

November 12.

g. † Our Father among the Saints John, Patriarch of Alexandria, the Merciful.



Born on the island of Cyprus, son of a prince, he devoted his whole life to prayer and virtue and for his piety he was chosen to be the patriarch. In this post St. John even more cared for the poor, the suffering and the captives, not leaving anyone without bountiful grants. St. John gave alms to everyone who asked. Once among the poor gathering for a handout there were well-dressed girls who approached and asked the hierarch whether they should give alms in the same way. St. John answered: "if you are servants of Christ, give as Christ has enjoined, not looking at the person for we do not give of our own but of Christ's". One rich noblewoman, who visited the hierarch and saw on his bed a thin coverlet, sent him a silk one, costing 36 gold coins (zlatnitsa). The hierarch respected her zeal and put on the coverlet presented to him, but in that same night he woke up, and repented and said: "woe to you, the condemned! You are covered with an expensive blanket, and the brothers in Christ, the poor, freeze in the cold. Let this costly gift cover some of the poor". In the morning he sent to sell the coverlet and gave the money to the needy. The noblewoman again gave him a coverlet, but the hierarch did not want to take advantage of the gift and turned the noblewoman's attachment to him into a means of philanthropy. So that no one from the needy would be set aside, St. John on Wednesday and Friday sat all day at the church gate so that all having business with him would not be forbidden to come to him. When they expressed surprise at his patience, the hierarch answered: " if I always have access to my Lord Jesus Christ, in prayer I talk to Him and I ask Him everything that I want: how I can forbid my neighbor to come to me?" And it is true that no urgent business could force St. John to postpone acts of mercy. One widow approached him when he went to church. Accompanying him she listened to his advice after the service. But the hierarch answered: "but would God listen to me if I do not want to listen to her?" Then he analyzed the situation and satisfied the widow. Being "meek, the good compassionate one was also gentle". St. John once for the defense of poor people was deeply offended by one secular leader and on the same day, before sunset, sent a message to his offender: "soon the sun will set: let us reconcile". The leader was so touched with these words, that he not only reconciled with the peace loving hierarch, but also promised to flee from conflicts with anyone in his life. During an attack of the

Persians in Egypt, St. John left for the island of Cyprus where he died in 620. His relics repose in city of Presburg, Hungary.

Troparion, tone 8

**In your patience, you possessed your reward, Holy Father,
You were constant in prayer, while loving and aiding the poor. //
O John the Merciful, beseech Christ God to save our souls.**

Kontakion, tone 2

**By distributing your wealth to the needy,
You now received the wealth of heaven, O John the most wise.
Therefore for the sake of all we honor you, //
Keeping your memory on your names day as the merciful One.**

Venerable Nilus the Faster

At first he was an eparch (leader) of Constantinople, but later, caring for his salvation, he left for Mount Sinai and there in a cave he spent his life in strict fasting and prayer. In this way the Venerable Nilus pursued his ascetical efforts for 60 years and died about the year 450.

Kontakion, tone 8

**Your vigil prayers, O Blessed Nilus,
Was like a scythe cutting the weeds of carnal passions.
Since you have boldness before the Lord, free me from every misfortune,
So that I may cry to you: //
Rejoice, O Universal Father.**

Epistle: Heb. 4:14-16, 5:1-6; sel. 311. **Gospel:** Luke 6:17-23; sel. 24.

Holy Prophet Ahijah. Born in Shiloh, he prophesied during the reigns of Solomon, Rehoboam and Abijam. He predicted that Jeroboam I would reign over 10 tribes of Israel. He died 1000 years before Christ.

Leo, Patriarch of Constantinople, led the patriarchal see from 1134 to 1143.

The Turks beheaded the *Martyr Savvas the Merchant from Nigdi* in Constantinople in 1726.

Martyr Nicholas suffered at the hands of the Turks in Constantinople in 1732.

Nilus the Myrrh-gusher, Born in the village of Petra (in Morea), he was tonsured as an ascetic on Mount Athos. He died in peace in the 17th century. In 1815 the relics of Nilus were discovered uncorrupted and sweet smelling. Today part of them is in the temple constructed on the place of the ascetical efforts of the Venerable Nilus and the rest in the Athonite Laura.

For St. John the Hairy, refer to September 3.

The Forgiving icon of the Mother of God

According to tradition the Evangelist Luke wrote this wonderworking icon. The Most Holy Virgin is represented on it beseeching Her Son for the forgiveness of the generation of Christians. Today this icon is on the island of Cyprus.

*S. V. Bulgakov, Manual for Church Servers, 2nd ed., 1274 pp. (Kharkov, 1900) pp 0409-10
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