

# SOBORNOST

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*American Carpatho-Russian Orthodox Diocese*

*ECUMENICAL PATRIARCHATE  
OF CONSTANTINOPLE*

## SERVICES

**Wednesday: Lay Vespers 6:30 PM**

**Saturday: Confession 4:30 PM**

**Great Vespers 5:00 PM**

**Sunday: Matins (Orthros) 8:45 AM**

**Sunday School 9:30 | Divine Liturgy 10:00 AM**

**September 25, 2022 – 15<sup>th</sup> Sunday After Pentecost**

### **St. Euphrosyne of Alexandria**

By Protopresbyter Fr. George Papavarnavas

The life of Saint Euphrosyne is admirable and her way of life uncommon. She is a model of spiritual bravery, purity and chastity. Born in Alexandria in the fifth century, she was an only daughter and very rich. Material wealth, fortunately, did not manage to harden her soul to become selfish and stingy, as it most often happens, but she remained benevolent and merciful. Her parents loved God and loved people, and they managed to give her true wealth of the heart, namely, to inspire love for God and for people.

At the age of twelve she was orphaned of a mother and her father showed greater zeal and diligence towards her upbringing. When she turned eighteen he wanted to marry her to a young man of high social status. But Euphrosyne chose the path of virginity in Christ and her decision was firm and irreversible. For this reason one day she divided her belongings among the poor and left secretly, to avoid her father discovering her and obligating her to return to the world and marry against her will. She changed her clothing and dwelled in a male monastery, changing her name also to Smaragdus. She lived in a male monastery for thirty-eight whole years without anyone knowing her secret.



In asceticism and virtue she far surpassed her fellow monastics, with the result that everyone marveled at the divine way of life of Smaragdus, and many struggled to emulate "him". Saint Nikodemos the Hagiorite admired her angelic way of life, writing: "It was given to her to shine among the men by her virtues, like a precious emerald (*smaragdos*) gemstone among other stones. Blessed Euphrosyne appeared like an emerald (*smaragdos*)."

Often parents, perhaps due to too much love, which is certainly not entirely free of selfishness, insist to impose upon their children their own decisions, in order to be benefited by their children. The legitimate reaction of children, which is sometimes dynamic and contains elements of exaggeration, creates family conflicts with societal implications. True love is linked with freedom, and vice versa. As is often said by His Eminence Metropolitan Hierotheos and is written in his books, love without freedom is a dictatorship and freedom without true love is anarchy.

Saint Euphrosyne never stopped truly loving her father and praying for him. When he realized the end of earthly life was near he asked her to meet him. In the meantime he had become a monk in the same monastery without it passing through his mind that he would meet his daughter there. During this meeting he learned her secret and her real name. It is worth noting that Paphnutios, her father, is also a Saint and that both father and daughter celebrate their feast on the same day.

Inside the male monastery she made a superhuman struggle to live according to Christ. She had to continuously impersonate, but also took great pains to not be outdone in asceticism and spiritual performance by her fellow monastics. And truly, as the sacred hymnographer says, she rejected the weaknesses of a female and became manly, that is, she had a manly mindset. In this way she overcame the difficulties to defeat the various temptations and live with "imcorruptible purity and chastity, which is acquired by corruptible people with toil and sweat" (St. John of Sinai).

Indeed, purity and chastity is acquired with much toil and sweat. Saint John of Sinai, in his wonderful book called "The Ladder", devotes one chapter (15) to purity and chastity, where he writes among other things:

- 1. Purity means that we put on the angelic nature. Purity is the longed-for house of Christ and the earthly heaven of the heart. Purity is a supernatural denial of nature, which means that a mortal and corruptible body is rivaling the celestial spirits in a truly marvelous way.*
- 2. He is pure who expels love with love and who has extinguished the material fire by the immaterial fire.*
- 3. Chastity is the name which is common to all the virtues.*

4. *He is chaste who even during sleep feels no movement or change of any kind in his constitution.*

5. *He is chaste who has continually acquired perfect insensibility to difference in bodies.*

6. *The rule and limit of absolute and perfect purity is to be equally disposed towards animate and inanimate bodies, rational and irrational.*

Saint Euphrosyne reminds us, among other things, that if one desires and truly wants to live according to Christ, there is nothing in the world that can deter them. Surely you will encounter temptations and difficulties will come, perhaps faced by people and situations, but if one truly loves the spiritual life, they will be patient and reach their goal, because love "always hopes, always perseveres", and it devises incredible ways to express itself.

