

Sunday of the Paralytic

Fourth Sunday of Pascha

24 April / 7 May

Resurrection Tone 3: Let the heavens be glad; let earthly things rejoice; * for the Lord hath wrought might with His arm. * He hath trampled down death by death; * the first-born of the dead hath He become. * From the belly of Hades hath He delivered us * and Hath granted to the world great mercy.

Resurrection Kondak, Tone 3: On this day thou didst rise from the tomb, O Merciful One, / leading us from the gates of death / On this day Adam exults as Eve rejoices. / With the prophets and the patriarchs they unceasingly praise the divine majesty of Thy power.

Kondak of the Sunday of the Paralytic, Tone 3: As of old Thou didst raise the paralytic, O Lord, by Thy Divine presence, raise my soul which is paralysed grievously by all manner of sins and unseemly deeds, that being saved I may cry out: O compassionate Christ, glory be to Thy power.

Kondak of Pascha, Tone 8: Though Thou didst descend into the grave, O Immortal One, yet didst Thou destroy the power of Hades, and didst arise as victor, O Christ God, calling to the myrrh-bearing women, Rejoice, and giving peace unto Thine Apostles, O Thou Who dost grant resurrection to the fallen.



Matins Gospel IV

Epistle: The Acts of the Apostles 9: 32 - 42

Now it came to pass, as Peter went through all parts of the country, that he also came down to the saints who dwelt in Lydda. There he found a certain man named Aeneas, who had been bedridden eight years and was paralysed. And Peter said to him, "Aeneas, Jesus the Christ heals you. Arise and make your bed." Then he arose immediately. So all who dwelt at Lydda and Sharon saw him and turned to the Lord. At Joppa there was a certain disciple named Tabitha, which is translated Dorcas. This woman was full of good works and charitable deeds which she did. But it happened in those days that she became sick and died. When they had washed her, they laid her in an upper room. And since Lydda was near Joppa, and the disciples had heard that Peter was there, they sent two men to him, imploring him not to delay in coming to them. Then Peter arose and went with them. When he had come, they brought him to the upper room. And all the widows stood by him weeping, showing the tunics and garments which Dorcas had made while she was with them. But Peter put them all out, and knelt down and prayed. And turning to the body he said, "Tabitha, arise." And she opened her eyes, and when she saw Peter she sat up. Then he gave her his hand and lifted her up; and when he had called the saints and widows, he presented her alive. And it became known throughout all Joppa, and many believed on the Lord.

PETER RAISES TABITHA FROM DEATH

He sends them all out, imitating his master in this also (Ref. Mk.5:40). For where tears are - or rather, where miracles are, there tears have no place. Certainly not in the celebration of such a mystery. Listen, I beseech you: although something of a similar kind is not happening now, yet in the case of our dead, a great mystery is celebrating likewise ...Angels are present, commissioned from heaven ...sent from the King Himself to call their fellow servant, and I ask you, Do you weep? Do you not know what a mystery it is that is taking place, how awful, how dread, and worthy indeed of hymns and lauds? ...For it is a very great mystery of the Wisdom of God. As if leaving the dwelling, the soul goes forth, speeding on her way to her own Lord, and do you mourn? Why then you should do this on the birth of a child: for this in fact is also a birth, and better than that... For as the sun arises, clear and bright, so the soul leaving the body with a clear conscience, shines joyously ...Think what the soul must then be! in what amazement, what wonder, what delight!

St. John Chrysostom. Homily XXI on Acts IX. B#55, pp. 138, 139.

