SAINT LUKE THE EVANGELIST

OCTOBER 25, 2026 — 6TH SUNDAY OF LUKE

HOLY MARTYR VARUS AND THE DEVOUT CLEOPATRA (ST. NIKOLAI VELIMIROVICH)

Varus was a Roman officer in Egypt and also secretly a Christian. When seven Christian teachers were cast into prison, Varus visited them, supplying them with necessities and ministering to them zealously. He was amazed at these martyrs and grieved that because of his fear he could not become a martyr for Christ. The men of God encouraged him, and Varus decided that he would go with them to be tortured.

One of these men of God died in prison, so that when the wicked eparch had the martyrs brought before him, there were only six remaining. He inquired as to the seventh. Varus said to him: "I am the seventh". The enraged governor tortured Varus first. He commanded that he be flogged with dry rods naked, and after that had him tied to a tree and sliced apart piece by piece until the saint gave his holy soul to God.

His body was thrown on a dung heap. A Palestinian woman named Cleopatra, the widow of an officer, was there with her son John. She secretly took Varus's holy relics from the dung heap and buried them in her house. Then she begged permission from the eparch to take the body of her deceased husband from Egypt to Palestine. As she was the wife of an officer, the eparch immediately gave his permission. However, the blessed Christian Cleopatra did not take the body of her husband but the relics of the Holy Martyr Varus instead. Thus, she brought the martyr's relics to Edras (the village of her birth) near Mount Tabor, and buried them with honor there. Afterward, she built a church to St. Varus and he often appeared to her from the other world, resplendent as an angel of God.

An Appearance of the Holy Martyr Varus

When the devout widow Cleopatra built a church to him, she summoned the bishop and priests to consecrate it. A large number of Christians gathered for this celebration, for the entire countryside venerated St. Varus as a great healer and miracle-worker.

Following the divine services, this pious benefactress went before the relics of St. Varus and prayed: "I beseech you, you who endured much suffering for Christ, implore God for that which is pleasing to Him; and for me and my only son, ask that which is beneficial."

Cleopatra's son John was ready for the army. Just as she left the church, John became ill. He was seized with a burning fever that grew steadily worse until, around midnight, John died. The grief-stricken, furious mother came before the tomb of St. Varus and spoke sharply:

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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.

Entrance Hymn. Mode 2.

Come, let us worship and bow down before Christ. Save us, O Son of God, risen from the dead. We sing to You, Alleluia.

Hymns after the Entrance.

Resurrectional Apolytikion.

Mode 4.

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For the Saints.

Mode 4. Come quickly.

Your 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

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 2.

O Protection of Christians that never falls, intercession with the Creator that never fails, we sinners beg you, do not ignore the voices of our prayers. O good Lady, we implore you, quickly come unto our aid, when we cry out to you with faith. Hurry to intercession, and hasten to supplication, O Theotokos who protect now and ever those who honor you.

READINGS

The Epistle

Gal. 2:16 – 20

Brethren, 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

Lk. 8:26 – 39

At that time, Jesus reached the country of the Gadarenes, which is opposite Galilee. When Jesus stepped ashore, a man from the town who had had demons for a long time came to meet him. This man wore no clothes, and he did not live in a house, but in the tombs.When he saw Jesus, he cried out and fell down before him. With a loud voice, he said, "What do you want from me, Jesus, you Son of the Most High God? I beg you, do not torment me!"(For Jesus commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the man). The unclean spirit had often seized the man and he was kept under guard, bound with chains and fetters. [But he had been] breaking the chains and was driven by the demon into deserted places. Jesus asked him, "What is your name?" He replied, "Legion," for many demons had entered into him.And he begged Jesus not to command them to go into the abyss.Now there was a large herd of swine feeding on the mountain, and the demons begged him that he would allow them to enter into those [pigs]; and Jesus allowed them.The demons came out from the man and entered into the pigs. Then the herd rushed down the steep bank into the lake and [the swine] were drowned.When the people who fed the pigs saw what had happened, they fled and told the story in the city and in the countryside. Then people went out to see what had happened. They came to Jesus and found the man from whom the demons had gone out. He was sitting at Jesus' feet, clothed and in his right mind; and they were afraid.Those who had seen it told the people how the demon-possessed man had been delivered.All the people of the surrounding country of the Gadarenes asked Jesus to depart from them, because they were extremely afraid. So he got into the boat and went back.The man from whom the demons had gone out begged to go with Jesus, but Jesus sent him away, saying:"Return to your house and proclaim what great things God has done for you." So the man went on his way, proclaiming throughout the whole city what great things Jesus had done for him.

