

22nd Sunday After Pentecost
St. Euthymius the New &
Monk-martyr Lucian of Antioch
15 / 28 October



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!

Venerable Father Euthymius the New, Troparion, Tone VIII: In thee, O father, that which was created according to the image of God was manifestly saved./ For accepting thy cross thou didst follow after Christ,/ and praying thou didst learn to disdain the flesh,/ for thou didst transcend it to take care of thine immortal soul.// Wherefore, with the angels doth thy soul rejoice, O venerable Euthymius.

Venerable Martyr Lucian of Antioch, Troparion, Tone IV: Thy martyr Lucian, O Lord,/ hath in his sufferings received an imperishable crown from Thee our God,/ for, possessed of Thy might,/ he cast down his tormentors and set at naught the feeble audacity of the demons.// By his prayers do Thou save our souls.

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 the Martyr, Tone II: With Hymns let us all gloriously honor/ as a most splendid luminary Lucian,/ who shone forth in fasting/ and later was radiant in suffering,// and who prayeth unceasingly for us all.

Kontakion of the Venerable One, Tone II: Crossing the tumult of the multitude dryshod,/ thou didst mightily drown the incorporeal foe in the streams of thy tears,/ O venerable and divinely wise Euthymius;/ and receiving the gift of miracles, thou healest all sufferings.// Pray thou unceasingly for us all.

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.

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.

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

Brothers and sisters! Did you know that there exists a psychological law by which under the influence of thought, a feeling, a desire is kindled; and from desire comes action. This law was discovered back in the first centuries by the Fathers of the Church, and then it passed on into secular life. In any sphere of life, there isn't a single action which is not provoked by feeling and desire. And in their turn, feeling and desire are kindled by thought; just as any flammable substance will catch fire if, for a sufficient length of time, one holds over it a magnifying glass through which a ray of sun is concentrated. And so: thought—feeling—action.

Both readings for this Sunday, the Apostle and the Gospel, are in a wonderful way connected with this law. Even more: without this law we wouldn't even be able to understand them in all their depth. The Gospel tells us about the Sower, the seed, and the ground. Different kinds of ground are mentioned: the ground by the wayside, the stony ground, the ground overgrown with weeds, and finally, good ground.

The Sower is the Lord, the seed is the Word of God, and the ground is the listener — you and I, our hearts. And this parable ends with the words: "But that on the good ground are they which in an honest and good heart, having heard the word, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience" (Lk. 8:15). This means that the purpose is such: we must accept the Word of God with all our being, with all our mind, with a good and pure heart. And it is impossible to express this good, pure heart in stronger words than in the words of the Apostle Paul in today's reading: "For I through the law am dead to the law, that I might live unto God. I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, Who loved me, and gave Himself for me" (Gal. 2:19-20). This is what we should strive for; here is the purpose of our life.

But who among us can honestly repeat these words of the Apostle: 'Nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me'? And if we do not feel what the Apostle felt, it means that our life is not fully Christian, and we are not bearing those fruits which the Lord expects from us. What is the matter? The Word of God is as powerful today as in the days when the Saviour Himself was preaching it; and yet our lives do not reflect this His Word. For if our deeds would conform to the teaching of Christ, then the whole world would turn to Christ, because our lives would be more eloquent, more strong than any sermon.

But alas, they are not like this. Our deeds are not like this because our feelings are not the feelings of Christ; they have not yet died to the law of earthly life— futile, temporary—in order to live for God, as the Apostle says. And our feelings are not like this because our thoughts are busy with unnecessary things. Only rarely are they directed toward Christ, Who loved us and gave Himself for us. Are they not wandering more often on the highways of our futile earthly life? Do they not bring our hearts into a state of stoniness, absorbed only with the cares of our temporary, materialistic welfare? Do they not get stuck between our sinful desires, as between weeds?

Let us examine ourselves. And if this is so, let us bring about a revolution within ourselves. And let us start with our thoughts; because every sin passes through thought into our feeling, and through feeling into action. This means that our main struggle with sin goes on in the thoughts. This is where we have to destroy it; then it will not even touch our heart and will not pass into action. Yes, but our thought is already infected by sin. What are we to do? From a thought, as from a hole in the ground, little snakes are constantly darting out—sinful thoughts—and they bite and poison our feelings. But this is what we must do: run to Christ with repentance. He is our Saviour from sin. In His first appearance after His Resurrection, He said to His disciples: "Receive ye the Holy Spirit. Whosoever sins ye forgive, they are forgiven" (Jn. 20: 22-23). Let us start with this. Let us take our sinful thoughts to confession, and we will receive absolution. And then new thoughts and new deeds will begin. A new life.

