

July 5

C. ✝. *Our Ven. Father Athanasius of Athos*



Born in Trebizond as Abraham and having remained in the circle of orphans in childhood, he underwent the care and providence of the Heavenly Father for the orphaned: the good people in Trebizond and later in Constantinople. He accepted his portion with them. Since his earliest years the child revealed unusual abilities in line with deep humility and self-denial.

Aspiring to monastic asceticism, he received tonsuring in the Kyminas Monastery in Asia Minor and under the direction of Ven. Michael Maleina (see July 12); he practiced asceticism in strict fasting and prayer and with rare patience and diligence fulfilling all labor and obediences. Athanasius wanted to eat food only once a week, but Ven. Michael in order to curtail his will ordered him to accept food once every three days and to sleep on a bastmat instead of in a chair as he slept before.

Athanasius unconditionally fulfilled everything asked of him. In the remaining time of monastic obedience, at the will of the starets [elder] he was engaged in copying books. All the Kyminas brethren called him the son of obedience, praised him and were amazed by him. In four years this laudable ascetic rose to the top of the ascetic life by much fasting, vigils, full prostrations, standing for all-night vigils and other day and night ascetic efforts and by suffering all kinds of evil.

Therefore the holy starets [elder], having learned of the pure pattern of thought of St. Athanasius and his ability for divine intuitions, allowed him to enter the great field of silence in a lonely place beyond the milieu of the Laura and commanded him to eat dry bread once in two days and a little water, during time of the Forty Day Fast to receive food through the five days, to sleep on a chair as before, and on all Sundays and Lord's feasts to watch in prayers and doxologies from evening up to the third hour of the day. The blessed one obediently fulfilled all this.

Loving humble wisdom and abhorring human glory, Athanasius left Mount Kyminas, being especially afraid that the holy starets [elder] will make him Hegumen in his place. Leaving Kyminas, he took only two books with him which he had copied - the Gospel Book [Tetraevangelion] and the Epistle Book [Apostol], but also the sacred cowl [cucullus] of a venerable starets [elder], which he always wore as a soul pleasing protection and departed for Mt. Athos at the beginning of 960. Here he lived among the anchorites as a simple illiterate monk, fulfilling all obediences, high and low, and changed his name to Barnabas.

But the lamp of God could not be kept covered: his glory spread all across Mt. Athos. Every day many came to him for the benefit of their souls. St.

Athanasius with the help of the Commander (later Emperor) Nicephorus Phocas constructed a monastery in which he also was the Hegumen.

The glory of the virtues of St. Athanasius was carried far off throughout the entire Christian world. The Athonite hermits left their silence and came to him, considering life under his direction better than solitude. Pilgrims from Greece, ancient Rome, Italy, and other places, monks and laymen, simple and noble, poor and wealthy appeared before him, and sought his guidance on the way to Heaven. Even hegumens and bishops leaving his command appeared before him in order to live under his direction.

For his holy life Venerable Athanasius was granted the gift of working wonders: by the sign of the cross he healed illnesses and by prayer he banished locusts. Venerable Athanasius foresaw and predicted the time and pattern of his death. In full consciousness of the passing of the time of his departure from this world he died in the year 1000. He and six builders fell to their death while inspecting the top of the cathedral cupolas which collapsed.

Troparion, tone 3

**While in the flesh by your way of life
You were admired by the angelic ranks,
How with a body you went out against the invisible webs,
O Ever-glorious One, and wounded the demonic regiments.
Therefore, O Athanasius, Christ rewarded you with rich gifts.
Therefore O Father, pray to save our souls.**

Kontakion, tone 8

**As the immaterial existence is tolerable to the spectator,
And the active teller of all that is true,
Your flock appeals to you, O Preacher of God;
Do not weaken praying for your servants
To be delivered from dangers and visitations, who sing to you:
Rejoice, O Father Athanasius.**

Paramoea: 1) see the first reading for Jan. 9; 2) the third for Jan. 1; 3) the first for Apr. 1. **For the rest:** see April 1.

