

# SOBORNOST

**St. Thomas the Apostle Orthodox Church**

**(301) 638-5035 Church  
4419 Leonardtown Road  
Waldorf, MD 20601**

**Rev. Father Joseph Edgington, Pastor  
(703) 532-8017**

[fredgington@gmail.com](mailto:fredgington@gmail.com)

[www.apostlethomas.org](http://www.apostlethomas.org)

*American Carpatho-Russian Orthodox Diocese*

*ECUMENICAL PATRIARCHATE  
OF CONSTANTINOPLE*

## SERVICES

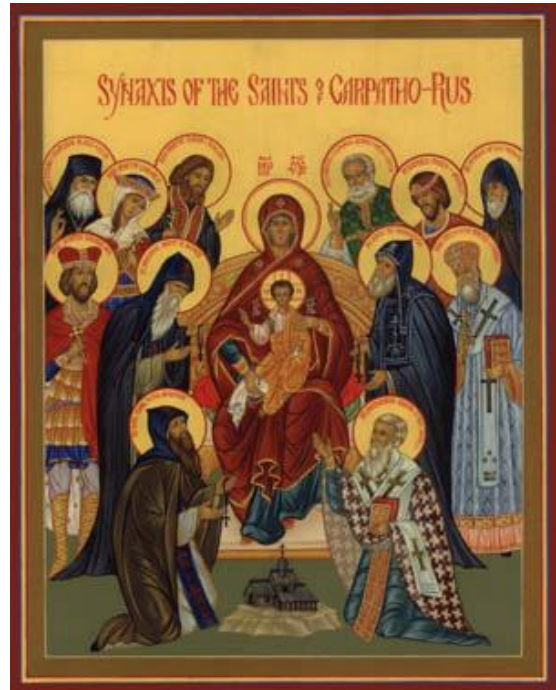
**Wednesday: Lay Vespers 6:30 PM**

**Saturday: Vespers 5 PM**

**Sunday: Matins 8:45 AM**

**Sunday School 9:30 AM**

**Divine Liturgy 10 AM**



## **June 25, 2023 – 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday After Pentecost | New Martyrs of the Turkish Yoke | Virgin-martyr Febronia of Nisibis**

On the third Sunday after Pentecost, we commemorate the new martyrs who suffered under the Turks. Among them is the New Martyr Angelis of Constantinople. Angelis belonged to the parish of Saints Constantine and Helen of the Karaman (the Karaman or Karamanlides were Turkish speaking Orthodox Christians from Karamania in southern Cappadocia) in Constantinople and earned his living as a goldsmith. He was married with six children, who were raised as pious Orthodox Christians.

On the feast of the Leave-taking of the Dormition of the Theotokos (Aug. 23) in the town of Saint Stephanos, both faithful Orthodox Christians and those who had apostatized and become Muslims were in attendance, which was not an uncommon occurrence. At one point they began to frolic and exchange hats - Orthodox put on Muslim (Turkish) hats and Muslims put on Orthodox (Roman) hats. Angelis was among those who participated.

The next day certain Muslims asked Angelis why he was wearing a Roman hat when he had become a Muslim the day before by putting on a Turkish hat. Astonished by this, Angelis responded: "I wear it because I am an Orthodox

Christian." Insisting that he become a Muslim, these Muslims accused him of denying the Islamic faith and therefore took him to court.

There Angelis was formally charged with making the Islamic declaration of faith and of wearing Muslim headdress. Angelis denied this charge and stated that he was only frolicking and returned to his house. Therefore he was sent to the Grand Vizier Kara Mustafa, who approached Angelis with flatteries and promises of rewards if he agreed to become a Muslim. Angelis responded that he was born and raised an Orthodox Christian, and nothing in this world could separate him from the love of Christ. Then the Grand Vizier responded with threats of extreme torture and death if he did not accept his proposal. Angelis responded: "Do whatever you wish. Burn, beat, cut, slaughter, throw me to the beasts, drown me at sea, and whatever else you are capable of doing to this my clay body. I will not deny my Christ! I will not change my faith! I will not become a Muslim!"

The Grand Vizier threw Angelis into prison when he realized he would not change his mind. Then a neighbor of his, a bey (a high ranking official) who liked Angelis, visited him and attempted to give him advice, begging him to deny his faith and return to his wife and children. Angelis was unwilling to listen to this advice, let alone accept it. The bey left saddened.

