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READER'S TYPIKA ON SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 16, 2025
(23rd Sunday after Pentecost)

The Holy Apostle and Evangelist Matthew

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

Reader: Amen.

THE TRISAGION PRAYERS

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

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

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

Lord, have mercy. (*Thrice*)

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

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

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

All: Amen.

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

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

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

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

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

THE FIRST ANTIPHON: PSALM 102

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

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

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

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

THE SECOND ANTIPHON: PSALM 145

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

Praise the Lord, O my soul. I will praise the Lord in my life, I will chant unto my God for as long as I have my being. 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 immortal, who for our salvation willed to be incarnate of the Holy Theotokos and ever-virgin Mary, and without change became man; and wast crucified, O Christ our God, and trampled down death by death; who art one of the Holy Trinity, glorified together with the Father and the Holy Spirit: save us.

THE BEATITUDES IN TONE SIX

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

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

For the Resurrection in Tone Six

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

Remember me, O God, my Saviour, when Thou comest in Thy Kingdom, and save me, since Thou alone art the Friend of man.

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

By the tree of the Cross, Thou didst save Adam who was deceived through a tree, and also the thief as he cried: Remember me, O Lord, in Thy Kingdom.

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

Having shattered the gates and bars of Hades, O Giver of Life, Thou, O Saviour, didst raise up all the dead, who cry: Glory be to Thine Arising.

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

Remember me, O Thou Who didst despoil death by Thy burial, and by Thy Resurrection didst fill all things with joy, since Thou art compassionate.

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

When the myrrh-bearers came unto the sepulchre, they heard an Angel who cried: Christ is risen, enlightening the whole world.

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

With one accord, let us all praise Christ, Who was nailed to the Tree of the Cross and delivered the world from error.

For St. Matthew¹ 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.

O Master, Word of God, Thou hast shown Thine Apostles to be luminaries of life, which drive away the gloom of atheism and light up the whole world with Thy divine glory.

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

Arming the excellent Matthew with Thy whole armour, O Saviour, Thou madest him mightier than the tyrants and didst reveal him as the destroyer of the idols' error, O man-befriending Master.

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

The sound of thy fiery tongue burnt up the altars of the demons, O Matthew, for thou art the Comforter's divinely wrought instrument, whereby Christ, the enhypostatic Word, is proclaimed.

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

When the godly-minded Matthew's trumpet of theology sounded forth, O all-immaculate Virgin, it mightily enlightened whole peoples with the illumination of the Trinity and the Word's unfathomable Incarnation from thee.

THE SUNDAY EISODIKON

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

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 SIX

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

APOLYTIKION OF ST. MATTHEW THE EVANGELIST IN TONE THREE

O holy Apostle and Evangelist Matthew, intercede with the merciful God, to grant our souls forgiveness of sins.

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

¹ Troparia from 3rd Ode of the Matins Canon of the Saint.

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 8

His sound hath gone forth into all the earth, and *His* words unto the ends of the world. (*Ps.18:4*)
{*twice*}

Verse: The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament proclaimeth the work of His hands. (*Ps.18:1*)

His sound hath gone forth into all the earth, and *His* words unto the ends of the world.

APOSTOLOS FOR ST. MATTHEW:

Reader: The reading is from the Epistle of St. Paul to the Romans §104 (10:11-21; 11:1-2).

Brethren, the scripture says, "No one who believes in him will be put to shame." For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; the same Lord is Lord of all and bestows his riches upon all who call upon him. For, "every one who calls upon the name of the Lord will be saved." But how are men to call upon him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without a preacher? And how can men preach unless they are sent? As it is written, "How beautiful are the feet of those who preach good news!" But they have not all obeyed the gospel; for Isaiah says, "Lord, who has believed what he has heard from us?" So faith comes from what is heard, and what is heard comes by the preaching of Christ. But I ask, have they not heard? Indeed they have; for "Their voice has gone out to all the earth, and their words to the ends of the world." Again I ask, did Israel not understand? First Moses says, "I will make you jealous of those who are not a nation; with a foolish nation I will make you angry." Then Isaiah is so bold as to say, "I have been found by those who did not seek me; I have shown myself to those who did not ask for me." But of Israel he says, "All day long I have held out my hands to a disobedient and contrary people." I ask, then, has God rejected his people? By no means! I myself am an Israelite, a descendant of Abraham, a member of the tribe of Benjamin. God has not rejected his people whom he foreknew.

ALLELUIA, TONE 1

Choir: Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia.

Verse 1: The heavens shall confess Thy wonders, O Lord, and Thy truth in the congregation of saints. (*Ps.88:5*)

Choir: Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia.

