

SAINT LUKE THE EVANGELIST GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH



JULY 18, 2010

THE SUNDAY OF THE HOLY FATHERS

The Holy Martyr Emilian, a Slav, suffered for Christ during the reign of the emperor Julian the Apostate (361-363). Julian wanted to restore in the Roman empire the cult of the pagan gods, and he circulated an edict throughout all the regions, according to which all Christians would be subject to death.

The city of Dorostolum, situated on the banks of the River Dunaj (Danube), where St Emilian lived, was governed by an official named Capitolinus. The imperial edict was read in the city square. The people of Dorostolum said that there were no Christians in the city.

St Emilian was a slave of the local city-head, and he was secretly a Christian. Emboldened by the harsh edict, St Emilian snuck into the pagan temple, he destroyed statues of the idols with a hammer, he overturned the altars and the candle-stands, and then emerged without notice. But soon the pagans discovered, that the pagan-temple was in ruins. An angry crowd began to beat up a certain Christian, who by chance happened by. St Emilian then shouted out loudly, that they should not lay hold of that innocent man, and then he said that he himself had wrecked the pagan-temple.

They seized him and led him for judgment to Capitolinus. By order of the official, St Emilian was for a long time beaten mercilessly, and then he was condemned to burning. Thrown into a bon-fire, he did not perish, but rather the flames burnt many of the pagans standing about. And when the bon-fire had gone out, St Emilian lay down upon the dying embers and with a prayer gave up his spirit to the Lord. At Constantinople afterwards there was built a church in honor of the holy Martyr Emilian, where they transferred his relics.

The Holy Martyr Hyacinthus was born into a pious Christian family in the city of Amastridea (now Amastra in Anatolia). An angel which appeared gave him his name. As a three-year-old boy St Hyacinthus asked God that a dead infant might be resurrected. The Lord hearkened to his childish prayer, and the dead one arose. Both lads afterwards grew up together, and they lived an ascetic life.

St Hyacinthus once noticed how the pagans were worshipping a tree, and so he chopped it down. For this they subjected him to harsh tortures. They smashed out all his teeth, and having bound him with rope, they dragged him along the ground and threw him in prison. It was there that the holy sufferer departed to the Lord.

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AT THE SMALL ENTRANCE WE SING

APOLYTIKION. MODE 7.

By means of Your Cross, O Lord, You abolished death. To the robber You opened Paradise. The lamentation of the myrrh-bearing women You transformed, and You gave Your Apostles the order to proclaim to all that You had risen, O Christ our God, and granted the world Your great mercy.

APOLYTIKION OF THE FATHERS. MODE 8.

Supremely blessed are You, O Christ our God. You established the holy Fathers upon the earth as beacons, and through them You have guided us all to the true Faith, O greatly merciful One, glory be to You.

APOLYTIKION FOR THE CHURCH. MODE 5.

The holy Apostle, the All-hymned Luke, * who is acknowledged by the Church of Christ * as the recorder of the Acts of the Apostles, * and the splendid author of the Gospel of Christ. * Let us praise with sacred hymns as a physician, * who heals the infirmities of man, * and the ailments of nature, * who cleanses spiritual wounds, and prays unceasingly for our souls.

KONTAKION. MODE 2.

O Protection of Christians that cannot be put to shame, mediation unto the creator most constant: O despise not the voices of those who have sinned; but be quick, O good one, to come unto our aid, who in faith cry unto you: Hasten to intercession and speed to make supplication, O you who ever protects, O Theotokos, those that honor you.

ΑΠΟΛΥΤΙΚΙΟΝ. ΗΧΟΣ ΒΑΡΥΣ.

Κατέλυσας τῷ Σταυρῷ σου τὸν θάνατον. ἠνέωξας τῷ Ληστῇ τὸν Παράδεισον. τῶν Μυροφόρων τὸν θρήνον μετέβαλες. καὶ τοῖς σοῖς Ἀποστόλοις κηρύττειν ἐπέταξας. ὅτι ἀνέστης Χριστὲ ὁ Θεός, παρέχων τῷ κόσμῳ τὸ μέγα ἔλεος.

ΑΠΟΛΥ. ΤΩΝ ΠΑΤΕΡΩΝ. ΗΧΟΣ ΠΛ Δ.

Υπερδεδοξασμένος εἶ, Χριστὲ ὁ Θεός ἡμῶν, ὁ φωστῆρας ἐπὶ γῆς τοὺς Πατέρας ἡμῶν θεμελιώσας, καὶ δι' αὐτῶν πρὸς τὴν ἀληθινὴν πίστιν, πάντας ἡμᾶς ὀδηγήσας. πολυεύπλαρχνε, δόξα σοι.

