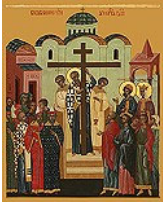


✠Bulletin✠

Week of July 12, 2026



Holy Cross Orthodox Church

V. Rev. Fr. Leonid Palceski
2365 South Olga Drive
Fort Myers, Florida 33905
www.HolyCrossFtMyers.org
Phone: 239-265-6562
Cell: 239-699-3119
HolyCrossFtMyers@gmail.com

6th SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST — Tone 5

Venerable Paisios of the Holy Mountain. Martyrs Proclus and Hilary of Ancyra (2nd c.). Ven. Michael, monk of Maleinos (962). Martyrs Theodore and his son, John, of Kiev (983). Ven. Arseny of Novgorod, Fool-for-Christ (1570). Monk-martyr Simon, founder of Volomsk Monastery (1641). Martyr Golinduc (in Baptism Mary), of Persia (591). Ven. John (998) and Gabriel, of the Holy Mountain (Georgian). Icon of the Mother of God, "THE THREE HANDS." (8th c.). Saint Serapion the New (3rd c.).

Weekly Liturgical Service Schedule

Sunday July 12th

9:00 am Proskomedie

9:30 am Divine Liturgy

***No Confessions**

Saturday – July 18th

5:30 pm – Vespers

Confessions

Weekly Schedule

Sunday July 12th

- Choir Practice
- Inquirers & Catechism classes

"Dear God, I don't want to sin again."

Archimandrite Symeon Kragiopoulos

Taken from a homily originally preached on the 4th of Aug, 2002

Today's Gospel speaks about the healing of the Paralytic of Capernaum. The Lord is in Capernaum, his second homeland, and a paralytic is brought to Him there so that He would heal him.

As always, so here too, our Lord waits and desires to see in the man something He can bring to life. While the Lord gives freely that which He gives, the man needs to at least desire that which the Lord has to give and be predisposed appropriately toward it. With respect to this the gospel passage mentions: "When Jesus saw their faith". (Matthew 9:2)

"When Jesus saw their faith", He immediately said, "'Son, be of good cheer; your sins are forgiven you.'". Christ, though, as if not seeing the man's paralysis and that the man is consumed with it, immediately says to him: "Cheer up! Your sins are forgiven." ***The heart of the matter for Christ is sin.***

Who among us has distress about the poisoning of his soul by sin, and desires to be delivered from it and be freed? The Fathers, the saints are constantly occupied with this and constantly refer to this: that Christ came to heal the soul of the sickness and wounds of sin. We need to pay attention to this.

The Christian spirit has so deteriorated today that people are ashamed to think that they have sins and that the problem is what is to be done about this sin. Each one of us has learned to live outside of the spirit of God, learned to practice the deeds of the old man, and so we do not understand anything about the truth of God.

This should be the concern of all of us: to hear within us and to feel all the more this voice of Christ which forgives our sins. It is an important matter not only to believe, but for you to feel within yourself and to sense that God has forgiven you, that he accepts you. But in order for this to happen you need to arrive at the point of saying: "Dear God, I don't want to sin again." You need to hate and detest sin as the saints tell us.

When God sees that you have made a definitive and absolute decision not to sin, the blessed moment comes when you are clear that the Lord forgives you. He has found you, and you have found Him; you have loved Him, and He loves you. He heals you and ***you now travel along the road of salvation.***

The Mystery of Repentance

Rdr. Theophan

“The Mystery (Sacrament) of Repentance is a Grace-giving sacred rite in which, after the faithful offer repentance of their sins, the remission of sins is bestowed by the mercy of God through the intermediary of a pastor of the Church, in accordance with the Savior’s promise.”

- Fr. Michael Pomazansky, Orthodox Dogmatic Theology

When we speak of confession, we are generally referring to the Mystery of Repentance although confession specifically makes up only the first half of the mystery. Confession for the Christian requires one to look inward and examine oneself. There are a number of ways to do this. As a standard of comparison, one can use the 10 Commandments, Christ’s Sermon on the Mount, specifically the Beatitudes (Matt. 5-7), or other passages from Holy Scripture as well as an examination of our relationship with God, ourselves, and others. The verbal pronouncement of one’s sins, coupled with an act of one’s will for correction and a resolve to do better with God’s help, contributes to a saving confession. It acts as healing balm for the soul, sometimes compared to a “second baptism.” The prayers of the priest bestow the Grace of God and remission of sins to the Christian according to his ministry.

