

In the Lives of the Saints it is clearly and obviously demonstrated: There is no spiritual death from which one cannot be resurrected by the Divine power of the risen and ascended Lord Christ; there is no torment, there is no misfortune, there is no misery, there is no suffering which the Lord will not change either gradually or all at once into quite compunctionate joy because of faith in Him. And again there are countless soul-stirring examples of how a sinner becomes a righteous man in the lives of the Saints: how a thief, a fornicator, a drunkard, a sensualist, a murderer, and adulterer becomes a holy man — there are many, many example of this in the Lives of the Saints; how a selfish egoistical, unbelieving, atheistic, proud, avaricious, lustful, evil, wicked, depraved, angry, spiteful, quarrelsome, malicious, envious, malevolent, boastful, vainglorious, unmerciful, gluttonous man becomes a man of God — there are many, many example of this in the Lives of the Saints.

Saint Justin Popovich

**27 November is the  
Thirteenth Sunday of Luke**

**Matins Gospel:** Matthew 28:16-20

**Epistle:** Ephesians 2:4-10

**Gospel:** Luke 18:18-27

**Resurrectional Apolytikion:**

Angelic powers were above Thy tomb, and they that guarded Thee became as dead. And Mary stood by the grave seeking Thine immaculate Body. Thou hast despoiled Hades and wast not tried thereby. Thou didst meet the Virgin and didst grant us life. O Thou Who didst arise from the dead, Lord, glory be to Thee.

**Seasonal Kontakion:**

On this day the Virgin cometh to the cave to give birth to \* God the Word ineffably, \* Who was before all the ages. \* Dance for joy, O earth, on hearing \* the gladsome tidings; \* with the Angels and the shepherds now glorify Him \* Who is willing to be gazed on \* as a young Child Who \* before the ages is God.

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

**Monday, 28 November:** 1 Thessalonians 2:20-3:8; Luke 19:37-44  
Stephen the New; Martyr Irenarchos

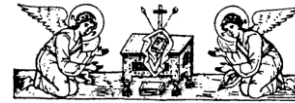
**Tuesday, 29 November:** 1 Thessalonians 3:8-13; Luke 19:45-48  
Martyrs Paramonos & Philumenos; Nicholas, Abp. of Thessalonica

**Wednesday, 30 November:** Matthew 4:18-23; 1 Corinthians 4:9-16; John 1:35-52  
Apostle Andrew the 1st Called; Froumentios of Ethiopia

**Thursday, 1 December:** 1 Thessalonians 4:18-5:10; Luke 20:9-18  
Prophet Nahum; Philaret the Merciful

**Friday, 2 December:** 1 Thessalonians 5:9-13; 5:24-28; Luke 20:19-26  
Prophet Habakkuk; Cyril of Phileus

**Saturday, 3 December:** 2 Corinthians 11:1-6; Luke 12:32-40  
Prophet Sophonias; John the Hesychast



# Evangelion

*A Bulletin of Orthodox Christian Faith*

27 November 2016

Archbishopric of Good Hope  
Patriarchate of Alexandria & All Africa

## What Must I Do to Inherit Eternal Life?

Today we hear Saint Luke's account of the encounter between the rich young ruler and Jesus Christ. This man asked what he must do to inherit eternal life and when Christ told him to keep the commandments which he knew so well, he answered that he had been doing that since his youth. With great discernment, Jesus Christ saw into his heart and called him to sell all his possessions, give the money to the poor, and follow Him. But when he heard this he was sad, for he was very rich and was too attached to his possessions to follow Christ.

Like last Sunday's Gospel, this encounter is a warning of the power that riches can have over us. And, indeed, it is not just money that can keep us from following Christ, but anything that we value more than Him, be it our relationships, activities or careers. It is not enough to keep the commandments on our own terms; instead we need to be open to whatever it is God asks of us.

But there is something more to this incident. Saint Luke tells us that this man was "overcome with sadness." Somewhere within himself he realised, even if not consciously, what he was missing by rejecting Christ's call. Sadness and grief can be the beginning of repentance, for they enable us to see that there is something that is missing, something for which we long. Too often we seek to cover over our sadness with mindless activity or entertainment, seeking ways to escape. Yet if we allow it to, it can help us to return to the God whom we have rejected.



All that is done in accord with the commandments: to love one another, to bear one another's burdens, to give alms and the like... is well-pleasing to God not when a man acts mercifully on account of some human consideration, but because the act is good in itself... The thing is perfect when a man gives alms without meanness or reluctance, without despising the recipient,,, giving as freely as if he were receiving, doing a kindness as graciously as if a kindness were shown to him.

