



# St. Cyril Orthodox Church

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+ **October 25, 2020** +  
**20<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost**

Martyrs Marcian & Martyrius (+355)

God cannot give  
us happiness and  
peace apart from  
**Himself**, because  
it is not there.  
**There is no such  
thing.**

- C. S. Lewis

**COVID-19 UPDATE:** We will no longer have a limit on the number of persons who can attend services, nor will there be a sign-up list. Archbishop Alexander has asked that those attending continue wearing a mask. We will resume having a small coffee hour after Liturgy, with snacks available.

**SATURDAY LITURGY:** We will have a Liturgy on the first Saturday of each month at 10 a.m. for those who are uncomfortable with the larger numbers of people at the Sunday Liturgies.

**COMMUNITY OUTREACH:** We will be having a fundraiser in November and December to benefit PACN, a local Christian crisis pregnancy center. Stay tuned for more details!

**TREASURER UPDATE** – October offerings so far: \$10,508. Projected expenses: \$13,746. Note that income includes \$1,400 grant from the Diocese of the South, and \$2,000 planting grant from the OCA.

**ONLINE CLASS** on the Orthodox faith will meet Wednesday evening at 7 p.m. on Zoom. See weekly email for the link. This week we will be discussing the crucifixion and resurrection of Christ.



## The Confession of the Bishop

By Fr. Viktor Gurev

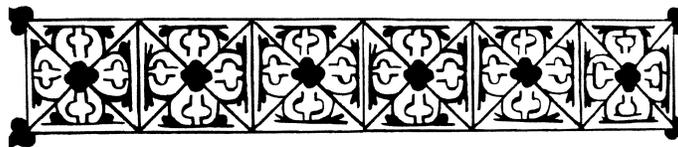
**T**HERE are, unfortunately, people who hide their sins during confession. Some people hide them because of a false fear, others because of false shame, others because of pride. Other people hide their iniquities from the priest at confession simply because of ignorance, and through this they not only do not receive forgiveness for their sins, but they also double them, because they are lying before the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, Who receives their confession. To lead such people away from the destructive habit of concealing their sins and to teach them deep, sincere, and full repentance, we will point them to the following story that tells us of how Christians in ancient times would sometimes repent of their sins.

It once happened in a particular city that there was a bishop who, at the advice of the devil, fell into an especially grievous sin. Bitterly repenting of his fall, and seeking forgiveness, the bishop went to the middle of the church at a time when the church was full of people and openly confessed his sin in front of everyone. After that, out of deep humility, he considered himself unworthy of the rank of bishop. Thus he took off his omophorion, placed it on the Holy Table, and then said to the people: “Forgive me, brethren, but I can no longer be your bishop.”

Seeing the great humility and regret of their shepherd, everyone who was in the church cried out with tears: “Let your sin fall on us, Father, just do not deprive us of your shepherding!” And for a long time, they kept begging the bishop to stay with them. At last, yielding to the prayers of his flock, but also wishing in some way to atone for his sin before God, the bishop finally said: “Very well, if you really want me to stay with you, then I will, but only on one condition. You must give me your word to unquestioningly fulfill what I now command you.”

All solemnly gave their word. Then the bishop, having ordered that the doors of the church be closed, said: “Know that if anyone of you does not step on me now with his feet, he will be excommunicated.” And, with these words, he lay down on the floor. Everyone was terrified; but not daring to break their promise, and fearing disciplinary punishment of the bishop, they began to walk over him, stepping on him with their feet. Then what do you suppose happened? When the last man in the church had stepped on him, a voice from heaven was heard, which said: “For the sake of his great humility, I have forgiven his sin!” Everyone heard this voice and glorified God.

So, my brethren, may there never be a lie between you after this, especially during holy confession. For you now know how disastrous this lie would be for you. Repent like David, who washed his bed all night with his tears. Repent like the sinful woman, who washed the feet of the Lord with her tears. Repent like Peter, who wept bitterly for the sin of denying His Lord. And then the Lord will undoubtedly forgive you, and make you no longer a child of wrath, but His own holy child, a child of His blessing.



**T**HE bread and the wine are not merely *symbols* of the Body and Blood of Christ (God forbid!) but the deified Body of the Lord itself. For the Lord has said, “This is My Body,” not, “This is a *symbol* of My Body;” and He said, “This is My Blood,” not “This is a *symbol* of My Blood.” And on a previous occasion He had said to the Jews, “Except you eat the Flesh of the Son of Man and drink His Blood, you have no life in you. For My Flesh is food indeed and My Blood is drink indeed.” And again, “He who eats My Flesh shall live” (John 6:51-55).

For this reason, with all fear and with a pure conscience and certain faith, let us draw near and it will be assuredly to us as we believe, doubting nothing. Let us pay homage to it in all purity both of soul and body: for it is twofold. Let us draw near to it with an ardent desire, and with our hands held in the form of a cross let us receive the body of the Crucified One; and let us apply our eyes and lips and brows, and partake of the divine coal, in order that the fire of the longing that is in us, with the additional heat derived from that Fiery Coal, may utterly consume our sins and illumine our hearts, and that we may be inflamed and deified by our participation in the divine fire.

- St. John of Damascus (+749)