

**31<sup>st</sup> Sunday After Pentecost**  
**Afterfeast of Theophany,**  
**St Theophan the Recluse**  
**10 / 23 January**



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

**Theophany of our Lord, Troparion, Tone I** — When Thou, O Lord, wast baptized in the Jordan, / the worship of the Trinity was made manifest; / for, the voice of the Father bare witness unto Thee, / calling Thee His beloved Son; / and the Spirit in the form of a dove / confirmed the certainty of His word. / O Christ our God, Who hast appeared and enlightened the worlds, // glory be to Thee!

**Troparion — Tone 8:** O guide of Orthodoxy, teacher of piety and purity, / ascetic of Vysha, divinely wise and holy hierarch Theophan: / By your writings you explained the Word of God, / and showed the way of salvation unto all the faithful. / Entreat Christ God that our souls may be saved.

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

**Kontakion of the Feast, Tone IV** — Thou hast appeared today to the whole world, / and Thy light, O Lord, hath been signed upon us / who hymn Thee with understanding. / Thou hast come, Thou hast appeared, / the Light unapproachable.

**Kontakion — Tone 4:** Holy hierarch Theophan, namesake of Theophany, / you enlightened many people by your teachings. / Now that you stand before the throne of the Holy Trinity / together with the angels, / pray without ceasing for us all.

**Matins Gospel IX**

**Epistle : Ephesians 4: 7-13**

7: But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ. 8: Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. 9: (Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth? 10: He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things.) 11: And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; 12: For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: 13: Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.

**THE MEASURE OF CHRIST'S GIFT**

But what does He say? 'According to the measure of Christ's gift' ...If then this or that man possesses any superiority in any spiritual gift, do not grieve at it, since his labour also is greater. He who had received five talents, had five required of him, whilst he who had received the two, brought only two, and yet received no less reward than the other. And therefore the Apostle here also encourages the hearer on the same ground, showing that gifts are bestowed not for the honour of one above another, but for the work of the Church, 'for the perfecting of the saints for the work of ministering to the building up of the body of Christ' ...By this He shows that it is not of his own intrinsic merit that one has received more and another less, but that it is for the sake of others, as God Himself has measured it.

*St. John Chrysostom. Homily XI on Ephesians IV, B#5, p. 103.*

for the Hierarch: Heb. 7:26 - 8:2

## Gospel St. Matthew 4: 12-17

12: Now when Jesus had heard that John was cast into prison, he departed into Galilee; 13: And leaving Nazareth, he came and dwelt in Capernaum, which is upon the sea coast, in the borders of Zabulon and Nephthali: 14: That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, saying, 15: The land of Zabulon, and the land of Nephthali, by the way of the sea, beyond Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles; 16: The people which sat in darkness saw great light; and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death light is sprung up. 17: From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

### UPON THOSE WHO SAT IN THE REGION AND SHADOW OF DEATH LIGHT HAS DAWNED

Why does He depart? Again instructing us not to go to meet temptations but to give place and withdraw ourselves ...He retires to Capernaum; at once fulfilling the prophesy (Isa. 9:1-2) ...by plotting against His forerunner and casting him into prison, they thrust out Christ into Galilee of the Gentiles ...Then, implying that they did not of themselves seek and find, but that God showed Himself to them from above, He says to them, 'Light has dawned,' that is the light of itself sprang up and shone forth: it was not that they first ran to the light ...For as persons not even knowing where to put a step forward, so they sat, overtaken by the darkness ...When He began preaching, He Himself also taught this same doctrine, which the other used to preach; and no word as yet concerning Himself. Because it was for the time a great thing even for this to be received, forasmuch as they had not as yet the proper opinion about Him.

*St. John Chrysostom. Homily XIV on Matthew IV, 1, 2. B#54, pp.86-87*

the Hierarch: John 10:9-16

### Saints of the week

**10 / 23 January — Afterfeast of Theophany – Saint Theophan the Recluse, Bishop of Tambov** George Govorov, the future Saint Theophan, was born on January 10, 1815 in the village of Chernavsk in the Orlov province where his father was a priest. At first, George attended a primary school at Liven, then a military school. From 1837-1841 he studied at the Kiev Theological Academy, and probably visited the Monastery of the Caves several times. In these surroundings, it was not surprising that he received the monastic tonsure while he was still a student. After graduation Hieromonk Theophan was appointed rector of Kiev's church schools, and later became rector of the seminary in Novgorod. Before he retired from teaching, Father Theophan served as a professor and Assistant Inspector at the Petersburg Academy.

