



# SAINT LUKE THE EVANGELIST

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

NOVEMBER 12, 2017—8TH SUNDAY OF LUKE

**S**aint John the Merciful, Patriarch of Alexandria, was born on Cyprus in the seventh century into the family of the illustrious dignitary Epiphanius. At the wish of his parents he entered into marriage and had children. When the wife and the children of the saint died, he became a monk. He was zealous in fasting and prayer, and had great love for those around him.

His spiritual exploits won him honor among men, and even the emperor revered him. When the Patriarchal throne of Alexandria fell vacant, the emperor Heraclius and all the clergy begged Saint John to occupy the Patriarchal throne.

The saint worthily assumed his archpastoral service, concerning himself with the moral and dogmatic welfare of his flock. As patriarch he denounced every soul-destroying heresy, and drove out from Alexandria the Monophysite Phyllonos of Antioch.

He considered his chief task to be charitable and to give help all those in need. At the beginning of his patriarchal service he ordered his stewards to compile a list of all the poor and downtrodden in Alexandria, which turned out to be over seven thousand men. The saint ordered that all of these unfortunates be provided for each day out of the church's treasury.

Twice during the week, on Wednesdays and Fridays, he emerged from the doors of the patriarchal cathedral, and sitting on the church portico, he received everyone in need. He settled quarrels, helped the wronged, and distributed alms. Three times a week he visited the sick-houses, and rendered assistance to the suffering. It was during this period that the emperor Heraclius led a tremendous army against the Persian emperor Chosroes II. The Persians ravaged and burned Jerusalem, taking a multitude of captives. The holy Patriarch John gave a large portion of the church treasury for their ransom.

The saint never refused suppliants. One day, when the saint was visiting the sick, he met a beggar and commanded that he be given six silver coins. The beggar changed his clothes, ran on ahead of the Patriarch, and again asked for alms. Saint John gave him six more silver coins. When, however, the beggar sought charity a third time, and the servants began to chase the fellow away, the Patriarch ordered that he be given twelve pieces of silver, saying, "Perhaps he is Christ putting me to the test." Twice the saint gave money to a merchant that had suffered shipwreck, and a third time gave him a ship belonging to the Patriarchate and filled with grain, with which the merchant had a successful journey and repaid his obligations.

Saint John the Merciful was known for his gentle attitude towards people. Once, the saint was compelled



# THE HYMNS OF THE THIRD ANTIPHON

*Today is Mode Pl. 2*

*Before the Entrance...*

## **Resurrectional Apolytikion.**

**MODE PL. 2.**

**W**hen 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. **(x2)**

*After the Entrance...*

## **Resurrectional Apolytikion.**

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## **Apolytikion for the Hierarchy.**

**MODE PL. 4.**

**B**y your patience you obtained your reward, O devout Father. You persevered in your prayers without ceasing; and the poor you loved and satisfied. We entreat you, blessed John the Merciful, intercede with Christ our God, for the salvation of 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 4.**

**T**he Savior's most pure and immaculate temple, the very precious bridal chamber and Virgin, who is the sacred treasure of the glory of God, on this day is introduced into the House of the Lord, and with herself she brings the grace in the divine Spirit. She is extolled by the Angels of God. A heavenly tabernacle is she.

“*Bind your soul to the rock of faith.  
Never mind what waves come at  
you, they'll break on the rock of faith  
and all obstacles will be overcome.*”

—ELDER IAKOVOS TSALIKIS



## THE READINGS OF THE DAY

### EPISTLE READING

*The Second Letter of Paul  
to the Corinthians (9:6-11)*

**B**rethren, remember this: whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly. Whoever sows generously will also reap generously. Let everyone give according to what he determines in his heart; not grudgingly or under compulsion; for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that by having what is needed in everything, you may overflow in every good work. As it is written: He has scattered abroad, he has given to the poor. His righteousness remains forever. Now may he who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food also supply and multiply your seed for sowing, and increase the fruits of your righteousness. Thus, may you be enriched in everything, so that you may be generous in all things; and through us, this brings thanksgiving to God.

