



/34th Sunday After Pentecost

Sts Athanasius and Cyril of Alexandria

18 / 31 January

Resurrection Tropar, Tone 1: When the stone had been sealed by the Jews; / while the soldiers were guarding Thy Most Pure Body; / Thou didst rise on the third day, O Saviour, / granting life to the world. / The Powers of Heaven therefore cried to Thee O Giver of Life: / glory to Thy Resurrection O Christ! / Glory to Thy Kingdom; / Glory to Thy Dispensation, O Thou who lovest mankind.

Troparion tone 3: You shone with works of Orthodoxy and quench all heresy, / and become victorious trophy-bearers. / You enriched all things with piety and greatly adorned the Church, / and worthily found Christ our God; / by your prayers He grants mercy to all.

Resurrection Kondak, Tone 1: As God, Thou didst rise from the tomb in glory, / Raising the world with Thyself. / Human nature praises Thee as God, for death has vanished. / Adam exults O Master, Eve rejoices, for she is freed from bondage, and cries to Thee; / Thou art the Giver of Resurrection to all, O Christ.

Kontakion tone 4: Great Hierarchs and champions of Christ's Church, / preserve all who sing: O compassionate Lord, / save those who with faith honour Thee.

Matins Gospel I

EPISTLE: Colossians 3: 12-16

Therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, put on tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering; Bearing with one another, and forgiving one another, if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so you also must do. But above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfection. And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to which also you were called in one body; and be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.

AS THE ELECT OF GOD... PUT ON TENDER MERCIES, KINDNESS, HUMBLENESS OF MIND, MEEKNESS, LONGSUFFERING... AND ABOVE ALL LOVE

Ever let mercy outweigh all else in you. Let our compassion be a mirror where we may see into ourselves that likeness and that true image which belong to Divine nature and Divine essence. A heart hard and unmerciful will never be pure.

St. Isaac of Syria, Directions on Spiritual Teaching. B#8.

for the Hierarchs: Heb. 13:7-16

Gospel: LUKE 18: 18-27

Now a certain ruler asked Him, saying, "Good Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" So Jesus said to him, "Why do you call Me good? No one is good but One, that is, God. You know the commandments: 'Do not commit adultery,' 'Do not murder,' 'Do not steal,' 'Do not bear false witness,' 'Honor your father and your mother.' " And he said, "All these things I have kept from my youth." So when Jesus heard these things, He said to him, "You still lack one thing. Sell all that you have and distribute to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me." But when he heard this, he became very sorrowful, for he was very rich. And when Jesus saw that he became very sorrowful, He said, "How hard it is for those who have riches to enter the kingdom of God! For 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." And those who heard it said, "Who then can be saved?" But He said, "The things which are impossible with men are possible with God."

WHY DO YOU CALL ME GOOD?

Now he, who is here called a Ruler, and who fancied himself to be learned in the law, and supposed that he had been accurately taught therein, imagined that he could convict Christ of dishonoring the commandment spoken by the most wise Moses, and of introducing laws of His own. For it was the object of the Jews to prove that Christ opposed and resisted the former commandments, to establish, as I said, new laws, of His own authority, in opposition to those previously existing, so that their wicked conduct towards Him might have a specious pretext. He draws near, therefore, and makes pretense of speaking kindly; for he calls Him Teacher, and styles Him Good, and professes himself desirous of being a disciple...

And what does the Omniscient reply, 'Who, as it is written, takes the wise in their craftiness?' (Job 5:13) Why do you call Me good? None is good but one, God. You see how He proved at once that he was neither wise nor learned, though the ruler of a synagogue of the Jews. For if, He I says, you did not believe that I am God, and the clothing of the flesh has led you astray, why did you apply to Me epithets suitable to the supreme nature alone, while still you suppose Me to be a mere man like yourself, and not superior to the limits of human nature? In the nature that transcends all, only in God, is found the attribute of being by nature, and un-changeable good; but the angels, and we on earth, are good by resembling Him, or rather by participation in Him.

