



Sunday of the Samaritan Woman

Fifth Sunday of Pascha

5 / 18 May

Resurrection Tropar, Tone 4: When the women disciples of the Lord / learned from the Angel the joyous message of Thy Resurrection / they cast away the ancestral curse / and elatedly told the Apostles / death is overcome / Christ God is risen / granting the world great mercy.

Mid-Pentecost Troparion, tone 8: Having come to the middle of the Feast, refresh my thirsty soul with the streams of piety; for Thou, O Saviour, didst cry to all: Let him who thirsts come to Me and drink. O Christ our God, Source of Life, glory to Thee.

Resurrection Kondak, Tone 4: My Saviour and Redeemer / as God rose from the tomb and delivered the earth-born from their chains / He has shattered the gates of hell, / and as Master, / He has risen on the third day.

Mid-Pentecost Kontakion, tone 4: When the Feast of the law was half over, O Lord and Creator of all, Thou didst say to the bystanders, O Christ our God: Come and draw the water of immortality. Therefore we fall down before Thee and cry with faith: Grant us Thy bounties, for Thou art the Source of our Life.

Kondak of the Sunday of the Samaritan Woman, Tone 8: Having come to the well in faith, the Samaritan woman saw Thee, the Water of Wisdom, whereof having drunk abundantly, she, the renowned one, inherited the kingdom on high forever.

THE HOLY MARTYR PHOTINA - This was the Samaritan woman who had the rare fortune to converse with the Lord Christ Himself at the Well of Jacob, near Sychar (St. John 4:4-31). Believing in the Lord, Photina afterwards went to preach His Gospel with Victor and Josiah her two sons, and with her five sisters, Anatolia, Phota, Photida, Parasceve and Cyriaca. They had gone to Carthage in Africa. There they were arrested and taken to Rome during the reign of Emperor Nero and were thrown into prison. By God's Divine Providence, Domnina, the daughter of Nero, came into contact with St. Photina and was converted to the Faith of Christ by her. After imprisonment they all suffered for the sake of Christ. Photina, who for the first time was enlightened with the light of truth at the well of Sychar, was now thrown into a well where she died and entered into the eternal kingdom of Christ.

Vespers: Lord I have Cried, Tone 4, on 10: Resurrection 4; Mid-Pentecost 3 (There is come now the middle of those days); Samaritan Woman 3 (At the sixth hour); G: Samaritan Woman (By Jacob's Well); N: Sunday Dogmatic (The Prophet David, the forefather of God). Aposticha: The sticheron of the Resurrection 1 (Having ascended the Cross, O Lord); The Paschal Stichera, with their verses; G: Pentecostarion (When by Thine unfathomable dispensation); N: Pascha (It is the day of resurrection) and Christ is risen x1.

Matins Gospel VII

Epistle: The Acts of the Apostles 11: 19-26 & 29-30

Now those who were scattered after the persecution that arose over Stephen traveled as far as Phoenicia, Cyprus, and Antioch, preaching the word to no one but the Jews only. But some of them were men from Cyprus and Cyrene, who, when they had come to Antioch, spoke to the Hellenists, preaching the Lord Jesus. And the hand of the Lord was with them, and a great number believed and turned to the Lord. Then news of these things came to the ears of the church in Jerusalem, and they sent out Barnabas to go as far as Antioch. When he came and had seen the grace of God, he was glad, and encouraged them all that with purpose of heart they should continue with the Lord. For he was a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and of faith. And a great many people were added to the Lord. Then Barnabas departed for Tarsus to seek Saul. And when he had found him, he brought him to Antioch. So it was that for a whole year they assembled with the church and taught a great many people. And the disciples were first called Christians in Antioch. Then the disciples, each according to his ability, determined to send relief to the brethren dwelling in Judea. This they also did, and sent it to the elders by the hands of Barnabas and Saul.

BARNABAS AND SAUL TO ANTIOCH

The persecution turned out to be no slight benefit, as 'to those who love God all things work together for good' (Rom.8:28). If they had made it their express study how best to establish the Church, they would have done nothing else but this: they dispersed the teachers ...When Stephen was slain, when Paul was twice in danger, when the Apostles were scourged, then the Gentiles received the word, and also the Samaritans. Paul declared: 'It was necessary that the Word of God should be spoken to you first; but since you reject it and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, behold, we turn to the Gentiles' (ch.13:46) ... 'And the hand of the Lord', it says, 'was with them,' that is, they wrought miracles ...Even so, it is no small part of providential management for Paul to be there ...In this way that Voice of the Gospel, that Trumpet of Heaven is not shut up in Jerusalem ...Truly this is the reason why it was there they were appointed to be called Christians, because Paul spent so long a time in Antioch!

St. John Chrysostom. Homily XXV on Acts XI. B#55, pp.162-163.

