

23rd Sunday After Pentecost
Holy Great-martyr Demetrius &
Commemoration of the Great
Earthquake at Constantinople
26 October / 8 November



Resurrection Tropar, Tone 6: The angelic powers were at Thy tomb; / the guards became as dead men. / Mary stood by Thy grave, / seeking Thy most pure Body. / Thou didst capture hell, not being tempted by it. / Thou didst come to the Virgin, granting life. / O Lord who didst rise from the Dead, / Glory to Thee!

Troparion tone 3: O victorious Demetrius,/ thou wast a protection for the world and an invincible soldier of Christ./ Thou didst inspire Nestor to humble Lyaaios./ Intercede with Christ our God to save us.

Troparion — Tone 8: Christ our God, You look the earth and it trembles; / deliver us from the terrible threat of earthquakes; / and through the prayers of the Theotokos, send down upon us / Your abundant mercy and save us.

Resurrection Kondak, Tone 6: When Christ God the Giver of Life, / raised all of the dead from the valleys of misery with His Mighty Hand, / He bestowed resurrection on the human race. / He is the Saviour of all, the Resurrection, the Life, and the God of All.

Kontakion tone 2: God has give thee invincible strength, O Demetrius,/ and hast tinged the Church with thy blood and kept thy city un-harmed,/ for thou art its foundation.

Kontakion — Tone 6: Deliver us all from upheavals, and from terrible afflictions caused by our sins, O Lord, / and spare Your people people whom You have purchased with Your blood, O Master. / Do not deliver Your city to destruction by terrible earthquakes, / for we know no other God than You; / and to those who cry out You respond: / “I am with you and no one will be against you.”

Vespers: for the Earthquake: Isa. 63:15-19; 64:1-5,8-9; Jer. 2:2-12; **for the Great Martyr:** Wisd. 4:7-15

Matins Gospel I

Epistle: for the Earthquake: Heb. 12:6-13; 25-27

EPISTLE: Ephesians 2: 4-10

But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, Even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), And raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, That in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God. Not of works, lest anyone should boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.

EVEN WHEN WE WERE DEAD IN TRESPASSES ...GOD MADE US ALIVE TOGETHER WITH CHRIST ...FOR BY GRACE YOU HAVE BEEN SAVED

Again Christ is introduced, and it is a matter well worthy of our belief, because if the firstfruits live, so do we also. He has quickened both Him and us. Do you see that all this is said of Christ incarnate? ...Those who were dead. those who were children of wrath, those He has quickened. Do you behold 'the hope of His calling?' ...Do you behold the glory of His inheritance? ...As yet not one is actually raised, excepting that inasmuch as the Head has risen, we also are raised ...Truly there is need of the Spirit and of revelation, in order to understand the depth of these mysteries. And then so you may have no distrust about the matter, observe what he adds further ...Was faith then, you will say, enough to save us? No, but God, he says, has required this, lest He should save us, barren and without work at all. His expression is that faith saves, but it is because God so wills it that faith saves ...'We are His workmanship.' He here alludes to the regeneration which is in reality a second creation. We have been brought from non-existence into being. As to what we were before, that is, the old man, we are dead.

St. John Chrysostom. Homily IV on Ephesians II. B#57, pp. 66- 68.

Epistle for the Great Martyr: II Tim. 2:1-10

Gospel: for the Earthquake: Matt. 8:23-27

THE GOSPEL: LUKE 16:19-31

The Lord said this parable: "There was a certain rich man who was clothed in purple and fine linen and fared sumptuously every day. But there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, full of sores, who was laid at his gate, Desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table. Moreover the dogs came and licked his sores. So it was that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels to Abraham's bosom. The rich man also died and was buried. And being in torments in Hades, he lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. Then he cried and said, 'Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame.' But Abraham said, 'Son, remember that in your lifetime you received your good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things; but now he is comforted and you are tormented. And besides all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed, so that those who want to pass from here to you cannot, nor can those from there pass to us.' Then he said, 'I beg you therefore, father, that you would send him to my father's house, For I have five brothers, that he may testify to them, lest they also come to this place of torment.' Abraham said to him, 'They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them.' And he said, 'No, father Abraham; but if one goes to them from the dead, they will repent.' But he said to him, 'If they do not hear Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rise from the dead.' "

LAZARUS & THE RICH MAN

Brothers and sisters, have you noticed how the Holy Church for a long time now has been telling us about the Word of God ? With His Word Christ calmed the storm, healed the servant of the centurion and the daughter of the Canaanite woman, raised the son of the widow of Nain, and filled five thousand people with five loaves of bread. By His Word, the miraculous catch of fish was accomplished. And even today's Gospel reading speaks about the Word of God. "There was a certain rich man," relates the Gospel, "which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day: and there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, full of sores, and desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table: moreover the dogs came and licked his sores" (Lk. 16:19-21).

And further it reveals to us what is beyond the grave. Eternity: The rich man—in hell, in torments; and Lazarus—in the bosom of Abraham. This Gospel ends with the words: and Abraham said to the rich man, "If they hear not Moses and the prophets [that is, the Word of God] neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead" (Lk. 16:31). See how important the Word of God is: our eternal fate depends on our attitude towards it.

Although the rich man did nothing evil, he did not live according to the Word of God, and he perished. But Lazarus did live according to the Word of God, and was saved. The Word of God has the wonderful power to renew the soul of a sinner. I will not explain to you how this happens, but will simply tell you something that happened in St. Petersburg. Here it is: There lived a family—a grandmother and grandson. The grandson was an Imperial Guardsman. His parents had died when he was still young, and his grandmother took their place. They were magnates, incalculably rich, millionaires. Vladimir, as this officer was called, while still a young man become satiated with everything that only the life of wealthy Russians could provide at that time. Like the life of the rich man in today's parable, his life was spent in gaiety and carousing. He had a good heart and his friends loved him as a person from whom they could always get anything they wanted. The word "no" did not exist for him.

