



**August 9, 2009**

**9<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST**

**The Holy Greatmartyr and Healer Panteleimon;  
Saint Clement of Ochrid**

**RESURRECTIONAL TROPARION - TONE EIGHT:**

You did descend from on high, O Merciful One! You did accept the three day burial to free us from our sufferings! O Lord, our Life and Resurrection: Glory to You!

[http://www.westsrbdio.org/AUDIO\\_Bulletin/Troparion\\_Resurrection\\_Tone\\_8.wav](http://www.westsrbdio.org/AUDIO_Bulletin/Troparion_Resurrection_Tone_8.wav)

**ST. PANTELEIMON TROPARION – TONE THREE:**

Holy martyr Panteleimon, the healer, intercede with the merciful God to grant the remission of sins to our souls.

**RESURRECTIONAL KONTAKION - TONE EIGHT:**

By rising from the tomb You did raise the dead and resurrect Adam. Eve exults in Your Resurrection, and the world celebrates Your Rising from the dead, O greatly Merciful One! [http://www.westsrbdio.org/AUDIO\\_Bulletin/Kontakion\\_Resurrection\\_Tone\\_8.wav](http://www.westsrbdio.org/AUDIO_Bulletin/Kontakion_Resurrection_Tone_8.wav)

**ST. PANTELEIMON KONTAKION – TONE FIVE:**

Having emulated God’s mercy, you have received from Him the power of healing, O contender and martyr of Christ God. By your prayers heal our spiritual diseases, constantly driving away the originator of temptations from those who faithfully sing: ‘Save us, O God!’

**HYMN TO THE MOTHER OF GOD - TONE SIX:**

Steadfast Protectress of Christians and constant advocate before the Creator, do not despise the cry of us sinners; but in your goodness come speedily to help us who call on you in faith. Hasten to hear our petition and to intercede for us, O Theotokos, for you always protect those who honor you!

**ХИМНА БОГОРОДИЦИ – ГЛАС 6:**

Непостидна заштитнице Хришћана, незаменљива пред Творцем Посреднице, не презри гласе мољења нас грешних, него као Блага притекни у помоћ нама који Ти са вером вапијемо: Пожури на молитву и похитај на умољавање, Богородице, свагдашња Заштитнице оних који те поштују.

## EPISTLE & COMMENTARY

### **THE PROKIMENON: PSALM 76: 11 IN THE 8<sup>TH</sup> TONE:**

Pray and make your vows before the Lord our God!

### **1 CORINTHIANS 3: 9-17**

Brethren, for we are God's fellow workers; you are God's field, you are God's building. According to the grace of God which was given to me, as a wise master builder I have laid the foundation, and another builds on it. But let each one take heed how he builds on it. For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if anyone builds on this foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, each one's work will become clear; for the Day will declare it, because it will be revealed by fire; and the fire will test each one's work, of what sort it is. If anyone's work which he has built on it endures, he will receive a reward. If anyone's work is burned he will suffer loss, but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire. Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you? If anyone defiles the temple of God, God will destroy him. For the temple of God is holy, which temple you are.

### **THE ALLELUIA VERSES: PSALM 95: 1, 2**

Come let us rejoice in the Lord! Let us make a joyful noise to God our Savior! Let us come before His face with thanksgiving; let us make a joyful noise to Him with psalms!

### **EPISTLE COMMENTARY**

**Fellow workers** is the Biblical concept of synergism, shown here by how the Apostles work together with God in carrying out the ministry. So too, we as God's fellow workers cooperate with Him to do His will, not as equals but as servants who willfully and obediently participate in His work.



Miracle-working icon of St. Panteleimon (18<sup>th</sup> century) from the Holy Skete of Koutloumousi, Mt. Athos.

**GOSPEL & COMMENTARY**

**MATTHEW 14: 22-34**

At that time, Jesus immediately made His disciples get into the boat and go before Him to the other side, while He sent the multitudes away. And when He had sent the multitudes away, He went up on the mountain by Himself to pray. Now when evening came, He was alone there. But the boat was now in the middle of the sea, tossed by the waves, for the wind was contrary. Now in the fourth watch of the night, Jesus went to them, walking on the sea. And when the disciples saw Him walking on the sea, they were troubled, saying, "It is a ghost!" And they cried out for fear. But immediately Jesus spoke to them, saying, "Be of good cheer! It is I; do not be afraid." And Peter answered Him and said, "Lord, if it is You, command me to come to You on the water." So He said, "Come." And when Peter had come down out of the boat, he walked on the water to go to Jesus. But when he saw that the wind was boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink he cried out saying, "Lord, save me." And immediately Jesus stretched out His hand and caught him, and said to him, "O you of little faith, why did you doubt?" And when they got into the boat, the wind ceased. Then those who were in the boat came and worshiped Him saying, "Truly, You are the Son of God." When they had crossed over, they came to the land of Gennesaret.

