

Saturday, October 24

Evening Prayer

Orthodox Saints

Opening Sentence

Seek him who made the Pleiades and Orion, and turns deep darkness into the morning, and darkens the day into night; who calls for the waters of the sea and pours them out upon the surface of the earth: The Lord is his name. *Amos 5:8*

Confession

Let us confess our sins against God and our neighbor.

Most merciful God, we confess that we have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done, and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We are truly sorry and we humbly repent. For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ, have mercy on us and forgive us; that we may delight in your will, and walk in your ways, to the glory of your Name. Amen.

Almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us all our sins through our Lord Jesus Christ, strengthen us in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep us in eternal life. Amen.

Invitatory

O God, make speed to save us.

O Lord, make haste to help us.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen.

O Gracious Light Phos hilaron

O gracious light,
pure brightness of the everliving Father in heaven,
O Jesus Christ, holy and blessed!
Now as we come to the setting of the sun,
and our eyes behold the vesper light,
we sing your praises, O God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
You are worthy at all times to be praised by happy voices,
O Son of God, O Giver of Life,

and to be glorified through all the worlds.

Psalm 42 *Quemadmodum*

1

As the deer longs for the water-brooks, *
so longs my soul for you, O God.

2

My soul is athirst for God, athirst for the living God; *
when shall I come to appear before the presence of God?

3

My tears have been my food day and night, *
while all day long they say to me,
"Where now is your God?"

4

I pour out my soul when I think on these things; *
how I went with the multitude and led them into the house of God,

5

With the voice of praise and thanksgiving, *
among those who keep holy-day.

6

Why are you so full of heaviness, O my soul? *
and why are you so disquieted within me?

7

Put your trust in God; *
for I will yet give thanks to him,
who is the help of my countenance, and my God.

8

My soul is heavy within me; *
therefore I will remember you from the land of Jordan,
and from the peak of Mizar among the heights of Hermon.

9

One deep calls to another in the noise of your cataracts; *
all your rapids and floods have gone over me.

10

The LORD grants his loving-kindness in the daytime; *
in the night season his song is with me,
a prayer to the God of my life.

11

I will say to the God of my strength,
"Why have you forgotten me? *
and why do I go so heavily while the enemy oppresses me?"

12

While my bones are being broken, *
my enemies mock me to my face;

13

All day long they mock me *
and say to me, "Where now is your God?"

14

Why are you so full of heaviness, O my soul? *
and why are you so disquieted within me?

15

Put your trust in God; *
for I will yet give thanks to him,
who is the help of my countenance, and my God.

Psalm 43 *Judica me, Deus*

1

Give judgment for me, O God,
and defend my cause against an ungodly people; *
deliver me from the deceitful and the wicked.

2

For you are the God of my strength;
why have you put me from you? *
and why do I go so heavily while the enemy oppresses me?

3

Send out your light and your truth, that they may lead me, *
and bring me to your holy hill
and to your dwelling;

4

That I may go to the altar of God,
to the God of my joy and gladness; *
and on the harp I will give thanks to you, O God my God.

5

Why are you so full of heaviness, O my soul? *
and why are you so disquieted within me?

6

Put your trust in God; *
for I will yet give thanks to him,
who is the help of my countenance, and my God.

Gloria Patri

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen.

Gospel

Matthew 12:33-42 (NRSV)

33 "Either make the tree good, and its fruit good; or make the tree bad, and its fruit bad; for the tree is known by its fruit. 34 You brood of vipers! How can you speak good things, when you are evil? For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks. 35 The good person brings good things out of a good treasure, and the evil person brings evil things out of an evil treasure. 36 I tell you, on the day of judgment you will have to give an account for every careless word you utter; 37 for by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned." 38 Then some of the scribes and Pharisees said to him, "Teacher, we wish to see a sign from you." 39 But he answered them, "An evil and adulterous generation asks for a sign, but no sign will be given to it except the sign of the prophet Jonah. 40 For just as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the sea monster, so for three days and three nights the Son of Man will be in the heart of the earth. 41 The people of Nineveh will rise up at the judgment with this generation and condemn it, because they repented at the proclamation of Jonah, and see, something greater than Jonah is here! 42 The queen of the South will rise up at the judgment with this generation and condemn it, because she came from the ends of the earth to listen to the wisdom of Solomon, and see, something greater than Solomon is here!"

