

Twelfth Sunday of Saint Luke
Twenty-Fourth Sunday After Pentecost
December 8, 2024

On December 1st we Commemorate:
Venerable Patapius of Thebes. The 362 Martyrs of North Africa.



Icon of the Ten Lepers

Holy Wisdom Orthodox Mission

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Great Vespers, Saturday Evenings at 6:00 pm
Divine Liturgy, Sunday Mornings at 9:30 am (Hours at 9:05 am)
Paraklesis to the Theotokos, Wednesday Evenings at 6:00 pm
Very Reverend Archpriest Luke Uhl, Retired, Interim Rector

Holy Wisdom Orthodox Mission
is a parish in the Diocese of the West
of the Orthodox Church in America
under the spiritual and ecclesiastical jurisdiction of
Archbishop Benjamin of San Francisco and the West



Orthodox Church in America



Diocese of the West

EPISTLE AND GOSPEL READINGS

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Epistle of the Twenty-Fourth Sunday, Ephesians 2:14-22

BRETHREN, Christ is our peace, Who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation, having abolished in His flesh the enmity, that is, the law of commandments contained in ordinances, so as to create in Himself one new man from the two, thus making peace, and that He might reconcile them both to God in one body through the Cross, thereby putting to death the enmity. And He came and preached peace to you who were afar off and to those who were near. For through Him we both have access by one Spirit to the Father. Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, having been built on the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the Chief Cornerstone, in Whom the whole building, being fitted together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord, in Whom you also are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit.

Gospel of the 12th Sunday of Saint Luke, Luke 17:12-19

AT THAT TIME: As Jesus entered a certain village, there met Him ten men who were lepers, who stood afar off. And they lifted up their voices and said, “Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!” So when He saw them, He said to them, “Go, show yourselves to the priests.” And so it was that as they went, they were cleansed. And one of them, when he saw that he was healed, returned, and with a loud voice glorified God, and fell down on his face at His feet, giving Him thanks. And he was a Samaritan. So Jesus answered and said, “Were there not ten cleansed? But where are the nine? Were there not any found who returned to give glory to God except this foreigner?” And He said to him, “Arise, go your way. Your faith has made you well.”



Twelfth Sunday of Saint Luke

In the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

“And as Jesus entered a village, He was met by ten lepers, who stood at a distance and lifted up their voices and said, ‘Jesus, Master, have mercy on us’” (Luke 17:12-13).

Having met the Savior, the ten lepers earnestly raised their voices and implored Him to free them from their terrible misery. Indicating their faith in His ability to do this, they even called Him, “Master.”

No one on earth had the ability to cure lepers of their dread disease, and few showed them any pity or mercy. Yet Christ, Who appeared on earth for this very reason, and had become man that He might show pity to all, was moved with compassion for the lepers.

Curiously, the Lord did not cure the ten right away by saying “*I will that you be clean*” as He did in the case of another leper (cf. *Matthew 8:2-3*). Instead, He told them, “*Go and show yourselves to the priests*” (*Luke 12:14*). Why did He do this? For two reasons.

First, He did this because the Law of Moses directed that those who were cured of leprosy must be certified as such by the priests and to offer sacrifice for having been cleansed (cf. *Leviticus 14:1-20*).

Jesus, the Giver of the Law, showed that He was in no way above the Law but that He was obedient to the commandments in every way. By so doing, He teaches us a great lesson about our obligation to observe the commandments and laws of the Church.

Second, by telling the lepers to present themselves to the priests who were knowledgeable of the Law and the Prophets, these leaders of the people might come to understand that Jesus Christ was the promised Messiah.

Throughout His public ministry, Jesus did not directly say to the people of Israel that He was the Son of God. Instead, He respected their free will and simply did those things that a man of faith would understand as being the works of the Messiah.

For instance, when John the Baptist heard in prison about the deeds of Christ, he sent his disciples to ask Jesus, “*Are You He Who is to come, or shall we look for another?*” (*Matthew 11:3*).