Saint Theophan was not completely happy with academic work, so he asked to be relieved of his duties. He was assigned to be a member of the Russian Mission in Jerusalem. After being raised to the rank of Archimandrite, he became Rector of Olnets Seminary. Soon he was assigned as the chief priest of the embassy church in Constantinople. Saint Theophan was eventually recalled to Russia to become rector of the Petersburg Academy, and supervisor of religious education in the capital's secular schools.

On May 9, 1859 Saint Theophan was consecrated as Bishop of Tambov, where he established a diocesan school for girls. During his time in Tambov he came to love the secluded Vysha Monastery in his diocese. In 1863 he was transferred to Vladimir and remained there for three years. He also established a diocesan school for girls at Vladimir.

The holy bishop visited parishes throughout his diocese serving, preaching, restoring churches, and sharing the joys and sorrows of his flock. It was very difficult for Bishop Theophan to live in the world and become involved with vain worldly disputes. Many abused his trust, but he could not bring himself to chastise anyone. Instead, he left such unpleasant tasks to the Archpriest of his cathedral.

He was present at the uncovering of the relics of Saint Tikhon of Zadonsk in 1861, and this made a tremendous impression on him, for he had much in common with that saint. He had loved Saint Tikhon from early childhood, and always spoke about him with great enthusiasm. When Saint Tikhon was glorified as a saint on August 13, Bishop Theophan's joy knew no bounds. In 1866 his request to be relieved of his duties as Bishop of Vladimir was granted. He was appointed as Superior of the Vysha Monastery, but soon resigned from that position. He was permitted to live there and to celebrate services whenever he wished. He also received a pension of 1000 rubles.

As he prepared to leave his diocese, he wished to focus on his own salvation, and to concentrate on undisturbed communion with God. On July 24, 1866 he bade his diocese farewell, leaving the world for a life of reclusion, and to devote himself to writing spiritual books. Through these books, Saint Theophan has become the spiritual benefactor of all Orthodox Christians. Although he sought the Kingdom of God and His righteousness (Mt. 6:33), a reputation as a writer of great significance for the whole world was also added to him.

Bishop Theophan wrote many books, but received no profits from their sale. He tried to keep them as inexpensive as possible, and they quickly sold out. He wrote about topics which others before him had not fully treated, such as how to live a Christian life, how to overcome sinful habits, and how to avoid despair. He tried to explain the steps of spiritual perfection systematically, as one who had himself gone through these various steps. Some of his books include THE SPIRITUAL LIFE AND HOW TO BE ATTUNED TO IT, THE PATH TO SALVATION, and LETTERS ON THE SPIRITUAL LIFE. He also translated the PHILOKALIA in five volumes, and THE SERMONS OF ST SIMEON THE NEW THEOLOGIAN.

For the first six years in the monastery, Bishop Theophan attended all the services, including the early Liturgy. He stood still in church with his eyes closed so that he would not be distracted. He often celebrated Liturgy on Sundays and Feast Days.

Beginning in 1872, he cut off all relationships with people (except for his confessor) and no longer left his cell to attend church. He built a small chapel in his quarters and dedicated it to the Lord's Baptism. For ten years he served there on Sundays and Feast Days. For the last eleven years of his life he served every day by himself. Sometimes he would sing, and sometimes he kept completely silent.

Whenever anyone visited him on business, Bishop Theophan would reply with as few words as possible, then immerse himself in prayer. If anyone sent him money, he would distribute it to the poor, keeping only a small portion to purchase books.

Whenever he was not occupied with writing or praying, the reclusive bishop worked at carpentry or painting icons. He received from twenty to forty letters each day, and he answered all of them. He was able to discern each writer's spiritual condition, then give detailed answers to the questions of those who were struggling for the salvation of their souls.

His eyesight deteriorated in his latter years, but he did not curtail his work because of it. In the evening, his cell attendant would prepare everything for the bishop to serve Liturgy the next morning. After finishing the Liturgy, Bishop Theophan would knock on the wall to signal the cell attendant to serve him tea. On days when there was no fasting, he would eat lunch at 1:00 P.M. This consisted of one egg and a glass of milk. At four o'clock he would have some tea, and then no more food that day.

