



HOLY TRINITY

ROMANIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH



723 N BODINE ST PHILADELPHIA, PA 19123

CHURCH BULLETIN

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The 20th Sunday after Pentecost

HOLY TRINITY
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Gospel Reading Luke 7: 11-16

At that time, Jesus went to a town called Nain, and his disciples and a large crowd went with him. As he approached the gate of the town, a man who had died was being carried out. He was his mother's only son, and she was a widow; and with her was a large crowd from the town. When the Lord saw her, he had compassion for her and said to her, 'Do

not weep.' Then he came forward and touched the bier, and the bearers stood still. And he said, 'Young man, I say to you, rise!' The dead man sat up and began to speak, and Jesus gave him to his mother. Fear seized all of them; and they glorified God, saying, 'A great prophet has risen among us!' and 'God has looked favourably on his people!'

Apostle Reading Galatians 1: 11-19

I want you to know, brothers and sisters, that the gospel that was proclaimed by me is not of human origin; for I did not receive it from a human source, nor was I taught it, but I received it through a revelation of Jesus Christ. You have heard, no doubt, of my earlier life in Judaism. I was violently persecuting the church of God and was trying to destroy it. I advanced in Judaism beyond many among my people of the same age, for I was far more zealous for the traditions of my ancestors. But when God, who

had set me apart before I was born and called me through his grace, was pleased to reveal his Son to me, so that I might proclaim him among the Gentiles, I did not confer with any human being, nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were already apostles before me, but I went away at once into Arabia, and afterwards I returned to Damascus. Then after three years I did go up to Jerusalem to visit Cephas and stayed with him for fifteen days; but I did not see any other apostle except James the Lord's brother.



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Synaxarion. Sunday October 18, 2020
(The 20th Sunday after Pentecost): Holy Apostle and Evangelist Luke; Holy Martyr Marinus

The Widow of Nain

Brothers and sisters,

Our Lord Jesus Christ healed thousands that we don't know about. Only a few of His miracles are recorded in the Gospels. Therefore, the ones that are recorded are particularly important; we must take careful notice.

This is one of my favorite ones because it is very deep. There's a reason why the Evangelist Luke says the things he does. The miracle could have been described much more laconically, but he gave certain very specific details that are very, very important.

The Lord is going through Nain. Many people are flocking about Him, and while so many people are joyfully receiving Him, a woman is full of sadness, who is a widow; her son is dead and they are burying him today.

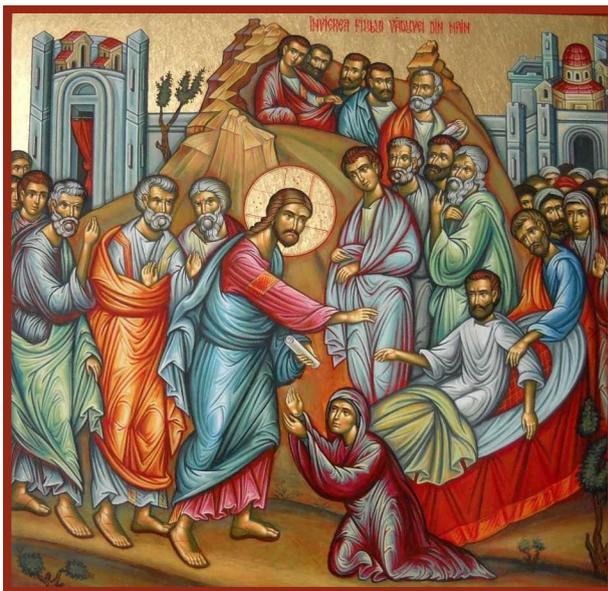
This is in microcosm our life, because there is a lot that is dead in us.

You know, only the Orthodox, as far as I know, talk about this. It's not really a pleasant subject to know that there's darkness in us, to speak of it often, to speak of the death that is in us. People who do not feel this darkness think that such talks is "negative" or shows "poor self-esteem", or even indicates a "lack of faith". But it's true. If you're honest with yourself, you'll see it. When your heart turns and has that constricting feeling when something happens, that's darkness. So this woman's sadness let us equate to the darkness that is in our hearts.

