



## 9<sup>th</sup> Sunday After Pentecost

### The Holy Passion-bearers Boris and Gleb

24 July / 6 August

**Resurrection Tropar, Tone 8:** Thou didst descend from on high, O Merciful One! / Thou didst endure the three-day burial / to free us from our sufferings! / O Lord, our Life and Resurrection, glory to Thee.

**Troparion of Ss Boris and Gleb tone 2:** O Passion-bearers and fulfillers of the Gospel of Christ, / chaste Boris and guileless Gleb; / you did not oppose the attacks of the enemy, your brother, / when he killed your bodies but could not touch your souls. / Let him therefore mourn while you rejoice with the Angels / standing before the Holy Trinity. / Pray that these who honour your memory may find grace with God / and that all Orthodox people may be saved.

**Resurrection Kondak, Tone 8:** By rising from the tomb Thou didst raise the dead and resurrect Adam / Eve exults in Thy Resurrection, / and the world celebrates Thy rising from the dead, O Greatly Merciful One.

**Kontakion of Ss Boris and Gleb tone 3:** Today your memory shines forth, noble sufferers, / and summons us to glorify Christ our God. / Those who come to the shrine of your relics / receive healing through your prayers, / for you are holy physicians.

#### Matins Gospel IX

##### EPISTLE: Corinthians 3:9-17

For we are God's fellow workers; you are God's field, you are God's building. According to the grace of God which was given to me, as a wise master builder I have laid the foundation, and another builds on it. But let each one take heed how he builds on it. For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if anyone builds on this foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, Each one's work will become clear; for the Day will declare it, because it will be revealed by fire; and the fire will test each one's work, of what sort it is. If anyone's work which he has built on it endures, he will receive a reward. If anyone's work is burned, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire. Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you? If anyone defiles the temple of God, God will destroy him. For the temple of God is holy, which temple you are.

#### WE ARE GOD'S FELLOW WORKERS... YOU ARE GOD'S BUILDING

His assertion that they are one, refers to their inability to do anything without 'God who gives the increase' ...Since this had a tendency to make men more indolent - I mean all being esteemed as one - whether they had laboured much or little, observe how he sets this right. He says, 'But each will receive his own reward according to his own labour' ...Do you see how to them he has also assigned no small task, having before laid down that the whole is of God? ...For the field is not called the husbandman's, but the householder's .. Again, the building is not the workman's but the master's ...Upon this then let us build, and as a foundation let us cleave to it as a branch to a vine; and let there be no interval between us and Christ. For the branch by its adherence draws in the sustenance, and the building stands because it is cemented together ...Let us then not merely keep hold of Christ, but let us be cemented to Him (Cf. Ps.73:27)...Let us cleave to Him ...by our works ...He is 'the Head,' we are 'the body'...He is 'a foundation', we are 'a building'; He 'a vine', we 'branches'; He 'the Bridegroom' we 'the bride'; He 'the Shepherd,' we 'the sheep,' He is 'the Way,' we 'they who walk therein.' Again, we are 'a temple,' He 'the indweller,' He the 'first begotten,' we 'the brethren': He 'the Heir,' we 'the heirs together with Him' ...He 'the Resurrection,' we 'those who rise again'; He 'the light,' we 'the enlightened.' All these indicate unity, and they allow no void interval, not even the slightest. For he who removes but to a little distance will go on till he has become very far distant.

*St. John Chrysostom. Homily VIII on I Corinthians III, 6, 7. B#56, pp. 46-47.*

For the saints: Rom. 8: 28 - 39

#### The Gospel According To St. Matthew 14: 22-34

Immediately Jesus made His disciples get into the boat and go before Him to the other side, while He sent the multitudes away. And when He had sent the multitudes away, He went up on the mountain by Himself to pray. Now when evening came, He was alone there. But the boat was now in the middle of the sea, tossed by the waves, for the wind was contrary. Now in the fourth watch of the night Jesus went to them, walking on the sea. And when the disciples saw Him walking on the sea, they were troubled, saying, "It is a ghost!" And they cried out for fear. But immediately Jesus spoke to them, saying, "Be of good cheer! It is I; do not be afraid." And Peter answered Him and said, "Lord, if it is You, command me to come to You on the water." So He said, "Come." And when Peter had come down out of the boat, he walked on the water to go to Jesus. But when he saw that the wind was boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink he cried out, saying, "Lord, save me!" And immediately Jesus stretched out His hand and caught him, and said to him, "O you of little faith, why did you doubt?" And when they got into the

boat, the wind ceased. Then those who were in the boat came and worshiped Him, saying, "Truly You are the Son of God." When they had crossed over, they came to the land of Gennesaret.

