



21st Sunday After Pentecost

Holy Fathers of the 7th Ecumenical Council

12 / 25 October

Resurrection Tropar, Tone 4: When the women disciples of the Lord / learned from the Angel the joyous message of Thy Resurrection / they cast away the ancestral curse / and elatedly told the Apostles / death is overcome / Christ God is risen / granting the world great mercy.

Tropar of the Fathers, Tone 8: Glorious art Thou, O Christ our God Who hast established our holy fathers as stars on earth./ Through them Thou dost guide us to the True Faith./ O Most Merciful One, glory to

Thee.

Resurrection Kondak, Tone 4: My Saviour and Redeemer / as God rose from the tomb and delivered the earth-born from their chains / He has shattered the gates of hell, / and as Master, / He has risen on the third day.

Kondak of the Fathers, Tone 8: The preaching of the Apostles and the doctrine of the Fathers confirmed the one faith in the Church./ In the garment of truth woven from theology on high she rightly divides and glorifies true piety.

Another Kondak of the Fathers, Tone 2: The Son Who shone from the Father/ was ineffably born in two natures of a woman./ We do not deny the image of His form/ but depict it piously and revere it./ For this cause the Church, holding the true Faith,/ kisses the icon of Christ's Incarnation

Vespers: Gen. 14:14-20; Deut. 1:8-11, 15-17; Deut. 10:14-21

Matins Gospel X

EPISTLE: ST. PAUL'S Letter To The Galatians 2: 16-20

Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law but by faith in Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, that we might be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the law; for by the works of the law no flesh shall be justified. But if, while we seek to be justified by Christ, we ourselves also are found sinners, is Christ therefore a minister of sin? Certainly not! For if I build again those things which I destroyed, I make myself a transgressor. For I through the law died to the law that I might live to God. I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.

I HAVE BEEN CRUCIFIED WITH CHRIST; IT IS NO LONGER I WHO LIVE, BUT CHRIST LIVES IN ME

Observe how cautiously he expresses himself; he does not say that they had abandoned the Law as evil, but as weak. If the law cannot confer righteousness, it follows that circumcision is superfluous; and this far he now proves, but he proceeds to show that it is not only superfluous but dangerous ...He speaks more strongly ...If faith in Him, he says, does not avail for our justification, and should it be necessary to embrace the law again, having forsaken the law for Christ's sake, we are not justified but condemned for such abandonment. Then will we find Him, for whose sake we forsook the law and went over to faith ...Observe how he has resolved the matter to a necessary absurdity ...Observe the Apostle's discernment. His opponents tried to show that one who did not keep the law was a transgressor, but he reverts the argument against them and shows that the one who did keep the law was a transgressor, not merely of faith, but of the law itself ...He means this: the law has confessedly ceased, and we have abandoned it and betaken ourselves to the salvation which comes of faith. But if we make a point of setting it up again, we become by that very act transgressors, striving to keep what God has annulled ...He adds the cause of his living, and shows that when alive, the law slew Him, but that when dead, Christ through death restored him to life.

He shows the wonder to be twofold: that by Christ both the dead was begotten into life, and, that by means of death. He means here immortal life, for this is the meaning of the words, 'That I might live to God I have been crucified with Christ.' How, it is asked, can a man now living and breathing have been crucified? ...It is Baptism He alludes to ...our subsequent manner of life, whereby our members are mortified. By saying, 'Christ lives in me,' he means nothing is done by me which Christ disapproves; for as by death he signifies not what is commonly understood, but a death to sin, so by life, he signifies a delivery from sin. For a man cannot live to God otherwise than by dying to sin, and as Christ suffered bodily death, so does Paul experience a death to sin (Cf. Col. 3:5) ...As sin, when it has the mastery, is itself the vital principle, and leads the soul wherever it will, so, when it is slain and the will of Christ is obeyed, this life is no longer earthly, but Christ lives, that is, works, has mastery within us.

St. John Chrysostom. Commentary on Galatians, Chapter II. B#57, pp. 20-22

For the Fathers, Hebrews 13 7-16

Gospel : Luke 7:11-16

At that time Jesus went into a city called Nain; and many of His disciples went with Him, and a large crowd. And when He came near the gate of the city, behold, a dead man was being carried out, the only son of his mother; and she was a widow. And a large crowd from the city was with her. When the Lord saw her, He had compassion on her and said to her, "Do not weep." Then He came and touched the open coffin, and those who carried him stood still. And He said, "Young man, I say to you, arise." So he who was dead sat up and began to speak. And He presented him to his mother. Then fear came upon all, and they glorified God, saying, "A great prophet has risen up among us"; and, "God has visited His people."

RESURRECTION OF THE SON OF THE WIDOW OF NAIN

"And when He came near the gate of the city, behold, a dead man was being carried out, the only son of his mother; and she was a widow. And a large crowd from the city was with her. When the Lord saw her He had compassion on her and said to her, "Do not weep" (vs.12-13).

