

St. Nestor of Thessalonica

In the time of the suffering of St. Demetrius the Myrrh-gusher, there was a young man of Thessalonica, Nestor, who learned the Christian Faith from St. Demetrius himself. At that time Emperor Maximian, organized various games and amusements for the people. The emperor's favorite in these games was Lyaeus, a man of Goliath-like size and strength. Lyaeus challenged men every day. Thus, Lyaeus amused the bloodthirsty, idolatrous Maximian. The emperor built a special stage for Lyaeus's battles, with spears planted beneath the platform. When Lyaeus defeated someone in wrestling, he would throw him from the platform onto the forest of spears. The emperor and his pagan subjects cheered until he died. Among Lyaeus's innocent victims were many Christians. When no one volunteered to duel with Lyaeus, by the emperor's orders Christians were arrested and forced to duel with him. Seeing this horrifying amusement of the pagan world, Nestor's heart was torn with pain, and he decided to come forward for a duel with the gigantic Lyaeus. St Demetrius blessed him and prophesied to him: "You will defeat Lyaeus, but you will suffer for Christ." Thus, young Nestor went to duel with Lyaeus. Maximian was present with a multitude of people; everyone felt pity for the young Nestor, who would surely die, and tried to dissuade him from dueling with Lyaeus. Nestor crossed himself and said: "O God of Demetrius, help me!" and with God's help, he overcame Lyaeus, knocked him down, and threw him onto the sharp spears, where the heavy giant soon found death. Then all the people cried out: "Great is the God of Demetrius!" But the emperor, shamed before the people and sorrowing for his favorite Lyaeus, was greatly angered at Nestor and Demetrius, and commanded that Nestor be beheaded and Demetrius run through with lances.

“Let us Attend!”



“And they found the man from whom the demons had departed, sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed and in his right mind.”

A PARISH BULLETIN OF
ALL SAINTS ORTHODOX CHURCH

Olyphant, Pennsylvania

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27 October 2024

18th Sunday after Pentecost

Bulletin, Sunday, 27 October 2024

18th SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST — Tone 1. Martyr Nestor of Thessalonica (ca. 306). Ven. Nestor the Chronicler of the Kiev Caves (Far Caves—ca. 1114). Uncovering of the Relics of St. Andrew, Prince of Smolensk (1540). Martyrs Capitolina and Eroteis of Cappadocia (304). Saint Claudia Procula (1st c.). Martyrs Mark, Soterikhos, and Valentine (304).

Epistle: 2 Corinthians 9:6–11

Gospel: Luke 8:26–39

Our souls and minds are strengthened and fortified by the regular reading of the Holy Scriptures. Daily readings can be found on the parish's wall calendar, or online by visiting the OCA's daily reading page <https://www.oca.org/readings>.

Schedule

- **Wednesday, 23 October 2024. 9AM, Akathist to Healers Sts. Cosmas and Damian**
- **Saturday, 2 November 2024. 5:00–5:45PM. Fr. Paul available for Confession ; 6PM Great Vespers.**
- **Sunday 3 November 2024, 19th Sunday After Pentecost. 9:30AM Divine Liturgy, Followed by Agape Coffee Hour Fellowship.**

Announcements

~ A warm welcome to all our visitors. Please join us downstairs for Agape Coffee Hour Fellowship.

~ Our thanks to Father John Black of St. Michael's parish for directing the funeral services for +Mary Brzuchalski this past week. God grant you many years.

~ Last Thursday Fr. Nicodemus of St. Tikhon's Monastery reposed in the Lord. Father Nicodemus was well known many generations who visited the monastery and greeted all guests to the Monastery Church with a humble warmth. His funeral will take place at the Monastery Church this Friday, 1 November 2024 at 10:30AM. Memory Eternal.

