



ALL-MERCIFUL SAVIOR MISSION NEWSLETTER

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SEVENTEENTH SUNDAY OF PENTECOST, OCT. 16, 2005

civil date / church date



THIS WEEK'S CALENDAR

Oct. 16 / Oct. 3	SUNDAY	17th of Pentecost. Tone 8. St. Dionysius the Areopagite, bishop, martyr. Service 10 a.m.
Oct. 17 / Oct. 4	Monday	New-martyrs Sts. James, Michael, Nicholas, and Tikhon, priests (+ 1937)
Oct. 18 / Oct. 5	Tuesday	Holy Hierarchs of Moscow. St. Gabriel, archimandrite of Moscow, +1959.
Oct. 19 / Oct. 6	Wednesday	<i>Fast, OW*</i> St. Thomas the Apostle. Icon of the Theotokos "O All-Hymned Mother."
Oct. 20 / Oct. 7	Thursday	Sts. Sergius & Bacchus, soldiers, martyrs of Syria.
Oct. 21 / Oct.. 8	Friday	<i>Fast</i> St. Pelagia, penitent, nun of Jerusalem, who lived on the Mt. of Olives.
Oct. 22 / Oct. 9	Saturday	Holy Apostle James, son of Alphaeus. Vigil 6:30 p.m.

* *Fast, OW means that oil and wine are allowed that day. *Fast, FOW means fish is also allowed that day.*

EASTERN ORTHODOXY FACT SHEET PART 4

Fasting. An important spiritual practice is fasting, especially in the season of Great Lent. There are four fasting seasons in the year (Great Lent, the six weeks before Easter or Pascha; the Apostles' Fast in early summer; the Dormition Fast in honor of the Virgin Mary, in the late summer; and the Nativity Fast, the six weeks preceding Christmas).

Forgiveness. Both formally at times in church, and at home, the asking of forgiveness from those one has offended is extremely important. Also, the seal of God's forgiveness is sought by repentance before God during confession of sins to a Priest. Harboring hatred disqualifies a believer from approaching to take Communion.

Holy Communion. In the devotional life of Orthodox faithful, Communion is approached with more care and awe than is typical in mainstream Western church life. Local traditions vary, but involve special fasting, required personal confession of sins, reconciliation with God and others, and—in many places—Communion is taken only rarely, as if to avoid a familiarity that would take the awesome Mystery for granted.

Candles. At home and in church, Orthodox love to light candles in connection with praying. The candle recalls Jesus as light of the world and is a reminder that prayer must be warm-hearted and fervent.

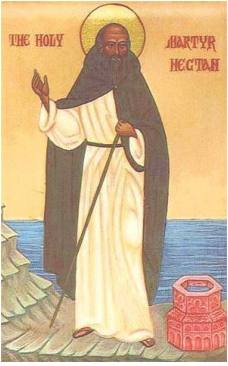
Community Life. Worship is very liturgical and reverent (much of what the Priest does, for example, is chanted behind a wall covered with icons, the people either seeing him through a door or not seeing him, a curtain being drawn). It celebrates Divine goodness and Divine things and does not focus, other than prayers for important needs, on re-living the quotidian human experiences of the week. Yet Orthodox church life is very communal, there is emphasis on the shared elements of a rich tradition, and little emphasis on individual preferences or experimentation in practices to suit individual tastes. Personhood is conceived of within a familial relationship with God, family, and church family. The Priest and even the Bishop has more of a direct, father role than in most Western-originating churches. In America, the communal aspect of Orthodoxy is sometimes weaker than in Orthodox homelands. (*Greek Archdiocese website & Fr. Aidan Keller*)

NEWS

- The website for All-Merciful Savior is <http://www.allmercifulsavior.com>. This week the **Western Saints Icon Project**, which Fr. Aidan began in 1998, was again expanded to include 32 new Saints.

- Today is the first day of our new **Sunday School** at 12:00 noon. The service will last till about 11:30, then there will be a chance for refreshments and for the kids to unwind a bit, before Mary-Martha and Maria Sola begin their catechism.

ST. NECTAN



Some years ago a student went with a friend to stay for a few days in the Devonshire countryside where his parents had a summer cottage. Together they visited the nearby village church of Hartland and the holy well of St Nectan. Now this Saint is much venerated in this corner of North Devon to this day. He was a sixth century Welsh hermit, the most illustrious of the twenty-four descendants of the legendary Welsh chieftain St Brychan, many of whom are venerated as Saints. Nectan left home quite young and sailed to North Devon, seeking solitude in the dense forests there. For many years his presence was unknown. He built a small hut near a stream and lived on wild berries. A farmer whom he helped by finding his pigs pitied him for his frugal life and he gave Nectan a cow. Not long after two thieves came to hear of this and planned to steal the cow. They beheaded Nectan who, to their intense horror, picked up his head and carried it back to his hut. Stones in the local stream show red marks to this day as a witness to the crime.

