



Saint George Greek Orthodox Church
Knoxville, Tennessee



Κήρυγμα  Kerygma

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2020~17



1st Sunday of Matthew

 **The Reality of Sainly Life** 

Feast of All Saints

Hebrews 11:33-12:2

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June 14, 2020

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Matthew 10:32-33;37-38;19:27-30

Each year we celebrate the Sunday of All Saints, a holiday that is interesting and unique for a few reasons. Considering the gravity of a day when we remember all the saints of the Church, whether identified by us or not, **is cause for inspiration**. Going further and reflecting on where in the calendar we find that day is added inspiration. These factors present us with some initial background.

Our Church places the Sunday of All Saints at the end of a **succession of moveable feasts**; holidays that rotate around Pascha. For example, this year Pascha was Sunday, April 19th. From there, count back ten weeks to find the beginning of “Triodion” (February 9th). Similarly, count forward eight weeks, the “Pentecostarion” season, to arrive at the Sunday of All Saints. The weeks add up to over a third of the year!

Against this background, upon a closer look at the All Saints celebration we can recognize three important responsibilities: Reflection, Anticipation, and Transition. **If we Reflect** on Pentecost being one week before, we recall celebrating the descent of the Holy Spirit upon the Apostles and upon the whole Church throughout the ages. For the week following through the Sunday of All Saints, the Church relaxes the ordinary custom of fasting.



From All Saints, we can then **look forward and Anticipate** another major feast when we honor the All-Praiseworthy and Preeminent Apostles Saints Peter and Paul (June 29th). Viewed together with the next day’s honoring of the Twelve, this celebration dovetails with Pentecost. On one end we remember the start of the Apostles’ mission when blessed by the Holy Spirit and at the other, their accomplishments.

Between the Sunday of All Saints and June 29th is a fasting period that varies in length annually. It is **a time of Transition**, not only with the fast, but also as a crossroad formed by the universal impact of the Holy Spirit’s descent together with the universal commemoration of All Saints. This vantage point allows us to identify the importance provided by the examples of the saints along with the parallel importance of using this time to affect a transition in our personal lives. From this perspective we can better contemplate our own place in the life of the Church. Where is that place? Where should it be?

Potentially, this can become a meaningful moment in our life. Anyone of uncertain faith will shy away, continuing without additional effort as their soul languishes. However, anyone with genuine faith will continually seek to reinvigorate their soul by renewing commitment to following Christ and serving His Church. In renewing our commitment, not casually but with burning intent, we can see more clearly **our dependence upon Christ’s authority and mercy as we progress, “from glory to glory.”** [2 Cor 3:18]

Following that path means identifying with an essential element of sainthood. By His grace we rise to whatever challenge confronting us and fulfill the responsibilities leading to salvation. That is, **we recognize and embrace the reality of saintly life**. In this way we awaken our soul, liberate our will, and embolden our resolve to follow Christ with sincerity. Our life then becomes a pious expression of true human nature as we reaffirm our viability within the Body of Christ.

God Bless!



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