

THE ORDER FOR THE TYPIKA SERVICE WHEN WE ARE UNABLE TO ATTEND CHURCH

SUNDAY SEPTEMBER 26, 2021

14th SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST – Tone 5. Repose of the Holy Apostle and Evangelist John the Theologian (2nd c.). Ven. Ephraim, Abbot of Perekóp, Wonderworker of Novgorod

THE SERVICE TAKES PLACE IN FRONT OF OUR ICON CORNER

EVERYONE: O, God cleanse me a sinner and have mercy on me! (3x)

READER: Through the Prayers of Our Holy Fathers, O Lord Jesus Christ Our God, Have Mercy on us.

READER: Amen. O, Heavenly King, the Comforter the Spirit of Truth, Who art everywhere present and fillest all things. Treasury of Blessings and Giver of Life. Come and abide in us and cleanse us from every impurity and save our souls, O Good One!

Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, have mercy on us. (3 times)
Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

O most Holy Trinity, have mercy on us. Lord, cleanse us from our sins. Master, pardon our transgressions. Holy One, visit and heal our infirmities, for Thy Name's sake.

Lord have mercy. Lord have mercy. Lord have mercy.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

EVERYONE: Our Father, Who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name. Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

READER: Through the Prayers of Our Holy Fathers, O Lord Jesus Christ Our God, Have Mercy on us.

READER: Amen. Lord have mercy (12x)

READER: Through the Prayers of Our Holy Fathers, O Lord Jesus Christ Our God, Have Mercy on us.

EVERYONE: Amen. Followed by the Singing of the First Antiphon.

Bless the Lord, O my soul! Blessed are Thou, O Lord! Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless His holy name! Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits. Who forgives all your iniquity, who heals all your diseases. The Lord is compassionate and merciful, long suffering and of great goodness. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless His holy name. Blessed art Thou, O Lord!

THE LITTLE LITANY is not said in the absence of a Priest or Deacon. The reader continues:

READER: Amen. Lord have mercy (3x)

READER: Through the Prayers of Our Holy Fathers, O Lord Jesus Christ Our God, Have Mercy on us.

EVERYONE: Amen. Followed by the singing of the Second Antiphon.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.

Praise the Lord, O my soul! I will praise the Lord as long as I live; I will sing praises to my God while I have being. Put not your trust in princes, in sons of men in whom there is no salvation. When his breath departs he returns to his earth, on that very day his plans perish. The Lord will reign forever; Your God, O Zion, to all generation.

Now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen. Only-begotten Son and immortal Word of God, Who for our salvation didst will to be incarnate of the holy Theotokos and ever-virgin Mary, Who without change didst become man and wast crucified, Who art one of the Holy Trinity, glorified with the Father and the Holy Spirit: O Christ our God, trampling down death by death, save us!

THE LITTLE LITANY is not said in the absence of a Priest or Deacon. The reader continues:

READER: Amen. Lord have mercy (3x)

READER: Through the Prayers of Our Holy Fathers, O Lord Jesus Christ Our God, Have Mercy on us.

EVERYONE: Amen. Followed by the singing of the Third Antiphon.

In Thy Kingdom remember us, O Lord, when Thou comest into Thy Kingdom. Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of heaven. Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted. Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled. Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the sons of God. Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven. Blessed are you when men shall revile you and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake. Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven.

Followed by the singing of the appointed Troparia for the day:

Troparion for The Resurrection – Tone 5

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.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

Troparion for St. John the Theologian – Tone 1

Beloved Apostle of Christ our God, hasten to deliver a defenseless people! He Who allowed thee to recline on His breast, receives thee as thou dost bow before Him. Implore Him, O John the Theologian, to disperse the persistent threat from the heathens,// entreating for us peace and great mercy!

THE EPISTLE LESSON

READER: The Prokeimenon is in the 5th Tone:

Thou, O Lord, shalt protect us / and preserve us from this generation forever.

CHOIR: *Thou, O Lord, shalt protect us / and preserve us from this generation forever.*

READER: Save me, O Lord, for there is no longer any that is godly!

CHOIR: *Thou, O Lord, shalt protect us / and preserve us from this generation forever.*

READER: The Second Prokeimenon is in the 5th Tone:

Their proclamation has gone out into all the earth, / and their words to the ends of the universe.

