

20th Sunday After Pentecost

St Job of Pochaev

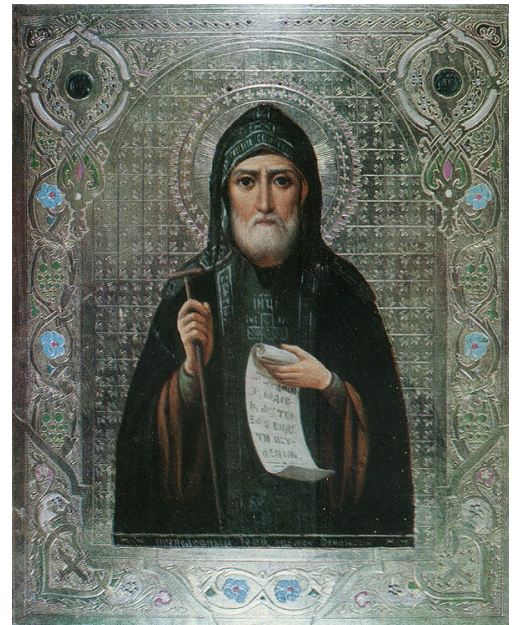
28 October / 10 November

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

Troparion of St Job Tone 4: Having acquired the patience of your Forefather, / and having resembled the Baptist in abstinence, / you shared the divine zeal of both / and were counted worthy to receive their names. / You were a fearless preacher of the True Faith; / in this way you brought a multitude of monastics to Christ. / You strengthened all people in Orthodoxy, / Job, our venerable father; / pray that our souls may be saved.

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

Kontakion of St Job Tone 4: "Today You have shown forth..." / You were a pillar of the True Faith; / a zealot of the commandments of the Gospel; / a denouncer of pride, / and a defender and teacher of the humble. / Therefore, those who honor you pray for the remission of their sins, / and that this, your holy habitation, be kept safe from all harm, / Job, our father, who resembled the long-suffering Patriarch of old.



Vespers

Lord I have Cried, Tone 3, on 10: Octoechos 4; Saint 6 (The day of thy commemoration is come); G: Saint (The venerable Job); N: Sunday Dogmatic Theotokion Tone 3. Aposticha: Octoechos; G: Saint (O Job our father); N: Theotokion in tone 8 (O unwedded Virgin).

3 Readings for the Saint

READING FROM THE WISDOM OF SOLOMON - But the souls of the righteous are in the hand of God, and there shall no torment touch them. In the sight of the unwise they seemed to die: and their departure is taken for misery, and their going from us to be utter destruction: but they are in peace. For though they be punished in the sight of men, yet is their hope full of immortality. And having been a little chastised, they shall be greatly rewarded: for God proved them, and found them worthy for himself. As gold in the furnace hath he tried them, and received them as a burnt offering. And in the time of their visitation they shall shine, and run to and fro like sparks among the stubble. They shall judge the nations, and have dominion over the people, and their Lord shall reign for ever. They that put their trust in him shall understand the truth: and such as be faithful in love shall abide with him: for grace and mercy is to his saints, and he hath care for his elect.

READING FROM THE WISDOM OF SOLOMON - But the righteous live for evermore; their reward also is with the Lord, and the care of them is with the most High. Therefore shall they receive a glorious kingdom, and a beautiful crown from the Lord's hand: for with his right hand shall he cover them, and with his arm shall he protect them, He shall take to him his jealousy for complete armor, and make the creature his weapon for the revenge of his enemies. He shall put on righteousness as a breastplate, and true judgment instead of a helmet. He shall take holiness for an invincible shield. His severe wrath shall he sharpen for a sword, and the world shall fight with him against the unwise. Then shall the right aiming thunderbolts go abroad; and from the clouds, as from a well-drawn bow, shall they fly to the mark. And hailstones full of wrath shall be cast as out of a stone bow, and the water of the sea shall rage against them, and the floods shall cruelly drown them. Yea, a mighty wind shall stand up against them, and like a storm shall blow them away: thus iniquity shall lay waste the whole earth, and ill-dealing shall overthrow the thrones of the mighty. Hear therefore, O ye kings, and understand; learn, ye that be judges of the ends of the earth. Give ear, ye that rule the people, and glory in the multitude of nations. For power is given you of the Lord, and sovereignty from the Highest, who shall try your works and search out your counsels.

READING FROM THE WISDOM OF SOLOMON - But though the righteous be prevented with death, yet shall he be in rest. For honorable age is not that which standeth in length of time, nor that is measured by number of years. But wisdom is the gray hair unto men, and an unspotted life is old age. He pleased God, and was loved of him: so that living among sinners he was translated. Yea, speedily was he taken away, lest that wickedness should alter his understanding, or deceit beguile his soul. For the bewitching of naughtiness doth obscure things that are honest; and the wandering of concupiscence doth undermine the simple mind. He, being made perfect in a short time, fulfilled a long time: for his soul pleased the Lord: therefore hastened he to take him away from among the wicked. This the people saw, and understood it not, neither laid they up this in their minds, That his grace and mercy is with his saints, and that he hath respect unto his chosen.

