



## The life and struggles of the Holy Hieromartyr Cyprian and the Holy Virgin Martyr Justina (c. 300 AD)

Memory celebrated October 2



Cyprian was a philosopher and renowned sorcerer originating from Carthage who lived in Antioch of Pisidia during the reign of Decius (249-251 AD). Springing from impious parents, in his very childhood he was dedicated by them to the service of the pagan god Apollo. At the age of seven he was given over to magicians for the study of sorcery and demonic wisdom. At the age of ten he was sent by his parents, as a preparation for a sorcerer's career, to Mount Olympus, which the pagans called the dwelling of the gods. Here there were a numerous multitude of idols, in which demons dwelled.

On this mountain Cyprian studied all manner of diabolical arts: he mastered various demonic transformations; learned how to change the nature of the air; to bring up winds; produce thunder and rain; disturb the waves of the sea; cause damage to gardens, vineyards, and fields; to send diseases and plagues upon people; and in general he learned a ruinous wisdom and diabolical activity filled with evil. In this

place he saw a numberless legion of demons, with the prince of darkness at their head; some stood before him others served him, still others cried out in praise of their prince, and some were sent into the world in order to corrupt people. Here he likewise saw in their forms the pagan gods and goddesses, and also diverse phantoms and spectres, the invocation of which he learned in a strict forty-day fast. he ate only after the setting sun, and not bread or anything else, but only acorns from oak trees.

When he was fifteen years old he began to receive lessons from seven great sorcerers; from them he learned many demonic secrets. Then he went to the city of Argos, where, having served the goddess Juno for a time, he learned many practices of deception from her priests. He lived also in Taurapolis on the island of Icara in the service of the goddess Diana; and from there he went to Sparta, where he learned how to call forth the dead from the graves and to force them to speak by means of various incantations and spells. At the age of twenty, Cyprian came to Egypt, and in the city of Memphis he learned yet greater charms and incantations. In his thirtieth year he went to the Chaldean, and having learned astrology there, he finished his studies. After this he returned to Antioch, being perfect in all evil-doing. Thus he became a sorcerer, magician, and destroyer of souls, a great friend and faithful slave of the prince of hell, with whom he conversed face-to-face, being vouchsafed to receive from him great honour, as he himself testified.

"Believe me", he said, "I have seen the prince of darkness himself, for I propitiated him by

sacrifices. I greeted him and spoke with him and his ancients; he liked me, praised my understanding, and before everyone said, 'Here is a new Jambres, always ready for obedience and worthy of communion with us!' And he promised to make me a prince after my departure from the body, and for the course of earthy life to help me in everything. And he gave me a legion of demons to serve me. When I departed from him, he addressed me with these words: 'Take courage, fervent Cyprian; arise and accompany me; let all the demonic ancients marvel at you.' Consequently, all of his princes also were attentive to me, seeing the honour shown to me. The outward appearance of the prince of darkness was like a flower. His head was crowned by a crown (not an actual, but a phantom one) made of gold and brilliant stones, as a result of which the whole space around him was illuminated; and his clothing was astonishing. When he would turn to one or the other side, that whole place would tremble; a multitude of evil spirits of various degrees stood obediently at his throne. I gave myself over entirely into his service at that time, obeying his every command". Thus did St. Cyprian relate of himself after his conversion.

From this it is evident what kind of man Cyprian was: as a friend of the demons, he performed all their works, causing evil to people and deceiving them. Living in Antioch, he turned many people away to every kind of lawless deed; he killed many with poisons and magic, and slaughtered young men and maidens as sacrifices to the demons. He instructed many in ruinous sorcery: some he taught to fly in the air, others to sail in boats on the clouds, still others to walk on water. By all the pagans he was revered and glorified as a chief priest and most wise servant of their vile gods. Many turned to him in their needs, and he helped them by means of the demonic power with which he was filled: with some he cooperated in their adulteries, with others in anger, enmity, revenge, jealousy. Already he was entirely in the depths of hell and in the jaws of the devil; he was a son of Gehenna, a partaker of the demonic inheritance and of their eternal perdition. But the Lord, who does not desire the death of a sinner, in His unutterable goodness and His mercy which is not conquered by the sins of men, deigned to seek out this lost man, to draw out of the abyss one who was mired in the filth of the depths of hell, and to save him in order to show to all men His mercy; for there is no sin which can conquer His love of mankind.

## He saved Cyprian from perdition

There lived at that time in Antioch a certain maiden whose name was Justina. She came from pagan parents; her father was a priest of the idols, Aedesios by name, and her mother was called Cledonia. Once, sitting at the window of her house, this maiden, who had then already reached womanhood, by chance heard the words of salvation out of the mouth of a Deacon who was passing by, whose name was Praylios. He spoke of our Lord Jesus Christ's becoming man, that He had been born of the Most Pure Virgin, and, having performed many miracles, had deigned to suffer for the sake of our salvation, had risen from the dead with glory, ascended into the heavens, and sits at the right hand of the Father and reigns eternally. This preaching of the Deacon fell on good soil, into the heart of Justina, and began quickly to bring forth fruit, uprooting in her the thorns of unbelief. Justina wished to be instructed in the Faith by this Deacon better and more completely, but she did not dare seek him out, being restrained by a maiden's modesty. However, she secretly went to the Church of Christ, and often hearing the Word of God, with the Holy Spirit acting in her heart, she came to believe in Christ.

Soon she convinced her mother of this also, and then brought to the Faith her aged father as well. Seeing the understanding of his daughter and hearing her wise words, Aedesios reflected within himself thus: "The idols are made by the hands of men and have neither soul nor breath, and therefore how can they be gods?" While he was reflecting on this, once at night he saw during his sleep, by divine consent, a wondrous vision: he saw a great multitude of light-bearing Angels, and in their midst was the Saviour of the world, Christ, Who said to him, "Come to Me, and I will give you the Kingdom of Heaven".

After rising in the morning, Aedesios went with his wife and daughter to the Christian Bishop, whose name was Optatos, begging him to instruct them in the Faith of Christ and to perform upon them Holy Baptism. At the same time he informed him of the words of his daughter and of the Angelic vision which he had seen himself. Hearing this, the Bishop rejoiced at their conversion, and having instructed them in the Faith of Christ, he baptised aedesios, his wife Cledonia, and their Justina; and then, having given them Communion of the Holy Mysteries, he let them go in peace.

When Aedesios had become strengthened in the Faith of Christ, the Bishop, seeing his piety, made him a Presbyter (Priest). After this, having lived virtuously and in the fear of God for a year and six months, Aedesios in holy faith came to the end of his life. As for Justina, she valiantly struggled in the keeping of the Lord's commandments, and having come to love her Bridegroom Christ, she served Him with fervent prayers, in virginity and chastity, in fasting and great abstinence. But the enemy, the hater of the human race, seeing such a life, envied her virtues and began to do harm to her, causing various misfortunes and sorrows.

