



Holy Ghost Orthodox Church

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ON THE MEND: Please keep the following parishioners and others in your prayers for recovery from their illnesses and injuries: Metropolitan Constantine, Patriarch Pavle, Archbishop Vsevolod, Bishop Robert, Father Peter Natishan, Father Gerald Olszewski, Father Jakiw Norton, Father Dragan Filipović, Father Elias Katras, Father Stevo Rocknage, Father Paul Stoll, Father Igor Soroka, Father John Monronko, Father Michael Mihalick [MS], Ollie Pendylshok, Walt & Evelyn Burlack, Joshua Agosto and his family, Harley Katarina Rahuba, Mike and Hilda Holupka, Eva Malesnick, Helen Likar, Stella Peanoske, Joe Nezolyk, Nick Behun, Terry Reinhart, Bernie O'Masta, Grace Holupka, Virginia Bryan, Joseph Sliwinsky, Maria Balo, Linda Mechtly, Mary Mochnick, Mary Pekich, Mildred Manolovich, Evelyn Misko, Jeanne Boehing, Alex Drobot, Rachelle, Jane Golofski, Doug Diller, Harry Krewsun, Sandy Gamble, Glen Lucas Burlack, Bernie Vangrin, Mary Alice Babcock, Dorie Kunkle, Andrea, & Melissa [Betty O'Masta's relatives], Mary Evelyn King, Stella Cherepko, Sam Wadrose, Khoruia Joanne Abdalah, Cameron [a boy in Matt's class], Faith—a 5-year-old girl with rheumatoid arthritis, Isabella Olivia Lindgren—a 2-year-old with a brain tumor, Dillon, Ethel Thomas, Donna, Jeff, Nick Malec [Maxine's brother], Bill, Erin, Jimmy Fennel [7th Grader], Jim Markovich, Jeff Walewski [thyroid cancer], Carol [Lotinski] Rose, Michael Miller, Dave May, Grace & Owen Ostrasky, Claudia [Horvath] Gradicheck, Alverta, Margaret Mueller, Gary Zurasky, Michael Horvath, Patti Sinecki, David Genshi, Pete Special, Rita Very & family, Sue Segeleon, Mike Gallagher, Mildred Walters, Michael Miller, Mike Pelchar [Liz's brother], Jim Logue—throat cancer, Liz Stumpf, Aubrie—6-month-old with Cystic Fibrosis, Kathy Ciranni, Ester Tylavsky, Ed Jamison, Theodore Nixon, Charles Johnson, Donna Kerr [stroke], Amy Forbeck, Michelle Corba Kapeluck, Gloria Prymak [Liz's niece], Robert Hippert & family, Marjorie Robison, Margaret Vladimir, John Sheliga, and Daria Masur. **ARNOLD:** Stefania Lucci, Kay Tomson, Ann Ostaffy, Steve Sakal, Homer Paul Kline, and Steve Ostaffy. We pray that God will grant them all a speedy recovery.

Please remember ALL American servicemen and women in the Middle East in your prayers. May God watch over them and all American servicemen and women—and bring them all home safely!

PLEASE REMEMBER TO BRING YOUR “BOXTOPS FOR EDUCATION” AND CAMPBELL’S SOUP LABELS TO CHURCH. There is a shoebox in the basement for Alex’s Fifth Grade and Matt’s Third Grade collections. THANK YOU ALL FOR YOUR HELP! *Alex and Matt*

REMEMBER—PRAYERS ARE ALWAYS FREE!

Communion Fasting: nothing to eat or drink after midnight, EXCEPT in cases where your doctor tells you to eat or drink something for medical reasons: medication, diabetes, etc. If you have a question, please call Father Bob.

AT ANY TIME—if there is an emergency, if you have questions, or if you just need to talk, please CALL FATHER BOB at [412] 279-5640.