For one to live with purity and chastity one must perform great labors and shed much sweat. By their bright example the Saints assure us that this life, despite its difficulties, is lovely. And it hides such joys that it is impossible for the "natural man" to even imagine. (*from johnsanidopoulos.com*)

### **Today's Epistle Lesson – St. Paul's Second Letter to the Corinthians 4:6-15 EOB**

Brethren, it is God who said, "Light will shine out of darkness," and he has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. However, we have this treasure in vessels of clay, so that the amazing power may be from God and not from ourselves. We are pressed on every side, yet [we are] not crushed! We are perplexed, but not to [the point of] despair. We are persecuted yet not forsaken; struck down, yet not destroyed; and we always carry in our bodies the death of the Lord Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be revealed in our body. Indeed, we who live are always delivered to death for Jesus' sake, so that the life of Jesus may be revealed in our mortal flesh. And so, death is at work in us, but life in you. Still, we have the same spirit of faith, according to what is written, "I believed, and therefore I spoke." We believe, and therefore we also speak; knowing that he who raised the Lord Jesus will also raise us with Jesus, and bring us with you into his presence. All these things are for your benefit, so that as grace is extended to many, this may also cause thanksgiving to be multiplied to the glory of God.

### **Today's Gospel Lesson – Saint Luke 5:1-11 EOB**

At that time, it happened that, while the multitude pressed on Jesus and heard the word of God, he was standing by the lake of Gennesaret. He saw two boats standing by the lake, but the fishermen had gone out of them and they were washing their nets. Jesus entered into one of the boats, which was Simon's, and

asked him to put out a little from the land. He sat down and taught the multitudes from the boat. When he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, "Put out into the deep, and let down your nets for a catch." Simon answered him, "Master, we worked all night and took nothing! But at your word, I will let down the net." When they had done this, they caught a great multitude of fish, and their net was breaking. They beckoned to their partners in the other boat to come and help them. They came and filled both boats, so [much] that they began to sink. But when Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, Lord!" He and all who were with him were amazed at their catch of fish; and so also were James and John, sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon. Jesus said to Simon, "Do not be afraid! From now on, you will be catching people alive." When they had brought their boats to shore, they left everything and followed him.

## A Word From the Holy Fathers

Whatever you sow in cultivated ground, you reap the same. If you plant fruit trees, or sow wheat, barley or some other useful crop, the earth brings them forth and they grow and are fruitful. But if the land is left untilled and unsown, it sprouts useless plants, mostly the thorns and thistles mentioned in the curse pronounced against us (Gen. 3:18). Even if a tree happens to grow, it will most probably have no fruit, be useless and full of thorns. It is the same with the soul. Whatever attitudes you instill in it, you will receive the same back. If you keep company with good people, listen to spiritual teaching and follow it, putting its precepts into practice, your soul cultivates virtues and becomes useful to God, to others, and to yourself. But if you delight in bad company and do not heed spiritual teaching, or even regard it as trivial, your soul turns wild and out of control, sprouts evil passions, and yields the stings and thorns of its own and the body's death, namely, sins.

2. In the beginning, as you all know, the serpent which originated evil stung man through sin, made him mortal, threw him out of paradise and brought him into this fleeting, painful world. Now, unless we hasten through repentance to heal the wounds he has inflicted, he will dispatch us to everlasting punishment and hell-fire. Just as savage animals and reptiles lurk in wild woods and thorny thickets, so this evil dragon, the great universal beast, dwells, according to Job, under the various trees of pleasure (Job 40:21 Lxx), and, he says, destruction runs in front of him (Job 41: 14 Lxx). Because I long for you all to be out of reach of this destruction, and would do anything to achieve this, I labor for your sake with words and spiritual teaching, brethren, on a daily basis for those who approach me privately, and also publicly for everyone in church, as the opportunity arises. This

instruction cuts down evil's trees, forces open sin's depths, blunts the goads of wickedness, triumphs over the dragon – the source of iniquity – shows up the straight path, and bestows saving knowledge.

