



**May 9, 2010**

**SIXTH SUNDAY OF PASCHA;  
SUNDAY OF THE BLIND MAN**

**PASCHAL TROPARION - TONE ONE:**

Christ is risen from the dead, trampling down death by death, and upon those in the tombs bestowing life!

**RESURRECTIONAL TROPARION - TONE FIVE:**

Let us, the faithful, praise and worship the Word, co-eternal with the Father and the Spirit; born for our salvation from the Virgin. For He willed to be lifted up on the Cross in the flesh, to endure death, and to raise the dead, by His glorious Resurrection.

**SUNDAY OF THE BLIND MAN KONTAKION - TONE FOUR:**

I come to You, O Christ, blind from birth in my spiritual eyes, and call to You in repentance: "You are the most radiant Light of those in darkness!"

**PASCHAL KONTAKION - TONE EIGHT:**

You did descend into the tomb, O Immortal. You did destroy the power of death. In victory did you arise, O Christ God, proclaiming, "Rejoice" to the myrrh-bearing women, granting peace to Your Apostles and bestowing Resurrection on the fallen!

**INSTEAD OF 'IT IS TRULY MEET...' we sing:**

The Angel cried to the Lady, full of grace: "Rejoice, O pure Virgin! Again, I say: 'Rejoice, your Son is risen from His three days in the tomb! With Himself He has raised all the dead.'" Rejoice, O ye people!

Shine, shine, O New Jerusalem! The glory of the Lord has shone on you! Exult now, and be glad, O Zion! Be radiant, O pure Theotokos, in the Resurrection of your Son!

## EPISTLE & COMMENTARY

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

*Pray and make your vows before the Lord our God!*

### **ACTS 16: 16-34**

In those days, it happened, as we went to prayer, that a certain slave girl possessed with a spirit of divination met us, who brought her masters much profit by fortunetelling. This girl followed Paul and us and cried out, saying, "These men are the servants of the Most High God, who proclaim to us the way of salvation." And this she did for many days. But Paul, greatly annoyed, turned and said to the spirit, "I command you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her." And he came out that very hour. But when her masters saw that their hope of profit was gone, they seized Paul and Silas and dragged them into the marketplace to the authorities. And they brought them to the magistrates, and said, "These men, being Jews, exceedingly trouble our city; and they teach customs which are not lawful for us, being Romans, to receive or observe." Then the multitude rose up together against them; and the magistrates tore off their clothes and commanded them to be beaten with rods. And when they had laid many stripes on them, they threw them into prison, commanding the jailer to keep them securely. Having received such a charge, he put them into the inner prison and fastened their feet in the stocks. But at midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening to them. Suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken; and immediately all the doors were opened and everyone's chains were loosed. And the keeper of the prison, awaking from sleep and seeing the prison doors open, supposing the prisoners had fled, drew his sword and was about to kill himself. But Paul called with a loud voice, saying, "Do yourself no harm, for we are all here." Then he called for a light, ran in, and fell down trembling before Paul and Silas. And he brought them out and said, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" So they said, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved, you and your household." Then they spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all who were in his house. And he took them the same hour of the night and washed their stripes. And immediately he and all his family were baptized. Now when he had brought them into his house, he set food before them; and he rejoiced, having believed in God with all his household.

### **ALLELUIA**

*Look upon me and have mercy on me. Lead my steps according to Your word.*

### **COMMENTARY**

The Power of the Risen Christ is seen in every exorcism. St. Paul was able to discern that this slave girl was possessed by a demon--even though she was proclaiming the truth. He was "greatly annoyed" because the child didn't have the ability to discern this truth for herself because of the demon. Impure praise from the enemies of God is unacceptable. We see this also when Christ confronts the Legion in the Gerasene man. The Demonic Legion also calls Jesus Christ the Son of God--but he scolds the demon, for this same reason. It is

necessary for all people to be free to accept Christ on their own, keeping the harmony of God's love for us by granting us free will. The demon did not allow this in the slave girl; hence, St. Paul exorcised it. How often do we have the same reaction as the owners of the slave girl? When we profit from the work of the devil, do we not also rail against Christ if the profit is eliminated through God's blessing? May our Risen Lord bless us with the faith and strength of character to continuously do that which profits God--and not ourselves.

