

SAINT LUKE THE EVANGELIST GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

JULY 23, 2017



THE SEVENTH SUNDAY OF MATTHEW

Hieromartyr Phocas was born in the city of Sinope. From youth he led a virtuous Christian life, and in his adult years he became Bishop of Sinope. Saint Phocas converted many pagans to faith in Christ. At the time of a persecution against Christians under the emperor Trajan (98-117), the governor demanded that the saint renounce Christ. After fierce torture they enclosed Saint Phocas in a hot bath, where he died a martyr's death in the year 117.

In the year 404, the relics of the saint were transferred to Constantinople (July 22).

The Holy Martyrs Trophimus, Theophilus, and thirteen martyrs with them, suffered during the persecution against Christians under the emperor Diocletian (284-305). Brought to trial, they bravely confessed themselves Christians and refused to offer sacrifice to idols. After fierce tortures, they broke the legs of the holy martyrs and threw them into a fire. Strengthened by the Lord, they came out of the fire completely unharmed, and they glorified Christ all the more. Unable to break the will of the holy confessors, the torturers beheaded them.

Saint Apollinaris was a disciple of the Apostle Peter, whom he followed from Antioch to Rome sometime during the reign of the Roman emperor Claudius (41-54). Saint Peter appointed Apollinaris as Bishop of Ravenna. Arriving in Ravenna as a stranger, Saint Apollinaris asked shelter of a local inhabitant, the soldier Irenaeus, and during their conversation he revealed the purpose for which he had come.

Irenaeus had a blind son, whom Saint Apollinaris healed, after he had prayed to the Lord. The soldier Irenaeus and his family were the first people in Ravenna to believe in Christ. The saint stayed at the house of Irenaeus and preached about Christ to everyone who wished to hear his words. One of the miracles that Saint Apollinaris performed was the healing of Thekla, the incurably sick wife of the tribune. Through the prayers of the saint, she got up from her bed completely healthy. Not only did she believe in Christ, but so did her husband the tribune. In their house Saint Apollinaris set up a small church, where he celebrated the Divine Liturgy. Saint Apollinaris ordained two presbyters, Aderetus and Calocyrus, and also two deacons for the newly-baptized people of Ravenna.

Saint Apollinaris labored with great zeal, preaching the Gospel at Ravenna for twelve years, and the number of Christians steadily increased. Pagan priests complained about the bishop to the governor Saturninus. The hierarch was brought to trial and subjected to grievous tortures. Thinking that he had died, the torturers took him out of the city to the seacoast and threw him into the water. The saint, however, was still alive. A certain pious Christian widow helped him and gave him shelter in her home. Saint Apollinaris stayed

AT THE SMALL ENTRANCE WE CHANT



ΑΠΟΛΥΤΙΚΙΟΝ. ΗΧΟΣ ΠΛ. Β.

Αγγελικαὶ Δυνάμεις ἐπὶ τὸ μνημῆμά σου, καὶ οἱ ἀφυλάσσοντες ἀπενεκρώθησαν, καὶ ἴστατο Μαρία ἐν τῷ τάφῳ, ζητοῦσα τὸ ἄχραντόν σου σῶμα. Ἐσκύλευσας τὸν Ἄϊδην, μὴ πειρασθεὶς ὑπ' αὐτοῦ, ὑπήντησας τῇ Παρθένῳ, δωρούμενος τὴν ζωὴν, ὁ ἀναστὰς ἐκ τῶν νεκρῶν, Κύριε δόξα σοι.

ΑΠΟΛΥΤ. ΤΟΥ ΙΕΡΟΜΑΡΤΥΡΟΣ. ΗΧΟΣ Δ.

Καὶ τρόπων μέτοχος, καὶ θρόνων διάδοχος, τῶν Ἀποστόλων γενόμενος, τὴν πράξιν εὔρες Θεόπνευστε, εἰς θεωρίας ἐπίβασιν· διὰ τοῦτο τὸν λόγον τῆς ἀληθείας ὀρθοτομῶν, καὶ τῇ πίστει ἐνήθλησας μέχρις αἵματος, Ἱερομάρτυς Φωκᾶ, πρέσβευε Χριστῷ τῷ Θεῷ, σωθῆναι τὰς ψυχὰς ἡμῶν.