St Seraphim tells us that Adam was created a living soul, he was not created dead and then brought to life, nor was he created like the animals and then raised to the image and likeness of God, but rather that "the Lord God breathed into Adam's face the breath of life, then according to Moses' word, Adam became a living soul, that is, completely and in every way like God, and, like Him forever immortal. Adam was immune to the action of the elements to such a degree that water could not drown him, fire could not burn him, the earth could not swallow him in its abysses and the air could not harm him by any kind of action whatever. Everything was subject to him as the beloved of God, as the king and lord of creation and everything looked up to him as the perfect crown of God's creatures. ... There never has been a man on earth wiser or more intelligent than he ... Adam could see and understand the Lord walking in paradise, and comprehend His words, and the conversation of the holy Angels, and the language of all beasts, birds and reptiles..." However all this was lost when Adam sinned. Because of his sin, he became more like the animals and became subject to the world of which he had previously been lord and master. And so, no longer was Adam immune to the action of the elements, now water could drown him, fire could burn him, the elements of the world would afflict him, animals would fear him and flee from him and could tear him. All this was lost to Adam and to all his descendents because of his sin.

But God did not abandon us entirely, but He, Himself, became incarnate, took on flesh as we have and became for us a second Adam, a new man, and opened to us the gates of paradise that by His grace we might not only regain our heritage for which we were created as the crown and lord of creation, but that we might surpass it becoming sons and heirs of God through Jesus Christ. In the Gospel over the past few weeks we see how it is that our Lord Jesus Christ, when He was bodily on the earth demonstrated His lordship over creation. Food multiplied at His command; at His word water turned into wine; at His touch, sickness and injury were banished; He walked upon the surface of the sea as if on dry land; at His word, the storm was calmed and the wind and the waves were stilled. At the feast of the Transfiguration of the Lord which we celebrated just the other day, we heard how before the eyes of His closest disciples Jesus was transfigured and shone with His Heavenly glory and appeared to them in the midst of Moses and Elijah. And then descending from the mount following this revelation it was shown how even the spiritual world, personified by the demons who afflict man and who would destroy him, is subject to His command. This is Christ, this is the God Incarnate, this is the second Adam who has come into the world to pour out His grace upon us; to restore in Himself all those who would deny themselves and follow Him to their rightful place and lord and crown of creation and to adopt them as His own sons and daughters. He has come that we might have Life - His life, the life of the Holy Trinity - and that we might have it abundantly - that is in full and complete measure sufficient to transfigure each of us into His image and likeness. In the words of St Athanasius, "God has become man so that man might become god."

How then is this transformation accomplished, how do we sinners regain our place as the king and crown of creation, how do we ascend to the heights revealed to us by Christ? The answer is given to us in the Gospel by our Lord Himself when he says to his disciples, "if you have faith as a grain of mustard seed, you shall say to this mountain, 'remove hence to yonder place' and it shall move and nothing shall be impossible to you." It is by our faith, our firm belief in Christ, that we acquire for ourselves the grace of God and are transformed into His image and likeness. The root cause then of our helplessness, the thing that holds us back is our own unbelief. The greater our faith, the greater our power to be like Christ, the less the faith, the less the power. In the Gospel today we heard how the Apostle Peter's faith appeared at first to be strong, but then his weakness was revealed. He was bold to step out of the boat and onto the waves to walk on the water to the Lord. Everything was fine, until he took his eyes off of Christ and began to look around. Then the fear and doubt began to assail him and his faith crumbled. Peter was overcome by the wind and the waves and unbelief weakened his faith, and he began to sink. And so he called out to the Lord and Jesus was there reaching out to take his hand, to lift him up and place him back in the boat where his faith could be nurtured and could become stronger. Faith then is weakened by unbelief which is itself the result of the perversion or corruption of our created nature which in turn is the result of sin. The wages of sin is death and this death shows itself in our lives as corruption which is a state of having fallen away from God and corruption, brought about by sin, in turn produces unbelief.

Therefore this lost power, this lost nearness to God, can be regained only by faith, faith and more faith. How can we strengthen our faith and thereby overcome the sin and corruption which separate us from God. How can we heal this spiritual plague? This too our Lord answers in the Gospel, when He continues His teaching on faith. When Jesus reached out to Peter, He said to him, "O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?" Jesus then placed Peter back in the boat, in the midst of the other apostles, symbolically in the embrace and protection of the Church, the ark of salvation. There, while he was cared for and protected, his faith could grow and become strong.

