

Sunday of the Publican and the Pharisee, Holy New Martyrs & Confessors of Russia

15 / 28 January

Lenten Triodion Begins

Resurrection Tropar, Tone 1: When the stone had been sealed by the Jews; / while the soldiers were guarding Thy Most Pure Body; / Thou didst rise on the third day, O Saviour, / granting life to the world. / The Powers of Heaven therefore cried to Thee O Giver of Life: / glory to Thy Resurrection O Christ! / Glory to Thy Kingdom; / Glory to Thy Dispensation, O Thou who lovest mankind.

Resurrection Kondak, Tone 1: As God, Thou didst rise from the tomb in glory, / Raising the world with Thyself. / Human nature praises Thee as God, for death has vanished. / Adam exults O Master, Eve rejoices, for she is freed from bondage, and cries to Thee; / Thou art the Giver of Resurrection to all, O Christ.

Kondak for the Publican and the Pharisee, Tone 4: Let us flee the bragging of the Pharisee, and learn the humility of the Publican, while crying out unto the Saviour with groanings: Be gracious unto us, O Thou Who alone dost readily forgive.



Matins Gospel I

After the Matins Gospel **Publican and the Pharisee, Troparion, Tone VIII** — Open to me the doors of repentance, O Life-giver. For my spirit rises early to pray towards Thy holy temple, bearing the temple of my body all defiled. But in Thy compassion, purify me by the loving kindness of Thy mercy.

Theotokion: Make straight for me the paths of salvation, O Mother of God. For I have profaned my soul with shameful sins, and have wasted my whole life in easy-going indifference. But by thy intercessions deliver me from all uncleanness.

Tone VI — Have mercy on me, O God, according to Thy great mercy; and according to the multitude of Thy compassions, blot out my transgression. When I think of the multitude of ghastly things I have done, wretch that I am, I tremble at the fearful day of Judgment. But trusting in the mercy of Thy loving kindness; like David I cry to Thee: Have mercy on me, O God, according to Thy great mercy.

(Note: These penitential songs are sung on Sundays during the Great Fast from the Sunday of the Publican and Pharisee to the fifth week.)

Epistle: II Timothy 3: 10-15

10 But you have carefully followed my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, love, perseverance, 11 persecutions, afflictions, which happened to me at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra—what persecutions I endured. And out of them all the Lord delivered me. 12 Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution. 13 But evil men and impostors will grow worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived. 14 But as for you, continue in the things which you have learned and been assured of, knowing from whom you have learned them, 15 and that from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.

ALL WHO DESIRE TO LIVE GODLY IN JESUS CHRIST WILL SUFFER PERSECUTION

True faith will be persecuted in this world. The Saviour Himself said this to His apostles clearly and publicly (Jn. 16:32). And St. Apollinarius of Hierapolis, writing against the Montanist heretics, asserts: 'Let them tell us, before God, who of all their prophets, beginning with Montanus and his wives, has been persecuted by the Jews and killed by the ungodly. No-one. Who among them has been arrested for the name of Christ, and crucified? Again, no-one ...Heresies are usually closer to the worldly and demonic spirit, and therefore the world and the demons do not persecute their own. To be constantly under persecution, with short breathing-spaces, is a distinguishing mark of the Faith and of the Orthodox Church. This persecution has existed throughout the whole of history, whether externally or internally; externally from unbelievers and internally from heretics.

The Lord Jesus both foretold this and showed it by His own example. And the apostles said it, and showed it by their own example. And all the God-bearing Fathers of the Church, and confessors and martyrs, said this, and showed it by their own example. Can we have any further doubt that it is by the narrow gate that one enters into the Kingdom of God? No; in this

there is no foundation or justification for doubt. Can sheep live among wolves and not be molested by them? Can a candle burn among cross-draughts and not be bent to and fro? Can a fruit-tree grow on a high road and be left alone by passers-by? And so, can the Church of devout souls not be persecuted again and again - by pagans, by idol-worshippers, by heretics, by schismatics, by passions and vices, by sin and lawlessness, by the world and by demons? Thus, not one godly soul can remain without persecution, either external or internal, until it is parted from the body and from this world. Maybe someone will challenge this, and expound something different, according to his assessment and logic. But that would not help either the understanding or the logic of a single man. Thousands of those crucified have spoken otherwise; thousands of those burned by fire have cried otherwise; thousands of those beheaded have proved otherwise, and thousands of those drowned have testified otherwise. Oh, my brothers, the Christian faith is strong, not only when it is in accord with secular understanding and logic, but when (and even especially when) it is opposed to them. All who desire to live godly lives shall be persecuted. This the apostles foretold at the beginning of the Christian era, and twenty Christian centuries give a many-voiced echo, confirming the truth of this prophecy. O risen Lord, give us light that we may be godly to the end and strength that we may endure persecution likewise to the end. To Thee be glory and praise for ever. Amen.

