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READER'S TYPIKA ON SUNDAY, JANUARY 10, 2021

(31st Sunday after Pentecost)

The Sunday after the Theophany of Christ

Leader: Through the prayers of our holy fathers, Lord Jesus Christ our God, have mercy on us, and save us.

Reader: Amen.

THE TRISAGION PRAYERS

People: Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal: have mercy on us. (*Thrice*)

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. Both now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen

All-holy Trinity, have mercy on us. Lord, cleanse us from our sins. Master, pardon our iniquities. Holy One, visit and heal our infirmities for thy Name's sake.

Lord, have mercy. (*Thrice*)

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. Both now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy Name; thy kingdom come; thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.

Leader: O Lord, Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on us.

All: Amen.

Reader: Lord, have mercy. (*12 times*)

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. Both now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

O come, let us worship and fall down before God our King.

O come, let us worship and fall down before Christ, our King and our God.

O come, let us worship and fall down before the Very Christ, our King and our God.

THE FIRST ANTIPHON: PSALM 102

Reader: Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me bless His holy name. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all that He hath done for thee, Who is gracious unto all thine iniquities, Who healeth all thine infirmities, Who redeemeth thy life from corruption, Who crowneth thee with mercy and compassion, Who fulfilleth thy desire with good things; thy youth shall be renewed as the eagle's. The Lord performeth deeds of mercy, and executeth judgement for all them that are wronged. He hath made His ways known unto Moses, unto the sons of Israel the things that He hath willed. Compassionate and merciful is the Lord, long-suffering and plenteous in mercy; not unto the end will He be angered, neither unto eternity will He be wroth. Not according to our iniquities hath He dealt with us, neither according to our sins hath He rewarded us. For according to the height of heaven from the earth, the Lord hath made His mercy to prevail over them that fear Him. As far as the east is from the west, so far hath He removed our iniquities from us. Like as a father hath compassion upon his sons, so hath the Lord had compassion upon them

that fear Him; for He knoweth whereof we are made, He hath remembered that we are dust. As for man, his days are as the grass; as a flower of the field, so shall he blossom forth. For when the wind is passed over it, then it shall be gone, and no longer will it know the place thereof. But the mercy of the Lord is from eternity, even unto eternity, upon them that fear Him. And His righteousness is upon sons of sons, upon them that keep His testament and remember His commandments to do them. The Lord in heaven hath prepared His throne, and His kingdom ruleth over all. Bless the Lord, all ye His angels, mighty in strength, that perform His word, to hear the voice of His words. Bless the Lord, all ye His hosts, His ministers that do His will. Bless the Lord, all ye His works, in every place of His dominion.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. Both now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

And again: Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me bless His holy Name; blessed art Thou, O Lord.

THE SECOND ANTIPHON: PSALM 145

Reader: Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.

Praise the Lord, O my soul. I will praise the Lord in my life, I will chant unto my God for as long as I have my be-ing. Trust ye not in princes, in the sons of men, in whom there is no salvation. His spirit shall go forth, and he shall return unto his earth. In that day all his thoughts shall perish. Blessed is he of whom the God of Jacob is his help, whose hope is in the Lord his God, Who hath made heaven and the earth, the sea and all that is therein, Who keepeth truth unto eternity, Who executeth judgement for the wronged, Who giveth food unto the hungry. The Lord looseth the fettered; the Lord maketh wise the blind; the Lord setteth aright the fallen; the Lord loveth the righteous; the Lord preserveth the proselytes. He shall adopt for His own the orphan and widow, and the way of sinners shall He destroy. The Lord shall be king unto eternity; thy God, O Sion, unto generation and generation.

Both now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

THE HYMN OF JUSTINIAN

Choir: Only-begotten Son and Word of God, who art im-mortal, who for our salvation willed to be incarnate of the Holy Theotokos and ever-virgin Mary, and without change became man; and wast crucified, O Christ our God, and trampled down death by death; who art one of the Holy Trinity, glorified together with the Father and the Holy Spirit: save us.

THE BEATITUDES IN TONE SIX

In Thy kingdom remember us, O Lord, when Thou comest in Thy kingdom.

- Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
- Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted.

For the Resurrection in Tone Six

Verse 10: Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.

Remember me, my God and Saviour, when Thou comest into Thy Kingdom and save me as Thou alone lovest mankind.

Verse 9: Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled.

Through the wood of the Cross Thou hast saved again Adam who was beguiled by the tree and the thief as he cried aloud: Remember me, O Lord, in Thy Kingdom.

Verse 8: Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy.

O Giver of life, having broken the gates and chains of hell, Thou, Saviour, hast made all men rise crying aloud: Glory to Thy Resurrection.

Verse 7: Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.

Do Thou Who hast by Thy burial and Thy Resurrection despoiled death, and filled all things with joy, remember me as Thou art compassionate.

Verse 6: Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the sons of God.

When the women bearing myrrh came to the tomb they heard an angel crying: Christ is risen filling the whole world with light.

Verse 5: Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Let us all praise with one accord Christ nailed to the wood of the Cross thus delivering the world from error.

For the Feast¹ in Tone Two

Verse 4: Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake.

When an innumerable multitude came to be baptized of John, he stood in their midst and called unto them that stood about: O ye disobedient people, who hath shown you to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth worthy fruits unto Christ, for He is now present and granteth peace.

Verse 3: Rejoice, and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in the heavens.

The Husbandman and Artificer, standing as one man in the midst of the many, searcheth out their hearts; and He hath taken His winnowing fan in His hand, and most wisely purgeth the universal threshing floor, burning up the unfruitful and granting life everlasting unto them that bring forth good fruit.

Verse 2: Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.

The Maker, seeing him whom His own fingers fit together // In the gloom of transgressions, in cords none escapeth, // Litteth him up and setteth him on His shoulders, // Washing him clean now in mighty-flowing eddies, // From the ancient shame of Adam's ill condition.

Verse 1: Both now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

Let us with rev'rence earnestly run with ardour // To the undefiled fountains of the stream of salvation, // And we shall observe the Word, born of the Pure One, // As He offereth a draught for our divine thirst, // Which doth gently heal the disease of the whole world.

THE SUNDAY EISODIKON

Verse: O come, let us worship and fall down before Christ.

Choir: Save us, O Son of God, Who art risen from the dead, who sing to thee: Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia.

Apolytikia:

RESURRECTIONAL APOLYTIKION IN TONE SIX

When Mary stood at Thy grave, looking for Thy sacred body, angelic powers shone above Thy revered tomb; and the soldiers who were to keep guard became as dead men. Thou led Hades captive and wast not tempted thereby. Thou didst meet the Virgin and didst give life to the world, O Thou, Who art risen from the dead, O Lord, glory to Thee.

¹ Troparia from 5th Ode of both Canons of the Feast (cf. St. Sabbas' Typikon).

APOLYTIKION OF THE THEOPHANY OF CHRIST IN TONE ONE

When Thou, O Lord, wast baptized in the Jordan, worship of the Trinity wast made manifest; for the voice of the Father bore witness to Thee, calling Thee His beloved Son. And the Spirit in the likeness of a dove confirmed the truth of His word. O Christ our God, Who hath appeared and enlightened the world, glory to Thee.

APOLYTIKION OF ST. MARY MAGDALENE IN TONE ONE

*(**The soldiers standing guard**)*

When Christ God had been born for our sakes from the Virgin, thou faith-fully didst follow Him, keeping His statutes and heeding His sacred laws, O august Mary Magdalene. Hence, as we today observe thy holy remembrance, we receive the loosing of our sins and transgressions through thy holy prayer(s) for us.

THE TRISAGION HYMN

Holy God, Holy mighty, Holy Immortal have mercy on us. (*thrice*)

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, both now and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

Holy Immortal have mercy on us.

Holy God, Holy mighty, Holy Immortal have mercy on us.

