



**June 20, 2010**  
**FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST;**  
**FEAST OF THE HIEROMARTYR THEODOTUS,**  
**BISHOP OF ANCYRA**

**RESURRECTION TROPARION - TONE THREE:**

Let the heavens rejoice and let the earth be glad! For the Lord has shown strength with His arm! He has trampled down death by death! He has become the firstborn of the dead! He has delivered us from the depths of hell, and has granted to the world great mercy!

**ST. THEODOTUS TROPARION - TONE 4**

Having partaken of the apostolic way of life, And becoming their successor to the throne, You have discovered in the practice of the virtues the way to divine contemplation. Therefore dispensing the word of truth you have also suffered to the shedding of blood for the sake of the faith, O holy martyr Theodotus, entreat Christ our God to save our souls.

**RESURRECTIONAL KONTAKION - TONE THREE:**

On this day You did rise from the tomb, O Merciful One, leading us from the gates of death. On this day Adam exults as Eve rejoices; with the prophets and the patriarchs they unceasingly praise the divine majesty of Your power!

**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 3<sup>RD</sup> TONE:**

*Sing praises to our God, sing praises; Sing praises to our King, sing praises!*

### **ROMANS 6: 18-23**

Brethren, having been set free from sin, you became slaves of righteousness. I speak in human terms because of the weakness of your flesh. For just as you presented your members as slaves of uncleanness, and of lawlessness leading to more lawlessness, so now present your members as slaves of righteousness for holiness. For when you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness. What fruit did you have then in the things of which you are now ashamed? For the end of those things is death. But now having been set free from sin, and having become slaves of God, you have your fruit to holiness, and the end, everlasting life. For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

### **ALLELUIA**

*In Thee O Lord, have I hoped; let me never be put to shame!*

*Be Thou a God of protection for me, a house of refuge, in order to save me!*

### **COMMENTARY**

Our Lord, Jesus Christ, knows our status. He, as man, knows what it means to endure the temptations of this fallen world. He, as God, is perfect, as the Father in Heaven is perfect. While we were slaves to sin, we only cared for those things which were well-pleasing to the self. We lost ourselves to the empty pleasures of the flesh. Once we have been set free from sin by baptism into Christ, we are granted the fullness of holiness and the Divine Gift of eternal life. May our Lord, who knows our struggles, grant us the strength to endure them as we work toward bearing the Holy Fruit that is possible through Him!



## GOSPEL & COMMENTARY

### **MATTHEW 8: 5-13**

At that time, when Jesus had entered Capernaum, a centurion came to Him, pleading with Him, saying, "Lord, my servant is lying at home paralyzed, dreadfully tormented." And Jesus said to him, "I will come and heal him." The centurion answered and said, "Lord, I am not worthy that You should come under my roof. But only speak a word, and my servant will be healed. For I also am a man under authority, having soldiers under me. And I say to this one, 'Go,' and he goes; and to another, 'Come,' and he comes; and to my servant, 'Do this,' and he does it." When Jesus heard it, He marveled, and said to those who followed, "Assuredly, I say to you, I have not found such great faith, not even in Israel! And I say to you that many will come from east and west, and sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven. But the sons of the kingdom will be cast out into outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth." Then Jesus said to the centurion, "Go your way; and as you have believed, so let it be done for you." And his servant was healed that same hour.

### **COMMENTARY**

True Faith is one of the most difficult things to find, as Christ reminds us in this pericope. We are all called to have the Faith of the centurion--that which does not need to see, only to hear, in order to believe. This is not easy, especially in today's bombardment of visual stimuli. One cannot even go walk to the corner without seeing advertisements. And yet, we are asked to believe in Jesus Christ as the Son of God, who died for us and rose from the dead...whom we cannot see, except in the people around us. Let us take our lesson from this humble centurion, who knew in his heart that Christ had only to say the word, and his servant would be healed. May Christ our God grant us the humility of the centurion, to know that we have only to believe, and all things are possible through Him!



