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**34<sup>th</sup> SUNDAY OF PENTECOST -Tone 1.** Sunday of the and the Pharisee. (Beginning of the Lenten Triodion). Hieromartyrs Marcellus, Bishop of Sicily, Philagrius, Bishop of Cyprus, (1<sup>st</sup> c.). Ven. Pankratii of the Kiev Caves. Ven. Nicephorus & Gennadii of Vazheozersk + The Relics of St. Innocent, Bishop of Irkutsk (1805).

Heb. 7:7-17     Luke 18:10-14

### Announcements

#### Liturgical Schedule:

**Divine Liturgy Sundays: 9:30 am – Great Vespers – Saturdays: 4:00pm**

**Lenten Retreat** by His Eminence Alexander on Feb. 15 at Christ the Saviour Church, Miami.

**Memorial Saturday – Feb. 22 – Divine Liturgy 9:00am** -- Saturday of Meatfare.

Bishop Thomas will attend Divine Liturgy on Saturday - Feb. 22 and will preside at the interment of his departed father Thomas Joseph at Lee High Memorial Park on at 3:00 pm.

Choir Rehearsal Saturday 3:30pm prior to Great Vespers.

Church School and Fellowship following Divine Liturgy on Sundays.

Votive Candles: There is a sponsor for the month of February.

On Sunday, Feb. 23 Father will speak on the understanding the Christ The Conqueror of Hell after coffee hour.

#### *Memorial Seervices For The Dead*

*"Today, as we believers hold a Memorial of all the dead from all time, let us praise our Lord and Savior, fervently asking that all may give a good answer to God in the hour of judgment, be deserving of His Heavenly Kingdom and come to dwell at His right hand in joy, in the glorious fellowship of the righteous and in the illumined inheritance of all those who are holy." [Meat Fare Saturday]*

Memorial Services for the dead are an important part of the Christian life in the Orthodox Church. They are officially prescribed to be held on Meat Fare Saturday, the 2nd, 3rd and 4th Saturdays of the Great Fast and on the Saturday before Pentecost. The Synaxarion says: *"On these days the Holy Fathers designated a Memorial for all those who have fallen asleep in **true faith** and in hope of everlasting life."* These days call us to enter into a mindful, prayerful communion with all who have passed through this temporary life into the world beyond.

These Memorials are based on the premise of our Faith that **the dead are alive**. The person who dies to this material world lives on in the spiritual world. Leaving this physical life, he passes on into another form of life by death he moves over into another realm of being, and he exists as a spirit in a dimension beyond this material reality of the body. He lives in the spiritual realm of being and existence as a soul with mind and will, with perception and consciousness, with awareness and intelligence. All this is in accordance with God's Providence: *"With incomprehensible depth of wisdom, Thou dost limit life in this world and with foresight Thou dost appoint death as an advancement that transports Thy servants to another life."* [Aposticha for the Dead]

The possibility of our existence as souls living in a realm beyond this physical world is founded on the fact that we are created with a spiritual and a material nature. This is affirmed in a *Stichira for the Dead*: *"My beginning and my substance was generated by Your creative command, O God For when You willed, You constructed me as a living being composed of a visible nature and an invisible nature: You formed my body out of the earth, and You endowed me with a soul out of Your Divine and Life Giving Spirit. Therefore, O Savior, give rest in the land of the living to your departed servants."* In death the body returns to the material elements from which it was made, but the soul goes on existing as a spiritual entity in the realm of the spirits.

The Memorial Services and Prayers are a means of our spiritual communion with the souls of those who have died. They engender a non-material mode of relationship with our departed fellow human beings. They are expressions of our love and concern and involvement with their life and being. Just as we believe that such activity can affect the lives of people in this world, so we believe it can affect the lives of the souls in the world beyond.

The souls that have died to this world continue to exist but they may exist in a life separated far from the Divine Realm. So our concern is not simply that they may continue to exist beyond the grave, but that they may share a life of peace and love in communion with the Divine Spirit; that they may live in a state of being with God and in fellowship with those godly souls who have departed this life. This is our fervent prayer for the dead: *"With the spirits of the departed righteous, give rest, O Lord, to the souls of Thy servants, and preserve them in a blessed life with Thee. In the place of Thy rest, O Lord, where all the saints repose, give rest also to the souls of thy servants."* [Troparia for the Dead]

*"A man must understand his nature. The body is temporal and corruptible. The soul, being the inspiring of God, is divine and immortal. The soul is to grow in the likeness of God. An intelligent man is one who has rightly understood the soul. He does not indulge his body or the passions of 'his flesh. Rather he leads a spiritual life in communion with God, contemplating God with his mind. It is impossible to escape death. Those who understand this are truly intelligent, and they become accomplished in*

*virtue and spirituality they accept death without any complaint, without fear or grief. They are mindful that death frees us from the evils of this, life."*

*Anthony the Great]*