

22nd Sunday After Pentecost

Synaxis of Archangel Michael and the other Bodiless Hosts

8 / 21 November



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

Troparion of the Angels tone 1: Supreme Leaders of the Heavenly Hosts,/ we implore you that by your prayers you will encircle us, unworthy as we are,/ with the protection of the wings of your immaterial glory,/ and guard us who fall down before you and fervently cry:/ Deliver us from dangers, for you are the commanders of the Powers above.

Another Troparion of the Angels tone 1: Let us praise Cherubim, Seraphim, Thrones, Powers, Authorities and Principalities,/ Dominions, Archangels and Angels for they are the Bodiless ministers of the Unoriginate Trinity/ and revealers of incomprehensible mysteries./ Glory to Him Who has given you being; glory to Him Who has given you light;/ glory to Him Who is praised by you in thrice-holy hymns.

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 Angels tone 2: Supreme Leaders of God's armies and ministers of the divine glory,/ princes of the bodiless Angels and guides of men,/ ask what is good for us and great mercy,/ as Supreme Leaders of the Bodiless Hosts. Supreme Leaders of God's armies and ministers of the divine glory,/ princes of the bodiless Angels and guides of men,/ ask what is good for us and great mercy,/ as Supreme Leaders of the Bodiless Hosts.

Vespers: Josh. 5:13-15; Judg. 6:2, 7, 11-24; Isa. 14:7-20

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.

for the Archangels: Heb. 2: 2-10

THE GOSPEL: LUKE 8: 41-56

And behold, there came a man named Jairus, and he was a ruler of the synagogue. And he fell down at Jesus' feet and begged Him to come to his house, For he had an only daughter about twelve years of age, and she was dying. But as He went, the multitudes thronged Him. Now a woman, having a flow of blood for twelve years, who had spent all her livelihood on physicians and could not be healed by any, Came from behind and touched the border of His garment. And immediately her flow of blood stopped. And Jesus said, "Who touched Me?" When all denied it, Peter and those with him said, "Master, the multitudes throng and press You, and You say, 'Who touched Me?' " But Jesus said, "Somebody touched Me, for I perceived power going out from Me." Now when the woman saw that she was not hidden, she came trembling; and falling down before Him, she declared to Him in the presence of all the people the reason she had touched Him and how she was healed immediately. And He said to her, "Daughter, be of good cheer; your faith has made you well. Go in peace." While He was still speaking, someone came from the ruler of the synagogue's house, saying to him, "Your daughter is dead. Do not trouble the Teacher." But when Jesus heard it, He answered him, saying, "Do not be afraid; only believe, and she will be made well." When He came into the house, He permitted no one to go in except Peter, James, and John, and the father and mother of the girl. Now all wept and mourned for her; but He said, "Do not weep; she is not dead, but sleeping." And they ridiculed Him, knowing that she was dead. But He put them all outside, took her by the hand and called, saying, "Little girl, arise." Then her spirit returned, and she arose immediately. And He commanded that she be given something to eat. And her parents were astonished, but He charged them to tell no one what had happened.

RESURRECTION OF THE DAUGHTER OF JAIRUS

Last Sunday's reading from the Apostle told us that we are saved by Grace, and that Grace is received through faith, and this is the gift of God. And we were shown what faith is in a striking example.

And here, even today's Gospel speaks about faith. To some degree we all possess it. But because it is imperfect, our faith is often subject to temptations. And the most terrible, the strongest of such temptations, is the death of a person near and dear to us. I think that the majority of those present here have already lived through, or are now living through, this incurable grief. But if not, it is something which will inevitably come. Today's Gospel gives us a classic example of how, in spite of all the difficulty of such an experience, it is possible to endure it. And at the same time it shows us again how much we need faith. For only through faith does God give us and will give us His power of Grace not to fall spiritually in such a terrible moment.

