



# SYNAXIS

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## EDITORIAL

The highest good for humanity, the goal to which each person must direct all the powers of his spirit and body, is salvation. From this, it follows that the highest act of love for one's neighbors is to aid their salvation. In the Orthodox Christian Church — Christ's kingdom, the kingdom of love — every member must be concerned first of all about his own personal salvation, and then about the salvation of others.

Attaining to salvation is the true reason for being of all humanity. To this end, Christ our God has established and ordained His Church upon the earth and made Her the custodian of salvation, the guide and maintainer of the truth which leads to salvation.

Love for one's neighbor must consist first of all in striving for one's own salvation, for in doing this, one is able to reflect the truth and prepare oneself to witness it to others. Moreover, it is a direct deceit of Satan which leads many who are not struggling for their own salvation to begin trying to save others. Witnessing of Christ and His Holy Church is not, after all, an aggressive act, but is primarily an act of example, of striving with one's whole soul to fulfil the commands of the Orthodox Christian Church — which are precisely the commands of the Holy Scripture — and to save one's own soul. Our holy and God-bearing father Serafim of Sarov has taught us, "Acquire the spirit of peace and a thousand will be saved around you."

Thus, striving diligently for one's own salvation is a great act of love of neighbor, for it helps him in his own salvation.

Zealously maintaining that truth which is vital to man's salvation, and proclaiming that truth is an act of great love for one's fellow humans. This too is primarily an act of striving to live that truth so that it will be manifested in oneself. Yet, we must realize that Satan is most anxious to pervert and destroy that truth so that no-one will be saved. This is why the preservation of Orthodoxy is such a vital act of love — probably the most vital act of love which one can perform. It is love first of all for God — love demonstrated by humble obedience, and love for one's neighbor — love demonstrated

by witnessing to the truth which is necessary for the salvation of his soul.

To undermine Orthodoxy, to denigrate it, to name it as "just one amongst the Christian denominations" is disdain and hatred. It is disdain for God demonstrated by self-willed disobedience and hatred of one's neighbor demonstrated by seeking to deprive him of the truth of salvation.

Let us, beloved of Christ, love God according to the way He has given us and love our neighbor according to the scripture, disdaining the idle inventions of man's pride about a philosophical and worldly form of love which destroys men's souls.

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#### THE SPIRITUAL MEADOW:

##### 4. Vision of Abba Leonty.

Abba Leonty, abbot of the koenobia of our holy father Theodosy, told us: "After the monks were banished from the New Lavra, I came here and remained. Once, on the Lord's Day, I came to church to communicate the Holy Mystery. Entering church, I saw an angel standing on the right side of the holy table. I was struck with terror and hurried away to my cell. And there, a voice said to me, 'From the time that this holy table was consecrated, I have been commanded to remain inseparably with it!'"

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(Around 520, the heretics who followed the teachings of Origin had occupied many of the monasteries of Palestine and persecuted the Orthodox. After the refutation of Originism, the heretics were ordered to return the monasteries to the Orthodox. This is when Abba Leonty came there, to the New Lavra. It was revealed to the Abba that even during the occupation of the holy place by the heretics, the angel of the church had not abandoned his watch).

#### NAME GAME: Names given to our Saviour in the scripture.

|   |              |
|---|--------------|
| 1 |              |
| 2 | ----- FATHER |
| 3 | -----        |
| 4 | -----        |
| 5 | -----        |
| 6 | -----        |
| X | X            |
| 7 | -----        |
| 8 | -----        |

1. God is with us (Es.7:14; Mt. 1:23).
2. Immortal Parent (Es.9:6).
3. Go-between (1Tim.2:5; Hb. 12:24).
4. The second \_\_\_\_\_ (1Cor.15:47).
5. Better than a barrister (1Jn. 2:1).
6. A citizen of that place from which it seemed doubtful that any good thing could come (Mt. 2:23).
7. Same as 1 down.
8. Opposite of death. (Jn.14:6).

