

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 9, 2022
17th Sunday after Pentecost (3rd of Luke)
Glorification of St. Tikhon, Patriarch of Moscow & All Russia,
Enlightener of North America

Patriarch Tikhon was born Vassily Ivanovich Bellavin on Jan. 19, 1865,- the son of a priest. As an outstanding student in the Ecclesiastical Seminary of Pskov, he was both loved and respected by his classmates. Tall and fair, he was already characterized by firm yet unaffected piety which he preserved to the end of his life. Later, in the St. Petersburg Academy, his fellow students affectionately nicknamed him "the patriarch." How prophetic this proved to be. Who could have foreseen that this quiet and modest young man was to be elected the first patriarch after 217 years of church administration by the Holy Synod.

In 1891 he received the monastic tonsure with the name of Tikhon. In 1898, at the age of 33, he was ordained bishop and appointed to the Aleutian-Alaskan diocese of North America. For seven years he tirelessly labored there in the Lord's harvest fields, winning the love and respect of his flock. Soon, however, the spiritual and administrative talents of the young hierarch were recognized and in 1907 he was appointed as Archbishop to Yaroslavl-one of the most important dioceses of Russia.

His simplicity, accessibility and modest demeanor won the hearts of people everywhere, and only he was surprised to hear that the people of Moscow had elected him as their archpastor. Three years later, on August 15, 1917, he was raised to the rank of Metropolitan and elected Chairman of the Council. This Council was comprised not only of learned theologians, but also of simple peasants one of whom said, "We no longer have a Tsar, no father whom we can love; it is impossible to love the Synod; therefore we, the peasants, want a Patriarch."

Prompted by the intense difficulties facing the Church at that time and the fear that the communists may soon dissolve the Council, it was decided to proceed quickly with the election of a patriarch who

could provide the sorely needed spiritual leadership. They chose three candidates by general vote and then cast lots, leaving the final decision to God's will. Thus did Patriarch Tikhon enter the arena as a spiritual warrior, to combat an enemy whose malice was to surpass that which anyone had anticipated or even imagined.

The consecration took place in the Cathedral of the Dormition on Nov.21, 1917. The communists had not yet taken a definite stand against the Church and the ceremony was performed amid great triumph and rejoicing.

Crowds of people filled the Kremlin and religious processions from all the churches of Moscow gathered on Red Square. Never again was there to be such a display of the Church's might and popularity. The hostile attitude of the godless authorities towards the Church and her faithful servants was soon fanned into a raging blaze of anger and hatred, and hundreds, thousands of the faithful were led like innocent lambs to the slaughter.

The Patriarch tried to bring the evil tyrants to their senses, and called upon the faithful to resist the communists-whom he anathematized as servants of Satan -and, if necessary, to suffer martyrdom.

In an epistle to the Soviet of the People's Commissars, on the occasion of the first anniversary of the October revolution, Patriarch Tikhon wrote:

"While you were seizing the power, you asked the people to trust you, and made promises to them. But have those promises been fulfilled? You gave a stone instead of a loaf, and a serpent instead of fish (Mt. 7:9-10). You have substituted a soulless international concept for our Motherland. You have divided the people into enemy camps and plunged them into a fratricidal war of an unprecedented cruelty. You have openly replaced Christ's love by hatred.. Mark the anniversary of your rule by liberating those imprisoned by you; by ceasing bloodshed, violence, destruction and oppression of religion.... Otherwise all righteous blood shed by you, shall be

required of you (Lk. 11:51), and 'you that take the sword shall perish by the sword' (Mt. 26:52)" (Epistle of Oct. 26, 1918).

The Patriarch never acted to protect himself and never hesitated to speak out in defense of the Truth. Fearing for his safety, many of his faithful supporters urged him to flee the country, but the Patriarch would not hear of it. "The flight of the Patriarch," he said, "would cause the enemies of the Church to rejoice and they would use it for their own evil purposes." Nevertheless, the Moscow parish communities organized a constant watch over the Patriarch. He continued to fearlessly visit churches in Moscow and elsewhere, drawing large crowds of the faithful who felt in the Patriarch "one of their kind".

