

✠ St. Gregory's Journal ✠

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St. Gregory the Great Orthodox Church
A Western Rite Congregation of the Antiochian Archdiocese
13407 Roxbury Rd., Silver Spring, MD ~ stgregoryoc.org

From a Homily by St. Gregory the Great d. 604

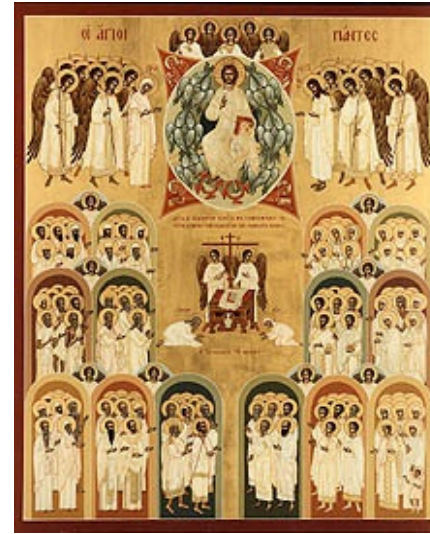
Holy Scripture is put before the eyes of our mind somewhat after the fashion of a looking-glass, that we may see therein the aspect of our inward man. Therein we see what traits of ours are unsightly, and what are comely; thereby we judge how we are growing, and how far as yet we are from fulness of stature.

Holy Scripture telleth of the doings of the saints, and stirreth up the heart of us weaklings to follow them. While it maketh memorial of their victorious deeds, it strengtheneth our frailty to strive against sin. And so by the words of the Scripture it cometh to pass that the soul trembleth less at the battle, inasmuch as it seeth how often the enemies have in former times been beaten by brave men.

And sometimes Holy Scripture showeth unto us, not only how the saints fought bravely, but also how they fell, that we may see by the example of the mighty, not only what

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weapons we must take, if we would conquer, but also what snares we must keep clear of, if we would avoid falling. For example: on the one hand, here is Job, waxing nobler under trial; and on the other hand, here is David, tried, and failing utterly. And so the glory of God's great ones doth strengthen our hope, and the backsliding of the same stir us up to be watchful and lowly. Thus the one cheereth us with gladness, and the other putteth

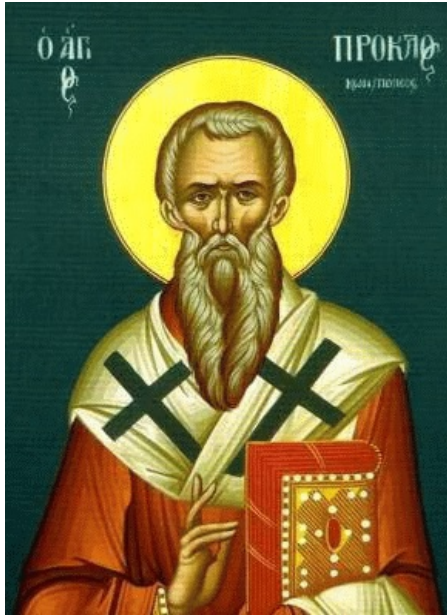
us on our guard through fear; so that the soul of him that heareth of these things may by the one gain sure and certain hope, and by the other be stirred to fearfulness and watchfulness; and on this wise the soul is not rashly puffed up, nor is it hopelessly cast down, or faint under the weight of dread, forasmuch as it is kept in trustfulness by the example of him who triumphed.

St. Proclus, Confessor Feast Day ~ October 24

The qualities of humility, courage, and faithfulness to the truth have placed St. Proclus in the company of the saints of God.

Born around the year 390, Proclus showed promise as a scholar as a young man and he was also devoted to the Church. He became a Reader at a young age and was ordained Deacon and then Priest by Patriarch Atticus of Constantinople, whose secretary he became. When Atticus died in 425, Proclus was considered for succeeding him, but Sisinnius I was chosen instead. Proclus

befriended the new Patriarch, who consecrated him Bishop of Cyzicus in 426.



Proclus had to accept with humility that the people rejected his election and chose another bishop instead. He remained in Constantinople and became well known for his preaching. When Sisinnius died in 427, there was another power struggle between the supporters of Proclus and those of another contender, Philip. The Emperor had to resolve the situation by appointing a different choice to the patriarchal throne, Nestorius, with disastrous consequences.

At first, Nestorius' heretical views were expressed subtly, but he eventually began to openly preach against the use of the term "*Theotokos*," Mother of God, a title which had been in use for more than a century. Nestorius' view was of separate subjects: Christ the man, and Christ the second person of the Trinity. The result of this belief led to the idea that God had not suffered on the Cross or endured death.

Proclus tried to avoid entering the disputes with Nestorius, but he eventually showed his opposition to this heresy in a fearless way. Asked to preach in the cathedral on a Marian feast day in the presence of Nestorius, he delivered what became his most famous sermon, defending the title *Theotokos*. This sermon was entered into the record of the first Council of Ephesus in 431, which confirmed the belief in the unity of human and divine in Christ and condemned Nestorius for heresy. Proclus was widely favored to

replace Nestorius as Patriarch, but, as he was still technically Bishop of Cyzicus (although never having been able to fulfill his duties there), canon law forbade his appointment to another diocese. Instead, Maximianus was elected.

For the fourth time, Proclus was proposed for the See of Constantinople when Maximianus died in Holy Week in the year 434. By *economia*, canon law was set aside and all the bishops and the Emperor declared Proclus the new Patriarch.

Patriarch Proclus was known for being concerned with reconciliation among those who had been part of various factions during the Nestorian controversy. His contribution to the liturgical life of the Church was in the introduction of the Trisagion: *Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, have mercy upon us*. This happened when a severe earthquake occurred in the capital city. There were aftershocks for four months and the people were forced to flee the city and live in camps outdoors. The Patriarch comforted them with the use of this prayer.

Humility, courage, and faithfulness to the truth - all characteristics of a devout Christian, one who is numbered among the saints. *Holy Proclus, pray for us*.

Parish News

We will celebrate the feast day of St. Luke, the Evangelist, on Sunday, October 18. A native of Antioch, St. Luke was a gentile Christian, a physician and, according to tradition, an artist. He is the author of the Gospel that bears his name and because that book contains most of the beautiful stories of the Annunciation, the Visitation, and the Nativity, it is thought that St. Luke spent some time with the Blessed Virgin Mary. The book of Acts, also written by St. Luke, continues the story of the building up of the Church

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through the missionary work of St. Paul, often accompanied by St. Luke.

The last Sunday in this month, October 25 this year, is set aside for a celebration of the kingship of Christ, who reminds us that His Kingdom is *not of this world* [John 18:36]. The kingdoms, empires, and countries of this world will vanish, but Christ's kingdom is eternal.

A Prayer of St. Dimitri of Rostov



Open, O doors and bolts of my heart, that Christ the King of Glory may enter!

Enter. O my Light, and enlighten my darkness;

Enter, O my Life, and quicken my deadness;

Enter, O my Physician, and heal my wounds;

Enter, O Divine Fire and burn up the thorns of my sins;

Ignite my inward parts and my heart with the flame of Thy love;

Enter, O my King, and destroy in me the kingdom of sin;

Sit on the throne of my heart and alone reign in me, O my King and my Lord!

