

SAINT LUKE THE EVANGELIST GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH



MAY 30, 2010

ALL SAINTS

The Sunday following Pentecost is dedicated to All Saints, both those who are known to us, and those who are known only to God. There have been saints at all times, and they have come from every corner of the earth. They were Apostles, Martyrs, Prophets, Hierarchs, Monastics, and Righteous, yet all were perfected by the same Holy Spirit.

The Descent of the Holy Spirit makes it possible for us to rise above our fallen state and to attain sainthood, thereby fulfilling God's directive to "be holy, for I am holy" (Lev. 11:44, 1 Peter 1:16, etc.). Therefore, it is fitting to commemorate All Saints on the first Sunday after Pentecost.

This feast may have originated at an early date, perhaps as a celebration of all martyrs, then it was broadened to include all men and women who had borne witness to Christ by their virtuous lives, even if they did not shed their blood for Him.

St Peter of Damascus, in his "Fourth Stage of Contemplation," mentions five categories of saints: Apostles, Martyrs, Prophets, Hierarchs, and Monastic Saints (*Philokalia* [in English] Vol. 3, p.131). He is actually quoting from the *Octoechos*, Tone 2 for Saturday Matins, kathisma after the first stichology.

St Nicodemus of the Holy Mountain (July 14) adds the Righteous to St Peter's five categories. The list of St Nicodemus is found in his book *The Fourteen Epistles Of St Paul* (Venice, 1819, p. 384) in his discussion of I Corinthians 12:28.

The hymnology for the feast of All Saints also lists six categories: "Rejoice, assembly of the Apostles, Prophets of the Lord, loyal choirs of the Martyrs, divine Hierarchs, Monastic Fathers, and the Righteous..."

Some of the saints are described as Confessors, a category which does not appear in the above lists. Since they are similar in spirit to the martyrs, they are regarded as belonging to the category of Martyrs. They were not put to death as the Martyrs were, but they boldly confessed Christ and came close to being executed for their faith. St Maximus the Confessor (January 21) is such a saint.

The order of these six types of saints seems to be based on their importance to the Church. The Apostles are listed first, because they were the first to spread the Gospel throughout the world.

Continued on page 5...

AT THE SMALL ENTRANCE WE SING

APOLYTIKION. MODE 8.

You descended from on high, O compassion-ate One, and condescended to be buried for three days, so that from the passions You might set us free. Our life and resurrection, O Lord, glory be to You.

APOLYTIKION FOR THE SAINTS. MODE 4.

Your Church is arrayed in the holy blood of Your Martyrs who witnessed throughout the world, as though in purple and fine linen. Through them she cries to You, Christ our God, Send down to Your people Your tender love, grant peace from above to Your com- monwealth, and to our souls Your great mercy.'

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 8.

O Planter of creation, Lord, to You does the entire world bring as an offering the God-bearing martyr Saints, as being nature's first fruits. At their earnest entreaty, keep Your Church in a state of pro- foundest peace, through the Theotokos, O Lord abundantly merciful.

ΑΠΟΛΥΤΙΚΙΟΝ. ΗΧΟΣ ΠΛ. Δ.

Ἐξ ὕψους κατήλθες ὁ εὐσπλαγχνος, Ἐταφήν καταδέξω τριήμερον, ἵνα ἡμᾶς ἐλευθερώσης τῶν παθῶν. ἡ ζωὴ καὶ ἡ ἀνάστασις ἡμῶν, Κύριε δόξα σοι.

ΑΠΟΛΥΤΙΚΙΟΝ ΤΩΝ ΑΓΙΩΝ. ΗΧΟΣ Δ'.

Τῶν ἐν ὄλω τῷ κόσμῳ Μαρτύρων σου, ὡς πορφύραν καὶ βύσσον τὰ αἵματα, ἡ Ἐκκλησία σου στολισαμένη, δι' αὐτῶν βοᾷ σοι, Χριστέ ὁ Θεός, τῷ λαῷ σου τοὺς οἰκτιρισμοὺς σου κατάπεμψον, εἰρήνην τῇ πολιτείᾳ σου δώρησαι, καὶ ταῖς ψυχαῖς ἡμῶν τὸ μέγα ἔλεος.

