



## Holy Ghost Orthodox Church

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**ON THE MEND:** Please keep the following parishioners and others in your prayers for recovery from their illnesses and injuries: Bishop Robert, Father Jakiw Norton, Father Dragan Filipović, Father Stevo Rocknage, Father Paul Stoll, Father Igor Soroka, Father Michael Mihalick [MS], Father Joseph Kopchak, Father Cuthbert Jack, Father Elias Warnke, Father Nestor Kowal, Father Paul Bigelow, Father Emilian Balan, Father John Nakonachny, Deacon Dennis Lapushanski, Protopresbyter Peter Hotrovich, Protodeacon Joseph Hotrovich, Pani-Dobrodijka Sonia Diakiw, Joshua Agosto and his family, Mike Holupka, Eva Malesnick, Stella Peanoske, Joe Nezolyk, Nick Behun, Grace Holupka, Virginia Bryan, Joseph Sliwinsky, Linda Mechtly, Mary Mochnick, Evelyn Misko, Jeanne Boehing, Alex Drobot, Rachelle, Jane Golofski, Doug Diller, Harry Krewsun, Mary Alice Babcock, Dorie Kunkle, Andrea, & Melissa [Betty O'Masta's relatives], Mary Evelyn King, Stella Cherepko, Sam Wadrose, Isabella Olivia Lindgren, Ethel Thomas, Donna, Erin, Michael Miller, Dave May, Grace & Owen Ostrasky, Alverta, Patti Sinecki, David Genshi, Sue Segeleon, Mike Gallagher, Michael Miller, Liz Stumpf, Theodore Nixon, Michelle Corba Kapeluck, Robert Hippert & family, Margaret Vladimir, Luke Emmerling, John Sheliga, George & Mika Rocknage, Robert McKivitz, Liz Obradovich, Halyna Zelinska [Bishop Daniel's mother], Charlotte, Andrew Mark Olynyk, Deborah Finley, Claire Senita, Eleanor Kelly, Bryan, Doris Artman, Nancy Barylak, Patrick Keenan, Khrystyna Chorniy, Anthony Cormier, Nathan Forbeck, Sarah Doyle, Samuel Peters, Jean Stutchell, Charles & Esther Holupka, Wanda Mefford, Lynn (Bush) Gill, David Vallor, Henry Faraly, Betty O'Masta, Julie Eiler, Glenn Miller, Vince Ferro, Michael Pawlyshyn, Dorothy Lednovich, Bob C., Allie— young girl with leukemia, Heather Kramer, Jane Wartinbee, Matthew—21-year-old with cancer, Nicholas Orlando, Mary Ann Kuznik, Michael Woloschak, Michael Pryhodzenko, Sonia Luciw, Nellie Patsko, Theresa Ditto, Mary Ann Musial, Mary Pelino, Yvonne Christy, Myron & Barbara Spak, Pete Niederberger, Julia Duda, Lisa Pandle, Kris & Julie Hanczar, John Kennedy, Lloyd Sheakley, Diane McDaniel, Loretta, Nancy, Carol, & Michael Sheliga, Gaelle Kelly, Irma McDivitt, Robin Young, Mckayla, Rachel, Tony Butecoff, Carl & Margaret Reed, Theodore Demopoulos, Jillian Bowman,

Lydia Wilson, Robert Pointon, Walter Cecelia, John Persico, Jeff Miller, Mary Kernick, Glenn Miller, Jean Marie, Donna & Walter McCrackin, Doug Smith [Millie Kerr's son-in-law], Bonnie & Eugene Blair [Pani Gina's parents], Mel & Charlotte Malik, Paula Pasquinelli, David Hoenshell, Barbara Macino, Shelley Hill, Mikaela Kapeluck, Linda Cawley, Gerald Cogley, Helen Bozo, June Miller, Corey Guich, Monica Salvatore, Glenda Tickerhoof, Robert Vangrin, Juliana Leis, Susan "Billie" Mason, Pauline Witkowsky, Sera White, LuAnne [Mike Horvath's daughter], Donald Griffey, Martin Kapusta, Deborah Smith, Nancy & Eric Dunik, Julian Stroz [child with cerebral palsy], Thomas Stutzman, Dr. Kirsten Ream, Patricia Corey, Michelle, Katie Swarm, and Daria Masur. ARNOLD: Stefania Lucci, Steve Sakal, and Homer Paul Kline. We pray that God will grant them all a speedy recovery.

