

# 11<sup>th</sup> Sunday After Pentecost Holy Martyrs Adrian and Natalia &

## Meeting of the Vladimir Icon of the Mother of God

26 August / 8 September

**Resurrection Tropar, Tone 2:** When Thou didst descend to death, O Life Immortal, Thou didst slay hell with the splendour of Thy Godhead! And when from the depths Thou didst raise the dead, all the powers of Heaven cried out: O Giver of Life, Christ our God, Glory to Thee!

**Tropar of the Icon tone 4:** Today the city of Moscow is radiant for it receives the sunbeam of thy wonderworking icon, O Lady./ As we greet it we pray to thee and cry:/ O wonderful Mother of God, pray to Christ our God Who was incarnate of thee/ that this city and all cities and countries be kept safe from all enemy assaults/ and that our souls may be saved, for He is merciful.

**Tropar of Ss Adrian and Natalie tone 3:** Thou didst value the Faith as imperishable wealth, O thrice blessed one,/ and didst abandon thy father's ungodliness./ Accepting thy spouse's word thou wast made radiant in contest./ O glorious Adrian, pray to Christ our God for us,/ together with godly-minded Natalie.

**Resurrection Kondak, Tone 2:** Hell became afraid, O Almighty Saviour, seeing the miracle of Thy resurrection from the tomb! The dead arose! Creation, with Adam, beheld this and rejoiced with Thee! And the world, O My Saviour, praises Thee forever.

**Kondak of the Icon tone 8:** Queen of the heavenly hosts, defender of our souls,/ we joyfully celebrate the festival of thy meeting, O holy Mother of God;/ for by the coming of thy precious icon thou hast delivered us from harm,/ and as is meet we cry to thee: Rejoice, unwedded Bride.

**Kondak of Ss Adrian and Natalie tone 4:** Thou didst lay to heart the words of thy godly-minded spouse,/ O Adrian martyr of Christ./ Eagerly didst thou run to the tortures, and with thy wife receive a crown.

**Another Kondak of Ss Adrian and Natalie tone 4:** The memory of the Martyrs has dawned, / and all the ends of the world are radiant./ They cry out with gladness: O Christ, Thou art the joy of the martyrs.



### Vespers

Lord I have Cried - Tone 2, on 10: Octoechos 3; Icon 4 (Thou art like a luminous palace); Martyrs 3 (Beholding the all-honored suffering); G: Icon (Come, ye assemblies of Russia!); N: Sunday Dogmatic in the tone of the week.

### 3 Readings for the Icon.

#### A READING FROM GENESIS

Jacob went forth from the well of the oath, and departed into Haran. And he came to a certain place, and slept there, for the sun had gone down; and he took one of the stones of the place, and put it at his head, and lay down to sleep in that place, and dreamed: and behold a ladder fixed on the earth, whose top reached to heaven, and the angels of God ascended and descended on it. And the Lord stood upon it, and said: "I am the God of thy father Abraham, and the God of Isaac. Fear not; the land on which thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed. And thy seed shall be like the sand of the earth; and it shall spread abroad to the sea, and the south, and the north, and the east; and in thee and in thy seed shall all tribes of the earth be blessed. And behold I am with thee to preserve thee continually in all the way wherein thou shalt go; and I will bring thee back to this land; for I will not desert thee, until I have done all that I have said to thee." And Jacob awaked out of his sleep, and said: "The Lord is in this place, and I knew it not." And he was afraid, and said: "How fearful is this place! This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven!"

## A READING FROM THE PROPHECY OF EZEKIEL

Thus saith the Lord: "It shall come to pass from the eighth day and onward, that the priests shall offer your whole burnt-offerings on the altar, and your peace offerings; and I will accept you," saith the Lord. Then He brought me back by the way of the outer gate of the sanctuary that faceth eastward; and it was shut. And the Lord said to me: "This gate shall be shut; it shall not be opened, and no one shall pass through it; for the Lord God of Israel shall enter by it, and it shall be shut. For the Prince, He shall sit in it, to eat bread before the Lord; He shall go in by the way of the porch of the gate, and shall go forth by the way of the same." And He brought me in by the way of the gate that faceth northward, in front of the house: and I looked, and, behold! the house was full of the glory of the Lord.

## A READING FROM PROVERBS

Wisdom hath built a house for herself and set up seven pillars. She hath killed her beasts; she hath mingled her wine in a bowl and prepared her table. She hath sent forth her servants, calling with a loud proclamation to the feast, saying: "Whoso is foolish, let him turn aside to me." And to those who want understanding, she saith: "Come, eat of my bread, and drink wine which I have mingled for you. Leave folly, that ye may reign forever; and seek wisdom, and improve understanding by knowledge." He that reproveth evil men shall get dishonor to himself; and he that rebuketh an ungodly man shall disgrace himself. Rebuke not evil men, lest they should hate thee: rebuke a wise man, and he will love thee. Give an opportunity to a wise man, and he will be wiser: instruct a just man, and he will receive more instruction. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and the counsel of the law is the character of a sound mind. For in this way thou shalt live long, and years of thy life shall be added to thee.

Aposticha: Octoechos; G: Martyrs (The zeal of a pious man); N: Icon (Let the assemblies of Russia rejoice).