Jairus approached Christ; his daughter was near death. He fell at the feet of Jesus and asked Him to enter his house. Christ agreed, but the people were crowding Him. On the way, the woman with an issue of blood was healed. The whole time there were delays. Christ moved slowly, very slowly. Imagine what Jairus was going through. Here he had asked Christ to hurry. After all, this was a matter of life and death for his daughter. If Christ were one minute late, it might be too late—his daughter could die. And this is exactly what happened. Someone came from the house of the ruler of the synagogue and said to him: "Thy daughter is dead; trouble not the Master" (Lk. 8:49).

Yes, according to human understanding it was all over. Why trouble the Master? Anything is possible to mend, but not death. Death alone is irreparable. Before it even the Teacher is powerless. Yes, this is so according to human understanding, but not according to God's understanding. And Jesus, after He heard this, said to Jairus: "Fear not: Believe only, and she shall be made whole" (Lk. 8:50). And in this moment Jairus rejected human understanding and accepted God's understanding. Now before him stood not just a Teacher, but the Saviour of the world, the Son of God—God Himself. Because God alone has power over life and death.

Jairus accepted within himself His words: "Fear not: believe only!" From this very moment he lived only by these words and continued following after Christ. They entered the house. And again two sides: the human side—"All wept and bewailed her." And Christ said, "She is not dead, but sleepeth." And again the human. "And they laughed Him to scorn, knowing that she was dead." But in the soul of Jairus there was an unspeakable calm. He had faith. And faith conquered. "Maid, arise!" exclaimed Christ, and her spirit returned into her and she immediately got up and was united with her father (Lk. 8:52-55).

Yes, but you may say this is a miracle of resurrection, and such miracles do not happen now. True. But the same miracle has been promised to all of us. Every day in our Confession of Faith we read, "I look for the resurrection of the dead." And this will happen, it will! Not as soon as it happened for Jairus, but it will happen! Pay attention to the following moment. Jairus already knew that his daughter was dead, but all the same he followed Christ, believing His words. How long this walk in faith lasted is not important; but what is important is that it took place.

Let us also believe in the words of the Gospel that the dead will rise; and like Jairus, let us follow Christ in faith. Mystically, this walk of Jairus after Christ did not end and will never end. It goes on even now, and we can all participate in it. Let us hasten to join Jairus. Then the words of Christ, "Fear not: Believe only, and she shall be made whole," will refer also to us. But for this to happen, like Jairus, we must hold fast to the robe of Christ and endure everything that God sends to us on the road of our life. The way of Jairus was comparatively short. Ours might be long, very long. It will go to the end of our life. But let us believe that there will be the resurrection of the dead and that we will be united with those dear to us who are already with the Lord. May God grant us the faith and the patience of Jairus!

Archbishop Andrei, The One Thing Needful

Saints of the week

8 / 21 November - Synaxis of the Archangels, SS Michael, Gabriel, Raphael, Uriel, Salaphiel, Juggediel & Barachiel - The angels of God have been commemorated by men from the earliest times, but this commemoration often degenerates into the divinisation of angels (IV Kings 23:5; A.V. II Kings). Heretics always wove fantasies round the angels. Some of them saw the angels as gods and others, if they did not so regard them, took them to be the creators of the whole visible world. The local Council in Laodicea, that was held in the fourth century, rejected in its 35th Canon the worship of angels as gods, and established the proper veneration of them. In the time of Pope Sylvester of Rome and the Alexandrian Patriarch Alexander, in the fourth century, this Feast of the Archangel Michael and the other heavenly powers was instituted, to be celebrated in November. Why in November? Because November is the ninth month after March, and it is thought that the world was created in the month of March. The ninth month after March was chosen because of the nine orders of angels that were the first created beings. St Dionysius the Areopagite, a disciple of the Apostle Paul (that Apostle who was caught up to the third heaven), writes of these nine orders in his book: 'Celestial Hierarchies'. These orders are as follows: six-winged Seraphim, many-eyed Cherubim, godly Thrones, Dominions, Virtues, Powers, Principalities, Archangels and Angels. The leader of the whole angelic army is the Archangel Michael. When Satan, Lucifer, fell away from God, and carried half the angels with him to destruction, then Michael arose and cried to the unfallen angels: 'Let us give heed! Let us stand aright; let us stand with fear!', and the whole angelic army sang aloud: 'Holy, holy, holy Lord God of Sabaoth; heaven and earth are full of Thy glory!' (See on the Archangel Michael: Joshua 5:13-15 and Jude v.9). Among the angels there rules a perfect unity of mind, of soul and of love; of total obedience of the lesser powers to the greater and of all to the holy will of God. Each nation has its guardian angel, as does each individual Christian. We must keep in mind that, whatever we do, openly or in secret, we do in the presence of our guardian angel and that, on the Day of Judgement, a great multitude of the holy angels of heaven will be gathered around the throne of Christ, and the thoughts, words and deeds of every man will be laid bare before them. May God have mercy on us and save us at the prayers of the holy Archangel Michael and all the bodiless powers of heaven. Amen; St. Tysilio, abbot of Meifod; St. Willehad, bishop of Bremen.