The communists, however, were unwilling to make a martyr out of him. Instead they tried to demoralize him by murdering clergy everywhere and weaving about him a net of lies, slander and threats. It was increasingly apparent that nothing he could do or say would pacify their bloody intent to liquidate the clergy whom they blindly accused of counter-revolutionary activity. Under the pretext of raising money to feed the starving populace, the communists ordered the confiscation of Church valuables. Hoping to avoid a blood-bath, the Patriarch issued an appeal, blessing the voluntary donations of valuables. But, the communists would stop at nothing and only used this as an excuse to further terrorize the Church. Some 10,000 executions of the faithful occurred in connection with the requisition of valuables.

Hoping to gain control over the Church, the atheist regime arrested the Patriarch and organized a new Church administration, the so-called "Renovators," who had the audacity to declare that never before had the Church been so free as it now was under communist rule. While in prison the Patriarch was deliberately misinformed as to the true situation of the Church and came to believe that the Renovators had all but usurped the Russian Church. Hoping to preserve what little remained, he asked to be released stating that he was no longer an enemy of the Soviet state and expressing re-

gret over the past. He deliberately made this humiliating concession in order to somehow try and save the Church: "Let my name be ruined in historical annals as long as the Church profits by it."

No amount of concession or compromise, however, would satisfy the communists and the position of the Patriarch grew more and more difficult: "It would be easier for me to stay in prison. I am supposed to be free, but actually I can do nothing. I appoint a bishop to the South, and he gets to the North. I send one to the West and they take him to the East." A special agent was assigned to the Patriarch to harrass him and extract concessions under the guise of what at first might appear to be beneficial to the Church. The strain of being surrounded by such lies and deceit, the feeling of responsibility for the persecuted flock, the arrests and exile of his hierarchy-all this caused such a strain on the Patriarch that he became a victim in the fullest sense of the word.

Exhausted physically and mentally, Patriarch Tikhon entered a private hospital on Jan. 12, 1925. When he was feeling better - he would go and serve in the churches of Moscow, returning to the hospital at night. Even there the communist agents continued to torment him. On the eve following the feast of Annunciation, the Holy Patriarch Tikhon of Moscow and all Russia reposed, having voluntarily offered his self to God as a blood-less sacrifice.

GREAT VESPERS

LORD I CALL: 4 stichera of the Resurrection in tone 8 (spiral bound Vespers book), then ...

St. Tikhon, tone 4:

O divinely inspired teacher of the Mysteries,
Holy Father Tikhon,
we know you as a foundation of Truth and confirmation of the
Faith,
expounder of piety, abode of purity,

elect vessel, fragrance of the Spirit,
truly-great treasury of teachings,//
and a foundation of the Church of Christ in the Russian lands and
North America.

We honor you, all-praised God-bearing Father Tikhon,
successor to the Apostles and of like character with the martyrs,
zealous emulator of the ascetics, seal of teachers,
divine model, expounder of the Mysteries of Christ,
and river spilling out holy understanding,
drowning the intentions of the blasphemers and transgressors,//
O truly-wise New Confessor Tikhon.

Having increased the talent of wisdom, O truly rich one,
you were given the joy of the Lord.
Adorned with the grace of divine radiance,
and shining noetically with spiritual rays,
you stand now at the right hand of the Bearer of Life//
always illumined, O glorious New Confessor Tikhon.

