

St. Elias Antiochian Orthodox Christian Church

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Saturday: Vespers at 5:00 PM followed by confession

Sunday: Orthros at 9:30 AM & Divine Liturgy at 10:30 AM

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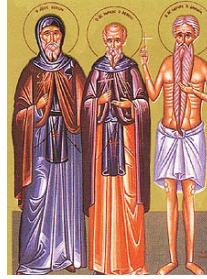
the departed up to Heaven. Taking Cyriacus with him, the monk immediately set off to the monastery of Saint Euthymius and consigned his body to the earth.

Saint Gerasimus died peacefully, mourned by his brethren and disciples. Before his death, a lion had aided Saint Gerasimus in his tasks, and upon the death of the Elder it died at his grave and was buried nearby. Therefore the lion is depicted on icons of the saint, at his feet.

Martyr Conon the Gardener of Pamphylia

Commemorated on March 5

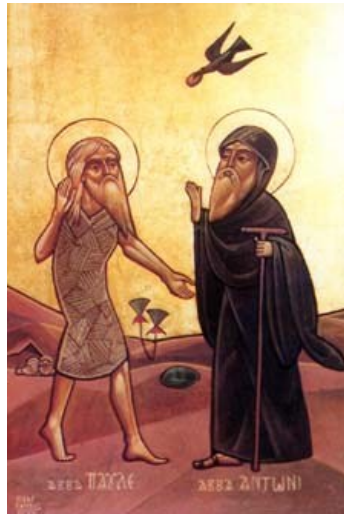
The Holy Martyr Conon the Gardener was born in Nazareth of Galilee, but he lived in the city of Mandona, where he occupied himself with gardening. He was a God-fearing man, sincere in heart, and without malice. The saint suffered for his faith in Christ under the emperor Decius (249-251). When they brought him to trial, he unwaveringly and firmly confessed his faith. The torturers drove nails into his feet and dragged him behind a chariot until the sufferer collapsed from exhaustion. With a prayer, he surrendered his spirit to the Lord.



Venerable Paul the Simple, disciple of Venerable Anthony the Great

Commemorated on March 7

Saint Paul the Simple of Egypt also lived in the fourth century and was called the Simple for his simplicity of heart and gentleness. He had been married, but when he discovered his wife's infidelity, he left her and went into the desert to Saint Anthony the Great (January 17). Paul was already 60 years old, and at first Saint Anthony would not accept Paul, saying that he was unfit for the harshness of the hermit's life. Paul stood outside the cell of the ascetic for three days, saying that he would sooner die than go from there. Then Saint Anthony took Paul into his cell, and tested his endurance and humility by hard work, severe fasting, with nightly vigils, constant singing of Psalms and prostrations. Finally, Saint Anthony decided to settle Paul into a separate cell.



During the many years of ascetic exploits the Lord granted Saint Paul both discernment, and the power to cast out demons. When they brought a possessed youth to Saint Anthony, he guided the afflicted one to Saint Paul saying, "I cannot help the boy, for I have not received power over the Prince of the demons. Paul the Simple, however, does have this gift." Saint Paul expelled the demon by his simplicity and humility.

After living for many years, performing numerous miracles, he departed to the Lord. He is mentioned by Saint John, the Abbot of Sinai (Ladder 24:30): "The thrice-blessed Paul the Simple was a clear example for us, for he was the rule and type of blessed simplicity...."

Saint Paul is also commemorated on October 4.

THE SYNAXARION (Plain Reading)

On March 2 in the Holy Orthodox Church, we commemorate Martyr Hesychios the Senator; Theodotos, bishop of Cyrene in Cyprus; and Virgin-martyr Euthalia of Sicily.

On this day, we make remembrance of the exile of the first-fashioned, Adam, from the Paradise of delight.

