



SAINT LUKE THE EVANGELIST

AUGUST 30, 2026 — 13TH SUNDAY OF MATTHEW

SAINT PHANTINOS

Saint Phantinos was from Calabria in Italy and was born in the year 902. His father was named George and his mother was Vryaini. From childhood he dedicated himself to God, and when he reached eight years of age he entered the monastery of Saint Elias and became his disciple. There he undertook the labor of acquiring the virtues. He was tonsured a monk and served as the cook of the monastery. And although he was continuously around food, in the second year of his monastic life he only ate once a week some raw vegetables and legumes. Having conquered gluttony and thoroughly purified himself of his passions, he was elevated to serve as ecclesiarch.

Following the repose of Saint Elias, Phantinos, after twenty years of obedience in the monastery, was made worthy of the gift of discernment and divine revelations, and decided to live an eremitic life in Lycaonia of southern Italy. There the devil tried to frighten him away from the place with noises and snakes, and even took on the appearance of his parents, but Phantinos remained unmoved and vanquished his temptations with the sign of the cross. There he continued to struggle amidst great hunger and deprivation, to the point where his clothes withered away and he remained naked,

even through the winter which nearly made him freeze to death. He struggled like this for eighteen years.

One day certain hunters came to the place where Phantinos struggled in asceticism, and recognized him. So they returned and told his parents, who went to meet him and there they had a tearful reunion. He then convinced them to embrace the monastic life, and after they distributed their belongings to the poor they joined their son. Phantinos therefore built one monastery for his mother and sister, and another monastery some distance away for his father and brothers Luke and Kosmas, and he became to all of them a spiritual father in the solitary life. But soon the mountains became like cities, so many followers did he attract, and this brought him to seek solitude every so often, but returned to his monastery to lead the brethren.

When he reached 60 years of age, by divine revelation he departed for Thessaloniki due to a coming invasion of Saracens, in order to inspire the people there towards a life of virtue. He therefore departed for Greece with two of his disciples, Vitaly and Nikephoros. Passing through Corinth, Athens and Larissa, where he stayed for some time at the tomb of Saint Achilleos, he eventually arrived at Thes-

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HYMNS OF THE SMALL ENTRANCE

RESURRECTIONAL APOLYTIKION.

Mode 4.

When the women Disciples of the Lord * had learned from the Angel the joyful message of the Resurrection * and had rejected the ancestral decsion, * they cried aloud to the Apostles triumphantly: * Death has been despoiled, Christ God has risen, * granting His great mercy to the world.

Verse 2: Let heaven and earth praise Him.

When the women Disciples of the Lord * had learned from the Angel the joyful message of the Resurrection * and had rejected the ancestral decsion, * they cried aloud to the Apostles triumphantly: * Death has been despoiled, Christ God has risen, * granting His great mercy to the world.

HYMNS AFTER THE ENTRANCE.

RESURRECTIONAL APOLYTIKION.

Mode 4.

When the women Disciples of the Lord * had learned from the Angel the joyful message of the Resurrection * and had rejected the ancestral decsion, * they cried aloud to the Apostles triumphantly: * Death has been despoiled, Christ God has risen, * granting His great mercy to the world.

FOR THE FORERUNNER.

Mode 2.

The memory of the just is observed with hymns of praise; for you suffices the testimony of the Lord, O Forerunner. You have proved to be truly more ven'erable than

the Prophets, since you were granted to baptize in the river the One whom they proclaimed. Therefore, when for the truth you had contested, rejoicing, to those in Hades you preached the Gospel, that God was manifested in the flesh, and takes away the sin of the world, and grants to us the great mercy.

APOLYTIKION OF OUR PATRON

Mode Pl. 1

The holy Apostle, the All-hymned Luke, * who is acknowledged by the Church of Christ * as the recorder of the Acts of the Apostles, * and the splendid author of the Gospel of Christ. * Let us praise with sacred hymns as a physician, * who heals the infirmities of man, * and the ailments of nature, * who cleanses spiritual wounds, and prays unceasingly for our souls.