CHOIR: *Their proclamation has gone out into all the earth, / and their words to the ends of the universe.*

READER: THE READING IS FROM THE SECOND EPISTLE OF THE HOLY APOSTLE PAUL TO THE CORINTHIANS.

READER: 2 Corinthians 1:21-2:4 and 1 John 4:12-19 (St. John)

BRETHREN:

Now He who establishes us with you in Christ and has anointed us is God, who also has sealed us and given us the Spirit in our hearts as a guarantee.

Moreover I call God as witness against my soul, that to spare you I came no more to Corinth. Not that we have dominion over your faith, but are fellow workers for your joy; for by faith you stand. But I determined this within myself, that I would not come again to you in sorrow.

For if I make you sorrowful, then who is he who makes me glad but the one who is made sorrowful by me? And I wrote this very thing to you, lest, when I came, I should have sorrow over those from whom I ought to have joy, having confidence in you all that my joy is the joy of you all.

For out of much affliction and anguish of heart I wrote to you, with many tears, not that you should be grieved, but that you might know the love which I have so abundantly for you.

BRETHREN:

No one has seen God at any time. If we love one another, God abides in us, and His love has been perfected in us. By this we know that we abide in Him, and He in us, because He has given us of His Spirit. And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent the Son as Savior of the world.

Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God. And we have known and believed the love that God has for us. God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God, and God in him.

Love has been perfected among us in this: that we may have boldness in the day of judgment; because as He is, so are we in this world.

There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves torment. But he who fears has not been made perfect in love.

We love Him because He first loved us.

READER: And to your spirit: Alleluia! Alleluia! I will sing of Thy mercies, O Lord, forever; with my mouth I will proclaim Thy truth from generation to generation.

CHOIR: Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

READER: For Thou hast said: Mercy will be established forever; Thy truth will be prepared in the heavens.

CHOIR: Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

READER: The heavens will praise Thy wonders, O Lord; and Thy truth in the congregation of the saints.

CHOIR: Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia

THE GOSPEL LESSON

READER: And that we may be accounted worthy of hearing the Holy Gospel, let us pray to the Lord God.

EVERYONE: Lord have mercy (3x)

READER: Let us listen to the Holy Gospel. The Reading is from the Holy Gospel according to Saint Mark.

EVERYONE: Glory to Thee, O Lord, glory to Thee.

READER: Luke 5:1-11 and John 19:25-27; 21:24-25 (St. John)

Let us Attend!

So it was, as the multitude pressed about Him to hear the word of God, that He stood by the Lake of Gennesaret, and saw two boats standing by the lake; but the fishermen had gone from them and were washing their nets.

Then He got into one of the boats, which was Simon's, and asked him to put out a little from the land. And He sat down and taught the multitudes from the boat. When He had stopped speaking, He said to Simon, "Launch out into the deep and let down your nets for a catch."

But Simon answered and said to Him, "Master, we have toiled all night and caught nothing; nevertheless at Your word I will let down the net." And when they had done this, they caught a great number of fish, and their net was breaking. So they signaled to their partners in the other boat to come and help them. And they came and filled both the boats, so that they began to sink.

When Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord!" For he and all who were with him were astonished at the catch of fish which they had taken; and so also were James and John, the sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon. And Jesus said to Simon, "Do not be afraid. From now on you will catch men."

So when they had brought their boats to land, they forsook all and followed Him.

At that time:

Now there stood by the cross of Jesus His mother, and His mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. When Jesus therefore saw His mother, and the disciple whom He loved standing by, He said to His mother, "Woman, behold your son!"

Then He said to the disciple, "Behold your mother!" And from that hour that disciple took her to his own home. This is the disciple who testifies of these things, and wrote these things; and we know that his testimony is true.

And there are also many other things that Jesus did, which if they were written one by one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that would be written. Amen.

EVERYONE: Glory to Thee, O Lord, glory to Thee.

**READER: Remember us, O Lord, when Thou comest into Thy Kingdom.
Remember us, O Master, when Thou comest into Thy Kingdom.
Remember us, O Holy One, when Thou comest into Thy Kingdom.**

**THE LITANY OF FERVENT SUPPLICATION is not said
in the absence of a Priest or Deacon. The reader continues:**

READER: Amen. Lord have mercy (12x)

***READER:* Through the Prayers of Our Holy Fathers, O Lord Jesus Christ Our God, Have Mercy on us.**

EVERYONE: Amen.