But those whose minds are perverted by sharing in the wickedness of Arius will probably not assent to the correctness of this explanation. For, they make the Son inferior to the supremacy and glory of God the Father... For they assert, as though they had obtained a reason for their blasphemy from the passage now before us, Behold, He has clearly and expressly denied that He is good, and set it apart as something appropriate only to God the Father; but verily, had He been equal to Him in substance, and sprung from Him by nature, how would He not also be good, being God? Let this, then, be our reply to our opponents. Since all correct and exact reasoning acknowledges a son to be consubstantial with the father, how is He not good, as being God? For He cannot but be God, if He is consubstantial with Him Who is by nature God ...We have the Savior's own testimony, Who says this: A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruits' (Matt. 7:18). How from a good root has there shot forth an evil sprout? Or how from a sweet fountain can there flow a bitter river? Was there ever a time when there was no Father, seeing that He is the Father eternally? ...We conclude, therefore, that the fruit of the good God is the good Son.

*St. Cyril of Alexandria, Commentary on the Gospel of St Luke, Homily 122. B#42, pp. 486-488.
for the Hierarchs: Matt. 5:14-19*

Saints of the week

18 / 31 January — St Athanasius the Great, Archbishop of Alexandria - Born in Alexandria in 296, he had from childhood an inclination to the spiritual life. He was a deacon with Archbishop Alexander and accompanied him to Nicaea, to the First Ecumenical Council in 325. At this Council, Athanasius became famed for his learning, his devotion and his zeal for Orthodoxy, and contributed very greatly to the containing of the Arian heresy and the strengthening of Orthodoxy. After the death of Alexander, Athanasius was chosen as Archbishop of Alexandria. He remained in his archiepiscopal calling for more than forty years, although he was not on the archiepiscopal throne the whole time. He was persecuted by heretics through almost the whole of his life, particularly by the Emperors Constantius, Julian and Valens, by Bishop Eusebius of Nicomedia and many others, and by the heretic Arius and his followers. He was forced to hide from his persecutors in a well, a grave, private houses and the deserts. Twice he was forced to flee to Rome. Only just before his death did he have a peaceful period as a good shepherd with his flock, which truly loved him. There are few saints who have been so callously slandered and so criminally persecuted as St Athanasius. But his great soul endured all with patience for the love of Christ and at last emerged victorious from all these terrible and lengthy struggles. He often went to St Antony for advice and moral support, revering him as his spiritual father. He suffered greatly for the truth, until the Lord gave him rest in His kingdom as His faithful servant, in the year 373; St Maxim, Archbishop of Wallachia; Saint Leobardus of Marmoutier (Gaul), hermit.

St. Dermot, abbot - (also known as Diarmaid) - 6th century. Ruins of six churches can be seen on Inchcleraun (Innis Clothran) in Lough Ree, where Saint Dermot founded a monastery. His burial site there became a pilgrimage centre. It is believed that Dermot was a native of Connaught and of royal blood.

19 January / 1 February — Our Holy Father Macarius the Great - He was an Egyptian and one of the contemporaries of St Antony the Great. His father was a priest. He married in obedience to his parents' wishes, but his wife died very soon and he went off into the desert of Scetis, where he spent sixty years in toil and struggle, both physical and spiritual, for the Kingdom of heaven. When he was asked why he was so thin, both when he ate and when he fasted, he replied: 'From fear of God!' He succeeded so greatly in purifying his mind from evil thoughts and his heart from evil desires that God endowed him with abundant wonderworking gifts, such that he even raised the dead from the grave. His humility made men and demons marvel. A demon once said to him: 'There is only one thing in which I cannot excel you: that is not in fasting, for I never eat, nor in vigils, for I never sleep.' 'Then what is it?' asked Macarius. 'Your humility', replied the demon. Macarius often said to his disciple, Paphnutius: 'Condemn no man, and you will be saved.' He lived for ninety years. Before his death, St Antony and St Pachomius appeared to him from the other world and told him that he would die in nine days' time. And so it came to pass. Cherubim also appeared to him before his death and revealed the heavenly, blessed world to him in a vision, praised his labours and virtues and told him that they had been sent to take his soul to the heavenly Kingdom. He entered into rest in the year 390; Our Holy Father Macarius of Alexandria; St Arsenius, Bishop of Corfu; St Mark, Archbishop of Ephesus; Blessed Theodore, the Fool for Christ of Novgorod;

St. Branwallader (Breward) of Cornwall and the Channel Islands, bishop of Jersey, (6th C.) - the day of the translation of his relics. Saint Branwallader was a Celtic or Welsh monk, who is said to have been a bishop in Jersey. It is believed that Branwallader worked with Saint Samson (f.d. July 28) in Cornwall and the Channel Islands, where he is remembered at Jersey in St. Brelade. He may also have travelled with Samson to Brittany in northern France. In the Exeter Martyrology, Branwallader is described as the son of the Cornish king, Kenen.