KONTAKION.

Mode 4.

Both Joachim and Anna from their sterility's stigma, and Adam and Eve from their mortality's ruin have been set free, O immaculate Maid, by your holy nativity. For this do your people hold celebration, redeemed from the guilt of transgression as they cry to you, "The barren one bears the Theotokos, the nourisher of our Life."



READINGS

The Epistle Thirteenth Sunday

The reading is from Paul's First Letter to the Corinthians.

1 Cor. 16:13–24

Brethren, Watch! Stand firm in the faith! Be courageous! Be strong! Let all that you do be done in love. Now I beg you, brethren (you know the house of Stephanas, that it is the first fruits of Achaia, and that they have devoted themselves to serve the saints), that you also be in service to people like this, and to everyone who helps in the work and labors. I rejoice at the coming of Stephanas, Fortunatus, and Achaicus; for what was lacking on your part, they supplied. They refreshed my spirit and yours; show therefore your appreciation to such people. The Churches of Asia greet you. Aquila and Priscilla greet you much in the Lord, together with the Church that is in their house. All the brethren greet you. Greet one another with a holy kiss! This greeting is by me, Paul, with my own hand. If anyone does not love the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be accursed. Maranatha! May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you. My love is with you all in Christ Jesus. Amen.

The Gospel Thirteenth Sunday of Matthew

The reading is from the holy Gospel according to Matthew.

Mt. 21:33–42

The Lord said this parable, “There was a man who was the owner of a household. He planted a vineyard, put a fence around it, dug a winepress in it, built a tower, and leased it out to farmers. He then left for another country. When the season for the fruit drew near, he sent his slaves to the farmers, to receive his fruit. But the farmers took his slaves, beat one, killed another, and stoned yet another. Again, the owner sent other slaves, even more than the first time; and they treated them in the same way. Then he sent his son to them, saying: ‘They will respect my son!’ But the farmers, when they saw the son, said to each other, ‘This is the heir! Come, let us kill him and seize his inheritance.’ And so they seized him, threw him out of the vineyard, and killed him. Therefore, when the lord of the vineyard returns, what will he do with those farmers?” They answered him, “He will bring those wretches to a wretched end and he will lease out the vineyard to other farmers who will give him the fruit in its season.” Jesus said to them, “Have you never read in the Scriptures: ‘The [very] stone which the builders rejected was made the head of the corner. This was from the Lord and it is marvelous in our eyes?’”



UPCOMING SERVICES

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 1, ECCLESIASTICAL NEW YEAR, ORTHROS / DIVINE LITURGY, 9AM

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 5, GREAT VESPERS, 5PM

ANNOUNCEMENTS

WELCOME BAGS

Thank you to all who donated items!

OPERATION CLASSROOM

Thank you to all who generously donated to this National Philoptochos campaign!

COMMUNITY COOKBOOK

Philoptochos is collecting non-fasting Pot Luck recipes. Deadline for submissions is Sept 20. A cookbook will be given to all who participate. See Presvytera Jeannie if you have any questions.

PHILOPTOCHOS ECCL. NEW YEAR PARTY

Join us on Saturday, Sept. 12 from 2:30-4:30pm followed by Great Vespers for food and fellowship for the New Year. All are welcome, but you must RSVP on the form in the Narthex.

SEPTEMBER PHILOPTOCHOS DRIVE

During the month of September, there will be a special collection jar for ZOE for Life! This is an Orthodox Christian initiative offering confidential support to women facing planned or unplanned pregnancies or struggling to provide for their young children. See flyer for more details.

WELCOME BACK COLLEGE STUDENTS!

Philoptochos will be offering a special Coffee Hour on September 13 to welcome back college

students. Please plan to stay after Divine Services.

