

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

### Holy Apostle Philip

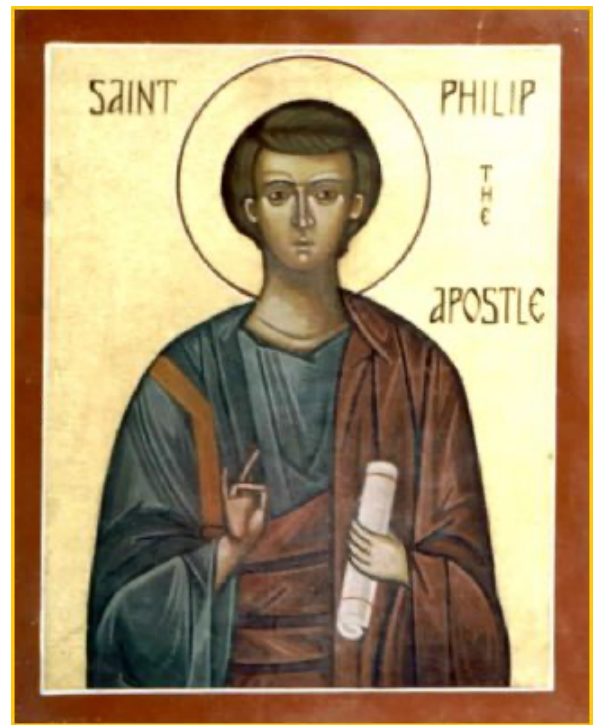
14 / 27 November

**Resurrection Tropar, Tone 7:** By Thy Cross, Thou didst destroy death / to the Thief, Thou didst open Paradise / for the myrrh-bearers, Thou didst change weeping into joy! / and Thou didst command Thy disciples, O Christ God / to proclaim that Thou art risen / granting the world great mercy.

**Troparion of the holy Apostle Philip tone 3:** Thou didst receive the enlightenment of the Comforter / and rise on the world like a star; / with divine Light thou didst dispel the darkness of ignorance, / O Apostle Philip. We entreat thee, / intercede with Christ our God to grant us His great mercy.

**Resurrection Kondak, Tone 7:** The dominion of death can no longer hold men captive, / for Christ descended, shattering and destroying its powers. / Hell is bound, while the prophets rejoice and cry: / The Saviour has come to those in faith, / enter, you faithful to the Resurrection.

**Kontakion of the Holy Apostle Philip tone 8:** The disciple and friend and imitator of Thy Passion, inspired Philip, preached Thee to the world. / Through the Mother of God keep the Church from her enemies by his prayers, O most merciful Saviour.



#### Matins Gospel II

**EPISTLE: Ephesians 2: 14-22**

For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation, Having abolished in His flesh the enmity, that is, the law of commandments contained in ordinances, so as to create in Himself one new man from the two, thus making peace, And that He might reconcile them both to God in one body through the cross, thereby putting to death the enmity. And He came and preached peace to you who were afar off and to those who were near. For through Him we both have access by one Spirit to the Father. Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, Having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner stone, In whom the whole building, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord, In whom you also are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit.

#### **YOU ARE NO LONGER STRANGERS AND FOREIGNERS, BUT FELLOW CITIZENS WITH THE SAINTS AND MEMBERS OF THE HOUSEHOLD OF GOD**