At that time there lived in Antioch a certain youth named Aglaias, the son of wealthy and renowned parents. He lived luxuriously, giving himself entirely over to the vanity of this world. Once he saw Justina as she was going to Church, and he was struck by her beauty. The devil instilled shameful intentions into his heart. Being inflamed with lust, Aglaias by all means strove to gain the good disposition and love of Justina and by means of deception to bring the pure lamb of Christ to the defilement which he planned. He observed all the paths by which the maiden would walk, and, meeting her, would speak to her cunning words, praising her beauty and glorifying her; showing his love for her, he strove to draw her into fornication by a cunningly-woven net of deceptions. The maiden, however, turned away from him and fled from him, despising him and not desiring to hear his deceptive and cunning speeches. But the youth did not grow cool in his desire of her beauty, and he asked her to be his wife.

She, however, replied to him, "My Bridegroom is Christ; Him I serve, and for His sake I preserve my purity. He preserves both my soul and my body from every defilement".

Hearing such a reply from the chaste maiden, Aglaias, being instigated by the devil, became yet more inflamed with passion. Not being able to deceive her, he intended to seize her by force. Having gathered to his aid some foolish youths like himself, he waylaid the maiden in the path along which she usually walked to Church for prayer; there he met her, and, seizing her, began dragging her by force to his house. But she began loudly to scream, beat him in the face, and spat on him. The neighbours, hearing her wails, ran out of their houses and took the immaculate lamb, St. Justina, from the hands of the impious youth as from the jaws of a wolf. The disorderly youths scattered, and Aglaias returned with shame to his house. Not knowing what more to do, he decided, with the increase of impure lust in him, upon a new evil deed: he went to the great sorcerer and magician Cyprian, the priest of the idols, and having informed him of his sorrow, begged his help, promising to give him much gold and silver. Having heard out Aglaias, Cyprian comforted him, promising to fulfil his desire. "I will so manage", he said, "that the maiden herself will seek your love and will feel passion for you even stronger than that which you have for her".

Having thus consoled the youth, Cyprian let him go, full of hope. Then, taking the books of his secret art, he invoked one of the impious spirits who, he was sure, could inflame the heart of Justina with passion for this youth. The demon willingly promised to fulfil this and proudly said, "This deed is not difficult for me, because many times I have shaken cities, crumbled walls, destroyed houses, caused the shedding of blood and patricide, instilled hatred and great anger between brothers and spouses, and have brought to sin many who have given a vow of virginity. In people who have settled in mountains and were accustomed to strict fasting and have never even thought about the flesh, I have instilled adulterous lust and instructed them to serve fleshly



passions; people who have repented and turned away from sin, I have converted back to evil deeds; many chaste people I have thrown into fornication. Will I really be unable to incline this maiden to the love of Aglaia? Indeed, why do I speak? I will swiftly show my powers in very deed. Take this powder" (here he gave him a vessel full of something) "and give it to this youth; let him sprinkle the house of Justina with it, and you will see what I have said will come to pass".

Having said this, the demon vanished. Cyprian called Aglaia and sent him to sprinkle the house of Justina secretly with the contents of the demon's vessel. When this had been done, the demon of fornication entered the house with the flaming arrows of fleshly lust in order to wound the heart of the maiden with fornication, and to ignite her flesh with impure lust.

Justina had the custom every night to offer up prayers to the Lord. And behold, when, according to custom, she arose at the third hour of the night and was praying to God, she suddenly felt an agitation in her body, a storm of bodily lust and the flame of the fire of Gehenna. In such agitation and inward battle she remained for quite a long time; the youth Aglaia came to her mind, and shameful thoughts arose in her. The maiden marvelled and was ashamed of herself, feeling that her blood was boiling as in a kettle; now she thought about that which she had always despised as vile. But in her good sense Justina understood that this battle had arisen in her from the devil; immediately she turned to the weapon of the sign of the Cross, hastened to God with fervent prayer, and from the depths of her heart cried out to Christ her Bridegroom:

"O Lord, my God, Jesus Christ! Behold how many enemies have risen up against me and have prepared a net in order to catch me and take away my soul. But I have remembered Thy Name in the night and have rejoiced, and now when they are close about me I hasten to Thee and have hope that mine enemy will not triumph over me. For Thou knowest, O Lord my God, that I, Thy slave, have preserved for Thee the purity of my body and have entrusted my soul to Thee. Preserve Thy sheep, O Good Shepherd; do not give it over to be eaten by the beast who seeks to devour me; grant me victory over the evil desire of my flesh".

Having prayed long and fervently, the holy virgin put the enemy to shame. Being conquered by her prayer, he fled from her with shame, and again there came a calm in Justina's body and heart; the flame of desire was quenched, the battle glorified God and sang a song of victory.

The demon, on the other hand, returned to Cyprian with the sad news that he had accomplished nothing. Cyprian asked him why he had not been able to conquer the maiden. The demon, even against his will, revealed the truth: "I could not conquer her because I saw on her a certain sign of which I was afraid".

Then Cyprian called a yet more malicious demon and sent him to tempt Justina. He went and did much more than the first one, falling upon the maiden with great rage. But she armed herself with fervent prayer and laid upon herself yet a more powerful labour: she clothed herself in a hair shirt and mortified her flesh with abstinence and fasting, eating only bread and water. Having thus tamed the passions of her flesh, Justina conquered the devil and banished him with shame. And he, like the first one, returned to Cyprian without accomplishing anything.

Then Cyprian called one of the princes of the demons, informed him about the weakness of the demons he had sent, who could not conquer a single maiden, and asked help from him. This prince of demons severely reproached the other demons for their lack of skill in this matter and for their inability to arouse passion in the heart of the maiden. Having given hope to Cyprian and promised to seduce the maiden by other means, he took on the appearance of a woman and went to Justina. And he began to converse piously with her, as if desiring to follow the example of her virtuous life and her chastity. Conversing in this way, he asked the maiden what kind of reward

there might be for such a strict life and for the preservation of purity.

Justina replied that the reward for those who live in chastity is great and beyond words, and that it is very remarkable that people do not in the least concern themselves for such a great treasure as Angelic purity. Then the devil, revealing his shamelessness, began with cunning words to tempt her, saying, "But then how could the world exist? How would people be born? After all, if Eve had preserved her purity, how would the human race have increased? In truth marriage is a good thing, being established by God Himself; the Sacred Scriptures also praise it, saying, Let marriage be had in honour among all, and the bed undefiled. And many Saints of God also - did they not enter into marriage, which God gave them as a consolation, so that they might rejoice in their children and praise God?"