ΑΠΟΛΥΤΙΚΙΟΝ ΤΟΥ ΝΑΟΥ. ΠΛ. Α'.

Λουκᾶν 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 ἀσθeneiῶν θεραπευτήν, τὸν καθαίροντα πληγὰς τοῦ πνεύματος, καὶ ἀδιαλείπτως πρεσβεύοντα ὑπὲρ τῶν ψυχῶν ἡμῶν.

KONTAKION. ΗΧΟΣ ΠΛ Δ'.

Ἦς ἀπαρχὰς τῆς φύσεως, τῷ φυτουργῷ τῆς κτίσεως, ἡ οἰκουμένη προσφέρει σοι Κύριε, τοὺς θεοφόρους Μάρτυρας, ταῖς αὐτῶν ἰκεσίαις, ἐν εἰρήνῃ βαθεῖα, τὴν Ἐκκλησίαν σου, διὰ τῆς Θεοτόκου συντήρησον, πολυέλεε.

THE READINGS OF THE DAY

EPISTLE READING

THE LETTER OF PAUL TO THE

HEBREWS 11:33-40; 12:1-2

Brethren, all the saints through faith conquered kingdoms, enforced justice, received promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched raging fire, escaped the edge of the sword, won strength out of weakness, became mighty in war, put foreign armies to flight. Women received their dead by resurrection. Some were tortured, refusing to accept release, that they might rise again to a better life. Others suffered mocking and scourging, and even chains and imprisonment. They were stoned, they were sawn in two, they were tempted, they were killed with the sword; they went about in skins of sheep and goats, destitute, afflicted, ill-treated - of whom the world was not worthy - wandering over deserts and mountains and in dens and caves of the earth. And all these, though well attested by their faith, did not receive what was promised, since God had foreseen something better for us, that apart from us they should not be made perfect. Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus the pioneer and perfection of our faith.

GOSPEL READING

MATTHEW 10:32-33; 37-38; 19:27-30

The Lord said to his disciples, "Every one who acknowledges me before men, I also will acknowledge before my Father who is in heaven; but whoever denies me before men, I also will deny him before my Father who is in heaven. He who loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; and he who loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me; and he who does not take his cross and follow me is not worthy of me." Then Peter said in reply, "Lo, we have left everything and followed you. What then shall we have?" Jesus said to them, "Truly, I say to you, in the new world, when the Son of man shall sit on his glorious throne, you who have followed me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. And every one who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or lands, for my name's sake, will receive a hundredfold, and inherit eternal life. But many that are first will be last, and the last first."

ANNOUNCEMENTS

UPCOMING CHURCH SERVICES:

June 5, Great Vespers, 6pm

UPCOMING CLASSES:

CATECHISM CLASS WILL RESUME LATER IN THE SUMMER

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.

THANK YOU

Thank you to the organizers of our annual Golf Tournament and those who worked at the event!

YOUTH EVENT

The Youth will go bowling on June 6 following Divine Services. All are invited to join us.

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!

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.

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.

AN EXCERPT ON

THE CORRECTION OF CHILDREN

By Sister Magdalen

‘Punishment’ in Christian terms is a means of correction. It is a last resort used to reinforce a lesson unlearned. It is better if the personal, pedagogical aspect is clear to the child – if he can see that he has to pay the penalty of his misbehavior, rather than if he simply has to endure something unrelated. We can show even babies that deliberate misbehavior will not be gratified. (We may, for example, simply not pick up the toy thrown down from the high-chair in a bad temper.) One might say to a disobedient child: ‘If you can’t keep away from the plug I’ll have to take you out.’ If a child has carelessly or deliberately broken something, a lesson is better learned by mending it together or contributing pocket money to replace it, rather than, say, foregoing an outing which had previously had no conditions attached to it. The best way to convince a child we mean business is to give all one’s words meaning, and to maintain channels of real communication by giving time for pleasant exchanges that the child accepts and enjoys. It is in this straight dialogue that the healing of ‘problem children’ begins. Then a slightly severe tone will be enough to get the message across. A child who is only spoken to in order to be reprimanded has to try out the adult’s sincerity, and this is not the child’s error. Parent may sometimes reinforce their message by a gesture such as seating a child by force on a chair, or sending him to his bedroom, or depriving him of sweets; any of these could be a cruel gesture, and a source of harm, but not necessarily so. The disposition of the parent is what makes the difference. Punishment should never frighten a child.