## GOSPEL & COMMENTARY

### **JOHN 9: 1-38**

At that time as Jesus passed by, He saw a man who was blind from birth. And His disciples asked Him, saying, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" Jesus answered, "Neither this man nor his parents sinned, but that the works of God should be revealed in him. I must work the works of Him who sent Me while it is day; the night is coming when no one can work. As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world." When He had said these things, He spat on the ground and made clay with the saliva; and He anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay. And He said to him, "Go, wash in the pool of Siloam" (which is translated, Sent). So he went and washed, and came back seeing. Therefore the neighbors and those who previously had seen that he was blind said, "Is not this he who sat and begged?" Some said, "This is he." Others said, "He is like him." He said, "I am he." Therefore they said to him, "How were your eyes opened?" He answered and said, "A Man called Jesus made clay and anointed my eyes and said to me, 'Go to the pool of Siloam and wash.' So I went and washed, and I received sight." Then they said to him, "Where is He?" He said, "I do not know." They brought him who formerly was blind to the Pharisees. Now it was a Sabbath when Jesus made the clay and opened his eyes. Then the Pharisees also asked him again how he had received his sight. He said to them, "He put clay on my eyes, and I washed, and I see." Therefore some of the Pharisees said, "This Man is not from God, because He does not keep the Sabbath." Others said, "How can a man who is a sinner do such signs?" And there was a division among them. They said to the blind man again, "What do you say about Him because He opened your eyes?" He said, "He is a prophet." But the Jews did not believe concerning him, that he had been blind and received his sight, until they called the parents of him who had received his sight. And they asked them, saying, "Is this your son, who you say was born blind? How then does he now see?" His parents answered them and said, "We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind; but by what means he now sees we do not know, or who opened his eyes we do not know. He is of age; ask him. He will speak for himself." His parents said these things because they feared the Jews, for the Jews had agreed already that if anyone confessed that He was Christ, he would be put out of the synagogue. Therefore his parents said, "He is of age; ask him." So they again called the man who was blind, and said to him, "Give God the glory! We know that this

Man is a sinner.” He answered and said, “Whether He is a sinner or not I do not know. One thing I know: that though I was blind, now I see.” Then they said to him again, “What did He do to you? How did He open your eyes?” He answered them, “I told you already, and you did not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you also want to become His disciples?” Then they reviled him and said, “You are His disciple, but we are Moses’ disciples. We know that God spoke to Moses; as for this fellow, we do not know where He is from.” The man answered and said to them, “Why, this is a marvelous thing, that you do not know where He is from; yet He has opened my eyes! Now we know that God does not hear sinners; but if anyone is a worshiper of God and does His will, He hears him. Since the world began it has been unheard of that anyone opened the eyes of one who was born blind. If this Man were not from God, He could do nothing.” They answered and said to him, “You were completely born in sins and are you teaching us?” And they cast him out. Jesus heard that they had cast him out; and when He had found him, He said to him, “Do you believe in the Son of God?” He answered and said, “Who is He, Lord, that I may believe in Him?” And Jesus said to him, “You have both seen Him and it is He who is talking with you.” Then he said, “Lord, I believe!” And he worshiped Him.

#### **COMMENTARY**

The power of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is continually manifested in the world. This Sunday of the Blind Man reflects back to the beginning: Christ is the True Light--the Illumination of the world--and whoever believes in Him will not perish, but have everlasting life. Only the Son of God has the power to illuminate those “blind from birth.” The blind man is truly symbolic of humanity: all need illumination by the Light of the world. An important lesson for all Christians is that our Savior rejects the assumption that all troubles and maladies are necessarily the consequence of personal or parental sin. This does not mean that such may be true in some cases, but sometimes, tribulation simply exists so that the works of God may be revealed. Never before in history was a man born blind given his sight. This unprecedented healing confirms that Jesus Christ is truly the Light of the world--the Son of God--the Anointed One. May the Light of our Risen Lord illuminate our souls as well, raising us up with Him as Children of the Light!