Our Sister Parish of St. Nicholas is celebrating its 120th Anniversary on Friday, 6 December 2024 with a Hierarchical Liturgy followed by a festive banquet at Rossi's Restaurant. Those interested in attending the Banquet can pick up Banquet form at the Candle Desk. Tickets are \$30.00 a person. There is no fee for Children 10 years or younger.

SATURDAY

St. Demetrios the Great Martyr
Fast-free

OCTOBER 26

2 Timothy 2:1-10; John 15:17-16:2

The prototype of obedience is Christ himself who obeyed the heavenly Father completely and to the end. The obedient person sees evil but evil does not touch his soul, precisely because the grace of the Holy Spirit is with him. The Holy Spirit loves very much the soul of the obedient person, and this is why it will not be long before such a soul comes to know the Lord.

St. Silouan the Athonite

NEW VENERABLE MARTYR JOASAPH OF MOUNT ATHOS.

Joasaph was a monk and disciple of Patriarch Nephon II of Constantinople in the late-fifteenth and early-sixteenth centuries. According to St. Nicodemus the Hagiorite, "he strove as much as possible to imitate the virtues and struggles of his sacred teacher." Eventually, Nephon, Joasaph, and the Neomartyr Makarios went to live at Vatopedi Monastery on Mount Athos. After the martyrdom of Makarios, Joasaph consulted with Nephon about his desire to also die as a martyr like Makarios. Nephon had foreknowledge of this and confirmed that it was God's will, but Joasaph waited until after the death of Nephon. He went to Constantinople and fearlessly preached the mystery of the Holy Trinity and the Incarnation of the Son and Word of God to the Muslim population. This proclamation surprised the Turks, and they seized Joasaph and took him before the judge. He was cruelly tortured and beheaded, sealing his confession with his blood.



COMMEMORATIONS: Demetrios the Myrrhusher and Lupus; Athanasios of Medikion; Anthony of Vologda; Theophilus of the Kiev Caves; Demetrius of Basarabov; Demetrios of Misti-Konakli; Alexander of Guria; Glykon, Leptina, Artemiodorus, and Basil; Joasaph of Mt. Athos; Cedd of Lastingham; Eata of Hexham; Luian and Marcian, former magicians; Boris (Razumov), Metropolitan of Nevrokop; Translation of the relics of St. George of Ioannina; Commemoration of the transfer of the Icon of St. Demetrios from Thessalonica to Constantinople; Commemoration of the Great Earthquake at Constantinople in 740.

SUNDAY

Seventh Sunday of Luke
Fast-free

OCTOBER 27

2 Corinthians 9:6-11
Luke 8:41-56

We know when the Holy Spirit visits us. We don't doubt it at all. It's not like one of our normal feelings. It is something that comes from above and transforms us completely, making us into different people. When Christ comes within us, then we live only the good; we live love for the entire world. Evil, sin and hatred disappear on their own; they can't remain, there is no place for them.

St. Porphyrios of Kausokalyvia

COMMEMORATION OF THE MIRACLE OF ST. NICHOLAS THE NEW IN 1943.

In Thebes, in the district of Tachi, the Germans had been informed that there was hidden ammunition that the insurgents were going to use against them. In fact, there was a storage space filled with weapons and ammunition where the bell tower is now located today. The Germans ordered everyone to gather outside the church, and a firing squad faced them. They checked homes, warehouses, and even the church and found nothing. But the room where the ammunition was hidden had a wooden door that would open and close with the slightest gust of wind. The inhabitants watched the officer walk past that door two or three times without once looking in. The Germans gave up their search and left without harming the residents. The people fell to their knees and prayed, thanking St. Nicholas the New for preventing the officer from seeing their weapons and saving them from certain death.