Later, when the disciples asked Jesus why it was they could not cast out a demon, he said to them, "Because of your unbelief...this kind cometh not out but by prayer and fasting." Fasting and prayer are two pillars of faith: two living fires that burn up the evil which afflicts us. "Through fasting, all bodily passions are calmed and destroyed, especially immorality; through prayer, all other passions of the soul, heart and mind are calmed and destroyed... By fasting, the vessels of the body and soul are cleansed of their filthy contents of worldly passions and vices; by prayer, the grace of the Holy Spirit is drawn down into the empty, cleansed vessel - and the fullness of faith consists in the abiding of God's Spirit in man.... Prayer is strengthened and extended by fasting; faith is confirmed by the one and the other - and faith moves mountains, drives out devils and makes the impossible, possible."

The Church gives to us ample opportunity to fast - the four major fasting seasons of the year and then between those seasons on the Wednesdays and Fridays of each week. If we neglect fasting, then we neglect one of the means that our Lord

has clearly established for the building up of our faith. Without fasting, it is possible to build a strong faith, but it is much much more difficult. And so we should take advantage of every opportunity that is provided to us by the Church to fast. It is one of the primary exercises by which the strength of our faith is built - and just as any exercise program benefits from a schedule to prevent too much or too little exercise (producing either harm or no benefit) so also the Church gives us a schedule of fasting - so that we avoid too much (and therefore harming ourselves) or too little (and therefore deriving no benefit.) Let us therefore endeavor to take advantage of the "exercise program" that the Church provides when she gives us opportunities to fast.

Prayer, on the other hand, is something in which we should engage constantly - as the Holy Apostle tells us, "pray without ceasing". There are many ways in which the Church teaches us to pray without ceasing - in each case though the goal is the constant remembrance of God and His presence with us. One of the most pervasive instructions of the Holy Fathers is to learn a short prayer and to use this prayer constantly in every situation. The most common prayer that is used for this purpose is the Jesus Prayer: "Lord Jesus Christ Son of God have mercy on me a sinner."

This prayer can be used in all places and at all times and for any purpose whatsoever. Even in the lengthy Church services, it is very easy and convenient to say the Jesus Prayer, and to do so for prolonged periods of time. No matter your situation, when it is impossible to do anything, "exercise" yourself in the Jesus Prayer. Stand in your heart in great reverence before God, and fully realizing your complete unworthiness even to utter the name of God, pronounce the words of the prayer with attention and fear, casting yourself upon God's mercy and condescension. The devil incessantly and in every way tries to dissuade man from this activity. One must be aware of this and fight against him, forcing oneself to say this wonderful prayer.

These two pillars of faith - prayer and fasting - lift us up to the heights of heaven and through them our faith is strengthened quickening in us the image and likeness of God. Our creation, our purpose our calling are all to ascend to the presence of God as the crown and king of creation and there to worship Him in spirit and in truth. In order to fulfill this great purpose, in order to overcome the sin which drags us down and chains us to this earth, which robs us of our birthright and of the power to become the sons of God, we must increase our faith, we must cry out, "Oh Lord, I believe, help thou my unbelief". We must build up our faith by prayer and fasting - not just as a compulsory exercise, but with zeal and purpose, in the knowledge and conviction that these things are the stepping stones by which we ascend to the Kingdom of Heaven.

