



# SAINT LUKE THE EVANGELIST

## G R E E K O R T H O D O X C H U R C H

OCTOBER 22, 2017—6TH SUNDAY OF LUKE

**S**aint Averkios, Bishop and Wonderworker of Hieropolis lived in the second century in Phrygia. The city of Hieropolis was inhabited by many pagans and very few Christians. The saint prayed to the Lord for the salvation of their souls and that they might be numbered among God's chosen flock. An angel appeared and bade Saint Averkios to destroy the idols in the pagan temple. He fulfilled the command of God with zeal. Hearing that the idol-worshippers wanted to kill him, the saint went to the place where the people had gathered and openly denounced the failings of the pagans. The pagans tried to seize the saint.

At this moment three demon-possessed youths in the crowd cried out. The people were dumbfounded, as the saint expelled the devils from them by his prayers. Seeing the youths restored to normal, the people of Hieropolis asked Saint Averkios to instruct them in the Christian Faith, and then they accepted Holy Baptism.

After this the saint went to the surrounding cities and villages, healing the sick and preaching the Kingdom of God. With his preaching he made the rounds of Syria, Cilicia, Mesopotamia, he visited Rome and everywhere he converted multitudes of people to Christ. For many years he guarded the Church against heretics, he confirmed Christians in the Faith, he set the prodigal upon the righteous path, he healed the sick and proclaimed the glory of Christ. Because of his great works, Saint Averkios is termed "Equal of the Apostles."

Saint Averkios returned home to Hieropolis, where he soon rested from his labors. After his death, many miracles took place at his tomb. He wrote his own epitaph, and it was carved on his tombstone, which is now in the Lateran Museum.

**The Seven Youths of Ephesus: Maximilian, Iamblicus, Martinian, John, Dionysius, Exacustodianus (Constantine) and Antoninus**, lived in the third century. Saint Maximilian was the son of the Ephesus city administrator, and the other six youths were sons of illustrious citizens of Ephesus. The youths were friends from childhood, and all were in military service together.

When the emperor Decius (249-251) arrived in Ephesus, he commanded all the citizens to offer sacrifice to the pagan gods. Torture and death awaited anyone who disobeyed. The seven youths were denounced by informants, and were summoned to reply to the charges. Appearing before the emperor, the young men confessed their faith in Christ.



# THE HYMNS OF THE THIRD ANTIPHON

*Today is Mode 1*

*Before the Entrance...*

## **Resurrectional Apolytikion.**

**MODE 3.**

**L**et the heavens sing for joy, and let everything on earth be glad. For with His Arm the Lord has worked power. He trampled death under foot by means of death; and He became the firstborn from the dead. From the maw of Hades He delivered us; and He granted the world His great mercy. **(x2)**

*After the Entrance...*

## **Resurrectional Apolytikion.**

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## **Apolytikion for the Hierarchy.**

**MODE 4.**

**T**he actual facts of your life manifested you to your flock as a rule of faith and an icon of gentleness and a teacher of self-control. By humility, therefore, you acquired the things on high, and riches through poverty. Father holy hierarchy Averki-os, intercede with Christ our God, entreating Him to save our souls.

## **Apolytikion for the Martyrs.**

**MODE 4.**

**Y**our Martyrs, O Lord, were worthily awarded by You \* the crowns of incorruption, in that they contested for You our immortal God. \* Since they possessed Your power, they defeated the tyrants, \* dashing the demons' powerless displays of defiance. \* O Christ God, at their fervent entreaties, save our souls.

## **Apolytikion for the Church.**

**MODE PL. 1.**

**T**he 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.

## **Kontakion.**

**MODE 2.**

**O** 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 Galatians (1:11-19)*

**B**rethren, the Good News which I preached, I proclaimed this to you, brethren, that it is not of human origin. I did not receive it from man and I was not taught [this Good News] by man, but it came to me through a revelation of Jesus Christ. You have heard about how I used to live in Judaism, how I persecuted the Church of God beyond measure, and how I ravaged it. I advanced in the Jewish religion beyond many of my own age among my countrymen, as I was more extremely zealous for the traditions of my forefathers. But when it was the good pleasure of God (who had set me apart from my mother's womb and called me through his grace, to reveal his Son in me so that I might preach him among the Gentiles), I did not immediately confer with flesh and blood: I did not go up to Jerusalem to visit those who were apostles before me, but I went away into Arabia. Later on, I returned to Damascus. Then, after three years, I did go up to Jerusalem to visit Peter, and I stayed with him for fifteen days. However, I did not see any of the other apostles, except James, 'the Lord's brother.'