COMMEMORATIONS: Alexander, Bishop of Guria and Samegrelo; Nestor of Thessalonica; Mark of the isle of Thasos; Procla, wife of Pontius Pilate; Kyriakos I, Patriarch of Constantinople; Capitolina and Eroteis of Cappadocia; Nestor the Chronicler of the Kiev Caves; Demetrius of Basarabov in Bulgaria (Bulgarian Calendar); Sergius Chernukhin of Danilov Monastery; Ia, virgin of Cornwall; Uncovering of the relics of St. Andrew, prince of Smolensk; (Last Sunday of October: Commemoration of the miracle of St. Nicholas the New in 1943).

MONDAY

Holy Protection of the Theotokos
Fast-free

OCTOBER 28

Hebrews 9:1-7
Luke 10:38-42, 11:27-28

*M*ary was made Mother of God to obtain salvation for many.
St. John Chrysostom

ST. DEMETRIUS, METROPOLITAN OF ROSTOV. Demetrius was born into a pious family near Kiev in the mid-seventeenth century, and he grew up a devout Christian. In college, he learned Latin and Greek and the whole series of classical sciences, and that was when his tremendous abilities as a student were first evident. Demetrius became a monk at the Kiev Kirillov monastery and began preaching and writing there. He also preached at several monasteries and churches in Lithuania, Ukraine, and Belarus and was elected abbot of two monasteries. Demetrius was called to the Kiev Caves Lavra by the abbot and was entrusted with writing the *Menologion*, which described the lives of the saints for every day of the year. For twenty years, he devoted himself to studying and compiling the lives of saints from many different sources. He said that while writing about the lives of the saints, his soul was filled with impressions of the saints, which gave him strength in body and spirit. All these accomplishments were brought to the attention of the patriarch and Tsar Peter I. At first, they ordained Demetrius the Metropolitan of Tobolsk and then of Rostov. His work strengthened the unity of the Russian Orthodox Church and influenced the work of succeeding Russian theologians.



COMMEMORATIONS: Protection of the Most Holy Theotokos (Greek Calendar); Parasceva of Iconium; Kyriakos of Jerusalem and Anna; Athanasius I of Constantinople; Terence, Africanus, Maximus, Pompeius, and 36 others; Stephen the Hymnographer; Terence and Neonilla of Syria, and their children; Febronia, daughter of Emperor Heraclius; Arsenius I of Srem; Firmilian of Caesarea, and Malchion; Neophytus of Urbnisi; Parasceva of Pirimin; Angelis, Manuel, George, and Nicholas of Crete; Job of Pochaev; Michael of Kuban; Arsenius of Cappadocia; Constantine of Kiev; Demetrius of Rostov; Nestor of the Kiev Caves; Feofil of Kiev; Hyacinth of Vicina.

TUESDAY

Fast-free

OCTOBER 29

Philippians 1:8-14; Luke 11:34-41

A person's spiritual state is indicated by the quality of his thoughts... Each person interprets [things] according to his own thought. Each thing can be seen from its good side or its bad side... People judge things according to their hearts' spiritual content. If they do not have spiritual content, they will draw the wrong conclusions and do wrong to other people. For example, one who is doing charity work at night so as not to be seen will never think evil if he should see someone late at night out on the street. But if a person who spends his nights in sin sees someone out on the street late at night, he will say, "Who knows where that bad fellow is spending his nights?" because he himself has such experiences... Do you remember how the two thieves who were crucified with Christ addressed him? They both saw Christ on the Cross, the earth quaking, and so forth. But what a difference there was in the thought of the one and the thought of the other! (Luke 23:39-41). One was saved, but the other was lost.

St. Paisios the Athonite

MARTYR MELITENE OF MARCIANOPOLIS. During the Christian persecutions, Melitene was accused of being a Christian before the governor of the region. When she appeared before him, she was beaten on her face, and then they exposed her naked body. She stood this way for many hours inside the court. Melitene ridiculed the governor and his idols, for she deemed dishonor an honor for Christ. Afterward, she was subjected to cruel torments and survived unharmed. Finally, they struck St. Melitene with a sword, and she surrendered her soul to God.