Hearing these words, Justina recognised the cunning deceiver, the devil and, more skilful than Eve, conquered him. Without continuing this conversation, she immediately fled to the defence of the Cross of the Lord and placed its honourable sign on her forehead; and her heart she turned to Christ her Bridegroom. And the devil immediately vanished with yet greater shame than the first two demons.

In great disturbance, the proud prince of the demons returned to Cyprian, who, finding out that he had not managed to do anything, said to him, "Can it be that even you, a prince powerful and more skilful than others in such matters, could not conquer the maiden? Who then among you can do anything with this unconquerable maiden's heart? Tell me by what weapon she battles with you, and how she makes powerless your mighty power?"

Being conquered by the power of God, the devil unwillingly acknowledged, "We cannot behold the sign of the Cross, but flee from it, because it scorches us like fire and banishes us far away".

Cyprian became angry at the devil because he had put him to shame, and reproaching the demon, he said, "Such is your power that even a weak virgin conquers you!"

Then the devil, desiring to console Cyprian, attempted yet another undertaking: he took on the form of Justina and went to Aglaïas with the hope that, having taken him for the real Justina, the youth might satisfy his desire, and thus neither the weakness of the demons be revealed, nor would Cyprian be put to shame. And behold, when the demon went to Aglaïas in the form of Justina, the youth leaped up in unspeakable joy, ran to the false maiden, embraced her and began kissing her, saying, "How good it is that you have come to me, fair Justina!"

But no sooner had the youth pronounced the word "Justina" than the demon immediately disappeared, being unable to bear even the name of Justina. The youth became greatly afraid and, running to Cyprian, told him what had happened. Then Cyprian by his sorcery gave him the form of a bird, and, having enabled him to fly in the air, he sent him to the house of Justina, advising him to fly into her room through the window. Being carried by a demon in the air, Aglaïas flew on the roof. Seeing her, the demon left Aglaïas and fled. At the same time, the phantom appearance of Aglaïas, also vanished, and the youth, falling down, was all but dashed to pieces. He grasped the edge of the roof with his hands and, holding on to it, hung there; and if he had not been let down to the ground by the prayer of St. Justina, the impious one would have fallen down and been killed. Thus, having achieved nothing, the youth returned to Cyprian and told him of his woe. Seeing himself put to shame, Cyprian was greatly grieved and thought himself of going to Justina, trusting in the power of his sorcery. He turned himself into a woman and into a bird, but he did not manage to reach as far as the door of the house of Justina before his false appearances disappeared, and he returned with sorrow.

After this, Cyprian began to gain revenge for his shame, and by his sorcery he brought diverse

misfortunes on the house of Justina and on the house of all her relatives, neighbours, and friends, as once the devil had done to Holy Righteous Job. He killed their animals, he struck down their slaves with plagues, and in this way he brought them to extreme grief. Finally, he struck with illness Justina herself, so that she lay in bed and her mother wept over her. Justina, however, comforted her mother with the words of the Holy Prophet-King David: "I shall not die, but live, and I shall tell of the works of the Lord".

Not only on Justina and her relatives, but also on the whole city, by God's allowance, did Cyprian bring misfortune as a result of his untameable rage and his great shame. Plagues appeared in the animals and various diseases among men; and the rumour spread, through the activity of the demons, that the great sorcerer Cyprian was punishing the city for Justina's opposition to him. Then the most honourable citizens went to Justina and with anger tried to persuade her not to grieve Cyprian any longer, and to become the wife of Aglaias, in order to escape yet greater misfortunes for the whole city because of her. But she calmed them by saying that soon all the misfortunes which had been brought about with the help of Cyprian's demons would cease. And so it happened. When St. Justina prayed fervently to God, immediately all the demonic attacks ceased; all were healed from the plagues and recovered from their diseases. When such a change occurred, the people glorified Christ and mocked Cyprian and his sorcerer's cunning, so that from shame he could not show himself among men and he avoided meeting even friends.

Having become convinced that nothing could conquer the power of the sign of the Cross and the Name of Christ, Cyprian came to his senses and said to the devil, "O destroyer and deceiver of all, source of every impurity and defilement! Now I have discovered your infirmity. For if you feel even the shadow of the Cross and tremble at the Name of Christ, then what will you do when Christ Himself comes to you? If you cannot conquer those who sign themselves with the sign of the Cross, then whom will you tear away from the hands of Christ? How I have understood what a non-entity you are; you are not even able to take revenge! Listening to you, I, a wretched one, have been deceived, and I believed your tricks. Depart from me, accursed one, depart! For I must entreat the Christians that they might have mercy on me. I must appeal to pious people, that they might deliver me from perdition and be concerned over my salvation. Depart, depart from me, lawless one, enemy of truth, adversary and hater of every good thing!"

Having heard this, the devil threw himself on Cyprian in order to kill him; attacking him, he began to beat and strangle him. Finding no defence anywhere, and not knowing how to help himself and be delivered from the fierce hands of the demon, Cyprian, already scarcely alive, remembered the sign of the Cross, by the power of which Justina had opposed all the demons' power, and he cried out: "O God of Justina, help me!"

Then, raising his hand, he made the sign of the Cross, and the devil immediately leaped away from him like an arrow shot from a bow. Gaining courage, Cyprian became bolder, and calling on the Name of Christ, he signed himself with the sign of the Cross and stubbornly opposed the demon, cursing and reproaching him. As for the devil, standing far away from him and not daring to draw near to him out of fear of the sign of the Cross and the Name of Christ, he threatened Cyprian in every manner, saying, "Christ will not deliver you out of my hands!" Then, after long and fierce attacks on Cyprian, the demon roared like a lion and went away.

Cyprian then took all his books of magic and went to the Christian Bishop Anthimos. Falling to the feet of the Bishop, he entreated him to have mercy on him and to give him Holy Baptism. Knowing that Cyprian was a great sorcerer, feared by all, the Bishop thought that he had come to him with some kind of trick, and therefore he refused him, saying, "You do much evil among the pagans; leave the Christians in peace, lest you speedily perish". Then Cyprian with tears confessed everything to the Bishop and gave him his books to be burned. Seeing his humility, the Bishop instructed him and taught him the Holy Faith, and then commanded him to prepare for



Baptism; and his books he burned before all the believing citizens.

Leaving the Bishop with a contrite heart, Cyprian wept over his sins, sprinkled ashes on his head, and sincerely repented, calling out to the True God for the cleansing of his iniquities. Coming the next day to Church, he heard the Word of God with joyful emotion, standing among the believers. And when the Deacon commanded the catechumens to go out, declaring, "Ye catechumens depart", and certain ones were already going out, Cyprian did not wish to go out, saying to the Deacon, "I am a slave of Christ; do not chase me out of here". But the Deacon said to him, "Since you have not yet been given Holy Baptism, you must go out of the Church".

