



# SAINT LUKE THE EVANGELIST

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

NOVEMBER 26, 2017—13TH SUNDAY OF LUKE

**S**aint **Alypius the Stylite** was born in the city of Adrianopolis in Paphlagonia. His mother, a Christian, was widowed early, and she sent her son to be educated by Bishop Theodore. She distributed her substance to the poor, then began to live an ascetic life near the church as a deaconess.

Saint Alypius, from his early years, wanted to devote his life to God and yearned for the solitary life, although Bishop Theodore would not give him permission to do so. Once, when Saint Alypius was accompanying his bishop to Constantinople, the holy Martyr Euphemia (September 16) appeared to him in a vision, summoning Saint Alypius to return to Adrianopolis and found a church in her name.

With contributions offered by believers in Adrianopolis, Saint Alypius did build a church in the name of the holy Martyr Euphemia, on the site of a dilapidated pagan temple infested by legions of devils. Beside the church, under the open sky, the saint erected a pillar over a pagan tomb. For fifty-three years Saint Alypius struggled upon the pillar, praying to God and teaching those who came to him.

The demons which infested the pagan cemetery fell upon the ascetic by night and pelted him with stones. Saint Alypius, wanted nothing to stand in the way of the attacks of the spirits of darkness, then even took down the boards that served him as a roof, protecting him from the rain and wind. In the face of the saint's conquering steadfastness, the demons fled the place forever, which had been sanctified by his deed of voluntary martyrdom.

Fourteen years before his death, Saint Alypius was no longer able to stand. He was compelled to lie on his side because of the weakness of his legs, and endured grievous sufferings with humble gratitude. Around the saint's pillar two monasteries sprang up: a men's monastery on the one side, and a women's monastery on the other. Saint Alypius introduced strict monastic rules for both monasteries and he directed both monasteries until his death. Saint Alypius reposed in the year 640, at age 118. The body of the venerable stylite was buried in the church he founded in honor of the holy Martyr Euphemia. The relics of the saint of God healed many of those who came in faith.

**Saint James the Solitary (Hermit)** was the disciple of Saint Maron (February 14). He lived in asceticism on a mountain not far from the city of Cyrrhus in Syria. He suffered grievous ills, but he always wore chains, ate food only in the evening, and prayed constantly. By such efforts he attained to high spiritual perfection, receiving from the Lord power over demons, the gift of healing and even of raising the dead. Saint James peacefully fell asleep in the Lord.



# THE HYMNS OF THE THIRD ANTIPHON

*Today is Mode Plagal 4.*

*Before the Entrance...*

## **Resurrectional Apolytikion.**

MODE PL. 4.

**Y**ou descended from on high, O compassionate One, and condescended to be buried for three days, so that from the passions You might set us free. Our life and resurrection, O Lord, glory be to You. (x2)

*After the Entrance...*

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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 3.

**O**n this day the Virgin Maid \* goes to the grotto to give birth \* to the pre-eternal Word \* in an ineffable manner. \* Dance for joy, all the inhabited earth, on hearing. \* Glorify along with Angels and with the shepherds \* Him who willed that He appear as \* a newborn Child, \* the pre-eternal God.

“It’s not enough for prayer just to proceed from the lips. It’s of great importance that we should love Him Whom we’re addressing. But we can’t feel that love if we repeat prayers mechanically, or even if we concentrate. Unless we struggle with all our powers to observe the Lord’s commandments, then we’re calling upon His name in vain. But God tells us quite clearly (Ex. 20, 7) that we are not to utter His name unless there’s a good reason to. This is why, when we call upon the name of the Lord, we have to be aware not only of the presence of the living God, but also of His true wisdom.”

—ELDER SOPHRONY OF ESSEX



## THE READINGS OF THE DAY

### EPISTLE READING

*The Letter of Paul to the Ephesians (4:1-7)*

**B**rethren, I, being the prisoner in the Lord, beg you to walk worthily of the calling with which you were called. [Walk] with complete lowliness and humility, with patience, bearing with one another in love; being eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, even as you also were called to one hope when you were called; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over all, and through all, and in us all. But grace has been granted to each one of us according to the measure of Christ's gift.

