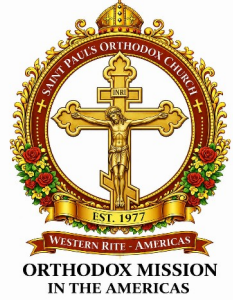




# St. Paul's Orthodox Church

## Monthly Gazette

August 2026



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### *Parish News*

Thank you to Anne-Marie and the Isbells for cleaning out the kitchen. It was long overdue.

Bp. George has wanted a small chapel in the church for a long time. The Isbells are making his dream come true. It is in the lower level of the church.



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## *August Birthdays*

12 Leeann Chen

18 Robin Brooks

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## *August Anniversaries*

10 Phil Jones and Leeann Chen

10 Jack and Mariann Littell

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## *Special Prayers*

Our Country

Bp. George and Mary

Billy

Fr. Walt and Bea

Georgie

Mary M.

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## *Calendar*

The following is the calendar for August, 2026.

**Holy Communion is every Sunday at 10:30 a.m.**

**Morning Prayer and Bible Study Wednesdays at 10:00 a.m.**

## **August**

**2 - Holy Communion 10:30 a.m.**

**5 - Morning Prayer and Bible Study 10:00 a.m.**

**6 - The Transfiguration of Christ**

**9 - Holy Communion 10:30 a.m.**

**10 - Anniversary of Phil Jones and Leeann Chen**

**10 - Anniversary of Jack and Mariann Littell**

**12 - Morning Prayer and Bible Study 10:00 a.m.**

**12 - Leeann Chen's Birthday**

**16 - Holy Communion 10:30 a.m.**

**18 - Robin Brooks' Birthday**

**19 - Morning Prayer and Bible Study 10:00 a.m.**

**23 - Holy Communion 10:30 a.m.**

**24 - St. Bartholomew the Apostle**

**26 - Morning Prayer and Bible Study 10:00 a.m.**

**30 - Holy Communion 10:30 a.m.**

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***Special Dates***

## *The Transfiguration of Christ*

### 1. Christ Reveals His Uncreated Light

Western Rite teaching emphasizes that Christ did not become something new on the mountain. Rather, He allowed the disciples to behold the uncreated light that was always His by nature. This follows the patristic witness—especially St. Gregory Palamas—that Christ’s humanity was never without divine glory from the moment of the Incarnation. The disciples’ eyes were opened to see Him “as He truly was.”

St. Augustine’s classic Western insight is often quoted: “Jesus Himself shone as the sun... He is the light which lighteth every man.” This expresses the Western conviction that the Transfiguration reveals Christ as the Light of the world, the fulfillment of all Old Testament theophanies.

### 2. A Revelation of the Kingdom Already Present

Western Rite sources stress that the Transfiguration is a preview of the Kingdom—a manifestation of the glory Christ possesses eternally and will reveal fully at His Second Coming. The presence of Moses and Elijah shows Christ as the fulfillment of the Law and the Prophets, and the Father’s voice identifies Him as the Beloved Son to whom the Church must listen.

The feast thus proclaims that the Kingdom is not merely future; it is present in Christ, shining through His humanity.

### 3. A Promise of Our Own Transformation

A distinct Western Rite emphasis is that Christ’s Transfiguration reveals what humanity was meant to be and what it will become through union with Him. St. Gregory Palamas (quoted in Western Rite teaching) says Christ showed the disciples “what we once were and what we shall become through Him.”

The feast therefore has a deeply ascetical and sacramental meaning:

- In Baptism we begin to share in Christ's light.
- In the Eucharist we behold the glory of the Lord.
- In the Christian life we are gradually transformed "from glory to glory."

#### 4. The Western Liturgical Expression

The Western Rite Mass for the Transfiguration highlights beauty, brightness, and truth:

- Introit: links the "lightnings" of Christ's glory with the loveliness of God's dwelling.
- Collect: prays that we may behold the King "in His beauty."
- Epistle (2 Peter 1): St. Peter testifies to the truth of what he saw on the holy mountain.
- Gospel (Luke 9): recounts the event and Christ's command to interpret it in light of the Resurrection.
- Offertory & Communion: emphasize divine radiance and the riches of God's house.

The Western liturgical tradition thus frames the Transfiguration as a feast of radiant beauty, doctrinal truth, and eschatological hope.

#### 5. The Feast's Meaning for the Faithful

In Western Rite Orthodox spirituality, the Transfiguration teaches:

- Christ's divinity shines through His humanity.
- The Kingdom is already present in Christ.
- Humanity is called to share in divine glory.