*Archpriest David Moser*  
<https://groups.yahoo.com/neo/groups/propoved/info>

for the Saints: John 15:17-16:2

### Saints of the Week

**24 July / 6 August - The Holy Martyr Christina** - Born in the city of Tyre, she was the daughter of the imperial governor, Urban, an idolater. It is not known why her parents gave her the name Christina, but it carried within itself the mystery of her future following of Christ. She knew nothing of Him until the age of eleven, but, when she reached that age, her father (wanting, because of her beauty, to hide her from the world until she was fully grown) made her live on the top floor of a high tower. He gave her every comfort — slaves and gold and silver idols to which to offer daily sacrifice. But the soul of the young Christina was weighed down and suffocated in this idolatrous atmosphere. Looking out of the window by day at the sun, and by night at the wonderful constellations of shining stars, she came, through her natural understanding, to a firm belief in the one, living God. God, in His great mercy, seeing her yearning for the truth, sent His angel to her, who signed her with the sign of the Cross, named her the bride of Christ and instructed her fully in the things of God. Then Christina smashed all the idols in her rooms, incurring her father's terrible wrath. He brought her to trial and had her tortured and thrown into prison, intending that she be beheaded on the following day. But that night, Urban, in full health, gave up the ghost and went to the grave before his daughter. After that, two of the governors, Dion and Julian, continued the interrogation of this holy maiden. Christina's courage in suffering and the marvels which were performed by the power of God brought many of the pagan inhabitants of Tyre to Christianity. During Christina's torture, Dion suddenly fell dead among the people. His successor, Julian, cut off Christina's breasts and cut out her tongue. The martyr took her tongue in her hand and threw it into Julian's face, and he was instantly blinded. Finally, her sufferings for Christ were ended under a sharp sword, but her life went on in the immortal kingdom of the angels. St Christina suffered with honour in the third century; Our Holy Father Polycarp, Abbot of the Kiev Caves;

**The Holy Passion-bearers Boris and Gleb** - They were sons of the great Prince Vladimir, Baptiser of the Russian people. Until his baptism, Vladimir had many wives, and children by them. Boris and Gleb were brothers of one mother. Before his death in 1015, Vladimir divided the Kingdom among all his sons. But Svyatopolk, his eldest son and Prince of Kiev, desired to take the parts that were set aside for Boris and Gleb, so he sent men to kill Boris. They carried a message to Boris, pretending that he wished to live in peace with him, and to increase Boris's land holdings inherited from their father. Some of Vladimir's advisers told Boris that he should take the army and establish himself as ruler of Kiev. St Boris, however, said that he could never lift his hand against his own brother. Unfortunately, Svyatopolk was not so scrupulous. He came to the town of Vyshegorod to ask its leaders if they were loyal to him. They assured him that they were ready to die for him. Svyatopolk sent assassins to the Alta to kill Boris, who already knew that his brother wanted him dead. When they arrived they heard him chanting psalms and praying before an icon of Christ. He asked the Lord to strengthen him for the suffering he was about to endure. He also prayed for Svyatopolk, asking God not to count this against him as sin. Then he lay down upon his couch, and the assassins stabbed him with their lances, and also killed some of Boris's servants. Wrapping Boris in a cloth, they threw him

onto a wagon and drove off with him. When Svyatopolk saw that he was still breathing, he sent some men to finish him off with swords. St Boris received the crown of martyrdom in 1015. After Svyatopolk had killed Boris, he wondered, "Now how can I kill Gleb?" He sent him a message saying that their father was ill and wished to see him. As he was on his way, he received word from Yaroslav that their father had died and that Svyatopolk had murdered Boris. St Gleb wept for his father and brother, and was lamenting them when the assassins arrived. They seized his boat and drew their weapons, but it was Gleb's cook Torchin who stabbed him with a knife. The martyr's body was thrown onto the shore between two trees. Later, he was buried beside St Boris in the church of St Basil. The holy martyrs Princes Boris and Gleb are also commemorated on May 2.

**St. Declan, bishop of Ardmore, Ireland (5th c.)** - Born at Desi (Decies), Waterford, Ireland, 5th century. Declan, an Irish monk, was baptised by and a disciple of Saint Colman. He appears to have been an Irish evangelist before the arrival of Saint Patrick. He may have made two pilgrimages to Rome and later became the first bishop of Ardmore, a see confirmed by Patrick during the synod of Cashel in 448. Many miracles are attributed to Declan. Five miles or less to the east of Youghal Harbour, on the southern Irish coast, a short, rocky and rather elevated promontory juts, with a south-easterly trend, into the ocean [ $\pm 51^{\circ} 57' N / 7^{\circ} 43' W$ ]. Maps and admiralty charts call it Ram Head, but the real name is Ceann-a-Rama and popularly it is often styled Ardmore Head. The material of this inhospitable coast is a hard metamorphic schist which bids defiance to time and weather. Landwards the shore curves in clay cliffs to the north-east, leaving, between it and the iron headland beyond, a shallow exposed bay wherein many a proud ship has met her doom. Nestling at the north side of the headland and sheltered by the latter from Atlantic storms stands one of the most remarkable groups of ancient ecclesiastical remains in Ireland—all that has survived of St. Declan's holy city of Ardmore. This embraces a beautiful and perfect round tower, a singularly interesting ruined church commonly called the cathedral, the ruins of a second church beside a holy well, a primitive oratory, a couple of ogham inscribed pillar stones, &c..

