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READER'S TYPIKA ON SUNDAY, MAY 9, 2021

(1<sup>st</sup> Sunday after Pascha)

*Sunday of Thomas the Apostle, Called "The Twin"*

THE OPENING

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

*Reader:* Amen.

*Leader & Choir:* Christ is risen from the dead, trampling down Death by death, and upon those in the tombs bestowing life! (*thrice*)

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 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.
- Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.
- Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled.

For Thomas Sunday<sup>1</sup> in Tone One

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

By Thy Cross Thou didst render us new instead of old, and incorruptible instead of corruptible, O Christ; and Thou didst command us to live worthily in newness of life.

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

By Thy Cross Thou didst render us new instead of old, and incorruptible instead of corruptible, O Christ; and Thou didst command us to live worthily in newness of life.

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<sup>1</sup> These troparia are taken from the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> Ode of Matins Canon, cf. Pentecostarion.

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

Though enclosed within a grave in Thy circumscribable flesh, Thou didst arise, O Christ, Who art un-circumscribable; and while the doors were shut, Thou didst come unto Thy disciples, O Almighty One.

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

Having preserved intact Thy wounds, which Thou didst endure willingly for us, Thou didst show them unto Thy disciples, O Christ, as a witness of Thy glorious Resurrection.

*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.*

Thou didst not leave Thomas immersed in the depth of unbelief, O Master, when he stretched forth his hands to examine Thee.

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

Thou didst not leave Thomas immersed in the depth of unbelief, O Master, when he stretched forth his hands to examine Thee.

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

Our Saviour said: When ye touch Me, see that I have bones and flesh; I am not subject to change.

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

Thomas felt Thy side; and believing, he recognized Thee, though he was not present when Thou didst first come, O our Saviour.

#### THE FESTAL EISODIKON

*Verse:* In congregations bless ye God, the Lord from the well-springs of Israel.

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

#### *Apolytikia:*

#### APOLYTIKION FOR THOMAS SUNDAY IN TONE SEVEN

While the tomb was sealed, Thou didst shine forth from it, O Life. While the doors were closed, Thou didst come in to Thy Disciples, O Christ God, Resurrection of all, renewing in us through them an upright spirit, according to the greatness of Thy mercy.

*Do not sing the Apolytikion of the Patron Saint!*

#### 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 3

Great is our Lord, and great is His strength, and of His understanding there is no measure. (*Ps. 146:5*) {*twice*}

*Verse:* Praise ye the Lord, for a psalm is a good thing; let praise be sweet unto our God. (*Ps. 146:1*)

Great is our Lord, and great is His strength, and of His understanding there is no measure.

APOSTOLOS FOR THOMAS' SUNDAY:

*Reader:* The reading is from the Acts of the Apostles §14 (5:12-20)

In those days, many signs and wonders were done among the people by the hands of the Apostles. And they were all together in Solomon's Portico. None of the rest dared join them, but the people held them in high honor. And more than ever believers were added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women, so that they even carried out the sick into the streets, and laid them on beds and pallets, that as Peter came by at least his shadow might fall on some of them. The people also gathered from the towns around Jerusalem, bringing the sick and those afflicted with unclean spirits, and they were all healed. But the high priest rose up and all who were with him, that is, the party of the Sadducees, and filled with jealousy they arrested the Apostles and put them in the common prison. But at night an angel of the Lord opened the prison doors and brought them out and said, "Go and stand in the temple and speak to the people all the words of this Life."

ALLELUIA, IN TONE 8

*Choir:* Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia.

*Verse 1:* Come let us rejoice in the Lord, let us shout with jubilation unto God our Saviour. (Ps.94:1)

*Choir:* Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia.

*Verse 2:* For the Lord is a great God and a great king over all the earth. (Ps.94:3)

*Choir:* Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia.

GOSPEL FOR THOMAS' SUNDAY:

*Reader:* The reading is from the Holy Gospel according to St. John §65 (20:19-31)

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

*Reader:* On the evening of that day, the first day of the week, the doors being shut where the Disciples were, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said to them, "Peace be with you." When He had said this, He showed them His hands and His side. Then the Disciples were glad when they saw the Lord. Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, even so I send you." And when He had said this, He breathed on them, and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained."

Now Thomas, one of the Twelve, called the Twin, was not with them when Jesus came. So the other Disciples told him, "We have seen the Lord." But he said to them, "Unless I see in His hands the print of the nails, and place my finger in the mark of the nails, and place my hand in His side, I will not believe."