Then Angelis' wife was persuaded by certain Muslims to visit him, and she asked him with tears in her eyes to submit and save himself along with his family. Angelis replied that he surrendered her and the children to Christ, since any reunion in this life would be temporary, while being faithful to Christ would allow them to be reunited for eternity in the next life. This convinced his wife that he was taking the proper course.

The next day Angelis was once again brought before the Grand Vizier, who threatened him once more, but to no avail. He was then sentenced to death. Angelis was taken near the Church of Hagia Sophia in front of the palace and there he was beheaded on September 1, 1680.

That night a mysterious light illumined the body of Angelis, and this was witnessed by both Orthodox Christians and Muslims. The Ottoman authorities therefore ordered his body be thrown into the sea. However, the Orthodox Christian Furrier's Guild paid 300 grosia to Musur Aga and purchased the body of the Saint before the order was carried out. For this exchange to take place undetected, the body of Angelis was taken out to sea, and it was transferred to another boat which took them to the island of Proti (Kinali), where Angelis was buried at a monastery.

It happened that Metropolitan Parthenios of Drystra was in Constantinople at that time and heard of the martyrdom of Angelis. He investigated the events

surrounding the death of the Neomartyr and wrote various encomia attesting these events. It seems also the three Muslims responsible for the death of Angelis suffered terribly as a consequence with a sickness unto death. However, because their souls would not leave them, they considered it a divine punishment, and they would call out "Angeli, Angeli!" They called for his wife to come to them and asked for her forgiveness, upon which they were able to give up their souls. (*from johnsanidopoulos.com*)

## **Holy Virgin-martyr Febronia as a Model for our Lives**

By Protopresbyter Fr. George Papavarnavas

Saint Febronia lived in the third century, during the period of persecution against the Church. At the age of 17 she went to live in a monastery in Mesopotamia, where her aunt Nun Bryenni was the abbess. She was endowed with many gifts and was distinguished from the other nuns for her zeal towards the spiritual life and for her love towards God, as well as each and every fellow human being. Her soul was most-beautiful and bright, but Saint Febronia was also endowed with physical beauty. Her sacred Synaxarion states that she had dazzling beauty and this was the reason for her martyrdom.

A group of soldiers, that were persecuting Christians, passed through the monastery where Saint Febronia lived. As soon as the nuns realized the presence of soldiers near the monastery they fled, but Saint Febronia, because she was sick, was unable to leave. The abbess and another nun stayed behind with her. When the soldiers came face to face with Saint Febronia, they were struck by her beauty. They left three men at the monastery to guard her and the rest returned and reported the incident to their ruler Selino. He ordered that she be brought before him and he tried in every way to convince her to change her faith. Blinded by her beauty, he promised her wealth and glory and offered to give her his nephew as her husband. The Saint, unsurprisingly, despised false human glory, which is eliminated by death and perishable wealth, and does not follow a person after the termination of this perishable life, because she was in communion with the glory of God and possessed true and imperishable wealth, which abides forever.

Saint Febronia, after cruel and inhuman torture, was perfected by the sword and gave up her most-beautiful soul in the hands of Him Whom she loved more than everyone and all things.

Her life and deeds give us the opportunity to highlight the following:

Physical beauty is itself a gift of God, like all His other gifts to humanity, which of themselves neither benefit nor harm the possessor, but this depends on how they are used. That is, the various graces and gifts given by God can benefit the one

who received them, as well as others, when they are not used for one's self-interest and the satisfaction of the human passions, but rather are used towards the glory of the Gift-giver. Also, the person receiving the gift of outer beauty must never forget that it comes and goes, while that which abides forever and has true value is inner beauty, spiritual beauty, which is obtained with hard work and a great struggle. To give physical beauty, and generally all external gifts, greater importance than is needed and to ignore and underestimate the inner beauty of the heart, as well as the other gifts which are important, yet they do not become immediately apparent, shows, at the very least, shallowness and superficiality. Father (now Saint – ed.) Paisios the Athonite would say how, when we meet someone we should not be carried away by what they are wearing or their external traits, but we should look at their heart. That is, we should try to understand what kind of person they are in actuality and not see what they have and own, such as secular positions and material wealth. Also, we should look carefully and try to uncover the non-phenomena, because the phenomena usually are deceiving. After all, what truly gives a person worth is the inner wealth of the heart. It is that which Holy Scripture and the Fathers of the Church call the hidden heart of man. This is why we must not rush to draw conclusions about a person, but we should let them reveal themselves.