Schedule of Services

Sunday, November 11 **Divine Liturgy** **10:30 AM**
24TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST—VENERABLE MARTYR ANASTASIA THE ROMAN, VENERABLE ABRAMIUS THE RECLUSE & HIS NIECE SAINT MARY OF MESOPOTAMIA, MARTYRS CLAUDIUS, ASTERIUS, NEON, & TEONILLA OF AEGAE, VENERABLE ANNA, VENERABLE ABRAMIUS-ARCHIMANDRITE OF ROSTOV, VENERABLE ABRAMIUS THE RECLUSE OF THE PERCHEVSKY LAVRA, NEW-MARTYR ATHANASIUS OF SPARTA AT MUATANACH, MARTYR TIMOTHY OF ESPHIGMENOU MONASTERY OF MOUNT ATHOS

Tone 7
Ephesians 2:14-22
Luke 8:26-39

Litany in Blessed Memory of All Deceased Veterans—Fr. Bob

Sunday, November 18 **Divine Liturgy** **10:30 AM**
25TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST—MARTYR GALACTION & WIFE EPISTME AT EMESA, APOSTLES PATROBUS, HERMAS, LINUS GAIUS, & PHILOLOGUS OF THE 70, SAINT GREGORY-ARCHBISHOP OF ALEXANDRIA, SAINT JONAH-ARCHBISHOP OF NOVGOROD, MARTYRS DOMNINUS, THIMOTHY, THEOPHILUS, THEOTIMUS, DOROTHEUS, EUPSYCHIUS, CARTERUS, PAMOPHILIUS, ATATHANGELUS, & CASTORUS OF PALESTINE, HIEROMARTYR SILVANUS-BISHOP OF GAZA

Tone 8
Ephesians 4:1-6
Luke 8:41-56

Litany in Blessed Memory of Paul Popichak—Fr. Bob
Parastas in Blessed Memory of Mary Novosel—Helen Pytlak [sister]

Monday, November 19 **ECUMENICAL SERVICE** **7:00 PM**
Presbyterian Church—Pastor Carl Jones, Speaker

Sunday, November 25 **OBEDNITZA** **10:30 AM**
26TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST—SAINT JOHN THE MERCIFUL-PATIRARCH OF ALEXANDRIA, VENERABLE NILUS THE FASTER OF SINAI, PROPHET AHIJAH, BLESSED JOHN “THE HAIRY” FOOL-FOR-CHRIST AT ROSTOV, SAINT LEON-PATRIARCH OF CONSTANTINOPLE, VENERABLE NILUS THE MYRRH-GUSHER OF MOUNT ATHOS
BAPTISM OF NICKOLAS ANDREW DAVIS

Tone 1
Ephesians 5:9-19
Luke 10:25-37

BULLETIN INSERT FOR 11 NOVEMBER 2007

24TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST—VENERABLE MATYR ANASTASIA THE ROMAN, VENERABLE ABRAMIUS THE RECLUSE & HIS NIECE SAINT MARY OF MESOPOTAMIA, MARTYRS CLAUDIUS, ASTERIUS, NEON, & TEONILLA OF AEGAE, VENERABLE ANNA, VENERABLE ABRAMIUS-ARCHIMANDRITE OF ROSTOV, VENERABLE ABRAMIUS THE RECLUSE OF THE PERCHEVSKY LAVRA, NEW-MARTYR ATHANASIVS OF SPARTA AT MUATANACH, MARTYR TIMOTHY OF ESPHIGMENOU MONASTERY OF MOUNT ATHOS

TROPARION—TONE 7

By Thy Cross, Thou didst destroy death!
To the thief, Thou didst open Paradise!
For the Myrrhbearers, Thou didst change weeping into joy.
And Thou didst command Thy disciples, O Christ God,
To proclaim that Thou art risen, granting the world great mercy!

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

KONTAKION—TONE 7

The dominion of death can no longer hold men captive,
For Christ descended, shattering and destroying its powers!
Hell is bound, while the prophets rejoice and cry:
The Savior has come to those in faith!
Enter, you faithful, into the Resurrection!