12/26 JUNE: On this day, we celebrate the memory of St. Anna of Kashin. St. Anna was the wife of St. Michael the Grand Prince of Tver. Upon the martyrdom of her husband in 1319, St. Anna became a nun. She lived a holy life of great moral struggle. St. Anna reposed on 2 October, 1337, at the home of her son Vasili, in Kashin.

During the Time of Trouble of the 17 century, St. Anna miraculously aided the town of Kashin.

Her relics were uncovered on 21 July, 1649 and, in the presence of Tsar Aleksis Mikhailovich, were carried over to the Resurrection Cathedral in Kashin on 12 June, 1650. The service to her was written by Epiphany Slavenitsky. Through her holy prayers, may our souls be saved

CHURCH SCHOOL FOR ADULTS:ON THE DIVINE LITURGYLesson 2: The Litany of Peace (The Great Litany).

"First of all, then I admonish that petitions, prayers, intercession and thanksgivings be offered on behalf of all men, for kings and all who are in authority or high responsibility, that we may pass a quiet and undisturbed life, a peaceable one in all godliness and reverence and seriousness in every way." (1TIM.2:1-2).

PETITIONS, ORDER OF SERVICE

The priest, standing before the Holy Table, raises his hands toward heaven and says:

"In peace, let us pray to the Lord"

The priest and faithful, all together cross themselves after each petition.

The faithful all together respond:  
"Lord have mercy."

PRIEST: "For the peace that is from above and for the salvation of our souls, let us pray to the Lord."

For each petition, the priest stands before the Holy Table with his hands raised toward heaven.

"The peace that is from above" and "The salvation of our souls" are inseparable, for that peace comes with a firm hope on that salvation.

The Salvation of our soul is the central and most important activity of our lives. Logically, then, it is the central theme of the Divine Liturgy.

SCRIPTURE REF.: LESSON.

"I desire therefore, that men everywhere pray lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting" (1TIM.2:8).

Forgiving all wrongs done against us and repenting for the wrongs which we have done to others, let us "Be at peace amongst yourselves" and "Let the peace from Christ rule in your hearts...giving praise to God always." (1THS. 5:13; COL.3:15).

The Divine Liturgy is a celebration — the priest, as it were, stands in the front row leading the people in the worship service, fulfilling those acts for which the special Grace given to the priesthood is required. The Liturgy is not watched or listened to, it is fully participated in by the faithful. That is why Orthodox Christian have no pews: they break up the unity and total involvement of the faithful in the Liturgy.

"Let Your mercy be upon us, O Lord, in accordance with our hope in You." (PS.33:22).

"And God's peace which transcends all understanding shall guard over your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus." (PHL.4:7).

The faithful fulfil the command to pray raising holy hands by making the sign of the Cross, not as though considering their own hands holy, but submitting their hands to the holiness of Christ in the sign of Cross.

(Litany of Peace continued in the next issue).

THE HISTORY OF GOD'S PEOPLE

CHAPTER 2

THE CREATION OF ADAM AND EVE.

JESUS CHRIST OUR GOD created man. He called the first man Adam.

God told Adam that he would be the master over all the earth. But Adam was to take good care of it and not spoil it.

So now, everything was created- the earth, the sun and the plants, the animals, bugs, birds and last of all, man.<sup>1</sup>

Now we have been told how the earth and the sky and everything came into being: God made them. He made every flower and every tree. And He made them all to have seeds so that they could keep on growing every year. God made man the same way.

What did God make man out of? The Bible tells us that too. God made man out of the soil of the earth. Man is made out of minerals mixed with water. Then, God breathed into the first man and the man came to life and began to move around. God gave man a soul and then man was truly alive. Because of his soul, man is different from all the other animals.

But where was Adam to live? The world is a very big place; where was the most perfect place of all for him to have his home?

God had made a special place for Adam. God planted an extra special garden and gave it a name - Eden. Eden means "paradise".

In that garden, God planted all the most beautiful trees with the most delicious fruits on them. A river flowed through the garden and all the most beautiful bushes and flowers grew there.

God put Adam in this wonderful garden and told him to take care of it; God did not want Adam to abuse the garden, but to enjoy it.

Then God said, "It is not good for man to live alone." So God made a wife for Adam so she could keep him company and help him look after the garden.

