

SUNDAY, JULY 11, 2021
GREATMARTYR EUPHEMIA THE ALL-PRAISED
BLESSED OLGA, PRINCESS OF RUSSIA

The Miracle of Saint Euphemia the All-Praised: The holy Great Martyr Euphemia (September 16) suffered martyrdom in the city of Chalcedon in the year 304, during the time of the persecution against Christians by the emperor Diocletian (284-305). One and a half centuries later, at a time when the Christian Church had become victorious within the Roman Empire, God deigned that Euphemia the All-Praised should again be a witness and confessor of the purity of the Orthodox teaching.

In the year 451 in the city of Chalcedon, in the very church where the glorified relics of the holy Great Martyr Euphemia rested, the sessions of the Fourth Ecumenical Council (July 16) took place. The Council was convened for determining the precise dogmatic formulae of the Orthodox Church concerning the nature of the God-Man Jesus Christ. This was necessary because of the widespread heresy of the Monophysites [“mono-physis” meaning “one nature”], who opposed the Orthodox teaching of the two natures in Jesus Christ, the Divine and the Human natures (in one Divine Person). The Monophysites falsely affirmed that in Christ was only one nature, the Divine [i.e. that Jesus is God but not man, by nature], causing discord and unrest within the Church. At the Council were present 630 representatives from all the local Christian Churches. On the Orthodox side Anatolius, Patriarch of Constantinople (July 3), Juvenal, Patriarch of Jerusalem (July 2), and representatives of Saint Leo, Pope of Rome (February 18) participated in the conciliar deliberations. The Monophysites were present in large numbers, headed by Dioscorus, the Patriarch of Alexandria, and the Constantinople archimandrite Eutychius.

After prolonged discussions the two sides could not come to a decisive agreement.

The holy Patriarch Anatolius of Constantinople proposed that the Council submit the decision of the Church dispute to the Holy Spirit, through His undoubted bearer Saint Euphemia the All-Praised, whose wonderworking relics had been discovered during the Council’s discussions. The Orthodox hierarchs and their opponents wrote down their confessions of faith on separate scrolls and sealed them with their seals. They opened the tomb of the holy Great Martyr Euphemia and placed both scrolls upon her bosom. Then, in the presence of the emperor Marcian (450-457), the participants of the Council sealed the tomb, putting on it the imperial seal and setting a guard to watch over it for three days. During these days both sides imposed upon themselves strict fast and made intense prayer. After three days the patriarch and the emperor in the presence of the Council opened the tomb with its relics: the scroll with the Orthodox confession was held by Saint Euphemia in her right hand, and the scroll of the heretics lay at her feet. Saint Euphemia, as though alive, raised her hand and gave the scroll to the patriarch. After this miracle many of the hesitant accepted the Orthodox confession, while those remaining obstinate in the heresy were consigned to the Council’s condemnation and excommunication.

After an invasion by the Persians during the seventh century, the relics of Saint Euphemia were transferred from Chalcedon to Constantinople, into a newly built church dedicated to

her. Many years later, during the period of the Iconoclast heresy, the reliquary with the relics of the saint was cast into the sea by order of the Iconoclast emperor Leo the Isaurian (716-741). The reliquary was rescued from the sea by the ship-owning brothers Sergius and Sargonos, who gave it over to the local bishop. The holy bishop ordered that the relics be preserved in secret, beneath a crypt, since the Iconoclast heresy was continuing to rage. A small church was built over the relics, and over the reliquary was put a board with an inscription stating whose relics rested within. When the Iconoclast heresy was finally condemned at the holy Seventh Ecumenical Council (in the year 787), during the time of Saint Tarasius, Patriarch of Constantinople (784-806) and the emperor Constantine VI (780-797) and his mother Saint Irene (797-802), the relics of the holy Great Martyr Euphemia were once again solemnly transferred to Constantinople.

GREAT VESPERS

LORD I CALL: Four stikhera of the Resurrection in tone 2, followed by three stikhera for Saint Euphemia and three for Saint Olga

Resurrection, tone 2:

Come, let us worship the Word of God
begotten of the Father before all ages,
and incarnate of the Virgin Mary!
Having endured the Cross, He was buried as He himself desired.//
And having risen from the dead, He saved me, the erring one.

Christ our Savior nailed to the Cross the bond against us,
He voided it and destroyed the dominion of death.//
We fall down before His Resurrection on the third day.

With the Archangels let us praise the Resurrection of Christ!
He is our Savior, our Redeemer.
He is coming with awesome glory and mighty power//
to judge the world which He made.

The Angel proclaimed You as the crucified and buried Master.
He told the women: “Come, see the place where He lay!
He is risen as He said, for He is almighty.”
We worship You, only immortal One.//
O Christ, the Giver of life, have mercy on us!

Saint Euphemia, tone 8:

O most glorious wonder!
The ewe lamb of the Lord,
imitating His voluntary death through the pain of suffering,
while lying in the tomb pours out blood by the power of the Spirit.

