

**33<sup>rd</sup> Sunday After Pentecost**  
**St. George the Chozebite,**  
**and Sunday after the Theophany**  
**8/ 21 January**



**Resurrection Tropar, Tone 8:** Thou didst descend from on high, O Merciful One! / Thou didst endure the three-day burial / to free us from our sufferings! / O Lord, our Life and Resurrection, glory to Thee.

**Hymn to the Theotokos Tone 8:** For our sake Thou wast born of the Virgin / and did endure crucifixion, O Good One / destroying death by death. / Revealing the resurrection as God, / do not despise the work of Thy hand. / Reveal thy love for man, O merciful One, / and accept the Theotokos praying for us, / and save Thy despairing people, O Savior.

**Resurrection Kondak, Tone 8:** By rising from the tomb Thou didst raise the dead and resurrect Adam/ Eve exults in Thy Resurrection, / and the world celebrates Thy rising from the dead, O Greatly Merciful One.

**Kondak of our Venerable father George, the Khozebite Tone 4:** Thou hast been shown to be an all-radiant beacon / illumining with divine rays the faithful who cry out to thee: / Pray for us to Christ the Master, / Who appeared in the streams of the Jordan // and hath enlightened mortals.

**Matins Gospel XI**

**Epistle for Sunday: Ephesians 4:7-13**

7. But to each one of us grace was given according to the measure of Christ's gift. 8. Therefore He says: "When He ascended on high, He led captivity captive, And gave gifts to men." 9. (Now this, "He ascended"—what does it mean but that He also first descended into the lower parts of the earth? 10. He who descended is also the One who ascended far above all the heavens, that He might fill all things.) 11. And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, 12. for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, 13. till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ;

**HE LED CAPTIVITY CAPTIVE.**

When thou hearest these words, think not of a mere removal from one place to another; for what Paul establishes in the Epistle to the Philippians (Philip. 2: 5-8.), that very argument is he also insisting upon here. In the same way as there, when exhorting them concerning lowliness, he brings forward Christ as an example, so does he here also, saying, "He descended into the lower parts of the earth." For were not this so, this expression which he uses, "He became obedient even unto death" (Philip. 2: 8, 9.), were superfluous; whereas from His ascending, he implies His descent, and by "the lower parts of the earth," he means "death," according to the notions of men; as Jacob also said, "Then shall ye bring down my gray hairs with sorrow to the grave." (Genesis 32:48.) And again as it is in the Psalm, "Lest I become like them that go down into the pit" (Psalm 143:7.), that is like the dead. Why does he descant upon this region here? And of what captivity does he speak? Of that of the devil; for He took the tyrant captive, the devil, I mean, and death, and the curse, and sin. Behold His spoils and His trophies. He descended, saith he, into the lower parts of the earth, beyond which there are none other: and He ascended up far above all

things, to that place, beyond which there is none other. This is to show His divine energy, and supreme dominion. For indeed even of old had all things been filled.

*St. John Chrysostom. Homily on Ephesians 4:9.*

### **Gospel for Sunday: Matthew 4:12-17**

12. Now when Jesus heard that John had been put in prison, He departed to Galilee. 13. And leaving Nazareth, He came and dwelt in Capernaum, which is by the sea, in the regions of Zebulun and Naphtali, 14. that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, saying: 15. "The land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, By the way of the sea, beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles: 16. The people who sat in darkness have seen a great light, And upon those who sat in the region and shadow of death Light has dawned." 17. From that time Jesus began to preach and to say, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

### **"Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."**

With these profound and holy words, the incarnate Word began His preaching to fallen mankind. Outwardly, such simple teaching! But one must understand it with his very life: then these short and simple words which are contained in all of the Gospel will be revealed. Just as the holy Apostle Paul, when preaching the Gospel, which he did throughout almost all the known world, said that he testified "both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ" (Acts 20:21).

Brethren! In order to believe in our Lord Jesus Christ repentance is needed; in order to remain in this salvific faith, repentance is needed; in order to be successful in it, repentance is needed; in order to inherit the Kingdom of Heaven, repentance is needed.

All of this is clearly set forth in the Holy Scripture. Holy Scripture teaches us that "God sent His Son into the world ... that the world through Him might be saved," that "he that believeth on Him is not condemned; but he that believeth not is condemned already," "That light (Christ) is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved." (John 3: 17-20) To those afflicted by the passion of vainglory the Scripture witnesses: "How can ye believe, which receive honour one of another, and seek not the honour that cometh from God only?" (John 5:44). Those bound by the passion of greed did not only not believe the Lord, but they even derided Him when He preached to them the important and most holy teaching concerning the remembrance of eternity, and the arranging of earthly matters in accordance to the immortality appointed for man. (Luke 16: 14) Those attracted to the evil passion of envy did not only not believe in the Lord, but they also conspired to kill Him, and they accomplished this. All those infected with vain and sinful vices, according to the unerring testimony of the Gospel, are cut off from participating in the spiritual wedding of the Son of God, making themselves unworthy of blessed union with Him (Matt. 22:5). "You can not serve God and Mammon!" (Luke 16:14); you cannot serve two masters, God and sin! "Repent: for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand! Repent, and believe in the Gospel (Mark 1:15).

