



SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 11, 2018

SUNDAY OF THE LAST JUDGMENT (MEAT-FARE); TRANSFER OF THE RELICS OF THE HOLY HIEROMARTYR IGNATIUS THE GOD-BEARER

RESURRECTIONAL TROPARION - TONE THREE:

Let the heavens rejoice! Let the earth be glad! For the Lord has shown strength with His arm! He has trampled down death by death! He has become the firstborn of the dead! He has delivered us from the depths of hell, and has granted to the world great mercy!

TROPARION TO SAINT IGNATIUS – TONE FOUR:

By sharing in the ways of the Apostles, you became a successor to their throne. Through the practice of virtue, you found the way to divine contemplation, O inspired one of God; by teaching the word of truth without error, you defended the Faith, even to the shedding of your blood. Hieromartyr Ignatius, entreat Christ God to save our souls.

RESURRECTIONAL KONTAKION - TONE THREE:

On this day You rose from the tomb, O Merciful One, leading us from the gates of death. On this day Adam exults as Eve rejoices; with the prophets and the patriarchs they unceasingly praise the divine majesty of Your power!

KONTAKION TO SAINT IGNATIUS – TONE FOUR:

Today you rose from the east, enlightening all of creation with your teachings, and you are crowned with martyrdom, God-bearing Ignatius.

SUNDAY OF THE LAST JUDGMENT KONTAKION - TONE ONE:

When You, O God, shall come to earth with glory, all things shall tremble and the river of fire shall flow before Your judgment seat; the books shall be opened and the hidden things disclosed. Deliver me then from the unquenchable fire and make me worthy to stand at Your right hand, O Righteous Judge.

EPISTLE READING

THE PROKEIMENON IN TONE THREE:

Great is our Lord, and mighty in power; His understanding is infinite.

SUNDAY OF THE LAST JUDGMENT: 1 CORINTHIANS 8: 8 – 9: 2

Brethren, food does not commend us to God; for neither if we eat are we the better, nor if we do not eat are we the worse. But beware lest somehow this liberty of yours become a stumbling block to those who are weak. For if anyone sees you who have knowledge eating in an idol's temple, will not the conscience of him who is weak be emboldened to eat those things offered to idols? And because of your knowledge shall the weak brother perish, for whom Christ died? But when you thus sin against the brethren, and wound their weak conscience, you sin against Christ. Therefore, if food makes my brother stumble, I will never again eat meat, lest I make my brother stumble. Am I not an

apostle? Am I not free? Have I not seen Jesus Christ our Lord? Are you not my work in the Lord? If I am not an apostle to others, yet doubtless I am to you. For you are the seal of my apostleship in the Lord.

THE ALLELUIA VERSES:

Come let us rejoice in the Lord! Let us make a joyful noise to God our Savior! Let us come before His face with thanksgiving; let us make a joyful noise to Him with psalms!

GOSPEL READING

SUNDAY OF THE LAST JUDGMENT: MATTHEW 25: 31-46

Jesus said, “When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then He will sit on the throne of His glory. All the nations will be gathered before Him, and He will separate them one from another, as a shepherd divides his sheep from the goats. And He will set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left. Then the King will say to those on His right hand, ‘Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: for I was hungry, and you gave Me food; I was thirsty and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger and you took Me in; I was naked and you clothed Me; I was sick and you visited Me; I was in prison and you came to Me.’ Then the righteous will answer Him, saying, ‘Lord, when did we see You hungry and feed You, or thirsty and give You drink? When did we see You a stranger and take You in, or naked and clothe You? Or when did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You?’ And the King will answer and say to them, ‘Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me’. Then He will also say to those on the left hand, ‘Depart from Me, you cursed, into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels: for I was hungry and you gave Me no food; I was thirsty and you gave Me no drink; I was a stranger and you did not take Me in, naked and you did not clothe Me, sick and in prison and you did not visit Me’. Then they will answer Him, saying, ‘Lord, when did we see You hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not minister to You?’ Then He will answer them, saying, ‘Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to Me’. And these will go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.”

FROM THE PROLOGUE:

JANUARY 29/FEBRUARY 11, BY SAINT NIKOLAI VELIMIROVIC:

The Holy Hieromartyr Ignatius the God-bearer

The principal feast of St. Ignatius is celebrated in winter, on December 20. On this date we commemorate the translation of his relics from Rome, where he suffered martyrdom, to Antioch, where he had earlier been bishop. When St. Ignatius was summoned to Rome to account for his faith before Emperor Trajan, he was accompanied on this long journey by several citizens from Antioch, who were motivated in this by a great love toward their wonderful archpastor. Since he would never deny his faith in Christ, this saint of God, who abhorred all the adulation and promises of Emperor Trajan, was condemned to death and thrown to wild beasts in the Circus Maximus. The wild beasts tore him apart, and he surrendered his soul to God. His companions then gathered his exposed bones, took them to Antioch, and honorably buried them. When the Persians captured Antioch in the sixth century, the relics of St. Ignatius were again translated from Antioch to Rome.

