

20th Sunday After Pentecost

Martyrs Marcian and martyrius

25 October / 7 November

Resurrection Tropar, Tone 3: Let the heavens rejoice / let the earth be glad / for the Lord has shown strength with His arm! / He has trampled down death by death! / He has become the first-born of the dead! He has delivered us from the depths of hell / and has granted the world great mercy.

Troparion of Ss Marcian and Martyrius tone 3: In holy zeal you dispelled the error of Arius/ and proclaimed the Trinity in one essence./ Holy Martyrs Marcian and Martyrius,/ unshaken bulwarks of Orthodoxy./ Pray to Christ our God to grant us His great mercy.

Resurrection Kondak, Tone 3: On this day thou didst rise from the tomb, O Merciful One, / leading us from the gates of death / On this day Adam exults as Eve rejoices. / With the prophets and the patriarchs they unceasingly praise the divine majesty of Thy power.

Kontakion of Ss Marcian and Martyrius tone 4: You fought well from infancy, O wise Martyrs,/ and by preserving the Orthodox Faith inviolate/ you humbled the apostate Arius/ and followed your teacher Paul./ Therefore with him you have found life, as champions of the Trinity.

Matins Gospel IX

Epistle: Galatians 1:11-19

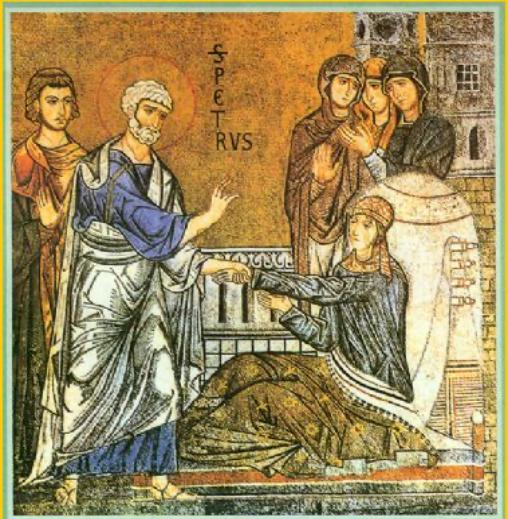
But I make known to you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached by me is not according to man. For I neither received it from man, nor was I taught it, but it came through the revelation of Jesus Christ. For you have heard of my former conduct in Judaism, how I persecuted the church of God beyond measure and tried to destroy it. And I advanced in Judaism beyond many of my contemporaries in my own nation, being more exceedingly zealous for the traditions of my fathers. But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb and called me through His grace, To reveal His Son in me, that I might preach Him among the Gentiles, I did not immediately confer with flesh and blood, Nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were apostles before me; but I went to Arabia, and returned again to Damascus. Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and remained with him fifteen days. But I saw none of the other apostles except James, the Lord's brother.

THE GOSPEL WHICH WAS PREACHED BY ME IS NOT ACCORDING TO MAN

Observe how diligently he affirms that he was taught of Christ, who Himself, without human intervention, condescended to reveal to him all knowledge. And if he were asked for his proof that God Himself thus immediately revealed to him these ineffable mysteries, he would instance his former manner of life, arguing that his conversion would not have been so sudden, had it not been by Divine revelation. For when men have been vehement and eager on the contrary side, their conviction, if it is effected by human means, requires much time and ingenuity ...For my violence even reached your ears, and the distance between Palestine and Galatia is so great, that the report would not have extended there, had not my acts exceeded all bounds and endurance ...Observe how he does not shrink from aggravating each point: not saying simply that he has 'persecuted' but 'beyond measure' and 'made havoc of it,' which signifies an attempt to extinguish, to pull down, to destroy, to annihilate the Church ...Here his object is to show that it was by some secret providence that he was left to himself for a time ...It is evident that God had some hidden reason for this delay. What this purpose was, you are eager to learn from me perhaps ...I must entreat your love not to require all things from me, but to search for it by yourselves and to beg of God to reveal it to you ...God indeed says that He called him on account of His excellent capacity, as He said to Ananias, 'for he is a chosen vessel unto Me, to bear My name before the Gentiles and kings' (Acts 9:15).

St. John Chrysostom. Chapter I. Commentary on Galatians. B#57, pp. 9-10.

for the Martyrs: Eph. 4:7-13



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

We all like to spend money, somehow there seems to be some intrinsic joy in just going on a buying spree. For many there is the additional pleasure comes from acquiring things that goes with spending money. We love to get all kinds of things and hang onto them. For some it is beautiful things, for others it is useful things, or maybe quirky things, personal things, funny things, and so on. Most everyone likes getting things. As we enter the Christmas holiday pre-season, that love of acquiring things comes into its own as we begin to contemplate acquiring more things – either as gifts to give to someone else (and thus sharing our joy) or as gifts we receive. Acquisitiveness is a passion that is natural to our soul, however, like all passions, if we overdo it or misuse it, that natural passion becomes sinful.

