



14th Sunday After Pentecost

Afterfeast of Exaltation of the Cross & Great Martyr Euphemia

16 / 29 September

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 of the Feast tone 1: O Lord, save Thy people/ and bless Thine inheritance./ Grant victory over their enemies to Orthodox Christians,/ and protect Thy people with Thy Cross.

Troparion of St Euphemia tone 3: In love thy contest was radiant/ and thou didst run to the fragrance of Christ./ O virtuous Virgin-Martyr, thou hast entered the bridal chamber/ and dost send healing into the world./ Save those who cry to thee: Rejoice, O holy Euphemia.

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 of the Feast tone 4: O Christ our God Who wast voluntarily lifted up on the Cross,/ grant Thy mercies to Thy new people named after Thee./ Gladden with Thy power Orthodox Christians/ and give them victory over their enemies./ May they have as an ally that invincible trophy, Thy weapon of peace.

Kontakion of St Euphemia tone 4: Thou didst win thy martyr's contest/ and dost now sanctify us with streams of miracles, O holy Euphemia./ We honour thy repose and stand before thy relics/ to be delivered from our souls diseases/ and obtain the grace of miracles.

Vespers

Lord I have Cried - Tone 5, on 10: Octoechos 3; Feast: 3 (Today the precious Cross); Great Martyr 4 (Having adorned thy soul); G: Great Martyr (O most glorious Euphemia); N: Sunday Dogmatic in the tone of the week.

Aposticha: Octoechos; G: Great Martyr (Let every tongue be moved); N: Feast (That which Moses prefigured).

Matins Gospel III

Epistle for Afterfeast of Exaltation Galatians 2: 16-20

Epistle: Corinthians 1:21 - 2:4

Now He who establishes us with you in Christ and has anointed us is God, Who also has sealed us and given us the Spirit in our hearts as a guarantee. Moreover I call God as witness against my soul, that to spare you I came no more to Corinth. Not that we have dominion over your faith, but are fellow workers for your joy; for by faith you stand. But I determined this within myself, that I would not come again to you in sorrow. For if I make you sorrowful, then who is he who makes me glad but the one who is made sorrowful by me? And I wrote this very thing to you, lest, when I came, I should have sorrow over those from whom I ought to have joy, having confidence in you all that my joy is the joy of you all. For out of much affliction and anguish of heart I wrote to you, with many tears, not that you should be grieved, but that you might know the love which I have so abundantly for you.

WHO ALSO HAS SEALED US AND GIVEN US THE SPIRIT IN OUR HEARTS AS A DEPOSIT

Again, from the past He establishes the future. For it is He Who establishes us in Christ (that is, who does not suffer us to be shaken from the faith which is in Christ) and He Who anointed us and gave the Spirit in our hearts. How will He not give us the future things? For He gave the principles and the foundations, and the root and the fount (to wit the true knowledge of Him, the partaking of the Spirit) how will He not give the things that come of these? ...And what is 'anointed,' and 'sealed?' He gave the Spirit, by Whom He did both these things, making at the same time prophets and priests and king, for in old times these three ranks were anointed ...For we are both to enjoy a kingdom and to be made priests by offering our bodies for a sacrifice (for he says 'present your members a living sacrifice to God') and moreover we are constituted prophets too: for 'the things eye has not seen, nor ear heard,' (I Cor. 2:9) these have been revealed to us. And in another way, too, we become kings: if we have the mind to get dominion over our unruly thoughts, for such a one is a king and more than one who wears a diadem.

St. John Chrysostom. Homily III on II Corinthians I, 4, 5. B#56, pp. 289-290.

Gospel for Afterfeast of Exaltation Mark 8: 34 - 9:1

Gospel: St. Matthew 22: 1-14

The Lord said this parable: "The kingdom of heaven is like a certain king who arranged a marriage for his son, And sent out his servants to call those who were invited to the wedding; and they were not willing to come. Again, he sent out other servants, saying, 'Tell those who are invited, "See, I have prepared my dinner; my oxen and fatted cattle are killed, and all things are ready. Come to the wedding." ' But they made light of it and went their ways, one to his own farm, another to his business. And the rest seized his servants, treated them spitefully, and killed them. But when the king heard about it, he was furious. And he sent out his armies, destroyed those murderers, and burned up their city. Then he said to his servants, 'The wedding is ready, but those who were invited were not worthy. Therefore go into the highways, and as many as you find, invite to the wedding.' So those servants went out into the highways and gathered together all whom they found, both bad and good. And the wedding hall was filled with guests. But when the king came in to see the guests, he saw a man there who did not have on a wedding garment. So he said to him, 'Friend, how did you come in here without a wedding garment?' And he was speechless. Then the king said to the servants, 'Bind him hand and foot, take him away, and cast him into outer darkness; there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.' For many are called, but few are chosen."