To this Cyprian replied, "As Christ my God liveth, Who has delivered me from the devil, Who has preserved the maiden Justina pure, and has had mercy on me - you will not chase me out of Church until I have become a complete Christian".

The Deacon related this to the Bishop, and the Bishop, seeing the fervour of Cyprian and his devotion to the Faith of Christ, called him up and immediately baptised him in the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Finding out about this, St. Justina gave thanks to God, distributed much alms to the poor, and made an offering in Church. And Cyprian, on the eighth day after his Baptism, was made a Reader by the Bishop; on the twentieth day he was made Subdeacon, and on the thirtieth day a Deacon; and in a year he was ordained Priest. Cyprian completely changed his life; with every day he increased his struggles, and constantly weeping over his previous evil deeds, he perfected himself and ascended from virtue to virtue. Soon he was made Bishop, and in this rank he led such a holy life that he equalled many great Saints. At the same time he zealously took care of the flock of Christ which had been entrusted to him. St. Justina the maiden he made a Deaconess, and then entrusted to her a convent, making her Abbess over other Christian maidens. By his conduct and instruction he converted many pagans and acquired them for the Church of Christ. Thus, idol worship began to die out in that land, and the glory of Christ increased.

Seeing the strict life of St. Cyprian, his concern for the Faith of Christ, and for the salvation of human souls, the devil ground his teeth against him and inspired the pagans to slander him before the governor of the eastern region, saying that he had put the gods to shame, had converted many people away from them, and was glorifying Christ, Who was hostile to their gods. And so, many impious ones came to the governor Eutolmios, who was then governing those regions, and made slanders against Cyprian and Justina, accusing them of being hostile to their gods and to the emperor and to all authorities, saying that they were disturbing the people, deceiving them, and leading them in their footsteps, disposing them to worship the crucified Christ. At the same time they asked the governor to give Cyprian and Justina over to death for this. Having heard their request, Eutolmios commanded that Cyprian and Justina be seized and placed in prison. Then, setting out for Damascus, he took them with him in order to make judgment upon them.

And when they had brought the prisoners of Christ, Cyprian and Justina, to him, he asked Cyprian, "Why have you changed your earlier glorious way of life, when you were a renowned servant of the gods and brought many people to them?"

St. Cyprian related to the governor how he had found out the infirmity and the deception of the demons and come to understand the power of Christ, which the demons feared and before which they trembled, disappearing from before the sign of the precious Cross; and likewise he explained the reason for his conversion to Christ, for Whom he declared his readiness to die. The torturer did not accept the words of Cyprian in his heart but being unable to reply to them, he commanded that the Saint be hung up and his body scraped, and that St. Justina be beaten on the mouth and eyes. For the whole time of the long torments they ceaselessly confessed Christ and endured

everything with thanksgiving. Then the torturer imprisoned them and strove by kind exhortations to return them to idol worship. When he was unable to convince them, he commanded that they be thrown into a cauldron; but the boiling cauldron did not cause them any harm, and they glorified God as if they were in some cool place. Seeing this, one priest of the idols, by name Athanasios, said, "In the name of the god Aesculapios, I also will throw myself into this fire and put to shame those sorcerers". But hardly had the fire touched him than he immediately died.

Seeing this, the torturer became frightened, and not desiring to judge them further, he sent the Martyrs to the governor Claudios in Nicomedia, describing all that had happened to them. This governor condemned them to be beheaded with the sword. When they were brought to the place of execution, Cyprian asked for a little time for prayer, so that Justina might be executed first; he feared that Justina would become frightened at the sight of his death. But she joyfully bent her head under the sword and departed unto her Bridegroom Christ. Seeing the innocent death of these Martyrs, a certain Theoktistos, who was present there, greatly pitied them, and, being inflamed in his heart toward God, he fell down to St. Cyprian and, kissing him, declared himself a Christian. Together with Cyprian he also was immediately condemned to be beheaded.

Thus they gave over their souls into the hands of God; their bodies, however, lay for six days unburied. Certain of the strangers who were there secretly took them and brought them to Rome, where they gave them to a certain virtuous and holy woman whose name was Rufina, a relative of Claudius Caesar. She buried with honour the bodies of the Holy Martyrs of Christ: Cyprian, Justina, and Theoktistos. At their graves many healings occurred for those who came to them with faith.

By the prayers of the Holy Martyrs Cyprian, Justina, and Theoktistos,  
may the Lord Jesus Christ heal also our afflictions of body and soul.  
Amen.

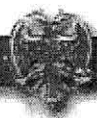
## Troparion to Sts Cyprian and Justina

Thou hast purified thyself by the ways of repentance, and with the streams of thy blood, thou hast drowned the enemy; and now thou dost reside with the Holy Justina in the mansions of Paradise. O Hierarch Cyprian, ever guard thy monastery from the wiles of the enemy.

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GREEK ORTHODOX ARCHDIOCESE OF AUSTRALIA

## St Dionysis the Areopagite (96 AD)

Memory celebrated October 3

St Dionysius the Areopagite was one of the first Athenian disciples of the Apostle Paul (Acts 17:34) and the first bishop of Athens. He was martyred in Paris and is commemorated on October 3. A number of works (including *The Divine Names*, *Mystical Theology*, *The Celestial Hierarchies*, and *The Ecclesiastical Hierarchy*) have been attributed to him which have influenced basic Orthodox teaching and inspired later Orthodox theologians such as St Maximus the Confessor (7th century). It is generally accepted that these works, in their present form, were probably written in the fifth century, because they seem to have been unknown to earlier Christian centuries, and their style and content indicate that they are later in date. Irrespective of the authorship of these works, the Orthodox world finds no difficulty in regarding them as in the tradition of St Dionysius, and through him, of St Paul the Apostle.

The following is an example of the work attributed to St Dionysius. Here he uses the language of paradox and symbolism to describe God, in terms that we can understand.

Leave the senses and workings of the intellect, and all that the senses and intellect can perceive, and all that is not and that is; and through unknowing reach out, so far as this is possible, towards oneness with Him who is beyond all being and knowledge. In this way, through an uncompromising, absolute and pure detachment from yourself and from all things, transcending all things and released from all, you will be led upwards towards that radiance of the divine darkness which is beyond all being.

Entering the darkness that surpasses understanding, we shall find ourselves brought, not just to brevity of speech, but to perfect silence and unknowing.

Emptied of all knowledge, man is joined in the highest part of himself, not with any created thing, nor with himself, nor with another, but with the One who is altogether unknowable; and, in knowing nothing, he knows in a manner that surpasses understanding.

St Dionysius uses the symbol of 'darkness' with the meaning expressed in Exodus 20:21 - The people remained at a distance, while Moses approached the thick darkness where God was. God is not called 'darkness', but appears to dwell in darkness because of our inability to grasp His essence or inner-nature. In other words, the darkness is in us, and not in Him.