The Gospel According To St. John 5: 1-15

After this there was a feast of the Jews, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. Now there is in Jerusalem by the Sheep Gate a pool, which is called in Hebrew, Bethesda, having five porches. In these lay a great multitude of sick people, blind, lame, paralysed, waiting for the moving of the water. For an angel went down at a certain time into the pool and stirred up the water; then whoever stepped in first, after the stirring of the water, was made well of whatever disease he had. Now a certain man was there who had an infirmity thirty-eight years. When Jesus saw him lying there, and knew that he already had been in that condition a long time, He said to him, "Do you want to be made well?" The sick man answered Him, "Sir, I have no man to put me into the pool when the water is stirred up; but while I am coming, another steps down before me." Jesus said to him, "Rise,

take up your bed and walk." And immediately the man was made well, took up his bed, and walked. And that day was the Sabbath. The Jews therefore said to him who was cured, "It is the Sabbath; it is not lawful for you to carry your bed." He answered them, "He who made me well said to me, 'Take up your bed and walk.'" Then they asked him, "Who is the Man who said to you, 'Take up your bed and walk'?" But the one who was healed did not know who it was, for Jesus had withdrawn, a multitude being in that place. Afterward Jesus found him in the temple, and said to him, "See, you have been made well. Sin no more, lest a worse thing come upon you." The man departed and told the Jews that it was Jesus who had made him well.

JESUS HEALS THE PARALYTIC BY THE POOL

Great is the profit of divine Scriptures, and all sufficient is the aid which comes from them ...for the divine oracles are a treasury of all manner of medicines. Whether it be needful to quench pride, to lull passion to sleep, to tread under foot the love of money, to despise pain, to inspire confidence, to gain patience - in the Scriptures we may find abundant resource. For what man of those who struggle with long poverty or who are nailed by a grievous disease will not, when he reads the passage before us, receive much comfort? Since this man had been a paralytic for thirty eight years, and he saw others delivered each year, and himself bound by his disease, not even so did he fall back and despair, though in truth not merely despondency for the past, but also hopelessness for the future was sufficient to overstrain him ...Yes, Lord, he says, but I have no man ...to put me in the pool. What can be more pitiable than these words? ...Do you see a heart crushed through long sickness? Do you see all violence subdued? ...He did not curse his day ...but replied gently ...Yes, Lord; yet he did not know who it was who asked him.

St. John Chrysostom. Homily XXXVII on John V, 1. B#58, p. 128.

Christ is Risen!

Today's Gospel reading confirms us more and more strongly in the divinity of our Risen Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

The Gospels for the last two Sundays told us about the appearances of the Risen One. They were as if filled with the light of Christ's Resurrection: the wonderful appearances to the disciples, to Thomas, to the myrrh-bearers. But today's Gospel starts with a dismal, horrible picture: there is no brightness, no light. At the Sheep Gate there was a pool which had five porches. "In these lay a great multitude of impotent folk, of blind, halt, withered.... For an angel went down at a certain season into the pool, and troubled the water: whosoever then first after the troubling of the water stepped in was made whole of whatsoever disease he had. And a certain man was there, which had an infirmity thirty and eight years" (Jn. 5:2-5). Just picture this: thirty-eight years in such a terrible condition, in pain and suffering, without a doctor, without care, without medicine, and maybe even often without food. And this unfortunate man bore all this because he wanted to be well. He tried to enter the water after it was troubled, but he had no one to help him, was late, and did not receive healing. And so passed thirty-eight years. Why this is a human lifetime!

Suddenly everything changed. Jesus came up to him and said: "Rise, take up thy bed and walk. . ." and he walked (Jn. 5:8,9).

What happened? What took place? What happened is that the reason for his sickness was removed. Christ revealed this reason when He met this man in the temple and said to him: "Behold, thou art made whole: sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee" (Jn. 5:14). Here is the reason—sin. Sin is the reason for all evil, for all our sufferings, for all our sicknesses. Yes, sin. . .sin alone. And Christ is the only one who can destroy it, who can forgive. But this is under one condition: "Sin no more."

We have lived through the Passion days, we have lived through the very death of Christ, the death of the Lamb of God, Who takes upon Himself the sin of the world. This means our sin, too. He, the Only Sinless One, has become the sacrifice for us before our Heavenly Father. And now we are walking in the Easter joy of the Risen Christ. And so week after week. But still we stumble, fall, sin. But let us not despond; let us turn to Him.