In response, Jesus said to these disciples: “*Go and tell John what you hear and see: the blind receive their sight and the lame walk, lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised up, and the poor have good news preached to them. And blessed is he who takes no offense at Me*” (*Matthew 11:4-6*).

Amen.

The Sunday of the Ten Lepers

From the account of the Healing of Ten Lepers, one may learn that nothing prevents a man from living in a manner pleasing to God, not even if he belongs to a despised race, if only he has a good will and disposition.

For behold, ten lepers met Jesus as He was about to enter a certain city. They met Him outside the city, for those who were considered unclean were not permitted to go into the city.

They stood afar off, as if ashamed of their supposed uncleanness, and did not dare to draw near, thinking that Jesus abhorred them as did the others. They lifted up their voices and made supplication.

By physical location they were standing afar off, but in their supplication they were near. “*For the Lord is nigh unto all that call upon Him in truth*” (*Psalms 144:19*). And they did not make supplication to Him as to a mere man, but as to One greater than a man. For they called Him Master, meaning Lord, Protector, and Guardian, which is not far from thinking of Him as God.

The Lord instructs them to show themselves to the priests. Initially the priests would examine men such as these to determine whether they were lepers or not. For there were certain signs by which the priests could recognize incurable leprosy.

But in addition to this, if it should happen that someone who had been suffering from leprosy was healed, the priests would again examine him to verify the cure, in which event the gift commanded by the law would be offered (cf. *Leviticus 14*).

In this case, since these men were already confirmed lepers, why should they show themselves to the priests, unless indeed they were about to be cleansed?

To command them to go to the priests indicated nothing less than that they would be healed. This is why the Evangelist says that as they went, they were cleansed.

Of the ten lepers, the nine who were Israelites showed themselves to be ungrateful, while it was the Samaritan, an accursed foreigner, as we said earlier, who returned to voice his gratitude.

The Samaritans were Assyrians; therefore, let no Gentile despair, and let no one descended from holy forebears boast.

This miracle also signifies the common salvation that came to the whole human race. For the ten lepers represent all of human nature—it was leprous with wickedness, carrying about with it the ugliness of sin, passing its life outside the heavenly city on account of its uncleanness, and standing afar off from God.

Continued from page 4 ☞ But this very distance from God is itself a supplication. For when the Lover of mankind, Who wills that all should be saved and receive good things, sees someone who is not sharing in His goodness, then He is most quick to show mercy and to heal those who are so miserably afflicted.

But He also healed the whole leprous nature of man, when, for every man's sake, He took flesh and tasted of death.

Although the Jews had been cleansed of the uncleanness of their leprous sin, as far as it was the Lords part to do, they showed themselves ungrateful and did not return from the path of their vain foolishness to give glory to God Who saved them, that is, to believe in Him Who is God and Who endured the extremes of suffering.

For this is the glory of God: His Flesh and His Cross. These Jews, then, did not confess the incarnate and crucified Lord of glory.

But the foreign and accursed people of the Gentiles recognized the One Who makes clean, and they glorified Him by believing in Him. They believed that God loves man so much and is so powerful that He accepted the very depth of dishonor for our sake—this is His love of man—and having accepted it, He suffered no harm to His own nature—this is His power.

Saint Theophylaktos, Bishop of Ochrid (AD 1055–1107)

HOMILY ON THE SUNDAY GOSPEL

On the Ten Lepers (Monk Agapios Landos)

In the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

These ten lepers, in the most succinct manner, provide an image of the whole of human nature, which was entirely leprous and rendered useless by sin.

Human nature had been justly expelled from the Jerusalem Above, that is Paradise, just as the lepers were exiled from Jerusalem on Earth]

They could not be cured by a Priest, Levite, Prophet or any other person, not even by an Angel, unless the Mighty Counsel of the Most High, the co-eternal Messenger and He who is consubstantial with God, came down from heaven, and humanely became human in order to save us humans.

All of us, then, had this leprosy. None of us was free from sin except those whom the all-wise Lord Christ had cleansed.

Today, too, who among us does not have this leprosy of sin upon them? No one. Who can boast that they have no sins on their conscience?