These few words, "Do not weep", encompass the whole purpose of Christ's coming to the world. Today's moving gospel reading from Luke 7:11-17 reminds us that Jesus came to wipe away our tears, to soften our pain, and to lighten the burden of life. One can only imagine how painful must have been the grief of the widow on her way to the cemetery to bury her only child - a son. St.Luke tells us that a "large crowd from the city was with her", but no matter how many people around her, she was now alone and aware only of her pain and grief. In the beautiful city of Nain in the region of Galilee, all she could see was two graves - that of her husband and now that of her only son. Now we might hastily think that this is simply the tragic story of one woman. But isn't it really everyone's story? Life can be beautiful for a while, but inevitably the day comes when it is no longer so.

There is suffering; there is trouble; there is war; there is death. The result of all this is grief - an utterly painful experience that all of us must at some point in life come to terms with.

But how does one handle grief effectively? In the twentieth century we live in an age of miracle drugs. There are few pains which science today cannot lessen or eliminate completely with medication. Yet there is no pill or sedative that can ease the anguish, loneliness and suffering of a grieving and broken heart. Medical authorities tell us that the mismanagement of grief causes all sorts of illnesses from ulcers to psychosis. It may even lead to suicide. Now some people feel that the greatest cure for grief is time. Yet time alone will not heal grief completely. Time can do terrible things to grief. It can turn it into bitter resentment which can poison the body and the mind. If we are to cure grief we must co-operate with time in ways which are constructive.

One of the most serious mistakes we can make is to refuse to express our grief or to keep it bottled up. It is such unexpressed grief that causes all sorts of physical and mental ailments. Modern psychiatry has emphasized that when the eyes refuse to cry, other organs in the body will begin to cry with all kinds of illnesses resulting. Thus a very constructive way of expressing grief is to let the tears flow.

Unfortunately in our culture we often equate tears with weakness. We even say, "If that person had enough faith as a Christian they would not cry." Yet tears have nothing to do with weakness or lack of faith. When Lazarus died, St. John clearly tells us that "Jesus wept" (John 11:35). And the next verse says very simply but profoundly; "And the Jews said, 'See how much he loved him.'" The fact that Jesus wept teaches us that sorrow is natural. Jesus wept even though he is the Source of life. Tears are an expression of love. Even the sure knowledge of eternal life will not take all the grief out of the human heart when we lose a loved one. St. Paul says, "Do not grieve as others who have no hope." He is not saying that we should not grieve, but that we should grieve with Christian hope.

To facilitate the healthy expression of grief, our Church conducts memorial services on specific Saturdays throughout the year and on anniversaries of our loved ones' passing. The Church has always realized that in many ways a grieving person is like a steam engine. Unless the steam can escape in a controlled way, pressure will build up and the boiler will explode.

Now in today's gospel reading we saw the widow walking behind her son's coffin on the way to the cemetery. Her hopes, her aspirations, her dreams were being buried in that coffin. The procession of death was making its way through the city gates.

But there was another procession that day: Jesus and His disciples and a great crowd with Him. The two processions met at the city gate. "When the Lord saw her, He had compassion on her and said to her, "Do not weep." Then He came and touched the open coffin...And He said, "Young man, I say to you, arise." And he who was dead sat up and began to speak. (vs.13-15)

There were two processions that day! At the head of one was a corpse - symbolizing despair, grief, sorrow, the helplessness and hopelessness of mankind. But at the head of the other was Christ, the Eternal, the Saviour, sent to stop mankind's tragic journey to the grave and to offer hope, peace, salvation and eternal life. St. Luke then continues by telling us that after the dead man sat up and began to speak, Jesus "gave him to his mother" (v.15). We notice here that the gospel says "gave him" and not "restored him". Jesus, in raising the young man, had acquired a special right of possession over him, and it is a gracious gift that He now made to the mother.

Today's gospel passage shows us Jesus's compassion triumphing over death, and it is one of the three gospel accounts where He was seen to raise a dead person. The other two accounts involved the raising of the

daughter of Jairus, and the raising of Lazarus. In each of the three cases it seems that it is the compassion that Jesus felt for the sorrowing relatives which was the foremost cause of the miracle (We note that Jesus did not even ask the widow to express her faith - as He had done before performing other miracles - but merely acted in response to her grief).

Now if this element of compassion is the first to be emphasised, it cannot be ignored that the miracles of resurrection have another cause also: they demonstrate that Jesus has all power over life and death. Some details of today's gospel throw light on this power: there is the authority with which Jesus (by a sign) stopped the procession; then the solemn and imperative form of the words, "I say to you, arise"; and the fact that the Evangelist Luke, who in the first verses of the same chapter speaks simply of "Jesus", now uses the word "Lord", for this was an encounter in which the Lord of life confronted death and human grief.

We also notice that the three cases of resurrection reported in the gospels cover all the successive physical aspects of death. Jesus raised the daughter of Jairus when she was still lying on her bed, He raised the son of the widow of Nain while he was being carried out in a coffin, and He raised Lazarus who was already buried and decomposing. Jesus's power over death is absolute. This applies just as much to different degrees of spiritual death as it does to different degrees of physical death, and the gospel accounts of resurrection indicate symbolically how Jesus restores life to sinners. "I am the Resurrection and the Life," said Jesus. "Whoever believes in me, though they die, yet shall they live. And whoever lives and believes in me shall never die" (John 11:25-26). Amen.

