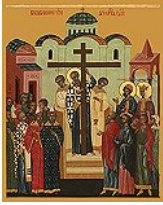


✠Bulletin✠

Week of July 5, 2026



Holy Cross Orthodox Church

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5th SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST — Tone 4

Ven. Athanasius, Founder of the Great Lavra and Cœnobitic Monasticism on Mt. Athos, and his six disciples (1003). Uncovering of the Relics of Ven. Sergius (Sérgii) of Rádonezh (1422). Hieromartyr Stephen, bishop of Rhegium, disciple of Apostle Paul, and with him Bishop Suerus and the women Agnes, Felicitas, and Perpetua (1st c.). Martyr Anna, at Rome (304). Hieromartyr Athanasius, deacon, of Jerusalem (451). St. Morwenna, patroness of Morwenstow (England) (6th c.). St. Lampadus, monk, of Irenopolis (10th c.). Sts. Athanasius and Theodosius, of Cherepovets (both ca. 1388), disciples of St. Sergius of Radonezh. New Martyr Cyprian of Koutoumousiou, Mt. Athos (1679). New Martyrs Abbess Elizabeth (Romanova) and Nun Barbara, and those with them: John, Igor, Constantine, Sergius, and Vladimir, princes, and Theodore, at Alapaevsk (1918). New Hieromartyr Aristarchus (Sitalo), archimandrite, of Akhtyra (1919). New Confessor Agapitus (Taube), monk of Optina Monastery (1936). (Greek Cal.: Synaxis of 23 Saints of Lesbos.)

Weekly Liturgical Service Schedule

Sunday July 5th

9:15 am - Hours

9:30 am - Divine Liturgy

Saturday – July 11th

5:30 pm – Vespers

Confessions

Weekly Schedule

Sunday July 5th

- Choir Practice
- Inquirers & Catechism classes

IN THANKSGIVING TO ALMIGHTY GOD

On the 250th Anniversary of the
United States of America

*Statement of the Holy Synod of Bishops of the
Orthodox Church in America
2026*

To the clergy, monastics, and faithful of the Orthodox Church in America:

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

I. GIVING THANKS TO GOD FOR THIS LAND

As the United States of America marks the two hundred and fiftieth anniversary of its founding, we, the Holy Synod of Bishops of the Orthodox Church in America, raise our hearts and voices in gratitude to God, the Giver of every good and perfect gift, Who in His inscrutable providence has planted His Holy Church in this land and caused her to take root, grow, and flourish.

We give thanks to Almighty God for the United States of America—a nation that has, by the grace of God, afforded its people the freedom to worship, to follow the way of Jesus Christ, and to bear witness to the Gospel without fear or compulsion. We do not take these gifts for granted. They are blessings of divine providence, entrusted to us as a sacred responsibility. The freedom to gather in our churches, to catechize our children in the Faith, to proclaim the Resurrection of Christ openly and without hindrance—these are gifts for which every generation must give thanks to God and remain worthy stewards.

While this statement is offered on the occasion of the United States' particular milestone, we note with gratitude that the Orthodox Church in America spans the breadth of this continent. Our dioceses in Canada and Mexico share with us in this moment of thanksgiving, giving glory to God for the freedom to worship and to serve the peoples of North

America in all their diversity. The blessing we celebrate belongs, in different measure and manner, to the whole Church on this continent. We call upon the faithful of the Orthodox Church in America to celebrate this historic milestone with prayers of thanksgiving, offered in your parishes, your homes, and in the quiet of your hearts, for this land and for all who dwell in it.

II. THE CHURCH PLANTED, GROWN, AND ESTABLISHED IN THIS LAND

The history of Orthodoxy in America is itself a testament to divine providence. From the earliest missionaries who brought the light of the Gospel to the shores of Alaska, to the generations of faithful who built parishes and communities across this vast continent, the Orthodox Church has been woven into the fabric of American life. She has welcomed the immigrant and the native-born, the seeker and the inheritor of the Faith, the learned and the simple—all those whom Christ Himself has called.

The granting of autocephaly to the Orthodox Church in America in 1970 was not merely an administrative act. It was an ecclesiological affirmation that this land has a Church of its own—a local Church, fully Orthodox, fully catholic, fully apostolic. The Orthodox Church in America is the Church for this land and for the people of this land. We are at home here, rooted in this soil, and the people of America—of every background, every heritage, every walk of life—are those whom Christ has entrusted to our pastoral care.