The pool at the Sheep Gate was only a shadow of what Christ performed and is performing. He alone is the source of healing and forgiveness. He alone, as God, can forgive sins. Let us turn to Him, and He will say to us the same words He said to the paralytic: "Rise, take up thy bed and walk."

And we will rise and walk again in the light of His Resurrection. But let us remember His words to the paralytic, "Sin no more." And let us not sin, because Christ is Risen!

The One Thing Needful - Archbishop Andrei

Saints of the Week

April 24 / May 7 The Holy Martyr Sabbas Stratelates - This famous Sabbas lived in Rome in the time of the Emperor Aurelian, and held a general's rank. He was of a noble Gothic family. He often visited Christians in prison, helping them from his abundance. Through his great purity and fasting, God gave him power over unclean spirits. When he was charged with being a Christian, he stood courageously before the Emperor, cast his officer's belt before him and publicly confessed Christ the Lord. He was tortured in various ways: flogged, flailed with iron rods, burned with torches. But he did not succumb to these deadly tortures, and was seen to be alive and well. His comrades, the soldiers, seeing clearly that God was helping Sabbas, accepted the Christian faith, and seventy of them were immediately beheaded at the Emperor's command. Christ the Lord Himself appeared to Sabbas in the prison in great light, and strengthened His martyr. Then Sabbas was condemned to death by drowning. He was thrown into a deep river, where he gave his soul to God in the year 272. And his soul went to the Lord to whom he had remained faithful under many tortures; Our Holy Mother Elisabeth; The Holy Martyrs Eusebius, Neon,

Leontius and Longinus; The Holy Martyrs Pasicrates and Valentine; Our Holy Father Thomas the Fool for Christ; The Holy New Martyrs Luke and Nicolas;

St. Egbert of Lindisfarne (729) - a Northumbrian monk, born of noble parentage c. 639; d. 729. In his youth he went for the sake of study to Ireland, to a monastery, says the Venerable Bede, "called Rathmelsigi", identified by some with Mellifont in what is now County Louth. There, when in danger of death from pestilence, he prayed for time to do penance, vowing amongst other things to live always in exile from his own country. In consequence he never returned to England, though he lived to the age of ninety, and always fasted rigorously. Having become a priest, he was filled with zeal for the conversion of the still pagan German tribes related to the angles, and would himself have become their apostle, if God had not shown him that his real calling was to other work. It was he, however, who dispatched to Friesland St. Wigbert, St. Willibrord, and other saintly missionaries. St. Egbert's own mission was made known to him by a monk, who, at Melrose, had been a disciple of St. Boisil. Appearing to this monk, St. Boisil sent him to tell Egbert that the Lord willed him instead of preaching to the heathen to go to the monasteries of St. Columba, "because their ploughs were not going straight", in consequence of their schismatic practice in the celebration of Easter. Leaving Ireland therefore in 716, Egbert crossed over to Iona, where the last thirteen years of his life were spent. By his sweetness and humility he induced the Iona monks to relinquish their erroneous mode of computation; in 729 they celebrated Easter with the rest of the Church upon 24 April, although their old rule placed it that year upon an earlier day.

