

O ye peoples of the earth, fashioned by God, know your Creator and His love for us! Know the love of Christ, and live in peace and thereby rejoice the Lord, Who in His mercy waits for all men to come to Him. Turn to Him, all ye peoples of the earth, and lift up your prayers to God; and the prayers of the whole earth shall rise to heaven like a soft and lovely cloud lit by the sun, and all the heavens will rejoice, and sing praises to the Lord for His sufferings whereby He saved us. Know, all ye peoples, that we are created for the glory of God in the heavens. Cleave not to the earth, for God is our Father and He loves us like dear children.

Saint Silouan the Athonite

**Sunday 17 August 2014 is the Tenth Sunday of Matthew**

**Matins Gospel:** John 21:1-14

**Epistle:** Corinthians 4:9-16

**Gospel:** Matthew 17:14-23

**Resurrectional Apolytikion:**

When the stone had been sealed by the Jews, and while soldiers were guarding your most pure Body, you rose, O Saviour, on the third day, giving life to the world. Therefore the heavenly Powers cried out to you, Giver of life: Glory to your Resurrection, O Christ! Glory to your Kingdom! Glory to your dispensation, only lover of humankind!

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### ***Readings and saints for this week:***

**Monday:** 2 Corinthians 2:3-15; Matthew 23:13-22

Martyrs Floros & Lauros; John and George, Abps. Of Constantinople

**Tuesday:** 2 Corinthians 2:14-17; 3:1-3; Matthew 23:23-28

Great Martyr Andrew Stratelates; Martyrs Timothy, Agapius and Thecla

**Wednesday:** 2 Corinthians 3:4-11; Matthew 23:29-39

Prophet Samuel; Martyr Luke of Bouleutos

**Thursday:** 2 Corinthians 4:1-12; Mark 3:13-21

Holy Apostle Thaddaeus; Martyr Bassa and her Children

**Friday:** 2 Corinthians 4:13-18; Matthew 24:27-33, 42-51

Martyr Agathonicus; Martyr Anthuse

**Saturday:** Philippians 2:5-11; Luke 10:38-42, 11:27-28

Apodosis of the Dormition; Ireneaus, Bishop



# *Evangelion*

*A Bulletin of Orthodox Christian Faith*

17 August 2014

## **If You Have Faith...**

Today we hear Saint Matthew's account of the healing of an epileptic boy. This incident occurs just after the Transfiguration of the Lord on Mount Tabor, and is particularly concerned with the power of faith in our lives.

This boy is brought to Jesus by his father after the apostles had been unable to heal him. Jesus Christ rebukes them for their lack of faith and when they later ask Him why they had not been able to cast the demon out of the boy, He blames it on their lack of faith, declaring that, if we have faith like a mustard seed, we will be able to move mountains.

The image that Jesus evokes here is that of the contrast between a mustard seed and the mountain. The mustard seed is a tiny little seed, but Christ's point is that even a tiny bit of faith, if it is genuine, can do great things.

We are sometimes inclined to think of faith in intellectual terms, as assent to particular doctrines. But the faith that Christ speaks of here is far deeper than that. It is an attitude of total trust in the all-powerful goodness of God. It is the humility to place our whole lives and all our desires before God, trusting that He knows what is best for us.

If we have even a little of this sort of faith, new possibilities will open up for us and for those around us. It is this sort of faith that we see in the lives of the saints and it is such faith that was to enable the apostles to do such great and unexpected things.



**It is more important to remember God  
than it is to remember to breathe.**

Saint Gregory the Theologian

## Saint Symeon the New Theologian

### On Receiving the Word and the Spirit into our Hearts

Every one of us believes in Him who is the Son of God and son of Mary, ever-virgin and Mother of God.

And as believers we faithfully welcome His Gospel into our hearts, confessing in words our belief, and repenting with all our soul of our past sins.

