



Sunday of All Saints

First Sunday After Pentecost

30 / 17 June

Resurrection Tropar, Tone 8: Thou didst descend from on high, O Merciful One! / Thou didst endure the three-day burial / to free us from our sufferings! / O Lord, our Life and Resurrection, glory to Thee.

Tropar Of All Saints, Tone 4: Adorned in the blood of Thy martyrs throughout all the world, as in purple and fine linen. Thy Church, through them, doth cry unto Thee, O Christ God: Send down Thy compassions upon Thy people; grant peace to Thy flock and to our souls great mercy.

Kondak Of All Saints, Tone 8: To Thee, the Planner of creation, the world doth offer the God-bearing martyrs as the first fruits of nature. By their intercessions preserve Thy Church, Thy commonwealth, in profound peace, through the Theotokos, O Greatly merciful One.

God is glorified in the Saints, while the Saints have been given glory by God.

St. Silouan. Wisdom from Mount Athos. B#73, p. 61.

Vespers: Isa. 43:9-14, Wisd. 3:1-9, Wisd 5:15-6:3

Lord I have Cried - Tone 8, on 10: Octoechos 6; Saints 4 (Speaking with the Spirit's words); G: Saints (O divine choir of Martyrs); N: Sunday Dogmatic tone 8

Aposticha: Octoechos; G: Saints (Come, O ye faithful); N: Theotokion in Tone 6 (Christ the Lord, my Creator and Deliverer).

Troparia: O Theotokos and Virgin 2X; Saints (Adorned in the blood of Thy martyrs) 1X.

Matins Gospel I

EPISTLE: ST. PAUL'S EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS 11: 33 - 12:2

Brethren, through faith, the saints subdued kingdoms, worked righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, Quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, became valiant in battle, turned to flight the armies of the aliens. Women received their dead raised to life again. And others were tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection. Still others had trial of mockings and scourgings, yes, and of chains and imprisonment. They were stoned, they were sawn in two, were tempted, were slain with the sword. They wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented-- Of whom the world was not worthy. They wandered in deserts and mountains, in dens and caves of the earth. And all these, having obtained a good testimony through faith, did not receive the promise, God having provided something better for us, that they should not be made perfect apart from us. Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith.

WE ARE SURROUNDED BY SO GREAT A CLOUD OF WITNESSES

At all times, indeed, but specially when I reflect upon the achievements of the saints, it comes over me to feel despondency concerning my own condition, because we have not even in dreams experienced the things among which those men spent their whole lives: not paying the penalty of sins, always doing rightly and yet always afflicted .. And having spoken of that which befell the apostles (Cf I Cor. 4:11, II Cor 11: 23-28, 12:7, Phil. 1:12, II Tim. 3:11, ... Elijah suffered the same thing with them (II Kings 1:8) and the Son of Man (Matt. 8:20) ...For God has provided some better thing for us. In order that they might not seem to have the advantage from being crowned before us, He appointed one time for crowning for all ...Do you see His tender carefulness?

St. John Chrysostom. Homily XXVIII on Hebrews XI, 1, 2. B#58, pp. 491-492.

GOSPEL: ST. MATTHEW 10: 32 - 33, 37 - 38 & 19: 27 - 30

Therefore whoever confesses Me before men, him I will also confess before My Father who is in heaven. But whoever denies Me before men, him I will also deny before My Father who is in heaven. He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he who does not take his cross and follow after Me is not worthy of Me. Then Peter answered and said to Him, "See, we have left all and followed You. Therefore what shall we have?" So Jesus said to them, "Assuredly I say to you, that in the regeneration, when the Son of Man sits on the throne of His glory, you who have followed Me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or lands, for My name's sake, shall receive a hundredfold, and inherit eternal life. But many who are first will be last, and the last first.

HE WHO DOES NOT TAKE HIS CROSS AND FOLLOW AFTER ME IS NOT WORTHY OF ME

Brothers and sisters! Last week the Holy Church placed flowers in our hands, as if saying to us: See how soulless nature is obedient to its Creator. Starting with the days of Christmas, the earth has been turning toward the sun, which began to bestow upon the earth its life-giving warmth. And nature does not prove itself ungrateful toward its Creator. In answer to His caress, she has produced this glorious beauty, these flowers, and further on, will produce fruits. And what about us? In answer to the spiritual warmth of God's Grace, so abundantly poured out on us, do we bring to our Creator spiritual beauty, flowers, fruits of virtues? After all, He became Man for our sake, died for us, rose for us, ascended into Heaven in order to send down to us His Holy Spirit. And what about us? Is not this beauty of nature around us a reproach to our conscience? Let us answer honestly. Yes, it is. But more than this, we want to justify our negligence, our ingratitude. The commandments of Christ are wonderful, we say; and if people would begin to fulfill them, then the whole earth would be transformed into a wonderful divine garden. But is this possible for weak human strength? And here this Sunday, the Sunday of All the Saints, answers this question loudly so that the whole world hears: Yes, it is possible.

