

Scripture Readings

EPISTLE I Corinthians 4:9-16 Brethren, God has exhibited us apostles as last of all, like men sentenced to death; because we have become a spectacle to the world, to angels and to men. We are fools for Christ's sake, but you are wise in Christ. We are weak, but you are strong. You are held in honor, but we in disrepute. To the present hour we hunger and thirst, we are ill-clad and buffeted and homeless, and we labor, working with our own hands. When reviled, we bless; when persecuted, we endure; when slandered, we try to conciliate; we have become, and are now, as the refuse of the world, the off-scouring of all things. I do not write this to make you ashamed, but to admonish you as my beloved children. For though you have countless guides in Christ, you do not have many fathers. For I became your father in Christ Jesus through the gospel. I urge you, then, be imitators of me.

GOSPEL Matthew 9:36, 10:1-8 At that time, when Jesus saw the crowds, He had compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. And He called to him his twelve disciples and gave them authority over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal every disease and every infirmity. The names of the twelve apostles are these: first, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother; James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother; Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew the tax collector; James the son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus; Simon the Cananaean. and Judas Iscariot, who betrayed him. These twelve Jesus sent out, charging them, "Go nowhere among the Gentiles, and enter no town of the Samaritans, but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. And preach as you go, saying, 'The kingdom of heaven is at hand.' Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse lepers, cast out demons. You received without paying, give without pay."



Gospel Reflection: We, Like the Apostles, Are Sent



Today the Holy Church commemorates the Synaxis of the Twelve Holy Apostles — the foundation stones of the Christian church to whom the Lord Jesus entrusted the continued work of His own ministry. "Apostle" is one of the most often used words in the lexicology of Orthodoxy, yet we often use it unmindful of its meaning and significance. From the Greek *apostolos*, the term originates from the word *apostelein*, meaning "sent forth." The Apostles were those who were sent. They had a mission, a calling, and a purpose. In the Gospel of John, Chapter 17, after the Resurrection, Jesus says to His Father that the Father has sent Him into the world and He now sends the Apostles. This biblical language of "being sent" is critical in understanding Jesus and therefore in understanding ourselves as "sent." The four "marks" of the Church underscore the nature of Church. The Church is one in Jesus and holy in Jesus. It is catholic in Jesus and it is sent in mission by Him — apostolic. We understand that from the Father's heart, the *kolpos tou patros*, the bosom of the Father as St. John writes, our discipleship acquires purpose, meaning, and truth. The

Twelve become the solid foundation not only of our faith but of our mission. Their lives, the personal experience of Jesus, their faith, however much it may fail or fumble — all of this become normative for our belief. We are grounded in it, established in it and therefore have an intimate connection with the Twelve. The Holy Apostles are at the pinnacle of "the great cloud of witnesses" of which the author to the Epistle to the Hebrews writes. Why? Because they are the ones Jesus sent. Their purpose was to sew the seed of faith and to witness the life and preaching of the Logos Himself whom the Father sent into our time and space. The Apostles were not only guardians of what had been delivered to them by the Lord, their mission was to hand it on, to share it, to break it open for others in whatever place they find themselves. And so it is with us. We are sent by virtue of our Holy Baptism. We do not have a "religion", we live a faith in a personal God who "for us and for our salvation, became man." Our focus and purpose is not to keep an institution going but to preach the Good News by example and by word. The more we realize "the sent nature" of our Orthodox Christian faith and take that seriously, the closer we move towards God and the more our lives will have a greater sense of genuine purpose.



The Deposition of the Robe of the Most Holy Theotokos (July 2)

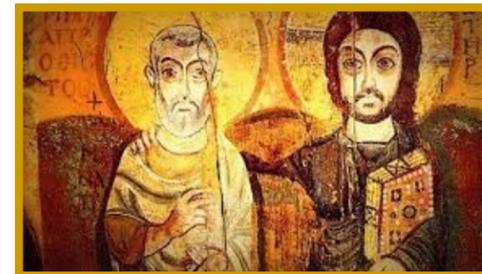
During the reign of Leo the Great (457-474) two patricians and brethren on a pilgrimage to the Holy Land lodged with an old widow, a Christian of Jewish descent. Seeing the many miracles wrought at a small shrine in her house, they pressed her until she revealed to them that she had raiment of the most holy Theotokos kept in a small coffer. Our Lady had had two virgins in her lifetime who attended upon her; before her holy dormition, she gave each of them one of her divine garments as a blessing. This old widow was of the family of one of those two virgins, and it had come through the generations into her hands. With the permission of God, that this holy relic might be had for the profit of many, the two men took the garment by stealth and brought it to Blachernae near Constantinople, and building a church in honor of the Apostles Peter and Mark, they secretly enshrined the garment therein. But here again, because of the multitude of miracles that were worked, it became known to the Emperor Leo, and a magnificent church was built, as some say, by that same Leo, but according to others, by his predecessors Marcian and Pulcheria, and enlarged by Leo when the holy raiment was found. The Emperor Justin the Younger completed the church, which the Emperor Romanus IV Diogenes raised up immediately again after it had burned in 1070. It burned again in 1434, and from that time it remained a small house of prayer together with the renowned holy spring. After the seventh century, the name Blachernae was given to other churches and monasteries by their pious founders out of reverence for this famous church in Constantinople. In this church John Catacuzene was crowned in 1345; also, the Council against Acindynus, the follower of Barlaam, was convoked here (see the Second Sunday of the Great Fast)."

