



## SAINT LUKE THE EVANGELIST

SEPTEMBER 20, 2026 — SUNDAY AFTER THE HOLY CROSS

### THE GREAT MARTYR EUSTATHIOS

This Great Martyr of Christ, Eustathios, was a most illustrious general of Rome, during the reign of Emperor Trajan in the year 100. He was famously recognized by others for his virtue, his way of life and thought, and he was merciful and compassionate to the poor. He was first called Plakidas, and his wife was Tatiani.

Hence this infamous man, because he was held under the delusion of idols, and for his great reverence and goodness, was made worthy to be called from above to faith in God, just as the Apostle Paul.

Once, as he was hunting and chasing after a large deer, and was near it and approaching it, O the wonder!, he saw standing between the two antlers of the deer, the honorable Cross of Christ, which shined like the sun. And on it was Christ crucified, from which he heard a voice saying: "Plakidas, why are you chasing after me? I am Christ."

Thus the blessed one was taught piety by Christ, and was baptized with his entire household. And instead of Plakidas he was renamed Eustathios. His wife, instead of Tatiani, was renamed Theopisti. And of his sons, one was renamed Agapios and the other Theopistos.

Then he was instructed by Christ, who appeared to him by means of trial temptations

which he was to suffer, like Job, and so he was surrendered over to the tempting demon. Immediately he lost everything he had, and left his homeland with his wife and children. As for his wife, he lost her on the journey to ship-masters, who were barbarous and wild people. His two children were taken by two wild animals when he was crossing a river. However, his wife and children were kept unharmed by divine Providence. Saint Eustathios, who was formerly rich and a man of office, was left to work for a salary. Under such circumstances this unbreakable man bravely endured, though not for a short period.

Due to the fact that barbarians went up against the land of the Romans, and the emperor was seeking help in this battle against the barbarians, there came to his remembrance the brave Eustathios who of old had manly virtue and was victorious. Therefore there was an investigation and he was sought for throughout the world, and the good Eustathios was soon recognized by the royal men seeking him. They were surprised by the pitiful vision they saw, for he was in an impoverished state when he was found. So he went to the emperor and was magnificently honored by being raised to his former office. He was sent against the barbarians, and altogether conquered them. On his

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## HYMNS OF THE SMALL ENTRANCE

### APOLYTIKION. FOR THE CROSS. MODE 1.

**S**ave, O Lord, Your people and bless Your inheritance, granting victory to the faithful over the enemy, and by Your Cross protecting Your commonwealth.

### HYMNS AFTER THE ENTRANCE.

#### RESURRECTIONAL APOLYTIKION.

##### *Grave Mode.*

**B**y means of Your Cross, O Lord, You abolished death. \* To the robber You opened Paradise. \* The lamentation of the myrrh-bearing women You transformed, \* and You gave Your Apostles the order to proclaim to all \* that You had risen, O Christ our God, \* and granted the world Your great mercy.

### APOLYTIKION. FOR THE CROSS.

##### *Mode 1.*

**S**ave, O Lord, Your people and bless Your inheritance, granting victory to the rulers over the enemies, and by Your Cross protecting Your commonwealth.

### FOR THE SAINTS.

##### *Mode 4. Come quickly.*

**Y**our Martyrs, O Lord, were worthily awarded by You \* the crowns of incorruption, in that they contested for You our immortal God. \* Since they possessed Your power, they defeated the tyrants, \* dashing the demons' powerless displays of defiance. \* O Christ God, at their fervent entreaties, save our souls.

### APOLYTIKION OF OUR PATRON

##### *Mode Pl. 1*

**T**he 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. Automelon.*

**Y**ou who were lifted on the cross voluntarily, \* O Christ our God, bestow Your tender compassions \* upon Your new community to which You gave Your name. \* Cause our faithful emperors to be glad in Your power, \* granting them the victories against their adversaries. \* And for an ally, Lord, may they have You, \* peace as their armor, the trophy invincible.



## READINGS

### *The Epistle*

*Gal. 2:16–20*

**B**rethren, yet knowing that no one is justified by the works of the law but through faith in Jesus Christ, we believed in Christ Jesus, so that we might be justified by faith in Christ, and not by the works of the law, because no one will be justified by the works of the law. But if, even though we desired to be justified in Christ, we were found to be sinners, does that mean that Christ is a servant of sin? Certainly not! Indeed, if I build up again those things which I [once] destroyed, I show that I am breaking the law. For I, through the law, died to the law, so that I might live to God. I have been crucified with Christ, and it is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. I now live this life in the flesh, but I live [it] by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and who gave himself up for me.

