

The Confessor's Tongue for October 28, A. D. 2018

22nd Sunday After Pentecost: St. Job of Pochaev

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.

28 October St. Job of Pochaev

Saint Job, Abbot and Wonderworker of Pochaev (in the world named Ivan Zhelezo), was born around 1551 in Pokutia in Galicia. At age ten he came to the Transfiguration Ugornits monastery, and at age twelve he received monastic tonsure with the name Job. The venerable Job from his youth was known for his great piety and strict ascetic life, and he was accounted worthy of the priestly office.

Around the year 1580, at the request of the renowned champion of Orthodoxy Prince Constantine Ostrozhsy, Saint Job was appointed the head of the Exaltation of the Cross monastery near the city of Dubno, and for more than twenty years he governed the monastery amidst the growing persecution of Orthodoxy on the part of the Catholics and Uniates.

At the beginning of the seventeenth century, Saint Job withdrew to Pochaev hill and settled in a cave not far from the ancient Dormition monastery, famed for its wonderworking Pochaev Icon of the Mother of God (July 23). The holy hermit, beloved by the brethren of the monastery, was chosen as their Igumen. Saint Job zealously fulfilled his duty as head of the monastery, kind and gentle with the brethren, he did much of the work himself, planting trees in the garden, and strengthening the waterworks at the monastery.

Saint Job was an ardent defender of the Orthodox Faith against the persecution of the Catholics. Following the Union of Brest (1596), many Orthodox living in Poland were deprived of their rights, and attempts were made to force them to convert to Catholicism. Many Orthodox hierarchs became apostates to Uniatism, but Saint Job and others defended Orthodoxy by copying and disseminating Orthodox books. Prince Ostrozhsy was also responsible for the first printed edition of the Orthodox Bible (1581).

In taking an active part in the defense of Orthodoxy and the Russian people, Saint Job was present at the 1628 Kiev Council, convened against the Unia. After 1642, he accepted the great schema with the name John.

Sometimes he completely secluded himself within the cave for three days or even a whole week. The Jesus Prayer was an unceasing prayer in gentle heart. According to the testimony of his disciple Dositheus, and author of the Life of Saint Job, once while praying in his cave, the saint was illumined by a heavenly light. Saint Job reposed peacefully in the year 1651 after serving the Divine Liturgy. He was more than 100 years old, and had directed the Pochaev monastery for more than fifty years.

The uncovering of Saint Job's relics took place on August 28, 1659. Dozens of miracles issued forth from

the relics, witnessed by not only Orthodox but also by Catholics as well, into whose hands the Pochaev monastery passed for 110 years. After the return of the monastery to the Orthodox Church, miracles continued, as they do to this day. The Church has designated two feasts to St. Job: August 28, the uncovering of his relics and October 28, his repose. There was a second uncovering of the relics on August 27-28, 1833. *oca.org*

More on St. Job and His Printing Press

It is well known that from the very earliest times an Orthodox printing press existed at the Pochaev Monastery in Volhynia, on which, based on privileges granted it by the kings of Poland, divers books were printed in the Slavonic, Latin and Polish languages. Tradition ascribes the establishment of this press to Anna Goiskaya, the foundress of the Pochaev Monastery. When the venerable Job arrived at Mount Pochaev, this printing press was already flourishing: its typefaces were beautiful, similar to the type styles in use at the printing press of the Lavra of the Kiev Caves during the same period; special calligraphic letters were used to begin articles; there were various vignettes, end-designs and borders which were used for the opening and closing pages, and so forth. One need not describe the sympathy with which the venerable Job must have treated this establishment, which then gave him the possibility to disseminate useful books not only by means of copying, as he did at the Dubno monastery, but also by printing them for anyone who desired them.

An opportune occasion soon presented itself to the blessed one for the achievement of this goal. At that time, at the Stauropegial Brotherhood of the Dormition of the All-holy Theotokos, in Lvov, Cyril Trankvillion-Stavrovetsky, who was subsequently archimandrite in Chernigov, but is famous in the history of Orthodox religious literature, was the pedagogue and preacher. Among his various other writings, Trankvillion authored *The Mirror of Theology*, which was directed against the Latins; and with the blessing of the venerable Job, this book was "published in the Monastery of Pochaev, on the lands of His Grace, Lord Andrew Firlej, in the year 1618, on the 12th day of the month of March."

Thus, during the tenure of the venerable Job, the Pochaev press printed leaflets containing the order of proskomedia for distribution among the Orthodox parishes, letters and epistles of the Orthodox hierarchs, various prayers, etc. And finally, because of the scarcity of Orthodox printing establishments within the confines of the south-western area of Russia at that time, when, as history bears witness, all "the most ancient printing presses of Volhynia—those at Ostrog, Kremenets, Rakhmanovsk, and others—one after another ceased their activity and

existence by the first half of the 17th century, and only the Pochaev Press was still publishing in the Slavono-Russian language in Volhynia", the Monastery of Pochaev found it possible to distribute the products of its press among the Orthodox, and thus certainly aided in supporting the Orthodox Church as much as possible amid the tribulations then inflicted upon it by the Latins.