Matins Gospel IX

Epistle: Galatians 1:11-19

But I make known to you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached by me is not according to man. For I neither received it from man, nor was I taught it, but it came through the revelation of Jesus Christ. For you have heard of my former conduct in Judaism, how I persecuted the church of God beyond measure and tried to destroy it. And I advanced in Judaism beyond many of my contemporaries in my own nation, being more exceedingly zealous for the traditions of my fathers. But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb and called me through His grace, To reveal His Son in me, that I might preach Him among the Gentiles, I did not immediately confer with flesh and blood, Nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were apostles before me; but I went to Arabia, and returned again to Damascus. Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and remained with him fifteen days. But I saw none of the other apostles except James, the Lord's brother.

THE GOSPEL WHICH WAS PREACHED BY ME IS NOT ACCORDING TO MAN

Observe how diligently he affirms that he was taught of Christ, who Himself, without human intervention, condescended to reveal to him all knowledge. And if he were asked for his proof that God Himself thus immediately revealed to him these ineffable mysteries, he would instance his former manner of life, arguing that his conversion would not have been so sudden, had it not been by Divine revelation. For when men have been vehement and eager on the contrary side, their conviction, if it is effected by human means, requires much time and ingenuity ...For my violence even reached your ears, and the distance between Palestine and Galatia is so great, that the report would not have extended there, had not my acts exceeded all bounds and endurance ...Observe how he does not shrink from aggravating each point: not saying simply that he has 'persecuted' but 'beyond measure' and 'made havoc of it,' which signifies an attempt to extinguish, to pull down, to destroy, to annihilate the Church ...Here his object is to show that it was by some secret providence that he was left to himself for a time ...It is evident that God had some hidden reason for this delay. What this purpose was, you are eager to learn from me perhaps ...I must entreat your love not to require all things from me, but to search for it by yourselves and to beg of God to reveal it to you ...God indeed says that He called him on account of His excellent capacity, as He said to Ananias, 'for he is a chosen vessel unto Me, to bear My name before the Gentiles and kings' (Acts 9:15).

St. John Chrysostom. Chapter I. Commentary on Galatians. B#57, pp. 9-10.

Second Epistle: Gal 5:22 - 6:2

THE GOSPEL: LUKE 8: 26-39

Then they sailed to the country of the Gadarenes, which is opposite Galilee. And when He stepped out on the land, there met Him a certain man from the city who had demons for a long time. And he wore no clothes, nor did he live in a house but in the tombs. When he saw Jesus, he cried out, fell down before Him, and with a loud voice said, "What have I to do with You, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I beg You, do not torment me!" For He had commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the man. For it had often seized him, and he was kept under guard, bound with chains and shackles; and he broke the bonds and was driven by the demon into the wilderness. Jesus asked him, saying, "What is your name?" And he said, "Legion," because many demons had entered him. And they begged Him that He would not command them to go out into the abyss. Now a herd of many swine was feeding there on the mountain. So they begged Him that He would permit them to enter them. And He permitted them. Then the demons

went out of the man and entered the swine, and the herd ran violently down the steep place into the lake and drowned. When those who fed them saw what had happened, they fled and told it in the city and in the country. Then they went out to see what had happened, and came to Jesus, and found the man from whom the demons had departed, sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed and in his right mind. And they were afraid. They also who had seen it told them by what means he who had been demon-possessed was healed. Then the whole multitude of the surrounding region of the Gadarenes asked Him to depart from them, for they were seized with great fear. And He got into the boat and returned. Now the man from whom the demons had departed begged Him that he might be with Him. But Jesus sent him away, saying, "Return to your own house, and tell what great things God has done for you." And he went his way and proclaimed throughout the whole city what great things Jesus had done for him.

JESUS ASKED...“WHAT IS YOUR NAME?”AND HE SAID,“LEGION,” BECAUSE MANY DEMONS HAD ENTERED HIM

So, brothers and sisters, ends today's Gospel reading where, as you heard, the Lord tells the healed man to reveal the mystery of his healing before all the Gadarene people. And this is what he did. The Gospel does not tell us how he related what had happened to him; but according to the meaning of the Gospel narrative, we can fully imagine what he must have said and what he most likely did say. Here is what he must have said:

“You Gadarenes have known me from my childhood. I was born among you and grew up among you, in your Gadarene land, a land of transgression. You have seen what happened. You lived not according to the Law which God revealed to you, but according to your lawlessness. In your desire for riches and comfort you engaged in a sinful trade, a trade which was not blessed by God. You raised pigs. You had whole herds of them, and yet according to the Law, they are unclean animals. God punished you and gave you over to the power of the devil.

And by the incomprehensible Providence of God, all this demonic power lodged in me alone—I bore your punishment. I was changed from a human being into a beast. I couldn't live in houses—I lived in a desert place, in a cave where the dead were buried. You bound me with chains, and I broke them. There wasn't just one devil within me but a whole legion of devils; as you saw in reality when He Who healed me permitted the demons to enter your herd of pigs, which threw itself from the precipice into the lake and drowned. Yes, now you can truly imagine why I caused so much evil and trouble. There was a terrible power in me. The devils took possession of all my human passions and brought them to a monstrous state. That is why I hated you so savagely, why I wanted to torment you, destroy you.