THE WEDDING FEAST

Such a Gospel the Holy Church offers today for our attention: the Gospel about the wedding feast. And in verses 10 to 13 is the section which refers to both the good and the evil ones who gathered at the meal. And when the lord entered, he found one man who was not dressed in a wedding garment. And just for this, that he was not wearing a wedding garment, such a terrible punishment followed. He was thrown out, bound, and was cast into a place of fire. For us this may even be incomprehensible. What is this actually? God is merciful, compassionate, and suddenly such a terrible punishment. Here is something we must understand. Let us look at it. If you remember, brothers, the Gospel which was read Sunday before last, you will recall also the pious young man who approached the Lord and asked Him what to do in order to enter the Kingdom of God. The Lord said, Fulfil the commandments. He said that he had fulfilled them. But seeing his heart, the Lord said: Give away everything you possess and follow me (Mt. 19:16-21).

The Lord called the young man to follow Him, but this young man was rich. And he trusted in these earthly riches, in the things that surround us. He somehow didn't understand that this very night his soul might be taken away and pass into eternal life. And what did he go away with? The Lord called him for renewal, to remove from his heart all the scabs, which are human passions. The Lord called. But he had riches which made him think that this earth is ours and is the purpose of our life. This is all we have: our houses, our villas, our cars, our relationships with each other. And we don't notice that one after another we depart. So this means that the Gospel of the Sunday before last is pointing out: do not trust, do not persist in your strivings for possession of earthly things, because this very night eternity may open for us. The earth is given to us only as a means of receiving those things which should be in a man's soul. And our soul should be suffused, as if saturated with the Beatitudes.

And this past Sunday. In the Gospel reading it told about the vineyard workers. The lord created the vineyard, gave them livelihood for their work. This livelihood consisted of everything that was needed for their life. But they, like the young man, accepted in their heart that this vineyard was their riches, that it belonged to them. This very vineyard, which was serving only as a means of acquiring goodness of heart, became for them an object of temptation. They decided to use it as their own. And therefore, they drove off all symptoms that were telling them that, after all, this was not theirs, that it belonged to the Lord;

and you have to do what the Lord requires of you: cultivate the vineyard. Then you will receive in your heart that goodness with which you can depart from this vineyard and go to something much better and greater, to something which God has prepared for you. But they did not pay attention to these symptoms. The vineyard became for them such a temptation, as the earth is for us, in which we seem to have everything we need. On it we build our villas, and close by are lying Lazaruses—beggars, widows, unfortunate children who have to be raised. But we do not concern ourselves with them. We are busy with our fine clothes, our meals, with such matters that will remain here. And the person departs into eternal life hungry, without good deeds.

Now that we have analysed these two Gospels, we ask: Why did the Lord tell this parable, and why does the Holy Church offer it today for our attention? Everyone who knows the Gospel knows also that, in addition to the Evangelist Matthew whose Gospel was read today, the Evangelist Luke also refers to this parable in some detail (Lk. 14:15-24). It tells there how Christ was invited to the meal of Simon the Pharisee. At this meal Christ saw what the Jews did who accepted the law of Moses, how they changed the law of Moses into a means of their own greatness and pride. And Christ, seeing this and feeling sorry for Simon who had invited Him, started to teach him. This was heard by all who were present at the meal. And they were supposedly right-believing Jews, Pharisees of Pharisees. And when Christ began to speak, He was for them...who was He? Just a rabbi. Here one of the Jews could not contain himself. And when Christ said that people will receive for their good deeds the Kingdom of God, he exclaimed, "Blessed is He that shall eat bread in the Kingdom of God!" (Lk.14: 15). Blessed! Because this blessedness belongs to the children of Abraham; what you are talking about belongs to us. Why bother with good deeds? The promise which was given to Moses is ours and we are using it—we, the Jews. This is our kingdom.

Then Christ, answering about this "kingdom," gave them this parable. Here He pointed out that the Jews were called by God for such a long time to receive blessedness, were called to a pure life; but they did not come. They were busy in the same way as that young man, as the workers in the vineyard—with earthly things. Apparently they were building for themselves palaces, buying unfortunate slaves, living in comfort, and they had no concern for anything else. And therefore, why bother with a king's feast? So their response to this feast was such that almost everyone refused to come. Then the Lord called his soldiers and through the soldiers called everyone, both evil and good, without discrimination: everyone had to come.