SYNAXARION

Continued

The Martyrs come next because of their example of courage in professing their faith before the enemies and persecutors of the Church, which encouraged other Christians to remain faithful to Christ even unto death.

Although they come first chronologically, the Prophets are listed after the Apostles and Martyrs. This is because the Old Testament Prophets saw only the shadows of things to come, whereas the Apostles and Martyrs experienced them firsthand. The New Testament also takes precedence over the Old Testament.

The holy Hierarchs comprise the fourth category. They are the leaders of their flocks, teaching them by their word and their example.

The Monastic Saints are those who withdrew from this world to live in monasteries, or in seclusion. They did not do this out of hatred for the world, but in order to devote themselves to unceasing prayer, and to do battle against the power of the demons. Although some people erroneously believe that monks and nuns are useless and unproductive, St John Climacus had a high regard for them: "Angels are a light for monks, and the monastic life is a light for all men" (LADDER, Step 26:31).

The last category, the Righteous, are those who attained holiness of life while living "in the world." Examples include Abraham and his wife Sarah, Job, Sts Joachim and Anna, St Joseph the Betrothed, St Juliana of Lazarevo, and others.

The feast of All Saints achieved great prominence in the ninth century, in the reign of the Byzantine Emperor Leo VI the Wise (886-911). His wife, the Holy Empress Theophano (Decem-

ber 16) lived in the world, but was not attached to worldly things. She was a great benefactor to the poor, and was generous to the monasteries. She was a true mother to her subjects, caring for widows and orphans, and consoling the sorrowful.

Even before the death of St Theophano in 893 or 894, her husband started to build a church, intending to dedicate it to Theophano, but she forbade him to do so. It was this emperor who decreed that the Sunday after Pentecost be dedicated to All Saints. Believing that his wife was one of the righteous, he knew that she would also be honored whenever the Feast of All Saints was celebrated.

St Isaac lived during the fourth century, received monastic tonsure and pursued ascetic labors in the desert. During the reign of the emperor Valens (364-378), a zealous adherent of the Arian heresy, there was a persecution of the Orthodox, and churches were closed and destroyed.

Hearing of the persecution, St Isaac left the wilderness and went to Constantinople to console and encourage the Orthodox, and to fight against the heretics. At that time, barbarian Goths along the River Danube were making war against the Empire. They seized Thrace and advanced toward Constantinople.

When the emperor Valens was leaving the capital with his soldiers, St Isaac cried out, "Emperor, unlock the churches of the Orthodox, and then the Lord will aid you!" But the emperor, disdainful of the words of the monk, confidently continued on his way. The saint repeated his request and prophecy three times. The angry emperor ordered St Isaac to be thrown into a deep ravine, filled with thorns and mud, from which it was impossible to escape.

St Isaac remained alive by God's help, and he emerged, overtook the emperor and said, "You wanted to destroy me, but three angels pulled me from the mire. Hear me, open up the churches for the Orthodox and you shall defeat the enemy. If, however, you do not heed me, then you shall not return. You will be captured and burned alive." The emperor was astonished at the saint's boldness and ordered his attendants Saturninus and Victor to take the monk and hold him in prison until his return.

St Isaac's prophecy was soon fulfilled. The Goths defeated and pursued the Greek army. The emperor and his Arian generals took refuge in a barn filled with straw, and the attackers set it afire. After receiving news of the emperor's death, they released St Isaac and honored him as a prophet.

Then the holy Emperor Theodosius the Great (379-395) came to the throne. On the advice of Saturninus and Victor, he summoned the Elder, treating him with great respect. Obeying his instructions, he banished the Arians from Constantinople and restored the churches to the Orthodox. St Isaac wanted to return to his desert, but Saturninus and Victor begged him not to leave the city, but to remain and protect it by his prayers.

