Candles		

Holy Synod Concludes its Regular Spring 2026 Session

Meeting under the presidency of His Beatitude Metropolitan Tikhon, the Holy Synod of Bishops of the Orthodox Church in America concluded their regular Spring Session held April 28 - 30, 2026 in Springfield, VA.

On Tuesday, April 28 the meeting began with an Opening Molieben and a report from His Beatitude where he highlighted the work of the Office of the Metropolitan. His Beatitude also presented His Eminence Archbishop Alexander's request for retirement as ruling hierarch of the Diocese of the South. That request was approved by the Holy Synod. Throughout the spring session, the ruling hierarchs presented annual reports for each of the dioceses.

At the second meeting, the Holy Synod received and approved a report on the updated Social Media Guidelines for Clergy and Lay Leaders of the Orthodox Church in America. The Holy Synod then discussed the Synodal offices, committees, and commissions and their ongoing work.

On Wednesday, April 29, the Holy Synod gathered at St. Nicholas Cathedral for the celebration of the Divine Liturgy with His Grace Bishop Benedict presiding. The community provided a brunch and a time of fellowship for the hierarchs. Following the Divine Liturgy, the Holy Synod heard reports from Archpriest Alessandro Margheritino, Chancellor of the Orthodox Church in America, Priest David Bozeman, Secretary of the Orthodox Church in America, and Mr. Andrew Smith, Treasurer.

The Holy Synod also heard reports from Archpriest Nicholas Solak for the Office of Pastoral life, where . he reported on the various programs under the OPL as well as the upcoming Clergy and Clergy Wives Retreats to be held later this year. Archpriest John Dresko, Chair of the Pension Board, presented his report followed by Dr. Alexander Tudorie, Dean of St. Vladimir's Orthodox Theological Seminary, who reported seminary activities. The day concluded with additional diocesan reports.

On Thursday, April 30, His Beatitude and the Holy Synod heard reports from Archpriest Justin Patterson, Project Manager of the Departments of the Orthodox Church in America, the OCA's General Counsel, Mr. Mark Hamilton, the Board of Theological Education, and Archpriest John Parker, Dean of St. Tikhon's Orthodox Theological Seminary, who reported on seminary activities and provided an update on the new partnership program with the Diocese of the Midwest. The session concluded with the remaining diocesan reports

Metro. Leonty con't from pg 1

upbringing in a priestly family and schooling at the Kyiv Theological Academy, quickly brought him to the forefront of North American clergy. As one of Saint Tikhon's closest advisors, he was elected chairman of the First All-American Sobor (Council), held in Mayfield, PA in 1907. At this and subsequent councils, his leadership guided the continuing formulation of the Church's ongoing missionary vision in North America. When the seminary was relocated to Tenafly, NJ in 1912, Father Leonid moved east, continuing his work at the seminary and eventually succeeding Saint Alexander Hotovitzky as dean of New York City's Saint Nicholas Cathedral and editor of the American Orthodox Messenger, the Church's official periodical. Father Leonid was one of two priests selected to join Archbishop Evdokim in representing the North ***Con't Next Pg***

MAY Celebrations

Birthday

3- Marcus Kubancsek / Fr. Matthew Stagon / Juliana Gemmel / Jordan Tsvetkoff
4- Isabella Willison
5- Joseph Schutt
6- Michael Polewan
8- Nancy (Anastasia) Tusinac
9- Patricia Thompson
12- Marco Kubancsek
14- Stephen Simko / Mary Gemmel
17- Brian Turner
19- Paula Kennedy
20- Philip Ellmore
22- Rachel Konik
24- Avzi Dardovski
27- Jennifer (Tsvetkoff)
28- Audrey Chengelis
29- Carol Krochta
30- Joseph Mico / Stacy Donofrio

Anniversary

1-2004- AB Benjamin of San Francisco & the West
2- Fr. Andrew's Priestly Ordination
5-2012- AB Alexander of Dallas & the South & the Bulgarian Diocese
6- Eli & Lidija Arvan
8-2010- AB Michael of NY & NY & NJ
11- Reader George & Michele Horodnic, Jr
18- Mark & Lorraine Livosky
28-2005- AB Alejo of Mexico City & Mexico
29- Reader Matthew & Deena Vansuch / Jim & Elaine Johnston

Names Day

4- Monica Vansuch
7- Alexis Jesko
20 Lidija Arvan

Metro. Leonty con't from previous pg

American Diocese at the All-Russian Church Council in Moscow in 1917-1918, at which he championed the restoration of the patriarchal system of Church governance abolished by Tsar Peter the Great two centuries earlier.

