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THE LIFE OF OUR HOLY FATHER
ST. SAMPSON THE GUEST RECEIVER
(27 JUNE)

SAMPSON WAS BORN in Rome. His parents were of royal blood and were very important people.

The parents gave their son an excellent education. Of all the things Sampson could have chosen, he chose medicine. He did not choose to be a doctor through necessity; he had no need to earn a living. Sampson wanted to learn medicine out of love, in order to serve the ill, for God's sake. The Saint was filled with true faith and he healed people by prayers to God.

St. Sampson was very pious and while he was learning the medical science, he learned the higher science also. The Saint read the Bible often and prayed constantly. Holy love began to radiate from the Servant of God.

When Sampson's parents died, they left him with a large inheritance. Joyfully, the Saint gave away all his wealth to the poor. Finally, the only thing that he had left was the clothing that he was wearing. He even used a rope for a belt because he had given away his own belt.

The blessed doctor became poor in body but rich in spirit. At last, he decided to go to some quiet little monastery to find an elder who would teach him about the spiritual life. The Saint was not in the monastery long before God called him to go to Constantinople. Getting a blessing from his elder, Sampson set out for the great city. There he bought a house with donations from pious people. This house became a clinic where the poor could come and receive treatment if they were ill. Moreover, God provided food so that St. Sampson could also feed the poor who were not ill. The Saint comforted and strengthened the souls of everyone who came to his house. He received everyone with great love. The Saint worked for his guests as if he were their least slave instead of their host and benefactor.

Just as God's sun comes out to warm and lighten the earth, so this holy Saint warmed and lightened the poor and the ill with holy love.

This blessed doctor healed the sick by his prayers to God. But he was truly humble. He tried to convince people that they had been healed by various medicines, with God's help, because he did not want glory for himself. The Saint never let anyone know that God was healing them because of his prayers.

Eventually, word of St. Sampson's work reached the Patriarch. The Patriarch sent for the Saint and, against his own will, ordained him as presbyter.

The King of Glory Himself glorified His servant. The emperor Justinian became seriously ill. The court physicians could not heal him. The emperor ordered that all the best physicians in the empire be called in to treat him.

But, alas, no-one was able to help the ill emperor. He was dying. Justinian dismissed the doctors and turned to God with his prayers. The all-merciful Lord heard the prayers of His servant. That night, the emperor had a dream. He saw a large number of doctors who had come to him. An angel came up to the emperor and pointed out one of the doctors: a saintly old man with grey hair and a meek appearance. The elder was

vested as a priest. "This one and no-one else can heal you from your mortal illness," said the angel.

The emperor was filled with joy and he praised and thanked the Lord for His great mercy. Justinian again had all the physicians called before him. To his sorrow, however, the saintly elder was not amongst them. He did not lose hope, for he trusted in God.

A description of the wondrous physician was sent out and a reward was offered to anyone who could find him.

One of the palace servants knew St. Sampson and recognized the imperial description. He went to the holy doctor and brought him to the dying emperor. Seeing the elder, the emperor became overjoyed. He rushed up to the Saint, embraced him and kissed him, not only on the lips, but also on the head and hands, saying, "Father, you are the very one whom the Lord showed me in my dream. The merciful Lord promised to grant me health through you."

The emperor led St. Sampson into his bed-chamber and seated him next to himself. He pressed the elder's hands to his eyes and piously kissed his holy hands, washing them with his tears. Justinian's humility overwhelmed the blessed elder and he meekly said, "Do not do this my emperor. Do not lower yourself before me like this or I will fall into pride. How am I any different from other people? I am poor and sinful. I myself have need to have my sinful soul healed. Your own fervent faith will bring down God's mercy upon you, my emperor. Christ will heal you."

St. Sampson then prayed for the emperor, and in an instant, the Lord healed him.

The emperor was filled with joy. Not only had his health been restored, but he had been allowed to witness the mercy of our Saviour and the glory of God's Saints. Justinian at once began to offer the Saint a huge gift of gold and silver but St. Sampson refused. He said, "If you really want to help our work, Your Imperial Majesty, then build a good hospital and guest-house where we can receive the ill, the poor and the wanderers. If you will do this, God will bless you and you will greatly comfort my old age."

Justinian happily agreed to fulfil this request of the blessed elder. The hospital was built — the very first modern, organized hospital in Europe — and a guest-house was constructed next to it.

St. Sampson gave himself up to spiritual struggle for many more years. He peacefully reposed in the Lord, already in deep old age. When his soul was departing from his body, his face became serene. He peacefully looked death in the face, not fearing it. The holy one knew who was calling him and what peace he was to receive in the heavenly mansions.

His holy relics were solemnly buried at the church of the Holy Martyr Nikios, to whom he was related.