A word of caution: we must avoid developing a transactional or legalistic view of confession in order to maintain a proper understanding of its place in the life of a Christian. We must not approach confession simply as a “stop” on our way to taking communion. Since the Eucharist is the “sacrament of the assembly,” in the words of Fr. Alexander Schmemmann, we should view the Mystery of Repentance not only as an individually salvific rite but as one which reintegrates us back into the Body of Christ, which is the Church, after we have fallen away due to our own sin or absence from the assembly. Let us approach this great mystery with preparation and contrition of heart trusting that, with God’s help, we can share in the mind of the Church and ensure that we lean not on our own understanding (Prov. 3:5).

Diocese of the South (DOS) Assembly

The upcoming 48th Diocesan Assembly will be held at the Hyatt Place in St. Augustine/Vilano Beach from Tuesday, July 21st through Friday, July 24th, 2026. Per the annual parish meeting, the church council has voted for our council secretary, Anthony (Theophan) Gordon to represent Holy Cross as our delegate during this assembly. Fr. Leonid and Matushka Irene will be attending as well. Observers are also welcome to attend. More information, including the itinerary and hotel arrangements, can be found at:

<https://dosoca.org/events/2026-diocesan-assembly/>

Prayer Requests

Agape Brill

Walter Kallaur – brother of the Constantine & Arlene Kallaur

Anne and Scott Peatross

Nicholas Kowalski

Robert Kozera

Megan – David & Phyllis Bartos’ daughter

Rosemary – Friend of David & Phyllis Bartos

Please pray for our families in Ukraine

Leonid, Nadiia, Andrii, Halyna,

Volodymyr, Maryna, Dmytro, Bohdan,

Nadiia, Oleksandr, Tetiana,

Roman, Mykola

Anatoly, Olga, Maria, Andrei

Please let us know of anyone you would like to add to the Prayer Lists.

Inquirers & Catechism Class

Classes will be on Sundays following Divine Liturgy. For those new to understanding Orthodoxy or for those who want to expand your foundation, please join us for our classes. Please check the schedule for changes.

The Divine Liturgy

Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom
Variable Hymns and Readings

Tone 5 Troparion (Resurrection)

Let us, the faithful, praise and worship the Word,
co-eternal with the Father and the Spirit,
born for our salvation from the Virgin;
for He willed to be lifted up on the Cross in the flesh,
to endure death,
and to raise the dead//
by His glorious Resurrection.

Tone 4 Troparion (Martyrs)

Thy holy martyrs Proclus and Hilary, O Lord,
through their sufferings have received incorruptible crowns from Thee, our
God.
For having Thy strength, they laid low their adversaries,
and shattered the powerless boldness of demons//
Through their intercession, save our souls!

Tone 8 Troparion (Ven. Michael)

The image of God was truly preserved in thee, O Father,
for thou didst take up the Cross and follow Christ.
By so doing, thou taughtest us to disregard the flesh for it passes away;
but to care instead for the soul, for it is immortal//
Therefore thy spirit, venerable Michael, rejoices with the angels.

Tone 5 Kontakion (Resurrection)

Thou didst descend into hell, O my Savior,
shattering its gates as Almighty,
resurrecting the dead as Creator,
and destroying the sting of death.
Thou hast delivered Adam from the curse, O Lover of man,//
and we cry to Thee: "O Lord, save us!

Tone 4 Kontakion (Martyrs)

Like the morning star,
your glorious sufferings enlighten us with holy miracles.
We celebrate you memory, O Proclus and Hilary;
pray to Christ our God for us//
that He will save our souls!

Tone 2 Kontakion (Ven. Michael)

By thy deeds thou didst wither the arrogance of the flesh;
and through enlightenment thou gavest wings to thine agility of spirit.
Thou wast revealed as a dwelling-place of the Trinity,
Whom now thou dost clearly behold.//
O blessed Michael, unceasingly pray for us all!

Tone 6 (Steadfast Protectress....)