ΑΠΟΛΥΤΙΚΙΟΝ ΤΟΥ ΝΑΟΥ. ΠΛ. Α΄.

Λουκάν τον πανύμνητον καὶ ἅγιον Ἀπόστολον, τὸν τῆς Ἐκκλησίας γνωστὸν συνθέτην τῶν Πράξεων τῶν Ἀποστόλων, τόν τε σεμνὸν τοῦ Εὐαγγελίου Χριστοῦ ὑπομνηματιστήν, ἀξίως τιμήσωμεν ὕμνοις ὁσίοις, ὡς νοσημάτων ἀνθρωπίνων καὶ φυσικῶν ἀσθενειῶν θεραπευτήν, τὸν καθαίροντα πληγὰς τοῦ πνεύματος, καὶ ἀδιαλείπτως πρεσβεύοντα ὑπὲρ τῶν ψυχῶν ἡμῶν.

ΚΟΝΤΑΚΙΟΝ. ΗΧΟΣ Β΄.

Προστασία τῶν Χριστιανῶν καταίσχυντε, μεσιτεία πρὸς τὸν Ποιητὴν μετέθετε, μὴ παρίδης ἀμαρτωλῶν δεήσεων φωνάς, λλὰ πρόφθασον, ὡς γαθή, εἰς τὴν βοήθειαν ἡμῶν, τῶν πιστῶς κραυγαζόντων σοι. Τάχυνον εἰς πρεσβείαν, καὶ σπεῦσον εἰς ἰκεσίαν, ἢ προστατεύουσα εἰ, Θεοτόκε, τῶν τιμῶντων σε.

THE READINGS OF THE DAY

EPISTLE READING

THE LETTER OF PAUL TO TITUS

3:8-15

TITUS, my son, the saying is sure. I desire you to insist on these things, so that those who have believed in God may be careful to apply themselves to good deeds; these are excellent and profitable to men. But avoid stupid controversies, genealogies, dissensions, and quarrels over the law, for they are unprofitable and futile. As for a man who is factious, after admonishing him once or twice, have nothing more to do with him, knowing that such a person is perverted and sinful; he is self-condemned. When I send Artemas or Tychicos to you, do your best to come to me at Nicopolis, for I have decided to spend the winter there. Do your best to speed Zenas the lawyer and Apollos on their way; see that they lack nothing. And let our people learn to apply themselves to good deeds, so as to help cases of urgent need, and not to be unfruitful. All who are with me send greeting to you. Greet those who love us in the faith. Grace be with you all. Amen.

GOSPEL READING

MATTHEW 5:14-19

The Lord said to his disciples, “You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hid. Nor do men light a lamp and put it under a bushel, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven. Think not that I have come to abolish the law and the prophets; I have come not to abolish them but to fulfill them. For truly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, not an iota, not a dot, will pass from the law until all is accomplished. Whoever then relaxes one of the least of these commandments and teaches men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but he who does them and teaches them shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.”

“*But since the Father is the principle and source, not because of the nature of the divinity, but because of the property of the hypostasis (and the hypostasis of the Father does not include the hypostasis of the Son), the Son cannot be a principle or source. The Filioque actually divides the hypostasis of the Father into two parts, or else the hypostasis of the Son becomes a part of the hypostasis of the Father. By the Filioque teaching, the Holy Spirit is two degrees or steps removed from the Father, and thus has a much lower rank than the Son. If the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Son also, then of the three Divine Hypostases, the Holy Spirit alone has more than one origin or principle.*”

ANNOUNCEMENTS

**UPCOMING CHURCH SERVICES:
NO GREAT VESPERS THIS WEEK**

**UPCOMING CLASSES:
CATECHISM CLASS WILL RESUME LATER IN THE SUMMER**

WELCOME FR. THOMAS

Please welcome Fr. Thomas George who is celebrating the Divine Liturgy during Fr. Michael's recovery from knee surgery.

DONATIONS REQUESTED

A donation box has been placed in the Narthex for our Long-range planning study - gifts of any amount are greatly appreciated towards the completion of this project.

STEWARDSHIP STATISTICS

We have received 63 pledge cards totalling \$86,840. Thank you to all who have generously committed to the future of our parish!

REMEMBER THE CHURCH THIS SUMMER

If you are planning to travel during the summer months, do not forget the needs of the Church. Our financial obligations continue, even when you are traveling. Prior to leaving town, please remember to send your stewardship offerings to the Church.

