

SAINT LUKE THE EVANGELIST GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH



JUNE 13, 2010

THIRD SUNDAY OF MATTHEW

The Holy Martyr Aquilina, a native of the Phoenician city of Byblos, suffered under the emperor Diocletian (284-305). Her parents raised her in Christian piety. When the girl was only twelve years old, she persuaded a pagan friend to convert to Christ. One of the servants of the imperial governor Volusian accused her of teaching others not to follow the religion of their fathers. The girl firmly confessed her faith in Christ before the governor and said that she would not renounce Him. Volusian tried to influence the young confessor through persuasion and by flattery, but seeing her confidence, he ordered her to be tortured.

They struck her upon the face, then they stripped her and beat her with whips. The torturer asked, "Where then is your God? Let Him come and take you out of my hands".

The saint answered, "The Lord is here with me invisibly, and the more I suffer, the more strength and endurance will He give me."

They drilled through the martyr's ears with heated metal rods. The holy virgin fell down as if dead. The torturer thought that the girl had actually died, and he gave orders to throw her body outside the city to be eaten by dogs.

By night a holy angel appeared to St Aquilina, roused her and said, "Arise and be healed. Go and denounce Volusian, so that he and his plans may come to nothing."

The martyr went to the court of the governor and stood before Volusian. Seeing St Aquilina, he called for his servants and ordered them to keep watch over her until morning.

In the morning he sentenced St Aquilina to death, saying that she was a sorceress who did not obey the imperial decrees. When they led the saint to execution, she prayed and gave thanks to God for allowing her to suffer for His Holy Name.

A voice was heard in answer to her prayer, summoning her to the heavenly Kingdom. Before the executioner could carry out the sentence, the martyr gave up her spirit to God (+ 293). The executioner feared to disobey the governor's orders, so he cut off her head although she was already dead.

Christians piously buried the martyr's body. Later, her relics were taken to Constantinople and placed in a church named for her.

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AT THE SMALL ENTRANCE WE SING

ΑΠΟΛΥΤΙΚΙΟΝ. ΜΟΔΕ 2.

When You descended unto death, O Lord who yourself are immortal Life, then did You mortify Hades by the lightning flash of Your Divinity. Also when You raised the dead from the netherworld, all the Powers of the heavens were crying out: O Giver of life, Christ our God, glory be to You.

ΑΠΟΛΥΤΙΚΙΟΝ FOR THE CHURCH. ΜΟΔΕ 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.

ΚΟΝΤΑΚΙΟΝ. ΜΟΔΕ 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 Β.

Οτε κατήλθες πρὸς τὸν θάνατον, ἡ Ζωὴ ἢ ἀθάνατος, τότε τὸν ἄδην ἐνέκρωσας τῇ ἀστραπῇ τῆς Θεότητος· ὅτε δὲ καὶ τοὺς τεθνεώτας ἐκ τῶν καταχθονίων ἀνέστησας, πᾶσαι αἱ δυνάμεις τῶν ἐπουρανίων ἐκραυγάζον· Ζωοδότα Χριστέ ὁ Θεὸς ἡμῶν δόξα σοι.

ΑΠΟΛΥΤΙΚΙΟΝ ΤΟΥ ΝΑΟΥ. ΠΛ. Α΄.

Λουκάν τον πανύμνητον καὶ ἅγιον Ἀπόστολον, τὸν τῆς Ἐκκλησίας γνωστὸν συνθέτην τῶν Πράξεων τῶν Ἀποστόλων, τὸν 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, ἡμεσιτεία πρὸς τὸν Ποιητὴν μετᾶθετε, μὴ παρίδης ἀμαρτωλῶν δεήσεων φωνάς, ἀλλὰ πρόφθασον, ὡς γαθὴ, εἰς τὴν βοήθειαν ἡμῶν, τῶν πιστῶς κραυγάζόντων σοι. Τάχυνον εἰς πρεσβείαν, καὶ σπεῦσον εἰς ἰκεσίαν, ἡ προστατεύουσα εἰ, Θεοτόκε, τῶν τιμώντων σε.

“*The Holy Trinity is the God of Love. The love of which the Gospel treats is the uncreated life-force of unoriginate Divinity. The property of this Love is to unite us in very being. He who dwells in this unity with God gradually grows to realize what is happening to him... and this natural growth in the Spirit through dwelling in the Divine realm by keeping Christ’s commandments.*”

THE READINGS OF THE DAY

EPISTLE READING

THE LETTER OF PAUL TO THE
ROMANS 5:1-11

BRETHREN, since we are justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Through him we have obtained access to this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in our hope of sharing the glory of God. More than that, we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not disappoint us, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit which has been given to us. While we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. Why, one will hardly die for a righteous man -- though perhaps for a good man one will dare even to die. But God shows his love for us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us. Since, therefore, we are now justified by his blood, much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God. For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his life. Not only so, but we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received our reconciliation.