9 / 22 November - The Holy Martyrs Onesiphorus and Prophyrius - These two wonderful men were martyred for the name of Christ in the time of the Emperor Diocletian (284-305). They were harshly beaten, and then burned in iron coffins, and after that tied to horses' tails and dragged over stones and thistles. They were thus broken to pieces and gave their holy souls into God's hands. Their relics were buried in Pentapolis. Our Holy Father John the Dwarf; Our Holy Mother Matrona of Constantinople; Our Holy Father Euthymius of Docheiariou and his disciple, Neophytus; St. Simon Metaphrastes; Our Holy Mother Theoctista of Paros.

Saint Matrona, Abbess of Constantinople was born in the city of Perge Pamphylia (Asia Minor) in the fifth century. They gave her in marriage to a wealthy man named Dometian. When her daughter Theodota was born, they resettled in Constantinople. The twenty-five-year-old Matrona loved to walk to the temple of God. She spent entire days there, ardently praying to the Lord and weeping for her sins. At the church the saint met two pious Eldresses, Eugenia and Susanna, who from their youth lived there in asceticism, work and prayer. Matrona began to imitate the God-pleasing life of an ascetic, humbling her flesh by abstinence and fasting, for which she had to endure criticism by her husband. Her soul yearned for a full renunciation of the world. After long hesitation, St Matrona decided to leave her family and entreated the Lord to reveal whether her intent was pleasing to Him. The Lord heard the prayer of His servant. Once, during a light sleep, she had a dream that she had fled from her husband, who was in pursuit of her. The saint concealed herself in a crowd of monks approaching her, and her husband did not notice her. Matrona accepted this dream as a divine directive to enter a men's monastery, where her husband would not think to look for her. She gave her fifteen-year-old daughter to be raised by the Eldress Susanna, and having cut her own hair and disguised herself in men's attire, she went to the monastery of St Bassion (October 10). There the Nun Matrona passed herself off as the eunuch Babylos and was accepted as one of the brethren. Apprehensive lest the monks learn that she was a woman, the saint passed her time in constant quietude and much work. The brethren marveled at the great virtue of Babylos. One time the saint was working in the monastery vineyard with the other monks. The novice monk Barnabas noted that her ear-lobe was pierced and asked about it. "It is necessary, brother, to till the soil and not watch other people, which is not proper for a monk," answered the saint. After a certain while it was revealed in a dream to St Bassion, the igumen of the monastery, that the eunuch Babylos was a woman. It was also revealed to Acacius, igumen of the nearby Abraham monastery. St Bassion summoned St Matrona and asked in a threatening voice why she had entered the monastery, to corrupt the monks, or to shame the monastery. With tears the saint told the igumen about all her past life, about her husband, hostile to her efforts and prayers, and about the vision directing her to go to the men's monastery. Convinced that her intent was pure and chaste, St Bassion sent St Matrona to a women's monastery in the city of Emesa. In this monastery the saint dwelt for many years, inspiring the sisters by her high monastic achievement. When the Abbess died, by the unanimous wish of the nuns the Nun Matrona became head of the convent. The fame of her virtuous activities, and miraculous gift of healing, which she acquired from the Lord, spread far beyond the walls of the monastery. Dometian also heard about the deeds of the nun. When St Matrona learned that her husband was coming to the monastery and wanted to see her, she secretly went off to Jerusalem, and then to Mount Sinai, and from there to Beirut, where she settled in an abandoned pagan temple. The local inhabitants learned of her seclusion, and began to come to her. The holy ascetic turned many from their pagan impiety and converted them to Christ. Women and girls began to settle by the dwelling of the nun and soon a new monastery was formed. Having fulfilled the will of God, revealed to her in a dream, the saint left Beirut and journeyed to Constantinople where she learned that her husband had died. With the blessing of her spiritual Father, St Bassion, the ascetic founded a women's monastery in Constantinople, to which sisters from the Beirut convent she founded also transferred. The

