



**The Holy, Glorious, and All-lauded Chiefs of the Apostles, Peter and Paul
Whom the Holy Church Celebrates on June 29**

The divinely-blessed Peter was from Bethsaida of Galilee. He was the son of Jonas and the brother of Andrew the First-called. He was a fisherman by trade, unlearned and poor, and was called Simon; later he was renamed Peter by the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, who looked at him and said, "Thou art Simon the son of Jonas; thou shalt be called Cephas (which is by interpretation, Peter)" (John 1:42). On being raised by the Lord to the dignity of an Apostle and becoming inseparable from Him as His zealous disciple, he followed Him from the beginning of His preaching of salvation up until the very Passion, when, in the court of Caiaphas the high priest, he denied Him thrice because of his fear of the Jews and of the danger at hand. But again, after many bitter tears, he received complete forgiveness of his transgression. After the Resurrection of Christ and the descent of the Holy Spirit, he preached in Judea, Antioch, and certain parts of Asia, and finally came to Rome, where he was crucified upside down by Nero, and thus he ascended to the eternal habitations about the year 66 or 68, leaving two Catholic (General) Epistles to the Church of Christ.

Paul, the chosen vessel of Christ, the glory of the Church, the Apostle of the Nations and teacher of the whole world, was a Jew by race, of the tribe of Benjamin, having Tarsus as his homeland. He was a Roman citizen, fluent in the Greek language, an expert in knowledge of the Law, a Pharisee, born of a Pharisee, and a disciple of Gamaliel, a notable teacher of the Law in Jerusalem. For this cause, from the beginning, Paul was a most fervent zealot for the traditions of the Jews and a great persecutor of the Church of Christ; at that time, his name was Saul (Acts 22:3-4). In his great passion of rage and fury against the disciples of the Lord, he went to Damascus bearing letters of introduction from the high priest. His intention was to bring the disciples of Christ back to Jerusalem in bonds. As he was approaching Damascus, about midday there suddenly shone upon him a light from Heaven. Falling on the earth, he heard a voice saying to him, "Saul, Saul, why persecuteth Me?" And he asked, "Who art Thou, Lord?" And the Lord said, "I am Jesus Whom thou persecutest; it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks." And that heavenly voice and brilliance made him tremble, and he was blinded for a time. He was led by the hand into the city and on account of a divine revelation to the Apostle Ananias (see Oct. 1), he was baptized by him, and both his bodily and spiritual eyes were opened to the knowledge of the Son of Righteousness. And straightway—O wondrous transformation!—beyond all expectation, he spoke with boldness in the synagogues, proclaiming that "Christ is the Son of God" (Acts 9:1-21).

As for his zeal in preaching the Gospel after these things had come to pass, as for his unabating labors and afflictions of diverse kinds, the wounds, the prisons, the bonds, the beatings, the stonings, the shipwrecks, the journeys, the perils on land, on sea, in cities, in wildernesses, the continual vigils, the daily fasting, the hunger, the thirst, the nakedness, and all those other things that he endured for the Name of Christ, and which he underwent before nations and kings and the Israelites, and above all, his care for all the churches, his fiery longing for the salvation of all, whereby he became all things to all men, that he might save them all if possible, and because of which, with his heart aflame, he continuously traveled throughout all parts, visiting them all, like a bird of heaven flying from Asia and Europe, the West and the East, neither staying nor abiding in one place—all these things are related incident by incident in the Book of the Acts, and as he himself tells them in his Epistles. His Epistles, being fourteen in number, are explained in 250 homilies by the divine Chrysostom and make manifest the loftiness of his thoughts, the abundance of the revelations made to him, the wisdom given to him by God, wherewith he brings together in a wondrous manner the Old with the New Testaments, and expounds the mysteries thereof which had been concealed under types; he confirms the doctrines of the Faith, expounds the ethical teaching of the Gospel, and

demonstrates with exactness the duties incumbent upon every rank, age, and order of man. In all these things his teaching proved to be a spiritual trumpet, and his speech was seen to be more radiant than the sun, and by these means he clearly sounded forth the word of truth and illumined the ends of the world. Having completed the work of his ministry, he likewise ended his life in martyrdom when he was beheaded in Rome during the reign of Nero, at the same time, some say, when Peter was crucified.

Rest from labour. Fish allowed.