However, one who has believed in Christ, and has decided to continually prove his faith, by his actions, is also in need of repentance. What do you think, brethren; what is the first fruit of living faith? What is the first fruit of fulfilling the commandments of Christ? I will give you the answer of St. Simeon the New Theologian, who acquired his knowledge of truth through his holy experience. He said: "The careful fulfillment of the commandments of Christ teaches a man his own infirmities." Exactly! As soon as one who believes in Christ begins to fulfill the all-holy commandments of the Gospel, or also, to perform the works of renewed nature, his fallen nature is instantly revealed to him, which had been hidden from sight until then, and it enters into a sustained battle with the Gospel. The life of one who struggles for Christ is filled with unseen falls. He involuntarily confesses with the Apostle: "For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. O wretched man that I am!" (Acts 7: 22-24). From such an observation of oneself, blessed poverty of spirit is engendered within a Christian, rational,

spiritual mourning appears, and a broken and humble heart is established, which God will not destroy (Ps. 50: 20). In living according to the Gospel, there appears in a man, as if naturally, the repentance commanded by the Gospel. Therefore, repentance is necessary not only in order to believe in Christ; it is necessary in order to have a living faith in Christ. "Repent for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand."

There remains to be explained: why is there such a close connection between the words of the Lord calling us to repent, and the announcing of the nearness of the Kingdom of heaven? Why is there not presented between them a kind of intermediate struggle, an intermediate condition? The reason is that our Lord Jesus Christ is "the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world" (John 1:29) --- He has accomplished everything for our salvation. He has reconciled us with God; He has prepared and acquired for us the Heavenly Kingdom. We, mankind, have been presented with one work in the matter of our salvation: the work of accepting salvation, given to us by God free and complete, the work of repentance. The Heavenly Kingdom and the Heavenly King are ineffably close to us --- incomparably closer than we imagine. "Behold, I stand at the door" of the heart of man, exclaims this King, and I knock at it with My all-holy and almighty Word: "if any man hear My voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me (Rev. 3:20). The opening of the doors of the heart to the Heavenly King is accomplished—with repentance. "Repent for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand."

*St. Ignatius (Brianchaninov)*

### **Saints of the week**

**8 / 21 January — Afterfeast of Theophany — The Holy Martyrs Julian and Vasilissa** - They were both of rich and noble families and, though married, agreed to live in celibacy as brother and sister. They gave their goods to the poor and embraced the monastic state; Julian founding a men's monastery of about 10,000 monks and Vasilissa one for about a thousand nuns. When a violent persecution of Christians was launched under Diocletian, Vasilissa besought God that none of her nuns should suffer torture nor repudiate the Orthodox faith. The Lord hearkened to the petition of His worthy servant and, during the next six months, took all the nuns to Himself, one by one, and finally their abbess Vasilissa. Before her own death, Vasilissa had a vision of her sisters in the other world. They were all bathed in light and were rejoicing like the angels. They appealed to their spiritual mother to join them as quickly as possible. Julian's monastery was burned by fire, and Julian was inhumanly tortured, being killed only after the most horrible sufferings. The Lord inspired and strengthened him in his torments and he endured them with heroism, keeping faith and glorifying the name of Christ. Together with Julian were beheaded the son and wife of the persecutor Marcian, Celsus and Maronilla, who, seeing Julian's heroic and patient sufferings, were themselves converted to Christianity. Also martyred with him were twenty Roman soldiers, seven brothers from that locality, a priest named Antony and a man called Anastasius whom Julian, at the time of his own martyrdom, raised from the dead by his prayers. They all suffered with honour for Christ and became citizens of the Kingdom of heaven in about the year 313. Our Holy Father George the Chozebite; St Domnica; St Gregory, Bishop of Ochrid; Holy Virgin Gudula of Brussels (659).

**Venerable George The Khozibite** - George lived an ascetical life in the seventh century in Khoziba Monastery in Jericho on the road from Jerusalem, the monastery where the Venerable John Khozibite first led an ascetical life.

**St. Domnica** - During the reign of Emperor Theodosius, Domnica, unbaptised, came from Carthage to Constantinople with four other pagan maidens. Patriarch Macarius baptized them and gave his blessing to them to live as nuns. With great zeal, St. Domnica gave herself up to a life of asceticism and in that zeal did not waver until her death in extreme old age. She died in the Lord about 474 A.D. She was so enlightened by the Holy Spirit that she was able to discern events in the future and through prayer to work miracles.

