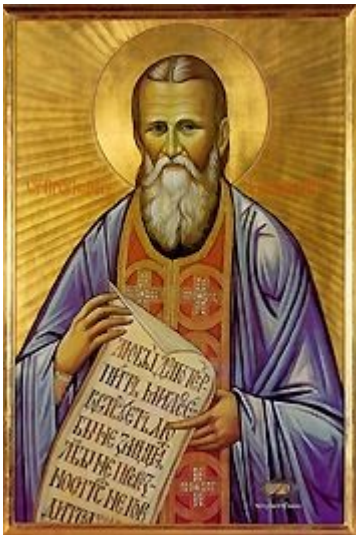




## 22<sup>nd</sup> Sunday After Pentecost

### St John of Kronstadt

19 October / 1 November

**Resurrection Tropar, Tone 5:** Let us, the faithful; praise and worship the Word, / Co-eternal with the Father and the Spirit, / born for our salvation from the Virgin; / for He willed to be lifted up on the cross in the flesh, / to endure death, / and to raise the dead / by His glorious Resurrection!

**Troparion of St John of Kronstadt tone 4:** With the Apostles thy message has gone out to the ends of the world, / and with the Confessors thou didst suffer for Christ; / thou art like the Hierarchs through thy preaching of the Word; / with the

Righteous thou art radiant with God's grace. / The Lord has exalted thy humility above the heavens / and given us thy name as a source of miracles. / O wonderworker living in Christ for ever, / have mercy on those in trouble / and hear us when we call to thee with faith, O our beloved shepherd John.

**Another Troparion of St John of Kronstadt (composed by St John of Shanghai & San Francisco) tone 4:** O Wonderworker living in Christ for ever, / with love have mercy on those in danger; / hear thy children who call upon thee with faith; / be compassionate to those who hope for aid from thee, / O Father John of Kronstadt, our beloved shepherd.

**Resurrection Kondak, Tone 5:** Thou didst descend into hell, O my Saviour, / shattering its gates as Almighty, / resurrecting the dead as Creator, / and destroying the sting of death. / Thou hadst delivered Adam from the curse, O Lover of Man, / and we cry to Thee, O Lord, save us.

**Kontakion of St John of Kronstadt tone 4:** Thou wast chosen by God in infancy / and in childhood received the gift of learning. / Thou wast called to the priesthood in a vision during sleep / and didst become a wonderful shepherd of Christ's Church. / Pray to Christ our God / that we may all be with thee in the Kingdom of heaven, / O Father John, namesake of grace.

**Vespers:** Joel 2:12-26; Joel 2:27-32; I John 4:20-5:5

**Matins Gospel XI**

#### **EPISTLE: Galatians 6:11-18**

See with what large letters I have written to you with my own hand! As many as desire to make a good showing in the flesh, these would compel you to be circumcised, only that they may not suffer persecution for the cross of Christ. For not even those who are circumcised keep the law, but they desire to have you circumcised that they may boast in your flesh. But God forbid that I should boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world. For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision avails anything, but a new creation. And as many as walk according to this rule, peace and mercy be upon them, and upon the Israel of God. From now on let no one trouble me, for I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus. Brethren, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen.

## **I HAVE WRITTEN TO YOU WITH MY OWN HAND!**

He has written the whole letter himself, which was proof of great sincerity. In his other Epistles he himself only dictated, another wrote, as is plain from the Epistle to the Romans, for at its close it is said, 'I Tertius, who write the Epistle, salute you' (Rom. 16:22) ...And this he did by necessity, not merely from affectation, but in order to remove injurious suspicion ...What is the meaning of 'to make a fair show in the flesh?' It means to be esteemed by men. As they are reviled by the Jews for deserting the customs of their fathers, they desire, he says, to injure you, so they may not have this charged against them, but vindicate themselves by means of your flesh. His object here is to show that they did not act this way from respect to God.

*St. John Chrysostom. Chapter VI Commentary on Galatians. B#57, pp. 45-46.*

### **Second Epistle I John 4:7-11**

#### **THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO ST. LUKE 8: 5-15**

THE LORD SAID THIS PARABLE: "A sower went out to sow his seed. And as he sowed, some fell by the wayside; and it was trampled down, and the birds of the air devoured it. Some fell on rock; and as soon as it sprang up, it withered away because it lacked moisture. And some fell among thorns, and the thorns sprang up with it and choked it. But others fell on good ground, sprang up, and yielded a crop a hundredfold." When He had said these things He cried, "He who has ears to hear, let him hear!" Then His disciples asked Him, saying, "What does this parable mean?" And He said, "To you it has been given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God, but to the rest it is given in parables, that 'Seeing they may not see, And hearing they may not understand.' "Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God. Those by the wayside are the ones who hear; then the devil comes and takes away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved. But the ones on the rock are those who, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no root, who believe for a while and in time of temptation fall away. Now the ones that fell among thorns are those who, when they have heard, go out and are choked with cares, riches, and pleasures of life, and bring no fruit to maturity. But the ones that fell on the good ground are those who, having heard the word with a noble and good heart, keep it and bear fruit with patience.

#### **THE SOWER**

We hear in today's Gospel, the Gospel for Sunday from Luke chapter 8, the Parable of the Sower. In this parable the Lord illustrates four different types of people. Three of these types of people – those on the way, those on the rock, and those in the thorns, do not bring forth any fruit from the sowing. Only those on the ground, that is, those with rich soil, bring forth fruit and are saved.

What is this seed which is being sown? It is the Word of God, yes, in one sense being the good news of salvation, the Gospel itself, but what is the seed in essence? Is it not love – pure, undefiled, unmingled, personal, all-powerful, life-creating Divine love? When we love or perform acts of love, this love is often tainted, mingled together with some self-interest, with some vanity, with some vainglory, with some critical remarks or condescension. Not so with the love of God. The love of God is completely selfless and pure.

