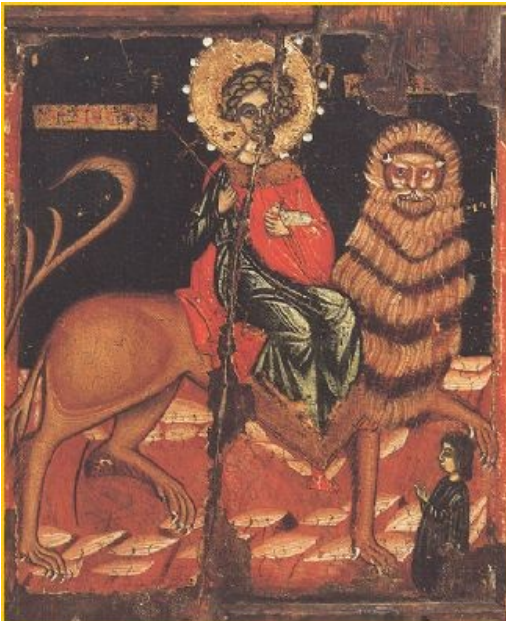


# 12<sup>th</sup> Sunday After Pentecost Martyr Mamas & St John the Faster

2 / 15 September



**Resurrection Tropar, Tone 3:** Let the heavens rejoice / let the earth be glad / for the Lord has shown strength with His arm! / He has trampled down death by death! / He has become the first-born of the dead! He has delivered us from the depths of hell / and has granted the world great mercy.

**Troparion of St Mamas tone 3:** Holy descendant of martyrs,/ thou didst eagerly follow their steps:/ while preaching the Saviour's Name thou wast fulfilled in contest./ Wise and glorious Mamas,/ pray to Christ our God to save us.

**Troparion of St John the Faster tone 4:** Anointed by the Holy Spirit,/ thou didst serve God like an arthly angel,/ O Shepherd and

Hierarch John./ Thou didst unify thyself through fasting/ and grant cleansing to those who eagerly run to thee.

**Resurrection Kondak, Tone 3:** On this day thou didst rise from the tomb, O Merciful One, / leading us from the gates of death / On this day Adam exults as Eve rejoices. / With the prophets and the patriarchs they unceasingly praise the divine majesty of Thy power.

**Kontakion of St Mamas tone 3:** Shepherd thy people in lifegiving pastures/ with the staff given thee by God./ And crush the invisible enemies beneath the feet of those who praise thee./ For all in danger have thee/as a fervent intercessor, O holy Mamas.

**Kontakion of St John tone 4:** Thou didst become like thy namesake the Forerunner, John, for thou wast radiant with fasting and purity,/ Christ has made thee a worthy shepherd of His flock;/ beseech Him to save those who venerate thee.

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## Vespers

Lord I have Cried - Tone 3, on 10: Octoechos 4; Martyr 3 (Shedding thy blood); Saint 3 (O most honored father John); G: Martyr (At the table of God); N: Sunday Dogmatic in the tone of the week.

Aposticha: Octoechos; G: Martyr (Come together, O ye faithful); Theotokion, Tone 4 (Mercifully regard the supplications).

## Matins Gospel I

### Epistle: Corinthians 15: 1-11

Moreover, brethren, I declare to you the gospel which I preached to you, which also you received and in which you stand, By which also you are saved, if you hold fast that word which I preached to you--unless you believed in vain. For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, And that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures, And that He was seen by Cephas, then by the twelve. After that He was seen by over five hundred brethren at once, of whom the greater part remain to the present, but some have fallen asleep. After that He was seen by James, then by all the apostles. Then last of all He was seen by me also, as by one born out of due time. For I am the least of the apostles, who am not worthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace toward me was not in vain; but I laboured more abundantly than they all, yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me. Therefore, whether it was I or they, so we preach and so you believed.

**HE WAS SEEN BY CEPHAS, THEN BY THE TWELVE. AFTER THAT...**

**BY MORE THAN FIVE HUNDRED BRETHREN AT ONCE... LAST OF ALL HE WAS SEEN BY ME ALSO**

Having finished the discourse on spiritual gifts, he passes on to the most necessary of all: the subject of the resurrection. For in this, too, they were very unsound. And as in men's bodies when the fever lays actual hold on their solid parts - I mean the nerves and the veins and the primary elements - the mischief becomes incurable unless it receives much attention, at that time something very similar was likely to happen. The mischief was proceeding to the very elements of godliness. This is why Paul also uses great earnestness. For his discourse was not of morals ...but about the very sum of all good things. They were at variance touching the resurrection itself. The devil was taking a vehement stand against the resurrection because this was our great hope ...Paul, writing to Timothy, called it gangrene ...saying, 'Of whom is Hymenaeus and Philetus, who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already, and overthrow the faith of some' (II Tim. 2:17,18). At one time then they spoke this way, but at another time they said that the body does not rise again but the resurrection is the purification of the soul. But these things that wicked demon persuaded them to say ...to show that all the things done for our sakes are a fable. For if they were persuaded that there is no resurrection of bodies, he would have gradually persuaded them that neither was Christ raised ...Paul puts this before us with much exactness, going over all of it...