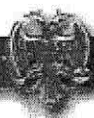
This is in accordance with St John Chrysostom (407), who states that we can not behold God's nature or essence, but He chooses to manifest Himself in forms that we can comprehend.

However, the different forms under which God is said to have appeared, proves that these manifestations were merely condescensions to the weakness of human nature, which requires something that the eye can see and the ear can hear. They were only manifestations of the Deity adapted to man's capacity; not the Divine Nature itself which is simple, incomposite, and devoid of shape. So, also, when it is said of God the Son that He is 'in the bosom of the Father', when he is described as 'standing', or 'sitting on the right hand of God', these expressions must not be

interpreted in too material a sense; they are expressions accommodated to our understanding, to convey an idea of such an intimate union and equality between the two Persons ... is in itself a mystery.

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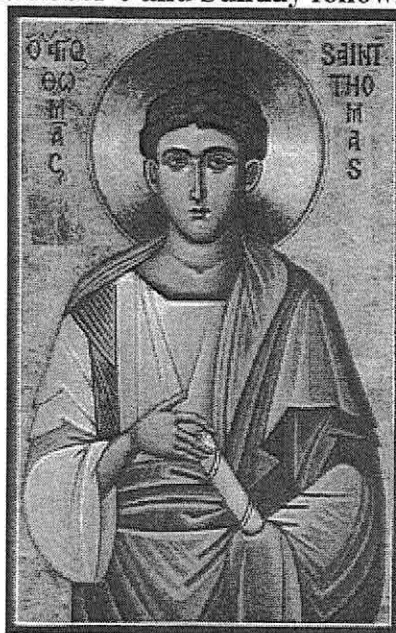
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GREEK ORTHODOX ARCHDIOCESE OF AUSTRALIA

## Holy Apostle St. Thomas (1st century)

Commemorated October 6 and Sunday following Easter Sunday

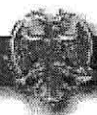


St. Thomas, called Didymus, is remembered as the apostle who refused to believe in the Resurrection unless he actually touched the wounds of the risen Christ (John 20:25-28). There is much uncertainty about his missionary work after Pentecost. The generally accepted tradition placed it in India, where the Syrian Christians of Malabar claim that they were evangelised by St. Thomas. He was martyred, by spearing, on the 'Big Hill', about 14 km from Madras; and was buried at Mylapore, now a suburb of Madras, in 72 AD. An ancient cross of stone marks the place where his body rested before its translation to Edessa in 394. His relics were later taken to the island Chios in the Aegean Sea and from there to Ortona in the Abruzzi.

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GREEK ORTHODOX ARCHDIOCESE OF AUSTRALIA

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## St. Pelagia

Memory celebrated October 8

A woman, whose comeliness today might have won her the crown at a beauty pageant and whose reckless escapades would have commanded the headlines in scandal, chose in the third century to serve Him who had worn a crown of thorns, and after exchanging a life of debauchery for the life of ascetism, commanded a respect that earned her sainthood. The story of St. Pelagia was not unlike that of countless others who have gone from evil to piety, but hers was a unique contribution to the cause of Christianity, and she stands in sainthood as the symbol of any *femme fatale* who has resisted temptation and assumed a decent posture in the Christian faith.

Born into immense wealth in the city of Antioch, Syria, Pelagia grew up in a hedonistic class whose sensual sins were an affront, not only to the rest of society but to God as well. She took such delight in every form of wickedness that the respectable people of Antioch strongly suspected that her great beauty and wealth were derived from Satan himself. In any case, it appeared she was in league with the devil because her wild dissipation took no toll on her beauty, and she seemed to thrive on the unwholesome living that would have wrecked anyone not allied with the forces of evil.

Pelagia customarily spent her Sabbath on a pleasure seeking tour, borne in a carriage drawn by a quartet of the finest Arabian horses, and would have passed the cathedral without incident had the faithful been within its walls, but on that fateful day an unusually large crowd had spilled out into the courtyard because of the presence of a prominent prelate, Bishop Nonnos.

The preacher's sonorous voice carried out to the street and out of curiosity Pelagia stopped to hear what was being said. The bishop's theme must have been salvation, and whatever the aim of his words, they found a target in the curious beauty sitting smugly in the coach. Her curiosity turned to interest and that into a deep sense of regret, which eventuated in her seeking out the Bishop, thereafter to be baptised by him and with a sincere repentance to become a Christian in the purest sense of the word.

Renouncing her lurid past, Pelagia began her new life by giving away every scrap of her worldly possessions, which she had in abundance, and turning her back on the leisure class that might prove her ruin, she undertook to cleanse her soul and to serve God with all her heart, a transformation that surely put the devil to rout.

In the disguise of a monk, with much of her radiant face concealed, she commenced her avowed asceticism and service to God by secluding herself in the desert and devoting herself to the study of religion, philosophy, and theology to a degree that would assure her acceptance in God's favour.

Realising that to expose her beautiful face in the company of females would be to invite embarrassment, no matter how well-intentioned the women may be, Pelagia reasoned that her only assurance of achieving a reasonable proximity to God was to go it alone. It is that doubtful her beautiful face would have been the handicap she construed it to be, but in light of what it had brought her in the past, she could scarcely be blamed for seeking isolation.

She realised a cherished dream when she was allowed to enter the Garden of Gethsemane in Jerusalem, there to abide for three years in an unceasing supplication for forgiveness and deliverance.

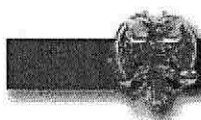
When she finally emerged from this holy ground, she was a spectacle of piety, with such beauty of soul that it exceeded her fair countenance, and to speak with her about the Lord would be like being given a first-hand account of Heaven and the Holy Spirit. There was an aura of purity about her that belied her reckless youth.

For the fifty-eight years that remained of her long life, she remained a symbol of the power of God to transform a sinner to a Saint. She died a peaceful death in the year 284 A.D.

From "Orthodox Saints" Vol 4 by Fr George Poulos,  
Holy Cross Orthodox Press

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GREEK ORTHODOX ARCHDIOCESE OF AUSTRALIA

## St. Luke the Evangelist

Commemorated October 18



The awesome figure of St. Luke looms larger and larger out of both the New Testament and the pages of documented human history so that nearly two thousand years after his death his image has no less been diminished by time than that of the Nazarene, Jesus Christ, whom he so nobly served. His fellow apostle St. Paul called him the 'glorious physician,' but that was only one of the many talents which this magnificent man applied in a service to God. He was a man of such monumental proportion as to make him appear incredible. His many gifts were spiced with unswerving loyalty, prolific creativity, and matchless perfection. Hailing from the ancient city of Antioch, Syria, Luke was a Roman whose early conversion to Christianity is evidenced by his membership in the Christian community of Antioch, prior to his emergence as an apostle, after meeting Paul. He had by that time developed a remarkable command of the Greek language and employed its idiomatic expressiveness in his beautiful narrative form of recording history. He became the Church's most



articulate historian and wrote with such sensitivity and clarity that his Gospel in the New Testament has been rightfully called the most beautiful book ever written.