But once his grandmother called Vladimir and said: 'Vladimir, after my death, you will have no one. Your friends will strip you of everything, and you will perish a lonely, unfortunate man. Get married.' Vladimir answered, "All right, Grandmother, I will get married." The grandmother found a fiancée for him—a princess from an impoverished family. Vladimir danced with her two or three times at parties and proposed to her. And then, because the wedding was set for only after the Christmas season, and Vladimir's life went on in its routine way—in a fog of merry-making and revelry—he wouldn't even have been able to remember her name right away. And if he had met her on the street, he probably wouldn't have recognised her.

Yet the closer the wedding day approached, the more troubled his soul became. And finally came the second day after the Feast of the Baptism of Christ. He had to go to his army office in order to get his salary and his vacation for the honeymoon. This was the first time he had gone out in St. Petersburg at such an early hour and, moreover, in a sober state. Usually, when he was travelling in Petersburg at this hour or still earlier, it was after a night spent in extreme debauchery, and then he was usually dozing off, oblivious to his surroundings. But today, as if for the first time, he saw Petersburg during working hours. On everything lay the impression of the businesslike seriousness of a morning in a metropolitan city. And upon his soul there lay, like a heavy stone, something unusually businesslike and serious: marriage, family life, obligations which he never had, never knew.

Upon arrival at his office, he received his papers and money—his large purse was filled with gold coins. When he went out, he wanted to be alone and walk. He ordered the driver to follow him on the roadway, and he himself walked on foot. Without noticing it, he reached the cathedral of the Kazan Icon of the Mother of God (celebrated this coming Monday, 22nd October/4th November). Just at that moment the bell rang. And for the first time, he felt drawn to enter church. Of course, he had been to church services, molebens and pannikhidas, but only because this was required by his social standing. But now, an inner need manifested itself. The cathedral was plunged in a cosy half-darkness. The Miraculous Icon was simply shining in brilliance. In spite of the winter season there were white lilies. The reading of the Akathist was still going on. There was a deep prayerful singing, a multitude of candles and devotion lamps, and more and more people—praying, weeping. Vladimir froze. He had not prayed for a long, long time. All he could say was: "O Mother of God! I am coming to a turning point in my life. If it has to be so, help me. But if all this is not necessary, stop it." And here, he himself thought that this was no way to pray, that he didn't even know how to pray. Suddenly someone tenderly touched his sleeve. It was a beggar woman with a child in her arms. "Sir, help me," she whispered. He thrust his hand into his pocket, pulled out his large purse, and put it in her hand. Because of the weight of the purse, she almost dropped it.

"Sir," she exclaimed, "I cannot take it. People will say I have stolen it." "Don't be afraid, my card is in the purse. Say that I gave it to you." "Sir, and what about you? You are giving away everything...and yourself?" "Don't you understand, I have everything, I don't need anything." "All right, I will take it. But know this: you are saving two lives—mine and my child's. How can I repay your kindness?" "You know what? Yes, you can help me. I don't know how to pray; but I am in need of prayer, right now, for my soul. Otherwise I will perish." She looked at him with a long, compassionate look. She bowed and disappeared into the crowd. But then he saw her again. She approached the Miraculous Icon, put her baby on one of the steps before the Icon, and started praying and making prostrations. Tears were streaming down her pale face. A shiver ran down his spine. He understood. This was a prayer for him. He quickly walked out of the church, went one block until he reached Great Konushenna Street. After the semi-darkness of the cathedral, the bright sun on the white snow blinded him. He felt a sharp, sudden pain in his eyes, then in his head, and he lost consciousness.

When he recovered, he sensed that he was lying on a table in his full Guard's uniform. He had fallen into a lethargic sleep, (a comatose condition in which all bodily functions become undetectable and the person appears to be dead) and now he was starting to wake up. He still couldn't move, couldn't open his eyes, but he

heard everything. Only he thought that he had died, and everything he heard he accepted as if he were dead. And everyone around him was sure that he was dead, and they prepared him for burial. And now he understood the reverse side of life. He heard two voices—male and female. The man's voice said: "At least for the sake of decency, put your handkerchief to your eyes. After all, he was your fiancé."

And the female voice said: "Papa, you know how I hated and despised him. Only your debts made me agree to this marriage. I cannot continue this comedy." And then his friends approached. All of them were in debt to him. "How wonderful that Vladimir died, and I don't have to pay back what he, good man that he was, loaned to me." And so more and more all the hypocrisy of the life he had been living was revealed to him. The tears of only one person were sincere. His nurse, who had taken the place of his father and mother, was sobbing.

Then they started to read the Psalter. Before, he had not understood them; but now, each word of the Psalms excited his awakening soul. All the depth of God's Mercy was revealed to him. God's Truth was revealed against the background of human lies. And then he heard a movement. He understood, the clergy had come and they were starting to serve the pannikhida. And when they began to sing: "With the Saints give rest . . ." and when they lifted his body to put it in the coffin, he caught his breath, recovered consciousness and began to move. Out of fear, the bearers dropped the coffin and ran out of the room. Vladimir remained alone. But by now he was not the same. In the middle of the empty room stood the renewed Vladimir.

When everything had calmed down, he divided all his property. Half he gave to his fiancé and all the rest to the poor. And he forgave all the debts. Soon afterwards, he became a monk and finished his ascetic life as archimandrite of the Kostroma Monastery. This is how the Word of God renews a man!

Archbishop Andrei, The One Thing Needful

[Gospel for the Great Martyr: John 15:17-16:2](#)