Constantinople monastery of St Matrona was known for its strict monastic rule and the virtuous life of its sisters. In extreme old age St Matrona had a vision of the heavenly Paradise and the place prepared for her there after 75 years of monastic labor. At the age of one hundred, St Matrona blessed the sisters, and quietly fell asleep in the Lord.

Troparion — Tone 8: The image of God was truly preserved in you, O Mother, / for you took up the Cross and followed Christ. / By so doing, you taught us to disregard the flesh, for it passes away; / but to care instead for the soul, since it is immortal. / Therefore your spirit, O holy Mother Matróna, rejoices with the angels.

Kontakion — Tone 8: You passed through the storm of life without faltering, chosen and godly Mother Matróna, / guided to the harbor of life, where you sing hymns to the Deliverer. / You ever pray that Christ may grant us grace and mercy; / you preserve the flock which you painstakingly gathered!

St. Nectarios (Anastasios Kaphalas), metropolitan of Pentapolis - born in Greece in 1846. His family was very poor, so he left home at the age of 14 to seek work. He found a job in Constantinople, but he received very low wages and ate poorly and only wore rags. Seeing that his master received many things by mail, he decided to write a letter for help. He had no friends in the world, and the post did not go to his mother's village. In his childlike faith, he decided to write to Christ to tell him his needs, writing on the envelope: "To the Lord Jesus Christ in Heaven". On his way to post it a merchant who knew him saw him and offered to post his letter. Reading the address and being overcome by curiosity, the merchant opened the letter and read the boy's plea to God for help. Greatly moved, he put money in an envelope and sent it anonymously to the boy, who gave thanks to God. Young Anastasios visited the Holy Places when he was very young. On the way he calmed a terrible storm through his prayers. Then, in his twenties, he entered a monastery, being tonsured in 1875 with the name Lazarus. Because of his virtues and piety he soon became a deacon and then a priest. He left his monastery because of Moslem rule and went to Egypt where he was elected the Metropolitan of Pentapolis. He lived a holy life and because of this was slandered by others, even his brother-bishops in the See of Alexandria. Thus, he was suspended from his diocese. Nevertheless, the saint bore this slandering humbly. When the people, greatly upset by his suspension, began to grow restless, he secretly left for Greece so as not to be the cause of dissension. He found there, however, that the slanders had travelled ahead of him, and that the Church authorities would not give him a position. Some people who had come to love the Saint very much used their influence to have him appointed Dean of a seminary in Athens. The busy city life was not pleasing to the saint and he looked for a quiet place where he could dedicate himself to prayer. Finding a disused convent on the island of Aegina he rebuilt the church and gathered a few nuns around him. Many came to confess their sins and receive wise counsel. He lived here until his death in 1920. On the day of his repose, the hospital in which he died was filled with a beautiful fragrance. An item of the saint's clothing, placed by a nurse on the bed of a sick man while they prepared the saint's body for burial, was a source of healing. His relics were incorrupt for many years after his repose, even after the impious Archbishop of Athens, Chrysostom, ordered that the relics be exposed to the elements for two days so they would dissolve. A friend of the saint's, a doctor, opened the relics in 1934 and was surprised to find the saint was easily recognisable to any who knew him during his life.