3. Christ's Church, especially here in this great city (*Thessalonica – ed.*), includes not only persons who are simple and lacking in formal education, but also people who are wise and cultivated, both by nature and through the study of secular disciplines and the teachings of the Church. For that reason I do not for the most part make my homilies too basic. I prefer to help those who are lower to rise, rather than to bring down those who are higher on their account. Anyone, even if he is unlearned, who pays careful attention to my teaching, will not be wholly unaware of what I am saying. That portion, however small, which he can understand and take hold of and put into practice, will chase away every evil from his soul and strengthen, fill, and save the heart which accepts it. My instruction is derived from divinely inspired Scripture which resembles that stone which, as Daniel tells us, was very small when it came from the mountain, but it smote the image of transitory power, broke it to pieces and destroyed it, and expanded to fill the whole earth (cf. Dan. 2:34-35). Not only should the simple and less cultivated listen attentively to what I am going to say, but particularly the wise. Even if my address makes some allowances for the unread, the wisdom it contains is far from lowly, and the benefits it offers far from obscure. I shall teach you about evil passions and about virtues, revealing their two distinct roots, that you may cut off the former and cherish the latter.

4. Whereas love for God is the source and starting point of every virtue, love for the world is the cause of all evil. For that reason these two loves are at enmity with each another and destroy each other. As the Lord's brother declares: "Friendship of the world is enmity to God. Whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God" (Jas. 4:4). And John, whom Christ loved, says, "If any man loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the pride of life, is not of the Father" (cf. 1 John 2:15-16). Let us take heed, brethren, lest by loving evil desires and being arrogant to one another, we fall away from our heavenly Father's love. For these two evils include every passion which separates us from God.

5. The foundation, origin and cause of these two opposing roots, love for God and love for the world, is another pair of implacably opposed loves. Love for the world springs from love for the body, since we love the world because of our body's well-being. On the other hand, love for God comes from love for our spirit, our soul, for we love God on account of the comfort and good fortune our souls will have in the world to come. The great Paul bears witness to the fact that these two

attitudes are at enmity with each other by saying, “The flesh lusts against the Spirit”, meaning the soul, “and the Spirit against the flesh” (Gal. 5: 17).

6. How does love for our own soul engender love for God? We are threatened with the unquenchable fire of hell and promised God’s eternal kingdom. This everlasting kingdom is for those who listen to God’s commandments and act upon them, whereas hell-fire is for those who by their actions disobey Christ’s Gospel. When true believers, who love their souls and desire to keep them for eternal life, hear these threats and promises, they immediately conceive longing and fear, fear of the unending pain in the threatened fire of hell, and longing for the promised kingdom of God with its eternal joy.

7. Because they yearn to attain to divine, unfading delight and are afraid of suffering in that fire, they break their ties with everything passionate, blameworthy and earthly, and strive to cleave to God through intense prayer, knowing for sure that He alone has power and authority to deliver them from the agony of hell, and make them worthy of that eternal joy which passes understanding. In this way they acquire love for God, and as they become more perfectly united with God through this love, they gain all the virtues as well. When God is at work in us, every kind of virtue becomes our own, but when He is not, everything we do is sin. As the Lord says in the Gospel, “Without me you can do nothing” (John 15:5). Those who truly act virtuously are aware of this, and do not pride themselves on any of their achievements, but humbly glorify God, the Fount of virtues, by Whom they are filled with the light that bestows goodness. When the air is full of sunlight, the glory and radiance it displays are not its own but the sun’s. So those who are united with God through fulfilling His commandments are, according to Paul, the sweet savor of Christ (cf. 2 Cor. 2:15). They have Christ’s fragrance, and proclaim the virtues of Him Who called them “out of darkness into His marvelous light” (1 Pet. 2:9).

8. Through spiritual instruction, knowledge of things to come is instilled in us, and a right love for our soul engenders in us, who believe, fear and longing for these future realities. This fear and longing results in turn in sincere, unceasing prayer and supplication to God. Then this continuous prayer brings love for Him and union with Him, through which every virtue is born, accompanied by humility, because we are aware of Who has brought about these virtues within us. But how is it that loving our body gives rise to love for the world, which then produces evil passions and a multitude, of sins? Just as our soul naturally longs for the lasting enjoyment to come, so our body yearns for the fleeting pleasure of the present. Such delight is sensual, works through our senses, and comes from visible, tangible things, that is, the world. Whoever is a friend of his body is a friend of the world. When, as a result of this love for the body, we have an excessive desire for worldly

pleasures, pursue them and cultivate them, we wrap ourselves in all the different kinds of ugliness of the passions. As earthly enjoyment works through the senses, and our senses are many and diverse, sensual pleasures and passions too are of great number and variety. Some act through our sight, others through our hearing, others again through our senses of smell, touch and taste.

