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READER'S TYPIKA ON SUNDAY, MAY 26, 2024

(3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday after Pascha)

*Sunday of the Healing of the Paralytic*

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 THREE

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 the Resurrection in Tone Three<sup>1</sup>

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

Thou didst banish Adam, our forefather, from Paradise, when he set at nought Thy commandment, O Christ; but Thou didst make the thief, who confessed Thee upon the Cross, to dwell therein, O Compassionate One, as he cried: Remember me, O Saviour, in Thy Kingdom.

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<sup>1</sup> Although these verses are marked as Resurrectional, those given in the Pentecostarion (shown here) appear to differ from the ones given in the Sunday Octoechos. This anomaly shows up both in the Romanian and the English (HTM) Pentecostarion.

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

Having risen from the dead, Thou didst raise us also from the passions by Thy Resurrection, O Lord; and Thou didst destroy all the might of death, O Saviour; for this cause we cry out in faith: Remember us also in Thy Kingdom.

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

By Thy three-day burial, as God Thou didst quicken and raise up with Thyself them that were dead in Hades; and since Thou art good, Thou didst cause incorruption to flow forth for us all, who with faith do ever cry out: Remember us also in Thy Kingdom.

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

When we sinned, Thou didst condemn us with the curse of death, O our Life-giver and Lord. And having suffered in Thy body, though Thou wast without sin, O Master, Thou didst quicken all mortals, who cry out: Remember us also in Thy Kingdom.

For the Paralytic Sunday in Tone Three<sup>2</sup>

*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.*

Of Thine own will Thou wast lifted up upon the Tree, and laid as one dead in the sepulchre, and having quickened together all them that were dead in Hades, O Christ, Thou didst raise them by Thy divine power.

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

When Hades met Thee below, O Compassionate One, it was embittered, and in haste it gave up them that it held in bonds, who with unceasing voices praise Thine awesome Resurrection, O Saviour.

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

When he that aforetime lay for many years upon a bed of affliction was made whole by Thy command, O Christ, he glorified and praised Thy compassion, O Giver of life.

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

He that sustaineth all things by His divine command is held in thine arms, O Virgin Theotokos, and since He is compassionate He doth rescue us from the enslaving hand of the evil one.

THE FESTAL EISODIKON

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

*Choir:* O Son of God, Who art risen from the dead; save us who sing unto Thee: Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia.

*Apolytikia:*

RESURRECTIONAL APOLYTIKION IN TONE THREE

Let the heavens rejoice and the earth be glad, for the Lord hath done a mighty act with His own arm. He hath trampled down death by death, and became the first-born from the dead. He hath delivered us from the depths of Hades, granting the world the Great Mercy.

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

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<sup>2</sup> These troparia are taken from the 6<sup>th</sup> Ode of Matins Canon, cf. Pentecostarion.

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 3

O chant unto our God, chant ye; chant unto our King, chant ye. (*Ps.46:6*) {*twice*}

*Verse:* Clap your hands, all ye nations; shout unto God with a voice of rejoicing. (*Ps.46:1*)

O chant unto our God, chant ye; chant unto our King, chant ye.

#### SUNDAY APOSTOLOS:

*Reader:* The reading is from the Acts of the Apostles §23 (9:32-42)

In those days, as Peter went here and there among them all, he came down also to the saints that lived at Lydda. There he found a man named Aeneas, who had been bedridden for eight years and was paralyzed. And Peter said to him, "Aeneas, Jesus Christ heals you; rise and make your bed." And immediately he rose. And all the residents of Lydda and Sharon saw him, and they turned to the Lord. Now there was at Joppa a disciple named Tabitha, which means Dorcas. She was full of good works and acts of charity. In those days she fell sick and died; and when they had washed her, they laid her in an upper room. Since Lydda was near Joppa, the disciples, hearing that Peter was there, sent two men to him entreating him, "Please come to us without delay." So Peter rose and went with them. And when he had come, they took him to the upper room. All the widows stood beside him weeping, and showing tunics and other garments, which Dorcas made while she was with them. But Peter put them all outside and knelt down and prayed; then turning to the body he said, "Tabitha, rise." And she opened her eyes, and when she saw Peter she sat up. And he gave her his hand and lifted her up. Then calling the saints and widows he presented her alive. And it became known throughout all Joppa, and many believed in the Lord.