The sower is sowing these seeds, and on each of these tiny seeds, sown ever so subtly, is written the phrase: "I love you my child." And how is this seed of the love of God sown? If our eyes are open, we will see clearly that it is sown in a million different ways every day. Let's begin with nature – is not the beauty of the natural world a seed, or rather many seeds, sown through our physical senses and containing the message of God's love? The symphony of colors in the Fall, the complexity of the design of our own bodies, every cell, every molecule with its combination of elements in precise arrangements working together to give us breath and continued life, the elegance of the lines drawn across the sweeping ridges and valleys in a snow-capped mountain range, and something not often studied except in specialized courses, the awe-inspiring crystal structure and chemistry of thousands of different minerals existing on the planet where we live – these are all seeds of love, messages from God about his love for us.

Often people create music with Divine inspiration which communicates the love of God and sows the seeds of love in our hearts. They write poetry and prose which, by some remarkable phenomenon, has an effect not just on the eyes which read the words or the ears which hear, but upon the very consciousness of a man. This faculty of speech, and the understanding of speech, is itself a miracle, by which words are translated into thoughts and impressions, affecting the mind and heart.

Christ has been sowing these seeds of love in His creation forever and continues to do so now, every day. But how do we respond? The appropriate response to this Divine love is to give love in return, to arrange everything in our life, from our thoughts to our actions to our future plans, as a loving response to this outpouring of love from the Sower, Christ. In Proverbs God speaks to man through the Prophet and says "Son, give me your heart." And this is what he says to all of us. "Son, give me your heart." "Daughter, give me your heart." "My child, my little one, my unique creation, give me your heart."

To be the one whose seed takes hold, the one on the ground whose soil brings forth fruit, is simply to be the one who responds to this command, "give me your heart" with a profound "Yes" and repeats this answer every hour of every day. Today we celebrate the memory of St. John of Kronstadt, and this righteous father and all-Russian pastor is the perfect example of this response. In his writings we can see how he struggled with every thought, with every question, all his responses to God and man completely bathed in the light of love, this loving response which we speak of today. Remembering St. John of Kronstadt, let us consider what amazing things are possible when one person, against all the influence of the world around him, once and for all determines his life's course based on one single goal – total surrender to the love of God, the Sower Christ, who even now sows His seeds of love in our hearts. Amen.

*Hermitage of the Holy Cross*

### Second Gospel: Luke 6:31 – 36

#### **Saints of the week**

**19 October / 1 November - St. John of Kronstadt, priest, wonderworker** - A married priest, he served in the Cathedral of St. Andrew's in Kronstadt, a busy port near St. Petersburg. A great man of prayer, he served Divine Liturgy every day and read the entire cycle of daily services. He visited the poor and the sick, generously giving alms, himself often going without. He and his matushka lived as brother and sister. He taught and advised all those who came to him, young and old, rich and poor. Such was the love of the people for him throughout Russia that the Kronstadt post office had a special section just for St. John! Even during his lifetime hundreds were healed through his holy prayers. In 1906, he became very ill and suffered with this sickness until his death. Nevertheless, he continued to serve daily. On December 20, 1908, he quietly reposed in the Lord. A crowd of 60,000 attended his funeral, an unprecedented event in Russia. He was formally glorified as a saint by the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad on June 3, 1964. Holy blessed Father John, pray to God for us!

**The Holy Prophet Joel** - The second in order of the Minor Prophets, Joel was the son of Phanuel, of the tribe of Reuben. He lived eight hundred years before Christ, and foretold the misfortunes of the Israelites and their captivity in Babylon for the sins that they had committed against God. He called the people to fasting and the priests to penitent and tearful prayer that God would have mercy on them: Sanctify ye a fast and cry unto the Lord' (1:14); 'Let the priests weep between the porch and the altar' (2:17). Joel also prophesied the descent of the Holy Spirit upon the apostles, and the outpouring of His grace on all the faithful (2:28). He foretold and described the Dreadful Judgement of God, and also the glory of God's holy Church.

**St. Frideswide of Oxford, abbess (c.735)** - the daughter of Didian, a Mercian prince whose lands included the upper reaches of the River Thames. She took a vow of perpetual virginity. A local prince named Algar refused to accept that she would not marry him. He pursued the saint, only to be struck blind. His sight returned once he had renounced his plan to make her forsake her vow. Frideswide had hidden herself from Algar in a village near

present-day Oxford called Binsey. Eventually she founded a nunnery there and became its first abbess. There she lived until her death around the year 735. The nunnery flourished and her name was not forgotten. In the twelfth century her nunnery was refounded, this time as a convent for Augustinian canons. In 1180 in the presence of the Archbishop of Canterbury and King Henry II of England her remains were translated to a new shrine in the monastery church. A yet greater shrine was built nine years later. Countless pilgrims visited her relics. Twice a year the University of Oxford held a solemn feast in her honour and came to venerate her bones. In 1440 the Archbishop of Canterbury declared her patroness of the university. Then in 1525 Cardinal Wolsey suppressed St Frideswide's monastery. Two decades later the monastery church became the new cathedral of Oxford. But the shrine containing Frideswide's relics had been broken up by Protestant reformers. The stone was used for building; but happily some Catholics preserved the saint's bones. Meanwhile the wife of the Protestant professor Peter Martyr had been buried in the Cathedral. In 1561, in an extraordinary burst of fanaticism a canon dug up her bones and mixed them with those of Saint Frideswide, adding the epitaph *Hic jacet religio cum superstitione* ('Here lies religion with superstition'). Today the place where her remains finally rested is marked with four elegant candlesticks in Christ Church.