St. Nathalan - Born near Aberdeen, Scotland; died 678. Nathalan was a nobleman, who possessed a large estate which he gave to the poor in order to become an anchorite. Nathalan is especially praised for having earned his living by farming, "which approaches nearest to divine contemplation." He fed his neighbours from his produce during times of famine, and found that farming served him as a type of penance. During his pilgrimage to Rome, Nathalan was consecrated bishop by the pope, because of his holiness and proficiency in profane and sacred learning. He took up residence at Tullicht (now in the diocese of Aberdeen), where he built a church, but he continued to use all his revenues for the relief of the poor as he had previously. He continued to earn his livelihood by the work of his hands, while living austerely, and preaching the Gospel. He is also credited with founding the churches at Bothelim and Colle.

St. Catellus of Castellamar E.

20 January / 2 February — Our Holy Father Euthymius the Great - Born in the Armenian town of Melitene near the River Euphrates in 377, of noble and eminent parents, he was their only son. His mother Dionysia had prayed for a child, and had a heavenly vision concerning his birth. He lived in asceticism from his youth, at first in the vicinity of his town, but then, after a visit to Jerusalem at the age of 29, in the Wilderness of Pharan, between Jerusalem and Jericho. He filled his days and nights with prayer and meditation, contemplation and physical toil. Many disciples gathered round him, such as Cyriac the Hermit, Sava the Sanctified, Theoctistus and others. He was, by God's gift, a great worker of wonders: he drove out demons, healed grave illnesses, brought forth water in the desert, multiplied bread and prophesied. He taught his monks the love of hardship, saying: 'If you eat bread that comes not from your own labours, that means that you eat the labour of another'. When one of the younger brethren desired to fast more than others, he forbade him and ordered him to come to the common table, so that he should not become proud through his too-great fasting. He also said that it is not good for a monk to move from place to place, for, he said: 'A tree that is frequently transplanted does not bear fruit.' Whoever desires to do good can do it in the place where he is. On love, he said: 'As salt is to bread, so is love to the other virtues.' He went off into the desert in the first week of the Great Fast and remained there in silence and meditation on God until before Easter. During his lifetime, a great monastery grew up near his cave, which was for centuries as full of monks as a hive of bees. His last command was that there should be loving hospitality to guests in the monastery, and that its gate should never be closed. He entered into rest at the age of 97. Patriarch Anastasius of Jerusalem was at his funeral. The Patriarch waited the entire day while a great mass of people gave the saint the last kiss, and only in the evening was he able to finish the funeral. On the seventh day after his death, Euthymius appeared to his disciple Domitian in light and joy. St Euthymius was a true 'son of light'. He entered into rest in the year 473. The Holy Martyrs Innas, Nirras and Pinnas;

St. Fechin, abbot - was probably born at Luighne (Leyney), Ireland. He was trained by St. Nathy, was founding Abbot of Fobhar, or Fore, in Westmeath, and died of the plague that devastated Ireland in the year 665..

21 January / 3 February — Our Holy Father Maximus the Confessor - By birth a citizen of Constantinople and at first a high-ranking courtier at the court of the Emperor Heraclius, he then became a monk and the abbot of a monastery not far from the capital. He was the greatest defender of Orthodoxy against the so-called Monothelite heresy, which developed from the heresy of Eutyches. That is to say: as Eutyches asserted that there is in Christ only one nature, so the Monothelites asserted that there is in Him only one will. Maximus resisted this assertion and found himself in opposition to both the Emperor and the Patriarch. But he was unafraid, and persevered to the end in proving that there are in the Lord two wills and also two natures. By his efforts, one Council in Carthage and one in Rome stood firm, and both these Councils anathematised the Monothelite teaching. Maximus's sufferings for Orthodoxy cannot be described: tortured by hierarchs, spat upon by the mass of the people, beaten by soldiers, persecuted, imprisoned; until finally, with his tongue cut out and one hand cut off, he was condemned to exile for life in Skhimaris, where he gave his soul into God's hands in the year 662. Blessed Maximus the Greek; The Holy Martyr Neophytus; The Holy Martyr Agnes; in Wales, St. Laudog, confessor; in Scotland,