The Gospel According To St. John 4: 5-42

So He came to a city of Samaria which is called Sychar, near the plot of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph. Now Jacob's well was there. Jesus therefore, being wearied from His journey, sat thus by the well. It was about the sixth hour. A woman of Samaria came to draw water. Jesus said to her, "Give Me a drink." For His disciples had gone away into the city to buy food. Then the woman of Samaria said to Him, "How is it that You, being a Jew, ask a drink from me, a Samaritan woman?" For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans. Jesus answered and said to her, "If you knew the gift of God, and who it is who says to you, 'Give Me a drink,' you would have asked Him, and He would have given you living water." The woman said to Him, "Sir, You have nothing to draw with, and the well is deep. Where then do You get that living water? Are You greater than our father Jacob, who gave us the well, and drank from it himself, as well as his sons and his livestock?" Jesus answered and said to her, "Whoever drinks of this water will thirst again, But whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst. But the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life." The woman said to Him, "Sir, give me this water, that I may not thirst, nor come here to draw." Jesus said to her, "Go, call your husband, and come here." The woman answered and said, "I have no husband." Jesus said to her, "You have well said, 'I have no husband,' For you have had five husbands, and the one whom you now have is not your husband; in that you spoke truly." The woman said to Him, "Sir, I perceive that You are a prophet. Our fathers worshiped on this mountain, and you Jews say that in Jerusalem is the place where one ought to worship." Jesus said to her, "Woman, believe Me, the hour is coming when you will neither on this mountain, nor in Jerusalem, worship the Father. You worship what you do not know; we know what we worship, for salvation is of the Jews. But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him. God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth." The woman said to Him, "I know that Messiah is coming" (who is called Christ). "When He comes, He will tell us all things." Jesus said to her, "I who speak to you am He." And at this point His disciples came, and they marveled that He talked with a woman; yet no one said, "What do You seek?" or, "Why are You talking with her?" The woman then left her waterpot, went her way into the city, and said to the men, "Come, see a Man who told me all things that I ever did. Could this be the Christ?" Then they went out of the city and came to Him. In the meantime His disciples urged Him, saying, "Rabbi, eat." But He said to them, "I have food to eat of which you do not know." Therefore the disciples said to one another, "Has anyone brought Him anything to eat?" Jesus said to them, "My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me, and to finish His work. Do you not say, 'There are still four months and then comes the harvest'? Behold, I say to you, lift up your eyes and look at the fields, for they are already white for harvest! And he who reaps receives wages, and gathers fruit for eternal life, that both he who sows and he who reaps may rejoice together. For in this the saying is true: 'One sows and another reaps.' I sent you to reap that for which you have not laboured; others have laboured, and you have entered into their labours." And many of the Samaritans of that city believed in Him because of the word of the woman who testified, "He told me all that I ever did." So when the Samaritans had come to Him, they urged Him to stay with them; and He stayed there two days. And many more believed because of His own word. Then they said to the woman, "Now we believe, not because of what you said, for we ourselves have heard Him and we know that this is indeed the Christ, the Savior of the world."

"Whoever drinks of this water will thirst again, But whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst."

"Jesus therefore, being wearied with His journey, sat thus on the well: and it was about the sixth hour. There cometh a woman of Samaria to draw water: Jesus saith unto her, Give me to drink" (Jn. 4:6-7). The Samaritan woman became filled with confusion and doubt of a purely worldly nature: How could He, a Jew, ask to drink from her, a Samaritan? The Jews had no dealings with the Samaritans. And even more, He said that if she knew Who He was, then she herself would ask drink from Him, and He would

give her Living Water. How could He give her something to drink? Why, He didn't even have anything to draw water with, and the well was deep.

In worldly terms this was impossible. And what kind of "Living Water" was this? Christ was speaking about heavenly, spiritual things; but she understood in earthly, worldly terms. And she said to Christ: "Sir, Thou hast nothing to draw with, and the well is deep: from whence then hast Thou that living water? ...Jesus answered and said unto her: Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again: but whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life" (Jn. 4:11, 13-14).

Still more confusing. But one thing was clear. He was offering a completely unusual kind of water. He who drank of it would never thirst. What a convenience. She would never have to come to this well and bend down to draw water. What a work and time saver. Although this offer seemed incredible, it was just too tempting and profitable to pass up; it paid to try it at least. "Sir, give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come hither to draw" (Jn. 4:15), said the Samaritan woman in absolute frankness, explaining the practical point of view she had in mind. And now she stood, in full anticipation of a material, worldly gift. And Christ, now using her attention, suddenly changed the topic of conversation: "Go, call thy husband and come hither. The woman answered and said, I have no husband. Jesus said unto her, Thou hast well said, I have no husband, for thou hast had five husbands: and he whom thou now hast is not thy husband: in that saidst thou truly" (Jn. 4: 16-18).

Terror and joy seized the Samaritan woman. This was the secret of her life, which tormented her sick conscience. How much she wanted to free herself from these pangs of conscience, to repent. But until this time no one could help her. But now, before her stood the One Who knew the secret of her heart. This was an unusual man. He could save her, teach her to repent, to pray. But where to pray?