ΑΠΟΛΥΤΙΚΙΟΝ ΤΟΥ ΝΑΟΥ. ΠΛ. Α'.

Λουκᾶν τὸν πανύμνητον καὶ ἅγιον ἀπόστολον, τὸν τῆς Ἐκκλησίας γνωστὸν συνθέτην τῶν Πράξεων τῶν Ἀποστόλων, τὸν τε σεμνὸν τοῦ Εὐαγγελίου Χριστοῦ ὑπομνηματιστὴν, ἀξίως τιμήσωμεν ὕμνοις ὁσίοις, ὡς νοσημάτων ἀνθρωπίνων καὶ φυσικῶν ἀσθενειῶν θεραπευτὴν, τὸν καθαίροντα πληγὰς τοῦ πνεύματος, καὶ ἀδιαλείπτως πρεσβεύοντα ὑπὲρ τῶν ψυχῶν ἡμῶν.

ΚΟΝΤΑΚΙΟΝ. ΗΧΟΣ Β'.

Προστασία τῶν Χριστιανῶν ἀκαταίσχυντε, μεσιτεία, πρὸς τὸν Ποιητὴν ἀμετάθετε, μὴ παρίδης, ἀμαρτωλῶν δεήσεων φωνάς, ἀλλὰ πρόφθασον, ὡς ἀγαθὴ, εἰς τὴν βοήθειαν ἡμῶν, τῶν πιστῶς κραυγαζόντων σοι· Τάχυνον εἰς πρεσβείαν, καὶ σπεῦσον εἰς ἰκεσίαν, ἢ προστατεύουσα ἀεὶ, Θεοτόκε, τῶν τιμώντων σε.

ΑΠΟΛΥΤΙΚΙΟΝ. ΜΟΔΕ ΠΛ. 2.

When the angelic powers appeared at Your grave, the soldiers guarding it feared and became as dead. And standing by the sepulcher was Mary who was seeking Your immaculate body. You devastated Hades, not afflicted by it. You went to meet the virgin, and granted eternal life. You resurrected from the dead. O Lord, glory to You.

ΑΠΟΛΥΤ. OF THE HIEROMARTYR. ΜΟΔΕ 4.

Becoming a partner with the Apostles in way of life and successor to their thrones, O God-inspired Saint, in the active life you found an entrance to contemplation. Hence you rightly expounded the word of truth, and you shed your blood in struggling for the faith, O Hieromartyr Phocas. Intercede with Christ our God, beseeching Him to save our souls..

ΑΠΟΛΥΤΙΚΙΟΝ ΓΙΑ ΤΗΝ ΕΚΚΛΗΣΙΑ. ΜΟΔΕ 5.

The holy Apostle, the All-hymned Luke, * who is acknowledged by the Church of Christ * as the recorder of the Acts of the Apostles, * and the splendid author of the Gospel of Christ. * Let us praise with sacred hymns as a physician, * who heals the infirmities of man, * and the ailments of nature, * who cleanses spiritual wounds, and prays unceasingly for our souls.

ΚΟΝΤΑΚΙΟΝ. ΜΟΔΕ 2.

Protection of Christians unshamable, mediation with the Creator immovable, we sinners beg you, do not despise the voices of our prayers, but anticipate, since you are good, and swiftly come unto our aid as we cry out to you with faith: Hurry to intercession, and hasten to supplication, O Theotokos who defend now and ever those who honor you.

THE READINGS OF THE DAY



EPISTLE READING

THE LETTER OF PAUL TO THE ROMANS 15:1-7

Brethren, we who are strong should bear the weaknesses of the weak, and not please ourselves. Let each one of us please our neighbor for what is good, to be edifying to him. Even Christ did not please himself. But, as it is written, “the insults of those who insulted you fell on me.” For whatever things were written before were written for our instruction, so that through patience and the Scriptures’ encouragement we might have hope. Now may the God of endurance and encouragement grant you to be together of the same mind according to Christ Jesus, so that with one accord, you may with one mouth glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, accept one another, even as Christ also accepted you, to the glory of God.