Bishop Theophan began to get weaker at the beginning of 1894. He was still writing on the afternoon of January 6, but when the cell attendant came to check on him at 4:30 he found that the bishop had departed to the Lord.

Saint Theophan's body lay in the small church in his cell for three days, then three more days in the cathedral. There was no trace of corruption, however. He was laid to rest in the Kazan church of the Vysha Monastery.

Several of Saint Theophan's books have been translated into English, and are reliable spiritual guides for Orthodox Christians of today. Saint Theophan's gift was the ability to present the wisdom of the Fathers in terms which modern people can understand. Since he lived close to our own time, many readers find his books "more approachable" than the earlier patristic literature. He treats the life of the soul and the life of the body as a unified whole, not as two separate elements, and reveals to people the path of salvation.

**St Gregory, Bishop of Nyssa** - The brother of St Basil the Great, he was at first a married priest, but when his wife, the blessed Theosevia, died, he was chosen and consecrated as Bishop of Nyssa. He was distinguished by great secular learning and spiritual experience, and was a great preacher, a translator of the Scriptures and a theologian. As a result of his opposition to the Arians, they did everything in their power to crush him, regarding him as their chief enemy. They were so successful in this that, in the reign of the Emperor Valens, their confederate, they managed to depose him from his episcopal seat and drive him into exile. This was in 376. The holy Father spent several years in patient exile, enduring poverty and humiliation. In 381, he took part in the Second Ecumenical Council, and it is thought that he formulated the final part of the Creed concerning the Holy Spirit. Finally, finishing his life at a great age in about the year 395, he entered into the Kingdom of God and has been commemorated through all succeeding ages as a great light in the Church. Our Holy Father Ammon of Egypt.

**11 / 24 January — Afterfeast of Theophany — Our Holy Father Theodosius the Great** - The first founder and organiser of cenobitic monasticism, he was born of devout parents in Cappadocia, in the village of Mogarisses. As a young man, he visited Simeon Stylites, who blessed him and predicted for him great spiritual glory. Theodosius set out in search of a place in which to found a monastery. He took with him a censer containing cold charcoal and incense. At the place where the charcoal suddenly ignited of itself, he stopped, settled down and began to lead a life of asceticism. There very quickly gathered round him many monks of different nationalities and with different languages. He therefore built a church for each language-group, so that services were conducted and God praised at the same moment in Greek, Armenian, Georgian and so forth. But on a day when they were to receive Communion, all the brethren gathered in the great church, where the service was conducted in Greek. The refectory was common to all; they held all possessions in common, laboured in common, endured in common and often hungered in common. Theodosius was a sublime example to all the monks; an example in work, in prayer, in fasting, in vigils and in all the Christian virtues. And God endowed him with the gifts of wonder-working, to heal the sick, to be present and help from a distance, to tame wild beasts, to predict the future and to increase bread and wheat. Prayer was on his lips day and night. He entered peacefully into rest in the Lord in the year 529, at the age of 105. Blessed Michael of Klops; Hieromartyr Hyginus, pope of Rome (142).

**12 / 25 January — Afterfeast of Theophany — The Holy Martyr Tatiana of Rome** - She was a Christian, of an eminent family, a deaconess in the Church. After the death of the Emperor Heliogabalus, the Emperor Alexander came to the throne in Rome. His mother, Julia Mamaea, was a Christian, but the Emperor himself was unsure and hesitant about his faith; an uncertainty that was clearly expressed by his keeping statues of both Christ and Apollo, of both Abraham and Orpheus, in his palace. His chief advisors took it into their own hands to persecute the Christians without his orders. When the virgin Tatiana was led to martyrdom, she prayed for her executioners. And lo, their eyes were opened and they saw four angels around the martyr. Seeing this, eight of them were converted to Christ, for which they were tortured and killed. St Tatiana's martyrdom was long-drawn-out: she was flogged, parts of her flesh were cut off, she was sawn with an iron saw, and then, all disfigured and bleeding, was flung that evening into prison to be brought out on the following day for further torture. But God sent His angel to the prison, to give her courage and heal her wounds. Tatiana, therefore, appeared before her torturers each morning in perfect health. She was thrown to a lion, but the lion became tame before her and did her no harm. Her hair was shorn, from an idea that occurred to their godless minds that some sorcery might be hidden in it, some magical strength. Finally she was led out, together with her father, and the two were beheaded. In such manner this heroic maiden finished her earthly life in about the year 225, and was crowned with an immortal crown of glory. She had the weak body of a woman, but a manly and valiant spirit.