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PAGE THREE++++++SYNAXIS/THE TLINGIT HERALD+++++AUGUST 1974+

THE FEAST OF THE TRANSFIGURATION OF OUR LORD AND GOD AND SAVIOUR, JESUS CHRIST. 6 AUGUST ACCORDING TO THE CALENDAR OF THE HOLY CHURCH.++++++

"...Jesus began to reveal to His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things at the hands of the elders and the high priests and scribes, and be killed and on the third day be raised from death."¹

Christ began to warn His apostles about His coming crucifixion while He was teaching them about Who He actually is — the Son of God. Although the disciples believed His teaching with all their hearts, they could not understand these words. Their faith was not yet strong and pure enough. "How is it possible," they thought, "that the Son of God can be taken captive, tortured and killed?"

Peter, for instance, had just confessed his complete belief in Jesus the Christ, declaring, "You are the Christ, the Son of the Living God."² When he heard Christ's startling words about His forthcoming death, however, he was stunned. He went to Jesus and dared to rebuke Him, saying, "...this shall not happen to You, Lord."

In order to strengthen the faith of the apostles and prepare them for that terrible day on Calvary, Jesus took the three chief apostles, Peter, James and John up to a high mountain to pray.³ The Lord intended to grant these three apostles a wonderful revelation, one that would give them complete faith and strengthen them.

When they arrived on top of Mt. Tabor, Christ gave Himself up completely to prayer, but the apostles soon became weary and fell asleep.

Suddenly, a great flash of light awoke the three apostles and they looked and saw the Lord Jesus Christ surrounded by an unearthly light such as they had never seen before. Our Saviour's Face was shining like the sun itself and His clothing had become as white as snow. Jesus Christ our God was

surrounded by His own glory and transfigured into an appearance of holy beauty.

The apostles trembled and stared in amazement as the two holy prophets Moses and Elias appeared in heavenly glory and stood beside the Lord, talking with Him about the sufferings and death which awaited Him in Jerusalem. They discussed precisely those things which were confusing the disciples.

The apostles felt an overwhelming joy all the while that the holy prophets were conversing with the Lord and they kept a reverent silence.

Then, all at once, Peter noticed that the prophets were beginning to depart from the Lord and he cried out, not realizing what he was saying:

"O Lord! It is good for us to be here; if You wish we will make three tabernacles here. One for You, one for Moses and one for Elias."⁴

While Peter was still speaking, a cloud of light appeared overhead. The apostles became terrified. They knew that God Himself had often made His presence visible to man by means of such a cloud of light — on Sinai, in the tabernacle and in the temple. They became all the more frightened when they felt themselves being overshadowed by the cloud. Suddenly, a voice rang out from the cloud, saying

"This is My beloved Son in Whom I am well pleased. Listen to Him, for in Him is all My dispensation."⁵

The apostles fell to the ground in terror, but the Lord

- MT. 16:21
- MT. 16:16
- According to the Tradition of the Holy Church, this was Mt. Tabor.

- 4. MT. 17:4
- 5. MT. 17:5

came up to them and said, "Get up, do not be afraid."⁶

Having stood up, the apostles looked around themselves but saw no-one except the Lord and He now looked just the same as always. As they were walking back down the mountain, the Lord forbade the three apostles to tell anyone about the wondrous event on the mount until after He had risen from the dead. They were to keep the miracle in their hearts.

The Transfiguration of our Saviour is a great event which teaches us several things.

First of all, the presence of the three figures standing in heavenly glory is a type of the Holy Trinity, a type which is reflected and echoed in the presence of the three apostles.

It is especially significant that the two holy apostles who appeared with our Saviour at His transfiguration were Moses and Elias. Moses died, was buried and was still awaiting the resurrection. Elias, however, had never tasted death, but had been assumed into heaven alive. Their appearance together to attend upon Christ reveals that Christ is the Master over life and death and is able to bring the dead forth at will, both body and soul, and stand them beside the living. The presence of Moses prefigures the general resurrection, a promise which was sealed by Christ's own death and resurrection.⁷

The Transfiguration itself, encompassing both the living and one brought forth from hades prefigures the transfiguration of the Holy Church and of the whole of the universe at the consummation of time. Here, too, we see proof that, in Christ's Church, the living and the dead are not divided and separated, that the Saints who have reposed (such as Moses) do indeed have audience before the Lord.

THE SPIRITUAL GARDEN

by John Moskhas

6.

Presbyter Abba Polikhrony told us of an incident which he had heard of from Abba Konstantin, abbot of the New Monastery of the Theotokos:

One of the brethren reposed in the Jerico hospital. We carried his body to the "Bashen" monastery for burial. From the moment we left the hospital, a star appeared over the coffin and remained visible right up until we committed the remains to the earth.

i.e., a noetic star, not a real star. This was a special revelation of God's Grace. It was just such a star which led the Magi to Christ.

6. MT.17:7

7. RM.14:9

THE NEW PATERIKON

2.