Steadfast Protectress of Christians,
constant Advocate before the Creator:
do not despise the cry of us sinners,
but in your goodness come speedily to help us
who call on you in faith. Hasten to hear our petition and to intercede for us,
O Theotokos, for you always protect those who honor you.

Tone 5 Prokeimenon (Resurrection)

Thou, O Lord, shalt protect us / and preserve us from this generation
forever. (Ps. 11:7)

*V. Save me, O Lord, for there is no longer any that is godly!
(Ps. 11:1a)*

Romans 12:6-14 (Epistle)

Brethren, Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us,
let us use them: if prophecy, let us prophesy in proportion to our faith; or
ministry, let us use it in our ministering; he who teaches, in teaching; he who
exhorts, in exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with
diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness. Let love be without
hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil. Cling to what is good. Be kindly affectionate to
one another with brotherly love, in honor giving preference to one another;
not lagging in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord; rejoicing in hope,
patient in tribulation, continuing steadfastly in prayer; distributing to the
needs of the saints, given to hospitality. Bless those who persecute you; bless
and do not curse.

Tone 5

Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia.

V. I will sing of Thy mercies, O Lord, forever; with my mouth I will proclaim Thy truth from generation to generation. (Ps. 88:1-2)

V. For Thou hast said: Mercy will be established forever; Thy truth will be prepared in the heavens. (Ps. 88:3)

Matthew 9:1-8 (Gospel)

So He got into a boat, crossed over, and came to His own city. Then behold, they brought to Him a paralytic lying on a bed. When Jesus saw their faith, He said to the paralytic, "Son, be of good cheer; your sins are forgiven you." And at once some of the scribes said within themselves, "This Man blasphemes!" But Jesus, knowing their thoughts, said, "Why do you think evil in your hearts? For which is easier, to say, 'Your sins are forgiven you,' or to say, 'Arise and walk'? But that you may know that the Son of Man has power on earth to forgive sins" – then He said to the paralytic, "Arise, take up your bed, and go to your house." And he arose and departed to his house. Now when the multitudes saw it, they marveled and glorified God, who had given such power to men.

Explanation of Today's Gospel Reading

By Blessed Theophylact
Archbishop of Ochrid and Bulgaria

1-2. So He got into a boat, crossed over, and came to His own city. Then behold, they brought to Him a paralytic lying on a bed. "His own city" means Capernaum, for it was there that He was living. He was born in Bethlehem, raised in Nazareth, and lived for an extended length of time in Capernaum. This paralytic is not the same as the one mentioned in the Gospel of St. John, for that one was beside the Sheep's Pool in Jerusalem, while this one was in Capernaum. And that one had no one to help him, while this one was carried by four men, as St. Mark says, who lowered him through the roof, a fact which St. Matthew omits. **When Jesus saw their faith.** Either the faith of the men who brought the paralytic, for Jesus often worked a miracle on account of the faith of those who brought the one sick; or, of the paralytic himself. **He said to the paralytic, "Son, be of good cheer; your sins are forgiven.** Jesus calls him "son", either as one of God's creatures, or because he believed. To show that the man's paralysis is a result of his sins, Jesus first forgives him his sins.

3-5. And at once some of the scribes said within themselves, "This Man blasphemes!" But Jesus, knowing their thoughts, said, "Why do you think evil in your hearts? For which is easier, to say, 'Your sins are forgiven you,' or to say, 'Arise and walk'?" By knowing their thoughts, Jesus shows that He is God. He rebukes them by saying, "You think that I am blaspheming by promising to forgive sins, which is a great thing, and that I resort to this because it is something which cannot be verified. But by healing the body, I shall guarantee that the soul has been healed well. By doing the lesser deed, though it appears to be more difficult, I shall also confirm the remission of sins, which is indeed something great even though it appears easier to you since it is not visible to the eye."

6-8. "But that you may know that the Son of Man has power on earth to forgive sins" – then He said to the paralytic, "Arise, take up your bed, and go to your house." And he arose and departed to his house. Now when the multitudes saw it, they marveled and glorified God, who had given such power to men. Jesus commanded him to carry his bed so that the event would not appear to have been imaginary, and also, so that the multitudes would see the miracle. For they thought that Jesus, Who is greater than all, was only a man.

Communion Hymn

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