**Also commemorated on this day:** Blessed Cleopatra (†327) and her son John (†320); Hieromartyr Sadoc, bishop of Persia, and with him 128 martyrs (†342); Venerable Leontius the philosopher (†624); Venerable Prochorus the myrrh-streaming of Pechenga (10th C); Translation of the relics of the Venerable John of Rila, Bulgaria (1187); Monk-martyr Nicholas Dvali of Jerusalem (†1314); Venerable Gabriel of Mt. Athos (†1901); New Hieromartyr priest Alexei Stavrovsky (†1918); New Hieromartyr Sergius Pokrovsky, priest (†1937); Venerable Anthony (Abashidze), schema-archbishop (†1942); Day of the glorification of the Holy New Martyrs and Confessors of Russia (1981); Synaxis of the Saints of the Archangelsk Archdiocese.

**20 October / 2 November - The Holy and Great Martyr Artemius** - This glorious saint was Egyptian by birth, and the commander-in-chief of the army of the Emperor Constantine the Great. When the victorious Cross, encircled by stars, appeared to the Emperor, Artemius also saw it, came to faith in Christ the Lord and was baptised. Later, in the time of the Emperor Constantius, Constantine's son, he was sent to Greece to take the relics of St Andrew and St Luke from Patras and Thebes respectively to Constantinople, which charge Artemius carried out with joy. After that, he was appointed governor and imperial representative in Egypt, in which appointment he remained throughout the reign of Constantius and for a certain time under Julian the Apostate. When this renegade Emperor went to war against the Persians, he stopped for a time in Antioch, and summoned Artemius and his army to join him there. Artemius went. At that time, the Emperor gave two Christian priests, Eugenius and Macarius, over to torture. Seeing this, St Artemius was profoundly alarmed, went to the Emperor and said to him: 'Why are you so inhumanly torturing these innocent and dedicated men, and why are you putting pressure on them to turn back from the Orthodox faith?' He also prophesied to the Emperor that his end was near. The furious Emperor sent the two priests into exile in Arabia, where they soon died, and stripped Artemius of his Military rank, ordering that he flogged and whipped. All wounded and covered with blood, Artemius was thrown into prison, where the Lord Christ Himself appeared to him, healing and comforting him. After that, the Emperor ordered that he laid on a flat stone and that another stone he put on him, so crushing his body like a board. Finally, he was beheaded(c. 362); The Emperor Julian then went out against the Persians and perished in a dishonourable way, as St Artemis had foretold.

**St. Acca, bishop of Hexham, England, (c. 740)** - From his youth he had been close to the great saints of the time, brought up in the household of Saint Bosa of York, accompanying Wilfrid to Rome (and there, says Bede, 'learning many valuable things about the organisation of the church which he could not have found out in his own country'). After serving for several years as chaplain to the redoubtable Saint Wilfrid, Bishop of Hexham in Northumbria, Acca succeeded to the bishopric on Wilfrid's death. Acca believed that the English church needed to include the beauties of the Roman liturgy rather than the Roman legal system. 'He invited a famous singer named Maban, who had been trained by the followers of Pope Gregory's disciples in Kent, to come and teach him and his clergy,' wrote the Venerable Bede. This man taught church music for twelve years - reviving old forgotten chants as well as bringing new ones. Acca also sang beautifully, says Bede (who knew him), and encouraged this revival by his own example. He loved and studied the Scriptures. He refurnished the churches with sacred vessels and lights. Above all he enlarged and beautified the cathedral of St Andrew at Hexham. He built up a fine library to which scholars and students were drawn, all of whom received the patronage of Bishop Acca. For some reason Acca was forced out of his diocese in the year 732. He was exiled to Withern, Galloway; but he returned before his death in 742 and was buried at Hexham.

**Venerable Gabriel of Samtavisi** - Venerable Gabriel was born in 1929 at Tbilisi, Georgia, which was governed by the Soviet Union. The young Goderdzi Urgebadze was dedicated in prayer from his childhood and pursued an ascetical life beyond his years, piously enduring ongoing attacks from demons.

When at the age of 12 his mother requested him to prioritise family over faith, he left home and roamed from monastery to monastery. He eventually returned home and completed his compulsory military service in 1949. Following this, he continued with his ascetical labours and at the age of 26, in 1955, was ordained presbyter and monk, and named Gabriel.

His most famous act, one which earned him his titles of "Fool for Christ" and "Confessor", came in 1965 at the May Day rally in Tbilisi. He took kerosene and burned the giant portrait of Lenin, the leader of the October Revolution which installed Communist rule. He then stood on a second floor balcony and gave a sermon to the shocked crowd, saying: "The Lord said, 'You shall have no other gods before Me. You shall not make for yourself an idol or a likeness of anything in heaven above, or in the earth beneath, or in the waters under the earth. You shall not bow down to them or serve them, for I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God...' (Exodus 20:3-5). People, come to your senses! The Georgians have always been Christians! So why are you bowing down before idols? Jesus Christ died and rose again... But your cast idols will never be resurrected. Even during their life they were dead..."

The communist Soviet regime planned a show-trial and execution. It also wanted to implicate the Georgian Patriarchate in this incident. Despite torture, Fr Gabriel stood firm and was released as a lunatic with the doctor's note saying, "When someone talks to him, he surely mentions God, angels, and icons." Up to Gabriel's final days, he remained firm in the faith and strove to restore Orthodoxy to Georgia. He reposed in the Lord on 2 November 1995. Many miracles were ascribed to him, and his grave at Mtskheta attracted an increasing number of pilgrims. He was recognised as a Saint by the Patriarchate of Georgia on 20 December 2012.

**Also commemorated on this day:** Martyr Zebinas of Palestine (†308); Martyrs Eborus and Ebnous (4th C); Venerable Matrona of Chios (†1462); Righteous Artemius of Verkola (†1545); Venerable Gerasimus the New (†1579); New Hieromartyr Herman, bishop of Alatyr, Zosima Pepenin, John Ganchev, John Rechkin, John Rodionov, Nicholas Figurov, Leonid Nikolsky, John Talzin, Alexander Orlov, priests, Michael Isaev, Peter Kravets, deacons, Martyr Paul Bocharov (†1937); Finding of the relics of Venerable Anastasia of Kiev, grand duchess (2009); Finding of the relics of New Hieromartyr Nikodim, bishop of Belgorod (2012).

