



Christ is Risen!
Truly, He is Risen!



FROM THE FATHERS

“HAS OUR LIBERTY then turned to boldness,
And our courage been considered rather presumptuous?
Is it for this reason perhaps that He is not seen by the unworthy?
As the true friends of the Creator talked thus to one another,

Mary, who followed them, said:

‘Initiates of the Lord, and you who truly love Him warmly,
do not assume this; but just wait; do not lose heart.

For what has come to pass was a Divine plan,
In order that women, who were the first to fall,
might be the first to see the Resurrected One.

He wisheth the greeting “Rejoice”
to be a sign of Grace to us who mourn,
He Who offereth resurrection to the fallen.”

SAINT ROMANOS THE MELODIST, SIXTH CENTURY

“THE SAME ORDER as of old is now followed in the reversal of our woe, that whereas death began from the female sex, the same should now first see the glory of the Resurrection, and be made the messenger thereof. So the Lord adds, *Go tell My brethren that they go into Galilee, there shall they see Me*” (Matt. 28.10).

SAINT HILARY OF POITIERS, + 368 A.D.

“WHAT were these women seeking at the tomb, if not the Body of the Lord Jesus? And you, what is it that you are seeking in the Church if not Jesus, that is, the Saviour? But if you wish to find Him, the sun being now risen, then come as these women came; that is, let there be no darkness of evil in your hearts, for the desires of the flesh and the works that are evil are darkness. They in whose heart there is darkness of this kind see not the light, and understand not Christ, for Christ is the Light. Therefore, drive the darkness from you, brethren, that is all sinful desires and all evil works, and provide yourselves with sweet spices, that is earnest prayer.”

SAINT AMBROSE OF MILAN, + 397 A.D.

“NOTE that every soul that gains mastery over the passions becomes like Mary Magdalene. Cleansed by dispassion, she was counted worthy to behold Jesus as God and man. For the angel sitting *at the head* (John 20:12) of Jesus symbolises His Divinity; and the one sitting *at the feet*, the incarnation of the Word, Who has abased Himself.”

SAINT THEOPHYLACT OF OCHRID, + C. 1108 A.D.

“THROUGH the resurrection, the body of the Lord, which was previously susceptible to suffering, transcended suffering; the corruptible became incorruptible. The body, that had become through suffering and death without form and comely glory, was now brightened and beautiful and glorified with the same glory of Divinity hypostatically united with Him.”

VEN. NICODEMUS OF THE HOLY MOUNTAIN, + 1809 A.D.

The Mystical Resurrection of Christ

BY ST. SYMEON THE NEW THEOLOGIAN

The following discourse is from the catecheses of St. Symeon the New Theologian to the monks of the Monastery of St. Mamas, where he served as Abbot. It is translated from the Greek edition by Archbishop Basil Krivoshein, Syméon le Nouveau Théologien, Catéchèses, Vol. II, Discourse 13, (Sources Chrétiennes, No. 104; Paris: Cerf, 1964), pp. 191-202.

St. Symeon was born in 949, in Galatia, Paphlagonia. He lived as a monastic at the Monastery of Studios, and subsequently at the Monastery of St. Mamas, where he was appointed Abbot. He was taught the rudiments of spiritual life by his spiritual teacher, Symeon the Pious, a man of great virtue and sanctity. The height of St. Symeon's spiritual knowledge and sanctity are also revealed in the discourse that follows, in which he reveals to us unknown dimensions of the Mystery of the Resurrection. These are dimensions and realities known and experienced by the sanctified spirits of the Fathers of our Church, who shone with the brilliance of Divine Grace and took delight in the darkness of the Superessential Hiddenness of God. By our participation in this Mystery and in the mystical Resurrection of Christ, he calls us all to perfection and salvation in Christ.

Concerning the Resurrection of Christ

In what it consists, or how Christ's resurrection takes place in us, and in it the resurrection of the soul.

The mystery of this Resurrection.

Delivered on the Monday of the second week of Pascha

BROTHERS and fathers, already Pascha, that joyous day, that day of all gladness and delight, the day of Christ's Resurrection, has arrived in the annual cycle. Rather, it occurs daily and eternally in those who know its mystery, and so has filled our hearts with ineffable joy and exultation. At the same time, it has brought to an end the toil of the all-venerable Fast; or, better to

say, it has perfected our souls and consoled them as well. Therefore, as you see, after inviting all the faithful together to rest and to thanksgiving, it has passed.

Let us, then, give thanks to the Lord, who has conveyed us over the ocean of the Fast and led us with joy into the haven of His Resurrection. Let us give thanks to Him, both those who have diligently and zealously completed the course of the Fast with ardent resolve and struggles for virtue, and those of us, as well, who have been weak in this matter through negligence and infirmity of soul. He it is Who with great munificence bestows crowns upon the zealous and due rewards for their deeds, and also in His mercy and love for mankind grants forgiveness to the weaker.

