



## 6<sup>th</sup> Sunday After Pentecost

### St Mary Magdelene & Hieromartyr Phocas

22 July / 4 August

**Resurrection Tropar, Tone 5:** Let us, the faithful; praise and worship the Word, / Co-eternal with the Father and the Spirit, / born for our salvation from the Virgin; / for He willed to be lifted up on the cross in the flesh, / to endure death, / and to raise the dead / by His glorious Resurrection!

**Troparion tone 1:** O holy Mary Magdalene, thou didst keep Christ's commandments/ and follow Him Who for our sakes was born of a Virgin./ Today we celebrate thy memory/ and receive forgiveness through thy prayers.

**Troparion St Phocas:** By sharing in the ways of the Apostles, / you became a successor to their throne. / Through the practice of virtue, you found the way to divine contemplation, O inspired one of God; / by teaching the word of truth without error, you defended the Faith, even to the shedding of your blood. / Hieromartyr Phocas, entreat Christ God to save our souls.

**Resurrection Kondak, Tone 5:** Thou didst descend into hell, O my Saviour, / shattering its gates as Almighty, / resurrecting the dead as Creator, / and destroying the sting of death. / Thou hadst delivered Adam from the curse, O Lover of Man, / and we cry to Thee, O Lord, save us.

**Kontakion tone 4:** When the transcendent God was incarnate/ He received thee as a true disciple in thy great love, O Myrrhbearer./ Then thou thyself didst work many healings/ and art now translated to heaven/ where thou ever intercedest for the world.

**Another Kontakion tone 3:** With others standing before the Saviour's Cross,/ weeping and suffering with the Mother of God,/ glorious Mary Magdalene offered praises saying:/ What is this strange wonder?/ He chooses to suffer Who upholds the whole creation: Glory to Thy Power.

**Kontakion St Phocas:** The Master has established you as a resplendent sun / Shining on all the faithful. / He has accepted your life, faith and contest as myrrh, O glorious Martyr Phocas, / For he is rich in mercy!

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#### Vespers

Lord I have Cried - Tone 5, on 10: Octoechos 4; St. Mary 3 (Bearing myrrh with tears); Hieromartyr 3 (Thou didst offer thyself); G: St. Mary (Being the first to behold); N: Sunday Dogmatic in the tone of the week.

Aposticha: Octoechos; G: St. Mary (As a disciple); N: Theotokion.

#### Matins Gospel VI

#### **EPISTLE: ST. PAUL'S LETTER TO THE ROMANS 12: 6-14**

Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, let us prophesy in proportion to our faith; Or ministry, let us use it in our ministering; he who teaches, in teaching; He who exhorts, in exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness. Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil. Cling to what is good. Be kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love, in honor giving preference to one another; Not lagging in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord; Rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation, continuing steadfastly in prayer; Distributing to the needs of the saints, given to hospitality. Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse.

## **HAVING GIFTS THAT DIFFER ACCORDING TO THE GRACE GIVEN TO US, LET US USE THEM**

He wants to make them vie with each other, and to labour more earnestly by showing that it is they themselves who give the grounds for their receiving more or less. For he says indeed that it is given by God ...But he also says that the beginnings lie with themselves in order to rouse the listless. This he does in the Epistle to the Corinthians as well, to produce these emotions. For when he says, 'covet the gifts earnestly,' (I Cor. 12:31), he shows that they were themselves the cause of the differences in what was given ...For though it is a grace, yet it is not poured forth at random, but framing its measure according to the recipients, it lets as much flow as it may find the vessel of faith that is brought to be capable of holding...

### **CONTRIBUTE TO THE NEEDS OF SAINTS, PRACTICE HOSPITALITY**

Even the Apostleship is called a ministry, and every spiritual work is a ministry ... It is not enough to give, but we must also do it with munificence, for this always answers to the name of simplicity ...It is not enough to show mercy, but it behooves us to do it with largesse and an ungrudging spirit ... even with a cheerful and rejoicing one ...He said, 'He who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully' (II Cor. 9:6) ... In this way the widow outweighed many talents by the two mites, for her spirit was large.

*St. John Chrysostom. Homily XXI on Romans XII. B#55, pp. 501, 502.*

### **Second Epistle: I Corinthians 9:2-12**

### **GOSPEL: ST. MATTHEW 9: 1-8**

So He got into a boat, crossed over, and came to His own city. Then behold, they brought to Him a paralytic lying on a bed. When Jesus saw their faith, He said to the paralytic, "Son, be of good cheer; your sins are forgiven you." And at once some of the scribes said within themselves, "This Man blasphemes!" But Jesus, knowing their thoughts, said, "Why do you think evil in your hearts? For which is easier, to say, 'Your sins are forgiven you,' or to say, 'Arise and walk'? But that you may know that the Son of Man has power on earth to forgive sins"--then He said to the paralytic, "Arise, take up your bed, and go to your house." And he arose and departed to his house. Now when the multitudes saw it, they marveled and glorified God, who had given such power to men.