**9 / 22 January — Afterfeast of Theophany — Hieromartyr Philip the Metropolitan of Moscow and All Russia**

Saint Philip, Metropolitan of Moscow, in the world Theodore, was descended from the illustrious noble lineage of the Kolichevi, occupying a prominent place in the Boyar дума at the court of the Moscow sovereigns. He was born in the year 1507. His father, Stephen Ivanovich, "a man enlightened and filled with military spirit," attentively prepared his son for government service. Theodore's pious mother Barbara, who ended her days as a nun with the name Barsanouphia, implanted in the soul of her son a sincere faith and deep piety. Young Theodore Kolichev applied himself diligently to the Holy Scripture and to the writings of the holy Fathers. The Moscow Great Prince Basil III, the father of Ivan the Terrible, brought young Theodore into the court, but he was not attracted to court life. Conscious of its vanity and sinfulness, Theodore all the more deeply immersed himself in the reading of books and visiting the churches of God. Life in Moscow repelled the young ascetic. The young Prince Ivan's sincere devotion to

him, promising him a great future in government service, could not deter him from seeking the Heavenly City.

On Sunday, June 5, 1537, in church for Divine Liturgy, Theodore felt intensely in his soul the words of the Savior: "No man can serve two masters" (Mt.6:24), which determined his ultimate destiny. Praying fervently to the Moscow wonderworkers, and without bidding farewell to his relatives, he secretly left Moscow in the attire of a peasant, and for a while he hid himself away from the world in the village of Khizna, near Lake Onega, earning his livelihood as a shepherd.

His thirst for ascetic deeds led him to the renowned Solovki monastery on the White Sea. There he fulfilled very difficult obediences: he chopped firewood, dug the ground, and worked in the mill. After a year and a half of testing, the igumen Alexis tonsured him, giving him the monastic name Philip and entrusting him in obedience to the Elder Jonah Shamina, a converser with Saint Alexander of Svir (August 30).

Under the guidance of experienced elders Philip grew spiritually, and progressed in fasting and prayer. Igumen Alexis sent him to work at the monastery forge, where Saint Philip combined the activity of unceasing prayer with his work with a heavy hammer.

He was always the first one in church for the services, and was the last to leave. He toiled also in the bakery, where the humble ascetic was comforted with a heavenly sign. In the monastery afterwards they displayed the "Bakery" image of the Mother of God, through which the heavenly Mediatrix bestowed Her blessing upon the humble baker Philip. With the blessing of the igumen, Saint Philip spent a certain while in wilderness solitude, attending to himself and to God.

In 1546 at Novgorod the Great, Archbishop Theodosius made Philip igumen of the Solovki monastery. The new igumen strove with all his might to exalt the spiritual significance of the monastery and its founders, Saints Sabbatius and Zosimus of Solovki (September 27, April 17). He searched for the Hodigitria icon of the Mother of God brought to the island by the first head of Solovki, Saint Sabbatius. He located the stone cross which once stood before the saint's cell. The Psalter belonging to Saint Zosimus (+1478), the first igumen of Solovki, was also found. His robe, in which igumens would vest during the service on the days when Saint Zosimus was commemorated, was also discovered.

The monastery experienced a spiritual revival. A new monastic Rule was adopted to regulate life at the monastery. Saint Philip built majestic temples: a church of the Dormition of the Mother of God, consecrated in the year 1557, and a church of the Transfiguration of the Lord. The igumen himself worked as a simple laborer, helping to build the walls of the Transfiguration church. Beneath the north portico he dug himself a grave beside that of his guide, the Elder Jonah. Spiritual life in these years flourished at the monastery: struggling with the brethren with the disciples of Igumen Philip were Saints John and Longinus of Yarenga (July 3) and Bassian and Jonah of Pertominsk (July 12).

Saint Philip often withdrew to a desolate wilderness spot for quiet prayer, two versts from the monastery, which was later known as the Philippov wilderness.

But the Lord was preparing the saint for other work. In Moscow, Tsar Ivan the Terrible fondly remembered the Solovki hermit from his childhood. The Tsar hoped to find in Saint Philip a true companion, confessor and counsellor, who in his exalted monastic life had nothing in common with the sedition of the nobles. The Metropolitan of Moscow, in Ivan's opinion, ought to have a certain spiritual meekness to quell the treachery and malice within the Boyar soul. The choice of Saint Philip as archpastor of the Russian Church seemed to him the best possible.

For a long time the saint refused to assume the great burden of the primacy of the Russian Church. He did not sense any spiritual affinity with Ivan. He attempted to get the Tsar to abolish the Oprichniki [secret police]. Ivan the Terrible attempted to argue its civil necessity. Finally, the dread Tsar and the holy Metropolitan came to an agreement: Saint Philip would not meddle in the affairs of the Oprichniki and the running of the government, he would not resign as Metropolitan in case the Tsar could not fulfill his wishes, and that he would be a support and counsellor of the Tsar, just as former Metropolitans supported the Moscow sovereigns. On July 25, 1566 Saint Philip was consecrated for the cathedra of Moscow's hierarch saints, whose number he was soon to join.