In the East when a feast was given, not only was food presented but also raiment. In this way, when garments were given to those who came—harlots, tax collectors, and other sinners—everyone was given an equal garment. But among them was also a Pharisee who entered. What he saw seemed horrible to him. Among those who were invited were great sinners, harlots, and tax collectors. He did not want to be on a level with them. His own garment, as it appeared to him, was much better. And he remained in it. The king entered to look at the guests and said to him: "Friend, how camest thou in hither not having a wedding garment? And he was speechless" (Mt. 22:12). But in his soul one could imagine that he was rebelling. Rebelling, because those present at the wedding feast were all sinners. And he, as it seemed a righteous man, a son of Abraham, here he had to sit together with them. And the most degrading thing of all was that they wanted him to exchange his rich garment for the garment in which all the sinners were dressed, for this wedding garment. No...never.

So what happened—happened! The Lord ordered him to be bound for disrupting unity. What unity? The unity of the Church of Christ. See, brothers and sisters, how important this unity is, how precious the Church of Christ is in the eyes of the Lord. So let us obey the voice of the Church; let us fulfil with our whole soul whatever she requires of us; let us keep the garment which she has given us. And may it never happen to us what happened to him, who was not wearing a wedding garment.

The One Thing Needful - Archbishop Andrei

Saints of the Week

16 / 29 September - Afterfeast of the Exaltation of the Cross - The Holy and Great Martyr Euphemia - Born in Chalcedon, her father was the senator Philophronus and her mother's name was Theodorisia, both devout Christians. Euphemia was a girl beautiful in both body and soul. When the Proconsul, Priscus, celebrated a festival of sacrifice to Ares in Chalcedon, forty-nine Christians absented themselves from the festivities and hid themselves. But they were discovered and brought before Priscus, holy Euphemia being among them. When the furious Priscus asked them why they had not carried out the imperial command, they replied: 'Both the Emperor's commands and yours must be obeyed if they are not contrary to the God of heaven. If they are, they must not only not be obeyed; they must be resisted.' Then Priscus put them to various tortures for nineteen days, from day to day. On the twelfth day, he held Euphemia apart from the others and began to flatter her beauty, hoping to bring her thus to idolatry. When all his flattery proved fruitless, he ordered that she be tortured. First, she was put on a wheel, but an angel of God appeared and broke it. Then he had her thrown into a fiery furnace, but she was preserved by God's power. Seeing this, two soldiers, Victor and Sosthenes, came to faith in Christ,

for which they were thrown to the wild beasts and thus finished their earthly course with glory. After that, Euphemia was thrown into a pit filled with water and all kinds of poisonous reptiles, but she made the sign of the Cross over the water as she went into the pit, and remained unharmed. She was finally thrown to the wild beasts and, with a prayer of thanksgiving, gave her soul into God's hands. Her parents buried her body. She suffered in the year 303, and entered into eternal joy. (St Euphemia is also commemorated on July 11th.)

St. Ninian, bishop of Whithorn (apostle of the E. Picts) (Galloway, c.432) - Ninian's father was a Cumbrian chief. When his son embraced Christianity, he decided to visit Rome, where for many years he advanced in holy virtue and self-discipline. But Ninian never forgot the fellow- Britons who still did not know the Gospel. He decided to return home. In 394 Ninian was consecrated bishop by Pope Siricius. On his way back to Britain Ninian was befriended by Saint Martin of Tours. He founded his see at Whithorn, and there built a stone church which became renowned as the 'White House'. When Ninian heard of Martin's death he dedicated the church to his friend. Almost certainly this White House was the oldest Christian foundation in Scotland. Ninian founded a monastery close by, and from here he and his monks persuaded the southern Picts inhabiting the Grampians to 'abandon the errors of idolatry' (as the Venerable Bede put it 'and accept the true Faith'. Saint Ninian travelled tirelessly. His diocese was huge, stretching from near present-day Glasgow as far as Westmoreland. Although later pagan invaders undid much of his work, his memory lingered; and his success in converting the rulers of Wales was considerable.

St. Edith, abbess of Wilton, England (984) - Daughter of King Edgar and St Wilfrida. She became a nun at Wilton in England at the age of fifteen. She reposed at the age of twenty-two, famous for her generosity to the poor and her familiarity with wild animals.

Also commemorated on this day: New Hieromartyr Gregory Raevsky priest (1937). New Hieromartyr Sergius priest (1942). Translation of the relics of St. Alexis of Moscow (2001). Repose of St. Cyprian, metropolitan of Kiev (1406). St. Photius, metropolitan of Kiev (1431). St. Kushka of Odessa confessor (1964). St. Sebastiana, disciple of St. Paul the Apostle, martyred at Heraclea (86). Martyr Melitina of Marcianopolis (2nd c.). Martyrs Victor and Sosthenes at Chalcedon (304). Venerable Dorotheus, hermit of Egypt (4th c.). Martyr Ludmilla (927), grandmother of St. Wenceslaus, prince of the Czechs. Venerable Procopius, abbot, of Sazava in Bohemia (1053). New Martyrs Isaac and Joseph, who suffered at Karnu, Georgia (808). The Icon of the Mother of God, named "Support of the Humble" (1420). Venerable Cyprian of Serbia.