Eight days later, His Disciples were again in the house, and Thomas was with them. The doors were shut, but Jesus came and stood among them, and said, "Peace be with you." Then He said to Thomas, "Put your finger here, and see My hands; and put out your hand, and place it in my side; do not be faithless, but believing." Thomas answered Him, "My Lord and my God!" Jesus said to him, "Have you believed because you have seen Me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet believe."

Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the Disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His Name.

*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.

### KONTAKION OF PASCHA IN TONE EIGHT

O Immortal One, when Thou didst descend into the tomb, Thou didst destroy the power of Hades; and Thou didst rise victorious, O Christ God. Thou hast said to the ointment-bearing women: Rejoice! And Thou gavest peace to Thy Disciples, O Bestower of Resurrection to those Who had fallen.

*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

*Instead of "It is truly meet..." we sing the Irmos of the 9<sup>th</sup> ode of the Matins canon from the Pentecostarion, in tone 1*

O most radiant lamp, the Theotokos, the immeasurable honor, which is more exalted than all creatures, with praises do we magnify thee.

### READINGS

#### ANTI-PASCHA (THOMAS SUNDAY)

Though the doors were shut at the dwelling where the disciples were gathered for fear of the Jews on the evening of the Sunday after the Passover, our Saviour wondrously entered and stood in their midst, and greeted them with His customary words, "Peace be unto you." Then He showed unto them His hands and feet and side; furthermore, in their presence, He took some fish and a honeycomb and ate before them, and thus assured them of His bodily Resurrection. But Thomas, who was not then present with the others, did not believe their testimony concerning Christ's Resurrection, but said in a decisive manner, "Except I shall see in His hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into His side, I will not believe."

Wherefore, after eight days, that is, on this day, when the disciples were again gathered together and Thomas was with them, the Lord Jesus came while the doors were shut, as He did formerly. Standing in their midst, He said, "Peace be unto you"; then He said to Thomas, "Bring hither thy finger, and behold My hands; and bring hither thy hand, and thrust it into My side: and be not unbelieving, but believing."

And Thomas, beholding and examining carefully the hands and side of the Master, cried out with faith, "My Lord and my God." Thus he clearly proclaimed the two natures – human and divine – of the God-man (Luke 24:36–49; John 20:19–29).

This day is called Antipascha (meaning "in the stead of Pascha," not "in opposition to Pascha") because with this day, the first Sunday after Pascha, the Church consecrates every Sunday of the year to the commemoration of Pascha, that is, the Resurrection. [From tyoos.org]

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### THE HOLY PROPHET ISAIAH

The Holy Prophet Isaiah lived 700 years before the birth of Christ, and was of royal lineage. Isaiah's father Amos raised his son in the fear of God and in the law of the Lord. Having attained the age of maturity, the Prophet Isaiah entered into marriage with a pious prophetess (Is 8:3) and had a son Jashub (Is 8:18).

Saint Isaiah was called to prophetic service during the reign of Oziah [Uzziah], king of Judea, and he prophesied for 60 years during the reign of kings Joatham, Achaz [Ahaz], Hezekiah and Manasseh. The start of his service was marked by the following vision: he beheld the Lord God, sitting in a majestic heavenly temple upon a high throne. Six-winged Seraphim encircled Him. With two wings they covered their faces, and with two wings they covered their feet, and with two wings they flew about crying out one to another, "Holy, Holy, Holy Lord Sabaoth, heaven and earth are filled with His glory!" The pillars of the heavenly temple shook from their shouts, and in the temple arose the smoke of incense.

The prophet cried out in terror, "Oh, an accursed man am I, granted to behold the Lord Sabaoth, and having impure lips and living amidst an impure people!" Then was sent him one of the Seraphim, having in hand a red-hot coal, which he took with tongs from the altar of the Lord. He touched it to the mouth of the Prophet Isaiah and said, "Lo, this has touched thy lips, and will take away with thine iniquities, and will cleanse thy sins." After this Isaiah heard the voice of the Lord, directed towards him, "Whom shall I send, and who will go to this people?" Isaiah answered, "Here am I, send me" (Is 6:1 ff). And the Lord sent him to the Jews to exhort them to turn from the ways of impiety and idol worship, and to offer repentance.

To those that repent and turn to the true God, the Lord promised mercy and forgiveness, but punishment and the judgment of God are appointed for the unrepentant. Then Isaiah asked the Lord, how long would the falling away of the Jewish nation from God continue. The Lord answered, "Until the cities be deserted, by reason of there being no people, and the land shall be made desolate. Just as when a tree be felled and from the stump come forth new shoots, so also from the destruction of the nation a holy remnant will remain, from which will emerge a new tribe."