St. Vimin (6th C) - the founder of the monastery of Holywood at Nithsdale. It is related that St. Vimin was an abbot in Fifeshire when he was consecrated bishop. He actively evangelized the region. In order to avoid the temptations to pride that accompanied his many miracles, he moved to a deserted place and founded Holywood (Sacrumboscum), which later became famous for producing many holy and learned men

22 January / 4 February — The Holy Apostle Timothy - One of the Seventy, he was born in Lystra of Lycaonia of a Greek father and a Jewish mother. His mother and grandmother were praised by the Apostle Paul for their sincere faith (2 Tim. 1:4-5). He met the great Apostle for the first time in Lystra, and was the only witness of Paul's healing of the man lame from birth. Later, Timothy was an almost constant travelling-companion of Paul's, visiting Achaia, Macedonia, Italy and Spain with him. A great zealot for the Faith, a superb preacher and of a gentle spirit, Timothy contributed greatly to the spreading and establishing of the Christian faith. Paul called him his own son in the faith (1 Tim. 1:2). After Paul's martyrdom, Timothy had St John the Evangelist as his teacher. But when the Emperor Domitian exiled John from Ephesus to the island of Patmos, Timothy remained in Ephesus as bishop. At the time of an idolatrous feast called Katagogium, the pagans, resentful of the Christians, made a merciless, masked attack on Timothy and killed him, in about the year 93. His honoured relics were later taken to Constantinople and buried in the Church of the Holy Apostles by the graves of St Luke the Evangelist and St Andrew the First-

Called. Our Holy Father, the Martyr Anastasius; St. Brithwald, monk of Glastonbury, bishop of Sarum who removed his see from Ramsbury to Sarum.

23 January / 5 February — Sunday of the Holy New Martyrs & Confessors of Russia (celebrated on the Sunday nearest to January 25 o.s.) — In any case, the world can and must wholeheartedly use for its edification and correction the present suffering by fire of the Russian people. The Russian people undoubtedly will come out of this fire holier, stronger and greater than it ever was before. No good blacksmith throws nails into the fire to be rid of them, he does it to make something better out of them. We think and believe that the Creator of the Russian people allowed this great people to experience this flame of suffering not to punish and kill it, but in order that by its terrible example other peoples may come to their senses and understand that the Russian people will be even more greatly glorified before heaven and earth. Do not cry, but be happy. A great harvest of souls has ripened in Russia. In these days the tortured Russian people fill Paradise more than any other Christian people on earth.

St. Nikolai (Velimirovic) of Ochrid

"Blessed is God! And in our time martyrs have sprung up and we have been vouchsafed to see people slain for Christ, people who have shed their blood which has watered the whole Church" (3rd Homily of St. John Chrysostom on 1 Chronicles)

We also in our times together with the golden-mouthed preacher can say the same of the Holy New Martyrs and Confessors of Russia, who now stand in the choir of the God-pleasers before the throne of the King of Glory and intercede on behalf of our people.

The congregation of the New Martyrs of Russia consists of representatives of all the professions and ranks of the Russian land - beginning from the time of the Tsar-Martyr down to the last homeless wanderer, the finest children of our Fatherland, who were fated to water the whole Russian Church with their holy blood.

The tortures which the holy passion-bearers endured were little different from the Christian martyrdoms of the first centuries, and the refined cruelty of the modern persecutors in no way yields to the cruelty of their predecessors.

Being incited by the devil — the first cause of all persecution against the Church in all ages, the new tormentors subjected their victims to the same kinds of sufferings which the Jews, pagans, and Moslems used in the first and following centuries of persecution.

