

First Sunday after Pentecost or All Saints Sunday

In the services for this Sunday over and above the usual glorifications of the resurrection of Christ, the choirs of all the Saints pleasing to God, who have shone through faith in the coming and the arrival of the promised Redeemer, together with those who exercised asceticism in piety are glorified. In the church hymns we magnify: patriarchs, forefathers, prophets, apostles, martyrs, hieromartyrs, confessors, hierarchs, venerable and righteous fathers and mothers _) and all the Saints, who from the ages were well pleasing to God, and "above all" "our Sovereign Lady, the Theotokos and Ever-virgin Mary". In glorifying their memory, let us also ask their prayerful petitions before God for us. Since "by the Holy Spirit is every soul enlivened", i.e. is cleansed, renewed and alas settled, and since the divine grace of the Holy Spirit is consecrated, it has made our first-born brethren, written in the heavens, and made them our worthy prayer books before God, that, they have celebrated the most glorious descent of the Holy Spirit on the apostles and who glorified His beneficial power, consecrating the souls of all believers, then to properly glorify also those holy foster children of the grace of God, who were consecrated and perfected by the power of the All-holy and Life-creating Spirit of the Lord. This commemoration also fulfills the honoring and glorifying of those pleasing to God, who, owing to their numbers and their not being known, special commemorations were not established for them. Glorifying the saints and numbering them among the ranks or choirs, the Holy Church points out to us their various virtues for imitation. _)

Troparion, for the Resurrection, tone 8

Troparion, for the Saints, tone 4

**As with fine porphyry and royal crimson,
Having been adorned with the blood of Thy martyrs shed throughout the world,
Thy Church cries out to Thee:
O Christ God, send down Thy bounties upon Thy people,
Grant peace to thy habitation and great mercy to our souls.**

Kontakion, tone 8

**Like the beginning of our existence, the universe offers Thee, O Lord,
The God-bearing martyrs as the first fruits of creation:
Through their prayers establish Thy Church, Thy habitation, in profound peace,
And maintain it through the Theotokos, O Thou, Who art Great in mercy.**

Paramoeya: 1) Is. 43:9-14. 2) Wis. 3:1-9. 3) Wis. 5:15-6:3. **Tone 8. Matins**
Gospels: 1 [Sel. 116: Mt. 28:16-20]. **Epistle:** Heb. 11:33-12:2; sel. 330. **Gospel:**
Mt. 10:32-33, 37-38; sel. 38, and 19:27-30; part of Sel. 79.

Refer to the Typicon (Ustav) if the temple is of All Saints.

With this Sunday, the services according to the Triodion are concluded _). **The conclusion of the Triodion services** with the commemoration in honor all the Saints, as His Grace, Innocent, Archbishop of Chersonese (refer to the Works of Innocent, Archbishop of Chersonese, Vol. 1, pp. 519-521 [Sochineniia Innokentii, Archiep. Khersonskago, t. I, str. 519-521]) teaches, is the most suitable conclusion to the celebrations of the Lord. It is the goal for which our Savior left the earth and ascended to heaven and for which the Holy Spirit left heaven and descended to earth, - this high goal consists in nothing else than, as in the sanctification of the sinful human race, in leading all of us to heaven. But the choirs of the Saints of God make up the assembly of indisputable witnesses that this blessed goal be achieved, that the Savior who is ascended from us has definitely prepared a place for all His followers, that the Comforter who is descended to us really combines with the possibility that very carnal people may reside in the mansions of the Heavenly Father. How is it that all who were holy to God, now blessed with us, are not servile to us men? Because their glory is the glory of the Redeemer Son and the Consecrator Spirit: without the merits of the Son heaven would not be opened to any of them, but without the grace of the Spirit not any of them could possibly enter into the opened heaven. Therefore the present festival in honor of all the Saints also consists of the most natural and pleasing conclusion of the festivals of the Lord. Therefore it itself is the direct fruit of events remembered in them. But the marvelous sequence and the divinely-wise order of the festivals of the Holy Church, naturally, motivates us to ask ourselves: is there such a sequence of this kind of holy order even in our celebrations?

