



**The Synaxis of The Icon of Our most Holy Lady the Theotokos
"Of Three Hands"
Which the Holy Church Celebrates June 28.¹**

The great defender of the Orthodox Faith against the Iconoclasts, our Righteous Father John of Damascus (see Dec.4), was slandered to the Caliph of Damascus by the Iconoclast Emperor Leo the Isaurian (reigned 717-741). Saint John was accused of sedition and his right hand was cut off. Having asked for the severed hand, Saint John passed the night in great pain, praying for the aid of the most holy Theotokos. Awaking from sleep, he found that his hand had been miraculously restored, with only a red scar around the wrist where it had been severed, as a testimony to the wondrous healing. In thanksgiving, he had a silver hand attached to the icon to commemorate this great miracle. On becoming a monk in the lavra of Saint Sabbas the Sanctified in the Holy Land, John brought the icon with him. There it remained until the thirteenth century, when it was given to Saint Sabbas of Serbia (see Jan.14), who brought it to Serbia, where it remained for a time. Later, it was miraculously transported by an unguided donkey to the Serbian Monastery of Hilandar on the Holy Mountain, Athos, where it remains to this day.

Text: *The Great Horologion* © 1997 the Holy Transfiguration Monastery Brookline, Massachusetts 02445

¹ Celebrated on July 12 in the Russian usage.

*Dismissal Hymn of the Mother of God. Fourth Tone
Be quick to anticipate*

FROM Palestine, godly-minded Sabbas brought unto us * thy ven'erable icon, which is known as Of the Three Hands, O all-holy Bride of God. * Wherefore, since the monks of Hilandar now possess it * as their boast, they send up hymns of praise and thanksgiving, * while crying out with fervour: Rejoice, thou who art full of grace.

*Dismissal Hymn of the Mother of God. Plagal of Fourth Tone
To Thee, the Champion Leader*

COME, let us worship the famed icon of the Queen of all * called: Of the Three Hands, for the fearful marvel which it wrought; * and with fervent faith and longing, come, let us cry out: * O Pure Maiden, keep thy monastery and thy flock * from all dangers, tribulations, and adversities, for we cry to thee: * Rejoice, thou help and defense of all.



SAINT JOHN OF DAMASCUS