## **Second Epistle: Galatians 5:22-6:2**

### **Gospel Matthew 19: 16-26**

Now behold, one came and said to Him, "Good Teacher, what good thing shall I do that I may have eternal life?" So He said to him, "Why do you call Me good? No one is good but One, that is, God. But if you want to enter into life, keep the commandments." He said to Him, "Which ones?" Jesus said, "'You shall not murder,' 'You shall not commit adultery,' 'You shall not steal,' 'You shall not bear false witness,' 'Honor your father and your mother,' and, 'You shall love your neighbour as yourself.'" The young man said to Him, "All these things I have kept from my youth. What do I still lack?" Jesus said to him, "If you want to be perfect, go, sell what you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me." But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions. Then Jesus said to His disciples, "Assuredly, I say to you that it is hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven. And again I say to you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God." When His disciples heard it, they were greatly astonished, saying, "Who then can be saved?" But Jesus looked at them and said to them, "With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible."

### **THE RICH YOUNG MAN**

See in the Epistle above what kind of reading from the Apostle Paul the Holy Church has selected for us today, in order to strengthen us in a definite state of mind. Along with the Sunday Gospel reading, which serves as a support, it strengthens in us the understanding that we live here temporarily. However, we fight against such an understanding; we don't even want to think about it. But it's a fact. Yes, our life is seventy years, and if by reason of strength, eighty years; but beyond this is hardship and disease. And how many tragic cases there are when God cuts off our earthly life in the years of youth, and even in childhood.

What have the Sunday Gospel readings been saying to us during the last few weeks? They have been saying that we must be perfect, that we must be Christians, because at any time the moment may come when Christ will call us and say: "Follow Me!" (Mt. 19:21). But how are we going to follow Him if we are spiritually paralysed, if we are spiritually blind and do not see His abodes on high?

Christ saves us from these dispositions. He gives us His Church. And the Orthodox Church is always reminding us of what the Bible says: how the world of God was created, how the first people lived, how the Fall occurred. Adam did not want to go from strength to strength, from grace to grace in communion with God, but wanted to have this strength within himself. And he went away, went away into the byways of human life, and therefore lost the Tree of Life. But God the Merciful One, God the Father gives us His Son Who was incarnate of the Most Holy Virgin, Who lived the Good News of the Gospel and showed us how to fulfill the commandment: Love for God and neighbour.

In today's Epistle the Apostle Paul shows us the true Risen Christ, Who brings us to Eternal Life. Paul himself, while still Saul, was also wandering in search of truth. He too in the beginning was searching for the earthly Christ who would free the Jews from the power of Rome. But when he was on the way to persecute the Church of God, he met Christ Himself, already after the Ascension; and here Saul became Paul. And as we heard in today's reading, he became the preacher of the Risen Christ. He became a New Testament man, who (if one can say so) brought about a great revolution in the world and transformed the whole world into the search for Christ and the striving for Life in Christ. With the name of the Apostle Paul is connected all the preaching of Christ in the entire world.

So when the Holy Church has strengthened us in the understanding that we are going toward Eternal Existence through our earthly wandering to Christ, then the Holy Church addresses us and points out: do not be mistaken. A certain lawyer came to Christ and asked:

What shall I do in order to inherit the Kingdom of God? (Today's Gospel). And Christ said, Fulfill the commandments. And when this lawyer said, From my childhood I have fulfilled the commandments, Christ saw his lack of understanding of the truth and said: Then give away everything that you have and follow Me (Mt. 19:16-21). But this man had much and trusted in this "much." Everything around him was real to him, and this reality gave him security in life. And this, what Christ was saying about future life, was not real to him. Therefore, when Christ said to him, Follow me and give away everything; he thought: how do I give it away? What will I have then? And what did he want to have? Power, strength, to be a possessor of earthly things.

The Apostle says today: what is earth? Christ leads us into Eternal Life. He saves us in an earthly way. God gives people abilities and knowledge; these are the various ways in which people pass their earthly life. But laid before them as a foundation are the Beatitudes: blessed are the poor in spirit, blessed are those who weep, blessed are the meek, blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, blessed are the peacemakers, those who are persecuted (Mt. 5:3-11). See, these are all the heavenly ways. This is what the Holy Church sets before us. Speaking to us about life beyond the grave, about resurrection (not as an idea, but as real life), about the Apostle Paul and all our saints, she shows us the truth and shows us that mirage which appears to be real. But if we start to live for this reality in order to acquire earthly goods, we will find ourselves in an abyss, and everything we possess will remain here. There will be nothing that belongs to Christ.

So let us arise, brothers, answering the calls of the Holy Church today: do not abandon prayer, do not abandon fasting which gives us concentration and attention, do not neglect also your good heart which will obtain for you a revelation from God and the joy of spiritual spring which will strengthen you in Eternal Life.