**GOSPEL COMMENTARY**

This miracle implies the divinity of Jesus as Messiah because He holds dominion over nature. In saying to the disciples, "**Be of good cheer! It is I; do not be afraid,**" He is also assuring us He will be with His people in the midst of the storms of life; "**Come**" is the call of Christ in the midst of turmoil. The Greek term for **doubt** here means wavering, hesitation or vacillation. Peter is not denying the faith, but he hesitates and weakens because he has taken his eyes off Christ and focused on the storm.

**SPIRITUAL ARTICLES**

**Reflection from *The Prologue* for July 27/August 9 by St. Nikolai Velimirovic**

If you give alms to the poor, know that inasmuch as you do good works for your neighbor, so much and more do you do for yourself. St. Anthony says: "Both life and death come to us from our neighbor." St. Peter Damascene writes: "As the poor should give thanks to God and love the rich who do them good, even more should the rich give thanks to God and love the poor; for they are saved by the providence of God, both now and in the future age, because of their alms. For without the poor, they not only cannot attain the salvation of their souls, but they also cannot avoid the temptations of wealth." Alms which are given out of vanity or with disdain are of no benefit. In earlier times, the wealthy would bring gold to the hermits and beg them to accept it. It was a rare occurrence for the hermits to accept alms gladly, and when they did, it was out of compassion for the rich. The most destitute of men received alms out of compassion!

**The Holy Great-martyr Panteleimon**

Panteleimon was born in Nicomedia of a Christian mother and a pagan father. His mother was named Eubula and his father Eustorgius. As a young man, he studied the science of medicine. The priest Hermolaus befriended him, taught him the Christian Faith and baptized him. Panteleimon miraculously cured a blind man whom other doctors had treated in vain; he healed him by the name of Christ and baptized him. The doctors, full of envy, accused Panteleimon as a Christian, and he went before the Emperor Maximian to stand trial. “He stood before the earthly king in body but in mind he stood before the heavenly King.” He freely declared to the emperor that he was a Christian, and in his presence healed a paralytic of his long-standing illness. This miracle drew many pagans to the Christian Faith. The emperor subjected Panteleimon to torture, but the Lord appeared to him on several occasions, and delivered him whole and unharmed. Then St. Hermolaus, along with Hermippas and Hermocrates suffered. Sentenced to death, St. Panteleimon knelt in prayer. At that moment, the executioner struck him on the neck with the sword, but it broke as though made of wax. The executioner was unable to execute Panteleimon until the saint completed his prayer and gave him permission to do so. His relics possess the ability to heal. Panteleimon was executed under an olive tree which was thereafter adorned with much fruit. “Panteleimon” means “all-merciful,” or “all-compassionate.” The All-merciful God received his righteous soul and glorified him among His great saints. This wonderful martyr suffered honorably for Christ in his youth, on July 27, 304. St. Panteleimon is invoked during the prayers of the Blessing of Waters and in the Sacrament of Holy Unction, together with St. Hermolaus and the other unmercenary and wonderworking saints. A most beautiful church dedicated to this saint is located on the Holy Mountain.

### **Saint Clement, Archbishop of Ochrid**

Clement was a disciple of Saints Methodius and Cyril. After the death of St. Methodius, Clement, under pressure from the Germans, traveled southward from Moravia. Clement and his companions—Gorazd, Nahum, Sava, and Angelarius (together, they were called “The Five”)—crossed the Danube River, where they were guests of Emperor Boris Michael. Following this they came to the region of Ohrid. They first founded a monastery in Belica, where Clement’s first episcopal see was located. Afterward, he moved to Ochrid, and from there developed his great archpastoral and illuminating activity for the entire region. In Ochrid St. Clement erected a church to St. Panteleimon. He had many disciples, who copied books in the Slavonic script for the Slavic peoples. St. Nahum especially assisted him in this work. He worked miracles during his life, and his relics manifest a healing power to the present day. Following great labors and faithful service to God, he reposed peacefully in Ochrid, in the year 916. His wonderworking relics repose in a church formerly dedicated to the Holy Theotokos, which was re-dedicated to him.