### GOSPEL READING

*Luke (18: 18-27)*

**A**t that time, a certain ruler came to Jesus saying, "Good Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" Jesus asked him, "Why do you call me good? No one is good, except one—God. You know the commandments: 'Do not commit adultery,' 'Do not murder,' 'Do not steal,' 'Do not bear false witness,' 'Honor your father and your mother.'" The ruler replied, "I have observed all these things from my youth." When Jesus heard these things, he said, "You still lack one thing. Sell all that you have, distribute it to the poor, and you will have a treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me." But when the man heard these things, he became very distressed because he was very rich. Jesus, seeing that he had become very distressed, said, "How hard it is for those who have wealth to enter into the Kingdom of God! Indeed, it is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for someone who is wealthy to enter into the Kingdom of God!" Those who heard this exclaimed, "Then who can be saved?" But Jesus replied, "The things which are impossible with men are possible with God."

“*The task of prayer for the whole world is the most valuable service and gives a living dimension to the world. Monastics strive for things which have absolute, not fleeting value. The intercession of the righteous is an honour for the world.*”

— ARCHIMANDRITE ZACHARIAS ZACHAROU ”



# ANNOUNCEMENTS

## UPCOMING CHURCH SERVICES:

**Wednesday, November 29, Great Vespers for St. Andrew the first-called, 5pm**

**Thursday, November 30, St. Andrew the first-called, Orthros / Div. Lit., 8:30am**

**Saturday December 2, Great Vespers, 5pm**

### Scripture Study

Fr. Michael is teaching a course on St. Paul's Letter to the Galatians. The second class will be on Thursday, November 30 at 6pm. This is not a catechism class, and as such is *only intended for Orthodox Christians*. The EOB translation is required for the class and can be purchased from the Bookstore.

### HOPE and JOY

Fr. Michael is teaching a course on St. Paul's Letter to the Galatians. The second class will be on Thursday, November 30 at 6pm. This is not a cat

### Philoptochos

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

**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! Please give gift cards for the Angel wreath to Karen Sade. Do not place in the box.

**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.

“*Anything we achieve through God's grace should be shared with others, to His glorification.*”

—ST. BASIL THE GREAT

Saint Stylianos was born in Paphlagonia of Asia Minor sometime between the fourth and sixth centuries. He inherited a great fortune from his parents when they died, but he did not keep it. He gave it away to the poor according to their need, desiring to help those who were less fortunate.

Stylianos left the city and went to a monastery, where he devoted his life to God. Since he was more zealous and devout than the other monks, he provoked their jealousy and had to leave. He left the monastery to live alone in a cave in the wilderness, where he spent his time in prayer and fasting.

The goodness and piety of the saint soon became evident to the inhabitants of Paphlagonia, and they sought him out to hear his teaching, or to be cured by him. Many were healed of physical and mental illnesses by his prayers.

Saint Stylianos was known for his love of children, and he would heal them of their infirmities. Even after his death, the citizens of Paphlagonia believed that he could cure their children. Whenever a child became sick, an icon of Saint Stylianos was painted and was hung over the child's bed.

At the hour of his death, the face of Saint Stylianos suddenly became radiant, and an angel appeared to receive his soul.

Known as a protector of children, Saint Stylianos is depicted in iconography holding an infant in his arms. Pious Christians ask him to help and protect their children, and childless women entreat his intercession so that they might have children.

## ***The life of Saint Arsenios the Cappadocian***

*by St. Paisios the Athonite*

### *Part 2*

**I**n addition to his other spiritual activities, it was St. Arsenios' rule to remain in isolation in his cell every Wednesday and Friday and to do spiritual exercises and to pray. On these two days the threshold of his cell served as a substitute for him. Whenever any sick person arrived from afar, who did not know his rule and knocked at the door, Father Arsenios would certainly open it, but would not speak. He learned about the illness of the person concerned through signs, found the right prayer, read it and the sufferer would recover. On other occasions though, people knocked but he did not answer. Surely, during such times of prayer, he must have been in an ecstatic state of spiritual contemplation. Events indicate that on those days when he would shut himself in his cell, not only would he draw down divine powers of Heaven, while praying, but he, too, would be drawn up to Heaven by Angelic powers.

The Pharasiotes did not disturb him on those two days, except for the sick who would go outside his cell and take soil from the threshold of his door, spread it on the afflicted part of their body and get well. One woman from Pharasa, whose bent and misshapen hand was healed when she put soil from the threshold of Hadjiphentis on it, reportedly said:

“Where we come from, we didn't know what a doctor was. We would go to Father Arsenios, Hadjiphentis. It was in Greece that we found out about doctors, but if we tell the local people these things, they think it very strange.”

All the pain of those suffering was gathered in the cell of Hadjiphentis...