Saints of the week

26 October / 8 November - The Holy and Great Martyr Dimitrios, the Myrrh-gusher of Thessalonica - This glorious and wonder-working saint was born in the city of Salonica of well-born and devout parents. Begged of God by these childless parents, Dimitrios was their only son and was, because of this, most carefully cherished and educated. His father was the military commander of Salonica, and, when he died, the Emperor made Dimitrios commander in his place. In doing this, the Emperor Maximian, an opponent of Christ, particularly recommended him to persecute and exterminate the Christians in Salonica. Dimitrios not only disobeyed the Emperor: he openly confessed and preached Christ the Lord in the city. Hearing of this, the Emperor was furious with Dimitrios and, at one time, on his way back from a war against the Sarmathians, went to Salonica especially to look into the matter. The Emperor, therefore, summoned Dimitrios and questioned him about his faith. Dimitrios proclaimed openly before the Emperor that he was a Christian, and, furthermore, denounced the Emperor's idolatry. The enraged Emperor cast him into prison. Knowing what was awaiting him, Dimitrios gave his goods to his faithful servant, Lupus, to give away to the poor, and went off to prison, glad that suffering for Christ was to be his lot. In the prison, an angel of the Lord appeared to him and said: 'Peace be with thee, thou sufferer for Christ; be brave and strong!' After several days, the Emperor sent soldiers to the prison to kill Dimitrios. They came upon the saint of God at prayer, and ran him through with their spears. Christians secretly took his body and gave it burial, and there flowed from it a healing myrrh by which many of the sick were healed. A small church was very soon built over his relics. An Illyrian nobleman, Leontius, became sick of an incurable illness. He ran prayerfully up to the relics of St Dimitrios and was completely healed, and in gratitude built a much larger church in place of the old one. The saint appeared to him on two occasions. When the Emperor Justinian wanted to take the saint's relics from Salonica to Constantinople, a spark of fire leapt from the tomb and a voice was heard: Leave them there. and don't touch!', and thus the relics of St Dimitrios have remained for all time in Salonica. As the defender of Salonica, St Dimitrios has many times appeared and saved the city from calamity, and there is no way of counting his miracles. The Russians regarded St Dimitrios as the protector of Siberia, which was overcome and annexed by Russia on October 26th, 1581.

The Commemoration of the Great Earthquake of Constantinople - In the year 740, during the reign of Emperor Leo the Isaurian, there was a terrifying and prolonged earthquake in Constantinople. The people

considered this a punishment from God for their sins, and prayed with great repentance to the Most-holy Theotokos and St. Demetrius, until God showed mercy and the earthquake ceased.

St. Cedd, bishop of the East Saxons - Cedd belonged to a family of brothers, and all six of them were chosen by King Oswald of Northumbria to be trained by St. Aidan to be monks and missionaries. This was in 635, when Aidan came from the monastery of Iona in Scotland to become bishop of King Oswald's kingdom. One of St. Cedd's brothers was St. Chad, who was the first bishop of York and then bishop of Lichfield. In 653, Peada, king of the Middle Angles, asked Aidan's successor at Lindisfarne for a bishop for his diocese, and St. Finan chose four monks from Lindisfarne to evangelize Peada's people. Later, the king of the East Saxons, whose chief city was London, also asked for a bishop, and Finan called Cedd to Lindisfarne and consecrated him bishop of London. Cedd founded three monasteries of his own, the best known being Lastingham, where he died of the plague in 664. St. Bede has a beautiful story of Cedd's founding of Lastingham: Cedd spent forty days in prayer and fasting in a remote spot given to him by King Ethelwald. In 664, Cedd was present at the Synod of Whitby and was a member of the Irish party, those wishing to retain the Irish date for Easter. But when the synod decided in favour of the Eastern date, Cedd accepted the decision, not wanting to cause any further disunity in the English churches. After the Synod of Whitby, a plague struck England, and Cedd was among those who died from the plague. At the news of his death, thirty monks came from London to spend their lives where their founder had died. But they, too, caught the plague and were buried near the little chapel that had been erected in Cedd's memory. Cedd was the second bishop of the city of London; the first was Mellitus, who came with St. Augustine and later became archbishop of Canterbury. Mellitus was driven from the see by the king of the East Saxons in 616, and London was without a bishop until Cedd's arrival about 654. Thought for the Day: St. Cedd was trained by a saint and he himself trained others to holiness. A good teacher teaches mostly by what he is; and, if he is a good teacher, the things that are important to him become important to those he teaches. Good teachers fashion the souls of others by contact with their own soul.

Also commemorated on this day: Martyr Lupus of Thessalonica (†306); St. Eata, bishop of Hexham (†686); Venerable Athanasius of Medikion (†814); St. Demetrius of Basarbov (13th C); Venerable Demetrius of Tsilibinsk (14th C); Venerable Theophilus of the Kiev Caves, bishop of Novgorod (†1482); Monk-martyr Joasaph of Constantinople (†1536); St. Anthony, bishop of Vologda (†1588); St. Alexander, bishop of Guria and Mingrelia, Georgia (†1907).

27 October / 9 November - The Holy Martyr Nestor - At the time of the martyrdom of St Dimitrios the Outpourer of Myrrh, there was in Constantinople a young man, Nestor, who had learned the Christian faith from St Dimitrios himself. At that time, the Emperor Maximian, an opponent of Christ, ordered various games and amusements for the people. The Emperor's favourite was a Vandal called Lyaeus, a man of Goliath-like size and strength. As the imperial gladiator, Lyaeus challenged men every day to a duel and slew them, and this blood-letting of his delighted the blood-lust of the idolatrous Emperor. He built a special arena, like a terrace on pillars, for Lyaeus's duels. Underneath this terrace were planted spears with sharp cutting-edges pointing upwards. When Lyaeus had overcome someone in the duel, he would push him from the terrace above onto the whole forest of prepared spears. The pagans stood around with their Emperor, and were delighted when some poor wretch writhed in torment on the spears until he died. Among Lyaeus's innocent victims were a large number of Christians, for, when there was a day when no-one came forward voluntarily to duel with Lyaeus, then, by the Emperor's orders, Christians were compelled to fight with him. Seeing this horrifying enjoyment of the pagan world, Nestor's heart swelled with pain and he resolved to go himself to the arena of the gigantic Lyaeus. He first went to the prison where St Dimitrios was kept, and asked his blessing to do this. St Dimitrios blessed him, signed him with the sign of the Cross on forehead and breast, and said to him: 'You will overcome him, but you will suffer for Christ.' The young Nestor then went to Lyaeus's arena. The Emperor was there with a large crowd, and they all bewailed the probable death of the young Nestor, trying to dissuade him from fighting Lyaeus, but Nestor crossed himself and said: 'O God of Dimitrios, help me!' With God's help, Nestor overcame Lyaeus, felled him and threw him down onto the sharp spears, where the heavy giant soon found death. Then the whole people shouted: 'Great is the God of Dimitrios!' But the Emperor had lost face before the people, and, mourning his favourite, became filled with wrath against Nestor and Dimitrios, and the wicked Emperor ordered that Nestor be beheaded with the sword and Dimitrios run through with spears. Thus this glorious Christian hero, Nestor, left behind his young, earthly life in 306, and entered into the Kingdom of his Lord.