### GOSPEL READING

*Luke (10:25-37)*

**A**t that time, an expert in the law came to Jesus and put him to the test, saying, "Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" Jesus answered, "What is written in the law? How do you read it?" The man answered, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all

your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbor as yourself." Jesus said to him, "You have answered correctly. Do this, and you will live." But the lawyer, desiring to justify himself, asked Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?" Then Jesus answered, "A certain man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho when he fell into the hands of robbers. They stripped him of his clothes and beat him. Then they went away, leaving him half dead. By chance, a certain priest was going down that way. But when the priest saw him, he passed by on the other side. In the same way, a Levite also came to the place, but when he saw the beaten man, he [also] passed by on the other side. Now a certain Samaritan was traveling and arrived at the spot where the man was. When the Samaritan saw the wounded man, he was moved with compassion, came to him, and wrapped his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. He placed the man on his own animal and brought him to an inn, and took care of him. On the next day, when he was leaving, he took out two denarii and gave them to the host, saying to him, 'Take care of him. Whatever you spend beyond that, I will pay you back when I return.' Now which one of these three do you think seemed to be a neighbor to the man who fell among the robbers?" The lawyer replied, "The one who showed mercy on him!" Then Jesus said to him, "Go and do likewise."



# ANNOUNCEMENTS

## UPCOMING CHURCH SERVICES:

**Sunday, Nov. 12, Great Vespers for St. John Chrysostom, following General Assembly**

**Monday, Nov. 13, St. John Chrysostom, Orthros / Div. Lit., 8:30am**

**Wednesday, Nov. 15, Great Vespers for St. Matthew the Evangelist, 5pm**

**Thursday, Nov. 16, St. Matthew the Evangelist, Orthros / Div. Lit., 8:30am**

**NO GREAT VESPERS**

### **Vigil for St. Nektarios the Wonderworker**

Thank you for all who helped support the celebration for the vigil.

### **Scripture Study**

Fr. Michael will teach a course on St. Paul's Letter to the Galatians beginning on Thursday, November 16 at 6pm. This is not a catechism class, and as such is *only intended for Orthodox Christians*. If you plan to attend, please see Fr. Michael. The EOB translation is required for the class and can be purchased from the Bookstore.

### **Fall General Assembly**

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

### **Philoptochos**

Thank you to all who participated in making cards for our local veterans on Make a Difference Day last week.

There will be a General Meeting this Tuesday, November 14 at 6:00pm. All are welcome!

**CHRISTMAS CARD:** If you would like to be included in our Community Christmas card, please see Elly Aslanidis or Rebecca Windle to sign up. A

suggested minimum \$15 donation is requested. Proceeds benefit Philoptochos in their charitable work. Extra forms are in the narthex. Deadline is December 10.

**ANGEL WREATH:** We are once again participating in the Voluntary Action Center Christmas Program, and are sponsoring three single parent families with up to three children each. If you would like to participate, take one or more angel cards from the wreath in the Narthex, buy the specific gift listed on the back and bring the gifts back to church unwrapped with the angel tag attached by Dec. 3. Thank you for your generosity!

**Cooking Class and Recipe Swap:** Philoptochos is sponsoring a Cooking Class on December 16 at 10:00am. Please see registration form for details. See Rebecca Windle if you have any questions.

to excommunicate two clergymen for a certain time because of some offense. One of them repented, but the other fellow became angry with the Patriarch and fell into greater sins. The saint wanted to summon him and calm him with kind words, but it slipped his mind. When he was celebrating the Divine Liturgy, the saint was suddenly reminded by the words of the Gospel: "If you bring your gift to the altar and remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift before the altar ... first, be reconciled with your brother, and then come and offer your gift" (Mt. 5:23-24). The saint came out of the altar, called the offending clergyman to him, and falling down on his knees before him in front of all the people he asked forgiveness. The cleric, filled with remorse, repented of his sin, corrected himself, and afterwards was found worthy to be ordained to the priesthood.