10 / 23 November - The Holy Apostles Olympas, Erastus, Quartus, Herodion, Sosipater and Tertius - They were all among the Seventy. The last three are also commemorated elsewhere: Herodion on April 8th, Sosipater on April 28th and Tertius on October 30th. Ss Olympas and Herodion were followers of the Apostle Peter and, when Peter suffered, they suffered too, being beheaded at Nero's command. Erastus was steward of the Church in Jerusalem, and later became Bishop of Paneas in Palestine. Quartus was bishop in Beirut; he suffered greatly and brought many to the Christian faith. Sosipater was bishop in Iconium, and Tertius followed him as bishop there. They strove in spirit, became victors and were crowned with wreaths of glory. The Holy Martyr Orestes; St. Nonnus, Bishop of Heliopolis.

11 / 24 November - Fast Day - The Holy and Great Martyr Menas - An Egyptian by birth and a soldier by profession, St Menas, as a true Christian, could not bear to look upon the foul offering of sacrifice to idols, so he left the army and the town, the society of men and everything else, and went to a deserted mountain. It was easier for Menas to live with the wild beasts than with pagans. One day, Menas looked from afar in spirit at a pagan festival in the town of Cotyaeus, then went to the town and, before them all, confessed his faith in Christ the living God, denouncing idolatry and paganism as falsehood and darkness. The governor of that town, one Pyrrhus, asked who and what he was. The saint replied: 'My fatherland is Egypt; my name is Menas. I was an officer, but, seeing the worship of idols, I rejected your honours. I have come now to proclaim my Christ before you all as the living God, that He may reveal me as His servant in the Kingdom of God.' Hearing this, Pyrrhus put holy Menas to harsh torture. He was flogged, flayed with iron flails, burned with torches and tortured in many other ways, finally being beheaded. His body was burned to prevent Christians taking it, but they did succeed in rescuing some bits from the flames. They buried these remains with care, and they were later taken to Alexandria and buried there, a church being built over them. St Menas suffered in about 304, and entered into the Kingdom of Christ. He was and remains a great wonderworker in both lives: both on earth and in heaven. Whoever has glorified Menas or invoked his aid with faith in time of need has received help. He has often appeared as a soldier on horseback, to help the faithful or punish the faithless. The Holy Martyr Stephen of Decani, King of Serbia; The Holy Martyrs Victor and Stephanis; The Holy Martyr Vincent the Deacon; Our Holy Father Theodore the Studite; St Urosica, Prince of Serbia; St. Martin the Merciful, bishop of Tours.

12 / 25 November- St John the Merciful - Born on the island of Cyprus of a princely family, his father, Epiphanius, being the governor, he was brought up from childhood as a true Christian. Under pressure from his parents, he married and had children. But, by the providence of God, both his wife and children went from this world to the next. Famed for his compassion and devotion, John was chosen as Patriarch of Alexandria in the time of the Emperor Heraclius. He governed the Church in Alexandria for ten years as a true pastor, guarding it from pagans and heretics, and was a model of meekness, compassion and love for his fellow-men. 'If you seek nobility', he said, 'seek it not in blood but in virtue, for in virtue lies true nobility.' All the saints are distinguished by compassion, but St John was utterly dedicated to this great virtue. Celebrating the Liturgy one day,