### GOSPEL READING

*Luke (8:26-39)*

**A**t that time, when Jesus reached the country of the Gadarenes, a man from the town who had had demons for a long time came to meet him. This man wore no clothes, and he did

not live in a house, but in the tombs. When he saw Jesus, he cried out and fell down before him. With a loud voice, he said, "What do you want from me, Jesus, you Son of the Most High God? I beg you, do not torment me!" (For Jesus commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the man). The unclean spirit had often seized the man and he was kept under guard, bound with chains and fetters. [But he had been] breaking the chains and was driven by the demon into deserted places. Jesus asked him, "What is your name?" He replied, "Legion," for many demons had entered into him. And he begged Jesus not to command them to go into the abyss. Now there was a large herd of swine feeding on the mountain, and the demons begged him that he would allow them to enter into those [pigs]; and Jesus allowed them. The demons came out from the man and entered into the pigs. Then the herd rushed down the steep bank into the lake and [the swine] were drowned. When the people who fed the pigs saw what had happened, they fled and told the story in the city and in the countryside. Then people went out to see what had happened. They came to Jesus and found the man from whom the demons had gone out. He was sitting at Jesus' feet, clothed and in his right mind; and they were afraid. Those who had seen it told the people how the demon-possessed man had been delivered. All the people of the surrounding country of the Gadarenes asked Jesus to depart from them, because they were extremely afraid. So he got into the boat and went back. The man from whom the demons had gone out begged to go with Jesus, but Jesus sent him away, saying: "Return to your house and proclaim what great things God has done for you." So the man went on his way, proclaiming throughout the whole city what great things Jesus had done for him.



## ANNOUNCEMENTS

**MEMORIAL SERVICE: Gus Aslanidis, 1 year**

### **UPCOMING CHURCH SERVICES:**

**Monday, October 23, St. Iakovos the Brother of God, Orthros / Divine Liturgy, 8:30am**

**NO GREAT VESPERS THIS WEEK**

### **Thank You!**

Thank you to everyone who helped support the celebration of the Vigil for our Patronal Feast!

### **Hierarchical Visitation – Pot Luck**

There will be a Community Pot luck on Sunday, November 5 after Divine Services in honor of the Hierarchical visit by His Grace, Bishop Demetrios, Chancellor of the Metropolis of Chicago. Please sign up to bring a main dish or side dish on the sign up sheet in the Narthex.

### **Bookstore - Christmas Orders**

If you are interested in ordering icons for Christmas, please place your order by October 29. Special orders placed after that date will be subject to additional shipping charges.

### **Hope and Joy**

Save the date for the next gathering on Saturday, November 11. See Calin Chindris to register your children, ages 5-12.

### **Breast Cancer Awareness**

October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month. Philoptochos has information about Breast Cancer in the Narthex.

### **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.***



Their military belts and insignia were quickly taken from them. Decius permitted them to go free, however, hoping that they would change their minds while he was off on a military campaign. The youths fled from the city and hid in a cave on Mount Ochlon, where they passed their time in prayer, preparing for martyrdom.

The youngest of them, Saint Iamblicus, dressed as a beggar and went into the city to buy bread. On one of his excursions into the city, he heard that the emperor had returned and was looking for them. Saint Maximilian urged his companions to come out of the cave and present themselves for trial.

Learning where the young men were hidden, the emperor ordered that the entrance of the cave be sealed with stones so that the saints would perish from hunger and thirst. Two of the dignitaries at the blocked entrance to the cave were secret Christians. Desiring to preserve the memory of the saints, they placed in the cave a sealed container containing two metal plaques. On them were inscribed the names of the seven youths and the details of their suffering and death.

The Lord placed the youths into a miraculous sleep lasting almost two centuries. In the meantime, the persecutions against Christians had ceased. During the reign of the holy emperor Theodosius the Younger (408-450) there were heretics who denied that there would be a general resurrection of the dead at the Second Coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Some of them said, "How can there be a resurrection of the dead when there will be neither soul nor body, since they are disintegrated?" Others affirmed, "The souls alone will have a restoration, since it would be impossible for bodies to arise and live after a thousand years, when even their dust would not remain." Therefore, the Lord revealed the mystery of the Resurrection of the Dead and of the future life through His seven saints.

The owner of the land on which Mount Ochlon was situated, discovered the stone construction,

and his workers opened up the entrance to the cave. The Lord had kept the youths alive, and they awoke from their sleep, unaware that almost two hundred years had passed. Their bodies and clothing were completely undecayed.

Preparing to accept torture, the youths once again asked Saint Iamblicus to buy bread for them in the city. Going toward the city, the youth was astonished to see a cross on the gates. Hearing the name of Jesus Christ freely spoken, he began to doubt that he was approaching his own city.

When he paid for the bread, Iamblicus gave the merchant coins with the image of the emperor Decius on it. He was detained, as someone who might be concealing a horde of old money. They took Saint Iamblicus to the city administrator, who also happened to be the Bishop of Ephesus. Hearing the bewildering answers of the young man, the bishop perceived that God was revealing some sort of mystery through him, and went with other people to the cave.