17 / 30 September - Afterfeast of the Exaltation of the Cross - The Holy Martyrs Vera, Nada and Lubov (Faith, Hope and Love), and their Mother, Sophia - They lived and suffered in Rome in the time of the Emperor Hadrian . The wise Sophia (as her name—Sophia— wisdom, indicates) was left a widow and, as a Christian, steeped herself and her daughters in the Christian faith. At the time that Hadrian's persecuting hand stretched out over the virtuous house of Sophia, Vera was twelve, Nada ten and Lubov nine. The four of them were brought before the Emperor, with their arms entwined 'like a woven wreath', humbly but firmly confessing their faith in Christ the Lord and refusing to offer sacrifice to the goddess Artemis. At the moment of their passion, the mother urged her valiant daughters to endure to the end: 'Your heavenly Lover, Jesus Christ, is eternal health, inexpressible beauty and life eternal. When your bodies are slain by torture, He will clothe you in incorruption and the wounds on your bodies will shine in heaven like the stars.' The torturers inflicted harsh torture on Vera, Nada and Lubov one by one. They beat them, stabbed them and threw them into fire and boiling pitch, and finally beheaded them one after the other. Sophia took the dead bodies of her daughters out of the town and buried them, and stayed by their grave in prayer for three days and nights, then gave her soul to God, hastening to the heavenly company where the blessed souls of her daughters awaited her.

Also commemorated on this day: New Hieromartyrs Paul, Theodosius, Nicodemus and Seraphim (1918). Virgin-martyr Irene (1931). Martyr John (1941). Virgin-martyr Alexandra (1943). Martyr Theodota at Nicaea (230) and Agathoklea. 156 Martyrs of Palestine, including bishops Peleus and Nilus, the presbyter Zeno, and the noblemen Paternuthius and Elias (310). St. Joachim, patriarch of Alexandria (1567). "Tsaregrad" (1071) and Makar'evsk "Directress" (1442) Icons of the Mother of God. Uncovering of the relics of St. John of Shanghai. Martyrs Lucy, and her son Geminian of Rome (303). Hieromartyrs Heraclides and Myron, bishops of Cyprus (1st c.). Martyrs Socrates and Stephen. St. Lambert, hieromartyr of Maastricht (704). 100 Martyrs of Egypt. Venerable Anastasius of Perioteron in Cyprus (12th c.). Venerable Eusipius of Cyprus. Martyrs Charalampus, Panteleon and others.

18 September / 1 October - Afterfeast of the Exaltation of the Cross - St Eumenius, Bishop of Gortyna - He gave himself to Christ with his whole heart from his youth, freeing himself of two heavy burdens: the burden of riches and the burden of the flesh. He freed himself from the first by giving away all his goods to the poor and needy, and from the latter by strict fasting. He thus healed himself and was able to heal others. Passionless and filled with the grace of the Holy Spirit, Eumenius shone with a

radiance that could not be hidden, as it is written: 'A city set on a hill cannot be hid' (Matt. 5:14), and so holy Eumenius could not be hidden from the world. Seeing him, the people chose him as their bishop in Gortyna. As a bishop, he governed Christ's flock as a good shepherd. He was a father to the poor, riches to the needy, consolation to the sad, healing to the sick and a marvellous wonder-worker. He worked many miracles by his prayers: he killed a poisonous snake, drove out demons, healed many of the sick, and did this not only in his home city but in Rome and in the Thebaid. In the Thebaid, he brought rain from God in a time of drought, and there finally finished his earthly course and entered into the eternal presence of his Lord. He lived and worked in the seventh century.

Martyr Ariadne of Phrygia - In the Phrygian town of Promisea, during the reign of Emperor Hadrian, there lived a pagan nobleman named Tertullus. The maiden Ariadna was his slave and a Christian. On the day of his son's birth, Tertullus prepared a great sacrificial offering to the idols, but the pious Ariadna did not attend, remaining at home to pray to the true God. Her master was enraged at this and tried to coerce her to deny Christ and to worship idols. When Ariadna refused, he tormented her with beatings and other cruel tortures and cast her into prison. When he released her from prison, he drove her away from the house. Soon afterward he regretted having released her, and sent servants to seize her and return her to him. By then, Ariadna was already a great distance from the town. She was passing by a huge rock when she saw her pursuers, and she prayed to God and the rock opened and hid her. The servants became confused by this and began to quarrel and fight among themselves, and killed each other.