## Matins Gospel XI

### Epistle: Corinthians 9: 2-12

For you are the seal of my apostleship in the Lord. My defence to those who examine me is this: Do we have no right to eat and drink? Do we have no right to take along a believing wife, as do also the other apostles, the brothers of the Lord, and Cephas? Or is it only Barnabas and I who have no right to refrain from working? Who ever goes to war at his own expense? Who plants a vineyard and does not eat of its fruit? Or who tends a flock and does not drink of the milk of the flock? Do I say these things as a mere man? Or does not the law say the same also? For it is written in the law of Moses, "You shall not muzzle an ox while it treads out the grain." Is it oxen God is concerned about? Or does He say it altogether for our sakes? For our sakes, no doubt, this is written, that he who ploughs should plough in hope, and he who threshes in hope should be partaker of his hope. If we have sown spiritual things for you, is it a great thing if we reap your material things? If others are partakers of this right over you, are we not even more? Nevertheless we have not used this right, but endure all things lest we hinder the gospel of Christ.

### **IF WE HAVE SOWN SPIRITUAL THINGS FOR YOU, IS IT A GREAT THING IF WE REAP YOUR MATERIAL THINGS?**

'Are you not my work in the Lord?' For this is the great thing, and others avail nothing apart from this. Even Judas himself was 'an Apostle,' and 'free' and 'saw Christ,' but because he did not have 'the work of an Apostle,' all those things did not profit him. You see then why he adds this also, and calls them to be witnesses of it ...Upon this it follows that if from no other quarter, yet from you I have a right to receive. Nevertheless, from whom I had most right to receive, from you whose teacher I was, from those I did not receive ...The whole world had him for its Apostle ...'For I both exhibited miracles and taught by word, and underwent dangers, and showed forth a blameless life' ...And not only this does he establish by his illustrations, but he shows also what kind of man a priest ought to be. For he ought to possess both the courage of a soldier and the diligence of a husbandman and the carefulness of a shepherd, and after all these to seek nothing more than necessities ...For he did not say, What soldier serves and is not enriched? ...To prevent high thoughts in those who contribute to their teachers, he signified that they receive more than they give.

*St. John Chrysostom. Homily XXI on I Corinthians IX, 2, 3, 4, 6. B#56, pp. 119-121.*

### **Second Epistle: Philippians 2:5-11**

## **Gospel Matthew 18: 23-35**

Therefore the kingdom of heaven is like a certain king who wanted to settle accounts with his servants. And when he had begun to settle accounts, one was brought to him who owed him ten thousand talents. But as he was not able to pay, his master commanded that he be sold, with his wife and children and all that he had, and that payment be made. The servant therefore fell down before him, saying, 'Master, have patience with me, and I will pay you all.' Then the master of that servant was moved with compassion, released him, and forgave him the debt. But that servant went out and found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred denarii; and he laid hands on him and took him by the throat, saying, 'Pay me what you owe!' So his fellow servant fell down at his feet and begged him, saying, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you all.' And he would not, but went and threw him into prison till he should pay the debt. So when his fellow servants saw what had been done, they were very grieved, and came and told their master all that had been done. Then his master, after he had called him, said to him, 'You wicked servant! I forgave you all that debt because you begged me. Should you not also have had compassion on your fellow servant, just as I had pity on you?' And his master was angry, and delivered him to the torturers until he should pay all that was due to him. So My heavenly Father also will do to you if each of you, from his heart, does not forgive his brother his trespasses."

### **FORGIVENESS OF DEBTS**

A terrible picture is drawn for us by this Sunday's Gospel. It begins with the following words: "Therefore the Kingdom of Heaven is likened unto a certain king, which would take account of his servants" (Mt. 18:23). Among those servants was one who was indebted to the lord for a great amount. This amount was so great that in spite of his desire, he could never repay it. There was only one way out: the lord could sell him, his wife, his children, and everything he had. "The servant therefore fell down, and worshipped him, saying, Lord, have patience with me and I will pay thee all. Then the lord of that servant was moved with compassion, and loosed him, and forgave him the debt" (Mt. 18:26-27). Listen, he did not postpone payment of the debt, he did not reduce the amount, but he forgave everything, completely, forever. It was as if nothing had happened, everything remained as before. A new, quiet life as before began. And even better: now this servant knew his master. He saw in him a loving father, and to work for such a father is bliss.

Suddenly something terrible happened: that servant walked out and met one of his fellow servants who owed him an utterly insignificant amount; and grabbing him, started to choke him, saying, Give back everything you owe me. Learning of this, his lord was angry and gave him over to the torturers until he had paid the whole debt.

And so it is with us. We have received everything from the Lord but have proved to be unpaid debtors. And we have asked for forgiveness and have received it. And God has accepted us into His family, the Church of Christ, and in her we can sail over this stormy sea of life as in a safe ship. A ship has everything necessary to protect those sailing in it from the water: it has a strong foundation, a bottom, sides, sails, oars, a rudder. In the same way, the Church of Christ has a rudder by which it is guided by her Godly Pilot, our Lord Jesus Christ; also has sails, oars—these are the godly sacraments; also has a strong foundation—the commandments of Christ of which the main one is love. And if we keep this His main commandment, love, then we will be in His family, that is in the Church, and will rejoice. How much the Lord spoke about it in His farewell talk with His disciples: "This is My commandment, that ye love one another, as I have loved you" (Jn.15: 12). "These things I command you, that ye love one another" (Jn.15:17). Yes, it is impossible to be in the Church and not to abide in His love. To be in the Church of Christ is possible only by keeping His main commandment, that commandment which has become the foundation of His entire Church, which is the fragrance of Christ—and this commandment is LOVE!

And so that unfortunate servant lost everything: the forgiveness of God, release from the whole debt, and the return to freedom of himself, his wife and his children. Everything that he had received, he lost in one moment, in that terrible moment when he did not forgive his debtor. And so we too can lose everything: forgiveness which we have received in the Sacrament of Confession, and the Grace which we have received in the Sacrament of Holy Communion—in one moment—in that moment when we will not forgive our debtors.