Is this then the great privilege, it may be said, that we are admitted into the commonwealth of the Jews? ...What is this, 'both one?' He does not mean that He has raised us to that high heritage of theirs, but that he has raised both us and them to a yet higher. However, the blessing to us is greater, because to the Jews it had been promised, and they were nearer than we ...For this reason he says, 'And that the Gentiles might glorify God for His mercy' (Rom. 15:9). The promise He gave indeed to the Israelites, but they were unworthy; to us He gave no promise, no, we were even strangers. We had nothing in common with them, yet He has made us one ....He calls 'the enmity in the flesh,' a middle wall, in that it is a common barrier, cutting us off alike from God. As the Prophet says, 'Your iniquities separate between you and Me' (Isa. 54:2) ...And this, while the law existed, was not only not abolished, but rather was strengthened; 'for the law,' says the Apostle, 'works wrath' (Rom. 4:15) ...The law was a hedge ...Listen again to the Prophet, where he says, 'I made a trench about it' (Isa. 5:2). And again, 'You have broken down her hedges, so that all who pass by the way pluck her fruit' (Ps. 80:12) ...It became a middle wall, no longer establishing them in security, but cutting them off from God ...His death, says the Apostle, has 'slain' the enmity ...How then is it that it does rise again? From our exceeding depravity. For as long as we abide in the body of Christ, as long as we are united, it does not rise again, but lies dead ...He calls those acts which the soul performs of herself 'natural,' and those which the body performs of itself 'carnal' ...The virtue of the flesh is her subjection to the soul. It is her vice to govern the soul ...He did not send Angels or Archangels on the mission, because to repair so many and such vast mischiefs and to declare what had been wrought was in the power of none other, but required His own coming. The Lord then took upon Himself the rank of a servant, no, almost of a minister.

*St. John Chrysostom. Homilies V and VI on Ephesians II. B#57, pp. 71-74.*

for the Apostle: I Corinthians 4:9-16

## THE GOSPEL According To St. Luke 10: 25-37

And behold, a certain lawyer stood up and tested Him, saying, "Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" He said to him, "What is written in the law? What is your reading of it?" So he answered and said, "'You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind,' and 'your neighbour as yourself.'" And He said to him, "You have answered rightly; do this and you will live." But he, wanting to justify himself, said to Jesus, "And who is my neighbour?" Then Jesus answered and said: "A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, who stripped him of his clothing, wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead. Now by chance a certain priest came down that road. And when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. Likewise a Levite, when he arrived at the place, came and looked, and passed by on the other side. But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was. And when he saw him, he had compassion. So he went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine; and he set him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him. On the next day, when he departed, he took out two denarii, gave them to the innkeeper, and said to him, 'Take care of him; and whatever more you spend, when I come again, I will repay you.' So which of these three do you think was neighbour to him who fell among the thieves?" And he said, "He who showed mercy on him." Then Jesus said to him, "Go and do likewise."

### THE PARABLE OF THE GOOD SAMARITAN

Remember, brothers and sisters, how the Holy Church brought us to this passage in the Gospel narrative. Remember last Sunday how Jairus, a Jewish prince, came to Christ. His daughter was dying and he could find help nowhere. She was dying. And so he ran to Christ, fell at His feet and asked for help. She was dying — his only daughter. Christ went with him and Jairus walked with Christ. Maybe this was not long, but in the mind of Jairus it was the way of his whole life. He should be close by his dying daughter...but he hoped. He hoped because he believed that Christ could perform something great, could perform a healing which no one else could do. And this is like away of life.

It is the same with us. A certain moment comes and we are made aware that there will be a departure, there will be a grave, a person will die. I will, and after me, you. Each of us has to expect this moment. But if you hope in God and, like Jairus, hold onto the robe of Christ and do not fall away from Him in spite of all the temptations, then you will undoubtedly arrive... arrive where? Well, today's Gospel tells us where in the question of the lawyer: 'What shall I do to inherit eternal life?' This is where — into Eternal Life.

It is this moment which reveals today's Gospel to us. How do we walk? How do we hold onto the robe of Christ? How do we not let go of this robe during the whole way? And this way is long, very long. This is our life. This may mean years, and for some of us many years. Eighty years for some, ninety for others, and still longer. How many dangers there are on this long road that can tear us away from the robe of Christ! The storm of temptation is raging all around. Look at our family life. Influenced by some mental blindness a husband abandons his family. From constant nervous tension in the family, a wife cannot bear it any longer and makes life intolerable, and so on. And in our public life, all the political crises; and in our civic life, the terrible crimes. O God, where can we go? All we have to do is, like Jairus, cling to Christ, hold onto His robe. The main thing is not to let go. We must be steadfast.