GOSPEL READING

MATTHEW 6:22-33

The Lord said, "The eye is the lamp of the body. So, if your eye is sound, your whole body will be full of light; but if your eye is not sound, your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light in you is darkness, how great is the darkness! No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon. Therefore I tell you, do not be anxious about your life, what you shall eat or what you shall drink, nor about your body, what you shall put on. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? Look at the birds of the air: they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? And which of you by being anxious can add one cubit to his span of life? And why are you anxious about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they neither toil nor spin; yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is alive and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not much more clothe you, O men of little faith? Therefore do not be anxious, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' For the Gentiles seek all these things; and your heavenly Father knows you need them all. But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things shall be yours as well."

ANNOUNCEMENTS

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

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

FR. MICHAEL ON VACATION

Please welcome Fr. Thomas George who is substituting for Fr. Michael, who will be on vacation from June 7 - July 1. If you have an emergency, please call Fr. Joseph at (314) 705-1468.

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 Andronicus was born in Rostov, and was a disciple of St Sergius of Radonezh (September 25), and received the monastic tonsure from him. Adorned with every virtue, St Andronicus lived at Holy Trinity Monastery for many years.

One day, the holy Metropolitan Alexis (February 12) visited the monastery to speak with St Sergius about founding a monastery in fulfillment of a vow he had made when he was saved from shipwreck. St Alexis wished to establish a cenobitic monastery dedicated to the Icon of Christ Not-Made-By Hands (August 16), and he wanted St Andronicus to become the igumen. St Sergius agreed to this proposal, and the monastery was completed between 1358-1361.

St Andronicus governed the monastery for many years, attracting many monks to that place. Among the notable monks of that monastery was St Andrew Rublev (July 4).

St Andronicus fell asleep in the Lord in 1395, and was succeeded as igumen by his disciple St Sava of Moscow.

DOGMA AND DOGMATICS:

THE TASK OF THE CHURCH IN THE FORMULATION OF DOGMAS & ON COGNIZANCE AND FAITH

By Metropolitan John of Pergamus

From what we have said so far, it has become obvious that:

A. Dogmas acquire their prestige from the constancy that they display towards the initial form of existential relationship between God and the world, which is not only revealed as a noetic “knowledge”, but is realized as a communion between God, the world and mankind in Christ; also in the experience of the first Disciples and apostolic communities, and as recorded in the New Testament.

B. In order for the dogmas to have prestige and authority, it is imperative that the eucharist community functions properly; in other words, it must be built properly, with the elements that we mentioned previously, and it must function as a community that consists of all the charismas and all the social classes. Consequently, the prestige of the dogmas is not imposed from on high, in the name of an authority that is perceived juridically (=as already existent by definition in an institution), but is made evident and is consolidated as the “Amen” of the entire community. Thus, from the moment that the dogma has been completed in this manner and is consolidated in the conscience of the Church, its prestige becomes irrevocable, and the only thing that is permissible from then on, is the experiencing and the interpretation of that dogma (by dogmatic theology, by ascetic living, by hymnography, hagiography, etc..).

Thus, whatever was “decreed” (in the above sense) as a “dogma” has absolute prestige and authority, and no pursuant synod or theology is allowed to “rescind” it, only to interpret it, perhaps formulating new dogmas, which, however, in order to become dogmas with prestige and authority of an equal stature to the preceding dogmas, must

fulfill the same prerequisites that we mentioned above.

C. From the above, we can comprehend the meaning of infallibility in the dogmas (and the Church). To the Orthodox, infallibility is not contained in any institution per se (for example in synods or in bishops), not even in any moral perfection or individual experience, or its acknowledgement through experience. The saints or the fathers, as individuals, are not automatically and by definition infallible. Infallibility is the result of the “communion of the Holy Spirit”, Who “composes the wholeness of the institution of the Church”. Therefore, no-one as an individual can be infallible; in other words, on his own, without any reference to the other charismas and functions of the Church. But, each individual can empirically express the truth of the Church as formulated by the synods of the bishops in an “infallible” way, provided the individual is faithful to this truth (as, for example, a hymnographer, or a hagiographer or an ascete or a martyr or an ordinary Christian who lives faithfully and humbly as a member of the eucharist body of the Church.)