The woman said to Him: "Sir, I perceive that thou art a prophet. Our fathers worshipped in this mountain; and ye say, that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship. Jesus saith unto her, Woman, believe me...the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship Him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship Him must worship in spirit and in truth"(Jn. 4:19-21, 23-24). The heart of the Samaritan woman accepted this Divine revelation with trembling, but still she was living by what she knew in worldly terms: "I know [she said] that Messiah cometh, which is called Christ: when he is come, he will tell us all things. Jesus saith unto her, I that speak unto thee am He" (Jn. 4:25-26). This was all. All earthly understandings were overturned. She became a new person. She believed.

Is it not the same with us, brothers and sisters? So often we ask God for earthly goods which to us seem so necessary, and God does not give them to us. Yet our prayer is never in vain. So it was with the Samaritan woman. She asked Christ for water. And He gave her water, but not the one she was asking for, but another one —His water, which became a "well of water springing up into everlasting life." He gave her Eternal Life. But in order to receive this water of Christ, she had to repent.

Let us do the same. Then He will reveal Himself to us and say, "I that speak unto thee am He." And we will have such joy that we will not be able to contain it within ourselves. No. Without noticing it ourselves, we will start to preach Christ. And not in words only, but in our whole life. And those around us will say: "Now we believe, not because of thy saying," but seeing thy life which thou hast dedicated to Him, we "know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world!" (Jn. 4:42).

The One Thing Needful - Archbishop Andrei

Saints of the Week

5 / 18 May — The Holy and Great Martyr Irene - She lived in the Balkans in apostolic times, in the town of Magedon where her father Licinius was governor of a small region. Some think that she was a Slav. She was born a pagan of pagan parents. Penelope—for that was her pagan name—learned the Christian faith from her teacher, Appelianus. St Timothy, the disciple of the Apostle Paul, baptised her and her lady-in-waiting, and brought her a letter from the Apostle Paul to read. She infuriated her father by her refusal to marry, and he intended to torture her, but she brought him to Christianity in a miraculous way. She was tortured in different ways by four kings, other than her father, but God saved her through His angels. King Sedechias buried her up to the neck in a pit full of snakes and scorpions, but an angel of God neutralised the poison of the reptiles and preserved the holy maiden untouched. Then the same king attempted to saw her in two, but the sword broke against her body as against stone. This same king once again bound her to the wheel of a water-mill, then let the water in to drown her, but the water would not flow, but stood still, and the maiden remained whole and alive. King Sapor, Sedechias's son, shod her with nails, loaded a sack of sand onto her, put a bridle on her and commanded

that she be led like an animal far outside the city. 'Truly I am as a beast before Thee, O Lord!', said the holy martyr as she ran bridled behind her torturers. But an angel of God caused an earthquake, and the earth opened and swallowed up her tormentors. Surviving all these tortures, by which an enormous number of pagans were brought to Christianity, Irene went to the city of Kallinikos, where she preached the Christian faith. The local king, Numerian, tried to kill her, throwing her into three burning metal oxen one after the other. But the maiden was preserved and remained alive, and many saw and believed. The Eparch, Vaudon, took her to the city of Constantina, where he thought to kill her by putting her onto a burning grid. But this did not harm St Irene, and many were brought to the true Faith. Finally, Irene came to the city of Mesemhria, where the king killed her but God restored her to life. And the king, seeing this, together with many of the people, believed in Christ and was baptised. And thus St Irene, by her sufferings and miracles, brought over 100,000 pagans to faith in Christ. At last she laid herself in a grave and commanded Appelianus to close it. After four days, when the grave was opened, her body was not in it. Thus God glorified forever the maiden and martyr Irene, who had sacrificed all and endured all, that God should be the more greatly glorified among men.

Also commemorated on this day: St. Hilarion, Archbishop of Arles; Venerable Euthymius of Thrace; Venerable Barlaam of Serpukhov; Monk-martyr Ephraim of Nea Makri; Venerable Adrian of Monza Monastery; Uncovering of the relics of Saint James of Zheleznoborov; Martyrs Neophytus, Gaius, and Gaianus; 'Inexhaustible Cup' Icon of the Mother of God.

6 / 19 May — Holy, Righteous and Longsuffering Job - a descendant of Esau, the grandson of Abraham, and lived in Arabia about 2,000 years before Christ. His father's name was Zareth and his mother's Bosora; his full name was Jobab. He was an honourable and God-fearing man, and was very rich. But when he reached the age of seventy-nine, God permitted heavy temptation from Satan to fall on him, as is written in detail in the Book of Job. In one day, Job lost all his great possessions and his sons and daughters. Then a great sickness fell on him, from which his whole body was covered with sores from top to toe, and Job lay on a rubbish heap outside the town and scoured his boils with sherds of broken pottery. But Job did not complain of God, but patiently endured all his sufferings to the end. Therefore the Lord restored his health and gave him riches greater than he had had before, and there were born to him seven sons and three daughters; as many as he had had before. And Job lived for 248 years, glorifying and praising God. Job is regarded as the model of patient endurance of every suffering that God sends us, and is a type of the suffering Christ.