Basil the Great says that "true and desired for beauty, which one is only able to see with a purified nous, is that which is according to divine and blessed nature, and when he sees the luminescence and joy he receives something from it, his appearance sweetens and takes on another color as if it blooms." Therefore, true beauty is the uncreated beauty of the Divine nature and one can only participate in this beauty who has purified the optical part of the soul, their nous, which through purification becomes a "nous that sees" God, and is beautified by this Divine beauty not only in soul but also in the body of this person, and this is why the outer appearance brightens and is beautified. In this category belongs the Theotokos first of all, then the Saints, but also by analogy those who are integrated into the process of purification and sanctification. The Prophet David, speaking prophetically about the person of the Theotokos, and referring to her inner beauty, which was reflected in her external appearance, calls her the beauty of Jacob: "The beauty of Jacob which He loved" (Ps. 46:5 LXX). And the Prophet Ezekiel speaks allegorically about the person of the Theotokos, saying: "I am perfect in beauty".

For how we use the gifts we have received from God, we will give an account to Him who gave them to us. All God's gifts are given to help us to be sanctified and saved, which is why we should be at His disposal, as well as in service to our fellow man, especially those whom Christ calls "the least of my brethren". (*from johnsanidopoulos.com*)

### **Today's Epistle Lesson – St. Paul's Letter to the Romans 5:1-10 EOB**

Brethren, being justified by faith, we have a peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we also have our access by faith into this grace in which we stand. And we rejoice in hope of the glory of God! Not only this, but we also rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces perseverance; and perseverance, character; and character, hope. Hope does not disappoint us, because God's love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us. For while we were still weak, at the right time, Christ died for the ungodly. Indeed, one will hardly die for someone righteous, but perhaps for a righteous person someone would even dare to die. But God entrusts his own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Even more so then, since we are now justified by his blood, shall we be saved from wrath through him! For if, while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of his Son, how much more shall we be saved by his life!

### **Today's Gospel Lesson - Saint Matthew 6:22-33 EOB**

The Lord said, "The lamp of the body is the eye! If therefore your eye is sound, your whole body will be full of light. But if your eye is evil, your whole body will be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in you is darkness, how great is the darkness! No one can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other; or else he will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and Mammon. Therefore, I tell you, do not be anxious about your life, wondering what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? See the birds of the sky: they do not sow, or reap, or gather into barns. Your heavenly Father feeds them! Are you not of much more value than they? Which of you, by being anxious, can add one moment to his lifespan? Why then are you anxious about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow. They do not toil or spin, yet I tell you that even Solomon in all his glory was not dressed like one of these! But if God clothes the grass of the field which today exists and tomorrow is thrown into the oven in such a way, will he not much more clothe you, you of little faith? Therefore, do not be anxious, saying: 'What will we eat?', 'What will we drink?' or, 'What will we wear?' It is the Gentiles who seek after all these things, but your heavenly Father knows that you need them all. Seek first the Kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. "

### **Homily on the Eleventh Eothinon Gospel – John 21:14-25**

By Metropolitan Hierotheos of Nafpaktos and Agiou Vlasiou

The incident described in today's Eothinon Gospel is a continuation of the incident described in the previous Gospel. That is, last Sunday we saw the miraculous

catching of fish and the food that Christ ate with His disciples at Lake Tiberias. Of course, Christ after His Resurrection did not need food because He had eliminated mortality, but He did it out of economy to bring joy to the disciples and show them that He was not a ghost, while that food was consumed by divinity.

Immediately after the meal, Christ had a conversation with Peter, who had shown his great love for Christ by going into the sea and swimming to shore to meet Christ. Three times He asked him if he loved Him, and he gave a positive answer. He commanded him to shepherd His sheep as an expression of his love for Him.

The question is, why does He ask him so that all could hear, even three times, if he loves Him, since he had previously confirmed Him to be his God. And the other question is why He asked him three times. It seems clear that this incident is a restoration of the Apostle Peter to the other disciples. It is known that the Apostle Peter denied Christ three times just before His Passion. His sin was great and his position was somehow shaken among the group of Christ's disciples. However, after the triple denial he did not depart from the group of disciples, as Judas did, but he wept bitterly for his sin and continued to remain in the group of disciples. This shows that no matter what sin we commit, we should never be disappointed, but repent immediately and remain in the Church. We should never put it into our minds to move away from the Church.