All the saints being remembered today followed the example of Christ. And all of them in their time, in their circumstances of life, fulfilled God's commandment of love of God and neighbour. Occasionally their times were difficult, maybe more difficult than ours; and not infrequently their circumstances in life were more dangerous in spiritual terms, and often in worldly terms were worse than ours. But they still proceeded, struggled, and reached the abodes on high where they now triumph.

Just look at the murals of our church and you will see them: martyrs, confessors, ascetics, fools for Christ, educated people, simple people, rich, poor, bishops, monastics, lay people. This is the Heavenly Church. She is all-embracing, and she is filled up by the earthly, Militant Church. There is room for each of us there. This is what today's Apostle reading tells us: "Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith" (Heb .12:1-2). Just think: all of these saints were live people like us. And like us, all of them were different people; and their paths were different. But all of them, absolutely all, had three qualities which they all possessed identically. These qualities are pointed out to us in today's Gospel. They are obligatory for everyone, and this means for us, too; we cannot escape them. Here they are: "Whosoever therefore shall confess Me before men, him will I confess also before My Father, which is in heaven" (Mt. 10:32). This is the first thing. Don't you feel, brothers, how important this is for us modern-day people? Why, the whole world around us as if asks us: "Are you Christian or one of ours?" We cannot leave this question unanswered. In our speech, our actions, our thoughts and feelings (for our feelings are somehow passed on to the others), we must answer loud and firm "Yes, I am a Christian!"

Here is the second: "He that loveth father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than Me, is not worthy of Me" (Mt.10:37). Here and now, the Lord demands from you and me this all-consuming love—to love Him more than everyone and everything. And only through this love for Him will we really be able to love our relatives, strangers, and even our enemies.

Finally the third: "And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after Me, is not worthy of Me" (Mt.10:38). This instance does not even require explanation. Each of us has his own sorrows and difficulties in life; they are personal for each of us. It is difficult, burdensome, but such is our life; and this means, such is the Will of God for us.

Let us thank the Lord even for this cross! Without it we cannot be saved. And the Lord wants all of us to be saved, and to be united into one Triumph with all the Saints, whom we are glorifying today.

The One Thing Needful - Archbishop Andrei

Saints of the Week

Apostles Fast Begins Monday through to the 12th of July

17 / 30 June — The Holy Martyrs Manuel, Sabel and Ishmael - these three brothers were Persians, of a pagan father and a Christian mother. Brought up in a Christian spirit and baptised, they were high officials at the court of King Balanos, and were sent to the Emperor Julian the Apostate to conduct negotiations and confirm the peace between the Persian and Graeco-Roman Empires. The apostate Emperor had arranged some sort of vile celebration in honour of the idols at Chalcedon, and he went there with his nobles bearing sacrifices for the idols. The Persian delegates absented themselves from the celebration. The Emperor summoned them and ordered them to take part in the festivities and offer sacrifice to the gods. They then declared that they were foreign envoys who had come from the King of Persia to establish peace between the two Empires, and not for any other reason. They said that they were Christians and considered it unworthy to bow down before lifeless idols and offer them sacrifice. The Emperor, in fury, had them thrown into prison. They were brought out the next day, and he began to dispute with them about the Faith, but the holy brothers were irrefutable and unwavering. They were then bound naked to trees and struck and flayed with iron flails. During their torture, they prayed to God, thanking Him for it: 'O sweet Jesus, these pains are sent to us for love of Thee.' An angel of God appeared to them, comforted them and took away all their pain. Contrary to all understanding of the rights of foreign envoys, the wicked Emperor Julian finally issued the order that the three brothers were to be slain with the sword. There was a great earthquake at their execution, thus making it impossible for the pagans to burn them as the Emperor had commanded. The earth later gave up the martyrs' bodies for Christians to find and bury. Many miracles were worked over their relics, bringing many pagan witnesses to the Christian faith. When the Persian king heard of the inhuman death that Julian had provided for the envoys, he prepared for war against him. Julian set out for Persia convinced of victory, but he was beaten to his knees and perished miserably.

St. Nectan of Hartland, martyr (Devon, 6th c.) - The Welsh saint Nectan has always been venerated as a martyr killed by robbers, although we have no details about his life. He is the patron of Hartland, Devonshire, which is near the site of his hermitage. The fullest surviving vita dates only to the 12th century in the Gotha manuscript. This work describes Nectan as the oldest of the 24 children of Saint Brychan of Brecknock. It tells us that Nectan was already a monk when he and his many relatives sailed from southern Wales to northern Devonshire. Seeking solitude, he settled in the dense forests. His family would meet him at his hermitage the last day of each year. After several years he found an even more remote valley with a spring. There he helped a swineherd find his pigs; later the owner rewarded Nectan with a gift of two cows, which were stolen. Nectan found them, reprimanded the thieves, and tried to convert them to Christ. They rewarded his efforts by cutting off his head. After his death, we are told, he carried his head for half a mile to the spring by his hut. Bishop Lyfing of Crediton (1021-1046) provided treasures for the church at Hartland, including bells, lead for the roof, and a sculpted reliquary. Nectan's staff was decorated with gold, silver, and jewels. Manors were built around the church to give it some protection from the Danish invaders. Five churches are dedicated to Nectan in Devon and Cornwall and possibly two Breton placenames may be connected with him. His feast is commemorated at Launceston, Exeter, Wells, and elsewhere. The date of his death is thought to be May 18.