REMINDERS ABOUT PROPER ATTIRE

1. Wear modest clothing that does not distract others from worship. 2. WOMEN: Dresses and skirts (of at least knee-length) are the traditional Church clothing for women. Blouses / tops should cover the shoulder and the stomach. Lipstick or lip balm should not be worn, and makeup is strongly discouraged. 3. MEN: Men should wear dress pants and polo / button-down shirts – no tshirts, including no shirts with writing or images. Denim pants are acceptable, work jeans are discouraged. 4. CHILDREN should be dressed for Church in their best clothing. Sloppy dress and play-clothes sends the wrong message to youngsters. 5. EVERYONE: Please wear closed toe shoes. Sandals should be worn with socks. Please do not wear brightly colored sneakers, or shoes with lights in them. No bare feet in Church. Shorts are never permitted, even for children. Tattoos should be covered, as much as possible. Hats are not worn inside the Church. REMEMBER: We come to Church to worship the Living God and our clothing should be simple, clean and respectable.

saloniki. There he faced many hardships, but also worked many miracles and spoke various prophecies. After eight years there, he reposed in peace at the age of 73 in the year 974. And soon after his repose, he continued to work many miracles.

SAINT ALEXANDER OF SVIR (+ 1533)

Saint Alexander of Svir was born on July 15, 1448, on the feast day of the Prophet Amos, and was named for him in Baptism. Saint Alexander was a beacon of monasticism in the deep forests of the Russian North, living in asceticism, and he was granted the extraordinary gifts of the Holy Spirit.

His parents, Stephen and Vassa (Vasilisa) were peasants of the village of Mandera near Lake Ladoga, at the bank of the River Oyata, a tributary of the River Svira. They had sons and daughters who were already grown and lived away from their parents. Stephen and Vassa wanted to have another son. They prayed fervently and heard a voice from above: "Rejoice, good man and wife, you shall bear a son, in whose birth God will give comfort to His Church."

Amos grew up to be a special child. He was always obedient and gentle, he shunned games, jokes and foul talk, he wore poor clothes and so weakened himself with fasting, that it caused his mother anxiety. Upon coming of age, he once met some Valaam monks who had come to the Oyata to purchase necessities, and for other monastery business.

By this time Valaam was already known as a monastery of deep piety and strict ascetic life. After speaking with the monks, the young man was fascinated by their account of the skete life (with two or three monks together) and the

solitary life of the hermit. Knowing that his parents had arranged a marriage for him, the youth went secretly to Valaam when he was nineteen. In the guise of a traveler, an angel of God appeared to him, showing him the way to the island.

Amos lived for seven years at the monastery as a novice, leading an austere life. He spent his days at work, and his nights in vigilance and prayer. Sometimes he prayed in the forest bare chested, all covered by mosquitoes and gnats, to the morning song of the birds.

In the year 1474, Amos received monastic tonsure with the name Alexander. After several years, his parents eventually learned from Karelians arriving in Mandera where their son had gone. Following the example of their son, the parents also went to the monastery and were tonsured with the names Sergius and Barbara. After their death, Saint Alexander, with the blessing of the abbot of the monastery, settled on a solitary island, where he built a cell in the crevice of a cliff and continued his spiritual exploits.

The fame of his asceticism spread far. Then in 1485 Saint Alexander departed from Valaam and, upon a command from above, chose a place in the forest on the shore of a beautiful lake, which was afterwards named Holy. Here the monk built himself a hut and dwelt in solitude for seven years, eating only what he gathered in the forest. Later at this place, Holy Lake, 36 versts from the future city of Olonets and 6 versts from the River Svira, Saint Alexander founded the Monastery of the Life-Creating Trinity, and 130 sazhen (i.e. 910 feet) off from it, at Lake Roschina, he built himself a hut on

the future site of the Saint Alexander of Svir Monastery.