*The One Thing Needful - Archbishop Andrei*

## **Second Gospel: Luke 6:17-23**

### **Saints of the Week**

**2 / 15 September - The Holy Martyr Mamas** — He was born in Paphlagonia of eminent Christian parents, Theodotus and Rufina, who were thrown into prison for the name of Christ. In the prison, Theodotus was the first to die, and Rufina, after giving birth to a son, soon followed her husband, and the new-born child was left in the prison beside the bodies of his parents. God the Provider sent His holy angel to a noble widow, Ammia, whom the angel told in a dream to go to the prison and take the child. Ammia asked the city governor's permission to bury the dead and take the child into her own home. The child was dumb until the age of five, and then his first word was 'Mama', because of which he was given the name Mamas. At school, he showed an unusual brightness, and, being brought up at home in a Christian spirit, did not conceal his faith but confessed it before his contemporaries, mocking at the idols. In the time of the Emperor Aurelian, there was a vicious persecution of Christians, and the pagans did not spare even Christian children. Mamas was fifteen years old when he was taken before the Emperor. The Emperor told him to deny Christ only with his lips. To this Mamas replied: 'I shall not deny my God and King Jesus Christ either in my heart or with my lips.' The Emperor ordered that he be beaten, burned with torches and finally thrown into the sea, but an angel of God saved him and took him to a high mountain near Caesarea. There he lived in solitude and prayer, and fierce wild beasts were tamed by his holiness. He was eventually found there by the persecutors and put again to torture. Overcoming both the power of fire and the fierceness of wild beasts, holy Mamas was stabbed with a trident by a pagan priest. He thus gave his holy soul to the God to whom he had remained faithful in all his sufferings. Many of the sick have been healed by his relics.

**Venerable John the Faster, Patriarch of Constantinople** - He is also celebrated on August 30. He was at first a goldsmith, but because of his great and many acts of mercy-and by God's providence-he was ordained a priest. Once, when he was a young man, John was walking with Eusebius, an old monk from Palestine. Suddenly, a bodiless voice spoke to Eusebius: ``Abba, do not walk to the right of the great John." It was the voice of God, foretelling the great service to which John would shortly be called. After the Blessed Eutychius, John was chosen to be Patriarch of Constantinople. He did not want to accept this but, having been frightened by a certain heavenly vision, he accepted. He was a great faster, intercessor and miracle-worker right up to his death. He reposed in the year 595. After his death, his only personal possessions were found to be a wooden spoon, a linen shirt and an old garment. His writings on repentance and confession are well known.

**Also commemorated on this day:** Translation of the relics of Prince Peter (1228) and Princess Febronia (tonsured David and Euphrosyne), wonderworkers of Murom (movable holiday on the Sunday before September 6th). Synaxis of All Saints of Saratov (movable holiday on the Sunday nearest to August 31st). Venerables Anthony (1073) and Theodosius (1074) of the Kiev Caves. New Martyrs Barsunuphius, bishop of Kyrilov, priest John, Abbess Seraphima of Therapontov Convent, and Anatole, Nicholas, Michael and Philip (1918). New Hieromartyr Nicholas priest (1920). New Hieromartyrs Damascene, bishop of Starodub, priests Ephimius, John, John, Vladimir, Victor, Basil, Theodore, Peter, Stephen and Virgin-martyr Ksenia (1937). Herman, bishop of Vyaznikov, priest Stephen and martyr Paul (1937). Translation of the relics (1796) of Venerable Theodosius, abbot, of Totma. 3,618 Martyrs who suffered at Nicomedia (3rd-4th c.). "Kaluga" Icon of the Most Holy Theotokos (1771). Righteous Eleazar, son of Aaron, and Righteous Phineas. Martyrs Aeithalas and Ammon of Thrace. Hieu, abbess of Tadcaster (7th c.).

**3 / 16 September - The Hieromartyr Anthimus** - Born in Nicomedia, he was brought up from childhood as a true Christian. 'His body was mortified, his spirit humble; jealousy was uprooted, anger tamed, sloth banished... he had love for all and was at peace with all, had a good understanding with all, was filled with zeal for the glory of God and was open to all.' It is not surprising that a man of such virtues was made a bishop. St Anthimus worked as a bishop in Nicomedia at the time of a harsh persecution of Christians under the two wicked Emperors Diocletian and Maximian. Streams of Christian blood were spilled, especially in Nicomedia. One year, on the feast of the Nativity of Christ, twenty thousand martyrs were burned in one church (see Dec. 28th). This happened during Anthimus's episcopate. The persecution did not end with this, but continued, and many Christians were thrown into prison and kept there for torture and death. St Anthimus withdrew to a village, Omana, not to escape death but to be able thence to strengthen his flock in the path of martyrdom, that none should draw back through fear. One of his letters to the Christians in prison was seized and taken to the Emperor Maximian. The Emperor sent twenty soldiers to find Anthimus and take him. The grey-beard, discerning this, went out to meet the soldiers, brought them into his house as his guests and only then revealed that he was Anthimus. The soldiers, amazed at his kindness, urged him to hide, and said that they would tell the Emperor that they had been unable to find him, but Anthimus replied that he dared not allow God's Law to be violated by a lie in order to save his life. So he set out with the soldiers. On the way, all the soldiers came to faith in Christ and were baptised by Anthimus. Brought before the Emperor, Anthimus was submitted to harsh and long-drawn-out torture, and was finally beheaded with an axe. He glorified God and entered into rest in the Lord at the beginning of the fourth century.