Ivan the Terrible, one of the greatest and most contradictory figures in Russian history, lived an intensely busy life. He was a talented writer and bibliophile, he was involved in compiling the Chronicles (and himself suddenly cut the thread of the Moscow chronicle writing), he examined the intricacies of the monastic Rule, and more than once he thought about abdicating the throne for the monastic life.

Every aspect of governmental service, all the measures undertaken to restructure civil and social life, Ivan the Terrible tried to rationalize as a manifestation of Divine Providence, as God acting in history. His beloved spiritual heroes were Saint Michael of Chernigov (September 20) and Saint Theodore the Black (September 19), military men active with complex contradictory destinies, moving toward their ends through whatever the obstacles before them, and fulfilling their duties to the nation and to the Church. The more the darkness thickened around Ivan, the more resolutely he demanded cleansing and redemption of his soul. Journeying on pilgrimage to the Saint Cyril of White Lake monastery, he declared his wish to become a monk to the igumen and the brethren. The haughty autocrat fell on his knees before the igumen, who blessed his intent. Ivan wrote, "it seems to me, an accursed sinner, that I am already robed in black."

Ivan imagined the Oprichnina in the form of a monastic brotherhood, serving God with weapons and military deeds. The Oprichniki were required to dress in monastic garb and attend long and tiring church services, lasting from 4 to 10 o'clock in the morning. "Brethren" not in church at 4 o'clock in the morning, were given a penance by the Tsar. Ivan and his sons fervently wished to pray and sing in the church choir. From church they went to the trapeza, and while the Oprichniki ate, the Tsar stood beside them. The Oprichniki gathered leftover food from the table and distributed it to the poor at the doorway of the trapeza.

Ivan, with tears of repentance and wanting to be an esteemer of the holy ascetics, the teachers of repentance, he wanted to wash and burn away his own sins and those of his companions, cherishing the assurance that even his terribly cruel actions would prove to be for the welfare of Russia and the triumph of Orthodoxy. The most clearly spiritual action and monastic sobriety of Ivan the Terrible is revealed in his "Synodikon." Shortly before his death, he ordered full lists compiled of the people murdered by him and his Oprichniki. These were then distributed to all the Russian monasteries. Ivan acknowledged all his sins against the nation, and besought the holy monks to pray to God for the forgiveness of his tormented soul.

The pseudo-monasticism of Ivan the Terrible, a dark most grievous oppression over Russia, tormented Saint Philip, who considered it impossible to mix the earthly and the heavenly, serving the Cross and serving the sword. Saint Philip saw how much unrepentant malice and envy was concealed beneath the black cowls of the Oprichniki. There were outright murderers among them, hardened in lawless bloodletting, and profiteers seeking gain, rooted in sin and transgressions. By the sufferance of God, history is often made by the hands of the impious, and Ivan the Terrible wanted to whiten his black brotherhood before God. The blood spilled by its thugs and fanatics cried out to Heaven.

Saint Philip decided to oppose Ivan. This was prompted by a new wave of executions in the years 1567-1568. In the autumn of 1567, just as the Tsar was setting out on a campaign against Livonia, he learned about a boyar conspiracy. The plotters intended to seize the Tsar and deliver him to the Polish king, who already was on the move with an army towards Russian territory.

Ivan dealt severely with the conspirators, and again he shed much blood. It was bitter for Saint Philip, and the conscience of the saint compelled him boldly to enter into defense of the executed. The final rift occurred in the spring of 1568. On the Sunday of the Veneration of the Cross, March 2, 1568, when the Tsar with his Oprichniki entered the Dormition cathedral in monastic garb, as was their custom, Saint Philip refused to bless him, and began openly to denounce the lawless acts committed by the Oprichniki. The accusations of the hierarch shattered the harmony of the church service. In a rage Ivan retorted, "Would you oppose us? We shall see your firmness! I have been too soft on you."

The Tsar began to show ever greater cruelty in persecuting all those who opposed him. Executions followed one after the other. The fate of the saintly confessor was sealed. But Ivan wanted to preserve a semblance of canonical propriety. The Boyar Duma obediently carried out his decision to place the Primate of the Russian Church on trial. A cathedral court was set up to try Metropolitan Philip in the presence of a diminished Boyar Duma, and false witnesses were found. To the deep sorrow of the saint, these were monks of the Solovki monastery, his former disciples and novices whom he loved. They accused Saint Philip of a multitude of transgressions, including sorcery.

"Like all my ancestors," the saint declared, "I came into this world prepared to suffer for truth." Having refuted all the accusations, the holy sufferer attempted to halt the trial by volunteering to resign his office. His resignation was not accepted, however, and new abuse awaited the martyr.