### **JESUS HEALS THE PARALYTIC**

The Gospel reading of last Sunday told us how the Gadarenes went out to meet Jesus and how they asked Him to "depart out of their coasts." And this happened because all of them were infected with one sin, the passion for profit, the love of money. This was an insatiable thirst for wealth, more and more of it. And wealth came to them through large herds of swine which were grazing in their pastures. But according to Jewish Law, they had no right to keep them. In this was their sin, and they lived in sin, to satisfy only this passion, this idol of getting rich. And this passion seemed to unite them all. See how the Gospel says: "And, behold, the whole city came out to meet Jesus and...besought Him that He would depart out of their coasts" (Mt. 8:34).

Yet not all inhabitants of this town were bad people. Undoubtedly, among them were those who wanted to see Jesus, who wanted to listen to His teaching, and maybe were ready to believe in Him. Salvation was so close, so very close. But this idol, this passion for profit enslaved them; and instead of asking the Lord to remain in their town, they asked Him to go away. They were already deprived of their freedom of will; through sin they were enslaved, a spiritual paralysis possessed them. The Gospel continues, "And He entered into a ship, and passed over, and came into His own city. And, behold, they brought to Him a paralytic, lying on a bed: and Jesus seeing their faith said unto the paralytic; Son, be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee" (Mt. 9:1-2).

There is physical paralysis, but there is also spiritual paralysis. Being paralysed physically we want to do something, but either our hand or our foot does not move. But being spiritually paralysed even to think is difficult, and we don't want to do anything—we lose heart. There is a desire to fulfill a commandment of Christ, and yet we cannot; something is interfering, something is holding us back. And instead of Christ abiding in our heart—there is a storm, and Christ goes away.

What motivated the Gadarenes to ask Christ to leave their land? Sin—the passion for profit. And this sin brought them into spiritual paralysis, and they did not have enough spiritual fortitude to detain Christ with them.

So it happens to us. The only reason is sin. And sin is not only love of money. There is a whole variety of rays from this “black diamond.” This means laziness, pride, vain talking, lying, condemnation, gluttony, anger, irritability, cruelty, any kind of impurity, despondency and still more and more. And we all suffer from these sins: whoever has any of these, this is sin. And this is what brings us to spiritual weakness, to spiritual paralysis. Let us look within ourselves and let us honestly recognise that, like the Gadarenes, we all live in spiritual weakness, in spiritual paralysis.

But let us not despond. The Gospel today gives us great comfort. With what words does Christ heal the paralytic? “Thy sins be forgiven thee.” This means that in bodily paralysis, also, the reason is often sin. And in spiritual paralysis, sin is always the reason. All you have to do is find this sin, this passion which stands between us and Christ; take it to the Lord and say: “Lord, heal me!” Then the Lord will tell us as He did the paralytic: “Thy sins be forgiven thee.... Arise, take up thy bed and go unto thine house” (Mt. 9:5-6).

And the storm will calm down, will go away from the heart, and Christ will fill it with quiet joy. The weakness will disappear and a new energy will appear in us, a new life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

*The One Thing Needful - Archbishop Andrei*

### **Second Gospel: Luke 8: 1-3**

### **Saints of the Week**

**22 July / 4 August - St Mary Magdalene** - one of the myrrh-bearing women, and equal to the apostles, she was born in Magdala by the Lake of Gennesaret, of the tribe of Issachar. She was tormented by seven evil spirits, of which she was freed and healed by the Lord Jesus. She was a faithful follower and servant of the Lord during His earthly life, and also stood beneath the Cross on Golgotha and lamented bitterly with the most holy Mother of God. After the Lord's death, she visited His tomb three times; and when He rose again, she saw Him twice, once alone and the other time with the other myrrh-bearing women. She travelled to Rome, went before Tiberias Caesar and presented him with a red egg, greeting him with the words: 'Christ is risen ! ' At the same time, she denounced Pilate to Caesar for his unjust condemnation of the Lord Jesus. Caesar listened to her, and moved Pilate from Jerusalem to Gaul, where this unjust judge died under imperial displeasure after a terrible illness. After that, she returned from Rome to Ephesus, to St John the Theologian, whom she helped in his task of preaching the Gospel. With great love for the risen Lord and with great zeal, she proclaimed the holy Gospel as a true apostle of Christ. She died peacefully in Ephesus and was buried, according to tradition, in the same cave in which the seven young men (see August 4th) had been in a charmed sleep for a hundred years. They came to life, and then died. St Magdalene's relics were then taken to Constantinople. Near the Garden of Gethsemane, there is a beautiful Russian church dedicated to St Mary Magdalene.