And now this force has left me. I am asking you to forgive me. I love you now as a brother—I want to become your fellow citizen. And how grateful I am to Him Who freed me - He is my Saviour—He is my God! And I am calling all of you to Him. Everything you are looking for: peace, happiness, joy—everything you will find in Him. All of you who weep, go to Him. He will wipe away your tears. He will give you what no earthly riches can give.”

This is what the formerly possessed man told the Gadarenes. He could also say the same to us. And we would not be surprised, because the very same thing is going on right now. All our newspapers tell us about such horrors which cannot be explained without the participation of the power of evil. And against the background of this nightmare we seem to hear the voice of this man healed by Christ: “I have peace and quiet in my soul. This was given to me by Christ. He will give it to you, too. Hasten to Him. My heart is filled with sweet compunction.” But our sceptical mind will ask: Is this so? And even if it is so, how long will this sweet compunction last? Here we are given an answer in today's reading from the Apostle: “But God, Who is rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith He loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ. For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the GIFT OF GOD” (Eph. 2:4-5, 8). In these words of the Apostle we have a whole revelation. We have heard about the sufferings of the possessed one and how the Grace of God delivered him from them. This same Grace can do the very same for us. But Grace is given through faith. What is faith? In answer to this question I will tell you one incident from my student life.

I studied at the Polytechnic Institute. At the same time I was a member of a Christian student society. Once, we students decided to invite to our meeting our teacher, Father John Egorov, a famous professor of theology. He would have to travel to Lesnoye, a suburb of St. Petersburg, where our polytechnic institute was located. We asked him to come visit us, but he answered: “I have never been there, and I don't know how to go.”

Our friend who had come to invite him said: “Father, it is very simple. First, go to the railroad station, and there you will find the street car. Wait until number 20 comes and take it. Without asking anyone, go to the very end. The conductor will say: ‘Polytechnic Institute—last stop.’ Walk out, stand with your back to the street car and before you will be a lane. Here, look for number 6 and before you will be a courtyard, and in the courtyard a house. Go up to the second floor, and you will find us there.”

Father John said: "A week passed and Sunday came. I took my notebook, looked at what I had written, and knew at once what I had to do. I remembered everything that your friend told me, and accepted it within myself as if I had already done it. I did all this in reality, and here I am with you." This is what faith means: to accept within oneself what was said, and put what was said into action.

Here in the Holy Gospel promises are given to us, and also instructions of what we must do to receive these promises. Let us accept them with faith. Let us perform everything that we are instructed to do in our lives, and we will receive the same Grace, the same peace, the same joy. We will receive everything that was received by the possessed man healed by Christ. Then the words of Christ will also refer to us. "Return to thine own house, and shew how great things God hath done unto thee."

Archbishop Andrei, The One Thing Needful

Second Gospel: Luke 6: 17-23

Saints of the week

28 October / 10 November - The Holy Martyr Terence - a Syrian, he suffered for the Christian faith together with his wife, Neonilla, and their seven children - Sarbelus, Photus, Theodulus, Hierax, Nitus, Bele, and Eunice. After many tortures, during which the power of God was shown, they were all beheaded with the sword.

Blessed Hieroschemamonk Feofil, Fool-for-Christ's-Sake, Ascetic & Visionary of the Kiev-Caves Lavra. - Hieroschemamonk Feofil, in the world Foma Andreyevich Gorenkovsky, the son of a village priest, was born in a town near Kiev in 1788. He was set apart by God even from his birth, and suffered much in his youth, thereby acquiring great humility. He entered a monastery in 1812, labouring in prayer & obedience for many years. He was tonsured with the name Feodorit in 1821 and in 1822, because of his exemplary monastic life, he was ordained hierodeacon. In 1827 he was ordained hieromonk and appointed steward of the monastery. The demands of this obedience were not in accordance with the desires of Feodorit's heart and he asked to be released from the stewardship. He then took upon himself the great podvig of foolishness-for-Christ's-sake. He took the great schema in 1834 and was renamed Feofil. Feofil always carried with him a Psalter and provisions to give to the poor & needy. He dressed in rags, and his cell was unkempt and full of rubbish. When questioned about this, the blessed one replied that he allowed it "so that everything surrounding me will constantly remind me of the disorder of my soul". He was often ill-treated by his brethren but bore all patiently. In the refectory, he would mix all his food together, both bitter and sweet. "It's the same in life", he would say, "both bitter and sour and salty mixed with sweet and all this must be digested". Later in his life, Feofil received a gift of a small bullock who could be tamed by no-one. Meek & gentle in Feofil's presence, the blessed one had a cart made for it and the creature carried him everywhere. He was found worthy to receive the gift of clairvoyancy & foretold many things which indeed came to pass. As a spiritual father, he could see into the hearts of his spiritual children. He worked many wonders during his life and foretold the time of his death. Having referred to himself in his life as "smelly Feofil", his cell was filled with a beautiful fragrance after his repose in 1853. Many pannikhidas were served at his graveside after his repose and much has been granted by God through his prayers. Blessed Hieroschemamonk Feofil, pray for us!