PROKEIMENON—TONE 7

READER: The Lord shall give strength to His people! The Lord shall bless His people with peace!

PEOPLE: The Lord shall give strength to His people! The Lord shall bless His people with peace!

READER: Offer to the Lord, O you sons of God! Offer young rams to the Lord!

PEOPLE: The Lord shall give strength to His people! The Lord shall bless His people with peace!

READER: The Lord shall give strength to His people!

PEOPLE: The Lord shall bless His people with peace!

ALLELUIA VERSES—TONE 7

It is good to give thanks to the Lord, to sing praises to Thy name, O Most High!
To declare Thy mercy in the morning, and Thy truth by night!

Sacrifice

When in England at a fairly large conference, Colin Powell was asked by the Archbishop of Canterbury if our plans for Iraq were just an example of 'empire building.' He answered by saying, "Over the years, the United States has sent many of its fine young men and women into great peril to fight for freedom beyond our borders. The only amount of land we have ever asked for in return is enough to bury those that did not return."

It became very quiet in the room.

Then there was a conference in France where a number of international engineers were taking part, including French and American. During a break one of the French engineers came back into the room saying "Have you heard the latest American stunt? They sent an aircraft carrier to Indonesia to help the tsunami victims. What do they intend to do, bomb them?"

A Boeing engineer stood up and replied quietly: "Our carriers have three hospitals on board that can treat several hundred people; they are nuclear powered and can supply emergency electrical power to shore facilities; they have three cafeterias with the capacity to feed 3,000 people three meals a day, they can produce several thousand gallons of fresh water from sea water each day, and they carry half a dozen helicopters for use in transporting victims and injured to and from their flight deck. We have eleven such ships; how many does France have?"

Once again, dead silence.

A U.S. Navy Admiral was attending a naval conference that included Admirals from the U.S., English, Canadian, Australian and French Navies. At

a cocktail reception, he found himself standing with a large group of Officers that included personnel from most of those countries. Everyone was chatting away in English as they sipped their drinks but a French admiral suddenly complained that, whereas Europeans learn many languages, Americans learn only English. He then asked, "Why is it that we always have to speak English in these conferences rather than speaking French?"

Without hesitating, the American Admiral replied "Maybe it's because the Brits, Canadians, Aussies and Americans arranged it so you wouldn't have to speak German."

You could have heard a pin drop.

The VETERAN

It is the VETERAN, not the preacher, who has given us freedom of religion.

It is the VETERAN, not the reporter, who has given us freedom of the press.

It is the VETERAN, not the poet, who has given us freedom of speech.

It is the VETERAN, not the campus organizer, who has given us freedom to assemble.

It is the VETERAN, not the lawyer, who has given us the right to a fair trial.

It is the VETERAN, not the politician, who has given us the right to vote.

It is the VETERAN, who salutes the Flag, who serves under the Flag,

ETERNAL REST GRANT THEM O LORD, AND LET PERPETUAL LIGHT SHINE UPON THEM.

There will be a memorial service in honor of the millions of Ukrainians who perished in the Artificial Famine of 1932-33 at the Heinz Chapel THIS AFTERNOON, at 3:00 PM. Protopresbyter George Hnatko and Monsignor George Appleyard of the Ukrainian Catholic Church, along with other Orthodox and Catholic clergy, will serve a Panikhida followed by a talk, some poetry, and choral arrangements. Admission is free!

A reminder that Father George Hnatko's 50th Anniversary Celebration will begin at 10:30 AM next Saturday, November 17th, at Saint John the Baptist church in Dixonville, PA. A banquet in honor of Father George will follow. Debbie Paouncic has arranged for car-pooling for that day—everyone will meet at the church parking lot—see her for more details.