**PRAYER LIST: Please help update our prayer list. If you or someone you know no longer needs to be on the prayer list or if there is someone who needs to be on the list please let Father Bob know. Remember—Prayers are ALWAYS FREE! Thank you!**

Please remember Ryan Fuller, James John Logue, George Senita, John Kirkowski, Matthew Machak, Michael Repasky, and ALL American service men and women in your prayers. May God watch over them and all American service men and women—and bring them all home safely!

PLEASE REMEMBER TO BRING YOUR "BOXTOPS FOR EDUCATION" AND CAMPBELL'S SOUP LABELS TO CHURCH. There is a shoebox in the basement for Debbie Paouncic's class. THANK YOU ALL FOR YOUR HELP!

**REMEMBER—PRAYERS ARE ALWAYS FREE!**

Communion Fasting: nothing to eat or drink after midnight, EXCEPT in cases where your doctor tells you to eat or drink something for medical reasons: medication, diabetes, etc. If you have a question, please call Father Bob.

**AT ANY TIME—if there is an emergency, if you have questions, or if you just need to talk, please CALL FATHER BOB at [412] 279-5640.**

#### SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

**SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 16 Divine Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom 10:30 AM**

**FIFTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST; HIEROMARTYR ANTHIMUS-BISHOP OF NICOMEDIA & THOSE WITH HIM; SAINT THEOCTISTUS-FELLOW-FASTER WITH SAINT EUTHYMIUS THE GREAT; SAINT PHOEBE-DEACONESS AT CENCHREAE NEAR CORINTH; MARTYR BASILISSA OF NICOMEDIA; HIEROMARTYR ARISTION-BISHOP OF ALEXANDRIA IN SYRIA**

*Tone 6*

II Corinthians 4:6-15

Matthew 22:35-46

***Parastas in Blessed Memory of Milos Pekich—Millie Kerr & Family***

**SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 23 Divine Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom 10:30 AM  
SIXTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST; SUNDAY BEFORE THE EXALTATION;  
AFTERFEAST OF THE NATIVITY OF THE THEOTOKOS; MARTYRS MENODORA,  
METRODORA, & NYMPHODORA AT NICOMEDIA; SYNAXIS OF THE HOLY  
APOSTLES APelles, LUCIUS, & CLEMENT OF THE 70; MARTYR BARYPSABAS IN  
DALMATIA; BLESSED PULCHERIA-EMPRESS OF GREECE; SAINTS PETER & PAUL-  
BISHOPS OF NICAIA; SAINT PAUL THE OBEDIENT OF PERCHEVSKY LAVRA**

*Tone 7*

II Corinthians 6:1-10

Matthew 25:14-30

***Parastas in Blessed Memory of Tillie Kuzman—Debbie & John***

**SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 30 Divine Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom 10:30 AM  
SEVENTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST; SUNDAY AFTER THE EXALTATION;  
AFTERFEAST OF THE EXALTATION; MARTYRS SOPHIA & DAUGHTERS FAITH,  
HOPE, AND LOVE AT ROME; MARTYR THEODOTA AT NICAIA AND AGTHOKLEA;  
156 MARTYRS OF PALESTINE**

*Tone 8*

Galatians 2:16-20; II Corinthians 6:16-7:1

Mark 8:34-9:1; Matthew 15:21-28

***Parastas in Blessed Memory of Tillie & Charles Pawlyshyn—Jean Stuchel & Frances***

**BULLETIN INSERT FOR 16 SEPTEMBER 2012  
FOURTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST; SAINT POEMEN  
THE GREAT; SAINT HOSIUS THE CONFESSOR-BISHOP OF  
CORDOVA; SAINT LIBERIUS-POPE OF ROME; SAINT  
POEMEN OF PALESTINE; MARTYR ANTUSA; HIEROMARTYRS  
PIMEN & KUKSHA OF PERCHEVSKY LAVRA**

**TROPARION—TONE 6**

The angelic powers were at Thy tomb; the guards became as dead men.  
Mary stood by Thy grave, seeking Thy most pure body.  
Thou didst capture hell, not being tempted by it.  
Thou didst come to the Virgin, granting life.

