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4th Sunday of Pascha —Tone 3. Apostle Simeon the Zealot (1st). Martyrs Philadelphus, Cyprian, Alphius, Onesimus, Erasmus, and 14 others, in Sicily (3rd c.). Martyr Hesychius of Antioch. Bl. Isdore the Fool. Bl. Thais. St. Simeon, Bishop.

Divine Liturgy of St. John:

Acts 9:32-42 John 5:1-15

Announcements

Liturgical Schedule:

Divine Liturgy Sundays 9:30 am

May 13 – Wednesday: Divine Liturgy 9:00 am

May 21 – Thursday: Divine Liturgy 9:00 am - St. Constantine & Helen

May 27 – Wednesday: Leave taking of Pascha – Forefeast of Ascension Great Vespers 5:00 pm

May 28 – Thursday: The Ascension of Our Lord – Divine Liturgy 9:00 am

Martyrs Philadelphus, Cyprian, Alphius, Onesimus, Erasmus, and 14 others, in Sicily

The Holy Martyrs Philadelphus, Alphaeus, Cyprian, Onesimus, Erasmus and 14 others with them, lived during the third century and came from Italy. Alphaeus, Philadelphus and Cyprian were sons of a governor in Italy, named Vitalius. They were enlightened by faith in Christ and baptized by Saint Onesimus.

During this period the emperor Licinius issued orders to seek out and hand over the Christians for torture. The brothers went to Rome together with Onesimus, Erasmus and fourteen other Christians. At Rome the pagans crushed the chest of Saint Onesimus with a heavy stone, which killed him. Erasmus and the fourteen Martyrs were beheaded.

The brothers Alphaeus, Philadelphus and Cyprian suffered in the city of Mesopolis Leontini in Sicily, where they had been sent from Rome. Saint Philadelphus was burned over an iron lattice in the year 251, in the reign of the emperor Decius.

In the year 1517 their incorrupt relics were discovered at Leontini [Lentini]. Saints Alphaeus, Philadelphus and Cyprian appeared to Saint Euthalia (March 2) and told her that she would be healed of an affliction after she was baptized.

Apostle Simon the Zealot

Saint Simon was from Cana in Galilee, and was known to the Lord and His Mother. Tradition says that he was the bridegroom at the wedding where the Savior performed His first miracle. After witnessing the miracle of the water which had been turned into wine, he became a zealous follower of Christ. For this reason, he is known as Saint Simon the Zealot.

Saint Simon was one of the twelve Apostles, and received the Holy Spirit with the others on Pentecost. He traveled to many places from Britain to the Black Sea, proclaiming the Gospel of Christ. After winning many pagans to the Lord, Saint Simon suffered martyrdom by crucifixion.

Saint Demetrius of Rostov says that this Saint Simon is to be distinguished from the Apostle Simon Peter, and from the Lord's relative Simon (Mt.13:55), who was the second Bishop of Jerusalem.

Blessed Isadora the Fool of Tabenna in Egypt

Saint Isadora, Fool-for-Christ, struggled in the Tabenna monastery in Egypt during the sixth century. Taking upon herself the feat of folly, she acted like one insane, and did not eat food with the other sisters of the monastery. Many of them regarded her with contempt, but Isadora bore all this with great patience and meekness, blessing God for everything.

She worked in the kitchen and fulfilled the dirtiest, most difficult tasks at the monastery, cleaning the monastery of every impurity. Isadora covered her head with a plain rag, and instead of cooked food she drank the dirty wash water from the pots and dishes. She never became angry, never insulted anyone with a word, never grumbled against God or the sisters, and was given to silence.

Once, a desert monk, Saint Pitirim, had a vision. An angel of God appeared to him and said, "Go to the Tabenna monastery. There you will see a sister wearing a rag on her head. She serves them all with love, and endures their contempt without complaint. Her heart and her thoughts rest always with God. You, on the other hand, sit in solitude, but your thoughts flit about all over the world."

The Elder set out for the Tabenna monastery, but he did not see the one indicated to him in the vision among the sisters. Then they led Isadora to him, considering her a demoniac. Isadora fell down at the knees of the Elder, asking his blessing. Saint Pitirim bowed down to the ground to her and said, "Bless me first, venerable Mother!"

To the astonished questions of the sisters the Elder replied, "Before God, Isadora is higher than all of us!" Then the sisters began to repent, confessing their mistreatment of Isadora, and they asked her forgiveness. The saint, however, distressed over her fame, secretly hid herself away from the monastery, and her ultimate fate remained unknown. It is believed that she died around the year 365.