Saturninus built a monastery for the saint in Constantinople, where monks gathered around him. St Isaac was the monastery's igumen and spiritual guide. He also nourished laypeople, and helped many of the poor and suffering.

When he had reached an advanced age, St Isaac made St Dalmatus (August 3) igumen. The monastery was later named for Dalmatus.

St Isaac died in the year 383, and his memory is also celebrated on March 22.

DOGMA AND DOGMATICS: THE FUNCTION OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IN THE FORMULATION OF DOGMAS

By Metropolitan John of Pergamus

“Theophany” (the manifestation of God) as “Christophany” (the manifestation of Christ), which comprises the basis of the dogma, contains two basic problems. The one problem is that, one needs to cover the period of time that intervenes between the historical Christ and His (=the Apostolic) era, with the pursuant generations; these are the eras in which the dogma is formulated. So, How is it possible to bridge this time chasm?

The second problem is that, within that same historical Theophany in Christ, there is the dimension of “already, and not yet”: in the historical Christ and the experience of the first apostles, we have God's revelation “as an inner reflection and an enigma” and not as something seen “face to face”. The fulfilled, “face to face” revelation is an eschatological reality. Christ bears a pre-portrayal and a pre-savoring of the Kingdom, in other words, the complete and direct, personal cognizance (knowledge) of God. Until that “last day” has come, no prophet or saint has a full cognizance of God, in a stable and unchangeable form. How is it possible for this pre-savoring of paradise, this complete cognizance of God to be attained from now, with a complete certainty that the proclaimed dogma expresses this pre-portrayal, and that it formulates it faithfully and accurately?

In other words, the dogma -as a faithful portrayal of Christ who reveals God- has to be faithful in the following two dimensions:

A. The faithful portrayal of the historic Christ (= past), and

B. The faithful portrayal of the future, eschatological Christ and His Kingdom. (ref. Byzantine

icons – they are not limited to historical representations, but they also portray the future situation, for example the icon of the Pentecost). This task of bridging the present (=dogma) with the past (historical Christophany) and the future (=Second Coming), is the exceptional task of the Holy Spirit in Divine Providence.

“It seemed proper to the Holy Spirit and to us” (Acts 15), is the decision reached by the Apostolic Synod. It comprises the fixed conviction of the Church that the dogmas are of the Holy Spirit’s inspiration, as is the Scripture (“every divinely inspired scripture....”) (Timothy II, 3:16). But this requires serious attention, because it can be understood in different ways; thus:

The presence of the Holy Spirit and His action can be misconstrued as a kind of magical and mechanical intervention of God. This reminds us of the “divine inspiration” of the ancient Hellenes (divination, oracles etc.), where personal freedom was excluded: the authors of the Bible and the Fathers of the Councils (Synods) were thus involuntary instruments of the Spirit. This is a perception that prevailed in the West (from where it also originated), in the form of so-called Fundamentalism.

The presence and the effect of the Spirit can be comprehended as being the result of moral changes in man. When we say “moral changes”, we imply a broader meaning of man’s every improvement that is attributed to his own striving. (for example, catharsis from vices; acquiring virtues etc.)

The effect of the Holy Spirit can be perceived as being the result of a community event, in both its perpendicular and its lateral dimensions, in other words, as a result of the communion within an ecclesiastic community.

Of these possibilities, the first one must be excluded altogether. The Holy Spirit is a Spirit of freedom, and does not force man. Besides, the event of Christ, the very nature of Christophany, is such that it fully respects a person’s freedom.

The second possibility has more value and gravity and is more fitting to the prerequisites of ascetic experience, which, as we saw, must always be taken into consideration. Without catharsis from vices, it is not possible for anyone to see God (for example, whoever hates his brother cannot see God – ref. John I). In this same spirit, saint Gregory the theologian rebutted the Eunomians, who had created an entirely different, intellectual theology that allowed anyone to “theologize”, even “after horseracing events and singing and feasting... which (theology) deemed equally a part of enjoyment”, by pointing out to them that “it is not for everyone to philosophize on God.... not for everyone”, but only “by those who have been tested and who have spent their life in theory (of God), and –prior to this- have a cleansed soul and body, or are at least cleansing them”. However, if ascetic living is taken as an isolated and self-sufficient prerequisite, then it is suffering from two serious faults: that of individualism and moralism. In other words, we shall be in danger of believing that God reveals Himself to isolated individuals and under certain conditions of human achievement.

