



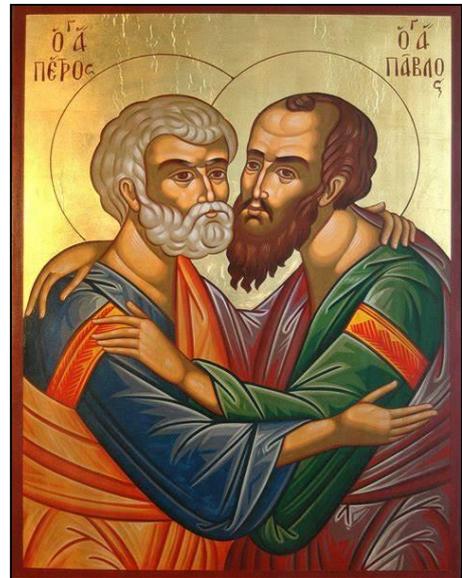
# Prophet Elias News

News in the time of self –isolation for the Orthodox Church of  
the Holy Prophet Elias in Devon  
28<sup>th</sup> June 2020



## The Feast Day of Saint Peter and Saint Paul - June 29th

Historically the reason why the Church combined the feast days of Saint Peter and Saint Paul into one was that they were both martyred in Rome and on the same day. There is a very ancient tradition which claims that they were both executed during Nero's persecution approximately in the year 68AD. For this reason, probably from the fourth century onwards the Church in Rome came to celebrate the feast day of these two apostles on the 29th June where they were martyred.



Theologically speaking, the reason why the feast day of these two apostles was combined into one was to show that even though their ministerial vision was not the same yet both were necessary and even complemented each other. Even though the apostle Paul was not one of the twelve, he would claim, nevertheless that his ministry was considered equal if not superior to those ministers who had been appointed by Christ during His earthly ministry since he had suffered so much for Christ.

During their lifetime, these two great apostles of our Church disagreed greatly as to how to receive new members into the newly established Christian faith. St Paul is said to have rebuked St Peter for duplicity in this matter. In Galatians 2.11, St Paul tells us of a disagreement he had with St Peter: “when Peter came to Antioch, I withstood him in the face because he was to be blamed.” Peter believed that new members firstly had to fulfil the requirements of the Jewish law by being circumcised before they could become Christians whereas Paul was totally opposed to this. What we can learn from this is that when the Church is ruled by the Holy Spirit tensions of this kind can be overcome.

*Extract from Philip Kariatlis; The Feast Day of Saint Peter and Saint Paul Daily Meditation for 29<sup>th</sup> June 2012 on the website of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of Australia*  
[http://www.greekorthodox.org.au/general/resources/publications/article/details.php?page=186&article\\_id=7](http://www.greekorthodox.org.au/general/resources/publications/article/details.php?page=186&article_id=7)

### Troparion

O first enthroned among the apostles and teachers of the whole world; entreat the Master of all that He may grant peace to the world and great mercy to our souls.

### Kontakion

O Lord, Thou hast received into the delight of Thy good things and into Thy rest the steadfast and divinely eloquent preachers, the foremost of Thine apostles; for Thou hast accepted their pangs and death as greater than any wholeburnt offering, O Thou Who alone knowest the hearts of men.

## **From a Sermon given by Metropolitan Anthony on 29<sup>th</sup> January 1989 (The Veneration Of Saint Peter's Chains)**

We think of Peter usually either as the Apostle who always spoke in the name of all his brothers; or else, as the one who having boasted of his readiness to die with Christ, when he saw Christ judged and condemned in an iniquitous way, renounced Him three times. When Christ met Peter on the shore of the lake after his denial of Him, he asked Him three times a question about love: "Peter! Dost thou love Me more than these?" - those disciples who have not betrayed Him. Why "more than these"? How could he be expected to love Christ more than the other Apostles, when there was all the evidence that he had renounced Him? True, every other Apostle had tried to escape the condemnation which was upon Christ; they had fled. But Peter had openly renounced Him. Why is it that he is asked whether he loves more than these? Peter did not remember it at that moment; but we can read in the Gospel that Christ says that he to whom more is forgiven loves more, out of a deeper gratitude, out of a deeper joy; out of a deeper wonder love flares in the heart of him who is forgiven; and the more there is to be forgiven, the deeper the gratitude, the more exulting the joy, the warmer, the more complete the love.

And Peter stood there, forgiven; Christ did not judge him, He did not reject him, He did not ask him: "Have you repented of your denial?" Because Peter was there, among the others, because Peter was one of His own but with a broken heart, with a searing memory of betrayal - he was received.