We have now passed through the entire cycle of celebrations, we have reached the end of festivals according to the season; but has their end and intention actually been accomplished by this very action? Have we come nearer to what the main end of all festivals and establishments of the Church consists in, all the mysteries and all its services, all our grateful and natural life that is for our sanctification in Christ? Now already completing the memory of all the Saints, can we say about ourselves, that we have become freer of all that is sinful, purer from all that is earthly and corruptible, one in spirit with all that is spiritual and heavenly? This is the natural and necessary fruit which the Church assumed to now see in us after so many celebrations of the light! She expected that the suffering of the Lord would shake the heart most persistent in sin, that with His Resurrection everything that has not yet had time to be completely suppressed by sin would revive in our spirit, that with His ascension to heaven the thought and wish for heaven would arise in the most indifferent soul, that with the descent to earth of the Comforter the weakest would convert and venture to walk the way of faith and love. Were these many expectations fulfilled? Is the harvest in us great

after so long a sowing? What does our Lord now see nestling close to us from the height of the glory of His Saints? Although He sees some conformity with that great asceticism, is it He who lifted them up for us, being on earth? What did the Holy Spirit, who descended from the Father for us, find in us? _an He witness to the Father, that His earthly children still remember their origin, and do not want to remain for ever on alien ground? Will they now find much joy in us, not looking at our celebration in their honor and our holy brethren in heaven? When we celebrate in their honor even they undoubtedly do not remain idle. We remember their acts and deeds, and they will examine our morals, paradigm of life and action. Seeing their labors and victories over the enemies of salvation, we should be calmed in spirit. Seeing our falling and changes in truth, they should be distressed about us. What, if they see nothing much in us, except the falling and changes? After this what does our celebration in honor of all the Saints mean for those very saints, if not the day of complaint against all of us sinners? Such are our festivals! The cycle of church festivals is bright and magnificent; the cycle of our festivals occurs in darkness and ugliness. In the church cycle the very laments terminate in the spiritual celebration; in our cycle the very celebrations often lead to spiritual laments. In the same vein, can we be glad when our Lord who ascended up for us sees that His suffering on the cross remains without any fruit for many of us, and that many of His followers live as if He did not also come for their salvation on earth? Can we be comforted when the Spirit Comforter sees how many will not remember anything about His presence among us, constantly breathe the spirit of the world and walk contrary to His inspiration of grace? Can our heavenly brethren accept our magnifications with joy when they find that our earthly brethren madly waste their precious grace inherited generally by all men, do not at all correspond to their heavenly nobility and walk in every evil, contrary to will of the Heavenly Father? After this one remedy to make the present festival pleasing to our Savior, for the Spirit Comforter, and for all the Saints is to acquire for ourselves their lament for our sins. Repentance suddenly changes everything. When we shall begin to lament after God, then the inhabitants of heaven will be glad again, like they lamented when we are betrayed to temporal and sinful pleasures. But is the lamentation about sins acceptable for the conclusion of the celebration of the Church? For the righteous, certainly, it would not be acceptable; but for the sinners only more acceptable. The sick are also treated in the feasts; and what illness is more dangerous than sin? However, is what began the cycle of the sacred days now concluded? Is it not the memory of the Fall of Adam, and we who are all his descendents in the presence of Adam? Therefore is it not better to conclude it, not by our ascending, but through our repentance from our own fall? Thus the end will return to the beginning, and will return us to that blessed and unoriginate beginning, in which the souls of all the holy brethren are now blessed. "Do not hesitate", the Holy Scripture inspires each of us, "to turn to the Lord, nor postpone it from day to day"; "do not be confident of cleansing that you add sin to sin". "For suddenly the wrath of the Lord will go forth, and during the time of punishment you will perish" (Sir. 5:5-7).

