

March 26

F. + *Synaxis of the Archistrategus Gabriel*



The day of commemorating in honor the Archangel Gabriel is the day of his Synaxis, because Christians gather together on the other day of Annunciation to glorify the heavenly messenger of the great mystery of the incarnation of the Son of God. St. Gabriel is one of the seven spirits, "who present the prayers of the saints and enter into the presence of the glory of the Holy One" (Tobit 12:15) [Dan.9:21]. The name Gabriel means "might of God". Gabriel in the service of the salvation of mankind is especially revealed as the herald and minister of the omnipotence of God. So, wasn't he revealed as the might of God in the wonderful conception of the Forerunner from aged parents? Gabriel announced this conception. Wasn't he the one to predict the seedless conception of the Very Son of God? - Gabriel had the honor of the annunciation about this. Wasn't this the same Archangel, according to the opinion of divinely wise men, sent to support the Savior in the Garden of Gethsemane and to announce to the Mother of God Her all-honorable dormition? Therefore the Church calls him "the servant of wonders". But in the service for wonders, he is also that special servant of the Mysteries of God. The Holy Church sometimes represents him with a paradisiacal branch in his hand which he presented to the Mother of God, but sometimes with a lantern in his right hand, inside of which burns a candle, and with the balance of justice made from jasper in his left.

He represents the balance of justice, since Gabriel is the herald of the destinies of God about the salvation of the human race. He represents it by a candle in a lantern since the destinies of God are hidden until the time of their fulfillment, and, after their fulfillment are comprehended only by those, who steadily gaze in the mirror of justice of the word of God and their conscience. Thus if anyone, who is named Gabriel and is proper in the "faith of God" (Mk. 2:23), then, according to the Savior, nothing is impossible for him.

Troparion, tone 4

**O Commander of heavenly hosts,
We the unworthy beseech you,
That you may surround us with your prayers,
Beneath the wings of your immaterial glory,
Faithfully protecting us who fall down and cry out to you:
Deliver us from troubles,
For you are the commander of the powers on high.**

Kontakion, tone 8

**All-radiant and honorable, and all-virtuous, infinite and awesome Trinity,
You are the glorious servant and intercessor, O Archistrategus
Now ever pray that we may be delivered from every tribulation and torment,
That we may cry out to you:
Rejoice, O Protection of your servants.**

Epistle: Eph. 6:10-17; sel. 233. **Gospel:** Jn. 15:17-27, 16:1-2; sel. 52.

For the decree concerning the Leavetaking of the Annunciation of the All-holy Theotokos, note the chapter in the Ustav [Typikon] and Menaion: If the Leavetaking of Annunciation falls: 1) on Friday in the 3rd or 4th weeks of Great Lent; 2) on the 3rd Sunday; 3) on the 4th or 5th Sunday; 4) on Monday in the 4th, 5th or 6th weeks; 5) on Wednesday of the 4th week; 6) on Thursday of the 5th week; 7) on Saturday of the 5th week. If Annunciation falls before Lazarus Saturday then the feast continues for three days; if on Lazarus Saturday, for two days with one day of Forefeast; if it falls during Passion or Bright week then it continues for one day.

Hieromartyr Ireneus, Bishop of Sirmium

He suffered for Christ during the Diocletian persecution in 304. After long tortures he was beheaded and his body thrown into the Bosveta River (inflow of the Sava River).

Ven. Malchus

Born in Antioch, Syria, having secretly left his parental home, he practiced asceticism from his youth in the Chalcis Hermitage. Taken into captivity by the Saracens, he faithfully served his master. Forced by him to marry an enslaved Christian woman, Ven. Malchus continued to abide in virginity with his wife. After a long time both spouses decided to escape captivity. Overtaken by their master, they hid in a certain cave, where a lioness with a young lion found refuge. The lioness tore into pieces both the master and his servant, who wanted to seize Ven. Malchus and his spouse. And then they left: Ven. Malchus returned to his monastery and peacefully ended his days in it in the 4th century. His wife entered a women's monastery.

Ven. Basil the New

A monk since youth, he wandered about on deserted mountains, serving the Lord in silence and solitude. During the reign of Leo the Wise, imperial officials have accidentally met him and, having been accused of being a spy, he was

subjected to various tortures. But the Lord wonderfully protected His righteous man during torture. Saved by the power of God from being torn apart by lions and from drowning in the sea, St. Basil wonderfully arrived in Constantinople. And here he was received as a holy person by the people. He soon became glorified for his gift of prophesy and for healing infirmities. Once "a certain man who had a very extreme illness came to him, and the venerable one through prayer was able to heal him". His holy life earned him the respect of kings and aristocrats. He died in peace, being 100 years old, about the middle of the 10th century.

Martyr Presbyters Bathusius and Vercius, Monk Arpilus, Laymen: Abibus (Abib), Agnus, Rhesus, Igathrax, Iscoeus, Silas, Signicus, Sonirilus, Suimbalus, Thermus, Phillius (or Philgus) and laywomen: Anna, Alla, Larissa (Variasa), Moico (Maica), Mamica, Wirco (Wirca or Virko), Animais (or Animaida), Gaatha and Duclida

They all suffered in the first half of the 4th century in Gothia, where they, according to the order of the king, were burned in the temple during church services. St. Gaatha, the wife of another Gothic king and her daughter Duclida, gathered the remains of the holy martyrs and with them moved to Cyzicus (in Crimea), from where they again returned to Gothia and where she was stoned to death by unbelievers. St. Duclida died in peace in Cyzicus.

Martyr Quadratus and 40 Martyrs with him, suffered during the reign of Diocletian. Martyrs Manuel and Theodosius (March 27) were from his company.

Melitene Icon of the Mother of God

The time and place of its appearance is unknown.

Eusebius, Bishop of the city of Cybil

He suffered for Christ during the reign of Emperor Valerian. Pullius also suffered in Cybil during the reign of Emperor Diocletian in 304 and was the chief reader in that church in which St. Eusebius was the bishop. Pullius was burned on a pile of wood for confessing his faith in Christ.

*S. V. Bulgakov, **Handbook for Church Servers**, 2nd ed., 1274 pp. (Kharkov, 1900), pp. 0122-0124. Translated by Archpriest Eugene D. Tarris © February 23, 2008; all rights reserved.*