Even after a sentence of life imprisonment had been handed down, they compelled Saint Philip to serve Liturgy in the Dormition cathedral. This was on November 8, 1568. In the middle of the service, the Oprichniki burst into the temple, they publicly read the council's sentence of condemnation, and then abused the saint. Tearing his vestments off, they dressed him in rags, dragged him out of the church and drove him off to the Theophany monastery on a simple peasant's sledge.

For a long while they held the martyr in the cellars of the Moscow monasteries. They placed his feet into stocks, they held him in chains, and put a heavy chain around his neck. Finally, they drove him off to the Tver Otroch monastery. And there a year later, on December 23, 1569, the saint was put to death at the hands of Maliuta Skuratov. Only three days before this the saint foresaw the end of his earthly life and received the Holy Mysteries. At first, his relics were committed to earth there at the monastery, beyond the church altar. Later, they were transferred to the Solovki monastery (August 11, 1591) and from there to Moscow (July 3, 1652).

Initially, the memory of Saint Philip was celebrated by the Russian Church on December 23, the day of his martyric death. In 1660, the celebration was transferred to January 9.

**The Holy Martyr Polyeuctus** - The Armenian town of Melitene was soaked in Christian blood, as was all the land of Armenia. The first blood shed for Christ in that town was that of St Polyeuctus, spilled in about the year 259, during the reign of Valerian. There were in the town two friends who were officers: Nearchus and Polyeuctus, the former baptised and the latter unbaptised. When a decree went out from the Emperor that all Christians were to be killed, Nearchus prepared himself for death, though with great sorrow at not having brought his friend Polyeuctus to the true Faith. When Polyeuctus became

aware of Nearchus' sorrow, he promised to become a believer. On the following day, he related to Nearchus a dream that he had: the Lord Himself had appeared to him in light, stripped his old clothing from him, clothed him in new and shining raiment and set him upon the saddle of a winged horse. After relating this dream, Poyeuctus went off to the town, tore up the royal decree on the persecution of Christians and smashed many statues of idols. He was tortured and condemned to death. On the way to the place of execution, he caught sight of Nearchus in the crowd and called joyfully to him: 'Save your soul, my dear soul-friend! Remember the vow of love confirmed between us!' And St Nearchus later ended a martyr for Christ in the fire. His feast is on April 22nd. Our Holy Father Eustratius; St Philip, Metropolitan of Moscow;

**St. Adrian of Canterbury (710)** - When Archbishop Deusdedit of Canterbury died in the year 664 the Pope decided that the best man to succeed him was an African named Adrian who was already abbot of a monastery in Italy, near Naples. But Adrian did not want this high office. Bede tells us that when the Pope summoned Adrian and instructed him to go to Canterbury as archbishop, the abbot excused himself, saying that he was not fitted for such a great dignity, but that he would find someone else more suited for the task.' The first substitute was too ill to become archbishop. Again the pope urged the post on Adrian. Again Adrian begged permission to find someone else. At that time a monk from Tarsus named Theodore was in Rome. Adrian nominated Theodore to the Pope. Theodore was willing to become Archbishop of Canterbury, but only if Adrian agreed to come to England and help him. So on 26 March 668 Theodore was consecrated Archbishop of Canterbury, and two months later he and Adrian set sail for England. They were a perfect team. Theodore appointed Adrian abbot of the monastery of St Peter and St Paul at Canterbury. Here the saint's learning and great virtues were employed to their best. Scholars came to the monastery from far away and Adrian taught there for thirty-nine years. His pupils could often speak Latin and Greek as well as they could speak their own languages, if not better. He knew an astonishing amount - teaching poetry, astronomy and maths (to calculate the church's calendar) as well as the Bible. Into the minds of his students Adrian 'poured the waters of wholesome knowledge day by day,' Bede records. The saint could convey happiness. 'Never,' asserts Bede, 'had there been such happy times as these since the English settled in Britain.' Adrian died in 710.

‡ **Scripture Readings - Luke 6:17-23 (Matins Gospel); Hebrews 8:7-13; Mark 8:11-21; Hebrews 13:17-21 (Hieromartyr Philip); John 10:9-16 (Hieromartyr Philip) ‡**

**10 / 23 January — Afterfeast of Theophany - St Gregory, Bishop of Nyssa** - The brother of St Basil the Great, he was at first a married priest, but when his wife, the blessed Theosevia, died, he was chosen and consecrated as Bishop of Nyssa. He was distinguished by great secular learning and spiritual experience, and was a great preacher, a translator of the Scriptures and a theologian. As a result of his opposition to the Arians, they did everything in their power to crush him, regarding him as their chief enemy. They were so successful in this that, in the reign of the Emperor Valens, their confederate, they managed to depose him from his episcopal seat and drive him into exile. This was in 376. The holy Father spent several years in patient exile, enduring poverty and humiliation. In 381, he took part in the Second Ecumenical Council, and it is thought that he formulated the final part of the Creed concerning the Holy Spirit. Finally, finishing his life at a great age in about the year 395, he entered into the Kingdom of God and has been commemorated through all succeeding ages as a great light in the Church. Our Holy Father Ammon of Egypt.

