



**July 18, 2010**

**EIGHTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST;  
FEAST OF THE VENERABLE ATHANASIOS OF MT. ATHOS;  
ST. SERGIUS OF RADONEZH**

**RESURRECTION TROPARION - TONE SEVEN:**

By Your Cross, You did destroy death! To the thief, You did open Paradise! For the myrrh bearers, You did change weeping into joy! And You did command Your disciples, O Christ God, to proclaim that You are risen, granting the world great mercy!

**ST. SERGIUS OF RADONEZH TROPARION - TONE EIGHT:**

From your youth you received Christ into your soul, O venerable one, and above all desired to leave behind the turmoil of the world. You courageously settled in the wilderness, where you raised children in obedience, the fruits of humility. Thus, as an abode of the Trinity, you enlightened all who approached in faith and granted healing to all. Our Father Sergius, pray to Christ God that our souls may be saved.

**RESURRECTIONAL KONTAKION - TONE SEVEN:**

The dominion of death can no longer hold man 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.

**ST. SERGIUS OF RADONEZH KONTAKION - TONE EIGHT:**

Having risen from the earth today and shining like the sun, your precious and incorrupt relics are as fragrant flowers, scented with miracles, granting healing to all the faithful, and making glad your flock which you wisely gathered and tended. Now as you stand before the throne of the Trinity, entreat God's help and grace for them and for all Orthodox Christians, so that we may sing: "Rejoice, divinely-wise Sergius."

**HYMN TO THE MOTHER OF GOD - TONE SIX:**

Steadfast Protectress of Christians and constant advocate before the Creator, do not despise the cry of us sinners; but in your goodness come speedily to help us who call on you in faith. Hasten to hear our petition and to intercede for us, O Theotokos, for you always protect those who honor you!

## EPISTLE & COMMENTARY

### **THE PROKIMENON IN THE 7<sup>TH</sup> TONE:**

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

### **I CORINTHIANS 1: 10-18**

Brethren, now I plead with you, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all speak the same thing and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment. For it has been declared to me concerning you, my brethren, by those of Chloe's household that there are contentions among you. Now I say this, that each of you says, "I am of Paul," or "I am of Apollos," or "I am of Cephas," or "I am of Christ." Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul? I thank God that I baptized none of you except Crispus and Gaius, lest anyone should say that I had baptized in my own name. Yes, I also baptized the household of Stephanas. Besides, I do not know whether I baptized any other. For Christ did not send me to baptize, but to preach the gospel, not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of no effect. For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.

### **ALLELUIA**

*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!*

### **COMMENTARY**

Christ is not divided; neither is the Church, as His Body, divided. One can leave the Church, but not divide it! Factionalism, however, brings great harm to the Church, for it seeks to give to the apostle a place only Christ should occupy. Many looked upon the apostles as teachers of philosophy rather than preachers of the Cross. The factious do not accept true wisdom, which is bestowed by the Spirit, and they misrepresent the apostles as rivals to each other rather than as fellow workers with Christ. May our Lord Jesus Christ enable us to love one another, and bear one another's burdens, unifying ourselves to His Body, the One Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church!



## **GOSPEL & COMMENTARY**

### **MATTHEW 14: 14-22**

At that time, when Jesus went out He saw a great multitude; and He was moved with compassion for them, and healed their sick. When it was evening, His disciples came to Him, saying, "This is a deserted place, and the hour is already late. Send the multitudes away, that they may go into the villages and buy themselves food." But Jesus said to them, "They do not need to go away. You give them something to eat." And they said to Him, "We have here only five loaves and two fish." He said, "Bring them here to Me." Then He commanded the multitudes to sit down on the grass. And He took the five loaves and the two fish, and looking up to heaven, He blessed and broke and gave the loaves to the disciples; and the disciples gave to the multitudes. So they all ate and were filled, and they took up twelve baskets full of the fragments that remained. Now those who had eaten were about five thousand men, besides women and children. Immediately Jesus made His disciples get into the boat and go before Him to the other side, while He sent the multitudes away.