So now she is going with a large group and they are going to bury her son; they are doing the funeral procession. And our Lord, Who's a complete stranger to this woman, tells her, with absolutely no explanation, cease weeping, don't weep, don't cry. Only our Lord can say these words, because only our Lord can heal.

And this also is our life in microcosm because there are many times when we don't understand why we should do something, or we don't feel that there is progress being made. But the Lord is telling us, not only "Don't cry," but "Follow me."

Simon Peter, when he was asked by the Lord to fish after



the full day of preaching and the sun was high in the sky and the fish were far away and not catchable, he said, "Nevertheless, I will let down the nets." He had no idea why the Lord would give such a command. It didn't make any sense but he did it.

The Lord says things to us that are unintelligible all the time such as saying to this woman, "don't cry," or to Peter, "let down the nets", or "love your enemies.", but they will make sense in the end. They will make sense if we listen and if we obey. And the only way we will understand is through gaining wisdom through experience.

So the Lord says to this woman, "Don't cry." Now, sometimes there's a long time between the Lord saying something to us and it coming to fruition. The Lord says that we will be perfect. Well, we're not very perfect looking, are we? So it must be a long time before that is fulfilled. The Lord says that we will have treasure. Well, we don't have a lot of treasure. And of course I'm not speaking of anything that is material. But there's still a lot lacking in us. It takes a long time for some of these things to be fulfilled.

In this case, because it is one event, the fulfillment happens very quickly. The Lord puts His hand on the bier. This is a very significant action – it shows that the Lord is Man and God. Not only does He love man because He has become a man, but he understands what it is to be a man. That's what that action of touching the bier means. He loves mankind, and He understands mankind.

So when He says, "Stop weeping," He knows from experience that His words make sense.

When He says, "Love your enemies," He knows from experience that this is the only way that we can have peace and happiness.

And all the rest of His commands, He commanded and He fulfilled the command in His flesh. So He speaks with authority like nobody else can. Because He understands what is the result of the things that He says to us. We only understand them darkly, as it were, in a glass. But the Lord sees clearly what His commands will bring if we obey them.

We must just trust Him that His commands are good and that, as He said, His yoke is not burdensome. His yoke is easy and His burden is light. We must just follow Him, even though it doesn't always make sense.

So He touches the bier to show us not only His love for mankind but His understanding of mankind. His way IS the only way to happiness, to peace, to security. There IS no other option and He knows it. And He will share it with us.

So what happens when He touches the bier? Another very important action that the apostle tells us. They stand still, which perhaps at first glance seems to be an obvious and irrelevant point. I don't think it is obvious at all. I think most of the time we keep just right on going because the Lord is touching us all the time. He is always saying to us, weep not, or some other words of encouragement or rebuke, and we are not hearing Him. And perhaps He touches us and we don't feel Him. But these people did and so they stopped and stood still.

I always recall, when I read these words, the Prophet Elijah. After forty days of travel he went to the mountain. And the Lord was not in the earthquake or the flood or the fire; but there was the still small voice like a rustling wind, and the Lord was in the wind. But he was still in order to be able to hear it, because you can't hear a little tiny rustling wind if you're making noise yourself.

So the people stood still, but not understanding why the Lord had given the command, why He had told this woman who had lost all of her living, as a widow having no substance anymore because her son was dead, why she would be told not to weep anymore. In fact, I would dare say that many people would have thought that to be a cruel comment, a cruel remark. And then He stops the procession, prolonging the woman's agony, in the minds of some. But no, He was to heal the boy. He was to raise him from the dead. This is our life in microcosm.

When you read -- This is why I tell you so often -- When you read the Scriptures, personalize them. This is you. You could say you're the boy. I'd say more that we are the woman with sadness, with difficulty, with passions, not understanding really what we're going to do the next day and having the Lord tell us things that we really don't understand.

And yet in the end our son will be raised; we will become perfected. This is our life. I hope you feel this deeply in your soul how powerful this is. The only way to peace, to happiness, is to follow Christ.