The first woman was given a name also. God called her Eve.

Here is how God created Eve: He caused Adam to fall asleep and then removed one of his rib-bones. Then he formed woman around this bone.<sup>2</sup> Adam and Eve became the parents of all men.

2. We accept the creation narrative as being a factual record and revelation that God created all things. We understand, however, that what is revealed in the Scripture and the manner in which God has done things has a greater meaning and forms a greater revelation. The creation of Eve and the manner in which it was done forms a moral lesson and a type: First of all, it teaches us that man and woman are to live together only in a union sanctified by God. The union of man and woman is a type of Christ and the Church. For this reason the Church is called "the bride of Christ". Here is how St. John Chrysostom explains this "type":

"Shall I tell you how marriage is also a mystery of the Church? As Christ came into

1. We have omitted the seventh day, upon which, it says, God "rested". Children ought not to be given a mental picture of some sort of giant taking a nap or of a God who needs rest. God did "work" on the seventh day, precisely because all things are sustained by God. On the seventh day as on every other day, God sustained and sustains. This is why Christ gathered food and healed on the Sabbath. Concerning the day of Christian worship, see Orthodox Life, Pascha, 1974, p.8.

2. (continued)  
the Church and She was made for Him, and He united with Her in a spiritual intercourse, 'for I have espoused you to one husband, a pure virgin' (1Cor.11:2)." (Hom.12, On Col.) And again, he says: "What? Is marriage a theatre? It is a mystery and a type of a mighty thing; and even if you do not reverence it, then reverence what it symbolizes. 'This mystery, he (St. Paul) says, 'is great, for I speak in regard of Christ and the Church' (Eph 5:32). It (marriage) is a type of Christ and the Church..." (ibid.; cf. Hom.23, on 2 Cor., ch.1, par.2, etc.).

THE LIFE OF THE HOLY MARTYR,  
JULIA OF CARTHAGE  
16 (29) JULY

In Africa, there was once a great and famous city called Carthage. One day, the Arabs attacked this city and captured many people.

One of these captured people was a little girl named Julia. Julia was an Orthodox Christian from a very wealthy family.

All the captives were taken away to the lands of Palestine and Syria and sold as slaves. Little Julia was sold to a pagan merchant (a pagan is someone who worships demons).

Life was very hard for Julia. She was taken away from her parents and never saw them again. Julia had to work very hard and live in a poor room. If she displeased her master, she could be beaten or even killed.

Fortunately for Julia, her parents had been good Christians and had taught her how to please God. Even as a baby, Julia had been taken to church and taught how to keep the fasts.

Now, she was all alone and very helpless. But she remembered our Saviour and turned to Him with her prayers.

Jesus heard the tearful prayers of His little servant. He invisibly comforted the lonely child and filled her heart with joy.

Julia was a very hard and careful worker. Her work was especially good because she did everything in the Lord's name. Whatever she started to do, she would first make the cross and ask for God's help.

The merchant who owned Julia was very pleased by her hard work. But when he found out that Julia was an Orthodox Christian, he was very angry. The pagans hated Christians.

Many times, the cruel master tried to force Julia to give up Christ and become a pagan. He even told her, "If you do not give up Christ, I will kill you."

Julia only crossed herself and peacefully replied:

"I am ready to die for my Saviour at any time."

At last, the merchant gave up and left her alone.

Julia continued to work hard. She was so good at managing the merchant's house that he became even richer. This made him very happy.

Soon, the merchant began to notice what kind of life Julia was living. She was very meek and humble, and fasted very strictly. In her free time she always prayed or read from the Bible. Sometimes Julia spent the whole night in prayer, not even sleeping.

Seeing this, the merchant became ashamed of himself and was sorry for being so mean to Julia. He began to have a great respect for his little slave.

When Julia had reached the age of twenty, the merchant decided to go to France on business. He took Julia with him.

The merchant loaded his ship and set out. After a few days, the ship came to the island of Corsica.

There were some Christian towns on the island, but at that time there were still many pagans there also. Just when the ship arrived, these pagans were having a feast to worship their demons.