



# SAINT LUKE THE EVANGELIST

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

OCTOBER 29, 2017—7TH SUNDAY OF LUKE

**T**he **Martyr Anastasia the Roman** lost her parents in infancy, and was then taken to be reared by the abbess of a women's monastery, named Sophia. She raised Anastasia in fervent faith, in the fear of God and obedience.

The persecution against Christians by the emperor Decius (249-251) began at that time. The city administrator, Probus, on the orders of the emperor commanded that Anastasia be brought to him. Blessed by her abbess to suffer for Christ, the young martyr Anastasia humbly came out to meet the armed soldiers. Seeing her youth and beauty, Probus first attempted flattery to make her deny Christ.

“Why waste your youth, deprived of pleasure? What is there to gain by enduring tortures and death for the Crucified? Worship our gods, marry a handsome husband, and live in glory and honor.”

The saint steadfastly replied, “My spouse, my riches, my life and my happiness are my Lord Jesus Christ, and you will not turn me away from Him by your deceit!”

Probus subjected Anastasia to fierce tortures. The holy martyr bravely endured them, glorifying and praising the Lord. In anger the torturers cut out her tongue.

The people, seeing the inhuman and disgusting treatment of the saint, became indignant, and the ruler was compelled to end the tortures by beheading the martyr. In this manner, Saint Anastasia received the crown of martyrdom.

The body of the saint was thrown out beyond the city to be eaten by wild animals, but the Lord did not permit her holy relics to be dishonored. At the command of a holy angel, Abbess Sophia went to find Saint Anastasia's mutilated body. With the help of two Christians, she buried it in the earth.

**Saint Avramios the Hermit and Blessed Maria**, his niece of Mesopotamia, lived the ascetic life in the village of Chidan, near the city of Edessa. They were contemporaries and fellow countrymen of Saint Ephraim the Syrian (January 28), who afterwards wrote about their life.

Saint Avramios began his difficult exploit of the solitary life in the prime of youth. He left his parents' home and settled in a desolate wilderness place, far from worldly enticements, and he spent his days in unceasing prayer. After the death of his parents, the saint refused his inheritance and requested his relatives to give it away to the poor. By his strict ascetic life, fasting, and love for mankind, Avramios attracted to him many seeking after spiritual enlightenment, prayer and blessing.

Soon his faith was put to a serious test, as he was appointed presbyter in one of the pagan villages of



# THE HYMNS OF THE THIRD ANTIPHON

*Today is Mode 4*

*Before the Entrance...*

## **Resurrectional Apolytikion.**

MODE 4.

**W**hen the women Disciples of the Lord had learned from the Angel the joyful message of the Resurrection and rejected the ancestral decision, they cried aloud to the Apostles triumphantly: Death has been despoiled, Christ God has risen, granting His great mercy to the world. (x2)

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## **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.

“*Impiety is a sin of the mind against God. It's ignorance of God and ends with the death of the soul. It's caused by our lack of awareness of God. In itself it's perverse and gets us nowhere. It's the mother of evils.*”

—**ST. NEKTARIOS**  
**THE WONDERWORKER**



## 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 (8:41-56)*

**A**t that time, a man named Jairus came to Jesus, and he was a ruler of the synagogue. He fell down at Jesus' feet and begged him to come to his house because he had an only daughter,

about twelve years old, who was dying. But as Jesus went, the crowd pressed against him. There was a woman who had a flow of blood for twelve years and who had spent all she had on physicians, but she could not be healed by any. She came behind him and touched the fringe of his cloak. Immediately, the flow of her blood stopped. Jesus said, "Who touched me?" As everyone was denying it, Peter and those with him said, "Master, the people are crowding and pressing against you, and you ask, 'Who touched me?'" But Jesus said, "Someone has touched me, for I perceived that power has gone out from me." When the woman saw that she was not hidden, she came forth trembling. Falling down before Jesus, in the presence of all the people, she confessed to him why she had touched him, and how she had immediately been healed. He said to her, "Daughter, be of good cheer! Your faith has made you well. Go in peace." While Jesus was still speaking, someone came from the ruler of the synagogue's house, saying to him, "Your daughter is dead. Do not trouble the Teacher." But when Jesus heard it, he answered him, "Do not be afraid! Only believe, and she will be healed." When Jesus arrived at the house, he did not allow anyone to enter in, except Peter, John, and James, as well as the father of the child and her mother. All were weeping and mourning the girl, but Jesus said, "Do not weep! She is not dead, but sleeping." But they mocked him, knowing that she was dead. Jesus put them all outside, and taking the girl by the hand, he called, "Child, arise!" Her spirit returned, and she immediately got up. He ordered that something to eat should be given to her. Her parents were amazed, but he commanded them to tell no one what had been done.