Icon of Saint Clement of Ochrid.  
**IMPORTANT REMINDERS & ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**Mark your calendars for Diocesan Days, September 4-6, 2009**

Follow this link for information on the 13<sup>th</sup> Annual Diocesan Days:

[http://www.westsrbdio.org/Diocesan\\_Days/Diocesan\\_Days\\_2009/xhtml/index.html](http://www.westsrbdio.org/Diocesan_Days/Diocesan_Days_2009/xhtml/index.html)

For **Continual Education in Liturgy and Theology**, we recommend the following article:

[http://www.westsrbdio.org/Theology/The\\_Eucharist\\_and\\_the\\_Kingdom\\_of\\_God.doc](http://www.westsrbdio.org/Theology/The_Eucharist_and_the_Kingdom_of_God.doc)

Serbian version: [http://www.verujem.org/pdf/zizijulas\\_evharistija.pdf](http://www.verujem.org/pdf/zizijulas_evharistija.pdf)

We will offer the same article here in sections on a weekly basis; today, Parts VII and VIII.

## THE EUCHARIST AND THE KINGDOM OF GOD

*For the things of the Old Testament are the shadow.  
Those of the New are an image. Truth is the state of things to come.*  
(Maximus the Confessor)

### **VII. The sacrifice of the paschal lamb**

The Divine Eucharist is *a sacrifice*. The patristic tradition in both East and West lays great stress on this aspect of the Eucharist. So, for instance: Cyril of Jerusalem (*Catechesis* 23:8, 9), Gregory the Theologian (*Orations* 2:95 and 4:52), Cyril of Alexandria (*On the Mystical Supper* 5) and John Chrysostom (*On the Epistle to the Hebrews* 17:3),<sup>1</sup> as well as the Divine Liturgies of St. John Chrysostom and of St. Basil the Great which are celebrated in the Orthodox Church, call the Eucharist a *sacrifice* which is “unbloody,” “reasonable,” etc. This sacrifice is none other than the death on the Cross of Christ, whose Body and Blood are offered “for many” (Mark 14:24, Matt. 26:28); in other words, they have the effect of *deliverance* from sins, which are “forgiven” thanks to this sacrifice and the “communion” of the “many” in it, which is the fount of “eternal life.”

This sacrificial character of the Divine Eucharist is indisputable both in biblical consciousness and theology, and in that of the Fathers and the Liturgy, The point that we often tend to overlook or underestimate is the connection and relationship between this sacrificial character of the Eucharist and the coming of the Kingdom of God, the “last times.” The Eucharist is indisputably the very sacrifice of the Lord upon the Cross. But what is the relationship of this sacrifice with the coming of the Kingdom? This question is of vital importance for theology, and also for the way in which we as believers experience this great mystery of the Church.

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<sup>1</sup> Chrysostom insists particularly on this aspect of the Eucharist, which he connects with the Last Supper and the sacrifice of Christ on the Cross, and also with heavenly worship and the Kingdom. See *On Hebrews* 11:2,3 and 14:1-2; *On the Priesthood* 3:4, and elsewhere. As to Latin Fathers, see for instance Ambrose (*On the Duties of the Clergy* 1:248; *On Faith* 4:124, and elsewhere), and Augustine (*Confessions* 9:32; *Enchiridion* 110; *On Psalms* 21 and 33; *City of God* 10:20, etc.).

All the indications from the story of the Last Supper, handed down to us by the Gospels and the Apostle Paul, testify that with the words “this is My Body” and “this is My Blood” Christ was referring to Himself as the *Paschal Lamb* (cf. 1 Cor. 5:7ff., “for Christ our paschal lamb has been sacrificed for us”). This identification of Christ with the paschal lamb was so widespread in the early Church that it was repeated without elucidation, not only by the Apostle Paul but also by other texts from the apostolic age, such as 1 Peter (1:19), Revelation (5:6, 12 and 12:11), St. John’s Gospel (1:29, 36), *et al.* So it is not by chance that in the language of the Church’s liturgy, the portion of the eucharistic bread which is changed into the Body of Christ at the Divine Eucharist came to be called the Lamb.