St. Botolph of Boston, England, abbot and confessor (680) - (also known as Botulf, Bostolph) Died c. 680; feast of his translation is December 1. Botolph and his brother, Saint Adulph, were two noble English brothers at the dawn of Christianity on that island. They were probably born in East Anglia. At some point they traveled into Belgian Gaul to learn more about Christian discipline in a monastery because they were then scarce in England. They progressed in the spiritual life to the point that Adulph

is said to have been raised to the episcopate, though this is questioned. Botulph is said to have been chaplain to the convent where two of his king's sisters lived, possibly at Chelles. (Liobsynde, the first abbess of Wenlock (Salop), was from Chelles and Wenlock was initially dependent on Ikanhoe.) Botulph returned to England with the treasure he had found and begged King Ethelmund of the South Saxons for land on which to set it. The king gave him the wilderness of Ikanhoe (Icanhoh), formerly thought to be near Boston (Botulf's stone) in Lincolnshire but now believed to be Iken in Suffolk. (Others relate that the land was provided by the king of East Anglia, either Ethelhere, 654, or more likely Ethelwold, 654-64.) There he built an abbey and taught the assembled brethren the rules of Christian perfection and the institutes of the holy fathers. He became one of the foremost missionaries of the 7th century. Everyone loved Botulph: He was humble, mild, and affable. He always practiced what he preached, finding an upright example far more important than sermons. Nevertheless, Saint Ceolfrid travelled all the way from Wearmouth to converse with this man "of remarkable life and learning" before joining Saint Benedict Biscop at Wearmouth. Botulph thanked God in good times and in bad, knowing that God works all things to the good of those who love Him. He lived to a venerable age and was purified by a long illness before his happy death. Although his monastery was destroyed by the Danes, his relics were carried to Ely (the head) and Thorney Abbeys. It is said that when Ethelwold sent his disciple Ulfkitel to collect the relics of Botulph for Thorney Abbey, he found that he could not move them without also taking those of Adulph as well. Saint Edward the Confessor gave some of them to Westminster and others are at Bury Saint Edmunds. More than 70 English churches were dedicated to Saint Botulph, including four parishes in London. Other place names also recall his sanctity including the town of Boston in Lincolnshire and Botulph's bridge, now Bottle-bridge, in Huntingdonshire.

Also commemorated on this day: Icons of the Mother of God "the Consoler of angry hearts" and "the Unbreakable Wall" (movable holiday on the Sunday of All Saints). New Hieromartyrs Aberkios priest and Nicander. New Hieromartyr Maximus. Virgin-Martyr Pelagia. Hieromartyr Philoneides, bishop of Kurion in Cyprus. Venerables Joseph and Pior, disciples of St. Anthony the Great. Uncovering of the relics of the Albanov Brothers of Novgorod: Saints Nicetas, Cyril, Nicephorus, Clement, and Isaac of Novgorod, founders of the Sikolnitzki Monastery. Venerable Ananias the Iconographer of Novgorod. Martyr Isaurus, and with him Basil, Innocent, Felix, Hermes, and Peregrinus of Athens. St. Aetius the Eunuch, enlightener of Ethiopia, baptized by the Apostle Philip. Martyr Shalva of Akhaltsikhe. St. Hypatius, abbot of monastery of Rufinianos.

18 June / 1 July — The Holy Martyr Leontius - a Roman military commander in Tripoli in Phoenicia in the reign of the Emperor Vespasian, he was born in Yelada, 'of great physical stature, powerful, strong and bold in battle'. The imperial governor, Hadrian, sent a military detachment to seize Leontius, Hadrian being a fierce adversary and persecutor of Christians. The commander of the detachment, Hypatius, fell ill on the way with a grave fever and the unit had therefore to slow its pace. One night an angel of the Lord appeared to Hypatius and said to him: 'If you desire to be healed, you and your soldiers must cry to heaven three times: "O God of Leontius, help me!" '. Hypatius told his companions about this vision, and they all shouted together as the angel had instructed him, and Hypatius was immediately healed. This miracle amazed them all, and especially a certain Theodulus. Then Hypatius and Theodulus went on ahead of the other soldiers to find Leontius. Leontius received them courteously and offered them refreshment. When he had expounded his faith in Christ, their hearts began to burn with love towards the Lord, and a bright cloud descended upon Hypatius and Theodulus, shedding dew over them. In this way the Holy Spirit of God Himself baptised these two converted souls while St Leontius spoke the words: 'In the name of the All-holy Trinity; Father, Son and Holy Spirit.' The evil Hadrian discovered that Hypatius and Theodulus had become Christians and ordered that they be beaten without mercy and then beheaded with an axe. In this manner Leontius's spiritual children died. Then Hadrian ordered a most cruel torture for Leontius, but Leontius remained unwavering in his faith. His entire body was covered with wounds, but he prayed to God unceasingly to remain with him. In the midst of these most vicious torments, an angel of the Lord appeared to comfort and encourage him. At last they threw the martyr onto the ground and flogged him until he gave his soul to God. Leontius's sufferings were witnessed by a certain Notarius, who recorded all that he saw on tablets and placed them in the martyr's grave. St Leontius suffered with honour in the year 73.