Isaiah left behind him a book of prophecy in which he denounces the Jews for their unfaithfulness to the God of their Fathers. He predicted the captivity of the Jews and their return from captivity during the time of the emperor Cyrus, the destruction and renewal of Jerusalem and of the Temple. Together with this he predicts the historical fate also of the other nations bordering

the Jews. But what is most important of all for us, the Prophet Isaiah with particular clarity and detail prophesies about the coming of the Messiah, Christ the Savior. The prophet names the Messiah as God and Man, teacher of all the nations, founder of the Kingdom of peace and love.

The prophet foretells the birth of the Messiah from a Virgin, and with particular clarity he describes the Suffering of the Messiah for the sins of the world. He foresees His Resurrection and the universal spreading of His Church. By his clear foretelling of Christ the Savior, the Prophet Isaiah deserves to be called an Old Testament Evangelist. To him belong the words, “He beareth our sins and is smitten for us.... He was wounded for our sins and tortured for our transgressions. The chastisement of our world was upon Him, and by His wounds we were healed....” (Is 53:4-5. Vide Isaiah: 7:14, 11:1, 9:6, 53:4, 60:13, etc.).

The holy Prophet Isaiah had also a gift of wonderworking. And so, when during the time of a siege of Jerusalem by enemies the besieged had become exhausted with thirst, he by his prayer drew out from beneath Mount Sion a spring of water, which was called Siloam, i.e. “sent from God.” It was to this spring afterwards that the Savior sent the man blind from birth to wash, and He restored his sight. By the prayer of the Prophet Isaiah, the Lord prolonged the life of Hezekiah for 15 years.

The Prophet Isaiah died a martyr’s death. By order of the Jewish king Manasseh he was sawn through by a wood-saw. The prophet was buried not far from the Pool of Siloam. The relics of the holy Prophet Isaiah were afterwards transferred by the emperor Theodosius the Younger to Constantinople and installed in the church of Saint Laurence at Blachernae. At the present time part of the head of the Prophet Isaiah is preserved at Athos in the Hilandar monastery.

For the times and the events which occurred during the life of the Prophet Isaiah, see the 4th Book of Kings [alt. 2 Kings] (Ch 16, 17, 19, 20, 23, etc.), and likewise 2 Chr:26-32. [From oca.org]

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THE HOLY MARTYR CHRISTOPHER, AND SAINTS CALLINICA AND AQUILINA,  
WHO BELIEVED IN CHRIST THROUGH HIM

The Holy Martyr Christopher lived during the third century and suffered about the year 250, during the reign of the emperor Decius (249-251). There are various accounts of his life and miracles, and he is widely venerated throughout the world. Saint Christopher is especially venerated in Italy, where people pray to him in times of contagious diseases.

There are various suggestions about his descent. Some historians believe that he was descended from the Canaanites, while others say from the “Cynoscephalai” [literally “dog-heads”] of Thesaly.

Saint Christopher was a man of great stature and unusual strength. According to tradition, Saint Christopher was very handsome, but wishing to avoid temptation for himself and others, he asked the Lord to give him an unattractive face, which was done. Before Baptism he was named Reprebus [Reprobate] because his disfigured appearance. Even before Baptism, Reprebus confessed his faith in Christ and denounced those who persecuted Christians. Consequently, a certain Bacchus gave him a beating, which he endured with humility.

Because of his renowned strength, 200 soldiers were assigned to bring him before the emperor Decius. Reprebus submitted without resistance. Several miracles occurred along the way; a dry stick blossomed in the saint’s hand, loaves of bread were multiplied through his prayers, and the travellers had no lack thereof. This is similar to the multiplication of loaves in the wilderness by the Savior. The soldiers surrounding Reprebus were astonished at these miracles. They came to

believe in Christ and they were baptized along with Reprebus by Saint Babylus of Antioch (September 4).

Christopher once made a vow to serve the greatest king in the world, so he first offered to serve the local king. Seeing that the king feared the devil, Christopher thought he would leave the king to serve Satan. Learning that the devil feared Christ, Christopher went in search of Him. Saint Babylas of Antioch told him that he could best serve Christ by doing well the task for which he was best suited. Therefore, he became a ferryman, carrying people across a river on his shoulders. One stormy night, Christopher carried a Child Who insisted on being taken across at that very moment. With every step Christopher took, the Child seemed to become heavier. Halfway across the stream, Christopher felt that his strength would give out, and that he and the Child would be drowned in the river. As they reached the other side, the Child told him that he had just carried all the sins of the world on his shoulders. Then He ordered Christopher to plant his walking stick in the ground. As he did so, the stick grew into a giant tree. Then he recognized Christ, the King Whom he had vowed to serve.