GOSPEL READING

MATTHEW 9: 27-35

At that time as Jesus passed by from there, two blind men followed him, calling out and saying, “Have mercy on us, son of David!” When he entered the house, the blind men came to him. Jesus. asked them, “Do you believe that I am able to do this?” They replied, “Yes, Lord.” He then touched their eyes, saying, “According to your faith, let it be done to you!” And their eyes were opened. Jesus strictly commanded them, saying, “See that no one knows about this.” However, they went out and spread his fame throughout that entire land. As they were leaving, behold, a mute man who was demon-possessed was brought to him. When the demon was cast out, the mute began to speak. The multitudes marveled, saying, “Nothing like this has ever been seen in Israel!” But the Pharisees said, “It is by the prince of the demons that he casts out demons.” Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues and preaching the Good News of the Kingdom. He also healed every kind of disease and sickness among the people.

“*The Christian life is life in the Lord Jesus Christ. The believer puts on Christ and lives through Him. He who falls after Baptism loses this grace; when rising up from his fall and re- turning to the Lord, he has to become worthy of it again, and this he does through Holy Communion. ‘He that eats My flesh, and drinks My blood, dwells in Me, and I in him, says the Lord’ (Jn. 6:56).*”

—ST. PAISIUS VELICHKOVSKY”

ANNOUNCEMENTS



UPCOMING CHURCH SERVICES:

Tuesday, July 25, The Falling Asleep of St. Anna the, Orthros / Div. Lit. 8:30am

Thursday, July 27, St. Panteleimon, Orthros / Div. Lit. 8:30am

Saturday, July 29 Great Vespers, 5pm

#SOAKUPTHESON

Hard to believe it is already Week 9 of this special summer series. If you have not already done so, go online bit.ly/soak-up-the-son for resources and past lessons. Pick up this week's lesson in the narthex. Check out our bookstore for good summer reading materials. And don't forget SPF! Say Prayers Frequently!

ALTAR SERVER ROBE DONATIONS

Thank to you everyone who has donated. If you wanted to make a donation, but forgot, please see Fr. Michael

GIVE A MONTH TOWARDS OUR FUTURE

Help offset our additional mortgage payment with a donation of \$640. If you would like to sponsor one month for 2017, please contact Fr. Michael.

PURPLE BARREL

Don't forget the the purple barrel next time you are at the grocery store. Donations are picked up by the local food bank. Thank you!

HOSPITAL VISITATIONS

Due to privacy issues, please be aware that pastoral visitations (**hospital / home**) must be scheduled with Fr. Michael *by an immediate family member*. Exceptions can only be made in cases where a person does not have any immediate family and is unable to make their own request.

CHURCH ATTIRE

There is no allowance for Church "summer-wear." An Orthodox Christian should always dress for Church in modest attire (in every season), so as not to draw attention to him/herself, becoming a distraction to others. Traditionally women wear dresses or skirts of at least knee length; dresses, blouses / tops should, at minimum, include short sleeves and cover the shoulder. **Women should not wear lipstick or lip gloss to Church** - it leaves a residue on the icons and on the Communion spoon. Men should dress in pants and polo or button-down shirts. Shorts should never be worn in Church. **Additionally, tight-fitting clothing is not appropriate for women or men.**

“We have to learn to bow our heads to the will of God and not to insist on what we ourselves want. Obedience to the will of God is achieved through obedience to our spiritual guides, our parents, our teachers and our superiors in the workplace. If we practice obedience, we'll understand what's required of us.”

—ELDER TADEJ VITOVNIČK

with her for six months, and secretly continued to preach about Christ. The saint's whereabouts became known when he restored the power of speech to an illustrious resident of the city named Boniface, whose wife had requested the saint to help her husband.

After this miracle many pagans were converted to Christ, and once again Saint Apollinaris was brought to trial and tortured. His bare feet were placed on red-hot coals. They expelled him from the city a second time, but the Lord again kept him alive. The saint did not cease preaching until he left the city. For a certain time Saint Apollinaris found himself elsewhere in Italy, where he continued to preach the Gospel as before. Returning to his flock in Ravenna, Saint Apollinaris went on trial yet again and was sentenced to banishment.