**Martyr Basilissa of Nicomedia** - Basilissa was a nine-year-old girl. She was martyred in Nicomedia not long after the death of St. Anthimus. The torturers covered her whole body with wounds, but she remained faithful to Christ. God preserved her unharmed from fire and wild beasts, which caused her torturer, Alexander, to repent and embrace the Christian Faith. Basilissa then went out into a field, fell to her knees, and prayed thankfully to God that she had endured the tortures, and with that she gave up her spirit to God, in about the year 309.

**Also commemorated on this day:** Venerable Theoctistus (451), fellow-faster with St. Euthymius the Great. Blessed John "the Hairy," fool-for-Christ at Rostov (1580). New Hieromartyr Pimen (Belolikhov) bishop of Vernensk and Semirechensk, Sergius, Basil, Philip, Vladimir priests, martyr Meletius (1918). New Hieromartyrs Basil and Parthenius priests (1919). New Hieromartyrs Andrew and Theophan priests (1920). New Hieromartyrs Vladimir and Michael priests (1921). New Hieromartyr Nicholas priest (1923). New Hieromartyr Euthymius priest with 4 martyrs (1924). New Hieromartyr Romanus priest (1929). New Hieromartyr Alexis and Elias priests (1937). New Hieromartyr Peter Deacon (1953). St. Phoebe, deaconess at Cencreae near Corinth (1st c.). Hieromartyr Aristion, bishop of Alexandria, in Syria (3rd c.). St. Ioannicius II, first patriarch of Serbia (1349). The Pisidia Icon of the Mother of God (608). New Martyr Polydorus of Cyprus (1794). Emperor Constantine the New. Martyrs Chariton and Archontinus. St. Remaclus, bishop of Maastricht (677). St. Aigulphus of Provence (676). St. Edward, martyr and king of England (978).

**4 / 17 September - The Hieromartyr Babylas** - This 'great and wonderful man, if one can call him a man', as St John Chrysostom expresses it, was archbishop in Antioch in the time of the wicked Emperor Numerian. This Numerian made a peace-treaty with some barbarian king, who was of better character and a greater lover of peace than himself. As a sign of his sincere desire for a lasting peace, the king gave his little son to be brought up at Numerian's court. One day, Numerian butchered the boy and offered him as a sacrifice to the idols. Still hot from his wicked shedding of innocent blood, this evildoer went to a Christian church to see what was happening there. Holy Babylas was at prayer with the people. He heard that the Emperor was coming with his retinue and intended to enter the church. Babylas stopped the service, went out in front of the church and told the Emperor that, as an idolater, he was not permitted entry to the holy church where the one, true God was worshipped. Speaking of Babylas, Chrysostom says: 'Who else in the world would he fear, having with such authority withstood the Emperor? By this he taught kings not to spread their power further than the measure given them by God,

and also showed the clergy how to use their authority. ' The shamed Emperor turned back, but planned revenge. The following day, the Emperor summoned Babylas, and began to berate him and bid him offer sacrifice to idols, which the saint, naturally, steadfastly refused to do. The Emperor then bound him with chains and threw him into prison. He also tortured three children: Urban, aged twelve, Prilidian, aged nine and Hippolinus, aged seven. Babylas was their spiritual father and teacher, and they had stayed near him out of love for him. They were the sons of a Christian woman, Christodoula, who herself suffered for Christ. The Emperor first ordered that each child be beaten with the number of blows that totalled his age, and then had them thrown into prison. Babylas, in bonds, was present at the beheading of the children, giving them courage, and then laid his honoured head under the sword. He was buried by Christians in the chains in which he was bound at his death, in one grave with the three children. Their holy souls flew off to the company of heaven, and their wonderworking relics remained to be of support to the faithful, along with the enduring witness of their heroism in the Faith. They suffered in about 283.

**Holy Prophet and God-seer Moses** - Moses was a great leader and the lawgiver of Israel. He was born in Egypt in about 1550 b.c. For forty years, he lived at the court of the pharaoh; for forty years, he lived as a shepherd in contemplation of God and the world; and for his remaining forty years, he led the people through the wilderness to the Promised Land. He beheld the Promised Land, but was not allowed to enter it, for he had once sinned against God (Numbers 20:12). Moses reposed at the age of 120. As a miracle-worker, he was a prefiguring of Christ, according to St. Basil the Great. He appeared from the other world on Mount Tabor during the Lord's Transfiguration. According to the witness of St. John Climacus, he appeared also to the monks in the Monastery of Mount Sinai.

