

ST. NICHOLAS ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN CHURCH

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Reverend Deacon David Donch Reverend Deacon Michael W. Speck
Sr. Warden - Greg Michaels Jr. Warden - Rocco Lupo Reader Nathaniel Donch



The Temptation of Christ

Sunday, January 10, 2021

**Sunday, January 10 – 10:00 AM – Divine Liturgy followed by a
Sisterhood Meeting.**

Wednesday, January 13 – 8:30 AM Liturgy

Saturday, January 16 - 5:00 PM – Vespers

Sunday, January 17 - 10:00 AM – Divine Liturgy

Saint Gregory, Bishop of Nyssa



Commemorated on [January 10](#)

Saint Gregory, Bishop of Nyssa, was a younger brother of Saint Basil the Great (January 1). His birth and upbringing came at a time when the Arian disputes were at their height. Having received an excellent education, he was at one time a teacher of rhetoric. In the year 372, he was consecrated by Saint Basil the Great as bishop of the city of Nyssa in Cappadocia.

Saint Gregory was an ardent advocate for Orthodoxy, and he fought against the Arian heresy with his brother Saint Basil. Gregory was persecuted by the Arians, by whom he was falsely accused of improper use of church property, and thereby deprived of his See and sent to Ancyra.

In the following year Saint Gregory was again deposed in absentia by a council of Arian bishops, but he continued to encourage his flock in Orthodoxy, wandering about from place to place. After the death of the emperor Valens (378), Saint Gregory was restored to his cathedra and was joyously received by his flock. His brother Saint Basil the Great died in 379.

Only with difficulty did Saint Gregory survive the loss of his brother and guide. He delivered a funeral oration for him, and completed Saint Basil's study of the six days of Creation, the Hexaemeron. That same year Saint Gregory participated in the Council of Antioch against heretics who refused to recognize the perpetual virginity of the Mother of God. Others at the opposite extreme, who worshipped the Mother of God as being God Herself, were also denounced by the Council. He

visited the churches of Arabia and Palestine, which were infected with the Arian heresy, to assert the Orthodox teaching about the Most Holy Theotokos. On his return journey Saint Gregory visited Jerusalem and the Holy Places.

In the year 381 Saint Gregory was one of the chief figures of the Second Ecumenical Council, convened at Constantinople against the heresy of Macedonius, who incorrectly taught about the Holy Spirit. At this Council, on the initiative of Saint Gregory, the Nicene Symbol of Faith (the Creed) was completed.

Together with the other bishops Saint Gregory affirmed Saint Gregory the Theologian as Archbishop of Constantinople.

In the year 383, Saint Gregory of Nyssa participated in a Council at Constantinople, where he preached a sermon on the divinity of the Son and the Holy Spirit. In 386, he was again at Constantinople, and he was asked to speak the funeral oration in memory of the empress Placidia. Again in 394 Saint Gregory was present in Constantinople at a local Council, convened to resolve church matters in Arabia.

Saint Gregory of Nyssa was a fiery defender of Orthodox dogmas and a zealous teacher of his flock, a kind and compassionate father to his spiritual children, and their intercessor before the courts. He was distinguished by his magnanimity, patience and love of peace.

Having reached old age, Saint Gregory of Nyssa died soon after the Council of Constantinople. Together with his great contemporaries, Saints Basil the Great and Gregory the Theologian, Saint Gregory of Nyssa had a significant influence on the Church life of his time. His sister, Saint Macrina, wrote to him: "You are renowned both in the cities, and gatherings of people, and throughout entire districts. Churches ask you for help." Saint Gregory is known in history as one of the most profound Christian thinkers of the fourth century. Endowed with philosophical talent, he saw philosophy as a means for a deeper penetration into the authentic meaning of divine revelation.

Saint Gregory left behind many remarkable works of dogmatic character, as well as sermons and discourses. He has been called "the Father of Fathers."

Saint Ita, Hermitess of Killeedy



Commemorated on [January 15](#)

Saint Ita, “the Foster Mother of the Irish Saints,” was born in the fifth century. She, like many of the Irish saints, was of the nobility. Her parents were devout Christians who lived in County Waterford. She founded a school and convent at Killeedy (Cille Ide) which still bears her name near Newcastle West in Co. Limerick. A holy well still marks the site of her church.

