

February 2: Our Venerable Father Euthymius the Great



Of noble and distinguished parents, Euthymius was born in the Armenian town of Melitene near the Euphrates River, in about the year 377. He was an only child, born in answer to the prayer of his mother, Dionysia, who had a heavenly vision regarding his birth. From his youth he lived a life of asceticism, at first in the proximity of his town; but then, after he visited Jerusalem at age twenty-nine, in the desert between Jerusalem and Jericho, called Pharan. He filled his days and nights with prayer, divine contemplation, meditation and physical labors. Around him gathered many disciples, some of whom are glorious saints, such as Cyriacus the Hermit, Sava the Sanctified, Theoctistus and others. Through the gift of God, Euthymius was a great miracle-worker: he expelled demons, healed the gravely ill, brought forth water in the desert, multiplied bread, and prophesied. He taught monks the love of labor, saying: “If you eat bread not earned by your own labor, know that you are eating of someone else’s labor.” When some of the younger monks wanted to fast more than others, he forbade them to do so and commanded them to come to the communal table, so that they would not become prideful as a result of their excessive fasting. He also said that it was not good for a monk to move from place to place, for, he said, “a tree frequently transplanted does not bear fruit.” Whoever desires to do good, can do it from the place where he is. Concerning love,

he said: “What salt is to bread, love is to other virtues.”

During the first week of Great Lent, he retreated to the desert and remained there in solitary silence and divine contemplation, until just before the Feast of the Resurrection. During his lifetime a large monastery was established in the proximity of his cave. Down through the centuries, this monastery was completely filled with monks, as a beehive is filled with bees. Euthymius’s final command was that the monastery always adhere to hospitality and that the gates of the monastery never be closed. He reposed at the age of ninety-seven. The Patriarch of Jerusalem was in attendance at his funeral. The patriarch waited all day long until the great masses of people revered the body of the saint, and only in the evening were they able to complete the Office for the Burial of the Dead. On the seventh day following his death, Euthymius appeared radiant and rejoicing to Dometian, his disciple. The Venerable Euthymius was a true “son of light.” He reposed in the year 473.

Source: St. Nikolai Velimirovic, The Prologue of Ohrid – Volume One.

Apolytikion

Be glad, O barren one, that hast not given birth; be of good cheer, thou that hast not travailed; for a man of desires hath multiplied thy children of the Spirit, having planted them in piety and reared them in continence to the perfection of the virtues. By his prayers, O Christ our God, make our life peaceful.

EPISTLE

1 Timothy 4: 9-15

⁹ This *is* a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance. ¹⁰ For to this *end* we both labor and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is *the* Savior of all men, especially of those who believe. ¹¹ These things command and teach.

¹² Let no one despise your youth, but be an example to the believers in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity. ¹³ Till I come, give attention to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine. ¹⁴ Do not neglect the gift that is in you, which was given to you by prophecy with the laying on of the hands of the eldership. ¹⁵ Meditate on these things; give yourself entirely to them, that your progress may be evident to all.

GOSPEL

Luke 19: 1-10

19 Then *Jesus* entered and passed through Jericho. ² Now behold, *there was* a man named Zacchaeus who was a chief tax collector, and he was rich. ³ And he sought to see who *Jesus* was, but could not because of the crowd, for he was of short stature. ⁴ So he ran ahead and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see Him, for He was going to pass that *way*. ⁵ And when *Jesus* came to the place, He looked up and saw him, and said to him, “Zacchaeus, make haste and come down, for today I must stay at your house.” ⁶ So he made haste and came down, and received Him joyfully. ⁷ But when they saw *it*, they all complained, saying, “He has gone to be a guest with a man who is a sinner.”

⁸ Then Zacchaeus stood and said to the Lord, “Look, Lord, I give half of my goods to the poor; and if I have taken anything from anyone by false accusation, I restore fourfold.”

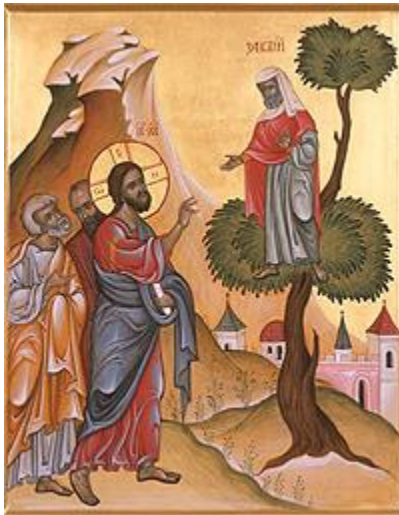
⁹ And *Jesus* said to him, “Today salvation has come to this house, because he also is a son of Abraham; ¹⁰ for the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost.”