God grant that such a moment never come to us. And therefore, for the sake of our own salvation, our own well-being and the well-being of those close to us, let us wholeheartedly forgive our debtors. And let us rejoice that we have such debtors, because only by forgiving them their debts, can we prove to the Lord how much we value His forgiveness. And let us also rejoice, because our Lord forgives us enormous things, and all that we can forgive is so small and insignificant. Let us rejoice every time when we say in the Lord's Prayer: "and forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors."

*The One  
Thing Needful - Archbishop Andrei*

**Second Gospel: Luke 10:38-42; 11:27-28**

## **Saints of the Week**

**26 August / 8 September - The Holy Martyr Adrian and his wife Natalia** - Husband and wife, they were both of noble and wealthy families in Nicomedia. Adrian was the governor of the Praetorium and a pagan, and Natalia was a secret Christian. They were both young, and had lived in wedlock for thirteen months in all before their martyrdom. When the wicked Emperor Maximian visited Nicomedia, he ordered that the Christians be seized and put to torture. There were twenty-three Christians hidden in a cave near the city. Someone handed them over to the authorities and they were cruelly flogged with leather whips and staves, and thrown into prison. They were then taken from prison and brought before the Praetor for their names to be noted. Adrian looked at these people, tortured but unbowed, peaceful and meek, and he put them under oath to say what they hoped for from their God, that they should undergo such tortures. They spoke to him of the blessedness of the righteous in the Kingdom of God. Hearing this, and again looking at these people, Adrian suddenly turned to the scribe and said: 'Write my name along with those of these saints; I also am a Christian.' When the Emperor heard this, he asked him: 'Have you lost your mind?' Adrian replied: 'I haven't lost it, but found it!' Hearing this, Natalia rejoiced greatly, and, when Adrian sat chained with the others in prison, came and ministered to them all. When they flogged her husband and put him to various tortures, she encouraged him to endure to the end. After long torture and imprisonment, the Emperor ordered that they be taken to the prison anvil, for their arms and legs to be broken by hammers. This was done and Adrian, along with the twenty-three others, breathed his last under the vicious tortures. Natalia took their relics to Constantinople and there buried them. After several days, Adrian appeared to her, bathed in light and beauty and calling her to come to God, and she peacefully gave her soul into her Lord's hands.

Prayer to the Holy Martyrs of Christ - Adrian and Natalia: O sacred couple, holy martyrs of Christ Adrian and Natalia, blessed spouses and valiant athletes! Hearken unto us who beseech you with tears, and send down upon us all that is profitable for our souls and bodies; and entreat Christ God, that He have mercy upon us and deal with us according to His mercy, that we not perish in our sins. Yea, O holy martyrs, accept ye our cry of supplication, and by your intercessions deliver us from famine, pestilence, earthquake, flood, fire, hail, the sword, invasion of aliens and civil strife, from sudden death and from all misfortune, grief and pain, that ever strengthened by your supplication and mediation, we may glorify the Lord Jesus Christ, to Whom is due all glory, honour and worship, with his unoriginate Father and His all-holy Spirit, unto the ages of ages. Amen.



**The Miracle of the Most Holy Mother of God in The miraculous renewals of icons** - Was first witnessed in the Convent in Harbin on the first Tuesday of Great Lent in 1925. A dark Icon of the Mother of God "of the Akathist" suddenly became light. A priest was asked to serve a Moleben before the renewed Icon, but when he expressed doubts as to whether the Icon had in fact been dark, it quickly became dark again. Abbess Moscow in 1395 Rufina commented that the Icon darkened again due to the "soot of unbelief," but she prophesied that before the renewal of Russia the Icon would once again be renewed. Another miracle of God's Mercy was manifested in the Convent on August 26, 1925 (o.s.), the Feast of the Icon of the Vladimir Mother of God. An Icon of the Vladimir Mother of God was miraculously renewed in Abbess Rufina's hands. In 1924 a pious and elderly lady gave the old and damaged Icon to the Convent, remarking to the novice who accepted it that she couldn't throw it away in spite of its condition. Abbess Rufina accepted the Icon and placed it in a prominent place in the Church, which at that time had few icons. Because of its condition many people complained, and so the Icon was moved to a corner of the Altar. Even there, however, the presence of the Icon was criticized by the clergy. On the Feast day of

the Icon, when several people were to be released from prison, Abbess Rufina decided to bless them with the Icon. She requested that the Icon be brought from the Altar and when Mother Ariadna handed it to her, it quickly began to lighten, the way that fog scatters in the sunlight, and became cleaned of the dust and dirt that time had settled upon it. Holding the Holy Icon in her hands, Abbess Rufina exclaimed, "Look, look, a miracle is taking place. The Icon is being restored!" After only a few minutes the Icon looked as though it had just been painted. The face of the Mother of God was lightened, the tin covering was brightened, and the halo above the face of the Virgin radiated a flowing light. This miracle occurred at 2 p.m. An hour later a Moleben was served by one of the hieromonks of the Convent, who only a few days earlier, had recommended that the Icon be burned and the ashes thrown into the river. With tears he begged forgiveness from the Mother of God. This miracle strengthened the Sisters in their faith that the Mother of God was Herself directing their lives invisibly, and was watching over their spiritual progress. Seeing in this miracle an indication from the Mother of God as to what the Convent should be called, Metropolitan Meletius blessed the changing of the name of the Convent to the Vladimir Icon of the Mother of God. On April 26, 1926 there was a fire at the Convent and one Icon, that of God the Sabaoth, was miraculously preserved and renewed. A flow of miraculous healings began n to occur from

that Icon as well as from the Icon of the Vladimir Mother of God. The apparition of these obvious signs of God's Mercy, began to be widely known, not only among the Russian population, but among the Chinese as well, not only in the city of Harbin, but along the whole territory of the Chinese Eastern Railroad.