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Canticle 17 The Song of Simeon

Nunc Dimittis Luke 2:29-32

Lord, you now have set your servant free *
to go in peace as you have promised;

For these eyes of mine have seen the Savior, *
whom you have prepared for all the world to see:

A Light to enlighten the nations, *
and the glory of your people Israel.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen.

- Departure of St. Zechariah the Monk
- Martyr Aretha and with him 4299 Martyrs (+523)

- Monks Aretha (XII), Sisoï (XIII) and Theophil (XII-XIII), Hermits of Pechersk, in Nearer Caves
 - Monk John, Hermit of Pskov (+1616)
 - Blessed Elezboi, Emperor of Ethiopia (+c.553-555)
 - Martyress Syncletia and her Two Daughters (VI)
 - Sainted Athanasias, Patriarch of Tsargrad-Constantinople (+post 1311)
-

Departure of St. Zechariah the Monk

On this day we commemorate the departure of St. Zechariah the monk.

His father was Karyos and he had a son Zechariah and a daughter, yet Karyos longed for the monastic life. He told his wife about what was on his mind and she agreed to it. He left his wife and the children and went to the desert of Scete and became a monk at the hands of a holy elder.

After a while, there was a great famine in the country and the wife took the two children and came to the desert where her husband Karyos was. She complained to him about the tribulation which had come upon her through the famine and handed him the children.

But Karyos told her: "God has divided the two children between us. You take the girl and leave the boy with me". She took the girl and departed. He kept his son Zechariah and brought him to the elders who prayed over him and they prophesied that he would become a perfect monk.

Zechariah was brought up well in the desert, and advanced in every virtue. Because he was exceedingly handsome and had a lovely face there were many murmurs in the desert because of him and they said: "How is it, a boy like that dwells in the desert among the monks?" When Zechariah heard that, he went to the Lake El-Natroun (which was very salty) without telling anyone. He took off his apparel, plunged his body into the lake, and remained in it for many hours. The color of his skin became black and he looked like a leper. Then he went forth from the water, put on his apparel and came to his father who did not recognize him until he had stared at him closely. He told his father what he had done.

When it was Sunday, he went with his father to the church to partake of the Holy Mysteries. The Lord disclosed to St. Isidore, the Priest of Scete, what St. Zechariah had done. He marvelled and said unto the monks: "Zechariah received the offering last Sunday as a man, but now he has become an angel".

This saint possessed many virtues, especially the virtue of humility in which he had reached such a degree of perfection that his father said about him: "I have laboured greatly, but I have never attained the extent of my son Zechariah".

Zechariah lived a strenuous life for forty-five years. When he came to the desert, he was seven years old. He departed in peace at the age of fifty two.

The Martyr Aretha and with him 4299 Martyrs suffered for the Lord Jesus Christ in the VI Century. Aretha was governor of the city of Negran in Arabia, the inhabitants of which were Christian. The Arabian (or Omirite) king, Dunaan, who was Jewish, decided to extirpate Christianity from the land, and he issued an edict that all followers of Christ were to be put to death. The inhabitants of Negran remained faithful to the Lord, and Dunaan came with a large army to destroy the city. At the city-walls of Negran the king's heralds announced, that Dunaan would let live only those who renounced the Crucified Galileian and His Cross, as a "sign of malediction." Not daring to assault the Christian city by force, Dunaan resorted to a ruse, swearing an oath that he would not force the Christians into Judaism, but would merely impose a tribute-tax on Negran. The inhabitants of the city would not heed the advice of Saint Aretha [his name in Greek means "virtue", as if here literally to suggest that the people "would not heed the voice of virtue"], and putting their trust in Dunaan, they opened wide the city-gates.