Also commemorated on this day: Glorification (1698) of Venerable Euphrosyne, nun, of Suzdal (1250). Venerable Hilarion of Optina (1873). New Hieromartyrs Alexis and Peter priests (1918). New Hieromartyrs Amphilius bishop of Krasnoiarsk, John, Boris, Michael, Vladimir, Benjamin, Constantine priests and Martyr Sergius (1937). Martyrs Sophia and Irene of Egypt (3rd c.). Martyr Castor of Alexandria. Great-martyr Prince Bidzini and Martyrs Prince Elizbar and Prince Shalva of Ksani, Georgia (1661). Synaxis of New Martyrs and Confessors of Vladimir region. Molchensk (1405), named the "Healer" (18th C) and Starorussk (returned in 1888) Icons of the Mother of God. St. Arcadius, bishop of Novgorod (1162).

19 September / 2 October - Fast Day - Afterfeast of the Exaltation of the Cross - The Holy Martyrs Trophimus, Sabbatius and Dorymedon. In the time of the Emperor Probus, in the third century, when Atticus was governing Antioch, two Christians, Trophimus and Sabbatius, both eminent and honoured men, came to that city. Just at that time, there was a pagan festival and offerings to the idol of Apollo in Daphne near Antioch. Atticus made a special effort to ensure that all the citizens took part in the festivities. When someone saw Trophimus and Sabbatius, and told Atticus that these two old men were not taking part, Atticus summoned them for trial, and, when they refused to deny Christ, put them to torture one by one. After beating and torturing Trophimus, he sent him to Phrygia to Dionysius, a yet harsher torturer of Christians, himself taking Sabbatius from prison and trying him. When the torturer asked Sabbatius who he was and what was his rank, he replied: 'My rank and dignity, my homeland, my glory and my riches are Christ the Son of God, who is alive for ever and by whose providence the whole universe is held in being.' He was therefore beaten and flogged with iron flails until his bones showed through his flesh, and he died under these tortures. The torturer put Trophimus to harsh torture, and held him in prison to inflict yet greater torture on him. Then a certain senator, Dorymedon, a secret Christian, came to the prison and ministered to Trophimus. When the torturer discovered this, he put them both to torture and finally threw them to the wild beasts. But the animals would not touch them. Holy Dorymedon even shouted into the ear of a she-bear to eat him up, but the bear only became even more docile. The torturer ordered, in consequence of this, that St Trophimus and Dorymedon be beheaded. The souls of these holy martyrs now reign in heaven.

St. Theodore of Taurus, archbishop of Canterbury (602-690) - probably the most important archbishop of Canterbury between St. Augustine and St. Lanfranc both for his organisation of the Church in England and as a scholar and teacher. The Venerable Bede tells us he was Greek by birth from Tarsus in Cilicia and had been educated in Constantinople and was a monk. Before his appointment he lived in Rome and was famous for his contribution to the bitter monothelite controversy. He was recommended by St. Adrian, an African bishop to Pope Vitalin, who was then looking for a suitable archbishop of Canterbury in 666. This followed the death in Rome of Wighard, the archbishop elect, and the choice of the kings of Northumbria and Kent in the crisis following the Synod of Whitby and an outbreak of the plague. St Adrian himself had been the pope's choice, but he had refused. Vitalin asked him instead to accompany and help St Theodore. He left Rome with St. Adrian and St Benedict Biscop, consulted St. Agilbert, bishop of Paris and former bishop of Wessex on the way, and reached England in 669. He made a visitation of most of the country, filled vacant sees, set up an important school at Canterbury with St. Adrian, which soon became the source of several future bishops and attracted students even from Ireland, and held the first synod of the Anglo-Saxon church at Hertford in 672. Its ten decrees were based on canons approved by the Council of Chalcedon, widely adopted in the West. But they dealt