#### **SPIRITUAL ARTICLES**

***From The Prologue for Apr. 26/May92 by St. Nikolai Velimirovic:***

#### **The Hieromartyr Basil, Bishop of Amasea**

Licinius, the brother-in-law of Constantine, to whose sister he was married, pretended to be a Christian before the great emperor. When he received authority from the emperor to govern the entire East, he began, at first secretly and later openly, to persecute the Christians and to strengthen idolatry. His wife grieved much over this, but she was unable to dissuade her husband from this shamefulness.

Giving himself over to idolatry, Licinius also gave himself up to all the passions without restraint but, most of all, to brutality toward women. Under the assault of these unclean passions, Licinius wanted to defile the virgin Glaphyra, who was in the service of the empress. Glaphyra complained to the empress, and the empress secretly sent her away from the imperial court of Nicomedia to the province of Pontus. Glaphyra arrived at the town of Amasea and was cordially received there by Bishop Basil and other Christians. Glaphyra was elated that God had saved her virginity, and she wrote to the empress concerning this. The empress also rejoiced and she forwarded money to the church in Amasea. However, a letter of Glaphyra's, which was directed to the empress, fell into the hands of the emperor's eunuch, who showed it to Licinius. The emperor, learning where Glaphyra was staying, immediately ordered that she and the bishop be brought back to Nicomedia. In the meantime Glaphyra died, and the soldiers brought Basil back to Nicomedia, alone and bound. Following tortures and imprisonment, this blessed man was beheaded and thrown into the sea, in the year 322. Through a vision of an angel of God, his clergy found his body near the town of Sinope. They removed his body from the water with the aid of a fisherman's net and translated it to Amasea, where they honorably buried it in the church which he, by his efforts, had built. The Emperor Constantine raised up an army against Licinius, defeated him, captured him, and exiled him to Gaul, where he ended his God-hating life.

### **Saint Janiæije of Deviè**

Janiæije was a Serb from Zeta. As a young man he was overwhelmed with love for Christ. He left his home and family and withdrew to the region of Ibar at the mouth of the Black River, into a narrow cave, in which, according to tradition, St. Peter of Koriš had lived a life of asceticism before him. When his fame began to spread among the people, he fled to Drenica and hid in the thick forest of Deviè. Here St. Janiæije spent years in solitude, silence, and prayer. According to tradition, the Serbian Prince George Brankoviæ brought his mentally ill daughter to him, and the saint healed her. In gratitude, George built a monastery on this spot, known today by the name of Deviè. The holy and wonderworking relics of Janiæije repose there. In this monastery, more recently, there lived in asceticism a famous and God-pleasing hermitess, the nun Euphemia, better known in the area of Kosovo by the name "Blessed Stojna." She reposed in the Lord in the year 1895.

### **Saint Stephen, Bishop of Perm**

Stephen was a Russian by birth. From an early age he was devoted to prayer and divine contemplation. As a young man, Stephen went to Rostov, where he was tonsured a monk in the Monastery of St. Gregory the Theologian. Learning about the land of Perm, which was completely overrun with the weeds of paganism, Stephen desired to become a missionary in this land. He immediately dedicated himself to studying the language of Perm, and when he had mastered the language, he composed an alphabet and translated the ecclesiastical books into that language. With the blessing of the Metropolitan of Moscow, Stephen, as a presbyter, started

out on his apostolic mission and began to preach the Gospel with apostolic zeal in the dense darkness of the paganism of Perm. Having baptized a few souls, he endeavored to build a church in Perm dedicated to the Holy Annunciation. When the Church of God flourished in Perm, he was consecrated as its bishop. Undergoing every hardship, affliction, malice and humiliation, he succeeded in dispelling the darkness among the heathens of Perm and in illuminating them with the Light of Christ. In his old age he returned to Moscow once more, and there he ended his earthly life and took up his habitation with the Lord in the year 1396.

## **HYMN OF PRAISE**

### **Saint Basil of Amasea**

Basil languishes in a dungeon  
For the honorable Cross and the Faith of Christ.  
Psalms he chants; God he praises,  
That for righteousness' sake He has granted him suffering.  
The emperor's tribune says to Basil:  
"Listen, old man, the emperor Licinius, protector of the gods,  
Orders that you offer sacrifice to the idols,  
And that you dismiss the man Christ.  
If you do not, an evil death awaits you."  
Basil shines with joy,  
And to the tribune he wonderfully responds:  
"Go tell your wicked emperor:  
If you gave me even your entire kingdom,  
But took away my resurrected Christ,  
You would take more than you gave.  
Traitor to Christ the Savior,  
Do you want to make me a traitor, too?  
O giver-of-death, I am not afraid of death;  
I am a servant of Christ the Giver of life."