The sacrifice of the paschal lamb has its roots in the exodus of Israel from Egypt, as described in the Book of Exodus (12:6). In the case of the Last Supper, however, it is clear that we have not merely a remembrance and repetition of the sacrifice of the Lamb in Exodus, such as took place at every celebration of the Jewish Passover, but the sacrifice of the *perfect, eschatological* paschal Lamb. This is borne out by many elements in the story of the Last Supper in the Gospels, as also by the liturgical practice of the early Church. Let us refer to some of these as examples.

We have already underlined, at the beginning of this study, the fact that the Lord clearly links the Last Supper with the Kingdom of God, according to the account given us by the Gospels. What we must note here is the connection of the sacrifice to which Christ refers there with the *New Covenant*. It has already been observed by biblical scholars that the term “Covenant” should be regarded as equivalent to the term “Kingdom of heaven.”<sup>2</sup> The sacrifice of Christ as the Paschal Lamb is the fulfillment of the eschatological purpose of the sacrifice both of the original paschal Lamb in Exodus, and of all the subsequent sacrifices performed by the Jews in imitation of the sacrifice of that lamb. So when Christ says at the Last Supper, and the Church repeats in the course of the Eucharist, that “this is My Blood, the Blood of the New Covenant,” our thoughts are directed toward the coming and establishment of the Kingdom of God, and not simply toward an event which took place in the past. The sacrifice of the Lord upon the Cross cannot be isolated from its eschatological significance. Remission of sins is itself linked in the New Testament with the coming of the Kingdom (Matt. 6:12; Luke 11:4; John 30:23, etc.), and this surely applies especially to the remission of sins which stems from the sacrifice of Christ as Paschal Lamb.

Things are still clearer in the book of Revelation, which without a doubt contains elements or fragments of ancient eucharistic liturgy.<sup>3</sup> In this book the description of Christ as the Lamb occurs repeatedly, and, without any doubt, in connection with the paschal lamb of Exodus 12:6. The eschatological significance that Revelation gives to the Lamb comes across clearly from the following remarks, which are of profound significance:

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<sup>2</sup> See J. Behm, “Diatheke,” in G. Kittel, *Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament*, vol. 2 (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer, 1935).

<sup>3</sup> See P. Prigent, *Apocalypse et Liturgie* (Neuchâtel: Delachaux et Niestlé, 1964). On the influence of this book on the Orthodox Liturgy, see P. Bratsiotis, “L’Apocalypse de saint Jean dans le culte de l’Église grecque orthodoxe.” *Revue d’Histoire et Philosophie religieuses* 42 (1962): pp. 116-121.

(a) The “lamb that was slain” has the authority to open the book with seven seals, the contents and meaning of which are revealed only at the end of history.

(b) The sacrifice of the Lamb does not concern only the people of Israel, but people “from every tribe and tongue and people and nation” (5:9). The universal character of this salvation suggests the end of history and the dawning of the “day of the Lord” (1 Cor. 1:8; 1 Thess. 5:2, etc.). It is characteristic that the Apostle Paul, who awaits the Second Coming of Christ imminently, regards as its “first fruits” the return of the gentiles and their grafting into the trunk of Israel (2 Thess. 2:13).

Thus the fact that the blood of the Lamb is shed “for all” refers us to the “Servant” of God in the book of Isaiah (chapters 52 and 53) who “bore the sin of many and was given up for their sins” (53:12, LXX), but who also in the last times *will bring together the scattered Israel* and will be “a light to the nations, that my salvation may reach to the end of the earth” (49:6), because “many nations will wonder at Him . . . for they that have been told of Him shall see, and they that have not heard shall understand” (52:15, LXX).

(c) In particular, we should note the connection in the Book of Revelation between the Lamb that was slain and the “new song,” the “alleluia” which is repeated three times by a great multitude and by the whole of creation (“like the sound of many waters”) in the context of the marriage of the Lamb and the worship of Him (19:1-8).

The fact that this “alleluia” is an eschatological hymn is made clear by the reason given for it in the text itself, “For the Lord our God the Almighty reigns” (19:6): in other words, the Kingdom of God has been established. This is also why, despite the fact that the lamb has been *slain*, the prevailing tone is one of joy: “let us rejoice and be glad” (19:7), recalling the “in gladness” of Acts (2:46) in connection with the celebration of the Eucharist by the first Christians.