Saint Job, Abbot and Wonderworker of Pochaev - (in the world named Ivan Zhelezo), was born around 1551 in Pokutia in Galicia. At age ten he came to the Transfiguration Ugornits monastery, and at age twelve he received monastic tonsure with the name Job. The venerable Job from his youth was known for his great piety and strict ascetic life, and he was accounted worthy of the priestly office. Around the year 1580, at the request of the renowned champion of Orthodoxy Prince Constantine Ostrozhsky, St Job was appointed the head of the Exaltation of the Cross monastery near the city of Dubno, and for more than twenty years he governed the monastery amidst the growing persecution of Orthodoxy on the part of the Catholics and Uniates. At the beginning of the seventeenth century, St Job withdrew to Pochaev hill and settled in a cave not far from the ancient Dormition monastery, famed for its wonderworking Pochaev Icon of the Mother of God (July 23). The holy hermit, beloved by the brethren of the monastery, was chosen as their Igumen. St Job zealously fulfilled his duty as head of the monastery, kind and gentle with the brethren, he did much of the work himself, planting trees in the garden, and strengthening the waterworks at the monastery. St Job was an ardent defender of the Orthodox Faith against the persecution of the Catholics. Following the Union of Brest (1596), many Orthodox living in Poland were deprived of their rights, and attempts were made to force them to convert to Catholicism. Many Orthodox hierarchs became apostates to Uniatism, but St Job and others defended Orthodoxy by copying and disseminating Orthodox books. Prince Ostrozhsky was also responsible for the first printed edition of the Orthodox Bible (1581). In taking an active part in the defense of Orthodoxy and the Russian people,

St Job was present at the 1628 Kiev Council, convened against the Unia. After 1642, he accepted the great schema with the name John. Sometimes he completely secluded himself within the cave for three days or even a whole week. The Jesus Prayer was an unceasing prayer in gentle heart. According to the testimony of his disciple Dositheus, and author of the Life of St Job, once while praying in his cave, the saint was illumined by a heavenly light. St Job reposed in the year 1651. He was more than 100 years old, and had directed the Pochaev monastery for more than fifty years. The uncovering of St Job's relics took place on August 28, 1659. There was a second uncovering of the relics on August 27-28, 1833.

Great-martyr Parasceva - She was born in the city of Iconium of wealthy and Christ-loving parents. After the death of her parents, the maiden Parasceva began to distribute her possessions to the poor and the less fortunate, all in the name of Christ the Lord. When a persecution began under Diocletian, Parasceva was brought to trial before the governor of that land. When the governor asked her for her name, she replied that she was called a Christian. The governor rebuked her because she did not give her usual name and Parasceva said to him: "First, I had to tell you my name in eternal life, and then my name in this temporal life." After flogging her, the governor cast Parasceva into prison where an angel of God appeared to her, healed her of her wounds, and comforted her. By prayer, Parasceva destroyed all the idols in the pagan temple. After prolonged and harsh tortures, Parasceva was beheaded with the sword and took up her abode in eternal life.

Also commemorated on this day: Venerable Stephen of St. Sabbas monastery, hymnographer (807). St. Arsenius I of Srem, archbishop of Serbia (1266). St. Demetrius, metropolitan of Rostov (1709). New Hieromartyr John priest (1918). New Hieromartyr Archpriest Michael Lektorsky of Kuban (1920). St. Arsenius of Cappadocia (1924). Martyrs Africanus, Terence, Maximus, Pompeius, and 36 others, at Carthage (250). Hieromartyr Cyriacus, patriarch of Jerusalem (363), and his mother Martyr Anna. Venerable John the Chozebite, bishop of Caesarea in Palestine (532). Hieromartyr Neophytus, bishop of Urbnisi, Georgia (587). St. Firmilian, bishop of Caesarea in Cappadocia, and Venerable Malchion, presbyter (269). St. Febronia, daughter of Emperor Heraclius (632). Righteous Virgin Parasceva of Pirimin on the Pinega River (Archangelsk) (16th c.). New Martyrs Angelis, Manuel, George, and Nicholas of Crete (1824). St. Athanasius I, patriarch of Constantinople (Mt. Athos) (1340). Protection of the Mother of God.

