

## May 7

F. † *Commemoration of the Appearance of the Sign of the Honorable Cross in the Sky in the City of Jerusalem, from the Holy Place of the Execution Stretching with the Stars to the Holy Mount of Olives, at the Third Hour of the Day [9:00 AM], during the Reign of Emperor Constantius, Son of Constantine the Great in the Year 351.*

The sign of the cross appeared in the sky during the reign of Cyril, the head of the Church of Jerusalem. Stretching from Golgotha to the Mount of Olives, the sign occupied the sky over this space of about 2 versts [1.32 miles]; its width corresponded to its length. During the appearance of such an unusual wonder, all came in awe, they left homes, squares, and all who were occupied with children and women ran to the church and began to glorify Christ with one voice and fervently to confess God. The whole empire knew about this and was quite awed. What took place in Jerusalem was soon spread, according to custom, to the whole universe, so to say, for prayers. Reviews of local places related what was seen to their neighbors. The Archbishop also informed the emperor about this in an epistle. Such a happening caused many pagans and Jews to come to the Christian faith. This sign of the cross announced beforehand the heavy cross for the Church of Arianism which soon appeared.

### *Troparion, tone 8*

**The image of Your Cross now is radiating more brightly than the sun,  
Stretching from the holy mountain to the Place of Execution,  
And in it You have shown Your strength, O Savior,  
By this also confirming our faithful emperor:  
And save them always in peace through the prayers of the Theotokos,  
O Christ God, and save us.**

### *Kontakion, tone 4*

**The heavens opened on the imprisoned,  
All-radiant beams in the heavens,  
Radiating the all-pure Cross on earth:  
Therefore accepting the radiance of its action,  
Guiding us to the eternal light,  
And in our struggles we have it,  
As an armor of peace, an invincible victory.**

**Epistle:** 1 Cor. 1:18-24; sel. 125. **Gospel:** Jn. 19:6-11, 13-20, 25-28, 30-35; sel. 60.

### *Martyr Acacius the Centurion*

In the church hymns, he was "a young man mild, and chaste, and meek, and strong in carnal passion, and cruel to demons and unapproachable to infidels", distinguished "with divine reason, wisdom and word". At first he suffered in Perinthus, Thrace and sent to Byzantium in fetters, where after more torture he was beheaded by the sword in 303. His relics were for a long time in the temple of his name, constructed by Constantine the Great in Constantinople. Now they are found in Squillace, Calabria.

**His service is sung in Compline.**

### *St. Pachomius*

In the world Procopius, a Malo Rus [Little Rus], captured by the Tartars in childhood, he was sold into slavery to the Turks in Usaki (Ούσακι) in the Philadelphia diocese (in Anatolia). Procopius was a slave for seventeen years and meekly brought together all the afflictions of the humiliation to which he was subjected there. The owner, a Moslem taught him the tanning trade, grew fond of him for his good manner and wanted to give him his daughter in marriage. Procopius refused to marry her and his owner gave him his freedom. Soon Procopius became seriously ill, but when he recovered, then a false accusation was laid on him, that, during his illness, he renounced Christ and promised to become a Moslem.

Then Procopius decide to leave for the Holy Mount Athos through Smyrna, where he settled near the St. Paul Monastery with one pious Elder Hieromonk Joseph, who tonsured him as a monk with the name of Pachomius. He practiced asceticism for twelve years with this elder. But later, having heard about the great asceticism and a life pleasing to God of a remarkable ascetic of that time, Acacius Kausokalytes, he settled in the residence in the Kausokalyvia [hut-burner] Monastery. Under the enchantment of the asceticism of this elder, St. Pachomius began to think about the crown of martyrdom. His idea was this, that, perhaps, during his illness he actually renounced Christ and promised to accept Mohammedanism, and this thought did not give him any rest and motivated him to atone for his sin. He expressed his intention to Elder Acacius, but the latter told this to the most virtuous elders of the Holy Mount, and all unanimously approved the intention of Pachomius.

Then, with the blessing of the elders, Pachomius left the Holy Mount and went with the Elder Joseph to Usaki, where he was recognized in the market by the Turks and they arrested him. In court he confessed Christ and refused to accept Mohammedanism, and at first he was imprisoned and then beheaded in 1730.

His relics are in the St. John the Theologian Monastery on Patmos Island. The well-known founder of the Patmos academy, Hierodeacon Macarius wrote in

honor of this venerable martyr "Λόγος ελκομιστικος," [The Logos Born in Mystery] printed in the book: "Ἱερὰ σάλπιγξ" [The Holy Trumpet] and in the abbreviated statement in the book under the title: "Νέον μαρτυρολογιόν" [New Martyriology]. To this same writer belongs, most likely, the composition of the special service in honor of the Venerable Martyr Pachomius, which is solemnly celebrated on Patmos on the day of the death of the newly revealed saint.

*John of Zedazeni and his Twelve Disciples: Shio [Simeon] of Mgvimeni (May 9), David of Gareji (May 29), Anthony of Markopi the Stylite (Jan. 19), Thaddeus of Stepantsminda, Stephen of Khirsa, Isidore of Samtavisi, Michael of Ulumbo, Pyrrhus of Breti, Zeno of Ikalto, Jesse, Bishop of Tsilkani (Dec. 2), Joseph of Alaverdi (15 Sept.) and Abibus, Bishop of Nekresi (November 29)*

By command of the Mother of God who appeared in a dream to Ven. John, they came to Georgia in the middle of the 6th century from Antioch, Syria and there labored much for the spread and establishment of the Christian faith.

Mount Zadena is 15 versts [10 miles] from Tiflis [Tbilisi] opposite Mtskheta.

#### *Liubech Icon of the Mother of God*

This wonderworking icon is at the present time found in the Resurrection parish church in Liubech, Chernigov Province.

An ancient copy of it was brought to the St. Sophia Cathedral in Kiev in 1690, where it is now.

#### *Zhirovits Icon of the Mother of God*

It wonderfully appeared on a tree in a forest in Zhirovits, Grodno Province in 1191. Shepherds looked upon it with awe, took and brought it to their Lord Alexander Soltan, who built a temple on the place of its appearance. Ten years later this temple burned down, but the holy icon remained unharmed. The inhabitants of Zhirovits built a new temple in honor of it. Now the holy icon is found in the Zhirovits Monastery built here (see the Lithuanian Diocese).

*S. V. Bulgakov, Handbook for Church Servers, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., 1274 pp. (Kharkov, 1900), pp. 0162-0163. Translated by Archpriest Eugene D. Tarris © May 29, 2008. All rights reserved.*