### **COMMENTARY**

A spiritual interpretation of this miracle given by the Fathers teaches that the five loaves indicate the five books of the Law (Genesis through Deuteronomy), which are broken open in Christ and thus feed the universe. The two fish represent the Gospel Book and the Epistle Book, the teaching of the fishermen. The gathering of the leftovers by the apostles shows that the teachings the faithful are unable to grasp are nevertheless held in the consciousness of the Church. May our Lord Jesus Christ continue to fill our hunger with His word!



## SPIRITUAL ARTICLES

**From *The Prologue* for Jul. 5/Jul. 18 by St. Nikolai Velimirovic:**

### **The Venerable Athanasius of Mount Athos**

Athanasius was born in Trebizond of God-fearing parents. He was orphaned at an early age, but by the providence of God a military officer took him under his care and brought him to Constantinople to be educated. Because of his meekness and humbleness, he was the favorite of his peers. During their games, the children chose one to be an emperor, another a commander—and Athanasius an abbot, as though it were a prophecy! Having completed his education, Athanasius (who before tonsure was called Abraham) withdrew into the desert of Maleinos near the Holy Mountain, where he lived the life of an ascetic, as a disciple of the then renowned Michael Maleinos. Desiring a more difficult life of asceticism, Athanasius moved to Mount Athos, to live in silence. But many that were desirous of a life of asceticism began to gather around him, and he was compelled to build his famous Lavra. He was assisted in this by the Byzantine emperors, first by Nicephorus Phocas, who himself intended to withdraw and become a monk, and then by John Tzimiskes. Countless temptations befell Athanasius, both from demons and from men—but he, as a brave soldier of Christ, resisted and conquered them all, by his immeasurable meekness and continual prayer to the Living God. Filled with the grace of God, Athanasius was found worthy to see the All-holy Theotokos, who miraculously brought forth water from a rock and promised that she would always be the Abbess of the monastery. In work and in prayer, Athanasius surpassed his brethren, and he loved all with the love of a spiritual father and shepherd. Death came to Athanasius unexpectedly. He and six other monks had climbed up onto a newly built vestibule of the church to inspect a wall that was being constructed, and the wall caved in on them and buried them. Thus died this great beacon of monasticism, in the year 1003. Many times following his death Athanasius appeared to his brethren—sometimes to comfort them, and sometimes to reprimand them.

### **The Venerable Martyr Cyprian the New**

Cyprian was born in the village of Klitzos in Epirus. Following the death of his devout parents, Cyprian went to the Holy Mountain, where he was tonsured a monk, devoting himself completely to a life of asceticism in a cell near the Monastery of Koutloumousiou. He imposed upon himself labor upon labor, and asceticism upon asceticism, until he became renowned and respected throughout the Holy Mountain. But Cyprian was still not satisfied with himself. He was tormented by the thought that he could not be saved except through martyrdom for Christ. Therefore, he left the Holy Mountain and went to Thessalonica, where he went before the pasha of Thessalonica and called upon him to reject the false faith of Mohammed and accept the true Faith of Christ. The pasha ordered him scourged and driven out. Unsatisfied with such little suffering for Christ, Cyprian traveled to Constantinople and wrote a letter to the grand vizier, in which he outlined the falseness of Mohammed and the truth of the Lord Christ. Enraged, the vizier sent him to Sheik ul-Islamu, and he, after having heard all that Cyprian had to say, ordered him beheaded. Cyprian was joyful beyond measure, and he went to the scaffold as to a wedding feast. Thus this godly man suffered for Christ on July 5, 1679, and realized his zealous desire.

## **The Venerable Lampadus**

Loving Christ with a fervent love from his early youth, Lampadus withdrew into the wilderness of Irenopolis, where he gave himself up to a life of asceticism. Since he had overcome all the passions and desires of the flesh, his soul was radiant with heavenly light and an unspeakable, otherworldly peace. Lampadus was a miracle-worker both during his life and after his death. He lived the ascetic life probably in the tenth century.