UPCOMING SERVICES

SATURDAY, October 31, Great Vespers, 5pm

ANNOUNCEMENTS

MAKE A DIFFERENCE DAY

Today, following the service, we will be signing Get Well cards for children in the MU children's Hospital in the Narthex. Volunteers will be making and serving a meal at Ronald McDonald House today. There is a jar in the narthex if you would like to make a donation to offset the costs.

FOOD BANK

Thank you to all who generously donated items for the Food Bank. We recently donated 117 pounds for our neighbors facing food insecurity.

THANK YOU

Thank you to the artoclasia baker and donors for the flowers for our Patron Feast Day.

FLOWERS

Four $100 donations for flowers for the Vigil service for Saint Nektarios are needed. Thank you!

ARTOCLASIA

Next Sunday, Nov. 1, Philoptochos will be honoring their patron Saints, Saints Cosmas and Damianos by offering an artoclasia. There will be a collection jar for the ministries of the Ecumenical Patriarchate. Thank you for your generosity!

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.

"O saint of God! Is this the way you help me?" and she said much more in her bitter lamentation until, utterly exhausted, she fell into a light sleep.

St. Varus appeared to her with her son John. Both were radiant as the sun in garments whiter than snow, bound with golden girdles, and had magnificent wreaths on their heads. God's saint said to her: "Did you not pray to me to implore God for whatever was pleasing to Him, and beneficial to you and your son? I prayed to God and He, in His unspeakable goodness, took your son into His heavenly army. If you so desire, here he is: take him and place him in the army of the earthly king." Hearing this, the young John embraced St. Varus and said: "No, my Lord, do not listen to my mother and do not send me back into the world, full of unrighteousness and iniquity, from which you have delivered me."

Awakening from the dream, Cleopatra felt great joy in her heart and left the church. She lived near the church for seven years, and St. Varus often appeared to her with John.

HOLY MARTYR ANASTASIOS THE FULLER AT SALONA IN DALMATIA

Saint Anastasios was born in Aquileia of a good family during the reign of Diocletian (284-311), and becoming a fuller he practiced his trade at Salona in Dalmatia. There he was inspired with divine zeal in his heart, after seeing the Holy Martyrs of Christ and their limbs torn from their bodies for their faith and confession of Christ. Being a Christian, this reminded him of all the good things that awaited them. This inflamed his heart with a desire for martyrdom, so that one day he covered his body with the image of the sign of the honorable Cross and voluntarily presented himself to be martyred. Anastasios, boldly and without fear, cried aloud in the judgment hall before all the pagans the words of the Prophet Isaiah: "I became manifest to them that asked not for me; I was found by those that sought me not" (65:1).

As they all gazed upon him, the Martyr addressed them saying: "Listen, all you ministers of the devil, I am a Christian, and I believe in our Lord Jesus Christ. Your idols and those who fall down and worship them, I turn away from and anathematize." Seeing his boldness, the pagans were astonished. Then they immediately undressed him and mightily flogged him. They then said to him: "We are dispensing this punishment on account of your shamelessness and impertinence. Since you believe in Christ, we will cut off your head, and cast your body to the fish and reptiles to be eaten." Therefore the beastly men took the Saint, and beheaded him. And taking a ship a short distance from the shore, they cast his body into the sea.

A righteous Christian of the city, the rich matron Asclepia, promised to free any of her slaves that recovered the body. They came upon some dark-skinned people who had found the body in the water, and they surrendered it to Asclepia's men, who brought it back to their mistress. After reverently wrapping his body with sheets and myrrh, she buried it in her garden, which became a Christian cemetery with a basilica dedicated to Saint Anastasios. The relics of the Holy Martyr were glorified by many miracles.