Alex has designed and created a card for Father George that we will present to him at the banquet in his honor. Please take a few minutes and sign the card—feel free to write a short note to him that will bring a smile to his face. He is always talking about his love for the people of our parish and asks about everyone here.

Last Saturday was the first in a series of “accessible” Divine Liturgies in our parish basement. In order to make it easier for our parishioners who have a problem navigating our steps—both inside and outside—we are having the first Sunday Divine Liturgy of each of the next three months downstairs. Although the initial Sunday showed no change, we hope this will allow those parishioners who have been unable to come to church to receive Holy Communion a chance to do so and to visit with all of their parish friends. Please pass on this information to anyone you think might be interested. Also, please see Father Bob with contact information for folks who may not have received the letter about this change last week.

September 2006, Article # 1
God's "Righteousness"
Written by the Very Rev. John Breck

Lead-in: How are we saved? By accumulating "good works," or by receiving "imputed righteousness" in response to our faith? Maybe this traditional question, so often seen as dividing Catholics and Protestants, is the wrong one to ask.

A Roman Catholic friend (and a good theologian) recently asked me whether the Greek Fathers of the Church understand the term "righteousness" in a forensic sense. He was referring to a Protestant doctrine that holds that God does not "make" us righteous; He "declares" or "counts" us righteous. That is, God imputes righteousness to us, while we remain in a state of sinfulness. *Simul iustus et peccator*, Luther would say: at once justified and sinful. Reading, for example, St Paul's letter to the Romans, my friend asked, do the Eastern Fathers also read the notion of "righteousness" forensically? Well no, I thought. But then I had to formulate something of the reason why. After a lot of stumbling, this is what I passed on to him.

The Protestant notion of "imputation," (as I understand it) grew out of the conviction that we are inherently (by nature) incapable of making ourselves righteous; we cannot become truly just on the basis of our own good deeds or merits. Insofar as the qualities of justice and righteousness are attributable to us, we should understand that God imputes them to us as an expression of His mercy. This God does so that we can re-enter the realm of His righteousness, His holiness, and thus be saved from the consequences of sin, which is (eternal) death. This interpretation, however, as many people have pointed out, means that our righteousness is little more than a legal fiction. God treats us as if we were just or righteous, although He (like us) knows full well that we are not.¹

The difference between this notion and the Orthodox perspective is well illustrated by our respective interpretations of Romans 5:12. In the West, at least in the popular mind, the debate was long polarized between Catholic emphasis on salvation through "works-righteousness," and Protestant insistence on "justification by faith (alone!)." The presupposition underlying both views is that we inherit Adam's guilt, which resulted from his sinful disobedience to the divine commandment.² St Augustine seemed convinced that the guilt resulting from Adam's sin is transmitted through the sexual act, from generation to generation, like some deleterious gene. This "original sin" must be removed if we are to be saved from death, to share in eternal life. The question as to how this is accomplished has received many different answers. Medieval Catholic piety held that this occurs through infused grace, which confers upon us the power to perform

righteous deeds and thereby actually to become or be made righteous. This enables us to build up a "treasury of merits," the term "merit" being understood as a gift of divine grace rather than our own accomplishment (Council of Trent, 1547). The popular notion that we are saved only if our merits outweigh our sins on the scales of divine justice is usually attributed to Roman Catholics. It is shared, nevertheless, by many Orthodox, who have failed to appreciate the fullness of God's grace, both in enabling us to perform good works and in forgiving us fully when we sincerely repent of our sins.³

To the Greek Fathers, what we inherit from Adam is not his sin and consequent guilt, but mortality.⁴ From Adam (understood, really, as an archetype), we "inherit" the sting of death. Death has spread to all of humanity, as an inevitable consequence of our fallen nature; yet each of us, under the threat of death, rebels personally against God, the Author of Life. This means that our guilt is our own; we bring it upon ourselves. (A sign in our local marina declares: "You are responsible for your wake!" How true...)