The Sunday of Zacchaeus

<p>How to Respond Like Zacchaeus When Salvation Comes to Your House: Homily for the 15th Sunday of Luke in the Orthodox Church January 31, 2016 · Fr. Philip LeMasters</p>

When Christians appear to live in ways that are no more virtuous than those of people without any religious faith at all, it is no wonder that some have little interest in or respect for our faith.

That is precisely why we all have a lot to learn from Zacchaeus, whose life was changed so profoundly by his encounter with Jesus Christ. No one would have had any illusions about what kind of person Zacchaeus was before the Lord entered His home. He was a traitor to his fellow Jews because he collected taxes for the Romans, who were occupying his country. He was a chief tax collector and quite wealthy because he took even more than was required from his own people. He lived in luxury from what he stole in the name of a hated foreign power. Though his way of life was about as far from God's requirements as one could get, Zacchaeus wanted to see the Lord as He passed by. A short little man, he had to climb a sycamore tree in order to be above the crowd and get a decent view. There were probably some people in the crowd that day who would have liked to see him fall out of the tree and break his neck.



Zacchaeus certainly knew what people thought of him. So just imagine how shocked everyone must have been when the Messiah of Israel called out to this wicked man: "Zacchaeus, make haste and come down, for today I must stay at your house." Then that little tax-collector quickly went home and got ready to welcome Christ. He received Him joyfully, but others grumbled about what was happening.

In that very stressful moment, just when the crowd was seething in anger at Christ and at Zacchaeus, the tax-collector did the unthinkable: He repented of his own free will. Yes, before Christ said or did anything else,

Zacchaeus repented. He accepted the truth about himself, that he was a criminal exploiter of the needy. To make things right, he gave half of what he owned to the poor and restored four-fold what he had stolen from others. In that moment, this despised and miserable man began to turn his life around. And Jesus Christ accepted the sincere repentance of this sinner, proclaiming that salvation had come to this son of Abraham, for He came to seek and to save the lost.

[...] Could the same be said of you and me? ...We need to prayerfully consider what change is in order in our lives because of Jesus Christ's gracious entrance in our souls. Zacchaeus is such a wonderful example of a sinner who received the Lord and became a shining beacon of holiness. He did so by deep, genuine, personal repentance that went to the heart of who he was before God and changed how he related to other people in practical ways. If we will follow his example, then we will be in intimate communion with Christ each day of our lives, always celebrating the liturgy of offering ourselves to Him in every thought, word, and deed. We will become a channel of blessing to others, and even skeptics will notice that salvation has come to our house. And then they may be so curious about what has happened that they will even climb a sycamore tree in order to get a better view.

Question: "Who was Timothy in the Bible?"



Answer: Timothy, the recipient of the two New Testament letters bearing his name, was the son of a Greek father and a Jewish mother. He joined Paul during one of Paul's later missionary journeys. Paul addresses Timothy as "my true son in the faith" (1 Timothy 1:2). He was probably no older than late teens/early twenties when he joined Paul but had already distinguished himself as faithful, and the elders noticed him. He probably heard and responded to the gospel when Paul came through the area of Derbe and Lystra on his first missionary journey, but we don't know for sure. Timothy served as Paul's representative to several churches, and he was later a pastor in Ephesus. Timothy is also mentioned as being with Paul when Paul wrote several New Testament letters.

Paul says Timothy had a "genuine faith," the same as that which lived in his mother and grandmother. Eunice and Lois prepared Timothy's heart to accept Christ by teaching Timothy the Old Testament Scriptures and preparing him "from infancy" to recognize the Messiah when He appeared. When Paul came preaching Christ, all three accepted his teaching and committed their lives to the Savior.

In **Paul's first letter to Timothy**, he gave him instructions and advice for leading the church. He also exhorted Timothy not to let others look down upon him due to his youth, but to set an example for other believers "in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith and in purity" (1 Timothy 4:12). Paul told Timothy to be devoted to reading Scripture, exhorting, and teaching, and to not neglect the gift that he had been given. Paul also counseled Timothy to keep a close watch on himself, to "pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance and gentleness. Fight the good fight of the faith. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called when you made your good confession in the presence of many witnesses" (1 Timothy 6:11–12).

Paul counseled Timothy, his "dear son" (2 Timothy 1:2), from a heart of love, wanting Timothy to stand firm in his own faith and to lead the other believers well. Timothy certainly seems to have been faithful; we should follow his example. <https://www.gotquestions.org/life-Timothy.html>

According to the New Testament, Eunice was the mother of Timothy. Born into the Jewish faith, she and her mother Lois accepted Christianity. She is mentioned only in 2 Timothy 1:5, where the author writes to Timothy, "I am reminded of your sincere faith, a faith that dwelt first in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice and now, I am sure, dwells in you as well." Commentator Albert Barnes, for example, says, "The mother of Timothy was a pious Hebrewess, and regarded it as one of the duties of her religion to train her son in the careful knowledge of the word of God."