**Hieromartyr Phocas** - On this day we commemorate the translation of the relics of St. Phocas from Pontus to Constantinople about the year 404 A.D. The primary feast of this saint is celebrated on September 22 and on that day a brief hagiography of his life and his sufferings is recorded. Today, one miracle of this saint is commemorated. The Arabs captured a man named Pontinus. The Arabs shackled him, bound his hands to his back and left him to die. Lying on his stomach on the ground, and not being able to move, Pontinus cried out: "O Holy Martyr Phocas have mercy on me and save me!" Saying this he fell asleep and, in a dream, saw Saint Phocas approaching him, touched him by the hand and said: "The Lord Jesus Christ forgives you!" When the man awoke, he found himself loosed from all bonds and free. He arose and departed for his home and took St. Phocas as the patron saint of his household.

**Also commemorated on this day:** New Hieromartyr Michael priest (1918). New Hieromartyr Alexis priest (1931). Venerable Cornelius, monk, of Pereyaslavl, and confessor of Alexandrov Convent (1693). Venerable Marcella of Chios (1500). St. Cyril I, patriarch of Antioch (298). St. Wandregisilus of Caux (668). St. Cyprian, fool-for-Christ of Suzdal (1622).

**23 July / 5 August - The Holy Martyrs Trophimus and Theophilus and thirteen others with them** - they suffered in Lycia, in the time of the Emperor Diocletian. Because they would in no way deny Christ nor offer sacrifice to idols, they were put to manifold tortures: they were stoned, flayed with iron flails, their knees were broken and, thus tortured and more dead than alive, they were thrown into the

flames, in which the power of God kept them unharmed. They were then taken from the fire and beheaded. The Lord glorified them both on earth and in His heavenly Kingdom. They suffered with honour in Lycia at the beginning of the fourth century; The Hieromartyr Apollinarius - he was a disciple of the Apostle Peter and was born in the city of Antioch. St Peter took him with him from Antioch to Rome, and, in Rome, consecrated him Bishop of Ravenna. Arriving in Ravenna, Apollinarius went into the house of a soldier, Irenaeus, whose blind son he healed and by this brought the whole family to the Christian faith. He also healed the wife of the military governor of Ravenna of a grave infirmity, and baptised his whole household. At the governor's request, Apollinarius remained in his house as his guest. Here he formed a house-church, and lived in that house for twelve years, preaching the Gospel and baptising unbelievers. He was grievously tormented in various ways by the pagan elders, but the strong right hand of God upheld him and preserved him. He was finally condemned to exile in Illyria in the Balkans. But the boat in which he was sailing capsized in a storm and, from among all the travellers, only St Apollinarius, together with two soldiers and three of his priests, was saved. Saved so miraculously, the soldiers came to believe in the power of Apollinarius' God and were baptised. Then Apollinarius began preaching the Gospel throughout the Balkans, travelling as far as the Danube. He then went to Thrace, where he spread the Gospel against great opposition. After three years of working in the Balkans, he was driven back to Italy. He went to Ravenna, where the faithful welcomed him with great joy. Hearing of this, the pagan elders wrote to Emperor Vespasian about Apollinarius, calling him a magician and asking if he should be put to death as an opponent of their gods. The Emperor replied that it was not necessary to kill him, but that he should be made to sacrifice to idols or driven from the city, for, he said: 'It is not seemly to take revenge on someone on behalf of the gods, for they can themselves be revenged on their enemies if they are angered.' But, in spite of this imperial decree, the pagans assaulted Apollinarius and stabbed him with daggers. This servant of God died of his wounds and went to the Kingdom of God. His relics are preserved in Ravenna, in the church dedicated to him.

**"Joy of All Who Sorrow" (with coins), which was at the glass factory in Petersburg** - This image was glorified in 1888 in Petersburg, when lightning hit a chapel during a terrible thunderstorm, but the holy icon of the Queen of Heaven located therein remained unharmed; only small brass coins (groshiki [half-kopecks]), that were lying in front of the icon, stuck to it. On the site of the chapel, a church was built in 1898. The Theotokos is depicted in a specific manner, standing beneath her Son, who is in Heaven as a king, and surrounded by people and angels. In addition, specific hymns are dedicated to celebrating her role of bringing hope and salvation into the world, thus becoming joy for all who sorrow "To Thee, the champion leader, do we Thy servants dedicate a hymn of victory and thanksgiving, as ones who have been delivered from eternal death by the Grace of Christ our God Who was born of Thee and by Thy maternal mediation before Him. As Thou dost have invincible might, free us from all misfortunes and sorrowful circumstances who cry aloud: Rejoice, O Virgin Theotokos, full of Grace, Joy of all who sorrow!" Many Orthodox parishes are named "Joy of all who Sorrow"

**Also commemorated on this day:** "Pochaev" (1675) Icon of the Mother of God. St. Theodore of Sanaskar (Glorification 2001). New Hieromartyr Michael priest and Martyr Andrew (1938). Hieromartyr Apollinaris, bishop of Ravenna (75). Righteous Anna (Hannah), mother of the Prophet Samuel. Translation of the Relics of St. Herman (Germanus), Archbishop of Kazan. 250 martyrs killed by Bulgarians (802-811). Eight Martyrs of Carthage (Greek). St. Anna of Leucadia (919). New Hieromartyr Nectarius (Trezvinsky), bishop of Yaransk. Repose of St. John Cassian the Roman, abbot, of Marseilles (435).