Greek patristic tradition generally interprets the Pauline notion of *dikaiosyne* as "righteousness," rather than as "justice" in the forensic sense. That is, the term refers first to God's own quality of righteousness, understood more as an expression of love and mercy than as one of divine justice that must be "satisfied." Through the indwelling Holy Spirit, followers of Christ are capable of receiving that divine righteousness as a gift – one that can actually work a transformation in human life by enabling us to pray, to wage spiritual warfare against the passions, and to love both God and other people. Human nature (*ousia*) remains "fallen"; but the human person (*hypostasis*) is led by the Spirit on a pathway of sanctification.

In the Eastern perspective, there is no thought that we must accumulate merits in order to justify ourselves before God, although our faithful often seem (as evidenced in Confession) to feel that if we are to be saved, our good works must outweigh our sins. Nor, on the other hand, is there a denial of the place and importance of good works in Christian life (Ephesians 2:8-10!). Salvation is accomplished by grace in response to faith. But that faith cannot be passive; it must express itself, not merely by confessing Jesus as "personal Lord and Savior," but by feeding, clothing, visiting and otherwise caring for the "least" of Jesus' brethren (Mt 25).

What we are saved from is the key issue here. Rather than view salvation primarily as a forensic liberation from guilt through imputed or imparted righteousness, we should see it as incorporation, by baptism, into Christ's

death and resurrection, such that we “die and rise” with Him. Thus we are saved from Death. We are freed from this ultimate consequence of sin and guilt – but only as a divinely bestowed gift of God's ineffable love, expressed in the suffering death of His Son, a gift to which we respond with faith that issues in love. That response, through the action of the indwelling Spirit, enables us finally to share in Christ's own resurrection and glorification, attaining what the Greek Fathers call *theôsis* or “deification” (which means existential participation in God's life, and not ontological confusion between God and His human creatures).⁵

Good works should thus be understood to be a response rather than a means to salvation. And God's righteousness should be seen as a gift of loving, merciful, saving grace, rather than as a forensic tool, wielded in the service of divine judgment.

1. D. Guthrie, *New Testament Theology* (Inter-Varsity Press, 1981, pp. 498-504) discusses various Protestant approaches to this question, including the distinction between “imparted” and “imputed” righteousness.

2. Modern dialog between Catholics and Protestants has gone beyond this focus on inherited guilt and is concerned more with the meaning of “justification.”

3. The common view of merits as a means by which we put God in our debt (never sanctioned as dogma), together with the idea of inherited guilt, has been treated well and in detail in recent Catholic reflection. The Catechism of the Catholic Church (§ 404-409), for example, makes an important distinction between original sin as a “deprivation of original holiness and justice” – which renders human nature “subject to ignorance, suffering and the dominion of death, and inclined to sin” – and personal faults for which each of us is responsible. In this perspective, “original sin” is close to the Orthodox understanding of “fallen human nature.”

4. E.g., John Chrysostom, *In Rom.*, hom. X (PG 60:474-5); Maximus the Confessor, *Quaest. Ad Thal.* (PG 90:408). An excellent summary of this issue can be found in J. Meyendorff, *Byzantine Theology* (Fordham University Press, 1974), pp. 143-146.

5. “Communion in the risen body of Christ; participation in divine life; sanctification through the energy of God, which penetrates true humanity and restores it to its ‘natural’ state, rather than justification, or remission of

inherited guilt – these are at the center of Byzantine understanding of the Christian Gospel.” J. Meyendorff, *Byzantine Theology*, p. 146.

Ukrainian May Become First Orthodox Saint in Latin America
24.10.2007, [16:34] // Orthodox //USA-Ukraine –



Maria Aperesyda Berushko, a school teacher of Ukrainian origin born in Curitiba (Paraná State, Brazil), who died saving her students in a school fire, may become the first Orthodox saint in Latin America. orthodoxy.org.ua posted the story on 22 October 2007.