There was a time when a certain citizen insulted George, the Patriarch's nephew. George asked the saint to avenge the wrong. The saint promised to deal with the offender so that all of Alexandria would marvel at what he had done. This calmed George, and Saint John began to instruct him, speaking of the necessity for meekness and humility. Then he summoned the man who insulted George. When Saint John learned that the man lived in a house owned by the church, he declared that he would excuse him from paying rent for an entire year. Alexandria indeed was amazed by such a "revenge," and George learned from his uncle how to forgive offenses and to bear insults for God's sake.

Saint John, a strict ascetic and man of prayer, was always mindful of his soul, and of death. He ordered a coffin for himself, but told the craftsmen not to finish it. Instead, he would have them come each feastday and ask if it was time to finish the work.

Saint John was persuaded to accompany the governor Nicetas on a visit to the emperor in

Constantinople. While on his way to visit the earthly king, he dreamed of a resplendent man who said to him, "The King of Kings summons you." He sailed to his native island of Cyprus, and died at Amanthos, the saint peacefully fell asleep in the Lord (616-620).

**Saint Nilus the Faster of Sinai**, a native of Constantinople. He lived during the fifth century and was a disciple of Saint John Chrysostom. Having received a fine education, the saint was appointed to the important post of prefect of the capital while still a young man. During this period, Nilus was married and had children, but the pomp of courtly life bothered the couple. Saint John Chrysostom exerted a tremendous influence upon their lives and their strivings. The spouses decided to separate and devote themselves to the monastic life.

The wife and daughter of Nilus went to one of the women's monasteries in Egypt, and Saint Nilus and his son Theodulus went to Sinai, where they settled in a cave dug out by their own hands. For forty years this cave served as the dwelling of Saint Nilus. By fasting, prayer and works, the monk attained a high degree of spiritual perfection. People began to come to him from every occupation and social rank from the emperor down to the farmer, and each found counsel and comfort from the saint.

At Sinai, Saint Nilus wrote many soul-profitting works to guide Christians on the path of salvation. In one of his letters there is an angry denunciation of the emperor Arcadius, who had exiled Saint John Chrysostom. The ascetic works of the venerable Nilus are widely known: they are perfectly executed in form, profoundly Orthodox in content, and are clear and lucid in expression. His Ascetic Discourse is found in Volume I of the English PHILOKALIA.

Saint Nilus suffered many misfortunes in the wilderness. Once, Saracens captured his son Theodulus, whom they intended to offer as a sacrifice to their pagan gods. Through the prayers of the saint

the Lord saved Theodulus, and his father found him with the Bishop of Emessa, who had ransomed the young man from the barbarians. This bishop ordained both of them as presbyters. After ordination they returned to Sinai, where they lived as ascetics together until the death of Saint Nilus.

**Saint Nilus the Myrrh-Gusher of Mt Athos** was born in Greece, in a village named for Saint Peter, in the Zakoneia diocese. He was raised by his uncle, the hieromonk Macarius. Having attained the age of maturity, he received monastic tonsure and was found worthy of ordination to hierodeacon, and then to hieromonk.

The desire for greater monastic struggles brought uncle and nephew to Mt Athos, where Macarius and Nilus lived in asceticism at a place called the Holy Rocks. Upon the repose of Saint Macarius, the venerable Nilus, aflame with zeal for even more intense spiritual efforts, found an isolated place almost inaccessible for any living thing. Upon his departure to the Lord in 1651, Saint Nilus was glorified by an abundant flow of curative myrrh, for which Christians journeyed from the most distant lands of the East.

