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was wealthy, Euphemian sat at the table once a day, only after the setting of the sun. He had an only son, Alexis, who, when he had reached the age of maturity, was compelled to marry. But on that same night, he left not only his wife but the home of his father as well. Alexis boarded a boat and arrived at the city of Edessa in Mesopotamia, where there was a renown image of our Lord, sent there by our Lord Himself to Emperor Abgar. Having venerated this image, Alexis clothed himself in the dress of a beggar and, as such, lived in the city for seventeen years, continually praying to God in the vestibule of the Church of the Holy Mother of God. When it became public that he was a man of God, he became frightened of the praise of men, departed Edessa and boarded a boat and traveled to Laodicea. According to God's Providence, the boat was carried away and sailed all the way to Rome. Considering this to be the finger of God, Alexis decided to go to the house of his father and there, as an unknown, continued his life of self-denial. His father did not recognize him but out of charity allowed him to live in his courtyard in a hut. Alexis remained here for seventeen years living only on bread and water. Mistreated by the servants in various ways, he



endured all to the end. When his end approached, he wrote a letter, clenched it in his hand, laid down and died on March 17, 411 A.D. At the same time there was a revelation in the Church of the Twelve Apostles, and in the presence of the emperor and the patriarch, a voice was heard which said, "Seek out the Man of God." Shortly after that, it was revealed that this Man of God resided at the house of Euphemian. The emperor along with the pope and an entire retinue arrived at the home of Euphemian and after a lengthy discussion learned that the beggar was that "Man of God." When they entered his hut, they found Alexis dead but his face shown as the sun. From that letter his parents learned that it was their son Alexis. Also, his bride, who for 34 years lived without him, learned that he was her husband. All were overcome with immense grief and pain. Later, they were comforted after seeing how God glorified His chosen one. By touching his body, many of the sick were healed, and from his body flowed a sweet-smelling oil [Chrism]. His body was buried in a sarcophagus of marble and jasper. His head reposes in the Church of St. Laurus in the Peloponnese.

From *The Prologue from Ochrid*. Bishop Nikolai Velimirovic. Lazarica Press. Birmingham, B30 1QE England

Go Forth

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MARCH 16, 2014

SECOND SUNDAY OF GREAT LENT

When you fast and are nourished with abstinence, do not store the leftovers for tomorrow, but, as the Lord became poor and enriched us, feed someone who does not want to be hungry, you who hungers willingly. Then your fast will be like the dove who brings and joyfully proclaims salvation to your soul from the flood.

ST. GREGORY PALAMAS — THE FESTIVE FAST

As to those who live in the world, they must force themselves to use the things of this world in conformity with the commandments of God. Will not the passionate part of the soul, as a result of this violence, be also brought to act according to the commandments? Such forcing, by dint of habituation, makes easy our acceptance of God's commandments, and transforms our changeable disposition into a fixed state. This condition brings about a steady hatred towards evil states and disposition of soul, and hatred of evil duly produces the impassibility which in turn engenders love for the unique Good. Thus one must offer to God the passionate part of the soul, alive and active, that it may be a living sacrifice. As the Apostle said of our bodies, 'I exhort you,

by the mercy of God, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God.'

ST. GREGORY PALAMAS — THE TRIADS

When we strive with diligent sobriety to keep watch over our rational faculties, to control and correct them, how else can we succeed in this task except by collecting our mind, which is dispersed abroad through the senses, and bringing it back into the world within, into the heart itself, which is the storehouse of all our thoughts?

ST. GREGORY PALAMAS — THE ART OF PRAYER

MARCH 17 – SAINT ALEXIS, THE MAN OF GOD

Varied are the paths upon which God leads those who desire to please Him and to fulfill His Law. There lived in Rome at the time of Emperor Honorius a high-ranking dignitary, Euphemian, who was highly respected and extremely wealthy. He and his wife, Algae, led a God-pleasing life. Even though he

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Phone: (802) 372-4361; oida@aol.com
Go Forth...and teach all nations. (Matthew 28:19)

MARCH 19 – SAINT CHRYSANTHUS & DARIA OF ATHENS

This inspiring account narrates the lives of the holy martyrs of our Lord Jesus Christ, Chrysanthus and Daria, and those with them, who suffered during the reign of Emperor Numerianus (253-254). Our story first opens with Chrysanthus, the son of a Roman senator, Polemonus of Alexandria.

Chrysanthus, disowning his ancestral impiety and putting aside the distinction of family, was catechized in the Christian Faith by a certain bishop who lived concealed in a cave. Enflamed with love for the worshipful Trinity, Chrysanthus was eager to forsake the former gloom of his error. Thus, he confessed that Jesus Christ came in the flesh [1 Jn. 4:2], naming Him the Lord of all [1 Cor. 12:3]. Chrysanthus then received holy Baptism at the hands of the bishop.