For He sees the dispositions and intentions of our souls rather than the toils of our bodies, whereby we exercise ourselves in virtue, whether we intensify our asceticism out of eagerness of soul or practice less than the zealous because of the weakness of our bodies. In accordance with our intentions He measures out the prizes and the charisms of the Spirit to each one, either granting fame and glory to him who is zealous or leaving him still in a lowly state and in need of more strenuous purification.

But, if you will, let us look and carefully examine^a what is the mystery of that Resurrection of Christ our God that occurs mystically in us at all times, if we are willing, and how Christ is buried in us as in a sepulchre and how He unites Himself to our souls and rises again, raising us with Himself. Such is the aim of our discourse.

Christ our God was suspended on the Cross and, having nailed thereto the sin of the world and having tasted death, He descended into the nethermost depths of Hades.

He returned from Hades into His own immaculate body, from which [His Divinity]¹ had in no way been separated as He descended thither, and at once He rose from the dead. Thereafter, He ascended to Heaven with great glory and power. In just the same way, since we have now come out of the world and entered into the

tomb of repentance and humiliation by being assimilated to the sufferings of the Lord, He Himself comes down from Heaven and enters into our body as into a grave. He unites Himself to our souls and raises them up, though they were avowedly dead, and then vouchsafes to him who has thus been raised with Christ to behold the glory of His mystical Resurrection.

Christ's Resurrection is thus our resurrection, the resurrection of us who lie prostrate in sin. He who has never fallen into sin, as it is written, nor suffered any alteration in His own glory, how will He ever be raised up or glorified, since He is always supremely glorified and remains the same, "far above every principality and authority"?

As has been said, Christ's Resurrection and His glory are our glory, which is accomplished in us, disclosed to us, and beheld by us through His Resurrection. Once He has appropriated what is ours, that which He works in us He ascribes to Himself.

The resurrection of the soul is union with life. Just as the body is dead and cannot live or be called alive unless it receives the living soul in itself and is united to it, though without admixture, so also the soul cannot live unless it is ineffably and unconfusedly united to God, Who is truly eternal Life.

Before this union in knowledge, vision, and perception it is dead, even though it is endowed with mind and is by nature immortal. There is no knowledge without vision, nor vision without perception.

This is what I am trying to say: there is vision, and in the vision there is knowledge and perception (I say this about spiritual things, for in the corporeal realm there is perception even apart from vision).

What do I mean? A blind man who strikes his foot against a stone feels it, but a dead man does not. But in spiritual things, unless the mind arrives at the vision of the things that are above thought, it does not perceive the mystical working of Divine Grace.

He therefore who, before he has arrived at Divine vision, claims that he perceives the things that are above mind, word, and thought resembles a blind man who has a sensation of good or bad things that he experiences, but does not know what is in his hands or at his feet, even if they are for him a matter of life or death. Since he is deprived of the faculty of sight and perception, he in no way perceives the bad or the good things that befall him. Hence, he will often lift up his staff to ward off his enemy and sometimes he smites his friend instead, while his enemy stands before his eyes and derides him.

Most men believe in the Resurrection of Christ, but very few are they that have a clear vision thereof. Those who do not behold it cannot even worship Christ Jesus as Holy and Lord. As Scripture says, “No one can say, ‘Jesus is Lord,’ except by the Holy Spirit,” and, elsewhere, “God is spirit, and those who worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth.”

That most sacred phrase which is daily on our lips does not say, “Having believed in the Resurrection of Christ,” but, “Having beheld the Resurrection of Christ, let us worship the Holy Lord Jesus, the only sinless One.”

How then, does the Holy Spirit exhort us to say, “Having beheld the Resurrection of Christ,” which we have not seen, as though we had seen it, when Christ has risen once for all a thousand years ago,² and even then without anyone seeing it?^{3.b}

Surely Divine Scripture does not wish us to lie? Far from it! Rather, it urges us to speak the truth, that the Resurrection of Christ takes place in each of us who believes, and that not once, but every hour, so to speak, when Christ the Master arises in us, in splendid raiment and flashing forth rays of incorruption and Divinity.

For the light-bearing Advent of the Spirit reveals to us, as in early morning, the Master’s Resurrection, or, rather, it grants us to see the Risen Lord Himself. For this reason we say, “God is the Lord and hath revealed Himself unto us,” and we allude to His

Second Coming, adding these words, “Blessed is He that cometh in the Name of the Lord.”

Those to whom the Risen Christ has revealed Himself, to them has He assuredly become manifest spiritually; He has shown Himself to their spiritual eyes. When this happens to us through the Spirit, He raises us from the dead and gives us life. He grants us to see Him, Who is immortal and indestructible, and not only that, He grants us clearly to know Him who raises and glorifies us with Himself, as all of Divine Scripture attests.