9. It is not food that is to blame for those passions associated with taste, but food to excess, which is self-indulgence. These passions are gluttony, eating delicacies, drinking too much, and drunkenness. When the stomach receives immoderate amounts of food, it passes it through the digestive system in great quantities, and by so doing provides abundant fuel for evil's fire. Having received loathsome things, it yields disgusting torrents, by means of which the lower passions come into being: fornication, adultery, immorality, licentiousness, and bodily impurity in all its forms. These passions enslave our hearing, sight and sense of smell, and make us long for what is filthy: foul talk, immoral songs, satanic dances, perfumes which encourage defilement, disgusting cosmetics, and self-adornment with extravagant clothes and hairstyles. People in the grip of such passions beautify themselves outwardly, but inwardly they wear the ugly mask of dishonorable vices. They really are like the "whited sepulchers", which appear outwardly beautiful, but within are full of stench and all uncleanness (Matt. 23:27). Once our senses have been subjected to evil from within and without, from far and near, they attract filth, and deadly sin goes in and out through these natural windows of ours. "Those things which proceed out of the mouth", it says, "they defile a man" (Matt. 15: 18), and "Whoever looks on a woman to lust after her has committed adultery with her already in his heart" (Matt. 5:28).

10. This sort of body-loving soul, which pursues pleasurable sensations by every means and gathers material from all over to delight the touch, the taste, and the other senses, begets acquisitiveness and love of money, which give rise to theft, extortion and every form of greed. In addition to these evils, there is another all-embracing means of perception within us apart from the bodily senses, imagination, which produces other pleasures and passions in those who love the world, such as conceit, self-esteem and arrogance. Further complex passions are formed from a mixture of sensual perceptions and imagination. These are the desire to please people, vanity and pride.

11. The soul's delight that originates from God and things divine is pure, free from passion, and unmixed with suffering. By contrast, this world offers enjoyment naturally accompanied by pain, not just on account of all sorts of changes and alterations, but because it gives each person a tiny part, and deprives him of the rest. There is only one world, and it is divided among innumerable millions of people, each of whom desires and strives to possess it all, and have it in his power.

If someone is enamored of the world and desires the whole of it, whether he has almost all of it, or just a small share, though still more than someone else, he himself sorrows of what he lacks, and causes distress to the person with less, because of his wealth. When, however, spiritual and divine enjoyment and bliss are shared out, without suffering any division, even if one person receives everything, no one else suffers any loss. Each of us has the Faith in its entirety, but instead of causing offense to our neighbor's piety, our faith assists his in many different ways.

12. As I was saying, this world yields pleasure accompanied by pain. Our body accepts the pleasure but refuses the pain, so the world is at the same time both kindly and vicious towards it. Those who are held fast by love for their body are unaware that the world by its very nature is a source of suffering as well as delight. They cannot grasp that the world they dote upon should be utterly shunned, and when they are discontented with the grief inherent in the world, being ignorant, like people fighting in the dark, of the cause of their misfortune, they blame one another each time difficulties arise. Hence, another unpleasant string of passions is invented by the wretched human race, giving rise to abusiveness, slander, false accusations, anger, hatred, strife, envy, and all kinds of bitterness filled with malicious desires. Because of such evils there are wars and murders all over the world, especially in our generation, because love has grown cold and sin has abounded (cf. Matt. 24:12).

13. Let us continue in oneness of mind, bound together by peace one towards the other, and abstaining from that rage which delivers bodies and souls unto destruction. I beseech you brethren, if anyone has a complaint against another, let us forgive one another as Christ forgave us, that we may be always peaceful, not only in God's churches but at home and in the market place, and with one mind and one mouth glorify our Father in heaven. Apart from this evil catalog of deadly passions associated with pleasure and pain, there are others, which are neither painless nor pleasant, but have their [origin] in a coming together of opposites. They include sarcasm, flattery, deceit and hypocrisy.

14. Do you see how subtly misleading and treacherous this world is, with how many evils it encompasses us, and by how many means it separates us from God? It makes us subject to countless passions and removes us in a variety of ways from Him Who is above all passion. That is why the Lord Himself said, "The whole world lies in wickedness" (cf. 1 John 5: 19), and called the devil the prince of this world (John 12:31), because he is the ruler of the darkness of this age. Do not imagine that the evil one holds sway over heaven and earth and all Creation in between, and is given the name of prince of this world on that account – perish the thought! This is not the world that lies in wickedness. Only He Who has measured



heaven with a span, according to the Prophet, and held the earth in a measure (cf. Isa. 40: 12), is the Creator of all. However, the misuse of Creation, the impassioned abuse of our free Will, the world of unrighteousness, evil desire and pride, as the beloved disciple of Christ says, are not of the Father (cf. 1 John 2: 16). This is the world that is subject to wickedness, because of our misuse and mismanagement. It is over this world that Satan rules, over the many passions we have listed, which are brought about by our sin-loving will with the evil one's cooperation, and unless we free ourselves from this evil inclination, we shall make him our own absolute master.