Luke, a physician whose skills healed many of his suffering comrades, joined St. Paul on his second missionary journey, as recounted in the Acts of the Apostles. Their odyssey began in Troas, about 50 A.D., and took them to Philippi, Rome, Caesarea, and ultimately to the Holy Land of Jerusalem. His prominence as a physician obscured his skills as an eloquent orator in the cause of Christ, but he was later to display a considerable talent as an artist whose icon of the Virgin Mary he gave to the Mother of God herself and which is now the prized possession of the Patriarchate of Constantinople. Although his skill as a physician and his talent as an artist may have by themselves given St. Luke a small place in history, it was his consummate gift as a writer that made him one of the greatest figures in all Christendom. Luke's contribution to the cause of Jesus Christ are beyond all measure, and his early influence on the Christian scene has enabled the Christian Church to rise to its ever increasing influence in human experience. One has only to read the Book of Acts, and his Gospel as well, to realize the stature of this most holy man; however, it is reserved to the privileged few who can comprehend classical Greek that the sheer beauty of his language can be appreciated.

The praises of Luke as a writer may seem excessive, particularly since he is one of many authors represented in the New Testament, chief among whom are St. Matthew (the man), St. Mark (the lion), and St. John (the eagle). Among these, the fourth, St. Luke, suffers in comparison with the title "St. Luke" (the calf). But out of the twenty-seven books comprising the New Testament, none shines with the brilliance of those composed by St. Luke. He is considered to have excelled beyond the others in expressiveness, historical method, sensitivity of narrative, and idiomatic phrasing.

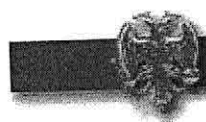
The patron saint of physicians and artists, St. Luke is surrounded by many legends and traditions that have not withstood the test of time. The discounted accounts of his martyrdom must now give way to the actual facts of his life. It is known that he remained a bachelor all of his life, devoting himself to the utmost degree to the cause of Christ. When advancing years curbed his campaigning, he withdrew to write his memorable accounts and died in Thebes at the age of eighty-four.

An appraisal of the contributions to Christianity by St. Luke cannot be measured by the number of words he wrote, the miles he traveled in missionary journeys, or the number of years he spent in exclusive dedication to the service of Jesus Christ. St. Luke, like so many who have given so much to all of us, is not to be appraised, only to be honoured.

from **Orthodox Saints** by Fr George Poulos  
Holy Cross Orthodox Press

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GREEK ORTHODOX ARCHDIOCESE OF AUSTRALIA

## St Lazaros

Commemorated October 17

Through the miracle of modern medicine the life-sustaining machine can pump air into a lung, cause a heart to beat, or a kidney to function, but although it can sustain life, it cannot restore it. Restoration of life calls for a true miracle. Such a true miracle is recounted in the familiar story of how Jesus Christ recalled a man named Lazaros from a premature death by his divine grace. A spark of that divinity was transmitted to Lazaros in the process of his deliverance and instilled in him the grace with which he was to become a saint.

Such great emphasis is placed on the return of Lazaros from the dead that his prior life is practically ignored. His true life began after he had died, exactly four days after, since that was the period of time in which he had lain dead before Christ appeared at his tomb in Bethany. A true friend of the departed Lazaros, as well as of his grieving sisters Mary and Martha, Jesus stood before the tomb and commanded Lazaros to come forth, whereupon Lazaros stepped from oblivion into immortality. Thereafter he became a servant of the Lord in the early development of the new faith.



Following the death and resurrection of the Saviour, Lazaros undertook an apostolic mission which carried him to many corners of the empire and ultimately to the island of Cyprus, where he settled after his ordination as bishop of Kition. The apostles of Christ encouraged him to stay on this island, and there he spent the final thirty years of his life, implanting Christianity with the firmness that was to sustain Cyprus centuries later through conquest, piracy, and subjugation. The association of Lazaros with Cyprus has been obscured by events on that strife-torn land, but evidence of his presence there is still extant after nearly two thousand years.

Christianity had taken a firm hold on the island when Lazaros died at the age of fifty-eight, this time not to be recalled by, but to join the Messiah who had summoned him many years before. He was buried in Cyprus and according to tradition there was inscribed after his name on his casket the words, "Tetraimeros, friend of Jesus Christ." The word "tetraimeros" is translated the "fourth day," the day on which he was brought back from the grave. Moreover, he was honoured in life as a friend of Jesus and was thus assured a place of honour in the kingdom of heaven. Lazaros was entombed in a small chapel dedicated to his memory. More than 800 years later, Emperor Leo of Constantinople, himself a devout Christian, replaced the chapel which was threatened with ruin with a beautiful cathedral and monastery, a fitting tribute to the personal friend of Jesus. After a time, Leo decided that the proper resting place for St. Lazaros would be in the capital city of Constantinople. That project was probably frowned upon by the islanders who pridefully cherished the shrine of Lazaros, but in due course, they came to accept the plan to place Lazaros in a more hallowed setting. The remains of St. Lazaros were ceremoniously brought to the cultural centre of Constantinople on 17 October 891.

A magnificent cathedral was erected in honour of St. Lazaros and his holy relics lie enshrined their in a bronze casket. The official dedication of the cathedral took place on 4 May 892. About

the same time the remains of St. Mary Magdalene were also brought to Constantinople by the devout Emperor Leo. Thus the Emperor sought to honour these two friends of Jesus. If a man can be measured by the kind of friends he has, then the measure of St. Lazaros cannot be drawn, because he had the friendship of Jesus Christ.

The closeness with the Saviour, although it added considerable lustre to the life of St. Lazaros, extended by a miracle of the Lord, was the deep commitment to Jesus Christ and subsequent mission in his behalf which has made Lazaros a saint of the Greek Orthodox Church. When the life expectancy standards at the time of Christ are considered, it can be said that Lazaros at age fifty-eight departed this earth after having lived a full life.

from **Orthodox Saints**, v. 4  
by Father George Poulos, Holy Cross Orthodox Press

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## St. John of Kronstadt (1908 AD)

Commemorated October 19

Father John of Kronstadt, one of the most well known saints of recent history, possessed an evangelical fervour, and, above all, was 'flesh of the flesh' of the Orthodox tradition and of the faith and life of the Orthodox Church. Father John was an expressive and impressive preacher, an promoter of frequent communion, a man who moved the hearts of hardened sinners to repentance, a man with a great depth of love, and a spiritual healer. Huge crowds flocked to him from all parts of Orthodox Russia to hear him and to be healed by him (in body and soul).