29 October / 11 November - Our Holy Mother, the Martyr Anastasia the Roman - She was born in Rome of well-born parents and left an orphan at the age of three. As an orphan, she was taken into a women's monastery near Rome, where the abbess was one Sophia, a nun of a high level of perfection. After seventeen years, Anastasia was known in the whole neighbourhood, to the Christians as a great ascetic and to the pagans as a rare beauty. The pagan administrator of the city, Probus, heard of her and sent soldiers to bring her to him. The good Abbess Sophia counselled Anastasia for two hours on how to keep the Faith, how to resist flattering delusion and how to endure torture. Anastasia said to her: 'My heart is ready to suffer for Christ; my soul is ready to die for my beloved Jesus.' Brought before the governor, Anastasia openly proclaimed her faith in Christ the Lord and, when the governor tried to dissuade her from the Faith, first with promises and then with threats, the holy maiden said to him: 'I am ready to die for my Lord, not once but—oh, if it were only possible!—a thousand times.' When they stripped her naked, to humiliate her, she cried to the judge: 'Whip me and cut at me and beat me; my naked body will be hidden by wounds, and my shame will be covered by my blood!' She was whipped and beaten and cut about. She twice felt a great thirst and asked for water, and a Christian, Cyril, gave her a drink, for which he was blessed by the martyr and beheaded by the pagans. Then her breasts and tongue were cut off, and an angel of God appeared to her and upheld her. She was finally beheaded with the sword outside the city. Blessed Sophia found her body and buried it, and Anastasia was crowned with the wreath of martyrdom under the Emperor Decius (249-251).

Venerable Abramius the Recluse and his niece St. Mary - Forced to do so by his parents, he married, but on the very day of his wedding he left his bride, his parents' home and all that he possessed, and withdrew into solitude to live a life of strict asceticism. He labored thus for fifty years, and left his cell only twice during that time. The first time, he left at the order of his bishop to convert a pagan village to the Christian Faith. The second time he came out to save his licentious niece Mary. He entered peacefully into rest in the year 360, at the age of seventy.

Also commemorated on this day: Venerable Abramius, archimandrite of Rostov (Valaam) (1073). New Hieromartyrs Nicholas priest and with him Cosma, Victor, Naum, Philip, John, Paul, Andrew, Paul, Basil, Alexis, John and Virgin-martyr Agaphia (1918). New Hieromartyr John priest (1930). New Hieromartyr Eugene priest (1937). Virgin-martyr Anastasia (after 1937). New Hieromartyr Leonid priest (1941). Martyrs Claudius, Asterius, Neon, and Theonilla, of Aegae in Cilicia (285). Venerable Anna (known as Euphemianus) of Constantinople (826). Venerable Abramius, recluse of the Kiev Caves (12th-13th c.). Venerable martyr Anastasius. Venerable Ermelindis, hermitess (6th c.). New Martyr Athanasius of Sparta, at Muatanach (1653). Martyr Timothy of Esphigmenou Monastery, Mt. Athos (1820). Martyr Melitene of Marcionopolis. Martyrs Cyril, Menas, and Menaesus. St. Rostislav, prince of Moravia, Czechoslovakia (870). St. Serapion of Zarzma, Georgia (900)

30 October / 12 November - The Hieromartyr Zenobius and his sister Zenobia - From the town of Aegae in Cilicia, they inherited the true Faith and great material wealth from their parents. Inflamed with zeal for the Faith, they, with great love, gave away their riches to the poor. Because they were so open-handed, God shielded these hands from every evil intent by men or demons. The merciful hands of Zenobius, which gave to the poor, were endowed by God with the gift of wonderworking, so that Zenobius was able to heal the sick of every sort of infirmity simply by the touch of his hand, and he was made Bishop of Aegae. At a time of persecution, the judge Licius seized him and said: 'I offer you the two: life and death— life if you bow down to the gods, and death if you do not.' Holy Zenobius replied: 'Life without Christ is not life, but death; and death for Christ's sake is not death, but life.' When Zenobius was put to harsh torture, his sister presented herself before the judge and said: 'I also want to drink this cup of suffering and be crowned with that wreath.' After torture by fire and in boiling pitch, they were both beheaded with the sword in about 285, and thus brother and sister entered into the immortal Kingdom of Christ the King.

The Holy Apostles Cleopas, Tertius, Mark, Justus, and Artemas - They were all numbered among the Seventy. The risen Lord appeared to Cleopas on the road to Emmaus (Luke 24:13-33). Tertius wrote down the Epistle to the Romans for Paul (Romans 16:22), and died a martyr as Bishop of Iconium after the Apostle Sosipater (November 10). St. Mark (or John) was the son of the devout Mary (whose home was a refuge for the apostles and the first Christians), and a kinsman of Barnabas (Acts 12:12). He became the bishop of the Samaritan town of Apollonia. Justus was a son of Joseph the Betrothed. Together with Matthias, he was one of those selected as a possible replacement for Judas the traitor, but he was not chosen. He suffered for the Gospel as a bishop in Eleutheropolis. St. Artemas was Bishop of Lystra in Lycaonia, and reposed peacefully.