**Also commemorated on this day:** New Hieromartyr Peter priest and St. Gregory confessor, priest (1938). Blessed Mary Diveyevo (1931). New Hieromartyr Victor priests, Martyr Demetrius, Peter and New Hiero-confessor Archpriest Roman Medved of Moscow (1937). New Hieromartyr Nectarius (Trezvinsky), bishop of Yaransk (1937). Uncovering of the relics of St. Nicholas the Confessor, metropolitan of Almaty (2000). Venerable Adrian, abbot of Ondrusov (Valaam) (1549). Synaxis of Saints of Central Asian Metropolitan District. Synaxis of Saints of Oryol Metropolia. The Pskov Caves Icon of the Most Holy Mother of God, named the "Tenderness" (1542). Blessed Cyprian of Storozhev, former outlaw (16th c.). Venerable Adrian, abbot of Poshekhonye (1550). Vladimir-Elets'k Icon of the Most Holy Mother of God (1395). Venerable Tithoes of the Thebaid (4th c.), disciple of St. Pachomius the Great (4th c.). Venerable Ibestion the Confessor, Egyptian ascetic. St. Zer-Jacob, missionary of Ethiopia. Venerable Adrian of Uglich (1504), disciple of St. Paisius of Uglich. Finding of the relics of Venerable Bassian of Alaty' Monastery (17th c.). Monk Ioasaph, prince of India. Martyrs Atticus and Sisinnius. The miraculous renewal of the Vladimir Icon of the Theotokos in Harbin (Manchuria) (1925).

**27 August / 9 September - Our Holy Father Pimen the Great** - an Egyptian by birth and a great Egyptian ascetic. As a boy, he visited various spiritual teachers and gathered proven experience as a bee gathers honey from flowers. Pimen once begged the elder Paul to take him to St Paisius. Seeing him, Paisius said: 'This child will save many; the hand of God is on him.' In time, Pimen became a monk and drew two of his brothers to monasticism. Their mother once came to see her sons, but Pimen would not allow her in, asking through the door: 'Which do you want more: to see us here and now, or in the other world in eternity?' Their mother went away joyfully, saying: 'If I will see you for certain there, I don't need to see you here.' In the monastery of these three brothers, governed by the eldest, Abba Anoub, the rule was as follows: at night, four hours were passed in manual work, four hours in sleep and four in reading the Psalter. The day was passed, from morning to noon, in alternate work and prayer, from mid-day to Vespers in reading and after Vespers they prepared their meal, the only one in the twenty-four hours, and this usually of some sort of cabbage. Pimen himself said about their life: 'We ate what was to hand. No-one ever said: "Give me something else", or "I won't eat that". In that way, we spent our whole life in silence and peace.' He lived in the fifth century, and entered peacefully into rest in great old age. The Holy Martyr Phanurius - who he was and when he lived is not known, but he is much venerated in Rhodes and Crete. In 1500, he appeared to some people on the island of Rhodes, where he also showed wonders of healing. There is found there an old icon of him, in which he is depicted as a young soldier holding a cross in his right hand and a burning candle in his left. St Phanurius is also much venerated in Egypt. There is a tradition that his mother was a great sinner, whom not even he could convert. But his filial love for his mother was great beyond measure, and he prayed more for his mother's salvation than his own. When the pagans stoned him to death for Christ, St Phanurius prayed to God: 'For the sake of these my sufferings, Lord, help all those who will pray to Thee for the salvation of Phanurius's sinful mother.' In Egypt, many Christians pray thus: 'O Lord, save Phanurius's mother and help me, a sinner' — and many receive help through this prayer.

**Also commemorated on this day:** New Hieromartyr Stephen Nemkov, and those with him, of Nizhni-Novgorod (1918). New Hieromartyrs Paul, priest (1918). New Hieromartyrs John, John priest and Hieromartyr Methodius (1937). New Hieromartyr Aleksander, priest (1939). New Hieromartyr Vladimir, priest (1940). St. Demetrius confessor, priest (1952). Venerables Pimen, Kuksha, and Nikon of the Kiev Caves (1114). St. Hosius (Osia) the Confessor, bishop of Cordova (4th c.). St. Liberius, pope of Rome (366). Venerable Poemen of Palestine (605). Martyr Anthusa. Venerable Sabbas of Benephali. Great-martyr Phanurius the Newly Appeared of Rhodes. Translation of the relics of Sts. Theognostus, Cyprian, and Photius, metropolitans of Moscow (1479). St. Caesarius, bishop of Aries (543). Martyr-hermit Decuman of Watchet. Martyr Djan Darada, the Ethiopian eunuch of Queen Candace.