The very next day Dunaan gave orders to start up an immense bon-fire and throw in it all the clergy of the Church of the city, so as to frighten all the rest of the Christians. Thus were burnt 427 men. The governor Aretha and the other chief men were thrown into prison. Then the oppressor sent out through the city his messengers, to convert the Christians to Judaism. And Dunaan himself conversed with those inhabitants brought forth from the prisons, saying: "I do not demand of you that ye should renounce the God of heaven and earth, nor do I want that ye should worship idols, but I want merely that ye do not believe in Jesus Christ, since the Crucified One was a man, and not God." The holy martyrs replied to this, that Jesus -- is God the Word, the Second Person of the Holy Trinity, Who for the salvation of mankind had become flesh from the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary. "We shalt not abjure Christ, since that He is for us -- Life, and death for Him -- is the finding of Life", declared the sufferers to Dunaan. And more than four thousand Christians -- men, women, both the aged and children -- from the city of Negran and surrounding villages accepted a martyr's death for Christ.

The Monks Aretha, Sisoï and Theophil, Hermits of Pechersk (XII-XIII), pursued asceticism at the Kievo-Pechersk monastery and were buried in the Nearer Caves.

The Monk Aretha was from Polotsk. While living at the monastery, he kept in his cell much wealth. One time robbers made off with it. Grieving over his lost riches, the Monk Aretha began to murmur against God, for which he was stricken with a serious illness. Being at the very brink of death, he saw, how both Angels and devils had come for him and were arguing between them. The devils asserted, that for his avarice and complaints against God he ought to be given over to them, while the Angels in turning to him bewailed: "Thou hapless man, if thou had given thanks to God for the pilfered riches, this would have been accounted in charity for thee." After this vision the Monk Aretha was restored to life. His final days he spent as an hermit, in distress and repentance over his sins, having renounced everything earthly. Saint Aretha died not later than the year 1190. In the Iconographic Originals, the monk is described thus: "In appearance stooped over, beard in length of some Kozmina, monastic robes."

The Monk Sisoï, an hermit, in the general service to the Monks of the Antoniev Caves is called "radiant in fasting."

The Monk Theophil in the same service is called "in miracles resplendid."

The commemoration of all the monks is also on 28 September and on the 2nd Sunday of Great Lent.

Blessed Elezboi, Emperor of Ethiopia, lived during the time when Arabia was ruled by the oppressor of Christians, Dunaan. Pious Elezboi was unable to look on indifferently as believers in Christ were being massacred, and he declared war on Dunaan. But his military campaign was unsuccessful. Wanting to learn the reason for his defeat, Elezboi at the prompting from above turned to a certain hermit, who revealed to the emperor, that he had proceeded unrighteously in deciding to take revenge against Dunaan, since the Lord had said: "Vengeance is Mine, and I shalt mete it forth!" (Heb 10:30). The hermit counselled Blessed Elezboi to devote his final days of life to God, so as to flee the wrath of God for his self-willed revenge, and then to defeat Dunaan. Saint Elezboi made a vow to the Lord, and having set off with his army against the enemy, he defeated and captured and executed him. After the victory the saint resigned as emperor, secluded himself within a monastery and for 15 years he dwelt in strict fast and ascetic deeds (+c.553-555).

The Holy Martyress Syncletia and her Two Daughters (VI) suffered under the Arabian king Dunaan. Saint Syncletia was descended from an illustrious family. Left widowed while still quite young, she devoted herself to the Christian upbringing of her daughters, and she herself led a life both chaste and virtuous. Dunaan in the meantime had started up a persecution, intending to extirpate Christians from his realm. He summoned Saint Syncletia and her daughters before him, and in urging her to forsake her "folly," he promised as reward to take her into the retinue of his wife. "How canst thou not be afraid, O king, to speak evil of That One Who hath given thee both royal crown and life?" -- replied the holy martyress.

Dunaan gave orders to lead the Martyress Syncletia and her daughters through the city as though they were criminals. Women, looking on at the disgrace of the saint, fell to crying, but she told them that this "shaming" for her was dearer than any earthly honour.

They again brought the martyress before Dunaan, and he said: "If thou wishest to remain alive, renounce Christ". "If I make renunciation, who then wilt deliver me from eternal death?" -- replied the saint. In a rage the tormentor gave orders first to kill the daughters of Saint Syncletia and force their blood on her, and then to behead the mother with a sword.