**24 July / 6 August - The Holy Martyr Christina** - Born in the city of Tyre, she was the daughter of the imperial governor, Urban, an idolater. It is not known why her parents gave her the name Christina, but it carried within itself the mystery of her future following of Christ. She knew nothing of Him until the age of eleven, but, when she reached that age, her father (wanting, because of her beauty, to hide her from the world until she was fully grown) made her live on the top floor of a high tower. He gave her every comfort — slaves and gold and silver idols to which to offer daily sacrifice. But the soul of the young Christina was weighed down and suffocated in this idolatrous atmosphere. Looking out of the window by day at the sun, and by night at the wonderful constellations of shining stars, she came, through her natural understanding, to a firm belief in the one, living God. God, in His great mercy, seeing her yearning for the truth, sent His angel to her, who signed her with the sign of the Cross, named her the bride of Christ and instructed her fully in the things of God. Then Christina smashed all the idols in her rooms, incurring her father's terrible wrath. He brought her to trial and had her tortured and thrown into prison, intending that she be beheaded on the following day. But that night, Urban, in full health, gave up the ghost and went to the grave before his daughter. After that, two of the governors, Dion and Julian, continued the interrogation of this holy maiden. Christina's courage in suffering and the marvels which were performed by the power of God brought many of the pagan inhabitants of Tyre to Christianity. During Christina's torture, Dion suddenly fell dead among the people. His successor, Julian, cut off Christina's breasts and cut out her tongue. The martyr took her tongue in her hand and threw it into Julian's face, and he was instantly blinded. Finally, her sufferings for Christ were ended under a

sharp sword, but her life went on in the immortal kingdom of the angels. St Christina suffered with honour in the third century.

**St. Declan, bishop of Ardmore, Ireland (5th c.)** - Born at Desi (Decies), Waterford, Ireland, 5th century. Declan, an Irish monk, was baptised by and a disciple of Saint Colman. He appears to have been an Irish evangelist before the arrival of Saint Patrick. He may have made two pilgrimages to Rome and later became the first bishop of Ardmore, a see confirmed by Patrick during the synod of Cashel in 448. Many miracles are attributed to Declan. Five miles or less to the east of Youghal Harbour, on the southern Irish coast, a short, rocky and rather elevated promontory juts, with a south-easterly trend, into the ocean [ $\pm 51^{\circ} 57' N / 7^{\circ} 43' W$ ]. Maps and admiralty charts call it Ram Head, but the real name is Ceann-a-Rama and popularly it is often styled Ardmore Head. The material of this inhospitable coast is a hard metamorphic schist which bids defiance to time and weather. Landwards the shore curves in clay cliffs to the north-east, leaving, between it and the iron headland beyond, a shallow exposed bay wherein many a proud ship has met her doom. Nestling at the north side of the headland and sheltered by the latter from Atlantic storms stands one of the most remarkable groups of ancient ecclesiastical remains in Ireland—all that has survived of St. Declan's holy city of Ardmore. This embraces a beautiful and perfect round tower, a singularly interesting ruined church commonly called the cathedral, the ruins of a second church beside a holy well, a primitive oratory, a couple of ogham inscribed pillar stones.

**Holy martyrs and passion-bearers Boris & Gleb** - Pious sons of Prince Vladimir, enlightener of Russia, they were named Romanus and David in Baptism. When Prince Vladimir died, his kingdom was divided among his sons (prior to baptism, he had children by several wives). But Prince Svyatopolk, not content with his share, resolved to have his brothers murdered in order to take their territories. Both brothers knew of the plan, but resolved not to take up arms against their brother, to avoid civil war and to fulfil the commandment "Resist not evil." Their bodies remained incorrupt and fragrant in death. They are buried in Vyshgorod. Note: Since every Orthodox Christian should be baptized with the name of a known Orthodox Saint, how do we get new Saints' names over the years? We see the process at work with St Vladimir and his sons Boris and Gleb. At baptism they received new Christian names, but when they were glorified, their (originally) pagan names were sanctified. Since then, countless Russians and others have been named Vladimir, Boris or Gleb at baptism.

**Also comemorated on this day:** New Hieromartyr Alpheus deacon (1937). Sts. Nicholas (1942) and John (1951) confessors, priests. Uncovering of the relics of Venerable Dalmatus, abbot and founder of the Dormition Monastery in Siberia (1994). Venerable Polycarp, archimandrite of the Kiev Caves (1182). St. George, bisop of Mogilev (1795). New Martyr Athanasius of Nicaea (1670). New Martyr Theophilus of Zakynthos (1635). Venerable Bogolep, child schemamonk of Black Ravine near Astrakhan (1667). Martyr Hermogenes. Venerable Pachomius, abbot, on the Lake (1479), friend of Venerable Dionysius of Glushets. St. Bernulphus, bishop of Utrecht (1054). St. Hilarion of Tvali (11th c.). Martyrs Capitio and Hymenaeus.