Then immediately, just as God the Word of the Father entered the Virgin's womb, so also in ourselves the Word which we receive in learning right belief appears like a seed.



You should be amazed when you hear of such an awe-inspiring mystery, and because the Word is reliable you should receive it with full conviction and faith.

In fact we receive Him not bodily, as the Virgin and Mother of God received Him, but both spiritually and substantially.

And the very one whom the chaste Virgin also received, we hold in our own hearts, as Saint Paul says: *It is God, who commanded light to shine out of darkness, who has shown in our hearts to reveal the knowledge of his Son.* (2 Corinthians 4:6)

In other words: He has become wholly substantial in us. And that He actually meant this, He made clear in the next verse: *But we contain this treasure in earthenware pots*, calling the Holy Spirit a treasure.

But elsewhere He also calls the Lord Spirit: *The Lord is the Spirit*, he says. (2 Corinthians 3:17) And He tells us this so that if you hear the words *the Son of God*, you should think of and hear the words *the Spirit* at the same time.

Again, if you hear the Spirit mentioned you should join the Father to the Spirit in thought, because concerning the Father too it is said: *God is Spirit*.

You are constantly taught that the Holy Trinity is inseparable and of the same substance, and that where the Son is the Father is also, and where the Father is the Spirit is also, and where the Holy Spirit is the whole of the deity in three persons is, the one God and Father with Son and Spirit of the same substance, "who is praised for ever. Amen."

So if we wholeheartedly believe and ardently repent, we receive the Word of God in our hearts, as has been said, like the Virgin, if of course we bring with us our own souls chaste and pure.

And just as the fire of the deity did not consume the Virgin since she was supremely pure, so neither does it consume us if we bring with us chaste and pure hearts; on the contrary it becomes in us the dew from heaven, a spring of water, and a stream of immortal life.

When are we living in Christ? When we live according to His Gospel and His Church. For He Himself, and not only His Gospel, is in the Church with all of His perfections and virtues. The Church is the eternally living Body of the God-man Christ. In her we find the medium of the holy mysteries. In her we find the means of holy good deeds. Our Lord Jesus Christ abides inseparable from the Church in this world. He abides with each member of the Church throughout all ages. He has His entire self for us in the Church, and continually gives Himself to us entirely, so that we might be enabled to live in this world as He lived.

Saint Justin Popovich

### Question Box

If you have a question about the faith and teaching of the Orthodox Church, you can send it to [evangelion@goarch.co.za](mailto:evangelion@goarch.co.za)

#### Why do we go to Church on Sunday and not on Saturday? Didn't God command us to keep the Sabbath holy?

It is certainly true that God instructed the people of Israel to observe the Sabbath day and to keep it holy. The Sabbath was the seventh day of the week and takes its significance from the fact that God Himself rested on the seventh day, after creating the world. (Exodus 20:8-11) That is why Jews observe the Sabbath to this day.

However, from the earliest times Christians gathered together to celebrate the Resurrection of Christ on the first day of the week. The Gospel writers are clear that Christ was raised on the first day of the week (Mark 16:2; Matthew 28:1; Luke 24:1; John 20:1). The Resurrection was such a earth-shattering event that it even turned the calendar upside down so that Sunday came to replace Saturday as the central day of the week. By the end of the first century it was commonly known as "the Lord's day."

For the early Christians, Sunday was also known as "the Eighth Day." The Jewish scriptures had used this term as a symbol for the day of the Lord, which they expected in the future and which would usher in a new creation. For Christians, this "day of the Lord" has come in the Resurrection of Christ and it is already ushering in a new creation that will be fulfilled at the end of time.

Sunday is both the first day of the week, but it is also something more. It is the beginning of eternity. We see this also in this season between Pascha and Pentecost which comprises seven weeks plus one day. Here we have the same symbolism of seven plus one. Seven is a symbol of completeness, and yet with the Resurrection of Christ even this completeness is transcended and we are ushered into the Kingdom of God.