

Sunday of the Paralytic

Fourth Sunday of Pascha

13 / 26 May

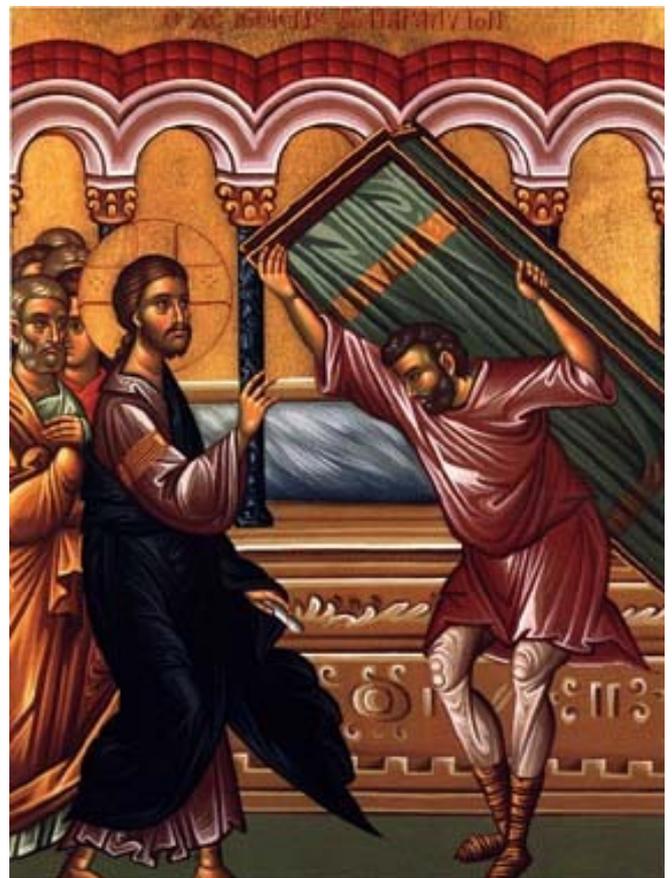
Sunday of the Paralytic, Troparion, Tone V — Christ is risen from the dead, trampling on death by death, and on those in the tombs bestowing life.

Kontakion, Tone III — By Thy divine presence, O Lord, raise my soul which is terribly paralyzed by all kinds of sins and misguided actions, as of old Thou didst raise the paralytic, that saved I may cry to Thee: O compassionate Christ, glory to Thy power.

Troparion of the Sunday, Tone III — Let the heavens rejoice, / let the earth be glad! / For the Lord has shown might 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!

Hymn to the Theotokos, Tone III — We praise you as the mediatrix of our salvation, / O Virgin Theotokos. / For your Son, our God, Who took flesh from you, / accepted the passion of the cross, / delivering us from corruption as the Lover of man.

Kontakion of the Sunday, Tone III — 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 patriarchs they unceasingly praise / the divine majesty of Thy power!



Matins Gospel IV

Epistle: The Acts of the Apostles 9: 32 - 42

Now it came to pass, as Peter went through all parts of the country, that he also came down to the saints who dwelt in Lydda. There he found a certain man named Aeneas, who had been bedridden eight years and was paralysed. And Peter said to him, "Aeneas, Jesus the Christ heals you. Arise and make your bed." Then he arose immediately. So all who dwelt at Lydda and Sharon saw him and turned to the Lord. At Joppa there was a certain disciple named Tabitha, which is translated Dorcas. This woman was full of good works and charitable deeds which she did. But it happened in those days that she became sick and died. When they had washed her, they laid her in an upper room. And since Lydda was near Joppa, and the disciples had heard that Peter was there, they sent two men to him, imploring him not to delay in coming to them. Then Peter arose and went with them. When he had come, they brought him to the upper room. And all the widows stood by him weeping, showing the tunics and garments which Dorcas had made while she was with them. But Peter put them all out, and knelt down and prayed. And turning to the body he said, "Tabitha, arise." And she opened her eyes, and when she saw Peter she sat up. Then he gave her his hand and lifted her up; and when he had called the saints and widows, he presented her alive. And it became known throughout all Joppa, and many believed on the Lord.