#### ALLELUIA, IN TONE 3

*Choir:* Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia.

*Verse 1:* In Thee, O Lord, have I hoped, let me not be put to shame in the age to come. (*Ps.30:1a*)

*Choir:* Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia.

*Verse 2:* Be Thou unto me a God to defend me and a house of refuge to save me. (*Ps.30:2b*)

*Choir:* Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia.

#### SUNDAY GOSPEL:

*Reader:* The reading is from the Holy Gospel according to St. John § 14 (5:1-15)

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

*Reader:* At that time, Jesus went up to Jerusalem. Now there is in Jerusalem by the Sheep Gate a pool, in Hebrew called Bethesda, which has five porticoes. In these lay a multitude of invalids, blind, lame, paralyzed, waiting for the moving of the water. For an angel of the Lord went down at certain seasons into the pool and troubled the water; whoever stepped in first, after the troubling of the water was healed of whatever disease he had. One man was there, who had been ill for 38 years. When Jesus saw him and knew that he had been lying there a long time, He said to him,

“Do you want to be healed?” The sick man answered Him, “Sir, I have no man to put me into the pool when the water is troubled, and while I am going another steps down before me.” Jesus said to him, “Rise, take up your pallet, and walk.” And at once the man was healed, and he took up his pallet and walked.

Now that day was the Sabbath. So the Jews said to the man who was cured, “It is the Sabbath, it is not lawful for you to carry your pallet.” But he answered them, “The man who healed me said to me, ‘Take up your pallet, and walk.’” They asked him, “Who is the man who said to you, ‘Take up your pallet, and walk’?” Now the man who had been healed did not know who it was, for Jesus had withdrawn, as there was a crowd in the place. Afterward, Jesus found him in the temple, and said to him, “See, you are well! Sin no more, that nothing worse befalls you.” The man went away and told the Jews that it was Jesus Who had healed him.

*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 PARALYTIC SUNDAY IN TONE THREE

*(Special melody: "On this day the Virgin...")*

As of old Thou didst raise up \* the paralytic, O Lord God, \* by Thy God-like care and might, \* raise up my soul which is palsied \* by diverse sins and transgressions \* and by unseemly \* deeds and acts, that, saved I may also cry out: \* O Compassionate Redeemer, \* O Christ God, glory \* to Thy dominion and might.

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 Refrain & Irmos of the 9<sup>th</sup> ode of the Paschal Canon,<sup>3</sup> in tone 1*

The Angel cried to the Lady full of grace: Rejoice, Rejoice, O pure Vir-gin! Again I say: Rejoice; thy Son is risen from his three days in the tomb. With Himself He has raised all the dead. Rejoice, rejoice, O ye people. Shine! Shine! Shine! O new Jerusalem. The glory of the Lord has shone on thee. Exult now, exult and be glad, O Sion. Be radiant, O pure Theotokos, in the Resurrection, the Resurrection of thy Son.

### READINGS

#### SUNDAY OF THE PARALYTIC

Close to the Sheep's Gate in Jerusalem, there was a pool, which was called the Sheep's Pool. It had round about it five porches, that is, five sets of pillars supporting a domed roof. Under this roof there lay very many sick people with various maladies, awaiting the moving of the water, because an Angel of the Lord came down to the pool at a certain season and troubled the water. The first to step in after the troubling of the water was healed immediately of whatever malady he had.