## **REFLECTION**

The saints are alive and their God-given power does not diminish in time. St. Janiæije of Deviè works miracles today, even as he did during his life on earth some five hundred years ago. A certain Miloš from Hercegovina prepared to travel to Jerusalem on a pilgrimage to the holy shrines. As he was about to depart on his way, St. Janiæije appeared to him in a dream and told him not to go to Jerusalem. "Rather than go to Jerusalem, it would be better for you to go to Deviè," explained the saint, "and there, to restore my church and put it in order." Miloš obeyed the saint and went to the neglected Deviè, cleaned it, put it in order, and made it possible to sing praises to God there again. Miloš became a monk there and remained until the end of his life. During the First World War and the Austrian occupation, a Hungarian officer with a detachment of soldiers came to Deviè. The officer ushered Damaskin, the abbot of the monastery, before the reliquary of St. Janiæije and asked him what was under the slab. "Holy things," replied the abbot. "What kind of holy things?" the

officer laughed. "You have something hidden under there." He then ordered the soldiers to strike the slab with pickaxes and overturn it. While this was being done, the officer was seized with pain in his abdomen. He lay down in bed and, before evening of the same day, died. The frightened soldiers left their work undone and fled the monastery.

## **IMPORTANT REMINDERS & ANNOUNCEMENTS**

### **Iconography Workshop - June 10-25, 2010**

This two week course will be held at the Saint Steven's Serbian Orthodox Cathedral, 1621 West Garvey Avenue, Alhambra, California 91803. The V. Rev. Stamatis Skliris from Athens has returned to the United States for another workshop to teach all those interested in learning and understanding Iconography. Please visit our website at [http://www.westsrbdio.org/iconography\\_studio/june\\_2010\\_course/index.html](http://www.westsrbdio.org/iconography_studio/june_2010_course/index.html) for more information and for an application form.

### **SAVE THE DATE!**

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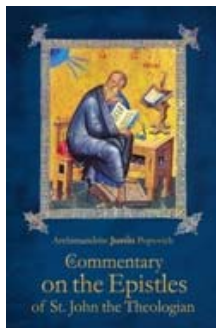
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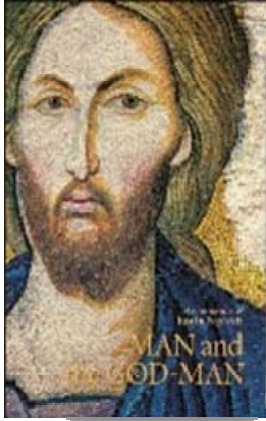
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### **Commentary on the Epistles of St. John the Theologian**

By Archimandrite Justin Popovic

This Commentary on the Epistles of St. John the Theologian - published now, three years after the blessed repose of Venerable Fr. Justin (on the Feast of the Annunciation, 1979) - was written by the tireless Messenger of Christ forty years ago, in circumstances similar to those in which Christ's Holy Evangelist John wrote his sacred Epistles. The text of this 93-page soft-bound book has been translated from the Serbian by Radomir M. Plavsic. Published by Sebastian Press, Western American Diocese of the Serbian Orthodox Church, Contemporary Christian Thought Series, number 5, First Edition  
*Retail price: \$10.*

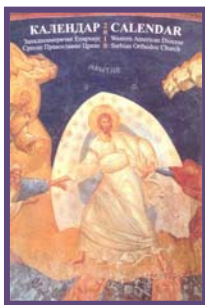


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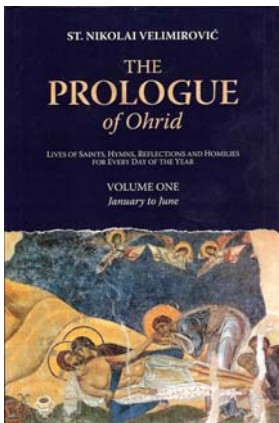
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