After the council, Father Leonid returned to America via Siberia, witnessing along the way the horrors the newly-established Bolshevik regime was inflicting on the Church and her faithful. Back in America, Father Leonid's experiences at the Moscow Council clearly filled him with a vision and model for subsequent All-American Sobors and Church life.

When Father Leonid was widowed in 1925, elevation to the episcopacy was proposed to him almost immediately. Initially, he rejected this out of concern for the continued upbringing of his five children. But in 1933, he accepted monastic tonsure with the name Leonty, and was consecrated Bishop of Chicago. ***Con't Nt Pg***

ATTENDANCE: A Comparison - *APRIL*	2025	2026
1st– Paralytic		
Vespers	8	11
Liturgy / Communion	51 / 37	35 / 28
2nd Week– Mother's D.		
Vespers	8	13
Liturgy / Communion	64 / 44	61 / 34
3rd Week-Blind		
Vespers	No Vespers	10
Liturgy / Communion Vespers for Ascension Liturgy for Ascension	44 / 35 No Record No Record	35 / 27 10 13 / 7
4th Week –Fathers 1ST		
Vespers	11	
Liturgy / Communion	47 / 32	
5th– Pentecost		
Vespers Liturgy / Communion Kneeling Prayers	6 56 / 37 30	

Acts 20:16-18, 28-36 (Epistle)

For Paul had decided to sail past Ephesus, so that he would not have to spend time in Asia; for he was hurrying to be at Jerusalem, if possible, on the Day of Pentecost. From Miletus he sent to Ephesus and called for the elders of the church. And when they had come to him, he said to them: "You know, from the first day that I came to Asia, in what manner I always lived among you, Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood. For I know this, that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock. Also from among yourselves men will rise up, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after themselves. Therefore watch, and remember that for three years I did not cease to warn everyone night and day with tears. So now, brethren, I commend you to God and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified. I have coveted no one's silver or gold or apparel. Yes, you yourselves know that these hands have provided for my necessities, and for those who were with me. I have shown you in every way, by laboring like this, that you must support the weak. And remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that He said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'" And when he had said these things, he knelt down and prayed with them all.

MAY Reposed List

1- Melaine Michaels (2019)
2- Anton Stanoff (1974) © / Stephen Kalas (1952) ©
3- Naume Evanoff (1984) © / Frank Carandonis (1955) ©
4- Mary Fischer (2007) © / Mary Graban (1963) © / Bishop Matthias (2024)
6- Bishop Innocent (2002) / Joseph Leschinsky (1983) © / Robert Puskas (2014) © / M. Krut (1923) © (no name)
7- Anna Holowatyk (1977) © / Samuel Zelina (1994) © / Emilian Graban (2016) © /
8- John Bilas (2015) © / Mary Fesz (2002) © / Still Born Lazich (1923) © / Satilarius Tsagaris (1949) © / Infant Diamantes (1957) ©
9- Stanley Gozur (1960) ©
10- Olga Sveda (2008) © / Tom Mahinis (1931) © / Joseph Slatsky (1943) © / John Boldish (1970) ©
11- George KInnich (1975) © / Sub-deacon Maurice Garman (2011) © / Steve Kraynak (1950) ©
Helen Kirtos (1953) ©
12- Stephen Timikovich (1977) © / Elaine Whitham (2012) / AP George Hutnyan (2020) / Mary Knight (2011) © / Albert Lisko (1925) ©
13- Sevasti Papantonokis (1928) ©
14- Stanley Lis (2019) / Nicholas Zoppia (1984) © / William Petroff (2000) © / E. Mastoridis (1922) © / Steve Lisko (1928) © / Greg Puskas (2023)
15- Fr. Michael Rosco (2013) / George Krupchak (1952) © / Michael Shevetz (1962) ©
16- Simon Vojtilla (1920) © / Anna Petro (1949) © / Charles Tsagares (1959) ©
18- Vasil Vilich (1926) ©
19- Betty Billy (2020) / Mary Kiddin (1993) ©
19- Still born John Caleris (1928) © / Sava Talaban (1945) ©
20- Helen Bickley (1974) © / Michael Leschinsky (1982) © / Anna Laricharoff (1964) ©
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24- Damian Leskovatz (1925) ©
25- Michael Liba (1940) © / Michael Volchko (1944) ©
26- Vasili Kovach (1945) ©
28- Catherine Harvischak (2009) ©
29- Milka Cukovich (1932) © / Nicholas Haralampbis (1961) ©
30- Anna Toth (1997) © / George Andras (1999) ©