At the entrance to the cave the bishop found the sealed container and opened it. He read upon the metal plaques the names of the seven youths and the details of the sealing of the cave on the orders of the emperor Decius. Going into the cave and seeing the saints alive, everyone rejoiced and perceived that the Lord, by waking them from their long sleep, was demonstrating to the Church the mystery of the Resurrection of the Dead.

Soon the emperor himself arrived in Ephesus and spoke with the young men in the cave. Then the holy youths, in sight of everyone, lay their heads upon the ground and fell asleep again, this time until the General Resurrection.

The emperor wanted to place each of the youths into a jeweled coffin, but they appeared to him in a dream and said that their bodies were to be left upon the ground in the cave. In the twelfth century the Russian pilgrim Igumen Daniel saw the holy relics of the seven youths in the cave.

There is a second commemoration of the seven

youths on October 22. According to one tradition, which entered into the Russian PROLOGUE (of Saints' Lives), the youths fell asleep for the second time on this day. The Greek MENAION of 1870 says that they first fell asleep on August 4, and woke up on October 22.

**The Martyrs Alexander the Bishop, Heraclius the Soldier, and Women Martyrs Anna, Elizabeth, Theodota and Glyceria at Adrianopolis** were killed during the third century at Adrianopolis for their confession of Christ. This century is noted as a time of the spread of Christianity among the pagans. Despite the persecutions against the Christians, Bishop Alexander fearlessly converted and baptized many pagans into the holy saving faith.

The governor of the region where the saint lived, ordered his soldiers to use torture to force Bishop Alexander to deny Christ. The saint patiently endured terrible tortures. Struck by this, the soldier Heraclius believed in Christ, for Whom the saint suffered. And after him, the Women Martyrs Anna, Elizabeth, Theodota and Glyceria confessed themselves to be Christians.

**The Commemoration of the Deliverance of Moscow From the Poles by the Kazan Icon** was established in gratitude for the deliverance of Moscow and all Russia from the incursion of the Polish in 1612. The end of the sixteenth and beginning of the seventeenth centuries is known in Russian history as "the Time of Troubles." The country suffered the onslaught of Polish armies, which scoffed at the Orthodox Faith, plundering and burning churches, cities and villages. Through deceit they succeeded in taking Moscow. In response to the appeal of His Holiness Patriarch Hermogenes (May 12), the Russian people rose up in defense of its native land. From Kazan, the wonderworking icon of the Mother of God was sent to the army headed by Prince Demetrius Pozharsky.

Saint Demetrius of Rostov (September 21), in his Discourse on the Day of Appearance of the Icon of

the Mother of God at Kazan (July 8), said:

"The Mother of God delivered from misfortune and woe not only the righteous, but also sinners, but which sinners? those who turn themselves to the Heavenly Father like the Prodigal Son, they make lamentation beating their bosom, like the Publican, they weep at the feet of Christ, like the Sinful Woman washing His feet with her tears, and they offer forth confession of Him, like the Thief upon the Cross. It is such sinners whom the All-Pure Mother of God heeds and hastens to aid, delivering them from great misfortunes and woe."

Knowing that they suffered such misfortunes for their sins, the whole nation and the militia imposed upon themselves a three-day fast. With prayer, they turned to the Lord and His All-Pure Mother for help. The prayer was heard. Saint Sergius of Radonezh appeared to Saint Arsenius (afterwards Bishop of Suzdal) and said that if Moscow were to be saved, then people must pray to the Most Holy Virgin. Emboldened by the news, Russian forces on October 22, 1612 liberated Moscow from the Polish usurpers. A celebration in honor of the Kazan Icon of the Most Holy Theotokos was established in 1649. Even in our day this icon is especially revered by the Russian Orthodox nation.

**The Andronicus Icon of the Mother of God** was a family icon of the Byzantine emperor Andronicus III. In 1347 he gave the icon to the Monemvasia monastery at Morea in the Peloponnesos. From here the image was sent to Russia in 1839. In 1877 the holy icon was placed in a temple of the Kazan women's monastery near Vyshnii Volochek. Other Feast days of this icon are May 1 and July 8.

