

# The Confessor's Tongue for May 30, 2010

1<sup>st</sup> Sunday After Pentecost: All Saints

In honor of St. Maximus the Confessor, whose tongue and right hand were cut off in an attempt by compromising authorities to silence his uncompromising confession of Christ's full humanity & divinity.

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## Sunday of All Saints

In the services for this Sunday over and above the usual glorifications of the resurrection of Christ, the choirs of all the Saints pleasing to God, who have shone through faith in the coming and the arrival of the promised Redeemer, together with those who exercised asceticism in piety are glorified. In the church hymns we magnify: patriarchs, forefathers, prophets, apostles, martyrs, hieromartyrs, confessors, hierarchs, venerable and righteous fathers and mothers, and all the Saints, who from the ages were well pleasing to God, and "above all" "our Sovereign Lady, the Theotokos and Ever-virgin Mary". In glorifying their memory, let us also ask their prayerful petitions before God for us. Since "by the Holy Spirit is every soul enlivened", i.e. is cleansed, renewed and alas settled, and since the divine grace of the Holy Spirit is consecrated, it has made our first-born brethren, written in the heavens, and made them our worthy prayer books before God, that, they have celebrated the most glorious descent of the Holy Spirit on the apostles and who glorified His beneficial power, consecrating the souls of all believers, then to properly glorify also those holy foster children of the grace of God, who were consecrated and perfected by the power of the All-holy and Life-creating Spirit of the Lord. This commemoration also fulfills the honoring and glorifying of those pleasing to God, who, owing to their numbers and their not being known, special commemorations were not established for them. Glorifying the saints and numbering them among the ranks or choirs, the Holy Church points out to us their various virtues for imitation. *Bulgakov Handbook*

## The Classes of Saints

The Orthodox Church honors various men pleasing to God who appropriated various names, corresponding to their various ascetic acts of virtuous life on earth. Such names are: patriarchs, forefathers, prophets, apostles, hierarchs, holy equal to the apostles, hieromartyrs, great martyrs, venerable martyrs, martyrs, confessors, venerable ones, righteous ones, disinterested ones [unmercenary healers] and blessed ones.

*Prophets* are great according to the pious life of the men of the Old Testament who were selected by God Himself and were sent by Him to various places for predicting the future to the people, with regard to the coming of Christ, the Savior of the world, to earth.

*Apostles* are the great men of the New Testament, the people closest to Christ the Savior, His worthiest disciples and companions, who were sent by Him to various countries for the preaching of the Divine Gospel to the people.

*Hierarchs* and *Fathers* ("our Fathers among the saints) are the Eastern Patriarchs, the pious Popes of

Rome, the Patriarchs, Archbishops, heirs to the Holy Apostles in the Christian Church and their great co-workers in preaching the Gospel and in their labor of true piety.

*Holy Equal to the Apostles* and *Enlighteners* are the men and women of royal or princely origin, but sometimes also of simple calling, who by their own preaching turned entire countries and peoples to Christ.

*Hieromartyrs* are Christian bishops and presbyters who died from torture for their belief in Christ.

*Great martyrs* are the pious men and women of various worldly ranks and positions, who courageously and with great patience thoroughly underwent various persecutions, tortures, and torments by their torturers for their holy Christian faith.

*Venerable Martyrs* are the pious and true ascetic men and women, included in the monastic calling, who suffered from the pagans and heterodox believers for their faith in Christ.

*Martyrs* are those men and women of various callings and positions, who without confusion, but sometimes even with joy, went one by one or in groups into the presence of their torturers, and there were tortured to death for their firm and unshakable confession of their faith in Christ.

*Confessors* and *Passion-bearers* are those great men of virtuous life of the Christian Church, courageously and fearlessly everywhere and always confessed their deep faith in Christ, who openly recognized themselves as true Christians, who endured torments and torture for this, but did not receive a martyr's death; some of them are called *branded*, because during torture special brands were put on the person.

*Venerable Ones* are the great, pious and Christ-loving men and women, desert-dwellers, hermits (who separated themselves from the world to the desert and there saved themselves in solitude), recluses (who voluntarily enclosed themselves in separate caves and cells for their entire life) and pillar-dwellers (who practiced asceticism under the open sky on pillars, or high towers), silent ones (who voluntarily took up the asceticism of silence), and are all inclusive in the monastic calling.

*Righteous Ones* are the great men and women, who were glorified for their virtuous and pious life, zealous for the fulfillment of the commandments of God and for their unbowed observance of the truths of the Gospel teaching, not shirking their family or public obligations and living in the world.

*Disinterested Ones* or *Unmercenarys* are men well pleasing to God who through their unmercenary labor for the benefit of their neighbors served the suffering and healed the sick.

*Blessed Ones* are the men and women of various callings and positions, who in carrying out their mortal life, both in the world and in the desert, with

unusual reserve, with extreme deprivation and denial of every possible worldly good, but sometimes even with many varieties of foolishness, all this "for the sake of Christ" ["holy fools for Christ"].