O Lord who didst rise from the dead: glory to Thee!

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

**KONTAKION—TONE 6**

When Christ God, the Giver of Life,  
Raised all of the dead from the valleys of misery with His might hand,  
He bestowed resurrection on the human race.  
He is the Savior of all,  
The Resurrection, the Life, and the God of all!

**PROKEIMENON—TONE 6**

**READER:** O Lord, save Thy people and bless Thine inheritance.

**PEOPLE: O Lord, save Thy people and bless Thine inheritance.**

**READER:** To Thee, O Lord, will I call. O my God, be not silent to me.

**PEOPLE: O Lord, save Thy people and bless Thine inheritance.**

**READER:** O Lord, save Thy people.

**PEOPLE: And bless Thine inheritance.**

**ALLELUIA VERSES—TONE 6**

He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High will abide in the shadow of the heavenly God.

He will say to the Lord: My Protector and my Refuge; my God, in whom I trust.

Look at the person on your right. Now smile. Look at the person on your left. Now smile. You just made someone's day!!!

**GREEK ORTHODOX ARCHDIOCESE OF AMERICA**

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**Prot. No. 718**

**+ BARTHOLOMEW**

**By the Mercy of God**

**Archbishop of Constantinople-New Rome And Ecumenical Patriarch**

**To the Fullness of the Church**

**Grace and Peace from the Creator and Sustainer of All Creation**

**Our Lord, God and Savior Jesus Christ**

\* \* \*

Beloved brothers and children in the Lord,

Our God, who created the universe and formed the earth as a perfect dwelling place for humanity, granted us the commandment and possibility to increase, multiply and fulfill creation, with dominion over all animals and plants.

The world that surrounds us was thus offered to us as a gift by our Creator as an arena of social activity but also of spiritual sanctification in order that we might inherit the creation to be renewed in the future age. Such has always been the theological position of the Holy Great Church of Christ, which is the reason why we have pioneered an ecological effort on behalf of the sacred Ecumenical Throne for the protection of our planet, which has long suffered from us both knowingly and unknowingly.

Of course, **biodiversity** is the work of divine wisdom and was not granted to humanity for its unruly control. By the same token, **dominion** over the earth and its environs implies rational use and enjoyment of its benefits, and not destructive acquisition of its resources out of a sense of greed. Nevertheless, especially in our times, we observe an excessive abuse of natural resources, resulting in the destruction of the environmental balance of the planet's ecosystems and generally of ecological conditions, so that the divinely-ordained regulations of human existence on earth are increasingly transgressed. For instance, all of us – scientists, as well as religious and political leaders, indeed all people – are witnessing a rise in the atmosphere's temperature, extreme weather conditions, the pollution of ecosystems both on land and in the sea, and an overall disturbance – sometimes to the point of utter destruction – of the potential for life in some regions of the world.

Inasmuch as the Mother Church perceives and evaluates the ensuing dangers of such ecological conditions for humanity, already from the time of our blessed predecessor, Ecumenical Patriarch Dimitrios, established September 1<sup>st</sup> of each year as a day of prayer for the natural environment. Yet, we are obliged to admit that the causes of the aforementioned ecological changes are not inspired by God but initiated by humans. Thus, the invocation and supplication of the Church and us all to God as the Lord of lords and Ruler of all for the restoration of creation are essentially a petition of **repentance** for our **sinfulness** in destroying the world instead of working to preserve and sustain its ever-flourishing resources reasonably and carefully.

When we pray to and entreat God for the preservation of the natural environment, we are ultimately imploring God to change with mindset of the powerful in the world, enlightening them not to destroy the planet's ecosystem for reasons of financial profit and ephemeral interest. This in turn, however, also concerns each one of us inasmuch as we all generate small ecological damage in our individual capacity and ignorance. Therefore, in praying for the natural environment, we are praying for personal repentance for our contribution – smaller or greater – to the disfigurement and destruction of creation, which we collectively experience regionally and occasionally through the immense phenomena of our time.