FOOD BANK

The Parish always accepts donations on non-perishable food items for distribution by the Mid-Missouri Food Bank. Please place items in the purple barrel in the narthex. We also accept donations of butter / margarine for St. Francis House.

SYNAXARION, *Continued*

Saint Pambo lived the ascetic life in the Nitrian desert in Egypt. St Anthony the Great (January 17) said, that the Monk Pambo by the fear of God inspired within himself the Holy Spirit. And the Monk Pimen the Great (August 27) said: "We beheld three things in Father Pambo: hunger every day, silence and handcrafts". The Monk Theodore the Studite termed St Pambo "exalted in deed and in word."

At the beginning of his monasticism, St Pambo heard the verses from the 38th [39th] Psalm of David: "preserve mine path, that I sin not by my tongue". These words sank deep into his soul, and he attempted to follow them always. Thus, when they asked him about something, he answered only after long pondering and prayer. He would say, "I must think first, and perhaps I can, in time, give an answer, with God's help." St Pambo was a model of a lover of work for his disciples. Each day he worked until exhausted, and by the bread acquired by his own toil.

St Pambo was distinguished by his humility, but together with this he highly esteemed the vocation of monk and he taught the laypeople to be respectful of monastics, who often converse with God.

It was said that sometimes St Pambo's face shone like lightning, as did the face of Moses. Yet, speaking to the brethren who stood about his deathbed, St Pambo said: "I go to the Lord as one who has not yet begun to serve Him." He died at the age of 70.

DOGMA AND DOGMATICS:
ON COGNIZANCE AND FAITH: COGNIZANCE «IN PERSON»:
PART 2 : THE ELEMENT OF LOVE, CONTINUED...

By Metropolitan John of Pergamus

Before closing the topic of Gnosiology, we need to clear up the issue of negation, based on everything that we have talked about. With the pretext of Lossky's writings in his "Mystic Theology" where he has mainly referred to the Cappadocian Fathers and Saint Gregorios of Palamas, the ignorance aspect has become overstressed. Indeed, in their task of refuting Eunomian theories, the Cappadocian Fathers had overstressed the idea that God could not become known, no matter how close one may seem to have approached Him: " Even if one becomes greater than him (Paul) and reaches even closer to God, having attained a smaller distance from Him and from perfect knowledge, or even if he has surpassed us with regard to the complex and humble and earth-infested alloy...." (Gregorios the Theologian). But we must not forget the following, basic points:

a) the ignorance of God is described by the Fathers as "incomprehensibility" or the "incomprehensible" notion of God. It does not therefore imply a denial of any kind of knowledge of God (if this were the case, then the Lord's words 'so that they may know You as the only true God' etc would have no meaning); it rather implies a special kind of knowledge, that of "comprehensibility" which is also an impossible thing. This kind of knowledge – which Eunomians allowed – is the kind that we analyzed above as the "knowledge of things", and we saw how and why it cannot be applied in the case of God.

b) That which the Fathers do not accept, is the knowledge of the nature or of the essence of God; to actually comprehend the "first and unalterable nature, as it is known within the Trinity" (Gregorios the Theologian). This doesn't mean that the Fathers refuse any talk of God as a Trinity. By relating the nature

or the essence of God with the Father, the Eunomians caused confusion by admitting that, if we could know God as the Father, we can also know the nature of God (since divine essence and Father are fully aligned notions). The distinction between essence and the Father, on which the Cappadocian Fathers insisted, ruled out any confusion. Thus, by saying that we do not know God in essence, does not automatically imply that we do not know Him as the Father (or as a Trinity of persons). And reversely, to say that we know God as the Father, does not automatically imply that we know Him in essence or by nature.

All of these indicate that the foregoing analysis is in accordance with patristic gnosiology: that God can only be known "in person", as persons, and not by nature or in essence. Patristic literature does not provide us with any existential analysis of what it means to know "in person" or as persons. It does, however, furnish us with the basic principle that there is a fundamental distinction gnosologically between nature and the person, since there is absolutely no way of knowing the nature of God, whereas it is possible to acknowledge His personal existence. Subsequently, negation that refers to the nature of God should not be generalized as negation and incomprehensibility with regard to His personal existence.

Beyond this general principle of distinction between the essence of God – something that is utterly inconceivable - and His personal-triadic existence which is made known to us through His Son in the Spirit, the Fathers do not offer us – as we said – an analysis of what it means to know God "in the person of Jesus Christ" and as a Trinity of persons. This analysis was not deemed necessary in the years of the Fathers, but that doesn't mean it should never be done

over the centuries. On the contrary, it is an obligation of Dogmatics – as we said during the first lessons – to proceed to interpret dogmas, provided it doesn't betray or distort the spirit of the Fathers. That is what all the greater Fathers did: they interpreted their predecessors, according to the needs of their own time, and they sought to analyze basic terminology.