These, then, are the Divine mysteries of Christians. This is the hidden power of our Faith,^c which unbelievers, or those who believe with difficulty, or rather believe in part, do not see and are not able at all to see.

Unbelievers, those who believe with difficulty, or believe in part, are those who do not show their faith through works. For, apart from works the demons also believe and confess Christ to be God and Master. “We know Thee Who Thou art,” they say, “the Son of God”; and elsewhere, “These men are the servants of the Most High God.”

Yet such faith will not benefit the demons, nor even men. This faith is of no use, for it is dead, according to the Divine Apostle, who says, “Faith without works is dead,” just like works without faith.

How is it dead? Because it does not have in itself God, Who bestows life. It does not possess in itself Him Who said, “He that loveth Me will keep My commandments, and I and the Father will come and make Our abode with him,” so that by His coming He might raise from the dead and give life to him who has acquired faith, and grant him to behold Him Who has risen in him and Who has resurrected him.

For this reason, such faith is dead, or, rather, they are dead who have faith without works. Faith in God is always alive, and since it is living, it gives life to those who come with a good in-

tention and receive it. Even before they have carried out the commandments it has brought many out of death into life and has shown them Christ our God.

Had they persevered in His commandments and kept them until death, they, too, would have been preserved by them—that is, in the state to which faith alone had brought them. But since they “turned aside like a crooked bow” and transfixed themselves on their former actions, they inevitably at once made shipwreck of their faith and wretchedly deprived themselves of the true wealth, which is Christ our God.

So I beseech you, lest we suffer their fate, let us keep God’s commandments with all our might, so that we might enjoy both present and future good things, that is, the very vision of Christ. To this may we all attain by the Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, unto Whom be glory unto the ages. Amen.

Notes

1. “Thou wast torn but not separated, O Word, from the flesh that Thou hadst taken.” (Canon of Great Saturday, Ode 6, Troparion 1) Jesus, as man, wore body and soul. And while His soul separated from His body and descended into Hades, His Divinity remained in both His soul and His body, which is why “it was not separated from the flesh that [He had] taken.”
2. St. Symeon wrote during the first half of the eleventh century, which is why a thousand years had passed.
3. Christ rose “whilst the tomb was sealed.” “Whilst the tomb was sealed, Thou, O Life, didst shine forth from the grave, O Christ God.” (Dismissal Hymn of St. Thomas Sunday)
 - a. “Without a doubt, when the Church gave the exceptional and precise name of ‘Theologian’ to St. Symeon, it understood that this name revealed his figure in all of its depth. This of course means that he had an Apostolic heart, evangelizing, as a river overflowing with the waters of the Spirit, those leading the monastic life;

he was clothed in the blood of the martyrs as with purple and fine linen, and became the ‘mystical’ exponent and hymnist of union with God, giving life to symbols and dogmatic ‘terms,’ and mystically accomplishing an assimilation of the Divine Mysteries. By no means does he neglect the Mysteriological experience (Baptism, Holy Communion, Repentance), since ‘his daily bread was the precious life-giving Bread and Blood of Christ,’ as a daily ‘beholder of dread visions’; but neither does he regard one as faithful, who does not have a mystical experience of the Mysteries (Resurrection, Crucifixion, etc.), ‘which always mystically takes place in those of us who so desire it.’ (Symeon the New Theologian, *Ἄπαντα* [Complete Works], Vol. II, translation and commentary by Monk Dionysios Simonopetrites, (Athens: Ekdoseis “Ofelimou Bibliou,” 1974), p. 74, n. 3).

b. “In truth, no one saw the moment of Christ’s Resurrection. This event became the basis on which the Fathers characterize the Resurrection as a Mystery and express its meaning, which is unobservable, unfathomable, and inaccessible to man. A glance at the hymnology of the Church reveals that the Myrrh-bearing women and the Disciples ‘indicated’ the Resurrection, but did not see it. Moreover, Byzantine Iconography seems to have been profoundly influenced by the supernatural nature of the Resurrection. No Icon exists of the Resurrection itself, but it is replaced by the descent into Hades and the appearance of Christ to the Myrrh-bearing women.” (Ibid., p. 76, n. 15)

c. “Works confirm and reveal one’s faith, while faith gives meaning and justification to works. It is characteristic of the spirit of the Church that the Saints’ whole effort has in view the bearing of ‘witness’ to the Faith before Christ. Evidence of holiness is a praiseworthy life, which is inspired by the Orthodox Faith. Likewise, certain Martyrs are portrayed on Icons as presenting their head to Christ as proof of their faith. Thus, there is no contradiction in St. Symeon when, in another Catechesis, he speaks about justification by faith and not works, while here he says that faith without works is dead. Just as with the Apostles Paul and James,

St. Symeon's sole goal is Christ Himself, and everything has this in view. When faith and works are cut off from the life-giving God and are individualized, then they are justified as ends in themselves. While such faith, on the one hand, flourishes in 'dry and bare flights of logic,' such works, on the other hand, degenerate into dead actions, deadened parts of incurable people. This, moreover, is also unbelief, or disbelief, or believing in part, according to St. Symeon." (Ibid., pp. 77-78, n. 21)

