

Holy Cross Orthodox Church

2365 South Olga Drive
Fort Myers, Florida
Very Rev. Leonid Palceski - (239) 540-0618

Website & Directory Information.

www.HolyCrossFtMyers.Org

12th After Pentecost – Tone 3. Ss. Alexander (340), John (595), and Paul the new (784). Patriarchs of Constantinople. St. Daniel, Prince of Moscow (1652). St. Christopher of Palestine, St. Fantinus, Synaxis of the Serbian Hierarchs: Ss. Savam Arsenius, Sava II, James, Nicodmus, and Daniel, Archbishop, Joannius II, Syridonm Ephraim, Macarius, Gabriel, Gregory. St. Alexander Nevsky.

Divine Liturgy of St. John:

1 Cor.15:1-11

Matthew 19:16-26

Liturgical Schedule:

Sunday - 9:30 am Divine Liturgy

Saint John, Patriarch of Constantinople

Saint John IV the Faster, Patriarch of Constantinople (582-595), is famed in the Orthodox Church as the compiler of a penitential Nomokanon (i.e. rule for penances), which has come down to us in several distinct versions, but their foundation is one and the same. These are instructions for priests on how to hear the confession of secret sins, whether these sins have been committed, or are merely sins of intention.

Ancient Church rules address the manner and duration of public penances which were established for obvious and manifest sinners. But it was necessary to adapt these rules for the secret confession of things which were not evident. Saint John the Faster issued his penitential Nomokanon (or “Canonaria”), so that the confession of secret sins, unknown to the world, bore witness to the good disposition of the sinner and of his conscience in being reconciled to God, and so the saint reduced the penances of the ancient Fathers by half or more.

On the other hand, he set more exactly the character of the penances: severe fasting, daily performance of a set number of prostrations to the ground, the distribution of alms, etc. The length of penance is determined by the priest. The main purpose of the Nomokanon compiled by the holy Patriarch consists in assigning penances, not simply according to the seriousness of the sins, but according to the degree of repentance and the spiritual state of the person who confesses.

Among the Greeks, and later in the Russian Church, the rules of Saint John the Faster are honored on a level “with other saintly rules,” and the Nomokanons of his book are accounted “applicable for all the Orthodox Church.” Saint Nikodemos of the Holy Mountain (July 14) included him in the *Manual for Confession (Exomologitarion)*, first published in 1794, and in the *Rudder (Pedalion)*, published in 1800.

The first Slavonic translation was done quite possibly by Saint Methodius, Equal of the Apostles, at the same time as he produced the Nomokanon in 50 Titles of the holy Patriarch John Scholastikos, whose successor on the throne of Constantinople was Saint John the Faster. This ancient translation was preserved in Rus in the “*Ustiug Rudder*” of the thirteenth century, which was published in 1902.

From the sixteenth century in the Russian Church the Nomokanon of Saint John the Faster was circulated in another redaction, compiled by the monks and clergy of Mount Athos. In this form it was repeatedly published at the Kiev Caves Lavra (in 1620, 1624, and 1629).

In Moscow, the Penitential Nomokanon was published in the form of a supplement to the *Trebnik (Book of Needs)*: under Patriarch Joasaph in 1639, under Patriarch Joseph in 1651, and under Patriarch Nikon in 1658. The last edition since that time is that printed in the *Great Book of Needs*. A scholarly edition of the Nomokanon with parallel Greek and Slavonic texts and with detailed historical and canonical commentary was published by A. S. Pavlov (Moscow, 1897).

Saint Paul the New, Patriarch of Constantinople

Saint Paul, by birth a Cypriot, became Patriarch of Constantinople (780-784) during the reign of the Iconoclast Emperor Leo IV the Khazar (775-780), and was a virtuous and pious, but timid man. Seeing the martyrdom which the Orthodox endured for the holy icons, the saint concealed his Orthodoxy and associated with the iconoclasts.

After the death of the emperor Leo, he wanted to restore icon veneration but was not able to accomplish this, since the iconoclasts were still quite powerful. The saint realized that it was not in his power to guide the flock, and so he left the patriarchal throne and went secretly to the monastery of Saint Florus, where he took the schema.

He repented of his silence and association with the iconoclasts and spoke of the necessity for convening the Seventh Ecumenical Council to condemn the Iconoclast heresy. Upon his advice, Saint Tarasius (February 25) was chosen to the patriarchal throne. At that time, he was a prominent imperial counselor. The saint died as a schemamonk in the year 804.