From all of these miracles which people saw Father Arsenios do by the Grace of God, it was only to

be expected that they would revere him as a Saint, which he was. And yet all of this placed Father Arsenios in a difficult position and forced him to strive harder to conceal his sanctity and to avoid people's praises.

Perhaps he himself would not have been harmed by pride, but the praises of men would have been a sufficient reward for his struggles in this vain life. The only solution for him was, from time to time, to play the "Fool-in-Christ", to present himself as the opposite of who he really was, by feigning idiosyncrasies and by acting in an odd manner, which is what he did. So as not to be called gentle and meek, he pretended to be irritable. So as not to draw attention to his fasting, he pretended to be a glutton, and many other such things.

If anyone ever said to him, "You're a Saint", Father Arsenios would answer abruptly, "Your family is not even a family." When the other person heard him belittling his family in such a curt fashion, he would be very upset and the next time would not say that Father Arsenios was a Saint, but that he could be a Saint if he were better behaved.

Often, however, when he was about to pretend to be irritable, he did not manage very well, because his smiling eyes gave him away. But he continued trying to convince people even with words that he was a sinful man of many passions. In fact, he used to say the following:

"See there, that's the kind of man I am. Now, do you still think that I'm a saint?"

To the women particularly he presented himself as stricter and more eccentric, because they held him in greater reverence and would try like crazy to be the first to serve him and to bring him food. So when a woman brought him food, he would sometimes tell her curtly that it was not enough, and not take it, and at other times, again abruptly would say that it was not well-cooked and again would send her away. These distraught women were at a loss, because they did not know where they stood

with him. Almost everyone was of the opinion that Hadjephentis was very eccentric and strange, but at the same time very much a Saint...

However much Father Arsenios tried to conceal himself, it was not easy because they had known him well for years. On all fasting days, even every Wednesday and Friday and Monday, which is dedicated to the Angels, he would not even drink water before the sun went down.

His rule of prayer for the services was as follows: On all major feasts, he kept all-night vigils, which he started at sunset and continued until sunrise. He usually held them in the Chapel of Panaghia, or that of Saint John Chrysostom, with the chanter Prodromos only, unless they met someone on the way who was suffering but was able to walk, in which case they would take him with them to the all-night vigil. Father Arsenios would heal him as soon as they reached the Chapel, so that he, too, could praise God.

On one occasion, when Father Arsenios and the chanter were on their way to the Chapel of Saint John Chrysostom, they met up with a woman who was mute. They took her and her companions along with them, and as soon as they reached the Church, he read the Gospel over her. The mute woman at once began to speak, and they all praised God.

On other days, though, he usually held the service in his cell or in the Church of the Blessed Martyrs Varachesios and Ionas, starting at 9 p.m. (secular time) and finishing at 3 a.m., after which he would rest for two or three hours. Often on week-days he would go to the nearby Chapels and celebrate the Divine Liturgy after his brief rest. Vespers were again usually said in the Church of the Blessed Martyrs.

Once, when Hadjephentis was going to Vespers, the moment he unlocked the door of the Church he saw a Woman Whose face was shining, coming out of the Church. She disappeared right in front of both him and the people who were with him. (Solo-

mon Koskeridis was among them.) Hadjiphentis said it was Panaghia.

For the vigils which he usually kept in far-off Chapels, no matter how distant they were, he never took an animal with him, but always went on foot, and then stood throughout the vigil. His chanter often asked him to sit for a while on the donkey which he took to the outlying Chapels, but Father Arsenios never agreed to do so, because it was his rule never to sit on an animal throughout his life, no matter how great a distance was involved. Even to go to Jerusalem, where he went five times, he walked for five days to get to Mersina to take the boat.

Father Arsenios' great sensitivity would not allow him to tire animals and rest himself. It wasn't enough that he walked everywhere, but he usually went barefoot, as well. When he encountered people, he would put his shoes on for a while, and then when they were off in the distance, he would put them back in his hand woven bag.....

The humble heart of Father Arsenios had by now filled with love for God and Man and the abundance of his love spilled over to animals as well. He loved them more than himself and preferred that he should tire rather than the animals.

Although he was so compassionate, even towards animals, he nevertheless tried to be hard towards women, so that they would not revere him so much, thus wounding his own sensitive heart when he could not find an alternative course of action. In other words, he managed to give the opposite impression to others, by pretending to be severe, irritable and odd.....

Father Arsenios was always making efforts to hide himself, while the Grace of God which dwelt within him was continually giving him away, and even a distance.