Avarice is a bad case of leprosy and one that is an incurable passion, for just as leprosy consumes and eats away at our body, so too does avarice devour the soul and corrupt it.

Continued on page 6 ☞

The same is true of other crimes, such as lechery, adultery and all other sins, which are an untreated leprosy, of which we cannot be cured unless we hasten to the Lord Christ, the all-powerful Physician, and cry aloud: "*Lord, save me.*"

But the Lord did not want to save them there and then, though He could have; He sent them to the priests, in order to indicate to us that He has given priests the authority to cure each and every sickness of the soul and body.

So let us, also, go to our priests and confessors to reveal our passions and receive healing.

Repentance has such power and grace that as soon as we make a move, in good faith and with a contrite heart, to go to our confessor and tell him our sins, before we even get there we invisibly receive forgiveness and healing from God, just as the lepers were cleansed before they reached the priests.

There are some who say that they do not go to confess their sins, because it is enough that the Lord already knows them. What foolishness and vanity! Of course, God knows them, you blockheads, but unless you go and confess them to the priest, who is God's representative, you will not be saved.

If someone has an open wound and does not show it to the doctor in order to be given the appropriate medication, they will not be cured. By the same token, unless sinners reveal their passions to their confessor, they will not be healed.

Let us then find a way to remove the leprosy from our soul, to acquire perfect cleansing through confession. And then, when we've been healed, let's not be like the nine, ungrateful for the grace they had received, but let us imitate the one, as being of the right mind, and let us thank God every day for healing us.

Even though God lacks nothing, that is, He does not want anything from us, we are greatly benefitted by the thanks we render to Him.

We become more like His familiar friends, more conscientious in observing His redemptive commands; we recall His good gifts and so become inheritors of the future blessings of eternal bliss, to which may we all attain, in Christ our God, to Whom be glory and dominion, always, unto the ages of ages.

Amen.

By Monk Agapios Landos of Crete (1585-1657)



In the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Leprosy was a terrible disease which in ancient times was devastating for those who contracted it and, in the end, proved fatal. Now we have medicines to treat this terrible disease.

In the time of Christ leprosy was widespread, presenting danger and causing panic. Lepers were isolated in desert regions, far from their families and all human contact and comfort. Worse, lepers were held in contempt, because it was believed that the disease resulted from the sinfulness and that God was punishing them for their sins.

In the Gospel we see God's mercy and the blessings of gratitude. Ten were healed but only one returned to thank his Benefactor before returning to normal society. When he saw that he had been cured, he turned back, fell at Jesus' feet, and thanked Him. When he rendered thanks, he received from Christ the blessing of salvation: "*Your faith has saved you*" (Luke 17, 19).

Only the Samaritan, a foreigner, expressed his gratitude and in so doing received the *full* benefit of healing. He was not simply healed of his physical ailment but was granted something far greater: salvation.

Are we not all "foreigners" as we live in a worldly manner often outside the customs and traditions of our Orthodox faith? Are we not exiled into this world of sorrow and tears? Are we not all sinners? Are we not called to be in the world but not of the world (cf. John 15:19 and John 17:16-18)?

Despite our state, when we call out "*Lord, Jesus Christ, have mercy on me*" does He not hear us as He did the Lepers?

Does He not likewise say to us "*Go, show yourselves to the priests*"? In other words, does He not say, "*Go to the priest and confess your sins that he might give you absolution*"? Does He not say, "*Go to the priest to receive Holy Unction for the healing of both body and soul*"?

The last words Christ spoke to the leper were "*Arise, go your way. Your faith has made you well.*" This Samaritan would no longer be in a state of sin, mortality, and death. He would instead be able to praise Christ and speak of His great mercy and His wondrous deeds.

When we have been healed so often and forgiven so many times, should we not also turn to Jesus and thank Him? Should we not proclaim His boundless love for us and also His mighty deeds done for us?

Or will we be like the nine who, having received what they wanted *in the short term in this world*, forget our Benefactor and fail to receive forgiveness and eternal life?

Amen.