And today's Gospel gives us the secret of how to be steadfast. Be a Merciful Samaritan everywhere, always, and to everyone. Let us examine ourselves. Are we really like this? There were children around us — did we teach them good things? Or a man came to us who was on the verge of moral destruction. Did we support him in his fight against sin? Did we help him to get out of this swamp which was sucking him down? Maybe all we had to do was stretch out not even a hand, but just a finger, and he would have been saved. How many there were who needed just one word of encouragement, some attention. And we could have given all this. But did we give it, like the Merciful Samaritan? If to all these questions our conscience answers, no, we did not help — then, yes, we are in danger of being torn away from the robe of Christ. Let us hasten to mend this. Mercy alone can keep us with Christ.

Our children have so-called "baby-teeth" which fall out by themselves, and in their place other teeth grow — real ones. In the same way we have a heart. But this is a coarse, carnal heart — a selfish one. With such a heart you cannot enter Eternal Life. And it will not fall out by itself. We have to cast it out and replace it with a new heart — not ours, but Christ's. And any time we help our neighbor and make an effort, we are as if tearing off a piece of our heart and giving it away to our neighbor. And in place of this piece of carnal, sinful heart, the Lord puts in us a similar piece of His heart — Christ's heart.

So during our life we are changing our heart into a new one, a real one, into the heart of Christ. And only then will Eternal Life open for us. Then no one will be able to tear us away from the robe of Christ; and we will receive what the lawyer was asking Christ about — Eternal Life.

*Archbishop Andrei, The One Thing Needful*

for the Apostle: John 1:43-51

## Saints of the week

**14 / 27 November - The Holy Apostle Philip** - He was born in Bethsaida near the Sea of Galilee, as were Peter and Andrew. Instructed in the Holy Scriptures from his youth, Philip immediately responded to the call of Christ and followed Him (John 1:43). After the descent of the Holy Spirit, Philip preached the Gospel with zeal in many regions of Asia and in Greece, where the Jews sought to kill him but the Lord saved him by the might of His wonders. The Jewish leaders, whose aim it was to kill Philip, were suddenly blinded, and found themselves in total darkness. There was a great earthquake, and the earth opened and swallowed up Philip's wicked persecutors. Many other wonders were wrought, especially the healing of the sick, by which many of the pagans came to faith in Christ. In the Phrygian town of Hierapolis, St Philip worked for the Gospel with John the Theologian, his own sister Mariamna and the Apostle Bartholomew. There was in that place a dangerous snake, which the pagans fed with care and worshipped as a god. God's Apostle destroyed the snake with prayer as though with a spear. This called forth the fury of the benighted people, and the wicked pagans seized Philip and crucified him upside-down on a tree, and then crucified Bartholomew also. At this, the earth opened and swallowed up the judge and many others with him. The terrified people ran to take the crucified apostles down, but they succeeded only in taking Bartholomew down alive; Philip had already breathed his last. Bartholomew made Stachys bishop for those baptised in the city. Stachys had been cured of blindness and baptised by Philip, having been blind for forty years. St Philip's relics were later taken to Rome. This wonderful Apostle suffered in the year 86, in the time of the Emperor Domitian; St Gregory Palamas, Archbishop of Salonica; St Justinian, Emperor of Byzantium;