**St. Theophan the Recluse**- This modern-day Church Father was born in Chernavsk in central Russia. The son of a priest, he entered seminary at a young age, then completed the four- year course in theology at the Academy of Kiev. Though he distinguished himself as a student, his heart turned increasingly toward the monastic life, and he was tonsured a monk and ordained a priest upon completion of his studies. During his time at the Academy he often visited the Lavra of the Caves, and there became a spiritual child of Father Parthenius. His desire for monastic life was not fulfilled immediately, for the Church felt need of his intellectual gifts. He served as a professor at the Theological Academy in St Petersburg, then worked for seven years in the Russian Mission to the Near East, mostly in Palestine. During this time he gained a perfect mastery of Greek and studied the works of the Church Fathers in the original languages. Returning to Russia, he was soon consecrated a bishop; but after seven years of episcopal service, he at last achieved his heart's desire, resigning as bishop and retiring to a small monastery at Yvschen, where he spent the rest of his days. After taking full part in the liturgical and communal life of the monastery for several years, he took up the life of a recluse in 1872. He lived in two small rooms, subsisting almost entirely on bread and tea, visited only by his confessor and the abbot of the monastery. He celebrated the Divine Liturgy every day in his cell. All of his time not taken up by inner prayer was devoted to translating the works of the Fathers into Russian and, increasingly, to writings of his own. Most importantly, he prepared a Russian-language edition of the Philokalia which had a deep impact upon Russian spiritual life. Though he received no visitors, St Theophan entered into correspondence with many earnest Christians who sought his counsel, and so in time became the spiritual father of many believers throughout Russia. He reposed in peace in 1894.

‡ **Scripture Readings - John 10:1-9 (Matins Gospel); Hebrews 9:8-10, 15-23; Mark 8:22-26; Hebrews 7:26-8:2 (St. Theophan); John 10:9-16 (St. Theophan) ‡**

**11 / 24 January — Afterfeast of Theophany — Fast Day. Fish Allowed - Our Holy Father Theodosius the Great** - The first founder and organiser of cenobitic monasticism, he was born of devout parents in Cappadocia, in the village of Mogarisses. As a young man, he visited Simeon Stylites, who blessed him and predicted for him great spiritual glory. Theodosius set out in search of a place in which to found a monastery. He took with him a censer containing cold charcoal and incense. At the place where the charcoal suddenly ignited of itself, he stopped, settled down and began to lead a life of asceticism. There very quickly gathered round him many monks of different nationalities and with different languages. He therefore built a church for each language-group, so that services were conducted and God praised at the same moment in Greek, Armenian, Georgian and so forth. But on a day when they were to receive Communion, all the brethren gathered in the great church, where the service was conducted in Greek. The refectory was common to all; they held all possessions in common, laboured in common, endured in common and often hungered in common. Theodosius was a sublime example to all the monks; an example in work, in prayer, in fasting, in vigils and in all the Christian virtues. And God endowed him with the gifts of wonder-working, to heal the sick, to be present and help from a distance, to tame wild beasts, to predict the future and to increase bread and wheat. Prayer was on his lips day and night. He entered peacefully into rest in the Lord in the year 529, at the age of 105. Blessed Michael of Klops; Hieromartyr Hyginus, pope of Rome (142).

‡ **Scripture Readings - Luke 6:17-23 (Matins Gospel); Hebrews 10:1-8; Mark 8:30-34; 2 Corinthians 4:6-15 (Venerable); Matthew 11:27-30 (Venerable) ‡**

**12 / 25 January — Afterfeast of Theophany — The Holy Martyr Tatiana of Rome** - She was a Christian, of an eminent family, a deaconess in the Church. After the death of the Emperor Heliogabalus, the Emperor Alexander came to the throne in Rome. His mother, Julia Mamaea, was a Christian, but the Emperor himself was unsure and hesitant about his faith; an uncertainty that was clearly expressed by his keeping statues of both Christ and Apollo, of both Abraham and Orpheus, in his palace. His chief advisors took it into their own hands to persecute the Christians without his orders. When the virgin Tatiana was led to martyrdom, she prayed for her executioners. And lo, their eyes were opened and they saw four angels around the martyr. Seeing this, eight of them were converted to Christ, for which they were tortured and killed. St Tatiana's martyrdom was long-drawn-out: she was flogged, parts of her flesh were cut off, she was sawn with an iron saw, and then, all disfigured and bleeding, was flung that evening into prison to be brought out on the following day for further torture. But God sent His angel to the prison, to give her courage and heal her wounds. Tatiana, therefore, appeared before her torturers each morning in perfect health. She was thrown to a lion, but the lion became tame before her and did her no harm. Her hair was shorn, from an idea that occurred to their godless minds that some sorcery might be hidden in it, some magical strength. Finally she was led out, together with her father, and the two were beheaded. In such manner this heroic maiden finished her earthly life in about the year 225, and was crowned with an immortal crown of glory. She had the weak body of a woman, but a manly and valiant spirit.