Our Holy Father Leontius the Seer or Discerner - of Greek descent from the Peloponnese. He lived a life of asceticism sixty years in the monastery Dionysiou [Mt. Athos] and entered into rest in the year 1605 A.D. being eighty-five years of age. It is said that this saint entered the monastery only once and only once did he leave the monastery in sixty full years. That is: he entered when he first went to Dionysiou and departed when they carried him out to bury him. He possessed the miraculous gift of discernment and prophecy and following his death myrrh flowed from his relics.

Also commemorated on this day: New Hieromartyrs Nicanor, Basil, Alexander, Basil and Sergius priests. Uncovering of the relics of St. Victor confessor, bishop of Glazov. "Bogoliubov" Icon of the Most Holy Theotokos. The Meeting of the "Piukhtinsk" ("At the Source") Icon of the Most Holy Theotokos.

Venerable Leontius, canonarch of the Kiev Caves. Martyr Aetherus of Nicomedia. St. Marina the Virgin of Bithynia. Finding of the relics of New Hieromartyr Victor, bishop of Glazov. St. Erasmus, monk. St. Leontius the Shepherd, monk.

19 June / 2 July — The Holy Apostle Jude, the brother of Our Lord - one of the Twelve Apostles, he was the son of Joseph and Salome (not the Salome from Bethlehem, but another), and brother to James the Lord's Brother. Joseph the Carpenter had four sons by Salome: James, Hosea, Simon and Jude. Jude is often called 'Jude the brother of James', to note his relationship with his brother (Lk. 6:16; Acts 1:13) . St Jude begins his Epistle: 'Jude, the servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James'. Although he could call himself the Lord's brother, just as James did, he did not do so. This was out of humility and out of shame, because he did not believe in Christ the Lord at the very beginning. When the aged Joseph desired to give Jesus His portion of the property before his death, just as he was doing for his other children, all of them were against it, including Jude, and only James voluntarily shared out his portion and laid some aside for Jesus. Jude is also called Levi and Thaddeus. There is another Thaddeus, or Jude; one of the Seventy (see August 21st), but this Thaddeus or Jude was one of the Great Apostles. He preached the Gospel in Judea, Samaria, Galilee, Idumea, Syria, Arabia, Mesopotamia and Armenia. At Edessa, the city of Abgar, he continued and developed the preaching of the other Thaddeus. While he was preaching in the region around Ararat, he was seized by the pagans, crucified and shot through with arrows, that he might reign forever in the Kingdom of Christ.

St. Romuald, abbot of Camaldoli, Ravenna (1027) - About the year 970, when Romuald was twenty years old, his father quarrelled with a fellow-citizen of Ravenna in Italy and Romuald was horrified when his father killed his opponent. Just outside Ravenna stands the monastery and church of Sant 'Apollinare in Classe and Romuald sought refuge there as a monk. After three years he asked an austere hermit named Marinus if he might join him as a disciple outside Venice. Romuald's early experience in his family made him exceedingly stern against those who pursued their public careers violently. Peter Orseolo, the Doge of Venice, had reached that office by murdering his predecessor. Romuald and Marinus, helped by the Abbot of Catalonia, persuaded Peter Orseolo to repent and resign the office he had gained with blood. Eventually the emperor appointed Romuald head of the monastery where he had first sought refuge from the evils of the world. But after two years he went to live as a hermit again. He spent his last years founding monasteries and hermitages in Italy, dying on 19 June 1027 at Val di Castro in Piceno.

St. Job, patriarch of Moscow - Saint Job, the first Patriarch of Moscow, was born into the family of pious tradesmen in Staritsa near Tver in the 1530s. His baptismal name was John. After his death in 1607, the relics of Patriarch Job were buried by the western doors of the Dormition Church of the monastery in Staritsa. Many miracles took place at his grave.

In 1652, on the recommendation of Metropolitan Nikon of Novgorod, Tsar Alexei ordered that the relics of St Job and St Philip (January 9) be transferred to Moscow. Metropolitan Barlaam of Rostov presided at the uncovering of St Job's relics in Staritsa. The Patriarch's incorrupt and fragrant relics became the source of healing for many who were afflicted by physical and mental illnesses. On March 27 a procession set off for Moscow with the relics. On Monday of the sixth week of Lent (April 5), the relics of Patriarch Job were brought to the Passions Monastery. From there, the procession proceeded to the Kremlin, and the relics of the saint were placed in the Dormition cathedral. A few days later, Patriarch Joseph died and was buried next to St Job.