**25 July / 7 August - The Dormition of the Righteous Anna, the Mother of the Most Holy Mother of God.** - Today is the commemoration of the falling asleep of St. Anna but her principal feast is celebrated on September 9, on which date is written her service and her hagiography. Anna was from the tribe of Levi and the daughter of Matthan, the priest. After a long and God-pleasing life she died in extreme old age.

**St Olympias the Deaconess** - Olympias was born in Constantinople of very distinguished parents. Her father, Anysius Secundus, was a senator and her mother was the daughter of the famous nobleman Eulavius who is mentioned in the hagiography of St. Nicholas the Wonder-worker. When Olympias reached maturity, she was betrothed to a nobleman who died before the marriage took place. The emperor and the other relatives pressured Olympias to marry another, but in vain. However, she refused them this and devoted herself to a god-pleasing life, giving from her inherited estate great offerings to the churches and alms to the needy. She served as a deaconess in the Church, at first during the time of Patriarch Nectarius and, after his death, during the time of St. John Chrysostom. When Chrysostom was exiled, he counselled Olympias to remain in the church and to serve as before regardless who the patriarch after him would be. Immediately after the banishment of this great saint, someone started a fire in the Great Church [The Church of the Divine Wisdom Hagia Sophia] and the fire consumed many prominent buildings in the capital. The enemies of Chrysostom accused this holy woman of initiating this malicious fire. Olympias was banished from Constantinople to Nicomedia where she died in the year 410 A.D., requesting in her testament that her body be placed in a box and cast into the sea and wherever the water tosses it up, there she is to be buried. The coffin was cast ashore in the city of Vrochthoi, where there existed a church dedicated to the Apostle Thomas. From her relics, great healing miracles appeared throughout the centuries. The exiled Chrysostom wrote beautiful letters to the exiled Olympias which, even today, serve as a great comfort to all those who suffer for the sake of God's justice. Among other things, Chrysostom writes to Olympias: "Now I am very elated not only because you were relieved

from infirmity, but more so, that you are nobly enduring all difficulties referring to them as trivialities which is characteristic of a soul full of power and abounding in the rich fruits of courage. For you not only courageously are enduring misfortune rather you do not even notice it when it comes and without exertion, without labour and disturbance not even talking about it to others but rejoicing and triumphing over it. That serves as the greatest wisdom" (Letter VI). ;

**Our Holy Mother Eupraxia the Virgin** - Eupraxia was the daughter of Antigonus, a nobleman of Constantinople and a relative of Emperor Theodosius the Great. Her mother, a young widow, with Eupraxia settled in Egypt and visited the monasteries there distributing alms and praying to God. By her fervent desire, the seven-year-old Eupraxia was tonsured a nun. The older she got the more she imposed upon herself the heavy burden of mortification. At one time, she fasted for forty days. She reposed in 413 A.D, in her thirtieth year. She possessed the great grace of God and healed the most difficult illnesses.

**Commemoration of the Fifth Ecumenical Council** - This Council was convened in Constantinople during the reign of Emperor Justinian the Great in the year 553 A.D. All the heresies of the Monophysites were condemned at this Council as well as the heretical writings of Theodore of Mopsuestia, Theodoret of Cyrus and Origen (his teaching against the resurrection of the dead).

Tropar of St. Nessian Tone 2: O thou who didst converse with St. Patrick/ and follow him in the monastic way:/ as thou didst guide monks to Christ our God,/ pray that our souls may be saved.

**Also commemorated on this day**: Venerable Macarius, abbot of Zheltovod and Unzha (1444). New Hieromartyr Nicholas priest (1918). New Hieromartyr Alexander priest (1927). St. Gregory (Kallidis), metropolitan of Thessalonica and Heraclea (1925). New Hieromartyrs Vukosav Milanovic and Rodoljub Samardzic of Kulen Bakufa, Serbia (1941-1945). New Hieromartyr Theodore Tonkovid, priest of Lovets (Pskov) (1942). St. Iraida confessor (1967). Martyrs Sanctus, Maturus, Attalus, Blandina, Vivlia, Vetius, Epagathus, Ponticus, Alexander and others at Lyons (177). Venerable Christopher, abbot of Solvychevodsk (Vologda) (1572). New Hieromartyrs Grand Duke Michael Alexandrovich, Nicholas (Johnson) and Peter (Remes).

