



**Our Righteous Father Theodosius, Abbot of the Kiev Caves Lavra,  
Founder of Monasticism in Russia, Whom the Holy Church Celebrates May 3.**

Our righteous Father Theodosius was born in 1009, not far from Kiev, and brought up in Kursk. From early childhood he showed the wisdom of an elder, avoiding childish games and refusing to wear anything but the poorest of clothing. When he was about thirteen years old, and his father died, he began to humble himself even more, going out to work with the serfs in the field. His mother went so far as to beat him in her attempts to make him behave more respectably. Hearing of the labors of Saint Anthony of Kiev, he fled to him secretly and was accepted by him as his disciple.

The monastery had been completed when Barlaam was Abbot. When Barlaam had departed the brethren the fathers visited the aged Anthony [founder of the Monastery of the Caves, who was now living in deep seclusion] to request that he should be their abbot. When, out of humility, he refused, they requested that he should designate a new abbot for them. He inquired whom

they desired. They replied that they required only the one designated by God and by his [Anthony's] own selection. Then he inquired of them: 'Who among you is more obedient, more modest, and more mild than Theodosius? Let him be your abbot.' The brethren rejoiced and thus they appointed Theodosius to be their abbot. Thus Saint Anthony lived his whole life as a hermit.

Saint Theodosius had been tonsured at the age of twenty-four by Saint Anthony's disciple Nikon, and was elected Abbot of the Caves Monastery in 1057. When Theodosius assumed the abbacy, he began to practice abstinence, fasting, and tearful prayer. Further, he sought for a reliable monastic rule for the monks. There was in Kiev at the time a monk from the Studion Monastery in Constantinople named Michael. Theodosius inquired of him the practices of the Studite monks. He obtained the monastic rule of Saint Theodore Studites (759-826) from him, copied it out, and established it in his own monastery to govern the chanting of monastic hymns, in making reverences, reading of the lessons, behavior in church, the whole ritual, conduct at the table, proper food for special days, and to regulate all else according to prescription. Under his guidance many monks attained to holiness, and the monastic life spread, and from the Caves Monastery all others adopted the same instruction. Therefore the Monastery of the Caves is honored among the oldest of them all.

When Prince Svyatoslav drove out his elder brother the pious Prince Isyaslav, and ascended to the throne of Chernigov in his place, Saint Theodosius courageously rebuked him, and continued reproving him even when threatened with exile. At the request of Prince Simon, the son of a Varangian (Viking) prince, the Saint wrote a prayer for the nobleman's forgiveness of sins, and, at his behest, had it placed in his coffin, whence arose this custom in Russia.

Saint Theodosius' main feast day is May 3, which is the date of his repose in 1074. His relics were discovered by St. Nestor the Chronicler, on August 14, 1091, and were found to be incorrupt. The relics were transferred to the main catholicon (cathedral) of the monastery, and a second annual feast day was established in commemoration of this event.

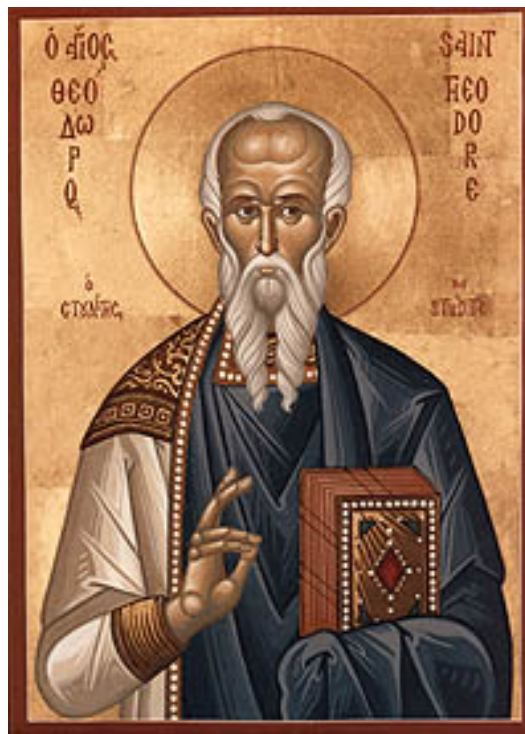
*Dismissal Hymn of the Righteous One  
Plagal of Fourth Tone*

**R**AISING thyself aloft upon virtue and having loved the monastic life from thy youth, thou didst valiantly attain to thy desire. Thou didst settle in a cave, and while adorning thy life with fasting and purity, thou didst persevere in prayers like one of the bodiless. And since thou hast shone forth in the Russian land as a brilliant lamp, O Father Theodosius, pray Christ God that our souls be saved.

*Kontakion of the Righteous One. Third Tone*

**T**ODAY we venerate the star of Russia, the blessed Theodosius, who hath shone forth from the east and come unto the west; for he hath enriched both this whole land with miracles and blessings, and us with the establishment and grace of the monastic rule.

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**SAINT THEODORE STUDITES  
WHOSE MONASTIC RULE WAS ADOPTED BY  
SAINT THEODOSIUS.**