With the triple invitation to a public confession of love, Christ healed His disciple's public denial. So He not only publicly restores him to the apostolic office, but also entrusts him with the ministry to shepherd His sheep. Therefore, an expression of His love would be "shepherd my sheep", "shepherd my lambs". This is his pastoral ministry of Christians. The Apostle Peter was aware of the sin, gained knowledge of repentance, saw the Risen Christ, expressed his great love to Him through his actions, and therefore can shepherd Christ's sheep correctly and unmistakably.

Christ then foretells to him his martyric death, when He told him that when he is old, he will stretch out his hands and be bound by another who will take him where he does not want, that is, to martyrdom. And indeed, as the Evangelist John says, "this He said to show by which death he would glorify God." Martyrdom is a praise to God. First one gives the confession of their faith and the testimony of their love, and then there is martyrdom, which certifies and confirms their love and faith in Christ.

Pastoral ministry is a crucifying ministry, which is done with the Cross and the Resurrection of Christ, and of course, ends with the Cross. Love by its nature is not a feeling, but an experience and an expression of witness. Whoever loves without sacrifice has a false and frivolous love. Christians are the sheep of Christ and not of the clergy. The clergy are shepherding Christ's sheep and lambs. When the

clergy claim Christ's sheep and make them their own, this is not true pastoral ministry.

Christ did much during His life, but also after His Resurrection, so that the Evangelist John would write that if all these were written in books then these books would not be able to fit all over the world, into all the libraries of the world. But this life that does not fit into books is enclosed within the Orthodox Church, and one can begin to read and live it while swimming in this spiritual wealth of the Church.

My beloved brethren, Christ is resurrected, and the Church of Christ is the Church of the Resurrection, and those who participate in this Resurrection celebration every Sunday, as we wrote in these short sermons, can be initiated into the great mystery of the Resurrection and transcend all problems they face in their life. *(from johnsanidopoulos.com)*

## A Word From the Holy Fathers

"The eye is the lamp of the body. So, if your eye is pure, your whole body will be full of light; but if your eye is not pure, your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light in you is darkness, how great is the darkness!" (Matt. 6:22-23). These are extremely profound words of Christ, full of mysterious meaning, which we all need to delve into. "The eye is the lamp of the body" - our eye. You know that our eye perceives everything visible, all images. It perceives the light of the sun. And this light, perceived by our eye, directs the whole body, directs all its movements, makes them quick and easy, and the whole body seems to be bright. And if our eye is damaged, if we do not see clearly, then our whole body will be dark.

You know what our blind, unfortunate brothers look like: how their whole body seems to have drooped, how motionless they hold their head, how careful all their movements are. And their whole body gives the impression of a dark body, thoroughly saturated with darkness. But besides our bodily eyes, we also have spiritual eyes. It is about them that the Lord Jesus Christ speaks. He says that if the spiritual eyes are clear, undamaged, bright, then our whole being, our whole body will be bright, spiritually bright.

Do you not know with what spiritual light the righteous shone? Were the bodies of such great saints as Seraphim of Sarov, Sergius of Radonezh, like Anthony and Theodosius of the Caves and the whole host of great saints, were their bodies similar to ours? Did their eyes, all their movements, did their speech and even their walk resemble ours? No no! They shone their spiritual light on people. This is what Christ is talking about. He said that if the spiritual eye is bright, then the whole being will be bright with spiritual light.

And if the spiritual eye is dark, damaged, and does not discern what is truly light, what is great, what is beautiful, then our whole being, not illuminated by spiritual light, will be dark.

"If then the light in you is darkness, how great is the darkness!" If your spiritual eyes are dark, if your whole being is dark, then what kind of darkness? You perceive everything spiritual differently than the holy people of God. You interpret everything in a dark, evil way that is not pleasing to God, and everything around you will be darkness for you.

"No one can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one and love the other; or he will be zealous for one, and neglect the other; you cannot serve God and mammon", namely wealth. We cannot serve two masters at the same time - God and the blessings of this world, wealth, because we will inevitably choose one or the other. If the desire to serve only God overcomes, earthly blessings will lose all attractiveness, all sweetness, and all value for us. And if we love what the world loves, then we will be strangers to God – completely strangers to God, we will be strangers to all His saints, for we will serve the lusts of our flesh, we will please this second master, and not God.

"Therefore I say to you, do not worry about your soul what you will eat or drink, nor about your body what you will wear. Isn't the soul more than food, the body more than clothes?" You, of course, understand even without my explanations that the soul deserves immeasurably more deep concentration, constant attention and care for its purity than the food with which we nourish and delight our body.