April 25 / May 8 — The Holy Apostle and Evangelist Mark - Mark was a companion and helper of the Apostle Peter in his journeys. Peter, in his first Epistle, calls him his son, not after the flesh but after the spirit (I Pet. 5:13). When Mark was with Peter in Rome, the faithful begged him to write down for them the saving knowledge of the Lord Jesus, His miracles and His life. So Mark wrote his Gospel, which the Apostle Peter himself saw and testified to as true. Mark was chosen by the Apostle Peter to be bishop, and sent to Egypt to preach. And so Mark was the first preacher of the Gospel and the first bishop in Egypt. Egypt was oppressed by a thick darkness of paganism, idolatry, divination and malice. But, with the help of God, St Mark succeeded in sowing the seed of the knowledge of God in Libya, Ammonia and Pentapolis. From Pentapolis, he went to Alexandria, whither the Spirit of God led him. In Alexandria, he succeeded in establishing the Church of God, in giving her bishops, priests and deacons and in rooting everything firmly in faithfulness and devotion. Mark confirmed his preaching with many great miracles. When the pagans brought accusations against Mark as a destroyer of their idolatrous faith, and when the governor of the city began to search for Mark, he fled again to Pentapolis, where he continued his earlier work. After two years, Mark again returned to Alexandria, to the great joy of his faithful, whose number had already increased very greatly. The pagans took the opportunity to seize Mark, and they bound him firmly and began to drag him over the cobblestones, crying: 'We're taking the ox to the stall!' They threw him into prison all injured and bloodstained, where there appeared to him first an angel from heaven, who encouraged and strengthened him, and then the Lord Himself. Jesus said to him: 'Peace to thee, Mark My Evangelist!', to which Mark replied: 'And peace to Thee, my Lord Jesus Christ!' On the next day, the wicked people hauled Mark from prison and again dragged him through the streets with the same cry: 'We're taking the ox to the stall!' Utterly spent and enfeebled, Mark said: 'Into Thy hands, O Lord, I commend my spirit', and thus breathed his last and went to the better world. His holy relics were given burial by Christians, and through the ages they give healing to people from every pain and ill;

St Anianus, Second Bishop of Alexandria - When Mark stepped out of the boat on dry land in Alexandria, the sandal on one foot became torn. Then, he saw a cobbler to whom he gave his sandal for repairs. In mending the sandal, the cobbler pierced himself with the needle in his left hand and blood began to flow and the cobbler screamed in pain. Then the apostle of God mixed some dust with his spittle and anointed the wounded hand and suddenly the hand became whole again. Astonished at this miracle, the cobbler invited Mark to his home. Hearing Mark's homily, Anianus [for that was the cobbler's name] was baptized; he and his entire household. Anianus displayed so much virtue and so much zeal for the work of God that St. Mark consecrated him bishop. This holy man was the second bishop of the Church in Alexandria.

April 26 / May 9 — The Hieromartyr Basil, Bishop of Amasea - Licinius, the brother-in-law of the Emperor Constantine, whose sister he had married, dissembled before the great Emperor, saying that he was a Christian. When he received authority over the whole of the East, he began, at first secretly but then publicly, to persecute the Christians and to uphold idolatry. His wife grieved greatly over this, but could not turn her husband back from this dishonour. Giving himself over to idolatry, Licinius gave himself over to all the passions, and especially to brutality towards women. Through this fall into such an impure passion, he desired to deflower the maiden Glaphyra, who was in waiting at the imperial court. She complained to the Empress, who sent her away from the court at Nicomedia secretly to the coast of Pontus. The maiden got as far as the town of Amasea, and was there warmly received by the bishop, Basil, and the other Christians. Glaphyra was very joyful that God had preserved her virginity, and wrote of this to the Empress. And the Empress rejoiced and sent her money for the Church in Amasea. But one letter of Glaphyra's, on its way to the Empress, fell into the hands of an imperial eunuch, who showed it to Emperor Licinius. Discovering where Glaphyra was to be found, he immediately sent orders that she and the bishop be brought to Nicomedia. In the meantime, Glaphyra died, and the soldiers brought only Basil, in bonds. After torture and imprisonment, this blessed man was beheaded and thrown into the sea, in the year 322. His priests, with the help of an angel of God, found his body near the town of Synope, took it out of the water with the aid of fishing nets and carried it to Amasea, where they gave it burial in the church which he had built by his labours. The Emperor Constantine raised an army against Licinius, overcame him, arrested him and sent him into exile in Gaul, where he ended his God-hating days; **St Janik of Devic;** **St Stephen, Bishop of Perm** - a Russian by birth. From an early age he was devoted to prayer and pious thoughts. As a young man, Stephen went to Rostov where he was tonsured a monk in the monastery of St. Gregory the Theologian. Learning about the Land of Perm, completely overrun with the weeds of heathenism, Stephen desired to become a missionary in this land. He immediately dedicated himself to the studying of the language of the Perms and when he mastered the language, he composed an alphabet and translated the ecclesiastical books into that language. With the blessing of the Metropolitan of Moscow,