# ANNOUNCEMENTS

## UPCOMING CHURCH SERVICES: NO GREAT VESPERS

### Welcome!

Please welcome Fr. Anastasios, associate Pastor of Assumption Greek Orthodox Church in Town & Country, Missouri.

### Vigil for St. Nektarios the Wonderworker

We will celebrate a vigil for the feastday of St. Nektarios the Wonderworker on November 8, beginning at 7pm. Please plan to join us for the celebration of this great modern day Saint.

**Artoclasia:** If you would like to bake artoclasia for the vigil, please send Fr. Michael a message.

**Flowers:** We need 3x \$100 donations for flowers to decorate the icon of the Saint.

### 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 TODAY. Special orders placed after that date will be subject to additional shipping charges.

### Philoptochos

Join Philoptochos to Make a Difference for a veteran. Decorate and sign a card for a vet at the VA Hospital on November 5.

Be generous in our 2nd Tray collection on November 5th for Sts. Cosmas and Damianos which benefits the Ecumenical Patriarchate.

Get ready for our annual Angel Wreath collection. Details coming soon.

### 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.

### Fall General Assembly

The Fall General Assembly of the Parish will take place on November 12 following Divine Services. All steward members of the Church are asked to plan to attend.

Mesopotamia. For three years, and sparing no efforts, the saint toiled over the enlightenment of the pagans. He tore down a pagan temple and built a church. Humbly enduring derision and even beatings from obstinate idol-worshippers, he entreated the Lord, "Look down, O Master, upon Your servant, hear my prayer. Strengthen me and set Your servants free from diabolical snares, and grant them to know You, the one true God." The zealous pastor was granted the happiness to see the culmination of his righteous efforts: the pagans came to believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God, and Saint Avramios baptized them himself.

Having fulfilled his priestly duty, Avramios again withdrew into his wilderness, where he continued to glorify God, and doing His holy will. The devil, put to shame by the deeds of Saint Avramios, tried to entrap him with proud thoughts. Once at midnight, when Saint Avramios was at prayer in his cell, suddenly a light shone and a voice was heard, "Blessed are you, Avramios, for no other man has done my will as you have!" Confuting the wiles of the enemy, the saint said: "I am a sinful man, but I trust in the help and grace of my God. I do not fear you, and your illusions do not scare me." Then he ordered the devil to depart, in the name of Jesus Christ.

Another time, the devil appeared before the saint in the form of a youth, lit a candle and began to sing Psalm 118/119, "Blessed are the blameless in the way, who walk in the law of the Lord." Perceiving that this also was a demonic temptation, the Elder crossed himself and asked, "If you know that the blameless are blessed, then why trouble them?"

The tempter answered, "I provoke them in order to conquer them and turn them away from every good deed." To this the saint replied, "You gain victory over those who, like yourself, have fallen away from God. You are forced to vanish, like smoke in the wind, from before the face of those who love God." After these words the devil vanished. Thus Saint

Avramios defeated the Enemy, being strengthened by divine grace. After fifty years of ascetic life, he peacefully fell asleep in the Lord.

Saint Avramios's niece, the Nun Maria, grew up being edified by his spiritual instruction. Her father died when she was seven, and so she was raised by her saintly uncle. But the Enemy of the race of man tried to turn her from the true path. At twenty-seven years of age she fell into sin with a man. Thoroughly ashamed, she left her cell, went to another city and began to live in a brothel. Two years later, when he learned of this, Saint Avramios clad himself in soldier's garb, so that he should not be recognized, and he went to the city to find his niece. Pretending to be one of her "clients," he revealed his identity once they were alone. With many tears and exhortations, he brought her to repentance and took her back to her cell.

Saint Maria returned to her cell and spent the rest of her days in prayer and tears of repentance. The Lord forgave her and even granted her the gift of healing the sick. She died five years after Saint Avramios.