TAKEN FROM THE WEBSITE OF THE FORMER SYNOD
IN RESISTANCE OF THE CHURCH OF GREECE



Resurrectional (Paschal) Message To the Entirety of the Body of Our Church

*“Yesterday I was buried with Thee, O Christ; today I rise with Thee,
Who art risen; I was crucified with Thee yesterday; do Thou,
O Saviour, glorify me together with Thee in Thy Kingdom.”*

Beloved Children in the Lord:

We celebrate yet again the “Feast of Feasts,” the greatest and resplendent Festival of the Resurrection of Christ, which fills all things with its radiant and other-worldly Light.

God, in His love for mankind, once more gives us exceeding joy and exultation: this incomparable delight and gladness.

For our Lord Jesus Christ, One of the Trinity, “the last Adam” (I Cor. 15:45), the Healer and Saviour of the Divinely fashioned human couple, who fell into disobedience and were cast out of Paradise—our Lord, entering into this world “in the form of a servant” (Phil. 2:7), came down to assume, sinlessly, our infirmity,

lowliness, and poverty. Thusly, our Maker and Fashioner became also our Kinsman, in order to share in what is ours, and this on our behalf. And as St. Gregory the Theologian emphasizes, “He humbles Himself for the sake of the soul bowed down to the earth, that He may raise up with Himself that which inclines downwards on account of sin” (Homily XXXVIII, §14, PG 36:328B).

Oh, the utmost love and compassion! He descends from Heaven in a wondrous manner, and He Who is invisible becomes visible; He Who is uncircumscribed becomes circumscribed; and He is made like unto us in all respects, “save sin,” and this, “in order to retrieve the fugitive, to deliver the captive, to show mercy on the insolent, to honour the mocker, and to raise the dead” (Archbishop Isidore of Thessalonica [fourteenth century]).

With this end in view, He accepted voluntary Suffering, “disregarding the shame” (Heb. 12:2), enduring every pain and every sorrow of both soul and body, “unto the cross and death;” for He truly suffered as man, His Divinity remaining impassible, darkening the sun and causing the earth to quake.

He descended indeed into Hades, so that He might, by His invincible strength, overthrow the tyrannical enemy, the devil, thrashing him, and ascend in triumph with His glorious “spoils,” in order to seat them “on high,” “bringing back from Hades those who were dead under Hades” (Archbishop Anthony of Larissa [fourteenth century]), namely, Adam and Eve and those believers with them.

Thus, He opened wide the Gates of Heaven, so that there might henceforth be no impediment to our dwelling on high, for this do we men on earth assuredly desire.



In order that we, too, might partake of the joy of the Resurrection, not just by the hearing of the ear, but in full awareness, it is necessary that we cherish and embrace Christ’s Suffering,

the Cross, and the Tomb. To this end, it is requisite that the inner eyes, that is, the noetic eyes of the heart, of the mind, and of the conscience, be opened by the Holy Spirit (cf. Eph. 1:18), that we might be illumined by Grace and be aware of, and yearn unto death for, the hoped-for good things of the Resurrection.

For Christ is risen from the dead, that He might raise us from the spiritual death of sin and the darkness of the passions, that He might recall and restore us from the sepulchres of our most grievous transgressions; whereas He is risen, we are also risen from our sins unto our healing.

Wherefore, brothers and sisters, let us draw nigh with faith, fear, and love to the Communion of the Body and Blood of our Risen Saviour, that we may receive remission of sins and life eternal. The radiant and sublime gifts of the Resurrection are bestowed by Divine Goodness upon those who have previously experienced the acridness of fasting, the reproach of repentance, and the fear of reproof, upon those who have forgiven from their hearts, shown mercy, endured, and kept their bodies unsullied by the filth of sin, with the power of Divine Grace, and have adorned their souls with purity, charity, and prayer; for inner purity and good order accrue to us through the constant ascent of our mind to Sweetest Jesus and through unceasing remembrance of what has been done for us by the Saviour.

Let us not forget that we have buried with Christ the hardship of abstinence, and that by turning aside from a passionate worldly outlook we have been crucified with Him, such that, through the Spirit-filled life and joy of Pascha, we might by Divine power and energy rise with Him Who arose for our sake.



Most Beloved and dearest Children in the Lord:

We belong, by Divine Grace, to the martyric Church of the Genuine Orthodox Christians, which has undergone persecution

and all manner of tribulations and buffetings, from without and from within. However, she has stood on the rock of the good Confession and is now flourishing, united and growing, leading all of us to the Kingdom that knows no evening. The strugglers who preceded us endured ill-treatment and sorrows, “rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation, continuing steadfastly in prayer” (Rom. 12:12), and they now enjoy unending bliss in Heaven. We cannot but prove ourselves their worthy successors in Orthodox Faith and virtue, offering a witness of the Cross and Resurrection in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation.