In heavy fetters, he was placed on a ship bound for Illyrica and the Danube River. Two soldiers were responsible for escorting him to his place of exile. Three of the clergy voluntarily followed their bishop into exile. Along the way the vessel was wrecked and everyone drowned, except for Saint Apollinaris, his clergy and the two soldiers. The soldiers, listening to Saint Apollinaris, believed in the Lord and were baptized. Not finding any shelter, the travelers came to Moisia in Thrace, where Saint Apollinaris healed a certain illustrious inhabitant from leprosy. Both he and his companions were given shelter at the man's home. In this land Saint Apollinaris preached tirelessly about Christ and he converted many of the pagans to Christianity, for which he was subjected to persecution by the unbelievers. They beat the saint mercilessly, then they sent him back to Italy aboard a ship.

After a three year absence, Saint Apollinaris returned to Ravenna and was joyfully received by his flock. The pagans, however, entered the church where the saint was serving the Divine Liturgy, scattered those at prayer, and dragged the saint before the idolatrous priests at the pagan temple of Apollo. The idol fell and shattered to pieces just as

the saint was brought in. The pagan priests brought Saint Apollinaris to Taurus, the new governor of the district for trial. Apollinaris performed a new miracle, healing the son of the governor, who had been blind from birth. In gratitude for the healing of his son, Taurus tried to protect Saint Apollinaris from the angry crowd. He sent him to his own estate outside the city. Although Taurus's wife and son were baptized, he feared the anger of the emperor, and did not receive Baptism. However, he was filled with gratitude and love toward his benefactor.

Saint Apollinaris lived for five years at Taurus's estate and preached without hindrance. During this time pagan priests sent letters of denunciation to Emperor Vespasian requesting a sentence of death or exile for the Christian "sorcerer" Apollinaris. But the emperor told the pagan priests that the gods were sufficiently powerful to take revenge for themselves, if they felt insulted. All the wrath of the pagans fell upon Saint Apollinaris: they seized him and beat him fiercely as he was leaving the city for a nearby settlement. Christians found him barely alive and took him to the settlement, where he lived for seven days. During his final illness the saint did not cease to teach his flock. He predicted that after the persecutions ended, Christians would enter upon better times when they could openly and freely confess their faith. After bestowing his archpastoral blessing upon those present, the hieromartyr Apollinaris fell asleep in the Lord. Saint Apollinaris was Bishop of Ravenna for twenty-eight years, and he reposed in the year 75.

The Pochaev Icon of the Mother of God is among the most venerable sacred items of the Orthodox Church. Located at the Dormition Cathedral, Pochaev, Ukraine, the icon is renowned throughout the Slavic world and is venerated by Orthodox Christians throughout the world. Christians of other confessions also come to venerate the wonderworking image of the Most Holy Theotokos, together with the Orthodox. The wonderworking

icon has been kept at the Pochaev Lavra, an ancient bastion of Orthodoxy, for about 400 years. (The account of the transfer of the icon to the Pochaev monastery is found under September 8). The miracles which issued forth from the holy icon are numerous and are testified to in the monastery books with the signatures of the faithful who have been delivered from unclean spirits, liberated from captivity, and sinners brought to their senses.

In the year 1721, Pochaev was occupied by Unitates. Even in this difficult time for the Lavra, the monastery chronicle notes 539 miracles from the glorified Orthodox icon. During the time of the Uniate rule in the second half of the eighteenth century, for example, the Uniate nobleman Count Nicholas Pototski became a benefactor of the Pochaev Lavra through the following miraculous circumstance. Having accused his coachman of overturning the carriage with frenzied horses, the count took out a pistol to shoot him. The coachman, turning towards Pochaev Hill, reached his hands upwards and cried out: "Mother of God, manifest in the Pochaev Icon, save me!" Pototski several times tried to shoot the pistol, which had never let him down, but the weapon misfired. The coachman remained alive. Pototski then immediately went to the wonderworking icon and decided to devote himself and all his property to the building-up of the monastery. From his wealth the Dormition cathedral was built, as well as buildings for the brethren.