COMMEMORATIONS: Anastasia of Rome; Abramius the Recluse; Mary of Mesopotamia; Anna of Mt. Olympus; Melitene of Marcianopolis; Athanasius of Sparta; Timothy of Esphigmenou; Abramius, archimandrite of Rostov; Sabbas the Commander; Serapion of Zarzma; Martyrs Cyril, Menas, and Menaeus; Abramius, recluse of the Near Caves; Ermelindis, hermitess in Meldaert; Colman of Kilmacduagh; Eberigisil of Cologne; Glorification of St. Rostislav, prince of Greater Moravia.

Within the Fold but Without Love

That our Orthodox Church possesses the fullness of truth is a given, yet because of our weakness as believers, this obvious truth is often invisible to others. In our weakness as sinful people, we Orthodox clergy as well as the laity often fail to demonstrate the love and joy that would make our faith attractive to others.

When people visit an Orthodox temple for the first time, if they see beautiful ritual and a mystical interior but are not received warmly by the worshipers, they likely will walk away thinking this faith has no impact on the soul. Beautiful worship and sublime theology mean nothing if we don't live it out in love for others.

Grand services can be performed on any stage as reenactments of ancient Christian worship, complete with beautiful costumes and authentic images of an ancient faith. Yet these rites will be nothing but empty externals, devoid of meaning, if we Orthodox Christians make no effort to breathe in the faith and allow Christ to change our hearts and transform us into a holy people.

Only when we invite God to make us His holy people do the spiritual power of the services and the beauty of our temples become irresistible to others, and they become seekers themselves, by God's grace.

Faith without Action Is Dead

Although eternal life cannot be attained by works, for no one can do any good except by the power of Christ, faith without works is dead. Transformation is necessary for any of us to enter into God's kingdom, and this requires us to cooperate with God in our salvation.

The good news is that God provides the means by which we can live a life in action, ever moving toward holiness. Christ has done all the work, but we are required to do our part by cooperating with the action of the Holy Spirit, who provides the grace needed for this transformation.

This transformation takes place in the heart, for "the heart is not simply the physical organ but the spiritual center of man's being, man as made in the image of God, his deepest and truest self, or the inner shrine, to be entered only through sacrifice and death, in which the mystery of the union between the divine and the human is consummated."¹⁹

The means by which this transformation can take place are provided by God through His Church. By availing ourselves of frequent confession and the reception of the Holy Mysteries, we are given what we need to make this journey to the heart of God, being transformed into His likeness that we might be made worthy to spend eternity with Him.

The Meaning of Salvation in the Ancient Church

According to Protopresbyter George Metallinos, dean of the Athens University School of Theology, “For [us] Orthodox the unique and absolute goal of life in Christ is theosis, our union with God, so that man—through his participation in God’s uncreated energy—may become ‘by the Grace of God’ that which God is by nature (without beginning and without end). This is what ‘salvation’ means, in Christianity.”²⁰

As Christians we know that salvation is an ongoing process we are called to cooperate in. We are instructed to “repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand” (Matt. 4:17). The Apostle Paul made this clear when he told us to “work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure” (Phil. 2:12–13).

Our faith is a free gift from God, not dependent on anything we can do. But the lifelong process of salvation requires that we cooperate with God’s grace, that we might be transformed by the Holy Spirit and made holy. If we are to spend eternity with God, transformation must take place.

The sole purpose of the Church is the salvation of every human person, whereby we are united to Christ, transformed by Him in all holiness, and prepared for eternal life. This work of salvation is a gradual, lifelong process by which Christians become more and more like Christ. It begins the moment we commit ourselves to Christ, and within the abounding grace of the Holy Spirit, we are ever drawn closer in communion with God.

Theosis goes far beyond the simple restoration of people to their state before the Fall. Because Christ united the human and divine natures in His person, it is now possible for us to experience closer fellowship with God than Adam and Eve initially experienced in the Garden of Eden. Some Orthodox theologians go so far as to say that Jesus would have become incarnate for this reason alone, even if Adam and Eve had never sinned.