The Holy Martyr Barbarus - a soldier during the reign of Julian the Apostate. When the emperor's commander Bacchus led the Roman army against the Franks, Barbarus, who was secretly a Christian, was serving in the army. In battle there appeared a certain hero on the side of the Franks, similar to Goliath of old and he challenged the Romans to send one of their men to come out to do battle. Commander Bacchus advised Barbarus to go. Barbarus prayed in his heart to the Living Lord, went out and defeated that giant. As a result, the Frankish army became confused and fled. Then the commander prepared a great celebration and ordered that sacrifices be offered to the idols. During the sacrificial offerings, the commander learned that Barbarus kept himself apart. When he was asked about that, Barbarus declared that he is a Christian. The commander informed the emperor and the emperor ordered that Barbarus be subjected to the most severe tortures. But Barbarus endured all with rare courage and composure. During his tortures, many miracles were manifested and many soldiers, witnessing this, accepted the Faith of Christ. Among them was the Commander Bacchus along with Callimachus and Dionysius. All three were beheaded for the Name of Christ and, after them, Barbarus was also beheaded in the year 362 A.D. Their souls took up habitation in the kingdom of Christ the Immortal King.

Martyr Barbarus the Former Robber in Epirus - The Holy Martyr Barbaros, formerly a brigand, lived in Greece and for a long time he committed robberies, extortions and murders. But the Lord, not desiring the death of a sinner, turned him also to repentance. One time, when Barbaros was sitting in a cave and gazing upon the multitude of his stolen possessions, the grace of God touched his heart. He thought about the inevitability of death, and about the Dread Last Judgement to come. Pondering over the multitude of his wicked deeds, he was distressed in his heart and he decided to make a start with his repentance, saying: "The Lord did not despise the prayer of the robber hanging alongside Him, and grant that He spare me through His ineffable mercy". Barbaros left behind in the cave all his treasures and he went to the nearest church. He did not hide his wicked deeds from the priest and he asked to be accepted for repentance. The priest gave him a place in his own home, and Saint Barbaros followed after him, going about on his hands and knees like a four-legged animal, since he considered himself unworthy to be called a man. In the household of the priest he settled himself in amongst the cattle, eating with the animals and considering himself more wicked than any creature. Having received from the priest absolution from his sins, Barbaros went off into the woods and lived there for 12 years bare and without clothing, suffering the cold and heat, and his body became dirty and blackened all over. Finally, Saint Barbaros received news from on high, that his sins were forgiven and that he would die a martyr's death. At the place where Saint Barbaros asceticised one time there came merchants. In the deep grass before

them something was moving. Thinking that this was an animal, they let loose several arrows from their bows. Coming closer, they were terrified seeing that they had mortally wounded a man. But Saint Barbaros besought them not to sorrow, he told them about himself, and he asked that they relate what had happened to the priest, at the house of whom he earlier had lived. After this, Saint Barbaros yielded up his spirit to God. The priest, who had accepted the repentance of the former robber, located his body, shining with an Heavenly light. The priest gave burial to the body of Saint Barbaros at the spot where he was killed. Afterwards from the grave of the saint there began to issue forth a curative myrrh, which did heal various maladies. His relics are located at the monastery of Kellios in Thessaly, near the city of Larissa.

Also commemorated on this day: Martyrs Demetrian, Danax, Mesirus, and Therin; St. Cassius, bishop of Narni; St. Edbert, bishop of Lindisfarne; Translation of the relics of St. Fulgentius, bishop of Ruspe; Translation of the relics of St. Sava the Serbian (1238); Venerable Micah, disciple of St. Sergius of Radonezh; Venerable Sinaites of Serbia: Romilus of Ravanica, Romanus of Djunisa, Nestor, Martyrius of Rukumije, Sisoës, Zosimas of Tuman; and Job; Venerable Job, abbot and wonder-worker of Pochaev; Finding of the relics of Saint Pachomius of Nerekhta; Birth of Tsar-Martyr Nicholas II; Martyr Vukashin at Jasenovac.

7 / 20 May – Commemoration of the Appearing of the Precious Cross over Jerusalem - In the time of the Emperor Constantius, St Constantine's son, and Patriarch Cyril of Jerusalem, the Precious Cross appeared one day at nine o'clock in the morning above Golgotha, and spread as far as the Mount of Olives. This Cross was brighter than the sun and more beautiful than the loveliest rainbow. The whole people—believers and unbelievers—left their work and watched this heavenly sign in fear and wonder. Many unbelievers were converted to faith in Christ, and also many Arians abandoned their wicked heresy and returned to Orthodoxy. Patriarch Cyril wrote a letter to the Emperor Constantius about this sign, the Emperor himself being inclined towards Arianism. This took place on May 7th, 357. Thus was it demonstrated by this means that the Christian faith does not lie in the worldly theorising of the sensual understanding of men, but in the power of God, shown forth through wonders and signs without number.