**26 July / 8 August - The Hieromartyr Hermolaus** - he was a priest in Nicomedia in the time of the Emperor Maximian, and was with the twenty thousand martyrs condemned by the Emperor to be burned in their church (see December 28th). Hermolaus somehow escaped death on that occasion, together with two other priests, Hermippus and Hermocrates. Hermolaus baptised St Panteleimon, with whom he was brought to trial, tortured and finally beheaded. Hermippus and Hermocrates suffered with them, and they were all crowned with wreaths of victory and glory in the Kingdom of Christ. They suffered with honour in about 304; Our Holy Mother, the Martyr Paraskeva - Paraskeva was born in Rome of Christian parents and from her youth was instructed in the Faith of Christ. With great fervence, St. Paraskeva endeavoured to fulfill all the commandments of God in her life. Believing strongly and living according to her faith, Paraskeva directed others on the path [of salvation] with the help of the True Faith and pious living. When her parents died Paraskeva distributed all of her property to the poor and was tonsured a nun. As a nun she preached the Faith of Christ with an even greater zeal, not hiding from anyone, even though at that time the Roman authorities bloodily persecuted the Faith of Christ. First the pernicious Jews accused St. Paraskeva of preaching the prohibited Faith. She was brought to trial before Emperor Antoninus. All the flatteries of the emperor did not help in the least to cause her to waver in the Faith. They then subjected her to fiery torments and placed a red-hot helmet on her head. The Lord miraculously saved her and Paraskeva was delivered and left Rome. She again traveled from city to city to convert the pagan people there to the True Faith. In two more cities she was brought before princes and judges and was tortured for her Lord, at the same time working great miracles and by the power of God quickly recuperated from her pains and wounds. The pagans, as always, ascribed her miracles to magic and her power of recovery to the mercy of their gods. St. Paraskeva once said to the prince who tortured her: "It is not your gods, O prince, who healed me but my Christ the True God." Finally Prince Tarasius beheaded her. Thus this saint gloriously ended her fruitful life. Her relics were later translated to Constantinople. She suffered honourably for Christ in the second century;

**Our Holy Father Moses the Ugrian** - He was at the court of the young Russian Prince Boris. When the godless Svyatopolk murdered Boris, Moses escaped and fled to Kiev. A little later he was taken to Poland as a slave by the Polish King Boleslav and there was sold for a thousand gold coins to a young and depraved widow, the wife of one of Boleslav's commanders who was slain. This wicked woman tempted Moses to commit adultery but Moses would not be tempted for he vowed to live chastely before the Lord. She then suggested marriage to him but he rejected that also. Moses secretly received the monastic tonsure from an Athonite monk and he appeared before the lady in the monastic habit. She bound him, ordered that he be flogged and to have his private organ severed. This unsuccessful seduction by this shameful woman lasted for five years - five years of pain and torture! However, King Boleslav was slain unexpectedly in an uprising during which this woman was also killed. Then Moses was free to go to Kiev where, at the monastery of St. Anthony, he devoted his life to prayer and silence. Completely conquering the shameful vice in himself, Moses assisted many to also be saved from it. His holy relics helped many

(St. John, the much suffering July 8). After ten years of silence in the Monastery of the Caves, St. Moses found rest on July 26, 1043 A.D. and took up habitation in the eternal virginal Kingdom of Christ.

**Also commemorated on this day:** Martyr Parasceve of Rome (138). St. Jacob (Netsvetov) of Atka-Island and Ikogmute, mission priest to the Yup'ik on the Yukon River (1867). Martyr Oriozela of Reuma in Byzantium (ca. 250). Venerable Ignatius, monk, of Mt. Stirion. Virgin-martyr Jerusalem of Byzantium. Venerable Gerontius, founder of the Skete of St. Anne, Mt. Athos (13th c.). St. Sava III, archbishop of Serbia (1316).

**27 July / 9 August - The Holy and Great Martyr Panteleimon** - born in Nicomedia of a Christian mother, Eubula, and a pagan father, Eustorgius, he studied medicine as a young man. The priest Hermolaus befriended him, instructed him in the Christian faith and baptised him. Panteleimon miraculously healed a blind man whom other doctors had treated in vain: he healed him by the name of Christ and baptised him. From jealousy, the doctors denounced Panteleimon as a Christian, and he went before the Emperor Maximian for judgement. 'He stood before the earthly ruler in the body, but in his mind he stood before the heavenly King.' He freely declared himself to be a Christian before the Emperor, and, in front of his eyes, healed a paralytic of a long infirmity. This miracle brought many of the pagans to the Christian faith. The Emperor put him to torture, but the Lord appeared to him on several occasions and delivered him whole and uninjured. Then St Hermolaus suffered, along with Hermippus and Hermocrates. Condemned to death, St Panteleimon knelt in prayer. At that, the executioner gave him a blow on the neck with his sword, and the sword broke as if made of wax. The executioner could not kill him until he had finished his prayer and had himself given the word to behead him. Panteleimon was beheaded under an olive tree, which after that became laden with fruit. 'Panteleimon' means 'all-merciful'. God the all-merciful received his righteous soul, and glorified him among His greatest saints, his relics remaining incorrupt. This wonderful martyr suffered with honour as a youth for Christ on July 27th, 304. St Panteleimon is invoked in the prayers at the blessing of water and the blessing of oil, together with St Hermolaus and the other unmercenaries and wonderworkers. The loveliest church dedicated to him is to be found on the Holy Mountain.