**The Holy Martyr Peter Apseamus** - A native of Eleutheropolis in Palestine, he suffered as a youth for the Christian faith in the year 311, under the Emperor Maximian. After terrible tortures, he was condemned to death. Hearing the sentence pronounced, he cried out with great joy: 'My one desire is to die for my God!' He was crucified, like his Lord, and gave up his spirit on the cross.

**The Icon of the Mother of God, "She who gives suck"** - This is the name given to the icon of the Mother of God that St Sava of Serbia brought from the monastery of St Sava the Sanctified near Jerusalem and placed in his hermitage at Karyes on the Holy Mountain. In that way a prophecy, made 800 years previously by St Sava the Sanctified, was fulfilled—that one day a Serbian priest called Sava would come and would be given the icon and his staff. When Sava of Serbia visited the community of St Sava the Sanctified, the monks called to mind the prophecy of their founder and gave the icon and the staff to Sava. The icon was placed at the right-hand side of the Royal Doors in the hermitage, and the staff in a cell which received the name 'Pateritsa'(the father's rod), also situated at Karyes.; Our Holy Mother Theodora; St. Benedict Biscop, abbot of Wearmouth (689-90), who introduced glass windows to England and raised St. Bede; in Cornwall, St. Alan, abbot of Erbin, c.

‡ **Scripture Readings - Hebrews 10:35-11:7; Mark 9:10-16; Hebrews 7:26-8:2 (St. Sava); John 10:9-16 (St. Sava) ‡**

**13 / 26 January — Afterfeast of Theophany - Fast Day. Fish allowed. - The Holy Martyrs Hermylas and Stratonicus** - The Emperor Licinius launched a violent persecution against the Christians. St Hermylas, a Christian and a deacon in one of the churches, was arrested and condemned to death. When he was told that he was being taken out to martyrdom, he rejoiced greatly. The Emperor threatened him in vain; Hermylas openly confessed his faith in Christ and, in reply to the Emperor's threats, said: "The Lord is my helper, I will not fear what man doeth unto me" (Ps. 117:6). After harsh torture, Hermylas was flung into prison. But the jailer was one Stratonicus, a secret Christian who was filled with whole-hearted compassion for Hermylas's sufferings. When he too appeared before the Emperor as a Christian, Licinius ordered that they both be thrown into the Danube. So Hermylas and Stratonicus were bound together in one net and cast into the river. After three days the river threw their bodies onto the bank, and fellow-Christians took them and buried them a little way outside Belgrade. These glorious martyrs suffered for Christ and entered into glory in the year 315.

**St James, Bishop of Nisibis** - In summer in an open field and in winter in a cave, St James lived as a hermit. On one occasion he went down into the city of Nisibis in Mesopotamia, to look into the faith and life of the Christians, and was there elected by the people as their bishop. He took part in the First Ecumenical Council in 325 and defended Orthodoxy against the Arians. It happened at one time that the pagan Persian army attacked Nisibis. St James went out onto the ramparts with the banner-icon from the church, himself raising it aloft and walking round the ramparts fearless of the arrows the enemy was aiming at him. Walking thus, the saint prayed to God to save the city and the faithful in it by sending flies and mosquitoes on the Persians, thus driving them away from the city walls. He did not, we see, seek the destruction of the enemy but some sort of catastrophe, no matter what, even some quite small occurrence, that would overcome them and remove them from the vicinity. God heard the prayer of His chosen one and sent a plague of flies and mosquitoes on the Persians, driving them away and saving the city of Nisibis. St James lived long and with honour, and died peacefully in great old age in the year 350.

**St Hilary, Bishop of Poitiers** - An ardent fighter against Arianism in the West, he suffered greatly for his choice of Orthodoxy. Of his writings on many subjects, the most important are those on the Holy Trinity. He entered into rest in the Lord in the year 367; Our Holy Father Maximus of Kapsokalyvia; in Cornwall, St. Erbin (Hermes), c and St. Elian (Alan), hermit. Australia Day.