**The Holy Martyr Peter Apselemus** - A native of Eleutheropolis in Palestine, he suffered as a youth for the Christian faith in the year 311, under the Emperor Maximian. After terrible tortures, he was condemned to death. Hearing the sentence pronounced, he cried out with great joy: 'My one desire is to die for my God!' He was crucified, like his Lord, and gave up his spirit on the cross.

**The Icon of the Mother of God, "She who gives suck"** - This is the name given to the icon of the Mother of God that St Sava of Serbia brought from the monastery of St Sava the Sanctified near Jerusalem and placed in his hermitage at Karyes on the Holy Mountain. In that way a prophecy, made 800 years previously by St Sava the Sanctified, was fulfilled—that one day a Serbian priest called Sava would come and would be given the icon and his staff. When Sava of Serbia visited the community of St Sava the Sanctified, the monks called to mind the prophecy of their founder and gave the icon and the staff to Sava. The icon was placed at the right-hand side of the Royal Doors in the hermitage, and the staff in a cell which received the name 'Pateritsa' (the father's rod), also situated at Karyes.; Our Holy Mother Theodora; St. Benedict Biscop, abbot of Wearmouth (689-90), who introduced glass windows to England and raised St. Bede; in Cornwall, St. Alan, abbot of Erbin, c.

**13 / 26 January — Afterfeast of Theophany - The Holy Martyrs Hermylas and Stratonicus** - The Emperor Licinius launched a violent persecution against the Christians. St Hermylas, a Christian and a deacon in one of the churches, was arrested and condemned to death. When he was told that he was being taken out to martyrdom, he rejoiced greatly. The Emperor threatened him in vain; Hermylas openly confessed his faith in Christ and, in reply to the Emperor's threats, said: "The Lord is my helper, I will not fear what man doeth unto me" (Ps. 117:6). After harsh torture, Hermylas was flung into prison. But the jailer was one Stratonicus, a secret Christian who was filled with whole-hearted compassion for Hermylas's sufferings. When he too appeared before the Emperor as a Christian, Licinius ordered that they both be thrown into the Danube. So Hermylas and Stratonicus were bound together in one net and cast into the river. After three days the river threw their bodies onto the bank, and fellow-Christians took them and buried them a little way outside Belgrade. These glorious martyrs suffered for Christ and entered into glory in the year 315.

**St James, Bishop of Nisibis** - In summer in an open field and in winter in a cave, St James lived as a hermit. On one occasion he went down into the city of Nisibis in Mesopotamia, to look into the faith and life of the Christians, and was there elected by the people as their bishop. He took part in the First Ecumenical Council in 325 and defended Orthodoxy against the Arians. It happened at one time that the pagan Persian army attacked Nisibis. St James went out onto the ramparts with the banner-icon from the church, himself raising it aloft and walking round the ramparts fearless of the arrows the enemy was aiming at him. Walking thus, the saint prayed to God to save the city and the faithful in it by sending flies and mosquitoes on the Persians, thus driving them away from the city walls. He did not, we see, seek the destruction of the enemy but some sort of catastrophe, no matter what, even some quite small occurrence, that would overcome them and remove them from the vicinity. God heard the prayer of His chosen one and sent a plague of flies and mosquitoes on the Persians, driving them away and saving the city of Nisibis. St James lived long and with honour, and died peacefully in great old age in the year 350.

**St Hilary, Bishop of Poitiers** - An ardent fighter against Arianism in the West, he suffered greatly for his choice of Orthodoxy. Of his writings on many subjects, the most important are those on the Holy Trinity. He entered into rest in the Lord in the year 367; Our Holy Father Maximus of Kapsokalyvia; in Cornwall, St. Erbin (Hermes), c and St. Elian (Alan), hermit. Australia Day.