admirably with the legacy of division in England between bishops trained by Roman and those trained by Irish masters; they also dealt with the respective rights of bishops and monasteries. A further decision was taken to create more dioceses, which was later implemented by Theodore in Northumbria (at the expense of St. Wilfrid), in Mercia, East Anglia, and Wessex. Theodore's work was the unification of disparate elements in the Church, fusing the elements from Rome, Gaul, and Ireland into a single cohesive whole. Although he was highhanded in his division of the Northumbrian diocese, and the papacy upheld St. Wilfrid against him, his policy, if not the way of implementing it, was sound. In pursuing it, he rightly respected the territorial limits of the regional kings' power by creating a second (or third) diocese within the kingdom, but avoided setting up dioceses with territory in different kingdoms. Towards the end of his long life he sought a reconciliation with St. Wilfrid and helped towards his partial restoration. According to St. Wilfrid's biographer alone, he also expressed a desire that St. Wilfrid should succeed him at Canterbury. This was never realised. St. Theodore's second synod, at Hatfield, produced a declaration of orthodoxy by the Church in England in the monothelite controversy. The synods later held at Clovesho were the direct result of St. Theodore inaugurating the series at Hertford which decreed that such yearly synods should be held. St. Theodore's school at Canterbury taught not only Latin and Greek (very rare at this time), but also Roman Law, the rules of metre, computistics, music and biblical exegesis on the Pentateuch and the Gospels of the literal school of Antioch. Theodore is also known to have been interested in medicine. But the Penitential ascribed to him cannot be his work as it stands: some elements (e.g. on remarriage after divorce) are in plain contradiction to his known teaching, while others date from after Theodore's death. It is possible that certain elements may go back to Theodore's oral teaching, but the whole work had at least two editors and the original cannot be recovered. Some of his exegesis has been recently studied afresh. St. Theodore died on 19 September at the age of about eighty-seven; he was buried close to St. Augustine in the monastery of SS. Peter and Paul, Canterbury. In 1091 his incorrupt body was translated.

Also commemorated on this day: St. Theodore, prince of Smolensk and Yaroslav (1299), and his children Sts. David and Constantine. New Martyr Priest Constantine (Golubev) of Bogorodsk (1918). New Hieromartyr Nicholas priest (1919). Venerable Alexis, Hieroschemamonk of Zosima Hermitage (1928). New Martyr Constantine priest (1937). New Martyr Nilus priest, Virgin-martyr Mary (1938). Martyr Zosimas, hermit of Cilicia (4th c.). Blessed George (Igor), Prince of Chernigov (1147). Hieromartyr Januarius, bishop of Benevento, and his companions: Sosius, Proclus and Festus, deacons, Gantiol, Eutychius, Acutius, and Desiderius, at Puzzuoli (305). St. Seguanos of Gaul.

20 September / 3 October - Afterfeast of the Exaltation of the Cross - The Holy and great Martyr Eustace (Placidus). He was a great Roman military leader in the time of the Emperors Titus and Trajan. Although a pagan, Placidus (for that was his pagan name) was a righteous and merciful man, like the centurion Cornelius, who was baptised by the Apostle Peter (Acts 10). Going hunting one day, he found a stag. By the providence of God, a shining Cross appeared among the stag's antlers and the voice of God came to Placidus, telling him to go to a Christian priest and be baptised. Placidus was baptised, along with his wife and two sons. At his baptism, he received the name Eustace, his wife the name Theopiste and their sons the names Agapius and Theopistus. After his baptism, Eustace went back to the very place where the revelation through the stag had occurred, and thanked God on his knees that he had brought him to the truth. At that, the voice of God came to him again, foretelling suffering for His name and strengthening him. Then Eustace secretly left Rome with his family, with the intention of hiding among simple people and serving God in an unknown and humble way. Arriving in Egypt, he was immediately beset by trials. Some wicked barbarian carried off his wife, and his two sons were seized by wild beasts. But the barbarian quickly came to a bad end, and a herdsman saved the boys from the wild beasts. Eustace settled in the Egyptian village of Vadisis, and there lived as a village hireling for fifteen years. After this, the barbarians descended on the Roman Empire, and the Emperor Trajan was sorry that his brave commander Placidus, who had been victorious wherever he had fought, was not with him. The Emperor sent two of his officers to seek the great general throughout the Empire. By God's providence, these officers, who had been friends of Eustace, came to this village of Vadisis, found him and took him to the Emperor. Eustace gathered the army together and defeated the barbarians. On the way back to Rome, Eustace went and found his wife and sons. When he arrived in Rome, the Emperor Trajan had died and the Emperor Hadrian was on the throne. When Hadrian summoned Eustace to offer sacrifice to idols, Eustace told him that he was a Christian. The Emperor put him to torture, together with his wife and sons. When the wild beasts did them no harm, he threw them into a white-hot metal ox. On the third day, they took out their bodies, dead but untouched by the fire. Thus this glorious general gave to Caesar that which is Caesar's, and to God that which is God's, and entered into the eternal Kingdom of Christ our God.

Also commemorated on this day: Holy Martyr and Confessor Michael and his counselor Theodore, wonderworkers of Chernigov (1245). New Hieromartyr Anatole (Kamensky), archbishop of Irkutsk (1925). New Hieromartyrs Theoktist and Alexander priests (1937). Venerable Oleg, prince of Briansk (1285). Synaxis of All Saints of Briansk. Martyr John the Confessor of Egypt, beheaded in Palestine, and

with him 40 Martyrs (310). New Martyr Hilarion of Crete (Mt. Athos) (1804). Venerables Theodore and Euprepius and two named Anastasius, confessors and disciples of St. Maximus the Confessor (7th c.). Martyrs Artemidorus and Thalos. St. Meletius of Crete. Venerable Kyr John of Crete. St. Eustathius, archbishop of Thessalonica (1194).