***READER:* The Heavenly Choir sings Thy praises and cries out: Holy, Holy, Holy Lord of Sabaoth; Heaven and earth are full of Thy glory.**

READER: Draw nigh unto Him, and be enlightened; and your faces shall not be put to shame.

***READER:* The Heavenly Choir sings Thy praises and cries out: Holy, Holy, Holy Lord of Sabaoth; Heaven and earth are full of Thy glory.**

READER: Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

***READER:* The Choir of Holy Angels and Archangels, with all the Powers of Heaven, sings Thy praises and cries out: Holy, Holy, Holy Lord of Sabaoth, Heaven and earth are full of Thy glory.**

THE SYMBOL OF FAITH (THE NICENE CREED)

EVERYONE: I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of Heaven and Earth and of all things visible and invisible. And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the only-begotten, begotten of the Father before all ages. Light of light; true God of true God, begotten, not made; of one essence with the Father, by Whom all things were made. Who for us men and for our salvation came down from Heaven, and was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary and became man. And He was crucified for us under Pontius Pilate, and suffered, and was buried. And the third day He arose again, according to the Scriptures, and ascended into Heaven, and sits at the right hand of the Father; And He shall come again with glory to judge the living and the dead. Whose kingdom shall have no end.

And in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the Giver of Life, Who proceeds from the Father; Who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified, Who spoke by the prophets.

In One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church. I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins. I look for the Resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

**THE LITANY OF SUPPLICATION is not said
in the absence of a Priest or Deacon. The reader continues:**

READER: Amen. Lord have mercy (12x)

***READER:* Through the Prayers of Our Holy Fathers, O Lord Jesus Christ Our God, Have Mercy on us.**

EVERYONE: Our Father, Who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name. Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

READER: Through the prayers of our Holy Fathers, O Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on us and save us.

EVERYONE: Amen. (Followed by the singing of the appointed Kontakia)

Kontakion for The Resurrection – Tone 5

Thou didst descend into hell, O my Savior, shattering its gates as Almighty, resurrecting the dead as Creator, and destroying the sting of death. Thou hast delivered Adam from the curse, O Lover of man, // and we cry to Thee: “O Lord, save us!”

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.

Kontakion for St. John the Theologian – Tone 2

Who shall declare thy greatness, O virgin disciple, for thou dost pour forth wonders and art a source of healings, // and prayest for our souls as theologian and friend of Christ.

Now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

Steadfast Protectress Tone 6 (Hymn to the Theotokos)

Steadfast Protectress of Christians, constant advocate before the Creator. Despise not the entreating cry of us sinners, but in Your Goodness come speedily to help us who call on You in faith! Hasten to hear our petition and to intercede for us, O Theotokos!! For You always protect those who honor You!

READER: Lord have mercy (12x)

O All-Holy Trinity, Consubstantial Power, Undivided Kingdom, Origin of all Good: be graciously inclined unto me, a sinner. Make steadfast my heart and give it understanding, and take away from me every defilement. Enlighten my mind, that I may ever glorify, praise and worship Thee, and say: One is Holy, One is the Lord Jesus Christ, to the glory of God the Father. Amen.

Blessed be the Name of the Lord, henceforth and forevermore. (3x)

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

PSALM 34

READER: I will bless the Lord at all times; His praise shall be continually in my mouth. In the Lord shall my soul be praised; let the meek hear and be glad. O magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt His name together. I sought the Lord, and He heard me, and delivered me from all my troubles. Draw nigh unto Him, and be enlightened, and your faces shall not be put to shame. This poor man cried, and the Lord heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles. The Angel of the Lord will encamp around those who fear Him, and will deliver them.

O taste and see that the Lord is good; blessed is the man that hopes in Him. O fear the Lord, all you His saints; for there is no want for them that fear Him. The rich have become poor and have hungered; but they that seek the Lord shall lack no good thing. Come, O children, hearken unto me; I will teach you the fear of the Lord. Who is the man that desires life, who loves to see days that are good? Keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips from speaking deceit. Turn away from evil, and do good; seek

peace, and pursue it. The eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous, and His ears unto their supplication. The face of the Lord is against them that do evil, to cut off the remembrance of them from the earth.