This is the love of which Saint Paul speaks in his Epistle to the Corinthians. What does he say about it? That love is patient, that love is kind, that loves envies no one, never is boastful, never is conceited, never is brutal, never is selfish; that love is not quick to take offence (how true of Christ!); that love keeps no score of wrongs: and here we see Christ receiving Peter as one of His own beloved disciples, in spite of his denial! Love does not gloat over other people's sins but delights in their truth; there is nothing love cannot face - no limits to its faith, to its hope, it endures forever; it never ceases, is never defeated.

But wasn't that also a call and a challenge? Did not that mean: "If you say that you are a friend to Me you must be prepared to lay down your life for Me, to sacrifice it for Me." Yes, Peter understood, from now on he understood what it meant to be a friend, and he understood what it meant to love with that complete, surrendered love that believes against all evidence, that has faith against all possibilities, that is never shaken even by material evidence, that endures, never ceases, never diminishes, conquers all evil. Yes, Peter understood, and one day he died upon the cross, like his Master, for His Master, as a response to His love.

Isn't that a message which we all can receive with awe and with gratitude, because each of us has something with which to reproach him or herself with regard to God, with regard to those who surround us. Let us remember Peter, and let us also remember this passage of the thirteenth chapter of the Epistle of Paul to the Corinthians. Let us meditate on them. And let us, in an act of sacrificial love, reach to the exultation of victorious love!

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### **Commemorations**

On Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> we remember the New Martyrs and Confessors of Bulgaria

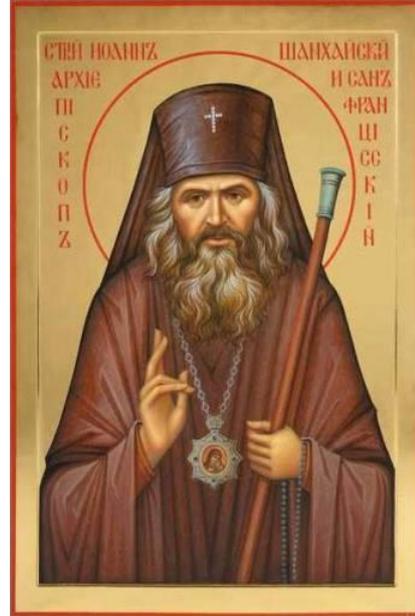
On 29<sup>th</sup>, Feast of the Holy Apostles Peter and Paul, we wish MANY YEARS! to Father Peter, to Peter France and to Pavlik Frank.

## Saint John of Shanghai and San Francisco (1896 – 1966) Feastday 2<sup>nd</sup> July

Saint John served as Bishop of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside Russia in Shanghai (1934 – 49), Paris (1951- 62) and San Francisco (1962-66).

The life of bishop John was not only one of prayer and service to God. His life belonged to those in need. Finding and helping poor people was as much part of his life as his daily monastic prayer. In Shanghai during the war Bishop John often went to the most dangerous areas in search of orphan children. He would return in his barbwire-torn cassock, each time bringing with him at least one child he had saved from death. An orphanage founded by him saved the lives of hundreds of poor children.

There was in him something of the Russian tradition of the ‘Fool for Christ’s Sake.’ While still a priest, serving in a Russian church in Paris, Fr. John caused indignation among some aristocratic parishioners who complained to Metropolitan Evlogy that he was seen walking barefoot on the Champs Elysee. The metropolitan sent Fr. John written orders, that from then on he must wear shoes. The next day, a serious Fr. John was seen, hurrying through the city as usual, to help the needy and homeless, previously barefooted, now with shoes in his hands.



Source, where a fuller account of the life of Saint John can be found:  
<https://iconandlight.wordpress.com/2018/07/01/st-john-maximovitch-the-wonderworker-of-san-francisco-tell-the-people-although-i-have-died-i-am-alive/>

### **A Royal Priesthood**

But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.

1 Peter 2:9

### **The Precept of Courtesy**

*Finally, be ye all of one mind, having compassion of one another, love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous. (1 Peter 3 : 8)*

That a precept of courtesy is by no means unworthy of the gravity and dignity if an apostolical mandate, may be gathered from the pernicious effects which all must have observed to have arisen from harsh strictness and sour virtue: such as refuses to mingle in harmless gaiety, or give countenance to innocent amusements, or which transacts the petty business of the day with a gloomy ferociousness that clouds existence. Goodness of this character is more formidable than lovely; it may drive away vice from its presence, but it will never persuade it to stay to be amended; it may teach, it may remonstrate, but the hearer will seek for more mild instruction. To those, therefore, by whose example the heathens were to be drawn away from error and wickedness, it is the Apostle's precept that they be courteous, that they accommodate themselves, as far as innocence allows, to the will of others; that they should practice all the established modes of civility, seize all occasions of cultivating kindness, and live with the rest of the world in an amicable reciprocation of courtesy, that Christianity might not be accused of making men less cheerful as companions, less sociable as neighbours, or less useful as friends.

Samuel Johnson *Sermons: Vol 1* (1788)