It was there that the paralytic of today's Gospel was lying, tormented by his infirmity of thirty-eight years. When Christ beheld him, He asked him, "Wilt thou be made whole?" And he answered with a quiet and meek voice, "Sir, I have no man, when the water is troubled, to put me into the pool." The Lord said to him, "Rise, take up thy bed, and walk." And straightway the man was made whole and took up his bed. Walking in the presence of all, he departed rejoicing to his own house. According to the expounders of the Gospels, the Lord Jesus healed this paralytic during the days of the Passover, when He had gone to Jerusalem for the Feast, and dwelt there teaching and working miracles. According to Saint John the Evangelist, this miracle took place on the Sabbath. [From tyoos.org]

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#### THE HOLY AND GLORIOUS APOSTLE CARPUS OF THE SEVENTY

Saint Carpos was among the Seventy Apostles of the Lord, who ministered to the Apostle Paul in the preaching of the gospel, and delivered his epistles. He taught many pagans to revere Christ. Some sources say he was Bishop of Varna in Thrace, while others say he was Bishop of Berroia in Macedonia. As a shining star he illumined the universe with his teachings. Daily he worked great miracles and banished evil spirits from the possessed.

In his second Epistle to Timothy (4:13), Saint Paul requests, "The phelonion that I left at Troas with Carpos, bring when you come, and the books." Carpos also preached the gospel in Crete where he received Saint Dionysius the Areopagite in his home. Saint Dionysius testifies in a letter that Carpos was a man with an exceptionally pure nous, with meekness and innocence, and that

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<sup>3</sup> The Antiochian sources appoint instead of the Irmos ("Shine, shine...") the 1<sup>st</sup> Troparion of the 9<sup>th</sup> Ode of the Matins Canon for the Theotokos (based on same Irmos): **With one voice, O Virgin, we the faithful call thee blessed. Rejoice, thou portal of the Lord; rejoice, thou living city; rejoice, thou through whom there has shone on us today the light of thy Son's Resurrection from the dead.**

the Lord Jesus, with His angels, appeared to him in a vision, and that he never began the Divine Liturgy unless he did not have a heavenly vision beforehand.

It happened that the Apostle Carpos lost his patience and began to pray that God send down death upon two sinful men; one a pagan and the other an apostate from the Christian faith. Then the Lord Jesus Christ Himself appeared to Carpos and said: "Strike me; I am prepared to be crucified again for the salvation of mankind." Saint Carpos related this event to Saint Dionysius the Areopagite and he wrote it down and gave it to the Church as a lesson to all, that prayers are needed for sinners to be saved and not for them to be destroyed, "for the Lord is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance" (2 Pet. 3:9).

Having brought many people and cities to Christ, and divided believers from unbelievers through Holy Baptism, many unbelievers came against him, and he endured all things with bravery and courage. In as much as he glorified God even in the midst of his trials and sufferings, God glorified him. For this reason even when he reposed in peace and delivered his spirit to the Lord, his relics continued to work miracles on a daily basis, healing all types of illnesses and diseases, and banishing evil spirits from the possessed. [From Mystagogy]

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The holy and glorious Apostle Alphaeus of the Seventy  
with his son Abercius and daughter Helen

The Holy Apostle Alphaeus of the Seventy appears to have come from the Galilean city of Capernaum. In the Gospels, Alphaeus could refer to either one or two people, as he is separately only mentioned as being the father of the Apostle Matthew (Mk. 2:14) and the father of the Apostle James the Less (Mk. 3:18; Matt. 10:3), both of whom were among the Twelve Disciples. Though both Matthew and James are described as being the "son of Alphaeus" there is no Biblical account of the two being called brothers, in the same context where John and James or Peter and Andrew are described as being brothers.

Alphaeus is sometimes identified with Cleopas, based on the identification from parallel Gospel accounts of Mary the mother of James who was the third woman with Mary Magdalene and Salome wife of Zebedee beside the cross in Matthew, with Mary the wife of Cleopas who was the third woman in John's account. If Alphaeus is indeed Cleopas, then he was likely the brother of Joseph the Betrothed and brother-in-law of Mary the Theotokos, thus making him the lawful uncle of our Lord Jesus.<sup>4</sup>

However, the Alphaeus commemorated today is said to be the father of a son named Abercius and a daughter named Helen, thus adding to the mystery of the identity of who exactly this Alphaeus commemorated today is. For this reason it has been proposed that Alphaeus here mentioned is in fact James the Less or Matthew, added in the calendar today as a second commemoration or associated with a separate local tradition. As for Abercius, he is said to have been martyred by being spread out naked and stung by bees till he died. Helen was martyred by being stoned to death.