D. Especially in the case of dogmatic theology, it is obvious that it cannot claim infallibility in the same sense that the decreed dogmas do. Many theologians confuse the dogmas with the theology of the Fathers when speaking of authority: “This was stated by Father so-and-so, therefore it must be infallible”. This can lead to a dangerous confusion. In order for a patristic position to acquire full authority, it must be passed through the furnace of “the communion of the Holy Spirit” that we described above, and neither the holiness nor the personal prestige of that Holy Father qualify enough to make it of an equal stature to the dogmas. For ex-

ample, Athanasios the Great had correctly phrased the faith of the Church, before the 1st Ecumenical Synod (Council) had convened to dogmatize. But it was only when the teaching of the 1st Ecumenical Synod was established in the Church, that Athanasios' theology was rendered an infallible "dogma", with a compulsory, overall acceptance.

Of course the question is raised, as to what happens in those periods when ecumenical synods are inoperative and dogmas are not decreed. In this case, the Church continues to live and confess the truth of God's Christophany, through various forms of experience and confessions, through the its contemporary Fathers (the Church always has Fathers); the Patristic era did not come to an end in the 9th century, as was predominantly believed by the West.

However, these Fathers interpret the existing dogmas without producing any new ones; in other words, without expecting the overall acceptance by the Ecumenical Church of whatever they say. Thus, in the case of Dogmatics (for all of us who are preoccupied with the holy dogmas as teachers or as students), what we strive for is an (existential) interpretation of the dogmas, which is something that cannot demand any kind of prestige.

It would be somewhat excessive – if not audacious – for a theologian to expect his own interpretation to be the one that fully and validly expresses the interpretation of the dogmas. Every one of us is capable of erring, and that is why we must all be humble enough to listen to each other's views. Without this humility, we are at risk of proclaiming ourselves infallible popes, which is something that often appears in Orthodoxy, whereby each theologian tends to become a "pope". The truth is revealed and is consolidated (=becomes infallible) only through our humble incorporation in the body of the Church, and by resigning ourselves to the communion and the community of the Holy Spirit.

Because God, after all, is recognized only "in the Spirit", through Love. But we shall speak of this in the next chapter on Gnosiology.

The theories on supposed "natural revelation" maintain that man has an inbuilt cognizance (knowledge) of God, which man then further cultivates. In other words, man is born having knowledge of God. Other theories say that there is no "natural revelation", only a direct revelation on God's part. This is a dilemma that developed chiefly among Protestants and Roman Catholics. A leading upholder of the theory that "natural revelation" does not exist, was – and continues to be – in the West : he is Karl Barth.

Like all other issues, this problem does not exist within our Orthodox tradition and mentality. Before we start to talk specifically about the patristic views – the views of Orthodox tradition on the subject of knowing God - I would like to first define the problem: what is cognizance. And we shall begin by approaching the subject entirely objectively – let's say, not as theologians, but as ordinary thinking people, or as scientists, if you wish.

What is cognizance (knowledge) ?

1. Cognizance of things

When we say that I "know" something, for instance: the table, it means that I am behaving in the following way: I am pointing out this table in order to relate it to my person. Aristotle had introduced this basic principle, which became familiar as the "this here" of Aristotle. When you point towards something and you identify it, saying: this (thing) is 'this one' and not something else, you are in fact saying that you know (recognize) it. In other words, knowing always has something to do with some kind of identification. From the moment that the object's identity is lost, then the knowledge of it is also lost. If this table is not this table but another one, then I don't know it. To be unable to identify it means "I cannot recognize it". Consequently, the identity of an object or a being is a necessary prerequisite for cognizance ("knowledge").

Now, how do we identify various objects? (This has to do with the gnosiology of every science. We are not speaking as theologians here, but in general, as we already said). And so, in order to simplify matters, I pose the following question: “In what way do I identify this table, and consequently say that I “know” it?”

A. This includes a negative action to begin with; in other words, I identify this table and I say that it is a table, thus ruling out that it is something else; I am saying that “A” is “A” and that it is not “B”. Therefore, in defining “A”, I try to define what is not “A”, i.e., by excluding another being. When I say it is this, it means it is not that.

B. The second basic action that is contained in the act of cognizance (knowing) is that I am obliged – precisely because I am excluding other objects – to somehow encompass the object of my cognizance; I have to define it. (Pay attention, how the use of words is very important). What is the meaning of the word “define”? The word “define” contains the inference of boundaries, or limits, or terms, which I place around the object. I am indicating it by excluding other objects, but: I am also placing limits around it.