As we venerate it for the purification of our souls//
we ever offer to God the praise of all.

O most glorious wonder!
Although mortal by nature,
the all-praised passion-bearer was steadfast this day,
holding the divine scroll, which she did not give to the enemies
but entrusted to the fathers.
O glorious martyr, boast of all the world, //
by your prayers, save unshaken the Church of Christ!

The assembly of the divine Fathers
placed the definition of the faith on your breast.
Having received it, O all-glorious one,
you preserved the faith of God unshaken,
conquering all manner of heresy
and putting to shame the advocates of false belief. //
Therefore, we honor and bless you.

Saint Olga, tone 4:

Your memory dawns like the sun, O holy Olga, wise in God.
As the mother of Russian kings, you pointed the way to Christ.
Taught in the apostolic way, you overthrew the idols and the Devil.
Enlightened by the power of the Holy Spirit,
you led the whole land to God from the darkness of ignorance. //
pray to Him for those who celebrate your memory!!

With wisdom in things divine
you overcame the Enemy who tempted Eve,
and, destroying his weapons,
you fostered the God-given paradise of the Church;
there you planted the life-giving Cross
and tasted of the heavenly food,
the perpetual wellspring of the blood of Christ.
Partaking of it, you remain incorrupt,
and you pray unceasingly for us all.

Let us rejoice spiritually in remembering Olga, wise in God!
Together with miracle-workers and martyrs
And, having the holy Theotokos as her helper,
she constantly prays to Christ,
that we who faithfully praise her in song
and venerate her incorrupt relics //

may be delivered from misfortunes and sorrows.

GLORY... Saint Euphemia, tone 6:

The virgin, passion-bearer and martyr Euphemia,
stood at the right hand of the Savior,
clothed in the strength of victory,
adorned with the oil of purity and the blood of suffering.
She cried aloud to Him, holding her lamp with joy:
“I have hastened to the scent of Your sweet fragrance, O Christ God,
for I am wounded by Your love.
Do not turn me away, O heavenly Bridegroom!”
By her prayers, O almighty Savior,//
send down on us Your great mercies!

NOW AND EVER... The dogmatikon in tone 2:

The shadow of the Law passed when grace came;
as the Bush burned, yet was not consumed,
so the Virgin gave birth, yet remained a Virgin.
Instead of a pillar of flame, the Righteous Sun has risen.//
Instead of Moses, Christ, the Salvation of our souls.

APOSTIKHA: All stikhera of the Resurrection in tone 2:

Your Resurrection, O Christ our Savior,
has enlightened the whole universe,
recalling Your creation.//
Glory to You, O almighty Lord!

By the Tree You destroyed the curse of the Tree, O Savior.
By Your burial You mortified the majesty of death.
You have enlightened our race by Your Resurrection.//
O Giver of life, Christ our God, glory to You!

When You were seen nailed to the Cross, O Christ,
You restored the beauty of Your creatures.
The soldiers showed their inhumanity when they pierced Your side with a spear.
The Hebrews, not knowing Your power,
asked that Your tomb might be sealed,
but through the mercy of Your compassion,
You accepted the tomb
and rose on the third day!//
O Lord, glory to You!

O Christ, the Giver of life,

for the sake of the dead You voluntarily endured death,
descending into hell as the Mighty One
to save those who awaited Your coming,
granting them the life of paradise instead of hell.
Grant also to us who glorify Your Resurrection on the third day//
cleansing of our sins and great mercy!

GLORY... Saint Euphemia, tone 6:

O all-praised Euphemia,
you are clothed in the virtues and made radiant by your thought;
you pour forth myrrh upon the hearts of the faithful,
shining like a radiant star from the East.
You supported a council of the divine fathers through the coming of the Holy Spirit.
Do not cease to beseech Christ on our behalf//
that our souls may be saved!

NOW AND EVER... Resurrectional Theotokion in tone 6:

My Maker and Redeemer, Christ the Lord,
was born of you, O most pure Virgin.
By accepting my nature, He freed Adam from his ancient curse.
Unceasingly we magnify you as the Mother of God!
Rejoice, O celestial Joy!
Rejoice, O Lady://
the Protection, Intercession and Salvation of our souls!

TROPARIA

Resurrection, tone 2

When Thou didst descend to death, O Life Immortal,
Thou didst slay hell with the splendor of Thy Godhead!
And when from the depths Thou didst raise the dead,
All the powers of heaven cried out:
O Giver O Life! Christ our God! Glory to Thee!

Saint Euphemia, tone 3

You brought joy to the Orthodox
and shame to the defenders of heresy,
for you confirmed what the Fathers of the Fourth Council had correctly taught.
O glorious martyr Euphemia, fair virgin of Christ,//
entreat Christ God to grant us His great mercy!

Resurrectional Dismissal Theotokion, tone 3

We praise you as the mediatrix of our salvation,
O Virgin Theotokos.
For your Son, our God, Who took flesh from you,
accepted the Passion on the Cross, //

delivering us from corruption as the Lover of Man.