Holy Monastery of Axion Estin

[For the Fathers: John 17: 1-13](#)

Saints of the week

12 / 25 October - The Holy Martyrs Tarachus, Probus and Andronicus - Tarachus was born in Syrian Claudiopolis, Probus in Pamphylian Side and Andronicus was the son of an eminent citizen of Ephesus. They were all three martyred together by the proconsul, Hymerius Maximus, in the time of the Emperor Diocletian (284-305). Tarachus was sixty-five years old when he was martyred. When the proconsul asked him three times for his name, he answered all three times: 'I am a Christian.' They were first beaten with rods, then, all bloody and wounded, thrown into prison. After that, they were brought out again for further torture. When the proconsul urged Probus to deny Christ, promising him honours from the Emperor and his own friendship, holy Probus replied: 'I neither desire imperial honours nor seek your friendship.' When he put St Andronicus to even greater physical torture, Christ's young martyr replied: 'My body is before you; do with it what you will.' After long-drawn-out torture in various places, these three holy martyrs were thrown into the theatre before the wild beasts. Before them, others were torn to pieces by the animals in this same theatre, but the beasts would not touch the saints; both the bear and the ferocious lioness fawned around them. Seeing this, many people believed in Christ the Lord and cried out against the proconsul. Wild with anger, and more ferocious than the beasts, the proconsul ordered soldiers to go in and cut Christ's soldiers to pieces, and their bodies lay mingled with the bodies of the others who had been slain. Three Christians: Macarius, Felix and Verianus, who witnessed the slaughter of the holy martyrs, came that night to take their bodies. All the bodies being mixed up and the night being very dark, they, in uncertainty about how to distinguish the martyrs' bodies, prayed to God, and three lights suddenly appeared above the bodies of the saints. They then took them and gave them burial.

Our Holy Father Cosmas of Maium - Born in Jerusalem, he was a friend of St John Damascene, whose parents took him in as an orphan and educated him. As a monk, he helped St Damascene to compile the Octoechos (the book of the Eight Tones, which change weekly and comprise the basis of the Offices), and he himself composed many Canons to the saints. The especially lovely Canons for Lazarus Saturday, Palm Sunday and the Sunday of the Judgement are ascribed to him. He was bishop of the town of Maiuma, near Gaza. He outlived St Damascene and died in great old age;

St. Edwin, king and martyr (584-633), king of Northumbria. A prince of the dynasty of Deira, whose territory was in the Yorkshire area, he was obliged to spend many of his early years in exile in Wales and East Anglia from Ethelfrith, king of Northumbria, of the rival tribe of Bernicia in the Northumberland area. Early in life he married Cwenburg of Mercia by whom he had two sons. In 616, with the help of Redwald, king of East Anglia, his host in exile who had steadfastly refused to betray him, Edwin defeated and killed Ethelfrith at the battle of the river Idle and so became king of Northumbria. Cwenburg had presumably died and Edwin sought to marry St. Ethelburga, a Christian princess from Kent. His embassy met with an initial rebuff because he was not a Christian, but the marriage was eventually agreed on condition that Ethelburga would be free to practise her own religion and that Edwin would seriously consider joining it. St. Paulinus was consecrated bishop and sent to York c.625 as the queen's chaplain; but with a view to the spread of Christianity in the North. As in Kent, there was an interval of some years before the king decided to become a Christian. Edwin was a thoughtful and melancholy man and not inclined to hurry important decisions; he naturally wished to take his followers with him when, and, if he decided to change his religion. Three events led up to his conversion: an unsuccessful assassination attempt by West Saxons; the pagan high priest, Coifi, deciding to abandon his old religion; and a reminder by St. Paulinus of a mysterious experience Edwin had undergone when in exile some years before. Edwin was baptised at Easter 627, after the birth of a daughter. Many thanes and others, in Yorkshire and Lincolnshire, followed his example. Edwin continued the expansionist policies of his predecessor, extending his territory to the north at the expense of the Picts, to the west at the expense of the Cumbrians and the Welsh, from whom he captured Anglesey and Man; he also absorbed the British enclave of Elmet (near Leeds) into his kingdom. He became the first Northumbrian to be overlord of the southern kingdoms as well as the first Christian king of Northumbria. But the king whom he could not conquer, Penda of Mercia, eventually conquered and killed him. This was at the battle of Hatfield Chase in 633. Aided by the Christian Welsh king Cadwallon, Penda decisively defeated the Northumbrians: the massacres and disorders which followed were ended only by the accession of St. Oswald the following year. Like St. Oswald, St. Edwin was regarded by his people as a tribal hero as well as a model Christian king. His following was centred on York where the church he had built contained his head, and on Whitby, which had a shrine of his body, which was discovered by revelation and brought there from Hatfield Chase. The abbey of Whitby, ruled in turn by St. Edwin's daughter St. Enfleda and granddaughter St. Elfleda, was a burial-place for the royal house of Deira and the home of the writer of the first biography of St. Gregory the Great. Unfortunately its early liturgical books like those of other centres in

Northumbria were lost, so there is no early calendar evidence for Edwin's feast. There was, however, at least one ancient church dedication and, centuries later, his recognition was approved by Gregory XIII implicitly through his being included among the English Martyrs in the famous wall-paintings at the English College, Rome.