**25 July / 7 August - The Dormition of the Righteous Anna, the Mother of the Most Holy Mother of God.;**

**St Olympias the Deaconess** - Olympias was born in Constantinople of very distinguished parents. Her father, Anysius Secundus, was a senator and her mother was the daughter of the famous nobleman Eulavius who is mentioned in the hagiography of St. Nicholas the Wonder-worker. When Olympias reached maturity, she was betrothed to a nobleman who died before the marriage took place. The emperor and the other relatives pressured Olympias to marry another, but in vain. However, she refused them this and devoted herself to a god-pleasing life, giving from her inherited estate great offerings to the churches and alms to the needy. She served as a deaconess in the Church, at first during the time of Patriarch Nectarius and, after his death, during the time of St. John Chrysostom. When Chrysostom was exiled, he counselled Olympias to remain in the church and to serve as before regardless who the patriarch after him would be. Immediately after the banishment of this great saint, someone started a fire in the Great Church [The Church of the Divine Wisdom Hagia Sophia] and the fire consumed many prominent buildings in the capital. The enemies of Chrysostom accused this holy woman of initiating this malicious fire. Olympias was banished from Constantinople to Nicomedia where she died in the year 410 A.D., requesting in her testament that her body be placed in a box and cast into the sea and wherever the water tosses it up, there she is to be buried. The coffin was cast ashore in the city of Vrochthoi, where there existed a church dedicated to the Apostle Thomas. From her relics, great healing miracles appeared throughout the centuries. The exiled Chrysostom wrote beautiful letters to the exiled Olympias which, even today, serve as a great comfort to all those who suffer for the sake of God's justice. Among other things, Chrysostom writes to Olympias: "Now I am very elated not only because you were relieved from infirmity, but more so, that you are nobly enduring all difficulties referring to them as trivialities which is characteristic of a soul full of power and abounding in the rich fruits of courage. For you not only courageously are enduring misfortune rather you do not even notice it when it comes and without exertion, without labour and disturbance not even talking about it to others but rejoicing and triumphing over it. That serves as the greatest wisdom" ([Letter VI](#)). ;

**Our Holy Mother Eupraxia the Virgin** - Eupraxia was the daughter of Antigonus, a nobleman of Constantinople and a relative of Emperor Theodosius the Great. Her mother, a young widow, with Eupraxia settled in Egypt and visited the monasteries there distributing alms and praying to God. By her fervent desire, the seven-year-old Eupraxia was tonsured a nun. The older she got the more she imposed upon herself the heavy burden of mortification. At one time, she fasted for forty days. She reposed in 413 A.D, in her thirtieth year. She possessed the great grace of God and healed the most difficult illnesses. **Commemoration of the Fifth Ecumenical Council** - This Council was convened in Constantinople during the reign of Emperor Justinian the Great in the year 553 A.D. All the heresies of the Monophysites were condemned at this Council as well as the heretical writings of Theodore of Mopsuestia, Theodoret of Cyrus and Origen (his teaching against the resurrection of the dead).

Tropar of St. Nessan Tone 2: O thou who didst converse with St. Patrick/ and follow him in the monastic way:/ as thou didst guide monks to Christ our God,/ pray that our souls may be saved.

**26 July / 8 August - The Hieromartyr Hermolaus** - he was a priest in Nicomedia in the time of the Emperor Maximian, and was with the twenty thousand martyrs condemned by the Emperor to be burned in their church (see December 28th). Hermolaus somehow escaped death on that occasion, together with two other priests, Hermippus and Hermocrates. Hermolaus baptised St Panteleimon, with whom he was brought to trial, tortured and finally beheaded. Hermippus and Hermocrates suffered with them, and they were all crowned with wreaths of victory and glory in the Kingdom of Christ. They suffered with honour in about 304; Our Holy Mother, the Martyr Paraskeva - Paraskeva was born in Rome of Christian parents and from her youth was instructed in the Faith of Christ. With great fervence, St. Paraskeva endeavoured to fulfill all the commandments of God in her life. Believing strongly and living according to her faith, Paraskeva directed others on the path [of salvation] with the help of the True Faith and pious living. When her parents died Paraskeva distributed all of her property to the poor and was tonsured a nun. As a nun she preached the Faith of Christ with an even greater zeal, not hiding from anyone, even though at that time the Roman authorities bloodily persecuted the Faith of Christ. First the pernicious Jews accused St. Paraskeva of preaching the prohibited Faith. She was brought to trial before Emperor Antoninus. All the flatteries