The righteous cried, and the Lord hear them, and He delivered them out of all their troubles. The Lord is nigh unto them that are broken in heart, and will save them that are humble in spirit.

Many are the afflictions of the righteous, and out of them all shall the Lord deliver them. The Lord keeps all of their bones; not one of them shall be broken. The death of sinners is cruel, and they that hate the righteous shall do wrong. The Lord will redeem the soul of His servants, and none of them shall do wrong that hope in Him.

READER: More honorable than the Cherubim and more glorious beyond than the Seraphim, without defilement, You gave birth to God the Word, True Theotokos, we magnify You.

CHOIR: Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen. Lord have mercy, Lord have mercy, Lord have mercy. Lord, Bless!

READER: May He, Who rose from the dead, Christ our True God, through the Prayers of our Holy Fathers, through the Prayers of the Most Holy Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary, by the Power of the Precious and Life-Creating Cross, through the protection of the Bodiless Powers of Heaven, through the prayers of the Holy Glorious Prophet, Forerunner and Baptist John, through the prayers of the holy glorious and all-laudable Apostles, through the Prayers of all the North American Saints, through the prayers of _____ the patron of this Holy Temple, of the Holy Apostle and Evangelist John the Theologian, whose repose we celebrate; of the Ven. Ephraim, Abbot of Perekóp, Wonderworker of Novgorod whom we commemorate today, of the holy and righteous Ancestors of God, Joachim and Anna, and of all the saints, O Lord Jesus Christ Our God, have mercy on us and save us.

CHOIR: Amen.

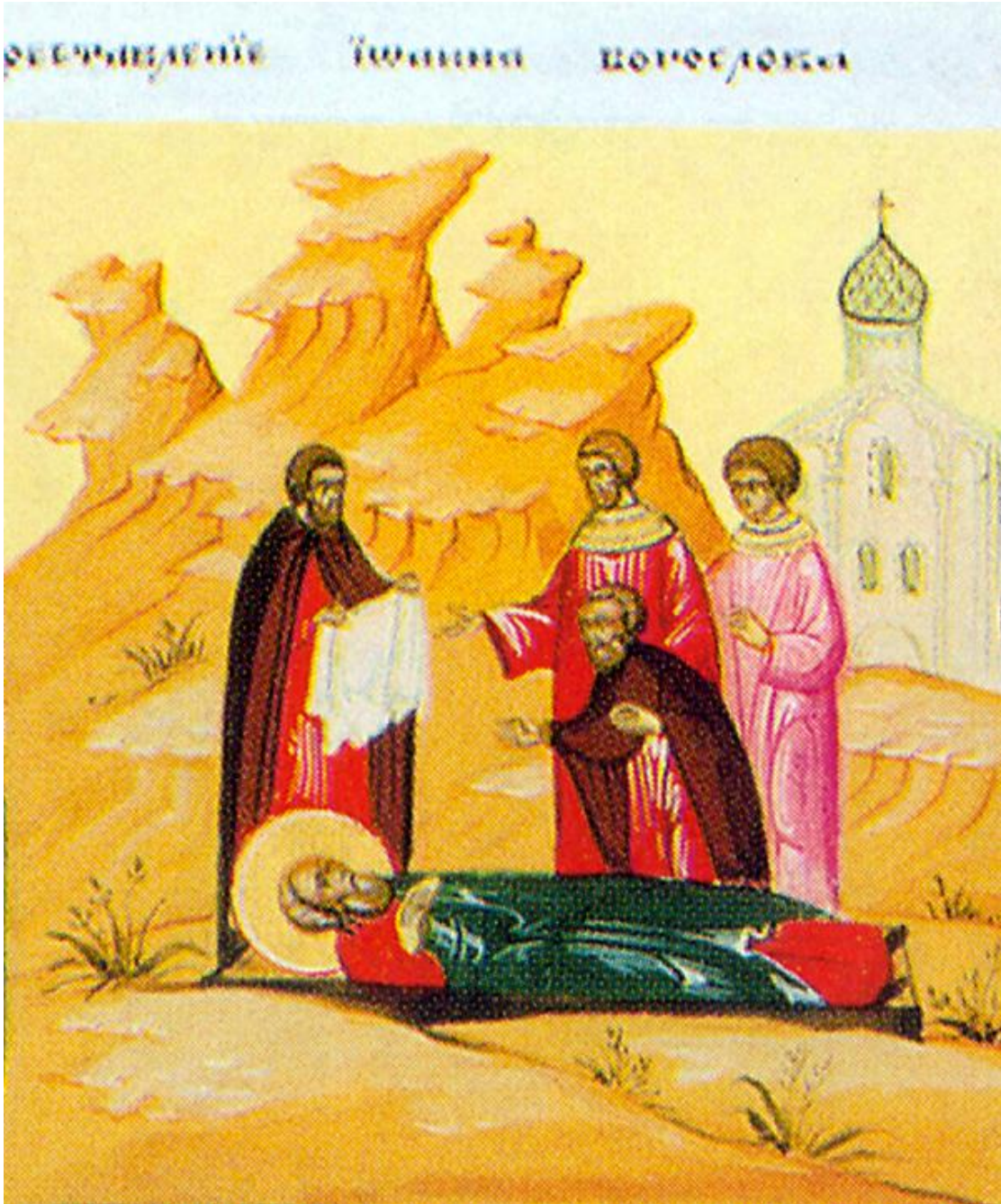
(The faithful now come up and venerate the
Precious Cross and Icons in our Icon Corner.)