**28 August / 10 September - Our Holy Father Moses the Black** - An Ethiopian, he was at first a robber and the leader of a robber band, but he then became a penitent and a great ascetic. As a slave, Moses escaped from his owner and became a robber. Because of his great physical strength and recklessness, the robbers chose him as their leader. Suddenly his conscience was filled with remorse and repentance for the crimes he had committed. He left the band, went to a monastery and gave himself entirely to obedience to his spiritual father and to the rule of the monastery. He made great use of the teaching of Saints Macarius, Arsenius and Isidore. Later, he withdrew to solitude in a cell, where he gave himself utterly to physical labour, prayer, vigils and pondering on God. Tormented by the demon of lust, he confessed to his spiritual father, Isidore, and received from him the advice to fast as much as possible, and never to eat his fill. When this proved to be of no help, he, at the elder's advice, began to keep night-vigils and to pray standing; he then got into the way of carrying water from a distant well for the older monks. After six years of terrible striving, St Isidore finally healed him miraculously of the lustful thoughts, imaginings and dreams visited on him by the demon. He was ordained priest in old age. He



founded a monastery of his own, and had seventy-five disciples, himself living to the age of seventy-five. He foresaw his own death, and one day told his disciples to flee, as barbarians were coming to attack the monastery. When his disciples urged him to flee as well, he told them that he must perish in the attack, for he had himself at one time done violence, according to the words: 'all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword' (Matt. 26:52). So he stayed, with six of his brethren. The barbarians came and ran them through. One of the brethren, hiding nearby, saw seven shining wreaths descend upon the seven martyrs. Abba Moses used to say, "Secret withdrawal (from work) maketh dark the mind, but or a man to endure and to persevere in his works maketh light the mind in our Lord, and it strengtheneth and fortifieth the soul." and " These four things lead to fornication: eating and drinking, oversleeping, negligence and decoration of clothes." "If you want to repent to God, beware of living in luxury, for this stimulates all passions and dispels the fear of God from the heart."

**Also commemorated on this day:** Uncovering of the relics of Venerable Job of Pochaev (1651). New Hieromartyr Alexis (1918). New Martyrs Archimandrite Sergius (Zaytsev) and monks of Zilantov Monastery of Kazan (1918) hieromonks Laurence (Nikitin), Seraphim (Kuz'min), hierodeacon Theodosius (Alexandrov), monks Leontius (Kariagin), Stephen, brothers Gregory (Timofeev), Hylarion (Pravdin), John (Sretensky), Sergius (Galini) (1918). New Hieromartyr Alexander, deacon (1918). New Hieromartyr Nicholas priest (1931). New Hieromartyr Basil priest (1937). Synaxis of the Saints of the Kiev Caves whose relics repose in the Far Cave of Venerable Theodosius. Venerable Sabbas, abbot of Krypetsk (1495). Righteous Anna the Prophetess and Daughter of Phanuel, who met the Lord at the Temple in Jerusalem (1st c.). Martyr Queen Shushaniki (Susanna) of Georgia (475) (Georgia). St. Amphilochius, bishop of Vladimir, Volhynia (1122). Righteous Hezekiah, king of Judah (691 B.C.). Venerable Theodore (Monk Theodosius of the Kiev Caves), prince of Ostrog (1483). New Hieromartyr Chrysostom, metropolitan of Smyrna (1922). 33 Martyrs of Nicomedia. Martyrs Diomedes and Laurence.

**29 August / 11 September - Fast day- The Beheading of the Glorious Prophet, Forerunner and Baptist John** - Herod Antipas, son of the Herod who slew the young children in Bethlehem at the time of the birth of the Lord Jesus, was ruler of Galilee when John the Baptist was preaching. This Herod was married to the daughter of Aretas, an Arabian prince. But Herod, an evil branch of evil stock, put away his lawful wife and took Herodias, his brother Philip's wife, to live with him while Philip was still alive. John the Baptist stood up against this lawlessness and strongly denounced Herod, at which Herod threw him into prison. At the time of some feast at his court in Sebastia in Galilee, Salome, the daughter of Herodias and Philip, danced for the guests. Herod, in his cups and carried away by her dancing, promised her whatever she asked, even to the half of his kingdom. Instructed by her mother, she asked for the head of John the Baptist. Herod commanded that John be beheaded in the prison and his head brought on a platter. John's disciples took the body of their teacher by night and buried it, but Herod tore out John's tongue with a needle and then buried his head in an unclean place. What later happened to John's head is recorded and can be read the Prologue under February 24th. God's punishment was quickly visited upon this group of evildoers. Prince Aretas, to avenge his daughter's honour, attacked Herod with his army and brought him to his knees. The defeated Herod was condemned by the Roman Caesar, Caligula, to exile first in Gaul and then in Spain. As exiles, Herod and Herodias lived in need and debasement until the earth opened and swallowed them up. Salome, Herodias's daughter, came to a bad end in the river Sikaris (Sula). The death of John took place before the Passover, but its commemoration on August 29th was instituted because it was on this day that a church, that had been built over his grave in Sebastia by the Emperor Constantine and the Empress Helena, was consecrated. In this church were also placed the relics of John's disciples, Eliseus and Audius.

**St. Sebbi, king of the East Saxons (c.694), monk** - he became the king of Essex (or the East Saxons) following the conversion of the kingdom by St. Cedd in 664. He ruled at a time when there was relative peace and the realm was under the domination of Mercia, a nearby kingdom. Sebbi abdicated after ruling thirty years and became a monk in London. He died there and was buried in the old St. Paul's.

**Also commemorated on this day:** Commemoration of orthodox soldiers killed on a battle fields. Venerable Alexander, abbot of Voche, of Galich (16th c.). New Martyr Anastasius of Bulgaria (1794). Venerable Theodora, nun, of Thessalonica (892). Venerable Arcadius of Arsinoe, Cyprus, bishop and wonderworker. Translation of the relics of Venerable Joseph the Sanctified of Samaka. New Hieromartyr Peter, metropolitan of Krutitsa (1936). Sts. Candida (418) and Gelasia (422) of Constantinople.