Bishop Nikolai Velimirovic, The Prologue, 27th April

Gospel Luke 18: 10-14

10 Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. 11 The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank You that I am not like other men— extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this tax collector. 12 I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all that I possess. 13 And the tax collector, standing afar off, would not so much as raise his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner! 14 I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other, for everyone who exalts himself will be abased, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.

“Great Lent is preceded by three preparatory Sundays. The first preparatory Sunday of Great Lent is termed the “Sunday of the Publican & Pharisee”. This Sunday’s Gospel parable of the Publican & the Pharisee is read in order to demonstrate that only prayer with heartfelt tears & humility, like that of the publican, & not with a recounting of one’s virtues, like that of the Pharisee, can call down upon us the mercy of God. Starting with this Sunday & continuing until the fifth Sunday of Great Lent, following the reading of the Gospel, during the All-night Vigil, the contrite prayer is chanted, “The doors of repentance open unto me, O Giver of Life...”

Archpriest Seraphim Slobodsky, The Law Of God

Many are the faults of the Pharisee: for first of all he is boastful, and without sense, for he praises himself, even though the sacred Scripture cries aloud, ‘Let a neighbour praise you, and not your own mouth: a stranger and not your own lips’ (Prov. 27:2) ...Our virtue, therefore, must not be contaminated with fault, but must be single-minded and blameless and free from all that can bring reproach. For what profit is there in fasting twice a week, if you so doing serve only as a pretext for ignorance and vanity, and if it makes you supercilious, haughty and selfish? You tithe your possessions and make a boast of it; but in another way you provoke God’s anger, by condemning men generally on this account and accusing others. And you yourself are puffed up, though not crowned by the divine decree for righteousness, but on the contrary, heap praises upon yourself. For I am not, he says, as the rest of mankind. Moderate yourself, O Pharisee: ‘Set a guard, O Lord, over your mouth, keep watch over the door of your lips’ (Ps. 140:3). You speak to God Who knows all things. Await the decree of the Judge. None of those skilled in the practice of wrestling ever crowns himself; nor does any man receive the crown of himself, but awaits the summons of the arbiter. Lower your pride, for arrogance is both accursed and hated by God. Although, therefore, you fast with puffed up mind, your so doing will not avail you; your labour will be unrewarded; for you have mingled dung with your perfume. Even according to the law of Moses a sacrifice that had a blemish was not capable of being offered to God; for it was said unto him, ‘Of sheep, and ox, that is offered for sacrifice, there must be no blemish therein’ (Lev. 22:21). Since, therefore, your fasting is accompanied by pride, you must expect to hear God saying, This is not the fast that I have chosen (Cf Isa. 58:5) ...You offer tithes, but you wrong in another way Him Who is honoured by you, in that you condemn men generally. This is an act foreign to the mind that fears God.

St. Cyril of Alexandria. Commentary on the Gospel of Saint Luke, Homily 120. B#42, pp. 480-481.

The Doors of Repentance

"Open to me the doors of repentance, O Giver of Life..." So sings the Church today at Matins of this first of four Sundays preparing us for Great Lent. This Sunday ought to be considered as a door by which we enter into the sacred time of year leading us to Pascha, a door giving us access to the life of repentance and conversion which Lent ought to bring each of us. "Repentance" (Greek: *metanoia*) means "a change of mind," inner change. What Great Lent demands of us is radical change, renewal, conversion.

In the Church’s calendar this first Preparation Sunday is called "The Sunday of the Publican and the Pharisee." In order to call us to real repentance, the Church puts before our eyes the image of two men who go up to the Temple to pray; one of them is put into a new relationship with God because of his humility and contrition. This Gospel Reading is the most dangerous of the parables. We so condemn the Pharisee that we actually say: "In spite of my sins, I at least am not a Pharisee, not a hypocrite." The Pharisee’s prayer is not all bad. Most of what he says is true. He even recognizes that his good actions come from God.