These observations take on even greater interest if this hymn is connected with the Last Supper itself. The Gospels note (Matt. 26:30, Mark 14:26) that immediately after the supper and the words of Christ, which connect it with the Kingdom, “when [Christ and the Disciples] *had sung a hymn*, they went out to the Mount of Olives.” As expert scholars indicate, this refers to the *hallel* which followed the Jewish paschal meal, in other words the singing of Psalms 114-118 (113-117) antiphonally, with one of the group reading the text aloud while the others (cf. the “multitude” or the “people” in Revelation) would respond with “alleluia” after the middle of each verse. Already in Christ’s time these psalms had an eschatological-messianic meaning for the Jews. But does not the same apply to us Orthodox, who preserve faithfully the liturgical tradition of the ancient Church, which carries on the worship of the first Church? The verses which end Psalm 118 (117)—“This is the day which the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it”—are clearly eschatological in Orthodox worship, since “this day” for us is the day of the Resurrection. The final verses of that psalm (“Blessed is he that comes in the name of the Lord . . . the Lord is God and has appeared unto us,” etc.) have the same eschatological character.

Conclusion: the Last Supper and the Lamb slain for our salvation cannot be understood without reference to the “last day,” the “day of the Lord,” the Parousia and the establishment of the Kingdom of God. In the words of St. Cyril of Alexandria, the

Eucharist is not simply “the performance of the dread sacrifice” but “the gift of immortality and a pledge of life without end.”<sup>4</sup>

This conclusion is reinforced and confirmed by another observation; the ancient Church never celebrated its Mystical Supper, the Divine Eucharist, on the same day as the Lord’s death, but *after* it. It is known from history that Christians in Asia Minor in the second century celebrated Easter on the fourteenth of Nisan, the same day as the Jewish Passover. It is significant, however, that they did not celebrate the Eucharist except at dawn the next day, in other words after the Jews’ paschal meal, during which the Christians fasted. The fact that even today the Orthodox Church, following the ancient tradition, waits for the Jewish Passover to pass and only then celebrates its own Passover (Easter) is not simply due, as is often held, to an anti-Jewish stance on its part; apart from anything else, it is due to the fact that the Passover of the Church, which is associated with joy and gladness, cannot precede the moment in time at which, historically, the Last Supper took place and the Crucifixion followed. That time is a time of fasting, while Easter is a time of *festivity*.

Have we ever seriously thought why the Church dissociated not only its Passover, but also its Eucharist, from fasting, and linked it with the radiance of the Resurrection? It is significant, as we noted earlier, that celebration of the Eucharist on fast days was forbidden by the Church. (The exception of the Exaltation of the Cross and the commemoration of the Forerunner does not negate the rule.) This has been confined, of course, to the period of Great Lent,<sup>5</sup> but the sense remains: the Eucharist is an eschatological event and cannot be other than festive, joyful and radiant. Its sacrificial character is transformed into the joy of the Resurrection, which means eschatological joy. In Christ there is no such thing as sacrifice without deliverance. And deliverance does not just mean remission of personal sins, in accordance with the Western spirit, Latin and Protestant, but the ultimate transfiguration of the world, the overcoming of corruption and death. This is what we celebrate when we perform the Eucharist: a sacrifice on the Cross which takes its meaning from the Resurrection, as the first realization in history of the Kingdom which is to come.

### **VIII. A festival of the Resurrection**

The most eloquent proof of the eschatological character of the Eucharist and its identification with the foretaste of the Kingdom of God is the fact that from the beginning it has been associated with Sunday, as the most appropriate day for its celebration. We referred above to the Quartodecimans in Asia Minor in the second century who celebrated Easter on the fourteenth of the month of Nisan. This, of course, involved celebration of the Eucharist on a day other than Sunday, at least on Easter day. As is well known, this custom gave rise to the paschal controversy which threatened to divide the early Church because, apart from anything else, it created variations in the time of fasting in places such as Rome where Easter was celebrated on Sunday by the local Church, and not according to the practice of the Quartodecimans, who came from Asia Minor and were living in Rome in the second century. But it was not long before this custom gave

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<sup>4</sup> PG 77:1028.