St. Job's Pochaev Lavra figures in current events in Ukraine. The Pochaev Lavra is located in Ternipol Oblast in Western Ukraine, where there is a high concentration of Uniates (or "Greek Catholics" as they now prefer to be called), near the city of Kremenets. The first record of the monastery dates to 1527, but local tradition dates it three centuries earlier. In this present time of unrest in Ukraine, Uniates have made efforts in the past year to claim the monastery for themselves. (They did not found it, but under Polish rule they were able to wrest it away from the Orthodox for 100 years.) O venerable father Job, pray for the land of Ukraine and for us!

All-Night Vigil: Gospel to Canons

At the conclusion of the canons, a Little Litany is taken, followed by "Holy is the Lord our God" and the Exapostilarion, also known as the "Hymn of Light." This is a short hymn sung after the Canon, and its name means "a sending out." Originally a singer was sent out from the choir to sing a solo in the center of the nave which served as a sort of dismissal hymn. A particular exapostilarion exists for every feast. The exapostilarion for Sunday is "Holy is the Lord our God." An additional exapostilarion for Sunday Matins explains the Matins Gospel. Hence there are eleven of these exapostilaria, one for each of the eleven Matins Resurrectional Gospels. The most famous exapostilarion for the whole year is "The Wise Thief," sung at the Matins of Great and Holy Friday.

"The Praises," which follow the Exapostilarion, mark the beginning of the third and last part of Matins. The Praises consist of Psalms 148, 149, and 150, though they are often abbreviated. The first verses are sung by the choir, then the reader chants the rest. Towards the end, hymns called "stichera" are interspersed between the verses of the psalms, just as is done at Vespers at "Lord, I have cried...". These stichera honor the event or saint of the day. Hence, for the Resurrectional Vigil, the stichera (in the tone of the week) speak of the Resurrection.

At every Vigil of the Resurrection, the same Theotokion (hymn to the Theotokos) concludes the Praises. This lovely hymn in tone 2 is known by all, since it is repeated every week:

Thou art most blessed, O Virgin Theotokos! For through the One who was born of thee, Hell hath been captured and Adam recalled! The curse hath been annulled and Eve set free! Death hath been slain, so we are given life: Blessed is Christ our God, whose good will it was, glory to Thee!

At the singing of the Theotokion, the Royal Doors are opened and all the lights in the temple are put on. If Matins has been served as originally

appointed, the night will have advanced and the first glimmer of dawn will have appeared. As the natural light begins to appear in the eastern sky, we prepare to greet this light as an icon of the True Light, Christ our God. It is time for the Great Doxology. The Priest, with outstretched arms raised to the heavens cries out: "Glory to Thee, who hast shown us the light!" And with that, the choir and people sing the Great Doxology.

The Doxology begins, as did Matins, with the Angelic song "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will towards men," and concludes with the singing of the Trisagion, "Holy God..." The Great Doxology is always sung due to its celebratory and festive nature. It is to be distinguished from the Lesser Doxology, which is similar (but not identical), and is chanted by the reader at Compline and Daily Matins. The Great Doxology is very ancient, dating at latest to the third century. It is par excellence the morning hymn of the Church.

After the Doxology, the Troparion (Resurrectional or Festal) is sung, followed by the Augmented Litany, and the Morning Litany. The content of these litanies is the same as their counterparts at Vespers and has already been discussed. Only here they come at the end of the service. The lights are then extinguished, and the All-Night Vigil concludes with the reading of the First Hour.

Concluding Comments on the Vigil

We have spent much time discussing the Vigil service because of its great importance in the liturgical and spiritual life of the Christian. It is an integral part of his preparation for meeting the Lord on the Lord's Day and is a vitally important part of his preparation for the Christian life in this world and the Kingdom to come.

The All-night Vigil is a "long" service. In its abbreviated parish form, it typically lasts about two hours. Some may balk at spending this time in church. But since we spend most of our time in the world caught up in the cares of earthly life, it takes us some time "lay aside all earthly cares" and come into God's presence with undistracted attention. Typically it takes at least half an hour to remove the "din" of life from our consciousness so we are able to open ourselves to God and give ourselves fully to corporate worship. For some, it may take the full service! The Vigil offers us this possibility.