**Icon of the Unburnt Bush** - This beautiful Icon calls to mind the burning Bush which Moses saw, but which was not consumed by the flames. The Prophet Moses is also commemorated on this day. On the Icon is a representation of the Mother of God with Her Child. She holds a ladder on which is sometimes represented St John of the Ladder, the ascetic who wrote a great spiritual treatise called "The Ladder." This richly meaningful Icon depicts the Mother of God Who contained within Her Womb the Eternal God Who is Fire, and yet was unconsumed, like the Unburnt Bush. She is a true Ladder by which we ascend to Heaven, as the Son of God took His Body from Her. The Prophet David is also depicted in the Icon, as the Ancestor of the Most Holy Theotokos and of Christ. He foretold the coming of the Messiah, especially through his Psalms. Many Icons of the Feasts of the Orthodox Church have depictions of David for the fact that his Psalms are used throughout to celebrate the events of our salvation. This icon has been known for its miracles of preservation from fires in Churches and homes.

**Also commemorated on this day:** Uncovering of the relics (1911) of St. Ioasaph, bishop of Belgorod (1754). Uncovering of the relics (1989) of St. Metrophanes, bishop of Voronezh (1703). Synaxis of All Saints of Voronezh. Hieromartyr Parthenius, abbot of Kiziltis Monastery in Crimea (1867). New Hieromartyrs Paul, John, Nicholas, Nicholas, John, Nicholas, Alexander, Peter and Michael priests, Hieromartyr Stephen, Martyrs Basil, Peter, Stephen and Alexander (1937). New Hieromartyrs Gregory (Lebedev) Bishop of Shliserburg and Sergius (Druzhinin) Bishop of Narva (1937). Virgin-Martyr Helen (1942). Martyr Hermione, daughter of Apostle Philip the Deacon (117). Martyrs Theodore, Mianus (Ammianus), Julian, Kion (Oceanus), and Centurionus of Nicomedia (305-311). New Hieromartyr Peter, metropolitan of Dabro-Bosnia (1941). St. Joachim, patriarch of Alexandria. Venerable Petronius of Egypt (346), disciple of St. Pachomius the Great. Martyr Charitina of Amisus. Martyrs Tathuil and Bebaia of Edessa. Martyr Jerusalem of Berroia. Martyrs Theotimus and Theodulus the executioners. St. Simeon, abbot and wonderworker of Garesja (1773). St. Anthimus the Blind, new ascetic of Cephalonia (1782). Translation of the relics of St. Birinus, bishop of Dorchester-on-Thames and enlightener of Wessex. Translation of the relics St. Cuthberg, bishop of Lindisfarne. Martyr Babylas of Nicomedia, and with him 84 children (4th c.)

**5/ 18 September - Fast Day - The Holy Prophet Zacharias** - He was the father of St. John the Forerunner. Zacharias was the son of Barachias, from the lineage of Abia, of the sons of Aaron. Zacharias was a high priest who held the eighth degree of service in the Temple at Jerusalem. His wife Elizabeth was the daughter of Sophia and sister of St. Anna, who was the mother of the Holy Theotokos. During the reign of King Herod the child-slayer, Zacharias was serving one day at the Temple of Jerusalem according to his turn. An angel of God appeared to him in the sanctuary, and Zacharias had great fear. The angel said to him: Fear not, Zacharias (Luke 1:13), and announced that Elizabeth would bear a son, in answer to their prayers. But both Zacharias and Elizabeth were old. When Zacharias doubted the words of the heavenly herald, the angel said: I am Gabriel, that stand in the presence of God (Luke 1:19). Zacharias was struck dumb from that hour, and could not speak until his son was born and he had written on a tablet: His name is John (Luke 1:63). Then his speech returned, and he magnified God. Some time later, when the Lord Jesus had been born and Herod began to slaughter the children of Bethlehem, he sent men to find and kill the son of Zacharias-for Herod had heard all that had happened to Zacharias, and how John had been born. Upon seeing the soldiers coming, Elizabeth took John into her arms-he was a year and a half old at that time-fled from the house with him, and ran to a rocky and desolate place. When she saw the soldiers following her, she cried out to the mountain: ``O mountain of God, receive a

mother with her child!" and the rock opened and hid the mother and child. Then Herod, enraged that the child John had not been slain, ordered that Zacharias be slain before the altar. The blood of Zacharias was spilled on the marble and dried solid as stone, and remained as a witness to Herod's evil deed. In the place where Elizabeth hid with John a cave opened, water flowed out of it, and a fruit-bearing palm grew, all by the power of God. Forty days after the death of Zacharias, the blessed Elizabeth died. The child John remained in the wilderness, fed by an angel and protected by God's providence, until the day he appeared at the Jordan.