Stephen, as a presbyter, started out on his apostolic mission and with apostolic zeal began to preach the Gospel in this dense darkness of the heathenism of Perm. Having baptized a few souls, he endeavoured to build a church in Perm dedicated to the Holy Annunciation. When the Church of God flourished in Perm, he was consecrated as its bishop. Undergoing every hardship, affliction, maliciousness and humiliation, he succeeded to dispel the darkness among the heathens of Perm and to illuminate them with the Light of Christ. In his old age he returned to Moscow once more but, there ended his earthly life and took up habitation with the Lord in the year 1396 AD.

April 27 / May 10 — The Holy Apostle Simeon - One of the Seventy, he was the son of Cleopas, and Cleopas was the brother of Joseph, the betrothed of the most holy Mother of God. Seeing the miracles of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, Simeon was converted and included among the Seventy apostles. With great zeal and courage, he preached the Gospel everywhere in Judea. And when the wicked Jews killed James, the Lord's brother and first bishop of the Church in Jerusalem, throwing him down from the top of the Temple and belabouring him round the head with a stick, then this Simeon, Joseph's nephew, was installed as bishop in Jerusalem. He, as the second Bishop of the Holy City, governed the Church of God with wisdom and strength to a great age. He was more than a hundred years old when he suffered, and his sufferings came about as follows: in the time of the Emperor Trajan there was a double persecution begun in Palestine, against the descendants of David and against the Christians. The wicked people condemned Simeon on both counts. St Simeon endured harsh torture and was finally crucified, as had been the Lord whom he had faithfully served on earth; Our Holy Father Stephen, Bishop of Vladimir; **The Burning of the Relics of St. Sava by the Turks** - Sava was the Archbishop of the Serbs. The body of St. Sava was buried in Milieshevo Monastery. During the time of the Turkish tyranny, the Serbian people gathered around the relics of their saint to seek comfort and healing. Fearing that an insurrection might arise from that place against the Turks, Sinan Pasha of Belgrade ordered that the relics of St. Sava be translated to Belgrade and there to be burned on Vracar, April 27, 1594 A.D. With the burning of the relics of this saint, the rabid Pasha did not burn the saint who remained alive before the Throne of God in the heavens and in the hearts of his people on earth; Our Holy Father John the Confessor.

28 April / 11 May — The Holy Apostles Jason and Sosipater, and the Virgin, Cercyra - The first two were among the Seventy Apostles, and the last was the daughter of the king of the island of Corfu. The Apostle Paul mentions Jason and Sosipater (Rom. 16:21), and calls them his kinsmen. Jason was born in Tarsus, as was the Apostle Paul himself, and Sosipater in Achaia. The first was nominated by the apostles as Bishop of Tarsus and the second as Bishop of Iconium. Travelling and preaching the Gospel, these two apostles came to the island of Corfu, where they succeeded in building a church dedicated to St Stephen the Protomartyr and in bringing some unbelievers to the Church. The king of the island threw them into prison, where there were seven robbers already imprisoned: Saturninus, Jakischolus, Faustian, Januarius, Marsalus, Euphrasius and Mamminus. The apostles brought all seven of them to the Christian faith, making wolves into lambs. The king commanded that these seven be put to death in boiling pitch, and they thus received the wreath of martyrdom. When, after this, the king was in process of questioning the apostles, his daughter Cercyra, looking through a window, saw the torture of these men of God and, discovering the reason for it, proclaimed herself a Christian and gave all her jewels away to the poor. The king was filled with wrath against his daughter and shut her up in a separate prison, then, failing to turn her from Christ, ordered that the prison be burned down. The prison burned to the ground, but the maiden remained alive. Seeing this wonder, many of the people were baptised. The furious king ordered that his daughter be bound to a tree and killed with arrows. Those who had come to believe in Christ fled from the terrible king to a nearby island and hid themselves. The king set off in a boat to arrest them, but his boat overturned in the sea and thus the unrighteous perished, as Pharaoh aforesaid. The new king accepted the Christian faith and was baptised, receiving the name Sebastian. Jason and Sosipater freely preached the Gospel and strengthened the Church of God in Corfu to great old age, and there finished their earthly course and went to the courts of the Lord. The Holy Martyrs Maximus, Dada and Quintilian; The Holy Martyr Tibald; St. Cronan, abbot of Roscrea, Ireland (7th c.)