In addressing this appeal, petition and exhortation from the sacred Center of Orthodoxy to all people throughout the world, we pray that our gracious Lord, who granted this earthly paradise to all people dwelling on our planet, will speak to the hearts of everyone so that we may respect the ecological balance that He offered in His wisdom and goodness, so that both we and future generations will enjoy His gifts with thanksgiving and glorification.

May this divine wisdom, peace and power, which created and sustains and guides all creation in its hope for salvation in the kingdom, always maintain the beauty of the world and

the welfare of humanity, leading all people of good will to produce fruitful works toward this purpose. And we invoke His grace and mercy on all of you, particularly those who respect and protect creation. Amen.

September 1, 2012

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**Protocol 109/12**

**September 1, 2012**

### **Beginning of the Ecclesiastical New Year Day for the Protection of our Natural Environment**

To the Most Reverend Hierarchs, the Reverend Priests and Deacons, the Monks and Nuns, the Presidents and Members of the Parish Councils of the Greek Orthodox Communities, the Distinguished Archons of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, the Day, Afternoon, and Church Schools, the Philoptochos Sisterhoods, the Youth, the Hellenic Organizations, and the entire Greek Orthodox Family in America

Beloved Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

We begin this new ecclesiastical year in worship of our Almighty God offering Him praise and thanksgiving for His great mercy. In our hymns and prayers on this day, we ask for all that we need for life and service, seeking to walk in communion with Him. Through our commitment to prayer, our participation in the commemorations and observances of the Church, and our offering for the promotion of His kingdom, we find renewed hope in an abundant life in Christ.

On this feast we ask our Lord, "Bless the crown of this year with Your goodness" (Psalm 65:11). We know that His goodness is true and enduring. His goodness is rooted in His love for us, and in this goodness He nurtures and sustains our lives. Through our trust in God, our lives are filled with His goodness, and consequently we become witnesses of the joy He has granted us.

We also ask Him to keep us in peace. While we know that peace is a cherished condition for tranquil and secure lives in this world, we also recognize that this peace is often temporary or frequently challenged. Certainly, we seek peaceful times, but we also affirm that true peace comes from Christ. Our Lord said, "*Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid*" (John 14:27).

It is in His goodness and peace that we also ask our Lord to bless all of our endeavors in the opening year and to "guide the work of our hands." Following His direction in all that we do ensures that we will produce great spiritual fruit in our lives and the lives of others. Dedicating ourselves to Him keeps our hearts and minds in His will and fills our actions and

words with His holiness and grace. When we acknowledge Christ in all our ways, our goals and intentions are pure, lives are transformed, and He is glorified.

It is also on this feast that we observe the Day for the Protection of our Natural Environment. This day has been established by our beloved Ecumenical Patriarchate in recognition that the goodness, peace, and guidance of God extend to all of the created order and to our stewardship of it. In goodness our Creator made everything and proclaimed that it was good (Genesis 1:31). Into a fallen world groaning under the burden of corruption, He has brought true peace. He has shown us the way of peace, so that we may live in proper relationship with our natural environment and with each other awaiting the deliverance into the "glorious liberty of the children of God" (Romans 8:21). Our Lord also gives us guidance in our stewardship and care of all that He has made. By His example and teaching, we know that the life of grace includes the natural world, and He directs us to protect and preserve it in love.

As we begin this ecclesiastical year together in worship and fellowship, I pray that the Lord will bless you, your families, and your parish with a year filled with His goodness and peace.

With paternal love in Christ,

†**DEMETRIOS**

**Archbishop of America**

### **Peace be with you!**

How are things going? Don't take it too seriously if someone's feelings towards you are "biased." You are entering further and further into life, and people are fallen creatures. This fallen state cannot but affect your relationships with others. This is why, incidentally, the Lord said to His disciples, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves, be wise..., although He also said, Lo, I am with you always...

On the one hand your wisdom and vigilance are necessary, but most important is a constant turning for help to the Lord, Who is seen not through physical eyes, but through the eyes of the soul. He has promised those who hope on Him that not a hair will fall from their heads without His will.