SAINT TABITHA, WHO WAS RAISED FROM THE DEAD BY THE APOSTLE PETER

St. Tabitha (Feast Day - October 25)

"She was always doing good works and acts of charity." In this way Luke the Evangelist praises Saint Tabitha. The name Tabitha is Syriac and in Greek is translated as Dorcas, which means "deer". Such was name of this most-pious and philanthropic woman, who lived in Joppa.

In the Acts of the Apostles (9:36-40) we are informed that Dorcas specialized as a weaver and manufactured tunics and garments, which she would sell and from these proceeds she supported the poor, widows and orphans.

While the Apostle Peter was out spreading the gospel, and he arrived in Lydda of Palestine, it happened that Dorcas fell ill and died. And though she was ready for burial, it became known that Peter was in Lydda. Then two were sent to plead with Peter to come to Joppa. When he arrived he went upstairs to the room in which they kept the body of Dorcas. Peter was moved, and without saying anything, after sending everyone outside the room, he knelt and prayed fervently. Then he said: "Tabitha, rise up." And indeed the dead woman resurrected! This was received with immense joy by all those in attendance, and the event spread throughout Joppa, which led to many believing in Christ.

After this Tabitha lived many years, "always doing good works and acts of charity." Death found her again in old age. And so this benevolent woman departed in peace and with joy, because God made her worthy to live beneficially full of good spiritual fruits.

Hymn in the Fourth Tone The people of Joppa were filled with awe, and the angels of God marvelled, when he who healed Eneas called forth from the dead her who was called Dorcas, who was wholly adorned with lovingkindness, for whom the poor widows cried aloud. And now, O blessed Tabitha, hearken to our prayers which are offered unto thee, and beg thou the Bestower of all good things that He grant mercy and compassions unto His faithful, that, blessing thee, we may cry aloud: Rejoice, O thou who teachest us the virtues!

HYMN OF PRAISE: Saint Tabitha

By St. Nikolai Velimirovich

Tabitha died, not that she might no longer live, But that the world might be astonished

at the miracle which came to pass.

Beside her deathbed Peter humbly knelt, And uttered fervent prayer unto the Lord.

She was resurrected in body! And the unbelievers heard How the Lord hearkened to the apostle's prayer And returned the living soul to the dead body.

And Peter turned the unbelievers to the Faith. O wondrous miracle, of a kind unknown in the world!

By the name of Christ, death was conquered. Death was conquered, and life rejoices. The young Tabitha rejoices in life;

And, more than in her own life, She rejoices that she served as a wonder to the unbelieving world.

She was resurrected in body! The unbelievers heard, And their own souls were raised from the dead.

O great Peter, servant of Christ, Pray to our Savior for us;

Resurrect our souls, buried in the mud- You, who revived Tabitha by the power of God.

HOLY MARTYRS PAPIAS, DIODOROS AND CLAUDIUS

The Holy Martyrs Papias, Diodoros and Claudius contested during the reign of Emperor Decius (249-251) and were from Attaleia of Pamphylia. They were breeders by occupation of various cattle. Because they worshiped the one true God and denounced the worship of idols, converting many pagans to the faith of Christ, they were arrested by Governor Pouplios of Pamphylia. Being questioned by him, they boldly confessed the name of Christ, our true God, and taught that He created the heavens, the earth, the sea, and everything therein, and besides Him there is no other God. Hearing this, the governor became enraged and gave them up to various harsh tortures. Unable to change their minds to deny Christ, he had them beheaded, and in this way they received crowns of martyrdom. They were honorably buried by Christians, to the glory of Christ our God.

HOLY MARTYRS FAUSTUS, BASIL AND SILOUAN AT DARION IN CONSTANTINOPLE

According to their entry in the Synaxarion of Constantinople on October 25th, the three Martyrs are called Faustus, Basil and Loukianos, and it says they were martyred by the sword.