## SPIRITUAL ARTICLES

**From *The Prologue for Jun. 7/Jun. 20* by St. Nikolai Velimirovic:**

### **The Holy Martyr Theodotus of Ancyra**

This martyr of Christ was secretly a Christian and, as such, he helped the Church and honorably buried the bodies of the holy martyrs. Thus, he buried the bodies of seven maidens who had suffered for Christ. When the pagans found out about him, they subjected him to tortures and slew him. (For more about St. Theodotus see May 18.)

### **The Holy Martyrs Cyriaca, Valeria and Maria**

All three of these martyrs were from Caesarea in Palestine. When a persecution of Christians began, they withdrew from the city to a hut, and there they prayed unceasingly to God, fasting and weeping that the Faith of Christ might be spread throughout the world and that the persecution of the Church might cease. As a result of slander, they were brought to trial, tortured, and in torments put to death in the year 304. Thus these glorious virgins were crowned with wreaths of martyrdom.

### **The Hieromartyr Marcellus, Pope of Rome**

During the reign of Maximian, Marcellus was sentenced to tend cattle in a certain place. In order to please Diocletian, who had taken him as co-emperor, Maximian began to construct public baths in Rome, the so-called Thermae, and forced the Christians to work on this project, as once Pharaoh compelled the Hebrews in Egypt. Many Christians perished at this time. Among those martyred was the deacon Cyriacus, who possessed great power over demons and had healed Artemia, the possessed daughter of Diocletian, as well as Jovia, the daughter of the Persian emperor, and had baptized both of them. Also martyred were Artemia; the deacons Sisinius, Smaragdus and Largius, companions of Cyriacus; the deacon Aphronianus; two newly baptized Roman soldiers, Papius and Maurus; the elder Saturninus; Crescentianus; and the blessed virgins Priscilla and Lucina, who with their wealth had built a cemetery for the slain Christian martyrs. The holy Pope Marcellus tended cattle for a long time, and finally, from starvation, humiliation, and torture by the soldiers, he reposed and gave up his soul to God.

### **The Hieromartyr Marcellinus, Pope of Rome**

Marcellinus was the predecessor of Pope Marcellus on the Roman patriarchal throne. When Emperor Diocletian summoned him and threatened him with torture, Marcellinus offered sacrifice to the idols, for which the emperor presented him with a precious garment. But Marcellinus bitterly repented and began day and night to lament his denial of Christ, as once had Peter the Apostle. At that time an assembly of bishops was held in Campania. The pope dressed in sackcloth, poured ashes over his head and entered the assembly, confessing his sin before all and begging them to judge him. The fathers said that he should judge himself. Then Marcellinus said: "I deprive myself of my priestly rank, of which I am not worthy; and even more, do not allow my body to be buried after death, but let it be thrown to the dogs!"

Having said this, he pronounced a curse on anyone who would dare to bury him. Marcellinus later went to the Emperor Diocletian, threw down the precious garment before him, confessed his faith in Jesus Christ and cursed the idols. The enraged emperor ordered Marcellinus to be tortured and then killed outside the city, together with three good men: Claudius, Cyrinus and Antoninus. The bodies of these three men were buried immediately, but the body of the pope lay there for thirty-six days. Then St. Peter appeared to the new pope, Marcellus, and ordered that the body of Marcellinus be buried, saying: *He that humbleth himself shall be exalted* (Luke 18:14).

### **The Venerable Daniel of Scetis**

Daniel was the abbot of the famous Egyptian Scetis. He was a disciple of St. Arsenius and a teacher of many. Many of his words and teachings are as guiding stars for monks. Once, when the barbarians attacked Scetis, the brethren called him to flee together with them. He answered them: "If God does not take care of me, what is the purpose of living?" Daniel also said: "The more obese your body becomes, the more emaciated your soul becomes." He lived a communal life of asceticism for forty years but later withdrew to the desert, in the year 420. He happened to be in Alexandria when a wicked father-in-law killed his daughter-in-law, St. Thomais (see April 13), because of her chastity. Daniel and his disciple buried this martyr.