St. Wilfrid, archbishop of York (709) - the son of a thegn of Northumbria had been educated at Lindisfarne.

The Transfer from Malta to Gatchina of a Part of the Wood of the Life-Creating Cross of the Lord, together with the Philermia Icon of the Mother of God and the Right Hand of Saint John the Baptist - was done in the year 1799. These holy things were preserved on the island of Malta by the Knights of the Catholic Order of Saint John of Jerusalem. In 1798, when the French seized the island, the Maltese knights turned for defence and protection to Russia. On 12 October 1799 they offered these ancient holy things to the emperor Paul I, who at this time was situated at Gatchina. In the autumn of 1799 the holy items were transferred to Peterburg and placed in the Winter Palace within the church in honour of the Image of the Saviour Not-Made-by-Hand. The feast for this event was established in 1800.

By ancient tradition, the Philermia Icon of the Mother of God was written by the holy Evangelist Luke. From Jerusalem it was transferred to Constantinople, where it was situated in the Blakhernae church. In the XIII Century it was taken from there by crusaders and from that time kept by the Knights of the Order of Saint John.

Also commemorated on this day: Hieromartyr Maximilian, bishop of Noricum (†284); Martyr Domnina of Cilicia (†286); St. Martin the Merciful, bishop of Tours (†397) [I Cor. 12:7-11 (§335); John 10:9-16 (§36)]; Venerable Mobhi of Glasnevin (†545); Venerable Amphilochius (†1452), Macarius (†1480), Tarasius (†1440), and Theodosius (15th C) of Glushitsa Monastery; St. Philaret, archbishop of Chernigov (†1866); Righteous John Letnikov, confessor (†1930); New Monk-martyr Lawrence (Levchenko) (†1937); New Hieromartyr Alexander Pozdnyevsky, priest (†1940); St. Nicholas the Confessor, metropolitan of Alma-Ata (†1955); 'Jerusalem,' 'Yaroslav- Smolensk,' 'Rudensk,' 'Kaluga' Icons of the Mother of God.

13 / 26 October - The Holy Martyrs Carpus and Pappylus - Carpus was Bishop of Thyateira and Pappylus was a deacon. They were born in Pergamum, where they finally suffered for the Christian faith at the hands of the wicked governor, Valerius, in Decius' reign. Valerius bound them behind horses and dragged them off to Sardis, where he put them to harsh torture; but an angel of God appeared to them, healed them of their wounds and strengthened them. Carpus's servant, Agathodorus, followed his master with great sorrow until he also was taken for torture. After that, Valerius again bound them behind horses and dragged them from Sardis to Pergamum. When holy Carpus was tied to a tree and so terribly flogged that his whole body was laid open and his blood streamed down onto the ground, he smiled in the midst of these tortures. When they asked him why he smiled, the holy martyr replied that he saw the heavens open and the Lord sitting on his throne, surrounded by cherubim and seraphim. At the time of Pappylus's martyrdom, this holy martyr healed a man, blind in one eye, by his prayers. Many, seeing this, came to believe in Christ the Lord. Thrown before wild beasts, the martyrs remained unhurt. When they were thrown into a fiery furnace, Agathonica, Pappylus' sister, saw this and leapt into the flames. But the flames did not burn them. Finally, they were all beheaded with the sword in 251. Thus, after great spiritual endeavour, they received the wreath of glory in the Kingdom of Christ.

Translation into Moscow of the Iveron Icon of the Most Holy Theotokos - The Iversk Icon of the Mother of God, situated on Mount Athos, is glorified by many miracles. Accounts of the wonderworking image were spread throughout Russia by pilgrims. His Holiness Patriarch Nikon (then still Novospassk monastery archimandrite) turned to the archimandrite of the Athos Iveria monastery, Pachomios (who at the time was in Moscow seeking alms for the Athos monasteries), – to supply a copy of the wonderworking Iversk Icon of the Most Holy Mother of God. The Athos monk Jamblichos wrote the copy of the Iversk image, and after a year the icon was in Moscow, accompanied by monks of Athos. On 13 October 1648 it was solemnly greeted by a multitude of the people. The great holiness of the Iversk Icon of the Russian Orthodox Church was glorified by the Lord with many miracles.

Also commemorated on this day: Martyr Florentius of Thessalonica (2nd C); Martyr Benjamin the deacon of Persia (†421); Venerable Venantius of Tours (5th C); St. Agathon, patriarch of Alexandria (†685); Venerable Nicetas the Confessor (†c.838); Venerable Luke of Demena, Sicily (†984); Hieromartyr Jacob of Hamatoura (13th C); Venerable Benjamin of the Kiev Caves (14th C); St. Meletius, patriarch of Alexandria (†1601); Martyr Chryse (Zlata) of Bulgaria (†1795); St. Anthony, metropolitan of Chkondidi, Georgia (†1815); New Hieromartyr Innocent Kikin and Nicholas Yermolov, priests (†1937); Return of the Relics of Venerable Sabbas the Sanctified from Italy to the Holy City (1965); Finding of the relics of New Hieromartyr Thaddeus (Uspensky), archbishop of

Tver (1993); Icon of the Mother of God 'Of the Seven Lakes.'