Sainted Athanasias I, Patriarch of Constantinople (1289-1293; 1303-1311), in the world Alexios, was from Adrianopolis. While still in his youth, thriving upon the knowledge of the wisdom of Christ, he left his home and went to Thessalonika, where he was tonsured in one of the monasteries with the name Akakios. From there he soon withdrew to Holy Mount Athos and entered the brethren of the Esthygmena monastery, where for three years he served in the refectory. In his works and his ascetic deeds he acquired the gift of tears, and by his virtuous acts he won the overall good-will of the brethren. Shunning praise, Akakios in humility left Athos at first for the holy places in Jerusalem, and then to Mount Patra, where for a long time he asceticised as an hermit. From there the ascetic transferred to the Auxention monastery, and then to Mount Galanteia to the monastery of Blessed Lazarus, where he accepted the great angelic form with the name Athanasias, and received the priestly dignity and became ecclesiarch (holder of church keys). And here the saint was granted a Divine revelation: from a crucifix he heard the Voice of the Lord, summoning him to pastoral service.

After 10 years, wanting still more to strengthen his spirit in silence and prayer, Saint Athanasias again settled on Mount Athos. But because of disorders arising there he returned to Mount Galanteia. But here also he was not long to remain in solitude. Many people thronged to him for pastoral guidance, and so he organised a women's monastery there. During this time the cathedra-chair of the Constantinople Church fell vacant after the disturbances and disorder of the period of the patriarch John Bekkos. At the suggestion of the pious emperor Andronikos Paleologos, the Council of hierarchs and clergy in 1289 unanimously chose Saint Athanasias to the cathedra of the Ecumenical Church.

Patriarch Athanasias began fervently to fulfill his new obedience and did much for strengthening the Church. His strictness of conviction roused the dissatisfaction of influential clergy, and in 1293 he was compelled to resign the cathedra and to retire again to his own monastery, where he asceticised in solitude. In 1303 he was again entrusted the staff of patriarchal service, which he worthily fulfilled for another 7 years. In 1308 Saint Athanasias established as Metropolitan of Kiev and All Rus' Sainted Peter, Primate of the Russian Church (commemorated 21 December). Again because of some sort of dissatisfaction, and not wanting to be the cause of church discord, Saint Athanasias in 1311 resigned the governance of the Church and departed to his own monastery, devoting himself fully to monastic deeds. Towards the end of his life the saint was again found worthy to behold Christ: the Lord reproached him, that Athanasias had not carried out his pastoral duty to the end. Gushing with tears, the saint repented his cowardice and received from the Lord both forgiveness and the gift of wonderworking. Saint Athanasias died at age 100.

The Monk John, Hermit of Pskov, asceticised during a terrible time of military troubles: in 1592 the Swedes besieged the city of Pskov, and from 1608 for seven years Polish forces made attack under the head of Lisovskii. It was only in the week before the death of the monk, through the intercession of the Pskovo-Pechersk Icon of the Mother of God and the Pskov Saints, that Pskov was delivered from the besieging army of the Swedish king Gustavus Adolphus. The Monk John, as the chronicle relates, "lived within the city walls for 23 years; rancid was his fish and bread he ate not; he lived within the city as

though in a wilderness, in great silence," and he died on 24 October 1616.

Apostles' Creed

I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only son, our Lord.
He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit
and born of the Virgin Mary.
He suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried.
He descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again.
He ascended into heaven,
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy Name,
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done, on earth as it is in
heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass
against us.

And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom,
and the power, and the glory,
for ever and ever. Amen.

Suffrages A

Show us your mercy, O Lord;

And grant us your salvation.

Clothe your ministers with righteousness;

Let your people sing with joy.

Give peace, O Lord, in all the world;

For only in you can we live in safety.

Lord, keep this nation under your care;

And guide us in the way of justice and truth.

Let your way be known upon earth;

Your saving health among all nations.

Let not the needy, O Lord, be forgotten;

Nor the hope of the poor be taken away.