People in the area feel that St Nectan is still very much alive. Every year, on June 7th, the day of his death, a special service is held in Hartland. The children walk in procession around the church carrying purple foxgloves as a symbol of the Saint's blood. Several stories are current amongst the villagers, especially one that says that St Nectan hated blasphemy so much that he prayed that the tongue of a blasphemer should swell in his throat and choke him till he died.

Now let us return to this incident that happened only a few years ago. This student's friend, not being a believer, scoffed openly against all he heard about St Nectan. Especially when he was told about the Saint's hatred of blasphemy. However, the morning after he had been told this story, the family waited for a long time for him to come down to breakfast and began to be concerned. Finally the young man appeared on the stairs, a terrified look on his white face, unable to speak, pointing to his mouth. Everyone tried to help him until finally he was able to express a few words. Apparently he had woken in the night with a severe pain in his tongue which started to swell more and more, so much that he began to choke and thought he would die. His repentant feelings as he remembered St Nectan's curse can be imagined and it was only those feelings of remorse that preserved him from death. – from an Orthodox nun in England, from the website “Orthodox England”

TEACHINGS OF ST. JOHN CASSIAN ON THE 8 PASSIONS--PART 2

Fornication (continued). ... Triumph over this passion is dependent upon a complete cleansing of the heart, from which—according to the word of the Lord—flows the poison of this sickness. “For out of the heart” says He, “proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications.” (Matthew 15:19). And indeed, if every success in virtue is the work of God’s grace and the overcoming of various passions is His victory, then to acquire chastity and to prevail over carnal passion is more so the work of a special grace of God, about which the Holy Fathers, experienced in the cleansing of the soul from this passion, give witness. For not to feel the sting of the flesh while still living in the flesh is, in a way, akin to coming out of the body. That is why it is impossible for a person to fly upwards into the heavenly heights of perfection on his own wings, if the Lord’s grace doesn’t extricate him from the earthly quagmire. Because there is no virtue through which people are more equated to the Angels than that of acquiring chastity.

What serves as an indicator of purity and the attainment of perfection in a person is when a person, at rest or during a pleasant sleep, does not have any images of a seductive nature, or, having appeared, these images do not arouse in him any carnal desire. However, involuntary desires, although not considered a sin, indicate that the soul has not yet achieved perfection, and that the roots of passion have not yet been eradicated.

The level of chastity’s worth determines the level of force of the enemies’ slander raised against it. That’s why we must, with all zeal, not only be temperate in everything, but continually be penitent and have prayerful lamentations in our hearts so that the blessed dew of the Holy Spirit, descending into the heart, cools and extinguishes the furnace of our flesh, which the Babylonian king (the devil) unceasingly tries to fire up. (ref.: king Nabuchodonosor had the 3 Youths thrown in a furnace; they lived. Next week: Greed)

SCRIPTURES THIS WEEK

Today.: 2 Corinthians 6:16-17:1; Matthew 15:21-28

Mon. Philippians 2:12-16; Luke 6:24-30

Tue. Philippians 2:17-23; Luke 6:37-45

Wed. Philippians 2:24-30; Luke 6:46-7:1

Thu. Philippians 3:1-8; Luke 7:17-30

Fri. Philippians 3:8-19; Luke 7:31-35

Sat. 1 Corinthians 15:39-45; Luke 4:31-36

Troparion, tone 8. O All-Merciful Saviour, Thou Luminary like the sun: | Through the light of Thy radiance grant us eloquence, | that with pure conscience we may sing praises on Thy feast all-divine, | glorifying Thee the only-begotten Son, and the consubstantial Spirit; | for Thou givest us peace and great mercy.

Kontakion, tone 4. I committed every abomination, O All-Merciful Saviour, | and fell into the pit of despair. | Yet I groan from the depths of my heart | and cry to Thee, O Word: | Hasten, O Merciful One, | and quickly help us, | for merciful art Thou!

Troparion, tone 8. O All-Merciful Saviour, Thou Luminary like the sun: | Through the light of Thy radiance grant us eloquence, | that with pure conscience we may sing praises on Thy feast all-divine, | glorifying Thee the only-begotten Son, and the consubstantial Spirit; | for Thou givest us peace and great mercy. **Kontakion, tone 4.** I committed every abomination, O All- Merciful Saviour, | and fell into the pit of despair. | Yet I groan from the depths of my heart | and cry to Thee, O Word: | Hasten, O Merciful One, | and quickly help us, | for merciful art Thou!