We embrace with joy the richness of our diversity. The Orthodox Church in America gathers faithful whose ancestors came from Russia, Romania, Bulgaria, and Albania—nations whose ancient Orthodox heritage now finds a new home on this continent—as well as from Eastern Europe more broadly, Greece, the Arab world, Africa, Asia, and the Americas themselves. This diversity is not an obstacle to unity but an icon of the Kingdom of God, where there is “neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free” (Galatians 3:28), but all are one in Christ Jesus. We treasure every thread even as we weave them together into a single garment: the local Orthodox Church in America.

III. THE GREAT COMMISSION AND OUR PARTICULAR CALLING

As our Lord Jesus Christ ascended into heaven, He entrusted to His disciples—and to His Church in every age and every land—a mission that admits of no exception and no delay: “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you” (Matthew 28:19–20). This is not a mission given to us in the abstract. It is a mission given to us here, in this place, among these people, at this moment in history.

The early Christians understood this calling with a simplicity that still instructs us. As an anonymous disciple wrote in the second century, in the Epistle to Diognetus:

“They dwell in their own countries, but only as sojourners; they bear their share in all things as citizens, and they endure all hardships as strangers. Every foreign land is to them as their native country, and every land of their birth as a land of strangers.”

We find in these ancient words a description of our own vocation. The Orthodox Church in America is at home in this land, fully engaged in its common life—and yet her citizenship is ultimately in heaven, her culture the culture of the Kingdom. It is precisely from this position that she can offer something to American society that no merely political or ideological force can provide—the presence of the living God.

The Orthodox Church in America accepts this calling with humility and with urgency. We are called to be the presence of Jesus Christ in American society—in its cities and its rural communities, in its universities and its prisons, in its hospitals and its institutions, among its poor and its prosperous. We are called not to retreat from the complexity of our times, but to illumine it with the light of the Gospel. We are called to be, as our Lord taught, salt and light—preserving what is good and true, and shining in the darkness without being overcome by it.

IV. OUR COMMITMENT TO THIS NATION AND ITS PEOPLE

We, the Holy Synod of Bishops, reaffirm the commitment of the Orthodox Church in America to the well-being of this nation and all its people. We are committed to the cultivation of peace, the promotion of human dignity, the practice of charity, and the witness of reconciliation in a society that stands in great need of all these gifts.

In this regard, we recall with appreciation the aspiration expressed at the very founding of this republic. President George Washington, writing in 1790, articulated a vision of civic life that went beyond the mere tolerance of religious difference to something more generous:

“All possess alike liberty of conscience and immunities of citizenship. It is now no more that toleration is spoken of, as if it was by the indulgence of one class of people that another enjoyed the exercise of their inherent natural rights.”

This aspiration—that religious liberty is not a concession granted by the powerful to the weak, but an inherent right belonging to all persons equally—has made it possible for the Orthodox Church to take root and flourish in this soil. We receive this gift with gratitude, even as we acknowledge with honesty that the distance between founding aspiration and faithful fulfillment has often been great, and that this very tension is itself a summons to continued repentance and renewal. The Church does not exist at the pleasure of the state, nor does she seek dominion over it. Rather, she stands within society as a witness to a Kingdom that exceeds all earthly kingdoms, illumining the civil order with the wisdom of the Gospel and the witness of holy lives.

In a moment of rapid and, at times, unsettling change, we offer the unchanging Christ—the same yesterday, today, and forever (Hebrews 13:8). Our parishes are to be places of genuine welcome, of profound worship, and of selfless love where our Lord, God, and Savior Jesus Christ is always manifested. Our contribution to America is not power, not politics, but the presence of the living God among His people.

V. A CALL TO REPENTANCE AND HUMILITY

Gratitude, however, is not the Church’s only word on this occasion. The prophets of ancient Israel—those whom God raised up precisely because they loved their people—never ceased calling rulers and people alike to repentance and humility before God. It is a mark of genuine love for this nation that the Church, too, must speak this word. Two hundred and fifty years is a span of time sufficient to accumulate both great achievements and grave failures. This nation—like all nations under God—has known the heights of generosity and the depths of injustice; the nobility of aspiration and the tragedy of betrayal. The Church does not pretend otherwise, nor would it serve this nation’s good for her to do so. We bear witness to a God before Whom no nation and no person stands without need of mercy.