Apolytikion of the Feast

O Ever-Virgin Theotokos, shelter of mankind, thou hast bestowed upon thy people a mighty investure, even thine immaculate body's raiment and sash, which by thy seedless childbirth have remained incorrupt; for in thee nature and time are made new. Wherefore, we implore thee to grant peace to the world, and great mercy to our souls.

40-Day Blessing

Loukas Peter, son of Ona and Aris Pappas
May God grant him many years of blessings!



"Even those who have renounced Christianity and attack it, in their inmost being still follow the Christian ideal, for hitherto neither their subtlety nor the ardor of their hearts has been able to create a higher ideal of man and of virtue than the ideal given by Christ."

(Fyodor Dostoyevsky)



Save, Have Mercy On, and Protect...

His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros, His Eminence Metropolitan +Panteleimon; His Eminence Archbishop +Pavlos of Aleppo and His Eminence Mar +Gregorios Ioanna of Aleppo, who were kidnapped; Metropolitan +Kallistos of Diokleia, Holly Dubois, Alexander Falsken, Andrea Katson, Steve Stathes, the child of God William George, Anatoly Seraphim, Jessica, Amanda Lawrence, Ourania Mantzouranis, Maria Kritzas, Cathy, Janie Pappas, Eleni Gourmani, Angela Apidououlos, the child of God Amelia Marghi, the child of God Seraphina Marie Vasilatos, Adib Marghi, Betty Jean Dubard, Nicholas Ellis, Katherine Ellis, Kelly, Jon Wood, Tom Dale, Bill Pastis, Evangelia Pantazakos, George Dizelos, Constantina Speris;

Unseen Warfare
as edited by
Nicodemus
of the
Holy Mountain
and revised by
Theophan the Recluse

SPRING 2019 BOOK STUDY: The Spring Book Study is held on Thursdays, at 10:30 AM and 7:00 PM. The text will be the spiritual classic *Unseen Warfare*, edited by St. Nicodemus of the Holy Mountain and St. Theodore the Recluse. It describes the challenges of the spiritual struggles within each of us and provides real solutions. A perfect complement to the *Philokalia*, St. Theophan writes in the forward: "the arena, the field of battle, the site where the fight actually takes place is our own heart and all our inner man. The time of battle is our whole life." Join us for this unique spiritual journey. All are welcome! **NO BOOK STUDY ON JULY 4**



Prayer for Independence Day

Father of Creation, Lord of the nations, in your hands are all the people of this world: the prideful, the needy, the arrogant, the lost, the high, the lowly, the entitled, the dispossessed, the loved and the unloved, the blessed and the not so blessed, and even we too, seeking your comfort, seeking your aid in tumultuous times. We give you thanks for the blessings of freedom. May we learn to use our freedoms in service to others. We give you thanks for the blessing of justice - may it be applied with equality and with mercy. May our own actions - and the actions of our nation - cause good things to happen to all people. Preserve the religious freedom of your Church. May nothing impede her in the preaching and living of your Gospel. Come to the aid of nations and leaders who need your guidance. Come

to the aid of those standing in harm's way. Make us mindful of the sacrifices of our military and their families. Make us mindful of ways that we can support them in their service. Strengthen us in faith and calm the fears within us. God of all who are in need, heed our call and answer our prayer. Send peace in our time, peace for our hearts, peace for our land, peace for all the world, peace that abides as we abide in you. Bless this republic in your compassion. For you are God alone, blessed above all others, from whom comes the only peace that endures unto ages of ages. Amen.

