



Saints Peter and Paul

Orthodox Church

25636 N. Mosiertown Rd Crossingville, PA 1641

Archpriest Fr. Daniel Mathewson – Rector

V. Rev. David Smoley – Retired

Lord's Day – 7-26-2020

Parish phone: 814-734-3801 Find us on the Web at:

www.orthodoxcrossingville.org

7th SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST — Tone

6. Repose of St. Jacob (Netsvetov), Enlightener of the Peoples of Alaska (1864). Hieromartyr Hermolaus and Martyrs Hermippus and Hermocrates at Nicomedia (ca. 305). Ven. Moses the Hungarian, of the Kiev Caves (Near Caves—ca. 1043). Martyr Parasceva of Rome (2nd c.). Ven. Gerontius of St. Anne Skete (Mt. Athos). The “EMVOLON” Icon of the Mother of God in Constantinople.

Glory to Jesus Christ!

Pray with out ceasing...

PLEASE INCLUDE THESE OUR BROTHERS AND SISTERS IN YOUR DAILY PRAYERS:

Those in need -Fr. Patrick, Fr. Andrew, Fr. Isaac, Fr. David, Fr. Anthony, Fr. Joseph, Mat. Gail, Mat. Donna, Mat. Pirisilla, Megan, George, Valerie R., Matt, Alice, Margaret, Charlotte, Cayllin Mary G., Melissa, Debra, Eliza, Pearl, William, Karen, John, Nickolas, Timothy, Amanda, Damian, Delani, Jeremiah, Christine, Rick, Samuel, Timothy M., Andrew, Kati, Simeon, Megan, Andrew, Margret-Ann, Lorely, Evan, Valentina The Homebound Ann, Tanya, Richard, Ruth, Lillian (Bernice) Catechumen-Christian... Military servers...Greg ...Newly Departed : David Witten, Fr. Paul Lasar, William Suschek, Claudia Sukel, Theona Sekel, Helen Miller, ...Departed Orthodox -Mat. Anastasia, Jeff, Catherine, Marilyn, Rodney, Irene, John B., John S., Ann, Katherine, Vernon, Paul, James Nickolai, Andrew, Peter, Paul, Margaret, Michael Mary Ann, Timothy... Special requests... Paul, Gilbert, Phyllis, Anthony, Ian, Paul, James, Sean, Liam, Bill, Wesley, Kim, Jim, Margaret, Loren, Russell, Julia, Shelby, Janet, Lynn, Margret, Helen, Dan, Jonathan, Donna, Nicholas, Maya, Eric, Mia

Holy Hymns:

Tone 6 Troparion (Resurrection)

The Angelic Powers were at Your tomb;
the guards became as dead men.
Mary stood by Your grave, seeking Your most pure body.
You captured hell, not being tempted by it.
You came to the Virgin, granting life.
O Lord, Who rose from the dead, // glory to You.

Tone 4 Troparion (St. Jacob) (Alaskan Melody)

O righteous Father Jacob,
adornment of Atka and the Yukon Delta;
you offered yourself as a living sacrifice
to bring light to a searching people. Offspring of Russian
America, flower of brotherly unity,
healer of sickness and terror of demons: O Holy Father
Jacob, // pray to Christ God that our souls may be saved!

Tone 6 Kontakion (Resurrection)

When Christ God the Giver of Life, raised all of the dead from the valleys of misery with His mighty hand, He bestowed resurrection on the human race. // He is the Savior of all, the Resurrection, the Life, and the God of all.

Tone 3 Kontakion (St. Jacob)

O Holy Father Jacob, teacher of the knowledge of God,
you revealed your love for your people, taking up your cross
and following Christ, enduring hardships like the Apostle
Paul. Pray on our behalf to Christ our God // to grant us great
mercy!

Tone 6 Prokeimenon (Resurrection)

O Lord, save Your people, / and bless Your inheritance! (Ps 27/28:9))

v: To You, O Lord, will I call. O my God, be not silent to me! (Ps 27/28:1)

Tone 7 Prokeimenon (St. Jacob)

The righteous shall rejoice in the Lord, / and shall hope in Him. (Ps 63/64:11)

Tone 6

Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

V: He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High will abide in the shadow of the heavenly God. (Ps 90/91:1)

v: He will say to the Lord: “My Protector and my Refuge; my God, in Whom I trust.” (Ps 90/91:2)

v. Blessed is the man who fears the Lord, who greatly delights in His commandments. (Ps 111/112:1)

Holy Scripture:

Romans 15:1-7 (Epistle)

We then who are strong ought to bear with the scruples of the weak, and not to please ourselves. Let each of us please his neighbor for his good, leading to edification. For even Christ did not please Himself; but as it is written, “The reproaches of those who reproached You fell on Me.” For whatever things were written before were written for our learning, that we through the patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope. Now may the God of patience and comfort grant you to be like-minded toward one another, according to Christ Jesus, that you may with one mind and one mouth glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore receive one another, just as Christ also received us, to the glory of God.