The Link between Repentance and Humility

In an age when self-focus is the rule of the day, and where the ego seems to reign, it is hard for people to see the value of humility. Many people, from politicians to rock stars, seem to climb the ladder of success by being anything but humble. In our darkened state, with sin dominating our lives and our bad habits seeming to be insurmountable, holiness seems to be only for saints, unattainable for ourselves. Stuck in our habitual patterns of behavior, we seem to have surrendered all hope for real change.

The antidote to this inertia can be found in one simple act: repenting. We fall down before our God, confessing our failure at keeping the commandments and asking for God’s help in turning our lives around. We commit ourselves to crushing down the ego and to acquiring a humble heart. We take every opportunity to accept correction or criticism, without becoming defensive, for we know the truth in these words of St. John Climacus: “As with the appearance of light, darkness retreats; so, at the fragrance of humility, all anger and bitterness vanishes.”

We refrain from judging anyone but only examine our own conscience, accusing only ourselves. St. Macarius the Great wrote,

Christians therefore ought to strive continually, and never to pass judgment on anyone—no, not upon the harlot on the street, or upon open sinners and disorderly persons—but to regard all men with singleness of intention and purity of eye, so that it may become like a fixed law of nature to despise no one, to abhor no one, to make no distinctions between them. . . . This is purity of heart, when you see sinners or sick people, to have compassion on them and be tenderhearted towards them.

Blessed is he, my brethren, who can say this to his Lord. Blessed is he whose heart is utterly ready to follow the will of God. The preparedness of a man's heart lies in this: his following of the will of God with joy and his being in no way distracted by his own thoughts and desires. The repentant King David first followed his own sinful thoughts and desires, and was like a ship tossed on a stormy sea. When, however, he realised that the storm would drown him, he turned to God with great repentance and tears, and put the ship of his life entirely into God's hands. 'My heart is ready, my heart is ready', he cries with great peace of soul, for he knows that he has put his ship into the hands of the greatest Steersman. The storm may still rage, the wind and waves may still assail him, but he does not fear, for he is sure that nothing can overturn his ship and that it will sail peacefully to a calm haven. A heart that is ready means a heart cleansed from pride and humbled before the majestic power and wisdom of God. A heart that is ready means a heart that is emptied of all worldly desires and fancies, and filled only with aspirations towards God and love for God. A heart that is ready means a heart healed of all restlessness, cares and fears, and strengthened and encouraged by the presence of God's grace. 'I will sing and give praise in my glory.' Thus the Psalmist continues. This shows how truly his heart is ready. He is not proud of his kingly glory, but ascribes it all to God. He abases himself before God as nothing, and his whole joy is to magnify and glorify God. His personal glory is given to him solely as a reason for glorifying his glorious God.

Oh, my brethren, let us strive that our hearts may soon be ready for God — ready to hear the word of God, ready to follow the will of God, ready to glorify the living God.

O Lord God, our immortal Creator, help us to prepare our hearts, that we may be vessels of Thy life-giving grace. To Thee be glory and praise for ever. Amen.