**St Dyfrig, bishop in Hereford & Gwent, hermit of Bardsey Island (c.550).**- St. Dyfrig was the son of the unmarried Princess Efrddyl, daughter of King Peibio Clafrog (the Leprous) of Eryng. The King was furious when he discovered his daughter was pregnant, some say and he tried to destroy her by casting her into the River. He failed and Dyfrig was born at Chilstone (Child's Stone) in the parish of Madley (Herefords), traditionally in the mid-6th century. When the baby Dyfrig kissed his grandfather, he cured him of his leprosy and the King Peibio quickly grew to love him. He gave him the whole area around Madley called Ynys Efrddyl. Here, Dyfrig, who had grown up a Christian, founded a monastery at Hennllann (Hentland) where he entered the religious life. After seven years, he founded a second establishment at Moccas and, at these two places, he became the tutor of many saints: Teilo, Samson, Ufelfyw, Merchwyn, Elwredd, Gwnwyn, Cynwal, Arthfoddw, Cynnwr, Arwystl, Inabwy, Cynfran, Gwrfan, Elhaern, Iddneu, Gwrddogwy, Gwernabwy, Ieuan, Aeddau and Cynfarch amongst them. Dyfrig became Bishop of Eryng, probably from Caer-Eryng (Weston-under-Penyard) and then Bishop of the whole of Glywysing & Gwent. Later, he was supposedly, raised to be Archbishop of Wales by St. Germanus, with his base at Caerleon. In this capacity, he is said have consecrated St. Deiniol as Bishop of Bangor Fawr and to have crowned the High-King Arthur at Caer Vudi (variously thought to be Silchester or Woodchester). Dyfrig was a great friend of St. Illtud and supported him in the foundation of Llanilltud Fawr Abbey (Llantwit Major) which he often visited. He would always spend lent on Ynys Byr (Caldy Island) nearby and consecrated St. Samson as Bishop of Dol there in AD 521. He also liked to call upon St. Cadog at Llancarfan and had a small cell built a mile away where the Fynnon Ddyfrig still survives. In AD 545, Archbishop Dyfrig attended the Synod of Llandewi Brefi in order to condemn the Pelagian Heresy and, with St. Deiniol, persuaded St. Dewi to also attend. The latter spoke so eloquently that Dyfrig resigned his Archiepiscopate in Dewi's favour. Dewi moved the Archiepiscopal See to Mynyw (St. Davids) while Dyfrig retired to the Abbey on Ynys Enlli (Bardsey). He was not there long before he died (on 14th November) and was buried within the monastic confines. His body was later translated to Llandaff Cathedral, in 1120, where his shrine can still be seen today. St. Dyfrig is amongst the most important of early Welsh saints, despite the fact that the area in which he was active is now part of the English county of Herefordshire.

**15 / 28 November - Beginning of Nativity Fast - Repose of St. Herman, wonderworker of Alaska; The Holy Martyrs Gurias, Samonas and Abibus** - Gurias and Samonas were eminent citizens of Edessa. At the time of a persecution of Christians, they hid outside the city and lived in fasting and prayer, giving courage to the faithful who came to them for counsel. They were seized and taken before the judge, who threatened them with death if they refused to observe the imperial decree on the worship of idols. Christ's holy martyrs replied: 'If we observe the imperial decree, we shall be lost even if you do not kill us.' They were thrown into prison after harsh torture, and were there confined from August 1st to November 10th, enduring hunger, darkness and great hardship. They were then brought out again and tortured afresh, and, as they remained steadfast in the Christian faith, were condemned to death and beheaded with the sword in the year 322, under the wicked Emperor Licinius (who ruled the eastern half of the Empire until 324). Later Abibus, a deacon in Edessa, was tortured for Christ his Lord and, in the flames, gave his spirit into God's hands. His mother took his unharmed body from the fire and buried it together with those of Gurias and Samonas. When the persecution had ended, Christians built a church in honour of these three martyrs, and placed their wonderworking relics in one coffin. Of the manifold miracles of these wonderful saints of God, one is specially remembered: A widow in Edessa had a young daughter, who was to marry a Goth serving in the Greek army. As the mother was concerned at the thought of sending her daughter to a distant land, the Goth swore over the grave of the martyrs that he would do no ill to the girl, but take her as his legal wife. He was, though, in fact, already married. When he took the girl back to his own land, he treated her, not as his wife, but as a slave, until his lawful wife died. He then agreed with his kinsman that he should bury his living slave along with his dead wife. The slave implored the holy martyrs with tears to save her, and they appeared to her in the grave, took hold of her and, in an instant, carried her from the land of the Goths to Edessa, to their church. On the following day, when the church was opened, the girl was found by the tomb of the saints, and the story of her miraculous deliverance was heard. The Holy Martyrs Elpidius, Marcellus and Eustochius; The Feast of the Icon of the Mother of God of Kupyatich;