Saint Nilus has left a remarkably accurate prophecy concerning the state of the Church in the mid-twentieth century, and a description of the people of that time. Among the inventions he predicted are the telephone, airplane, and submarine. He also warned that people's minds would be clouded by carnal passions, "and dishonor and lawlessness will grow stronger." Men would not be distinguishable from women because of their "shamelessness of dress and style of hair." Saint Nilus lamented that Christian pastors, bishops and priests, would become vain men, and that the morals and traditions of the Church would change. Few pious and God-fearing pastors would remain, and many people would stray from the right path because no one would instruct them.

## **Do you Possess the Signs of Christ's Beatitudes?**

*by St. Symeon the New Theologian*

### *Part 2*

*But those who are united to God by faith and recognize Him through action are indeed enabled to see Him by contemplation. They see things of which I am unable to write. Their minds sees strange visions and is totally illumined so that it becomes like light, though they are unable to conceive these things or describe them. Their mind is itself light and sees all things as light; the light itself has life and imparts light to those who see it. They see themselves entirely united to the light and, as they see, they concentrate on the vision {and are as they were}. They perceive the light in their soul and are in ecstasy. In their ecstasy they see it from a distance, but, as they return to themselves, they find themselves once more in the midst of it. They are completely at a loss for words and concepts which might describe what they have perceived in their vision.*

**W**hen we hear these mysteries, how can we not marvel and run to Christ? Who will not long to see God's wonderful works and love Him Who grants these gifts and extraordinary attributes? Indeed, brethren, there is nothing better in the world than to have nothing that belongs to the world and to desire nothing other than the bare essentials for the body. What these are, Scripture knows- bread, water, clothing and shelter. As God's apostle says: "If we have food and clothing, we shall be content with these [I. Tim. 6, 8]. If we ever have need of more than these, He will certainly supply them, provided we trust in Him and believe in Him, since He gives even greater things and "fills all things living with plenteousness" [Ps. 145, 16].

Let us just forsake all the other things that belong to this fleeting life, things such as vanity, envy, inter-cine strife, deceit, whining, intrigue and all the

things that turn us away from God and imperil the soul. Let us instead long for all the things that God commands us to embrace: spiritual poverty, which the world calls humiliation; continual mourning, by day and night, from which arises the joy of the soul and the timely comfort of those who love God. In this way, everyone who genuinely strives, succeeds in attaining meekness. People who hunger and thirst for righteousness and seek it at all times will obtain the kingdom of God, which surpasses all human understanding. Moreover, they become merciful, pure in heart, peaceful, peace-makers and courageous in the face of trials. All this is the result of mourning every day. Another thing it achieves is to make us hate evil; it kindles that divine zeal in the soul which does not allow it ever to be at ease or to incline towards evil deeds with evil people, but fills it with courage and the strength to endure to the end against all adversities.

So, let us flee from the world and the things that are in the world. For what do we have in common with the world and those who are in the world? Let us run, pursue, until we have caught hold of something which is permanent and does not ebb away- for all things perish and pass away, as in a dream and nothing lasts or is certain among visible things. The sun, the stars, the heavens and the earth, all of them will pass away. What then can be of benefit to us when, necessarily, we must die and depart to that which is in the world beyond, leaving these things behind? If things which are visible pass away, how are they of any assistance when we ourselves depart and forsake this body as dead? When the soul leaves the body, it cannot see by means of it, nor can it be seen by anyone else. Once this has happened, it deals only with things that are invisible and is not concerned with things that are here. Before it lies a dual possibility of life and destiny: on the one hand, that of the kingdom of heaven and eternal glory, or, on the other, that of hell and burning punishment. It receives one of

these from God as its eternal inheritance, as it has earned it from its deeds in this life.

It is for these reasons that I urge that we flee the world. Let us flee from the deceit of life and what purports to be happiness, and let us run towards Christ Himself, Who is the saviour of souls. Let us try to find Him Who is present everywhere, and, when we have found Him, let us cleave to Him and fall at His feet and embrace them in the fervent zeal of our souls. Indeed, I beg of you, let us try to see Him and contemplate Him even in this life. Because, if we are found to be worthy of seeing Him here, we shall not die, death will have no dominion over us [Rom. 6, 9].