**30 August / 12 September - Afterfeast of the Beheading of St. John the Baptist - Ss Alexander, John and Paul the New, Patriarchs of Constantinople** - Alexander took part in the First Ecumenical Council in Nicaea, in place of the aged Patriarch Metrophanes, whom he then succeeded. When certain philosophers tried to dispute with him about faith, he said to one of them: 'In the name of my Lord Jesus Christ, I command you to remain silent!', and the philosopher became dumb from that moment. By his prayers, also, Arius's life was shortened. Alexander died at the age of ninety-eight, in the year 340. St John the Faster governed the Church in the days of the wicked Emperor Anastasius, an Acephalite heretic. He entered into rest in 595. St Paul IV governed the Church for five years and eight months and

renounced the throne to receive the Great Habit secretly, to repent of his sins when he first supported the iconoclasts. He was the predecessor of the great Tarasius, and entered into rest in the time of Irene and Constantine, in 784.

**Translation of the Relics of St. Alexander Nevsky** - The Holy Noble Born Prince Alexander Nevsky (in monastic-schema Alexei) died on the return journey from the Horde at Gorodtsa on the Volga, on 14 November 1263, and on 23 November (under this day is located the account about him) in 1263 he was buried in the Cathedral Church of the Nativity Monastery in the city of Vladimir (there is set up there now a memorial to the holy prince; yet another memorial is set up in the city of Pereslavl'-Zalessk). Veneration of the nobleborn prince started right at his burial, whereof was a remarkable miracle: the saint himself extended his hand for the absolving prayer. Great Prince Ioann Ioannovich (1353-1359) in his spiritual testament written in the year 1356, left to his son Dimitrii (1363-1389), the future victor of the Battle of Kulikovo, "an icon of Saint Alexander". The undecayed relics of the nobleborn prince were opened, on account of a vision, before the Kulikovo Battle - in the year 1380, and then were set forth for local feast-celebration. For the prayers of the holy prince, glorified by defense of the Fatherland, Russian commanders resorted to in all the following times. On 30 August 1721 Peter I, after a lengthy and exhausting war with the Swedes, concluded the Nishtad Peace. This day was decided upon to hallow by the transfer of the relics of the Noble Born Prince Alexander Nevsky from Vladimir to the new northern capital, Peterburg, arranged on the banks of the Neva. Withdrawn from Vladimir on 11 August 1723, the holy relics were greeted at Shlissel'burg on 20 September of that year and remained there until 1724, when on 30 August they were placed in the Trinity Cathedral of the Alexander Nevsky Lavra (Monastery), where now also they rest. By an edict/ukaz on 2 September 1724 there was established a feastday on 30 August (in 1727 the feast was discontinued by reason of non-church matters, and involved clique-struggles at the imperial court. In 1730 the feast was again re-established).

Archimandrite Gavriel Buzhinsky compiled a special service in remembrance of the Nishtad Peace, combining with it a service to Saint Alexander Nevsky. The name of the Defender of the borders of Russia and the Patron of Soldiers is famous far from the regions of our Native Land. The testimony to this: the numerous temples dedicated to Saint Alexander Nevsky. The most famous of them: the Patriarchal Cathedral at Sofia, the Cathedral church in Talinin, and a church in Tbilisi. These churches are a pledge of friendship of the Russian National-Liberator with brother nations.

**Also commemorated on this day:** Repose of Venerable Alexander, abbot of Svir (1533). Uncovering of the relics of St. Daniel, prince of Moscow (1652). New Hieromartyr Peter priest (1918). New Hieromartyr Apollinaris (1918). New Hieromartyr Paul priest and Virgin-martyr Elizaveta and Martyr Theodore (1937). New Hieromartyr Schema-archimandrite Ignatius (Lebedev) of St. Peter's Monastery (1938). Hiero-confessor Archpriest Peter Cheltsov of Smolensk (1972). Venerable Christopher of Palestine (6th c.). Venerable Fantinus of Calabria (9th c.). Synaxis of the Serbian Hierarchs: Sts. Sava I (1235), Arsenius (1266), Sava II (1271), Eustathius I (1285), James (1292), Nicodemus (1325), and Daniel II (1338), archbishops; Sts. Ioannicius II (1354), Spyridon (1388), Ephraim II (1395), Cyril (1419), Nicon (ca. 1439), Macarius (1574), Gabriel I (1659), patriarchs; and St. Gregory (1012), bishop. St. Barlaam metropolitan of Moldavia (1657). Venerable Bryaene of Nisibis (318). St. Eulalius, bishop of Caesarea (4th c.). Sixteen Monk-martyrs of Thebes. Six Martyrs of Melitene. St. Sarmata of The Paradise. Hieromartyr Felix and Martyrs Fortunatus, Septimius and Januarius. St. Fiacrius of Brogillum (670). Translation of the relics of St. Guthlac. Hieromonk of Crowland.

**31 August / 13 September - Fast day- The Feast of the Girdle of the Most Holy Mother of God** - At her Dormition, the most holy Mother of God left her girdle to the holy Apostle Thomas. This girdle was later taken to Constantinople and kept there in a sealed casket in the church of the Mother of God at Blachernae, founded by the Empress Pulcheria. This casket was never opened until the time of the Emperor Leo the Wise (886-912). Leo's wife, the Empress Zoe, was taken sick in soul and, as the result of a mysterious vision, desired that the girdle of the holy Mother of God be placed upon her. The Emperor asked the Patriarch, and the casket was opened. The girdle was taken out and placed upon the sick Empress, who immediately recovered. This feast was instituted as a memorial of this wonder. One part of this girdle is to be found in Georgia, in Zugdid. This came about as follows: The daughter of the Emperor Romanus was healed by the aid of this girdle and, later, when her father gave her to King Abuchaz of Georgia, she took a part of this girdle with her. By order of the Russian Tsar Alexander I, a special church was built in Mingrelia in Zugdid, where this piece of the wonderworking raiment of the holy Mother of God is kept.