Isn't the body greater than clothes? You need to know that, according to Holy Scripture, the significance of our body is great, extremely great and profound. Human nature is tripartite: it consists of body, soul and spirit. And these three parts of human nature are in constant, inextricable connection with each other. The Holy Spirit, always ascending to God, sanctifies the body, and the body is sanctified by Him.

The Holy Apostle Paul said amazing words about our bodies: "Don't you know that your bodies are the temple of the Holy Spirit living in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? For you were bought with a price. Therefore glorify God in your bodies and in your souls, which are God's" (1 Corinthians 6:19-20). See what is the significance of our body, the body of a true Christian who has loved Christ with all the strength of his soul, to be the temple of the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Apostle Paul in his epistle to the Romans says such profound words, so amazing for us: "I beseech you, brethren, by the mercy of God, present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, for your reasonable worship" (Romans



12:1). We must offer our bodies as a sacrifice to God, a living sacrifice, pleasing to God. The great holy hermits, venerables, ascetics truly offered their bodies as a sacrifice to God, for they did nothing, nothing to please their flesh, did not nourish it, kept it in the cold, in hunger, deprived it of sleep. It was a sacrifice to their God.

Elsewhere in the same epistle to the Romans, Saint Paul says: "And do not give your members to sin as instruments of unrighteousness, but present yourselves to God as alive from the dead, and your members to God as instruments of righteousness" (Romans 6:13). Can't we give our bodies to the service of God, or to the service of the devil? Oh, we can, we can. There are many, many who offer their flesh, their human body, not as a sacrifice to God, but in the service of the devil. Are we really going to sacrifice to the devil?! Shall we not direct our hands, our feet to where our grievously suffering brothers are waiting for our help? Shall we not try to do everything possible with our hands, and with our feet to go any distance to help the suffering - shall we not try to please God?! If we offer our bodies and our members as a sacrifice to God, shall we take care to feed them and keep them warm?

Therefore, the Apostle Paul says, and Christ Himself also says: "Therefore I say to you: do not worry about your life, what you eat and what you drink, nor about your body, what you wear. Is not life greater than food and the body than clothing?" After all, pagans also take care of clothes for the body, about everything that cares for the body.

The Lord says, you take care of your bodies, what you will wear, "look at the lilies of the field, how they grow: they do not work, they do not spin, but I tell you that even Solomon in all his glory did not dress like any of them. If the grass of the field, which is today, and tomorrow will be thrown into the oven, God dresses like this, how much more will He do for you, you of little faith? And which of you, by worrying, can add even one cubit to his stature? So don't worry and don't say: what shall we eat? or what shall we drink? Or what shall we wear? Because all these are sought by the pagans; and because your Father in heaven knows that you need all of this. Seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all this will be added to you." Oh, what amazing words, words never heard by the world, words about not taking care of the body, that one should not worry of either food or clothing. Before Christ, no one had ever talked about it. But now there are many people who scoff at these words of Christ, or at least wonder whether it is possible not to worry about food, about clothes, not to worry about the body.

Well, are the words of Christ really not true, is He talking about the impossible? Oh no! If He demands that we should not worry about anything except the Kingdom of Heaven, if He requires that all our aspirations, all hopes be directed

towards one goal - to acquire the Kingdom of Heaven, shall we not direct all our efforts towards this? For every word of His is true.

Let us first of all understand that the teaching of Christ, all His commandments, were given to the world so that the world might be saved. His commandments, His words, His precepts were directed not only to individual people, to individual ascetics of piety, they were addressed to all mankind. If humanity had not rejected Christ, if it had been inspired by His Divine teaching and began to follow the path of life indicated by Him, fulfilling everything that Christ said, then all this would have been achievable.

Think, if people were not divided into peoples hostile to each other, lived in peace, harmony and love with each other, would there really be such horrors that we read about in the newspapers almost every day? In the fertile country of India, millions of people die of hunger every year. And now there is hunger. Why do they die, why, through their own fault? Because they live under the heavy heel of their rulers - the British. The British do not consider the people of India to be people, they despise them as inferior, they squeeze all the juices of life out of the Hindus, rob the country and make them beggars. Precisely because there is no love, such is the attitude of the British towards the Indians, precisely because the peoples are oppressed in other colonial countries, that is why there is hunger and disease.

It is precisely because there is so little love in the world that Christ's words do not come true that everyone will be fed and clothed if they care only about the Kingdom of God. Oh, if all mankind would believe in Christ, what great prosperity there would be everywhere! The earth is plentiful; it can feed in excess a much larger population than that which lives on it. There would be no starving people, there would be no division between people if they had sought "the Kingdom of God and His righteousness." The people themselves are to blame for the fact that these words of Christ do not come true, those who rejected Christ, did not accept Him when He came down to us from heaven, they are guilty.