### **HYMN OF PRAISE**

Saint Marcellinus  
O sinner, cast out despair,  
And offer repentance unto God.  
Despair is rejoicing for the devil.  
Behold, Marcellinus was a hierarch,  
And when they led him to torture  
He betrayed the Lord before the emperor.  
Yet he did not give himself to despair,  
But openly confessed the terrible sin  
And washed it away in glory by his blood.  
O sinner, do not become despondent,  
And do not conceal sins like a serpent.  
Concealed sin is a serpent in the bosom!  
It eats the heart of secret sinners.  
Peter sinned—and quickly cast sin away;  
That is what true penitents do.  
When an apostle and a pope sinned  
And were forgiven by God,  
How then can there not be forgiveness for you?  
Only repent, but without being late.  
A bitter death can make you late  
And separate you from God forever.  
Quickly, quickly, cast out despair,  
And quickly offer repentance!

## **REFLECTION**

Within the saints there exists a very acute conscience. That which average people consider a minor sin, the saints consider to be a great transgression. It is said of Abba Daniel that on three occasions robbers captured him and took him into the forest. Fortunately, on two occasions he saved himself from slavery, but the third time, when he wanted to escape, he struck one of them with a stone, killed him, and fled. This murder weighed on his conscience as heavily as lead. Perplexed as to what he should do, he went to the Alexandrian patriarch, Timothy, confessed to him and sought advice. The patriarch consoled him and released him from any penance. But his conscience still troubled him, and he went to the pope in Rome. The pope told him the same thing as had Patriarch Timothy. Still dissatisfied, Daniel visited in succession the other patriarchs, in Constantinople, Antioch and Jerusalem, confessing to all of them and seeking advice. But he remained unsatisfied. Then he returned to Alexandria and declared himself to the authorities as a murderer. The authorities arrested him. When the trial was held before the prince, Daniel related everything that had happened and begged to be killed in order to save his soul from eternal fire. The prince was amazed at all of this and said to him: "Go, Father, and pray to God for me, even if you kill seven more!" Dissatisfied with this, Daniel then decided to take a leprous man into his cell and serve him until his death, and when this one died, to take another. So he did, and thus he quieted his conscience.

## **IMPORTANT REMINDERS & ANNOUNCEMENTS**

### **Residents of Heaven – An Exhibit of Byzantine and Modern Orthodox Icons**

with *V. Rev. Stamatis Skliris, Iconographer*

at the "*David Allan Hubbard Library, Fuller Theological Seminary*"

135 N. Oakland Avenue, Pasadena, California 91101

June 10 – July 5, 2010

### **DIOCESAN DAYS GATHERING**

*His Grace, Bishop Maxim cordially invites you to our*

#### **14th ANNUAL DIOCESAN DAYS GATHERING**

Saint Sava Mission

Jackson, California

September 3-5, 2010

Ad/Greeting for the Annual 2010 Publication

Full-page \$150, Half-page \$75, Quarter-page \$50

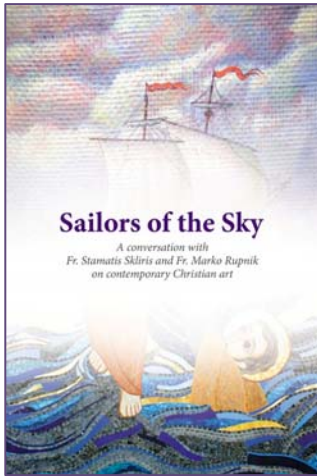
Sponsorship Categories: Gold \$1,000, Silver \$500

More information is now available on our Diocesan Website!

Please visit [www.westsrbdio.org](http://www.westsrbdio.org).

**FROM SEBASTIAN PRESS:**

**OUR NEWEST PUBLICATION**



**Sailors of the Sky**

*A conversation with Fr. Stamatis Skliris  
and Fr. Marko Rupnik on contemporary Christian art*

In these timely conversations led by Fr. Radovan Bigovic, many issues are introduced that enable the contemporary reader to deepen and expand his or her understanding of the role of art in the life of the Church. Here we find answers to questions on the crisis of contemporary ecclesiastical art in West and East; the impact of Impressionism, Expressionism, Cubism, Surrealism, and Abstract painting on contemporary ecclesiastical painting; and a consideration of the main

distinction between iconography and secular painting.