THE APOSTOLOS & THE GOSPEL

PROKEIMENON IN TONE 1

Let Thy mercy, O Lord, be upon us, according as we have hoped in Thee. (*Ps.32:22*) *{twice}*

Verse: Rejoice in the Lord, O ye righteous; praise is meet for the upright. (*Ps.32:1*)

Let Thy mercy, O Lord, be upon us, according as we have hoped in Thee.

APOSTOLOS FOR THE SUNDAY AFTER THEOPHANY:

Reader: The reading is from the Epistle of St. Paul to the Ephesians §224A (4:7-13).

Brethren, grace was given to each of us according to the measure of Christ's gift. Therefore it is said, "When He ascended on high He led a host of captives, and He gave gifts to men." (In saying, "He ascended," what does it mean but that He had also descended into the lower parts of the earth? He who descended is He who also ascended far above all the heavens, that He might fill all things.) And His gifts were that some should be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.

ALLELUIA, IN TONE 5

Choir: Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia.

Verse 1: Of Thy mercies, O Lord, will I sing for ever. Unto generation and generation will I declare Thy truth with my mouth. (*Ps.88:1,2*)

Choir: Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia.

Verse 2: For Thou hast said: Mercy shall be built up for ever. In the heavens shall Thy truth be established. (*Ps.88:3*)

Choir: Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia.

GOSPEL FOR THE SUNDAY AFTER THEOPHANY:

Reader: The reading is from the Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew §8 (4:12-17).

Choir: Glory the Thee O Lord, Glory to Thee.

Reader: At that time, when Jesus heard that John had been arrested, he withdrew into Galilee; and leaving Nazareth he went and dwelt in Capernaum by the sea, in the territory of Zebulon and Naphtali, so that what was spoken by the prophet Isaiah might be fulfilled: “The land of Zebulon and the land of Naphtali, toward the sea, across the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles—the people who sat in darkness have seen a great light, and for those who sat in the region and shadow of death light has dawned.” From that time Jesus began to preach, saying, “Repent, for the kingdom of Heaven is at hand.”

Choir: Glory to Thee O Lord, Glory to Thee.

Then we sing the following, in tone 6

Choir: Remember us, O Lord, when Thou comest in Thy kingdom.

- Remember us, O Master, when Thou comest in Thy kingdom.
- Remember us, O Holy One, when Thou comest in Thy kingdom.

The heavenly choir praiseth Thee and saith: Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord of Sabaoth; heaven and earth are full of Thy glory.

Verse: Come unto Him, and be enlightened and your faces shall not be ashamed.

The heavenly choir praiseth Thee and saith: Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord of Sabaoth; heaven and earth are full of Thy glory.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.

The choir of Holy angels and archangels, with all the heavenly hosts praiseth Thee and saith: Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord of Sabaoth; heaven and earth are full of Thy glory.

Both now and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

THE SYMBOL OF FAITH

I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible;

And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the Only-begotten, Begotten of the Father before all worlds, Light of Light, Very God of Very God, Begotten, not made; of one essence with the Father, by whom all things were made: Who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven, and was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary, and was made man; And was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate, and suffered and was buried; And the third day He rose again, according to the Scriptures; And ascended into heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of the Father; And He shall come again with glory to judge the living and the dead, Whose kingdom shall have no end.

And I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and Giver of Life, Who proceedeth from the Father, Who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified, Who spake by the Prophets;

And I believe in One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church. I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins. I look for the Resurrection of the dead, And the Life of the world to come. Amen.

Leader: Remit, pardon, forgive, O God, our offenses, both voluntary and involuntary, in deed and word, in knowledge and ignorance, by day and by night, in mind and thought; forgive us all things, for Thou art good and the Lover of mankind.

All: Amen

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy Name; thy kingdom come; thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we

forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.

Leader: O Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on us.

All: Amen.

Kontakia:

KONTAKION OF THE RESURRECTION IN TONE SIX

Having raised up all the dead out of the dark abysses by His life-bestowing hand, Christ God, the Giver of Life, hath bestowed the Resurrection upon mortal nature; for He is the Savior and Resurrection and Life of all, and the God of all.