C. The third action that I perform, which is a consequence of the second action, is that I am describing it. (here we have another term of gnosiology, which, however, signifies precisely the relating of an object by the method of isolating it) To describe an object means that I inscribe (write) things around that object and thus create a frame around it. I say that “A” is “A” and not “B”, and in this way, I identify it. Now, how do I go about describing it? In order to describe, I utilize certain properties that the object has; for instance, in order to say that I am describing this table, and that I am identifying it by describing it, I need to give it a form. If it loses its form (as conceded to me by space and time), I will say that this table is another one and not that one. I identify it as being another. Imagine, if space and time were non-existent, and likewise the ability to isolate and to describe on the basis of

the table’s form, thus rendering this table united to the other table to an absolute degree, then, I would no longer be able to know (discern) the specific table. Identity is lost and there will be a confusion of objects. Cognizance (knowledge) will disappear. Consequently, ‘description’ (usage of the limits that space and time place between two objects) is a necessary element and is accomplished on the basis of the object’s attributes (for example its form); this is advanced even further (Aristotle analyzed all of this), with the attributes of objects, which originate from a judgment expressed by the object of cognizance. In other words, I say that this table is square in shape; as cognizance of the table progresses, I can now define its form and say it is square.

But where did I obtain the concept of “square”? It is a concept. Plato would have said it is an idea that we draw from the permanent cosmos of ideas and then apply to tangible objects. Aristotle says that it is not an idea, but merely attributes that the object itself possesses. In other words, the attribute of squareness already resides within the table.

At any rate, for me to say that something is square, I must use a logical shape, which can apply everywhere, and not only to a table. It must also be applicable to other objects. It is not the table only that has a square shape. If we supposed that in all the world, only the table is square in shape, then I could not call it square. I have borrowed the concept of ‘square’ from my experience of another object. We shall examine this eventually; (and you will see how opportune it is, when we apply it to God, which is a very serious issue.)

In any case, we are now at a point where we describe the object by using its different attributes, which, apart from its shape, include thousands of other things. The more attributes that I add, the more I “know” the object. For example, it is square; then I go to the colour. It has that colour. Then I go to various other attributes. And, based on all of these, I end up (and this is our next element) with the ability to utilize the object. And

I can now define the object on the basis of its usefulness. I say that it is a table, because I use it for writing on. Thus, we always have a latent utilitarian aspect to this cognizance, which originates from the identification of an object's attributes, because these attributes are automatically available for usage. This usage may be aesthetic (i.e. it is beautiful), or the object may be altogether exploitable from a realistic aspect, in which case, I use it for a specific purpose.

So, to summarize: For the cognizance (knowledge) of an object, so that we may "know" it, relate it, we must have an exclusion of another object and a description based on the attributes that the object possesses, with the help of time and space.

This is because we do not only relate objects that we perceive with our eyes, but also objects that we don't see. I can relate my father; I know him. He is no longer alive. However, time has made it possible for him to be isolated from me, otherwise, there would have been confusion between my father and myself. If things were totally indistinct, I would never have known my father. I know him, thanks to the distance that time and space have allotted, as in the case of the table. Therefore, this description that I am making with the aid of time and space, is what helps me distinguish that "A" is "A" and not "B". I can therefore "know" things, on the basis of this procedure of description, which leads me to the detection of attributes. And because of this detection of attributes, I am led – as I said – to their evaluation and their utilization. I can say that this table is larger than the other one; it is better than the other one, etc., etc.. This ability to compare, also offers the possibility to utilize it later; to say: "I want a larger table now; this one is not suitable". All this procedure of "knowing" resides inside that which we call "scientific knowledge", which is very much dependent on the cultural level and the cultural era in which one lives, so that one can see which of those attributes comprise useful attributes. For instance, in ancient Greek times, when beauty was important, the attribute of form, of beauty, was the

basic attribute by which one could get to "know" something. In our age, and especially in the West, (where we can see how much theoretical sciences suffer), knowledge is accompanied by usage. If you don't provide something along with knowledge that will be useful and will produce results, you are not providing anything. It is as though you know nothing. This knowledge is of no interest. Why should we speak of God, or of art? What can it "give" us? What are the results? And nowadays, in England, theoretical Schools are in danger of being closed down, because the prevailing philosophy is "how is the industry benefiting from these Schools? Give the money to Schools that produce results." But how is a result produced? From that very procedure of knowledge, which defines and describes and consequently provides the possibility of usage and the benefit through that usage.

Well, that is basically the method one uses in science. Although we must stress here that after Einstein and chiefly after the recent quantum theory, we definitely have a change in the perception that the researcher – the one who "knows" – distances himself from the object of his knowledge. Because, as you are aware, natural sciences today believe that the researcher is somehow entangled in the procedure of 'knowing' his object and affects that knowledge. In other words, to know that this table is square is not simply a matter of detecting the table's attribute of squareness; it is as though the experimenter is affecting the result of the experiment. Therefore, the experiment is not simply "the object" that has certain attributes. We too allot certain attributes. And knowledge is an interaction of our involvement within this procedure, to the point that knowledge is entirely changed. We can't expand on this right now of course. This is just a parenthesis. I would like to say however, that the basic perception, the classical perception prior to Einstein, in short, the common perception of knowledge (cognizance), has those elements that I just described.

To Be Continued...