**Also commemorated on this day:** Commemoration of the canonization of Venerable Herman of Alaska (1970). New Hieromartyrs Ambrose, bishop of Sarapul, priests Plato and Panteleimon (1918). New Hieromartyr John priest (1941). St. Ioasaph, metropolitan of Moscow (1555). Blessed Nicholas Kochanov, fool-for-Christ at Novgorod (1392). Venerable Anthusa, abbess of Mantinea in Asia Minor and her 90 sisters (759). St. Clement of Ochrid, bishop of Greater Macedonia (916), and Sts. Angelar (10th c.), Gorazd (896), Nahum of Ochrid (910), and Sabbas (10th c.), disciples of Sts. Cyril and Methodius. Martyr Christodulus (1777). The blind man who confessed Christ and was martyred with St. Panteleimon. 853 Martyrs of Thrace who were drowned. St. Manuel, monk.

**July 28 / August 10 — The Holy Apostles of the Seventy and Deacons: Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon & Parmenas** — all four were of the number of the seven deacons and the seventy apostles. The other three deacons were Stephen, Philip and Nicolas. Stephen, the first martyr, is commemorated on December 27th, and Philip on October 11th. Nicolas was not included in the ranks of the saints because of heresy. These first four have no separate commemoration, and are commemorated together on this day. Prochorus was consecrated by the Apostle Peter as Bishop of Nicomedia. He served for a time with St John the Evangelist and, on the island of Patmos, wrote down the Revelation that he heard from St John's lips. After that, he returned to Nicomedia, where he made great efforts to bring the people to the Faith. He died a martyr in Antioch, where he was murdered by unbelievers. Holy Nicanor suffered in Jerusalem on the same day as St Stephen the Archdeacon, quickly followed by two hundred others, killed by the wicked Jews. Timon was bishop in Arabia, and was crucified for Christ. Parmenas died before the eyes of the apostles, and was mourned and buried by them.

**St. Samson, bishop of Dol in Brittany (c.565)** - Bishop and confessor, born in South Wales; died 28 July, 565 (?). The date of his birth is unknown. His parents whose names are given as Amon of Dyfed and Anna of Gwynedd, were of noble, but not royal, birth. While still an infant he was dedicated to God and entrusted to the care of St. Illtyd, by whom he was brought up in the monastery of Llantwit Major. He showed exceptional talents in his studies, and was eventually ordained deacon and priest by St. Dubric. After this he retired to another monastery, possibly after that on Caldy Island, to practise greater austerities, and some years later became its abbot. About this time some Irish monks who were returning from Rome happened to visit Samson's monastery. So struck was the abbot by their learning and sanctity that he accompanied them to Ireland, and there remained some time. During his visit he received the submission of an Irish monastery, and, on his return to Wales, sent one of his uncles to act as its superior. His fame as a worker of miracles now attracted so much attention that he resolved to found a new monastery or cell "far from the haunts of men", and accordingly retired with a few companions to a lonely spot on the banks of the Severn. He was soon discovered, however, and forced by his fellow-countrymen to become abbot of the monastery formerly ruled by St. Germanus; here St. Dubric consecrated him bishop but without appointment to any particular see. Now, being warned by an angel,

he determined to leave England and, after some delay, set sail for Brittany. He landed near Dol, and there built a monastery which became the centre of his episcopal work in the district. Business taking him to Paris, he visited King Childebert there, and was nominated by him as Bishop of Dol; Dol, however, did not become a regular episcopal see till about the middle of the ninth century. Samson attained the age of 85 years, and was buried at Dol.

**Also commemorated on this day:** Appearance of the "Smolensk" "Directress" Icon of the Mother of God brought from Constantinople in 1046. St. Pitirim, bishop of Tambov (1698). Synaxis of All Saints of Tambov. New Hieromartyr Nicholas deacon (1918). New Hieromartyr Basil, Virgin-martyrs Anastasia and Hellen, Martyrs Aretha, John, John, John and Virgin-martyr Maura (1937). New Hieromartyr Ignatius of Jablechna (1942). Venerable Moses, wonderworker of the Kiev Caves (14th c.). Martyr Julian of Dalmatia (2nd c.), Martyr Eustathius (Eustace) the Soldier of Ancyra (316) and Martyr Acacius of Apamea (321). Venerable Paul of Xeropotamou, Mt. Athos (820). 0"Grebensk" (1380), "Kostroma" (1672) and "Umileniye" ("of Tender Feeling") (1885) of Diveyevo, before which St. Seraphim reposed. Venerable Irene Chrysoyolantou of Cappadocia (912). Venerables Ursus and Leobatus (Leubais), brother-abbots (500). New Martyr Christodoulos of Kassandra (1777). New Martyr Anastasius of Ancyra (1777). Venerable George of Mt. Athos, the Builder (1033).