When she decided to settle in Killeedy, a local chieftain offered her a grant of land for the support of the convent, which Saint Ita accepted and cultivated. The convent became known as a training ground for young boys, many of whom became famous churchmen. She received Saint Brendan the Voyager (May 16) when he was only a year old, and kept him until he was six. She also cared for her nephew Saint Mochaemhoch (March 13) in his infancy. She called him “Pulcherius,” because he was such a handsome child.

Many people sought her spiritual counsels, and she also seems to have practiced medicine to some degree. Her life was spent in repentance and asceticism.

Saint Ita once told Saint Brendan that the three things most displeasing to God are: A face that hates mankind, a will that clings to the love of evil, and placing one’s entire trust in riches (Compare Proverbs 6:16-19).

The three things most pleasing to God are: The firm belief of a pure heart in God, the simple religious life, and liberality with charity.

Saint Ita fell asleep in the Lord in 570. Her Feast Day is a local holiday in the district, and her name is a popular one for Irish girls.

ST. NICHOLAS PARISH NEWS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

January 10, 2021



There will be a St. Marion Sisterhood Meeting following the Liturgy today.

Because of the significant spike in COVID-19 cases in our region and out of abundant caution for the health of our faithful, our Annual Church Meeting will not be held at the end of this month as is our custom. The meeting might be scheduled for later this year or possibly held next year. Should any council members wish to discontinue their positions now, we will hold elections using paper ballots. We will ask those whose term of office is expiring at this time to retain their positions for the next year. The usual annual financial and pastor's report will be sent by e-mail or mailed to parishioners who do not have access to the internet. We pray that we will be able to return to our usual parish activities as 2021 progresses.

We are always so grateful for your continued financial support of our church. God Bless You for your kindness.

Church envelopes for 2021 have arrived and are available in the church basement.

Saint Theophan the Recluse, Bishop of Tambov



Commemorated on [January 10](#)

George Govorov, the future Saint Theophan, was born on January 10, 1815 in the village of Chernavsk in the Orlov province where his father was a priest.

At first, George attended a primary school at Liven, then a military school. From 1837-1841 he studied at the Kiev Theological Academy, and probably visited the Monastery of the Caves several times. In these surroundings, it was not surprising that he received the monastic tonsure while he was still a student. After graduation Hieromonk Theophan was appointed rector of Kiev's church schools, and later became rector of the seminary in Novgorod. Before he retired from teaching, Father Theophan served as a professor and Assistant Inspector at the Petersburg Academy.

Saint Theophan was not completely happy with academic work, so he asked to be relieved of his duties. He was assigned to be a member of the Russian Mission in Jerusalem. After being raised to the rank of Archimandrite, he became Rector of Olnets Seminary. Soon he was assigned as the chief priest of the embassy church in Constantinople. Saint Theophan was eventually recalled to Russia to become rector of the Petersburg Academy, and supervisor of religious education in the capital's secular schools.

On May 9, 1859 Saint Theophan was consecrated as Bishop of Tambov, where he established a diocesan school for girls. During his time in Tambov he came to love the secluded Vysha Monastery in his diocese. In 1863 he was transferred to Vladimir and remained there for three years. He also established a diocesan school for girls at Vladimir.

The holy bishop visited parishes throughout his diocese serving, preaching, restoring churches, and sharing the joys and sorrows of his flock. It was very difficult for Bishop Theophan to live in the world and become involved with vain worldly disputes. Many abused his trust, but he could not bring himself to chastise anyone. Instead, he left such unpleasant tasks to the Archpriest of his cathedral.

He was present at the uncovering of the relics of Saint Tikhon of Zadonsk in 1861, and this made a tremendous impression on him, for he had much in common with that saint. He had loved Saint Tikhon from early childhood, and always spoke about him with great enthusiasm. When Saint Tikhon was glorified as a saint on August 13, Bishop Theophan's joy knew no bounds.