OCTOBER 27th

1. The Holy Martyr Nestor.

At the time of the martyrdom of St Dimitrios the Outpourer of Myrrh, there was in Constantinople a young man, Nestor, who had learned the Christian faith from St Dimitrios himself. At that time, the Emperor Maximian, an opponent of Christ, ordered various games and amusements for the people. The Emperor's favourite was a Vandal called Lyaeus, a man of Goliath-like size and strength. As the imperial gladiator, Lyaeus challenged men every day to a duel and slew them, and this blood-letting of his delighted the blood-lust of the idolatrous Emperor. He built a special arena, like a terrace on pillars, for Lyaeus's duels. Underneath this terrace were planted spears with sharp cutting-edges pointing upwards. When Lyaeus had overcome someone in the duel, he would push him from the terrace above onto the whole forest of prepared spears. The pagans stood around with their Emperor, and were delighted when some poor wretch writhed in torment on the spears until he died. Among Lyaeus's innocent victims were a large number of Christians, for, when there was a day when no-one came forward voluntarily to duel with Lyaeus, then, by the Emperor's orders, Christians were compelled to fight with him. Seeing this horrifying enjoyment of the pagan world, Nestor's heart swelled with pain and he resolved to go himself to the arena of the gigantic Lyaeus. He first went to the prison where St Dimitrios was kept, and asked his blessing to do this. St Dimitrios blessed him, signed him with the sign of the Cross on forehead and breast, and said to him: 'You will overcome him, but you will suffer for Christ.' The young Nestor then went to Lyaeus's arena. The Emperor was there with a large crowd, and they all bewailed the probable death of the young Nestor, trying to dissuade him from fighting Lyaeus, but Nestor crossed himself and said: 'O God of Dimitrios, help me!' With God's help, Nestor overcame Lyaeus, felled him and threw him down onto the sharp spears, where the heavy giant soon found death. Then the whole people shouted: 'Great is the God of Dimitrios!' But the Emperor had lost face before the people, and,

mourning his favourite, became filled with wrath against Nestor and Dimitrios, and the wicked Emperor ordered that Nestor be beheaded with the sword and Dimitrios run through with spears. Thus this glorious Christian hero, Nestor, left behind his young, earthly life in 306, and entered into the Kingdom of his Lord.

2. Our Holy Father Nestor the Chronicler.

He arrived at the Monastery of the Caves in Kiev at the age of seventeen, while St Theodosius was still abbot. He wrote the first history of the Russian people, into which he interwove the history of Russian asceticism. He was distinguished by a rare humility and meekness. In his glorious literary works, he often refers to himself as unworthy, vulgar, ignorant and filled with every sin. But God, who knows the heart of man, glorified this wonderful man who was so pleasing to Him. When Nestor entered into rest, on October 27th, 1114, his relics performed many miracles.

3. St Andrew, Prince of Smolensk.

From love of Christ, he set aside worldly glory and honour, hid himself in a monastery and there, disguised and unknown, served as verger for thirty years. He entered peacefully into rest in the Lord in 1390, and his wonderworking relics were found in 1540.

Author's note: In the Greek Great Synaxarion, **St Procula Claudia** is also commemorated on this day. She was that wife of Pilate to whom the Lord appeared in a dream at the time of His condemnation. Because of this, she tried to turn her husband from the shedding of innocent blood, but in vain (Matt. 27:19). She later became a disciple of Christ, and was baptised. She suffered greatly for the name of Christ, but finally entered into rest peacefully.

* * *

FOR CONSIDERATION

A miracle of St Dimitrios of Salonica: That the saints of God live clothed in great glory and power in heaven is known to Orthodox

Christians, not by some reasoning of their own but by the help and revelation of the saints. They appear sometimes in order to be seen and heard by men, sometimes either to be seen or heard and sometimes, unseen and unheard, they have influenced our thoughts, our circumstances and our actions. Among many of St Dimitrios's miracles, this one is noted: In the Church of St Dimitrios in Salonica, a young man called Onesiphorus was given the job of verger. His main task was to keep an account of the candles and lamps. This young man began to steal candles and take them home, then sell them again. St Dimitrios appeared to him and said: 'Brother Onesiphorus, your action is displeasing to me, for you are stealing candles, and are by this bringing trouble on others and especially on yourself. Stop this, and repent.' Onesiphorus was terrified and ashamed, and for a time stopped stealing candles. But this was later forgotten, and he again began to steal. One morning, an eminent man took some large candles to the saint's tomb, lit them, prayed a moment and then went out. Onesiphorus came up to the candles and put out his hand to take them. At that moment, a voice like thunder was heard: 'Are you doing that again?' As though struck by a thunderbolt, Onesiphorus fell to the ground unconscious. When some people came into the church, they lifted him up and he came to himself little by little, and related all that had happened to him, and they were all amazed and glorified God.