Verse 2: God Who is glorified in the council of the saints is great and terrible towards all that are round about Him. (*Ps.88:7*)

Choir: Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia.

GOSPEL FOR ST. MATTHEW:

Reader: The reading is from the Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew §30 (9:9-13).

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

Reader: At that time, as Jesus passed on from there, he saw a man called Matthew sitting at the tax office; and he said to him, "Follow me." And he rose and followed him.

And as he sat at table in the house, behold, many tax collectors and sinners came and sat down with Jesus and his disciples. And when the Pharisees saw this, they said to his disciples, "Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?" But when he heard it, he said, "Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. Go and learn what this means, 'I desire mercy, and not sacrifice.' For I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance."

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

Then we sing the following, in tone 6

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

THE SYMBOL OF FAITH

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

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

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

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

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

All: Amen

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

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

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

All: Amen.

Kontakia:

KONTAKION OF THE RESURRECTION IN TONE SIX

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

KONTAKION OF ST. MATTHEW IN TONE FOUR

*(**Thou Who wast raised up**)*

When thou didst cast away the publican's balance * and wast united to the yoke of uprightness * then didst thou prove a merchant of great excellence, * one that gathered in the wealth * of the wisdom of Heaven; * for this cause, the word of truth * thou didst herald, O Matthew, * and didst arouse the souls of sluggish men * by signifying the dread day of reckoning.

KONTAKION OF ENTRANCE OF THE THEOTOKOS IN TONE FOUR

*(**Thou Who wast raised up**)*

The sacred treasury of God's holy glory, * the greatly precious bridal chamber and Virgin, * the Savior's most pure temple, free of stain and undefiled, * into the House of the Lord * on this day is brought forward * and bringeth with herself the grace * of the Most Divine Spirit; * her do God's Angels hymn with songs of praise, * for she is truly the heavenly tabernacle.

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.

READINGS

THE HOLY APOSTLE AND EVANGELIST MATTHEW

The Holy Apostle and Evangelist Matthew, was also named Levi (Mark 2:14; Luke 5:27); he was one of the Twelve Apostles (Mark 3:18; Luke 6:45; Acts 1:13), and was brother of the Apostle James Alphaeus (Mark 2:14). He was a publican, or tax-collector for Rome, in a time when the Jews were under the rule of the Roman Empire. He lived in the Galilean city of Capernaum. When Matthew heard the voice of Jesus Christ: “Come, follow Me” (Mt. 9:9), he left everything and followed the Savior. Christ and His disciples did not refuse Matthew’s invitation and they visited his house, where they shared table with the publican’s friends and acquaintances. Like the host, they were also publicans and known sinners. This event disturbed the pharisees and scribes a great deal.

Publicans who collected taxes from their countrymen did this with great profit for themselves. Usually greedy and cruel people, the Jews considered them pernicious betrayers of their country and religion. The word “publican” for the Jews had the connotation of “public sinner” and “idol-worshipper.” To even speak with a tax-collector was considered a sin, and to associate with one was defilement. But the Jewish teachers were not able to comprehend that the Lord had “come to call not the righteous, but sinners to repentance” (Mt. 9:13).

Matthew, acknowledging his sinfulness, repaid fourfold anyone he had cheated, and he distributed his remaining possessions to the poor, and he followed after Christ with the other apostles. Saint Matthew was attentive to the instructions of the Divine Teacher, he beheld His innumerable miracles, he went together with the Twelve Apostles preaching to “the lost sheep of the house of Israel” (Mt. 10:6). He was a witness to the suffering, death, and Resurrection of the Savior, and of His glorious Ascension into Heaven.

Having received the grace of the Holy Spirit, which descended upon the Apostles on the day of Pentecost, Saint Matthew preached in Palestine for several years. At the request of the Jewish converts at Jerusalem, the holy Apostle Matthew wrote his Gospel describing the earthly life of the Savior, before leaving to preach the Gospel in faraway lands.

In the order of the books of the New Testament, the Gospel of Matthew comes first. Palestine is said to be the place where the Gospel was written. Saint Matthew wrote in Aramaic, and then it was translated into Greek. The Aramaic text has not survived, but many of the linguistic and cultural-historical peculiarities of the Greek translation give indications of it.

The Apostle Matthew preached among people who were awaiting the Messiah. His Gospel manifests itself as a vivid proof that Jesus Christ is the Messiah foretold by the prophets, and that there would not be another (Mt. 11:3).

The preaching and deeds of the Savior are presented by the evangelist in three divisions, constituting three aspects of the service of the Messiah: as Prophet and Law-Giver (Ch. 5-7), Lord over the world both visible and invisible (Ch. 8-25), and finally as High Priest offered as Sacrifice for the sins of all mankind (Ch. 26-27).