Dismissal Hymn Fourth Tone

O FOREMOST of the Apostles and teachers of the world, intercede ye with the Master of all that He grant peace to the world and great mercy to our souls.

Hypakoë. Plagal of Fourth Tone

WHAT prison hath not had thee as its prisoner? What church hath not had thee as her orator? Damascus maketh much of thee, O Paul, for it saw thee bereaved of sight; Rome received thy blood, and she too doth boast; but Tarsus rejoiceth yet more, and with longing she honoureth thy swaddling bands. O Apostle Paul, thou boast of the world, be quick to make us steadfast.

Kontakion. Second Tone

THOU hast taken to Thyself, O Lord, the firm and God-proclaiming heralds, the chief Apostles, for the enjoyment of Thy blessings and for repose; for Thou hast accepted their labours and death as above all sacrifice, O Thou Who alone knowest the secrets of our hearts.

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A SELECTION OF HYMNS FROM
THE MENAION

GREAT VESPERS

After the Proemial Psalm we chant Blessed is the man. *For* Lord, I have cried,
we allow for six verses and chant the following Stichera, repeating them all:

*Second Tone. The Original Melody
By Andrew Pyrus*

WITH what fair crowns of praise shall we crown * blessed Peter and Paul, the Apostles? * Who, after the body, were far apart, * yet in the Spirit, were bound as one; * the foremost among the God-proclaimers; * the one as the leader of the apostolic choir; * the other as having labored more than all the rest. * For they are crowned with the laurels * of immortal glory, * as is truly meet and fitting, * in Heaven by Christ our God, * Who granteth great mercy to the world.

(Twice)

Prosomia

WITH what beauty of hymns shall we praise * blessed Peter and Paul, the Apostles? * Those wings of the knowledge of God Most High, * that flew throughout all the farthest parts * and truly were lifted up to Heaven; * those hands of the holy Gospel of the grace of God; * those feet of the sacred preaching of eternal truth; * those mighty rivers of wisdom * and the Cross's branches * whereby all the demonic conceit * hath been overthrown by Christ, * Who granteth great mercy to the world. *(Twice)*

WITH what spiritual songs shall we laud * blessed Peter and Paul? those two edges of the Holy Spirit's most dreaded sword, * which have both slaughtered all godlessness, * without which ever thereby being blunted; * the famous and right resplendent ornaments of Rome; * the glory and exultation of the world entire; * God-graven spiritual tablets * of New Covenant grace, * which were handed down in Scion * when sounded forth by Christ God, * Who granteth great mercy to the world. *(Twice)*

Glory. *Fourth Tone. By John the Monk*

BY His threefold question: Peter, lovest thou Me? Christ set aright the threefold denial. Wherefore, Simon said unto the Knower of hidden things: Lord, Thou knowest all things; Thou comprehendest all things; Thou knowest that I love Thee. Whereupon the Saviour said unto him: Feed My sheep, feed Mine elect, feed My lambs, which I have purchased with Mine own Blood unto their salvation. Do thou entreat Him, O Apostle blessed of God, that we be granted great mercy.

Both now. *Theotokion*

HE that on thine account is now God's ancestor, the Prophet David, did aforetime in melody say of thee to Him that hath done great things to thee: The queen stood at Thy right hand. For Christ God, Who was pleased to become

incarnate of thee without father that He might save the world, hath shown thee forth as the mother and cause of Life, that He might restore His image corrupted by the passions; and having found the stray sheep lost in the mountains and taken it upon His shoulders, He bringeth it unto his Father, and by His own will uniteth it with the heavenly powers, O Theotokos; for He hath great and abundant mercy.

MATINS

*Then, for the hymns of Ascent, the First Antiphon in Fourth Tone.
Prokeimenon. Fourth Tone*

Their sound hath gone forth into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world.

Verse: The heavens declare the glory of God,
and the firmament proclaimeth the work of His hands.

Then Let every breath *and the Eleventh Matinal Gospel:* At that time, after He was risen from the dead, Jesus showed Himself to the disciples, and straightway saith to Simon Peter...
(John 21:15-25). And straightway the Fiftieth Psalm.