**Also commemorated on this day:** Martyrdom of St. Athanasius, abbot, of Brest, by the Latins (1649). New Hieromartyr Alexis, archbishop of Velikoustiuzh, Martyr Euthymius (1937). Uncovering of the relics of Venerable Alexander Urodov (2001). Martyrdom of the Holy Passion-bearer Gleb of Russia, in holy baptism David (1051). Martyrs Thiphael and his sister, Thivea (or Vivea) (98-138). Martyr Sarbelus of Edessa. Virgin-martyr Rhais (Raisa) of Alexandria (308). Martyrs Juventinus and Maximus at Antioch (4th c.). Martyrs Urban, Theodore, Medimnus, and 77 Companions at Nicomedia (370). Martyrs Abdas, Hormizd, and Sunin of Persia (ca. 424). Icon of the Mother of God Orshansk (1631). Appearance of the Holy Apostle Peter to Emperor Justinian at Athira near Constantinople.

**6 / 19 September - Commemoration of the Miracles of the Holy Archangel Michael** - There was in Phrygia a place called Chonae (plunging), not far from Hierapolis, and in that place there was a miraculous spring of water. When the Apostle John the Theologian, together with Philip, was preaching the Gospel in Hierapolis, he looked at this place and foretold that a spring would gush forth in it, a spring of healing water from which many would be restored to health, and that the place would be visited by Michael, the great archangel of God. This prophecy was very soon fulfilled: a spring of water appeared, which became known far and wide for its miraculous power. A pagan in Laodicea had a dumb daughter, which caused him great grief, but the Archangel Michael appeared to him in a dream and urged him to take his daughter to this spring, that she might be restored to health. The father immediately obeyed, took his daughter and there encountered many people who had come to seek deliverance from various ills. They were all Christians. The man asked how he should seek healing, and the Christians told him: 'In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, you must beg the Archangel Michael.' The father made his petition accordingly and dipped his daughter in the water, and the girl began to speak. Then this pagan was baptised along with his daughter and his whole household, and built a church to the Archangel Michael over the spring. Later, a young man called Archippus settled there. Pagans did him much malicious harm, for they did not want such power to be felt from a Christian holy place and many people be drawn to it. In their wickedness, they altered the course of a nearby river, so that it inundated the church and the spring. But, at the prayers of Archippus, the Archangel Michael appeared and opened a fissure in the rock at the end of the church, through which the flooding river plunged. So the place was saved, and became known as Chonae — plunging — from the river's plunge through the opened fissure. St Archippus lived there in asceticism till the age of seventy, and entered peacefully into rest in the Lord.

**St. Bega, virgin, first abbess of Copeland in Cumbria** - of Irish royalty. Her family arranged her marriage to the Prince of Norway. Bega wanted to devote her life and virginity to the Lord, refused the arrangement, and fled. It is said that she was carried across the sea to the coast of Cumberland by riding on a clod of earth. She lived as an anchoress in Cumberland for many years, being fed by the birds in the woods. Saint Oswald of Northumbria, on a raid to dispel some highwaymen, convinced her to enter a convent for her own safety. She agreed, and took the veil from Saint Aidan of Lindisfarne and founded a monastery which later was named after her. As Abbess she was known for her generosity to the poor and oppressed who came to the abbey for assistance.

**Also commemorated on this day:** Martyr Eudoxius, and with him Martyrs Zeno, Macarius, and 1,104 soldiers in Melitene (311). New Hieromartyr Demetrius priest (1918). New Hieromartyrs Constantine, John and Vsevolod priests (1937). Venerable Archippus of Hierapolis (4th c.). Martyrs Romulus and 11,000 others in Armenia (2nd c.). Hieromartyr Cyril, bishop of Gortyna (3rd-4th c.). Martyrs Cyriacus, Faustus, Abibus, and 11 others at Alexandria (250). Venerable David of Hermopolis in Egypt (6th c.). Kiev-Bratsk (1654) and Arabia Icons of the Mother of God. Martyrs Calodote, Macarius, Andrew, Cyriacus, Dionysius, Andrew the Soldier, Andropelagia, Thecla, Theoctistus, and Sarapabon the Senator, in Egypt (256). St. Magnus of Fussen, enlightener of the Allgau region of Germany (750-772)

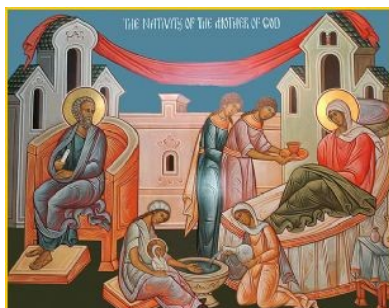
**7 / 20 September - Forefeast of the Nativity of the Theotokos - The Holy Martyr Sozon** - Born in Lycaonia, Sozon was a shepherd and lived by the Law of God, teaching his brothers and sisters, and his friends, his devout faith. He learned in a vision that he would suffer martyrdom for Christ. At that time, there was a great persecution of Christians near the city of Pompeiopolis on the part of Maximian, the governor of Silicia. In the city, there was a golden idol which was worshipped by the pagans. Sozon left his sheep, went to the city, entered the pagan temple and knocked an arm off the golden idol, melting it down and giving the gold to the poor. There was a great outcry in the city because of this, and the pagans began to search for the guilty man. That no-one else should suffer for his action, Sozon went to the governor and declared himself to be a Christian and the performer of that act. The torturers first beat him, then chained him to a tree and flogged him with iron flails. When he was at his last breath, they cast

him into the flames, where holy Sozon gave his soul to God. He suffered in about 304. His relics were found to be wonderworking, and a church dedicated to him was built over them.