KONTAKION OF THE THEOPHANY OF CHRIST IN TONE FOUR

*(**The original melody**)*

On this day Thou hast appeared * unto the whole world, * and Thy light, O Sovereign Lord, * is signed on us who sing Thy praise * and chant with knowledge: Thou hast now come, * Thou hast appeared, O Thou Light unapproachable.

Leader: Lord, have mercy. (12 times)

O All-Holy Trinity, the consubstantial dominion, the indivisible Kingdom, and cause of every Good: Show Thy good will even unto me a sinner; make steadfast my heart and grant it understanding, and take away mine every defilement; enlighten my mind that I may glorify, hymn, worship, and say:

Choir: One is Holy, One is Lord, Jesus Christ, to the Glory of God the Father. Amen.

PSALM 33

Reader: Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. Both now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen

I will bless the Lord at all times, His praise shall continually be in my mouth. In the Lord shall my soul be praised; let the meek hear and be glad. O magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt His name together. I sought the Lord, and He heard me, and delivered me from all my tribulations. Come unto Him, and be enlightened, and your faces shall not be ashamed. This poor man cried, and the Lord heard him, and saved him out of all his tribulations. The angel of the Lord will encamp round about them that fear Him, and will deliver them. O taste and see that the Lord is good; blessed is the man that hopeth in Him. O fear the Lord, all ye His saints; for there is no want to them that fear Him. Rich men have turned poor and gone hungry; but they that seek the Lord shall not be deprived of any good thing. Come ye children, hearken unto me; I will teach you the fear of the Lord. What man is there that desireth life, who loveth to see good days? Keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips from speaking guile. Turn away from evil, and do good; seek peace, and pursue it. The eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous, and His ears are opened unto their supplication. The face of the Lord is against them that do evil, utterly to destroy the remembrance of them from the earth. The righteous cried, and the Lord heard them, and He delivered them out of all their tribulations. The Lord is nigh unto them that are of a contrite heart, and He will save the humble of spirit. Many are the tribulations of the righteous, and the Lord shall deliver them out of them all. The Lord keepeth all their bones, not one of them shall be broken. The death of sinners is evil, and they that hate the righteous shall do wrong. The Lord will redeem the souls of His servants, and none of them will do wrong that hope in Him.

THE HYMN TO THE THEOTOKOS²

It is truly meet and right to bless thee, O Theotokos, who art ever blessed and all-blameless, and the Mother of our God. More honourable than the cherubim and more glorious beyond compare than the seraphim, thou who without corruption bearest God the Word and art truly Theotokos: We magnify thee.

READING(S)

THE AFTERFEAST OF THE THEOPHANY OF CHRIST

Theophany is the Feast which reveals the Most Holy Trinity to the world through the Baptism of the Lord (Mt.3:13-17; Mark 1:9-11; Luke 3:21-22). God the Father spoke from Heaven about the Son, the Son was baptized by Saint John the Forerunner, and the Holy Spirit descended upon the Son in the form of a dove. From ancient times this Feast was called the Day of Illumination and the Feast of Lights, since God is Light and has appeared to illumine “those who sat in darkness,” and “in the region of the shadow of death” (Mt.4:16), and to save the fallen race of mankind by grace.

In the ancient Church it was the custom to baptize catechumens at the Vespers of Theophany, so that Baptism also is revealed as the spiritual illumination of mankind.

The origin of the Feast of Theophany goes back to Apostolic times, and it is mentioned in The Apostolic Constitutions (Book V:13). From the second century we have the testimony of Saint Clement of Alexandria concerning the celebration of the Baptism of the Lord, and the night vigil before this Feast.

There is a third century dialogue about the services for Theophany between the holy martyr Hippolytus and Saint Gregory the Wonderworker. In the following centuries, from the fourth to ninth century, all the great Fathers of the Church: Gregory the Theologian, John Chrysostom, Ambrose of Milan, John of Damascus, commented on the Feast of Theophany.

The monks Joseph the Studite, Theophanes and Byzantios composed much liturgical music for this Feast, which is sung at Orthodox services even today. Saint John of Damascus said that the Lord was baptized, not because He Himself had need for cleansing, but “to bury human sin by water,” to fulfill the Law, to reveal the mystery of the Holy Trinity, and finally, to sanctify “the nature of water” and to offer us the form and example of Baptism.