Create in us clean hearts, O God;

And sustain us with your Holy Spirit.

Collect of the Day: Pentecost, proper 24

Almighty and everlasting God, in Christ you have revealed your glory among the nations: Preserve the works of your mercy, that your Church throughout the world may persevere with steadfast faith in the confession of your Name; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

A Collect for Saturdays

O God, the source of eternal light: Shed forth your unending day upon us who watch for you, that our

lips may praise you, our lives may bless you, and our worship on the morrow give you glory; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

For Mission

O God, you have made of one blood all the peoples of the earth, and sent your blessed Son to preach peace to those who are far off and to those who are near: Grant that people everywhere may seek after you and find you; bring the nations into your fold; pour out your Spirit upon all flesh, and hasten the coming of your kingdom; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

World Cycle of Prayer

We pray for the people of New Zealand.

The Press

Ecumenical Cycle of Prayer

We pray for our sisters and brothers, members of the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod.

The Lutheran Church Missouri Synod

For Sound Government

O Lord our Governor, bless the leaders of our land, that we may be a people at peace among ourselves and a blessing to other nations of the earth.

Lord, keep this nation under your care.

To all who have executive authority and to all who have administrative authority, grant wisdom and grace in the exercise of their duties.

Give grace to your servants, O Lord.

To those who make our laws give courage, wisdom, and foresight to provide for the needs of all our people, and to fulfill our obligations in the community of nations.

Give grace to your servants, O Lord.

To the Judges and officers of our Courts give understanding and integrity, that human rights may be safeguarded and justice served.

Give grace to your servants, O Lord.

And finally, teach our people to rely on your strength and to accept their responsibilities to their fellow citizens, that they may elect trustworthy leaders and make wise decisions for the well-being of our society; that we may serve you faithfully in our generation and honor your holy Name.

For yours is the kingdom, O Lord, and you are exalted as head above all. Amen.

For Schools and Colleges

O Eternal God, bless all schools, colleges, and universities, that they may be lively centers for sound learning, new discovery, and the pursuit of wisdom; and grant that those who teach and those who learn may find you to be the source of all truth; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

For the Harvest of Lands and Waters

O gracious Father, who open your hand and fills all living things: Bless the lands and waters, and multiply the harvests of the world; let your Spirit go forth, that it may renew the face of the earth; show your loving-kindness, that our land may give her increase; and save us from selfish use of what thou give, that men and women everywhere may give you thanks; through Christ our Lord. Amen.

A Prayer Attributed to St. Francis

Lord, make us instruments of your peace. Where there is hatred, let us sow love; where there is injury, pardon; where there is discord, union; where there is doubt, faith; where there is despair, hope; where there is darkness, light; where there is sadness, joy. Grant that we may not so much seek to be consoled as to console; to be understood as to understand; to be loved as to love.

For it is in giving that we receive; it is in pardoning that we are pardoned; and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life. Amen.

General Thanksgiving

Almighty God, Father of all mercies, we your unworthy servants give you humble thanks for all your goodness and loving-kindness to us and to all whom you have made. We bless you for our creation, preservation, and all the blessings of this life; but above all for your immeasurable love in the redemption of the world by our Lord Jesus Christ; for the means of grace, and for the hope of glory. And, we pray, give us such an awareness of your mercies, that with truly thankful hearts we may show forth your praise, not only with our lips, but in our lives, by giving up our selves to your service, and by walking before you in holiness and righteousness all our days; through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be honor and glory throughout all ages. Amen.

A Prayer of St. Chrysostom

Almighty God, you have given us grace at this time with one accord to make our common supplication to you; and you have promised through your well-beloved Son that when two or three are gathered together in his Name you will be in the midst of them: Fulfill now, O Lord, our desires and petitions as may be best for us; granting us in this world knowledge of your truth, and in the age to come life everlasting. Amen.

Benediction

Let us bless the Lord. Alleluia. Alleluia.

Thanks be to God. Alleluia. Alleluia.

May the God of hope fill us with all joy and peace in believing through the power of the Holy Spirit.
Amen. *Romans 15:13*