**Saint Avramios, Archimandrite of Rostov**, in the world Averkios, left his parents' home in his youth and entered upon the path of Christian asceticism. Having assumed the monastic schema, Avramios settled at Rostov on the shore of Lake Nero. In the Rostov lands there were not many pagans, and the saint worked intensely at spreading the true Faith.

Not far from the cell of the saint was a pagan temple, where the pagans worshipped a stone idol of Veles (Volos), which caused fright among the inhabitants of Rostov. In a miraculous vision the Apostle John the Theologian stood before Avramios, and gave him a staff with a cross on top, with which the venerable one destroyed the idol. At the place of the pagan temple, Saint Avramios founded a monastery in honor of the Theophany and became its head.

In memory of the miraculous appearance, the holy monk built a church named for Saint John the Theologian. Many of the pagans were persuaded and baptized by Saint Avramios. Particularly great was his influence with the children whom he taught the ability to read and write, instructing them in the law of God, and tonsured monastics from among them.

Everyone who came to the monastery was accepted with love. The saint's life was a constant work of prayer and toil for the benefit of the brethren: he chopped firewood for the oven, he laundered the monks' clothing and carried water for the kitchen. Saint Avramios reposed in old age and was buried in the church of the Theophany.

His holy relics were uncovered in the time of Great Prince Vsevolod (1176-1212). In the year 1551, Tsar Ivan the Terrible, before his campaign against Kazan, made the rounds of holy places. At the Theophany-Abramiev monastery the monks showed him the staff with which Saint Avramios had destroyed the idol of Veles. The Tsar took the staff with him on the campaign, but the cross remained at the monastery. And returning again after the subjugation of the Khan, Ivan the Terrible gave orders to build a new stone church at the Abramiev monastery in honor of the Theophany, with four chapels, and he also supplied it with books and icons.

**Saint Serapion of Zarzma** was the son of a Klarjeti aristocrat famed for his wealth and good deeds. Serapion had two brothers, who were still young when their mother died. Their father also reposed soon after.

From childhood Saint Serapion longed to lead the life of a hermit. With his younger brother, John, he set off for Parekhi Monastery, where he requested the spiritual guidance of "the spiritual father and teacher of orphans," the great wonderworker Michael of Parekhi.

The older brother remained at home to continue

the family tradition of caring for wanderers and the poor.

Saint Michael perceived in the young Serapion true zeal for a divine ministry and blessed him to enter the priesthood.

Once, while he was praying, Saint Michael was instructed in a vision to send his disciples Serapion and John to Samtskhe to found a monastery.

Serapion was alarmed at the thought of such a great responsibility, but he submitted to his spiritual father's will and set off for Samtskhe with several companions. He took with him a wonder-working icon of our Lord's Transfiguration.

The monks climbed to the peak of a very high mountain and, having looked around at their environs, decided to settle there and begin construction of the monastery. But soon the villagers chased the monks away, and the holy fathers located the exact place that their shepherd, Saint Michael, had seen in the vision. At that time a faithful nobleman named George Chorchaneli ruled in this mountainous region. Once, while he was out hunting, George saw smoke over the dense forest and sent a servant to discover the cause. He was soon informed that two remarkable monks had settled in that place. Immediately he set off for the spot, humbly greeted the monks, venerated the wonder-working icon, and asked for the fathers' blessings.

Overjoyed and inspired by Serapion's preaching, the prince fell on his knees before him and promised to help him in every way to establish the new monastery. Having donated this land and the surrounding area to the monastery, he presented the monks with a deed assigning ownership of all the territory the monks could cover on foot in one day to the future monastery. The prince sent his servant to accompany them.

The brothers walked over unexplored territory, through dense forests, and over rocky paths. Two local residents, the God-fearing Ia and Garbaneli,

accompanied them. But not all the local people received the monks so warmly: the residents of Tsiskvili met them with hostility and tried to block their path.

That very same night a miracle occurred: an earthquake split the rocks that were holding back Lake Satakhve and washed away the entire village of Tsiskvili. Only two brothers survived. To this day this place has been called “Zarzma” [the word “zari” is often used to denote a tragic occurrence].

The brethren began to search for a suitable place to build their church. Saint Serapion wanted to construct the church on a high hill, but John and the other brothers objected. “It is not necessary, Holy Father, to build in this place,” they said. “It is high and cold here, and the brothers are dressed only in rags.”