Matthew 9:27-35 (Gospel)

When Jesus departed from there, two blind men followed Him, crying out and saying, “Son of David, have mercy on us!” And when He had come into the house, the blind men came to Him. And Jesus said to them, “Do you believe that I am able to do this?” They said to Him, “Yes, Lord.” Then He touched their eyes, saying, “According to your faith let it be to you.” And their eyes were opened. And Jesus sternly warned them, saying, “See that no one knows it.” But when they had departed, they spread the news about Him in all that country. As they went out, behold, they brought to Him a man, mute and demon-possessed. And when the demon was cast out, the mute spoke. And the multitudes marveled, saying, “It was never seen like this in Israel!” But the Pharisees said, “He casts out demons by the ruler of the demons.” Then Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people.

Services and Announcements:

Sat. Aug. 1st Divine Liturgy 9:30am
--Blessing of Waters to Follow

Great Vespers – 6pm

Sun. Aug. 2nd Hours – 9:15am

Divine Liturgy – 9:30am

-Parish Challenge to Prayer, Fasting and Almsgiving

-Coffee Hour on Sunday's is resuming now.

-Parish Picnic following Divine Liturgy on August 6th and 15th.

-**Atrium and parish education** will resume on August 30th.

Teachers / Leaders Prep- Wed. Aug. 12th, Sun. Aug. 16th,
Sun. Aug. 23rd. (*Atrium 1,2,3 and Adult.*)

-Parish Council notes...

By-Law Update: Please make 'corrections' to the by-laws and bring them to Liturgy on Aug. 2nd so the By-laws group can consider, consolidate and make needed revisions in time for the annual meeting. (Nov. 8th)

WITH UNVEILED FACES

Modern secular man has become materialized in his understanding. To a great degree, he no longer views the world and the events that transpire in it through the Spirit. Everything is mundane. Everything has a "scientific" answer. Experts rule and dictate base materialism. For the secular mind, there is nothing more than the material. And even matter itself is drained of its spiritual reality and symbolism.

Thus, there is not much meaning left to the world around the modern man of the "masses." He has reverted back to the nothingness from which the Creator called him forth. Thus, in his blindness he denigrates the world around him and strives to strip it of all underlying meaning and many times refuses to believe that much of which transpires around him is full of symbol and deeper meaning. Fr. Seraphim Rose, of blessed memory, states that in "a frenzy of Satanic energy that impels him to strike out at the whole of creation and bring it, if he can, plummeting into the abyss with him." It may well be that the enemy is very pleased that the "mass man" lives in such a material plane. Yet, it is my opinion from research, that many who have great worldly power do not subscribe to such a materialistic view but are more than happy to promote it, for it keeps the "mass man" blinded. Such ones understand, to some degree, the energy of the spiritual plane, although they are all avowedly against Christianity.

For a Christian, it should not be so. Indeed, a true Christian is one who is striving to discern the meaning behind the seeming "material" events that transpire around him through the Truth of Jesus Christ. He is one who desires to, by the grace of God, rightly discern the "times and seasons" (cf. Lk 12:56).

Much of what is taking place must be first and foremost evaluated through the wisdom of Christ in His Church. That is as Christians we should be asking what the spiritual implications are of the many physical events and things taking place quite rapidly around us.

I desire to offer a reflection that to some may seem silly, but, I believe it worth contemplating. Is there a deeper meaning to the somewhat global phenomenon of covering the face of persons? Is there a "symbolism" underlying the covering of the human face, most of all as it pertains to Christian things? This is the specific focus of this article. (My point at current is not to touch upon the given "material" reasons, which I'm also not attempting to discount in total.)

I wonder because I have stumbled upon strange wording in some writings with regard to masking the face. To take but one of a few possible examples, a renowned medical journal uses the word "talisman" to describe the effect of covering a face. It is hard for me to think that they simply used such a word with no deeper thought or meaning. A talisman is an object that persons believe hold magical powers and particular energies that bring a specific effect to the wearer/user. It clearly has pagan and religious connotations.

Other "experts" in modern scientism have also called covering the face "symbolic." This coupled with the reality that many continually speak of an emerging "new normal" and a "great reset" gives me great pause. They all say that "life will be dramatically different." So we have a new consciousness into which powers that be wish to "initiate" the people of the world.