The theological content of the Gospel, besides the Christological themes, includes also the teaching about the Kingdom of God and about the Church, which the Lord sets forth in parables about the inner preparation for entering into the Kingdom (Ch. 5-7), about the worthiness of servers of the Church in the world (Ch. 10-11), about the signs of the Kingdom and its growth in the souls of mankind (Ch. 13), about the humility and simplicity of the inheritors of the Kingdom (Mt. 18:1-35; 19 13-30; 20:1-16; 25-27; 23:1-28), and about the eschatological revelations of the Kingdom in the Second Coming of Christ within the daily spiritual life of the Church (Ch. 24-25).

The Kingdom of Heaven and the Church are closely interconnected in the spiritual experience of Christianity: the Church is the historical embodiment of the Kingdom of Heaven in the world, and the Kingdom of Heaven is the Church of Christ in its eschatological perfection (Mt. 16:18-19; 28:18-20).

The holy Apostle brought the Gospel of Christ to Syria, Media, Persia, Parthia, and finishing his preaching in Ethiopia with a martyr's death. This land was inhabited by tribes of cannibals with primitive customs and beliefs. The holy Apostle Matthew converted some of the idol-worshippers to faith in Christ. He founded the Church and built a temple in the city of Mirmena, establishing there his companion Platon as bishop.

When the holy apostle was fervently entreating God for the conversion of the Ethiopians the Lord Himself appeared to him in the form of a youth. He gave him a staff, and commanded him to plant it at the doors of the church. The Lord said that a tree would grow from this staff and it would bear fruit, and from its roots would flow a stream of water. When the Ethiopians washed themselves in the water and ate the fruit, they lost their wild ways and became gentle and good.

When the holy apostle carried the staff towards the church, he was met by the wife and son of the ruler of the land, Fulvian, who were afflicted by unclean spirits. In the Name of Christ the holy apostle healed them. This miracle converted a number of the pagans to the Lord. But the ruler did not want his subjects to become Christians and cease worshiping the pagan gods. He accused the apostle of sorcery and gave orders to execute him.

They put Saint Matthew head downwards, piled up brushwood and ignited it. When the fire flared up, everyone then saw that the fire did not harm Saint Matthew. Then Fulvian gave orders to add more wood to the fire, and frenzied with boldness, he commanded to set up twelve idols around the fire. But the flames melted the idols and flared up toward Fulvian. The frightened Ethiopian turned to the saint with an entreaty for mercy, and by the prayer of the martyr the flame went out. The body of the holy apostle remained unharmed, and he departed to the Lord.

The ruler Fulvian deeply repented of his deed, but still he had doubts. By his command, they put the body of Saint Matthew into an iron coffin and threw it into the sea. In doing this Fulvian said that if the God of Matthew would preserve the body of the apostle in the water as He preserved him in the fire, then this would be proper reason to worship this One True God.

That night the Apostle Matthew appeared to Bishop Platon in a dream, and commanded him to go with clergy to the shore of the sea and to find his body there. The righteous Fulvian and his retinue went with the bishop to the shore of the sea. The coffin carried by the waves was taken to the church built by the apostle. Then Fulvian begged forgiveness of the holy Apostle Matthew,

after which Bishop Platon baptized him, giving him the name Matthew in obedience to a command of God.

Soon Saint Fulvian-Matthew abdicated his rule and became a presbyter. Upon the death of Bishop Platon, the Apostle Matthew appeared to him and exhorted him to head the Ethiopian Church. Having become a bishop, Saint Fulvian-Matthew toiled at preaching the Word of God, continuing the work of his heavenly patron. [From oca.org]