TO PONDER

Let me ponder on Peter's wonderful journey with the angel of God (Acts 12):

1. How the angel led Peter out of the prison and took him into the city.
2. How they invisibly passed the first and second guards.
3. How the locked gates of the city opened to them of themselves.

HOMILY

— on zeal for the house of God.

'The zeal of Thine house hath even eaten me, and the rebukes of them that rebuked Thee are fallen upon me' (Ps. 68:9).

The heavens are the house of God. The Church of God is the house of God. The bodies of the faithful are the house of God. Where God is, there is the house of God; a holy place. Men desecrate the holy things of God, and the royal prophet is wrathful and burns with zeal. He takes all insults to the holy things of God on himself, and they fall on him like a fire that inflames him with yet greater zeal. Men desecrate the heavens when they do not believe, and deny that which God Himself has revealed to men for their salvation. When men oppose the truth, or when they pervert it in a heretical way, or when they make judgements in self-will with their bodily understanding about Christ the Lord, or when they doubt the existence of the angels and the saints, or the Judgement and the immortal Kingdom of Christ and the eternal punishment of unrepentant sinners — in all these and similar cases, men fall as robbers upon the house of God and desecrate the holy things within. Then zeal rises up in the heart of the righteous against such opposition to, and blasphemy against, God. In the same way, men fall upon the house of the holy things of God when they bear themselves unworthily towards the Church's rules, lazily towards the Church's laws and wickedly towards the Church's ministers. Then zeal for the holy things of the house of God flares up in the hearts of the righteous and devout. Finally, the abasing of the human body, the giving over of oneself to the passions, the service of sin, rape, murder, brutality, drunkenness and other wicked works; all this is a falling on the holy things of the house of God, it is all blasphemy against God and man. Again, the zeal of him who is zealous for the things of God rises up and shines before men as a heavenly fire.

Oh, my brethren, let us look at Christ's zeal for the holy things of the house of God (John 2:17), and at the zeal of the apostles and our holy Orthodox Fathers of the Church. Let us be more zealous for our salvation than the devil is day and night for our ruin.

O Lord Jesus Christ, Thou model of zeal for holy things, give us a spark of Thy zeal, that we may be like Thee in zeal and saved by Thee. To Thee be glory and praise for ever. Amen.

1. The Holy Martyr Paraskeva (Petka).

She was born in the city of Iconium of rich and Christ-loving parents. After their death, the maiden Paraskeva began to give her goods away to the poor and needy, all in the name of Christ the Lord. When a persecution arose under Diocletian (284-305), Paraskeva was taken for trial before the governor of that area. When the governor asked her name, she said that she was called a Christian. The governor rebuked her for not giving her ordinary name, but Paraskeva said to him: 'I had first to tell you my name in eternal life, and can then give you my name in this transitory life.' After flogging her, the governor threw her into prison, where an angel of God appeared to her and, healing her of her wounds, comforted her. She destroyed all the idols in the pagan temple by her prayers. After long and harsh torture, she was beheaded with the sword and entered into eternal life.

2. St Arsenius, Archbishop of Peć.

A great hierarch of the Serbian Church and the successor of St Sava, Arsenius was born in Srem. He became a monk while still a young man, and gave himself to wholehearted asceticism for his soul's salvation. Hearing of the wonderful personality and deeds of St Sava, Arsenius went to him at Žiča, where the saint received him with kindness and drew him into the brotherhood at the monastery. Seeing rare virtues in Arsenius, Sava soon installed him as abbot of the Žiča community. When the Hungarians over-ran the land of Serbia, Sava sent Arsenius south to find a more secluded spot for the archiepiscopal seat. Arsenius chose Peć, and there built a monastery and church to the Holy Apostles, which later became dedicated to the Lord's Ascension. Before his second departure for Jerusalem, Sava designated Arsenius to succeed him on the archiepiscopal throne and, when Sava died at Trnovo on his way home, Arsenius urged King Vladislav to take Sava's body onto Serbian soil. He governed the Church wisely for thirty years, and entered into rest in the Lord on October 28th, 1266. On the wall of