Also commemorated on this day: New Hieromartyr Eugene (Zernov), metropolitan of Nizhni Novgorod (1935). New Hieromartyr Leonid priest (1941). New Hiero-confessor Varnava (Nastic) of Bosnia (1964). New Hieromartyr Mathew priest (1942). Finding of the relics of Agathangelus the Confessor, metropolitan of Yaroslavl (1998). Hieromartyr Marcian, bishop of Syracuse (2nd c). Martyr Eutropia of Alexandria (220). Martyr Anastasia of Thessalonica (3rd C). St. Stephen Milutin (1320), his brother St. Dragutin (monk Theoctistus) (1316), and their mother St. Helen (1306), wife of Urosh I of Serbia. "Ozeryansk" (16th C) Icon of the Mother of God. Martyrs Alexander, Cronion, Julian, Macarius, and 13 companions at Alexandria (250). Martyr Dometius of Phrygia. St. Joseph I, Patriarch of Constantinople (1283). New Hieromartyr Nicanor (Kudriavtsev) bishop of Bogoroditsk. Finding of the relics of Great-martyr Stephen-Urosh III of Dechani, Serbia (1331). Martyr Jotham Zedgenidze, Paravani (1465)

31 October / 13 November - Fast Day - The Holy Apostles Stachys, Amplias, Urban, Narcissus, Apelles and Aristobulus - They were of the Seventy. St Stachys was a helper of St Andrew the First-Called, who made him bishop of Byzantium. He built a church in Argyropolis, and governed his flock with faithfulness and zeal. After sixteen years as bishop, he entered peacefully into rest in the Lord. Amplias and Urban were also fellow-workers with St Andrew, and were made bishop by him, Amplias in Lydda and Urban in Macedonia. They both died as martyrs for Christ the Lord. Narcissus was made Bishop of Athens by the Apostle Philip, and holy Apelles was Bishop of Heraklion in Trachis.

Aristobulus - Born in Cyprus, Aristobulus was the brother of the Apostle Barnabas. He followed the Apostle Paul, who mentions him in his Epistle to the Romans saying, "Greet those who belong to the family of Aristobulus" ([Romans 16:10](#)). When the great apostle appointed many bishops throughout the various parts of the world, he appointed Aristobulus as bishop for the British, that is, England. In Britain the people were savages, heathen and wicked. Aristobulus endured many indescribable tortures, misfortunes and evil among them. They struck and beat him mercilessly, dragged him about the streets, ridiculed and mocked him. Finally this holy man succeeded by the power of the Grace of God. He enlightened the people, baptized them in the name of Christ the Lord, built churches, ordained priests and deacons and, in the end, died there peacefully and entered into the Kingdom of the Lord, Whom he faithfully served.

The Holy Martyr Epimachus - born in Egypt, he lived there in ascetism, and there finished his earthly course a martyr. In imitation of St John the Baptist, he went off as a young man into the desert. In response to his great love for God, the Spirit of God instructed him in all truth and, with no other teacher, taught him how to live the ascetic life. Epimachus discovered how the pagans were torturing and slaughtering the Christians in Alexandria, so, all afire with zeal for the Faith, he went to the city and knocked down the idol. When the pagans began to torture him for this, he cried out: 'Smite me, spit on me, put a crown of thorns on my head and a reed in my hand; give me gall to drink, crucify me and pierce me with a spear. The Lord endured all that, and I want to endure it!' In the vast crowd that was watching the martyrdom of holy Epimachus, there was one woman with a blind eye. She wept bitterly on witnessing the soul-less torture of the man of God, and, when the torturers flayed his holy body, blood

spurted from it and a drop fell on her eye. Suddenly she could see, and her blind eye became as whole as the other. Then the woman cried out: 'Great is the God in whom this sufferer believes!' After that, St Epimachus was beheaded and his soul entered into eternal joy, in about 250.

St. Begu, nun of Harkness - reputed by St. Bede to have seen in a vision the death of St. Hilda, the foundress of both Whitby and Harkness.

Also commemorated on this day: New Hieromartyr Priest John Kochurov of Chicago and St. Petersburg (1917). New Hieromartyr Leonid (1918). New Hieromartyrs Vsevolod, Alexander, Sergius, Alexis, Basil, Peter, Basil priests, Hieromartyrs Anatolius, Euphrosynus and Martyr James (1937). New Hieromartyr Innocent (1938). Venerables Spyridon and Nicodemus the Prosphorabakers of the Kiev Caves (1148). Venerable Maura of Constantinople (436). Venerable Anatolius, recluse of the Kiev Caves (12th c.). New Martyr Nicholas the New of Chios (1754). Venerable Foillan, Irish monk-martyr (655). Martyr Quentin of Rome (3rd-4th c.). St. James, bishop of Mygdonia (4th. c.). Commemoration of the Martyrs of Tbilisi slain under Jelaluddin (1227). Martyr Epimachus the Roman and his companion Gordian (361-363). Martyrs Stephen, Barnabas, Trophimus, Dorymedon, Cosmas, Damian, Sabbas, Bassa, Abraham, and others with them. Martyrs Seleucius and Stratonica his wife, myrr-gushers

1 / 14 November - Ss Cosmas and Damian - Unmercenaries and wonderworkers, they were brothers in the flesh and in the spirit, born somewhere in Asia of a pagan father and a Christian mother. After their father's death, their mother Theodota devoted all her time and energy to the bringing-up of her sons as true Christians. God helped her, and her sons grew as two choice fruits and as two holy lamps. They were skilled in medicine and ministered to the sick without payment, and so fulfilled Christ's command: 'Freely have ye received; freely give' (Matt. 10:8). They were so strict in their unpaid ministry to men that Cosmas became greatly enraged with his brother Damian when he took three eggs from a woman, Palladia, and gave orders that, after his death, he should not be buried with his brother. In fact, holy Damian had not taken those eggs as a reward for healing Palladia's sickness, but because she had sworn by the Most Holy Trinity that he should have them. However, after their death in Fereman, they were buried together in obedience to a revelation from God. These two holy brothers were great wonderworkers both during their lifetime and after their death. A farm labourer, on lying down to sleep at one time, was attacked by a snake, which entwined itself around his mouth and stomach. This poor man would have breathed his last in the greatest torment had he not at the last moment invoked the help of Saints Cosmas and Damian. Thus the Lord glorified forever by miracles those who glorified Him here on earth by their faith, purity and mercy.