It is the Sunday of Forgiveness, known also as Cheese Fare Sunday. Today's lesson from the Holy Gospel teaches us about forgiveness and fasting, and how both are crucial to our own return to Paradise. The divine Fathers also set the anniversary of the exile of Adam from the Paradise of bliss on this day, at the entrance of Great Lent, to show us by deed as well as word how great is the benefit that accrues to man from fasting and repenting; and, on the contrary, how great the harm that comes from destructive gluttony and from disobedience to the divine commandments. The sin of gluttony resulted in Adam and Eve's banishment from Paradise, because they disobeyed God by eating from the tree which He had forbidden them. The Church reminds us of this event to encourage us to return to that ancient glory and primeval happiness by means of fasting and obedience to God and His commandments.

By Thine ineffable compassion, O Christ our God, make us worthy of the delight of Paradise and have mercy on us, as Thou art alone the Lover of mankind. Amen.

THE EPISTLE

Priest: Let us attend.

Reader: Sing praises to our God, sing praises.
Clap your hands, all ye nations.

Reader: The Reading from the Epistle of St. Paul to the Romans. (13:11-14:4)

Brethren, now is our salvation nearer than when we believed. The night is far spent, the day is at hand. Let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light. Let us walk becomingly, as in the day, not in reveling and drunkenness, not in chambering and licentiousness, not in strife and jealousy. But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh to fulfill its lusts. But as for the one who is weak in faith, receive him, but not for disputes over opinions. For one believes he may eat anything; but the weak person eats herbs. Let not him who eats despise him who does not eat, and let not him who does not eat judge him who eats; for God has received him. Who are you to be the judge over the servant of a stranger? To his own master he either stands or falls; but he will be made to stand; for God is able to make him stand.

رَتِّلُوا لِلْهِنَا رَتِّلُوا. يَا جَمِيعَ الْأُمَمِ صَفِّقُوا بِالْأَيْدِي.

فَصَلِّ مِنْ رِسَالَةِ الْقَدِيسِ بُولُسَ الرَّسُولِ إِلَى أَهْلِ رومية. (14:4-13:11)

يَا إِخْوَةُ، إِنَّ خَلَاصَنَا الْآنَ أَقْرَبُ مِمَّا كَانَ حِينَ آمَنَّا. قَدْ تَنَاهَى اللَّيْلُ وَأَقْتَرَبَ النَّهَارُ، فَلْتَدَعْ عَنَّا أَعْمَالَ الظُّلْمَةِ وَتَلْبَسْ أَسْلِحَةَ النُّورِ. لِنَسْلُكَنَّ سُلُوكًا لَائِقًا كَمَا فِي النَّهَارِ، لَا بِالْقُصُوفِ وَالسُّكْرِ، وَلَا بِالْمَصَاجِعِ وَالْعَهْرِ، وَلَا بِالْخِصَامِ وَالْحَسَدِ، بَلِ الْبَسُوا الرَّبَّ يَسُوعَ الْمَسِيحَ وَلَا تَهَنَّمُوا بِأَجْسَادِكُمْ لِقَضَاءِ شَهَوَاتِهَا. مَنْ كَانَ ضَعِيفًا فِي الْإِيمَانِ فَاتَّخِذُوهُ بِغَيْرِ مُبَاحَثَةٍ فِي الْآرَاءِ. مِنَ النَّاسِ مَنْ يَعْتَقِدُ أَنَّ لَهُ أَنْ يَأْكُلَ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ، أَمَّا الضَّعِيفُ فَيَأْكُلُ بُعُولًا. فَلَا يَزِدِرِ الَّذِي يَأْكُلُ مَنْ لَا يَأْكُلُ وَلَا يَدِينُ الَّذِي لَا يَأْكُلُ مَنْ يَأْكُلُ، فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ قَدْ

اتَّخَذَهُ. مَنْ أَنْتَ يَا مَنْ تَدِينُ عَبْدًا أَجْنَبِيًّا؟ إِنَّهُ لِمَوْلَاهُ يَتَّبِعُ أَوْ يَسْفُطُ. لَكِنَّهُ سَيَتَّبِعُ لِأَنَّ اللَّهَ قَادِرٌ عَلَى أَنْ يَتَّبِعَهُ.