St. Ia, virgin of Cornwall - the sister of Saints Ercus (or Euny) and Herygh, Saint Ia, was a holy maiden who came from Ireland to Cornwall—it is said that she sailed on a leaf that grew to accommodate her—and landed and settled at the mouth of the Hayle River where Saint Ives, formerly called Porth Ia, now stands. In Cornwall she erected a cell where she lived the life of prayer and austerities. This version relates that Ia suffered martyrdom in Cornwall at the mouth of the Hayle River.

Blessed Olga Michael of Alaska - In every generation, God raises up His saints—those who live not for themselves, but for others, and whose lives are transfigured by love. Some are prophets. Some are martyrs. Some are ascetics or bishops or missionaries. And some, like Saint Olga of Kwethluk, are mothers whose holiness is woven through the fabric of everyday life: in quiet prayers, in bread baked with love, in garments sewn for the cold, in the simple, unseen acts of mercy that echo in eternity.

She lived in obscurity, yet now her name is spoken in cathedrals and chapels, in villages and homes, in whispered prayers and joyous hymns. She did not study theology, yet she embodied the theology of the Incarnation: that God has taken flesh and dwells among us, and that holiness is not reserved for the few, but shines in every person who lives in Christ.

She is a saint of the Alaskan land, yet her love has crossed every border. Her spirit walks where the Yup'ik drum once sounded and where Orthodox chant now rises. Her prayers accompany survivors, mothers, widows, children, and all who suffer in silence. To the broken, she is a healer. To the forgotten, she is a friend. To the despairing, she is a light in the long night of the soul.

The Yup'ik elders say: "A real person does not disappear, but remains in the hearts of those they have loved." In the Church, we say more: A real person in Christ becomes a saint, and the hearts they have loved, in communion with the Lord, become the Church, the living body of Christ in the world.

Saint Olga Michael of Kwethluk—Tanqilria Arrsamquq, the Quiet One—has not left us. She remains, as she always was: praying, watching, guiding.

Righteous Mother Olga, Matushka of all Alaska,
Refuge of the afflicted, comfort of the grieving,
Intercessor for women, protector of the pure,
Pray to Christ God for us, that our souls may be saved.

Also commemorated on this day: Righteous Procla, wife of Pontius Pilate (1st C); Martyrs Capitolina and Eroteis (†304); Martyr Mark and those with him (†304); St. Cyriacus, patriarch of Constantinople (†606); Venerable Nestor the chronicler of the Kiev Caves (†1114); Venerable Nestor, not the chronicler, wonderworker of the Kiev Caves (14th C); Finding of the relics of Right-believing Andrew, prince of Smolensk (1539); New Hieromartyr Sergius (Chernukhin) (†1942).

28 October / 10 November - The Holy Martyr Terence - a Syrian, he suffered for the Christian faith together with his wife, Neonilla, and their seven children - Sarbelus, Photus, Theodulus, Hierax, Nitus, Bele, and Eunice. After many tortures, during which the power of God was shown, they were all beheaded with the sword.

Blessed Hieroschemamonk Feofil, Fool-for-Christ's-Sake, Ascetic & Visionary of the Kiev-Caves Lavra.

Hieroschemamonk Feofil, in the world Foma Andreyevich Gorenkovsky, the son of a village priest, was born in a town near Kiev in 1788. He was set apart by God even from his birth, and suffered much in his youth, thereby acquiring great humility. He entered a monastery in 1812, labouring in prayer & obedience for many years. He was tonsured with the name Feodorit in 1821 and in 1822, because of his exemplary monastic life, he was ordained hierodeacon. In 1827 he was ordained hieromonk and appointed steward of the monastery. The demands of this obedience were not in accordance with the desires of Feodorit's heart and he asked to be released from the stewardship. He then took upon himself the great podvig of foolishness-for-Christ's-sake. He took the great schema in 1834 and was renamed Feofil. Feofil always carried with him a Psalter and provisions to give to the poor & needy. He dressed in rags, and his cell was unkempt and full of rubbish. When questioned about this, the blessed one replied that he allowed it "so that everything surrounding me will constantly remind me of the disorder of my soul". He was often ill-treated by his brethren but bore all patiently. In the refectory, he would mix all his food together, both bitter and sweet. "It's the same in life", he would say, "both bitter and

sour and salty mixed with sweet and all this must be digested". Later in his life, Feofil received a gift of a small bullock who could be tamed by no-one. Meek & gentle in Feofil's presence, the blessed one had a cart made for it and the creature carried him everywhere. He was found worthy to receive the gift of clairvoyancy & foretold many things which indeed came to pass. As a spiritual father, he could see into the hearts of his spiritual children. He worked many wonders during his life and foretold the time of his death. Having referred to himself in his life as "smelly Feofil", his cell was filled with a beautiful fragrance after his repose in 1853. Many pannikhidas were served at his graveside after his repose and much has been granted by God through his prayers. Blessed Hieroschemamonk Feofil, pray for us!

Saint Job, Abbot and Wonderworker of Pochaev (in the world named Ivan Zhelezo), was born around 1551 in Pokutia in Galicia. At age ten he came to the Transfiguration Ugornits monastery, and at age twelve he received monastic tonsure with the name Job. The venerable Job from his youth was known for his great piety and strict ascetic life, and he was accounted worthy of the priestly office. Around the year 1580, at the request of the renowned champion of Orthodoxy Prince Constantine Ostrozhsky, St Job was appointed the head of the Exaltation of the Cross monastery near the city of Dubno, and for more than twenty years he governed the monastery amidst the growing persecution of Orthodoxy on the part of the Catholics and Uniates. At the beginning of the seventeenth century, St Job withdrew to Pochaev hill and settled in a cave not far from the ancient Dormition monastery, famed for its wonderworking Pochaev Icon of the Mother of God (July 23). The holy hermit, beloved by the brethren of the monastery, was chosen as their Igumen. St Job zealously fulfilled his duty as head of the monastery, kind and gentle with the brethren, he did much of the work himself, planting trees in the garden, and strengthening the waterworks at the monastery.