Shining with Divine light and inspired by holy enthusiasm, come let us exclaim in joy and exultation:

“Christ is risen, and we are delivered from the second and everlasting death;

Christ is risen, and the enemy is slain; . . .

Christ is risen, and the faithful are exalted; . . .

Christ is risen, and we are freed

from the gloom of the passions;

Christ is risen, and we are vouchsafed Angelic dignity; . . .

Christ is risen, and Grace dwells in both women and men; . . .

Christ is risen, and God judges the earth as the prince of this world takes to flight”! (Isidore of Thessalonica).

To Him that is risen be glory and dominion unto the ages. Amen!

Christ is Risen! Truly, He is Risen!

Holy Pascha, 2015

The Holy Synod [of the Church of the
True Orthodox Christians of Greece]

Translated at the St. Gregory Palamas Monastery, Etna, CA



Teaching on the Divine Services of the Orthodox Church

BY ARCHPRIEST ALEXANDER RUDAKOV

PUBLISHED IN 1890 IN SAINT PETERSBURG

Continuation

§ 46. The Great Doxology. After the chanting of the laudatory psalms, the Great Doxology follows. The Royal gates are opened and the priest proclaims its beginning with the exclamation, *Glory to Thee, Who hast shown us the light!* In times past, the incumbent greeted the faithful who had assembled with these words, when during the Vigil the first rays of the dawning sun were seen in the East. And, just as those rays spread abroad, the Christians in the words of the Great Doxology confessed yet once again the Divine glory of the Redeemer. The doxology begins with the words with which the Angels hymned the God-Child in Bethlehem: *Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill among men.* It largely consists of a prayerful calling upon the Lord Jesus Christ and ends with the thrice-holy song: *Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, have mercy on us.* The doxology has been used in the Church from the earliest times. It is mentioned in the Apostolic Constitutions and in a letter from Pliny the Younger to the Emperor Trajan. After it, the threefold litany is intoned, and then the supplicatory litany and the Vigil ends with a final dismissal [after the reading of the First Hour].

Differences between daily Vespers and Mattins, and those served together within the Vigil service. In daily vespers, the proemial psalm (103), *Bless the Lord, O my soul,* is not chanted but read with the Royal gates shut, and without the censuring of the whole church. After the Litany of Peace, the kathisma appointed for the day is simply read; there is usually no entrance, no Old Testament readings and no liti or artoclasia. In daily Mattins, after the initial exclamation by the priest, *Blessed is*

our God, we read Psalms 19 and 20, then follows *Holy God to Our Father*, after which the troparion and kontakion of the Cross and a theotokion are chanted. This is followed by a short litany, which in earlier times was for the Orthodox Sovereign, but now is confined to the Bishop and a petition for *all the brethren and all Christians*. Only then do we begin the Six Psalms. Also on daily Mattins there are no polyeleos, hymns of ascent, antiphons, Gospel reading or anointing with blessed oil. The doxology at the end is not chanted but read. [On certain more important feast days which fall on weekdays, there will be a polyelos and Mattins Gospel appropriate to the commemoration, and the Great Doxology will be chanted].

§ 47. The General Meaning of the Service of Mattins. In its first half, the service of Mattins, within the All-Night Vigil, manifests to us the appearance of Christ in the world, and in the second part it glorifies His Resurrection. Thus the thrice repeated verse before the Six Psalms, *Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill among men*, recalls the Angels' doxology, when they appeared to the shepherds at the time of the Saviour's birth in Bethlehem. The reading of the Six Psalms themselves in the darkened church reminds us of the Bethlehem shepherds themselves, who, at the Angel's command, journeyed to the cave through the gloom of night; it also depicts in another way the gloomy state of the souls of the faithful. The chanting of *God is the Lord and hath appeared unto us* expresses the joy, which those shepherds in Bethlehem felt in seeing the New-born Saviour. As the commemoration of the preaching ministry and redeeming death of Christ the Saviour is the main subject of the Liturgy, in Mattins we then [on Sundays] pass on to the glorification of the Resurrection of Christ. The chanting of the verses, *Praise ye the name of the Lord*, and the rest bring to our attention the glorification of the Divine mercy, which has been shown in the redemption of the race of man. The Evlogitaria of the Resurrection signify the Angels' annunciation to the Myrrh-bearing Women that the Saviour has arisen. The reading of the Gospel represents His appearance and His conversations after the Resurrection. In the

canon, through their songs, the Prophets of old from Moses until Zacharias, the father of the Forerunner, accompany the Resurrected One. In the Praises, everything that has breath and all creation is invited to glorify Him. In the Great Doxology all those present in the church glorify the Lord.

... to be continued with "The Liturgy."