**St. Kentigern Mungo** - Bishop, founder of the See of Glasgow, born about 518; died at Glasgow, 13 January, 603. His mother Thenaw was daughter of a British prince, Lothus (from whom the province of Lothian was called); his father's name is unknown. According to Jocelyn's life of Kentigern, the saint was born at Culross in Fife, and brought up until manhood by St. Serf (or Servanus) at his monastery there; but Skene shows that this connection between the two saints involves an anachronism, as St. Serf really belongs to the following century. At the age of twenty-five we find Kentigern (the name means "head chief", but he was popularly known as Mungo — in Cymric, Mwyn-gu, or "dear one"), beginning his missionary labours at Cathures, on the Clyde, the site of modern Glasgow. The Christian King of Strathclyde, Roderick Hael, welcomed the saint, and procured his consecration as bishop, which took place about 540. For some thirteen years he laboured in the district, living a most austere life in a cell at the confluence of the Clyde and the Molendinar, and making many converts by his holy example and his preaching. A large community grew up around him, became known as "Clasgu" (meaning the "dear family") and ultimately grew into the town and city of Glasgow. About 553 a strong anti-Christian movement in Strathclyde compelled Kentigern to leave the district, and he retired to Wales, staying for a time with St. David at Menevia, and afterwards founding a large monastery at Llanelwy, now St. Asaph's, of which he appointed the holy monk Asaph superior in succession to himself. In 573 the battle of Arthuret secured the triumph of the Christian cause in Cumbria, and Kentigern, at the earnest appeal of King Roderick, returned thither, accompanied by many of his Welsh disciples. For eight years he fixed his see at Hoddam in Dumfriesshire, evangelizing thence the districts of Galloway and Cumberland. About 581 he finally returned to Glasgow, and here, a year or two later, he was visited by St. Columba, who was at that time labouring in Strathclyde. The two saints embraced, held long converse, and exchanged their pastoral staves. Kentigern was buried on the spot where now stands the beautiful cathedral dedicated in his honour. His remains are said still to rest in the crypt.

**14 / 27 January — St Sava, Archbishop of Serbia** - The son of Stefan Nemanja, the great Serbian national leader, he was born in 1169. As a young man he yearned for the spiritual life, which led him to flee to the Holy Mountain, where he became a monk and with rare zeal followed all the ascetic practices. Nemanja followed his son's example and himself went to the Holy Mountain, where he lived and ended his days as the monk Simeon. Sava obtained the independence of the Serbian Church from the Emperor and the Patriarch, and became its first archbishop. He, together, with his father, built the monastery of Hilandar and after that many other monasteries, churches and schools throughout the land of Serbia. He travelled to the Holy Land on two occasions, on pilgrimage to the holy places there. He made peace among his brothers, who were in conflict over their rights, and also between the Serbs and their neighbours. In creating the Serbian Church, he created the Serbian state and Serbian culture along with it. He brought peace to all the Balkan peoples, working for the good of all, for which he was

venerated and loved by all on the Balkan peninsula. He gave a Christian soul to the people of Serbia, which survived the fall of the Serbian state. He died in Trnovo in the reign of King Asen, being taken ill after the Divine Liturgy on the Feast of the Theophany in 1236. King Vladislav took his body to Mileseva, whence Sinan Pasha removed it, burning it at Vracar in Belgrade on April 27th, 1595.

**St. Nina, enlightener of Georgia** - Hearing of the Georgian people, the maiden Nina desired from her early years to travel to Georgia and baptise the Georgians. The Mother of God appeared to her and promised her that she would take her to that land. When the Lord opened the path to her, the young Nina indeed went to Georgia, where she very quickly gained the love of the people. She baptised Mirian, King of Georgia, his wife Nana and their son Bakar, who then zealously aided Nina in her missionary efforts. Nina travelled throughout Georgia in the course of her life, and succeeded in bringing all the people to the Christian faith—and this during a time of fearful persecution of Christians by the Emperor Diocletian. She rested from her many labours and entered into peace in the Lord in the year 335. Her grave is in a church in Samtavro. She performed many miracles both during her lifetime and after her death.

**Our Holy Fathers, the Martyrs of Sinai and Raithu** - These holy fathers were killed by the Saracens, those of Sinai in the fourth century and the others in the fifth century.

**15 / 28 January — Our Holy Father Paul of Thebes** - Born of wealthy parents in Lower Thebes in Egypt in the reign of the Emperor Decius, he and a sister of his together inherited all their parents' property. But his brother-in-law, an idol-worshipper, plotted to seize Paul's half of the inheritance. He therefore threatened Paul that he would betray him to the authorities as a Christian if he did not hand over his share of the property. This misfortune, coupled with the examples of self-sacrifice by the Christian martyrs that Paul saw with his own eyes, induced him to give his half of the property to his sister and go into the desert, where he lived in asceticism until his death. The spiritual heights attained by this giant of a monk are testified to by no less a person than St Antony the Great, who once visited Paul and saw how the wild animals and birds of the air ministered to him. Returning from this visit, Antony said to his monks: 'Woe is me, my children, a sinful and false monk, who am a monk in name only. I have seen Elias, I have seen John in the desert, and I have seen Paul—in Paradise!' St Paul lived 113 years, and entered peacefully into rest in the Lord in the year 342.

