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READER'S TYPIKA ON SUNDAY, JANUARY 31, 2021

(34th Sunday after Pentecost & 3rd – out of 5 – Sunday before the Beginning of the Triodion¹)

The Holy and Wonderworking Unmercenaries Cyrus and John

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.

¹ From the leave-taking of Theophany, up until the beginning of the Triodion, the gospels and epistles are read in reverse order, in such a way that on the Sunday of the Publican and Pharisee we read the epistle corresponding to the 33rd Sunday after Pentecost, coupled with the gospel for the 16th Sunday of Luke. The lectionary for this period, which varies from year to year, depends on the number of Sundays and whether there are high rank commemorations on these days. In 2021 there are 5 Sundays, so the appointed readings are as follows:

- on 1st Sunday we read the Apostolos for the Saint (ordinarily, we would read the Apostolos for 29th Sunday after Pentecost), coupled with the Gospel for the 12th Sunday of Luke (“Ten Lepers”);
- on 2nd Sunday we read the Apostolos for 31st Sunday after Pentecost, coupled with the Gospel for the 14th Sunday of Luke;
- on 3rd Sunday (**today**) we read the Apostolos for 32nd Sunday after Pentecost, coupled with the Gospel for the 15th Sunday of Luke (“Zachaeus”);
- on 4th Sunday we read Apostolos for 16th Sunday after Pentecost, coupled with the Gospel for the 16th Sunday of Matthew
- on 5th (& last) Sunday we read the Apostolos for 17th Sunday after Pentecost), coupled with the Gospel for the 17th Sunday of Matthew (“Caananite Woman”).

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 ONE

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 One

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

Through food, the enemy led Adam out of Paradise; and through the Cross Christ led the thief back into it crying: 'Remember me, O Lord, when Thou comest into Thy Kingdom.'

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

I venerate Thy sufferings and glorify Thy Resurrection. With Adam and with the thief I raise a shining cry to Thee: 'Remember me, O Lord, when Thou comest into Thy Kingdom.'

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

Without sin, hast Thou been crucified, and of Thine own will hast Thou been laid in the tomb. But Thou as God hast risen raising Adam with Thyself, crying: 'Remember me, when Thou comest into Thy Kingdom.'

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

On the third day, O Christ our God, Thou hast raised from the tomb the temple of Thy body raising with Thyself Adam and those descending from him, crying: 'Remember me when Thou comest into Thy Kingdom.'

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

The women bearing myrrh came early in the morning lamenting to Thy tomb, O Christ our God, and they found there an angel in shining white seated and crying: 'What do ye seek? Christ is risen, weep no more.'

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

O Lord, Thine apostles as Thou hast ordered them were beside Thee on the Mountain and seeing Thee, O Saviour, they worshipped and Thou hast sent them forth to teach and to baptize the nations.

For Ss. Cyrus and John² in Tone Four

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.

In weak flesh made strong by the Passion of Christ, the glorious Martyrs overthrew the manslayer.

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

Receiving in spirit unmingled delight in return for the pains they suffered in the body, the Martyrs of Christ rejoiced.

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

The weakness of woman's nature was given strength by the Cross. Wherefore, they manfully triumphed over the malicious dragon.

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

Thou alone becamest the cause of good things past nature for those on earth, O Mother of God. Wherefore, we cry to thee: Rejoice.

² These troparia are from 3rd Ode of the Matins canon (cf. St. Sabbas Typikon).

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 ONE

While the stone was sealed by the Jews, and the soldiers were guarding Thy most pure body, Thou didst arise on the third day, O Savior, granting life to the world. For which cause the heavenly powers cried aloud unto Thee, O giver of life. Glory to Thy Resurrection, O Christ, glory to Thy kingdom, glory to Thy providence, O Thou Who alone art the lover of mankind.

APOLYTIKION FOR SS. CYRUS AND JOHN IN TONE FIVE

Since Thou hast given us the miracles of Thy holy Martyrs, Cyrus and John, as an invincible battlement, by their entreaties scatter the counsels of the heathen, O Christ our God, and strengthen the faith of Orthodox Christians, since Thou alone art good and the Lover of mankind.

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, 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.

SUNDAY APOSTOLOS (32ND SUNDAY):

Reader: The reading is from the First Epistle of St. Paul to Timothy §285a (4:9-15).

Timothy, my son, the saying is sure and worthy of full acceptance. For to this end we toil and strive, because we have our hope set on the living God, Who is the Savior of all men, especially of those who believe. Command and teach these things. Let no one despise your youth, but set the believers an example in speech and conduct, in love, in faith, in purity. Until I come, attend to the public reading of scripture, to preaching, to teaching. Do not neglect the gift you have, which was given you by prophetic utterance when the council of elders laid their hands upon you. Practice these duties; devote yourself to them, so that all may see your progress.

ALLELUIA, IN TONE 1

Choir: Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia.

Verse 1: O God Who givest avengement unto me and hast subdued peoples under me.

