



## The Virtues of the Holy Forefathers

Singing in the service for this day "the God-pleasing life" of the Old Testament righteous men, the Holy Church thus represents our intellectual look at the whole universe of great virtues, such as: the God-loving gentleness and meekness of the first martyr in the world, Abel, the holy zeal for the glorification of the name of God, Enos, the high divine thinking and the fear of God, Enoch, the firmness in faith and piety, Noah among the general depravity of his contemporary world, the wonderful faith and obedience to the word of God, Abraham, filial obedience, Isaac up to the preparation to be offered as a burnt offering according to the command of God, the kind domestic bravery, Sarah, the penetrating maternal love, Rebecca, the mild humility, Jacob who earned the rage of Laban and Esau, the holy chastity, Joseph who was more than ready to suffer and die, rather than to sin before God, the unhampered invincible patience in the sufferings and misfortunes, Job, the meek, wise leadership, Moses and Samuel, the inspiring courage through faith, Joshua son of Nun, Barak, and Gideon, the high self-sacrificing love for their country and people, Judith and Esther, the plaintive and contrite repentance, David and Manasseh, the ascetic and divinely intellectual life, Elijah and Elisha, the zeal for the glory of God of the holy Prophets, the unhampered invincible dedication to the Law of God and usual patriotism of the three youths in Babylon and the rest of the good deeds of all the other Old Testament men we celebrate "of whom the world was not worthy" (Hebrews 11:38). According to the teaching of Saint Gregory the Theologian, each of these virtues stand by themselves "as a special way to salvation, and undoubtedly results in any one of the everlasting and blessed abodes; for as the generations of life are various, so are the abodes of God are many" (Saint John 14:2), and in them are divided and are assigned to everyone according to his worthiness. Therefore let one fulfill his virtue, one to another, the other of the many, and whoever, if it is possible, and in everything; only let everyone go without stopping, let everyone strive forward and follow steadily in the steps of the good leaders, who directly leads a path for him, and makes his way through the narrow gate (Saint Matthew 7:14) to lead to the heights of the blessed heavens.