### *The Gospel*

*Mk. 8:34–38; 9:1*

**T**he Lord said: “Whoever wants to come after me, let him deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me. Indeed, whoever wants to save his life will lose it; and whoever will lose his life for my sake and for the sake of the Good News will save it. What will it profit if someone gains the whole world and loses his life? Or what will someone give in exchange for his life? Whoever will be ashamed of me and my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of Man also will be ashamed of when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels.” And he said to them, “Amen, I tell you that there are some standing here who will not taste death until they see the Kingdom of God come with power.”



## UPCOMING SERVICES

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 23, CONCEPTION OF THE FORERUNNER, ORTHROS / DIVINE LITURGY, 8:30AM

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 26, GREAT VESPERS, 5PM

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### BASIL

Thank you to everyone who donated basil for the feast day of the Exaltation of the Cross.

### COMMUNITY COOKBOOK

Today is the last day to participate in the Community Cookbook sponsored by Philoptochos. Please see Presv Jeannie if you have any questions.

### RONALD McDONALD HOUSE

Philoptochos would like a group of volunteers to cook a meal at the Ronald McDonald House in October. They need 8 people to help. Dates and times are TBD. Please contact Lisa Panicker, Donna Hoffman, or Karen Sade if you are interested.

### COFFEE HOUSE

Join us on Tuesday, October 6 at 6:30pm for coffee and fellowship. We ask that you bring a canned food item for the Food Bank or a \$5 donation.

### 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 based in Ohio. They offer confidential support to women facing planned and unplanned pregnancies or those who are struggling to provide for their young children. See flyer for more information.

### CATECHISM CLASS

There will be class today.

### PROPER ATTIRE

1. Dress modestly so as not to distract others from worship. 2. WOMEN: Knee-length or longer dresses and skirts are traditional; tops should cover the shoulders and stomach. No lipstick or lip balm; makeup is strongly discouraged. 3. MEN: Dress pants and polo or button-down shirts. No T-shirts, especially with writing or images. Denim is acceptable; work jeans are discouraged. 4. CHILDREN: Dress children in their best clothing; sloppy dress and playclothes send the wrong message. 5. EVERYONE: Wear closed-toe shoes; sandals only with socks. No brightly colored or light-up sneakers, no bare feet, no shorts (even for children), no hats indoors. Cover tattoos as much as possible. REMEMBER: We come to worship the Living God; dress simply, cleanly, and respectably.

return to Rome after the battle, by the economy and plan of God, he found his wife and children, and they were reunited. Wherefore he magnified God for all things which He paradoxically economized.

Returning to Rome with his wife and children, he went to Emperor Hadrian, in the year 117, and having received great gifts for his victory, he was urged to sacrifice to the gods in thanksgiving for his victory. The Saint told him that he was victorious through the power of Christ, and not the power of the gods. This enraged the tyrant. First, he removed the position of general from him. Then he was brought to be fed to wild lions with his wife and children. Because the four were kept unharmed from the wild beasts, they were all placed into a red-hot copper ox. In this way their sacred souls were delivered into the hands of God, and their holy bodies were kept completely unharmed from the fire, so that the unbelieving people were amazed and came to faith in Christ. And the Christians were compelled to glorify their Holy God. So they reverently took up their bodies and lavishly buried them.

### SAINT EUSTATHIOS KATAPHLOROS, ARCH-BISHOP OF THESSALONIKI (+ 1195)

St. Eustathios of Thessaloniki (Feast Day - September 20)

Saint Eustathios was born in Constantinople about the year 1115. In his youth he entered the Monastery of Saint Euphemia where he began the studies that he completed with great distinction at the Patriarchal School as a pupil of Nicholas Kataphloros. Eustathios took on the last name of his teacher, though it is unknown if he did this because they were related or because he wanted to honor him.

Eustathios was ordained a Deacon in Hagia Sophia in 1150, then appointed to the offices of superintendent of petitions, keeper of the sacred vessels and professor of rhetoric by Emperor Manuel I Komnenos, the last of which means that he was the head of the Patriarchal School. He was distinguished as a public orator and for his deep learning, and taught the whole range of Greek classics. It was during this time that he wrote his Commentaries on Homer's Iliad and Odyssey among his other works on literature. Eustathios' house in Constantinople was a sort of school for young students; it became a center around which the best minds of the capital and youths anxious to learn collected. Or as Michael Choniates said in his funeral oration: "All young students of literature sought his company, and his home was truly a shrine of the Muses, another Academy, Stoa, and Peripatos."