The Pharisee sins in two ways. He lacks repentance and humility. He has no sense of his weaknesses, of the sins which he *does* commit, like all other men. He compares himself with the tax collector in pride, with a certain scorn. Have we the right to condemn the Pharisee, to think ourselves better than he, when we violate the commandments which he observes? Do we have the humility and repentance of the tax collector? If we condemn the Pharisee for pride, without actually becoming the Publican, we ourselves become Pharisees. The tax collector only asks for mercy. He sees his own need for forgiveness. "This man went to his house in a right relationship with God, but not the other."

Is the tax collector "justified" only because he confessed his sin and stood before God in humility? There is more. His prayer is an appeal to God's tenderness made in confidence. What Jesus demands of us as we repent is this abandonment, this absolute confidence in the Father's mercy and compassion. The Church hymns draw the conclusion and give us today's main thought: "Lord, You condemned the Pharisee when he justified himself and boasted about his actions; You justified the tax collector when he approached in humility, asking pardon of his sins; for You reject arrogant thoughts, but You do not turn away from contrite hearts. Before You we also fall down in adoration. Grant us Your pardon and Your great mercy!"

The Living Word

Anon.

Saints of the week

Fast Free Week

15 / 28 January — Our Holy Father Paul of Thebes - Born of wealthy parents in Lower Thebes in Egypt in the reign of the Emperor Decius, he and a sister of his together inherited all their parents' property. But his brother-in-law, an idol-worshipper, plotted to seize Paul's half of the inheritance. He therefore threatened Paul that he would betray him to the authorities as a Christian if he did not hand over his share of the property. This misfortune, coupled with the examples of self-sacrifice by the Christian martyrs that Paul saw with his own eyes, induced him to give his half of the property to his sister and go of into the desert, where he lived in asceticism until his death. The spiritual heights attained by this giant of a monk are testified to by no less a person than St Antony the Great, who once visited Paul and saw how the wild animals and birds of the air ministered to him. Returning from this visit, Antony said to his monks: 'Woe is me, my children, a sinful and false monk, who am a monk in name only. I have seen Elias, I have seen John in the desert, and I have seen Paul—in Paradise!' St Paul lived 113 years, and entered peacefully into rest in the Lord in the year 342.

Our Holy Father John Kalyvites (The Hut-Dweller) - He was born in Constantinople in the early part of the 5th century, of rich and eminent parents whose only child he was. Drawn by inclination to the spiritual life, the young John fled with a monk to a monastery in Asia Minor. He spent six years in this monastery in the greatest restraint, prayer and obedience to the superior. Then the devil attacked him with the temptation to leave the monastery and return to his parents, to live with them as a nobleman. He indeed returned to his parents' home, but dressed as a beggar. He saw his parents, but, not wishing to reveal himself to them as their son, remained as a beggar in their courtyard, living off the crumbs that the servants threw him and enduring much ridicule from all. He lived thus for three years, praying God that He would save the souls of his father and mother. When he fell ill and felt death approaching, he revealed himself to his parents. They recognised him by a precious Gospel-book which they had given him in childhood and which he had kept with him as his sole possession. And so this young man, albeit so rich, saved his soul and those of his parents, overcame the devil and entered into rest in the Lord in about the year 450. Our Holy Father Gabriel of Lesnov; The Holy Martyr Pansophius; In Ireland at Limerick,

St. Ita, hermitress (570) - called the "Brigid of Munster"; born in the present County of Waterford, about 475; d. 15 January, 570. She became a nun, settling down at Cluain Credhail, a place-name that has ever since been known as Killeedy--that is, "Church of St. Ita"--in County Limerick. Her austerities are told by St. Cuimin of Down, and numerous miracles are recorded of her. She was also endowed with the gift of prophecy and was held in great veneration by a large number of contemporary saints, men as well as women. When she felt her end approaching she sent for her community of nuns, and invoked the blessing of heaven on the clergy and laity of the district around Killeedy. Not alone was St. Ita a saint, but she was the foster-mother of many saints, including St. Brendan the Voyager, St. Pulcherius (Mochoemog), and St. Cummian Fada.;

St. Maurus, disciple of St. Benedict (584); in Wales - Deacon, son of Equitius, a nobleman of Rome, died 584. Feast, 15 Jan. He is represented as an abbot with crozier, or with book and censer, or holding the weights and measures of food and drink given him by his holy master. He is the patron of charcoalburners, coppersmiths etc. -- in Belgium of shoemakers -- and is invoked against gout, hoarseness etc. He was a disciple of St. Benedict, and his chief support at Subiaco. He is described as a model of religious virtues, especially of obedience.