St. John of Beverley, bishop of York (721) - Born in Harpham (Humberside), Yorkshire, England; died at Beverley, England, May 7, 721; canonized in 1037; feast of translation, October 25. Saint John trained for the priesthood and monastic life in Kent under the direction of SS. Adrian and Theodore, but returned to Yorkshire upon completing his studies to become a monk at Whitby Abbey, which was then under the rule of Saint Hilda. John founded a monastery in Humberside, England, on the site of a small church dedicated to Saint John the Evangelist, where he asked to be buried. In 687, after the death of Saint Eata, John he was consecrated bishop of Hexham. He is said to have shown special care for the poor and the handicapped. Whatever time he could spare from his episcopal duties he spent in contemplation. At regular seasons, especially during Lent, he retired to pray in a cell by the church of Saint Michael beyond the Tyne, near Hexham. He would take with him some poor person, whom he would serve during his retirement. He was transferred York as archbishop upon the death of Saint Bosa in 705, and Saint Wilfrid succeeded him at Hexham as part of the final settlement of the latter's long dispute with the Northumbrian kings. He continued his practice of periodic retirement for spiritual refreshment. His chosen retreat was an abbey that he had built at Beverley, then a forest. Not until old age had worn him out did he resign his office to Saint Wilfrid the Younger in order to spend the last four years of his life in the peace of his beloved abbey at Beverley.

Venerable Nilus, abbot of Sora - The Monk Nil of Sorsk, a great ascetic of the Russian Church, was descended from the Maikov boyar-noble line. He accepted monasticism at the monastery of the Monk Kirill (Cyril) of Belozersk (Comm. 9 June). Here he made use of the counsels of the pious starets-elder Paisii Yaroslavov, who was afterwards hegumen of the Trinity-Sergiev Lavra. The Monk Nil journeyed much through the East, studying the monastic life in Palestine and at Athos. Returning to Rus', he withdrew to the River Sora in the Vologda lands, he made himself a cell and a chapel, where there soon grew up a monastery with a new for that time in Rus' skete monastic-rule, adopted from Athos by the Monk Nil. In accord with the command of the Monk Nil, the monks had to sustain themselves by the work of their own hands, to accept charity only in extreme need, and to shun the love of things and splendour even in church; women were not permitted in the skete monastery, monks was not allowed to leave the skete under any pretexts, and the possession of lands or estates was forbidden. Scattered about in the forest around the small church in honour of the Meeting (Sretenie) of the Lord, in separate cells of one or two but not more than three men, the skete-monks on the eve of Sundays and other feastdays gathered together a complete day for Divine-services, and the All-Night Vigil moreover, at which for each kathisma two or three readings from the holy fathers were put forth, and it indeed lasted the whole night. On other days each one prayed and worked in his own cell. The chief effort of the monk was devoted to the struggle with his own thoughts and passions, in result of which in his soul would be born peace, in his mind - clarity, in his heart - contriteness and love. In his written works - "A Tradition for my Student, Wishing to Live in the Wilderness", and the "Ustav-Rule", the Monk Nil in detail spells out the steps of this salvific mental activity. The first step - is a renunciation from the world, in particular, from

every worldly distraction; the second - is unceasing prayer, accompanied by the memory of death. In his own life the saint distinguished himself by his extreme non-possessiveness and love for work. He himself dug out a pond and a well, the water of which had healing power. For his sanctity of life the Staretz Nil was deeply venerated by the Russian hierarchs of his time. The monk participated in the Sobor-Councils of the years 1490 and 1503. Shunning the honours and glories of this world, before his death he bid his disciples either to cast out his body for devouring by beasts and birds or else bury it without honours at the place of his exploits. The saint died in his 76th year of life, on the day of 7 May 1508. His relics, buried in the monastery founded by him, were glorified by manifold mysteries. The Russian Church enumerated him to the rank of the Saints.

Also commemorated on this day: Martyr Acacius the Centurion; Martyr Dometillus; St. Domitianus, bishop of Maastricht; St. John Zedazeni in Georgia and his 12 disciples: Abibus, Anthony, David, Zeno, Thaddeus, Jesse (Ise), Joseph, Isidore, Michael, Pyrrhus, Stephen, and Shio; Finding of the relics of Venerable Nilus the Myrrh-gusher of Mount Athos; Martyr Pachomius the Russian of Mt. Athos; 'Zhirovits' and 'Liubech' Icons of the Mother of God.

8 / 21 May — The Holy Apostle and Evangelist John - The main commemoration of this great Apostle and Evangelist is on September 26th, but on May 8th is commemorated a wonderful revelation about his grave. When St John was more than a hundred years old, he took seven of his disciples, went outside the city of Ephesus and told the disciples to dig a grave in the form of a cross. Then the old man went down alive into the grave and was buried. When the faithful later opened John's grave, they did not find the body in it. And on May 8th each year a dust arose from the grave, from which those suffering from many diseases were healed.