The rich man in the Gospel parable today was someone who had acquired many things. He was not generally mean spirited for while he enjoyed the things that he acquired, he also shared those things with his friends and other like minded people. However, he did enjoy acquiring and surrounding himself with "the finer things" in life – fine food and drink, beautiful clothes, cultured friends and acquaintances and so on. He did not, it seems, even notice those things which did not fit into his likes and desires. One of those who remained unnoticed by him was the poor beggar Lazarus. There is no indication in this parable that the rich man was cruel or purposefully tormented Lazarus, rather it seems that he was completely unaware of Lazarus' existence and thus overlooked his presence, not noticing his poverty, his illness and his great need. This rich man was not particularly evil, however, he was overwhelmed by the passion of acquisitiveness.

Acquisitiveness, when properly used instills in us the desire to get the good things that God offers to us. We are drawn towards God's provision for we want to acquire the blessings, virtues and salvation that God gives. This zeal to get the spiritual gifts is the proper use and venue of acquisitiveness. The desire to acquire worldly things is a secondary effect which relates to our dual nature as physical/spiritual beings. However, the corrupted nature which we inherited from our first parents Adam and Eve has already confused our acquisitiveness so that it is no longer directed mainly towards acquiring the spiritual good things that lead to our salvation, but instead is directed towards the acquisition of worldly things which bring worldly joy and comfort but no spiritual benefit.

To be rich or to have many worldly things is not in and of itself sinful, however, when the possession or acquisition of those things becomes an end in and of itself, then sin enters in. When we acquire or possess things but do not use them for their intended purpose, then sin enters in. When our acquisitiveness becomes self centered and causes us to lose sight of God and of our neighbor, then sin enters in. It seems good then, to consider what is the proper direction of our natural acquisitiveness and the proper use of those things which we do acquire.

All things, the scripture tells us, work together for good for those who love the Lord. St Seraphim likens the Christian life to the life of a merchant who has assets which can be spent to acquire goods however those assets must be spent wisely always seeking to purchase those goods which will bring the best profit and maximize the return on investment. We must remember that the proper purpose of all that God gives to us is for the working out of our salvation. We should use everything that we have to that goal. Thus the worldly things that we have are not ends in and of themselves, but are given to us so that we might use them in such a way that we draw nearer to God and acquire His grace. Wealth, the abundance of worldly goods, is given to us by God not for our own ease and enjoyment. This is given to us so that we might use all these worldly goods to do the will of God in the world. One of the problems that the rich man of the parable had was his self centeredness. He simply closed his eyes to anything that did not meet with his approval or prejudices. Thus he did not even notice the poor Lazarus at his gate who suffered from hunger and disease – he did not even see this need. The rich man of the parable exemplifies the plight of those who at the great judgment are told by the Lord, "When I was hungry you did not feed me; when I was thirsty you gave me no drink; when I was naked you did not clothe me; when I was sick or in prison you did not visit me." And when they heard this they said, "When did we see you hungry or thirsty or naked or sick or in prison?" Because of their self absorption, these condemned ones were completely unaware of the many opportunities to serve Christ around them. So was the rich man who was completely unaware of the poor, hungry, thirsty, naked and sick Lazarus who lay at his gate. Thus one of the first things that we must do in order to use what God has given to us in this world is to open our eyes, to

see not only those things which please our senses and sensibilities, but also to see those who are in need. Then we must use all that God has given to us to express His love and His compassion to the world simply by using what we have to care for those around us that we see with our opened eyes. St Gregory Palamas points out to us the great love of God for mankind which gives us the opportunity to acquire that which is beyond value (the grace of God) by spending that which is worthless (worldly possessions). "Our lowly, earthly bodily needs, namely, food and drink, clothing, the gold and silver each one possesses: all such things are earth and dust, and nothing is less valuable than that. Yet these worthless things can be the means by which, if, in accordance with the Lord's promise and exhortation someone offers what he has in excess to those possessed of virtues, (because they are completely destitute of physical necessities) he can make up for his deficiency in virtues and escape punishment for being without them through this act of giving. To demonstrate this point, the great Paul, writing to the Corinthians, calls such sharing 'fellowship with the saints' and goes on to say 'that your abundance may be a supply for their want, that their abundance also may be a supply for your want.'(2 Cor. 8:4&14)"

Not only wealth, but poverty too is given to us by God and must be used in the proper manner. When we find ourselves in need or want; when we suffer, are ill or encounter some other misfortune, it is necessary to bear this poverty with patience and without complaint, remembering that suffering in this world brings us wealth and riches in the kingdom of God. If, however, we loudly complain and call attention to ourselves and demand this or that "right" from others or seek pity and sympathy from society, then we have not used well the poverty that God has given and we have already received our reward (that is the attention and sympathy of the world) and so will therefore receive no spiritual benefit. But if we bear our burden with humility and patience, trusting in God to provide all that we need, then He will provide us not only with our worldly needs, but also with the riches of grace of the Kingdom of heaven.