of the emperor did not help in the least to cause her to waver in the Faith. They then subjected her to fiery torments and placed a red-hot helmet on her head. The Lord miraculously saved her and Paraskeva was delivered and left Rome. She again traveled from city to city to convert the pagan people there to the True Faith. In two more cities she was brought before princes and judges and was tortured for her Lord, at the same time working great miracles and by the power of God quickly recuperated from her pains and wounds. The pagans, as always, ascribed her miracles to magic and her power of recovery to the mercy of their gods. St. Paraskeva once said to the prince who tortured her: "It is not your gods, O prince, who healed me but my Christ the True God." Finally Prince Tarasius beheaded her. Thus this saint gloriously ended her fruitful life. Her relics were later translated to Constantinople. She suffered honourably for Christ in the second century;

**Our Holy Father Moses the Ugrian** - He was at the court of the young Russian Prince Boris. When the godless Svyatopolk murdered Boris, Moses escaped and fled to Kiev. A little later he was taken to Poland as a slave by the Polish King Boleslav and there was sold for a thousand gold coins to a young and depraved widow, the wife of one of Boleslav's commanders who was slain. This wicked woman tempted Moses to commit adultery but Moses would not be tempted for he vowed to live chastely before the Lord. She then suggested marriage to him but he rejected that also. Moses secretly received the monastic tonsure from an Athonite monk and he appeared before the lady in the monastic habit. She bound him, ordered that he be flogged and to have his private organ severed. This unsuccessful seduction by this shameful woman lasted for five years - five years of pain and torture! However, King Boleslav was slain unexpectedly in an uprising during which this woman was also killed. Then Moses was free to go to Kiev where, at the monastery of St. Anthony, he devoted his life to prayer and silence. Completely conquering the shameful vice in himself, Moses assisted many to also be saved from it. His holy relics helped many (St. John, the much suffering July 8). After ten years of silence in the Monastery of the Caves, St. Moses found rest on July 26, 1043 A.D. and took up habitation in the eternal virginal Kingdom of Christ.

**27 July / 9 August - The Holy and Great Martyr Panteleimon** - born in Nicomedia of a Christian mother, Eubula, and a pagan father, Eustorgius, he studied medicine as a young man. The priest Hermolaus befriended him, instructed him in the Christian faith and baptised him. Panteleimon miraculously healed a blind man whom other doctors had treated in vain: he healed him by the name of Christ and baptised him. From jealousy, the doctors denounced Panteleimon as a Christian, and he went before the Emperor Maximian for judgement. 'He stood before the earthly ruler in the body, but in his mind he stood before the heavenly King.' He freely declared himself to be a Christian before the Emperor, and, in front of his eyes, healed a paralytic of a long infirmity. This miracle brought many of the pagans to the Christian faith. The Emperor put him to torture, but the Lord appeared to him on several occasions and delivered him whole and uninjured. Then St Hermolaus suffered, along with Hermippus and Hermocrates. Condemned to death, St Panteleimon knelt in prayer. At that, the executioner gave him a blow on the neck with his sword, and the sword broke as if made of wax. The executioner could not kill him until he had finished his prayer and had himself given the word to behead him. Panteleimon was beheaded under an olive tree, which after that became laden with fruit. 'Panteleimon' means 'all-merciful'. God the all-merciful received his righteous soul, and glorified him among His greatest saints, his relics remaining incorrupt. This wonderful martyr suffered with honour as a youth for Christ on July 27th, 304. St Panteleimon is invoked in the prayers at the blessing of water and the blessing of oil, together with St Hermolaus and the other unmercenaries and wonderworkers. The loveliest church dedicated to him is to be found on the Holy Mountain; St Clement, Archbishop of Ochrid; Blessed Nicolas the Fool for Christ; Our Holy Mother Anthusa; The 153 Martyrs in Thrace; commemoration of the canonisation of St. Herman of Alaska (1970).