READER: Through the Prayers of our Holy Fathers, O Lord Jesus Christ our God, have mercy on us and save us!

CHOIR: Amen. Lord have mercy! Lord have mercy! Lord have mercy!

THE DIOCESE OF NEW YORK and NEW JERSEY EDUCATION CORNER”

The Repose of The Holy Apostle and Evangelist John the Theologian



Commemorated on September 26

The Holy, Glorious All-laudable Apostle and Evangelist, Virgin, and Beloved Friend of Christ, John the Theologian was the son of Zebedee and Salome, a daughter of Saint Joseph the Betrothed. He was called by our Lord Jesus Christ to be one of His Apostles at the same time as his elder brother James. This took

place at Lake Gennesareth (i.e. the Sea of Galilee). Leaving behind their father, both brothers followed the Lord.

The Apostle John was especially loved by the Savior for his sacrificial love and his virginal purity. After his calling, the Apostle John did not part from the Lord, and he was one of the three apostles who were particularly close to Him. Saint John the Theologian was present when the Lord restored the daughter of Jairus to life, and he was a witness to the Transfiguration of the Lord on Mount Tabor.

During the Last Supper, he reclined next to the Lord, and laid his head upon His breast. He also asked the name of the Savior's betrayer. The Apostle John followed after the Lord when they led Him bound from the Garden of Gethsemane to the court of the iniquitous High Priests Annas and Caiphas. He was there in the courtyard of the High Priest during the interrogations of his Teacher and he resolutely followed after him on the way to Golgotha, grieving with all his heart.

At the foot of the Cross he stood with the Mother of God and heard the words of the Crucified Lord addressed to Her from the Cross: "Woman, behold Thy son." Then the Lord said to him, "Behold thy Mother" (John 19:26-27). From that moment the Apostle John, like a loving son, concerned himself over the Most Holy Virgin Mary, and he served Her until Her Dormition.

After the Dormition of the Mother of God the Apostle John went to Ephesus and other cities of Asia Minor to preach the Gospel, taking with him his own disciple Prochorus. They boarded a ship, which floundered during a terrible tempest. All the travellers were cast up upon dry ground, and only the Apostle John remained in the depths of the sea. Prochorus wept bitterly, bereft of his spiritual father and guide, and he went on towards Ephesus alone.

On the fourteenth day of his journey he stood at the shore of the sea and saw that the waves had cast a man ashore. Going up to him, he recognized the Apostle John, whom the Lord had preserved alive for fourteen days in the sea. Teacher and disciple went to Ephesus, where the Apostle John preached incessantly to the pagans about Christ. His preaching was accompanied by such numerous and great miracles, that the number of believers increased with each day.