The Patriarch of Ecumenical Throne held Hadjiphentis in reverence, and would often write to him to ask him to pray for the Ecumenical Throne. Had-

jiphentis would then take Prodrornos, and the two of them would hold all-night vigils, as I mentioned before, in the Chapel of Panaghia (so Kantzi) or in the Church of Saint John Chrysostom.....

Repeatedly people would suggest that he should become a bishop, but he always refused on the grounds that it would not be right since he was of such an irritable nature. But to those, again, who knew full well that he was gentle and meek, he would say:

“I won't become one, because I'm afraid of pride.

The higher the mountains, the more the storm-clouds gather.”

The Patriarch of Jerusalem also wanted to make him a bishop, and had persuaded his brother, Vlasios, to beg him to accept, but Father Arsenios still would not consent.

He preferred the poor sackcloth cape thrown across his shoulders, which concealed the Kingdom of God dwelling in his humble soul, rather than the rich and regal episcopal cope. Since he did not wish to displease the Patriarch, he agreed to become an Exarch of the Most Holy Sepulchre in order to help pilgrims, and an Exarch of his District so as not to upset the Bishop of Caesarea, whom he loved and respected greatly.

Virtue, you see, cannot be hidden, however much one wants to, just as the sun cannot be hidden by a screen, since a good number of rays will pass through its countless small openings. The same happened with holy Father Arsenios. However much he tried to hide, a good number of his virtues passed through into the people's awareness.

There is, of course, much evidence, from both his holy life and his many miracles, which indicate his saintliness. While most of the older Pharasioties have died, there are still enough of the younger generation still living, who were also eye-witnesses to many of the events recorded at the end of this book.

The blessed man of God, Hadjiphentis, apart

from his many other gifts, was also endowed with the gift of foresight. He had been told by God, years before, that they would leave for Greece, and so would tell the Pharasiotes not to spend too much, but to save for the journey.

A year before the exchange of populations, a woman went to him and said: “Your blessing, Hadjiephentis, I hear that this year they’re going to move us.”

“Don’t worry; keep on with what you’re doing, because there’s another year to go,” Father Arsenios told her.

When that year had gone by, the dread message then arrived that they were to get ready quickly for the journey. The expulsion from their fatherland was naturally a very bitter affair, but good Father Arsenios had sweetened even this, by saying that they would be returning to their motherland, Greece.

All the Pharasiotes began their preparations at once, just as Father Arsenios did. First he baptised all the unbaptised children, including the village president’s child, at which time the following event occurred: The child’s parents wanted to give him the grandfather’s name, Christos.

Father Arsenios, however, did not agree, because he wanted to give him his own name, and he said to the parents:

“It’s natural that you should want to have someone follow in the grandfather’s footsteps, is it not also natural for me to want to leave a monk to follow in mine?”

He then turned to the godmother and told her: “Arsenios is the name you will give him.”

Indeed, from an early age, this child did aspire to become a monk, and in fact became one. Whether it was Father Arsenios’ prayer that took effect, or his gift of foresight, both alternatives reveal the holiness of the person.

After the baptism of the children, Father Arsenios was digging for a week in order to hide the

sacred vessels so that they would not be desecrated by the Turks. He placed some in the Church of the Blessed Martyrs Varachios and Ionas, and others in the cemetery. It was, of course, impossible to take them on the journey, because the animals were loaded down with small children in cases of twos, or with the elderly, with foodstuffs and other urgent supplies for the long march.

Just as the affectionate Father Arsenios, who was very caring, looked after the arrangements for his children, so the children, out of philotimo, also made sure that he was afforded some relief, even if only bodily, in that wretched exile of theirs. For this reason they prepared a gentle beast of burden, to carry him and keep him from getting overly tired, but in no way did he agree to ride on it. Then the Council was forced to appoint three strong, pious young men to accompany him, Moisis Koglanidis, Khoutis’ son, Solomon Koskeridis and Sarantis Tsoupouridis, even though Father Arsenios had no need of human protection. He was spiritually a stout-hearted young man himself and possessed divine powers, as would become clear from what happened during the course of the journey.

The flight began on 14 August, 1924, since the Turks had come earlier and evicted them from their homes. The Feast of the Dormition of the Theotokos (15 August), was being celebrated in the first village they stopped at, Ahyiavoudes (Yahyali).

*To be continued...*

“*Silence is a great fortifier  
in unseen warfare and a  
sure hope of victory.*”

—ST. NICODEMUS THE ATHONITE