On the Feast of the Baptism of Christ, the Holy Church proclaims our faith in the most sublime mystery, incomprehensible to human intellect, of one God in three Persons. It teaches us to confess and glorify the Holy Trinity, one in Essence and Undivided. It exposes and overthrows the errors of ancient teachings which attempted to explain the Creator of the world by reason, and in human terms.

The Church shows the necessity of Baptism for believers in Christ, and it inspires us with a sense of deep gratitude for the illumination and purification of our sinful nature. The Church teaches that our salvation and cleansing from sin is possible only by the power of the grace of the Holy Spirit, therefore it is necessary to preserve worthily these gifts of the grace of holy Baptism, keeping clean this priceless garb, for “As many as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ” (Gal 3:27).

² The Arabic Typikon has the usual Hymn. Alternatively (cf. St. Sabbas Typikon), we can sing the Refrain & Irmos of the 9th Ode of the 1st Canon of the Feast, in tone 1: **Magnify, O my soul, her who is more honorable and more exalted in glory than the heavenly hosts. Verily, all tongues are at a loss to praise thee properly; and every mind, even though transcending the world, is distracted in thy praise, O Theotokos. But because thou art good, accept our faith, having known our divine longing. Wherefore, since thou art the helper of Christians, we do magnify thee.**

On the day of Theophany, all foods are permitted, even if the Feast falls on a Wednesday or Friday. [From oca.org]

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OUR FATHER AMONG THE SAINTS GREGORY, BISHOP OF NYSSA

Saint Gregory, Bishop of Nyssa, was a younger brother of Saint Basil the Great (January 1). His birth and upbringing came at a time when the Arian disputes were at their height. Having received an excellent education, he was at one time a teacher of rhetoric. In the year 372, he was consecrated by Saint Basil the Great as bishop of the city of Nyssa in Cappadocia.

Saint Gregory was an ardent advocate for Orthodoxy, and he fought against the Arian heresy with his brother Saint Basil. Gregory was persecuted by the Arians, by whom he was falsely accused of improper use of church property, and thereby deprived of his See and sent to Ancyra.

In the following year Saint Gregory was again deposed in absentia by a council of Arian bishops, but he continued to encourage his flock in Orthodoxy, wandering about from place to place. After the death of the emperor Valens (378), Saint Gregory was restored to his cathedra and was joyously received by his flock. His brother Saint Basil the Great died in 379.

Only with difficulty did Saint Gregory survive the loss of his brother and guide. He delivered a funeral oration for him, and completed Saint Basil's study of the six days of Creation, the Hexameron. That same year Saint Gregory participated in the Council of Antioch against heretics who refused to recognize the perpetual virginity of the Mother of God. Others at the opposite extreme, who worshipped the Mother of God as being God Herself, were also denounced by the Council. He visited the churches of Arabia and Palestine, which were infected with the Arian heresy, to assert the Orthodox teaching about the Most Holy Theotokos. On his return journey Saint Gregory visited Jerusalem and the Holy Places.

In the year 381 Saint Gregory was one of the chief figures of the Second Ecumenical Council, convened at Constantinople against the heresy of Macedonius, who incorrectly taught about the Holy Spirit. At this Council, on the initiative of Saint Gregory, the Nicene Symbol of Faith (the Creed) was completed.

Together with the other bishops Saint Gregory affirmed Saint Gregory the Theologian as Archbishop of Constantinople.

In the year 383, Saint Gregory of Nyssa participated in a Council at Constantinople, where he preached a sermon on the divinity of the Son and the Holy Spirit. In 386, he was again at Constantinople, and he was asked to speak the funeral oration in memory of the empress Placilla. Again in 394 Saint Gregory was present in Constantinople at a local Council, convened to resolve church matters in Arabia.

Saint Gregory of Nyssa was a fiery defender of Orthodox dogmas and a zealous teacher of his flock, a kind and compassionate father to his spiritual children, and their intercessor before the courts. He was distinguished by his magnanimity, patience and love of peace.