PETER RAISES TABITHA FROM DEATH

He sends them all out, imitating his master in this also (Ref. Mk.5:40). For where tears are - or rather, where miracles are, there tears have no place. Certainly not in the celebration of such a mystery. Listen, I beseech you: although something of a similar kind is not happening now, yet in the case of our dead, a great mystery is celebrating likewise ...Angels are present, commissioned from heaven ...sent from the King Himself to call their fellow servant, and I ask you, Do you weep? Do you not know what a mystery it is that is taking place, how awful, how dread, and worthy indeed of hymns and lauds? ...For it is a very great mystery of the Wisdom of God. As if leaving the dwelling, the soul goes forth, speeding on her way to her own Lord, and do you mourn? Why then you should do this on the birth of a child: for this in fact is also a birth, and better than that... For as the sun arises, clear and bright, so the soul leaving the body with a clear conscience, shines joyously ...Think what the soul must then be! in what amazement, what wonder, what delight!

St. John Chrysostom. Homily XXI on Acts IX. B#55, pp. 138, 139.

Gospel: John 5: 1-15

After this there was a feast of the Jews, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. Now there is in Jerusalem by the Sheep Gate a pool, which is called in Hebrew, Bethesda, having five porches. In these lay a great multitude of sick people, blind, lame, paralysed, waiting for the moving of the water. For an angel went down at a certain time into the pool and stirred up the water; then whoever stepped in first, after the stirring of the water, was made well of whatever disease he had. Now a certain man was there who had an infirmity thirty-eight years. When Jesus saw him lying there, and knew that he already had been in that condition a long time, He said to him, "Do you want to be made well?" The sick man answered Him, "Sir, I have no man to put me into the pool when the water is stirred up; but while I am coming, another steps down before me." Jesus said to him, "Rise, take up your bed and walk." And immediately the man was made well, took up his bed, and walked. And that day was the Sabbath. The Jews therefore said to him who was cured, "It is the Sabbath; it is not lawful for you to carry your bed." He answered them, "He who made me well said to me, 'Take up your bed and walk.'" Then they asked him, "Who is the Man who said to you, 'Take up your bed and walk'?" But the one who was healed did not know who it was, for Jesus had withdrawn, a multitude being in that place. Afterward Jesus found him in the temple, and said to him, "See, you have been made well. Sin no more, lest a worse thing come upon you." The man departed and told the Jews that it was Jesus who had made him well.

JESUS HEALS THE PARALYTIC BY THE POOL

Great is the profit of divine Scriptures, and all sufficient is the aid which comes from them ...for the divine oracles are a treasury of all manner of medicines. Whether it be needful to quench pride, to lull passion to sleep, to tread under foot the love of money, to despise pain, to inspire confidence, to gain patience - in the Scriptures we may find abundant resource. For what man of those who struggle with long poverty or who are nailed by a grievous disease will not, when he reads the passage before us, receive much comfort? Since this man had been a paralytic for thirty eight years, and he saw others delivered each year, and himself bound by his disease, not even so did he fall back and despair, though in truth not merely despondency for the past, but also hopelessness for the future was sufficient to overstrain him ...Yes, Lord, he says, but I have no man ...to put me in the pool. What can be more pitiable than these words? ...Do you see a heart crushed through long sickness? Do you see all violence subdued? ...He did not curse his day ...but replied gently ...Yes, Lord; yet he did not know who it was who asked him.

St. John Chrysostom. Homily XXXVII on John V, 1. B#58, p. 128.

Christ is Risen!

Today's Gospel reading confirms us more and more strongly in the divinity of our Risen Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

The Gospels for the last two Sundays told us about the appearances of the Risen One. They were as if filled with the light of Christ's Resurrection: the wonderful appearances to the disciples, to Thomas, to the myrrh-bearers. But today's Gospel starts with a dismal, horrible picture: there is no brightness, no light. At the Sheep Gate there was a pool which had five porches. "In these lay a great multitude of impotent folk, of blind, halt, withered.... For an angel went down at a certain season into the pool, and troubled the water: whosoever then first after the troubling of the water stepped in was made whole of whatsoever disease he had. And a certain man was there, which had an infirmity thirty and eight years" (Jn. 5:2-5). Just picture this: thirty-eight years in such a terrible condition, in pain and suffering, without a doctor, without care, without medicine, and maybe even often without food. And this unfortunate man bore all this because he wanted to be well. He tried to enter the water after it was troubled, but he had no one to help him, was late, and did not receive healing. And so passed thirty-eight years. Why this is a human lifetime!