## *The Truth of the Faith as a Struggle for Life*

*by Archimandrite Ieronymos Nikolopoulos*

*People today, who are indifferent towards so many things, are also indifferent to matters of the faith. Naturally, some sociologists and anthropologists are not slow to interpret this phenomenon as 'the end of faith'. And there are historians who analyze it as 'a turn towards modernity' which is typical of our times. But, as will become clear below, none of this is true, both because there have always been people, throughout the course of history, who have been indifferent to religious matters and also because if the souls of such people ever warm, they become fervent in the faith, to the point where they surpass, spiritually, many who have been in the Church for years.*

One of the causes of indifference is the sense which many people have that they know quite enough about the faith. If priests and lay people say a couple of words to them about the Gospel, they receive the answer: 'We know all about that'. They then go on to invoke whatever religious knowledge they've retained from their childhood in order to demonstrate a command of the theology of the Church which is sufficient to meet their spiritual needs. This is even more the case now when religious education in schools is epistemological and cultural, with a very slight nod towards Orthodoxy as the dominant faith in Greece. [The author is writing here specifically about Greece, but readers elsewhere will no doubt recognize a similar situation in their own countries, since the phenomenon is widespread. WJL] Be that as it may, the faith and the spiritual life aren't matters of knowledge to be learned from books, but are, rather, experiences which people have to acquire as gifts of God and which demand willing effort and struggle.

Today's Gospel reading presents the well-known, graphic and detailed 'Parable of the Sower', as well

as an explanation of it by the Lord Himself. But between the narrative and its interpretation, there is recorded the particular question of the disciples concerning the exposition of the parable, and thereafter a word from the Lord which is based on a prophecy in Isaiah. The disciples ask the meaning and significance of the parable and the Lord replies: 'To you it has been given to know the secrets of the kingdom of God; but for others they are in parables, so that seeing they may not see, and hearing they may not understand'.

Many Protestants and some people who are admirers of an exclusively historical 'interpretation of the Bible' misinterpret this as meaning that Christ deliberately spoke in vague terms so that His teaching would not be readily comprehensible and would therefore not provoke the various groups of Scribes and Pharisees, as well as the Romans, all of whom were watching Him carefully. In this way He would escape their wrath. We can see the weakness of this interpretation when we recall that Christ went freely to His voluntary passion and that those who tried to discourage Him, such as Peter, were met with sharp rebukes (Matth. 16, 23). So how can it be claimed that Christ spoke in parables in order to hide and not provoke people?

And again, how can we reconcile the fact the He Who came to bring us to 'all the truth' didn't speak clearly, but used these forms of speech? Cyril of Alexandria explains: 'The parables are like images of things which can't be seen, but are more mental and spiritual. This is why that which the eye of the body is unable to see is revealed to the eye of the mind, through the use of perceptible and almost tangible things, which gives shape to the subtleties of the mind'. But the aim of the parables is not merely to instruct.

'To know the secrets of the Kingdom of God'

When Christ refers to the parables, He's talking about the mysteries of the Kingdom of God. Let no one be deceived by imagining exactly what mysteri-

ous, conspiratorial or apocryphal thing lies behind the words of the Lord. Everything's explained later. It's simply that Christ wishes to use the two-fold properties of the parables in order to simultaneously reveal and conceal: they clarify the truth for those who are seeking it in their lives, while not declaring it to those who are remiss and disinclined to do so, even though they may have been momentarily impressed.

Christ is talking about the spiritual state of the Jews of His time and describes them as 'hardened', that is, too hard and unable to receive the truth of the faith. Typically, they had superficial religiosity and tremendous self-centredness. This is why He says that they're 'uncircumcised in their heart' (Acts 7, 51). How was He to reveal the truth to people with such spiritual symptoms, which, over time, can be observed in the whole of humankind? But on the other hand, how could He be unfair to those who were genuinely seeking the truth?

Christ establishes the truth of the faith as a struggle for life. Truth exists, it's been revealed, but it's not for everyone's eyes. In particular, people who are negligent and indifferent will misunderstand it, or they'll feel coerced by its existence. Christ wants us to turn freely and whole-heartedly to Him and His truth which is why, for the preservation of free and selfless love, He has arranged for us the period of apprenticeship which is the dominant feature of the lives of the saints. And this lies in a continuous apprenticeship in the truth of the faith- not in the reading of books, but in the practical experience of our spiritual struggle and the sacraments of the Church. The saving truth of the faith, as the only truth on earth, is the most important and valuable thing God gives us, but, in order to acquire it we have to earn it with whole-hearted love and eager striving. We have to see that it can't be exhausted but that the secret mysteries of the glory of God are continually and increasingly being revealed.

“*Study then, O man, the life according to God, and no one shall ever conquer you; and although you are accounted the most insignificant of men, you will be more powerful than all. On the other hand, if you art indifferent about virtue of soul, though thou were the most powerful of men, then you will easily be vanquished by all that assail you...let us take heed to our life; and let us not be concerned about the goods that perish; neither as to the glory that fades; nor as to that body which grows old; nor as to that beauty which is fading; nor as to that pleasure which is fleeting; but let us expend all our care about the soul; and let us provide for the welfare of this in every way.*”

—ST. JOHN CHRYSOSTOM