I find it of interest to note, from a spiritual and religious perspective, that covering the face has deep roots in pagan and occult initiation rites. Masks symbolize the suppression of "ego" and an interrogation into a new consciousness, or "normal." Why? Because the face is arguably the most identifying feature of a person, by suppressing it the most prominent personal identifier is suppressed. In such initiations, it symbolizes to a great degree the loss of personhood and integration into a controlled collective. Now, I don't want to spend too much time on the potential reality of the talisman of covering a person's face. I'm highlighting it for consideration, most of all since certain "experts" have themselves used "symbol" and "talisman" to describe masking the face. So, I do not find the

possibility to be stretched. You are free to reject the possibility. I believe it worth pondering, given many factors at hand.

As a stark contrast, in the Christian tradition, a person is never required to cover their face, to mask their most prominent expression of personhood, in any of its rites. Face holds deep theological meaning. For Orthodox, it is good to contemplate upon the theology of Icons and the place of "face" in iconography. A potent example would be the icon "Made Without Hands," which is a depiction of only the Face of Christ our Lord.

On the face are located four of the five major physical senses. Christ the Lord is called the "head" of the Church which is His body (cf. Eph. 1:22). The head entails and implies the face.

Moses, it is said, "*spoke with God face to face*" (cf. Ex. 33:11). And this reality holds profound meaning.

And St. Paul writes to the Corinthians, "*Now the Lord is Spirit; and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. But we all, with unveiled face reflecting as a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, even as the Lord is Spirit*" (2 Cor. 2:17-18). Thus, the "face to face" encounter with the Lord is a manifestation of the freedom which has been given to Christians in Christ the Lord. It seems clear it is the face that in a potent manner reflects the glory of the Lord. As our Lord said, "*If the Son therefore shall set you free, you shall be free indeed*" (Jn. 8:36). And St. Paul again exhorts, "*Keep on standing fast therefore in the freedom with which Christ has set us free*" (Gal. 5:1). An unveiled face represents the freeing of a person, whereas, in religious rites, the masking of a person's face represents the repression of their personal freedom, the adsorption of his person into a new aggregate; so, a veil also represents the repression of true freedom.

Further, it is written, "*Therefore having this ministry, even as we received mercy, we are not faint-hearted, but we renounce the hidden things of shame ... but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every conscience of men before the face of God*" (2 Cor. 3:1-2) So we see the face as an image of doing things in the open and forthrightly. It is an icon of the manifestation of truth. Christians, ideally, have nothing to hide and may stand "face to face" with God. Whereas veiling, in this sense, is a desire to hide.

In this passage St. Paul does also note that the Gospel is "veiled" to those who are perishing. This is because of their being "blinded in the mind" (cf. 2 Cor. 4:3-5) That is, a veil, in this instance, becomes a symbol of lack of revelation, a hindrance in approaching God. Yet this is not a characteristic of the Gospel rather it is that of the individual's heart and mind. Earlier St. Paul uses the image of a veil to represent the hardness of heart, a lack of true understanding, a rejecting of revelation, in a willful manner on the part of persons (Cf. 2 Cor. 3:13-15). In this imagery, a veil represents a lack of personal encounter and an inability to truly comprehend spiritual realities. St. Paul continues, "*Because it is God who said, 'Let there be light' to shine out of the darkness, Who shines in our hearts, for the illumination of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ*" (2 Cor. 4:6). Our illumination is represented in our freedom to approach our God with unveiled faces and encounter in return "*the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.*" Spiritually speaking a veil represents a darkened and uncomprehending mind, while a fully revealed face represents an illumined and knowing mind. Thus in Christian worship participants have always approached God with faces unveiled, even physically speaking. For this represents the spiritual reality that Christians are "free children" of God the Father and that we have been given the grace and freedom to approach Him with faces unveiled. It seems there is a profound theological purpose in standing before God with unveiled faces.

For, in worship, we are coming, as Moses did, to a "face to face" encounter with the Living God. This uniquely Christian understanding stands in evident contrast to the occult and pagan practices of masking the face in order to approach and be initiated into their "deities."

And so I wonder, what is the spiritual and theological message of veiling the face in true Christian worship? It seems most probable that veiling the face is latent with spiritual symbolism. I ask out of a desire for true dialogue in these times. Are we doing only physical things, or do our physical actions have meaningful spiritual implications? If we falter in our vocation to spiritually evaluate all things, could we also be in danger of existing only on the material plane and thereby sacrificing important spiritual realities? I believe it worth reflecting upon. I'll leave you to ponder. --Fr. Jeremiah Lynch