One such necessity that historical needs imposed with regard to Gnosiology was, during the Patristic years, the distinction between the essence and the energy of God. This distinction, which appears somewhat hazily in Saint Athanasios and more clearly in the Cappadocian Fathers, is extensively developed by Saint Gregorios of Palamas, as we know. In this way, the Patristic principle of the "incomprehensibility" of God's essence is preserved, and the energy or the energies of God are offered as a basis of gnosiology.

Thus, negation is again confined to the essence of God. The persons, as well as the energies of God, which are both uncreated, allow us to know God and to theologize. But in this case, as we saw from the preceding analysis, cognizance cannot be perceived as comprehension. It is a kind of knowledge that needs analyzing, if the Fathers' aspect were to be interpreted. This is the analysis that we attempted here.

ON FAITH

In the previous lesson we completed our examination of cognizance. And of course with respect to the cognizance of God, we shall repeat the basic points, because they are related to the things we shall be discussing today. I would like to remind you that cognizance (knowledge) has an ontological content, which means that it includes the identity of beings; that is, I acknowledge the existence of a being.

This kind of identification, of recognition of a being's existence: that this being exists and not another; that this is this, and not another; that this here is this table, and not the other table. "Identifying" does not simply imply that this being is a being, but that it is this being and not any other being. We furthermore

said that knowledge, as a means of identification of beings, is two kinds:

a) It is the knowledge of things, i.e., of beings which appear as objects before us, which are given, which we identify because we are compelled to identify them; we identify them, we recognize them, by the method of isolating them from other objects; by describing their characteristic attributes based on the broader experience which we have. We place them inside a lattice of relationships, along with other objects that we recognize, so that, from "things", we make them "utilities", which we can utilize. This kind of knowledge cannot apply to God, for the obvious reasons that were explained.

b) We now look at the other kind of knowledge, which we described as the knowledge pertaining to persons, that is, the identifying of a being in a state of freedom and love. "In a state of freedom" means that this being does not compel us to acknowledge its presence; that although it has certain characteristics and attributes which we may recognize, it willingly reveals its presence to us, and we likewise willingly identify it and acknowledge its existence. Knowledge is not forced on us in this case; we acquire this knowledge in a state of independence. "In a state of love" means that we acquire this identification of the other, within a loving relationship. The other being is absolutely essential to our own existence; it is an existential interdependence. Thus, we come to know someone – God in this case – not in the form of an impersonal power that imposes His presence on us because of His attributes – His powers, let's say – but, we come to know Him as a person Who comprises part of a loving relationship that is an integral and necessary part of our very existence. And we subsequently recognize Him because He willingly reveals Himself and not because we are led there by our knowledge of the world (as in Platonism), or because of a logical observation or persuasion. It is not about a knowledge derived from a logical persuasion.

We also said that this knowledge of God is offered to us within a loving relationship in which God is identified eternally, He is known eternally, despite us and despite the world; and this loving relationship is the relationship between the Father and the Son. We therefore identify God in Christ, in the Son alone, by becoming a part of this existing relationship ourselves. Only the Son knows the Father. Whether in essence or by nature, we cannot know God, nor should we seek to thus know Him, because that would imply knowing Him compulsorily, i.e., based on His attributes. This is what is implied, when we say that God is known by Christ only. But because this method of knowing God also involves the factor of love, of a loving relationship, God is consequently known within the framework of a community that is created by the Holy Spirit, and that is why we cannot get to know God without Christ and without the Holy Spirit, Who shapes this lattice of loving relationships into a community.

On the basis of these observations, we shall proceed to examine the meaning of faith; starting from today, we shall examine the main elements of Dogmatics, as presented in the Symbol of Faith (the Creed). This structure of Dogmatics is the only correct structure. If we stray from this structure, we systematize the dogmas on the basis of logical categories, e.g., when we have dogmatic concepts such as “salvation” etc., and we process all these meanings and make them part of a system, Dogmatics becomes a system of logic. However, if we examine the Creed, which, as we said, is not a logical structure, but is a structure based on existential relations that are introduced from the moment of baptism, and especially during the divine Eucharist, then we can consider ourselves on safe ground.