**Our Holy Father John, Archbishop of Novgorod** - He was first a married priest and then, from 1163, bishop in Novgorod, building seven churches during his lifetime. He had a vision of the holy Mother of God and a rare power over demons, making them obey him, and he once miraculously preserved Novgorod from an attack by seventy-two princes. He suffered from diabolical temptations, but overcame them all by the power of the Cross and by prayer. Retiring to a monastery in old age, he received the Great Habit and entered peacefully into rest in the Lord on September 7th, 1185.

**St Kassia (Kassiani) the Hymnographer** - She was born in Constantinople to a noble family, and grew to be unusually beautiful and learned — so much so that she was chosen to participate in a 'bride show', at which the Emperor Theophilos was to choose a wife. Struck by Kassia's beauty, the Emperor approached her and said 'Through a woman came forth the baser things,' referring to Eve's transgression. Kassia responded, 'Through a woman came forth the better things', referring to the Incarnation of Christ through His Most Pure Mother. Stung by her reply, the Emperor rejected her and chose Theodora as his wife. Kassia entered monastic life and founded a women's monastery in Constantinople, closely allied with the Stoudion Monastery. Serving as abbess of the monastery, she wrote many liturgical hymns, at least twenty of which are included in the services of the Church. Best-known (or at least most closely associated with her) is the Hymn of Kassiani, sung at Matins on Holy Wednesday. She reposed in peace.

**Also commemorated on this day:** Martyrdom of St. Macarius, archimandrite of Kanev (1678). Venerable Macarius of Optina (1860). New Hieromartyrs Peter and Michael priests, Alexander deacon (1918). New Hieromartyr Priest John Maslovsky of Verkhne-Poltavka, Amur (1921). New Hieromartyrs Eugene metropolitan of Gorky, Stephan priest and Hieromartyrs Eugene, Nicholas and Pakhomius, New Hieromartyrs Gregory, Basil priests, Hieromartyr Leo (1937). Venerables Alexander Peresvet and Andrew Oслиaby (1380). Venerable Serapion of Spaso-Eleazar Monastery in Pskov (1480). Apostles Evodus (Euodias) (66) and Onesiphorus (67) of the Seventy. Martyr Eupychius of Caesarea in Cappadocia (2nd c.). Venerable Luke and St. Peter the Cappadocian, abbots of the monastery of the Deep Stream (10th c.). Venerable Cloud (Clodoald), abbot-founder of Nogent-sur-Seine near Paris (560) (Gaul).



**8 / 21 September - The Nativity of the Most Holy Mother of God -**

*Epistle: Phil. 2:5-11 & Gospel: St. Luke: 10:28-42 & 11:27-28*) The Holy Virgin Mary was born of her aged parents, Joachim and Anna. Her father was of the tribe of David and her mother of the tribe of Aaron, and so she was of royal blood from her father and priestly blood from her mother. By this, she foreshadowed Him who would be born of her as King and High Priest. Her parents were already old and had no children, and, because of this, were ashamed before men and humble before God. In their humility, they prayed with tears that God would bring joy to their old age with the gift of a child, as He had once given joy to the aged Abraham and Sarah, giving them their son Isaac. God, almighty and all-seeing, gave them a joy

far exceeding all their expectations and their wildest dreams, for He gave them not just a daughter, but the Mother of God; He illumined them not only with temporal joy but with eternal. God gave them just one daughter, who later gave them just one grandson—but what a daughter and what a grandson! Mary full of grace, blessed among women, the temple of the Holy Spirit, altar of the living God, table of living bread, ark of God's holy things, tree of the most delicious fruits, glory of the human race, praise of womanhood, fount of virginity and purity—this was the daughter given by God to Joachim and Anna. Born in Nazareth, she was after three years taken to the Temple in Jerusalem, whence she returned again to Nazareth and shortly afterwards heard the tidings of the holy Archangel Gabriel concerning the birth of the Son of God, the Saviour of the world, from her most pure and virginal body.

**Troparion of the Mother of God tone 4:** Thy birth, O Mother of God,/ has brought joy to all the world;/ for from thee arose the Sun of Righteousness, Christ our God,/ Who, having dissolved the curse, has given His blessing,/ and having abolished death, has granted us life eternal.

**Kontakion of the Mother of God tone 4:** Joachim and Anna were freed from the reproach of childlessness/ and Adam and Eve from the corruption of death, O Immaculate One, by thy holy nativity./ And thy people, redeemed from the guilt of sin,/ celebrate thy birth by crying to thee:/ The barren woman gives birth to the Mother of God and the nurse of our life.