**Our Holy Father John Kalyvites (The Hut-Dweller)** - He was born in Constantinople in the early part of the 5th century, of rich and eminent parents whose only child he was. Drawn by inclination to the spiritual life, the young John fled with a monk to a monastery in Asia Minor. He spent six years in this monastery in the greatest restraint, prayer and obedience to the superior. Then the devil attacked him with the temptation to leave the monastery and return to his parents, to live with them as a nobleman. He indeed returned to his parents' home, but dressed as a beggar. He saw his parents, but, not wishing to reveal himself to them as their son, remained as a beggar in their courtyard, living off the crumbs that the servants threw him and enduring much ridicule from all. He lived thus for three years, praying God that He would save the souls of his father and mother. When he fell ill and felt death approaching, he revealed himself to his parents. They recognised him by a precious Gospel-book which they had given him in childhood and which he had kept with him as his sole possession. And so this young man, albeit so rich, saved his soul and those of his parents, overcame the devil and entered into rest in the Lord in about the year 450. Our Holy Father Gabriel of Lesnov; The Holy Martyr Pansophius; In Ireland at Limerick,

**St. Ita, hermitress (570)** - called the "Brigid of Munster"; born in the present County of Waterford, about 475; d. 15 January, 570. She became a nun, settling down at Cluain Credhail, a place-name that has ever since been known as Killeedy--that is, "Church of St. Ita"--in County Limerick. Her austerities are told by St. Cuimin of Down, and numerous miracles are recorded of her. She was also endowed with the gift of prophecy and was held in great veneration by a large number of contemporary saints, men as well as women. When she felt her end approaching she sent for her community of nuns, and invoked the blessing of heaven on the clergy and laity of the district around Killeedy. Not alone was St. Ita a saint, but she was the foster-mother of many saints, including St. Brendan the Voyager, St. Pulcherius (Mochoemog), and St. Cummian Fada,;

**St. Maurus**, disciple of St. Benedict (584); in Wales - Deacon, son of Equitius, a nobleman of Rome, died 584. Feast, 15 Jan. He is represented as an abbot with crozier, or with book and censer, or holding the weights and measures of food and drink given him by his holy master. He is the patron of charcoalburners, coppersmiths etc. -- in Belgium of shoemakers -- and is invoked against gout, hoarseness etc. He was a disciple of St. Benedict, and his chief support at Subiaco. He is described as a model of religious virtues, especially of obedience.

**16 / 29 January — Veneration of the Precious Chains of the Holy and All-glorious Apostle Peter** - Today we commemorate the chains with which Peter was shackled by the lawless Herod and which, when an angel appeared to him in prison, fell from him (Acts 12:7). The faithful kept these chains, both in memory of the great Apostle and also because of their healing power, for many of the sick were healed by touching them (as with the towel of the Apostle Paul: Acts 19:12). The Patriarch of Jerusalem, St Juvenal, made a gift of these chains to the Empress Eudocia, the exiled wife of the Emperor Theodosius the Younger. She divided them in half, sending one half to the Church of the Holy Apostles in Constantinople and the other to her daughter, the Empress Eudoxia, wife of Valentinian of Rome. This Eudoxia built the Church of St Peter and placed these chains in it, together with those in which Peter was shackled before his death under the Emperor Nero.

**The Holy Martyrs Speusippus, Eleusippus, Meleusippus and their grandmother Leonilla** - They suffered for Christ in France in the reign of the Emperor Marcus Aurelius (161 - 180). The three brothers were triplets. At first only Leonilla was a Christian, while her grandsons were pagans. After much exhortation on the part of the pious Leonilla and a local priest, the three brothers were baptised. Being baptised, they began with youthful fervour to witness to their faith, and in their zeal went out and smashed all the idols in the area. Accused and brought before the judge, they acknowledged their action and openly confessed their faith in Christ. The judge threw them into prison, then summoned their grandmother and directed her to go to the prison and counsel her grandsons to deny Christ and worship idols. Leonilla went off without a word to the prison, but

instead of advising her grandsons to deny the true Faith, she set about encouraging them not to give up, but to persevere to the end in all their sufferings and die for Christ. When the judge examined them again and saw their yet stronger steadfastness in the Faith, he condemned them to death. All three were first hanged on one tree, where they hung 'like the strings of a lute', and after that flogged and then finally burned. A woman, Jovilla, stirred by the courage of these martyrs, cried out: 'I too am a Christian!' They immediately seized her and beheaded her with a sword, together with the aged Leonilla. Our Holy Father, the Martyr Damascene of Gabrovo; Our Holy Father Romil;