If the temple is named for him, we do a vigil.

*+ Uncovering of the honorable relics of our Ven. and God-bearing Father
Hegumen Sergius, Wonderworker of Radonezh*

Before his own blessed death, according to his humility, Ven. Sergius (see 25 Sept.) willed that the brethren bury him in the general monastic cemetery. After the death of the venerable one the brethren asked Metropolitan Cyprian for advice about where to bury him, who, after deliberation about where it would be more

proper to bury the venerable one, ordered to inter him in the monastery church at its southern wall near the altar.

For 30 years the relics of the venerable one were in the ground, but according to a special revelation later removed from it or opened. Near the monastery of the venerable one lived a certain pious man, who had great faith in the Ven. Sergius and frequently came to pray before him. One night the venerable one came to him in a dream and said for him: "to announce to the Hegumen of the monastery that it is too long to leave me in the grave covered with earth in which water floods my body". The pious man in fear and joy hastened to transmit the words of the venerable one to Nikon, Hegumen of the monastery. Nikon informed all the brethren of the monastery about his announcement and all rejoiced and decided to remove the relics of the Venerable One from the earth.

Many clergy, princes and laity gathered for the festival of the opening of the relics. On July 5, 1422, the day of this celebration, "the sacred council opened the wonderworking tomb, which was completely filled with spiritual fragrance and aroma and saw the wonderful sight and worthy tenderness, for not only was the honorable holy body whole and brightly preserved, but also his vestments in which he was buried completely whole without any corruption present, and although water was seen standing on both sides of the ark (tomb), his holy body and robes were not touched in any way". Nikon had built a stone church over the relics of Ven. Sergius.

The relics of Ven Sergius repose even up to now in the existing Trinity Cathedral as an inexhaustible source of healing and comfort for the praying brethren of the monastery and for the pilgrims coming from all over the Russian land.

Troparion, tone 8

**From youth you received Christ into your soul, O Venerable One,
And above all you desired to leave behind the turmoil of the world.
You courageously settled in the wilderness,
Where you raised children in the fruits of humility that is obedience.
Therefore as an abode of the Trinity,
You enlightened all who approached you in faith
And granted abundant healing to all.
Our Father Sergius, pray to Christ God to save our souls.**

Kontakion, tone 8

**Today shining forth from the earth like the bright sun,
Your honorable relics were found incorrupt
Blooming with many wonders like fragrant flowers.
They poured out all manner of healing upon all the faithful,
And made your chosen flock glad, which you wisely gathered and tended;
And now standing before the Trinity you pray for them,
And to grant victory to the Emperor against his enemies,
So that we may call out to you:**

Rejoice, O Divinely-wise Sergius.

His Synaxis is done in his monastery and where his temple is.

Paramoea 1) see 1st reading for Jan. 9. 2) 3rd reading for Jan. 1; 3) 2nd reading for Jan. 10. **Matins and Liturgy Gospel and the Epistle** see Sept. 25.

Ven. Lampadus

Having dedicated himself from youth to a life of fasting, he practiced asceticism (not later than the 10th century) until old age in a deserted cave near the city of Irenopolis and was granted the gift of working miracles during his life and after his death.

Martyrs Anna and Cyrilla

St. Anna is the same person as St. Agnes whose memory is celebrated on January 21. St. Cyrilla (Cyprilla) suffered together with St. Theodore, Bishop of Cyrene (see July 4).

Ven. Martyr Cyprian

A monk of the Koutloumousion Monastery on Mt. Athos, he suffered affliction by the Turks in Salonika for criticizing Islam and then was beheaded by the sword in Constantinople in 1679.

Ven. Athanasius the Hermit

Ven. Athanasius, called the iron staff, and according to the opinion of some was a disciple of Ven. Sergius of Radonezh, with whose blessing he left for the Novgorod province where he and Ven. Theodosius of Cherepovets founded the Resurrection Monastery, which served as the foundation for the city of Cherepovets. He died in 1392. His relics are in a hidden place in the monastery he founded (now the cathedral in the city of Cherepovets).

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