21 September / 4 October - Apodosis of the Exaltation of the Cross - Fast Day - The Holy Apostle Codratus. One of the Seventy, he was a disciple of the Great Apostles. He preached the Gospel in Athens, and was at first bishop in Athens after St Publius, and then in the city of Magnesia. He was very learned in the secular disciplines and rich with the grace of the Holy Spirit. His biographer says of him: 'He was as a morning star among clouds', the clouds being the darkness of Hellenic paganism, lacking the light of devotion, and the holy Apostle Codratus shone to them—the Hellenes—as a great light, illumining the darkness, casting down the foul sacrifices and destroying demonic temples by his prayers. But darkness always hates the light, and the pagans hated holy Codratus. They first stoned him, as the Jews had earlier stoned St Stephen, and then imprisoned him, leaving him without bread until his holy soul left his body and entered into the Kingdom of Christ his God. St Codratus wrote a defence of Christianity and gave it to the Emperor Hadrian. This defence acted so strongly upon the pagan Emperor that he decreed that Christians should not be persecuted without special cause. Holy Codratus suffered in about 130. He was buried in Magnesia, the place of his passion.

St. Demetrius, Metropolitan of Rostov - Sainted Dimitrii, Metropolitan of Rostov, arrived at the Rostov cathedral in 1702, and he first of all visited the monastery of Sainted Jakov, Bishop of Rostov. At the cathedral church in honour of the Conception of the Most Holy Mother of God he made liturgy, after which before all those present in the temple he pointed out on the right side the place of his future burial with the words: "Behold my repose, here settle I for eternity". Sainted Dimitrii reposed on 28 October 1709. Contrary to the wishes of the saint, expressed in his will, the clergy and people of Rostov requested the locum-tenens of the patriarchal throne, the Metropolitan of Ryazan Stefan Yavorsky, - who arrived for the funeral, to make the burial at the cathedral church of the city, alongside the predecessor of Saint Dimitrii, Sainted Joasaph. Metropolitan Stefan, keeping to the will of his deceased friend, insisted on burial of the body of Saint Dimitrii at the designated spot. However, until the arrival of Metropolitan Stefan the place of burial had not been prepared, although from the day of death about a month had elapsed. Owing to the urgent departure of Metropolitan Stefan from Rostov, into the dug-out grave was made an hastily constructed wooden frame, in which on 25 November the body of the saint was buried. This circumstance, foreseen by the Providence of God, led to a quick uncovering of the relics. In 1752 repairs were being done at the cathedral church of the monastery, and on 21 September during repair of the torn-up floor was discovered the undecayed body of Saint Dimitrii. The place of burial was affected by dampness, the oaken coffin and the writing on it were decayed, but the body of the saint, and even the omophor, sacchos, mitre and silken rosary were preserved uncorrupt. After the uncovering of the holy relics many healings were worked, about which report was made to the Synod, - by the order of which there arrived at Rostov the Suzdal' Metropolitan Sylvester and the Simonovsk archimandrite Gavriel for an examination of the relics of saint Dimitrii and the incidents of miraculous healings. There resulted an ukaz (decree) of the Synod of 29 April 1757 concerning the enumeration to the ranks of the saints of Sainted Dimitrii, Metropolitan of Rostov, and feast days established for 28 October (the day of repose) and 21 September (the day of uncovering of the relics).

Also commemorated on this day: New Hieromartyrs Alexander, Alexis, Constantine, John priests (1918). New Hieromartyr Mavrikius and with him Martyr Basil and Vladimir (1937). New Hieromartyrs Valentin, Alexander, John, Andrew, Peter, John priests (1937). New Hieromartyr Theophan (Tuliakov), metropolitan of Lipetsk and Belo-Russia (1937). New Hieromartyr John priest (1938). New Hieromartyr Basil priest (1942). Venerable Daniel, abbot of Shugh Hill (Novgorod) (16th c.). Venerable Joseph of Zaonikiev Monastery (1612). Hieromartyr Hypatius, bishop of Ephesus, and his presbyter Andrew (730). Sts. Isaacius and Meletius, bishops of Cyprus. Martyr Eusebius of Phoenicia (2nd c.) and Martyr Priscus of Phrygia. Martyrs Eusebius, Nestabus, Zeno, and Nestor the Confessor of Gaza (4th c.). Venerable Jonah the Sabbaite (9th c.). Synaxis of All Saints of Uglich