**St. Kentigern Mungo** - Bishop, founder of the See of Glasgow, born about 518; died at Glasgow, 13 January, 603. His mother Thenaw was daughter of a British prince, Lothus (from whom the province of Lothian was called); his father's name is unknown. According to Jocelyn's life of Kentigern, the saint was born at Culross in Fife, and brought up until manhood by St. Serf (or Servanus) at his monastery there; but Skene shows that this connection between the two saints involves an anachronism, as St. Serf really belongs to the following century. At the age of twenty-five we find Kentigern (the name means "head chief", but he was popularly known as Mungo — in Cymric, Mwyn-gu, or "dear one"), beginning his missionary labours at Cathures, on the Clyde, the site of modern Glasgow. The Christian King of Strathclyde, Roderick Hael, welcomed the saint, and procured his consecration as bishop, which took place about 540. For some thirteen years he laboured in the district, living a most austere life in a cell at the confluence of the Clyde and the Molendinar, and making many converts by his holy example and his preaching. A large community grew up around him, became known as "Clasgu" (meaning the "dear family") and ultimately grew into the town and city of Glasgow. About 553 a strong anti-Christian movement in Strathclyde compelled Kentigern to leave the district, and he retired to Wales, staying for a time with St. David at Menevia, and afterwards founding a large monastery at Llanelwy, now St. Asaph's, of which he appointed the holy monk Asaph superior in succession to himself. In 573 the battle of Arthuret secured the triumph of the Christian cause in Cumbria, and Kentigern, at the earnest appeal of King Roderick, returned thither, accompanied by many of his Welsh disciples. For eight years he fixed his see at Hoddam in Dumfriesshire, evangelizing thence the districts of Galloway and Cumberland. About 581 he finally returned to Glasgow, and here, a year or two later, he was visited by St. Columba, who was at that time labouring in Strathtay. The two saints embraced, held long converse, and exchanged their pastoral staves. Kentigern was buried on the spot where now stands the beautiful cathedral dedicated in his honour. His remains are said still to rest in the crypt.

‡ **Scripture Readings - Hebrews 11:8, 11:16; Mark 9:33-41; Romans 8:28-39; Luke 6:17-23** ‡

**14 / 27 January — St Sava, Archbishop of Serbia** - The son of Stefan Nemanja, the great Serbian national leader, he was born in 1169. As a young man he yearned for the spiritual life, which led him to flee to the Holy Mountain, where he became a monk and with rare zeal followed all the ascetic practices. Nemanja followed his son's example and himself went to the Holy Mountain, where he lived and ended his days as the monk Simeon. Sava obtained the independence of the Serbian Church from the Emperor and the Patriarch, and became its first archbishop. He, together, with his father, built the monastery of Hilandar and after that many other monasteries, churches and schools throughout the land of Serbia. He travelled to the Holy Land on two occasions, on pilgrimage to the holy places there. He made peace among his brothers, who were in conflict over their rights, and also between the Serbs and their



neighbours. In creating the Serbian Church, he created the Serbian state and Serbian culture along with it. He brought peace to all the Balkan peoples, working for the good of all, for which he was venerated and loved by all on the Balkan peninsula. He gave a Christian soul to the people of Serbia, which survived the fall of the Serbian state. He died in Trnovo in the reign of King Asen, being taken ill after the Divine Liturgy on the Feast of the Theophany in 1236. King Vladislav took his body to Mileseva, whence Sinan Pasha removed it, burning it at Vracar in Belgrade on April 27th, 1595.

**St. Nina, enlightener of Georgia** - Hearing of the Georgian people, the maiden Nina desired from her early years to travel to Georgia and baptise the Georgians. The Mother of God appeared to her and promised her that she would take her to that land. When the Lord opened the path to her, the young Nina indeed went to Georgia, where she very quickly gained the love of the people. She baptised Mirian, King of Georgia, his wife Nana and their son Bakar, who then zealously aided Nina in her missionary efforts. Nina travelled throughout Georgia in the course of her life, and succeeded in bringing all the people to the Christian faith—and this during a time of fearful persecution of Christians by the Emperor Diocletian. She rested from her many labours and entered into peace in the Lord in the year 335. Her grave is in a church in Samtavro. She performed many miracles both during her lifetime and after her death.

**Our Holy Fathers, the Martyrs of Sinai and Raithu** - These holy fathers were killed by the Saracens, those of Sinai in the fourth century and the others in the fifth century.

‡ **Scripture Readings - Matthew 10:1-8 (Matins Gospel); Ephesians 5:1-8; Luke 14:1-11; 1 Corinthians 4:9-16 (St. Nina); Matthew 25:1-13 (St. Nina) ‡**

### WORDS OF WISDOM

We believers in Christ, having been gathered from the Gentiles, had been taken captive by the devil, though we were creatures of God We were sold out to the demonic powers. Into this circumstance our Lord Jesus Christ came bearing the baggage of captivity, as Ezekiel says, 'and, covering his head so that his adversaries would not know him,' preaching remission to those who had been taken captive and release to those held in chains. ... After Christ freed us, we were snatched out of an old captivity into a new freeing captivity [to Christ], as he led us with him into heaven.

*St. Jerome. EPISTLE TO THE EPHESIANS 2.4.8.5*