Let us not tarry to see him in the future, but rather strive to contemplate Him now, since Saint John the Theologian tells us: "We know that we have God in our hearts, from the Spirit Whom we have received from Him". If any of you, then, have demonstrated that your faith in Him cannot be broken and is solid, and you have properly examined what we have already said, make sure that you do not deceive yourselves. Do not imagine that you have Christ within you, when you have nothing and hear this (God preserve you from it!): Take away what wicked people think they have and give it to them who have more. Then you will weep and lament and there will be infinite grief forever.

God forbid that we, who have denied the whole world and the things in the world and have had recourse to Christ, should hear such a voice and suffer such a fate! Rather, having kept God's commandments, may our hearts be cleansed by tears and penitence, so that from now on we may see the divine light, Christ Himself, and possess Him in us. Through His most holy Spirit, may He nourish our souls and keep them alive by allowing us to taste the pleasant sweetness of those benefactions of His kingdom, of which may we all be found worthy in Jesus Christ our Lord, to Whom be glory known and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

## *The Blood of Christ Flows in our Veins?*

by *Archimandrite Andreas (Konanos)*

*Excerpt*

One day a man came to Elder Paisios, who said to him, “My child, your soul is in a state of lethargy. It should wake up. So that we could talk and you would understand me, you first have to wake up. Make a spiritual rule for yourself that you will go to church regularly, as much as possible—if you can, three times a month, and if you can, every Sunday. That would be even better. Your mind will open little by little, your heart will find peace, and then I will talk and you will understand me. But if I talk to you now you will not understand, because your soul is in a state of laziness, insensibility, and indifference and you will not perceive divine things even if I tell you about them.”

Another man who had many problems came and asked Elder Paisios, “Father, I have this and that problem. Tell me, what should I do?”

The elder asked him, “Do you go to Holy Liturgy?”  
“I don’t”

“So, now go every Sunday.”

“All right, and what will you tell me about my problem?” He wanted to change the subject.

“Do what I said and you will see. You will go to Holy Liturgy.”

“Yes, but I have those problems I told you about!”

“Do it, and you’ll see!”

He went home from the Holy Mountain a little upset, saying, “I travelled so far, and Elder Paisios only told me what I already know: Go to church! Well what is this? Did I have to go to Elder Paisios so that he could only tell me that? Well, what else is there to do, I’ll do as he says.”

He started going to church and his problems at home and at work gradually began to go away. This amazed him. A year and a half later he saw that much in his life was working out well, and he again

went to the Holy Mountain. Then Elder Paisios asked him, “Do you go to church like I told you to do?”

“I go, father, and everything worked out for me. I want that you would tell me how it all happened.”

The elder said to him, “My child, when you go to church you make peace with God. And when you make peace with Him, don’t you understand that He gives you every good thing? Before coming to me you did not have a good relationship with God, and you resisted Him, were far from Him. But I told you what the root is to everything: If you make peace with God, everything else will be resolved, one thing after another. That is why your problems went away.”

Our salvation is very simple; it is close, right next door, and we don’t need to go anywhere. For this we need only one miracle: that the Lord would touch our souls, wake us up, and so that we would love Him and desire Him.

When at the Holy Liturgy we feel joy in our souls, a joy that is greater than any other joy, it means that the “dawn” has broken in our souls into another life: We begin to have a foretaste of what we will feel in eternity.

I pray to God that He would make us fleshly people, sunk in the vanity and falsity of this world, capable of loving the eternal, immutable, and imperishable.

In this way, any perplexity surrounding Holy Liturgy is resolved at the Liturgy itself...

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“*Let nothing seem difficult  
for you.*”

—ST. LUKE THE PHYSICIAN