16 / 29 January — Veneration of the Precious Chains of the Holy and All-glorious Apostle Peter - Today we commemorate the chains with which Peter was shackled by the lawless Herod and which, when an angel appeared to him in prison, fell from him (Acts 12:7). The faithful kept these chains, both in memory of the great Apostle and also because of their healing power, for many of the sick were healed by touching them (as with the towel of the Apostle Paul: Acts 19:12). The Patriarch of Jerusalem, St Juvenal, made a gift of these chains to the Empress Eudocia, the exiled wife of the Emperor Theodosius the Younger. She divided them in half, sending one half to the Church of the Holy Apostles in Constantinople and the other to her daughter, the Empress Eudoxia, wife of Valentian of Rome. This Eudoxia built the Church of St Peter and placed these chains in it, together with those in which Peter was shackled before his death under the Emperor Nero.

The Holy Martyrs Speusippus, Eleusippus, Meleusippus and their grandmother Leonilla - They suffered for Christ in France in the reign of the Emperor Marcus Aurelius (161 - 180). The three brothers were triplets. At first only Leonilla was a Christian, while her grandsons were pagans. After much exhortation on the part of the pious Leonilla and a local priest, the three brothers were baptised. Being baptised, they began with youthful fervour to witness to their faith, and in their zeal went

out and smashed all the idols in the area. Accused and brought before the judge, they acknowledged their action and openly confessed their faith in Christ. The judge threw them into prison, then summoned their grandmother and directed her to go to the prison and counsel her grandsons to deny Christ and worship idols. Leonilla went off without a word to the prison, but instead of advising her grandsons to deny the true Faith, she set about encouraging them not to give up, but to persevere to the end in all their sufferings and die for Christ. When the judge examined them again and saw their yet stronger steadfastness in the Faith, he condemned them to death. All three were first hanged on one tree, where they hung 'like the strings of a lute', and after that flogged and then finally burned. A woman, Jovilla, stirred by the courage of these martyrs, cried out: 'I too am a Christian!' They immediately seized her and beheaded her with a sword, together with the aged Leonilla. Our Holy Father, the Martyr Damascene of Gabrovo; Our Holy Father Romil;

St. Honoratus, archbishop of Arles & founder of the Lerins Monastery - b. about 350; d. 429. It is believed that he was born in the north of Gaul and that he belonged to an illustrious pagan family. Converted to Christianity with his brother Venantius, he embarked with him from Marseilles about 368, under the guidance of a holy person named Caprasius, to visit the holy places of Palestine and the lauræ of Syria and Egypt. But the death of Venantius, occurring suddenly at Methone, Achaia, prevented the pious travellers from going farther. They returned to Gaul through Italy, and, after having stopped at Rome, Honoratus went on into Provence and, encouraged by Leontius, Bishop of Fréjus, took up his abode in the wild island of Lérins with the intention of living there in solitude. Numerous disciples soon gathered around him and thus was founded the monastery, which has enjoyed so great a celebrity and which was during the fifth and sixth centuries a nursery for illustrious bishops and remarkable ecclesiastical writers. Honoratus's reputation for sanctity throughout the south-eastern portion of Gaul was such that in 426 after the assassination of Patroclus, Archbishop of Arles, he was summoned from his solitude to succeed to the government of the diocese, which the Arian and Manichaean heresies had greatly disturbed. He appears to have succeeded in re-establishing order and orthodoxy, while still continuing to direct from afar the monks of Lérins. However, the acts of his brief pontificate are not known. He died in the arms of Hilary, one of his disciples and probably a relative, who was to succeed him in the See of Arles. His various writings have not been preserved, nor has the rule which he gave to the solitaries of Lérins; St. Sigebert, king of the East Angles, martyr (635);