Highly regarded as one of the greatest scholars of his time and as man of complete integrity, he was consecrated Metropolitan of Myra in 1174, and the next year in 1175 was elevated to the Archiepiscopal Throne of Thessaloniki. As Archbishop the holy Eustathios lived as an ascetic, he gave whatever he had to the poor, and he opposed every form of social injustice.

When the Normans besieged Thessaloniki in 1185, he refused to flee and remained behind with his flock at the risk of his life. When the city fell, he gave himself up to the Norman leaders, and asked that they put an end to the killing and looting, as well as to respect the faith and customs of the Orthodox Christians. The Normans searched his house because of a rumor put out by his enemies that he had hidden

treasure there, but they found nothing worth taking. Even so, they ill-treated the Saint and he was released shortly after when Emperor Alexios Komnenos recaptured the city in 1186. After this he wrote a contemporary account of the siege of the city by the Normans.

In Thessaloniki Archbishop Eustathios struggled to raise the standard of Christian behavior among the clergy, people and monastics, which had become lax at the time. From a cultural point of view his repeated appeals to the monks not to squander the treasures of the libraries are very interesting; he wrote: "Woe to me! Why will you, O dunces, liken a monastic library to your souls? As you do not possess any knowledge, you are willing to deprive the library also of its scientific means? Let it preserve its treasures. After you there will come either a man of learning or an admirer of science, and the first, by spending a certain time in the libraries, will grow more clever than he was before; the other, ashamed of his complete ignorance, will, by reading books, find that which he desires." Such criticisms brought much opposition and hatred against him that he left his see for two years and went to Philippopolis in 1191, where Emperor Isaakios Angelos dismissed the accusations brought against him and wrote a letter to the people of Thessaloniki to receive back their Shepherd, so he returned in September of 1193.

Philip Schaff, who often did not have much good to say of Orthodox saints, wrote highly of Archbishop Eustathios in his *History of the Christian Church*: "He early distinguished himself for learning, piety and eloquence... He was a model bishop, pious faithful, unselfish, unsparing in rebuke and wise in counsel, one

of those pure characters so rarely met among the Greeks — a man who well knew the failings (superstition, mock-holiness and indecorous frivolity) of his nation and his times, which he was more exempt from than any of his contemporaries."

Saint Eustathios reposed at an advanced age some time between 1194 and 1197, though likely it was in 1195, honored by his flock. Funeral orations were delivered by Euthymios Malakis and Michael Choniates (of which manuscripts survive in the Bodleian Library in the University of Oxford), and these are primary sources of his life and work. Among the things Michael mentions is that his tomb had become a place where healings and miracles took place. In 1312 Vatopaidi Monastery depicted him in a fresco of the Katholikon as a Saint. Shortly after similar depictions were seen in monasteries of southern Serbia. He was officially canonized by the Ecumenical Patriarchate on June 10, 1988.

**HOLY NEW MARTYR HILARION OF CRETE**  
Saint Hilarion was born to pious Orthodox Christians, Francisco and Katherine, in the city of Heraklion in Crete, and had four siblings: two brothers named Polyzoos and George, and two sisters whose names are not known to us. Hilarion's birth name was John.

As a young man John went to live with his uncle in Constantinople, with the understanding that his uncle would see to his professional education. But though John lived with his uncle for ten years, his uncle completely neglected his education. Instead John took a job as a clerk with a merchant.

One day the merchant left for his homeland on the island of Chios, and left John with another Christian employee in charge of the

business. However, unfortunately for John, the merchant never took an inventory.

Upon his return the merchant thought that he was cheated, claiming the money collected while he was away did not equal the price of the goods sold. The employees were thirty grosia short, but because the other employee had been with the merchant for many years, it was John who was accused of taking the money. Moreover, John was threatened that if he did not return the money there would be dire consequences.

Though John was innocent of what his employer accused him of, he ran off to his uncle to seek his assistance. But his uncle refused to see him. Disappointed and desperate, he went to the palace of the Sultan to seek assistance from the mother of the Sultan. There he encountered an Ethiopian eunuch, Mertzan Aga, who was in charge of that part of the palace. John knew him and was comfortable telling him his story and asked from him advice as to what he should do. The Ethiopian aga counseled John to become a Muslim and thereby become immune to any punishment. John accepted this proposal.