The school fire tragedy happened in the village school of Zhoakim Tavora, where a gas balloon burned and exploded. Maria could have escaped first; however, she stayed in the burning classroom to try to save her students.

JOYOUS NEWS!

On Sunday, November 25, at 10:30 AM, we will welcome Nickolas Andrew Davis into the Holy Orthodox Church through the mysteries of Holy Baptism, Holy Chrismation, and the Holy Eucharist. [An Obednitza will follow the baptism.]

Nickolas is the son of Robert and Loni Davis of Delmont. Please come and share their joy as another child joins the Royal Priesthood of our Holy Church.

MONK AVRAMII (ABRAHAM), ARCHIMANDRITE OF ROSTOV (1073-1077).
MONASTICMARTYRESS ANASTASIA THE ROMAN (III).
MONK ABRAHAM AND BLESSED MARIA, HIS NIECE (+ C. 360).

MARTYRS CLAUDIUS, ASTERIAS, NEONES AND THEONILLA (+ 285).
NUN ANNA (+ 826).

The Monk Avramii (Abraham), Archimandrite of Rostov, in the world Averkii, in his youth left from his parental home and entered upon the path of Christian asceticism. Having assumed the monastic form, Avramii settled at Rostov on the shore of Lake Nero. In the Rostov lands there were then yet many pagans, and the monk worked intensely at spreading the true faith. Not far off from the cell of the Saint there was a pagan temple, where the pagans worshipped a stone idol of Veles (Volos), which caused fright among the inhabitants of Rostov. In a miraculous vision the Apostle John the Theologian came to stand before Avramii, and gave him a staff crowned with a cross atop, with which the monk destroyed the idol. At the place of the pagan temple, Saint Avramii founded a monastery in honour of the Theophany and became its head. And in memory of the miraculous appearance, the monk erected a church in the name of the Apostle John the Theologian. Many of the pagans were persuaded and baptised by Saint Avramii. Particularly great was his influence with the children: he taught them reading and writing, he instructed them in the law of God, and tonsured monastics from amongst them. Everyone coming to the monastery of the saint was lovingly accepted. His life was a constant work of prayer and toil for the benefit of the brethren: he chopped firewood for the oven, he laundered the monks clothing and carried water for the kitchen. The monk reposed in old age and was buried in the church of the Theophany (+ XI Century). His holy relics were uncovered during the time of Greatprince Vsevolod (1176-1212). In the year 1551 tsar Ivan the Terrible, before his campaign against Kazan, made the rounds of holy places. At the Theophany-Avramiev monastery he showed him that staff, with which the Monk Avramii had destroyed the idol of Veles. The tsar took the staff with him on the campaign, but the cross remained at the monastery. And returning again after the subjugation of the Kazan khanate, Ivan the Terrible gave orders to build at the Avramiev monastery a new stone church in honour of the Theophany, with four chapels, and he sent there books and icons.

The Monastic Martyress Anastasia the Roman in infancy lost her parents, and she was then taken under the care of the head of a women's monastery, named Sophia. The hegumeness raised Anastasia in fervent faith, in the fear of God and obedience. During these times there began the persecution against Christians by the emperor Decius (249-251). The city administrator, Probus, on the orders of the emperor commanded that Anastasia be brought to him. Having been blessed by her eldress-mentor for the deed of suffering for the Name of Christ, the young Martyress Anastasia humbly came out to meet the armed soldiers. Seeing her youth and beauty, Probus at first attempted by false flattery to tempt her and lead her into a renunciation of faith in Christ: "Why waste thine years, deprived of pleasure? What is there to gain in giving thyself over to tortures and death for the Crucified? Worship our gods, get thyself some handsome husband, and live in glory and honour". The saint steadfastly replied: "My Bridegroom, my riches, my life and my happiness -- is my Lord Jesus Christ, and with the threat of torments thou canst not part me from the Lord!" Fiercesome tortures were then begun. The holy martyress bravely endured them, glorifying and praising the Lord. In anger the torturers cut out her tongue. The people, seeing the inhuman and disgusting treatment of the saint, became indignant, and the governor of the city was

compelled to bring the torture to a close, by beheading the martyress. The body of Saint Anastasia was thrown out beyond the city for devouring by wild animals, but the Lord did not permit that a mockery should be made with the holy remains. Learning of this through the Lord, the hegumeness Sophia found the torn body of the martyress, and with the help of two Christians she consigned it to earth.