St. Fursey, of Burgh Castle, enlightener of East Anglia - Son of an Irish prince, Fursey became abbot of a monastery in Tuam, Co. Galway, but it was as a missionary in England and France that he achieved a European fame overshadowed only by Columbanus. He was welcomed to East Anglia c. 630 by King Sigebert, who granted land for a monastery at Burgh Castle in Suffolk. Becoming ill, Fursey fell into a trance and, according to Saint Bede the historian, quit his body from evening till cock-crow and was found worthy to behold the chorus of angels in Heaven. Fursey's visions of Heaven and Hell, experienced throughout his life and widely recounted, are thought to have inspired Dante's Divine Comedy. After some years in East Anglia, Fursey set out on a pilgrimage to Rome. He was well-received by Clovis, king of the Franks, whose palace mayor, Erconwald, persuaded the saint to build a monastery at Lagny, outside Paris. Fursey died c. 648 at Mazerolles, where he had once miraculously restored a nobleman's son to life. Erconwald had the body brought to Péronne in Picardy, where it awaited entombment while a new church was built. Four years later, when the body was buried near the altar, it was found to be completely free from decomposition;

Tropar of St Fursey of Burgh Castle, tone 5: Establishing thy monastery in a Roman fortress thou didst teach men that the Orthodox Faith is a true bastion/ against the onslaughts of every evil force, O Father Fursey./ Wherefore pray to God for us/ that we may all be bastions of the Faith/ standing firm against the rising tide of falsehood,/ that our souls may be saved.

Kondak of St Fursey of Burgh Castle, tone 4: Thou didst need the walls of stone/ to defend the Faith against its pagan enemies, O Father Fursey,/ but pray for us that we may have a spiritual wall around us/ to defend the Faith against its enemies./ Following thee and praising thy eternal memory,/ we stand firm against every error, ever singing:/ Rejoice, beloved of God, our Father Fursey.

St. Dunchaid O'Braoin, abbot of Clonmacnoisen - Born in Westmeath; died at Armagh, 988. Saint Dunchaid was an anchorite until 969, when he was chosen abbot of Clonmacnoise Monastery. In his old age he retired to Armagh, where he died

17 / 30 January —Our Holy Father Antony the Great - He was an Egyptian, born about 250 in a village called Quemen-el-Arons near Heracleopolis. After the death of his rich and noble parents, he shared his inherited possessions with his sister, who was still in her minority, made sure that she was cared for, gave away his half of the inheritance to the poor and, at the age of twenty, consecrated himself to the life of asceticism that he had desired from childhood. At first he lived near his own village but then, in order to escape the disturbance of men, went off into the desert, on the shores of the Red Sea, where he spent twenty years as a hermit in company with no-one but God, in unceasing prayer, pondering and contemplation, patiently undergoing inexpressible demonic temptations. His fame spread through the whole world and around him gathered many disciples whom he, by word and example, placed on the path of salvation. In eighty-five years of ascetic life, he went only twice to Alexandria: the first time to seek martyrdom during a time of persecution of the Church, and the second at the invitation of St Athanasius, to refute the Arians' slanderous allegations that he too was a follower of the Arian heresy. He departed this life at the age of 105, leaving behind a whole army of disciples and followers. And, although Antony was unlettered he was, as a counsellor and teacher, one of the most learned men of his age, as also was St Athanasius the Great. When some Hellenic philosophers tried to test him with literary learning, Antony shamed them with the question: 'Which is older, the understanding or the book? And which of these is the source of the other?' The shamed philosophers dispersed, for they saw that they had only book-learning without understanding, while Antony had understanding. Here was a man who had attained perfection insofar as man is able on earth. Here was an educator of educators and teacher of teachers, who for a whole eighty-five years perfected himself, and only thus was able to perfect many others. Full of years and great works, Antony entered into rest in the Lord in the year 356. St. Anthony teaches: "Learn to love humility, for it will cover all your sins. All sins are repugnant before God but the most repugnant of all is pride of the heart. Do not consider yourself learned and wise; otherwise, all your effort will be destroyed and your boat will reach the harbour empty. If you have great authority, do not

threaten anyone with death. Know, that according to nature, you too are susceptible to death and that every soul sheds its body from itself as the final garment." In Byzantium there existed an unusual and instructive custom during the crowning of the emperors in the Church of the Divine Wisdom [St. Sophia]. The custom was that when the patriarch placed the crown on the emperor's head, at the same time, he handed him a silk purse filled with dirt from the grave. Then, even the emperor would recall death and to avoid all pride and become humble. The Holy Emperor Theodosius the Great; The Holy Martyr George the New of Ioannina;

St. Nennius - One of the Twelve Apostles of Ireland, he was a disciple of St. Finian. The only other thing known about him is that he was born in Ireland..