- The sacraments are foretastes of that glory.
- The Christian life is a journey toward transfiguration.

It is a feast of light, hope, and the promise of our restoration in Christ.

## *St. Bartholomew the Apostle*

### 1. Identity and Mission

In the Western tradition, **St. Bartholomew** is identified with **Nathanael** of the Gospel of John—“an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile.” He is remembered as one of the Twelve Apostles, a man of **purity of heart, straightforward faith, and apostolic zeal**.

Western Rite tradition emphasizes his role as a **missionary apostle**, preaching the Gospel in:

- **India** (according to ancient Western sources),
- **Mesopotamia**,
- **Persia**, and
- **Armenia**, where he is said to have converted many and established the Church.

### 2. His Martyrdom

The Western tradition preserves the ancient account that St. Bartholomew suffered a **gruesome martyrdom** in Armenia, being **flayed alive** and then **beheaded** for preaching Christ. This is not treated as sensationalism but as a witness to the **total self-offering** of an apostle who would not renounce the Gospel.

His manner of death became a symbol in Western Christian art:

- He is often depicted holding a **knife** (the instrument of his martyrdom)
- Or holding his **own skin**, symbolizing victory over the flesh and the world.

### 3. Western Liturgical Emphasis

The Western Rite feast of St. Bartholomew (August 24) highlights three themes:

#### A. Purity of Heart

The Gospel for the feast (John 1) presents him as the man “without guile,” showing that holiness begins with **truthfulness of heart**.

#### B. Apostolic Authority

The Collect prays that the Church may “love that which he believed and preach that which he taught,” emphasizing continuity with the apostolic faith.

#### C. Missionary Courage

The Western liturgical texts celebrate his fearless proclamation of Christ in distant lands, making him a model for evangelism and steadfastness.

### 4. Theological Significance in the Western Rite

Western Rite Orthodox teaching sees St. Bartholomew as:

- A witness to **Christ’s divinity**, recognizing Jesus immediately as the Son of God.
- A model of **integrity**, showing that the Gospel is preached most powerfully by a life without deceit.
- A sign of the Church’s **universality**, since his mission extended far beyond the Roman world.
- A martyr whose suffering reveals the **cost of discipleship** and the **glory of faithfulness**.

His life embodies the Western Christian ideal of **apostolic simplicity**, **missionary zeal**, and **unwavering fidelity** to Christ.

## 5. Meaning for the Faithful Today

For Western Rite Orthodox Christians, St. Bartholomew teaches:

- **Honesty and purity** are the foundation of spiritual life.
- The Gospel must be carried “to the ends of the earth,” beginning with our own communities.
- True discipleship may demand sacrifice, but it leads to eternal glory.
- The apostolic faith we hold today is the same faith he preached.

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## *Liturgy of St. Tikhon*

## The Athanasian Creed

### 1. The Creed Is Fully Orthodox

The Athanasian Creed is accepted in the Western Rite because:

- It teaches the **Nicene faith**: one God in Trinity, and Christ fully God and fully man.
- Its theology aligns with the **Ecumenical Councils** (Nicaea, Constantinople, Ephesus, Chalcedon).
- It expresses Western precision in Trinitarian and Christological doctrine without contradicting Eastern Orthodox theology.

The Orthodox Church does **not** require the Athanasian Creed universally, but it **permits and affirms** it for Western Rite use.

## 2. Its Liturgical Use in the Western Rite

In Orthodox Western Rite practice today:

- It is **primarily used on Trinity Sunday**.
- It may also be used in **catechesis**, adult education, or doctrinal instruction.
- Historically, in the Western Church, it was said at **Prime on Sundays**, but Orthodox Western Rite parishes do not typically follow that medieval rule.

So the Orthodox Western Rite keeps the creed as part of its **Western patrimony**, but uses it **sparingly and solemnly**.

## 3. Its History — As Understood in the Western Rite

Western Rite Orthodox teaching follows mainstream historical scholarship:

- **Not written by St. Athanasius**
- Composed in the **Latin West**, likely **Gaul**, around **450–550 A.D.**
- Named for Athanasius because it strongly defends the **Nicene Trinitarian faith** he championed.

This historical understanding is standard in both Orthodox and Western Christian scholarship.

## 4. Why the Orthodox Western Rite Values It

The Athanasian Creed is treasured because:

- It is the **clearest Western statement** of the Trinity.
- It gives a **precise Christology** that matches the Orthodox dogma of the Incarnation.

- It reflects the Western Church’s ancient commitment to the same faith the Orthodox Church preserves.