Suddenly everything changed. Jesus came up to him and said: "Rise, take up thy bed and walk. . ." and he walked (Jn. 5:8,9). What happened? What took place? What happened is that the reason for his sickness was removed. Christ revealed this reason when He met this man in the temple and said to him: "Behold, thou art made whole: sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee" (Jn. 5:14). Here is the reason—sin. Sin is the reason for all evil, for all our sufferings, for all our sicknesses. Yes, sin. . .sin alone. And Christ is the only one who can destroy it, who can forgive. But this is under one condition: "Sin no more."

We have lived through the Passion days, we have lived through the very death of Christ, the death of the Lamb of God, Who takes upon Himself the sin of the world. This means our sin, too. He, the Only Sinless One, has become the sacrifice for us before our Heavenly Father. And now we are walking in the Easter joy of the Risen Christ. And so week after week. But still we stumble, fall, sin. But let us not despond; let us turn to Him.

The pool at the Sheep Gate was only a shadow of what Christ performed and is performing. He alone is the source of healing and forgiveness. He alone, as God, can forgive sins. Let us turn to Him, and He will say to us the same words He said to the paralytic: "Rise, take up thy bed and walk."

And we will rise and walk again in the light of His Resurrection. But let us remember His words to the paralytic, "Sin no more. " And let us not sin, because Christ is Risen!

The One Thing Needful - Archbishop Andrei

Saints of the Week

13 / 26 May — The Holy Martyr Glykeria - daughter of a governor of Rome, she became poor after her father's death and went to live in Trajanopolis in Thrace. In the time of the wicked Emperor Antoninus, Glykeria was brought to offer sacrifice to the idol of Zeus. She traced the Cross on her forehead and, when the governor asked her where was her lamp (for they all carried lamps in their hands), Glykeria indicated the Cross on her forehead and said: 'This is my lamp!' At her prayers, the idol was struck by lightning and broken into pieces. The governor was furious with her and commanded that she be thrown into prison. He sealed the door of the prison, intending to starve the maiden to death, but an angel of God appeared to Glykeria and gave her heavenly food. After a certain time, when the governor reckoned that the maiden must have died of hunger, he opened the prison and was astounded to see her in good health, bright and merry. The warder, Laodicius, seeing this marvel, himself confessed Christ the Lord and was at once beheaded. After that Glykeria was thrown into a burning furnace, but she remained untouched by the flames. Standing in the midst of the fire, she praised the Lord, commemorating the wonder with the Three Children in the burning fiery furnace in Babylon. Finally, she was thrown to the lions and, praying to God, this holy maiden gave her soul into the hands of the Lord for whom she had heroically suffered much torture. She suffered with honour in the year 141 . A healing myrrh flowed from her relics, which healed the sick of the gravest illnesses.

The Holy Martyr Alexander - a Slav. As an eighteen year old soldier in the army of Emperor Maximilian, he refused the order of the emperor to give honor to the Roman idols and for that which he was handed over to Captain Tiberian, to either counsel Alexander to deny Christ or else torture and kill him. Since all the counselling was in vain, Tiberian took Alexander with him across Macedonia to Constantinople where he traveled for duty. In every town along the way, the young Alexander was cruelly tortured but, in every town, Christians came out before him and begged him for a blessing and they encouraged him in his mortification. Pimenia, his mother, followed after him. During the course of this travel, an angel of God appeared many times to Alexander soothing his pains and encouraging him. In one place, Carasura, the martyr performed a miracle through prayer: when thirst overcame him and the soldiers who escorted him, he brought forth a well of cold water from an arid place. On the shore of the Ergina river, Tiberian ordered the executioner to behead Alexander and to toss his body into the water. When the executioner swung at the martyr's head, he saw radiant angels of God around Alexander and became frightened and his hand dropped. Alexander asked him why his hand dropped and the executioner replied that he sees some radiant young men around him. Yearning death and union with the Lord, Alexander prayed to God to withdraw the angels from him so that the executioner would not be frightened. And thus, the executioner carried out his work in the year 298 A.D. Pimenia removed the body of her son and honourably buried him. Many healings occurred at the grave of the martyr. After death, the martyr appeared to his mother and informed her of her imminent translation to the other world.