18 / 31 January — St Athanasius the Great, Archbishop of Alexandria - Born in Alexandria in 296, he had from childhood an inclination to the spiritual life. He was a deacon with Archbishop Alexander and accompanied him to Nicaea, to the First Ecumenical Council in 325. At this Council, Athanasius became famed for his learning, his devotion and his zeal for Orthodoxy, and contributed very greatly to the containing of the Arian heresy and the strengthening of Orthodoxy. After the death of Alexander, Athanasius was chosen as Archbishop of Alexandria. He remained in his archiepiscopal calling for more than forty years, although he was not on the archiepiscopal throne the whole time. He was persecuted by heretics through almost the whole of his life, particularly by the Emperors Constantius, Julian and Valens, by Bishop Eusebius of Nicomedia and many others, and by the heretic Arius and his followers. He was forced to hide from his persecutors in a well, a grave, private houses and the deserts. Twice he was forced to flee to Rome. Only just before his death did he have a peaceful period as a good shepherd with his flock, which truly loved him. There are few saints who have been so callously slandered and so criminally persecuted as St Athanasius. But his great soul endured all with patience for the love of Christ and at last emerged victorious from all these terrible and lengthy struggles. He often went to St Antony for advice and moral support, revering him as his spiritual father. He suffered greatly for the truth, until the Lord gave him rest in His kingdom as His faithful servant, in the year 373; St Maxim, Archbishop of Wallachia; Saint Leobardus of Marmoutier (Gaul), hermit.

St. Dermot, abbot - (also known as Diarmaid) - 6th century. Ruins of six churches can be seen on Inchcleraun (Innis Clothran) in Lough Ree, where Saint Dermot founded a monastery. His burial site there became a pilgrimage centre. It is believed that Dermot was a native of Connaught and of royal blood.

19 January / 1 February — Our Holy Father Macarius the Great - He was an Egyptian and one of the contemporaries of St Antony the Great. His father was a priest. He married in obedience to his parents' wishes, but his wife died very soon and he went off into the desert of Scetis, where he spent sixty years in toil and struggle, both physical and spiritual, for the Kingdom of heaven. When he was asked why he was so thin, both when he ate and when he fasted, he replied: 'From fear of God!' He succeeded so greatly in purifying his mind from evil thoughts and his heart from evil desires that God endowed him with abundant wonderworking gifts, such that he even raised the dead from the grave. His humility made men and demons marvel. A demon once said to him: 'There is only one thing in which I cannot excel you: that is not in fasting, for I never eat, nor in vigils, for I never sleep.' 'Then what is it?' asked Macarius. 'Your humility', replied the demon. Macarius often said to his disciple, Paphnutius: 'Condemn no man, and you will be saved.' He lived for ninety years. Before his death, St Antony and St Pachomius appeared to him from the other world and told him that he would die in nine days' time. And so it came to pass. Cherubim also appeared to him before his death and revealed the heavenly, blessed world to him in a vision, praised his labours and virtues and told him that they had been sent to take his soul to the heavenly Kingdom. He entered into rest in the year 390; Our Holy Father Macarius of Alexandria; St Arsenius, Bishop of Corfu; St Mark, Archbishop of Ephesus; Blessed Theodore, the Fool for Christ of Novgorod;

St. Branwallader (Breward) of Cornwall and the Channel Islands, bishop of Jersey, (6th C.) - the day of the translation of his relics. Saint Branwallader was a Celtic or Welsh monk, who is said to have been a bishop in Jersey. It is believed that Branwallader worked with Saint Samson (f.d. July 28) in Cornwall and the Channel Islands, where he is remembered at Jersey in St. Brelade. He may also have travelled with Samson to Brittany in northern France. In the Exeter Martyrology, Branwallader is described as the son of the Cornish king, Kenen.