Our Holy Father Arsenius the Great - This glorious saint was born of a patrician family in Rome and was well educated in the secular sciences and philosophy as well as in spiritual wisdom. Abandoning all the vanity of the world, he dedicated himself to the service of the Church and was a deacon of the great church in Rome. Unmarried, withdrawn, quiet and devout, Arsenius thought to live that way his entire life. But the Providence of God directed his path in life otherwise. Emperor Theodosius took him as a tutor and teacher of his sons Arcadius and Honorius, and installed him as a senator surrounding him with great wealth, honours and luxury. But all of this burdened Arsenius' heart rather than pleasing him. It happened that Arcadius committed a wrong and for that Arsenius punished him. The offended Arcadius conceived a terrible revenge against his teacher and when Arsenius found out he changed into the clothes of a beggar, left for the seashore, boarded a boat and sailed to Egypt. When he arrived at the renowned Scete, he became a disciple of the glorious John Colobus [The Short] and dedicated himself to a life of asceticism. He considered himself dead and when someone informed him that a wealthy relative died and willed his entire estate to him, Arsenius replied: "But I died before him, how is it therefore that I could be his heir?" Withdrawn in a hermit's cell as in a tomb, throughout the entire day, he wove baskets of palm leaves, and at night, he prayed to God. He avoided men and all conversations with them. Only on feast days did he leave his cell and attend church to receive Holy Communion. In order not to become lazy, he often asked himself the question: "Arsenius, why did you come to the wilderness?" He remained in the wilderness for fifty-five years as a "desert dweller" and for that entire time was a model to the monks and a glory to monastics in general. In all, Arsenius lived one hundred years and died peacefully in the year 448 A.D. after prolonged labour and voluntarily imposing hardships upon himself and took up habitation in the kingdom of Christ the Lord, Whom he loved with all his heart, all his mind and all his soul.

St Emilia - the mother of Saint Basil the Great. In her youth she desired to remain a virgin for life but was forced into marriage. Emilia gave birth to nine children and so inspired them with the Spirit of Christ that five of them became Christian saints: Basil the Great, Gregory, Bishop of Nyssa, Peter, Bishop of Sebaste, Macrina and Theosevia. In her old age Emilia established a convent where she lived with Macrina her daughter and where she died in the Lord on May 8, 375 A.D.

Also commemorated on this day: Venerable Hierax of Egypt; St. Wiro, enlightener of the Netherlands; Venerable Pimen the Faster of the Kiev Caves. Venerable Arsenius the Lover of Labor of the Kiev Caves; Venerable Zosimus and Adrian of Volokolamsk; Translation of the relics of Venerable Arsenius of Novgorod, fool-for-Christ; New Martyr Nicephorus Zaitsev; The 'Cassiope' Icon of the Mother of God.

9 / 22 May — St Nicolas the Wonderworker of Myra in Lycia - on this day is commemorated the translation of his relics. In the time of the Emperor Alexius I Comnenus and Patriarch Nicolas Grammaticus, in 1087, the body of this saint was taken from Myra in Lycia to the town of Bari in Italy. This came to pass because of a Moslem attack on Lycia. The saint appeared to a priest in Bari and commanded that his relics be taken there. At that time, the town of Bari was Orthodox and under the administration of an Orthodox patriarch. At the translation of the saint's relics, many miracles were wrought on those who touched them, and a healing myrrh flowed in abundance from them. Also on this

day is commemorated the miracle worked by St Nicolas on Stefan of Decani, King of Serbia. This was when the saint restored the sight of the blind King Stefan.

The Holy Prophet Isaiah - This great prophet was of royal birth. He was born in Jerusalem of Amoz the brother of Amaziah, King of the Jews. By the great grace of God that was within him, Isaiah was made worthy to see the Lord of Sabaoth on His heavenly throne, surrounded by six-winged seraphim which cried unceasingly: 'Holy, holy, holy Lord of Sabaoth' (Is. 6). Isaiah prophesied many things, both to individuals and to nations. Once he walked for three days naked through the streets of Jerusalem, prophesying the imminent fall of the city to the Assyrian king, Sennacherib, and warning the King and the leaders of the people not to seek help from Egypt and Ethiopia, because they too would shortly be over-run by the same Sennacherib, but to seek the aid of the all-seeing God. And this prophecy, like all the rest, was literally fulfilled (37:31-35). But his most important prophecies were on the incarnation of God, on the conception of the most pure Mother of God, on John the Baptist and on many events in the life of Christ. This seer, because of his pure heart and zeal for God, also received the gift of working miracles. Thus, when the besieged city of Jerusalem was suffering from thirst, he prayed to God and water flowed out from beneath the hill of Sion. This water was named Siloam (Sent), and it was to that water that, later, the Lord sent the man born blind, to wash himself and receive his sight (Is. 8:6; Jn 9:7). In the time of King Manasseh, when Isaiah thundered against the pagan practices of the king and the leaders of the people, comparing that generation with Sodom and Gomorrah, the anger of the leaders and the people was lifted up against this great prophet, and he was seized, taken out of Jerusalem and sawn in half. He lived and prophesied seven hundred years before Christ.