THE COMING MONTH

THE DAY of Pascha falls two days before the Church month of April begins (on 30th March), and so the whole month of April falls within the forty-day festival of Pascha. During it we celebrate the paschal series of Sunday commemorations: Thomas Sunday, the Sundays of the Myrrhbearers, the Paralytic, and the Samaritan Woman, with the last Sunday in this series, that of the Blind Man, falling in May. Because of the festal period, during this time, we do not have any of the strictest fast days and on every Wednesday and Friday we are permitted wine (alcohol) and oil in our food. On Wednesday 23rd April / 6th May, which this year is both the feast of Mid-Pentecost and that of the Great Martyr George the Trophy-Bearer, we are also permitted fish.

Among the Saints celebrated this month, we have:

Our holy father Eutychius, the Patriarch of Constantinople (6th / 19th April) was born in Phrygia in about 512. He was brought up by his grandfather, the sacristan of the church of Augustopolis, as his mother had died within days of his birth. Subsequently he was sent to the Imperial City to continue his studies. Understanding the wisdom of this world to be folly, he desired to embrace the monastic life. Therefore, he resolved to dedicate himself to monastic life. St Eutychius withdrew to a monastery in Amaseia of Pontus, and received the angelic schema. For his strict

life he was eventually made archimandrite of all the monasteries in that region. At that time, the Emperor Justinian (527-65), wishing to purge the Church of all traces of the Nestorian heresy, convened a local council to condemn, even after their deaths, Theodore of Mopsuestia, Theodoretus of Cyrrhus and Ibas of Edessa. The Metropolitan of Amaseia, unable to attend this Synod because of ill health, sent Eutychius to represent him. During the Synod sessions, the devout and learned Eutychius was much appreciated by the Fathers for his profound knowledge of Holy Scripture and his ability to refute the arguments of the heretics. Recalling the example of King Josiah, who had the bones of idolaters dug up and burned (II Kings 23:16), he declared that one could anathematize the dead to protect the Church against the perverse influence of their doctrine. The holy Patriarch Menas, who had a fatherly affection for Eutychius, predicted after receiving a divine revelation that he would be his successor as Patriarch of Constantinople, and Eutychius was in fact designated by the Emperor to succeed him, to the great joy of the people. As soon as he was enthroned, this good shepherd, desirous of establishing the peace of the Church, persuaded Justinian to convene the Fifth Œcumenical Council in Constantinople in A.D. 553. At the Council of 165 Fathers, Saint Eutychius presided, and the doctrine of the four preceding Councils was confirmed and the Fathers promulgated anathemas condemning the writings of Theodore of Mopsuestia, Theodoretus of Cyrrhus and Ibas of Edessa, as well as Origen and Evagrius, whose written works, in spite of their considerable influence in elucidating the doctrine of the Church, had at that time occasioned the rise of a dangerous Origenist current. The Church was able thereafter to enjoy peace for twelve years. However, on the instigation of the evil one, certain sophists led Emperor Justinian, who was inclined to veer towards the Monophysite heresy, into the nets of the new heretical doctrine, according to which the body of Christ was impassable and incorruptible by nature, so that the Lord was unable to endure the sufferings of the Passion except by a miracle of His own will. Perceiving that this doctrine was only a form of Monophysitism, which calls into question the very Incarnation of our

Lord Jesus Christ, Saint Eutychius steadfastly opposed it, though it was supported by the Emperor and the Court theologians. For this, on 25th January, A.D. 565, as he was celebrating the Divine Liturgy, he was dragged from the sanctuary by men-at-arms and imprisoned in a monastery in Chalcedon. A tribunal of bishops, compliant to the Sovereign's will, deposed the holy hierarch and sent him into exile. After a period confined to a monastery on the island of Prinkipo in the Sea of Marmara, the Saint was returned to his own monastery in Amaseia, giving thanks to God for having been counted worthy to suffer for the cause of the Truth. At Amaseia, he was able to enjoy tranquillity, and he performed numerous miracles for the afflicted who came to ask for his prayers. After twelve years of exile, he was recalled to the Patriarchal Throne of Constantinople by the Emperor Justin II. The whole city gave him a rapturous welcome, crying out along his way: *Blessed be he that cometh in the name of the Lord!* The holy Patriarch, by his prayers, ended an epidemic which had ravaged the city for some time and, when he celebrated the Divine Liturgy in the Cathedral of the Holy Wisdom, spent six hours distributing the Holy Gifts to the faithful. During this second period of his episcopate, which lasted for a little more than four years, Saint Eutychius strengthened his Church in the true Faith and confirmed his teachings by the power of his miracles. Before his repose he predicted to the Emperor Tiberius, who had come to his bedside, that he would follow him four months later, as indeed came to pass. Saint Eutychius entered into rest in peace in A.D. 582, on Thomas Sunday, and this year, 2015, his feast day falls again on Thomas Sunday. His body was laid to rest in the Church of the Holy Apostles, beside the sacred relics of the holy Apostles Andrew, Luke and Timothy.