Well, the Creed – the Symbol of Faith - commences with “I believe....”. What is the meaning behind “I believe”? The problem with the relationship between knowledge and faith as you probably know, is one of the basic problems; but, the overall problematics behind it have their roots in certain prerequi-

sites that developed in the West, which do not apply to us. The matter of knowledge and faith is for many a dilemma. You either know, or you believe. Whoever believes, forsakes knowledge : this is the dilemma of “believe, and do not inquire” that is often quoted. There is a perception that knowledge precedes faith, or the reverse; that faith precedes knowledge and that at any rate it seeks the logic therein, as Augustine had said. This same theme, is a variation on the problem which, in a way, we have already touched on, i.e., if love precedes knowledge or knowledge love. In other words, can we love something that we do not know?

The point had already been raised by Augustine. An answer was also given, and it had become prevalent in the West, to be later developed by Thomas Aquinas in person, as well as by other, major Western thinkers. Their stance was that if you don't know, you cannot love; that we cannot love something that we know nothing about. Therefore, philosophically this would mean that the relationship that we create with a being, must have the prerequisite of objective recognition of that being. All of this, rests on the premise that knowledge is a matter of mental conception, while love is something emotional.

But, we saw in the previous lessons that things are not like that for us; that in other words, you cannot know unless you love, as we saw in the Apostle Paul, in John's 1st Epistle, etc. However, we must elucidate this somehow, because it isn't proper to distinguish between knowledge preceding love, or love preceding knowledge. This is equally wrong; we do not love, in order to attain knowledge. The correct thing to say – as has become evident from what we have said up to now – is that these two are identical, i.e., that knowledge is love and love is knowledge. Because, when love is comprehended as a relationship between persons, and not as an emotion or a natural attribute, it is then that this relationship is created, in which the other's identity is revealed. And that is the meaning of “knowledge”: the revealing, the recognition of a being's identity. Hence, knowledge becomes

actual, through a relationship of this kind, either through love, or with love, or within love. It follows that knowledge and love do not oppose one another; neither does one precede the other, however, they do relate to one another.

One could say the same about faith. Faith and knowledge are basically related. They are the same thing. Let us examine this more detail. I would like us to firstly bear in mind the historical prerequisites of that which we call “Symbol of Faith”. We have to refer back to the first lessons once again, basically to the liturgical experience of the Church.

What does “I believe” signify, within the framework of the Symbol of Faith?

As you may perhaps know, during the ancient Church’s baptismal rite that was delivered to us in the 2nd century by Justinian (and later by Cyril of Jerusalem in more detail), in order for someone to be baptized, they must first be submitted to certain exorcisms; these exorcisms were accompanied by an invitation to the person being baptized to turn away from the West, and to face the East. This is a very important liturgical rite, because it denotes an act of reversal, of changing one’s position, from West to East. Further along, we shall see what meaning this about-face towards the East carries. However, the reversal itself signifies that in order for a person to declare “I believe”, he must firstly change his stance towards beings. Consequently, Faith is basically a stance that a person takes towards existence, and this stance is most assuredly the opposite of the stance that he takes with his biological existence. When man is born, he takes a stance towards life, towards beings, towards God. Well, this must be overturned, and afterwards, the about-face towards the East will take place (we shall see what this means).

You most certainly cannot say “I believe”, if you remain fixed in the same direction that you have taken from the moment of your biological birth.

Before analyzing this matter of “towards the East”, let’s take a look at the other basic aspect of this liturgical rite, which is, that the words “I believe” are in actual fact a response to a question. They can never be something that originates on its own, from whichever stance or whichever thought or placement that man may personally have. One must reply, to a question that is posed by others. The others, who pose the question, are the community of the church. Consequently, it is not possible for a person to state “I believe”, outside the framework of the community of the church. A person cannot develop faith by remaining locked up, alone in his room; it is only possible within the community that poses this question. Thus, the words “I believe” are a reply to a question, and they cannot be presumed to be without a question.

The second basic element is the one that involves the “about-face towards the East”, which we shall see is of immense importance. As you know, liturgically the East is the direction towards which the prayers of the early Christians were offered, because it is from that direction that Christ’s coming was expected. It was therefore the ultimate - eschatological let’s say – point of reference within the church’s liturgical rites. The turn towards the East therefore signified that we turn towards that point from which we anticipate the End of Time to enter and to materialize. From this aspect, Faith could therefore be viewed as an about-face turn towards the End of Time.

Now note carefully how, on the basis of these observations, the definition of the term “faith” becomes more comprehensible, as seen in the Epistle to Hebrews. You know that the only systematic definition of “faith” that we have, is the one found in the Epistle to Hebrews, chapter 11 verse (a) : “...faith is the substance/hypostasis of things hoped for, and the grasping of things not visible..”

To Be Continued...