29 April / 12 May — St Basil of Ostrog - born in Popovo Selo in Herzegovina, of simple and devout parents. From his youth he was filled with love for the Church of God, and when he grew up he went to the monastery of the Dormition of the Mother of God at Trebinje, and became a monk. As such, he quickly became known for his serious and rare ascetic life, for he loaded himself with ascetic practices, each harder than the last. He was later chosen and consecrated as Bishop of Zahum and Skenderia, much against his will. As a bishop, he first lived in the monastery at Tvrδος, whence, as a good pastor, he confirmed his flock in the Orthodox faith, keeping it from the cruelty of the Turks and the guile of the Latins. But when he was too pressed-upon by his enemies, and when Tvrδος was destroyed by the Turks, Basil moved to Ostrog, where he lived in strict asceticism, protecting his flock by his unceasing and loving prayers. (A new church, on the ruins of the old Tvrδος, has been built in our day by Nikolai Runjevac, from the village of Poljica near Trebinje—a wonderful foundation in the sight of God and His people) He went peacefully to the Lord in the 16th century, leaving his whole and healing body, uncorrupt and wonderworking, to the present day. The miracles at the grave of St Basil are without number. Both Christians and Moslems hasten to his relics and find healing of the gravest sicknesses and sufferings. A great national gathering takes place there every year at Pentecost. The Nine Holy Martyrs of Cyzicus; Our Holy Father Memnon the Wonderworker.

30 April / 13 May — The Holy Apostle James - the son of Zebedee and brother of St. John the Theologian, he was one of the Twelve. At the call of the Lord Jesus, he left his fishing nets and his father and, together with John, immediately followed Christ. He was one of the three apostles to whom the Lord revealed the greatest mysteries: before whom He was transfigured on Tabor and before whom He was in agony in the Garden of Gethsemane before His Passion. After receiving the Holy Spirit, he preached the Gospel in various places, going as far as Spain. On his return from Spain, a violent quarrel broke out between the Jews and himself on the Holy Scriptures, and, being unable to withstand him, they hired a magician, Hermogenes. But Hermogenes and Philip his pupil were overcome by the power and truth that James preached, and were baptised. Then the Jews denounced him to Herod, and persuaded one Josias to slander the Apostle. This Josias, seeing James's manly bearing and

hearing his clear preaching of the truth, repented and came to faith in Christ. When James was condemned to death, this Josias was also condemned. Mounting the scaffold, Josias begged James's forgiveness for the sin of slander, and James embraced him, kissing him and saying: 'Peace be to thee, and forgiveness.' And they both laid their heads under the sword and were beheaded for the sake of the Lord whom they had loved and served. St James suffered in Jerusalem in the year 45. His body was taken to Spain, where to this day miracles of healing are performed at his tomb;