Martyr Hermenegild the Goth - Hermenegild was the son of the Gothic King Leovigild who adhered to the Arian heresy. However, Hermenegild did not turn away from Orthodoxy in spite of all the flatteries and threats of his cruel heretical father. His father cast him into prison and, early on Pascha, sent a heretical bishop to administer Communion to him. But the God-pleaser refused to receive Communion at the hands of a heretic, and the heretical bishop informed the king about this. The king became angry and ordered the executioner to behead Hermenegild in the year 586. Leovigild later repented that he had killed his son; he renounced his heresy and returned to Orthodoxy.

Also commemorated on this day - New Hieromartyrs Alexander and Theodore priests (1918). New Hieromartyrs Sergius archbishop of Elets, Alexander and Demetrius priests, Virgin-martyr Elizabeth (1937). Martyr Peter (1941). Hieromartyrs John the Bishop and James the Presbyter, of Persia (345). Martyrs Cyrenia and Juliana in Cilicia (305). Martyrs Caesarius, Dacius, Sabbas, Sabinian, Agrippa, Adrian, and Thomas at Damascus (7th c.). St. Cosmas of Verkhoturys (1704). Martyrs James of Mt. Athos and his two disciples James and Dionysius (1520). Venerable David of Euboea (1589). Martyrs Cyprian and Juliana. St. Cadfan, abbot of Bardsey Island. New Virgin-martyr Helen of Sinope (18th c.).

2 / 15 November - Fast Day - The Holy Martyrs Acyndinus, Pegasus, Anempodistus, Aphthonius, Elpidophorus and others with them - They were Persian Christians, and suffered in the time of King Sapor, in 355. The first three were servants at the court of this king, but secretly served Christ their Lord. When they were arrested and brought to trial before the king, he asked them whence they came. To this they replied: 'Our paternity and life is the most holy Trinity, consubstantial and undivided, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, one God.' The king gave them over to harsh torture, and they endured it all courageously, singing psalms and with prayer on their lips. At the time of their torture and imprisonment, angels of God appeared to them several times, and once the Lord Christ Himself, as a man 'with a face radiant as the sun'. When one of the torturers, Aphthonius, saw with wonder that boiling lead did no harm to the martyrs, he believed in Christ and cried out: 'Great is the Christian God!' He was then immediately beheaded, and many others saw and believed. Then the King commanded that Acyndinus, Pegasus and Anempodistus be sewn into goat-skins and thrown into the sea. Then St Aphthonius appeared from the other world with three shining angels, and they bore the martyrs to dry land and set them free. Elpidophorus was a courtier. When he revealed that he was a Christian, and denounced the king for his slaughter of innocent Christians, the king condemned him to death, and

Elpidephorus was beheaded along with about seven thousand other Christians. Then the three first-named martyrs were finally thrown into a burning furnace, along with twenty-eight soldiers and the king's mother, who had also come to faith in Christ. And so, in the flames, they gave their righteous souls into the hands of the Lord.

St. Cadfan, abbot of Bardsey Island - Breton in origin he migrated to Wales, gathered numerous disciples and founded the church of Towyn (Gwynedd) and the large famous monastery of Bardsey Island, both of which claimed to be the place of his death.

Also commemorated on this: New Hieromartyrs Constantine and Anania priests (1918). New Hieromartyrs Bishop Victorin and Priest Basil Luzgin of Glazomicha (1918). Venerable Marcian of Cyrrhus (388). "Shuiu-Smolensk" Wonderworking Icon of the Mother of God (1654-1655). Blessed Cyprian of Storozhev, former outlaw (Olonets) (16th c.). St. Erc, bishop of Slane, Ireland (512). St. Anthony the Confessor, archbishop of Thessalonica (844). Women-Martyrs Cyriaca, Domnina and Domna. Martyrs of senatorial rank beheaded under Marcus Aurelius

3 / 16 November - The Hieromartyr Aicepsimas, Bishop of Naeson - The eighty-year-old Aicepsimas, filled with every Christian virtue, was sitting one day in his house with his guests when a child, filled with the Spirit of God, ran up to the aged bishop, kissed him on the head, and said: 'Blessed is this head, for it will be martyred for Christ!' This prophecy was soon fulfilled. King Sapor raised a fierce persecution of Christians throughout Persia, and St Aicepsimas was seized and taken before a prince who was also a pagan priest. When the bishop had been arrested and bound, he was approached by one of his household, who asked him what he wanted done about his house. The saint replied: 'It's no longer my house; I'm going to a higher home, and shall not return.' After long interrogation, he was thrown into prison, whence, the next day, were brought a seventy-year-old priest called Joseph and a deacon, Aeithalas. After three years' imprisonment and many sufferings, Aicepsimas was beheaded, and Joseph and Aeithalas were buried up to the waist in the ground, being stoned by a group of men who were without mercy towards Christians. Joseph's body, by God's providence, disappeared that night, and above Aeithalas's body there grew a tree, which healed all manner of disease and pain. Five years passed, then the wicked and jealous pagans cut down this tree. These soldiers of Christ suffered in Persia in the fourth century, in the time of the pagan King Sapor.