**July 28 / August 10 — The Smolensk "Hodigitria" Icon of the Theotokos**, or "She who leads the way," was, according to Church Tradition, painted by the holy Evangelist Luke during the earthly life of the Most Holy Theotokos. The holy hierarch Demetrius of Rostov suggests that this icon was painted at the request of Theophilus, the prefect of Antioch. From Antioch the holy image was transferred to Jerusalem. From there the empress Eudokia, the spouse of Arcadius, gave it at Constantinople to Pulcheria, the sister of the emperor, who put the holy icon in the Blachernae church. In 1046, the Byzantine emperor Constantine IX Monomachos (1042-1054), gave his daughter Anna in marriage to Prince Vsevolod Yaroslavich, the son of Yaroslav the Wise. He blessed her on her way with this icon. After the death of Prince Vsevolod the icon went to his son Vladimir Monomachos, who transferred it at the beginning of the twelfth century into the Smolensk cathedral church in honor of the Dormition of the Most Holy Theotokos. From that time, the icon was known as the Smolensk Hodigitria. In the year 1238, at the bespeaking of the icon, the self-sacrificing Orthodox warrior Mercurius went by night into the camp of Batu and killed many of the enemy, in whose number was their most powerful warrior. Having accepted a martyr's death in battle, he was included by the Church in the ranks of the Saints (November 24).

In the fourteenth century, Smolensk came into the possession of the Lithuanian princes. The daughter of prince Vitovt, Sophia, was given in marriage to the Moscow Great Prince Basil Dimitrievich (1398-1425). In 1398, she brought the Smolensk Icon of the Mother of God with her to Moscow. They set the holy image in the Annunciation cathedral of the Kremlin, on the right side of the Royal Doors. In 1456, at the request of the inhabitants of Smolensk with Bishop Misael at the head, the icon was solemnly returned to Smolensk in a church procession, and at Moscow there remained two copies. One was put in the Annunciation cathedral, and the other, "a measure for measure," was put in the Novodevichi monastery, founded in memory of the return of Smolensk to Russia. The monastery was built on Devichi Pole (Virgin's Field), where "with many tears" the Muscovites handed over the holy icon to Smolensk. In 1602 an exact copy was painted from the wonderworking icon (in 1666 together with the ancient icon they brought a new copy to Moscow for restoration), which they placed in the tower of the Smolensk fortress wall over the Dneprovsk Gates, under a specially constructed cover. Afterwards, in 1727, a wooden church was built there, and in 1802, a stone church. The new copy took on the power of the old image, and when the Russian armies left Smolensk on August 5, 1812, they took the icon with them for defense from the enemy forces. On the eve of the Battle of Borodino they carried this icon through the camp, to encourage and inspire the soldiers to great deeds. The ancient image of the Smolensk Hodigitria, taken to the Dormition cathedral on the day of the Battle of Borodino went in procession with the Iveron and Vladimir Icons of the Mother of God through the Belo and Kitai quarters and the Kremlin walls, and then they sent it to the sick and wounded at the Lefortovo palace. After leaving Moscow, the icon was taken to Yaroslavl. Thus were these

sister-icons preserved, and the Mother of God defended Russia through Her icons. After the victory over the enemy forces the Hodigitria Icon was returned to Smolensk together with its glorified copy. The celebration in honor of this wonderworking icon on July 28 was established in the year 1525 in memory of the return of Smolensk to Russia. There exist many venerated copies of the Smolensk Hodigitria, for which the celebration is set on this day. There is also a day of celebration for the Smolensk Icon (November 5), glorified in the nineteenth century when this image was returned to Smolensk on the orders of the commander-in-chief of the Russian army M. I. Kutuzov. In memory of the expulsion of the enemy from Russia, it was decided to celebrate this day annually at Smolensk. The holy icon of the Hodigitria Mother of God is one of the chief holy objects of the Russian Church. Believers have received and do receive from it an abundant help of grace. The Mother of God through Her holy icon intercedes for and strengthens us, guiding us on the way to salvation, and we call out to Her, "Thou art the All-Blessed Hodigitria for faithful peoples, Thou art the affirmation, the Praiseworthy of Smolensk and all the Russian land. Rejoice, Hodigitria, salvation of Christians!"

**The Holy Apostles of the Seventy and Deacons: Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon & Parmenas** — all four were of the number of the seven deacons and the seventy apostles. The other three deacons were Stephen, Philip and Nicolas. Stephen, the first martyr, is commemorated on December 27th, and Philip on October 11th. Nicolas was not included in the ranks of the saints because of heresy. These first four have no separate commemoration, and are commemorated together on this day. Prochorus was consecrated by the Apostle Peter as Bishop of Nicomedia. He served for a time with St John the Evangelist and, on the island of Patmos, wrote down the Revelation that he heard from St John's lips. After that, he returned to Nicomedia, where he made great efforts to bring the people to the Faith. He died a martyr in Antioch, where he was murdered by unbelievers. Holy Nicanor suffered in Jerusalem on the same day as St Stephen the Archdeacon, quickly followed by two hundred others, killed by the wicked Jews. Timon was bishop in Arabia, and was crucified for Christ. Parmenas died before the eyes of the apostles, and was mourned and buried by them; The Holy Martyr Julian; Our Holy Father Paul of Xeropotamou; The Holy Martyr Eustathius (Eustace);