Also commemorated on this day: Translation of the relics of Martyr Abramius of Bulgaria (1230) (movable holiday on the 4th Sunday of Pascha). Righteous Tabitha (1st c.) (movable holiday on the 4th Sunday of Pascha). New Martyr Theodore of Bizantium, who died at Mitilene (1795) (movable holiday on the 4th Sunday of Pascha) (Greek). All Saints of Euboea (movable holiday on the 4th Sunday of Pascha) (Greek). New Hieromartyrs Basil, Alexander and Christopher, Hieromartyr Macarius and Martyr Sergius (1922). 103 New Hieromartyrs of Cherkassk (20th c.). Righteous Virgin Glyceria of Novgorod (1522). Translation of the relics of St. Macarius, archimandrite of Obruch or Kanev (1678). St. Pausiacius, bishop of Synnada (606). St. George the Confessor of Constantinople, with his wife and children (ca. 842). Venerable Euthymius of Athos the translator (1028) (Georgia). Venerables Amphilochius (1452), Macarius (1462), and Tarasius (1440), abbots, and Theodosius (15 c.), monk, of Glushitsa Monastery (Vologda). St. Servatius, first bishop of Maastricht (384). Martyrs killed by the Latins at the Iveron Monastery on Mt. Athos (Georgia). Monkmartyr John of the Iveron Monastery on Mt Athos (Greek). St. Sergius the Confessor of Constantinople (9th c.) (Greek). Venerable Nicephorus, priest of the monastery of Ephapsios (Greek). Hieromartyr Alexander of Tiverias. (Greek). St. Leander of Seville (600).

14 / 27 May — The Holy Martyr Isidore - in the reign of the Emperor Decius, this Isidore was taken by force by soldiers from the island of Chios. He had held the Christian faith from his youth, and had spent his life in fasting, prayer and good works. So when, in the army, he declared himself to be a Christian, the commander took him to task for it, and urged him to deny Christ and offer sacrifice to idols. The saint replied: 'Even if you kill my body, you have no power over my soul. I have the true and living God, Jesus Christ, who lives in me and will be with me at my death; and I am in Him and shall remain in Him, and will not cease to confess His holy name while the spirit is in my body.' The commander ordered that they first beat him with iron flails and then cut out his tongue. But, even without his tongue, Isidore was able to speak, and confessed the name of Christ by the Spirit of God. Meanwhile the punishment of God struck the commander, and he suddenly became mute. The mute commander finally gave the signal to behead Isidore. Isidore rejoiced at this sentence and, praising God, went out to the scaffold, where his head was cut off in the year 251. His friend, Ammon, buried his body and, after that, himself suffered and received the wreath of martyrdom.

Also commemorated this day: St. Isidore, fool-for-Christ, wonderworker of Rostov (1474). New Hieromartyr Peter priest (1939). Venerable Nicetas, bishop of Novgorod and recluse of the Kiev Caves (1108). Martyr Maximus, under Decius (250). Venerable Serapion the Sindonite, monk, of Egypt (542). St. Leontius, patriarch of Jerusalem (1175). Trebensk (1654) and Yaroslavl (Pechersk) Icons of the Mother of God (1823). New Martyr John-Raiko of Shumena, Bulgaria (1802) (Greek). New Martyr Mark of Crete, at Smyrna (1643) (Greek). First opening of the relics (1846) of St. Tikhon of Zadonsk (1783). St. Aprunculus, bishop of Clermont in Gaul (Gaul). Sts. Alexander, Barbarus, and Acolythus, martyred at the Church of Holy Peace by the Sea in Constantinople (Greek). St. Andrew, abbot of Raphael (Tobolsk) (1820).

15 / 28 May — Our Holy Father Pachomius the Great - an Egyptian by birth and was a pagan in his youth. As a soldier, he took part in the Emperor Constantine's war against Maxentius. After that, learning from Christians about the one God and seeing their devout life, Pachomius was baptised and went to the Tabennisiot desert, to the famous ascetic Palamon, with whom he lived in asceticism for ten years. Then an angel appeared to him in the robes of a monk of the Great Habit at the place called Tabennisi and gave him a tablet on which was written the rule of a cenobitic monastery, commanding him to found such a monastery in that place and prophesying to him that many monks would come to it seeking the salvation of their souls. Obeying the angel of God, Pachomius began building many cells, although there was no one in that place but himself and his brother John. When his brother grumbled at him for doing this unnecessary building, Pachomius simply told him that he was following God's command, without explaining who would live there, or when. But many men soon assembled in that place, moved by the Spirit of God, and began to live in asceticism under the rule that Pachomius had received from the angel. When the number of monks had increased greatly, Pachomius, step by step, founded six further monasteries. The number of his disciples grew to seven thousand. St Antony is regarded as the founder of the eremitic life, and St Pachomius of the monastic, communal life. The humility, love of toil and abstinence of this holy father were and remain a rare example for the imitation of monks. St Pachomius performed innumerable miracles, and also endured innumerable temptations from demons and men. And he served men as both father and brother. He roused many to set out on the way of salvation, and brought many into the way of truth. He was and remains a great light in the Church and a great witness to the truth and righteousness of Christ. He entered peacefully into rest in 346, at the age of sixty. The Church has raised many of his followers to the ranks of the saints: Theodore, Job, Paphnutius, Pecusius, Athenodorus, Eponichus, Soutus, Psois, Dionysius, Petronius and others.