This book is adorned with striking full-color icons by Fr. Stamatis Skliris and Fr. Marko Rupnik, renowned as iconographers and as writers and lecturers on Byzantine iconography. Highly recommended! 94 pages – Retail Price - \$15.00



**Sebastian Press Special - Spend \$50 or more on our Sebastian Press Titles and receive a FREE Wall Calendar!**

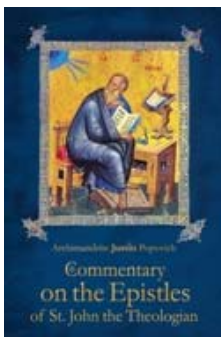
**2010 Wall Calendar adorned with icons by Fr. Stamatis Skliris**

The Serbian Orthodox Diocese of Western America is pleased to announce the publication of a beautiful, full-color, trilingual (English, Serbian and Greek) Wall Calendar, which has been compiled and designed by Bishop Maxim and Interklima (Vrnjci), and printed in Serbia. This high quality,

trilingual (English, Serbian and Greek) Calendar is adorned with striking full-color icons by Fr. Stamatis Skliris, a parish priest in Athens who is renowned as an iconographer and as a writer and lecturer on Byzantine iconography. Highly recommended! 27 pages

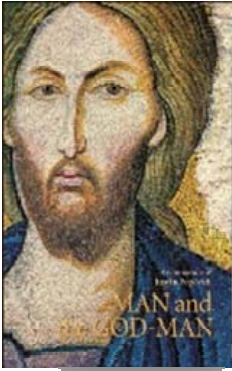
For a complete list of Sebastian Press Titles, please visit:

[http://www.westsrbdio.org/SEBASTIAN\\_PRESS/Sebastian\\_Press.html](http://www.westsrbdio.org/SEBASTIAN_PRESS/Sebastian_Press.html)



**Commentary on the Epistles of St. John the Theologian**

By Archimandrite Justin Popovic - This Commentary on the Epistles of St. John the Theologian - published now, three years after the blessed repose of Venerable Fr. Justin (on the Feast of the Annunciation, 1979) - was written by the tireless Messenger of Christ forty years ago, in circumstances similar to those in which Christ's Holy Evangelist John wrote his sacred Epistles. The text of this 93-page soft-bound book has been translated from the Serbian by Radomir M. Plavsic. Published by Sebastian Press, Western American Diocese of the Serbian Orthodox Church, Contemporary Christian Thought - Retail price: \$10.

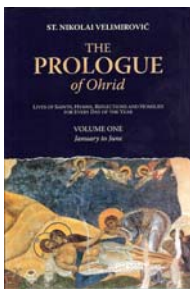


**MAN AND THE GOD-MAN by Archimandrite Justin Popovic**

This newest publication of our Sebastian Press Publishing House is now available for purchase online at:

[http://www.westsrbdio.org/ads/man\\_and\\_the\\_godman.html](http://www.westsrbdio.org/ads/man_and_the_godman.html)

*Retail Price: \$15.00*



**THE PROLOGUE OF OHRID** - St Nikolai of Zica (Velimirovic) (1880-1956) has been called the "Serbian Chrysostom" for his theological depth and golden-tongued eloquence. Now for the first time, a complete and unabridged English translation of St. Nikolai's Prologue of Ohrid has been made available. St. Nikolai's Prologue has become a much-loved spiritual classic for Orthodox Christians worldwide. An inspirational source-book of the Orthodox Faith, it contains within its pages a summation of the Church's wisdom and Her experience of sanctity through the Grace of Jesus Christ. Lives of Saints, Hymns, Reflections and Homilies are presented for every day of the year. St. Nikolai's beautiful Hymns have never before appeared in English. –

*Retail \$120 per set*