Like the athlete in his sport, the Christian must train for spiritual life. Athletic success and glory does not happen automatically, and it often involves great struggle and sacrifice. But the rewards for the athlete are far greater than any inconveniences or suffering. So it is in the spiritual life: 'no pain, no gain.' To put off the old man and to put on Christ takes some effort on our part as we die to ourselves and learn to submit ourselves to God's will. As St. Paul put it, "I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us" (Romans 5:18). The small suffering and

inconvenience of the Vigil helps to train us for participation in God's glory.

The Vigil typifies the long, watchful waiting of the normal Christian life for the Coming of Christ. The neglect of the Vigil helps explain the spiritual collapse of modern man, who makes no time to be still before his Creator and wants everything now. Renewal of Christian life in today's world requires resisting earthly temptations, idle entertainments, and the like to rediscover the life of prayer in the Church. The pagan world reserves Saturday night for its pleasures. The Christian world reserves Saturday night for its Vigil of prayer. There is a sharp distinction between this world as elusive pleasure and the Kingdom of God as the joyful Presence of the Lord.

If you truly desire to advance in the Christian life, learn to "watch and pray" as part of the Church militant and make the Vigil part of your preparation for meeting Christ the Lord in Holy Communion.

On Spiritual Knowledge

St. Symeon the New Theologian

Spiritual knowledge is like a house built in the midst of a secular and pagan knowledge, in which there is laid up, like a solid and well-secured chest, the knowledge of the inspired Scriptures and the inestimable riches they contain. Those who enter into the house will never at all be able to see those treasure unless this chest is opened for them. But it does not belong to human wisdom ever to be able to open it, so that the riches of the Spirit deposited in it remain unknown to all who are worldly.

A man might pick up the entire chest and carry it on his shoulders without knowing what treasure is contained in it. So a person may read the Scriptures and commit them all to memory and carry them with him as if they were but one psalm, and yet be ignorant of the gift of the Holy Spirit hidden within them. It is not by the chest that its contents are exposed, nor is it by the Scripture that the contents of Scripture become clear? How is this so? Listen!

You see a small chest, firmly secured on every side. By means of its weight and its external beauty you conjecture, or perhaps believe from what you have heard, that it contains a treasure. You pick it up quickly and go off with it. But tell me, what will it profit you if you constantly carry it about closed and locked without opening it? As long as you live, you will never see the treasure it contains; you will not see the sparkling of its precious stones, the luster of its pearls, the flashing gleam of its gold. What will you profit, if you are not found worthy to take even a small part of it to buy some food or clothing? But if, as we have said, you carry the chest about with you entirely sealed, even though it is filled with a great and constantly treasure, will you not be worn out with hunger, thirst, and nakedness? You will not profit at all!

Pay heed to me, brother, and apply this to spiritual things. Think of the chest as the Gospel of

Christ and the other divine Scriptures. In them there is enclosed and sealed up eternal life together with the unutterable and eternal blessing which it contains, though unseen by physical eyes. As the Lord's word says, "Search the Scriptures, for in them is eternal life". As for the man who carries the chest about, think of him as one who learns all the Scriptures by heart and always quotes them with his mouth. He carries them about in the memory of his soul as in a chest containing God's commandments as precious stones where is eternal life. For Christ's words are light and life, as He Himself says, "He who does not obey the Son shall not see life". Together with the commandments, it contains the virtues, like pearls.

To express it differently, just as the illiterate cannot read books like those who are literate, neither can those who have refused to go through the commandments of Christ by practicing them be granted the revelation of the Holy Spirit like those who have brooded over them and fulfilled them and shed their blood for them.

From the commandments spring the virtues, and from them the revelation of the mysteries that re hidden and veiled in the letter. From the fulfillment of the commandments comes the practice of the virtues; through the practice of the virtues the commandments are fulfilled. Thus by means of these the door of knowledge has been opened to us; or, rather, it has been opened, not by them, but by Him who has said, "he who loves Me will keep My commandments, and My Father will love him, and I will reveal Myself to him." When, therefore, God "lives in us and moves among us" and perceptibly reveals himself to us, then we consciously contemplate the contents of the chest, the divine mysteries that re hidden in the divine Scripture. Let no one deceive himself—in no other way it is possible for the chest of knowledge to be opened to us, and for us to enjoy the good things that it contains and partake of them and contemplate them.

But what are these good things of which I speak? They consist in perfect love (that is toward God and our neighbor), contempt of all things that are visible, mortification of the flesh and "its members that are on earth", including evil desire. Just as a dead man has no thought whatever and perceive nothing, so we ourselves shall have no thoughts of evil desire or of passionate sentiment at any time. We shall not feel the tyrannical oppression of the evil one, but be mindful only of the commandments of our Savior Christ. We shall think of immortality, of the incorruption of eternal glory, of the kingdom of heaven, of our adoption as sons through the regeneration of the Holy Spirit. Thereby we become sons by adoption and grace, we are called "heirs of God and fellow-heirs of Christ," and together with these things we acquire "the mind of Christ" and through Him see God and Christ Himself dwelling in us and moving among us in a way that we can know.