Father John believed in indulging people with love. To indulgent people with love means not to judge, not to take revenge, and to endure and forgive. "Do not confuse man -this image of God - with the evil which is in him, because evil is only his accidental misfortune, a sickness, a devil's dream; but man's essence - the image of God - is always there". This recognition of God in others is the rule he used in relating to others. He also said, "As far as is it possible, be gentle, humble and simple to all, considering yourself, without hypocrisy, to be spiritually below everyone. Pride is the reason for a cold, pompous and insincere manner towards those whom are considered to be below us, or those from whom we hope to derive some benefit. When people speak ill of you and you feel resentment, it means that you are proud, and pride must be eliminated from your heart by worldly dishonour. Therefore, do not resent and hate those who speak ill of you, but try to love them as you would love people who benefit you, and pray for them. Maintain a peaceful and loving disposition towards your brother even if he deprives you of your last shilling; show him that, above all, you love God's image in him. However most people are angry when they are deprived even of a very small part of their property!"

One of the basic aims of love is to see everyone saved, transformed and united to true, divine love. This is impeded by what he called "malicious joy" when he said, "Oh, how disgusted I am by this devilish malicious joy over the sins of one neighbour! People cast a slur on someone's whole life because of one sin that he has committed. They forget that love extenuates everything. A Christian must truly wish for himself and others, that God's name should be constantly glorified in both himself and others, that all should become Temples of God".

However, sobriety from evil is not enough. We should also seek to obtain inner peace, since "without inner peace and harmonious coexistence with others, one cannot have peace and harmony within oneself. In acquiring inner peace, let us also be peacemakers in relation to our fellowmen".

To attain peace and love, and to preserve them, "Do not be put out of countenance when you are angry and when this anger prepares to manifest itself in words, command it to be silent. When you allow anger to express itself, it will pour out with great force and may overwhelm your defence". He continued, "Do not expose all your impurities, not to contaminate others with the breath of evil concealed in you. It is better to speak of your illness to your spiritual father or your friend in order that they may direct and restrain you".

On reproaching others of their evil he said, "It is better not to pass on reproachful words, but to keep silent about them or, even if it is not true, convey words of love and goodwill; then our spirits will be at peace" and, "if you wish to correct somebody's faults of your own accord, restrain yourself, because, usually, through our pride and irritability, we do more harm than good... Pray to God that He Himself will enlighten the mind and the hearts of men; if God sees that your prayer is full of

love, He most certainly will grant your wish. An embittered person is ill; to cure him we must apply to his heart a plaster of Love", and finally, "Look at every human being as if he were unique in God's world, a great miracle of God's wisdom and grace, and do not let the fact that you are accustomed to him serve as a ground for neglect".

"Our Saviour bids us to love our enemies which is extremely difficult; but for a heart which is reborn through grace, it is easy to do so because God helps the believer in everything".

The reader is refer to The Life of Father John of Kronstadt by Bishop Alexander, published by St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, as a good introduction to his life and as an outline of his spiritual message.

The feast day of St. John of Kronstadt is October 19.

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## St. Justin the Martyr

Commemorated October 20

St. Justin the Martyr was born in Palestine between 100 and 110 AD to pagan parents. As a young man he attended various philosophical schools before becoming an itinerant Christian philosopher. He eventually arrived in Rome where he founded a school. He, along with six companions, was Martyred (beheaded) some time between 163 and 167 AD (most probably in 165 AD). St. Justin is regarded as the most important of the 2nd century apologists. His Dialogue with Trypho the Jew, written about 155 AD, is the oldest Christian apology against Judaism in existence. The following is extracted from this dialogue:

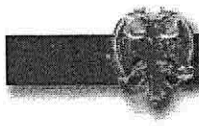
"He [Christ] became Man by the Virgin so that the course which has taken by disobedience in the beginning through the agency of the serpent, might be also the very course by which it would be put down. For Eve, a virgin and undefiled, conceived the word of the serpent, and bore disobedience and death. But the Virgin Mary received faith and joy when the angel Gabriel announced to her the glad tidings that the Spirit of the Lord would come upon her and the power of the Most High would overshadow her, for which reason the Holy One being born of her is the Son of God. And she replied: 'Be it done unto me according to thy word'".

Just as the Orthodox Church regards Christ as the New Adam (Rom 5:12-21; 1 Cor 15:21-22, 45), the Ever-Virgin Mary is also seen as a type of second Eve, through which the Word Himself was born receiving the recapitulation of Adam. The Virgin Mary's obedient submission to the Will of God counterbalanced Eve's disobedience in Paradise. That is, Eve as a virgin disobeyed God's Will by her unbelief, and the Virgin Mary, obeyed God's Will by her faith.

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GREEK ORTHODOX ARCHDIOCESE OF AUSTRALIA

## St. Hilarion the Great (~371 AD)

**Memory Celebrated on October 21**

St. Hilarion was an abbot and monastic pioneer of Palestine. He studied at Alexandria, where he became a Christian. He visited St. Antony, then at the height of his fame, but returned to Palestine, found his parents were dead, gave all his belongings to his brothers and to the poor, and became a hermit at Majuma in about 306 AD. His regime was based on St. Antony's: he lived on figs, bread, vegetables, and oil. First, he made a shelter of reeds, later a very small cell. Disciples came to learn from him and large crowds were attracted to him by his austerities and miracles. For the sake of his monks he had come to own household goods and a farm. To escape these responsibilities and the crowds, he left Palestine, first for Egypt, then for Sicily (where his disciple St. Hesychius found him), and eventually for Epidaurus in Dalmatia. Once more his miracles attracted publicity and he fled to Cyprus. He settled near Paphos, but later retired to a more remote site about 20 km away, where Epiphanius, Bishop of Salamis, visited him.

St. Hilarion died at the age of eighty. He was buried near Paphos, but his relics were translated to Majuma.

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GREEK ORTHODOX ARCHDIOCESE OF AUSTRALIA

## St. James the Just (62 AD)

Memory celebrated October 23

The author of the General Epistle of James identifies himself as "James, a bondservant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ " (James 1:1). Early church tradition ascribes this letter to James, the "brother", or kinsman, of our Lord, known as James the Just.

St. James was probably converted by a post-resurrection appearance of Christ (1 Cor. 15:7). The apostles made him the first bishop of Jerusalem (see Acts 12:7, 18; Gal. 1:18, 19, 2:9), where he presided over the Jerusalem Council (Acts 15:13).

James was the ideal bishop for Jerusalem. He lived a strict and holy life, praying in the temple so frequently he was called "camel-kneed". The Jews considered him incorruptible, for he obeyed the Law of Moses better than they. Furthermore, they found no fault with him, except that he confessed Jesus to be the Messiah. It was the Jews who called this bishop of the Church "Just"!