14 / 27 October - Our Holy Mother Petka—Paraskeva - This glorious saint was of Serbian birth, from the town of Epibata, between Silinaurius and Constantinople. St Petka's parents were wealthy and devout Christians, and had one son, Euthymius, who became a monk during his parents' lifetime and later became Bishop of Madytos. After her parents' death, the maiden Petka, always desirous of the ascetic life for the sake of Christ, left her home and went first to Constantinople and then to the Jordan wilderness, where she lived to old age in asceticism. Who can describe all the labours, the sufferings, the temptations from demons that Petka endured for many years? In her old age, an angel of God appeared to her and said: 'Leave the wilderness and go back to your home.' St Petka obeyed the voice from heaven, left her beloved wilderness and returned to Epibata. She lived a further two years there, still in ceaseless fasting and prayer, and then gave her spirit into God's hands and went to join the company of Paradise. She entered into rest in the eleventh century. Her wonderworking relics were, in the course of time, taken to Constantinople, Trnovo, Constantinople again and Belgrade. They are now in Romania, in the town of Jassy. St Petka's spring is to be found in Belgrade. The waters miraculously heal all the sick who, with faith in God and love for this saint, hasten to ask her aid.

King Harold II, the last Orthodox king of England and those killed with him at Hastings (1066). His family fled to Kiev and his daughter, Princess Gytha married the Grand Duke of Kiev, Vladimir Monomakh.

Martyrs Nazarius, Gervase, Protase, and Celsus - Nazarius was born in Rome of a Jewish father and a Christian mother. His mother, Perpetua, was baptized by the Apostle Peter himself. Confessing his mother's Faith, Nazarius sincerely fulfilled all the precepts of the Church. Fearlessly preaching the Gospel, Nazarius went to Milan. There, he found the Christians Gervasius and Protasius in prison, and ministered to them with great love. Learning of this, the local eparch ordered Nazarius to be beaten and driven from the city. His mother came to him in a vision and told him to go to Gaul, and to preach the Gospel there; and this is what Nazarius did. After several years, Nazarius returned to Milan—this time with a disciple, the young man Celsus, whom he had baptized in Gaul. There he found the brothers Gervasius and Protasius still in prison, and he was soon thrown in with them by the governor Anulinus. Christ's martyrs rejoiced because of this reunion brought about by God's providence. Emperor Nero ordered Nazarius slain, and the governor brought Nazarius and Celsus out of prison and beheaded them. Soon after that, General Astazius, passing through Milan en route to battle against the Moravians, beheaded St. Gervasius along with St. Protasius. He had heard that these two brothers would not sacrifice to idols, and fearing that he might lose the battle by losing favor with his false gods, he commanded that they be executed immediately. Gervasius and Protasius were twins, born of the blessed parents Vitalius and Valeria, who were also martyred for the Faith. The relics of St. Nazarius were translated by St. Ambrose from a garden outside the city to the Church of the Holy Apostles. The relics of St. Gervasius and St. Protasius were revealed to him in a miraculous vision.

Also commemorated on this day: Hieromartyr Silvanus, priest of Gaza (†311); St. Burchard, bishop of Wurzburg (†754); Venerable Nikola Sviatosha, prince of Chernigov (†1143); St. Ignatius, archbishop of Mithymna (†1566); New Hieromartyr Michael Lektorsky, priest (†1921); New Hieromartyr Ambrose the Confessor, bishop of Kamenetz-Podolsk (†1932); New Hieromartyr Peter Lebedev, priest (†1937); New Monk-martyr Maximilian Marchenko (†1938); 'Yakhroma' Icon of the Mother of God.

15 / 28 October - Our Holy Father, the Martyr Lucian, Priest of Antioch - Born of noble parents in Syrian Samosata, he received in his youth a very wide education, both secular and spiritual, and was a man eminent both for his learning and for his strict ascetic life. Giving his goods away to the poor, he supported himself by the writing of works of instruction, feeding himself thus by the work of his hands. He did a very great service to the Church in the work which he undertook of the correcting of the Hebrew text of the Scriptures in many places, texts which heretics had taken the opportunity to twist and corrupt according to their wicked teaching. Because of his learning and his great spirituality, he was ordained priest in Antioch. In the time of Maximian's persecution, when St Anthimus of Nicomedia and St Peter of Alexandria were put to torture, St Lucian was also on the list of those whom the Emperor wanted to have killed. Lucian fled the city and hid, but a jealous heretic priest, Pancratius, revealed his whereabouts. The persecution was terrible at that time, and not even tiny children were safe. Two boys, who would not eat food offered to idols, were thrown into a bath of boiling water, where, under torture, they gave their holy souls into God's hands. A disciple of Lucian's, Pelagia (see Oct. 8th), to preserve her virginal purity from the dissolute authorities, gave her soul into God's hands, and her body fell

from the roof of her house. Lucian was taken to Nicomedia, to appear before the Emperor. On the way, he managed to bring forty soldiers to Christ by his counsel, and they all died a martyr's death. After interrogation and flogging, St Lucian was thrown into prison, where he was tortured by hunger. He scorned hunger', writes St John Chrysostom of Lucian. Let us also scorn luxury and destroy the lordship of the stomach; that we may, when the time comes for us to meet such torture, be prepared beforehand, by the help of a lesser asceticism, to show ourselves worthy of glory in the hour of battle.' He received Communion in prison on the Theophany, and on the following day gave his soul into God's hands, on January 7th, 312.