St Job was an ardent defender of the Orthodox Faith against the persecution of the Catholics. Following the Union of Brest (1596), many Orthodox living in Poland were deprived of their rights, and attempts were made to force them to convert to Catholicism. Many Orthodox hierarchs became apostates to Uniatism, but St Job and others defended Orthodoxy by copying and disseminating Orthodox books. Prince Ostrozhsky was also responsible for the first printed edition of the Orthodox Bible (1581). In taking an active part in the defense of Orthodoxy and the Russian people, St Job was present at the 1628 Kiev Council, convened against the Unia. After 1642, he accepted the great schema with the name John. Sometimes he completely secluded himself within the cave for three days or even a whole week. The Jesus Prayer was an unceasing prayer in gentle heart. According to the testimony of his disciple Dositheus, and author of the Life of St Job, once while praying in his cave, the saint was illumined by a heavenly light. St Job reposed in the year 1651. He was more than 100 years old, and had directed the Pochaev monastery for more than fifty years. The uncovering of St Job's relics took place on August 28, 1659. There was a second uncovering of the relics on August 27-28, 1833.

Great-martyr Paraskeva of Iconium - The Holy Martyress Paraskeva, named also Piatnitsa, lived during the III Century at Iconium in a rich and pious family. The parents of the saint revered especially the day of the Passion of the Lord – Friday (Piatnitsa), and therefore they called their daughter Paraskeva this name, since she had been born on a Friday-Piatnitsa, and the name Paraskeva in Slavic translation from the Greek means also – Piatnitsa-Friday.

Young Paraskeva with all her heart loved purity and the lofty morality of the virginal life, and she took a vow of celibacy. She wanted to devote all her life to God and to the enlightenment of pagans with the light of the faith of Christ. Upon this righteous path Saint Paraskeva was brought to judgement, bearing in her own name the memory of the day of the terrible Sufferings of Jesus, and she shared in the Passion of Christ also in her own life through her bodily torments. Because of her confession of the Orthodox faith, the pagans in a frenzy seized hold of her and brought her to the city governor. Here they demanded that she offer unholy sacrifice to the pagan idol. With a steady heart, and trusting on God, the saint refused this demand. For this she underwent great torments: having tied her to a tree, the torturers tore at her pure body with iron nails, and then exhausted by the torture, they threw her into prison, all lacerated to the bone. But God did not forsake the holy sufferer, and miraculously healed her torn body. Not heeding this Divine miracle, the executioners continued with their torture of Saint Paraskeva, and finally, they cut off her head.

Saint Paraskeva-Piatnitsa has always enjoyed an especial love and veneration amongst the Orthodox people. With her memory is associated many a pious custom and observance. In the ancient Russian mesyatseslovs with Saints-Lives, the name of the martyress is inscribed thus: "Saint Paraskeva, also called Piatnitsa". Churches in the name of Saint Paraskeva in antiquity were given the name Piatnitsa. Small wayside chapels received of old in Rus' the name-form Piatnitsa. The simple Russian people called the Martyress Paraskeva variously Piatnitsa,

Piatina, Petka. The icons of Saint Paraskeva were especially venerated and embellished by our forefathers. Russian iconographers usually depicted the martyress as an austere ascetic, tall of stature, with a radiant crown upon her head. Icons of the saint guard over pious and happy households. By Church belief, Saint Paraskeva – is protectress of fields and cattle. Therefore on the day of her memory it was the custom to bring fruit to church for blessing, which as a blessed object was kept until the following year. Moreover, Saint Paraskeva is prayed to for protection of cattle from disease. Saint Paraskeva is likewise an healer of people from grievous illness of both body and soul.

Venerable Arsenios of Cappadocia - Cappadocia (in eastern Turkey) is virtually devoid of Christians now, but in 1840, when St Arsenios was born there, there were still vital Orthodox communities. St Arsenios became a monk and was sent to his native town, Farasa, to serve the people. He pastored his Greek Orthodox flock amidst extremely difficult conditions. Under the harsh yoke of the Turks, the Greek people of Farasa formed an oasis of Orthodox Christianity. They sought refuge in holy St. Arsenios, who was their teacher, their spiritual father, and the healer of their souls and bodies. His reputation as a healer was so great that not only Greek Christians but also Turkish Muslims came to him for healing. Many times his village was threatened with violence from marauding Turks, but each time it was preserved in a miraculous way by St Arsenios.

He lived in a small cell with an earthen floor, fasted often and was in the habit of shutting himself in his cell for at least two whole days every week to devote himself entirely to prayer.

St Arsenios predicted the expulsion of the Greeks from Asia Minor before it happened, and organized his flock for departure. When the expulsion order came in 1924, the aged Saint led his faithful on a 400-mile journey across Turkey on foot. He had foretold that he would only live forty days after reaching Greece, and this came to pass. His last words were “The soul, the soul, take care of it more than the flesh, which will return to earth and be eaten by worms!” Two days later, on November 10, 1924, he died in peace at the age of eighty-three. He was officially declared a Saint by the Patriarchate of Constantinople in 1986.

St. Arsenios was the spiritual father of the late St. Paisios’ family. He baptised St. Paisios as an infant. Throughout his life Elder Paisios had great love and reverence for the memory of St. Arsenios, and it was out of this love that he compiled the book “Saint Arsenios the Cappadocian” which provides us with the details of his life. Accounts of these miraculous events were documented by the St. Paisios from eyewitnesses, and they testify to how powerfully God works through His holy ones, and to how lovingly He cares for and protects His children amidst adversity.

Since 1970, many apparitions and miracles have occurred near his holy relics, which reside in the Monastery of Souroti near Thessalonica. The relic of St. Arsenios has also been known to heal those who have cancer and to grant children to infertile couples.