The return of Pochaev into the bosom of Orthodoxy in 1832 was marked by the miraculous healing of the blind maiden Anna Akimchukova, who had come on pilgrimage to the holy things together with her seventy-year-old grandmother from Kremenets-Podolsk, 200 versts away. In memory of this event, the Volhynia archbishop and Lavra archimandrite Innocent (1832-1840) established the reading of the Akathist on Saturdays before the wonderworking icon. During the time of Archi-

mandrite Agathangelus, Archbishop of Volhynia (1866-1876), a separate chapel was constructed in the galleries of the Holy Trinity church in memory of the victory over the Tatars, which was dedicated on July 23, 1875.

THE POWER OF HOLY BAPTISM

*an excerpt from **The Life in Christ**
by St. Nicholas Kavalas*

Baptism and the powers of the age to come

But what is the life of Christ? I mean, what is that condition which those who have benefited by Baptism and have been washed therein have in common with Christ in their life? This has not yet been made clear; indeed, the greater part of it surpasses human reason. It is the power of the world to come, as Paul says (Heb. 6: 5), and a preparation for another life. Just as it is impossible to understand what the eyes can do or the beauty of colour without coming to the light, or for sleepers while they are still asleep to learn of the actions of those who stay awake, so it is impossible in this life to know clearly the new members and their faculties and how great is their beauty, since it is only in the life to come that they can be used. For this there is need of a similar beauty and a corresponding light.

Yet we are really members of Christ, and this is the result of Baptism. The splendor and beauty of the members come from the Head, for they would not appear beautiful without being attached to the Head. The Head of these members is hidden in the present life but He will appear in the life to come. Then the members too will be resplendent and will be clearly manifested when they shine brightly with their Head. To this Paul refers when he says, "you have died, and your life is hid with Christ in God; but when Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory" (Col. 3:3-4). And blessed John says, "it does not yet appear what we shall be, but when He appears we shall be like Him" (1 Jn. 3:2).

It is therefore impossible now fully to know the power of this life, even, I suppose, for the saints themselves. They admit their ignorance of the greater part of it, and that they know it dimly in a mirror and in part (1 Cor. 13:12), and that it is impossible to express in speech even the things which they are able to know. While those who are pure in heart have a perception and knowledge of them, yet it is impossible to find words of speech suitable to the objects of knowledge and capable of expressing the blessed experience to those who know it not. The things which the apostle heard when he was caught up into Paradise and the third heaven are “words which cannot be told, which man may not utter” (2 Cor. 12:4).

How the effects of Baptism are shown

That which is known of this life, of which we may speak, and which displays Its hidden qualities is the courage of the newly initiated, the new character of those who have been baptized and have persevered. Their extraordinary virtue surpasses human laws and can be ascribed neither to wisdom, nor training, nor innate ability, nor to any other human cause. Their souls have eagerly rushed into things such as man cannot readily imagine, their bodies did not quench that eagerness but endured as great pains as the soul desired. Yet soul and body have but limited power and neither the one nor the other is able to stand up under every pain. Some pains they are able to overcome under others either the soul gives up or the body breaks down.

Nothing, however, overcame the souls and bodies of the blessed martyrs. They were able to endure and persevere against pains so great and so many that even the wildest imaginations cannot conceive of them. Yet I have not mentioned that which is most novel. It was not mere endurance or perseverance on their part. It was not in the hope of surpassing rewards and a better life that they despised this present life, as though achieving such daring by some act of Judgment or reasoning, like patients enduring the surgeon’s cautery and scalpel. What is most novel is that

they loved the very wounds and longed for the very pains, that they regarded death itself as desirable even when there was no alternative. Some of them desired sword and rack and death, and when they arrived at the testing they were the more eager. Others willingly spent their lives suffering ill-treatment and hardship without any relief and considered it their food to “die daily” (1 Cor. 15:31). Their bodies followed and assisted them as they struggled against the very laws of the body. This was true not of two or three or twenty, nor of men only or those in the prime of life, but of tens of thousands, nay rather of countless persons of every age alike.