One father told us:

People don't take Holy Communion anymore. They are invited by the King to a royal banquet and they don't come because they are too lazy to dress for dinner. We had an old man in hospital to whom we came with the Mysteries. He refused to Commune saying, "No, I don't intend to die just yet." In the evening he became worse and saw death approaching. He began to call for the Holy Communion, but we could not get to him in time. He went to the grave having refused Christ's invitation and turned away His mercy.

UNDERSTANDING THE DIVINE LITURGY:
(PART 3: Scripture in the Liturgy)

LESSON 2: The Litany of Peace (Concluded)

PETITIONS; ORDER OF SERVICE .

SCRIPTURE; LESSON ,

Finally, the Great Litany ends with the prayers:

"Protect us, save us, have mercy on us and keep us, O God, by Thy Grace."

And a commemoration of the Holy Virgin which is doctrinally important:

"Commemorating our most holy, most blessed and glorious Mistress, the Theotokos and ever-virgin Mary, with all the Saints, let us commend ourselves and each other and all our lives unto Christ our God."

The term "holy", as used to describe anything or person other than God, signifies something or someone especially set apart and consecrated to the service of God.

No person has ever been set aside for so great and holy a service as was Mary, for she was called to be the vessel of His Incarnation. To fail to venerate her as blessed is to deny the

Scripture which says, "Henceforth, all generations shall call me blessed". (LK.1:48). The title "Theotokos" (Bearer or Mother of God) is given to Mary by the Holy Bible (LK.1:35, 43 and MT. 1:23), and signifies that Christ is truly God and was God from the instant of His conception in the virgin womb.

The title "ever-virgin" shows us the continued state of Grace and perfection of Mary, for which she is highly honoured.

We commemorate and call to remembrance the Saints as the Word of God teaches us, "The righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance" (PS. 111:6. cf. PROV.10:7; 4KI.2:15; 1 CHR.21:9-18; 1KI.28:14; MT.10:39-41; SIR.44:14; JS.5:10-11; 2TS.1:10-12).

The faithful respond:

"To Thee, O Lord!"

Acknowledging that they commit themselves and their lives to Christ O God.

Priest:

"For unto Thee is due all glory, honour and worship, to the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto the ages of ages."

"That together you may, with united hearts and one voice, praise and glorify God..." (RM.15:6).

THE HISTORY OF GOD'S PEOPLE
CHAPTER 4: WHY MAN MUST SUFFER

SATAN HAD TRICKED Adam and Eve into disobeying God and doing something which was very bad for themselves.

As evening came, they heard a voice in the garden calling them. It was the voice of Christ God. But Adam and Eve did not go to God when He called them. Instead, they hid in the trees.

Why do you suppose Adam and Eve hid from God? They hid because they knew they had sinned; because they had disobeyed God.

Is it possible to hide from God? No, because God can see everywhere. He knew where Adam and Eve had hidden and He knew why they had hidden.

But God wanted Adam and Eve to confess their sin themselves, so He called them again. This time Adam answered and said, "Here we are. We heard your voice in the garden and were ashamed so we hid ourselves."

The Lord asked, "Have you eaten of the fruit of the tree which I commanded you not to eat from?" But Adam did not want to confess his sin honestly. Instead, he tried to blame Eve and even to blame God. Adam said, "This woman that You gave me, she gave me the fruit and I ate it."

God said to Eve, "What is this that you have done?" Eve tried to blame her sin on the serpent. She answered, "The serpent tricked me and I ate the fruit."

God was very sad. He had made man with His own hands. He had given man life and a beautiful garden to live in and everything he needed. God had be like a loving father to Adam and Eve. Now they disobeyed Him and refused to repent. Instead, they tried to blame someone else for their sin.

God loves us very much and when we disobey Him and refuse to sincerely repent and confess our sin, it is necessary for Him to chastize us so that we will learn better and repent and be saved.¹ This is what God now did to Adam and Eve. The Lord told Adam, "Because you disobeyed Me, the earth will no longer give you food freely. Now you will have to work very hard to stay alive." So Adam, and because of him, all mankind, would have to work hard for their food.

Eve was also given a chastizement.²

When Adam and Eve were first created, they were perfect human beings. Now, their nature was changed. Now they were sinful human beings. Being sinful, Adam and Eve could no longer walk with God like children walking with a loving father, and they could no longer live in paradise.

Living outside of paradise and no longer being perfect human beings, man could now become sick and have diseases. God permitted this so that whenever a person becomes sick, he will remember that he is sinful and must repent and be saved by God.

15 (23) August: On this day we celebrate the memory of Blessed Lavrenty (Lawrence) the Fool of Kaluga. He lived during the reign of Simeon Ivanovich, the Prince of Kaluga, and often stayed in his home. The Saint walked about bare-footed in all seasons. Kaluga was saved from cholera by his prayers. He reposed on 10 August 1515.

1. God does not punish us in this life, but He chastizes us. Chastize means "to purify". We ask parents to avoid using the word "punishment" in relation to God and His acts because it creates a false concept of God in children's minds and leads them away from love for God.

2. See Readers' Questions.