This is when we too will be able to say together with the Apostle: "Nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, Who loved me, and gave Himself for me." Then too the seed, the Word of God, will fall on good ground, and we will be able to keep it in a pure heart and bring forth fruit in patience. And in this "keeping" we will find a new life and a new joy.

Archbishop Andrei, The One Thing Needful Thing

Saints of the week

15 / 28 October - Our Holy Father, the Martyr Lucian, Priest of Antioch - Born of noble parents in Syrian Samosata, he received in his youth a very wide education, both secular and spiritual, and was a man eminent both for his learning and for his strict ascetic life. Giving his goods away to the poor, he supported himself by the writing of works of instruction, feeding himself thus by the work of his hands. He did a very great service to the Church in the work which he undertook of the correcting of the Hebrew text of the Scriptures in many places, texts which heretics had taken the opportunity to twist and corrupt according to their wicked teaching. Because of his learning and his great spirituality, he was ordained priest in Antioch. In the time of Maximian's persecution, when St Anthimus of Nicomedia and St Peter of Alexandria were put to torture, St Lucian was also on the list of those whom the Emperor wanted to have killed. Lucian fled the city and hid, but a jealous heretic priest,

Pancratius, revealed his whereabouts. The persecution was terrible at that time, and not even tiny children were safe. Two boys, who would not eat food offered to idols, were thrown into a bath of boiling water, where, under torture, they gave their holy souls into God's hands. A disciple of Lucian's, Pelagia (see Oct. 8th), to preserve her virginal purity from the dissolute authorities, gave her soul into God's hands, and her body fell from the roof of her house. Lucian was taken to Nicomedia, to appear before the Emperor. On the way, he managed to bring forty soldiers to Christ by his counsel, and they all died a martyr's death. After interrogation and flogging, St Lucian was thrown into prison, where he was tortured by hunger. He scorned hunger', writes St John Chrysostom of Lucian. Let us also scorn luxury and destroy the lordship of the stomach; that we may, when the time comes for us to meet such torture, be prepared beforehand, by the help of a lesser asceticism, to show ourselves

worthy of glory in the hour of battle.' He received Communion in prison on the Theophany, and on the following day gave his soul into God's hands, on January 7th, 312; Our Holy Father Euthymius the New.

16 / 29 October - The Holy Martyr Longinus - the centurion who stood at the Cross of Our Lord - The divine Matthew the Evangelist, describing the Passion of the Lord Jesus Christ, says: 'Now when the centurion and they that were with him, watching Jesus, saw the earthquake and the things that were done, they feared greatly, saying: "Truly this was the Son of God" ' (Matt. 27:54). That centurion was this blessed Longinus, who, with two other of his soldiers, came to believe in Jesus as the Son of God. He was the officer in command both at the Lord's crucifixion on Golgotha and in the watch that guarded the tomb. When the Jewish elders learned of Christ's Resurrection, they bribed the soldiers to spread the falsehood that Christ had not risen, but that His disciples had stolen His body. The Jews tried to bribe Longinus also, but without success. Then the Jews resorted to their usual practice: they conspired to kill Longinus. Discovering this, Longinus took off his army belt, received baptism from the apostles together with his two friends, and with them secretly left Jerusalem and went to Cappadocia. There he gave himself to fasting and prayer and, as a living witness of the Resurrection of Christ, turned many pagans to the true Faith by his testimony. He then went off to a village where his father had property, but the wicked Jews would not even there leave him in peace. In response to slander on their part, Pilate sent soldiers to behead Longinus. Holy Longinus foresaw in his spirit the approach of his executioners and, going out to meet them, took them to his home without telling them who he was. The soldiers lay down to sleep, and St Longinus spent the whole night preparing for death. In the morning, he went and brought his two friends, dressed himself in white grave-clothes, told the others in the house what was happening and showed them a place on a hillock to bury him. He then revealed himself to the soldiers as the Longinus whom they were seeking. The soldiers were embarrassed and ashamed, and would not think of beheading Longinus, but he laid it on them to carry out their superior's command, and he and his two friends were beheaded. Longinus's head was taken by the soldiers to Pilate; Pilate gave it to the Jews and they flung it onto a dung-heap outside the city. Our Holy Father Longinus the Lover of Labour; St. Gall, Irish monk and enlightener of Switzerland (c.630).

17 / 30 October - The Holy Prophet Hosea - The son of Beerai of the tribe of Issachar, he lived and prophesied more than eight hundred years before the birth of Christ. His inspired words are found in his book, which contains fourteen chapters. He strongly rebuked Israel and Judah for their idolatry, foretold God's punishment for their sin, the destruction of Samaria and Israel for their apostasy but the showing of God's mercy on the tribe of Judah. He foresaw the end of the sacrifices of the Old Covenant, and the coming of the Lord and the rich gifts that He would bring to earth. He lived to great old age, and entered peacefully into rest; The Holy Martyrs Cosmas & Damian, the Unmercenaries; Our Holy Father, the Martyr Andrew; St. Lazarus the Four Days-Dead; Martyrs Ethelred & Ethelbert, princes of Kent, England (c.640).