S. V. Bulgakov, *Handbook for Church Servers*, 2nd ed. 1274 pp. (Kharkov, 1900) pp 0621-0624. Translated by Archpriest Eugene D Tarris © June 21, 2005. All rights reserved.

### The Saints & Our Vocation

*St. Justin of Cheliye*

The Lives of the Saints show forth those persons filled with Christ God, those Christ-bearing persons, those holy persons in whom is preserved and through whom is transmitted the holy tradition of that holy grace-filled life. It is preserved and transmitted by means of holy evangelical [i.e. living according to the Gospel, *to evangelion*] living. For the lives of the saints are holy evangelical truths which are translated into our human life by grace and *podvigs* (asceticism). There is no evangelical truth which cannot be transformed into human life. They were all brought by Christ God for one purpose: to become our life, our reality, our possession, our joy. And the saints, all, without exception, live these Divine truths as the center of their lives and the essence of their being. For this reason the "Loves" of the Saints are a proof and testimony: that our origin is in heaven; that we are not from this world but from that one; that a man is a true man only in God; that on earth one lives by heaven; that 'our conversation is in heaven' (Phil 3:20); that our task is to make ourselves heavenly, feeding ourselves with the "heavenly bread" which came down to earth. And He came down to feed us with eternal Divine truth, eternal Divine good, eternal Divine righteousness, eternal Divine love, eternal Divine life through Holy Communion, through living in the one true God and Lord Jesus Christ.

In other words, our vocation is to fill ourselves with the Lord Christ, with His Divine life-creating energies, to live in Christ and to make ourselves christ. If you set about this, you are already in heaven although you walk on earth; you are already wholly in God even though your being has remained within the limits of human nature. The man who makes himself a christ surpasses himself, as man, by God, by the God-man, in whom is give the perfect image of the true, real, whole man in the image of God; and in Him are also given the all-vanquishing Divine energies, by the help of which man raises himself above every sin, above every death, above every hell; and the he does by the Church and in the Church, which all the powers of hell cannot overcome, because in Her is the whole wondrous God-man, the Lord Christ, with all His Divine energies, His truths, His realities, His perfections, His lives, His eternities.

### Prayer of the Third Hour

O Lord who at the third hour didst send down Thine all-holy Spirit upon thine apostles, take not the

Same [Him, the Holy Spirit] from us, O Good One, but renew Him in us who pray unto Thee.

### The Sayings of St. Anthony the Great

*Abba Anthony heard of a very young monk who had performed a miracle on the road. Seeing the old men walking with difficulty along the road, he ordered the wild asses to come and carry them until they reached Abba Anthony. Those whom they had carried told Abba Anthony about it. He said to them, 'This monk seems to me to be a ship loaded with goods, but I do not know if he will reach harbor.' After a while, Anthony suddenly began to weep, to tear his hair, and lament. His disciples said to him, 'Why are you weeping, Father?' The old man replied, 'A great pillar of the Church has just fallen (he meant the young monk) but go to him and see what has happened.' So the disciples went and found the monk sitting on a mat and weeping for the sin he had committed. Seeing the disciples of the old man he said, 'Tell the old man to pray that God will give me just ten days, and I hope I will have made satisfaction.' But in the space of five days he died. Saying 14 in *The Sayings of the Desert Fathers**

*Commentary:* The true Christian is not threatened by the gifts, miracles, or accomplishments of others. When the young wonderworker falls, Anthony takes no joy, but weeps, lamenting his fall. We must guard ourselves lest we, feeling threatened by others or envying their gifts, take a malicious pleasure in their shortcomings or failures. In Proverbs we are even warned not to take pleasure in the downfall of the wicked lest the Lord cease to chasten them!

The Christian life is likened to a merchant ship. In the course of life, we gain a valuable cargo of virtues and good works to offer to God, but we must make it safely to port. The monk had a great treasure of virtues and accomplishments, but his ship foundered before reaching a safe haven. Thus we, too, must be vigilant and cautious until the end and not trust in what we have accomplished to date. The miracle the young monk worked is impressive, but was it not, perhaps, mixed with a measure of pride and self-display that helped bring him down? And having fallen, we do not know whether we shall find repentance, whether we shall have the time or inclination to repent. *Fr. Justin Frederick*

### June Namedays

1 Fr. Justin Frederick (St. Justin of Cheliye)

### June Birthdays

22 Reader Benjamin Tolleson

*If your nameday or birthday should but does not appear here, please let your priest know.*

### Upcoming Events 2010

30 May, Sunday, Pre-Memorial Day Picnic, 3:00 p.m.

31 May – 28 June Apostles Fast

4, 11 July: Fr. Justin gone; Fr. Christopher Allen here

GLORY BE TO GOD IN ALL THINGS!