Not much time passed when Chrysanthus' father learned of his son's new faith and activities. Polemonus had his son incarcerated in a bleak and dark dungeon where he was punished for many days with starvation.

Since the holy youth remained unwavering in Christ's Faith, Polemonus contrived a plan to lure his son to his former persuasion. Polemonus arranged to have Daria, a beautiful and young maiden, brought from Athens to Rome. Polemonus enjoined Chrysanthus to take the maiden as his bride. The father's selection of Daria was not without reason. This maiden had studied pagan philosophy; thus, it was the father's hope that his son would

fall in love with the beautiful and intelligent Daria, who would turn him away from Christianity.

When Chrysanthus and Daria were married, unbeknownst to the father, the couple agreed to preserve their virginity until death. Thus, disregarding his father's incentives to passion, Chrysanthus dwelt with Daria as one would his sister, and not as a wife. Indeed, instead of Daria drawing away Chrysanthus, he, by his teaching, brought her to deny the darkness and practices of unbelief. Whereupon, she forsook a mortal lover and believed in Christ, the immortal Bridegroom of unsurpassed comeliness, and received holy illumination, that is Baptism.

The holy couple, superior in virtue, correctly and wisely instructed the people, bringing many to believe in Christ. Now the idolaters learned of their ministry. Begrudging their own salvation, with full malice, they yielded to the demons at work in them, and discredited the young couple before Eparch Cellerinus. They charged that the sacred duo were convincing women to abandon their husbands and to follow Christ. Alarmed at this accusation and where it could lead if ignored, the eparch delivered Chrysanthus and Daria to the tribune (also the judge), named Claudius.

Claudius had the couple removed outside the city where he tortured them with various chastisements. The executioners tore at Chrysanthus' body with prickly rods. Next, they burned him with torches, but the martyr remained unconsumed. All the while, Chrysanthus remained cheerful, as though someone else were suffering

these dread punishments. When the integrity of Daria's maidenhood was threatened by profane hands, Christ, Whom she loved with pure thought, sent a wild beast to act as a kind of guard to her virginity. Thus, the beast clearly kept away the would-be ravagers of her modesty.

Now Claudius rightly perceived that the Christian prisoners were protected by divine power. Whereupon, he fell before Chrysanthus' feet, beseeching him that he might be deemed worthy of holy Baptism. Moreover, others, under Claudius' command, also observed that the couple in nowise sustained any injury. Therefore, they, too, came to believe in Christ as true God. In addition to the tribune, his wife Hilaria and sons, named Jason and Maurice, also espoused Christ. Claudius also brought others of his household, including servants, and his friends and other men-at-arms to Christianity.

Not much time passed when both Emperor Numerianus and Eparch Cellerinus learned of their conversion. Therefore, the eparch had them all tortured. Tribune Claudius received the crown of martyrdom when they bound a rock to his neck and cast him into the sea. An attempt was made to have the other soldiers deny Christ, but this proved unsuccessful. Therefore, they were slain by the sword in the stadium. When Claudius' two sons, Jason and Maurice, were brought before the emperor, they also professed Christ dauntlessly. Whereupon, they were sentenced to decapitation, and received the crowns of martyrdom.

Meanwhile, the holy Martyrs Chry-



santhus and Daria were cast into a fetid pit of murky mire. The idolaters then bespattered the saints with earth until they filled up the pit. Thus, that blessed holy couple, the precious vessels of purity, received the crowns of the contest.

Nearby the site where Claudius and his men met death, there was a cave. This cave was cleaned and prepared by the Christians, so they might entomb the precious relics of the saints. However, the holy Hilaria took up the relics of her sons and interred them in another place, which she oft-times visited.

At length, Hilaria was arrested by the unbelievers who dragged her along in a violent fashion. Hilaria besought them to let her rest for a spell. They granted her this wish. At this point, she lifted her hands unto heaven and prayed. Then, straightway, she surrendered her soul into the hands of God. Observing this, the executioners were sore amazed and quickly fled.

When two maidservants of the holy Hilaria learned of their lady's repose, they went to the place where her relics lay. They took up St. Hilaria and buried her nearby the tombs of her sons.

Thus, the Holy Church celebrates the memories of SS. Chrysanthus, Daria, Claudius, Hilaria, Jason, Maurice, and those with them on the 19th of March.

From *The Lives of The Holy Women Martyrs*. Translated and Compiled from the Greek of *The Great Synaxaristes of the Orthodox Church*. Holy Apostles Convent, Buena Vista, CO 81211-3118.