**21 October / 3 November - Our Holy Father Hilarion the Great** - As a rose growing among thorns, so was this great saint born of pagan parents in the village of Tabatha near Gaza in Palestine. His parents sent him to study in Alexandria, where the gifted youngster quickly assimilated both secular learning and spiritual wisdom. Coming to know Christ the Lord and receiving baptism, he desired to serve the Lord with his whole heart. With this desire, Hilarion visited St Antony the Great in the desert and became his disciple. He then returned to his homeland and lived in asceticism near Maiuma, not far from Gaza. Demons tried to frighten him with various terrors, but he, with prayer to God and the sign of the Cross, overcame them all and drove them away. A great many who were desirous of the spiritual life gathered around him, and St Hilarion became for Palestine what St Antony was for Egypt. A divine teacher, a strict ascetic, a marvellous wonderworker, Hilarion was revered not only by Christians but also by pagans. He, though, fearing the praise of men and crying out through his tears: 'Woe is me, for I am getting my reward in this life!', fled from place to place simply to hide from men and remain alone with his soul and God. He therefore settled and lived for a time in Egypt, Sicily, Dalmatia and finally in Cyprus, where his life of great toil came to an end in about 372, when he had reached the age of eighty. Hilarion's wonderworking relics were taken by Ezekiel, one of his disciples, to Palestine and laid in the monastery that he had founded.

**Translation of the relics (1206) of St. Hilarion, bishop of Meglin, Bulgaria** - The Transfer of the Relics of Sainted Ilarion, Bishop of Meglina, to the Bulgarian city of Tirnovo, occurred in the year 1206. Prior to this event the body of the saint rested in the city of Meglina.

Saint Ilarion had received a fine Christian upbringing. In his 18th year of life he left the world and withdrew to a monastery, which he was soon chosen to head because of his virtuous and strict life. Concerning himself over the salvation of the souls entrusted to him, he unceasingly exhorted the monks not to waste the precious

time intended for salvation. With a particular persistence Ilarion eradicated drunkenness. In the year 1134 he was ordained bishop of Meglina. At this time the Bogomil heresy was spreading through Bulgaria. The heretics followed a false teaching, in which good and evil manifest themselves of independent principles, and between which ensues a struggle. With an apostolic zeal and fervent prayer Saint Ilarion rose up in struggle against the heretical pseudo-teaching. He untiringly unmasked the heresy of the Bogomils, snatching from them their hypocritical guise of piety. In refuting the teaching of the heretics, Saint Ilarion said: "Ye be not Christians at all, since ye are hostile to the Cross of Christ the Saviour, ye acknowledge not the One God, ye slander the ancient Revelation (Old Testament), venerated by Christians. Ye do deceive simple people by hypocritical meekness, whilst full of pride. True piety is not possible in those, who see not in themselves corruption of heart, nor beseech the grace of God by prayer and humility. Evil thoughts, envy, vanity, greed, lie – are not the deed of some evil thing within man and to be conquered by mere fasting. These vices – are the fruit of self-love which therefore demands rooting-out by spiritual efforts".

After the saint's exhortations many of the heretics abandoned their pseudo-teaching and returned to the bosom of Holy Church. Saint Ilarion the same way also untiringly and successfully struggled against the rise in Bulgaria of the Armenian Monophysite heretics, who acknowledged in Christ only the Divine nature. The saint reposed in the year 1164.

**Also commemorated on this day:** Martyrs Dasius, Gaius, and Zoticus (†303); Martyr Ursula of Cologne, and those with her (4th C); Venerable Fintan of Teachmunnu, Ireland (†635); Venerable Malathgen of Cluain-Edneach, Ireland (†767); Venerable James of Cappadocia (10th C); Venerable Philotheus of Mt. Athos (11th C); St. Hilarion, schema-metropolitan of Kiev (11th C); Translation of the relics of St. Hilarion, bishop of Meglin, Bulgaria (1206); Venerable Theophilus and James of Omutch (†c.1412); Venerable Hilarion of Pskovoezersk (†1476); New Martyr John of the Peloponessus (†1773); Righteous John and Moses, priests, of Sibiel, Transylvania (18th C); Monk-martyrs Bessarion, Sophronius, and Oprea of Transylvania (18th C); New Hieromartyrs Paulinus, archbishop of Mogilev, Arcadius, bishop of Ekaterinburg, and with them Anatole Levitsky, Nicanderarchbishop of Kursk, Alexis, bishop of Urazov, Constantine Chekalov, Sergius Smirnov, Basil Nikolsky, Theodore Belyaev, Vladimir Vvedensky, Nicholas Raevsky, John Kozyrev, Alexander Bogoyavlensky, Demetrius Troitsky, Sophronius (Nesmeyanov), Neophytus (Osipov) (†1937); New Nun-martyr Pelagia (Testovoy) (†1944). Chernelevsky, priests, and New Martyr Cyprian Annikov (†1937); New Hieromartyr Damian, archbishop of Kursk, Alexis, bishop of Urazov, Constantine Chekalov, Sergius Smirnov, Basil Nikolsky, Theodore Belyaev, Vladimir Vvedensky, Nicholas Raevsky, John Kozyrev, Alexander Bogoyavlensky, Demetrius Troitsky, Sophronius (Nesmeyanov), Neophytus (Osipov) (†1937); New Nun-martyr Pelagia (Testovoy) (†1944).