The Holy Martyr Christopher - Third century martyr in the persecutions of Decius. His fame derives from the pious legend of him being a "Christ-bearer" (= Christopher). He was a powerfully built man who wandered the world in search of novelty and adventure. He came upon a hermit who lived beside a dangerous stream and served others by guiding them to safe places to cross. He gave Offero instruction in the truth of God. Offero took the hermit's place, but instead of guiding travellers, he carried them safely across the stream. One day he carried a small child across the stream; the child's weight nearly crushed him. When they arrived on the other side, the child revealed himself as Christ, and he was so heavy because he bore the weight of the world on himself. He then baptised Offero with water from the stream. Christopher's service at the stream led to his patronage of things related to travel and travellers, people who carry things.

Also commemorated on this day: Martyrs Aquilina and Callinica of Lycia; Martyr Epimachus the New of Alexandria; Martyr Gordion of Rome; Venerable Shio of Mgvime, Georgia; Monk-martyr Nicholas of Vouneni; Translation of the relics of the Martyr-child Gabriel; Hieromartyrs Nicholas and George, priest, and other martyrs of Novoselsky monastery; Venerable Joseph of Optina; New Hieromartyr Demetrius Voskresensky, priest; New Hieromartyr Basil Kolosov, priest 'Perekop' Icon of the Mother of God.

10 / 23 May –The Holy Apostle Simon the Zealot - One of the twelve Great Apostles, he was born in Cana of Galilee. The Lord Jesus came to his wedding with His Mother and His disciples, and, when the wine ran out, the Lord changed water into wine. Seeing this wonder, the newly-married Simon left his home and parents and bride, to go after Christ. Simon was called the Zealot because of his great and burning zeal for the Saviour and His Gospel. After receiving the Holy Spirit, he went off to preach the Gospel in Mauretania in Africa. As a result of his success in bringing many to the Faith of Christ, he was tortured and finally crucified like his Lord, who had prepared a crown of glory for him in His immortal Kingdom.

Our Holy Mother Isidora the Fool for Christ - Isidora lived in the fourth century and was a nun in a convent in Tabennisi. She pretended insanity in order to conceal her virtues and her mortification. Isidora performed the most menial tasks, fed on the leftovers on the dishes, served all and everyone and was despised by all and everyone. At that time, an angel of God revealed to the great ascetic Pitirim about Isidora's secret. Pitirim came to the convent and when he saw Isidora he bowed down to the ground before her. And so, she to him. Then the sisters informed Pitirim that she was insane. "All of you are insane" replied Pitirim, "and this one is greater before the Lord than I and all of you; I only pray that God will render to me that which is intended for her at the Dreadful Judgment!" Then the sisters became ashamed and begged both Pitirim and Isidora for forgiveness. From then on, everyone began to show respect for Isidora. And she, to escape the honours of men, fled the convent to a place unknown and died about the year 365 A.D.

St. Conleth, hermit and bishop of Kildare (c.520) - Skilled worker in gold and silver, and manuscript illuminator. Hermit in a cell in Old Connell, Ireland near the Liffey river. His reputation for holiness attracted would-be disciples. Friend and co-worker with Saint Brigid; they ran first double monastery together. First bishop of Kildare, Ireland c.490. Baptised Saint Tigernach of Clogher Died while on pilgrimage to Rome.

Born c.450 in Ireland Died attacked by wolves on 3 May 519 in the forests of Leinster, Ireland; buried nearby; relics translated to the Kildare cathedral in 799; relics taken to Connell in 835 to protect them from Danish invaders.

Also commemorated on this day: Martyrs Philadelphus, Cyprian, Alpheus, Onesimus, Erasmus, and those with them; Martyr Hesychius of Antioch; Blessed Thais (Taisia) of Egypt; Venerable Lawrence of Egypt, monk; Venerable Simon, wonderworker of the Kiev Caves, bishop of Vladimir and Suzdal; Venerable Simon of Yurievets, fool-for-Christ; Translation of the relics of the blessed martyr Basil of Mangazea; Venerable Synesius, archimandrite of Irkutsk; Righteous Confessor, Theodore Andreev, priest; 'Bratsk Monastery of Kiev' Icon of the Mother of God.