**Ss. Ina, king of Wessex, restorer of Glastonbury, & his queen Ethelburga. (8th c.)** - He was a son of the underking Cenred and ascended the West-Saxon throne in 688, a year before the death of his predecessor Caedwalla. For thirty-seven years he ruled over a turbulent and war-like people, and by virtue of a varied genius was equally successful as a warrior and legislator. His first efforts were directed towards establishing internal peace, and in the fifth year of his reign he drew up a set of laws which regulated the administration of justice and fixed the legal status of the various elapses of his subjects. With the exception of the Kentish laws this code is the earliest extant specimen of Anglo-Saxon legislation, and for that reason is of particular interest. When matters in his own realm had been

adjusted, Ina turned his attention to Withred, King of Kent, and at the head of a formidable army demanded weregild (compensation) for the death of Mul (for Mollo), brother of Caedwalla. Withred paid the full compensation—thirty thousand pounds of silver—and admitted the supremacy of the West-Saxon over all the country held by the English south of the Thames. By successive conquests, Ina added several districts to the western provinces of his domain, and after a bitter war conquered Geraint, King of Cornwall, and built a fortress on the Tone, at the site of the present Taunton. Throughout his entire reign was particularly solicitous for the welfare of religion and religious establishment, founding many monasteries and endowing those already in existence. The Abbey of Glastonbury was erected by him, with the funds, it is thought, which came from the weregild collected from Withred. Other monastic establishments which were recipients of his bounty were those at Malmesbury, Wimborne, Nursling, Tisbury, Waltham, and Sherborne. Worn out by his long rule, Ina determined to abdicate in favour of Æthelheard and Oswald, and to make his peace with God. In pursuance of this project, he convened the Witenagemot and formally announced his abdication. With his wife he proceeded to Rome, to watch and pray at the tomb of the Apostles in the guise of a poor and pious pilgrim. While there he founded a hospice or home for English pilgrims, in the district known as Burges Saxonum, the modern Borgo. Some historians trace the foundation of the English College at Rome back to this hospice. The memory of the hospice still lives in the Church of San Spirito in Sassia, formerly S. Maria in Saxia; it is thought that King Ina and his Queen Ethelburga, lie buried in this church or in the atrium of St. Peter's. They died blessing God that they had been allowed to lay their dust in the consecrated soil of Rome.

**Also commemorated on this day:** New Martyr Demetrius, priest (1937). St. Ioane (Maisuradze) (1957) and St. Giorgi-Ioane (Mkheidze), (1960), confessors, of Georgia. New Martyr Alexander Jacobson at Solovki (1930). Icon of Sophia, the Wisdom of God (Kiev). Venerable Icons of the Nativity of Most Holy Mother of God Syamsk (1524), Glinsk (16th C), Lukianovsk (16th C), Isaacovsk (1659), Kholmok, Kursk "Sign" Icon (1259), Pochaev (1559), Lesninsk, Domnitsk (1696). Venerable Serapion, monk, of Spaso-Eleazar Monastery (Pskov) (1480). Venerable Lucian, abbot of Alexandrov (1654). Venerable Arsenius, abbot of Konevits (1447). New Martyr Athanasius of Thessalonica (1774). St. Sophronius of Achtalea in Georgia, bishop (1803). Martyrs Rufus and Rufianus. Martyrs Severus and Artemidorus. St. Kinemark, disciple of St. Dyfrig. Translation of the relics of St. Grimald, abbot of Winchester.

### ‡ Daily Scripture Readings ‡

**Monday** - 2 Corinthians 8:7-15; Mark 3:6-12; Hebrews 13:7-16 (Hieromartyr Anthimus); John 10:9-16 (Hieromartyr Anthimus)

**Tuesday** - John 10:9-16 (Matins Gospel); 2 Corinthians 8:16-9:5; Mark 3:13-19  
Hebrews 11:33-12:2 (Hieromartyr and Prophet); Luke 12:32-40 (Hieromartyr and Prophet);  
Hebrews 7:26-8:2 (St. Ioasaph); John 10:9-16 (St. Ioasaph)

**Wednesday** - 2 Corinthians 9:12-10:7; Mark 3:20-27; Hebrews 6:13-20 (Prophet);  
Matthew 23:29-39 (Prophet)

**Thursday** - 2 Corinthians 10:7-18; Mark 3:28-35; Hebrews 2:2-10 (Epistle, Angels);  
Luke 10:16-21 (Gospel, Angels)

**Friday** - 2 Corinthians 11:5-21; Mark 4:1-9; 1 Corinthians 2:6-9; Matthew 22:15-22; Ephesians  
6:10-17 (Martyr); John 15:17-16:2 (Martyr)

**Saturday** - Luke 1:39-49, 56 (Matins Gospel); Philippians 2:5-11 (Theotokos);  
Luke 10:38-42; 11:27-28 (Theotokos)