**22 October / 4 November - Fast Day - The Kazan Icon of the Most Holy Theotokos** - commemorating the deliverance from the Poles in 1612. The Celebration of the Most Holy Mother of God, in honour of Her "Kazansk" Icon, was established in gratitude for the deliverance of Moscow and all Russia from the incursion of the Polish in 1612. The period of the end of the XVI and beginning XVII Centuries is known in the history of Russia as "the Time of Troubles" ("Smutnoe Vremya"). The country suffered the onslaught of Polish armies, which scoffed at the Orthodox faith, in plundering and burning churches, cities and villages. By way of deceit they succeeded in taking Moscow. To the appeal of His Holiness Patriarch Ermogen (Comm. 12 May), the Russian nation rose up in defense of its native-land. To the militia forces headed by prince Dimitrii Mikhailovich Pozharsky was sent from Kazan the wonderworking image of the Mother of God.

Sainted Dimitrii of Rostov (Comm. 21 September), in his "Discourse on the Day of Appearance of the Icon of the Mother of God at Kazan" (Icon feastday 8 July), said: "The Mother of God doth deliver from misfortune and woe not only the righteous, but also sinners, but which sinners? Those, which do turn themselves to the Heavenly Father like the Prodigal Son, they make lamentation beating their bosom, like the Publican, they weep at the feet of Christ, like the Sinful Woman washing His feet with her tears, and they offer forth confession of Him, like the Thief upon the Cross. Upon suchlike sinners is it that the All-Pure Mother of God doth heed and hasten to their aid, and from great misfortunes and woe doth deliver".

Knowing that the misfortunes were in sufferance for their sins, the whole nation and the militia imposed upon themselves a three-day fast and with prayer they turned to the Lord and His All-Pure Mother for Heavenly help. The prayer was heard. Situated in captivity under the Polish, from Sainted Arsenii (afterwards Bishop of Suzdal')

came an announcement, that in a vision to him had been revealed a shifting in the Judgement of God towards mercy, through the intercession of the Most Holy Virgin. Emboldened by the news, Russian forces on 22 October 1612 liberated Moscow from the Polish usurpers. Celebration in honour of the Kazan Icon of the Most Holy Mother of God was established in 1649. And down to our own day this icon is especially revered by the Russian Orthodox nation.

**St Abercius, Equal to the Apostles** - In the time of the Emperor Antoninus (138-161), St Abercius was bishop in the city of Hierapolis in Phrygia. The great majority of the town's inhabitants were pagans, and St Abercius governed his little flock with a heart greatly saddened by the great number of pagans and idolaters, and with fervent prayer to God that He would bring them to the true Light. At the time of a rowdy idolatrous festival, Abercius became inflamed with godly zeal and went into the temple, smashing all the idols. When the furious pagans tried to kill him, three young madmen fell down before the man of God, foaming at the mouth and bellowing. The man of God drove the demons out of them, and they were healed and became calm. Seeing this, the fury of the pagans turned to marvelling at Christ's wonderworker, and five hundred of them were immediately baptised. Little by little, everyone in the city of Hierapolis came to believe in Christ and was baptised. The proconsul of the region, Publius, had a blind mother whose sight Abercius restored by prayer, and both Publius and his mother came to faith in Christ, along with many other people. In old age, Abercius was summoned to Rome, where he healed the Emperor's mad daughter. The Lord Christ appeared to His faithful follower, St. Abercius, several times. People from far and near came to him for help in chronic sickness, and the demons not only feared him but were obedient to his commands. At the order of the Lord Himself, he preached the Gospel throughout Syria and Mesopotamia, and went to his beloved Lord in great old age, in the city of Hierapolis at the end of the second century.

**The Seven Youths of Ephesus: Maximilian, Iamblichus, Martinian, John, Dionysius, Eksacustodianus (Constantine) and Antoninus** – They lived in the III Century. Saint Maximilian was the son of the Ephesus city administrator, and the other six youths – were sons of other illustrious Ephesus citizens. The youths were friends from childhood, and all were together in military service. When the emperor Decius (249-251) arrived in Ephesus, he commanded all the citizenry to appear for offering sacrifice to the pagan gods; torture and death by execution awaited the recalcitrant. By denunciation from those currying the emperor's favour, the seven youths of Ephesus were summoned to reply to the charges. Standing before the emperor, the seven youths confessed their faith in Christ. Their illustrious military decorations – the military sashes – were quickly taken from them. Decius however set them at liberty, hoping, that they would change their minds while he was away on military campaign. The youths fled from the city and hid in a cave on Mount Okhlonos, where they passed the time at prayer, preparing for the deed of martyrdom. The very youngest of them – Saint Iamblichus, having clothed himself in beggar's attire, went into the city and bought bread. In one of these journeys into the city he heard, that the emperor had returned and sought them, so as to bring them to trial. Saint Maximilian exhorted his companions to come out of the cave and bravely appear at trial. Having learned where the lads were hidden, the emperor gave orders to seal the entrance of the cave with stones, so that the lads would perish in it from hunger and thirst. Two of the dignitaries, coming before the walled-up entrance to the cave, were secret christians. Wanting to preserve the memory of the saints, they set in among the stones a sealed container, in which were located two tin sheaves. On them were inscribed the names of the seven youths and the details of their suffering and death.

But the Lord brought upon the youths a miraculous sleep, continuing almost two centuries. During this while the persecutions against Christians had ceased, although during the reign of the holy nobleborn emperor Theodosius the Younger (408-450) there had appeared heretics who rejected the belief in the Resurrection of the Dead at the Second Coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Some of them said: "How can there be a resurrection of the dead, when there would be neither soul, nor body, since they are disintegrated?" Others affirmed: "Only the souls alone would have a restoration, since it would be impossible for bodies to arise and live after a thousand years, when even the dust from them would not remain". The Lord therefore revealed the mystery of the awaited Resurrection of the Dead and of the Future Life also through His seven youths.