The Apostles endured all manner of difficulties, but relying on Him they conquered the world. A small number of sheep conquered countless packs of wolves. Does this not prove God's strength and His providence? The Lord is the same yesterday, today and forever. In all your troubles and sorrows turn to the Lord, and He will nourish you.

Always, even if you are in a hurry, you can turn your thoughts to the Lord and say, "Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me; Lord, be merciful to me a sinner," or as Barsanuphius the Great says, at least call to mind that there exists an all-seeing Lord, Who sees you, and even this small thing will suffice to guide you out of a difficult situation. And when sorrow comes, and prayer does not seem to help, do not despair or grumble

or give in to disbelief. Remember, without trials one cannot be saved; one cannot even gain experience in life without them.

Faith and prayer cause trials to bring us great benefit. Without prayer they can result in grumbling, disbelief and harm for both body and soul. This is why one must learn always to be with God, and He is always with us. "God is with us, understand, O ye nations (passions, demons, fallen people-the tools of demons), and submit yourselves, for God is with us!" ....*Do not grieve in the face of unpleasantness, but cast your cares on the Lord.*

*Meditation taken from Letters to Spiritual Children, published by  
Nikodemos Orthodox Publication Society*

## **The Church is Not the Building**

July 21, 2011, by Fr. Andrew



Holy Trinity Cathedral, Jordanville, New York

I hate it when people say that. Yes, there is a certain truth to the statement *The Church is not the building*. But it is usually said in the context of talking about buildings, and so what is meant by it is not really a counter of an obviously ridiculous idea, namely, that the Church is equal to a building.

Who actually thinks that? Is there anyone who believes that the Christian faith and tradition are about buildings? I don't think even church architects actually think that. (Actually, they probably think something rather like what I am about to say.) Yes, of course, it does not matter if I have a spiritual life, love God, love my neighbor, or grow in holiness, just so long as I have a nice **building** to keep and maintain!

Yes, of course, we know people who act that way, but the problem there is not with the building, just as the problem with a dysfunctional home life is not your house. No, saying *The Church is not the building* is not a serious statement of policy—I've never known someone who said that who wanted to move all church services outdoors—but it does present a problematic dichotomy, and it's also rooted in a certain theology of its own.

One of the inheritances of the streams of Christian theology whose origins flow from 16th century Western Europe is a deliberate de-emphasis on the matter of, well, matter. As many Christians stopped believing that sacraments (ritual acts believed to be means by which God communicates



grace), iconoclasm (“image-breaking”) also came alongside. Much of the physical side of being spiritual came to be regarded as idolatry and was shunned in favor of what was summarized in the motto “Four bare walls and a sermon.” Salvation was for people’s hearts and souls, and pretty buildings, vestments, iconography, bread, wine, oil, water, etc., had nothing at all to do with it, because those things pertain to the body and not the soul.

Right?

This theological attitude finds its roots originally not in Christian theology but in pagan theology, particularly the dualism that was characteristic of the philosophers who opposed the prevailing polytheism of their time. Dualism’s essential idea is that “spiritual” things are good, but physical things are bad (or at least of a much, much lower importance). Orthodox Christianity is not dualist. As such, we believe that man—being a union of both body and soul—is not a soul trapped in the prison of the body. Rather, he **is** a body just as much as he **is** a soul, and even if the union of the two has suffered and will suffer because of the disruption of the Fall of Mankind from the time of Adam and Eve, that essential union remains and will eventually be fully healed in the general Resurrection.

What that means is that physical stuff has a spiritual side to it. And if that is the case, then that means that church buildings have a spiritual character, too. We can see this basic intuition in all of mankind, not just traditional Christianity. Everywhere one goes, buildings meant for religious usage have a special character and usually a special beauty to them. Even among the very poor, there is a desire to impart a particular beauty in the place where prayers are said.

For Orthodox Christians, the church building and all that adorns it are icons—that is, they are physical images that connect us with spiritual reality. We don’t worship such things, because only God is due worship, but we do pay them honor and treat them in a special way, because they put us in touch with the divine in a way that our emotions, intellect and imaginations alone cannot.