### ‡ Daily Scripture Readings ‡

**Monday** - Luke 1:39-49, 56 (Matins Gospel); 1 Corinthians 5:9-6:11; Matthew 13:54-58; Hebrews 9:1-7 (Theotokos); Luke 10:38-42; 11:27-28 (Theotokos)

**Tuesday** - Luke 21:12-19 (Matins Gospel); 1 Corinthians 6:20-7:12; Matthew 14:1-13; Romans 8:28-39 (Passion-bearers); John 15:17-16:2 (Passion-bearers)

**Wednesday** - 1 Corinthians 7:12-24; Matthew 14:35-15:11; Galatians 4:22-31 (Righteous Anna); Luke 8:16-21 (Righteous Anna)

**Thursday** - 1 Corinthians 7:24-35; Matthew 15:12-21; 1 Corinthians 7:35-8:7; Matthew 15:29-31

**Friday** - Luke 21:12-19 (Matins Gospel); 2 Timothy 2:1-10 (Great-martyr); John 15:17-16:2 (Great-martyr)

**Saturday** - Luke 1:39-49, 56 (Matins Gospel); Romans 12:1-3; Matthew 10:37-11:1; Philippians 2:5-11 (Theotokos); Luke 10:38-42; 11:27-28 (Theotokos)

### ***HYMN OF PRAISE SAINT MARY MAGDALENE***

Magdalene, in dark sorrow wrapped herself  
Because of the bloody death of the Son of God.  
Sorrow is to love, the most bitter sorrow,  
It, in the world, has no comfort or companion,  
To it, tears are comfort and pain its only companion,  
To Saint Magdalene, in darkness the world became wrapped.  
The weak creation of man, asked for light,  
Without hope, in the dark Mary groped.  
His tomb to her is light but behold, the tomb is empty!  
Stolen she thought, naked and not anointed!  
Bitterly she wept, to weeping never any end,  
At that moment, a man's voice beside her, she heard:  
Woman, why are you weeping, tell me: Whom do you seek?  
Whom do I seek, you ask? To comfort me, do you wish?  
But, if you took Him away, where did you place Him?  
Tearful and melancholy, Jesus looked at her,  
And with a sweet voice called her: Mary!  
In Mary's heart, a light began to shine  
O familiar voice, with sweetness unsurpassable,  
The voice overly generous by life and power!  
With that voice, the Lord healed the sick,  
With that same voice, He resurrected the dead.



Life-creating voice, a miraculous voice!  
Mary recoiled and turned around  
Rabbi, she cried out at that moment the sun came out  
A New Day dawned to Mary and to the world.

### **REFLECTION**

**"Blessed are they that mourn" (Matthew 5:4)**, said the Lord. Blessed are they who mourn asking for the Kingdom of God. Blessed are they who mourn suffering for the Faith in Christ. Blessed are they that mourn repenting of their sins. There can be no true repentance without tears. With what shall we wash away our sins if not through tears or through blood, the blood of martyrdom? The monks of Nitria sent a petition to St. Macarius the Great asking if he would come to them rather than they all come to him. Macarius obeyed and came to them. All the monks gathered around St. Macarius and begged him for a word of instruction. Macarius began to weep and through his tears said: "Brethren, let tears flow from your eyes before you go over there where our tears will fry our bodies." Then all the brethren began to weep.

### **HOMILY**

**-About the inexorable justice of God-  
"For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but  
cast them down to hell, and delivered them into  
chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment;  
and spared not the old world, but saved Noah the  
eighth person, a preacher of righteousness, bringing  
in the flood upon the world of the ungodly; and  
turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrha into  
ashes condemned them with an overthrow, making  
them an example unto those that after should live  
ungodly" (2 Peter 2: 4-6).**

O how will the sinful man be spared? "And spared not the old world but saved Noah, the eighth person, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly; and turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrha into ashes, condemned them with an overthrow". Therefore O sinful man, how then can you be spared? Are you dearer and more precious to Him than millions of angels, from so many people drowned by the Flood [Deluge] and from densely populated cities? When the angels are cast into the darkness of Hades, people are drowned by the flood and cities are burned to ashes in what do you hope, sinning, continually sinning and not turning away from sin? You say, in the mercy of God! But, is God more merciful now than He was then? Does God change as man does? Do not hope without measure [limit] but according to the measure [limit] of your efforts as regards the improvement of your life, let that be your hope. Truly, great is the mercy of God, long is the patience of God and infinite is the love of God. Behold, God loves you more and is more merciful to you than you are to yourself and He continually wishes you salvation even more than you yourself do. But he, who to the end mocks the mercy of God and he, who to the very end laughs at the patience of God and he, who to the end opposes the love of God, will God then take him by force into His kingdom and make him a fellow citizen with the angels and saints? How terrible is the darkness of Hades, the clanging sound of chains and the gnashing of teeth? Those who ridiculed the mercy of God and opposed the love of God dwell there [Hades]. Will you want to go there, O prodigal soul? God does not desire that you go there; the angels mourn because you are headed there; the saints are praying that you return; Holy Church offers sacrifices for you that you would come to your senses. If you despise all of that O why would you despise it all! Then what kind of mercy do you expect from God? O righteous Lord, help us that we may, in due time turn away from the path which leads to the darkness of Hades, make us to understand and strengthen us in goodness, before You send Your angel to take away our soul.

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

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