**St. Maughold, apostle to the Isle of Man (d.488)** - an Irish prince and reputedly a captain of robbers who was converted by Patrick. Upon his conversion, he became a new man by putting on the spirit of Christ. One version of the legend says that Patrick told him to put to sea in a coracle without oars as a penance for his evil deeds. Another says that he set sail in order to

avoid the temptations of the world. In both stories, he retired to the Isle of Man (Eubonia) off the coast of Lancashire, England. Earlier Patrick had sent his nephew, Saint Germanus, as bishop to plant the Church on the island. Germanus was succeeded by Saints Romulus and Conindrus during whose time Maughold arrived on the island and began to live an austere, penitential life in the mountainous area now named after him Saint Maughold. After their deaths, Maughold was unanimously chosen as bishop by the Monks. In one of the 18 parish churchyards on the island can be found Saint Maughold's well. The very clear water of the well is received in a large stone coffin. Those seeking cures of various ailments, particularly poisoning, are seated in the saint's chair just above the well and given a glass of well-water to drink. Maughold's shrine was here until the relics were scattered during the Reformation. Maughold, commemorated in both the British and Irish calendars, is described in the Martyrology of Oengus as "a rod of gold, a vast ingot, the great bishop MacCaille." Many topological features on the Isle of Man, which he divided into 25 parishes, bear Maughold's name.

**16 / 29 November - Nativity Fast - The Holy Apostle Matthew the Evangelist** - the son of Alphaeus was at first a tax-collector, and it was as such that the Lord saw him in Capernaum and said to him: 'Follow Me!' Leaving everything, he followed Him (Matt. 9:9). After that, Matthew prepared a feast in his house, and there provided an opportunity for the Lord to voice some great truths about His coming to earth. After receiving the Holy Spirit, Matthew preached the Gospel among the Parthians and Medes and in Ethiopia, the land of the negroes. In Ethiopia, he consecrated as bishop one Plato, a follower of his, and himself withdrew to prayerful solitude on a mountain, where the Lord appeared to him. Matthew baptised the wife and son of the prince of that land, at which the prince was greatly enraged and sent a guard to bring Matthew before him for trial. The soldiers went off, but returned to the prince, saying that they had heard Matthew's voice, but had been unable to set eyes on him. The prince then sent a second guard. When this guard drew near to the Apostle, he shone with a heavenly radiance so brilliant that the soldiers were unable to look at him, but threw down their weapons in terror and returned home. The prince then went himself. When he approached Matthew, such radiance shone forth from the saint that the prince was blinded on the instant. But the Apostle had a kind heart: he prayed to God and the prince's sight was restored—unfortunately, only on the physical plane, his spiritual eyes remaining closed. He seized St Matthew and put him to harsh torture, twice lighting a fire on his chest, but the power of God kept him alive and unharmed. Then the Apostle prayed to God, and gave his spirit into His hands. The prince commanded that the martyr's body be put into a leaden coffin and cast into the sea. The saint appeared to Bishop Plato and told him where to find his body in its coffin, and the bishop went and brought them back. Seeing this new marvel, the prince was baptised and received the name Matthew. He then set aside all earthly vanity and became a priest, serving the Church in a manner pleasing to God. When Plato died, the Apostle Matthew appeared to this Matthew and counselled him to accept the episcopate. So he became a bishop, and was a good shepherd for many years, until God took him to His immortal Kingdom. St Matthew the Apostle wrote his Gospel in Aramaic, and it was very soon translated into Greek. It has come down to us in Greek, the Aramaic original being lost. Of this Evangelist, it is said that he never ate meat, but fed only on vegetables and fruit; Our Holy Father Sergius of Malopinega.