The Icon of the Most Holy Theotokos "Tikhvin"

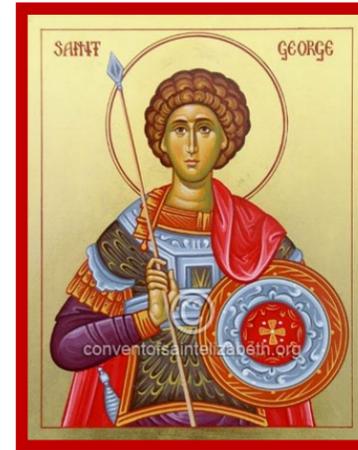
June 26



According to one tradition, this icon was painted by Saint Luke the Evangelist. It was formerly situated in the famous Church of Blachernae in Constantinople. In 1383, it appeared upon the waters of Lake Ladoga, whence it travelled miraculously through the air to the city of Tikhvin; there, it remained by the River Tikhvinka, and a monastery was built to shelter the icon. In 1613-14 this monastery miraculously withstood the many attacks of the Swedish invaders. In the early twentieth century it was brought to America and was returned to Russia in 2004. The holy icon is renowned for a great many miracles wrought through it by the all-holy Mother of God, especially for the healing of children.

Kontakion of the Feast

Let us run, O ye peoples, to the Virgin Queen, the Theotokos, thanking Christ our God; and gazing tenderly at her miraculous icon, let us fall down and cry to her: O Lady Mary, having visited this land by the wondrous appearance of thy venerable icon, keep all Christians in peace and prosperity, and make them heirs of the heavenly life; for to thee we cry with faith: Rejoice, O Virgin, salvation of the world.

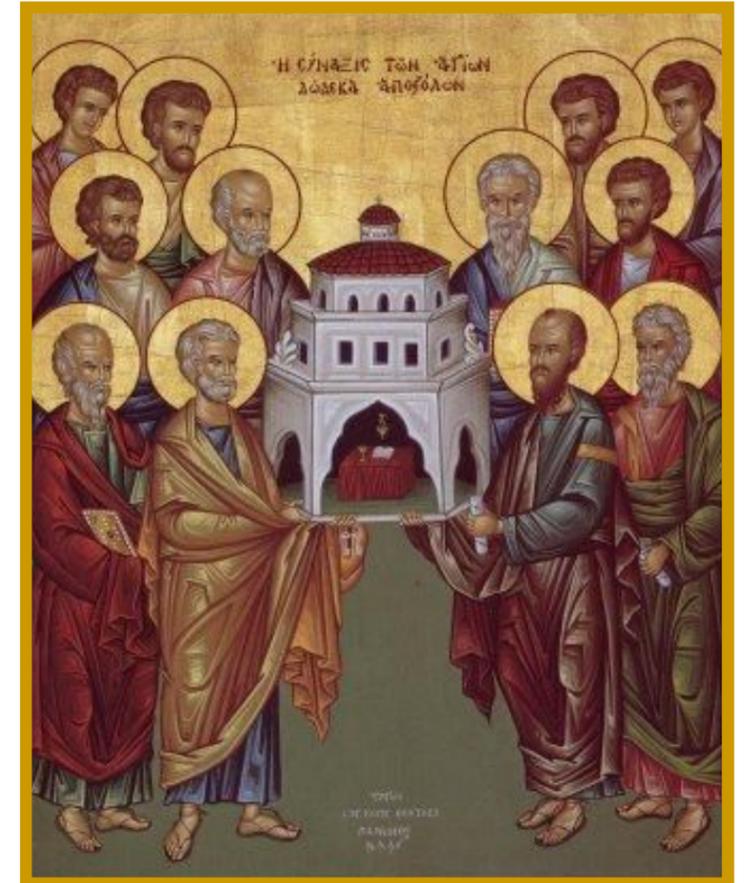


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THE SYNAXIS of THE HOLY APOSTLES

June 30, 2019

Resurrectional Apolytikion . Tone 1

Though the stone of Thy Tomb was sealed by the Judeans, and while the soldiers were guarding Thy sacred body, O Saviour, Thou didst rise granting to the world the gift of life. Wherefore Thou O giver of Life, the Hosts of heaven did laud Thee. Glory to Thy Resurrection O Christ; Glory to Thy Kingdom; Glory to Thy Providence; Thou alone art friend of man.

Apolytikion of St. George

O Trophy-Bearer, Great Martyr George, who freed captives, supported the poor, healed the sick, was a champion of kings, intercede with Christ God that our souls be saved!

Ἀπολυτίκιον

Ὡς τῶν αἰχμαλώτων ἐλευθερωτῆς, καὶ τῶν πτωχῶν ὑπερασπιστῆς,
ἀσθενούντων ἰατρός, βασιλέων ὑπέρμαχος,
Τροπαιοφόρε Μεγαλομάρτυρ Γεώργιε, πρέσβευε Χριστῷ τῷ Θεῷ, σωθῆναι
τὰς ψυχὰς ἡμῶν.