Saint Christopher was brought before the emperor, who tried to make him renounce Christ, not by force but by cunning. He summoned two profligate women, Callinika and Aquilina, and commanded them to persuade Christopher to deny Christ, and to offer sacrifice to idols. Instead, the women were converted to Christ by Saint Christopher. When they returned to the emperor, they declared themselves to be Christians. Therefore, they were subjected to fierce beatings, and so they received the crown of martyrdom.

Decius also sentenced to execution the soldiers who had been sent after Saint Christopher, but who now believed in Christ. The emperor ordered that the martyr be thrown into a red-hot metal box. Saint Christopher, however, did not experience any suffering and he remained unharmed. After many fierce torments they finally beheaded the martyr with a sword. This occurred in the year 250 in Lycia. By his miracles the holy Martyr Christopher converted as many as 50,000 pagans to Christ, as Saint Ambrose of Milan testifies. The relics of Saint Christopher were later transferred to Toledo (Spain), and still later to the abbey of Saint Denis in France.

In Greece, many churches place the icon of Saint Christopher at the entrance so that people can see it as they enter and leave the building. There is a rhyming couplet in Greek which says, "When you see Christopher, you can walk in safety." This reflects the belief that whoever gazes upon the icon of Saint Christopher will not meet with sudden or accidental death that day.

The name Christopher means "Christ-bearer." This can refer to the saint carrying the Savior across the river, and it may also refer to Saint Christopher bearing Christ within himself (Galatians 2:20). [From oca.org]

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#### TRANSLATION OF THE RELICS OF SAINT NICHOLAS THE WONDERWORKER FROM MYRA TO BARI

In the eleventh century the Eastern Roman Empire was going through some terrible times. The Turks put an end to its influence in Asia Minor, they destroyed cities and villages, they murdered the inhabitants, and they accompanied their cruel outrage with the desecration of churches, holy relics, icons and books. The Muslims also attempted to destroy the relics of Saint Nicholas, deeply venerated by the whole Christian world.

In the year 792 the caliph Aaron Al'-Rashid sent Khumeid at the head of a fleet to pillage the island of Rhodes. Having lain waste this island, Khumeid set off to Myra in Lycia with the intent to rob the tomb of Saint Nicholas. But instead he robbed another tomb standing alongside the

crypt of the Saint. Just as they succeeded in committing this sacrilege, a terrible storm lifted upon the sea and almost all the ships were shattered into pieces.

The desecration of holy things shocked not only Eastern, but also Western Christians. Christians in Italy were particularly apprehensive for the relics of Saint Nicholas, and among them were many Greeks. The inhabitants of the city of Bari, located on the shores of the Adriatic Sea, decided to save the relics of Saint Nicholas.

In the year 1087 merchants from Bari and Venice went to Antioch to trade. Both these and others also proposed to take up the relics of Saint Nicholas and transport them to Italy on the return trip. In this plan the men of Bari commissioned the Venetians to land them at Myra. At first two men were sent in, who in returning reported that in the city all was quiet. In the church where the glorified relics rested, they encountered only four monks. Immediately forty-seven men, having armed themselves, set out for the Church of Saint Nicholas. The guards, suspecting nothing, showed them the raised platform, beneath which the tomb of the Saint was concealed, and where they anointed foreigners with myrrh from the relics of the Saint.

At this time the monks told them about an appearance of Saint Nicholas that evening to a certain Elder. In this vision Saint Nicholas ordered the careful preservation of his relics. This account encouraged the barons, they saw an avowal for them in this vision and, as it were, a decree from the Saint. In order to facilitate their activity, they revealed their intent to the monks and offered them money, 300 gold coins. The guards refused the money and wanted to warn the inhabitants about the misfortune threatening them. But the newcomers bound them and put their own guards at the doorway.

They took apart the platform above the tomb with the relics. In this effort the youth Matthew was excessive in his zeal, wanting to find the relics of Saint Nicholas as quickly as possible. In his impatience he broke the cover and the barons saw that the sarcophagus was filled with fragrant holy myrrh. The compatriots of the barons, the priests Luppus and Drogus, offered a litany, after which the break made by Matthew began to flow with myrrh from the Saint's sarcophagus. This occurred on April 20, 1087.

Seeing the absence of a container chest, the priest Drogus wrapped the relics in the cloth, and in the company of the barons he carried them to the ship. The monks, having been set free, alerted the city with the sad news about the abduction of the relics of the Wonderworker Nicholas by foreigners. A crowd of people gathered at the shore, but it was too late.