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

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!

Tropar, 4th Tone: With the apostles thy sound hath gone forth unto the ends of the world; / with the confessors thou didst endure sufferings for Christ; / thou didst liken thyself unto the holy hierarchs in the preaching of the Word; / and with the venerable hast thou shone forth in the grace of God. / Therefore, the Lord hath exalted the depths of the humility higher than the heavens, / and hath given us thy name as a source of most wondrous miracles. / Wherefore, O wonderworker, who livest in Christ forever, / lovingly have mercy upon those amid misfortunes, / and hearken unto thy children that call upon thee with faith, / O Righteous John, // our beloved pastor.

Kontakion, 4th Tone: O thou who from infancy wast chosen by God, / and in childhood didst miraculously receive from Him the gift of learning, / and wast gloriously called to the priesthood in a vision during sleep, / thou didst prove to be a wonderful shepherd of the Church of Christ, / O Father John, namesake of grace. / Pray to Christ our God // that we all be with thee in the kingdom of the heavens.

The Holy Prophet Joel - The second in order of the Minor Prophets, Joel was the son of Phanel, 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; The Holy Martyr Varus; Our Holy Father Prochorus of Pchinja;

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.

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 hack 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. Our Holy Father Gerasim the New. Our Holy Father, the New Martyr Ignatius;

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 refurbished 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.

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; St Hilarion, Bishop of Meglin; Our Holy Father Philotheus.

REFLECTION

The saints of God place great importance on receiving Holy Communion before their death. Even though they were sacrificing their lives for Christ the Lord and washing away all their sins by the blood of martyrdom, the martyrs longingly received the Holy Mysteries whenever it was possible. St. Lucian was in prison with several of his disciples and other Christians. On the eve of Theophany, Lucian longed, on such a great Christian feast, to partake of the Body and Blood of Christ, for he knew that his death was imminent. Seeing the sincere desire of His sufferer, God Almighty arranged that some Christians pass bread and wine into the prison. When the Feast of Theophany dawned, Lucian called all the Christian prisoners to stand in a circle around him and said to them: "Surround me and be the Church." He had no table, chair, stone or wood in the prison upon which to celebrate the Divine Liturgy. "Holy Father, where shall we place the bread and wine?" they asked Lucian. He lay down in their midst and said: "Place them on my chest, let it be a living altar for the Living God!" And thus the Liturgy was celebrated correctly and prayerfully on the chest of the martyr, and all received Holy Communion. The next day, the emperor sent soldiers to bring Lucian out for torture. When the soldiers opened the door of the prison, St. Lucian cried out three times: "I am a Christian! I am a Christian! I am a Christian!" and with that, he gave up his soul to his God.

HOMILY

on how the Lord watches over the bones of the righteous

He watches over all his bones; not one of them shall be broken (Psalm 34:20).

Let not the righteous be afraid. The All-seeing God watches over them. Can the All-seeing lose or forget something? On the Day of Resurrection, He shall gather all their bodily parts and gloriously resurrect them. The persecutors hurled the bodies of the martyrs into the sea, buried them in deep pits, or left them in fields for the birds to devour. But the Lord, by His divine providence, so guided events that these holy relics came into the hands of the faithful. They were laid honorably in costly reliquaries, churches were built over them, and wonderworking power emanated from them. God wanted to show the faithful by this that He watches over the bones of the righteous, and that He has glorified them in the Heavenly Kingdom. And the Church on earth has affirmed this through the miraculous power of their glorified bodies. Wonderworking relics are like forerunners of the general and glorious resurrection of the righteous. But what if some of the bones of the righteous are burned or ground up-could that be an obstacle to the almighty power of God? Can He not, in the Day of Resurrection, reassemble and enliven them from the scattered ashes? *There shall not an hair of your head perish (Luke 21:18)*, assures the Lord. Nevertheless, if you want to understand "bones" as "works," know then that the works of the unrighteous are as smoke, and the works of the righteous are powerful and as lasting as hard bones. Not even one righteous deed will fade away or disappear in the course of time. God knows them and God watches over them, so that He may reveal them like precious pearls before the assembly of angels and men on that Day.

O All-seeing Lord, Master and Protector of the righteous, multiply our righteous deeds by Thy Holy Spirit, without whom nothing good can be done; and save us by Thy mercy, not according to our deeds.

To Thee be glory and praise forever. Amen.