**17 / 30 November — Nativity Fast — St Gregory the Wonder-worker, Bishop of Neocaesarea** - Here is a man of God and a mighty wonderworker, who was called a second Moses! Born of wealthy and eminent pagan parents, Gregory at first studied Hellenic and Egyptian philosophy, but, seeing its barrenness and insufficiency, he turned to Christian teachers, particularly Origen of Alexandria, with whom he studied for several years and by whom he was baptised. Pure in soul and body, he desired to consecrate himself utterly to Christ, to which end he withdrew to the desert, where, in painful asceticism, he spent many years. His fame spread abroad everywhere, and Phaedimus, the bishop of Amasea, wanted to make him Bishop of Caesarea. The discerning Gregory was warned of Phaedimus's intention, and hid in the wilderness from those sent to find him, so that they failed in their quest. Finally, Phaedimus consecrated him by devious means, and Gregory had to accept the work of a shepherd. The most holy Mother of God appeared to him, together with St John the Theologian, and, at her command, St John gave him the Creed that is known by Gregory's name. (The Nicene Creed, that Gregory was instrumental in establishing at the Second Ecumenical Council in 381). Who can enumerate the miracles of this second Moses? He commanded evil spirits, commanded mountains and waters, healed every sort of pain and ill, became invisible to his persecutors and had insight into both distant events and men's thoughts. He finished his earthly course in the year 270, in great old age. When he arrived in Caesarea as bishop, the whole town was composed of pagans, with just seventeen Christians. When he departed this life, the whole town was Christian, with just seventeen pagans. He therefore received a wreath of glory from his Lord in the heavenly Kingdom. Our Holy Father Nikhon of Radonezh' Our Holy Father Gennadius of Vatopedi;

**St. Hilda, abs & eldress, who convened the Council of Whitby and adopted the orthodox Pascha.**- Daughter of Hereric. Sister of Saint Hereswitha. Grand-niece of King Saint Edwin. Baptized in 627 at age thirteen by Saint Paulinus of York. Lived as a lay woman until age 33 when she became a Benedictine nun at the monastery of Chelles in France. Abbess at Hartepool, Northumberland, England. Abbess of the double monastery of Whitby, Streaneshalch. Abbess to Saint Wilfrid of York, Saint John of Beverley, and three other bishops. Patroness and supporter of learning and culture, including patronage of the poet Caedmon. Hilda and her houses followed the Celtic liturgy and rule, but many houses had adopted the continental Benedictine rule, and the Roman liturgy. Hilda convened a conference in 664 to help settle one a single rule. When the conference settled on the Roman and Benedictine, they were adopted throughout England, and Hilda insured the observance of her houses. Born 614 at Northumbria, England Died 680 of natural causes Representation - holding Whitby abbey in her hands with a crown on her head or at her feet; turning serpents into stone; stopping wild birds from stealing a corn crop; being carried to heaven by the angels

**18 November / 1 December — The Holy Martyr Platon** — From the town of Ancyra in Galatia, he was born and brought up a Christian. Even in his youth, he showed great perfection in every virtue. Platon did not conceal his faith in Christ the Lord, but preached it openly, denouncing idolaters for their bowing down to dead creatures in place of the living Creator. For this, he was brought before the governor, Agrippinus, for trial, and was harshly tortured by him. When the governor began to urge

him to escape death and save his life by worshipping idols, Platon replied: 'There are two deaths: the temporal and the eternal; and there are two lives: the one transitory and the other without end.' Then Agrippinus put him to harsher torture. Among other tortures, he commanded that red-hot cannon balls be placed on his naked body, and that his flesh be cut into strips. 'Torture me more harshly', cried the martyr to the torturers, 'that your inhumanity and my endurance may be the more clearly seen. 'When the torturer spoke to the martyr about the philosopher Platon, saying that he was a pagan philosopher, he replied: 'I am not like Platon, nor he like me, except in our names. I learn and teach the wisdom that is of Christ, while he teaches the wisdom that is folly before God.' After that, Platon was thrown into prison, where he spent eighteen days without bread or water. When the warders marvelled that Platon could live without food for so long, he said to them: 'You are satiated by food, but I by holy prayer; you rejoice in wine, but I in Christ the true Vine.' He was finally beheaded with the sword in about 266, and received a wreath of eternal glory. The Holy Martyrs Romanus and Barulas; St. Mawes, bishop in Cornwall & Brittany (5th c.).