22 September / 5 October -The Hieromartyr Phocas, Bishop of Sinope. He exercised himself from his youth in all the Christian virtues. As bishop in his birthplace, the town of Sinope on the shore of the Black Sea, he strengthened the devout in their faith by his divine example and words, and brought many idol-worshippers to the true Faith. The stony-hearted pagans were filled with wrath against holy Phocas, and the Lord foreshowed to him in a vision his death by martyrdom. Phocas saw a shining dove fly down from heaven, carrying in its beak a beautiful wreath of flowers which it laid on his head, and a voice came from the dove: 'My cup is full, and it is for thee to drink it!' From this vision, the man of God learned that he must very soon suffer for Christ. He was not afraid, but, with thanksgiving to God, prepared himself for torture. Soon after this, the Governor, Africanus, took Phocas for interrogation and inflicted harsh tortures upon him: his whole body was beaten black and blue and torn with wounds, and, after imprisonment, he was thrown into boiling water, in which this courageous soldier of Christ finished

his earthly course and entered into the joy of his Lord. He suffered in the time of the Emperor Trajan (98-117).

The Holy Prophet Jonah - Jonah lived more than eight hundred years before Christ. It is said that he was that son of the widow of Zarephath in Sidon whom the Prophet Elias had raised from the dead. By his three-day sojourn in the belly of the whale, he prefigured the three days that Christ lay in the tomb; and, by his deliverance from the belly of the whale, he prefigured the Lord's Resurrection from the dead. Everything else concerning this wonderful prophet can be read in the Book of Jonah.

Martyr Phocas the Gardener of Sinope - Phocas was a compatriot of the Hieromartyr Phocas. He had a garden in Sinope, near the Black Sea, that he himself cultivated. He treated all passers-by with the fruits of his garden, not missing an opportunity to feed their souls with the word of God. But a certain prince who persecuted Christians heard of him, and sent soldiers to kill him. Phocas treated the soldiers so cordially that they hesitated to kill him. However, by his own insistent request, they carried out the command and beheaded him. In that place, over his miracle-working relics, a church was soon built in his name. St. Phocas is especially venerated by sailors, and is invoked for help by all who travel by sea. Phocas suffered in the year 320.

Also commemorated on this day: Venerable Jonah the Presbyter (9th c.), father of St. Theophanes the Hymnographer and St. Theodore Graptus. Blessed Parasceve od Diveyevo (1915). New Martyr Benjamin bishop of Romanovsk (1930). Venerable Jonah, abbot of Yash Lake (1589). Venerable Macarius, abbot of Zhabyn (1623). Synaxis of All Saints of Tula. St. Peter the Tax-collector of Constantinople (6th c.). Hieromartyr Theodosius of Brazsk (1694). The 26 Martyrs of Zographou Monastery, Mt. Athos, martyred by the Latins (1284). Martyrs Isaac and Martin. Venerable Theophanes the Silent, recluse of the Kiev Caves. Venerable Cosmas, desert-dweller of Zographou, Mt. Athos (1323). Hieromartyr Emmeram, bishop in Gaul, martyred at Regensburg (690). Icon of the Most Holy Theotokos "She Who is Quick to Hear" (14th C).

‡ Daily Scripture Readings ‡

Monday - Galatians 2:11-16; Luke 3:19-22

Tuesday - Galatians 2:21-3:7; Luke 3:23-4:1

Wednesday - Galatians 3:15-22; Luke 4:1-15

Thursday - Galatians 3:23-4:5; Luke 4:16-22

Friday - John 10:1-9 (Matins Gospel); Galatians 4:8-21; Luke 4:22-30;
Hebrews 7:26-8:2 (St. Demetrius); John 10:9-16 (St. Demetrius)

Saturday - 1 Corinthians 4:17-5:5; Luke 4:31-36

REFLECTION

If only we begin with the firm intention to live according to God's law, we need not be afraid of any assaults by unreasonable men. For he who truly begins to live according to God's law finds that all things done to him by men happen for his benefit, and to the glory of God. One especially need not fear being compelled to move from a place that he loves to a place that he doesn't care for. Instead of empty fear and fruitless lamentation, it is better to seek out God's intention for us. What harm did the evil actions of Joseph's brothers do to him? Did not his involuntary departure to Egypt glorify him, save his brothers from famine, and create the necessary conditions for all the wondrous things God worked through Moses in Egypt and in the wilderness? The pagans and heretics often drove Orthodox Christians into barbarian regions. What did they accomplish by that? Did they destroy Orthodoxy? No-rather, they strengthened it even more in the souls of the persecuted, and spread it among the barbarian peoples. The evil heretic Lucius exiled the glorious Macarius, with several Tabennisiot ascetics, from Egypt to a barbarian island, where the entire population worshiped idols. But by the teachings and example of these holy men, the entire populace of the island was soon baptized. That island was later renamed the "Island of Repentance."