**St. Aidan, bishop of Lindisfarne, apostle of N. England who taught the Wednesday and Friday fasts (651)** - An Irish monk who had studied under St. Senan, at Iniscathay (Scattery Island). He is placed as Bishop of Clogher by Ware and Lynch, but he resigned that see and became a monk at Iona about 630. His virtues, however, shone so resplendently that he was selected (635) as first Bishop of Lindisfarne, and in time became apostle of Northumbria. St. Bede is lavish in praise of the episcopal rule of St. Aidan, and of his Irish co-workers in the ministry. Oswald, king of Northumbria, who had studied in

Ireland, was a firm friend of St. Aidan, and did all he could for the Irish missionaries until his sad death at Maserfield near Oswestry, 5 August, 642. St. Aidan died at Bamborough on the last day of August, 651, and his remains were borne to Lindisfarne. Bede tells us that "he was a pontiff inspired with a passionate love of virtue, but at the same time full of a surpassing mildness and gentleness."

**St. Eanswythe, abbess of Folkestone, grand-daughter of king St. Ethelbert of England, (c.640)** - is remembered for the simple life in which she gave up all the pleasures of the World. Once, the King of Northumbria asked to marry Eanswythe. At that time her father was building an oratory for her and one of the beams to be used was three feet too short. Eanswythe set the King a task to complete in order to win her hand in marriage. If the King's gods could, by his prayers, lengthen the beam then she would marry him. The King failed and went away filled with shame. Eanswythe however, approached the beam, made a prayer, and the beam lengthened to the required size. This was the first miracle. The nearest water to the oratory was a good distance away and had to be brought by hand. Eanswythe therefore went to the spring a mile or so away in the village of Sweeten. Using a stick she made the water follow her, up and down over cliffs and rocky summits, to her Oratory, where it delivered abundant water for men and animals. In the third miracle the young virgin placed an interdict that the birds should stop settling on the nearby fields and consuming the produce. So it was - the birds obeyed. She performed still further miracles. She restored a blind woman's sight, made a mad man sane and restored health in others from various diseases. King Eadbald consented to allowing her to found a monastery where she served as its abbess. Hers was the first convent in England. The Abbey was destroyed by the Danes; the church built in its place became an "alien" Priory of Lonlay l' Abbeye(Orne) in 1095; then about 1838 the Monks were moved by William de Avaranches to the site of the present church. Less than a century later a great rebuilding took place. It was finally rebuilt as we see it today between 1856 and 1874. In art, Saint Eanswythe is portrayed as a crowned abbess with a book and two fish.

**Also commemorated on this day:** New Hieromartyr Alexander priest and Vladimir deacon (1918). New Hieromartyrs Michael and Myron priests (1937). New Hieromartyr Demetrius (1938). Hieromartyr Cyprian, bishop of Carthage (258). St. Gennadius, patriarch of Constantinople (471). New Martyrs of Jasenovac (1941-1945). St. John, metropolitan of Kiev (1089). St. Paulinus, bishop of Trier (358). St. Gennadius Scholarius, patriarch of Constantinople (1372). St. Cuthburga, abbess of Wimborne. Four Martyrs of Perge in Pamphylia. Martyrs: Menas, Faustus, Andrew, Heraclius, Phileortus and Diadoch. Martyr Phileortus. Martyr Diadoch. Eight Virgin-martyrs of Gaza. 366 Martyrs of Nicomedia.

**1 / 14 September - The Beginning of the Church's Year** - The First Ecumenical Council decreed that the Church's year should begin on September 1st. The month of September was, for the Jews, the beginning of the civil year (see Exodus 12:2), the month of the gathering of fruits and the bringing to God of sacrifices of thanksgiving. It was at the time of this feast that the Lord Jesus went into the synagogue in Nazareth, opened the Book of the Prophet Isaiah and read the words: 'The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me; because He hath anointed Me to preach good tidings unto the meek; He hath sent Me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance' (Is. 61:1-2; cf. Luke 4:16-21). This month of September is also noted in the history of Christianity because it was during September that Constantine the Great was victorious over Maxentius, the enemy of the Christian faith, a victory followed by the granting of freedom of confession of the Christian faith throughout the whole Roman Empire. For a long time, the civil year in the Christian world was reckoned in the same way as the Church's year, from September 1st, but it was later changed to January 1st, first in western Europe and then also in Russia in the time of Peter the Great.

**Our Holy Father Simeon Stylites (the Elder) and his mother St. Martha** - born in Syria of peasant parents, he fled from them at the age of eighteen and became a monk. He gave himself to the strictest asceticism, sometimes fasting for forty days. After that, he followed a particular asceticism, until then unknown: standing day and night on a pillar in unceasing prayer. His pillar was at first three metres high, then one of six metres was built for him, then eleven, eighteen and finally twenty. His mother, Martha, came to see him twice, but he would not receive her, saying to her from his pillar: 'Don't disturb me now, Mother dear, if we are to be worthy to meet in the next world.' St Simeon endured innumerable assaults from demons, overcoming them all by prayer. He worked great miracles, healing the sick by his prayers and his words. People from all sides gathered around his pillar: rich and poor, kings and slaves. He helped them all, restoring bodily health to some, giving comfort and instruction to others and denouncing some for their heretical faith. The Empress Eudocia was thus turned from the Eutychian heresy back to Orthodoxy. Simeon lived in asceticism during the reigns of the Emperors Theodosius the Younger, Marcian and Leo the Great. This first Christian stylite and great wonderworker, St Simeon, lived for seventy years, and entered into rest in the Lord on September 1st, 459. His relics were taken to Antioch, to the church dedicated to his name.