St. Nathalan - Born near Aberdeen, Scotland; died 678. Nathalan was a nobleman, who possessed a large estate which he gave to the poor in order to become an anchorite. Nathalan is especially praised for having earned his living by farming, "which approaches nearest to divine contemplation." He fed his neighbours from his produce during times of famine, and found that farming served him as a type of penance. During his pilgrimage to Rome, Nathalan was consecrated bishop by the pope, because of his holiness and proficiency in profane and sacred learning. He took up residence at Tullicht (now in the diocese of Aberdeen), where he built a church, but he continued to use all his revenues for the relief of the poor as he had previously. He continued to earn his livelihood by the work of his hands, while living austere, and preaching the Gospel. He is also credited with founding the churches at Bothelim and Colle.

St. Catellus of Castellamar E.

20 January / 2 February — Our Holy Father Euthymius the Great - Born in the Armenian town of Melitene near the River Euphrates in 377, of noble and eminent parents, he was their only son. His mother Dionysia had prayed for a child, and had a heavenly vision concerning his birth. He lived in asceticism from his youth, at first in the vicinity of his town, but then, after a visit to Jerusalem at the age of 29, in the Wilderness of Pharan, between Jerusalem and Jericho. He filled his days and nights with prayer and meditation, contemplation and physical toil. Many disciples gathered round him, such as Cyriac the Hermit, Sava the Sanctified, Theoctistus and others. He was, by God's gift, a great worker of wonders: he drove out demons, healed grave illnesses, brought forth water in the desert, multiplied bread and prophesied. He taught his monks the love of hardship, saying: 'If you eat bread that comes not from your own labours, that means that you eat the labour of another'. When one of

the younger brethren desired to fast more than others, he forbade him and ordered him to come to the common table, so that he should not become proud through his too-great fasting. He also said that it is not good for a monk to move from place to place, for, he said: 'A tree that is frequently transplanted does not bear fruit.' Whoever desires to do good can do it in the place where he is. On love, he said: 'As salt is to bread, so is love to the other virtues.' He went off into the desert in the first week of the Great Fast and remained there in silence and meditation on God until before Easter. During his lifetime, a great monastery grew up near his cave, which was for centuries as full of monks as a hive of bees. His last command was that there should be loving hospitality to guests in the monastery, and that its gate should never be closed. He entered into rest at the age of 97. Patriarch Anastasius of Jerusalem was at his funeral. The Patriarch waited the entire day while a great mass of people gave the saint the last kiss, and only in the evening was he able to finish the funeral. On the seventh day after his death, Euthymius appeared to his disciple Domitian in light and joy. St Euthymius was a true 'son of light'. He entered into rest in the year 473. The Holy Martyrs Innas, Nirras and Pinnas;

St. Fechin, abbot - was probably born at Luighne (Leyney), Ireland. He was trained by St. Nathy, was founding Abbot of Fobhar, or Fore, in Westmeath, and died of the plague that devastated Ireland in the year 665..

21 January / 3 February — Our Holy Father Maximus the Confessor - By birth a citizen of Constantinople and at first a high-ranking courtier at the court of the Emperor Heraclius, he then became a monk and the abbot of a monastery not far from the capital. He was the greatest defender of Orthodoxy against the so-called Monothelite heresy, which developed from the heresy of Eutyches. That is to say: as Eutyches asserted that there is in Christ only one nature, so the Monothelites asserted that there is in Him only one will. Maximus resisted this assertion and found himself in opposition to both the Emperor and the Patriarch. But he was unafraid, and persevered to the end in proving that there are in the Lord two wills and also two natures. By his efforts, one Council in Carthage and one in Rome stood firm, and both these Councils anathematised the Monothelite teaching. Maximus's sufferings for Orthodoxy cannot be described: tortured by hierarchs, spat upon by the mass of the people, beaten by soldiers, persecuted, imprisoned; until finally, with his tongue cut out and one hand cut off, he was condemned to exile for life in Skhimaris, where he gave his soul into God's hands in the year 662. Blessed Maximus the Greek; The Holy Martyr Neophytus; The Holy Martyr Agnes; in Wales, St. Laudog, confessor; in Scotland,

St. Vimin (6th C) - the founder of the monastery of Holywood at Nithsdale. It is related that St. Vimin was an abbot in Fifeshire when he was consecrated bishop. He actively evangelized the region. In order to avoid the temptations to pride that accompanied his many miracles, he moved to a deserted place and founded Holywood (Sacumboscum), which later became famous for producing many holy and learned men