the words of Christ: 'If thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there remember that thy brother hath aught against thee ...' (Matt. 5:23), came into the Patriarch's mind, and he remembered that one of the clergy in the church there had a grudge against him. He left the holy gifts, went up to the priest, fell before his feet and begged his forgiveness. As soon as he had made his peace with that man, he returned to the Table of Preparation. Another time, on the way to the Church of Ss Cyrus and John, it happened that he was met by a poor widow, who started speaking to him of her poverty. The Patriarch's companions were bored by the woman's lengthy lamenting, and urged the bishop to hurry to the church for the service, and listen to the woman when it was over. St John replied: 'And how will God obey me, if I don't obey Him?', and he would not move from the spot until he had heard the widow out. When the Persians invaded Egypt, Patriarch John took ship to flee from the assault. He fell ill on the voyage and, arriving in Cyprus, died at his birthplace in 620, entering into the immortal kingdom of his Lord. His wonderworking relics were first taken to Constantinople, then to Budapest and finally came to rest in Presburg. The Holy Prophet Ahijah; Our Holy Father Nilus of Sinai; Our Holy Father Nilus the Outpurer of Myrrh; St. Lebuin, monk of Deventer (d.777); St. Machan, bishop of Aberdeenshire.

13 / 26 November - Fast Day - St John Chrysostom - the Golden-Tongued - He was born in Antioch in the year 347, his father's name being Secundus and his mother's Anthusa. Studying Greek philosophy, John became disgusted with Hellenic paganism and turned to the Christian faith as the one and all-embracing truth. John was baptised by Meletius, Patriarch of Antioch, and, after that, his parents were also baptised. After their death, John became a monk and began to live in strict asceticism. He wrote a book: 'On the Priesthood', after which the holy Apostles John and Peter appeared to him, prophesying for him great service, great grace and also great suffering. When the time came for him to be ordained priest, an angel of God appeared at the same time to Patriarch Flavian (Meletius's successor) and to John himself. When the Patriarch ordained him, a shining white dove was seen above John's head. Renowned for his wisdom, his asceticism and the power of his words, John was, at the desire of Emperor Arcadius, chosen as Patriarch of Constantinople. He governed the Church for six years as Patriarch with unequalled zeal and wisdom, sending missionaries to the pagan Celts and Scythians and purging the Church of simony, deposing many bishops who were given to this vice. He extended the Church's charitable works, wrote a rite for the Holy Liturgy, put heretics to shame, denounced the Empress Eudoxia, interpreted the Scriptures with his golden mind and tongue and left to the Church many precious books of sermons. The people glorified him; the jealous loathed him; the Empress twice had him sent into exile. He spent three years in exile, and died on Holy Cross Day, September 14th, 407, in a place called Comana in Armenia. The holy Apostles John and Peter again appeared to him at the time of his death, and also the holy martyr Basiliscus (see May 22nd), in whose church he received Communion for the last time. 'Glory to God for everything!' were his last words, and with them the soul of Chrysostom the Patriarch entered into Paradise. Of his relics, the head is preserved in the Church of the Dormition in Moscow, and the body in the Vatican in Rome.

Tropar to St. John Chrysostom, Tone 8: Grace shining forth from thy mouth like a beacon hath illumined the universe, and disclosed to the world treasures of uncovetousness, and shown us the heights of humility; but while instructing by thy words, O Father John Chrysostom, intercede with the Word, Christ our God, to save our souls.

Kondak for St. John Chrysostom, Tone 6: From the heavens hast thou received divine grace and by thy lips thou dost teach all to worship the One God in Trinity, O John Chrysostom, all-blessed righteous one. Rightly do we acclaim thee, for thou art a teacher revealing things divine. The Holy Martyrs Antoninus, Nicephorus, Herman and Manetha; Our Holy Father, the Martyr Damascene; St. Quintianus & St. Euprasius, bishops of Clermont, Gaul.