<sup>5</sup> According to the testimony of the historians Socrates (*Church History* 5:22) and Sozomen (*Church History* 7:19), in the early Church, at least in Alexandria, the Eucharist was not celebrated on any fast day throughout the year, and not just during Lent.

way, and the celebration of Easter and performance of the Eucharist on Sunday became general. Evidence for connection of the Eucharist with Sunday could start with the Acts of the Apostles (20:7) and the First Epistle to the Corinthians (16:2) and proceed to Revelation (1:10), the *Didache* (14:1) and Justin (*First Apology* 67) who is clear on this question.

But why Sunday? What led the Church to this practice? What is the deeper theological meaning of this practice?

Sunday is the day of the *Resurrection* of Christ. The Christians regarded it thus from the beginning,<sup>6</sup> on the basis of the biblical evidence that the Resurrection took place “on the first day of the week” (Mark 16:2; cf. Matt. 28:1 and Luke 24:1). But the meaning that they gave to the Resurrection of Christ from the beginning was very profound, and was necessarily carried over both to Sunday and to the Eucharist which was celebrated on that day. It is worth noting some of the fundamental aspects of this meaning in order to understand better the relationship between Eucharist and Kingdom.

As the day of the Resurrection, Sunday is the *eighth day*. The reason is that the “new creation” begins on this day, when “our Christ appeared risen from the dead, it being forever, however, the first in terms of its significance. For Christ, being the firstborn of all creation, again became the chief of another race, that which is regenerated by Him. . . .”<sup>7</sup> St. Basil the Great throws light on the eschatological character of the “eighth day” in his work *On the Holy Spirit* (27:66), when he writes the following highly significant words, which we must not forget when we speak about the Divine Eucharist:

“Thus we all look to the east at our prayers, but few of us know that we are seeking our own old country, Paradise, which God planted in Eden in the east. *We pray standing on the first day of the week*, but we do not all know the reason. *On the day of the Resurrection* we remind ourselves of the grace given to us by standing at prayer, *not only because we are risen with Christ and are bound to seek those things which are above, but because that day seems to us in some sense an image of the age which we expect*. Therefore, though it is the beginning of days, it is not called by Moses “first” but “one” . . . as though the same day often recurred. Now “one” and “eighth” are the same, in itself distinctly indicating that day which is really “one” and truly “eighth” . . . *the state which follows after this present time, the day which knows no end or evening, and no successor, that age which does not end or grow old*. Of necessity, then, *the Church teaches her own foster-children to offer their prayers on that day standing, in order that through the constant reminder of the endless life we may not neglect to make provision for our removal thither*. Moreover, all of Pentecost is *a reminder of the resurrection expected in the age to come*. For that one and first day, if seven times multiplied by seven, completes the seven weeks of the holy Pentecost. And so it is a likeness of eternity. . . . *On this day the rules of the Church have educated us to prefer the upright attitude of prayer, for by their plain reminder they, as it were, make our mind to dwell no longer in the present but in the future.*”

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<sup>6</sup> See, for example: Ignatius, *Magnesians* 9; *Epistle of Barnabas* 15:811.; Justin, *First Apology* 67, *Dialogue* 41 and 138; Tertullian, *On Prayer* 23; Eusebius, *Church History* 111.27:5; *Apostolic Constitutions* 11.59, V.20, 19, etc.

<sup>7</sup> Justin, *Dialogue* 138.

We have quoted this lengthy passage in its entirety because it gives us quite clearly the eschatological meaning of Sunday and of the Eucharist which is celebrated on that day. We note in particular that for St. Basil, the avoidance of kneeling on Sunday<sup>8</sup> is necessitated not only by the fact that it is the day of the Resurrection, but also by the *expectation of the age to come*, so that our minds are made to dwell “no longer in the present but in the future.” This strong impetus *toward what is to come*, not simply toward what is above, brings the dimension of *time* into eschatology, and recalls what we have said above in commenting on the relevant passages of St. Maximus: the eschatology of the Divine Liturgy, like that of Sunday, is not a Platonic type of representation of a heavenly state, but a *movement and progression toward the future*. Maximus and Basil concur on this point.

It is noteworthy, again, that St. Basil refers to praying toward the east. For the east was not only the place of the original paradise, but also the direction from which the Lord is expected to appear at His Second Coming. As St. John of Damascus says, summarizing the reasons for praying toward the east:<sup>9</sup> there are many reasons, and they include the future coming of the Son of Man from the east according to the Gospel passage (Matt. 24:27): as the lightning comes from the east and shines as far as the “west, so will be the coming of the Son of Man.” So after quoting this passage, Damascene concludes, “Waiting for Him with longing, we worship toward the east”: in other words, because we are awaiting Christ’s final coming in glory, we pray facing east.