St Donatus - bishop of Evira in Albania. He was endowed by God with the great blessing of miracle-working, by which he performed many miracles for the benefit of the people. Donatus changed bitter water into sweet water; brought down rain during a drought; healed the king's daughter of insanity; and resurrected a man from the dead. This deceased man had repaid his debt to a certain creditor. This unscrupulous creditor wanted the debt to be repaid a second time and, wanting to benefit from the death of his debtor, he came to his widow and demanded that the debt be repaid immediately. The widow wept and complained to the bishop. St. Donatus warned the creditor to wait, at least, until the man was buried and then the debt would be discussed. The creditor angrily insisted his own. Then Donatus approached the dead man, touched him and cried out: "Arise brother and see what you have with your creditor!." The dead man rose and with a frightening glance looked at his lender and related to him the time, when and where he had repaid the debt. He also sought from the lender his written receipt. The frightened lender then placed a document into his hands and the enlivened deceased tore it up and again lay down and died. St. Donatus died peacefully in very old age and took up habitation with the Lord in the year 387 A.D. His relics repose in Evira, Albania and, even today, benefit the faithful; The Holy Martyr Argyra.;

St. Erconwald, bishop of London (c.693) - Born in East Anglia; died at Barking, April 30, c. 686-693; second feast day on May 13. Erconwald is reputed to have been of royal blood, son of Annas or Offa. In 675, Saint Theodore of Canterbury appointed Erconwald bishop of the East Saxons with his see in London and extending over Essex and Middlesex. His episcopate was the most important in that diocese between that of Saint Mellitus and Saint Dunstan. His shrine in Saint Paul's Cathedral was a much visited pilgrimage site during the Middle Ages, where miracles were reported until the 16th century, but little is known of his life except that he founded a monastery at Chertsey in Surrey, which he governed, and a convent at Barking in Essex to which he appointed as abbess his sister, Ethelburga. Erconwald took some part in the reconciliation of Saint Theodore with Saint Wilfrid. In Saint Bede's time, miracles were recorded as a result of touching the couch used by Erconwald in his later years. At his death, Erconwald's relics were claimed by Barking, Chertsey, and London; he was finally buried in Saint Paul's Cathedral in London, which he had enlarged. The relics escaped the fire of 1087 and were placed in the crypt. November 14, 1148, they were translated to a new shrine behind the high altar, from where they were again moved on February 1, 1326 He is portrayed in art as a bishop in a small 'chariot' (the Saxon equivalent of a bath chair) in which he travelled because of his gout. Sometimes there is a woman touching it or he may be shown with Saint Ethelburga of Barking (Roeder). Erconwald is invoked against gout.

HYMN OF PRAISE

THE HOLY APOSTLE JAMES

Zebedee's James, one of three was, Who saw the most miraculous mysteries of Christ, Who saw the Transfiguration of the Savior, In clothing white, with a flaming countenance, And again in the Garden they saw Him sorrowful, As a helpless prisoner, in the cage of the world. By this contradiction, James was confused, Until, enlightened he was, by the light of the Resurrection. And when the Lord arose, James believed; Ripped asunder the doubts as a cloud of dreams! And yet, when the Spirit descended and the power to him, He gave, James, victorious commander he became. Day and night, he began to wage war, And with God's help, miracles to work. All for the Name of Christ; all in the glory of Christ, Until that Holy Name did glisten in the world. In vain did bloody Herod behead him His commander God, granted him eternal glory.

REFLECTION

A devout elder lay on his death bed. His friends gathered around him and mourned him. With that, the elder laughed three times. The monks asked him: "What are you laughing at?" The elder replied: "I laughed the first time, because all of you are afraid of death; the second time, for none of you are prepared for death; the third time, because I am going from labor to rest." Behold, how a righteous man dies! He is not afraid of death. He is prepared for death. He sees, that through death, he passes from the difficult life to eternal rest. When the nature of man imagines itself in its original state in Paradise then, death is unnatural, the same way that sin is unnatural. Death emanated from sin. Repented and cleansed from sin, man does not consider death annihilation, but the gate to life eternal. If, at times, the righteous prayed to God to prolong their earthly life, that was not because of love for this life nor because of the fear of death but solely that they would gain more time for repentance and cleansing from sin in order that they may present themselves before God, more sinless and more pure. Even if they showed fear before death, that was not out of fear of death but the fear of God's judgment. What kind of fear then must the unrepentant sinner have before death?