Tone 7, Troparion (*Resurrection*)

By Thy Cross Thou didst destroy death. • To the thief Thou didst open Paradise. • For the Myrrhbearers Thou didst change weeping into joy, • and Thou didst command Thy disciples, O Christ God, • to proclaim that Thou art risen, • granting the world great mercy.

Tone 8, Troparion of the Temple (*Midfeast of Pentecost*)

O Savior at the Middle of the Feast, • fill my thirsting soul with the waters of piety, as Thou didst cry to all: • "If anyone thirst, let him come to Me and drink." • O Christ God, Fountain of our life, glory to Thee.

Tone 8, Troparion (*Venerable Patapius*)

The image of God was truly preserved in thee, O Father, • for thou didst take up the Cross and follow Christ. • By so doing, thou taughtest us to disregard the flesh for it passes away; • but to care instead for the soul, for it is immortal. • Therefore thy spirit, venerable Patapius, rejoices with the angels.

Tone 7, Kontakion (*Resurrection*)

The dominion of death can no longer hold men captive, • for Christ descended, shattering and destroying its powers. • Hades is bound, while the Prophets rejoice and cry: • "The Savior has come to those in faith; • enter, you faithful, into the Resurrection."

Tone 4, Kontakion of the Temple (*Midfeast of Pentecost*)

Christ God, the Creator and Master of all, • cried to all in the midst of the feast of the law: "Come and draw the water of immortality." • We fall before Thee and faithfully cry: • "Grant us Thy mercies for Thou art the Fountain of our life."

Tone 3, Kontakion (*Venerable Patapius*)

Glory... Thy temple is found to be a source of healing, • and the people flock to it eagerly, O saint. • They seek the healing of their diseases • and the forgiveness of their sins, • for thou art a protector for all those in need, ven' rable Patapius.

Tone 2, Kontakion of the Theotokos

Both... Steadfast protectress of Christians, • constant advocate before the Creator; • despise not the entreating cries of us sinners, • but in thy goodness come speedily to help us who call on thee in faith. • Hasten to hear our petition and to intercede for us, O Theotokos, • for thou dost always protect those who honor thee.

Prokeímenon

The Lord shall give strength to His people. The Lord shall bless His people with peace. (*Psalm 28:11*)



Евангелие

И когда входил Он в одно селение, встретили Его десять человек прокажённых, которые остановились вдали и громким голосом говорили: Иисус Наставник! помилуй нас.

Увидев их, Он сказал им: пойдите, покажитесь священникам.

И когда они шли, очистились.

Один же из них, видя, что исцелён, возвратился, громким голосом прославляя Бога, и пал ниц к ногам Его, благодаря Его; и это был Самарянин.

Тогда Иисус сказал: не десять ли очистились? где же девять? как они не возвратились воздать славу Богу, кроме сего иноплеменика?

И сказал ему: встань, иди; вера твоя спасла тебя (Лк. 17, 12-19).



Митрополит Антоний Сурожский

Во имя Отца и Сына и Святого Духа.

Сколько радости и сколько живой благодарности было вокруг Христа!

Когда мы читаем Евангелие, мы на каждой странице, в каждой строчке видим, как изливаются на наш грешный, холодный, измученный мир Божия ласка, Божия любовь, Божия милость; как Бог, Христом, взыскует всех, у кого отяжелела душа, потемнела душа от греха, тех, которые не могут уже нести тяжести своей жизни – по болезни или по другой причине.

Как только Христос входит в жизнь людей, эта жизнь начинает искриться радостью, новой надеждой, верой не только в Бога, а в самого себя, в человека, в жизнь.

И как мы искажаем евангельскую проповедь и евангельское слово, когда мы превращаем свою жизнь в постоянное искание в себе самого

1 темного, греховного, недостойного ни нас, ни людей, ни Бога, под предлогом, что этим мы стараемся стать достойными нашего Наставника и Спасителя..

Радость была печатью евангельской христианской общины, радость и благодарность, ликование о том, что Бог *так* возлюбил мир, что не только создал этот мир, но послал в этот мир Сына Своего Единородного – *не судить*, а спасти мир! Мы спасены, мир спасен любовью Божией.