(Ps.17:48)

Choir: Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia.

Verse 2: It is He that magnifieth the salvation of His king and worketh mercy for His anointed, for David, and for his seed unto eternity. *(Ps.17:51)*

Choir: Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia.

SUNDAY GOSPEL (15TH SUNDAY OF LUKE):

Reader: The reading is from the Holy Gospel according to St. Luke §94 (19:1-10).

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

Reader: At that time, Jesus entered Jericho and was passing through. And there was a man named Zacchaeus; he was a chief tax collector, and rich. And he sought to see Who Jesus was, but could not, on account of the crowd, because he was small of stature. So he ran on ahead and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see Jesus, for He was to pass that way. And when Jesus came to the place, He looked up and said to him, "Zacchaeus, make haste and come down; for I must stay at your house today." So he made haste and came down, and received Him joyfully. And when they saw it they all murmured, "He has gone in to be the guest of a man who is a sinner." And Zacchaeus stood and said to the Lord, "Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have defrauded anyone of anything, I restore it fourfold." And Jesus said to him, "Today salvation has come to this house, since he also is a son of Abraham; for the Son of man came to seek and to save the lost."

Choir: Glory the 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 ONE

As God, Thou didst arise from the tomb in glory, and Thou didst raise the world together with Thyself. And mortal nature praised Thee as God, and death was obliterated. And Adam danceth for joy, O Master, and Eve, now freed from fetters, rejoiceth as she crieth out: Thou, O Christ, dost grant resurrection unto all.

KONTAKION OF SS. CYRUS AND JOHN IN TONE THREE

*(**On this day the Virgin**)*

From divine grace, ye received * the gift to work awesome marvels: * thus, O Saints, throughout the world * ye ever work signs and wonders; * and ye cut out all our passions * and all our sufferings * with an invisible surgery, for ye truly * are divinely-wise physicians, * O godly Cyrus, * and John, beloved of God.

KONTAKION OF THE PRESENTATION OF CHRIST IN TONE ONE

Thou, O Christ God, Who by Thy Birth, didst sanctify the Virgin's womb, and, as is meet, didst bless Simeon's arms, and didst also come to save us; preserve Thy fold in wars, and confirm them whom Thou didst love, for Thou alone art the Lover of mankind.

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 THEOTOKOS

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 HOLY AND WONDERWORKING UNMERCENARIES CYRUS AND JOHN,

AND THOSE WITH THEM: THE HOLY MARTYR ATHANASIA

AND HER THREE DAUGHTERS, THE VIRGINS THEODOTA, THEOCTISTE, AND EUDOXIA

Saint Cyrus was a noted physician in the city of Alexandria, where he had been born and raised. He was a Christian and he treated the sick without charge, not only curing their bodily afflictions, but also healing their spiritual infirmities. He would say, "Whoever wishes to avoid being ill should refrain from sin, for sin is often the cause of bodily illness." Preaching the Gospel, the holy physician converted many pagans to Christ. During the persecution by Diocletian (284-305), Saint Cyrus withdrew into Arabia, where he became a monk. He continued to heal people by his prayer, having received from God the gift to heal every sickness.

In the city of Edessa at this time lived the soldier John, a pious Christian. When the persecution started, he went to Jerusalem and there he heard about Saint Cyrus. He began to search for him, going first to Alexandria and then to Arabia. When Saint John finally found Saint Cyrus, he remained with him and became his faithful follower.

They learned of the arrest of the Christian woman Athanasia and her three young daughters. Theoctiste was fifteen; Theodota, was thirteen; and Eudoxia, was eleven. Saints Cyrus and John

hastened to the prison to help them. They were concerned that faced with torture, the women might renounce Christ.

Saints Cyrus and John gave them courage to endure what lay before them. Learning of this, the ruler of the city arrested Saints Cyrus and John, and seeing their steadfast and fearless confession of faith in Christ, he brought Athanasia and her daughters to witness their torture. The tyrant did not refrain from any form of torture against the holy martyrs. The women were not frightened by the sufferings of Saints Cyrus and John, but courageously continued to confess Christ. They were flogged and then beheaded, receiving their crowns of martyrdom.

At the same place they executed the Holy Unmercenaries Cyrus and John. Christians buried their bodies in the church of the holy Evangelist Mark. In the fifth century the relics of Saints Cyrus and John were transferred from Canopis to Manuphin. Later on their relics were transferred to Rome, and from there to Munchen (Munich) (another account is located under June 28).

Saints Cyrus and John are invoked by those who have difficulty in sleeping. [From oca.org]

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THE HOLY NEW MARTYR ELIAS ARDOUNIS OF KALAMATA IN PELOPONNESUS (+ 1686)

Saint Elias was a barber in the town of Kalamata in Peloponnesos and much respected for his shrewd good sense and experience in political affairs by the Turkish officials of the place. One day, when the latter had come to see him, Elias urged them to do all they could to reduce the burden of taxation on Christians which the Turks had imposed on them, or many would be led to deny their Christian faith and become Muslim merely to be relieved financially. The discussion grew heated and Elias was carried away to the extent of declaring, almost jokingly, that he himself was inclined to deny his faith in return for a fez. One of the Turks took him at his word and handed him the headgear, whereupon poor, benighted Elias adhered to Islam in the presence of the judge and to the sorrow of the local Christians.