During this time the Saint experienced fierce sufferings from hunger, frost, sickness and demonic temptations. But the Lord continually sustained the spiritual and bodily strength of the righteous one. Once when suffering with terrible infirmities, he not only was unable to get up from the ground, but was unable to even lift his head. He just lay there and sang Psalms. Then a glorious man appeared to him. Placing his hand on the sore spot, he made the sign of the Cross over the Saint and healed him.

In 1493 while hunting for deer, the adjoining land-owner Andrew Zavalishin happened to come upon the Saint's hut. Andrew spoke to him of a light he had seen at this place, and he entreated the monk to tell him about his life. From that point Andrew started to visit Saint Alexander often, and finally through the monk's guidance, he went to Valaam, where he was tonsured with the name Adrian. Later, he founded the Ondrusov Monastery, and led a saintly life (August 26 and May 17).

Andrew Zavalishin was not able to keep silent about the ascetic, in spite of the promise he had given. News of the venerable one began to spread widely, and monks started to gather around him. Therefore, Saint Alexander withdrew from the brethren and built himself a dwelling place 130 sazhen from the monastery. There he encountered a multitude of temptations. The demons took on beastly shapes, they hissed like snakes, urging him to flee. However, the Saint's prayer scorched and dispersed the devils like a fiery flame.

In 1508, twenty-three years after he came to this secluded spot, the Life-Creating Trinity

appeared to Saint Alexander. One night he was praying in his hut. Suddenly, an intense light shone, and the monk saw Three Men, robed in radiant white garb, approaching him. Radiant with heavenly glory, they shone in a pure brightness greater than the sun. Each of them held a staff in His hand.

The monk fell down in terror, and coming to his senses, prostrated himself on the ground. Taking him up by the hand, the Men said: "Have trust, blessed one, and fear not." The Saint was ordered to build a church and a monastery. He fell to his knees, protesting his own unworthiness, but the Lord raised him up and ordered him to fulfill the commands. Saint Alexander asked in whose name the church ought to be dedicated. The Lord said: "Beloved, as you see those speaking with you in Three Persons, so also construct the church in the Name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, the Trinity One-in-Essence. I leave you peace and My peace I give you." And immediately Saint Alexander beheld the Lord with out-stretched wings, going as though along the ground, and He became invisible.

In the history of the Russian Orthodox Church this appearance is acknowledged as unique. After this vision the monk began to think where to build the church. Once, while praying to God, he heard a voice from above. Gazing up to the heavens, he saw an angel of God in mantiya and klobuk, such as Saint Pachomios (May 15) had seen. The angel, standing in the air with outstretched wings and upraised hands, proclaimed: "One is Holy, One is the Lord Jesus Christ, to the Glory of God the Father. Amen." Then he turned to Saint Alexander saying, "Build on this spot the church in the

Name of the Lord Who has appeared to you in Three Persons, Father and Son and Holy Spirit, the Undivided Trinity.” After making the sign of the Cross over the place three times, the angel became invisible.

In that same year a wooden church of the Life-Creating Trinity was built (in 1526 a stone church was built here). And at the same time as the building of the church, the brethren began to urge Saint Alexander to accept the priesthood. For a long time he refused, considering himself unworthy. Then the brethren began to implore Saint Serapion, Archbishop of Novgorod (March 16), to convince him to accept the office. And so in that very year Saint Alexander journeyed to Novgorod and received ordination from the holy archbishop. Soon afterwards, the brethren also asked the Saint to be their abbot.

As abbot, the monk became even more humble than before. His clothes were all in tatters, and he slept on the bare ground. He himself prepared food, kneaded dough and baked bread. One time there was not enough firewood and the steward asked the abbot to send any idle monks for firewood. “I am idle,” said the Saint, and he began to chop firewood. Another time, he carried water.

When all were asleep, the Saint was often busy grinding wheat with hand-stones to make more bread. At night he made the round of the cells, and if he heard vain conversations, he lightly tapped on the door and departed, but in the morning he admonished the brother, imposing a penance on him.