the altar at Peć is written: 'O Lord our God, hearken; visit and bless this church ... remember it, and me, the sinner Arsenius'. He was buried there in the church at Peć.

Translator's note: St Arsenius's relics are now in the monastery of Zhrebaonik in Montenegro.

3. **The Holy Martyr Terence.**

A Syrian, he suffered for the Christian faith together with his wife and their seven children. After many tortures, during which the power of God was shown, they were all beheaded with the sword.

4. **St Stephen of St Sava's.**

The writer of many beautiful Canons, he lived in the community of St Sava the Sanctified near Jerusalem. He later became a bishop, and entered peacefully into rest in 807.

5. **St Athanasius, Patriarch of Constantinople.**

An opponent of union with Rome, in contrast to his predecessor, John Beccus (1275-1282), he was an ascetic and a man of prayer from his childhood. Beloved of the people, he incurred the displeasure of some of the clergy for his moral strictness. He withdrew to his monastery on Mount Ganos, where he lived in even stricter asceticism than formerly. The Lord Jesus Christ Himself appeared to him and chided him gently for leaving his flock to the wolves. When he had prophesied the day of the earthquake in Constantinople, the Emperor Andronicus called him back to the patriarchal throne, much against his will, and he later secretly withdrew again to his asceticism, entering into rest at the age of a hundred. He was a wonderworker and a seer.

6. **St Dimitri, Bishop of Rostov.**

A great hierarch, preacher, writer and ascetic, he was born near Kiev in 1651, and died in 1709. Among many other glorious works of instruction that he wrote, especially noteworthy is the translation and publication of the Lives of the Saints. He foresaw his own death three days before, and died while at prayer. He was a great light of the Russian Church, and of Orthodoxy in general. He had heavenly visions during his life; he served the Lord with zeal and entered into the heavenly Kingdom.

FOR CONSIDERATION

St Dimitri of Rostov was a saint in the classical pattern of our first fathers. He not only wrote beautiful books of instruction but also illumined his flock by his example, being a great faster and a man of prayer. He was so humble that he even asked the students in his seminary to pray for him. Whenever the clock struck the hour, he stood in prayer and recited 'Mother of God and Virgin, rejoice!' When he was ill — which often happened to him — he asked the seminarians each to recite the 'Our Father' for him five times, keeping in mind the five wounds of the Lord Jesus Christ. St Barbara once appeared to him, and asked him with a smile: 'Why do you pray in the Latin way?', meaning: why are your prayers to God so brief? At this rebuke, although so gently given, he was in despair, but she comforted him, saying: 'Don't be afraid.' On another occasion, St Orestes the Martyr (Nov. 10th) appeared to him, just as Dimitri was writing his life, and said: 'I endured greater sufferings for Christ than you have recorded.' He then showed him his left side, and said: 'This was pierced with a white-hot iron.' He went on to show him his left arm, saying: 'This was cut off', and his thigh, saying: 'The flesh was cut away here.' When St Dimitri began to wonder whether this Orestes was one of the Five Companions (Dec. 13th), the saint answered his query, saying: 'I'm not the one among the Five Companions, but the one whose Life you're now writing.'

TO PONDER

Let me ponder on God's terrible punishment of Herod (Acts 12):

1. How Herod was puffed up with pride, and the people glorified him as a god.
2. How an angel of God suddenly attacked him, 'because he gave not God the glory'.
3. How he died consumed by worms.

HOMILY

— on prayer to God to save one's soul from the dust.