The **Holy Hieromartyr Januarius of Benevento** and those with him (21st April / 4th May) suffered during the reign of Diocletian. At that time Diocletian appointed Timothy, a pagan, governor of the province of Campania, and ordered him to compel all who believed in Christ to offer sacrifice to the idols. This Timothy heard of the Bishop Januarius and had him brought before

him. He ordered the saint to sacrifice to the gods in obedience to the decrees of the “invincible ruler.” When Januarius refused, he caused a furnace to be heated for three days and the saint cast into it. Januarius entered the furnace, praying to the Three Holy Children, and like them began to walk in the midst of the fire praising the All-holy Trinity. The fire did not touch either his clothes or his hair. Timothy, however, ascribed this to magic and had the saint imprisoned. While he was kept in captivity, two of his clergy, the deacon Festus and the reader Desiderius, learned of their bishop’s plight and set out for Nola, where they too were arrested. The three were bound in chains and dragged before Timothy’s chariot to the city of Pozzuoli, where, along with Sosius, Proculus, Eutyches and Acutius, other Christians suffering persecution, they were delivered up to wild beasts. However, the beasts became as lambs before the confessors and would not harm them. Exasperated, the judge ordered them to be beheaded. That he might be brought to repentance, St Januarius prayed that Timothy might be blinded, and this immediately came to pass. Penitent at last, he began to cry out in repentance, and through the prayers of the saint his sight was restored. Many of the multitude, almost five thousand, seeing the wonderful things which the Lord wrought through Januarius His martyr, believed in the Lord Jesus Christ. Then Timothy, seeing such a crowd turned toward the Lord, was troubled and (lest the servant of the Lord Jesus Christ might be deprived of his crown) fearing the commands of the Emperor, changed yet again and ordered soldiers to behead the saintly Bishop with the holy martyrs. The saints were then perfected in martyrdom by beheading. The cruel Timothy began to suffer very much at that same time and thereafter died in great affliction. Afterwards when peace was restored to the Church, venerable bishops, together with all the relatives of St. Januarius and with the clergy, taking his body brought it amidst hymns and canticles to Naples and deposited it in the basilica where it now rests.



NEWS from the communities in England of the Church of the True Orthodox Christians of Greece

BISHOP SOFRONIE'S VISIT

HIS GRACE, **Bishop Sofronie of Suceava** paid a lenten visit to the Traditionalist Orthodox Romanian flock in England over the weekend of the Sunday of the Holy Cross. On Saturday, 1st/14th March, he served an Unction service at the Convent, and spent a large part of the day there hearing confessions. On the Sunday itself, he celebrated the Divine Liturgy at St Edward's assisted by **Fr Oeconomos Stephen Fretwell, Fr Borislav Popov and Hierodeacon Sabbas**, aided by a strong choir of the Romanian faithful. For this service the church was packed, and after the Liturgy His Grace heard more confessions and blessed the cars of several of his parishioners, before returning to London.

MEMORIAL SERVICE AND PRAYERS FOR THE NEW-BORN

THE BROTHERHOOD CLERGY served a memorial service for **Demetrios Lemos** at his grave in **Hendon Cemetery**, North London, on Monday, 3rd / 16th March. They then went on to Stanmore, to the home of **Alexandru and Tatiana Petrea**, where they read the first and eighth day prayers for their newborn son, who was named **Simeon**, after the Righteous Simeon the God-receiver (feast day: 3rd / 16th February).

BAPTISM AT BROOKWOOD

THE TWIN SONS of **André** and **Tatiana Henderson-Stewart, Nicolas** and **Alexander**, were baptized and christened at St Edward's Church on Saturday, 1st / 14th March, the feast day of the **Venerable Martyr Eudocia the Samaritan** and **Saint David of Wales**. Nicolas, named after the **Tsar-Martyr**, was sponsored by **David Henderson-Stewart** and **Xenia Sekatcheva**, and Alexander, named for **St Alexander Nevsky**, by **Nicolas Henderson-Stewart** and **Elizabeth Fagerlund**. The newly-illumined Orthodox Christians received the Divine Mysteries for the first time the next day at the Liturgy at the **Convent of the Annunciation** in London, which is near their home. The family provided a very generous meal in the Old Mortuary for those who attended the Mysterion, and bearing in mind that we were in the lenten period very wisely contracted a caterer who specialised in Lebanese cuisine and was thus more able to provide fasting foods. The provision was so generous that, of the left-overs, some were consumed by the Brotherhood for meals afterwards, some were added to our parishioners' Sunday buffet breakfast, and, after that, some the hens enjoyed.