Also commemorated this day: St. Isaiah, bishop and wonderworker of Rostov (1090). The slain Crown Prince Demetrius of Moscow (1591). Venerable Isaiah, wonderworker of the Kiev Caves (1115). Venerable Pachomius, abbot and Silvanus of Nerekhta (1384). Venerable Euphrosynus (Eleazar), abbot, wonderworker of Pskov (1481), and his disciple St. Serapion (1480). Finding of the relics of Venerable Arsenius, abbot of Konevits (1991). Venerable Achilles, bishop of Larissa (330). Venerable Pachomius, abbot of Nerekhta (1384), and St. Silvanus, of Nerekhta. St. Macarius (Glukharev), archimandrite, of Altai (1847). St. Barbaras the Myrrh-gusher of Greece (9th c.) (Greek). St. Andrew the hermit and wonderworker (Greek). New Hieromartyrs Pachomius, archbishop of Chernigov (1938), his brother Abercius, archbishop of Zhitomir (1937), their father Priest Nicholas Kedrov (1936), and their brother-in-

law Priest Vladimir Zagarsky (1937). St. Dymphna, martyr of Geel, Flanders (7th c.) (Neth.). St. Arethas of Verkhoturys and Valaam (1903). St. Hallvard of Husaby. St. Colman of Oughval (7th c.) (Celtic & British)

16 / 29 May — Fast Day - Our Holy Father Theodore the Sanctified - he was a disciple of St Pachomius, being born and growing up an unbeliever. Coming to the true Faith as a young man, he was baptised and, having heard of St Pachomius, fled to him in his monastery unknown to his parents. St Pachomius made him a monk and came to love him for his rare zeal and his obedience. When his mother came to fetch him back home, he would not let her see him, but prayed to God to enlighten her with the truth. And indeed, his mother not only did not take her son back home but herself did not return. Seeing a women's monastery, ruled by Pachomius's sister, close by, she entered it and was tonsured. After a certain time, Paphnutius, Theodore's brother, also came to the monastery and was tonsured. It once happened that the Bishop of Panopolis invited Pachomius to build a monastery for the many people who were desirous of the monastic life. Pachomius took Theodore with him, and entrusted to him the duty of building the monastery. Upon Pachomius's death, Theodore became abbot of all Pachomius's monasteries and lived until great old age, guiding a multitude of monks on the way of salvation. He entered peacefully into rest and went to the Kingdom of eternal light in the year 368.

St. Brendan the Voyager, abbot of Clonfert (578) - St. Brendan sailed in skin-covered coracles, from Ireland to Scotland, then to England and Wales. His most famous voyage in search of the promised land, was described in a famous saga known as the 'Navigatio,' which indicates that he reached Greenland or even North America. It is still possible to construct a coracle according to the instructions of the Navigatio, and to sail it from Ireland to Newfoundland. St. Brendan was born near Tralee on the west coast of Ireland, and he was brought up by a saint called Ita, who taught him three things that God truly loves: 'the true faith of a pure heart; the simple religious life, and bountifulness inspired by Christian charity.' (She added three things that God hates: 'a scowling face; obstinate wrong-doing; and too much confidence in money'.) He founded several monasteries the most renowned being at Clonfert, a centre famous for missionary work, where he is said to have directed three thousand monks.; The Blessed Maiden Musa; St Nicolas Mysticus, Patriarch of Constantinople.