To these God-pleasers can be ascribed the words of the apostle concerning the first martyrs of the Church of God in the Old Testament ... of them many were "stoned, sawn asunder, were slain with the sword" "not accepting deliverance: that they might obtain a better resurrection" (Heb 11:37, 35)

Tortures for Christ and death itself the new martyrs met fearlessly they rejoiced that in their sufferings they resembled their Redeemer.

Before their deaths many of them prayed for their tormentors, they blessed their murdered, they called them to repentance.

Their valour irradiates the Russian Church with a new glory presenting to the world a countless congregation of crowned passion-bearers. And together with them the whole Universal Church is harvesting the fruits of their victories. The New Martyrs have united heaven with the earth in common joy, for both the Church militant together with the Church triumphant now rejoices over them.

The celebration of the glorification of the Holy New-Martyrs and Confessors of Russia took place abroad on October 19/November 1, 1981.
"Orthodox Life" 1/1987

The Hieromartyr Clement, Bishop of Ancyra - He was born in 258 in the town of Ancyra of a pagan father and a Christian mother. His devout mother, Euphrosyne, prophesied a martyr's death for her son, and left this world when Clement was twelve years old. Her friend Sophia took Clement into her own home as her son and saw that he was brought up a Christian. Clement became so famed for his virtuous life that he was chosen as bishop of Ancyra at the age of twenty. He acquired a mature wisdom in his early years, and harnessed and conquered his body by great restraint. He ate only bread and vegetables, and never anything slaughtered or with blood. In the reign of Diocletian, he was tortured as terribly 'as anyone has ever been since the foundation of the world'. He spent twenty-eight years under torture and imprisonment. Eleven different torturers tormented him. When, at one time, they were smiting him on the face, spitting on him and breaking his teeth, he cried out to Domentian the torturer: 'You are doing me honour, O Domentian, not torturing me, for the mouth of my Lord Jesus Christ was struck in like manner, and His cheeks slapped; and lo, I, unworthy as I am, am now made worthy of this!' When he was brought before the Emperor Diocletian in Rome, the Emperor placed on one side various instruments of torture, and on the other side gifts—medals, clothing, money—whatever the Emperor was able to bestow, and then told Clement to choose. Christ's martyr, with a scornful glance at all the Emperor's gifts, chose the instruments of torture. And he was terribly tortured; piece by piece the flesh was flayed from his body until the bones showed white beneath. He was healed of these wounds, and was finally beheaded by a soldier in 312, while he was presiding at the Liturgy as bishop in the church in Ancyra. St Clement's miracles are without number. The Sixth Ecumenical Council; St Paulinus the Merciful;

St. Colman - Died c. 702. Saint Colman succeeded Saint Hierlug (Zailug) as abbot-bishop of Lismore in 698. During his rule the fame of Lismore monastery, Ireland reached its peak

24 January / 6 February — Our Holy Mother Xenia - Born in Rome, she was the only daughter of a famous senator. Drawn by the love of Christ, she refused to marry as her parents desired. In order to escape this, she fled from her home with two of her slaves and came to the island of Kos, to a place called Mylassa, where she started a community for virgins, remaining there in asceticism till her death. Though she was a weak woman, she had a man's perseverance in fasting, prayer and vigils. She often spent entire nights standing in prayer, was dressed more poorly than her sisters, and on her bread, when she ate, she often put ashes from the censer. At the hour of her death (in 450), a wonderful sign appeared over the monastery: a wreath of stars encircling a cross more resplendent than the sun. Many of the sick were healed by her relics. Her two slaves girls

followed the example of their abbess in all things, and when they died, they were buried, by their wish, at the feet of blessed Xenia. The Holy Martyr Babylas; Our Holy Father Macedonius; Our Holy Father Philo, Bishop of Cyprus; Our Holy Father Dionysius of Olympus;