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<sup>4</sup> According to the surviving fragments, which may be spurious, of the work Exposition of the Sayings of the Lord by Papias of Hierapolis, who lived c. 70–163 AD, Cleopas and Alphaeus are the same person: "Mary the wife of Cleopas or Alphaeus, who was the mother of James the bishop and apostle, and of Simon and Thaddeus, and of one Joseph [Josés]." The Catholic Encyclopedia suggests that etymologically, the names Cleopas and Alphaeus are different, but that they could still be the same person. Other sources propose that Alphaeus, Clophas and Cleophas are variant attempts to render the Aramaic H in Aramaic Hilfai into Greek as aspirated, or K.



That Alphaeus is commemorated as an Apostle tells us that he worked with the other Apostles in spreading the gospel of Christ, though we have no details of this. According to the Synaxarion of Constantinople he is said to have reposed in peace, though in iconography he is depicted as being bound to a cross and shot through with arrows, thus dying as a martyr, and deepening the mystery of the identity of the Apostle Alphaeus.<sup>5</sup> [From Mystagogy]

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#### OUR RIGHTEOUS FATHER SYNESIOS, BISHOP OF KARPASIA IN CYPRUS

Saint Synesios (or Synesius) is the patron saint of the occupied village of Rizokarpaso and is regarded as the protector of the Karpas Peninsula (Karpasia). Unfortunately we have very little information about this Cypriot Saint, but what we know comes from a monk named Akakios.

Synesios was born in the ancient city of Karpasia and succeeded Saint Philon (Jan. 24), who was the first bishop of Karpasia, on the episcopal throne of Karpasia. He was a meek man without guile, who confronted the numerous heresies of his time with zeal to protect his flock from the ravaging wolves, and made sure that the Orthodox faith was established. His gentleness, the sweetness of his words and convincing arguments were reinforced by his numerous miracles. In this way, the enemies of the Church who sought to tear apart the seamless tunic of the Lord among the faithful of Cyprus, rediscovered the true Gospel message of salvation and the correct path of the Christian faith.

After the repose of the Saint, he did not cease to grant healings and miracles to those who ran to him with faith. Numerous miracles are reported that were performed through his intercessions, most notably with those who suffer from dysuria.

In the village of Rizokarpaso there is a church dedicated to Saint Synesios, dating from the twelfth century. The church was built next to a cave known as the "Cave of Saint Synesios," where the Saint lived a life of ascetic toil. The Church of Saint Synesios is located in the central square of the village and is one of the only three Orthodox churches in the occupied territories of Cyprus that are still functioning and have not been pillaged, destroyed or turned into museums or mosques by the Turks, for the simple reason that a few hundred Greek Cypriots still live in Rizokarpaso.

The memory of Saint Synesios is celebrated on May 26, however the big feast of Saint Synesios used to take place during the week of Easter, where crowds of people used to come to Rizokarpaso in order to pay their respects to the Saint and do their shopping. [From Mystagogy]

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#### THE HOLY NEW MARTYR ALEXANDER OF THESSALONICA

Alexander was a young Orthodox Christian from Thessaloniki who was sent to Smyrna by his parents who sought in this way to protect their son from the local Muslims. Unfortunately, however, Alexander did come under the influence of the Muslim faith and accepted Islam. Moreover, he later made a pilgrimage to Mecca and even became a dervish, that is, a member of a Muslim monastic order.

It was not long, however, before his conscience began to trouble him. He found he could not tolerate the position he was in, that is, he could not stand by silently while Orthodox Christians,

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<sup>5</sup> Perhaps he was not an apostle at all, but a later martyr with his two children who happened to have a Hebrew name that was associated with the father of one or two of the Twelve Disciples. But this is just speculation.

to whom he still felt related, were persecuted. To lighten the burden of his conscience, he began to feign insanity. While playing the role of a madman, Alexander tirelessly rebuked the Muslims for the injustices they committed against the Christians.