Towards the end of his life, Saint Alexander decided to build a stone church of the Protection of the Most Holy Theotokos. One evening, after singing an Akathist to the Most Holy

Theotokos, he settled down to rest in the cell and suddenly said to his cell-attendant Athanasius, “Child, be sober and alert, because at this hour we will have a wondrous and astounding visit.”

Then came a voice like thunder, “Behold the Lord and His Mother are coming.” The monk hastened to the entrance to the cell, and a great light illumined it, shining over all the monastery brighter than the rays of the sun. The Saint beheld the All-Pure Mother of God over the foundation of the Protection Church sitting at the site of the altar, like an empress upon a throne. She held the Infant Christ in her arms, and a multitude of angels stood before her shining with indescribable brightness.

He fell down, unable to bear the great light. The Mother of God said, “Arise, chosen one of my Son and God. I have come here to visit you, my dear one, and to look upon the foundation of my church. I have made entreaty for your disciples and monastery. From this time on there will be an abundance; not only during your life, but also after your death. Everything your monastery requires will be granted in abundance. Behold and watch carefully how many monks are gathered into your flock. You must guide them on the way of salvation in the Name of the Holy Trinity.”

The Saint arose and saw a multitude of monks. Again the Mother of God said: “My dear one, if someone carries even one brick for the building of my church, in the Name of Jesus Christ, my Son and God, his treasure will not perish.” Then she became invisible.

Before his death the Saint displayed wondrous humility. He summoned the brethren and told them: “Bind my sinful body by the

legs and drag it to a swampy thicket and, after covering it with skins, throw it in.” The brethren answered: “No, Father, it is not possible to do this.” Then the holy ascetic ordered that his body not be kept at the monastery, but in a place of seclusion, the Church of the Transfiguration of the Lord. Saint Alexander departed to the heavenly Kingdom on August 30, 1533 at the age of 85.

Saint Alexander of Svir was glorified by wondrous miracles during his life and upon his death. In 1545, his disciple and successor, Abbot Herodion, compiled his Life . In 1547 the local celebration of the Saint began and a service was composed for him. On April 17, 1641, during the rebuilding of the Transfiguration Church, the incorrupt relics of Saint Alexander of Svir were uncovered and his universal Church celebration was established on two dates: the day of his repose, August 30, and the day of glorification (and the uncovering of his relics), April 17.

Saint Alexander of Svir instructed and raised up a whole multitude of disciples, as the Mother of God had promised him. They are the Holy Monks: Ignatius of Ostrov, Leonid of Ostrov, Cornelius of Ostrov, Dionysius of Ostrov, Athanasius of Ostrov, Theodore of Ostrov, and Therapon of Ostrov.

Besides these Saints, there are disciples and conversers with Saint Alexander of Svir, who have separate days of commemoration: Saint Athanasius of Syandem (January 18), Saint Gennadius of Vasheozersk (February 9), Saint Macarius of Odozh (August 9), Saint Adrian of Ondrosov (May 17), Saint Nicephorus of Vasheozersk (February 9), Saint Gennadius of Kostroma and Liubimograd (January 23).

All these Saints (except Saint Gennadius of Kostroma) are depicted on the Icon of the Monastic Fathers who shone forth in the land of Karelia (icon from the church at the Seminary in Kuopio, Finland). The festal celebration of the Synaxis of the Saints who shone forth in Karelia is celebrated by the Finnish Orthodox Church on the Saturday falling between October 31 and November 6.

The incorrupt relics of the Saint were removed from the Svir Monastery by the Bolsheviks on December 20, 1918 after several unsuccessful attempts to confiscate them. There was an infamous campaign to liquidate the relics of the saints which continued from 1919 to 1922. Many relics of Russian saints were stolen and subjected to “scientific examination” or displayed in anti-religious museums. Some were completely destroyed.

Hoping to prove that the relics were fakes, the Soviets conducted many tests. However, the tests only confirmed that the relics were genuine. Finally, the holy relics were sent to Petrograd’s Military Medical Academy. There they remained for nearly eighty years.