Metro. Leonty con't from previous pg

While he had been a hierarch for scarcely more than one year when the Fifth All-American Sobor was convened in November 1934 to elect a successor to the late Metropolitan Platon, many considered Bishop Leonty as the most viable candidate. However, when the sobor's delegates debated the proper procedure for electing a Primate, Bishop Leonty suggested that they simply acknowledge the senior hierarch, Archbishop Theophilus, as Primate. To this suggestion, the delegates responded with a resounding cry of "Axios," electing Archbishop Theophilus.

Until 1950, Bishop Leonty continued shepherding his Midwest flock, while serving as Metropolitan Theophilus' foremost assistant in guiding the Church through World War II, a decade-long period of ecclesiastical synergy and peace with ROCOR, the reopening of theological seminaries in America, and a failed attempt of ending estrangement from the Church in Russia.

By the time Metropolitan Theophilus died in 1950, the clergy and faithful knew that only Archbishop Leonty could be the next Metropolitan of All America and Canada. Indeed, at the Eighth All-American Sobor in December 1950, he was elected Primate by a nearly unanimous vote. During his tenure, structure was given to the Church through the adoption of a governing Statute in 1955. With his blessing, the first English-language parishes were established; various pan-Orthodox initiatives, including the Standing Conference of Canonical Orthodox Bishops in the Americas and the Orthodox Christian Education Commission, were undertaken; and preliminary steps were taken to the heal the rift with the Russian Church, ultimately paving the way to autocephaly for the Orthodox Church in America.

After 15 years of service as Primate, Metropolitan Leonty peacefully fell asleep in the Lord at his residence in Syosset, NY, on May 14, 1965, and was interred at Saint Tikhon's Monastery, South Canaan, PA. Those who were blessed to have known Metropolitan Leonty cherish his humility, prayerfulness, meekness, dignity, kindness, generosity, forbearance, thoughtfulness, sense of humor, vision, erudition and wisdom.

The text of the booklet, titled "Essays of Orthodox Theology" may be found here.

May the memory of Metropolitan Leonty be eternal!

REMINDER

Just a gentle reminder the monthly calendars are only tentative. Please check emails or weekly bulletin for any changes.

PRAYER LIST

PARISHIONERS: Achiles Arvan / Audrey Chengelis / Joan Cross / Ann Cvercko / Pauline Fesz / Mary Fredericks / George Horodnic / Gianna Hryb / Sue Kennedy / Matushka Helen Psinka / Nadine Sabo / Dorothy Shirilla / Julia Simko / Reader Nick Vansuch / Mildred Wilfong

CLERGY: Fr. Basil Duesenberry / Fr. Andrew Gall / AP James Gleason (Fr.) / AP Emil Hutyan / AP Michael Rustic / Fr. Peter Simko / Fr. Theophanes Kamau & family & parishioners at St. Joachim & Anna in Nairobi, Kenya

FAMILY & FRIENDS: Mat. Melanie Adamcio / Mary Ann Bozichovich (Kennedy) / Diane Caban (Sirilla) / George Caban (Sirilla) / Donna Chiarelli / Karen Debiec / Erin (Willison) / Thomas Hull, Jr. / Ron Hryb / Paula Kennedy / Joe Kollar (Fr.) / Kelly Marie Konya (Candle guy's daughter) / Mary Alyce Koval / Ginny McCay (Fredericks) / Matushka Raisa (Nicoloff) / Conner (Sabo) Chris Quotap (Fr.) / Bob Smrek (Sirilla) / Matt Turner (Sirilla) / Emilia Yanitto / Catherine Zile (Fr.) / David (Willison) / Drew (Willison) / Eleanor Marie (Vansuch) / Katherine (Steffaro) / Richard (Tusinac) / Miranda & her unborn baby / Lindsey & her unborn baby / Blaire & her newborn Tatiana