According to tradition, James was executed, around 62 AD, at the prompting of the Sanhedrin, being thrown from the temple walls and then clubbed to death. October 23 is the remembrance of his martyrdom.

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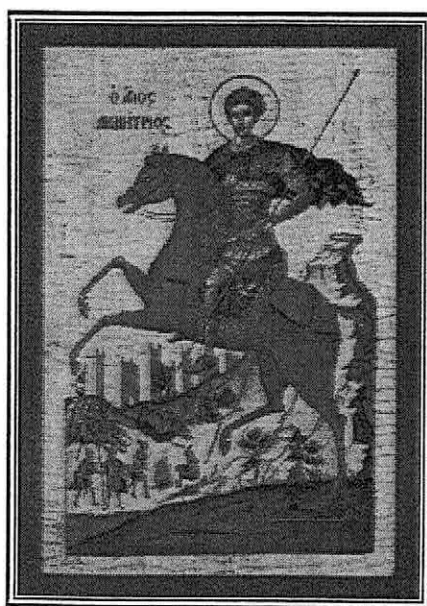
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GREEK ORTHODOX ARCHDIOCESE OF AUSTRALIA

## St. Dimitrios

Celebrated October 26



Great Martyr Dimitrios, the Myrrh-flowing and Wonderworking Saint, was a Christian and the son of the military commander of Thessalonica in the early fourth century. St. Dimitrios was the only son and was, because of this, most carefully cherished and educated. When his father died, Dimitrios was appointed by Emperor Maximian to take his place. Maximian was an opponent of Christ and charged Dimitrios to persecute and to kill the Christians in that city.

Instead, Dimitrios disobeyed Maximian and openly confessed and preached Christianity. Hearing of this, the Emperor was furious and on his way back from battles against the Sarmathians he went to Thessalonica to look into the matter. He summoned Dimitrios and questioned him about his faith. Dimitrios confessed his belief as well as his disgust for idolatry (and thus openly criticising the Emperor himself). The enraged Emperor cast him into prison, and Dimitrios, knowing his fate, had his servant Lupus give his wealth to the poor (being glad that suffering for Christ was to be his lot).

An angel of God appeared to Dimitrios saying, "Peace be with thee, thou sufferer for Christ; be brave and strong!" After several days, the Emperor sent soldiers to the prison to kill Dimitrios. The soldiers came into the cell finding the Saint at prayer, and killed him with their spears. Christians the secretly took his body and buried it, and his relics began producing a healing fragrant myrrh. A small church was soon built over his relics, and when an Illyrian nobleman, by the name of Leontius, ran prayerfully up to the relics of St. Dimitrios and was completely cured of an incurable disease, he built a much larger church replacing the small one.

Once, when barbarians plundered the city, two maidens were abducted. When the leader of the barbarians learned that the maidens could embroider, he threatened them to produce the likeness of St. Dimitrios. They finished on the eve of the Saint's feast and they wept asking for his forgiveness. Suddenly, Dimitrios appeared and transported them like an angel of God to the safety of his church in Thessalonica and left them among the people during a vigil.

The Saint appeared on other occasions. When Emperor Justinian attempted to move the Saint's relics to Constantinople, flames shot out of the tomb and a voice commanded them to, "Leave them there, and don't touch!" and thus the relics have remained since in Thessalonica. Another time was when a young man responsible for the candles of the church was stealing them and reselling them from his home. Dimitrios appeared to him and told him that he was harming himself and the church. The embarrassed man obeyed for a little while but soon returned to his old ways. One day, when he was about to steal some large candles that had just been lit near the tomb of St. Dimitrios, a booming voice said, "Are you doing this again!" He fell over unconscious, and when he awoke, he related the whole story.

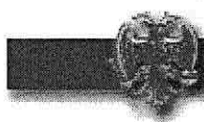
As the defender of Thessalonica, St. Dimitrios has many times appeared and saved the city in times

of trouble. The Russians also regarded St. Dimitrios as the protector of Siberia.

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GREEK ORTHODOX ARCHDIOCESE OF AUSTRALIA

## St. Timotheos the Esphigmenitis (1820 AD)

Commemorated October 29

Five months before the outbreak of the Greek Revolution of 1821, St Timotheos of Esphigmenou (baptised Triantafilos) acquired the imperishable crown of martyrdom on Oct 29, 1820.

The saint was married and had two daughters. It so happened however that his wife fell away from goodness by following a man of another faith and converting to his faith.

Triantafilos grieved that his family was broken-up and that his wife was needlessly losing her soul. So he took his children from his country Pareora Kissaniou (eastern Thrace) and left them with relatives in another village. He then sent word to his wife requesting she return and, with love and endearment, promised to forgive her. His wife answered his letter indicating her will to return although could not. He then presented himself to the Hagarenes and promised to change religion too, if only his wife could be returned to him. Immediately, with great joy and without the least suspicion, the Hagarenes brought him to their faith and returned his wife.

Then, by mutual agreement, Triantafilos' wife entered a convent and he went to the Holy Monastery of the Great Lavra at Mount Athos, where he confessed and started working as a gardener. Soon after, he obtained the small schema and was renamed Timotheos. For six years, Fr Timotheos lived and laboured with fasting, praying, obedience, meekness, humility and a secret longing for martyrdom. His good example earned him the respect and honour of his brethren. Following the martyrdom of Fr Agathangelos, a fellow brother of the monastery, he asked permission to enter the Convent of Ephigmenou where he earned respect and acquired the Great Schema. His responsibilities increased and so did his desire for martyrdom. At first, however, the abbot did not permit him, but seeing Fr Timotheos' persistence, for he was ignited and inflamed with the love of Christ, the abbot blessed him and let him go.

Yearning for martyrdom at the same spot where, for the sake of his wife's spiritual salvation, he changed faith, Timotheos left for Hellespont. On the way he was escorted and greatly aided by hieromonk Fr Euthymius Byzantion.

Upon their arrival, they visited another who betrayed his faith, and did their utmost to return him to Christ. However, he was so vanquished by the malice devil that he quickly ran to report them. Instantly, the Hagarenes arrested and thrashed the priests before placing them in bonds.

In prison they were in company with priestmonk Fr Nicholas and monk Brother Barnabas who were also tortured for their faith. Deacon-priest Germanos secretly entered the prison to pray with the others.

On the day after, the Hagarenes decided that Timotheos should die by the sword. He was overjoyed and sang to God with tears of love and gratitude, and thanked Him for many benefactions. Immediately they escorted him to the chopping block and struck off his head. This glorious end put the Hagarenes to shame and they resolved to liberate the others. With heartfelt respect, Deacon Germanos brought Timotheos' blood-soaked clothing to the Monastery of Esphigmenou. He then proclaimed Timotheos' marvellous martyrdom to his family and people.

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