The master of that region of land, on which Mount Okhlonos was situated, discovered the stone construction, and his workers opened up the entrance to the cave. The Lord had kept alive the youths, and they as it were awoke from their habitual sleep, not suspecting, that almost 200 years had elapsed. Their bodies and clothing were completely undecayed. Preparing to accept torture, the youths entrusted to Saint Iamblichus yet once again

to buy bread for them in the city to keep up their strength. Going towards the city, the youth was astonished, seeing the holy cross on the gates. And hearing the freely uttered Name of Jesus Christ, he began to doubt that he was approaching his own city. Praying for the bread, the youth gave the merchant money with the image of the emperor Decius on it, and he was detained, as one possibly concealing an horde of old money. They took Saint Iamblichus to the city administrator, who at this time happened to be the bishop of Ephesus. Hearing the bewildering answers of the youth, the bishop perceived, that God was revealing through him some sort of mystery, and set out himself with other people to the cave. At the entrance to the cave the bishop took out the sealed container and opened it. He read upon the tin sheaves the names of the seven youths and the details of the sealing-up of the cave on the orders of the emperor Decius. Going into the cave and seeing the youths alive, everyone rejoiced and perceived that the Lord, through their awakening from long sleep, was disclosing to the Church the mystery of the Resurrection of the Dead. Soon the emperor himself arrived in Ephesus and conversed with the youths in the cave. Then the holy youths in view of everyone lay down their heads upon the ground and again fell asleep, this time until the General Resurrection. The emperor wanted to place each of the youths into a jeweled coffin, but appearing to him in a dream, the holy youths said, that their bodies were to be left in the cave upon the ground. In the XII Century the Russian pilgrim the hegumen Daniel saw in the cave these holy remains of the seven youths.

A second commemoration of the seven youths is celebrated on 22 October. (By one tradition, which entered into the Russian Prologue [of Saints Lives], the youths a second time fell asleep on this day; according to the notes of the Greek Menaion of 1870, they fell asleep first on 4 August, and woke up on 22 October. The holy youths are mentioned also in the service of the Church New Year – 1 September).

**Also commemorated on this day:** Hieromartyr Mark, bishop of Jerusalem (†156); Hieromartyr Alexander, bishop, Martyrs Heraclius the soldier, Anna, Elizabeth, Theodota, and Glyceria (3rd C); Venerable Lot of Egypt (5th C); Venerable Rufus of Egypt (5th C); Venerable Theodore and Paul of Rostov (†1409); New Hieromartyrs Seraphim, archbishop of Uglich, and with him Vladimir Sobolev, Alexander Andreyev, Basil Bogoyavlensky, Alexander Lebedev, priests, Monk-martyrs Herman (Polyansky) and Menas (Shelaev) (†1937); New Hieromartyrs Nicholas Bogoslovsky, Nicholas Ushakov, priests, and Monk-martyr Gregory (Vorobiev) (†1937); ‘Andronikos’ and ‘Jacobstadt’ Icons of the Mother of God.

**23 October / 5 November - The Holy Apostle James, the Brother of the Lord -** He is called ‘the Lord’s brother’ because he was the son of righteous Joseph, the betrothed of the most holy Mother of God. When Joseph was dying, he shared out his goods among his sons and wanted to leave a share to the Lord Jesus, the Son of the most holy Virgin Mary, but his sons opposed this, not reckoning Jesus to be a brother of theirs. James, though, loved Jesus greatly and announced that he would include Him in his share, counting himself to be indeed brother to the Lord. James was, from the first, devoted to the Lord Jesus. According to tradition, he went to Egypt with the most holy Virgin and Joseph when Herod tried to kill the new-born King. As soon as he heard Christ’s teaching, he began to live by it. It is said that, during the whole of his life, he ate neither fat nor oil, but lived only on bread and water, and he was chaste to the end of his days. He often kept a vigil of prayer at night. The Lord included him among his Seventy apostles, appearing to him after His glorious Resurrection, as the Apostle Paul testifies (I Cor. 15:7). He was bishop in Jerusalem for thirty years, and governed the Church of God with zeal. On the Lord’s instructions, he composed the first Liturgy, which was far too long for later Christians and was shortened by St Basil and St John Chrysostom. He brought many Jews and Greeks to the Christian faith, and even unbelieving Jews marvelled at his justice, nicknaming him James the Just. When Ananias became High Priest, he decided, along with other of the Jewish elders, to kill James as a preacher of Christ. One day, at Pascha, when many people were gathered in Jerusalem, the elders told him to climb up onto a roof and speak against Christ. St James climbed up there, and began to speak to the people about Christ as the Son of God and the true Messiah, and of His Resurrection and eternal glory in heaven. The infuriated priests and elders cast him down from the roof, and he was badly injured though still alive. A man then ran up and gave him such a vicious blow on the head that his brains spilled out. Thus this glorious apostle of Christ died a martyr’s death and entered into the Kingdom of his Lord. James was sixty-three years old when he suffered for Christ.

**Translation of the relics of Blessed James of Borovichi, wonderworker of Novgorod -** Righteous Iakov (James) Borovich, Novgorod Wonderworker, in his youth took upon himself the arduous task of fool-for-Christ. Most of the details of his life are unknown. The Lord glorified him after death. In the year 1540, on the third day

of Pascha, a large block of ice floated up against the current along the River Msta to the village of Borovich (in Novgorod district), and on this block of ice stood the coffin (an oaken log) without cover, upon which lay the body of the youth. Shunning their responsibility, peasants with poles shoved the block of ice to mid-stream, but it returned to the shore. This was repeated three times. By night the youth appeared in a dream to the elders of the village, who had seen him upon the ice-floe, and said: "I too am a Christian just like ye. Push me not away. My name is Iakov, and I received my name in honour of Saint Iakov (James), Brother of the Lord".

The relics of the holy lad were at first placed in a chapel, and in 1544 transferred to the Holy Spirit church. Then was established a festal celebration to him. The Lord, having glorified his God-pleasing one, granted the relics of Saint Iakov a curative power. A feastday with matins was established in 1572. In the Iconographic Originals it says about Saint Iakov: "The likeness of a lad, bare, girded with a piece of cloth". In 1657 Patriarch Nikon dispatched part of the relics to Valdai, to the Iversk monastery.