The Holy Martyrs Romanus, James, Philotheus, Hyperechius, Abibus, Julian, and Paregorius

They all suffered martyrdom for the Lord Jesus Christ in Samosata during the reign of Emperor Maximilian, in the year 297. Philotheus and Hyperechius were aristocrats and the others were young men of noble birth. The pagans inflicted a terrible death upon them, hammering nails into the heads of each of them. They suffered martyrdom honorably and entered into eternal joy.

The Venerable Lawrence of the Monastery of the Kiev Caves

Lawrence voluntarily chose the life of a recluse, following the examples of the earlier recluses Isaac and Nicetas. However, he guarded himself against the diabolical delusions which befell the other two in the beginning. With great abstinence, prayer and divine contemplation, Lawrence attained a high state of perfection. He learned from a terrified demon that, of the 118 monks in the Monastery of the Caves, 30 had been given by God authority over evil spirits. Lawrence went to the Lord in the year 1194.

HYMN OF PRAISE: Saint Ignatius the God-bearer

The bitter death of Christ dulled the sting of death
And banished forever the irrational fear of death.
A host of martyrs flocked to Christ in death,
But without fear, complaints or shrieks.
Many hurried to death with rejoicing,
Because, before their deaths, they saw angels and heaven.
St. Ignatius traveled to Rome.
Along the way, he prayed to the Living God
As a son would pray to his parents,
That the teeth of the beasts would grind him!
God granted him that for which he prayed.
Behold, the saint, having been ground, remained alive!
Alive and whole he remains, before the Table of Heaven,
Bread made tender by torture for Christ—
St. Ignatius, the courageous God-bearer.
Throughout the ages he imparts courage to those being tortured.
There can only be two kinds of suffering:
For the truth or for sins—this cannot be concealed.
Pain for one's sins is pain without hope,
But pain for the truth is joy without sorrow.
As light through rain paints the rainbow,
Thus does joy through tears and gentle sorrow
Depict Paradise and God in the spiritual heavens,
Strengthening the souls of the holy martyrs.

REFLECTION

The more a man advances in spiritual knowledge and in purification of the heart, the more it appears to him that the depth in which he finds himself is even lower than he had previously thought, and that the height to which he strives is even higher. When one spiritual giant, who was on his deathbed, heard that his companions were praising him because of his great asceticism, he began to weep, and said: "My children, I have not even begun my spiritual life." When St. Ignatius the God-bearer lay chained in the dungeon, he wrote to the Ephesians: "I do not command you as though I were someone

significant. Even though I am in chains for the name of Jesus Christ, nevertheless, I still have not perfected myself in Him. Now I am beginning to be His disciple, and I speak to you as to an assembly of my teachers.”

HOMILY

on perfection through the fulfilling of the will of God

Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of Him that sent me, and to finish His work (John 4:34).

Here is a saving example given to us by our Savior! He Who had such power, authority and wisdom says that He came into the world to do not His own will but the will of the Father, and to do not His own work but the work of His Father—but we, even though we are as weak as a cobweb, continuously emphasize our will and, some of us, even our work! The Son is equal to the Father, as He says in another place: I and My Father are one (John 10:30). Nevertheless, the Lord Jesus says that He came into the world to do His Father’s will and to accomplish His Father’s will. He is not saying this in order to show the smallness of His being before the Father’s being—for Their being is one—but, rather, to show the greatness of His love toward the Father, and in order to motivate us, out of love toward God, to totally adopt His will.

All of our misery in this life comes from the fact that we do not implement the will of Him Who sent us into this world. We do not implement His will because we do not have love toward Him. For whoever loves someone acts according to his will. The Lord Himself said: If ye love Me, keep My commandments (John 14:15). By what means could the Lord proclaim His love toward the Father, if not by fulfilling the will of the Father? And by what means can we proclaim our love toward the Lord Jesus, crucified for us on the Cross, if not by fulfilling His will?

Our will, O my brethren, is as deceitful as a shadow. Let us not follow it, that we may not perish. Rather, let us follow the will of the Lover of mankind, the Lord, Who alone knows what is best for us.

O humble and man-loving Lord, teach us to do Thy will.

To Thee be glory and praise forever. Amen.