Also commemorated on this day: Martyrs Africanus, Terence, Maximus, Pompeius, and 36 others (†249-251); Venerable Firmilian, archbishop of Caesarea in Cappadocia (†269); Hieromartyr Cyriacus, patriarch of Jerusalem, and his mother, Martyr Anna (†263); Venerable Malchion, priest of Antioch (3rd C); Hieromartyr Neophytus, bishop of Urbnisi, Georgia (†587); Venerable John Chozebite, bishop of Caesarea in Palestine (6th C); Right-believing Febronia, daughter of Emperor Heraclius (†632); Venerable Stephen the Sabbaite, hymnographer (†807); St. Arsenius, archbishop of Serbia (†1266); St. Demetrius, metropolitan of Rostov (†1709); Martyrs Angelis, Manuel, George, and Nicholas of Crete (†1824); Blessed Theophilus of Kiev, fool-for-Christ (†1853); New Hieromartyr John Vilensky, priest (†1918); New Monk-martyr Genadius Parfent’ev (†1919); New Hieromartyr Constantine, metropolitan of Kiev (†1937).

29 October / 11 November – Fast Day - Our Holy Mother, the Martyr Anastasia the Roman - She was born in Rome of well-born parents and left an orphan at the age of three. As an orphan, she was taken into a women's monastery near Rome, where the abbess was one Sophia, a nun of a high level of perfection. After seventeen years, Anastasia was known in the whole neighbourhood, to the Christians as a great ascetic and to the pagans as a rare beauty. The pagan administrator of the city, Probus, heard of her and sent soldiers to bring her to him. The good Abbess Sophia counselled Anastasia for two hours on how to keep the Faith, how to resist flattering delusion and how to endure torture. Anastasia said to her: 'My heart is ready to suffer for Christ; my soul is ready to die for my beloved Jesus.' Brought before the governor, Anastasia openly proclaimed her faith in Christ the Lord and, when the governor tried to dissuade her from the Faith, first with promises and then with threats, the holy maiden said to him: 'I am ready to die for my Lord, not once but—oh, if it were only possible!—a

thousand times.' When they stripped her naked, to humiliate her, she cried to the judge: 'Whip me and cut at me and beat me; my naked body will be hidden by wounds, and my shame will be covered by my blood!' She was whipped and beaten and cut about. She twice felt a great thirst and asked for water, and a Christian, Cyril, gave her a drink, for which he was blessed by the martyr and beheaded by the pagans. Then her breasts and tongue were cut off, and an angel of God appeared to her and upheld her. She was finally beheaded with the sword outside the city. Blessed Sophia found her body and buried it, and Anastasia was crowned with the wreath of martyrdom under the Emperor Decius (249-251).

Venerable Abramius the Recluse and his niece St. Mary, of Mesopotamia - The Monk Abraham the Hermit and Blessed Maria, his niece, asceticised in the village of Chidan, near the city of Edessa. They were contemporaries and of the same country together with the Monk Ephrem the Syrian (Comm. 28 January), who afterwards wrote about their life. The Monk Abraham began his difficult exploit of the solitary life in the prime of youth. He left his parental home and settled in a desolate wilderness place, far off from worldly enticements, and he spent his days in unceasing prayer. After the death of his parents, the saint refused his inheritance and requested his kinsmen to give it away to the poor. By his strict ascetic life, fasting and love for mankind, Abraham attracted to him many, seeking after spiritual light, prayer and blessing. Soon his faith was put to a serious test: he was appointed presbyter in one of the pagan villages of Mesopotamia. For three years, and sparing no efforts, the monk toiled over the enlightenment of the pagans. He tore down a pagan temple and built up a temple of God. Humbly enduring derision and even beating from obstinate idol-worshippers, in prayer he beseeched the Lord: "Look down, O Master, upon Thine servant, hearken unto my prayer, strengthen me and set free Thy servants from diabolical snares and grant them to know Thee, the One True God". The zealous pastor was granted the happiness to see the culmination of his righteous efforts: the pagans came to believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God, and the monk himself baptised them. Having fulfilled his priestly duty, Abraham again withdrew into his wilderness, where he continued to glorify God, and doing His holy will. The devil, put to shame by the deeds of the monk, tried to entrap him with proud thoughts. One time at midnight, when Saint Abraham was at prayer in his cell, suddenly there shone a light and a voice was heard: "Blessed art thou, blessed as is no one amongst mankind!" Confuting the wiles of the enemy, the saint said: "I – am a sinful man, but I trust on the help and grace of my God and I fear thee not". Another time the devil appeared before the saint in the form of a youth, lighted a candle and began to sing the Psalm: "Blessed is the undefiled on the way that walketh in the law of the Lord". Perceiving, that this also was a demonic temptation, the elder crossed himself and asked: "If thou knowest, what be the undefiled blessed, then why troublest thou them?" The temptor answered: "I provoke them in order to conquer them and turn them away from every good deed". To this the saint replied: "Thou gainest victory over those fallen away from God through their will, but for those loving God thou dost vanish, like smoke in the wind". After these words the devil vanished. And thus did Saint Abraham defeat the enemy, strengthened by Divine grace. After fifty years of ascetic life he peacefully expired to the Lord.

Also commemorated on this day: Martyrs Claudius, Asterius, Neon, and Theonilla (†285); Venerable Ermelinda of Brabant (†592); Venerable Colman of Kilmacduagh (†632); Venerable Anna of Constantinople (†826); Venerable Serapion of Zarzma, Georgia (†900); Venerable Abramius, wonderworker of Rostov (†1073); Venerable Abramius, recluse of the Kiev Caves (13th C); New Monk-martyr Athanasius (†1653); New Monk-martyr Timothy of Esphigmenou (†1820); New Hieromartyrs Nicholas Probatov, priest, and with him Martyrs Cosma, Victor, Nahum, Philip, John, Paul, Andrew, Paul, Basil, Alexis, John and Agatha (†1918); New Hieromartyr Eugene Ivashko, priest, and Martyr Anastasia Lebedev (†after 1937); New Hieromartyr Leonid Muravev, priest (†1941).