**Also commemorated on this day:** St. Severin, bishop of Cologne (†c.397); Righteous Oda of Amay, Belgium (†c.723); St. Ignatius, patriarch of Constantinople (†877); Venerable Elisha of Lauryshava (†c.1250); New Hieromartyr Eusebius, archbishop of Shadrinsk, Alexander Soloviev, Vladimir Ambartsumov, Emilian Goncharov, Nicholas Agafonnikov, Nicholas Archangelsky, and Sozon Reshetilov, priests (†1937); Nun-martyr Euphrosyne Timofeeva (†1942); Venerable Nicephorus of Cappadocia; Venerable Petronius.

**24 October / 6 November - Fast Day - The Holy Martyr Arethas** - This holy martyr suffered for the Christian faith with more than four thousand other Christians: priests, monks and nuns, townsmen and women and children. Arethas was the local governor of the town of Negran, in the land of Omir in southern Arabia, and was ninety-five years old when he suffered. The land of Omir was governed by a Jew called Dunaan, a vicious persecutor of Christians. Resolving to exterminate Christianity completely in his land, he laid siege to the Christian town of Negran and told the citizens that, if they did not deny Christ, he would put them all to death. The citizens closed the gates, and Dunaan attacked the city wall for a long time without success. Then the iniquitous governor swore to the citizens that he would do nothing to them if they opened the gate for him to enter and take the tribute owing to him, saying that he would then go away at once. The Christians believed him, and opened the gates. Then the bloodthirsty Jew summoned the aged Arethas to him, along with his clergy and other eminent citizens, and slew them all with the sword, and then indulged in a riot of butchery through the town. Hearing of this, the Byzantine Emperor, Justin, was greatly distressed and wrote a letter to the Ethiopian Emperor Elesbaan, urging him to set out with an army against Dunaan and avenge the Christian blood that had been spilled. Elesbaan obeyed Justin, attacked the governor of Omir, overcame him, slaughtered his entire army and put him to the sword. A devout man called Abramius was installed as ruler of Omir by God's revelation and, as archbishop, also by God's revelation, St Gregory (see Dec. 19th). In Negran, the Christians rebuilt the Church of the Holy Trinity that Dunaan had burned, and built a church to the holy martyr Arethas and the other martyrs of that city. They suffered and received wreaths of martyrdom from the Lord in 523.

**The Icon of the Holy Theotokos, ``Joy of All Who Sorrow``:** This name is given to one of the wonderworking icons of the Most-holy Theotokos. On this day the icon is celebrated for the miraculous healing in Moscow, of Euphemia, the sister of Patriarch Joachim, in the year 1688. Euphemia had a serious wound in the side and as the doctors failed in their treatments, she prayed with tears to the Most-holy Theotokos. Then, she heard a voice: ``Euphemia, go to the Church of the Transfiguration of my Son; there you will find the icon, `Joy of All Who Sorrow.` Have the priest pray for you before this icon and you will be healed." Euphemia did so, and was immediately made well.

HYMN OF PRAISE to the Icon of the Most-holy Theotokos, ``Joy of All Who Sorrow`` O Most-holy Mother of God, ``Joy of All Who Sorrow," Grant thy mercy to us sinners. Thy Son now sits on the throne of the Eternal Kingdom, And all our troubles thou seest; thou knowest them as they occur. Thou hast always prayed to Christ God for the faithful, And hast relieved much pain and misery of the sorrowful. O Holy Virgin, never cease, to the end of time, To pray for the salvation of our race. God hast made thee even more glorious than the Seraphim: O hasten to us, O Joy of all who sorrow!

**St. Maglorius, abbot of Sark** - Died 586. Abbot Maglorius of Lammear, Brittany, was born in south Wales and educated under Saint Illyd. He was a cousin of Saint Samson, with whom he crossed over to Brittany, where they became abbots of two monasteries. St. Samson became bishop of Dol, and on his death he is said to have

been succeeded by St. Maglorius, who finally retired to the Channel Islands and built an abbey on Sark, where he died. He is represented in art giving Holy Communion to an angel and is sometimes shown with Saint Samson of Dol. Venerated at Sark.

**Also commemorated on this day:** Hieromartyr Akakios the Presbyter (†303); Martyrs Severus, Vitaly, Felix, Rogatus, Papirus, Victoria, Flavian, and Victor of Nicomedia (4th C); Martyr Syncletica and her two daughters (†523); Blessed Elesbaan, king of Ethiopia (†553); Venerable Senoch of Tours (†576); Venerable Arethas, Theophilus, and Sisoës of the Kiev Caves (12th–13th C); St. Athanasius, patriarch of Constantinople (†c.1315); Venerable John, hermit of the Pskov Caves (†1616); Venerable Zosimus (Verkhovsky) (†1833); New Hieromartyr Lawrence (Knyazev), bishop of Balakhnin, Alexis Porfiriev, priest, and Martyr Alexis Neidhardt (†1918); Venerable Arethas (Mitrenin) of Valaam, confessor (†1932); New Hieromartyrs John Smirnov and Nicholas Nikolsky, priests (†1937); New Martyr Peter Bogorodsky, priest (†1938); Venerable George (Karslidis) the New Confessor (†1959).

**25 October / 7 November - The Holy Martyrs Marcian and Martyrius** - These saints were clergy with Patriarch Paul of Constantinople in the time of the Emperor Constantius. After the death of the great Emperor Constantine, the Arian heresy, which had till then been kept under, sprang up again and began to spread, and the Emperor Constantius himself inclined towards it. There were two influential nobles at the imperial court, Eusebius and Philip, both ardent Arians. Through their influence, Patriarch Paul was dethroned and driven out to Armenia, where the Arians strangled him, and the patriarchal throne was seized by the dishonourable Macedonius. At that time, when Orthodoxy had two fierce struggles on hand, against both the pagans and the heretics, Marcian and Martyrius ranged themselves decisively and with all their strength on the side of Orthodoxy. Marcian was a reader and Martyrius a sub-deacon at the Cathedral, and had been secretaries to Patriarch Paul. The Arians first tried to bribe them, but, when the two holy men refused this with scorn, the heretics condemned them to death. When they were led to the scaffold, they raised their hands and prayed to God, thanking Him that they were finishing their lives as martyrs: 'Lord, we rejoice that we are leaving this world by such a death. Make us worthy to be partakers of eternal life, O Thou our Life!' They then laid their heads under the sword and were beheaded, in 355. A church was later built to them over their relics by St John Chrysostom.