All these things are granted to those who hear God's commandments and do them; they enjoy them

abundantly together with those unutterable and ineffable things that are above these things, through the opening of the chest of which we have spoken, that is, the uncovering of the eyes of our minds and the contemplation of the things that are hidden in Holy Writ. But others, who lack the knowledge and experience of any of the things of which we have spoken, have no taste of their sweetness, of the immortal life derived from them, since they lean on the mere study of the Scriptures. Nay, rather, this very study will judge and condemn them at their departure from this life even more than those who have not heard the Scriptures at all. Some of these men err through ignorance and pervert all the divine Scriptures as they interpret them in accordance with their passionate desires. They wish to comment themselves as though there were to be saved apart from the exact observance of Christ's commandments, and so they altogether deny the power of the Holy Scriptures.

This is natural, for the things that are sealed up and closed, unseen and unknown by all men, are opened up by the Holy Spirit alone. When they have thus been unveiled they become visible and knowable to us. How then will those who claim that they have never known at all the Holy Spirit's presence, radiance, illumination, and His coming to dwell in them have the power to know or perceive or thing of them in any way? How shall they apprehend such mysteries, who have never at all experienced in themselves the recasting, renewal, transformation, reshaping, regeneration, that He bring about? Those who have not yet been baptized in the Holy Spirit, how can they know the change that comes over those who have been baptized in Him? Those who have not been "born from above" (as the Lord said), those who have been born of God and have become the children of God? Those who have refused to experience this, but by their negligence have missed this glory—for they have received the power to become such—tell me, what knowledge will enable them to understand or in any way imagine what the others have become?

God is Spirit, invisible, immortal, inaccessible, incomprehensible. Those who are born of Him He makes to be such as himself, like the Father who has begotten them. They may be touched and seen in body only; in other respects they are known to God alone and know only Him; or, rather, they wish to be known to God alone and constantly strive to look to Him and are anxious to be seen by Him. To express it differently, just as the illiterate cannot read books like those who are literate, neither can those who have refused to go through the commandments of Christ by practicing them be granted the revelation of the Holy Spirit like those who have brooded over them and fulfilled them and shed their blood for them. The man who takes a sealed and closed book cannot see what is written in it nor can he understand its subject as long as the book remains sealed, even though he may have learned all the wisdom of the world. Likewise, even he who, as we have said, has learned all

the divine Scriptures by heart will never be able to know and perceive the mystical and divine glory and power hidden in them without going through all God's commandments and taking the Paraclete with him. The Paraclete will open to him the words like a book and mystically show him the glory they contain. Indeed, with the eternal life that causes them to spring forth, He will as well reveal the blessings of God hidden in them, blessing that are veiled and utterly invisible to the despisers and the negligent. This is to be expected, since they have nailed all their sense to the vanity of the world and are passionately attached to the pleasures of life and to physical beauty. But since the vision of their souls is dinned, they are unable to see and to contemplate the intellectual beauties of God's unutterable blessings.

One whose bodily eyes are weak cannot at all look on a brightly shining sunbeam; if he stares at it he at once loses such sight as he still has. So he whose spiritual eyes are weak and whose senses are subject to passions cannot contemplate the excellence or beauty of a body without passion or harm to himself. Whatever peace of thought he possessed before, whatever calm of evil desire, he loses them as he lingers to reflect on the passion. Consequently, such a person is wholly unable to perceive even his own infirmity. For if he has that that he was sick, it was because he believed that there were others who were healthy, and perhaps he blamed himself for being the cause of his sickness and was concerned for getting rid of it. Now, however, such a person holds that all men are subject to passions and looks on himself as their equal, and claims that it is impossible for him to be better than all others. Why is this? So that this wretched man may with them succumb to passion, since he is unwilling to rid himself of such an evil. Had he been willing, he would have had the strength, for he would have received the ability from God. For as many of us as were baptized into His Name have received from Him the power to divest ourselves of our past inborn corruption like an old garment, and to become sons of God and clothed with Christ.

But far be it from us, brethren, to become like those who take this attitude and think such thoughts, men of earth, and utterly dried up. Rather, may we follow Christ, who has died for us, and has risen, and exalted us to heaven. Let us continually follow in His footsteps, being cleansed by penitence from the defilement of sin and clothed in the birth garment of incorruption that belongs to the Spirit, in the same Christ our God, to whom is due all glory, honor, and adoration, forever and ever. Amen. *St. Symeon the New Theologian: The Discourses*

Upcoming Events 2018

31 October: All Saints Party
11 November: Parish Thanksgiving Meal
15 November: Nativity Fast Begins
2 December: Children's Craft Fair

GLORY BE TO GOD IN ALL THINGS!