We are all by nature "acquisitive" however that acquisitiveness is often misused and misplaced for rather than desiring to acquire the grace of God and the blessings of the Kingdom of Heaven which are for our salvation, we hunger after the things of the world that are worthless and which will pass way. As we approach this season of giving and receiving, let us set our hearts and desires not on the things of this world which are earth and dust and less than worthless and seek after the virtues and grace of God which is priceless beyond value through which we will work out our salvation and enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.

Archpriest David Moser

<https://groups.yahoo.com/neo/groups/propoved/info>

for the Martyrs: Matt. 10:1, 5-8

Saints of the week

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. The Holy Martyr Anastasius; St Tabitha.

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. Our Holy Father, the Martyr Joasaph; Commemoration of the Great Earthquake in Constantinople (740);

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; S. Edfrith, bishop of Lindisfarne.

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.; Our Holy Father Nestor the Chronicler; St. Andrew, Prince of Smolensk; St. Odran, monk of Iona,

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.

28 October / 10 November - Fast Day - 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. The Holy Martyr Paraskeva—Petka; St Arsenius, Archbishop of Pec; St Stephen of St Sava's; St Athanasius, Patriarch of Constantinople; St Dimitri, Bishop of Rostov;

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 Zhelezko), 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.

29 October / 11 November - 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). Our Holy Father Abraham the Recluse and his niece Maria; Our Holy Father, the Martyr Timothy of Esphigmenou; St. Kea, bishop of Devon & Cornwall, St. Odrada, nun (7th c.)

30 October / 12 November - Fast Day - 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. The Holy Apostles Cleopas, Tertius, Mark, Justus and Artemas; The Holy King Milutin.

31 October / 13 November - 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. ; The Holy Martyr Nicolas of Chios; Our Holy Fathers Spiridon and Nicodemus;

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.

HYMN OF PRAISE Saint Tabitha

Tabitha died, not that she might no longer live, But that the world might be astonished at the miracle which came to pass. Beside her deathbed Peter humbly knelt, And uttered fervent prayer unto the Lord. She was resurrected in body! And the unbelievers heard How the Lord hearkened to the apostle's prayer And returned the living soul to the dead body. And Peter turned the unbelievers to the Faith. O wondrous miracle, of a kind unknown in the world! By the name of Christ, death was conquered. Death was conquered, and life rejoices. The young Tabitha rejoices in life; And, more than in her own life, She rejoices that she served as a wonder to the unbelieving world. She was resurrected in body! The unbelievers heard, And their own souls were raised from the dead. O great Peter, servant of Christ, Pray to our Savior for us; Resurrect our souls, buried in the mud- You, who revived Tabitha by the power of God.

HOMILY on fleeing the world and dwelling in the wilderness

Lo, then would I flee afar off, and remain in the wilderness (Psalm 55:7).

Brethren, from whom did the prophet flee into the wilderness? From evil adversaries, from passions, and from vanity. Why did he flee into the wilderness? Because that is the way of victory over wicked adversaries, passions, and the vanity of the world. Very few choose the wilderness: that is why he fled into the wilderness. Men fight over cities and lands, over authority and wealth, but not over the wilderness. In the cities, the inner adversaries of man-the passions and diverse vanities- constantly are aroused with new fire, while in the wilderness they fade and vanish. Before he spoke of fleeing, the prophet said, *And the terrors of death have fallen upon me* (Psalm 55:4); this is the reason to flee into the wilderness. One should prepare his soul for the other world, for the encounter with God. Not even a king can save himself from death or avoid judgment. Living in constant luxury and merriment, man is indeed as if lulled to sleep by the strong drink of this world. But then, in the midst of luxury and merriment, the thought of death tugs at him and awakens him. Oh, I must die! I must leave this world! I must come before God and before the angels! Where is my soul? Where are my deeds? With what shall I leave this world, and with what shall I enter into the next world? Thousands upon thousands of those who have been awakened from sinful sleep by such questions have fled to the wilderness and, day and night, they amend their souls and purify their hearts by repentance, prayer, fasting, vigils, labor and other proven means by which man kills the fear of death, and becomes adopted by God.

O Lord Jesus Christ, our Most-wise and Most-gracious Teacher, Who Thyself at times withdrew from men into solitude, help us to be collected in soul and prepare ourselves for Thy Most-glorious Kingdom.

To Thee be glory and praise forever. Amen.