But Christ did not give us some sort of exact outline, as you would in some sort of lecture class, exactly what you need to know. He says, follow me, do what I do. And because of our passions, because of our sins, we don't understand a lot of times why we should do a thing or we don't feel any satisfaction from it. Intellectually we can say why we should love, why we should become compassionate, why we should not lust or we should not gossip; or we should pray when we are tired. We know these things intellectually, but it has not penetrated every ounce of our being as it did our Lord. So we don't have a full understanding.

There's a lot in which we're in the dark not because the Lord will not reveal it to us, but because we cannot take it in, because the only way to become good is to follow the Lord.

From the moment He was born to the time He died, His face was set to Jerusalem. He came for one purpose and one purpose only, to save us. And EVERYTHING He did was for that purpose. And He understands us, more than we understand ourselves.

So let's trust Him, not in a superficial way, but completely and totally.

Let's believe Him when He says: There will be a time when you will no longer weep.

Let's believe Him when He says: You will become perfected.

Let's believe Him when He gives us the Commandments and that they will be the only path to happiness.

There is no other.

So this miracle is our life in microcosm if we choose to live it.

May God grant us the wisdom to see as He reveals to us the truth. You have to stand still for the truth, brothers and sisters. You have to listen for the truth. You have to follow things even that don't make a lot of sense.

May God help us.

Fr. Seraphim Holland

Source: <http://www.orthodox.net/sermons/>



Holy Transylvanian Martyrs and Confessors*

On October 21st, the Romanian Orthodox Church commemorates the Holy Transylvanian Confessors and Martyrs: the Venerable Hieromonks Besarion and Sophronius, Holy Martyr Oprea Nicolae and Holy Hieromartyrs John of Galeș and Moses Măcinic of Sibiel. They suffered for their courage to oppose the Habsburg proselite policy and to defend Orthodoxy against the official attempts to impose the Uniate faith upon Romanians.



In 1688, Transylvania, the western province of nowadays Romania, was occupied by the Austrian Empire. Since then, the Habsburg Catholic authorities have promoted a fierce campaign of proselytism against the autochthonous Orthodox Romanians who lacked political rights but who constituted the overwhelming majority of the population.

Their terrible offensive against the Orthodox Church, aiming to „convert” Romanians to the Catholic faith was planned by Jesuits. According to the Jesuit strategy, through the “conversion” of Romanians, Transylvanian Catholicism would have been able to recover not only the church members but also the privileges the Catholic Church had used to enjoy. Indeed, after the emergence of Protestantism, many Hungarians and Saxons of Transylvania left the Catholic Church and switched to the Protestant Lutheran and Reformed churches.

The Jesuits hoped that Catholicism would become again the most important denomination in Transylvania and, by way of representation, the Diet (the parliament of Transylvania at that time) would be dominated again by the Catholic nobles, who could have presumably supported the Catholic Church by laws favorable.

Jesuits hoped that the Romanians’ conversion to the Catholicism would have made possible a considerable increase in number of the Catholic membership. Consequently, by way of representativeness, the Catholic nobles in the Transylvanian Parliament, the so-called “Catholic state”, would become dominant, being able to promote laws favoring the Catholic Church. Nothing was

important for the Habsburg authorities in Transylvania but to reach this aim. This was their initial intention. However, because no Orthodox Romanian in Transylvania would ever freely accepted to leave his faith in order to join the Pope’s crowd (the so-called „papistași”), their attempts of direct „conversion” of Romanians failed. Thus, the Je-

suit missionaries had to re-consider their initial prozelyte plan which they would soon abandon. As they thought that it would be easier for Romanians to accept Catholicism if they would let them keeping their Byzantine liturgy, their rites and traditions, the Habsburg authorities established the so-called Uniate Church (the Church United with Rome), a.k.a. the Greek-Catholic Church. Consequently, a “split” in the Romanian Church appeared. This was another tricky and more cunning Jesuite strategy in order to lure Orthodox Romanians to a compromise. Romanians were to become members of a new denomination, which was no longer Orthodox (except its the Byzantine rite and traditions, which they were allowed to preserve).