During this time there had begun a persecution of Christians under the emperor Nero (56-68). They took the Apostle John for trial at Rome. Saint John was sentenced to death for his confession of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, but the Lord preserved His chosen one. The apostle drank a cup of deadly poison, but he remained alive. Later, he emerged unharmed from a cauldron of boiling oil into which he had been thrown on orders from the torturer.

After this, they sent the Apostle John off to imprisonment to the island of Patmos, where he spent many years. Proceeding along on his way to the place of exile, Saint John worked many miracles. On the island of Patmos, his preaching and miracles attracted to him all the inhabitants of the island, and he enlightened them with the light of the Gospel. He cast out many devils from the pagan temples, and he healed a great multitude of the sick.

Sorcerers with demonic powers showed great hostility to the preaching of the holy apostle. He especially frightened the chief sorcerer of them all, named Kinops, who boasted that they would destroy the apostle. But the great John, by the grace of God acting through him, destroyed all the demonic artifices to which Kinops resorted, and the haughty sorcerer perished in the depths of the sea.

The Apostle John withdrew with his disciple Prochorus to a desolate height, where he imposed upon himself a three-day fast. As Saint John prayed the earth quaked and thunder rumbled. Prochorus fell to the ground in fright. The Apostle John lifted him up and told him to write down what he was about to say. "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end, saith the Lord, Who is and Who was and Who is to come, the Almighty" (Rev 1:8), proclaimed the Spirit of God through the Apostle John. Thus in about the year 67 the Book of Revelation was written, known also as the "Apocalypse," of the holy Apostle John the Theologian. In this Book were predictions of the tribulations of the Church and of the end of the world.

After his prolonged exile, the Apostle John received his freedom and returned to Ephesus, where he continued with his activity, instructing Christians to guard against false teachers and their erroneous teachings. In the year 95, the Apostle John wrote his Gospel at Ephesus. He called for all Christians to love the Lord and one another, and by this to fulfill the commands of Christ. The Church calls Saint John the "Apostle of Love", since he constantly taught that without love man cannot come near to God.

In his three Epistles, Saint John speaks of the significance of love for God and for neighbor. Already in his old age, he learned of a youth who had strayed from the true path to follow the leader of a band of robbers, so Saint John went out into the wilderness to seek him. Seeing the holy Elder, the guilty one tried to hide himself, but the Apostle John ran after him and besought him to stop. He promised to take the sins of the youth upon himself, if only he would repent and not bring ruin upon his soul. Shaken by the intense love of the holy Elder, the youth actually did repent and turn his life around.

Saint John reposed when he was more than a hundred years old. He far outlived the other eyewitnesses of the Lord, and for a long time he remained the only remaining eyewitness of the earthly life of the Savior. When it was time for the departure of the Apostle John, he went out beyond the city limits of Ephesus with the families of his disciples. He bade them prepare for him a cross-shaped grave, in which he lay, telling his disciples that they should cover him over with the soil. The disciples tearfully kissed their beloved teacher, but not wanting to be disobedient, they fulfilled his bidding. They covered the face of the saint with a cloth and filled in the grave. Learning of this, other disciples of Saint John came to the place of his burial. When they opened the grave, they found it empty.

Each year from the grave of the holy Apostle John on May 8 came forth a fine dust, which believers gathered up and were healed of sicknesses by it. Therefore, the Church also celebrates the memory of the holy Apostle John the Theologian on May 8.

The Lord bestowed on His beloved disciple John and John's brother James the name "Sons of Thunder" an awesome messenger accompanied by the cleansing power of heavenly fire. And precisely by this the Savior pointed out the flaming, fiery, sacrificial character of Christian love, the preacher of which was the Apostle John the Theologian. The eagle, symbol of the lofty heights of his theological thought, is the iconographic symbol of the Evangelist John the Theologian. The appellation "Theologian" is bestowed by Holy Church only to Saint John among the immediate disciples and Apostles of Christ, as being the seer of the mysterious Judgments of God.

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BRIEF COMMENTARY ON THE LIFE and WRITINGS OF ST. JOHN

Saint John the Theologian is also Saint John the Apostle and Evangelist. Saint John was one of the Twelve Disciples. He was "the one whom Jesus loved." (John 20:2) This is why he is often called "the beloved disciple." He was the brother of James, both of whom were the sons of Zebedee. They were both fishermen. Peter, James and John were the "inner circle" if you will, of the disciples. The three of them were present for the Transfiguration.