John was immediately circumcised, given new Muslim clothing, received gifts, and was assigned a hodja to instruct him of the tenets of the Islamic faith. But after three days, John realized the enormity of his sin by abandoning his faith in Christ, and sought an opportunity to escape his situation. Twelve days later he managed to escape the palace and boarded a ship for the Crimea, where he remained for ten months.

While in Crimea John became very remorseful for his apostasy, and understood that the only way to repay his sin was to confess his faith

where he denied it and die a martyric death. He therefore returned to Constantinople, and consulted with a known spiritual father named Father Symeon and an ascetic named Jeremiah. They advised John to go instead to Mount Athos and enter Iveron Monastery. John obeyed their advice.

While at Iveron Monastery, the fathers there sent him to the Skete of Saint Anna to place him under the spiritual direction of Elder Bessarion, who one year prior accompanied Saint Luke the Neomartyr (March 23) to Mytilene where he faced martyrdom. After undergoing strict asceticism and fasting, John was tonsured a monk and took the name Hilarion. Shortly afterwards Hilarion told his Elder that he was ready to return to Constantinople and confess Christ. Elder Bessarion gave his blessing, communed him, and accompanied him to Constantinople.

When Hilarion arrived in Constantinople, he presented himself at the palace where he converted to Islam. There he told the Ethiopian aga responsible for his apostasy that he had returned to the light of truth and now anathematized Islam. Saying this, Hilarion took off his Muslim turban and threw it to the floor and put on his monastic cap which he had under his coat. This angered the aga and he had Hilarion beaten and tortured mercilessly, to the point where his bones became visible. Seeing that John remained steadfast in his faith in Christ, the Saint was sentenced to beheading, and by this received two crowns, one for asceticism and the other for martyrdom, on September 20, 1804.

After the beheading of the Holy Martyr, Elder Bessarion with other Christians gave him a

Christian burial and took some of his blood as a relic. One day Bessarion was invited into a Christian home and the children were brought before him to receive his blessing. One of them, a girl of around eight years old, was possessed by a hidden demon and showed signs of her possession. She became darkened, made various physical movements, and fell down as if she was dead. The Elder took out some of the blood of Saint Hilarion to anoint the girl, but before he even touched her the demon departed and the girl got up and returned to normal. A portion of the Saint's relics can be found today at Kykkos Monastery in Cyprus.

Apolytikion in the Fourth Tone With ascetic living you subdued the adversary, with struggles you divinely glorified Christ the Life-giver, therefore Venerable Martyr Hilarion, we entreat you to pray to God for those who honor you, for their forgiveness and healing of body and soul.

Kontakion in the Third Tone With tears of repentance you were reconciled with the Lord. In the arena of martyrdom you defeated the one who wounded you. You were fully distinguished by the pains of abstinence and bravely accepted martyrdom for Christ. And for this, Hilarion, you were worthy of pure glory.

Megalynarion Rejoice, divine offspring of Heraklion, participant of Venerable Martyrs. You shone brightly in asceticism and struggle, and accepted the incorruptible crown from the Lord.

### HOLY PRINCE OLEG OF BRIANSK

Holy Prince Leontius Oleg Romanovich of Briansk was grandson of the holy martyr Prince Michael of Chernigov. According to the chronicle histories, Prince Oleg together and his

father, Prince Roman Mikhailovich of Briansk, participated in a war against Lithuania in 1274.

After 1274, he resigned as prince and became a monk with the name Basil at the Briansk Monastery of Saints Peter and Paul, built through his generosity. The holy prince died at this monastery as a strict ascetic in the year 1285, and was buried in the monastery church.

### SAINT THALASSIOS OF LIBYA

Our holy Father Thalassios was from Libya in Africa, and both a priest and an abbot, who lived during the reign of Constantine Pogonatos (668-685). He was an ascetic author, whose four centuries titled *On Love, Self-control and Life in accordance with the Nous* appears in the *Philokalia*. This is his only known writing.

He was a personal friend of Saint Maximus the Confessor, whose largest work, *To Thalassios: On Various Questions Relating to Holy Scripture*, consists of answers to difficulties raised by Saint Thalassios. The *Two Hundred Texts on Theology* by Saint Maximus are also dedicated to Saint Thalassios, and in addition five of Saint Maximus' letters are addressed to him. Twice Saint Maximus describes himself as a disciple of Saint Thalassios. Perhaps this is no more than an expression of courtesy towards someone older than himself, and it may have been Saint Thalassios who was in reality the disciple: but it is not impossible that Saint Maximus was indeed decisively influenced by him. He reposed in peace in the year 648.