15. We who are in Christ's ranks should long for the world above. Let our desire be directed towards the kingdom He promised us. Let us shun enjoyments which drag down our soul, fear the hell-fire with which pleasure-lovers are threatened, flee self-indulgence, drunkenness, fornication, prodigality, greed, injustice, vanity, pride, hatred, anger and inhumanity. These are the things which give the evil one power, alas, over ourselves and the world. We should escape from the world's deception and from its prince, and show through our good works that we are the work of God's good hands. By so doing, we shall make best use of the present, and enjoy the promised eternal benefits when the time comes.

16. May we all attain to these by the grace and love for mankind of Our Lord Jesus Christ, to Whom belongs glory together with the Father and the Holy Spirit unto the ages of ages. Amen.

– St. Gregory Palamas, *Homily Thirty-Three*

### **The Miracle of the Trisagion**

Our Orthodox liturgical life has as its objective the uniting of our soul and mind to God. The primary way in which this occurs is by the Church's integrating the faithful into the eternal, continuous worship of the Triune God.

The Church is an eternal body because its God is eternal and is itself His body. As such, the Church addresses itself to our thirst for eternity. It does not live only in this world, but raises us to the next. This concept is referred to as *anagogy*. The word comes from the Greek. The verb is ἀνάγω, meaning *to lead up* from a lower place to a higher, as defined in the *Liddell and Scott's Greek-English Lexicon* (1871, 48). The Church's earthly worship and everything connected with it, the Church building, its interior, iconography, vestments, vessels, architecture and, yes, chanting are all clearly laid out to raise the worshiper to the presence of God. They are points of contact with eternity, metaphysical references, if you will.

The eternal worship of God is our goal: to continuously praise Him with all our being.... It is clear, as a good mother, the Church teaches us by example, joining us and making the worshiper an extension of this eternal worship, *raising us up* to

God's presence—anagogy. In the words of a contemporary Church theologian, “when the believer is within the Divine Liturgy, he has gone beyond the world of corruption. He lives and dances for joy, extended beyond the threat of time, outside the prison of space. Although time and space exist, man is mystically nourished by the ‘hidden manna,’ by another reality, a reality earlier than time and above space. And when space and time cease to exist, man will be able to live and will live just the same. When man comes down from the mountain of his experience of the Liturgy, of participation in that which truly exists, he goes about his business in the created world in a different way. He does his service in time differently. He is a dynamic presence, like a grain of mustard seed: a witness to the Kingdom” (Vasileios; 1984, 79). The golden-mouthed Saint John Chrysostom (4th c.) also related how this most ancient of angelic hymns unites the earthly with the heavenly liturgy:

Above, the hosts of angels sing praise; below, men form choirs in the churches and imitate them by singing the same doxology. Above the Seraphim cry out the Trisagion Hymn; below, the human throng sends up the same cry. The inhabitants of heaven and earth are brought together in a common assembly; there is one thanksgiving, one shout of delight, one joyful chorus.

—*Patrologia Graeca* lvi,97

Saint Cyril, the Patriarch of Jerusalem in the middle of the fourth century, will also comment on the hymn in almost the same context:

After this we make mention of heaven, and earth, and sea; of the sun and moon; of the stars and all the creation, rational and irrational, visible and invisible; of Angels, Archangels, Virtues, Dominions, Principalities, Powers, Thrones; of the Cherubim with many faces: in effect repeating that call of David's, *Magnify the Lord with me* (Ps. 34:3). We make mention also of the Seraphim, whom Isaiah by the Holy Spirit beheld encircling the throne of God, and with two of their wings veiling their faces, and with two their feet, and with two flying, who cried, Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Sabaoth. For, for this cause rehearse we this confession of God, delivered down to us from the Seraphim, that we may join in Hymns with the hosts of the world above.

Then having sanctified ourselves by these spiritual Hymns [Eph. 5:19], we call upon the merciful God to send forth His Holy Spirit upon the gifts lying before Him [...].