The Venerable Euthymius the New - Euthymius was born in Ancyra in 824 of righteous parents, Epiphanius and Anna. He served in the army, married and had one daughter, Anastasia. He lived a strict and long ascetic life in monasteries on Mount Olympus and Mount Athos. For a time he also lived as a stylite near Thessalonica. He founded a monastery for men and a convent for women, near Thessalonica. He entered into rest on an island near the Holy Mountain toward the end of the ninth century. His holy and miracle-working relics repose in Thessalonica.

Also commemorated on this day: Martyrs Sarbelus and Bebaia (2nd C); Martyr Aurelia of Strasbourg (4th C); St. Antiochus, bishop of Lyon (†410); Venerable Sabinus, bishop of Catania (†760); Venerable Thecla of Ochsenfurt, Germany (†c.790); Monk-martyr Lucian of the Kiev Caves (†1240); Venerable John, bishop of Suzdal (†1373); St. Dionysius, archbishop of Suzdal (†1385); New Hieromartyr Martyr Symeon Konyukhov, priest (†1918); New Hieromartyr Demetrius Kasatkin, priest (†1942); St. Athanasius the Confessor, bishop of Kovrov (†1962); New Hieromartyrs of Belorussia: Seraphim, archimandrite, Vladimir, Basil, Sergius, Michael, Porphyrius, Michael, Demetriy, John, Leonid, Alexander, Vladimir, Vladimir, Matthew, Peter, Valerian, Vladimir, John, Vladimir, Nicholas, John, Demetriy, priests, and Nicholas, deacon (†1930-1950); 'She Who Ripens the Grain' Icon of the Mother of God.

16 / 29 October - The Holy Martyr Longinus - the centurion who stood at the Cross of Our Lord - The divine Matthew the Evangelist, describing the Passion of the Lord Jesus Christ, says: 'Now when the centurion and they that were with him, watching Jesus, saw the earthquake and the things that were done, they feared greatly, saying: "Truly this was the Son of God" ' (Matt. 27:54). That centurion was this blessed Longinus, who, with two other of his soldiers, came to believe in Jesus as the Son of God. He was the officer in command both at the Lord's crucifixion on Golgotha and in the watch that guarded the tomb. When the Jewish elders learned of Christ's Resurrection, they bribed the soldiers to spread the falsehood that Christ had not risen, but that His disciples had stolen His body. The Jews tried to bribe Longinus also, but without success. Then the Jews resorted to their usual practice: they conspired to kill Longinus. Discovering this, Longinus took off his army belt, received baptism from the apostles together with his two friends, and with them secretly left Jerusalem and went to Cappadocia. There he gave himself to fasting and prayer and, as a living witness of the Resurrection of Christ, turned many pagans to the true Faith by his testimony. He then went off to a village where his father had property, but the wicked Jews would not even there leave him in peace. In response to slander on their part, Pilate sent soldiers to behead Longinus. Holy Longinus foresaw in his spirit the approach of his executioners and, going out to meet them, took them to his home without telling them who he was. The soldiers lay down to sleep, and St Longinus spent the whole night preparing for death. In the morning, he went and brought his two friends, dressed himself in white grave-clothes, told the others in the house what was happening and showed them a place on a hillock to bury him. He then revealed himself to the soldiers as the Longinus whom they were seeking. The soldiers were embarrassed and ashamed, and would not think of beheading Longinus, but he laid it on them to carry out their superior's command, and he and his two friends were beheaded. Longinus's head was taken by the soldiers to Pilate; Pilate gave it to the Jews and they flung it onto a dung-heap outside the city.

The Venerable Longinus, The Lover of Labor - Longinus was a monk of the Monastery of the Kiev Caves in the fourteenth century. He was the gatekeeper of the monastery, and had such a pure and grace-filled heart that he always knew the thoughts of those who were entering the monastery and of those who were leaving the monastery. The miracle-working relics of Longinus repose in the Cave of St. Theodosius.

Venerable Gall the hermit, enlightener of Switzerland - He was born in Ireland to wealthy parents, who sent him to be educated at the Monastery of Bangor. There he embraced the ascetical life and became a monk. He was one of the twelve monks who traveled with his spiritual father St Columbanus (November 23) as missionaries to Gaul. In time some of the group traveled into pagan lands, up the Rhine river to Lake Zurich. The monks settled

on Lake Constance around a chapel dedicated to St Aurelia, which had been taken by the pagans as a shrine; they cleansed and reconsecrated the chapel, which became the center of their new monastery. Saint Gall lived as a hermit, serving the brethren by making nets and catching fish. In 612 St Columbanus went on to Italy with most of his disciples, leaving St Gall and a few others to continue their life. When St Gall delivered Frideburga, the daughter of a local duke, from a demon, he offered the saint a tract of land on the shores of Lake Constance; here was founded the monastery that in later times bore St Gall's name.