MILITARY FAMILY & FRIENDS: Cory Deaton (Fr.) / Alena Grabavoy (Fr.) / Kyle Grabovoy (Fr.) / Liam Garrity (Zelinsky) / Kenneth (Simko) / Brandon Rader (Middle East)

MISCELLANEOUS: Metropolitan Paul (Orthodox Diocese of Aleppo) & Archbishop John (Archdiocese of Aleppo) still being held captive & Metropolitan Arseny imprisoned / The UN & IOCC humanitarian aid workers around the world / Those suffering persecution in Syria, Iraq, Israel, Egypt, Ukraine and around the world.

Wives of Retired Clergy Shared Stories and Experiences

On the evening of April 30, clergy wives of the Midwest Diocese were invited to a Zoom to hear three retired clergy wives talk about their lives over decades of service in the Orthodox Church in America.

Matushka Karen Wojcik grew up in the Protestant Church and knew almost nothing about the Orthodox Church. What she did know was that she wanted to marry the man who would become Father Theodore Wojcik. It was that wish that brought her into the Orthodox Church.

Both a quick learner and a person of many skills, she willingly took on the role of Matushka and found herself developing a profound love of Orthodoxy. With this foundation, she was able to help her husband grow the numbers of parish members, lovingly teach and guide those members, and nourish a harmonious spirit within the community.

She wasn't afraid to forgo those parish activities that didn't appeal to her, even if some people "expected" the Matushka to take part. Being her own person was the only way to serve the parish well, which she did for many years. Her example was part of the inspiration for two of their three sons to become priests.

Matushka Valerie Zahirsky came to Saint Vladimir's Seminary as a member of the Armenian Church. As she and seminarian Michael Zahirsky grew closer, she decided to join the Orthodox Church in America, and remembers the day when Father Alexander Schmemann formally received her in the seminary chapel.

She spoke about the joys of marrying and raising children as a clergy wife in the Orthodox Church, but also about making hard choices when it comes to following the Church's teachings, especially during Lent. Should all "fun" activities be curtailed, or is that too rigid? Parents can only try to find a balance, and hope to do their best.

Matushka Vera Proctor described growing up in a large and vibrant Serbian Orthodox community. Seeing how members readily helped and cared for each other prepared her for parish life. She and her husband, Father Jonathan, modeled that same loving care, which benefited their children and their parishioners.

A different opportunity to serve came in the form of FOCUS Minnesota, which she worked to develop, and then ran for fourteen years. (FOCUS stands for Fellowship of Orthodox Christians United to Serve.) The group concentrates on everyday needs in the Twin Cities, especially basic sustenance. To this end, she has handed out bagged sandwiches on the street. Over the years, she developed a wonderful volunteer staff and there is a part-time employee.

Now retired, she says that the hardest and never-ending task was finding support for the group. But she believes that FOCUS is there to this day because God wants it to be, and because it is determinedly indoing His work.

Remembering Some Sayings of Archbishop Paul:

"Do not pray for an easy life…" (June 1, 2022)

"Faith is never Passive" (May 31, 2022)

Commemoration of the Holy Fathers of the First Ecumenical Council Commemorated on May 24

On the seventh Sunday of Pascha, we commemorate the holy God-bearing Fathers of the First Ecumenical Council.

The Commemoration of the First Ecumenical Council has been celebrated by the Church of Christ from ancient times. The Lord Jesus Christ left the Church a great promise, "I will build My Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it" (Mt. 16:18). Although the Church of Christ on earth will pass through difficult struggles with the Enemy of salvation, it will emerge victorious. The holy martyrs bore witness to the truth of the Savior's words, enduring suffering and death for confessing Christ, but the persecutor's sword is shattered by the Cross of Christ.