Making use of the most non-Orthodox various means of constraint, from promises (never honored) to blackmail and even threats to imprisonment, the Habsburg authorities in Transylvania were trying harder and harder to force Orthodox Romanians to accept the Union with Rome. Thus, through pressure and deceit, from 1698 to 1701, some Orthodox Romanians in Transylvania were forced to accept the “union” with the Church of Rome, at the time of metropolitan Atanasie Anghel (1698–1713). Thus the members of the new Uniate Church were to be officially counted among Catholics.

However, by the middle of the 18th century, among Romanian Orthodox priests and faithful in Transylvania arose countless defenders of the true faith. They took the risks that arose from their opposition to this anti-Orthodox policy. Most of them paid a heavy price with their lives for their courage to defend the Orthodox faith.

Empress Maria Theresa herself acknowledged in her 1760 rescript that "the crowds were treated in that principality

of ours with death and other means of cruelty because they refused to unite with the Greek Catholic rite."

The saints which we celebrate on October 21 are among the bravest defenders of Orthodoxy in Transylvania. They all lived in the 18th century and suffered many torments being condemned by the Habsburg authorities to many years in prison just because they had the courage to defend the Orthodox Church and the right of Romanians to remain Orthodox Christians, as they were born.

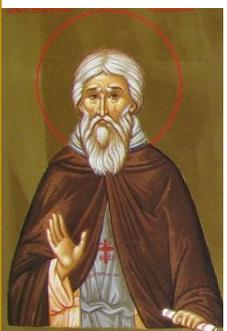
In the lines below, we will try to briefly present their contribution to the defense of the Orthodox faith in Transylvania and to the safeguarding of the dignity of the Romanian nation in this principality.

The first saint we are commemorating is the Holy Venerable Confessor **Visarion (Besarion) Sarai**. He was born in 1714 to Maxim and Maria Ciurcea, a family of Orthodox Vlachs in Bosnia. At the baptism he received the name Nicholas. He became a monk in 1738 at the Saint Sava Monastery. In 1742, he arrived at the Pakra Monastery in Slovenia, and in January 1744 he came to Transylvania and



began the fight to defend Orthodoxy.

He was arrested on April 26, 1744 by the imperial authorities, enduring the torments of a long and violent interrogation. He was sent to the prison in Deva, then to those in Timisoara, Osieck and Raab, and finally to the horrific Kufstein prison in the Tyrolean Mountains (Austria), where he died a martyr.



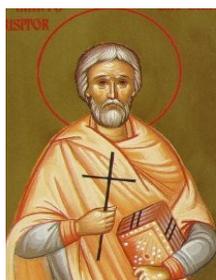
Saint Sofronie (Sophronius) of Cioara was a married parish priest. After his wife died, he decided to become a monk and went to the Monastery of Cozia (in the province of Oltenia, Vallachia), where he entered monasticism. He later returned to his native Transylvania and erected a small monastery on his own property. Because the local authorities destroyed his monastery, he led a popular uprising

against the Habsburg authorities and the Greek-Catholic Diocese (United with Rome) in Blaj, which acted as a divisive factor against the Romanian Orthodox Church. In August 1760, Saint Sofronie convened a Synod (a large Assembly) calling for an Orthodox bishop, restitution of churches, release of prisoners, and observance of religious freedom. He died on a date we do not know, either at the Vieroși Monastery or at the Robaia Monastery.

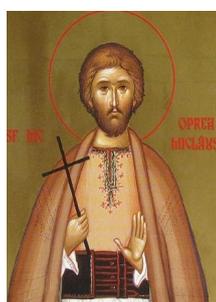


Saint Ioan (John) of Galeș was at the forefront of the movement around the city of Sibiu to defend Orthodoxy, roaming several villages to collect signatures on a document entitled *Memorandum*, by which the Romanian Orthodox in Transylvania demanded that freedom be granted to the Orthodox Church. The document was handed to Oprea Miclăuș, to be brought to the Imperial Court in Vienna. By order of Empress Maria Theresa, St. John was thrown into the Deva prison, then to Graz and finally to Kufstein. Since the last news about Father John is from 1780, he is believed to have died not long after.