Also commemorated on this day: Mozdok" and "Dubensk-Krasnogorodsk" (17th c.) Icons of the Most Holy Theotokos (movable holiday on the Prepolovenie – Mid-Pentecost). Translation of the relics (1545) of Venerable Ephraim, abbot of Perekom (1492). St. Matthew, Hieromonk of Yaransk in Vyatka (1927). Venerables Cassian (1537) and Laurence (1548), abbots of Komel (Vologda). St. Alexander, archbishop of Jerusalem (3rd c.). Martyrs Vitus, Modestus and Crescentia at Lucania (303). Blessed child Musa of Rome (5th c.). Monk-martyrs of the community of St. Sava the Sanctified (610). St. George II, bishop of Mitylene (842). Martyr Vukasin of Serbia (1943). Martyr Abdiesus, bishop, and companions in Persia (418). St. Nicholas Mystikos, patriarch of Constantinople (930) (Greek). New Martyr Nicholas of Metsovo, whose relics are at Meteora (1617) (Greek). Martyrs Vitus, Modestus, and Crescentia at Lucania (303). Martyr Peter of Blachernae (Greek). St. Euphemia near Neaorion (Greek). Hieromartyr Theodore of Vrsac in Banat, Serbia (1595). St. Carantoc of Carhampton.

17 / 30 May — The Holy Apostle Andronicus - One of the Seventy, he was a kinsman of the Apostle Paul, as Paul wrote (Rom. 16:17), remembering also St Junia, Andronicus's helper. Andronicus was made Bishop of Pannonia, and did not stay in one place, but preached the Gospel throughout the whole of Pannonia. With St Junia, he was successful in bringing many to Christ and in demolishing many temples of idolatry. Both of them had the grace of wonder-working, by which they drove out demons and healed every sort of sickness and disease. They both suffered for Christ, and thus received a twofold crown: of apostleship and of martyrdom. Their holy relics were found in the excavations in Eugenius.

St. Melangell, virgin hermitress of Wales - Imagine a party of huntsmen in the thick, green undergrowth of a small, wooded valley. The dogs are barking as they begin to follow the scent of a hare. One of the huntsmen sounds the horn. Riding at the front is the local prince. The time is 607 A.D. The place is the Pennant Valley in the kingdom of Powys, in central Wales. The hare disappears into a huge thicket of undergrowth, and the hunters prepare to follow. Then

suddenly strange things begin to happen. The dogs turn back in fear. The huntsman with the horn finds he cannot sound a blast, yet he cannot take the horn from his lips. The prince, brave and proud, leaps from his horse. He will not show fear in the face of magic. He draws his sword and begins to cut his way through the brambles and shrubs. In a circular clearing in the centre of the thicket stands a young woman. She is dressed very simply. She stands calmly, radiating a sense of peace. At her feet the hare has crouched down for safety. Prince Brochwel of Powys has just come face to face with Melangell, the daughter of an Irish warrior. Melangell refused a pre-arranged marriage to an old warrior chieftain. She fled to Wales and began a life of prayer, living in a cave on the side of the Pennant Valley. As she was drawn deeper into the spiritual life, animals began to come to her in complete trust. Around her the world was restored to Paradise. Prince Brochwel granted her the valley as a place of prayer and refuge for ever. Gradually a small convent grew up, and a church was built. When Melangell died, the nuns placed her body within the church. The holy woman came to be known as a saint. No one knows how long the convent lasted, but archaeologists have shown that nuns were still being buried outside the church in the 9th and 10th Century. Around 1160 A.D. a new stone church was built, with a shrine where people could come to venerate the bones of Saint Melangell. Pilgrims began to arrive, and miracles of healing took place. The valley was noted as a place of peace, a sanctuary for hares, a comfort to the sick, a glimpse of heaven. Then came the upheavals and pain of the Reformation. The shrine was desecrated, and chunks of masonry from the shrine were hurled out of the church. Often the relics of saints were destroyed at this time by the reformers, but Saint Melangell was reburied in the floor of the church. Pilgrims were no longer encouraged to make the long journey into the Welsh mountains to visit this holy place. Centuries passed, and times changed. Hardly anyone lived near the tiny church in the hidden valley. The few local sheep farmers could not afford to repair the building. By the 1980's the church was almost derelict. Then in 1988 work began to restore the church and shrine of Saint Melangell. Many parts of the ancient shrine were found built into walls, or on neighbouring farms. New masonry was carved to match the old stonework. Today, the church and shrine are beautiful once more. Hundreds of pilgrims flock to pray there and to ask for the prayers of the early Celtic holy woman. A centre for healing and rest has been established a few yards from the church, so that Saint Melangell's work may continue.