OIKOS

MAKE my tongue to speak plainly, O my Saviour; enlarge my mouth and fill it, and give my heart compunction that I may be the first to follow what I say and what I teach; for every one that doeth and teacheth, it saith, the same is great. For if I speak without doing, I am reckoned as sounding brass. Wherefore grant me to say what is needful and to do what is expedient, O Thou Who alone knowest the secrets of our hearts.

SYNAXARION

✠ On the twenty-ninth of this month we commemorate the holy, glorious, and all-lauded Chiefs of the Apostles, Peter and Paul.

Verses

Peter, who preached the Cross, died by crucifixion;
And Paul by the sword's cutting, who cut down error.

On the twenty-ninth Peter suffered the Cross and Paul the sword.

✠ On this day we commemorate the holy New Hieromartyr Paul, Priest of Stavropol, who was slain by the atheists in the year 1918.

By the intercessions of Thy Saints, O Christ God, have mercy on us. Amen.

EXAPOSTILARION
Second Tone. Harken, ye women

LET us all praise with sacred hymns * Peter and Paul, the men of God, * the foremost of the Apostles * and the bright lights of the whole world; * the preachers of the holy Faith, * the trumpets of theology, * revealers of divine decrees, * the pillars of the august Church, and the destroyers of error.



THE PROOF OF THE APOSTOLIC PREACHING

Saint Irenaeus of Lyons ✠ 202 A. D.

§ 86. If then the prophets prophesied that the Son of God was to appear upon the earth, and prophesied also where on the earth and how and in what manner He should make known His appearance, and all these prophecies the Lord took upon Himself; our faith in Him was well-founded, and the tradition of the preaching (is) true: that is to say, the testimony of the Apostles, who being sent forth by the Lord preached in all the world the Son of God, who came to suffer, and endured to the destruction of death and the quickening of the flesh: that by the putting away of the enmity towards God, which is unrighteousness, we should obtain peace with Him, doing that which is pleasing to Him. And this was declared by the prophets in the words: *As the feet of one preaching glad tidings of peace, as one preaching good news* (Is. 52:7 LXX). And that these were to go forth from Judaea and from Jerusalem, to declare to us *the word* of God, which is *the law* for us, Isaiah says thus: *For out of Sion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord out of Jerusalem* (Is. 2:3 LXX). And that in all the earth they were to preach, David says: *Their sound hath gone forth unto all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world* (Ps. 18:4 LXX).

§ 97. Now by *Jacob* and *Israel* he means the Son of God, who received power from the Father over our life, and after having received this brought it down to us who were far off from Him, when He *appeared on earth and was conversant with men*, (*Baruch* 3:37 LXX), mingling and mixing the Spirit of God the Father with the creature formed by God, that man might be “with the formation” [*sic*] of God.

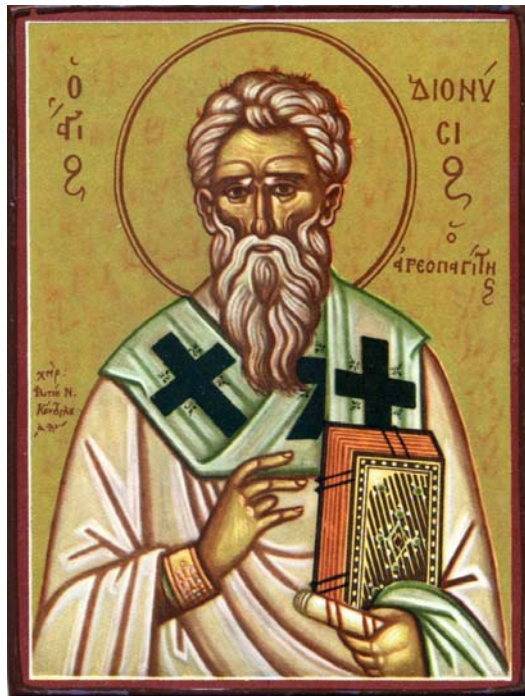
§ 98. This, beloved, is the preaching of the truth, and this is the manner of our redemption, and this is the way of life, which the prophets proclaimed, and Christ established, and the apostles delivered, and the Church in all the world hands on to her children. This must we keep with all certainty, with a sound will and pleasing to God, with good works and right-willed disposition.