## Side-by-Side Comparison of the Three Western Creeds

### 1. Purpose and Use

| Creed                   | Purpose                                                        | Western Rite Orthodox Use                                           |
|-------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Apostles’ Creed</b>  | Early baptismal creed summarizing basic Christian faith.       | Used at <b>Prime, Compline</b> , and in catechesis.                 |
| <b>Nicene Creed</b>     | Universal dogmatic creed defining the Trinity and Incarnation. | Used at <b>Mass</b> every Sunday and feast day.                     |
| <b>Athanasian Creed</b> | Detailed Western exposition of the Trinity and Christology.    | Used chiefly on <b>Trinity Sunday</b> and in doctrinal instruction. |

### 2. Historical Origin

| Creed                   | Date                                        | Origin                   | Notes                                                                                           |
|-------------------------|---------------------------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Apostles’ Creed</b>  | 2nd–4th century                             | Rome                     | Not written by the Apostles; developed from Roman baptismal formulas.                           |
| <b>Nicene Creed</b>     | 325 (Nicaea), expanded 381 (Constantinople) | Ecumenical Councils      | Universal Orthodox creed; defines consubstantiality of the Son and full divinity of the Spirit. |
| <b>Athanasian Creed</b> | 450–550 A.D.                                | Latin West (likely Gaul) | Not written by St. Athanasius; named for him because it defends Nicene theology.                |

### 3. Structure and Length

| Creed                   | Structure                                | Length                                 |
|-------------------------|------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|
| <b>Apostles' Creed</b>  | 3-part: Father, Son, Holy Spirit         | Shortest                               |
| <b>Nicene Creed</b>     | 4-part: Father, Son, Holy Spirit, Church | Medium                                 |
| <b>Athanasian Creed</b> | 2-part: Trinity, Incarnation             | Longest; includes warnings (anathemas) |

### 4. Theological Emphasis

#### Apostles' Creed

- Basic outline of Christian belief
- Focus on Christ's life, death, resurrection
- Mentions the Holy Spirit briefly
- No detailed Trinitarian theology
- No Christological definitions

**Orthodox Western Rite view:** A faithful early Western baptismal creed; fully orthodox but not as doctrinally precise as the later creeds.

#### Nicene Creed

- **Consubstantiality:** the Son is "of one essence with the Father"
- Full divinity of the Holy Spirit
- Clear definition of the Incarnation: "was made man"
- Explicit rejection of Arianism
- Universal creed of the entire Orthodox Church

**Orthodox Western Rite view:** The dogmatic standard. Required at Mass. Identical in East and West except for the Orthodox omission of the filioque.

### Athanasian Creed

- Most detailed Western statement of the Trinity
- Strong emphasis on equality of the Persons: *“The Father eternal, the Son eternal, the Holy Spirit eternal... and yet they are not three eternals but one eternal.”*
- Detailed Christology: Christ is **one Person in two natures**
- Includes solemn warnings that salvation requires holding the Catholic faith

**Orthodox Western Rite view:** A precise Western exposition of the same faith taught by the Ecumenical Councils. Used sparingly but valued highly.

## 5. Liturgical Placement (Western Rite Orthodox)

| Creed            | Liturgical Placement                       |
|------------------|--------------------------------------------|
| Apostles' Creed  | Daily Offices (Prime, Compline); catechism |
| Nicene Creed     | Mass (every Sunday and feast)              |
| Athanasian Creed | Trinity Sunday; doctrinal instruction      |

## 6. Key Differences at a Glance

| Topic             | Apostles' Creed | Nicene Creed         | Athanasian Creed         |
|-------------------|-----------------|----------------------|--------------------------|
| Trinity           | Implied         | Defined              | Explained in detail      |
| Christ's Divinity | Affirmed        | Defined dogmatically | Explained with precision |

| Topic                          | Apostles' Creed | Nicene Creed           | Athanasian Creed            |
|--------------------------------|-----------------|------------------------|-----------------------------|
| <b>Holy Spirit</b>             | Brief mention   | Full divinity stated   | Full equality emphasized    |
| <b>Warnings/<br/>Anathemas</b> | None            | One (against heresies) | Many (doctrinal boundaries) |
| <b>Liturgical Use</b>          | Daily           | Eucharistic            | Occasional/Solemn           |

## 7. One-Sentence Summary of Each

- **Apostles' Creed:** The earliest Western baptismal summary of Christian faith, simple and foundational.
- **Nicene Creed:** The universal Orthodox dogmatic creed defining the Trinity and the Incarnation.
- **Athanasian Creed:** A detailed Western exposition of Trinitarian and Christological doctrine, used especially on Trinity Sunday.