14 / 27 November - The Holy Apostle Philip - He was born in Bethsaida near the Sea of Galilee, as were Peter and Andrew. Instructed in the Holy Scriptures from his youth, Philip immediately responded to the call of Christ and followed Him (John 1:43). After the descent of the Holy Spirit, Philip preached the Gospel with zeal in many regions of Asia and in Greece, where the Jews sought to kill him but the Lord saved him by the might of His wonders. The Jewish leaders, whose aim it was to kill Philip, were suddenly blinded, and found themselves in total darkness. There was a great earthquake, and the earth opened and swallowed up Philip's wicked persecutors. Many other wonders were wrought, especially the healing of the sick, by which many of the pagans came to faith in Christ. In the Phrygian town of Hierapolis, St Philip worked for the Gospel with John the Theologian, his own sister Mariamna and the Apostle Bartholomew. There was in that place a dangerous snake, which the pagans fed with care and worshipped as a god. God's Apostle destroyed the snake with prayer as though with a spear. This called forth the fury of the benighted people, and the wicked pagans seized Philip and crucified him upside-down on a tree, and then crucified Bartholomew also. At this, the earth opened and swallowed up the judge and many others with him. The terrified people ran to take the crucified apostles down, but they succeeded only in taking Bartholomew down alive; Philip had already breathed his last. Bartholomew made Stachys bishop for those baptised in the city. Stachys had been cured of blindness and baptised by Philip, having been blind for forty years. St Philip's relics were later taken to Rome. This wonderful Apostle suffered in the year 86, in the time of the Emperor Domitian; St Gregory Palamas, Archbishop of Salonica; St Justinian, Emperor of Byzantium;

St Dyfrig, bishop in Hereford & Gwent, hermit of Bardsey Island (c.550).- St. Dyfrig was the son of the unmarried Princess Efrddyl, daughter of King Peibio Clafrog (the Leprous) of Eryng. The King was furious when he discovered his daughter was pregnant, some say and he tried to destroy her by casting her into the River. He failed and Dyfrig was born at Chilstone (Child's Stone) in the parish of Madley (Herefords), traditionally in the mid-6th century. When the baby Dyfrig kissed his grandfather, he cured him of his leprosy and the King Peibio quickly grew to love him. He gave him the whole area around Madley called Ynys Efrddyl. Here, Dyfrig, who had grown up a Christian, founded a monastery at Hennllann (Hentland) where he entered the religious life. After seven years, he founded a second establishment at Moccas and, at these two places, he became the tutor of many saints: Teilo, Samson, Ufelfyw, Merchwyn, Elwredd, Gwnwyn, Cynwal, Arthfoddw, Cynnwr, Arwystl, Inabwy, Cynfran, Gwrfan, Elhaern, Iddneu, Gwrddogwy, Gwernabwy, Ieuan, Aeddau and Cynfarch amongst them. Dyfrig became Bishop of Eryng, probably from Caer-Eryng (Weston-under-Penyard) and then Bishop of the whole of Glywysing &

Gwent. Later, he was supposedly, raised to be Archbishop of Wales by St. Germanus, with his base at Caerleon. In this capacity, he is said have consecrated St. Deiniol as Bishop of Bangor Fawr and to have crowned the High-King Arthur at Caer Vudi (variously thought to be Silchester or Woodchester). Dyfrig was a great friend of St. Illtud and supported him in the foundation of Llanilltud Fawr Abbey (Llantwit Major) which he often visited. He would always spend lent on Ynys Byr (Caldy Island) nearby and consecrated St. Samson as Bishop of Dol there in AD 521. He also liked to call upon St. Cadog at Llancarfan and had a small cell built a mile away where the Fynnon Ddyfrig still survives. In AD 545, Archbishop Dyfrig attended the Synod of Llandewi Brefi in order to condemn the Pelagian Heresy and, with St. Deiniol, persuaded St. Dewi to also attend. The latter spoke so eloquently that Dyfrig resigned his Archiepiscopate in Dewi's favour. Dewi moved the Archiepiscopal See to Mynyw (St. Davids) while Dyfrig retired to the Abbey on Ynys Enlli (Bardsey). He was not there long before he died (on 14th November) and was buried within the monastic confines. His body was later translated to Llandaff Cathedral, in 1120, where his shrine can still be seen today. St. Dyfrig is amongst the most important of early Welsh saints, despite the fact that the area in which he was active is now part of the English county of Herefordshire.