**19 November / 2 December — The Holy Prophet Obadiah** — Obadiah lived at the court of King Ahab, but, when the king turned away from true worship and bowed down to idols, Obadiah did not follow the king's example, but continued to serve the one, true God. When the wicked Queen Jezebel, because of her feud with Elias, hunted down all the prophets of God, Obadiah took a hundred of them and hid them in two caves, feeding them till the persecution was over (I Kings 18:4). A contemporary of the great Prophet Elias, Obadiah revered him greatly and hearkened to him in all things, being a follower and pupil of his. He lived nine hundred years before Christ, and entered peacefully into rest. The Holy Martyr Barlaam; Our Holy Fathers Barlaam and Joasaph the Heir; The Holy Martyr Heliodorus;

**St. Egbert, archbishop of York (766)** - He was son of Eata and brother of Eadbert, King of Northumbria. Having received deacon's Orders at Rome he returned to Northumbria and was appointed to the See of York in 732. He received the pallium in 735, thus becoming second Archbishop of York, the title having been lost to that church since the flight of Saint Paulinus to Kent. He was thus placed in a position to carry out many needed reforms in which he proved himself a strict disciplinarian, but was at the same time remarkable for sweetness and gentleness. One of his greatest works was the foundation of the famous School of York and its celebrated library. Alcuin was among his pupils. Eadbert resigned his throne to enter the monastery, and the two men spent their last years in retirement and prayer. Egbert's best known work is a collection of canonical regulations.

**20 November / 3 December — Forefeast of the Entry into the Temple of the Most Holy Theotokos — Nativity Fast — Our Holy Father Gregory of Decapolis** — He was born in Isaurian Decapolis of eminent and devout parents, Sergius and Maria. When he had finished his schooling, his parents desired him to marry, but he fled to the desert and became a monk. He lived in various places: in Byzantium and Rome, and on Mount Olympus. Wherever he found himself, he made men marvel by his asceticism and miracles. It happened at times that his face was lit up with heavenly light, and that angels of God appeared to him; he looked upon the beauty of the angels and heard their blessed singing. He lived a long and godly life, and died peacefully in Constantinople in the ninth century, his soul entering into the joy of his Lord. St Proclus, Patriarch of Constantinople; The Holy Martyrs Eustace, Thespesius and Anatolius; St Isaac, Archbishop of Armenia; The Three Holy Persian Maidens;

**At Bury St. Edmund in Suffolk, St. Edmund, king of E. Anglia, martyr (869)** - On Christmas Day 855 a young man aged fourteen was acclaimed King of Norfolk by the ruling men and clergy of that county. The following year the leaders of Suffolk also made him their king. For fifteen years Edmund ruled over the East Angles with what all acknowledged as Christian dignity and justice. He himself seems to have modelled his piety on that of King David in the Old Testament, becoming especially proficient at reciting the psalms in public worship. From the year 866 his kingdom was increasingly threatened by Danish invasions. For four years the East Angles managed to keep a shaky, often broken peace with them. Then the invaders burned Thetford. King Edmund's army attacked them there but could not defeat the marauders. The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle records that the Danes 'killed the king and overcame all the land', adding that 'they destroyed all the churches that they came to, and at the same time reaching Peterborough, killed the abbot and monks and burned and broke everything they found there'. He thus remains the only English sovereign until the time of King Charles I to die for religious beliefs as well as the defence of his throne. For centuries the holy relics of King Edmund remained incorrupt, and innumerable miracles were wrought through his intercession. The skull of St. Edmund is at present in the basilica of St. Sernin in Toulouse, while his holy bones are in the private chapel of the Duke of Norfolk in Arundel Castle.