Glory ... St. Tikhon, tone 6:

Grace spilled out from your lips, O venerable Father Tikhon,
and you became a shepherd of the Church of Christ,
teaching your rational sheep to believe in the Trinity,//
one in essence and one Godhead.

now and ever ... the theotokion-dogmatikon of the Resurrection in tone 8 (spiral bound Vespers book)

OLD TESTAMENT READINGS:

Wisdom of Solomon 3:1-9. But the souls of the righteous are in the hand of God, and no torment will ever touch them. In the eyes of the foolish they seemed to have died, and their departure was thought to be affliction, and their going from us to be their destruction; but they are at peace. For though in the sight of men they

were punished, their hope is full of immortality. Having been disciplined a little, they will receive great good, because God tested them and found them worthy of himself; like gold in the furnace he tried them, and like a sacrificial burnt offering he accepted them. In the time of their visitation they will shine forth, and will run like sparks through the stubble. They will govern nations and rule over peoples, and the Lord will reign over them for ever. Those who trust in him will understand truth, and the faithful will abide with him in love, because grace and mercy are upon his elect, and he watches over his holy ones.

Wisdom of Solomon 5:15-6:3. But the righteous live for ever, and their reward is with the Lord; the Most High takes care of them. Therefore they will receive a glorious crown and a beautiful diadem from the hand of the Lord, because with his right hand he will cover them, and with his arm he will shield them. The Lord will take his zeal as his whole armor, and will arm all creation to repel his enemies; he will put on righteousness as a breastplate, and wear impartial justice as a helmet; he will take holiness as an invincible shield, and sharpen stern wrath for a sword, and creation will join with him to fight against the madmen. Shafts of lightning will fly with true aim, and will leap to the target as from a well-drawn bow of clouds, and hailstones full of wrath will be hurled as from a catapult; the water of the sea will rage against them, and rivers will relentlessly overwhelm them; a mighty wind will rise against them, and like a tempest it will winnow them away. Lawlessness will lay waste the whole earth, and evil-doing will overturn the thrones of rulers. Listen therefore, O kings, and understand; learn, O judges of the ends of the earth. Give ear, you that rule over multitudes, and boast of many nations. For your dominion was given you from the Lord, and your sovereignty from the Most High, who will search out your works and inquire into your plans.

Wisdom of Solomon 4:7-15. But the righteous man, though he die early, will be at rest. For old age is not honored for length of time, nor measured by number of years; but understanding is gray hair

for men, and a blameless life is ripe old age. There was one who pleased God and was loved by him, He was caught up lest evil change his understanding or guile deceive his soul. For the fascination of wickedness obscures what is good, and roving desire perverts the innocent mind. Being perfected in a short time, he fulfilled long years; for his soul was pleasing to the Lord, therefore he took him quickly from the midst of wickedness. Yet the peoples saw and did not understand, nor take such a thing to heart, that God's grace and mercy are with his elect, and he watches over his holy ones.

APOSTICHA: All stichera of the Resurrection in tone 8 (spiral bound Vespers book)

Glory ... saints, tone 8:

By your pure confession and missionary work,
laboring on two continents,
you set before all people a faithful pattern of true godliness,
O New Confessor Tikhon,//
father of the flock of Christ.

now and ever ... theotokion of the Resurrection in tone 8 (spiral bound Vespers book)

TROPARIA

Resurrection, tone 8:

You descended from on high, O Merciful One!
You accepted the three day burial to free us from our sufferings!//
O Lord, our Life and Resurrection, glory to You!

St. Cyprian, tone 1:

Chosen by God in a turbulent time,
you glorified God in complete holiness,
and attained greatness through humility,
showing forth the power of God through simplicity and piety.
You laid down your life for the Church and her people,

O holy Confessor and Patriarch, Father Tikhon.
Pray to Christ God with Whom you were also crucified,
that He may save our souls!

Resurrectional dismissal theotokion, tone 1:

When Gabriel announced to you, O Virgin, saying "Rejoice!"
with that word the Master of all was incarnate in you,
the holy Ark, spoken of by the righteous David!
Your womb became more spacious than the heavens,
for you carried your Creator.
Glory to Him Who took abode in you!
Glory to Him Who came forth from you!//
Glory to Him Who freed us by being born of you!

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