**St. Samson, bishop of Dol in Brittany (c.565)** - Bishop and confessor, born in South Wales; died 28 July, 565 (?). The date of his birth is unknown. His parents whose names are given as Amon of Dyfed and Anna of Gwynedd, were of noble, but not royal, birth. While still an infant he was dedicated to God and entrusted to the care of St. Illtyd, by whom he was brought up in the monastery of Llantwit Major. He showed exceptional talents in his studies, and was eventually ordained deacon and priest by St. Dubric. After this he retired to another monastery, possibly after that on Caldy Island, to practise greater austerities, and some years later became its abbot. About this time some Irish monks who were returning from Rome happened to visit Samson's monastery. So struck was the abbot by their learning and sanctity that he accompanied them to Ireland, and there remained some time. During his visit he received the submission of an Irish monastery, and, on his return to Wales, sent one of his uncles to act as its superior. His fame as a worker of miracles now attracted so much attention that he resolved to found a new monastery or cell "far from the haunts of men", and accordingly retired with a few companions to a lonely spot on the banks of the Severn. He was soon discovered, however, and forced by his fellow-countrymen to become abbot of the monastery formerly ruled by St. Germanus; here St. Dubric consecrated him bishop but without appointment to any particular see. Now, being warned by an angel, he determined to leave England and, after some delay, set sail for Brittany. He landed near Dol, and there built a monastery which became the centre of his episcopal work in the district. Business taking him to Paris, he visited King Childebert there, and was nominated by him as Bishop of Dol; Dol, however, did not become a regular episcopal see till about the middle of the ninth century. Samson attained the age of 85 years, and was buried at Dol.

**July 29 / August 11 — The Holy Martyr Callinicus** - born in Cilicia and brought up in Christian piety, he left all and began to preach the Gospel. He was arrested in Ancyra by the pagan governor, Sacerdos. When the governor, in fury, threatened him with torture if he would not worship idols, St Callinicus replied: 'Every torture for my God is as welcome to me as bread is to a hungry man.' After harsh torture and beating, the governor shod him with iron shoes, with the nails sticking inwards, and ordered that he be driven out to the town of Gangra, for he did not dare to have him further tortured or killed in Ancyra, as many men, beholding the heroic endurance of the man of God, were turning to the Christian faith. On the way, the soldiers became thirsty and there was no water. St Callinicus prayed to God and brought forth water from a rock. When they arrived in Gangra, the torturers threw Callinicus into a fiery furnace. The saint prayed to God, saying: 'I thank Thee, O heavenly Father, that Thou makest me worthy in this hour to die for Thy holy Name!' He then went into the fire. When the fire was extinguished, his dead body was found whole and untouched by the flames. He suffered with honour, and was crowned with a wreath of eternal glory, in about 250. The Holy Martyr Seraphima; The Holy Martyr Theodotia; The Holy Martyr Eustathius of Mtskheta; St. Olaf, king of Norway (1030).

**July 30 / August 12 — The Holy Apostles Silas, Silvanus, Crescens, Epaphroditus and Andronicus** - these are all among the Seventy. St Silas was sent from Jerusalem to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas, to settle a quarrel among the faithful concerning circumcision: namely, whether or not it was necessary to circumcise pagans who had embraced Christianity (Acts 15:22). After that, Silas travelled with Paul around Asia and Macedonia, and was installed as Bishop of Corinth, where he died peacefully. Silvanus helped the two greatest apostles (I Pet. 5:12; II Cor. 1:19). As bishop in Salonica, he laboured much and suffered much, until he exchanged the earthly life for the heavenly. Crescens was a fellow-worker with the Apostle Paul (II Tim. 4:10), and then bishop in Galatia and a missionary in Gaul, where he died a martyr for Christ under Trajan. St Epaphroditus is mentioned by the Apostle Paul (Rom. 16:5), and became Bishop of Carthage. Andronicus (Rom. 16:7), Bishop of Pannonia, is also commemorated separately on May 17th; The Hieromartyr Valentine; The Hieromartyr Polychronius, Bishop of Babylon; St John the Soldier; Our Holy Mother Angelina; Birthday of the New Martyr Crown Prince Alexis.