Having reached old age, Saint Gregory of Nyssa died soon after the Council of Constantinople. Together with his great contemporaries, Saints Basil the Great and Gregory the Theologian, Saint Gregory of Nyssa had a significant influence on the Church life of his time. His sister, Saint Macrina, wrote to him: "You are renowned both in the cities, and gatherings of people, and throughout entire districts. Churches ask you for help." Saint Gregory is known in history as one of the most profound Christian thinkers of the fourth century. Endowed with philosophical talent, he saw philosophy as a means for a deeper penetration into the authentic meaning of divine revelation.

Saint Gregory left behind many remarkable works of dogmatic character, as well as sermons and discourses. He has been called “the Father of Fathers.” [From oca.org]

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OUR RIGHTEOUS FATHER MARCIAN, PRESBYTER AND STEWARD OF THE GREAT CHURCH

Saint Marcian, Presbyter of the Great Church, was born at Rome and in his youth he received a first-rate education in Constantinople. After the death of his parents, Saint Marcian used his inheritance on the building, renovation and embellishment of churches. Thus, he built a church dedicated to the holy Martyr Anastasia (December 22), richly adorned it, and had the holy relics of the saint transferred to it. He also built a church of the Great Martyr Irene (May 5), and the church of Saint Isidore.

His moral purity and strict asceticism were resented by those who were slothful and avaricious, for they regarded his life as an unspoken criticism of their own lack of virtue. However, his meekness and silence overcame their slanders and brought him to the attention of the Patriarch, who ordained Saint Marcian a presbyter and appointed him treasurer of the Church of Constantinople.

From his wealth Saint Marcian distributed generous alms, and distinguished himself by non-covetousness, denying himself in everything. In accord with the command of the Savior, he did not even have an extra set of clothes, which he might need should he be caught in inclement weather. Having received a gift of wonderworking, Saint Marcian healed the sick and cast out devils. Saint Marcian died between 472-474 and was buried at the monastery of Saint John the Forerunner at Constantinople. [From oca.org]

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OUR FATHER AMONG THE SAINTS DOMETIAN, BISHOP OF MELITENE

Saint Dometian, Bishop of Melitene, was born and lived during the sixth century, in the time of the emperor Justin the Younger. He was married but was widowed, and thereafter he became a monk and lived a strict and holy life.

At thirty years of age he was chosen bishop of the city of Melitene (in Armenia). Wise and zealous in questions of faith, strong in word and deed, Saint Dometian quickly gained fame as a good and dedicated pastor. More than once he carried out government commissions in Persia to avoid conflict with the Greeks. Beloved by all, Saint Dometian often received rich gifts, which he distributed to the poor. Both during his life and after his death in 601, Saint Dometian was glorified by God with miracles. [From oca.org]

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OUR RIGHTEOUS FATHERS PAUL OF OBNORA AND MACARIUS OF PISMA, HIS DISCIPLE

Saint Paul of Obnora, a famed disciple of Saint Sergius of Radonezh, was born at Moscow in the year 1317. From his youth he distinguished himself by his piety and kindness towards the poor and suffering. His rich parents prepared him for a secular life, but at twenty-two years of age he secretly left his parental home and received tonsure at the Nativity monastery on the Volga (in the Yaroslav diocese).

From there Paul transferred to the Holy Trinity monastery to Saint Sergius of Radonezh, spending several years with him as his disciple, obeying the holy Elder in all things. With the blessing of Saint Sergius, he settled a short distance from the monastery in a separate cell, where he spent fifteen years as a hermit. Having asked the blessing of Saint Sergius to go off into the wilderness for a quiet and solitary life, Saint Paul wandered about for a long while, seeking a place of

solitude. He wandered a great deal in the wilderness. He spent time with Saint Abraham of Chukhloma (July 20) and finally, he remained in the Komel forest.