The Monk Abraham the Hermit and Blessed Maria, his niece, asceticised in the village of Chidan, near the city of Edessa. They were contemporaries and of the same country together with the Monk Ephrem the Syrian (Comm. 28 January), who afterwards wrote about their life. The Monk Abraham began his difficult exploit of the solitary life in the prime of youth. He left his parental home and settled in a desolate wilderness place, far off from worldly enticements, and he spent his days in unceasing prayer. After the death of his parents, the saint refused his inheritance and requested his kinsmen to give it away to the poor. By his strict ascetic life, fasting and love for mankind, Abraham attracted to him many, seeking after spiritual light, prayer and blessing. Soon his faith was put to a serious test: he was appointed presbyter in one of the pagan villages of Mesopotamia. For three years, and sparing no efforts, the monk toiled over the enlightenment of the pagans. He tore down a pagan temple and built up a temple of God. Humbly enduring derision and even beating from obstinate idol-worshippers, in prayer he beseeched the Lord: "Look down, O Master, upon Thine servant, hearken unto my prayer, strengthen me and set free Thy servants from diabolical snares and grant them to know Thee, the One True God". The zealous pastor was granted the happiness to see the culmination of his righteous efforts: the pagans came to believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God, and the monk himself baptised them. Having fulfilled his priestly duty, Abraham again withdrew into his wilderness, where he continued to glorify God, and doing His holy will. The devil, put to shame by the deeds of the monk, tried to entrap him with proud thoughts. One time at midnight, when Saint Abraham was at prayer in his cell, suddenly there shone a light and a voice was heard: "Blessed art thou, blessed as is no one amongst mankind!" Confuting the wiles of the enemy, the saint said: "I -- am a sinful man, but I trust on the help and grace of my God and I fear thee not". Another time the devil appeared before the saint in the form of a youth, lighted a candle and began to sing the Psalm: "Blessed is the undefiled on the way that walketh in the law of the Lord". Perceiving, that this also was a demonic temptation, the elder crossed himself and asked: "If thou knowest, what be the undefiled blessed, then why troublest thou them?" The temptor answered: "I provoke them in order to conquer them and turn them away from every good deed". To this the saint replied: "Thou gainest victory over those fallen away from God through their will, but for those loving God thou dost vanish, like smoke in the wind". After these words the devil vanished. And thus did Saint Abraham defeat the enemy, strengthened by Divine grace. After fifty years of ascetic life he peacefully expired to the Lord (+ c. 360).

Saint Abraham's Niece, the Nun Maria, grew up being edified by his spiritual instruction. But the enemy of the race of man tried to turn her from the true path. At twenty-seven years of age she left her cell, went to another city and began to live dissolutely. Learning of this, the Monk Abraham donned himself in soldier's garb, so that he should not be recognised, and he set off to the city. He sought out his niece and brought her to repentance. The Nun Maria returned to her cell and spent all the rest of her days in prayer

and tears of repentance. The Lord vouchsafed her the gift of healing the sick. She died five years after the Monk Abraham.

The Holy Martyrs Claudius, Asterias, Neones and Theonilla suffered for Christ in the year 285 in Cilicia, during the reign of the emperor Diocletian. After their father's death, the step-mother, not wanting to give the inheritance over to the children, betrayed them to the persecutors of Christians. The governor of Cilicia named Lysias at length urged the martyrs to renounce Christ and instead worship idols, and employing various means of torture. They crucified the unyielding brothers, and the sister after torture was thrown into the sea.