At various times, the holy Gall refused calls to become a bishop, or to take over the abbacy of the great monastery at Luxeuil. To all such requests he answered that he would rather serve than command. He continued living in his isolated monastic community until he reposed in peace in 640, at the age of ninety-nine. In later years, and continuing well into the middle ages, the Monastery of St Gall became famed for the holiness of its monks and for its library.

Also commemorated on this day: Venerable Eupraxia the Abbess, in the world Euphrosyne, princess of Pskov (†1243); Venerable Longinus the gate-keeper of the Kiev Caves (14th C); Venerable Longin of Yaranga (†1544); Blessed Domna of Tomsk, fool-for-Christ (†1872); Finding of the relics of St. John, metropolitan of Tobolsk (†1914); Righteous George Troitsky, confessor, priest (†1931); New Hieromartyr Eugene elkhovsky, priest (†1937); New Hieromartyr Alexis Nikonov, priest (†1938); New Hieromartyr John Zasyedatelev, priest (†1942); Venerable Malus the Hermit.

17 / 30 October - The Holy Prophet Hosea - The son of Beeri of the tribe of Issachar, he lived and prophesied more than eight hundred years before the birth of Christ. His inspired words are found in his book, which contains fourteen chapters. He strongly rebuked Israel and Judah for their idolatry, foretold God's punishment for their sin, the destruction of Samaria and Israel for their apostasy but the showing of God's mercy on the tribe of Judah. He foresaw the end of the sacrifices of the Old Covenant, and the coming of the Lord and the rich gifts that He would bring to earth. He lived to great old age, and entered peacefully into rest.

The Holy Martyrs Cosmas and Damian, The Unmercenaries - There are three pairs of holy physicians by the name of Cosmas and Damian. The first entered into rest peacefully on November 1, the second pair was stoned in Rome on July 1, and the third was from Arabia; and it is these that we speak of under today's date. They were physicians by profession, and when they received the Christian Faith, they healed the sick in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. They became widely known for their miraculous healings. The malicious pagans seized them, and took them before Governor Lysias in the town of Aegea. Since neither of these brothers would renounce Christ at any cost, they were cast into the sea, then into fire, but the omnipotent God saved them from both the water and the fire. An angel of the Lord appeared to them and saved them. The pagan governor ascribed this to their alleged sorcery but they answered: "We know nothing of sorcery nor do we need sorcery, but we possess the power of Christ-which saves us and all who invoke His Most-holy Name." The pagans struck them with stones but the stones bounced off them; they shot them with arrows, but the arrows rebounded as well. Finally, they were beheaded with the sword. Saints Leontius, Anthimus and Eutropius also suffered with them, and received heavenly wreaths of glory. They suffered in the time of Diocletian and Maximian. Many miracles were manifested from their holy relics, even as miracles abounded from them during their life.

Also commemorated on this day: Monk-martyr Andrew of Crete (†767); Martyrs and Unmercenary Healers Cosmas and Damian in Cilicia, Arabia, with their brothers Leontius, Anthimus, and Eutropius (3rd C); Hieromartyr Hero, bishop of Antioch; Martyr Shushanik (Susanna), princess of Ransk (†475); Martyrs Æthelred and Æthelberht, princes of Kent (†c.640); Translation of the relics of the Lazarus 'of the Four-Days' to Constantinople (898); Venerable Anthony of Leokhnov (†1611); St. Joseph the wonderworker, Catholicos-Patriarch of Georgia (†1770); New Hieromartyrs Neophyt Lyubimov and Anatoly Ivanovsky, priests, Monk-martyrs Hyacinth (Pitatelev), and Kallistos (Oparin) (†1918); New Hieromartyr Alexander, archbishop of Semipalatinsk (†1937); Blessed Parasceva, fool-for-Christ of Starobilsk (†1942); 'In Giving Birth, you Preserved your Virginity' and 'Deliverer' Icons of the Mother of God.

18 / 31 October - The Holy Apostle and Evangelist Luke - Born in Antioch, he applied himself in his youth to the study of Greek philosophy, medicine and art. At the time that the Lord Jesus was at work upon earth, Luke came to Jerusalem, where he saw the Saviour face to face, heard His saving teaching and was a witness of His wonderful works. Coming to belief in the Lord, St Luke was included among the Seventy and sent forth to preach the Gospel. Together with Cleopas, he saw the risen Lord on the road to Emmaus (Lk. 24). After the descent of the Holy Spirit upon the apostles, Luke returned to Antioch and there became a fellow-worker with the Apostle Paul, with whom he travelled to Rome, bringing Jews and pagans to the Christian faith. 'Luke the beloved physician salutes you', writes the Apostle Paul to the Colossians (4:14). At the request of the Christians, he wrote his Gospel in about the year 60. After the death by martyrdom of the great Apostle, Luke preached the Gospel all over Italy, Dalmatia, Macedonia and elsewhere. He painted three icons of the most holy Mother of God and also icons of the Apostles Peter and Paul, and is regarded as the founder of Christian iconography. In old age, he visited Libya and Upper Egypt, and thence returned to Greece, where he set himself with great zeal to preach the Gospel and bring men to Christ, disregarding his great age. St Luke wrote both his Gospel and the Acts of the Apostles, and dedicated them both to Theophilus, governor of Achaia. He was eighty-four years old when wicked idol-worshippers put him to torture for the sake of Christ and hanged him from an olive tree in the town of Thebes in Beothia. The wonderworking relics of this wonderful saint were taken to Constantinople in the time of the Emperor Constantius, son of St Constantine.