At the Gryazovitsa River, in the hollow of an old linden tree, the monk built a small cell and dwelt there for three years in complete silence, “not giving his body rest, that he might receive future rest.” Then he moved on to the River Nurma, where he built a hut and dug a well, spending his days in vigil and prayer.

Five days out of the week he went without food, and only on Saturday and Sunday did he partake of some bread and water. The news about the hermit spread abroad, and those wishing spiritual guidance began coming to him. Despite his love for the solitary life, Saint Paul never refused anyone spiritual consolation and guidance. He was also visited by Saint Sergius of Nurma (October 7), who sought solitude with the blessing of Saint Sergius of Radonezh, and who also spent his ascetic life in these places.

With the blessing of Saint Sergius and the agreement of Metropolitan Photius, Saint Paul built the Holy Trinity church in 1414, around which a monastery sprang up (later called the Monastery of Saint Paul of Obnora). Having written a strict monastic Rule for the brethren, Saint Paul entrusted the guidance of the new monastery to his disciple Alexis, while he himself continued as before to live in a solitary cell on a hill. He remained a responsive and good counsellor for anyone needing his help. Saint Paul died at 112 years of age. His final words were, “Brethren, have love one for another and keep to the rule of the monastic community.”

The Life of the saint was written in about the year 1546, and his glorification occurred in 1547.

Saint Macarius of Pisma and Kostroma was a fellow ascetic of Saint Paul of Obnora. In the second half of the fourteenth century, he founded the Makariev Transfiguration monastery at the River Pisma on the outskirts of Kostroma. [From oca.org]

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SAINT THEOPHAN THE RECLUSE, BISHOP OF TAMBOV

George Govorov, the future Saint Theophan, was born on January 10, 1815 in the village of Chernavsk in the Orlov province where his father was a priest.

At first, George attended a primary school at Liven, then a military school. From 1837-1841 he studied at the Kiev Theological Academy, and probably visited the Monastery of the Caves several times. In these surroundings, it was not surprising that he received the monastic tonsure while he was still a student. After graduation Hieromonk Theophan was appointed rector of Kiev’s church schools, and later became rector of the seminary in Novgorod. Before he retired from teaching, Father Theophan served as a professor and Assistant Inspector at the Petersburg Academy.

Saint Theophan was not completely happy with academic work, so he asked to be relieved of his duties. He was assigned to be a member of the Russian Mission in Jerusalem. After being raised to the rank of Archimandrite, he became Rector of Olnets Seminary. Soon he was assigned as the chief priest of the embassy church in Constantinople. Saint Theophan was eventually recalled to Russia to become rector of the Petersburg Academy, and supervisor of religious education in the capital’s secular schools.

On May 9, 1859 Saint Theophan was consecrated as Bishop of Tambov, where he established a diocesan school for girls. During his time in Tambov he came to love the secluded Vysha Monastery in his diocese. In 1863 he was transferred to Vladimir and remained there for three years. He also established a diocesan school for girls at Vladimir.

The holy bishop visited parishes throughout his diocese serving, preaching, restoring churches, and sharing the joys and sorrows of his flock. It was very difficult for Bishop Theophan to live in the world and become involved with vain worldly disputes. Many abused his trust, but he could not bring himself to chastise anyone. Instead, he left such unpleasant tasks to the Archpriest of his cathedral.

He was present at the uncovering of the relics of Saint Tikhon of Zadonsk in 1861, and this made a tremendous impression on him, for he had much in common with that saint. He had loved Saint Tikhon from early childhood, and always spoke about him with great enthusiasm. When Saint Tikhon was glorified as a saint on August 13, Bishop Theophan's joy knew no bounds.

In 1866 his request to be relieved of his duties as Bishop of Vladimir was granted. He was appointed as Superior of the Vysha Monastery, but soon resigned from that position. He was permitted to live there and to celebrate services whenever he wished. He also received a pension of 1000 rubles.

As he prepared to leave his diocese, he wished to focus on his own salvation, and to concentrate on undisturbed communion with God. On July 24, 1866 he bade his diocese farewell, leaving the world for a life of reclusion, and to devote himself to writing spiritual books. Through these books, Saint Theophan has become the spiritual benefactor of all Orthodox Christians. Although he sought the Kingdom of God and His righteousness (Mt. 6:33), a reputation as a writer of great significance for the whole world was also added to him.