To resolve this question, the holy fathers filled two small icon lamps with equal amounts of oil. Serapion placed one of them at the top of the hill, John placed the other near a stream on the southern side of the hill, and they began to pray. At daybreak Serapion’s lamp had already gone out, but John’s lamp continued to burn until midday. Thus they began to build the church in the place that John had chosen.

The monks faced many obstacles in the construction of their church. The area was covered with dense forest, and the stones necessary for building could be found only in the river. At George Chorchaneli’s suggestion, they salvaged the stone from a church that had been destroyed by the earthquake.

After three years of construction, the monastery was completed, and the wonder-working icon of the Transfiguration was placed in the altar of the church. The monks fashioned cells, and Saint Serapion established the rules of the monastery.

When he was approaching death, Michael of Parekhi sent two of his disciples to Serapion and John. When he learned that the construction of the

monastery was completed, he rejoiced exceedingly and blessed its benefactor, George Chorchaneli. Then he took the withered branch of a box tree and presented it to him, saying, “My son, plant this tree near the church and, if it blossoms again, know that it is God’s will that you zealously continue the work you have begun in His name.” After some time the branch blossomed, and this miracle became known to many.

When the blessed Serapion sensed the approach of death, he summoned the brothers, bade them farewell, and appointed Hieromonk George his successor as abbot. He was buried with great honor on the eastern side of the altar at the monastery church.

## *Wine makes glad the heart of man (Psalm 104: 15)*

*by Brother Pakhoum*

*It is written that wine makes glad the heart of man (Psalm 104: 15) and that the joy of the Lord is our strength (Nehemiah 8: 10). The Holy Spirit pours the divine wine in man’s good wineskin, in the one who has kept himself unspotted from the world (James 1: 27) and its corruption which reigns through sin unto death.*

**O**’ Mother, you are the intercessor of the souls who run out of wine, their wineskin bursts, and their souls withers to the point of death; you intervened in the right time at the wedding of Cana of Galilee.

After the Son completed the economy of Redemption, you, O’ Mother, began to minister to the bridal souls teaching them how to watch and live so that their vine may be a choicest vine, a good vineyard that has good grapes.

You chose Mount Athos to be the land for your garden. You drew the souls to this place and you were vigilant to protect them from the thieves

and the foxes that spoil the vines. You fought on behalf of it and on behalf of the souls who dwell in it so that there would be wine and oil in it. You determined to make it a place for storing wine and oil to flow with it unto the world in the End Times because they are what the Good Samaritan needs -since the souls became even more dead, their wineskins burst, and are in need of the divine oil.

The Psalmist spoke about this divine oil saying: 'I have been anointed with fresh oil' (Psalm 92: 10). This oil gives flexibility to the soul protecting it from being constrained, withering and bursting. Hence, the soul would be protected from death, would become a good wineskin, and would be filled with the good wine.

The souls in Mount Athos in Greece have received this gift of wine and oil; and so, they were lifted up on top of the world and became seated with God in the Mount of the congregation. They entered the clouds and the glory of God by partaking of the divine nature. Heaven was opened for them with all its glories. They attracted souls and passed on to them how to gather wine and oil to live by them and gather them in the spiritual stores to be saved for the End Times.

Every person who lived in this place with this mystery, even if he departed from the body, is still filled with the mystery of the wine and oil: wine after wine; oil after oil; grace after grace (John 1: 16) because it is saved in the good wineskin which is anointed with fresh oil.

You, O' Mother, was the one who opened the heavens of this mountain to this mystery because you lived by this mystery and you passed it on to those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, those who dwell on this mountain, for you are the door of heaven.

They lived by this mystery and you were vigilant to gather the wine and oil in the manifold divine stores to be kept for the End Times when you will open these stores and there will be wine and oil

in the End Times that will heal all those whom the ruler of this world have wounded and brought down from Jerusalem (the dwelling place of God with man, Revelation 21: 3) to Jericho (the sphere of the ruler of this world), leaving them half dead. They will be healed with this wine and oil and return to their place, Jerusalem

“ We should also note that we priests often lose the wonderful entry into the presence of God at the Holy Sacrament of the Anaphora, because we weren't in God's presence enough before we came to the Divine Liturgy. The same is true for all of us when we come to the Divine Liturgy. If we haven't enjoyed the stillness of God's presence, if we haven't stayed in quietude to the extent that we're able to, then we lose the power of Holy Communion, which is a communion of Christ's grace, a communion of the gifts of all the saints.

—ARCH. ZACHARIAS ZACHAROU