But the truth of Christ's words comes true in individual people, in those who are full of contempt for everything earthly, who devoted themselves entirely to the service of God, hermits, ascetics, who, placing their hope in God, went into the mountains and wildernesses and forests. They put all their cares on God, and God fed them: fed them through the angels who brought them food, fed them through the birds which He commanded to bring them meat and bread and fruits. If all people put all their hope in God, and set the goal of their life to acquire the Kingdom of God, if everyone walked the narrow path through the narrow gate, everyone would walk the path of suffering, which is assigned to all those who love Christ, if all people acted this way, then it would be as if there was peace in the

world, colonial slavery would end, and no one would be crushed by need, care for food and clothing.

"Seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness." And then the truth of these words of Christ, over which unbelievers mock and ridicule, would be confirmed. "Seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness." Have a bright spiritual eye! Amen.

– St. Luke the Surgeon of Simferopol, *Homily on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Matthew*

## **The Fifth Ecumenical Synod (553 A.D.)**

By Metropolitan Hierotheos of Nafpaktos and Agiou Vlasiou

In the previous sermon, beloved brethren, we saw that the Church, through the Holy Fathers, in order to preserve the truth that Christ is perfect God and perfect man, from heretical theologians who were influenced by philosophy and used terms like essence, nature, hypostasis and person philosophically, with heretical meanings, came to decisions by divine inspiration on these matters with the same terms they used, to which they gave an orthodox meaning.

It is the Church's belief that Christ is perfect God and perfect man, having two natures, divine and human, which are united in one person "inconfusedly, unchangeably, indivisibly, inseparably". When each nature acted in the person of the Word, it acted in communion with the other nature, without becoming confused, changed, divided, or separated. This is a great mystery.

We see this in the Gospels. When Christ learned of the death of His friend Lazarus, He wept, that is, His human nature wept without being separated from the divine nature. And when He resurrected Lazarus, He resurrected him with His divine nature, without being separated from His human nature. Both natures work together in Christ. Christ is the God-man.

Saint John of Damascus used two examples to express this clearly. A piece of coal that is burning is still coal, but it has fire within it. The coal did not surround the fire, but the fire surrounded the coal from within. The other example is the knife that we put in the fire and it burns. The red-hot knife being still iron cuts, and since it is red hot it burns, but this is done by the red-hot object itself.

The Fathers of the Church determined in the Third and Fourth Ecumenical Synods this truth about the two natures in the one person of Christ. There were, however, Bishops and Christian theologians, who did not accept these decisions and continued to misinterpret the writings of Saint Cyril of Alexandria and not to accept the phrase of the Third Ecumenical Synod - "of two natures" - thinking that nature here means hypostasis therefore in this way thinking the heresy of Nestorius is expressed. Thus, Emperor Justinian convened the Fifth Ecumenical Synod, in

553 AD in Constantinople, to further clarify these theological issues, in fact to address all these reservations to the previous decisions of the Ecumenical Synods, by Christians living within the borders of the Roman Empire.

The Ecumenical Synod condemned the "Three Chapters", that is, it condemned the texts of three heretics who had cacodox and heretical views. Specifically, it condemned the cacodox teaching of Theodore of Mopsuestia, the anti-Orthodox teachings of Theodoret of Cyrus, who had writings that were directed against Cyril of Alexandria and the Third Ecumenical Synod and supported Nestorius, and it condemned the Epistle of Ibas of Edessa which He sent to Maris and had heretical views.

The Fifth Ecumenical Synod then set out in an accurate manner the Orthodox teaching on the Person of Christ, which had been formulated by the Third and Fourth Ecumenical Synods. Indeed, when one reads the fourteen anathemas of this Synod, one realizes the serious work it has done.

Also, various problems had been created by the Origenists, that is, various Christians who subscribed to some of the views of Origen, which had been formulated by this teacher before the First Ecumenical Synod was convened. That is why the Fifth Ecumenical Synod condemned the cacodoxies of Origen, which had already been condemned individually the previous year. Among the cacodoxies mentioned are those that refer to the pre-existence of the soul, the apokatastasis, and other views.

We understand what a great effort our Holy Fathers made, how much they tried to preserve the revealed truth that the Triune God is the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, the Trinity one in essence and without division; that Christ is true God and true man, of one essence with the Father in His divinity and of one essence with us in His humanity; that He is the Savior of men, and all else that refers to Orthodox truth and the salvation of men.