Also commemorated on this day: Venerable Euphrosyne (Princess Eudocia) of Moscow (1407). Martyrs Solochon, Pamphamer, and Pamphalon at Chalcedon (298). St. Stephen, archbishop of Constantinople (893). Uncovering of the relics (1551) of Venerable Adrian, abbot of Ondrusov (Valaam) (1549). Venerables Nectarius (1550) and Theophanes (1544) of Meteora (Greek). Venerable Athanasius the New, wonderworker of Christianopolis (18th c.) (Greek). Great-martyr Nicholas of Sophia (1555). St. Jonah Atamansk, priest of Odessa (1924).

18 / 31 May — Fast Day - The Holy Martyr Theodotus, and the seven maiden martyrs: Tecusa, Alexandra, Claudia, Favina, Euphrasia, Matrona and Julia. Theodotus was a married man and an innkeeper in Ancyra in the time of the Emperor Diocletian. Although he was married, he lived according to the words of the Apostle: 'Let them who have wives be as though they had not' (I Cor. 7:29). But he kept the inn on, in order to be able unsuspectedly to help Christians, and his inn was a refuge for persecuted Christians. Theodotus secretly sent help to the Christian refugees in the mountains, and secretly gathered the bodies of those who had been killed, giving them burial. At that time, seven maidens were taken for trial and tortured for Christ. They were tortured, mocked and then thrown into a lake. One of them, St Tecusa, appeared to St Theodotus and told him to take her body out of the lake and bury it. Under cover of night, Theodotus set off with a companion to carry out the martyr's wishes, and, led by an angel of God, succeeded in finding all seven bodies and burying them. But this friend betrayed him to the authorities and the judge put him to harsh torture. Theodotus endured all the tortures as though not in his own body, having his whole mind steeped in God. When the torturers had made his body one great wound and broken his teeth with stones, it was ordered that he be beheaded. When he was taken to the scaffold, many Christians wept for him, but St Theodotus said to them: 'Don't weep for me, my brethren, but glorify our Lord Jesus Christ, by whose aid I am finishing my course and overcoming the enemy.' Saying this, he laid his head on the block under the sword and was beheaded, in the year 303. A priest buried the martyr's body on a hill outside the city and a church dedicated to St Theodotus was later built on the site; The Holy Martyrs Peter, Dionysius, Andrew, Paul and Christina.

Also commemorated on this day: Commemoration of the Holy Fathers of Seven Ecumenical Councils. Martyrs Peter of Lampsacus, and Andrew, Paul, and Dionysia, at Euridinos (249-251). St. Macarius (Glukharev) of Altai, Siberia (1847). Righteous John (Gashkevich), archpriest of Korma (1917). New Hieromartyr Michael, priest (1932). New Hieromartyr Damjan (Damian) Strbac, Jr. of Grahovo, Serbia (1940s). New Hieromartyr Basil priest (1942). Martyrs Symeon, Isaac, and Bachtisius of Persia (339). Martyrs Heraclius, Paulinus, Beneditimus of Athenas (250). Holy Martyrs Davit and Tarichan (693) (Georgia). Martyr Euphrasia of Nicaea (Greek). St. Stephen the New, patriarch of Constantinople (Greek). Hieromartyr Theodore, pope of Rome (Greek). St. Anastaso of Lukada (Greek). Venerable Martinian of Areovinthus, monk (Greek). Martyr Julian (Greek). Hieromartyr Potamon, bishop of Heraclea (341) (Greek). St. Elgiva, Queen of England. Also commemorated on this day:

19 May / 1 June — The Hieromartyr Patrick, Bishop of Brussa with three priests: Acacius, Menander and Polyenus - they suffered for the Christian faith in the time of Julian the Apostate in Asian Brussa. The imperial governor, Junius, brought Patrick to a hot water spring and asked him: 'Who created this healing water, if not our gods, Aesculapius and the others, whom we worship?' St Patrick answered: 'Your gods are demons; and this water, like all other water, was created by Christ. our Lord and God.' Then the governor asked: 'And will this Christ of yours save you if I throw you into this boiling water?' The saint replied: 'If He wills, He can keep me whole and uninjured, although I would wish, in this water, to be parted from this temporal life, that I may live eternally with Christ; but let His holy will be done, without which not a hair of a man's head can fall.' Hearing this, the governor ordered that Patrick be thrown into the water. The boiling drops fell on all sides, and scalded many of the onlookers, but the saint remained untouched, as though he were standing in cold water. Seeing this, the governor was wild with shame and commanded that Patrick and three of his priests be beheaded with axes. So these goodly followers of Christ said their prayers and laid their heads under the executioner's axe. When they had been beheaded, their souls were taken merrily to Christ's Kingdom of light, to reign eternally.