GOSPEL

Priest: The Reading from the Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew. (6:14-21)

The Lord said to His Disciples: If you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father also will forgive you; but if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses. And when you fast, do not look dismal, like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces that their fasting may be seen by men. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward. But when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, that your fasting may not be seen by men but by your Father Who is in secret; and your Father Who sees in secret will reward you. Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust consume and where thieves break in and steal, but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust consumes and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

فَصَلِّ شَرِيفٌ مِنْ بَشَارَةِ الْقَدِيسِ مَتَى الْإِنْجِيلِي الْبَشِيرِ وَالتَّمْلِيذِ الطَّاهِرِ. (21-14:6)

قَالَ الرَّبُّ: إِنَّ غَفْرَتُمْ لِلنَّاسِ زَلَّاتِهِمْ، يَغْفِرُ لَكُمْ أَبُوكُمْ السَّمَاوِيِّ أَيْضًا. وَإِنْ لَمْ تَغْفِرُوا لِلنَّاسِ زَلَّاتِهِمْ،

فَأَبُوكُمْ أَيْضًا لَا يَغْفِرُ لَكُمْ زَلَّاتِكُمْ. وَمَتَى صُمْتُمْ، فَلَا تَكُونُوا مُعْبَسِينَ كَالْمُرَائِينَ. فَإِنَّهُمْ يُنْكَرُونَ وَجُوهَهُمْ

لِيُظْهِرُوا لِلنَّاسِ صَائِمِينَ. الْحَقُّ أَقُولُ لَكُمْ، إِنَّهُمْ قَدْ أَخَذُوا أَجْرَهُمْ. أَمَا أَنْتَ فَإِذَا صُمْتَ، فَادْهَنْ رَأْسَكَ وَاغْسِلْ

وَجْهَكَ لئَلَّا تَظْهَرَ لِلنَّاسِ صَائِمًا، بَلْ لِأَبِيكَ الَّذِي فِي الْخَفِيَّةِ، وَأَبُوكَ الَّذِي يَرَى فِي الْخَفِيَّةِ يُجَازِيكَ عِلَانِيَةً.

لَا تَكْتُمُوا لَكُمْ كُنُوزًا عَلَى الْأَرْضِ، حَيْثُ يَفْسُدُ السُّوسُ وَالْآكِلَةُ وَيَنْقُبُ السَّارِقُونَ وَيَسْرِقُونَ. لَكِنْ اكْتُمُوا لَكُمْ

كُنُوزًا فِي السَّمَاءِ حَيْثُ لَا يَفْسُدُ سوسٌ وَلَا آكِلَةٌ وَلَا يَنْقُبُ السَّارِقُونَ وَلَا يَسْرِقُونَ. لِأَنَّهُ حَيْثُ تَكُونُ كُنُوزُكُمْ،

هُنَاكَ تَكُونُ قُلُوبُكُمْ.

LENTEN TROPARIA

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.

Open to me the doors of repentance, O Life-giver; for my soul goeth early to the temple of Thy holiness, coming in the temple of my body, wholly polluted. But because Thou art compassionate, purify me by the compassion of Thy mercies.

طَرُوبَارِيَّاتِ الصُّومِ، بِاللَّحْنِ الثَّامِنِ

الْمَجْدُ لِلآبِ وَالْإِبْنِ وَالرُّوحِ الْقُدْسِ.

إِفْتَحْ لِي أَبْوَابَ التَّوْبَةِ يَا وَاهِبَ الْحَيَاةِ، لِأَنَّ رُوحِي تَبْتَكِرُ إِلَى هَيْكَلِ قُدْسِكَ، آتِيًّا بِهِيْكَلِ جَسَدِي مُدْنَسًا

بِجُمْلَتِهِ. لَكِنْ، بِمَا أَنَّكَ مُنْعَطِفٌ، نَقِّنِي بِتَحَنُّنِ مَرَاكِمْكَ.