Saint John is the author of the fourth Gospel, hence his title "Evangelist," a title given to the four Gospel writers—Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. He also wrote three Epistles, I John, II John and III John. He also wrote the book of Revelation. Saint John is the only one of the twelve disciples to die of natural causes. He lived to be over 100. He died in exile on the Greek island of Patmos.

Saint John is one of only a few saints to be given the title "Theologian." This is because his proclamation of the Gospel of Christ was not only narrative and didactic (teaching in nature) but was also highly theological. He explained who Christ is in a way that no one else had explained.

Matthew, Mark and Luke, in their Gospels, take a narrative approach. For instance, the Incarnation in the Gospel of Matthew talks about the witness of the Magi. In the Gospel of Luke, we read about the angels and the shepherds. Saint John describes the Incarnation in a mere five words: "And the Word became flesh". (John 1:14) He begins his Gospel by speaking of Christ as the "Word" of God, who was present and

participated in the Creation of the world. "The Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the Beginning with God; all things were made through Him, and without Him was not anything made that was made." In very basic terms, all FOUR Gospels focus on why Christ is the Savior of our souls. The Synoptic Gospels (Matthew, Mark and Luke) focus on what Christ did. The Gospel of John focuses more on who Christ is. Hence the Gospel of John also includes the "I AM" phrases of Jesus:

I AM the bread of life. (John 6:48)

I AM the living bread. (John 6: 51)

I AM the light of the world. (John 8:12)

I AM the door. (John 10:9)

I AM the good shepherd. (John 10:11)

I AM the Resurrection and the Life. (John 11: 25)

The Epistle lesson from the feastday of St. John is taken from the first chapter of his first Epistle, and begins in a very similar way to how he begins the Gospel. It is a "theological expose" on the person of Christ. He first gives testimony to how he and others interacted with Christ – they saw Him, touched Him, looked at Him. Secondly, John writes "so that you (the reader) may have fellowship with us." (I John 1: 3) "Our joy may be complete" (1:4) refers to the joy that one gets from sharing the Good News of Christ. John's joy is not merely that he knows Christ but that he shares Christ with others and brings others to Christ.

Saint John continues then to give a basic summary of the message of Christ – that to believe in Christ is to be allied with light and away from darkness. One cannot walk in darkness and also walk in the Light of Christ. To try to both is to live a lie. "But if we walk in the Light, as He is in the Light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin." (1:7) This is one of the summary verses, similar to John 3:16, which in a few words gives us the crux of what it means to be a Christian. The two Great Commandments – love God and love our neighbor – are summarized in this verse. If we love God, we will walk in His Light. If we love our neighbor, we will have fellowship with one another. And if we do both of these things, then the blood of Jesus can cleanse us of all sin.

O Apostle, the beloved of Christ God, hasten to deliver us, a people that has no excuse. He accepts you supplicating Him, for He condescended at the Supper to let you lean on Him. Entreat Him, O Theologian, that He scatter the persistent cloud of hostile nations, and pray for us, for peace and great mercy.

(Apolytkion of St. John the Theologian, Trans. By Fr. Seraphim Dedes)

Love God. Love your neighbor. Partake in the Body and Blood of Christ so that you can be cleansed of all sin. This is the summary of the Christian faith and life.

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The Miraculous Catch of Fish

Luke 5:1-11

From The Explanation of the Gospel of St. Luke

by Blessed Theophylact, Archbishop of Ochrid and Bulgaria

1-11. And it came to pass, that, as the multitude pressed against Him to hear the word of God, He stood by the lake of Gennesaret, and saw two boats standing by the lake: but the fishermen were gone out of them, and were washing their nets. And He entered into one of the boats, which was Simon's, and prayed him that he would thrust out a little from the land. And He sat down, and taught the people out of the boat. Now when He had left speaking, He said unto Simon, Launch out into the deep, and let down your nets for a catch. And Simon answering said unto Him, Master, we have toiled all the night, and have taken nothing: nevertheless at Thy word I will let down the net. And when they had done this, they enclosed a great multitude of fishes, and their net broke. And they beckoned unto their partners, which were in the other boat, that they should come and help them. And they came, and

filled both the boats, so that they began to sink. When Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus knees, saying, Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord. For he was astonished, and all that were with him, at the catch of the fishes which they had taken; and so were also James, and John, the sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon. And Jesus said unto Simon, Fear not; from henceforth thou shalt catch men. And when they had brought their boats to land, they forsook all, and followed Him.