The examples of the martyrs for Christ

Most clearly was this shown in the case of the martyrs. Some of them were believers before the persecutions; into others Christ infused the true life during the very persecutions. All alike displayed faith in Christ to their persecutors, they proclaimed the Name and were willing to die. With a single shout they challenged the executioners as though they were rushing to some obvious benefit, all of them alike, women and girls, men and boys, every occupation, every class. This too must be stated since it makes no small difference to the matter. One who lives by the sweat of hard work would not be affected in the same way by agonies and pains as one who lives a life of leisure. A soldier and a musician would not look on sword and death with the same eyes...

It happened that many ended up in this choir even though they had not been washed, i.e., had not been baptized with water by the Church, yet the Church’s Bridegroom Himself baptized them. To many He gave a cloud from heaven, or water sprang from the earth of its own accord, and so He baptized them. Most of them, however, He invisibly re-created. Just as the members of the Church such as Paul and others like him, should complete what is lacking in Christ (cf. Col. 1:24), so it is not incongruous if the Head of the Church supply what is lacking in the Church. If there are some members who appear to be help-

ing the Head, how much more fitting it is that the Head Himself should add that which is lacking for the members.

How Baptism enables us to endure all things for Christ

These things being so, let us resume our subject. That this power by which they ventured with such courage and were willing to die with such zeal cannot possibly be found in human nature need not be shown by reasoning. Further, since we must suppose the grace of Baptism as its cause, let us examine the way in which the washing has effected these things in them.

Now it is clear that the labours and struggles were such as are proper to those who love, and that the darts and philtres of Christ impelled them to this novelty.* So let us examine what is the cause of their love, what they experienced to make them love in this way, and whence they received the fire of love.

In fact it is knowing that causes love and gives birth to it. It is not possible to attain love of anything that is beautiful without first learning how beautiful it is. Since this knowledge is sometimes very ample and complete and at other times imperfect, it follows that the philtre of love has a corresponding effect. Some things that are beautiful and good are perfectly known and perfectly loved as befits so great beauty. Others are not clearly evident to those who love them, and love of them is thus more feeble.

This therefore becomes clear: the baptismal washing has instilled into men some knowledge and perception of God, so that they have clearly known Him who is good and have perceived His beauty and tasted of His goodness (cf. Ps. 34:8). This, I affirm, they are able to know more perfectly by experience than were they merely to learn it by being taught.

Our knowledge of things is twofold: that which one may acquire from hearsay, and that which one may learn by personal experience. In the former we do not deal with the thing itself, but see it by means of words as in a picture, and inaccurately at that, since it is by the image of the form itself. It is impossible to find anything in nature entirely like it which would actually be an adequate copy for use by those who

would acquire knowledge of it. When, however, men encounter the things themselves they gain experience of them. By experience the very form itself encounters the soul and incites desire, as though it left an imprint corresponding to the good. In the former case, since we lack the proper appearance of the thing itself, we receive an uncertain and dim image of it through that which it has in common with other things, and by it measure our desire for the thing itself. Therefore we do not love it to the extent that it is a worthy object of love, and since we have not perceived the very form itself we do not experience its proper effect. Just as a different form of anything that exists produces a different impression on the soul, so it inspires a different degree of love.

When therefore love of the Saviour produces nothing new or extraordinary in us it proves that we have encountered no more than mere words about Him. How would it be possible to know Him well from hearsay? Nothing like Him may be found, nothing which He has in common with others, nor is there anything with which He may be compared nor anything which is comparable to Him. How could one then comprehend His beauty or love Him in a way that is worthy of it?

When men have a longing so great that it surpasses human nature and eagerly desire and are able to accomplish things beyond human thought, it is the Bridegroom who has smitten them with this longing. It is He who has sent a ray of His beauty into their eyes. The greatness of the wound shows the dart which has struck home, the longing indicates who has inflicted the wound.

In this way the New Covenant differs from the Old and is superior to it. Of old it was a word which instructed; now it is Christ Himself who is present and in an ineffable manner disposes and forms the souls of men. By means of words, teaching, and laws it was not possible for men to arrive at the goal which they sought. Had it been possible by means of words, there would have been no need for deeds, and deeds at that which were extraordinary—that God should be incarnate, be crucified, and suffer death.