This resurrectional and eschatological character of the Eucharist has another consequence, too: during the Eucharist, the Church is *bathed in light and adorned with all available splendor*. A Eucharist in dimly-lit churches, ostensibly for the sake of devout concentration, is antithetical to its very nature. Unfortunately, the pietism which has crept into our consciousness and our worship has misled us into the mistaken idea that richness in vestments and in the decoration of churches is a bad thing. Just one simple observation shows how alien to the Orthodox tradition this idea is: the richest and most splendid vestments in our Church are to be found in our monasteries, and particularly on the Holy Mountain, the most important and authoritative monastic center for Orthodoxy. Why, then, does the genuine Orthodox monk, who according to the Sayings of the Fathers should wear such a shoddy and threadbare *riason* that he could hang it outside his cell door in the certainty that no one would be tempted to steal it—why during the Liturgy does this same man, as celebrant, put on the most splendid vestments, yet without being scandalized or scandalizing anyone else? Quite simply, because the eschatological character of the Eucharist remains vivid in his consciousness: in the Eucharist, we move within the space of the age to come, of the Kingdom. There we experience “the day which knows no end or evening, and no successor, that age which does not end or grow old,” in the words of St. Basil. We have every possibility for practicing our humility outside the Liturgy. We do not have the right to turn the Eucharist into an opportunity to show off our humility, or a means to psychological experiences of compunction. Besides, “He who offers and He who is offered,” the real celebrant, is

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<sup>8</sup> The prohibition of kneeling on Sunday goes back to ancient times, as Irenaeus testifies in his lost work *On the Pascha*. See fragment 6 in the series Library of the Greek Fathers, published by the Apostoliki Diakonia, Volume 5, page 174.

<sup>9</sup> *Exposition of the Orthodox Faith* 13 (PG 94:1136).

Christ, and indeed the risen Christ as He will come *in His glory* on the last day, and those who celebrate the Liturgy are nothing more than *icons* of this eschatological Christ. And of course “the honor paid to the icon passes to the prototype.”

Thus, once again, much depends on whether in the Eucharist we simply refer back to the past, or whether we look to the last times, to the future.

How resolutely the Church refused to link the Eucharist with sorrow and compunction is shown by the fact that even on the days when the martyrs are commemorated, when she recalls their martyrdom, she celebrates the Divine Eucharist with the same splendor as on Sundays. It is known that from the first centuries it became the practice to celebrate the Eucharist on the feastdays of the martyrs,<sup>10</sup> and subsequently of all the saints. What is often overlooked is the fact that from the beginning the martyrdom of the saints was seen not just as a repetition of Christ’s sacrifice on the Cross, but as a *revelation of the glory of His Kingdom*. Already the description of the martyrdom of Stephen in the Acts of the Apostles (7:55ff.) makes clear the eschatological character that the Church recognizes in it: “he gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God; and he said, Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God.” (The reference to the “Son of Man,” who is considered an eschatological figure in Scripture, is characteristic.) The same goes for the “Acts”—the martyrologies—of all the martyrs of the early Church.<sup>11</sup> The celebration of the Eucharist on saints’ days cannot be separated from the eschatological character of the Eucharist, which for that reason is always celebrated with particular splendor and involves the lifting of the fast.

*To be continued...*

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<sup>10</sup> A. Fytrakis, *Relics and Tombs of the Martyrs in the First Three Centuries* (in Greek) (Athens, 1955), pp. 77ff.

<sup>11</sup> A moving passage, and one that reveals the eschatological character both of martyrdom and of the Eucharist, is the following extract from the martyrdom of Saint Agathonike, published by Harnack, “Die Akten des Karpus, des Papyrus und der Agathonike,” in *Texte und Untersuchungen*, III, 3/4 (Leipzig, 1888), pp. 451f.: “A certain Agathonike was standing beside them (during the martyrdom of Papyrus and Carpus); and seeing the glory of the Lord which Carpus said that he saw, and contemplating the heavenly invitation, at once she lifted up her voice: ‘For me too is this supper (τὸ ἄριστον, or ‘dinner’) prepared. And I too must eat my share of this glorious meal.’” The association between martyrdom and the Eucharist is clear, as is the eschatological character of both.