The Celestial and Ecclesiastical Hierarchy of Saint Dionysius the Areopagite

Hence, naturally, in the history of the world, after the more ancient tradition (*i.e. the Old Testament*) the new Testament is proclaimed; the inspired and hierarchical order teaching this, as I think, that the one affirmed the divine works of Jesus as to come, but the other as accomplished; that described the truth in figures, this shewed it present.

For the accomplishment within this, of the predictions of that, established the truth: the work of God is a consummation of the Word of God.

tr. John Parker, <http://books.google.com/books?id> (p. 64 ¶ 1.)



SAINT DIONYSIUS THE AREOPAGITE
BY ΚΟΝΤΟΒΛΟΥ

Their sound hath gone forth into all the earth,
and their words unto the ends of the world.

Ps. 18:4 LXX

Saints Dionysius the Areopagite and Irenaeus of Lyons both agree, to use Saint Dionysius' succinct phrase, that

“The one (the Old Testament)
affirmed the divine works of Jesus as to come,
but the other as accomplished;
that described the truth in figures,
this shewed it present.
For the accomplishment within this,
of the predictions of that,
established the truth:
the work of God is a consummation of the Word of God.

Eighteen times in the New Testament the phrase “that it might be fulfilled” appears. This wording is found in the Gospels of Saints Matthew and John and in Saint Paul's Epistle to the Romans. Further, the theme of the fulfillment of prophecy by Christ is repeatedly echoed in the hymns of the Church.

Saint Irenaeus of Lyons, who converted all of Gaul in the second century, underscores that these prophecies told of the Saviour's coming on the earth as a man among men (Baruch 3:37 LXX), and indicated “where on earth and in what manner...(the Lord) should make known His appearance .” The Saint draws our attention to Our Lord's taking “all these prophecies upon Himself” as the Creed says, “for us men and for our salvation.”

Saint Irenaeus concludes:

“Our faith in Him was well-founded, and the tradition of the (Apostolic) preaching is true: that is to say, the testimony of the Apostles, who being sent forth by the Lord preached in all the world the Son of God, who came to suffer, and endured the destruction of death and the quickening of the flesh: that by the putting away of the enmity towards God, which is unrighteousness, we should obtain peace with Him, doing that which is well pleasing to Him.”

The Gospel has been preached throughout the earth by the Prophets as well as by St. Paul's companion, Saint Thecla, since we hear in the Aposticha of her feast: “Her sound hath gone forth into all the earth, and her words unto the ends of the world” (September 24).

Saint John Chrysostom can help us with how the Apostolic preaching can go “unto the ends of the world”; he speaks of “a great sort of hearing.”¹

“For he (i.e. St. Paul) says, I was not speaking of mere hearing, nor of the need of hearing men’s words and believing them, but I mean a great sort of hearing. For the hearing is ‘by the Word of God’ (Rom. 10:17). They were not speaking their own, but they were telling what they learnt from God. And this is a higher thing than miracles. For we are equally bound to believe and to obey God, whether speaking or working miracles, since both works and miracles come of His words. For both the heaven and everything else was established in this way. (Ps. 32:6 LXX Ed.).

Meeting another objection, Chrysostom continues,

“Ver. 18. ‘But I say, Have they not heard?’

“What, he means, if the preachers were sent, and did preach what they were bid, and these did not hear? Then comes a most perfect reply to the objection.

‘Yes, verily, their sound went out into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world’ (Ps. 18:4 LXX).

“What do you say? he means. They have not heard? Why the whole world, and the ends of the earth have heard. And have you, amongst whom the heralds abode such a long time, and of whose land they were, not heard? How can this ever be? Sure if the ends of the world heard, much more must you.”

Brethren, since we hymn Saint Thecla as an Equal to the Apostles and in the Aposticha we chant, “Her sound hath gone forth into all the earth and her words unto the ends of the world” what greater need have we than of humility when we serve the Lord in any way? The Prophetic and Apostolic word has embraced the earth.

The Prophet David cries:

Thy knowledge is too wonderful for me;
it is mighty, I cannot attain unto it.
Whither shall I go from Thy Spirit?
And from Thy presence
whither shall I flee?

Psalm 138:5, 6.

Through the prayers of our holy Fathers
Lord Jesus Christ our God,
have mercy on us.
Amen.

Virtual Parish Ed.

¹ Chrysostom: *Homilies on the Acts of the Apostles and the Epistle to the Romans* NPNF Vol. 11, p.479.