This is why the second possibility must necessarily be combined with the third one, which the ecclesiastic form of action of the Holy Spirit.

In order for this to be comprehended, we must first of all rid ourselves of a faulty perception that we have; i.e., that the Holy Spirit acts upon isolated persons. This perception is so widespread, that it might seem strange to refer to it as “faulty”. Those who defend this view are overlooking a fundamental distinction between the action of the Holy Spirit in the Old Testament and the action in the New Testament. In the Old Testament, the Spirit is given to certain people (prophets, kings, etc.) and not the entire nation of Israel. During the Messianic era however, when the Holy Spirit is introduced in the New Testament with the arrival of the Messiah, it was expected that the Spirit would be given to the

entire nation of God. This is why Luke in his narration of the Pentecost uses the phrase of the prophet Joel: “in the last days I shall pour forth from My Spirit over every flesh... says the Lord Almighty”

As a result of this, all baptized Christians -in the New Testament- were considered as having the Holy Spirit and possessing various charismas. If we examine chapter 12 of Corinthians I, we can see how, for the apostle Paul, being a member of the Church is equivalent to possessing a certain charisma of the Spirit. Given that the Corinthians were under the impression that some people can be more charismatic than others, Paul refutes this perception vehemently, and stresses that everyone has some sort of charisma, even those who perform a simple task such as administration etc. Paul thus strikes back at every form of “spiritual elitism”, stressing that even if someone has adequate knowledge or faith to “move mountains”, he will be nothing, if he has no “love”.

What does “love” signify here? If we take a look at this text as a whole (chapters 11 – 14) and not as isolated verses, we can see that for Paul, “love” – therein- signifies the communion that the community of the Church creates. Love here is not about the feelings of a certain person (good intentions etc.), but the inter-dependence of the members of the church, as one body. “Love” means not saying that ‘I am the head and I don’t need the legs’ etc... This is what Paul was stressing here: the inter-dependence of the assorted charismas.

It is precisely for this reason, that Paul ends his Epistle by naming the Holy Spirit “community”. In Corinthians II, 13:13, it actually appears to be an expression that existed prior to Paul in the liturgical usage of the first Churches, and one that has remained a basic element of the Divine Eucharist ever since. Wherever the Spirit drifts, It creates a community, and destroys individualism. We must understand this thoroughly. This was how all the Fathers of the Church had also perceived the Holy

Spirit. One could present a multitude of quotes from the Fathers of the first centuries, for example Gregory of Nazianzo, who especially focuses on personal “theory” (= “viewing”), hence endowing a special significance to the way he refers to the Holy Spirit. In his 12th Address, he compares the desire for “theory” with the Spirit as follows: On the one hand, there is the desire for theory, that is, the tendency for solitude, a catharsis of the mind and theory; but, this is not where the Spirit leads to. “The Spirit moves within (the congregation of the church), leading it and making it fruitful (the ecclesiastic community), in the desire to benefit it, that they may benefit each other, and make public the (Spirit’s) enlightenment”. This is why the “prepared” (congregated) church is –to saint Gregory- so much more superior than the experience of theory, as the skies are by comparison to a star, or a garden to a plant, or a whole body to a body member. To the Fathers, this is the chief work of the Spirit: to lead towards the overall Church, and not towards isolated, personal experiences.

Consequently, all the charismas of the Church are necessary for the revelation of God; not just the few and far between ones. The reason for this is that no charisma can be imaginable, without its inter-dependence with the other ones. The Church has a variety of charismas; not everyone possesses “knowledge”, not everyone has healing abilities, or the gift of speaking languages, or administrative abilities etc.. They are not all “god-seers” in the same way. At any rate, no-one can see God on his own and independently of the other charismas. The Spirit acts as a community, and that means: within the body of the Church.

Thus, we reach the conclusion with regard to the dogmas, that the revelation of the truth always presupposes a communion and a community of the Church in order for the dogma to be a truth. What exactly does this mean?

To Be Continued...