Saints Julian and Didymus the Blind - St. Julian, called the "Hermit," was a Persian and an unlearned peasant, but because of the purity of his heart he was a vessel of the grace of the Holy Spirit. He lived a life of asceticism beside the Euphrates River in Mesopotamia, and possessed the gift of clairvoyance. In the same moment that Julian the Apostate perished, St. Julian discerned this in the spirit, and declared it to his disciples. St. Didymus the Blind was his contemporary. He lived in Alexandria, and also perceived in the spirit the death of Julian. St. Didymus was at prayer during the night when a voice came to him from heaven, saying: "Today the Emperor Julian is no more, inform Patriarch Athanasius of this." St. Anthony the Great greatly respected this wondrous blind saint who had the spirit of discernment. He stayed with him and prayed to God with him whenever he came to Alexandria from the desert. Both St. Julian and St. Didymus, wonderful servants of God, entered into rest some time after the year 362.

Also commemorated on this day: Hieromartyr Asclpiades, archbishop of Antioch (†220); Martyr Marinus (4th C); Finding of the relics of Venerable Joseph of Volotsk (1515); Venerable David of Serpukhov (†1520); Martyrs Gabriel and Cirmidol of Egypt (†1522); New martyr Chryse (Zlata) of Meglen (†1795); St. Peter, metropolitan of Montenegro (†1830) [Heb. 7:26-8:2 (§318); John 10:9-16 (§36)]; New Hieromartyrs Andrew Voskresensky, Nicholas Sokolov, Sergius Bazhanov, and Sergius Gusev, priests, and Martyr Elizabeth Krymova (†1937).

† Daily Scripture Readings †

Monday – Epistle: for the 22nd Monday: Col. 2:13-20 (§255)
Gospel: for the 21st Monday: Luke 7:36-50 (§33)

Tuesday – Epistle: for the 22nd Tuesday: Col. 2:20-3:3 (§256)
Gospel: for the 21st Tuesday: Luke 8:1-3 (§34)

Wednesday – Epistle: for the 22nd Wednesday: Col. 3:17-4:1 (§259)
Gospel: for the 21st Wednesday: Luke 8:22-25 (§37)

Thursday – Epistle: for the 22nd Thursday: Col. 4:2-9 (§260)
Gospel: for the 21st Thursday: Luke 9:7-11 (§41)

Friday - Epistle: for the 22nd Friday: Col. 4:10-18 (§261)
Gospel: for the 21st Friday: Luke 9:12-18 (§42)

Saturday – Epistle: for the 22nd Saturday: II Cor. 5:1-10 (§178)
Gospel: for the 21st Saturday: Luke 6:1-10 (§22)

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Today we commemorate the Holy Fathers of the Seventh Ecumenical Council—that Council which approved the veneration of the holy icons. These Holy Fathers had to endure much persecution and injustices, and many were imprisoned and suffered torments, but in the end, the Orthodox faith prevailed, and beginning with this Council, and then with the events of the Triumph of Orthodoxy, iconodulia was confirmed. And since then, the Church has kept this faith in the holy icons; and although there constantly appear heretics who reject this faith, the Orthodox Church preserves its holy Tradition whole.

How do we honor the holy icons? Everyone knows that we kiss them, we pray before them, we light candles before them, we adorn them with flowers and various jewels, and so on. That is all well and good, but it's not the most important veneration of the holy icons. We hear about the most important icon veneration in the prayer that a priest reads when he blesses icons, which says that icons are created so that, looking upon them, people would glorify the Lord God and try to emulate the life of the holy God-pleasers depicted on these holy icons. This is the most important veneration: Beholding the holy icons, to lift our minds to God, remember the Heavenly world, and try to correct ourselves and become better.

For example, let us look at our beautiful cathedral. At the High Place, we see the Savior, Who is teaching His disciples and communing them of His Body and Blood. And if we look at this image and remember the Sacrament of the Eucharist and understand its importance and try to commune more and more often, we thereby honor this fresco; we honor this image. Around the Lord are depicted the Holy Apostles, and together with them, the holy New Martyrs, who are communing of the Body and Blood. We can't kiss this icon; we can't light candles in front of it; it's too high up, but we can venerate it all the same. We honor it if we, looking upon the faces of the holy Martyrs, remember their podvig. And what is the most important thing in their podvig? It is, of course, courageous patience—when, despite persecution and misunderstandings, sometimes from those closest to them, despite everything, they confessed the Orthodox faith. And, if beholding this image we will also confess the Orthodox faith, these images will be worthily honored by us, and we will be true venerators of the holy icons.

Let us, brothers and sisters, try today to remember the Holy Fathers of the Seventh Ecumenical Council, to be faithful to their precepts, and to be true venerators of icons; and, beholding every image in our church, let us try to be like those saints who are depicted here, so we would meet them in the Heavenly Kingdom.

Amen.

Hieromonk Athanasius (Deriugin)

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