SPECIAL THANKS

OUR SPECIAL THANKS are due to **Fr Gabriel Lawani** and his **Presbytera Helena**, who journeyed down from Manchester so that Fr Gabriel might twice serve at the **Convent of the Annunciation in Willesden** on Sundays when Fr Alexis was unable to drive because of the treatments to his eye. Not only did this mean they had to leave their own parishioners, but they had to stay overnight in London. With the increased numbers of people we have now, and with our shortage of clergy, this was an immense help to both **Mother Vikentia** and her sisters and to our own community at Brookwood, allowing services to continue in both places without interruption.

APPOINTMENTS

MRS ELENA HOLDEN has been appointed by the directors of the **King Edward Orthodox Trust Co Ltd**, the charity which administers our property here, to be the **coordinator of our Child and Vulnerable Persons' Protection Policy**. If you witness any child or vulnerable person physically or sexually abused while on our premises, please report the matter immediately to Fr Alexis or to Elena with as many details as possible, so that the matter can be dealt with. If any serious cases should arise, the matter will be referred to the police or the social services.

WITH the blessing of **His Grace, Bishop Ambrose**, we have appointed **Mihai Visanu** as the coordinator of the Romanian Traditionalist community here. As they have no priest, and our clergy do not speak Romanian, it was felt that someone should be in charge of liaising with visiting clergy, making sure all parties are fully informed of events, and proper permissions and blessings granted. Mihai will be aided in this work by **Ecaterina Rogojina**.

FILM ABOUT SAINT EDWARD

BACK in the Winter, just after Theophany, a Russian, **Elina (Baptismal name Maria) Malyutina**, who was visiting England from Moscow, and staying in the Midlands, asked to come to visit Saint Edward's Church, because her father is named Eduard. She then made a short film about St Edward, which begins with Fr Niphon showing her the icon with the life of St Edward and explaining the scenes. Then in Russian, Maria tells the life of the martyr and the history of his sacred relics, accompanying her talk with many illustrations. Within a day or two of her posting this short film on the internet, 550 people had watched it. It is now available on **You-tube**: <<http://youtu.be/PG1uMAjb39E>> We thank Maria for her good efforts. May God bless her through the prayers of His saint, our heavenly intercessor.

TALK AT ASCOT

AT THE INVITATION of the **Reverend Patrick Gilday**, curate and deacon in the Church of England **Parish of All Saints, Ascot**, Father Alexis gave a talk to their parishioners on Monday, 2nd March. The evening was introduced by Fr Patrick, and the Rector of the parish, **Fr Darrell Hannah**, was also present. The talk was scheduled to begin at 8 p.m. and end before 9.30. As he is not very accomplished in these things, Fr Alexis invited questions, and in the event did not leave until 10.20. One hopes that this was of some benefit to some of those present.

GIFT FROM CHERTSEY MUSEUM

WE have received a small but significant gift from **Chertsey Museum**, a postcard photograph of a re-enactment of the martyrdom of the Chertsey monks by the Danes. The original photograph was taken in 1934 at a pageant held in the Abbey grounds.

VISITORS

FR CHRISTODOULOS CHRISTODOULOU of the St Nectarios Church in Battersea, London (Æc. Patr.) visited St Edward's Cemetery on Saturday, 28th February, to chant a memorial service at the grave of Artemi Marutin. He was accompanied by a Romanian deacon, and after their prayers at the grave, they were shown the church and, with other mourners, had a Mercy Meal in Artemi's memory in the hall of the Old Mortuary.



PRACTICAL TIP

THIS IS SOMETHING which, perhaps, has to be said every year. Do not waste the struggles of Great Lent. Many quite conscientious Orthodox Christians do make a real effort to keep the fast in the fullest sense, but come Pascha night seem to simply let go. After Pascha, church attendance drops and people seem to take a holiday from God. This, of course, is not beneficial. Naturally we break the fast, our religious observance is a little less intense, but it should not be abandoned altogether. Our politicians are renowned for Stop-Go tactics, but they should not be part and parcel of an Orthodox Christian observance. Rather we should use each fasting period throughout life as a step on a ladder. You can rest on each step a little, but should be careful not to drop off!



THE ANGEL said to Tobias, *grab the fish's gill and draw him to you* (Tobit 6:4). The Lord grabbed the devil and through His own dying took and vanquished the very one that had wanted to take Him in death. Now He grabbed his gill so that He might cut off that most vile head from the trapped body with the right hand of His power; that is, so that the loving Redeemer might both sever the ancient enemy's wickedness from the heart of those whom he had wickedly united to himself - and had made as though they were one body with him - and ingraft these into the body of His own Church. For a fish has its gill where its head and body meet. Now just as our Lord is the Head of the Church, and the Church is truly His body, so too is the devil the head of all the wicked and they are his body, his members. So the Lord grabbed that monstrous fish's gill, drew it to Himself, and threw it upon the shore because, in shattering the devil's power, He openly delivered and confidently uprooted those whom He foreknew to be sons of light from the power of darkness.

VENERABLE BEDE OF JARROW, + 735 A.D.