In the entry on February 6th, the three Martyrs are called Faustus, Basil and Silouan. It is suggested also that they suffered martyrdom together with other Holy Martyrs in the Darion district of Constantinople.

The Menologion of Basil II has an image of Saint Faustus for February 6th, without any other information except he is called and dressed as a Bishop.

The iambic verses for both feast days are the same, which is why these Martyrs are thought to be the same people.

HOLY MARTYRS MARKIANOS AND MARTYRIOS THE NOTARIES

Sts. Markianos and Martyrios were notaries (i.e. secretaries) under Paul, the Patriarch of Constantinople (Nov. 6), during the reign of Emperor Constantius (337-361). With the death of the great Emperor Constantine, the Arian heresy, which until then had been suppressed, revived and gained momentum. Even Emperor Constantius himself leaned toward this heresy.

There were two influential noblemen at the emperor's court, Eusebius and Philip, both of whom were ardent Arians. Under their influence, Patriarch Paul was ousted from the patriarchal throne and banished to Armenia, where the Arians strangled him in 344. Then the dishonorable Macedonius seized the patriarchal throne.

At that time Orthodoxy had two bitter struggles: against the pagans and against the heretics. Markianos and Martyrios were with all their strength and determination on the side of Orthodoxy, proclaiming openly that: "The Son of God is consubstantial with the Father and God by nature." Markianos was a reader and Martyrios was a subdeacon at the Cathedral Church of Hagia Sophia, who shined with their reverence, modesty, holiness and virtue.

The Arians at first tried to bribe them, but when these holy men rejected this with scorn, the heretics condemned them to death. When they were brought to the executioner, they raised their hands and prayed to God, giving Him thanks for a martyr's end to their lives: "Lord, we rejoice that we depart from this life by

such a death. Make us worthy to be partakers of eternal life. Thou art our life!" They placed their necks beneath the sword and were beheaded in the year 355.

Their sacred relics were buried outside the Melandissia Gate of the Constantinople. Later, St. John Chrysostom built a church in their name over their miracle-working relics.

SAINTS PHILADELPHOS AND POLYKARPOS

Saints Philadelphos and Polykarpos are commemorated together on both October 25th and February 8th with the same iambic verses. However, on October 25th the Synaxarion of Constantinople says they reposed in peace, while on February 8th it says they died as martyrs. The Menologion of Basil II for February 8th confirms that Saint Philadelphos was a martyr, though it says nothing of Saint Polykarpos.

SAINT GEORGE OF AMASTRIS

Saint George of Amastris was the son of pious parents, whose names were Theodosios and Megethos, and was from Kromna, which was a city near Amastris, on the coast of the Black Sea. Because the parents of this Saint spent their lives childless, for this reason they supplicated God in prayer and fasting to give them the fruit of the womb, and this indeed happened. By a divine voice they learned of his conception and his name and of the office of high priesthood which their future son, George, who was to be born in their old age, was destined to receive.

When the child was born and weaned off milk, he completely cast away the pleasurable and temporal things of youth, and longed for with all his heart the good things of the future. He did not neglect his education, both divine and human. Observing the virtuousness of their child, his parents rejoiced and glorified God.

The Saint, having been properly educated, departed his homeland and went to a mountain called Agrioserike, where he found an honorable elder, and received from him the angelic schema of Monks.

After his elder died, he went to Vonitsa, which is on the mainland of Acarnania, near Xiromero, and there the renowned one put himself through suffering with hard work and asceticism.

Because the Bishop of Amastris at the Black Sea died, this Venerable one was elevated against his will to that throne, as a lamp on a lampstand, by the election of God and the agreement of the Priests.

He was ordained High Priest in Constantinople, then departed and went to his eparchy in Amastris. In all things he was diligent and eager, with the arrangement of the sanctuary, the decoration of the holy Bema, the establishment of the priestly order, the protection of orphans and widows, the feeding of the poor, settling and liberating those who were in debt, and most of all, he eagerly established piety and Orthodoxy towards God. With these things, one could also observe in Amastris, various miracles performed by this Saint.