All this mystery which is incomprehensible to human reason, we live out in the Divine Liturgy, in which we glorify the Triune God, we glorify the incarnation of the Son and Word of God, we commune of the divinized Body of Christ after appropriate preparation, and we confess: "We have seen the true Light, we have received the heavenly Spirit; we have found the true faith, worshiping the undivided Trinity, for the Trinity has saved us." This is our faith, this is our confession, this is our Church, this is our life. *(from johnsanidopoulos.com)*

### **Also Commemorated Today: St. Moluag, Missionary to the Picts**

Also known as Lugaidh and Molloch, Moluag was born c.530AD of the clan Dalaraidhe, in northern Ireland where he became a monk of Bangor. Many consider his true name to have been Lugaidh (pronounced Lua) and the form of

Moluag, used in the Annals of Tigernach, is simply an affectionate form - *Mo-Luoc*, "my Lugaidh".

Saint Moluag was educated in the monastery school of Bangor in Ireland and then returned to his native land as a missionary. (Some say that he was actually from Ulster and may have been an O'Neill.) The Cistercian Bernard of Clairvaux in his biography of his close friend Malachy of Ireland tells us that the monk Moluag of Bangor was the founder of 100 monasteries in Scotland. In fact, Moluag ranked alongside Saint Columba as a missionary: While Columba was the apostle to the Gaels; Moluag evangelized the Picts. His main work as a bishop was the evangelization of the Hebrides. Inevitably, legends have grown around his name according to which there was a rivalry between Moluag and Columba, but it appears that they worked among to distinct national groups.

Moluag actually arrived about a year before Columba in Scotland. He was accompanied by Saint Comgall, an Irish Pict, who presented him to King Brude to obtain his authority for the mission. Columba, incidentally, had Comgall perform the same service for him. It is possible that King Brude preferred Moluag to Columba, and that is what led Moluag to concentrate more on the Picts. It would be quite natural that the Pictish king might have some reservations about the Ulster prince Columba, who was a natural leader of the Gaelic people in Scotland. Whatever happened, the two missionaries gradually brought an end to the armed conflict between the two nations.

St Moluag's plan for working Pictland was to organize three great *muinntirs* or communities to be the centres of education and ministerial supply for the Churches in their respective districts; and, of course, for the maintenance of these central communities he had the reserves of the mother church of Bangor in Eire.

He first organised the great community of **Lismore** in Lorn about 562AD. Moluag's settlement was in the north of Lismore, close to a megalithic site surmounted by a high cairn which once marked the funeral pyres of Pictish Kings. This island was the sacred island of the Western Picts, and continued to be the burial-place of their kings who reigned at *Beregonium*. The Churches dependent on Lismore, still traceable, are *Teampul Mór* in Lewis; the Church of Pabay, that is, Isle of the *pápa*; *Cill Moluag* in Raasay; *Teampull Mholuig*, "Moluag's Chapel", at Europie in Ness; *Cill Moluag* in Skye; *Cill Moluag* in Tiree; *Cill Moluag* in Mull; 'Kilmalu' in Morvern; '**Kilmalu**' of Inverary; and *Cill Moluag* at Ballagan, Inverfarigaig.

St Moluag's second central community is said to have been organised at *Rosemarkie* on the northern shore of the Inverness Firth (however, see below).

Many of the churches founded from this centre were afterwards, in the Roman Catholic period, dedicated to Roman saints, and they cannot now be definitely distinguished as St Moluag's; but there was an old church in the strath of the Peffray (Strathpeffer) whose temporalities are still called *Davoch-Moluag*, and the submerged Church of Cromarty was evidently one of St Moluag's foundations.

His third central community was at *Mortlach* in Morayshire. Dependant upon it was the smaller community at Clova or Cloveth near Lumsden village. The foundations that still bear St Moluag's name in this part of Scotland are at "*Maol-Moluag's*", now New Machar, at Clatt in the Garioch and at Migvie (also linked to [St Finan](#)) and Tarland. Another of St Moluag's known foundations was at Alyth in Perthshire.

It must not be supposed that the trained clergy from Bangor and from St Moluag's own centres kept themselves apart from the Britonic and the native Pictish clergy who were at work in Pictland at this time; because there is evidence that the Bangor clergy assisted in manning Churches founded long before their arrival as well as looking to the care of congregations gathered by themselves. The only sign of want of co-operation between the Celtic clergy, as might be expected from the political relations of the time, was between the Picts and the Gaidheals or Scots, in the territory occupied by the Scotie colonists in Dalriada.