—*Mystagogical Catechesis V, nos. 6 and 7*

This ancient hymn, the *Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of Sabaoth...* was used in the Christian worship of both the East and the West, where it is known by the Latin names of *Sanctus* or *Tersanctus*. In the East we call this the *Angelic* or *Triumphant Hymn* and it still accompanies the most sacred section of the Divine Liturgy, the Anaphora, the time when the gifts are offered up to God in confession, thanksgiving and supplication, as both a preparation and purification, as well as participation in the eternal, heavenly and angelic worship of the Lord God.

At this juncture Saint Maximus Confessor (7th c.) can serve to summarize the place this sublime hymn holds in the process of anagogy:

The unceasing and sanctifying doxology by the holy angels in the Trisagion signifies, in general, the equality in the way of life and conduct and the harmony in the divine praising which will take place in the age to come by both heavenly and earthly powers, when the human body now rendered immortal by the resurrection will no longer weigh down the soul by corruption and will not itself be weighed down but will take on, by the change into incorruption, potency and aptitude to receive God's coming. In particular it signifies, for the faithful, the theological rivalry with the angels in faith; for the active ones, it symbolizes the splendor of life equal to the angels, so far as this is possible for men, and the persistence in the theological hymnology; for those who have knowledge, endless thoughts, hymns, and movements concerning the Godhead which are equal to the angels, so far as humanly possible.

—*Mystagogy*, St. Maximus Confessor, Chapter 24

After a few centuries the trinitarian aspect of the Angelic, Triumphal Hymn was to inspire the development of another, somewhat related ancient hymn, also claiming angelic, divinely-revealed, heavenly origins, the *Trisagion* or Thrice-holy Hymn.

On the 25th of September, each year the Orthodox Church commemorates the miracle of the taking up into heaven by the angels of a child when Proclus was Patriarch of Constantinople (434-446) and Theodosios II was emperor.

ANNUS MUNDI 5930.—In this year Proclus, the most holy bishop of Constantinople, petitioned the Emperor Theodosios for the relic of John Chrysostom to be transferred from Comanus to the capital city. And in the next year, and for 33 years, it was processed with the King and the blessed Pulcheria and placed in the church of the Apostles. [...] During Proclus' reign great earthquakes were occurring in Constantinople for four months continuously. Being struck with fear, the Byzantines went out of the city to the so-called Kampos, and were supplicating God and processing with the bishop night and day. One day, when the earth was shaking and all the

people were continuously crying out the *Kyrie, eleison*, at about the third hour, suddenly and in sight of all a young child was taken up into the air, and a divine voice was heard around it announcing to the bishop and the people to process and to say thus: *Holy God, holy Mighty, holy Immortal, have mercy on us*, nothing else being added. Our father among the Saints, Proclus, accepting the decision, processed the people chanting thusly and the earthquake immediately ceased. The blessed Pulcheria and her brother, supporting the miracle, established that this divine hymn be chanted throughout the entire ecumene; and from that day all the churches sing to God each day.

—PG 108.244B-248A

In his treatise *The Orthodox Faith*, Saint John of Damascus (8th c.) adds that “it is traditional that the Thrice-Holy Hymn was also sung in this manner at the holy and great Fourth Ecumenical Council—that which was held in Chalcedon, I mean—for so it is reported in the acts of this same holy council”. The Council of Chalcedon was held in 451, but it is clearly accepted that the hymn was inserted into the liturgy between the years 430 and 450. Since then, of course, its use spread throughout almost every service of the Orthodox Church. Today, it is intricately combined even with the recitation of the Lord’s Prayer, both in the Church and in private devotion in what are known as the “Introductory, Trisagion prayers” that begin the majority of divine services.

The hymn was probably so completely embraced by the Church due to the fact that the Monophysite Antiochian Patriarch Peter the Fuller (*circa* 470) interpolated into the hymn the phrase “who was crucified for us,” attempting to align his position with the Theopaschites (a particular group of Monophysites). In any event, Orthodoxy would not accept the change and it was eventually rejected by the 81st Canon of the Council in Trullo, in 692.