St Job has long been revered as a worker of miracles. The Altar Crosses in the churches of the Staritsa monastery and the Tver cathedral contained particles of his holy relics.

Also commemorated on this day: St. John of Shanghai and San Francisco the Wonderworker. Venerable Barlaam, monk, of Shenkursk. Martyr Zosimas the Soldier at Antioch in Pisidia. Venerable Paisius the Great of Egypt. Venerable John the Solitary of Jerusalem. Venerable Paisius the Bulgarian, of Hilandar, Mt. Athos. Venerable Zeno, hermit of Egypt. Holy Myrrh-bearer Mary, mother of the Apostle James. New Martyr Parthenius, bishop. New Hieromartyr Priest Sergius Florinsky of Estonia. Hieromartyr Asyncretus, martyred at the Church of Holy Peace by the Sea in Constantinople. St. Macarius of Petra.

20 June / 3 July — Apostles' Fast — The Hieromartyr Methodius, Bishop of Patara - he devoted himself from his youth to the ascetic life and, like a city set on a hill, was seen and called to the episcopate in the city of Patara in Lycia. Methodius was a learned and eloquent hierarch and wrote against the heresy of Origen. His words, 'inspired by God, illumine the whole world like lightning'. The pagans rose up against him, tortured him and beheaded him in 311, in Chalcis in Syria.

Our Holy Father Naum of Ochrid - During this his summer feast there is a great assembly of people at the monastery of St. Nahum. Many sick people come or are brought to beseech healing through faith and prayer over the relics of the saint. Not only Orthodox people but also those from other faiths come to seek favour from St. Nahum. In 1926, a Muslim from Resna brought and donated a bell to the monastery out of thanksgiving because St. Nahum healed his brother from his deathbed and restored him to life. The donor was Jemail Zizo and his brother, who was healed, was called Suleiman Zizo. Both were prominent citizens of Resna.

Also commemorated on this day: Holy Prince Gleb Andreyevich of Vladimir. St. Minas, bishop of Polotsk. Translation of the relics of St. Gurias, archbishop of Kazan. Martyrs Inna, Pinna, and Rimma, disciples of Apostle Andrew in Scythia. Martyrs Aristocleus presbyter, Demetrian deacon, and Athanasius reader, of Cyprus. St. Leucius the Confessor, bishop of Brindisi. St. Nicholas (Cabasilas). Icon of the Most Holy Theotokos "Modensk-Kosninsk". St. Callistus I, patriarch of Constantinople. Translation of the relics and garments of the Apostles Luke, Andrew, and Thomas, the Prophet Elisha, and Martyr Lazarus to the Church of the Holy Apostles in Constantinople. Martyrs Paul, Cyriacus, Paula, Felicilana, Thomas, Felix, Martyrius, Vitaly, Crispinus, and Emilius in Tomi. Blessed Studios, founder of the Studion Monastery. Finding of the relics of New Martyr Hieromonk Raphael of Lesbos.

21 June / 4 July — Apostles' Fast — The Holy Martyr Julian of Tarsus - of a noble senatorial family, he lived in Tarsus in Cilicia and suffered in the reign of Diocletian. Although only eighteen years old when he was taken for trial for the Faith, St Julian was already both educated and resolute in Christian faith and devotion. The imperial governor took him from city to city for a whole year, torturing him all the while and attempting to persuade him to renounce Christ. Julian's mother followed her son at a distance. When the governor seized her and sent her to urge her son to renounce Christ, she spent three days in the prison with him, giving him precisely the opposite advice, teaching him and giving him the strength not to lose heart but to go to his death with courage and gratitude to God. His torturers then sewed Julian into a sack of sand with scorpions and snakes and threw him into the sea, and his mother also died under torture. The waves carried his body onto the shore, and the faithful took it to Alexandria, where they buried it in 290. His relics were later taken to Antioch. St John Chrysostom himself gave an eulogy for the holy martyr Julian: 'A holy voice comes forth from the lips of the martyr, and with this voice is poured out a light brighter than the rays of the sun.' He said further: 'Take whomsoever you will, be he a madman or one possessed, and lead him to the grave of this saint, to the martyr's relics, and you will see the demon immediately jump out and flee as from blazing fire.' It is evident from this speech that many wonders must have been wrought at St Julian's grave.