The promise spoken to Solomon rings out across the centuries with undiminished urgency:

“If my people who are called by my name humble themselves, and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and heal their land.” (2 Chronicles 7:14)

It is in this spirit that we call the faithful of the Orthodox Church in America—and, through their witness, this nation—to repentance: repentance for injustices past and present; for the idols of wealth, comfort, and power that seduce every generation; for the divisions and enmities that tear at the fabric of common life; and for the ways in which we have failed to love our neighbors as ourselves. A true commemoration of a nation’s founding is not mere self-congratulation; it is a moment of sober examination, of honest confession, and of renewed dependence upon God.

The Church does not speak this word from a posture of superiority. We acknowledge our own failures—in charity, in unity, and in the fullness of our witness to the Gospel. We, too, stand in need of God’s mercy. But it is precisely because the Church has known the healing power of repentance that she cannot withhold this word from the world she is called to serve.

VI. A CALL TO THE DIOCESES

We encourage all dioceses, parishes, monasteries, and institutions of the Orthodox Church in America to mark the 250th anniversary of the United States of America in a manner befitting the occasion. Special services of thanksgiving, educational programs, civic engagement, and acts of charity are all fitting expressions of our gratitude to God and our love for this country and this continent.

VII. CONCLUSION

We close with a prayer offered in both gratitude and penitence—that this nation, conceived in aspiration toward freedom and formed through the struggles and sacrifices of many generations, may yet heed the ancient call to humility before God, and so continue to be a place where the Church of Christ flourishes, where the Gospel is proclaimed, and where all people are able to seek the face of God without fear.

To Him Who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us, to Him be glory in the Church and in Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen.

Schedule of Services for July

Sunday – July 12th

9:00 am Proskomedie

***No Confessions**

Saturday – July 18th

5:30 pm – Vespers

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 4 Troparion *(Resurrection)*

When the women disciples of the Lord
learned from the angel the joyous message of Thy Resurrection,
they cast away the ancestral curse
and elatedly told the apostles:
“Death is overthrown!
Christ God is risen,//
granting the world great mercy!”

Tone 3 Troparion (Ven. Athanasius)

The angelic hosts marveled at thy life in the flesh,
how, though still in the body,
thou didst engage the invisible powers in combat, O ever-glorious one,
and didst route the hosts of demons.
Therefore Christ has bestowed rich gifts upon thee, O Athanasius.//
For this cause, O father, intercede for the salvation of our souls.

Tone 4 Kontakion (Resurrection)

My Savior and Redeemer
as God rose from the tomb and delivered the earth-born from their chains.
He has shattered the gates of hell,
and as Master,//
He has risen on the third day!

Tone 8 Kontakion (Ven. Athanasius)

O most excellent seer of immaterial beings
and a truly faithful interpreter of their workings,
thy flock calls out to thee, O God-inspired orator:
“Do not cease to pray for thy servants,
that we may be delivered from dangers and demonic attacks,//
as we cry out to thee: Rejoice, O Father Athanasius!”

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 4 Prokeimenon (Resurrection)

O Lord, how manifold are Thy works; / in wisdom hast Thou made them all.
(Ps. 103:26)

V. Bless the Lord, O my soul! O Lord, my God, Thou art very great!
(Ps. 103:1)

Tone 7 Prokeimenon (Ven. Athanasius)

Precious in the sight of the Lord / is the death of His saints.
(Ps. 115:6)

Romans 10:1-10 (Epistle)

Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is that they may be saved. For I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge. For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and seeking to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted to the righteousness of God. For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes. For Moses writes about the righteousness which is of the law, "The man who does those things shall live by them." But the righteousness of faith speaks in this way, "Do not say in your heart, 'Who will ascend into heaven?'" (that is, to bring Christ down from above) or, 'Who will descend into the abyss?'" (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead). But what does it say? "The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart" (that is, the word of faith which we preach): that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

Galatians 5:22-6:2 (Epistle, Ven. Athanasius)

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law. And those who are Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. Let us not become conceited, provoking one another, envying one another. Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness, considering yourself lest you also be tempted. Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.

Tone 4

Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia.