The Nun Anna asceticised under the name Euphymian. The account about her is located under 13 June.

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Nektarios the Wonderworker, Bishop of Pentapolis

November 9/22

Apolytikion in the First Tone

O faithful, let us honor Nektarios, divine servant of Christ, offspring of Silivria and guardian of Aegina, who in these latter years was manifested as the true friend of virtue. All manner of healing wells forth for those who in piety cry out, "Glory to Christ who glorified you; glory to Him who, through you, wrought wonders; glory to Him who, through you, works healing for all."

Kontakion in the Plagal of the Fourth Tone

In joy, let our hearts praise the latest shining star of the Orthodox, the newly erected rampart of the Church. For, glorified by the work of the Spirit, he abundantly pours forth the grace of healing to those who cry out, "Hail, Father Nektarios".

Reading:

Saint Nektarius was born in Selyvria of Thrace on October 1, 1846. After putting himself through school in Constantinople with much hard labour, he became a monk on Chios in 1876, receiving the monastic name of Lazarus; because of his virtue, a year later he was

ordained deacon, receiving the new name of Nectarius. Under the patronage of Patriarch Sophronius of Alexandria, Nectarius went to Athens to study in 1882; completing his theological studies in 1885, he went to Alexandria, where Patriarch

Sophronius ordained him priest on March 23, 1886 in the Cathedral of Saint Sabbas, and in August of the same year, in the Church of Saint Nicholas in Cairo, made him Archimandrite. Archimandrite Nectarius showed much zeal both for preaching the word of God, and for the beauty of God's house. He greatly beautified the Church of Saint Nicholas in Cairo, and years later, when Nectarius was in Athens, Saint Nicholas appeared to him in a dream, embracing him and telling him he was going to exalt him very high. On January 15, 1889, in the same Church of Saint Nicholas, Nectarius was consecrated Metropolitan of the Pentapolis in eastern Libya, which was under the jurisdiction of Alexandria.

Although Nectarius' swift ascent through the degrees of ecclesiastical office did not affect his modesty and childlike innocence, it aroused the envy of lesser men, who convinced the elderly Sophronius that Nectarius had it in his heart to become Patriarch. Since the people loved Nectarius, the Patriarch was troubled by the slanders. On May 3, 1890, Sophronius relieved Metropolitan Nectarius of his duties; in July of the same year, he commanded Nectarius to leave Egypt. Without seeking to avenge or even to defend himself, the innocent Metropolitan left for Athens, where he found that accusations of immorality had arrived before him. Because his good name had been soiled, he was unable to find a position worthy of a bishop, and in February of 1891 accepted the position of provincial preacher in Euboia; then, in 1894, he was appointed dean of the Rizarios Ecclesiastical School in Athens.

Through his eloquent sermons his unwearying labours to educate fitting men for the priesthood, his generous alms deeds despite his own poverty, and the holiness, meekness, and fatherly love that were manifest in him, he became a shining light and a spiritual guide to many. At the request of certain pious women, in 1904 he began the building of his convent of the Holy Trinity on the island of Aegina while yet dean of the Rizarios School; finding later that his presence there was needed, he took up his residence on Aegina in 1908, where he spent the last years of his life, devoting himself to the direction of his convent and to very intense prayer; he was sometimes seen lifted above the ground while rapt in prayer.

He became the protector of all Aegina, through his prayers delivering the island from drought, healing the sick, and casting out demons. Here also he endured wicked slanders with singular patience, forgiving his false accusers and not seeking to avenge himself.

Although he had already worked wonders in life, an innumerable multitude of miracles have been wrought after his repose in 1920 through his holy relics, which for many years remained incorrupt. There is hardly a malady that has not been cured through his prayers; but Saint Nectarius is especially renowned for his healings of cancer for sufferers in all parts of the world.