St. Mewan, abbot of St. Meen - One of the most famous of the Breton saints was Saint Mewan. A relative of Saint Samson of Dol,* (* A Life of St. Samson appeared in OA #40, June 1984) he was born in Gwent of a noble family, and was well-educated, intelligent and serious-minded. When quite young he chose to renounce the world and lead a life of poverty. As a disciple of his kinsman, he travelled with Saint Samson and a small group of monks on a missionary journey to Brittany. After some time in the monastery of Dol which they founded, Samson sent young Mewan to a certain count to beg for assistance in building his basilica. On the way Mewan met a wealthy and pious man, who promised him his own estate as a site for the monastery. This offer was taken up later with Samson's blessing when Mewan desired to lead a more solitary life. The site proved suitable for a monastery except that there was no water. Mewan prayed fervently, and struck his staff into the ground. Immediately a spring of water gushed out. This water healed both sick men and animals, so that soon the fame of it spread abroad, and people flocked to it from distant places. The number of monks increased rapidly as his sanctity became known. Once a count imprisoned and sentenced to death one of his servants for a trifling misdemeanour. St. Mewan begged the count to release him without avail. Through the prayers of St. Mewan, the servant was miraculously released, and fled to the monastery for sanctuary. The infuriated count broke in and seized him, ignoring St. Mewan's warning that as a punishment he would die in three days' time. As the count was returning home, he was seriously injured by a fall from his horse. He repented, confessed and died on the third day. Many miracles, particularly of healing, are recorded in the life of the Saint. After his death his cult gradually spread all over France. His well was famous for its powers of curing a malady popularly called "St. Mewan's evil," namely a malignant mange that eats the flesh down to the bone. In the Middle Ages it was established that between four and five thousand pilgrims came annually for healing. The name Méen (Mewan) is pronounced like the French word for hand, main, so pilgrims used to wear a hand-shaped piece of cloth sewn on their clothes or hat. They were supposed to live on alms throughout their pilgrimage, and give to the poor on their return the money they would have spent on the journey. It is recorded that in the mid-seventeenth century some fifteen thousand pilgrims passed each year through Rennes, where a hospice was built to accommodate them. Even in the late eighteenth century, annual pilgrimages were still being made and numerous healings of skin diseases reported. A charming anecdote is told about Saint Mewan's death. Knowing beforehand the hour of his repose, he called the brethren together in words of love to give them his last instructions. His godson Austol, who had never been parted from him and had always served him humbly, was pierced with grief. "Why, father," he cried, "do you leave me your servant desolate? It had been better that I had

been buried by your hands and commended by your holy prayers before your departure." He wept bitterly, and his beloved godfather replied, "Dearest godson, continue with your usual labour, for by God's mercy, in seven days you shall join me in the glory of the heavenly life. The bond of love which unites us is not broken; no, it will be made even stronger." After the Saint's death, Austol continued to serve the brothers as before. On the seventh day, having observed a three-day fast, he went alone to the church, and there peacefully reposed. The brothers, finding him dead, and remembering the love which these two servants of God had for each other, opened Saint Mewan's tomb and discovered that the Saint's body, which diffused a divine fragrance, had moved and was lying on the right of the grave facing the space on the left as if waiting for his disciple. So Austol, who later was also glorified, was buried beside his beloved friend. The bones of the two saints thus declared the love that had always united them. In the year 919 the relics of Saint Mewan and his disciple Saint Austol were moved to Central France to escape the Norsemen, and were brought back in 1074 on January 18, the day on which they are commemorated.

Also commemorated on this day: New Hieromartyr John. Venerable George (Lavrov) the Confessor, archimandrite of Kaluga. New Hieromartyrs Alexis, Paul and Nicholas priests. New Hieromartyr Ionna. New Martyr Nicetas. Finding of the relics of Venerable Maximus the Greek. Hieromartyr Terence (Tertius), bishop of Iconium. Venerable Julius, presbyter of Novara, and his brother Venerable Julian the Deacon. Martyrs Archil II (744) and Luarsab II, kings of Georgia. New Martyr Nicetas of Nisyros, near Rhodes. Martyr Aphrodisius in Cilicia. Martyr Julian of Libya. Hieromartyr Anthony, Martyrs Anastasius, who was raised from the dead, Celsius and his mother Vasilissa, 20 prison guards and 7 brothers, martyred with St. Julian. Venerable Anastasia (Anna) of Serbia, mother of St. Sava. Martyr Theodore, right-believing prince of Starodub. St. Cormac of the Sea.

22 June / 5 July — Apostles' Fast - The Hieromartyr Eusebius of Samosata - he was a major opponent of Arianism. When the patriarchal throne of Antioch became vacant, Meletius was elected Patriarch. This Meletius was a shining light in the Church, and deserved the great eulogy given by St John Chrysostom at his death. But the Arians soon drove Meletius from Antioch. When Constantius, Constantine's evil son, died, he was followed by Julian the Apostate, a man even worse than he, as ruler of the Empire. During Julian's persecution of Christians, St Eusebius took off his cassock, clad himself in soldier's garb and travelled around the persecuted churches of Syria, Phoenicia and Palestine, strengthening the Orthodox faith everywhere and creating the necessary priests, deacons and other clergy and raising some to the episcopate. After the news of Julian's death, St Eusebius advised Meletius to summon a Council of the Church in Antioch. This took place in 363, and the twenty-seven hierarchs present denounced Arianism once again and proclaimed the Orthodox faith as it was expressed at the First Ecumenical Council. Besides Meletius and Eusebius, St Pelagius of Laodicea, a man of great asceticism and chastity, made a great impact at this Council, which took place during the reign of the devout Emperor Jovian. But he died soon after, and the evil Valens took the throne, and the persecution of Orthodoxy began afresh. St Meletius was banished to Armenia, Eusebius to Thrace and Pelagius to Arabia. After Valens, the Emperor Gratian came to the throne and restored freedom to the Church, returning the exiled bishops to their rightful places: Meletius to Antioch, Eusebius to Samosata and Pelagius to Laodicea. Many dioceses were vacant at that time and Eusebius was quick to find canonical pastors for the people. But when he arrived at the city of Doliche with the newly-chosen bishop, Marinus, to install him as bishop and denounce the Arian heresy (which was strong in that city), a certain fanatical heretic threw a tile from the roof and gave him a mortal wound. This great zealot for Orthodoxy, this saint and martyr, died and entered into eternal life in the blessedness of Paradise in the year 379.