In 1866 his request to be relieved of his duties as Bishop of Vladimir was granted. He was appointed as Superior of the Vysha Monastery, but soon resigned from that position. He was permitted to live there and to celebrate services whenever he wished. He also received a pension of 1000 rubles.

As he prepared to leave his diocese, he wished to focus on his own salvation, and to concentrate on undisturbed communion with God. On July 24, 1866 he bade his diocese farewell, leaving the world for a life of reclusion, and to devote himself to writing spiritual books. Through these books, Saint Theophan has become the spiritual benefactor of all Orthodox Christians. Although he sought the Kingdom of God and His righteousness (Mt. 6:33), a reputation as a writer of great significance for the whole world was also added to him.

Bishop Theophan wrote many books, but received no profits from their sale. He tried to keep them as inexpensive as possible, and they quickly sold out. He wrote about topics which others before him had not fully treated, such as how to live a Christian life, how to overcome sinful habits, and how to avoid despair. He tried to explain the steps of spiritual perfection systematically, as one who had himself gone through these various steps. Some of his books include THE SPIRITUAL LIFE AND HOW TO BE ATTUNED TO IT, THE PATH TO SALVATION, and LETTERS ON

THE SPIRITUAL LIFE. He also translated the PHILOKALIA in five volumes, and THE SERMONS OF ST SIMEON THE NEW THEOLOGIAN.

For the first six years in the monastery, Bishop Theophan attended all the services, including the early Liturgy. He stood still in church with his eyes closed so that he would not be distracted. He often celebrated Liturgy on Sundays and Feast Days.

Beginning in 1872, he cut off all relationships with people (except for his confessor) and no longer left his cell to attend church. He built a small chapel in his quarters and dedicated it to the Lord's Baptism. For ten years he served there on Sundays and Feast Days. For the last eleven years of his life he served every day by himself. Sometimes he would sing, and sometimes he kept completely silent.

Whenever anyone visited him on business, Bishop Theophan would reply with as few words as possible, then immerse himself in prayer. If anyone sent him money, he would distribute it to the poor, keeping only a small portion to purchase books.

Whenever he was not occupied with writing or praying, the reclusive bishop worked at carpentry or painting icons. He received from twenty to forty letters each day, and he answered all of them. He was able to discern each writer's spiritual condition, then give detailed answers to the questions of those who were struggling for the salvation of their souls.

His eyesight deteriorated in his latter years, but he did not curtail his work because of it. In the evening, his cell attendant would prepare everything for the bishop to serve Liturgy the next morning. After finishing the Liturgy, Bishop Theophan would knock on the wall to signal the cell attendant to serve him tea. On days when there was no fasting, he would eat lunch at 1:00 P.M. This consisted of one egg and a glass of milk. At four o'clock he would have some tea, and then no more food that day.

Bishop Theophan began to get weaker at the beginning of 1894. He was still writing on the afternoon of January 6, but when the cell attendant came to check on him at 4:30 he found that the bishop had departed to the Lord.

Saint Theophan's body lay in the small church in his cell for three days, then three more days in the cathedral. There was no trace of corruption, however. He was laid to rest in the Kazan church of the Vysha Monastery.

Several of Saint Theophan's books have been translated into English, and are reliable spiritual guides for Orthodox Christians of today. Saint Theophan's gift was the ability to present the wisdom of the Fathers in terms which modern people can understand. Since he lived close to our own time, many readers find his books "more approachable" than the earlier patristic literature. He treats the life of the soul and the life of the body as a unified whole, not as two separate elements, and reveals to people the path of salvation.

January 7, 2021

His Beatitude Metropolitan Tikhon offers statement on recent events

SYOSSET, NY [OCA]

On Thursday, January 7, 2021, His Beatitude Metropolitan Tikhon offered the following statement:

"In the aftermath of the troubling events in Washington, DC, yesterday, may we all keep this country and one another in prayer asking the Lord to grant peace, unity, and hope to all the people of the United States of America. As the Apostle Paul exhorts us to do, "Let love be genuine; hate what is evil, hold fast to what is good; love one another with brotherly affection; outdo one another in showing honor" (Rom 12:9-10).