Ironically, iconoclastic Christianity still makes use of some very physical elements—how could it not? One typically finds sermons and music in such churches, aural expressions making use of the vibrational and resonant properties of physical matter. Orthodoxy essentially just takes the very necessity of physicality in worship and all spiritual life to its fullest and most natural conclusions. The body is intimately connected with the soul, and so what you do with the one will affect the other.

For Orthodoxy, this essential intuition that our species has, that the physical and spiritual have very much to do with each other, was fulfilled in the Incarnation of Christ, that everlasting moment when the invisible,

incorporeal, untouchable, ineffable God became visible, embodied, touchable and approachable. God became man, and so physical matter received the possibility of becoming sanctified and sanctifying. He did it all the time when He was here visibly—not just by taking on a body, but with very physical actions in order to effect real changes, e.g., turning water to wine, smearing mud on a blind man's eyes, raising the dead, etc.

So, no, the Church is not the building. The people are the Church. We get that. But there's a reason they built that building, and it's not just a container. There is something there that speaks of the power and majesty and closeness of God, something that connects us to Him in a way that nothing else can. And Orthodox Christians believe that God will not only honor that intention from His creatures, but will respond and, once again, use the physical to affect the spiritual.

Consider this for a moment: What does the building your faith uses for prayer convey about what you believe? Does it connect you with Heaven? Does it connect you with God?

### **An Honest Mistake**—*[especially for Fr. Bob!]*

The light turned yellow, just in front of him. He did the right thing, stopping at the crosswalk, even though he could have beaten the red light by accelerating through the intersection.

The tailgating woman was furious and honked her horn, screaming in frustration, as she missed her chance to get through the intersection, dropping her cell phone and makeup.

As she was still in mid-rant, she heard a tap on her window and looked up into the face of a very serious police officer. The officer ordered her to exit her car with her hands up. He took her to the police station where she was searched fingerprinted, photographed, and placed in a holding cell.

After a couple of hours, a policeman approached the cell and opened the door. She was escorted back to the booking desk where the arresting officer was waiting with her personal effects.

He said, "I'm very sorry for this mistake. You see, I pulled up behind your car while you were blowing your horn, flipping off the guy in front of you and cussing a blue streak at him. I noticed the 'What Would Jesus Do' bumper sticker, the 'Choose Life' license plate holder, the 'Follow Me to Sunday-School' bumper sticker, and the chrome-plated Christian fish emblem on the trunk, so naturally...I assumed you had stolen the car."

*Spiritual Counsels of the Blessed Elder Thaddeus of Serbia +2002*

That we must reject demonic thoughts and enslavement to worldly things

"Here on earth people should strive to reject the suggestions of the spirits of evil. The Holy Fathers tell us always to be vigilant, and to be aware that any thought which disturbs our inner peace comes directly from Hades; and that we must not accept such a thought, but reject it immediately. If we enter into conversation with such a thought, we will soon be caught in its net."

"Many other thoughts will be born from that one thought from hell, and it is only much later that a person sees where his thoughts have taken him and what he has done. One evil thing leads to another, and when a person comes to his senses, he says, 'Whatever made me do this? I used to be at peace, and now - all of a sudden - everything has gone wrong.' The reason everything went wrong is that we were not vigilant enough."

**A Prayer of Thanksgiving—*Saint Basil the Great***

We bless Thee, O most high God and Lord of mercy, Who art ever doing numberless great and inscrutable things for us—glorious and wonderful; Who grants to us sleep for rest from our infirmities, and repose from the burdens of or much toiling flesh. We thank Thee that Thou hast not destroyed us with our sins, but hast loved us forever; and though we are sunk in despair, Thou hast raised us up to glorify thy power. Therefore, we implore Thine incomparable goodness: enlighten the eyes of our understanding and raise up our mind from the heavy sleep of indolence; open our mouth and fill it with Thy praise, that we may be able—without distraction—to sing and confess Thee, Who are God glorified in all and by all, the eternal Father, with Thine Only-begotten Son, and thine All-Holy and good and life-giving Spirit, now and ever, and unto ages of ages.

Amen!