St. Alban, protomartyr of Britain (c.305) - when the people of Britain began to follow our Saviour, Jesus Christ, many of them were killed by those who worshipped Satan. The first British Christian to be martyred was St. Alban. Alban lived in the city of Verulamium, which today is called Saint Albans. We do not know who his parents were, or what kind of work he did. But we do know that he was a very kind man. When the soldiers were looking for the local presbyter in order to kill him, Alban hid God's servant in his own house. Alban was not yet a Christian, but as he watched and spoke with the presbyter, and heard his prayers, he began to believe in Christ. The presbyter taught St. Alban about our Saviour and about the Christian Faith, and the saint believed with all his heart, and asked to be baptised. One day, the soldiers heard that the presbyter was hiding in Alban's house. They came to search the house and arrest God's servant. St. Alban, however, put on the presbyter's robes and the soldiers, thinking that he was the presbyter, arrested him and took him before the judge. The judge was very angry with Alban. "Why did you hide this presbyter?" he shouted. "Turn him over to my soldiers, or else you will be punished." at this, Saint Alban declared, "I am also a Christian and I adore the true, living God." The judge was furious. He cried out, "Renounce Christ and worship our idols, or I will have your head cut off!" The saint, however, gave glory to God. The judge ordered, "Take him to the hill and cut off his head." The holy martyr was very happy. He was joyful that he was going to give up his life for Christ. As the saint was being led to Holmhurst Hill to be killed, they came to the River Ver. The bridge over the river was crowded with people who had come to watch his martyrdom, and so the saint walked to the river, signed it with the Cross, and the river opened and left a path for the saint and the soldiers.

When the executioner saw this, he fell at the saint's feet and confessed Christ. The soldiers quickly arrested this new Christian also. The two were taken to the top of the hill, where their heads were cut off, and they received the Martyr's Crown from Christ.

Also commemorated on this day: Venerable Barlaam of Khutyn (1192) (movable holiday on the 1st Friday of Apostles' Fast). "Tabynsk" and "Kursk-Root" Icons of the Most Holy Theotokos (movable holiday on the 9th Friday of Pascha). New Hieromartyr Gennadius priest. New Hieromartyrs Theodore and Gabriel. New Hieromartyr Michael Stephanovsky. Martyrs Zeno and his servant Zenas of Philadelphia. Martyrs Galacteon, Juliana, and Saturninus of Constantinople. St. Gregory metropolitan of Valasha. Martyr Pompian. 1,480 martyrs of Samaria in Palestine.

23 June / 6 July — Apostles' Fast - The Holy Martyr Agrippina - born and brought up in Rome. She trained herself from childhood to live by the Gospel, expelling the stench of the passions from her heart with the sweet-smelling perfume of purity and chastity. She was betrothed to Christ the Lord, and suffered as a bride of Christ in the reign of the Emperor Valerian. She endured beating with staves until her bones were crushed. An angel of the Lord appeared to her to strengthen her, until she surrendered her soul to God under fresh tortures. Her friends, Vassa, Paula and Agathonica, took her relics to the island of Sicily and buried them there. A church was later built there in her name, where countless miracles were wrought over her relics. She entered into eternal rest and was crowned with glory in the year 275.

St. Etheldreda of Ely, England, (679) - Twice Saint Etheldreda (who is also called Saint Audrey) married. released from these unwelcome ties first by the death of her husband after five years and secondly after she managed to persuade her second husband that they should live as brother and sister a relationship that led him to release the saint after twelve years. At last she was able to fulfil her life's desire. In between her two marriages she had lived in solitude for five years on the island of Ely. Now she founded a nunnery and a monastery about the year 672, ruling this double house as abbess. Etheldreda was a woman of noble birth, the daughter of King Anna of East Anglia. But from now on she ceased to wear clothing of fine linen and dressed only in woollen garments. Except at Easter, Pentecost and Epiphany, she washed only in cold water. Only when she was ill or on great church festivals did she eat more than one meal a day. Seven years after the foundation of the double monastery, she died of a plague. The year was 679. The Venerable Bede tells how the body of the saint was exhumed. When she died, she had a tumour on her neck. She attributed this to divine punishment because she was once vain enough to wear a costly necklace. When her coffin was opened sixteen years later, the tumour had healed. Thus Etheldreda became the patron saint of those suffering throat and neck ailments. He also wrote, "Now Etheldreda shines upon our days, Shedding the light of grace on all our ways. Born of a noble and a royal line, She brings to Christ her King a life more fine."