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## *Joke of the Month*

One fine Sunday, the thurifer — young Timothy, who takes his job *very* seriously — decided that the parish needed “a more dramatic liturgical experience.” No one knew what he meant. Everyone should have been afraid.

During the procession, Timothy swung the thurible with such gusto that it began to behave less like a liturgical implement and more like a **heavily perfumed medieval weapon**.

The choir ducked. The acolytes scattered. Mrs. Pennington crossed herself three times and once for good measure.

Father Ambrose whispered, “Timothy... perhaps a gentler swing?” Timothy nodded solemnly and immediately swung it harder, creating what witnesses later described as **a small but determined incense tornado**.

The cloud rolled down the nave like the Shekinah glory, except slightly more cinnamon-scented. The organist vanished completely. Only her shoes remained visible beneath the fog.

The congregation began coughing politely — the kind of coughing that says, “We are dying, but we don’t want to interrupt the liturgy.”

The thurible, now fully committed to its new identity as a meteorological event, detached from its chain and flew across the sanctuary, landing squarely in the baptismal font with a dramatic *sploosh*.

The water hissed. The thurible sizzled. The font burped.

Timothy gasped. “I... I think I accidentally consecrated the thurible.”

Father Ambrose sighed the sigh of a man who has seen too much. “Timothy, that’s not how any of this works.”

The thurible was retrieved, dried, and placed back in its usual spot — where it now sits quietly, plotting.

The following Sunday, Father Ambrose announced the sermon title:

**“Incense: A Guide to Using It Without Summoning Weather Patterns.”**

Mrs. Pennington said she would be taking notes, “in case the thurible tries anything.”

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*The Psalms*

## *Psalm 1*

- 1** Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful.
- 2** But his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night.
- 3** And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.
- 4** The ungodly are not so: but are like the chaff which the wind driveth away.
- 5** Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous.
- 6** For the LORD knoweth the way of the righteous: but the way of the ungodly shall perish.

Psalm 1 is the **gateway to the entire Psalter**. In both Eastern and Western Orthodox tradition, it sets the tone for the spiritual life by describing two paths:

- the **way of righteousness**, and
- the **way of the wicked**.

It is a psalm about **character, choices, and the deep inner life** of the believer.

### **1. The Blessed Person**

The psalm begins with what the righteous *avoid*:

- ungodly counsel,
- sinful habits,
- and scornful attitudes.

Orthodoxy sees this as a description of **spiritual sobriety**. The blessed person is one who refuses to let the world shape their mind, heart, or imagination.

In Western Rite spirituality, this is often linked to the discipline of the **Daily Office**, which forms the mind through Scripture rather than worldly noise.

## 2. Delighting in the Law of the Lord

The righteous person doesn't merely obey God's law — they **delight** in it. This is a key Orthodox theme: holiness is not grim duty but **joyful communion** with God.

The Fathers teach that “the Law of the Lord” ultimately means **Christ Himself**, the Word of God. To meditate on the Law is to keep Christ before the eyes of the heart.

## 3. The Tree by the Waters

The psalm's central image is the righteous person as a **tree planted by streams of water**.

Orthodox interpretation sees this as:

- **Baptism** (the waters of new life),
- **the Eucharist** (continual nourishment),
- **the Holy Spirit** (the living water flowing within the soul).

The tree bears fruit “in due season,” meaning the spiritual life grows **gradually, steadily, and naturally**. Orthodoxy rejects the idea of instant holiness; Psalm 1 teaches **slow, rooted, sacramental growth**.

## 4. The Way of the Wicked

The wicked are described as **chaff** — weightless, rootless, and easily blown away.

In Orthodox thought, this symbolizes a life without:

- repentance,
- stability,
- or communion with God.

The wicked are not destroyed because God hates them; they perish because they **refuse the only source of life**.

## 5. Two Ways, One Choice

Psalm 1 presents the ancient biblical theme of the **Two Ways**:

- the way of life,
- and the way of death.

The Western Rite often pairs Psalm 1 with the Collects that ask God to “keep us steadfast in the faith,” because the psalm teaches that righteousness is not accidental — it is a **daily choice** shaped by prayer, Scripture, and worship.

## **6. Christ as the Fulfillment of Psalm 1**

Orthodox tradition ultimately reads Psalm 1 **Christologically**:

- **Christ** is the truly Blessed Man.
- **Christ** is the Tree planted by the waters.
- **Christ** is the One who perfectly delights in the Law.
- **Christ** is the Way of Life.

We become the “blessed man” only by **union with Him**.

If you need a Bible to delve further into these Psalms, please contact Bp. George.

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