St Moluag continued to labour in Pictland until his death on the 25th June 592 AD. Some sources give that he died at Ardclach in Nairnshire. According to the other old traditions he died while visiting his churches in the Garioch and was buried at Rosemarkie. In the Martyrology of Oengus, under his entry on June 25th, is a comment which is typical of the warm esteem with which he is commemorated in the Irish calendars: "*The pure, the bright, the pleasant, / the sun of Lismore; / that is Moluoc, / of Lismore in Alba*".

The blackthorn crosier (Bachuill Mor) of Saint Moluag is in the possession of the Campbells, dukes of Argyle, who traditionally carried it with them into battle. His shrine was at Mortlach. On the island of Lewis, the custom persisted, despite the Scottish reformers' attempts to stop it, until the 19th century of conducting a ritual service of intercession to Moluag at his titular church Teampall Mo Luigh. Although the cultus of Moluag decreased together with the power of the Pictish people he evangelized, there are many memorials to Moluag in the form of ancient churches and placenames. Kilmoluag is a common example. The name "Luke," which is very common among men in Scotland, is reliably stated to be derived from Moluag.

Saint Moluag is invoked against insanity and his intercession sought to heal wounds. (from [celticsaints.org](http://celticsaints.org) and [cushnieent.force9.co.uk](http://cushnieent.force9.co.uk))

## Also Commemorated Today

Afterfeast of the Nativity of the Forerunner

Venerable [Nikon](#) the Confessor of Optina (1931).

New Hieromartyrs Nicholas and [Basil](#) priests (1918).

New Hieromartyr Basil priest (1940).

Prince [Peter](#) (1228) and Princess [Febronia](#) (tonsured David and Euphrosyne), w/w of Murom.

Venerables [Leonis](#), Libye, and Eutropia of Syria.

7 Martyred [brothers](#) Orentios, Pharnakios, Eros, Firmus, Firminus, Kyriakos and Longinus (301)

Venerable [Symeon](#) of Sinai (5th c.).

Ven. [Methodios](#) of Nivritos (10<sup>th</sup> c.)

Venerables [Dionysius](#) and [Dometius](#) (1380) of the Monastery of the Forerunner (Dionysiou), Mt. Athos (*Greek*).

New Martyr [Procopius](#) of Varna and Mt. Athos, who suffered at Smyrna (1810)

New Martyr [George](#) of Attalia (1823) (*Greek*).

Martyr Gallicianus the Patrician in Egypt (362).

St. [Adelbert](#), archdeacon (740) (*Neth.*).

St. [Theoleptus](#), metropolitan of Philadelphia (1322).

Ven. [Dalmat](#) of Iset, Perm (1697)

St. [Amphilabus](#), priest-martyr of Verulamium (4<sup>th</sup> c.)(Britain)

St. [Molonachus](#), bishop of Lismore (Britain)(7<sup>th</sup> c.)

St. [Milburga](#), Abbess of Much Wenlock (England)(c. 722)

Martyr [Solomon](#), King of Brittany (434)

Martyr [Solomon](#) (III), King of Brittany (874)

Ven. [Amand](#) of Coly (France)(6<sup>th</sup> c.)

Virgin-martyr [Cyneburga](#) of Gloucester (England) (710)

Virgin-martyr [Eurosia](#) (Orosia) of Jaca (Spain)(714)

St. [Gallicanus](#), bishop of Embrun (France)(c.541)

Ven. [Gallicanus](#) of Ostia (Italy)(c.362)

Hieromartyr [Gohard](#), bishop of Nantes (France)(843)

Martyr [Lucy](#) and 20 companions in Rome (c. 280)

St. [Maximus](#), bishop of Turin (c. 470)

St. [Prosper](#) of Aquitaine (c. 460)

St. [Prosper](#), bishop of Reggio (Italy) (c. 460)

St. [Selyf](#), hermit in Cornwall (6<sup>th</sup> c.)

## Social Team for July 2

Team 4 – Vallandingham, Tony Papadakis, Andrew & Katy, Joseph Frey. Thank you!

## Follow Our Diocese On-Line

Diocesan Website: <http://www.acrod.org>

Camp Nazareth: <http://www.campnazareth.org>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/acroddiocese>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/acrodnews>

You Tube: <https://youtube.com/acroddiocese>

***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, 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, and those in need of our prayers. (Please advise Fr. Joseph of changes.)