The Lord flees glory, which all the more pursues Him. When the crowd pressed against Him, He entered the boat, so that from the boat He could teach those standing on the shore, and everyone would be in front of Him, rather than some coming towards Him from behind. And when He had finished teaching the people, He did not leave the owner of the boat without payment, but gave him a two-fold benefit: He bestowed on him an abundance of fish, and He made him His disciple. Marvel at how wisely the Lord arranges our salvation, drawing to Himself each one by means of the things that are his own and with which he is familiar. As He had attracted the Magi with a star, so now He draws the fishermen by means of fish. Behold the gentleness of Christ, how He does not command, but requests, that Peter put out from land. Behold also the obedience of Peter, how he welcomes into his boat a man whom he did not know, and obeys Him in everything. When the Lord tells him to launch out into the deep, Peter does not become exasperated and leave Him, nor does he reply, "I have toiled the whole night and gained nothing, and now I should obey you and do it all again?" Peter said nothing like this, but instead, At Thy word I will let down the net. Such was the warmth of his trust even before he had faith. And he caught so great a number of fish that he was not able to haul them in, and he beckoned to his companions in the other boat. He calls them with a signal, because his astonishment at the catch was so great that he could not even speak. Out of great reverence for Jesus, Peter begs Him not to remain in the boat, and calls himself a sinner who is not worthy to be with Him. You may also understand these things in a spiritual sense. The boat is the synagogue of the Jews. Peter represents the teachers of the law. For the teachers of the law also toiled the whole night before Christ came (the time before Christ's sojourning on earth was indeed night) and took in nothing. But when Christ came, and it became day, the teachers of the law were replaced by the Apostles who, at His word, that is, at His command, let down the net of the Gospel in which they caught so great a number of men that the Apostles could not haul in the catch by themselves. And so they beckon to their partners and companions and together pull in the net. These are the pastors and teachers of the Church in every generation who teach and interpret the words of the Apostles, laboring with the Apostles to catch mankind. Consider also the words, Let down the net. The net is the Gospel: like the fisherman's net, which is a lowly and commonplace thing, the Gospel is composed of humble, everyday words which reach down and condescend to the simplicity of the people. This is why it is said that the net is let down. If any one should say that letting down the net also indicates the depth of meaning of the Gospel, neither would he be off the mark. Therefore the words of the prophet have also been fulfilled, Behold, I will send many fishermen, saith the Lord, and they shall fish for them; and afterward I will send many hunters, and they shall hunt for them (Jer. 16:16). The fishermen are the holy Apostles, and the hunters are the leaders and teachers of the Church in each generation.

LET ALL THAT YOU DO BE DONE IN LOVE. 1 Cor.16:14

YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND. Matt. 22:37

YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF. Matt. 22:39

LOVE YOUR ENEMIES AND PRAY FOR THOSE WHO PERSECUTE YOU. Matt. 5:44

LOVE IS PATIENT, LOVE IS KIND, LOVE DOES NOT ENVY, LOVE DOES NOT BOAST, LOVE IS NOT PROUD, LOVE IS NOT SELFISH, LOVE IS NOT PROVOKED. 1Cor. 13:4

LOVE BEARS ALL THINGS, LOVE ALWAYS HAS FAITH, LOVE ALWAYS HAS HOPE, LOVE ENDURES ALL THINGS. LOVE NEVER FAILS! 1Cor. 13:7,8

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=== Scriptural Readings for the Week ===

Monday	Galatians 2:11-16	Luke 4:37-44
Tuesday	Galatians 2:21-3:7	Luke 5:12-16
Wednesday	Galatians 3:15-22	Luke 5:33-39
Thursday	Galatians 3:23-4:5	Luke 6:12-19
Friday	Hebrews 9:1-7	Luke 10:38-42; 11:27-28
	Galatians 4:8-21	Luke 6:17-23
Saturday	1 Corinthians 4:17-5:5	Luke 5:17-26
Sunday	2 Corinthians 4:6-15	Luke 6:31-36