**St. Tabitha** - St. Tabitha (which means "gazelle") was a disciple of the apostles and lived in Joppa. She was full of good works and almsdeeds (Acts 9:36), but suddenly became weak and died. The Apostle Peter was then in the town of Lydda, and the grieving disciples sent for him, imploring him to comfort her kinsmen. Upon his arrival, the great Apostle of Christ told everyone to leave the room where the corpse lay, then knelt in prayer. Then, turning to the body, he said: Tabitha, arise (Acts 9:40) and Tabitha opened her eyes and stood up. Many believed in the Lord Jesus Christ because of this wonderful miracle.

**Demetrius Saturday: Commemoration of the Departed:** In the spiritual experience of the Russian Church, veneration of the holy Great Martyr Demetrios of Thessalonica is closely linked with the memory of the defense of the nation and Church by the Great Prince of Moscow, Demetrios of the Don (May 19).

St Demetrios of the Don smashed the military might of the Golden Horde at the Battle of Kulikovo Field on September 8, 1380 (the Feast of the Nativity of the Most Holy Theotokos), set between the Rivers Don and Nepryadva. The Battle of Kulikovo, for which the nation calls him Demetrios of the Don, became the first Russian national deed, rallying the spiritual power of the Russian nation around Moscow. The "Zadonschina," an inspiring historic poem written by the priest Sophronius of Ryazem (1381), is devoted to this event.

Prince Demetrios of the Don was greatly devoted to the holy Great Martyr Demetrios. In 1380, on the eve of the Battle of Kulikovo, he solemnly transferred from Vladimir to Moscow the most holy object in the Dimitriev cathedral of Vladimir: the icon of the Great Martyr Demetrios of Thessalonica, painted on a piece of wood from the saint's grave. A chapel in honor of the Great Martyr Demetrios was built at Moscow's Dormition Cathedral.

The St Demetrios Memorial Saturday was established for the churchwide remembrance of the soldiers who fell in the Battle of Kulikovo. This memorial service was held for the first time at the Trinity-St Sergius monastery on October 20, 1380 by St Sergius of Radonezh, in the presence of Great Prince Demetrios of the Don. It is an annual

remembrance of the heroes of the Battle of Kulikovo, among whom are the schemamonks Alexander (Peresvet) and Andrew (Oslyab).

**Also commemorated on this day:** St. Front, bishop of Périgueux (2nd C); Martyr Miniatus of Florence (†251); Martyrs Crispinus and Crispinianus of Soissons (†285); Martyr Anastasius of Salona (3rd C); St. Gaudentius, bishop of Brescia (†410); Venerable Martyrius the deacon and Martyrius the recluse of the Kiev Caves (14th C); Venerable Matrona (Vlasova) the confessor (†1963); Martyrs Valerius and Chrysaphos; Righteous Kallia of Constantinople.

### † Daily Scripture Readings †

**Monday** – Epistle: for the 23rd Monday: I Thess. 1:1-5 (\$262)  
Gospel: for the 22nd Monday: Luke 9:18-22 (\$43)

**Tuesday** – Epistle: for the 23rd Tuesday: I Thess. 1:6-10 (\$263); for the 23rd Wednesday: I Thess. 2:1-8 (\$264)  
Gospel: for the 22nd Tuesday: Luke 9:23-27 (\$44); for the 22nd Wednesday: Luke 9:44-50 (\$47)

**Wednesday** – Vespers: Gen. 28:10-17; Ezek. 43:27-44:4; Prov. 9:1-11  
Matins Gospel: Luke 1:39-49, 56 (\$4) Epistle: Phil. 2:5-11 (\$240)  
Gospel: Luke 10:38-42, 11:27-28 (\$54)

**Thursday** – Epistle: for the 23rd Thursday: I Thess. 2:9-14 (\$265)  
Gospel: for the 22nd Thursday: Luke 9:49-56 (\$48)

**Friday** – Epistle: for the 23rd Friday: I Thess. 2:14-19 (\$266)  
Gospel: for the 22nd Friday: Luke 10:1-15 (\$50)

**Saturday** – Epistle: for the 23rd Saturday: II Cor. 8:1-5 (\$185); for the Departed: I Thess. 4:13-17 (\$270)  
Gospel: for the 23rd Saturday: Luke 7:2-10 (\$29); for the Departed: John 5:24-30 (\$16)

Thank God every day with your whole heart for having given to you life according to His image and likeness—an intelligently free and immortal life. Especially thank God for having restored and guided you again unto life eternal after you had fallen into eternal death, and for having done so not simply by the action of His omnipotence, for this would not have been in conformity to His justice, but by having given for our redemption His only begotten Son, Who suffered and died for us. Thank Him also for again daily bestowing life upon you, who have fallen an innumerable multitude of times, by your own free will, through sins, from life into death, and that He does so as soon as you only say from your whole heart: "Father, I have sinned against heaven and before Thee!" Thank Him also for often delivering you from sickness, you who imprudently throw yourself into danger and sickness, the precursors of bodily death, for correcting your faults, and for not depriving you of earthly life, knowing that it is dear to you, and that you are not yet ready for the future, eternal life.

Thank Him for all your means of existence, for all the joys and sorrows of life; for everything is from Him, the All-merciful Father; everything comes from the First Origin of Life, Who has apportioned and lent life to all.

*~Excerpts from "My Life in Christ." St. John of Kronstadt.*