_) The Orthodox Church honors various men pleasing to God who appropriated various names, corresponding to their various ascetic acts of virtuous life on earth. Such names are: patriarchs, forefathers, prophets, apostles, hierarchs, holy equal to the Apostles, Hieromartyrs, Great Martyrs, Venerable martyrs, martyrs, confessors, Venerable ones, Righteous ones, Disinterested ones and Blessed ones.

For *Patriarchs*, *Forefathers* and *Fathers* see pages 453 and 461.

Prophets are great according to the pious life of the men of the Old Testament who were selected by God Himself and were sent by Him to various places for predicting the future to the people, with regard to the coming of Christ, the Savior of the world, to earth.

Apostles are the great men of the New Testament, the people closest to Christ the Savior, His worthiest disciples and companions, who were sent by Him to various countries for the preaching of the Divine Gospel to the people.

Hierarchs and *Fathers* ("our Fathers among the saints) are the Eastern Patriarchs, the pious Popes of Rome, the Patriarchs, Archbishops, heirs to the Holy Apostles in the Christian Church and their great co-workers in preaching the Gospel and in their labor of true piety.

Holy Equal to the Apostles and *Enlighteners* are the men and women of royal or princely origin, but sometimes also of simple calling, who by their own preaching turned entire countries and peoples to Christ.

Hieromartyrs are Christian bishops and presbyters who died from torture for their belief in Christ.

Great martyrs are the pious men and women of various worldly ranks and positions, who courageously and with great patience thoroughly underwent various persecutions, tortures, and torments by their torturers for their holy Christian faith.

Venerable Martyrs are the pious and true ascetic men and women, included in the monastic calling, who suffered from the pagans and heterodox believers for their faith in Christ.

Martyrs are those men and women of various callings and positions, who without confusion, but sometimes even with joy, went one by one or in groups into the presence of their torturers, and there were tortured to death for their firm and unshakable confession of their faith in Christ.

Confessors and *Passion-bearers* are those great men of virtuous life of the Christian Church, courageously and fearlessly everywhere and always confessed their deep faith in Christ, who openly recognized themselves as true Christians, who endured torments and torture for this, but did not receive a martyr's death; some of them are called *branded*, because during torture special brands were put on the person.

Venerable Ones are the great, pious and Christ-loving men and women, desert-dwellers, hermits (who separated themselves from the world to the desert and there saved themselves in solitude), recluses (who voluntary enclosed themselves in separate caves and cells for their entire life) and pillar-dwellers (who

practiced asceticism under the open sky on pillars, or high towers), silent ones (who voluntarily took up the asceticism of silence), and are all inclusive in the monastic calling.

Righteous Ones are the great men and women, who were glorified for their virtuous and pious life, zealous for the fulfillment of the commandments of God and for their unbowed observance of the truths of the Gospel teaching, not shirking their family or public obligations and living in the world.

Disinterested Ones or *Unmercenaries* are men well pleasing to God who through their unmercenary labor for the benefit of their neighbors served the suffering and healed the sick.

Blessed Ones are the men and women of various callings and positions, who in carrying out their mortal life, both in the world and in the desert, with unusual reserve, with extreme deprivation and denial of every possible worldly good, but sometimes even with many varieties of foolishness, all this "for the sake of Christ".