Saint Moise (Moses) Măcinic was ordained to the holy priesthood in Bucharest around 1746, and worked to oppose the Unia. Because of his activities he was arrested and jailed in Sibiu for seventeen months. Ultimately, he was released with the understanding that he would cease to function as a priest, and live as an but to support himself from the field work. He took refuge in Banat. In,



1752 he was chosen to go to Vienna with Saint Oprea where he met Saint Oprea Miclăuș, whom he accompanied on his travels to Vienna, to deliver a petition to Empress Maria Theresa. The petition asked her to recognize the rights of the Orthodox Church in Transylvania. She received them, but she had them thrown into the terrible Kufstein Prison in the Tyrolean Mountains, where Father Moise died. Although representatives from Transylvania repeatedly asked the Hapsburg rulers to free the two saints, they denied all knowledge of them.



Saint Oprea Nicolae, whom his friends called **Miclăuș**, was originally from the village of Tilișca (in the commune of Sălișteța Sibiului). He traveled three times to Vienna to present the complaints of Transylvanian Orthodox Romanians (in 1748, 1749 and 1752). In their memoirs, Romanians demanded freedom for the Orthodox Church and an Orthodox bishop to lead the Diocese of Transylvania. In 1752, while bringing the memorandum to the Imperial Court, he was arrested in Vienna and taken to the Kufstein prison, where he died as a martyr and confessor for Orthodoxy.



The Holy Transylvanian Martyrs Visarion (Besarion) Sarai, Sofronie (Sophronius) of Cioara and Oprea Nicolae (Miclăus) were canonized in 1955. Taking into account their firm fight for defending Orthodoxy, the Holy Synod of the Romanian Orthodox Church decided that be honoured by our Church as confessors of the Orthodox faith. The Holy Priests Ioan (John) of Galeș and Saint Moise (Moses) Măcinic were canonized in 1992.

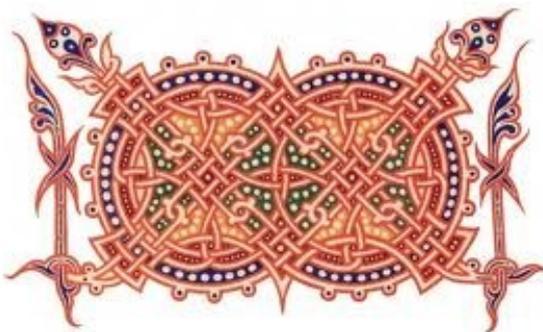
All five are celebrated on October 21.

“Venerable Bessarion Serai the Confessor, Saint Sophronius the Confessor and Martyr Oprea Nicholas of Saliste: Champions of Orthodoxy, you have quickened the souls as the angelic trumpets to confess fearlessly true faith. As wise preachers, you have nourished the people with a righteous and enlightened teaching. Great were the struggles of your labours! Great was your zeal to preach!”.

V. Rev. Fr. Nicolai Buga

Note:

* „Confessors” refers to someone who witnessed to the faith but was not directly martyred for doing so.



HOLY TRINITY’S Liturgical Schedule from October 18 to October 27, 2020

Sunday October 18 (20th Sunday after Pentecost):

- 9:00 am - Matins
- 10:00 am - Divine Liturgy
- 11:00 am - Sunday School
- 12:00 pm - Coffee Hour
- 1:00 pm - Baptism Anisia DARIE

**Wednesday October 21:
Holy Transylvanian Martyrs
and Confessors:**

- 9:00 am - Matins
- 10:00 am - Divine Liturgy
- 12:00 pm - Coffee Hour

**Saturday October 24:
12:00 pm - Baptism Emma Eliana DARIE**

Sunday October 25 (23rd Sunday after Pentecost):

- 9:00 am - Matins
- 10:00 am - Divine Liturgy
- 11:00 am - Sunday School
- 12:00 pm - Coffee Hour

**Monday October 26 -
Holy Great Martyr Demetrius
the Myrrh Streamer:**

- 9:00 am - Matins
- 10:00 am - Divine Liturgy
- 12:00 pm - Coffee Hour

**Tuesday October 27 - Holy Venerable
Demetrius of Bassarab, Protector of
Bucharest:**

- 9:00 am - Matins
- 10:00 am - Divine Liturgy
- 12:00 pm - Coffee Hour