Later, while in Egypt, some Muslims from the island of Crete plotted to murder him because, as time went by, he sounded more and more like a Christian and less like a Muslim. Before their evil plans could be carried out, Alexander left Egypt and returned to Thessaloniki.

Later he went on to the island of Chios where, still dressed as a dervish, he began to attend Orthodox services, and he continued to preach to the Muslims in Chios, beseeching them to act with justice towards the Orthodox.

From Chios, Alexander returned to Smyrna, the city where he had first abandoned his Orthodox Christian faith. The time had now come for him to witness for Jesus Christ. Voluntarily he appeared before the kadi of the city and told him his story. He said:

"Mulla! I was an Orthodox Christian and because of my foolishness I denied my faith and became a Muslim. Later I realized my former faith was light, which I lost, while your faith, as I have come to know it, is darkness. So I have come before you to confess I have made a mistake by denying the light and accepting the darkness. I was born an Orthodox Christian! I want to die an Orthodox Christian! Behold, you have heard my decision, Mulla, now do to me whatever you wish, for I am ready to endure every torture and to even spill my blood for the love of my Jesus Christ, whom I wrongly denied."

After these words were spoken, Alexander took off his Muslim head covering and replaced it with a Christian one. Those present in the courtroom could not believe their ears. In fact they thought they must be listening to a madman.

But one by one, beginning with the mulla, they began in a soft sympathetic voice to tell him he had spoken unheard of things, and perhaps he was not well and should come to his senses. How could he, a dervish, shame his religion and his integrity in such a manner?

To all of these remonstrances, Alexander responded: "It is true, I was out of my mind, but now frankly I have come to my senses and I confess my iniquity. You say, because I am a dervish, how do I say such things? I truly speak the truth, for I have gone to your Mecca, and have examined all of your faith, and I have understood everything about it to be false and abominable."

The Muslims present responded to Alexander's declarations by saying he must be drunk, and as such they had him put in prison. On the following day when more Muslims gathered around the mulla, Alexander was questioned again but with the same results. The Muslims felt embarrassed that one of their best, a dervish, could renounce Islam and therefore tried very hard to persuade him to give up the notion of returning to Christianity.

They began to flatter him with soft soothing words, reminding him of his position, his integrity as a dervish, and the thought that it would be a pity for him to sacrifice his youth, his very life. They offered him money, clothes, anything he might wish, but none of this made an impression on Alexander who was determined to witness for Jesus Christ and suffer any and all consequences.

Alexander turned a deaf ear to the threats of physical torture and death as he had previously to the flattery and promises of material rewards. Nothing could persuade him to give up Jesus Christ for the religion preached by Muhammad. And so he responded:

"O how foolish you are to bring up death. I came here for this purpose, to die for the love of my sweetest Jesus Christ. You are trying in vain to change my unwavering decision with your deceiving threats and your insignificant promises. As for myself, I think of dying for my holy

faith which I wrongly denied and to die to this false life and to gain the other, the eternal one. I was born an Orthodox Christian and I wish to die an Orthodox Christian. This is what I desire, this is what I thirst for. So you do whatever you wish. I am ready to suffer everything for my Master Jesus Christ."

Alexander was returned to prison where he stayed until Friday, a Muslim holy day on which it was customary for the important Muslims of the city to gather about the kadi of each city and attend with services at the mosque. On this occasion, Alexander was the topic of their conversation.

When brought before the kadi for the third time, the same flattery, promises and threats were made. To these Alexander replied by simply saying: "I was born an Orthodox Christian, I wish to die an Orthodox Christian. I will not exchange the light for darkness. I worship Father, Son and Holy Spirit, Trinity consubstantial and undivided." Saying this, he made the sign of the cross.

This was the last straw for the kadi and the Muslims present. Alexander was immediately sentenced to death. He was bound and led to the place of execution accompanied by many Muslims who continued to try to persuade him to change his mind. To their admonitions, Alexander responded, "I am an Orthodox Christian and I die as an Orthodox Christian."

Many people, Muslims, Orthodox Christians, Westerners and Armenians gathered for the execution. Alexander stood in the center. The executioner then placed his sword in front of Alexander's eyes to frighten him. But the Neomartyr remained calm and unaffected.