Both now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

Prepare for me the way of salvation, O Theotokos; for I have profaned myself with coarse sins, and consumed my whole life with procrastination. But by thine intercessions purify thou me from all abomination.

الآنَ وَكُلَّ أَوَانٍ وَإِلَى دَهْرِ الدَّاهِرِينَ. آمِينَ.

سَهِّلِي لِي مَنَاجِيَ الْخَلَاصِ يَا وَالِدَةَ الْإِلَهِ، فَإِنِّي قَدْ دَنَسْتُ نَفْسِي بِخَطَايَا سَمِجَةٍ، وَأَفْتِنْتُ عُمْرِي كُلَّهُ بِالنَّوَانِي.

لَكِنْ بِشَفَاعَاتِكَ، نَقِّنِي مِنْ كُلِّ رَجَاسَةٍ.

(TONE SIX) Have mercy upon me, O God, according to Thy lovingkindness; according to the multitude of Thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions.

If I think upon the multitude of my evil deeds, wretch that I am, I tremble for the terrible Day of Judgment. But, trusting the compassion of Thy mercy, I shout to Thee like David, Have mercy upon me, O God, according to Thy Great Mercy.

إِيذِيَوْمَالُونَ بِاللَّحْنِ السَّادِسِ

يَا رَحِيمُ، اِرْحَمْنِي يَا اللَّهُ كَعَظِيمِ رَحْمَتِكَ، وَكَمَثَلِ كَثْرَةِ رَأْفَاتِكَ امْحُ مَاثِمِي.

إِذَا تَصَوَّرْتُ كَثْرَةَ أَعْمَالِي الرَّدِيئَةِ أَنَا الشَّقِي، فَإِنِّي أُرْتَعِدُ مِنْ يَوْمِ الدَّيْنُونَةِ الرَّهيبِ. لَكِنِّي إِذْ أَنَا وَاثِقٌ بِتَحَنُّنِكَ،

أَهْتَفُ إِلَيْكَ مِثْلَ دَاوُدَ: اِرْحَمْنِي يَا اللَّهُ، بِحَسَبِ عَظِيمِ رَحْمَتِكَ.

Venerable Gerasimus of the Jordan

Commemorated on March 4

Saint Gerasimus was a native of Lycia (Asia Minor). From his early years he was distinguished for his piety. Having received monastic tonsure, he withdrew into the desert of the Thebaid (in Egypt). Thereafter, in about the year 450, the monk arrived in Palestine and settled at the Jordan, where he founded a monastery.

For a certain while Saint Gerasimus was tempted by the heresy of Eutyches and Dioscorus, which acknowledged only the divine nature in Jesus Christ, but not His human nature (i.e. the Monophysite heresy). Saint Euthymius the Great (January 20) helped him to return to the true Faith.

Saint Gerasimus established a strict monastic Rule. He spent five days of the week in solitude, occupying himself with handicrafts and prayer. On these days the wilderness dwellers did not eat cooked food, nor did they kindle a fire, but ate only dry bread, roots and water.

On Saturday and Sunday all gathered at the monastery for Divine Liturgy and to partake of the Holy Mysteries of Christ. In the afternoon, taking a supply of bread, tubers, water and an armload of date-palm branches for weaving baskets, the desert-dwellers returned to their own cells. Each had only old clothes and a mat, upon which he slept. When they left their cells, the door was never locked, so that anyone could enter and rest, or take whatever he needed.

Saint Gerasimus himself attained a high level of asceticism. During Great Lent he ate nothing until the very day of the All-Radiant Resurrection of Christ, when he received the Holy Mysteries. Going out into the desert for all of Great Lent, Saint Gerasimus took with him his beloved disciple Saint Cyriacus (September 29), whom Saint Euthymius had sent to him.

When Saint Euthymius the Great died, Saint Gerasimus saw how angels carried the soul of