The mystagogical-anagogical interpretation of the Trisagion hymn by the Fathers of the Church is connected to the context of the Thrice-Holy, Angelic Triumphal Hymn we just examined: the three *holies* of the Seraphic Hymn is expanded in the Trisagion as a hymn specifically to the three persons of the Holy Trinity. In discussing the hymn’s place in the Divine Liturgy, Saint Nicholas Cabasilas comments establish us in the choir of the angels:

Next [after the raising of the Book of the Gospels] we praise God himself, the Triune God, as the coming of the Savior revealed him to us. The hymn which we sing comes to us from the angels, and is taken in part from the book of the sacred psalms of the prophet. It was gathered together by Christ’s Church and dedicated to the Trinity. For the Hagios [the Sanctus], which is repeated thrice, is the angelic acclamation [Is. 6:3, Rev. 4:8]; the

words “Strong and immortal God” are those of the blessed David, who exclaims: “My soul thirsts for the strong and living God” [Ps. 42:2]. The Church which is the assembly of those who believe and profess the Trinity and Unity of God, played its part in gathering together these two acclamations, joining them, and adding the ejaculation, “Have mercy on us”; she wished to show, on the one hand, the harmony of the Old and New Testaments, and on the other, that angels and men form one Church, a single choir, because of the coming of Christ who was of both heaven and earth.

That is why we sing this hymn after the bringing in and showing of the Book of the Gospels; it is as if we proclaim that he, by coming among us, has given us a place amid the angels, and established us in the heavenly choir.

—20. *The showing of the Gospel, and the Trisagion.*

A number of structural liturgical factors, as well as the manuscript tradition for the Trisagion point to an origin outside the context of the Divine Liturgy. First, its structural hymnographic form—refrain, glorification (Glory; both now.), repeated last line, and embellished, appendix repeat—indicate its use as an antiphonal kanon, which would align itself well with its origin as a Constantinopolitan processional, as modern liturgiology has recently observed. Its use at the end of the Great Doxology and the witness of usage in the asmatic vespers of the cathedral rite in the Athos, Great Lavra MS A.165 shortly before the dismissal point to an origin in the Divine Liturgy as an entrance processional (*introit*) carried over from a wider processional, “stational” liturgical tradition. Tradition has also preserved a special tidbit of information pointing to this processional origin. It is recorded that the point of the *perisse* (the appendix troparion at the end of an antiphonal psalmody) was when the Emperor and his court arrived in the Church. The highly formalized court rituals spilled over into the public worship life and we know that on great feasts the Patriarch and Emperor entered the Great Church together. The purpose of the highly melismatic *perisse* had the practical application of covering a multitude of liturgical actions, prayers and petitions establishing the Patriarch on the synthronon before the scripture readings, which in Byzantine times was the actual beginning of the Divine Liturgy.

Anyone familiar with the Divine Liturgies of the Orthodox Church knows that the Trisagion is still chanted today (without the antiphonal psalmic verses, which disappeared without a trace [*except for in the hierarchical Divine Liturgy, where it still occurs – ed.*]) and its psaltic tradition is still quite vibrant. The only time when it is not chanted is on the feasts of the Cross, 14 September and the Third Sunday of the Great Fast, and the Great Feasts of the Master, when two special alternative

hymns take its place—on the Great Feasts the baptismal hymn *All those who have been baptized in Christ...* (*Ὅσοι εἰς Χριστόν*) and on the feasts of the Cross the *We venerate Thy Cross, O Master...* (*Τὸν Σταυρόν Σου*), possibly originating in Jerusalem. The daily form is as follows: It is chanted three times followed by a glorification (Glory to the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit; both now and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.), the last phrase and then repeated a final time as a *perisse*, announced with the word *δύναμις* from the deacon [*Greek practice – ed.*]. The word means “power” or “strength,” an obvious command to chant in a more intense fashion. All of this takes place just prior to the appointed scriptural readings for the day....

To summarize regarding the Trisagion, its divinely revealed origin attests to its popularity, as does its use throughout the Church’s daily worship cycle. It looks to be an expansion on the Angelic, triumphal thrice-holy hymn, developing its Trinitarian character to address each person of the Godhead individually. The *Trisagion prayers*, the introductory prayers used to begin almost every service, just before the Lord’s Prayer, are among the first prayers learned by an Orthodox believer. (*adapted from psalticnotes.com*)

### **St. Finbarr, Bishop of Cork**

Born in Templemartin, near Bandon, and originally named Lóchán (modern form, Loan), he was the son of Amergin of Maigh Seóla, a skilled craftsman originally from Galway. He studied in Ossory, corresponding approximately to the present County Kilkenny. He was renamed "Fionnbharra" (Fairhead in Irish), reportedly when, on being tonsured, the presiding cleric remarked: "Is fionn barr ("find barr", in the Irish of the time) Lócháin", meaning, "Fair is the crest of Loan"), and he then became known as "Findbarr" ("Fionnbharra" in modern Irish) because of his fair hair. He went on pilgrimage to Rome with some of the monks, visiting Saint David in Wales on the way back.