REFLECTION

Holy Scripture clearly and irrefutably witnesses that angels ceaselessly communicate with this world. The Holy Scripture and Holy Tradition of the Orthodox Church teaches us the names of the seven leaders of the angelic powers: Michael, Gabriel, Raphael, Uriel, Salathiel, Jegudiel, and Barachiel (an eighth, Jeremiel, is sometimes included).

``Michael" in the Hebrew language means ``Who is like unto God?" or ``Who is equal to God?" St. Michael has been depicted from earliest Christian times as a commander, who holds in his right hand a spear with which he attacks Lucifer, Satan, and in his left hand a green palm branch. At the top of the spear there is a linen ribbon with a red cross. The Archangel Michael is especially considered to be the Guardian of the Orthodox Faith and a fighter against heresies.

``Gabriel" means ``Man of God" or ``Might of God." He is the herald of the mysteries of God, especially the Incarnation of God and all other mysteries related to it. He is depicted as follows: In his right hand, he holds a lantern with a lighted taper inside, and in his left hand, a mirror of green jasper. The mirror signifies the wisdom of God as a hidden mystery.

``Raphael" means ``God's healing" or ``God the Healer." (Tobit 3:17, 12:15). Raphael is depicted leading Tobit (who is carrying a fish caught in the Tigris) with his right hand, and holding a physician's alabaster jar in his left hand.

``Uriel" means ``Fire of God," or ``Light of God" (III Esdras 3:1, 5:20). He is depicted holding a sword against the Persians in his right hand, and a fiery flame in his left.

``Salathiel" means ``Intercessor of God" (III Esdras 5:16). He is depicted with his face and eyes lowered, holding his hands on his bosom in prayer.

``Jegudiel" means ``Glorifier of God." He is depicted bearing a golden wreath in his right hand and a triple-tongued whip in his left hand.

``Barachiel" means ``Blessing of God." He is depicted holding a white rose in his hand against his breast.

``Jeremiel" means ``God's exaltation." He is venerated as an inspirer and awakener of exalted thoughts that raise a man toward God (III Ezra 4:36).

CONTEMPLATION

Contemplate the Apostle Paul's miraculous resurrecting of Eutychus (Acts 20): 1. How Paul preached in a house at Troas by night; 2. How the young man Eutychus drifted into a deep sleep, and fell from a third-story window to his death; 3. How Paul came down, embraced him and restored him to life.

HOMILY - on how Christ brings to life men who are dead in sin

Even when we were dead in sins, [God] hath quickened us together with Christ (Ephesians 2:5).

God first brought Christ to life: He first raised Him as a man from the grave. And Christ is our Head. Thus, in order to resurrect the whole generation of the faithful, it was necessary to resurrect the Head first. When the Head resurrected, then the resurrection of the whole body, with all its members, was assured. Therefore, the Apostle Paul speaks of our resurrection and glorification as a completed thing. So it is that God resurrected us also with Christ: *And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus* (Ephesians 2:6). God resurrected us-together with Christ as man-who once were dead in sins, slain by our sins. He not only makes us worthy of resurrection with the Lord Jesus Christ, but He also puts us on the same level with the resurrected Christ in the heights of heaven, above the whole realm of incorporeal spirits. Brethren, God did not come to earth for the sake of some petty, inconsequential thing, but for something completely unique, something greater than great. When an earthly king visits a place in his country, the benefit of his visit is felt long after. The Lord, the King, visited mankind on the earth and the benefit of that visit will be felt to the end of time. That visit means life instead of death for us, glory instead of shame, closeness to God instead of estrangement, and blessing instead of a curse. In other words, that visit means our resurrection from the dead, and our eternal reign in the heavens with Christ.

O Lord, thanks be to Thee; O Lord, glory be to Thee.

To Thee be glory and praise forever. Amen.