Persecution of Christians ceased during the fourth century, but heresies arose within the Church itself. One of the most pernicious of these heresies was Arianism. Arius, a priest of Alexandria, was a man of immense pride and ambition. In denying the divine nature of Jesus Christ and His equality with God the Father, Arius falsely taught that the Savior is not consubstantial with the Father, but is only a created being.

A local Council, convened with Patriarch Alexander of Alexandria presiding, condemned the false teachings of Arius. However, Arius would not submit to the authority of the Church. He wrote to many bishops, denouncing the decrees of the local Council. He spread his false teaching throughout the East, receiving support from certain Eastern bishops.

Investigating these dissentions, the holy emperor Constantine (May 21) consulted Bishop Hosius of Cordova (Aug. 27), who assured him that the heresy of Arius was directed against the most fundamental dogma of Christ's Church, and so he decided to convene an Ecumenical Council. In the year 325, 318 bishops representing Christian Churches from various lands gathered together at Nicea.

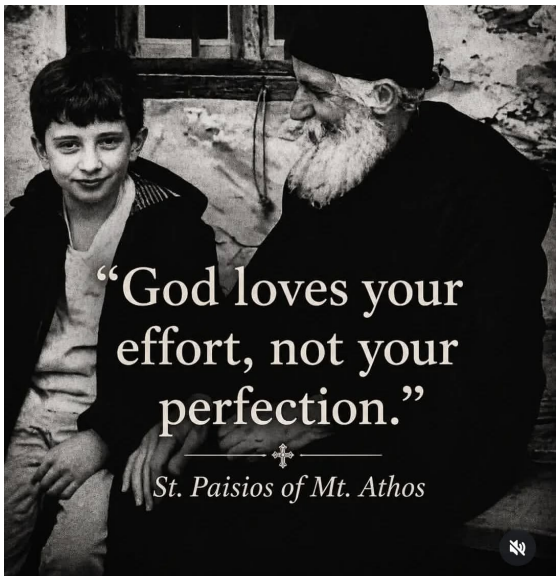
Among the assembled bishops were many confessors who had suffered during the persecutions, and who bore the marks of torture upon their bodies. Also participating in the Council were several great luminaries of the Church: Saint Nicholas, Archbishop of Myra in Lycia (December 6 and May 9), Saint Spyridon, Bishop of Tremithos (December 12), and others venerated by the Church as holy Fathers.

With Patriarch Alexander of Alexandria came his deacon, Athanasius [who later became Patriarch of Alexandria (May 2 and January 18)]. He is called "the Great," for he was a zealous champion for the purity of Orthodoxy. In the Sixth Ode of the Canon for today's Feast, he is referred to as "the thirteenth Apostle."

The emperor Constantine presided over the sessions of the Council. In his speech, responding to the welcome by Bishop Eusebius of Caesarea, he said, "God has helped me cast down the impious might of the persecutors, but more distressful for me than any blood spilled in battle is for a soldier, is the internal strife in the Church of God, for it is more ruinous."

Arius, with seventeen bishops among his supporters, remained arrogant, but his teaching was repudiated and he was excommunicated from the Church. In his speech, the holy deacon Athanasius conclusively refuted the blasphemous opinions of Arius. The heresiarch Arius is depicted in iconography sitting on Satan's knees, or in the mouth of the Beast of the Deep (Rev. 13).

The Fathers of the Council declined to accept a Symbol of Faith (Creed) proposed by the Arians. Instead, they affirmed the Orthodox Symbol of Faith. Saint Constantine asked the Council to insert into the text of the Symbol of Faith the word "consubstantial," which he had heard in the speeches of the bishops. The Fathers of the Council unanimously accepted this suggestion.

In the Nicean Creed, the holy Fathers set forth and confirmed the Apostolic teachings about Christ's divine nature. The heresy of Arius was exposed and repudiated as an error of haughty reason. After resolving this chief dogmatic question, the Council also issued Twelve Canons on questions of churchly administration and discipline. Also decided was the date for the celebration of Holy Pascha. By decision of the Council, Holy Pascha should not be celebrated by Christians on the same day with the Jewish Passover, but on the first Sunday after the first full moon of the vernal equinox (which occured on March 22 in 325).

The First Ecumenical Council is also commemorated on May 29.