O Lord Jesus Christ, who have descended the waters of Jordan sanctifying the whole creation and offering us a new life, protect and keep this country and grant it peace, tranquility, and reconciliation!"

Fifteen Quotes from Saint Tikhon of Zadonsk



1. We are blessed, for our Lord has come. He has come for our sake. He likened himself to His people and came to His people for their sake. He came to save the sinners, which means us, for we are among the sinners. He came to redeem the dead, which means us, for we are among the dead. Blessed is the Lord who came to save the sinners and to redeem the dead!

2. Observe the honor that He has accorded us. His death is our life. By His illnesses and ulcers, are He cured our illnesses. He brought us honor and glory by suffering dishonor. Our spiritual rebirth is predicated in His birth. His sorrows are our joy. By his labors, we acquire eternal rest. By his torments, we are spared from our eternal torments. By the journeys of his earthly life, we inherit our fatherland in heaven. His hunger and thirst give us an eternal reprieve from thirst and heat. The goodness that man acquires emanates from Him alone, and to Him alone, we must ascribe.

3. Christ is my wisdom, truth, sanctification and deliverance; the faithful soul will know full well that no truth and sanctity may exist without Christ. Without Him, we may have no enlightenment or deliverance, and all wisdom without Him is madness. Faith in Christ gives wisdom, we are justified, sanctified and redeemed by our faith.

However, without Christ, all wise men are mad, all righteous men are sinful, all pure men are impure, and all men will die.

4. We know that by faith alone we have no power to rise against sin and to defeat it, or to do genuine goodness, and so we plead and pray fervently to God for His help in all these things.

5. A sinner acts towards God like a man who mocks and reviles his keeper and feeder. The sinner sees none of these things, for he is blinded by his sin; but when he opens the eyes of his spirit, he will see, and accept it as true.

6. Many Christians say with their mouths: "We revere You, we bow to You, we glorify and praise you", but their actions show otherwise. They praise and glorify Christ with their mouths, but revile Him by their iniquities.

7. God is impartial, but He has mercy on all who repent... A sinner is destroyed not by the gravity or number of his sins, but by a life without repentance.

8. God and His Divine grace mean everything for our souls; they are its calmness, nourishment, light, glory, honor, wealth, comfort, joy, happiness; they are all the good things that it enjoys when it finds Him. The more it seeks Him, the more it desires Him and will desire and seek Him until it meets Him face to face, We will then draw all the longer from His ever-springing, life-giving source, with eternal longing, and without saturation or excess. For the more we see Him, so much the stronger we desire Him.

9. Kingly honor and worldly fame is to eternal glory like darkness is to light. Earthly wealth is naught by comparison with wealth in heaven. Comfort today is to goodness in heaven is like foul and impure water to clean and life-bringing water; rather, it is meaningless.

10. Truth is like eternal life; once found, it is never lost.

11. A heart that cares for eternal life no longer cares for vain acquisitions; but when vanity enters our hearts, eternal life is lost.

12. When we die, we leave all things behind; not just our possessions, but also the earth and our very bodies; we depart with our souls only, and nothing else. So why should we care about things that we must abandon one day or another?

13. When the son returned to his father from a distant land, how great was his joy at reuniting with him and seeing his face! How heartfelt the welcome and embrace of his father! Imagine then the what blessing it will be for the honorable soul to return from this world, to leave behind its faraway land and its vale of tears, to reunite with its father in heaven, to see His Holy face, to bow before the radiant throne of His Glory, and is met by His holy embrace!

14. We also observe how sweet and comforting it is for a man to rest from his hard labors, and to forget the sorrows and pains of those labors. How sweet and peaceful will it be for the saintly soul to find rest in eternal life from the labor, struggle and feats of piety; after multiplying the talents from the Lord and serving Him and the neighbor with awe and love!

15. Leave the darkness and aspire to the truth, to understand the Truth. Remember the words of our Savior: For many are invited, but few are chosen (Matthew 22:14). We are called by His grace to have eternal life; so let us seek to be not only among the invited but also among the chosen. Reflect upon this diligently and frequently, and you will grow to despise the world with its affections and lusts.

Excerpted from: Writings of the Holy Father Tikhon of Zadonsk, Volume 5.