_) The Holy Church has regularized the remembrance and honor of all righteous men who have moved in eternity because "righteous men", according to the word to God, "live for ever" (Wis. 5:15) not only in heaven, but also on earth; because "their memory" abides from generation to generation "with praises" (Prov. 10:7), and among the blessings before the eyes not only of God but also of the people; because they, being alive even in the Divinely sanctified ark of grace in time, have co-operated for the beloved by the "place where the glory [of God] dwells" (Ps. 25:8) for the entire eternity. We honor and magnify the saints of God and consequently all of them are our fathers and brethren according to the spirit of the Christian faith and according to that love by which they are indissolubly joined to us; wherefore true "love never disappears" (1 Cor. 13:8). Being one with us by nature, the saints pleasing to God also make us one with the Church of the Lord Jesus, who is the one foundation and the one Head, the one God and the one Savior, the one means of salvation and the one hope of the saved. Thus, the glorified Saints have a close and uninterrupted though invisible dialogue with us. We call on them in our prayers, as contributors to our salvation, as protectors and comforters in the afflictions and misfortunes laid on us, as defenders against the invisible powers of Hades, and we do this not in vain. The holy ones of God hear us when we pray, unite our entreaties to their prayers, lifting them up as pure and fragrant incense (Rev. 5:8) to the holy table of the Pantocrator, ask His Goodness for mercy on us, satisfy the justice that is so frequently irritated by our iniquities, and send mercy and the "grace from the One Who is, and Who was, and Who is to come" (Rev. 1:4) to us. Being in the kingdom of God, they "have already received the kingdom, the magnificent and quality crown from the hand of the Lord" (Wis. 5:16), but by the spirit of humility they will not die to compose "crowns" of the kingdom from themselves "and to offer" themselves "before the throne" of the Lamb (Rev. 4:10-11, 5:11-14), petitioning before Him, as "Mediator between God and men" (1 Tim. 2:5), that He be merciful to us sinners,

carried away in the abyss of perdition and by the vanities of the world, both the impulses of the passions and temptations of the evil one. If the saints pleasing to God, neither looking at the spiritual height of their perfection and holiness, nor at their visible distance from us, will intercede to gaze upon us, the proud and vain, with an eye of compassion and to save us by their prayers and mediation, then we all the more should also honor and glorify their memory from generation to generation, that, glorifying them, we glorify "God, Who is wonderful in His Saints" (Ps. 67:36), and, honoring them, we "honor grace with God, residing and acting in them, and the help from God we ask through them" (Orthodox Catechism). Besides, the gathering of most of all those saved, which "God, Who is rich in mercy, made us alive together with Christ", already "made us sit with Him on the heavenly" thrones (Eph. 2:4-6), evidently showing us all immensity of the power of the merits of the Savior and the power of saving grace, serves as vivifying and encouraging for us in the formidable arena of salvation, wherefore "through faith" in the Redeemer even we "have obtained access", to that same "grace", in which stood all those pleasing to God (Rom. 5:2). But, strengthening in us the hope of salvation, the commemoration of the blessed choirs of Saints also serves for us as the encouragement for unrelenting patience and self-denial. The Saints of God are blessed with light in the house of the heavenly Father, but the enjoyment of peace and unearthly joy is the reward and recompense for their labor and asceticism, that, having disdained the world with their good deeds, they steadily flowed "to the honor of the highest calling of God" (Phil. 3:14). Thus if we want to inherit salvation, to settle in heaven and to be blessed among those standing in the choir of the Saints, we should live holily and undefiled according to our "Holy calling" (1 Pet. 1:15). "The grace of God is saving for all men" (Tit. 2:11), but does not save anybody against their will; she is omnipotent, but not violent. "The heavenly Kingdom", even with the assistance of grace, "has suffered violence" (Mt. 11:12), and that only those admire it, who, prevailing completely over any sinful temptation, course their way to the Kingdom with effort and patience. (Sermons and Speeches of Sophronius, Bishop of Turkistan, Vol. 1, pages 90-102 [Slova i rechi Sofroniia, Episcopa Turkestanstskago, t. I, str. 90-102]).

_) The remaining Sundays after Pentecost have no special services except for the weekly ones done according to the Octoechos, and the daily ones done according to the Menaion. All the Sundays after Pentecost up to the Sunday of the Publican and the Pharisee, i.e. from the end of the weeks of the Flowery Triodion up to the beginning of the weeks of the Lenten Triodion, is considered to be thirty two. All the Sundays, or more precisely, every day is known as a week, have special readings from the Gospel and the Book of Epistles, the maintenance of which is not part of the church services performed daily.