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THE HOLY MARTYR EPHYGENIA OF ETHIOPIA, DISCIPLE OF ST. MATTHEW

The Holy Apostle St. Matthew evangelized Ethiopia, where he disclosed as agents of the Devil the various magicians who misled the King and the people. He resurrected the son of the King, and the admiring people wanted to adore him as a god. But St. Matthew did not permit it, and used the gold and silver they brought in his homage to build a great church. He resided there under the protection of the sovereign for 33 years. The king's daughter, St. Ephigenia, consecrated herself to God and founded a convent where she was the superior of more than 200 virgins. After the King died, his successor, Hirtacus, wanted to marry St. Ephigenia since he considered her the only woman worthy of him. The new King asked St. Matthew to convince her to marry and promised him half of his kingdom. The Apostle told him to come to church on Sunday, and that there he would find a response to his request. The King thought that the Apostle would persuade Ephigenia to marry him. With the virgins and whole populace present, St. Matthew preached at great length on the excellence of the sacrament of marriage. Hirtacus was pleased believing that the sermon would make Ephigenia consent to marriage with him. However, at a certain moment, St. Matthew said, "Since marriage is good as long as the union is kept inviolate, all of you here present know that if a servant dared to usurp the king's spouse, he would deserve not only the king's anger, but death as a penalty." Then he turned to the king and addressed him, "So it is with you, O King! You know that Ephigenia has become the spouse of the Eternal King and is consecrated with the sacred veil. How can you take the spouse of One who is more powerful than you and make her your wife?" Filled with rage and hatred, the King left the church. When the liturgy was concluded, he sent a swordsman with orders to kill St. Matthew. Finding St. Matthew standing before the altar with his hands raised to Heaven in prayer, he stabbed the Apostle in the back, killing him and making him a martyr. Learning this, the indignant people ran to the royal palace to take revenge, but the priests restrained them and advised them to follow the funeral procession of St. Matthew instead. Hirtacus then had a huge fire ignited around the convent of St. Ephigenia to kill her and the virgins. But St. Matthew appeared to them and turned the fire away from the convent and towards the royal palace, which was completely consumed along with all in it. Only the King and his son managed to escape. The Prince immediately ran to the tomb of St. Matthew confessing his father's crimes and asking forgiveness. The King was stricken with leprosy and took his life with his own sword. The people chose as king the brother of St. Ephigenia. He reigned for 70 years spreading the word of Christ and building churches throughout Ethiopia. [From Antiochian.org (credited to oca.org)]

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SAINT FULVIAN, PRINCE OF ETHIOPIA, WHO IN HOLY BAPTISM WAS RENAMED MATTHEW

It is believed that after the day of Pentecost, the Apostle and Evangelist Matthew preached the Gospel first in Palestine, and then in Syria, Media, Persia, Parthia and finally, Ethiopia. Tradition holds that the Lord appeared to Saint Matthew, giving him a wooden rod and instructing him to plant it in a particular place in Ethiopia. Upon his arrival at the place in Ethiopia described by the

Lord, he met a man whom he ordained a Bishop named Platon. The rod was planted, as the Lord had instructed, and almost immediately it sprouted leaves and grew into a beautiful tree, the fruit of which was delicious. A spring also welled up nearby, the water of which could heal the sick.

Many Ethiopians were won over to Christ, although the local sovereign Prince, Fulvianus, a dedicated pagan, was violently opposed to this and, by his order, Saint Matthew was arrested and burned at the stake. When the fire flared up, everyone then saw that the fire did not harm Matthew. Then Fulvianus gave orders to add more wood to the fire, and frenzied with boldness, he commanded to set up twelve idols around the fire. But the flames melted the idols and flared up toward Fulvianus. The frightened Ethiopian turned to the Apostle with an entreaty for mercy, and by the prayer of the Apostle the flame went out. The body of Saint Matthew remained unharmed, and he departed to the Lord.

The ruler Fulvianus deeply repented of his deed, but still he had doubts. By his command, they put the body of Saint Matthew into an iron coffin and threw it into the sea. In doing this Fulvianus said that if the God of Matthew would preserve the body of the apostle in the water as He preserved him in the fire, then this would be proper reason to worship this One True God.

That night the Apostle Matthew appeared to Bishop Platon in a dream, and commanded him to go with clergy to the shore of the sea and to find his body there. Fulvianus and his retinue went with the bishop to the shore of the sea. The coffin carried by the waves was taken to the church built by the apostle. Then Fulvianus begged forgiveness of the holy Apostle Matthew, after which Bishop Platon baptized him, giving him the name Matthew in obedience to a command of God.

Soon Fulvianus-Matthew abdicated his rule and became a presbyter. Upon the death of Bishop Platon, the Apostle Matthew appeared to him and exhorted him to head the Ethiopian Church. Having become a bishop, Fulvianus-Matthew spent his remaining years preaching the gospel and winning his people to the Church.

In time, however, Fulvianus came to regret his action and agonized over his horrific act. His conscience beckoned him towards Christ. Ultimately, he embraced the Christian faith and was baptized, taking the name "Matthew." When the elderly Bishop Platon reposed, Saint Fulvianus-Matthew was consecrated to the episcopacy and succeeded him. He spent his remaining years preaching the gospel and winning his people to the Church. [From Mystagogy]

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 holy, glorious, and all-laudable Apostle and Evangelist Matthew; the Martyr Ephygenia of Ethiopia, disciple of St. Matthew; and Fulvian, prince of Ethiopia, 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.