V. Go forth, prosper and reign, for the sake of meekness,
righteousness and truth! (Ps. 44:3b)

V. For Thou lovest righteousness, and hatest iniquity. (Ps. 44:6)

Tone 6

V. Blessed is the man who fears the Lord, who greatly delights in His commandments. (Ps. 111:1)

Matthew 8:28-9:1 (Gospel)

When He had come to the other side, to the country of the Gergesenes, there met Him two demon-possessed men, coming out of the tombs, exceedingly fierce, so that no one could pass that way. And suddenly they cried out, saying, "What have we to do with You, Jesus, You Son of God? Have You come here to torment us before the time?" Now a good way off from them there was a herd of many swine feeding. So the demons begged Him, saying, "If You cast us out, permit us to go away into the herd of swine." And He said to them, "Go." So when they had come out, they went into the herd of swine. And suddenly the whole herd of swine ran violently down the steep place into the sea, and perished in the water. Then those who kept them fled; and they went away into the city and told everything, including what had happened to the demon-possessed men. And behold, the whole city came out to meet Jesus. And when they saw Him, they begged Him to depart from their region. So He got into a boat, crossed over, and came to His own city.

Luke 6:17-23 (Gospel, Ven. Athanasius)

And He came down with them and stood on a level place with a crowd of His disciples and a great multitude of people from all Judea and Jerusalem, and from the seacoast of Tyre and Sidon, who came to hear Him and be healed of their diseases, as well as those who were tormented with unclean spirits. And they were healed. And the whole multitude sought to touch Him, for power went out from Him and healed them all. Then He lifted up His eyes toward His disciples, and said: "Blessed are you poor, for yours is the kingdom of God. Blessed are you who hunger now, for you shall be filled. Blessed are you who weep now, for you shall laugh. Blessed are you when men hate you, and when they exclude you, and revile you, and cast out your name as evil, for the Son of Man's sake. Rejoice in that day and leap for joy! For indeed your reward is great in heaven, for in like manner their fathers did to the prophets.

Explanation of Today's Gospel Reading

Matthew 8:28-9:1

By Blessed Theophylact
Archbishop of Ochrid and Bulgaria

28. When He had come to the other side, to the country of the Gergesenes, there met Him two demon-possessed men, coming out of the tombs, exceedingly fierce, so that no one could pass that way. While the men in the boat were yet wondering what manner of man this was that even the winds

and the sea obeyed Him, the demons come to proclaim the answer. Although Mark and Luke speak of one man who was possessed by a legion of demons, understand that this one man was one of the two mentioned by Matthew, evidently, the more notorious of the two. Jesus came alone towards them, since no one dared to bring them to Him, so fierce were they. They dwelt among the tombs because the demons wish to inspire the belief that the souls of those who have died become demons. Let no one believe this: for when the soul departs from a man, it does not wander about the earth. For the souls of the righteous are in the hand of God, and the souls of sinners are also led away, as was the soul of the rich man.

29. And suddenly they cried out, saying, "What have we to do with You, Jesus, You Son of God? Have You come here to torment us before the time?"

Behold, they proclaim Him to be the Son of God, but first they declare their enmity. The demons consider it torment to be prevented from harming men. Understand the demons' words, "before the time", to mean that they thought that Christ, not enduring their great wickedness, would not wait for the time of their punishment. But this is not so; for the demons are permitted to contend with us until the end of the world.

30-32. Now a good way off from them there was a herd of many swine feeding. So the demons begged Him, saying, "If You cast us out, permit us to go away into the herd of swine." And He said to them, "Go." So when they had come out, they went into the herd of swine.

The demons asked this so that they could drown the swine, and thus the owners would be grieved and would not welcome Christ. Christ granted the demons their request in order to show how great is their bitterness towards men, and that if they had the power, and were not prevented as they are by God, they would do worse things to us than they did to the swine. For God protects those possessed by demons so that they do not kill themselves.

34. And behold, the whole city came out to meet Jesus. And when they saw Him, they begged Him to depart from their region.

The inhabitants of the city begged Jesus to leave because they were grieved and thought that they would suffer something worse thereafter. You, O reader, learn that where there is a swinish life, it is not Christ who dwells there, but demons.

Communion Hymn

Praise the Lord from the heavens, praise Him in the highest! *(Ps. 148:1)*
The righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance! He shall not fear evil tidings! *(Ps. 111:6)*