Not long after, he was moved to repentance when he realized the gravity of what he had done, and traveled to Mount Athos. There he found a spiritual father and confessed with many tears his apostasy and once again acknowledged Orthodoxy; he was also chrismated and received the Body and Blood of Christ. Elias eventually became a monk on Mount Athos, where he led a virtuous life for eight years. However, as he could not attain peace of conscience, he received the blessing of his spiritual father to offer himself for martyrdom.

Elias returned to Kalamata, and made his presence known by walking around the bazaars of the Turks. When he was called Moustafa and questioned why he was gone for so long, he responded he was no longer Moustafa but an Orthodox Christian. With this he began to ridicule Islam and confess Christ as the true God. They in turn struck and pushed at him, and dragged him to the judge. Presented before the judge, Elias confessed Christ in like manner. For this he was imprisoned and shackled in chains for many days. After the second session of questioning, the judge saw his steadfastness of faith, so he was condemned to be burned to death in a slow fire. On his way to the flames a Turk slashed his back with the sword, but he gained greater courage for the trial and proceeded along joyfully singing the Psalms of David. But when he was thrown into the pile of green wood, he was suffocated almost immediately and his hair, beard and monastic cassock were left miraculously untouched by the flames. This occurred on January 31, 1686. That night a heavenly light appeared over his body, of which it was said by the Christians that since the earthly fire could not burn him that God sent His heavenly light to do the job.

The local Christians ransomed his body with money and buried him with great devotion, and as they were in procession the entire area was filled with a beautiful aroma coming from his relics. A church was later built over his tomb. His holy skull is in the Holy Monastery of Voukkanou in Messinia and is processed on the Sunday of the Holy Myrrhbearers, which is the day of his feast (February 2 is also a major feast in Kalamata because of the Cathedral of the Presentation of Christ). He was also martyred next to the Church of the Holy Forty Martyrs, which was built by the Christians in honor of the Saint, but was named after the Holy Forty Martyrs for fear of the Turks; after the Turkish occupation it was named in honor of Saint Elias.

At Kalamata, the mother of a certain teacher, named Dionysios Podaros, who recorded his martyrdom, took a portion of the Saint's relics and kept it in her home. There, one night, she saw a great light which shone to the glory of the Martyr and our Lord Jesus Christ. [From Mystagogy]

* * *

OUR FATHER AMONG THE SAINTS NIKITA OF THE KIEV CAVES, BISHOP OF NOVGOROD

Saint Nikita, Bishop of Novgorod, in his youth entered the Kiev Caves monastery and soon wished to become a hermit. The igumen cautioned him that such an exploit was premature for a young monk, but he, trusting in his own strength, would not listen.

In the hermitage Saint Nikita fell into temptation. The devil appeared to him in the guise of an angel, and the inexperienced ascetic bowed down to him. The devil gave him advice, speaking as if to one who had attained perfection: "Don't bother to pray, just read and study other things, and I shall pray in your place." He stood near the hermit, giving the appearance of praying. The deceived monk Nikita came to surpass everyone in his knowledge of the Books of the Old Testament, but he would not speak about the Gospel, nor did he wish to hear it read.

The Elders of the Kiev Caves went to the monk, and after they had prayed, they expelled the devil from him. After this Saint Nikita remained a hermit with the blessing of the Elders, and lived in strict fasting and prayer, surpassing everyone in obedience and humility.

Through the prayer of the holy Elders, the merciful Lord brought him up from the depths of his fall to a high degree of spiritual perfection. Afterwards, he was made Bishop of Novgorod, and for his holy life God granted him the gift of wonderworking. Once, during a time of drought, he brought rain from the heavens by his prayers. Another time, he stopped a fire in the city. Saint Nikita guided the Novgorod flock for thirteen years, and then peacefully fell asleep in the Lord in 1109.

In 1558, during the reign of Tsar Ivan Vasilievich, Bishop Nikita was glorified as a saint. His relics now rest in the church of the holy Apostle Philip in Novgorod. He is also commemorated on May 14.

Saint Nikita is invoked for protection against lightning and fire. People also turn to the Most Holy Theotokos, glorified in her "Unburnt Bush" Icon (September 4), for this purpose. [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 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 and Equal to the Apostles Mary Magdalene, protector of this community; of the Holy and Wonderworking Unmercenaries Cyrus and John; Martyrs Athanasia and her daughters Theodota, Theoktiste and Eudoxia of Egypt; New-martyr Elias in the Peloponnesus; and Nikita of the Kiev Caves, bishop of Novgorod, 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.