### **HYMN OF PRAISE**

#### **To the Most-holy Theotokos**

On Mount Athos a Lavra shines,  
The wondrous monastery of Athanasius.  
One thousand years have passed it by,  
But the spirit and bread did not run out:  
It was lacking neither spirit nor bread  
Nor the shining vision of God's heaven.  
Thus it was written in books of old:  
The Abbess provides,  
As Mount Athos is her realm—  
The mighty fortress of Orthodoxy;  
That mystical Abbess—  
Is it not the All-pure Theotokos?  
She upholds the Lavra, and nourishes Iveron,  
Protects Hilandar, defends Russikon;  
Karakallou and Zographou, Simonospetra,  
And Pantocrator—she protects them all.  
She is the fortress of their inhabitants,  
But to all she is peace and defense.

### **REFLECTION**

How did Moses, with a blow from his rod, bring forth water from the rock? How did God send down manna from heaven and feed the people of Israel in the wilderness? Thus ask those who have a very weak conception of the might of the Omnipotent God—and still they are perplexed as to why such miracles do not take place again, in order that all peoples might believe in God. But the Israelites witnessed countless miracles of God with their own eyes, and still they did not believe. Meanwhile, God repeats the wondrous miracles of old, wherever and whenever it is needed. Once, when there was a famine in the Lavra of Athanasius, all of the brethren dispersed in all directions. Dejected, Athanasius set off to seek out another place. A woman on the road asked him: "Where are you going?" And because she was a woman on the Holy Mountain—where no women are granted access—he asked in wonder: "Who are you?" She answered: "I am she to whom you have dedicated your community. I am the Mother of your Lord." Athanasius said: "I am afraid to trust you, for even demons can manifest themselves as angels of light. How will you prove to me the truthfulness of your words?" Then the Holy Theotokos said to him: "Strike your rod upon this rock, and you will know who it is that speaks to you. Know that I will always remain the Abbess of your Lavra." Athanasius then struck the rock with his rod. At that, the rock shook and cracked as if from thunder, and water gushed forth from the shattered rock. Frightened, Athanasius turned to prostrate himself before the Holy All-pure One, but she had already

vanished. He returned to his Lavra and, to his even greater amazement, found all the barns overflowing with wheat. Here, then, is a recapitulation of great wonders, which confirm the miracles of old, and by which the faithful are strengthened in the Faith.

### **IMPORTANT REMINDERS & ANNOUNCEMENTS**

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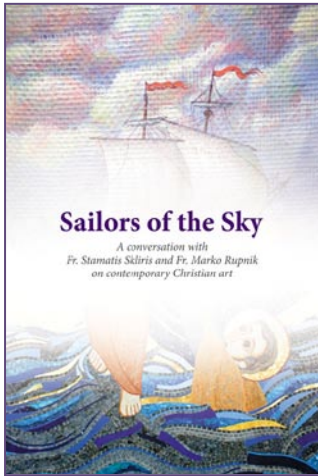
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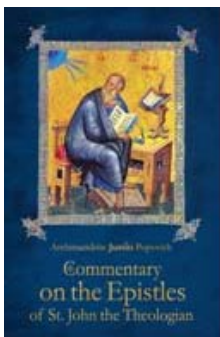
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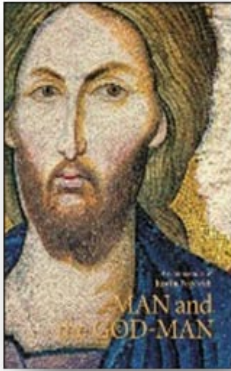
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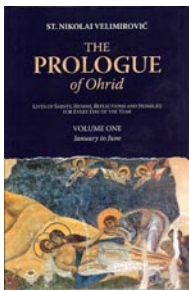


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