30 October / 12 November - The Hieromartyr Zenobius and his sister Zenobia - From the town of Aegae in Cilicia, they inherited the true Faith and great material wealth from their parents. Inflamed with zeal for the Faith, they, with great love, gave away their riches to the poor. Because they were so open-handed, God shielded these hands from every evil intent by men or demons. The merciful hands of Zenobius, which gave to the poor, were endowed by God with the gift of wonderworking, so that Zenobius was able to heal the sick of every sort of infirmity simply by the touch of his hand, and he was made Bishop of Aegae. At a time of persecution, the judge Licius seized him and said: 'I offer you the two: life and death— life if you bow down to the gods, and death if you do not.' Holy Zenobius replied: 'Life without Christ is not life, but death; and death for Christ's sake is not death, but life.' When Zenobius was put to harsh torture, his sister presented herself before the judge and said: 'I also want to drink this cup of suffering and be crowned with that wreath.' After torture by fire and in boiling pitch, they were both beheaded with the sword in about 285, and thus brother and sister entered into the immortal Kingdom of Christ the King.

Also commemorated on this day: Apostles of the Seventy: Tertius, Mark, Justus, and Artemas (1st C); Hieromartyr Marcian, bishop of Syracuse (2nd C); Martyr Anastasia of Thessalonica (†c.250); Martyr Eutropia of Alexandria (†c.250); Martyrs Alexander, Cronion, Julian, Macarius, and 13 companions (†249-251); Martyr Marcellus of Tangier (†298); St. Serapion, archbishop of Antioch (†311); St. Cyriacus, bishop of Corinth (4th C); St. Asterius, metropolitan of Amaseia (†c.430); St. Germanus, bishop of Capua (†540); St. Joseph, patriarch of Constantinople (†1283); St. Stephen Milutin (†1320), king of Serbia, his brother Dragutin (†1316) and their mother Helen (†1314); New Hieromartyr Leonid Vinogradov, priest (†1941); New Hieromartyr Matthew Kazarin, deacon (†1942); St. Varnava, bishop of Hvosno, confessor (†1964) Translation of the relics of the New Hieromartyr Alexander, archbishop of Kharkov (1992); Finding of the relics of St. Agafangel, metropolitan of Yaroslavl (1998); Finding of the relics of Venerable Eutropia of Kherson (2009); ‘Ozeryanko,’ and ‘Chislenskaya’ Icons of the Mother of God.

31 October / 13 November - Fast Day - The Holy Apostles Stachys, Amplias, Urban, Narcissus, Apelles and Aristobulus - They were of the Seventy. St Stachys was a helper of St Andrew the First-Called, who made him bishop of Byzantium. He built a church in Argyropolis, and governed his flock with faithfulness and zeal. After sixteen years as bishop, he entered peacefully into rest in the Lord. Amplias and Urban were also fellow-workers with St Andrew, and were made bishop by him, Amplias in Lydda and Urban in Macedonia. They both died as martyrs for Christ the Lord. Narcissus was made Bishop of Athens by the Apostle Philip, and holy Apelles was Bishop of Heraklion in Trachis.

Aristobulus - Born in Cyprus, Aristobulus was the brother of the Apostle Barnabas. He followed the Apostle Paul, who mentions him in his Epistle to the Romans saying, "Greet those who belong to the family of Aristobulus" ([Romans 16:10](#)). When the great apostle appointed many bishops throughout the various parts of the world, he appointed Aristobulus as bishop for the British, that is, England. In Britain the people were savages, heathen and wicked. Aristobulus endured many indescribable tortures, misfortunes and evil among them. They struck and beat him mercilessly, dragged him about the streets, ridiculed and mocked him. Finally this holy man succeeded by the power of the Grace of God. He enlightened the people, baptized them in the name of Christ the Lord, built churches, ordained priests and deacons and, in the end, died there peacefully and entered into the Kingdom of the Lord, Whom he faithfully served.

The Holy Martyr Epimachus – born in Egypt, he lived there in ascetism, and there finished his earthly course a martyr. In imitation of St John the Baptist, he went off as a young man into the desert. In response to his great love for God, the Spirit of God instructed him in all truth and, with no other teacher, taught him how to live the ascetic life. Epimachus discovered how the pagans were torturing and slaughtering the Christians in Alexandria, so, all afire with zeal for the Faith, he went to the city and knocked down the idol. When the pagans began to torture him for this, he cried out: ‘Smite me, spit on me, put a crown of thorns on my head and a reed in my hand; give me gall to drink, crucify me and pierce me with a spear. The Lord endured all that, and I want to endure it!’ In the vast crowd that was watching the martyrdom of holy Epimachus, there was one woman with a blind eye. She wept bitterly on witnessing the soul-less torture of the man of God, and, when the torturers flayed his holy body, blood spurted from it and a drop fell on her eye. Suddenly she could see, and her blind eye became as whole as the other. Then the woman cried out: ‘Great is the God in whom this sufferer believes!’ After that, St Epimachus was beheaded and his soul entered into eternal joy, in about 250.

St. Begu, nun of Harkness - reputed by St. Bede to have seen in a vision the death of St. Hilda, the foundress of both Whitby and Harkness.

Also commemorated on this day: Martyrs Seleucius and Stratonica (†309); Martyr Quentin of Rome (4th C); Venerable Maura of Constantinople (†436); Venerable Begu of Hackness (7th C); Venerable Spyridon (†1148) and Nicodemus (12th C), prosphora bakers of the Kiev Caves; Venerable Anatolius, recluse of the Kiev Caves (12th C); New Martyr Nicholas of Chios (†1754); New Hieromartyr John Kochurov, priest (†1917); New Monk-martyr Leonid (Molchanov) (†1918); New Hieromartyrs Alexander Vozdvizhensk, Alexis Sibersky, Basil Archangelsky, Basil Kolokolov, Vsevolod Smirnov, Peter Voskoboynikov, Sergius Rozanov, priests, Monk-martyrs Anatole (Botvinnikov), Euphrosynus (Antonov), and Martyr Jacob Blatov (†1937); New Monk-martyr Innocent (Mazurin) (†1938).