On completion of his education he returned home and lived for some time on an island in the small lake then called Loch Irce. The island is now called Gougane Barra (the little rock-fissure of Finnbarra). He is reputed to have built small churches in various other places, including one in Ballineadig, County Cork, called Cell na Cluaine, anglicised as Cellnaclona and sometimes referred to as Cloyne, causing it to be confused with Cloyne (Cluain Uamha) in east Cork.

About the year 600, Saint Finbarr was consecrated the first Bishop of Cork. He settled for about the last seventeen years of his life in the area then known as *Corcach Mór na Mumhan* (the Great Marsh of Munster), now the city of Cork, where he gathered around him monks and students. The celebrated Monastery of Cork became a center of monasticism in southern Ireland, and many pious men

gathered there from all over Ireland in order to be trained in monastic life and to live in holiness. This became an important center of learning, giving rise to the phrase *Ionad Bairre Sgoil na Mumhan*. "Where Finbarr taught let Munster learn", is the motto of today's University College Cork in English but is not a translation of the Irish motto *Ionad Bairre Sgoil na Mumhan* which means "Finbarr's foundation, the School of Munster".

The church and monastery he founded in 606 were on a limestone cliff above the River Lee, an area now known as Gill Abbey, after a 12th-century Bishop of Cork, Giolla Aedha Ó Muidhin. It continued to be the site of the cathedral of his diocese. The present building on the site, owned by the Church of Ireland, is called Saint Fin Barre's Cathedral. The people of Cork often refer to the nearby Catholic church, also dedicated to Saint Finbarr, in Dunbar Street in the South Parish as 'the South Chapel', distinguishing it from the North Cathedral, the Catholic Cathedral of Saint Mary and Saint Anne, sometimes called 'the North Chapel'.

Finbarr died at Cell na Cluaine, while returning from a visit to Gougane Barra. He was buried in the cemetery attached to his church in Cork. The exact year of his death is unknown: various sources give the years 610, 623 and 633. (*from johnsanidopoulos.com*)

## **Martyr Paphnutius of Egypt and 546 Companions**

The Holy Martyr Paphnutius hailed from Egypt and struggled in the desert. During the persecution against Christians under Diocletian (284-305), the governor Hadrian commanded that Saint Paphnutius be brought to him. The ascetic, not waiting for those sent to bring him, appeared before the governor, confessed his faith in Christ, and was subjected to torture.

The soldiers involved in his torture, Dionysius and Callimachus, seeing how the power of God preserved the martyr, believed in Christ the Savior themselves, for which they were then beheaded. Cast into prison after the tortures, Saint Paphnutius converted forty prisoners to the Faith. They were all burned alive.

After a while Saint Paphnutius was set free, and a Christian named Nestorius gladly took him in. He and all his family, after spiritual guidance, became steadfast in the Faith, and ultimately endured martyrdom. The saint strengthened many other Christians to confess our Lord Jesus Christ, and they all died as martyrs. Some were cut with swords, others were burned. There were 546 men in all.

Saint Paphnutius himself was thrown by the torturers into a river with a stone about his neck, but he miraculously floated to shore with the stone. Finally, they sent the holy martyr to the emperor Diocletian himself, who commanded him to be crucified on a date tree. (*from johnsanodopoulos.com*)

## Social Team for October 2

Team 5 is up next week - Vallandingham, Tony Papadakis, Andrew and Katy. Thank you!

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***In Your Prayers – Please Remember...*** His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch BARTHOLOMEW, His Eminence Metropolitan GREGORY, Fr. Joseph & Family, His Grace Bishop Neofitos of Nyeri & Mt. Kenya, Bennett family, Tatyana & Slava Chumak & family, Luke & Marlena Cooper, Roberta Corson, Jon Church, Tina Crull, Mary Diane David, Marlene Doukas, Linda A. Georgiev, Sandi Hebel, Howl family, Helen P. Janowiak, John M. Janowiak, Andrew Kinn, Kopan family, Helen, Brian, Luke and Mia Mahony, Valentina Makowelski, Susan Matula, Anna Meinhold, David & Kathryn Newman, Bobby Nutter & family, Nicholas Pavlik, Weston Perry & family, John Reece, Mary Reed, Marge Rusnak, Rose Song, Fr. Nectarios & Ia, Mother Virginia Marie & the Carmelite Nuns of Port Tobacco, the suffering people of Ukraine, the newly reposed servants of God Metropolitan Kallistos Ware and Carolyn Shull, and those in need of our prayers. (Please advise Fr. Joseph of changes.)