Alexander was then ordered to kneel, at which point the order came from the mulla for a stay of execution. The stay continued for an hour during which time Alexander prayed. When he gave no sign of changing his mind or of being willing to convert, the execution proceeded and he was beheaded.

Thus Alexander the dervish from Thessaloniki sacrificed his life for the love of Jesus Christ in the city of Smyrna, Asia Minor on May 26, 1794. [From Mystagogy]

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#### SAINT AUGUSTINE, FIRST ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY, EVANGELIZER OF ENGLAND

Saint Augustine was from Italy, and a disciple of Saint Felix, Bishop of Messana. Saint Gregory Dialogus (March 12) chose him to lead a mission of forty monks to evangelize the people of Britain. They arrived at Ebbsfleet (on the isle of Thanet) in Kent in 597.

King Ethelbert, whose Frankish wife Bertha was a Christian, welcomed them. They were allowed to base their mission at the ancient church of Saint Martin in Canterbury, which was restored for their use. This church had been built during the Roman occupation of Britain, and the queen often went there to pray. At first, the king was reluctant to give up his pagan beliefs, but he promised not to harm them, and to supply them with whatever they needed. He also promised that he would not prevent them from preaching Christianity. Saint Augustine later converted the king to Christianity, along with thousands of his subjects. The holy right-believing King Ethelbert is commemorated on February 25.

Bede says that Saint Augustine was consecrated as Archbishop of Britain by Archbishop Etherius of Arles (others say that it was his successor Saint Virgilius of Arles [March 5] who consecrated Saint Augustine). Returning to Britain, he threw himself into the work of evangelizing the country with renewed zeal. Saint Augustine built Christ Church, predecessor of the present cathedral at Canterbury, and consecrated it on June 9, 603 (according to the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle). He also founded the monastery of Saints Peter and Paul east of the city. Here Saint

Augustine, the Archbishops of Canterbury, and the Kings of Kent were buried. The monastery, now in ruins, was later known as Saint Augustine's Monastery.

The saint was instrumental in founding the dioceses of Rochester and London. In 604 he consecrated Saint Justus (November 10) and Saint Mellitus (April 24) as bishops for those Sees. Saint Augustine also helped the king draft the earliest Anglo-Saxon laws, and founded a school in Canterbury.

Saint Augustine was not completely successful in all his efforts, however. He was not able to achieve unity with the already existing Christian communities who followed Celtic practices. He met with some of their bishops to urge them to abandon their Celtic traditions and to accept the Roman practices. He invited them to cooperate with him in evangelizing the country, but they refused to give up their ancient traditions. Before meeting with Saint Augustine in 603, the Celtic bishops asked a holy hermit whether or not to accept Augustine as their leader. The hermit replied, "If he rises to greet you, then accept him. If he remains seated, then he is arrogant and unfit to be your leader, and you should reject him." Unfortunately, Saint Augustine did not rise to greet them. Perhaps Saint Augustine was, to some degree, a bit tactless and too insistent on conformity to Roman customs. On the other hand, Celtic resentment against Roman authority also contributed to the stormy relationship.

Known in his lifetime as a wonderworker, Saint Augustine fell asleep in the Lord on May 26, 604. He was laid to rest at the entrance of the unfinished church of Saints Peter and Paul. When the church was dedicated in 613, his holy relics were placed inside. An epitaph was composed for his tomb. In part, it reads: "Here lies the Lord Augustine, first Archbishop of Canterbury, sent here by blessed Gregory, bishop of the city of Rome, who with the help of God, and aided by miracles, guided King Ethelbert and his people from the worship of idols to the Faith of Christ."

Saint Bede (May 27) gives detailed information about Saint Augustine's mission to Britain in his *History of the English Church and People* (Book I, 23-33. Book II, 1-3). [From *Mystagogy & oca.org*]

### THE 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 Apostles Karpos and Alphaios of the Seventy; Sinesios, bishop of Carpasia in Cyprus; New-martyr Alexander of Thessalonica; and Augustine of Canterbury, evangelizer of England, 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!