St. Dunstan, archbishop of Canterbury (988) - nephew of the Archbishop of Canterbury, spent a privileged youth at the court of King Athelstan and eventually became abbot of Glastonbury. English monastic life had almost totally disappeared as a result of the Viking invasions. Dunstan set about vigorously reviving it. He founded monasteries at Bath, Exeter, Malmesbury, and elsewhere, drawing up new rules for their good order. He installed monks in Winchester, in Chertsey, Surrey, and Milton Abbas, Dorset and restored the old abbey of Abingdon. After a period of exile King Edgar recalled him to be Archbishop of Canterbury in the year 960. There he founded an abbey to the east of the city, along with three churches dedicated to St Mary, Saints Peter and Paul, and St Pancras. As a skilled metalworker, scribe and bell-founder himself, he stimulated the revival of church art and illuminated manuscripts. He also loved to play the harp and wrote several fine hymns.

Also commemorated on this day: Synaxis of New Martyrs of Butovo (movable holiday on the Saturday after the Pascha). Venerable Cornelius, abbot of Komel (Vologda) (1537). Right-believing Prince Demetrius Donskoy (1389) and Venerable Euphrosyne (Princess Eudocia) of Moscow (1407). New Hieromartyr Matthias priest (1919). New Hieromartyr Victor (1937). New Hieromartyrs Onuphrius, archbishop of Kursk; Anthony, bishop of Belgorod, and with him priests Metrophan, Alexander, Michael, Matthew, Hippolytus, Nicholas, Basil, Nicholas, Maxim, Alexander, Paul, and Paul, and Martyrs Michael and George (1938). New Hieromartyr Onuphrius, archbishop of Kursk (1938). New Hieromartyr Valentine (1940). Venerable Cornelius, abbot of Paleostrov and Valaam (1420). St. John, prince of Uglich, tonsured as Ignatius (Vologda) (1522). Venerable Sergius, monk, of Shukhtom (1609). Martyr Acoluthus of the Thebaid (284-305). Venerable John, bishop of the Goths in Crimea (787). Sts. Parthenius and his brother Calogerus (250). Entrance of St. Nina (Nino), Equal-to-the-Apostles, into Georgia (323) (Georgia). Monk-martyrs and confessors John, Conon, Jeremias, Cyril, Theoctistus, Barnabas, Maximus, Theognostus, Joseph, Gennadius, Gerasimus, Mark, and Herman of Cyprus, who suffered under the Latins (1231). Synaxis of Hieromartyrs of Kharkov. Martyrs Cyriaca and Theotima (311) (Greek).

‡ Daily Scripture Readings ‡

Monday - Acts 10:1-16; John 6:56-69

Tuesday - Acts 10:21-33; John 7:1-13

Wednesday - Acts 14:6-18; John 7:14-30

Thursday - Acts 10:34-43; John 8:12-20

Friday - Acts 10:44-11:10; John 8:21-30

Saturday - Matthew 11:27-30 (Matins Gospel); Acts 12:1-11; John 8:31-42; Galatians 5:22-6:2 (St. Demetrius Donskoy); Luke 6:17-23 (St. Demetrius Donskoy)

REFLECTION

Concerning the power of death and the power of the Cross of Christ, St. Athanasius writes: "Whose death ever drove out demons? And whose death have the demons been afraid of as the death of Christ? Where the Name of Christ is only invoked, there, every demon is driven out. Who in such a measure tamed spiritual passions in men that the prostitutes live a chaste life and murderers do not use the sword anymore and the fearful become courageous? If not the Faith of Christ? If not the sign of the Cross? And who else has so convinced men in immortality as the Cross of Christ and the resurrection of the Body of Christ? The death of the Sinless One and the Cross of the Lover of men have brought a greater and more lasting victory than all the earthly kings with many multi-millions of armies. Which army was able to defeat a single demon? Meanwhile, only the mention of the Name of the Crucified One on the Cross peels to flight the army of demons. O, if all Christians would know what treasure they have in the Name of Christ, and what kind of weapon they have in the Cross of Christ!