On May 8 the ships arrived in Bari, and soon the joyous news made the rounds of all the city. On the following day, May 9, 1087, they solemnly transported the relics of Saint Nicholas into the Church of Saint Stephen, not far from the sea. The solemn bearing of the relics was accompanied by numerous healings of the sick, which inspired still greater reverence for God's Saint. A year afterwards, a church was built in the name of Saint Nicholas and consecrated by Pope Urban II.

This event, connected with the transfer of the relics of Saint Nicholas, evoked a particular veneration for the Wonderworker Nicholas and was marked by the establishment of a special feast day on May 9. At first the feast day of the Transfer of the Relics of Saint Nicholas was observed only by the people of the city of Bari. It was not adopted in the other lands of the Christian East and West, despite the fact that the transfer of the relics was widely known. This circumstance is explained by the custom in the Middle Ages of venerating primarily the relics of local saints. Moreover, the Greek Church did not establish the celebration of this remembrance, since they regarded the loss of the relics of Saint Nicholas was a sad event.

The Russian Orthodox Church celebration of the memory of the Transfer of the Relics of Saint Nicholas from Myra in Lycia to Bari in Italy on May 9 was established soon after the year 1087, on the basis of an already established veneration by the Russian people of the great Saint of God, brought from Greece simultaneously with the acceptance of Christianity. The glorious accounts of the miracles performed by the Saint on both land and sea, were widely known to the Russian people. Their inexhaustible strength and abundance testify to the help of the great Saint of God for suffering mankind. The image of Saint Nicholas, a mighty wonderworker and benefactor, became especially dear to the heart of the Russian people, since it inspired deep faith and hope for his intercession. The faith of the Russian people in the abundant aid of God's Saint was marked by numerous miracles.

A significant body of literature was compiled about him very early in Russian writings. Accounts of the miracles of Saint Nicholas done in the Russian land were recorded at an early date. Soon after the Transfer of the Relics of Saint Nicholas from Myra to Bari, a Russian version of his Life and an account of the Transfer of his holy relics were written by a contemporary to this event. Earlier still, an encomium to the Wonderworker was written. Each week on Thursday, the Orthodox Church honors his memory in particular.

Numerous churches and monasteries were built in honor of Saint Nicholas, and Russian people are wont to name their children after him at Baptism. In Russia are preserved numerous wonderworking icons of the Saint. Most renowned among them are the icons of Mozhaïsk, Zaraïsk, Volokolamsk, Ugreshsk and Ratny. There was no house or temple in the Russian land in which there was not an icon of Saint Nicholas the Wonderworker.

The significance of the intercession of the great Saint of God is expressed by the ancient compiler of the Life, in the words of whom Saint Nicholas "did work many glorious miracles both on land and on sea, aiding those downtrodden in misfortune and rescuing the drowning, carried to dry land from the depths of the sea, raising up others from corruption and bringing them home, liberating from chains and imprisonment, averting felling by the sword and freeing from death, and granting healing to many: sight to the blind, walking to the lame, hearing to the deaf, and speech to the mute. He brought riches to many suffering in abject poverty and want, he provided the hungry food, and for each in their need he appeared a ready helper, an avid defender and speedy intercessor and protector, and such as appeal to him he doth help and deliver from adversity. Both the East and the West know of this great Wonderworker, and all the ends of the earth know his miracle-working."

Note on the "passingby" of St. Nicholas' relics near Greek islands during the voyage to Bari: Areas in the Peloponnese, Zakynthos and other Ionian Islands, maintained that this "passingby" of the relics of Saint Nicholas was a great blessing for them, and many places celebrate this festally. Saint Nikodemos refers to this in his service which he composed, where he hymns the "passing" of the relic of the Saint, through which he sanctified not just these areas of Greece and Italy, but "everything under the sun". Because various areas had greeted the relics on different days, the custom arose to variously celebrate the translation of Saint Nicholas May 9<sup>th</sup>, May 10<sup>th</sup>, May 20<sup>th</sup>, or other days during that period. The Service by Saint Nikodemos was written, however, to be celebrated on May 10<sup>th</sup>. [From Mystagogy]

## 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, glorious, and all-laudable Apostle Thomas, called "The Twin"; of the holy and glorious Prophet Isaiah; Martyr Christopher of Lycia; and Nicholas the wonderworker, archbishop of Myra in Lycia, 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:* Christ is risen from the dead, trampling down Death by death, and upon those in the tombs...

*People:* ...bestowing life!