**Also commemorated on this day:** Martyr Aeithalas of Persia (380). Holy Forty Virgin-martyrs: Laurencia the deaconess, Celsina, Theoclia, Theoctista, Dorothy, Eutychia, Thecla, Aristaineta,



Philadelphia, Mary, Veronica, Euthymia, Lamprotatia, Euphymia, Theodora, Theodota, Teteia, Aquilina, Theodulia, Aplodora, Lampadia, Procopia, Paula, Junilla, Ampliana, Percissa, Polynicia, Maura, Gregoria, Cyria, Bassa, Callinica, Barbara, Cyriacia, Agathonica, Justa, Irene, Matrona, Timothea, Tatiana, and Anna, and Martyr Ammon the deacon, their teacher, at Heraclea in Thrace (321-3). Martyrs Callista and her brothers Evodus and Hermogenes, at Nicomedia (309). Righteous Joshua the Son of Nun (1400 B.C.). Venerable Dionysius the Lesser (before 556). Synaxis of the Most Holy Theotokos in Miasena Monastery, in memory of the finding of Her Icon (864). "Chernigov-Gethsemane" (1869), Alexandria, August (1914) and named "All-Blessed" at Kazan Icons of the Most Holy Theotokos. Venerable Meletius the Younger of Thebes (1095-1124). New Martyr Angelis of Constantinople (1680). Venerable Nicholas of Courtaliatis in Crete, monk (1670). Venerable Symeon of Lesbos. St. Evanthia. St. Verena of Zurzach (350). St. Aegidius of Camargue (590). St. Haido of Stanos (1820-21). Commemoration of the Great Fire at Constantinople about 470 A.D.

### ‡ Daily Scripture Readings ‡

**Monday** - 2 Corinthians 5:10-15; Mark 1:9-15; Galatians 5:22-6:2 (St. Poemen);  
Matthew 4:25-5:12 (St. Poemen)

**Tuesday** - 2 Corinthians 5:15-21; Mark 1:16-22; 2 Corinthians 6:11-16; Mark 1:23-28

**Wednesday** - Matthew 14:1-13 (Matins Gospel); Acts 13:25-32 (Forerunner); Mark 6:14-30  
(Forerunner)

**Thursday** - Matthew 11:27-30 (Matins Gospel); 2 Corinthians 7:1-10; Mark 1:29-35; Galatians  
5:22-6:2 (St. Alexander Nevsky); Matthew 11:27-30 (St. Alexander Nevsky); 2 Corinthians 6:1-  
10 (St. Daniel); Luke 6:17-23 (St. Daniel)

**Friday** - 2 Corinthians 7:10-16; Mark 2:18-22; 1 Corinthians 1:26-29; Matthew 20:29-34;  
Hebrews 9:1-7 (Theotokos); Luke 10:38-42; 11:27-28 (Theotokos)

**Saturday** - 1 Timothy 2:1-7 (Epistle, New Year); Luke 4:16-22 (Gospel, New Year);  
Colossians 3:12-16 (Epistle, St. Simeon); Matthew 11:27-30 (Gospel, St. Simeon)

### HOMILY

#### -on the Word, the Son of God-

#### In the beginning was the Word (John 1:1).

The Logos-the rational, intelligent Word-existed in the beginning. This pertains to the Divine Nature of our Lord Jesus Christ. Brethren, by saying, In the beginning, do we think that the Word of God has a beginning? Or that there was a certain date in time when the Son of God was born of God the Father? In no way! For the birth of the Son of God can have neither a date nor a beginning, since time is a condition of this transient world, and it does not affect the eternal God, and therefore does not affect anything at all that is of God. Can the sun remain the sun, if the sunlight is separated from it? Will a man remain a man, if his mind is taken away? Would honey still be honey, if its sweetness is separated from it? It cannot. Even less can one conceive of God as separate from His Logos, from His rational Word, from His Intelligence, from His Wisdom-the eternal Father separate from His co-eternal Son. No, brethren, the words are not about the beginning of the Son of God from God the Father, but rather about the beginning of the history of the created world and the salvation of mankind. This beginning is in the Word of God, in the Son of God. He began both the creation of the world and the salvation of the world. Whoever would speak of the creation of the visible or invisible worlds, or of the salvation of mankind, must begin with the Beginning. And that Beginning is the Word of God, the Wisdom of God, the Son of God. For example, if someone were telling a story about boating on a lake, he might begin it like this: ``In the beginning there was a lake, and on it sailed a white boat...." No reasonable person would interpret the words, ``In the beginning there was a lake..." to mean that the lake came into existence on the same day that the boat sailed on it. Thus, no rational man could take the words of the Evangelist, In the beginning was the Word..., as though the Word of God came forth from God at the same moment that the world was created! Just as the lake existed for thousands of years before the boat sailed on it, so the Word of God existed for a whole eternity before the beginning of creation. O Son of God, co-eternal with the Father and the Spirit, enlighten us and save us.

**To You be glory and thanks always. Amen.**