11 / 24 May — Ss Cyril and Methodius, Equal to the Apostles - brothers from Salonica, of eminent and wealthy parents, Leo and Maria. The elder brother, Methodius, spent ten years as an officer among the Slavs in Macedonia, and thus learned the Slavic language. After that, Methodius went off to Olympus and gave himself to monastic asceticism, and Cyril (Constantine) later joined him there. When the Khazarite king, Kagan, sought preachers of the Christian faith from the Emperor Michael, the Emperor commanded that these two brothers be found and sent to the Khazars. They converted Kagan to the Christian faith and baptised him, together with a great number of his nobles and an even greater number of the people. After some time, they returned to Constantinople, where they compiled a Slavic alphabet of 38 letters and began to translate the service books from Greek into Slavonic. At the invitation of Prince Rastislav, they went to Moravia, where, with great devotion, they spread and confirmed the Faith, made more copies of the books, brought them priests and taught the young. They went to Rome at the invitation of the Pope, and Cyril fell ill and died there, on February 14th, 869. Then Methodius returned to Moravia and laboured at the confirming of the Faith among the Slavs until his death. After his death—he entered into rest in the Lord on April 6th, 885 —his disciples, the Five Followers, with St Clement as bishop at the beginning, crossed the Danube and moved towards the south, to Macedonia, where, from Ochrid, they continued the work among the Slavs that Cyril and Methodius had begun in the north.

St Nicodemus, Archbishop of Pec - This great hierarch was a Serb by birth. He lived a life of asceticism on Holy Mt. Athos and was abbot of Hilendar Monastery. Following the death of Sava III, he was elected as the Archbishop of "All the Serbs and the Coastal Lands" in the year 1317 A.D. Nicodemus crowned King Milutin in the year 1321 A.D. He translated the Jerusalem Typikon into Serbian. [The Typikon is a book containing the rubrics (directions) for the celebration of the Divine Mysteries and other offices of the Orthodox Church.] In the introduction of this book, Nicodemus says: "Almighty God, Who knows our weaknesses, will give us spiritual strength, but only if we first display effort." He sincerely loved the ascetical life and laboured to strengthen it throughout the Serbian land. He laboured relentlessly to uproot the Bogomil heresy and to strengthen the Orthodox Faith. He died in the Lord in the year 1325 A.D. His miracle-working relics repose in the monastery in Pec.

Also commemorated on this day: Hieromartyr Mocius the priest of Amphipolis in Macedonia; Commemoration of the Founding of Constantinople; Venerable Comgall of Bangor; Holy Equal-to-the-Apostles Rostislav, prince of Greater Moravia; Venerable Sophronius the Recluse of the Kiev Caves; Hieromartyr Joseph, metropolitan of Astrakhan; Blessed Christesias (Christopher in monasticism) of Gareji; Martyrs Dioscorus the New and Argyrus of Thessalonica; St. Anthony (Smirnitsky), archbishop of Voronezh; St. Theophylactus, bishop of Stavropol; New Hieromartyr Michael Belorossof, priest; New Hieromartyr Alexander (Petrovsky), archbishop of Kharkov; 'Constantinople' Icon of the Mother of God.

‡ Daily Scripture Readings ‡

Monday - Acts 12:12-17; John 8:42-51

Tuesday - Acts 12:25-13:12; John 8:51-59

Wednesday - John 21:15-25 Matins Gospel; Acts 13:13-24; John 6:5-14; 1 John 1:1-7 Apostle; John 19:25-27; 21:24-25 Apostle

Thursday - Proverbs 10:7, 6, 3:13-16; Proverbs 10:31-32, 11:1-12; Wisdom of Solomon 4:7-15; John 10:1-9 (Matins Gospel); Acts 14:20-27; for the Hierarch: Hebrews 13:17-21; John 9:39-10:9; for the Hierarch: Luke 6:17-23

Friday - Acts 15:5-34; John 10:17-28

Saturday - John 10:9-16 Matins Gospel; Acts 15:35-41; John 10:27-38; Hebrews 7:26-8:2 Equals-to-the-Apostles; Matthew 5:14-19 Equals-to-the-Apostles

HYMN OF PRAISE

SAINTE PHOTINA, THE SAMARITAN WOMAN

The Samaritan Woman met Christ at the well,
And was enlightened with the light of Christ, Himself.
Under Nero, her life she ended in another well,
And her spirit she gave to Christ God, her Lord.
Her glorious sons were Victor and Josiah,
Both, the saintly mother enlightened with holiness.
Five sisters suffered for the Name of Christ,
With her were translated to heaven, their reward to receive.
O, penitent Photina, wonderful sufferer,
How your countenance with eternal light now glows.
At one time, not even water did you give to the Savior,
Finally, even your blood for Him, you shed.
Your soul at one time darkened, while yet a Samaritan you were,
When you became a Christian, above the sun's rays, you shown.
In Sychar, you proclaimed Christ with fear,
In the center of Rome, by your death you witnessed to Him.
Love, every fear, destroys and makes one a hero,
O, Photina, love, forever, glorified you.
Two or three Romes, can Nero burn down
But the soul of Christians cannot burn.
The vessels of clay, Nero can smash
But, over the spirit of Photina, did not have any power.
O, immortal saint, help us now,
By your prayers, before the Throne of Christ the Savior.