Also commemorated on this day: The Meeting of the Vladimir Icon of the Most Holy Theotokos in memory of Saving of Moscow from the Invasion of Khan Achmed. Synaxis of All Saints of Vladimir. New Hieromartyrs Alexander Miropolsky, Peter Smorodintsev priests. New Hieromartyr Mitrophan archbishop of Astrakhan, bishop Leonty of Enotaeava, and those with him. New Hieromartyr Maxim, bishop of Serpukhov. St. Artemius of Verkola. Translation of the relics of St. Herman, archbishop of Kazan. Martyrs Eustochius, Gaius, Probus, Lollius, and Urban, of Ancyra. Pskov Icon of the Most Holy Theotokos, "Tenderness" (1524), Zaonikeevsk (1588), and "Vratarnitsa"(1894) Icons of the Mother of God. Venerables Joseph, Anthony, and Ioannicius, abbots, of Vologda. Translation of the relics of Venerable Michael, fool-for-Christ of Klops Monastery. St. Dionysius of Polotsk. St. Nicetas of Thebes in Boetia and his disciples Theodore, Gregory and Daniel.

† Daily Scripture Readings †

Monday - Luke 1:39-49, 56 (Matins Gospel); Romans 2:28-3:18; Matthew 6:31-34; 7:9-11; Philippians 2:5-11 (Theotokos); Luke 10:38-42; 11:27-28 (Theotokos)

Tuesday - John 21:15-25 (Matins Gospel); Romans 4:4-12; Matthew 7:15-21; Jude 1:1-10 (Apostle); John 14:21-24 (Apostle); Hebrews 7:26-8:2 (St. Job); John 10:9-16 (St. Job)

Wednesday - Romans 4:13-25; Matthew 7:21-23

Thursday - Romans 5:10-16; Matthew 8:23-27

Friday - Romans 5:17-6:2; Matthew 9:14-17

Saturday - Luke 1:39-49, 56 (Matins Gospel); Romans 3:19-26; Matthew 7:1-8; Philippians 2:5-11 (Theotokos); Luke 10:38-42; 11:27-28 (Theotokos)

REFLECTION

Every device of which man boasts as an invention of his mind is revealed by Divine Providence and every invented device has its two-fold significance one physical, the other spiritual. Even the clock is a wonderful device but it was not invented merely to tell us the time of day and night but also to remind us of death. This is its spiritual significance. When the small hand completes its rounds of seconds and minutes then the large hand arrives at the ordered hour and the clock strikes. So will the clock of our life strike when the days, months and years of our life are numbered. That is why St. Tikhon of Zadonsk counsels every Christian to reflect:

1. How the time of our life continually passes;
2. How it is impossible to bring back time that is past;
3. How the past and future times are not in our control but only that time in which we are now living;
4. How the end of our life is unknown;
5. How we must be prepared for death every day, every hour and every minute;
6. How because of that we must always be in the state of continual repentance;
7. How we must be repentant in every hour and spiritually disposed as we would wish to be at the hour of our death.

HOMILY

-About the trial of our faith-

"That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perishes, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearance of Jesus Christ" (1 Peter 1:7).

Brethren, our faith is tried more often than is the reed rocked by the winds. Trials are like the winds: a weak faith they will uproot and a strong faith will be strengthened even more. Trials are also like the flame in which straw is burned and gold is purified. Man's intellectual pursuits and suppositions also try our faith. These are very strong and bitter winds. But we can overcome them if we are willing to adhere to the words of God and if, in opposition to those intellectual pursuits, we are able to emphasize the teachings of the Faith of Christ. Our faith is further tried by fear and shame: fear of men who persecute the Faith and shame of men who arrogantly despise the Faith. These also are strong winds which we must resist if we wish to remain alive. How will we resist them? By the fear of God which should always be greater in our soul than the fear of men and of shame before the apostles, saints and martyrs who were not ashamed of their faith before emperors, princes and sages of this world.

Our faith is further tried by suffering and misery. This is the fire in which our faith either has to be burned like straw or to be tempered as pure gold. We will resist these trials if we would but remember Christ crucified on the Cross for us and so many thousands of martyrs for the Faith who, in their patience, conquered all and emerged from the flames as gold and who for centuries glow among the angels and among men. Our faith is also tried by death, the death of our relatives and friends and the death of mankind in general. This is the bitter fire in which the faith of many have been burned. Is death the end of everything? It is not, but rather believe that it is the beginning of everything; it is the beginning of a new and just life. Believe in the Resurrection of Christ, believe in life beyond the grave and believe in the general resurrection and the Dreadful Judgment.

O Good Lord, strengthen the faith in us and have mercy on us.

To You be glory and thanks always. Amen.