St. Winifred of Holywell, abbess of Denbighshire in England, m (630) - Daughter to Trevith, a member of the Welsh landed class and advisor to the king. Spiritual student of her maternal uncle Saint Beuno. Physically beautiful, she made a private vow of chastity, becoming a bride of Christ. Murdered when she rejected the amorous advances of a chieftain named Caradog of Hawarden; she had escaped from him, and was seeking shelter in a church when he caught and killed her. Legend says that where her head fell, a well sprang up which became a place of pilgrimage, and whose waters were reported to heal leprosy, skin diseases, and other ailments. Saint Beuno raised her back to life; he cursed Caradog who was promptly swallowed by the earth. Winifred became a nun, and later abbess at Cwytherin, Denbighshire. Name Meaning - friend of peace (Celtic / Gaelic) . Patronage: incest victims, martyrs.

Also commemorated on this day: Dedication of the Church of the Great-martyr George in Lydda (4th c.). New Hieromartyr Nicholas and Martyr Paul (1918). New Hieromartyrs Basil, Peter, Basil, Alexander, Vladimir, Sergius, Nicholas, Vicentius, John, Peter, Alexander, Paul, Cosmas priests and Simeon deacon (1937). Virgin-martyr Evdokia (1938). New Hieromartyr Sergius deacon (1942). Martyrs Atticus, Agapius, Eudoxius, Carterius, Istucarius (Styrax), Pactobius (Tobias), and Nictopolion, at Sebaste (320). Venerable Aicepsimas, hermit of Cyrrhus in Syria (4th c.). St. Snandulia of Persia (380). Venerable Anna, daughter of Prince Vsevolod I Yaroslavich (1112). Venerable Elias of Egypt. St. Achaemonides, (or Hormisdas), confessor, of Persia (4th). Translation of the relics of St. Edith, nun of Wilton. St. Theodore, confessor, bishop of Ancyra (8-9th c.). New Martyr Hieromonk George of Neopolis, Asia Minor (1797). Martyrs Dacius, Severus, Andronas, Theodotus, and Theodota. St. Hubert of Maastricht (727). Venerable Nicholas, Radiant Star of the Georgians (1308). St. Pimen of Zographou, Mt. Athos (16th-17th c.). The Meeting (1196) of St. Sava (1235) and St. Symeon the Myrrh-gusher (1200) of Serbia at Vatopedi, Mt. Athos. St. Pirmin, bishop and monastic founder (753)

‡ Daily Scripture Readings ‡

Monday - Philippians 4:10-23; Luke 11:29-33; Galatians 5:22-6:2 (St. Abramius); Matthew 11:27-30 (St. Abramius)

Tuesday - Colossians 1:1-2, 7-11; Luke 11:34-41

Wednesday - Colossians 1:18-23; Luke 11:42-46

Thursday - Colossians 1:24-29; Luke 11:47-12:1; 1 Corinthians 12:27-13:8 (Unmercenaries); Matthew 10:1,5-8 (Unmercenaries)

Friday - Colossians 2:1-7; Luke 12:2-12

Saturday - 2 Corinthians 3:12-18; Luke 9:1-6

REFLECTION

But he that endureth to the end shall be saved (Matthew 10:22), said the Lord. Faith is the only light of endurance, for endurance in and of itself implies unbearable darkness. Faith is the shining star in this darkness; faith eases the sharpness of suffering; it bears on its wings all the weight of endurance. St. Abramius gives us a beautiful example of perseverance in endurance. The vexation that the devil caused him by a multitude of temptations and terrors would have driven lesser men to leave one place for another. But Abramius did not want to move, so as not to give the evil demon a cause to rejoice; he remained in his place and defeated the devil. The bishop of that region sent Abramius to a pagan village to convert the villagers to the Christian Faith. After long hesitation, Abramius set out, saying: ``Let it be as God wills-I will go out of obedience." He first built a church in that village. Then he smashed all the idols in plain sight of the villagers. They beat him and whipped him half to death, and drove him from their village. But he prayed to God with tears for them, that the Lord would open the eyes of their hearts to know the truth of Christ. And so the pagans continually beat and abused him over the course of three years, but he constantly prayed to God for them, and was not angered with them, enduring in the Faith as a firm rock. And only after three years of labor, tears, forgiveness and faith, was he rewarded. Suddenly, the consciences of the villagers were awakened and they all came together to Abramius, bowing before him, and receiving the Christian Faith from him.