Saint Dorotheos of Gaza



## The Feast of Saint Andrew, the First Called

On Wednesday, we celebrate the feast of the Apostle Andrew, who is known in the Orthodox Church as the "First called." He was a disciple of Saint John the Baptist and was present when St John pointed to Jesus and said "Behold, the Lamb of God!" In response to his question, "Where are you staying?" Jesus Christ answered him, "Come and see." Saint Andrew followed Christ and became convinced that He was the Messiah and went and called his brother Peter. After Pentecost Saint Andrew was to preach the Gospel throughout Asia Minor and was finally martyred in the Peloponnese by being crucified upside down.

The feast of Saint Andrew marks an important step in our journey to the Nativity. Just as he encouraged his brother to "Come and see"

the Messiah whom he had found, so in the Liturgy he exhorts us to "Come and see" the Messiah.

*We have found Him whom the prophets proclaimed in the Spirit! Come to His beauty, that we may be rescued in soul and in thought, and that, led by the light of His radiance, we may drive away the night of deception and the darkness of unbelief, blessing Christ, who bestows upon the world great mercy. (Vespers of the Feast of Saint Andrew)*

The Church encourages us to identify ourselves with Saint Andrew as we prepare to celebrate the coming of the Saviour this Christmas. He reminds us of the longings of the people of Israel which found their fulfillment in the birth of Christ, bringing joy to the whole world. Therefore, on this feast we begin to sing at Matins:

*Rejoice, O Isaiah, and receive the Word of God. Prophecy to Mary the Maiden. She is the Burning Bush unconsumed by the fire of divinity. Adorn yourself, O Bethlehem. Open your gates, O Eden. Enter, O Magi, and see salvation swaddled in a crib. Behold the star shining above the cave; it announces the life-giving Lord who saves the human race.*



## This week the Church commemorates three of the prophets of Israel:

On **Thursday**, we commemorate the **Prophet Nahum**, who lived in the seventh century before Christ and prophesied the destruction of Nineveh. While he spoke of God's judgement, he also proclaims God's loving kindness towards those who are faithful to Him. And he looks to the coming of Christ, proclaiming: "Behold on the mountains the feet of Him who brings good tidings, who proclaims peace."

On **Friday**, we commemorate the **Prophet Habakkuk**, whose name means "loving embrace." He lived in a time of turmoil just before the Babylonian exile, but he prophesied the future deliverance of the people and the coming of Christ and one of his songs is still used by the Church in the fourth Ode of Matins.

On **Saturday**, we commemorate the **Prophet Sophonias** (Zephaniah), who also lived in the tumultuous seventh century before Christ. He warned his listeners of the terrible "Day of the Lord" and of God's judgement against the wicked. But he promises that a faithful and pure remnant will remain, and that the meek and lowly in heart will rejoice in their coming Saviour.

## Preparing for Christ's Nativity

Last Monday, on the feast of the Entrance of the Theotokos into the Temple, we took an important step on our journey of preparation for the Nativity of Christ. The feast of the Entrance was the announcement of the coming of Christ and the Church has now begun to sing the canon of the Nativity of Christ:

*Christ is born; glorify Him!  
Christ comes from heaven; go to meet Him!  
Christ is on earth; be exalted!  
Sing to the Lord, all the earth!*

The coming of Christ that we are preparing for during this Nativity Fast is an event of great joy. Saint Gregory the Theologian writes:

*Again the darkness is passed. Again Light is made. ... The people that sat in darkness, let them see the Great Light of full knowledge. Old things have passed away. Behold, all things are becoming new. The letter gives way, and the Spirit comes to the fore. The shadows flee away, for the Truth has come upon them. ... He that was without a mother (being begotten from the Father before the ages) now becomes without a father (being born of the Virgin).*

Our world knows much darkness, pain and suffering and, although it may not be aware of it, it longs for a Saviour. We also know – if we are honest with ourselves – that we share in this brokenness of the world. Our nature has been corrupted by sin and yet it also longs to be healed. The Image of God in us has been tarnished and needs to be restored. Jesus Christ comes into the world to take our human nature upon Himself in order to restore it to what it was meant to be. Saint Gregory writes:

*...for He who gives riches becomes poor, for He assumes the poverty of my flesh that I may assume the riches of His divinity. He that is full empties Himself, for He empties Himself of His glory for a short while that I may have a share in His fullness. What are the riches of His goodness! What is this mystery that is around me! I had a share in the Image but I did not keep it. He now partakes of my flesh that He might both save the image and make the flesh immortal. He communicates a Second Communion far more marvelous than the First.*

What is it that defines the Christian? Keeping watch every day and hour and being ready to carry out perfectly what pleases God, in the knowledge that the Lord will come at an hour we do not expect.

Saint Basil the Great