**St. Honoratus, archbishop of Arles & founder of the Lerins Monastery** - b. about 350; d. 429. It is believed that he was born in the north of Gaul and that he belonged to an illustrious pagan family. Converted to Christianity with his brother Venantius, he embarked with him from Marseilles about 368, under the guidance of a holy person named Caprasius, to visit the holy places of Palestine and the lauræ of Syria and Egypt. But the death of Venantius, occurring suddenly at Methone, Achaia, prevented the pious travellers from going farther. They returned to Gaul through Italy, and, after having stopped at Rome, Honoratus went on into Provence and, encouraged by Leontius, Bishop of Fréjus, took up his abode in the wild island of Lérins with the intention of living there in solitude. Numerous disciples soon gathered around him and thus was founded the monastery, which has enjoyed so great a celebrity and which was during the fifth and sixth centuries a nursery for illustrious bishops and remarkable ecclesiastical writers. Honoratus's reputation for sanctity throughout the south-eastern portion of Gaul was such that in 426 after the assassination of Patroclus, Archbishop of Arles, he was summoned from his solitude to succeed to the government of the diocese, which the Arian and Manichæan heresies had greatly disturbed. He appears to have succeeded in re-establishing order and orthodoxy, while still continuing to direct from afar the monks of Lérins. However, the acts of his brief pontificate are not known. He died in the arms of Hilary, one of his disciples and probably a relative, who was to succeed him in the See of Arles. His various writings have not been preserved, nor has the rule which he gave to the solitaries of Lérins; St. Sigebert, king of the East Angles, martyr (635);

**St. Fursey, of Burgh Castle, enlightener of East Anglia** - Son of an Irish prince, Fursey became abbot of a monastery in Tuam, Co. Galway, but it was as a missionary in England and France that he achieved a European fame overshadowed only by Columbanus. He was welcomed to East Anglia c. 630 by King Sigebert, who granted land for a monastery at Burgh Castle in Suffolk. Becoming ill, Fursey fell into a trance and, according to Saint Bede the historian, quit his body from evening till cock-crow and was found worthy to behold the chorus of angels in Heaven. Fursey's visions of Heaven and Hell, experienced throughout his life and widely recounted, are thought to have inspired Dante's Divine Comedy. After some years in East Anglia, Fursey set out on a pilgrimage to Rome. He was well-received by Clovis, king of the Franks, whose palace mayor, Erconwald, persuaded the saint to build a monastery at Lagny, outside Paris. Fursey died c. 648 at Mazerolles, where he had once miraculously restored a nobleman's son to life. Erconwald had the body brought to Péronne in Picardy, where it awaited entombment while a new church was built. Four years later, when the body was buried near the altar, it was found to be completely free from decomposition;

Tropar of St

Fursey of Burgh Castle, tone 5: Establishing thy monastery in a Roman fortress thou didst teach men that the Orthodox Faith is a true bastion/ against the onslaughts of every evil force, O Father Fursey./ Wherefore pray to God for us/ that we may all be bastions of the Faith/ standing firm against the rising tide of falsehood,/ that our souls may be saved.

Kondak of St Fursey of Burgh Castle, tone 4: Thou didst need the walls of stone/ to defend the Faith against its pagan enemies, O Father Fursey,/ but pray for us that we may have a spiritual wall around us/ to defend the Faith against its enemies./ Following thee and praising thy eternal memory,/ we stand firm against every error, ever singing:/ Rejoice, beloved of God, our Father Fursey.

**St. Dunchaid O'Braoin, abbot of Clonmacnoisen** - Born in Westmeath; died at Armagh, 988. Saint Dunchaid was an anchorite until 969, when he was chosen abbot of Clonmacnoise Monastery. In his old age he retired to Armagh, where he died