1 / 14 November - Ss Cosmas and Damian - Unmercenaries and wonderworkers, they were brothers in the flesh and in the spirit, born somewhere in Asia of a pagan father and a Christian mother. After their father's death, their mother Theodota devoted all her time and energy to the bringing-up of her sons as true Christians. God helped her, and her sons grew as two choice fruits and as two holy lamps. They were skilled in medicine and ministered to the sick without payment, and so fulfilled Christ's command: 'Freely have ye received; freely give' (Matt. 10:8). They were so strict in their unpaid ministry to men that Cosmas became greatly enraged with his brother Damian when he took three eggs from a woman, Palladia, and gave orders that, after his death, he should not be buried with his brother. In fact, holy Damian had not taken those eggs as a reward for healing Palladia's sickness, but because she had sworn by the Most Holy Trinity that he should have them. However, after their death in Fereman, they were buried together in obedience to a revelation from God. These two holy brothers were great wonderworkers both during their lifetime and after their death. A farm labourer, on lying down to sleep at one time, was attacked by a snake, which entwined itself around his mouth and stomach. This poor man would have breathed his last in the greatest torment had he not at the last moment invoked the help of Saints Cosmas and Damian. Thus the Lord glorified forever by miracles those who glorified Him here on earth by their faith, purity and mercy.

New Virgin-martyr Helen of Sinope - She was a maiden of fifteen who lived with her parents in the Christian enclave of Sinope in Pontus during the 1700s. One day, as she went to the marketplace, she passed by the house of the local Pasha (governor), who, seeing her beauty, was seized by lust for her. He ordered his servants to bring her to him, and made two attempts to defile her; each time, however, he was prevented by a mysterious power that kept him from her like an invisible wall. Determined to have his way for her, he kept her prisoner in his house; but she was able to slip away and run home to her parents' house.

Enraged that his prey had escaped, the Pasha called together the leaders of the Christian community and promised that, unless Helen were handed over to him, all the Christians in the town would be massacred. Grief-stricken and fearful, the leaders persuaded Helen's father to return the girl to the palace. The vile Pasha made several more attempts to rape the Saint, but once again he was restrained as if by an invisible wall as she recited the Six Psalms and all the prayers that she knew by heart. Realizing that he was powerless against her, the Pasha had her thrown in the common jail, then ordered that she be tortured to death. The executioners subjected the maiden to several cruel torments before killing her by driving two nails into her skull and beheading her. They then put her body in a sack and threw it in the Black Sea.

Some Greek sailors followed a heavenly light to the place where the sack had sunk, and divers retrieved the Saint's relics, which immediately revealed themselves as a source of healing for many. Her body was taken to Russia; her head was placed in the church in Sinope, where it continued to work miracles, especially for those who suffered from headaches. When the Greeks were driven from Sinope in 1924, refugees took the head with them. It is venerated today in a church near Thessalonika.

Also commemorated on this day: St. Primus (Ephraim), bishop of Alexandria (†119); Hieromartyr Benignus of Dijon (†c.200); Martyrs Cyrenia and Juliana (†c.305); Hieromartyrs John the bishop and James the priest, who suffered in Persia (†345); Hieromartyr Austromoine, bishop of Clermont (4th C); St. Marcellus, bishop of Paris (†430); Martyr Hermenigild, prince of the Goths (†586); Martyrs Caesarius, Dacius, Sabbas, Sabinian, Agrippa, Adrian, and Thomas at Damascus (7th C); New Monk-martyrs James and his disciples, James the deacon and Dionysius (†1520); Venerable David of Euboea (†1589); Blessed Cosmas of Verkhoturye, fool-for-Christ (†1706); New Nun-martyr Helen of Sinope (18th C); New Hieromartyrs Alexander Smirnov and Theodore Remizov, priests (†1918); New Hieromartyrs Alexander Shalay, Demetrius Ovechkin, priests, and Martyr Elizabeth Samovskoy (†1937); New Martyr Peter Ignatov (†1941).

† Daily Scripture Readings †

Monday – Epistle: for the 24th Monday: I Thess. 2:20-3:8 (§267)
Gospel: for the 23rd Monday: Luke 10:22-24 (§52)

Tuesday – Epistle: for the 24th Tuesday: I Thess. 3:9-13 (§268)
Gospel: for the 23rd Tuesday: Luke 11:1-10 (§55)

Wednesday – Epistle: for the 24th Wednesday: I Thess. 4:1-12 (§269)
Gospel: for the 23rd Wednesday: Luke 11:9-13 (§56)

Thursday – Epistle: for the 24th Thursday: I Thess. 5:1-8 (§271)
Gospel: for the 23rd Thursday: Luke 11:14-23 (§57)

Friday - Epistle: for the 24th Friday: I Thess. 5:9-13, 24-28 (§272)
Gospel: for the 23rd Friday: Luke 11:23-26 (§58)

Saturday – Epistle: for the 24th Saturday: II Cor. 11:1-6 (§191)
Gospel: for the 23rd Saturday: Luke 8:16-21 (§36)

REFLECTION

A miracle of St. Demetrius of Thessalonica: Demetrius was a commander of Thessalonica during his life and remained so after his repose. People have felt his presence in Thessalonica, especially in times of great calamities. He protects the city, wards off misfortunes, repels invaders, and helps all who invoke his name. Here is a wonderful example of his unusual aid to people in need. Once, the barbarians attacked Thessalonica and were unable to overtake it. Infuriated at this, they pillaged the countryside and bound and carried off two beautiful maidens whom they gave as a gift to their prince. These maidens knew how to embroider well. When the prince saw their handiwork, he said to them: "I hear that there is a great god in your land, Demetrius, and that he works great miracles. Embroider his face on this linen." The maidens told him that St. Demetrius was not a god but rather God's servant and the helper of Christians. At first, they refused to embroider the face of the saint, but when the prince threatened them with death, they carried out the command and completed the task by St. Demetrius's Day. On the eve of the feast, they looked at their embroidery and wept sorrowfully, as they had to spend the feast day in slavery and had to give that embroidered image of their beloved saint to an impious barbarian. Both maidens prayed to St. Demetrius to forgive them. Then St. Demetrius appeared to them and took them both away, as an angel had once taken the Prophet Habakkuk. He brought them to Thessalonica and set them in his church. A solemn all-night vigil was being celebrated, and many people were there. When they learned of the miraculous rescue of these Christian maidens, all glorified God and St. Demetrius, His great servant and commander.