Bishop Theophan wrote many books, but received no profits from their sale. He tried to keep them as inexpensive as possible, and they quickly sold out. He wrote about topics which others before him had not fully treated, such as how to live a Christian life, how to overcome sinful habits, and how to avoid despair. He tried to explain the steps of spiritual perfection systematically, as one who had himself gone through these various steps. Some of his books include *The Spiritual Life and how to be attuned to it*, *The Path to Salvation*, and *Letters on the Spiritual Life*. He also translated the *Philokalia* in five volumes, and *The Sermons of St. Simeon the New Theologian*.

For the first six years in the monastery, Bishop Theophan attended all the services, including the early Liturgy. He stood still in church with his eyes closed so that he would not be distracted. He often celebrated Liturgy on Sundays and Feast Days.

Beginning in 1872, he cut off all relationships with people (except for his confessor) and no longer left his cell to attend church. He built a small chapel in his quarters and dedicated it to the Lord's Baptism. For ten years he served there on Sundays and Feast Days. For the last eleven years of his life he served every day by himself. Sometimes he would sing, and sometimes he kept completely silent.

Whenever anyone visited him on business, Bishop Theophan would reply with as few words as possible, then immerse himself in prayer. If anyone sent him money, he would distribute it to the poor, keeping only a small portion to purchase books.

Whenever he was not occupied with writing or praying, the reclusive bishop worked at carpentry or painting icons. He received from twenty to forty letters each day, and he answered all of them. He was able to discern each writer's spiritual condition, then give detailed answers to the questions of those who were struggling for the salvation of their souls.

His eyesight deteriorated in his latter years, but he did not curtail his work because of it. In the evening, his cell attendant would prepare everything for the bishop to serve Liturgy the next morning. After finishing the Liturgy, Bishop Theophan would knock on the wall to signal the cell

attendant to serve him tea. On days when there was no fasting, he would eat lunch at 1:00 P.M. This consisted of one egg and a glass of milk. At four o'clock he would have some tea, and then no more food that day.

Bishop Theophan began to get weaker at the beginning of 1894. He was still writing on the afternoon of January 6, but when the cell attendant came to check on him at 4:30 he found that the bishop had departed to the Lord.

Saint Theophan's body lay in the small church in his cell for three days, then three more days in the cathedral. There was no trace of corruption, however. He was laid to rest in the Kazan church of the Vysha Monastery.

Several of Saint Theophan's books have been translated into English, and are reliable spiritual guides for Orthodox Christians of today. Saint Theophan's gift was the ability to present the wisdom of the Fathers in terms which modern people can understand. Since he lived close to our own time, many readers find his books "more approachable" than the earlier patristic literature. He treats the life of the soul and the life of the body as a unified whole, not as two separate elements, and reveals to people the path of salvation. [From oca.org]

THE LITTLE DISMISSAL

The Leader bows toward the icon of Christ on the iconostasis, saying:

Leader: Glory to thee, O Christ our God and our Hope, glory to thee.

All: Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, both now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen. Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy. O Lord, bless.

Leader: O Thou Who deigned to be baptized by John in the Jordan for our salvation, and rose again from the dead, Christ our true God, through the intercessions of his all-immaculate and all-blameless holy Mother; of our venerable and God-bearing fathers; of the Holy Myrrh-Bearer Mary Magdalene and Equal to the Apostles, protector of this community; of our fathers among the saints Gregory, bishop of Nyssa; Marcian the priest of Constantinople; Dometian, bishop of Melitene; Venerable Paul of Obnora and Makarios of Pisma; and Bishop Theophan the Recluse, whose memory we celebrate today, and of all the saints: have mercy on us, and save us, for Thou art good and lovest mankind.

Then, facing the icon of Christ, on the iconostasis, the Leader says:

Leader: Through the prayers of our holy fathers, Lord Jesus Christ our God, have mercy on us, and save us.

All: Amen.