Blessed Xenia of St Petersburg - Saint Xenia lived during the eighteenth century, but little is known of her life or of her family. She passed most of her life in Petersburg during the reigns of the empresses Elizabeth and Catherine II. Xenia Grigorievna Petrova was the wife of an army officer, Major Andrew Petrov. After the wedding, the couple lived in St Petersburg. St Xenia became a widow at the age of twenty-six when her husband suddenly died at a party. She grieved for the loss of her husband, and especially because he died without Confession or Holy Communion. Once her earthly happiness ended, she did not look for it again. From that time forward, Xenia lost interest in the things of this world, and followed the difficult path of foolishness for the sake of Christ. The basis for this strange way of life is to be found in the first Epistle to the Corinthians (1 Cor. 1:18-24, 1 Cor. 2:14, 1 Cor. 3:18-19). The Lord strengthened her and helped her to bear sorrow and misfortune patiently for the next forty-five years. She started wearing her husband's clothing, and insisted that she be addressed as "Andrew Feodorovich." She told people that it was she, and not her husband, who had died. In a certain sense, this was perfectly true. She abandoned her former way of life and experienced a spiritual rebirth. When she gave away her house and possessions to the poor, her relatives complained to the authorities. After speaking to Xenia, the officials were convinced that she was in her right mind and was entitled to dispose of her property as she saw fit. Soon she had nothing left for herself, so she wandered through the poor section of Petersburg with no place to lay her head. She refused all assistance from her relatives, happy to be free of worldly attachments. When her late husband's red and green uniform wore out, she clothed herself in rags of those colors. After a while, Xenia left Petersburg for eight years. It is believed that she visited holy Elders and ascetics throughout Russia seeking instruction in the spiritual life. She may have visited St Theodore of Sanaxar (February 19), who had been a military man himself. His life changed dramatically when a young officer died at a drinking party. Perhaps this officer was St Xenia's husband. In any case, she knew St Theodore and profited from his instructions. St Xenia eventually returned to the poor section of Petersburg, where she was mocked and insulted because of her strange behavior. When she did accept money from people it was only small amounts, which she used to help the poor. She spent her nights praying without sleep in a field outside the city. Prayer strengthened her, and in her heart's conversation with the Lord she found the support she needed on her difficult path. When a new church was being built in the Smolensk cemetery, St Xenia brought bricks to the site. She did this in secret, during the night, so that no one would know. Soon her great virtue and spiritual gifts began to be noticed. She prophesied future events affecting the citizens of Petersburg, and even the royal family. Against her will, she became known as someone pleasing to God, and nearly everyone loved her. They said, "Xenia does not belong to this world, she belongs to God." People regarded her visits to their homes or shops as a great blessing. St Xenia loved children, and mothers rejoiced when the childless widow would stand and pray over a baby's crib, or kiss a child. They believed that the blessed one's kiss would bring that child good fortune. St Xenia lived about forty-five years after the death of her husband, and departed to the Lord at the age of seventy-one. The exact date and circumstances of her death are not known, but it probably took place at the end of the eighteenth century. She was buried in the Smolensk cemetery. By the 1820s, people flocked to her grave to pray for her soul, and to ask her to intercede with God for them. So many visitors took earth from her grave that it had to be replaced every year. Later, a chapel was built over her grave. Those who turn to St Xenia in prayer receive healing from illness, and deliverance from their afflictions. She is also known for helping people who seek jobs.

St. Cadoc of Llancarvan Wales - Son of Saint Gwynllyw, a king in Wales, a robber chieftain who led a band of 300; his mother, Saint Gladys, had been stolen in a raid on a neighbouring chief. Raised by an Irish monk; Cadoc's father had stolen the monk's cow, and when he came to demand its return, the king decided it was sign. Studied in Wales and Ireland. Priest. Once chased through a wood by an armed swineherd from an enemy tribe. His hiding place spooked an old, grey, wild boar that made three great leaps at him - then disappeared; Cadoc took this as a sign, and the location became the site of the great church and monastery at Llancarvan. He once saved his brother monks in a famine by tying a white thread to the foot of a (well-fed) mouse; he then following the thread to an abandoned, well-stocked, underground granary. Another time he and his brothers went out to meet a band of thieves, chanting and playing harps; it surprised the highwaymen so much, they turned and left. Lived as a hermit with Saint Gildas on the Island of Flatholmes off Vannes, Brittany. Established a monastery on a small island just off Brittany, joined by a stone bridge so local children could walk out for school. Returned to Britain to evangelize, and work with Christian survivors of Saxon raids. Born 6th century Welsh Died martyred by Saxons while serving at Mass c.580 near Weedon, Northamptonshire, England