И это спасение мы должны сделать своим собственным достоянием через благодарность, которая бы выражалась не только в слове, не только в живом чувстве умиления, не только в слезах радости, но в такой жизни, которая могла бы – если можно так выразиться – утешить Отца о том, что Он предал Своего Сына на смерть ради нас, обрадовать Спасителя о том, что не напрасно Он жил, не напрасно учил, не напрасно страдал и не напрасно умер: что Его любовь пролилась в нашу жизнь, и что она составляет нашу надежду, и нашу радость, и наше ликование, и нашу *уверенность* в спасении...

Поэтому, подходя теперь к празднику Воплощения, Рождества Спасителя, **будем учиться этой радости; взглянем на нашу жизнь по-новому**; вспомним, сколько Господь излил в эту нашу жизнь милости, ласки, любви, сколько радости Он нам дал: телесной, душевной; сколько у нас друзей, вспомним тех, кто нас любит, родителей, которые нас хранят, если даже они покинули этот мир.

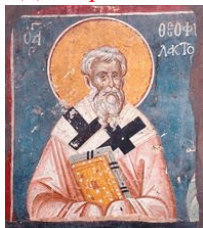
Сколько нам дано земного, и как небесное вливается в нашу жизнь и делает землю уже началом неба, делает время уже началом вечности, делает нашу теперешнюю жизнь начатком жизни вечной...

Научимся этой радости, потому что через очень короткое время мы будем стоять перед яслями, в которых лежит Господь; мы увидим, *что* такое Божия любовь – хрупкая, незащитная, уязвимая, отдающая себя без границ, без сопротивления – только бы мы ее приняли и началась бы для нас новая жизнь, новая радость...

Подумаем о любви Божией и о том, что никакая сила не может ее победить. Не напрасно говорил апостол Павел, что ничто не может нас вырвать из руки Божией, исторгнуть нас из Божественной любви.

Научимся радоваться, и из глубин этой радости строить жизнь, которая была бы сплошной благодарностью, если нужно – крестной, но ликующей радостью.

Аминь.



Блаженный Феофилакт Болгарский

И отсюда всякий может познать, что **никому ничто не препятствует богоугождать Богу, хотя бы он был из проклятого рода, но лишь только бы имел доброе произволение.**

Вот десять человек прокаженных встретили Иисуса, когда Он имел войти в один город.

Встретили они Его вне города, ибо им, так как они считались нечистыми, не позволялось жить внутри города (*Числ. 1, 1. 3*).

Они остановились «вдали», как бы стыдясь мнимой своей нечистоты и не смея приблизиться в той мысли, что и Иисус возгнушается ими, как прочие то делали, возвышают голос и просят милости.

По месту они стояли вдали, но по молитве стали вблизи.

Ибо Господь *близок ко всем призывающим Его во истине* (*Псал. 144, 18*).

Они просят милости не как от простого человека, но как от такого, который выше человека.

Ибо они называют Иисуса наставником, то есть господином, попечителем, надзирателем, что очень близко к наименованию его Богом.

Он (Иисус) повелевает им (прокаженным) показаться священникам.

Ибо священники осматривали таковых, и от них сии принимали решение, чисты ли они от проказы, или нет (*Левит, гл. 13*).

Священники имели признаки, по коим они отмечали неизлечимую проказу.

Да и тогда, когда кто заболел проказою, потом выздоровел, священники осматривали, и им приносили дар, какой поведено в законе.

Здесь же, когда прокаженные были непрерываемо таковы, какая была им нужда показаться священникам, если они не имели быть очищенными совершенно?

Повеление им пойти к священникам указывало не на другое что, как на то, что они сделаются чистыми.

По сему и сказано, что они, идучи дорогою, очистились.

3 ☞ Десять прокаженных обозначают всю природу человеческую, Но смотри, как мы и сначала говорили, из десяти человек девять, хотя они были и израильтяне, остались неблагодарными.

А самарянин, хотя был и чуждого рода, возвратился и высказал свою признательность (а самаряне были ассирияне), **дабы никто из язычников не отчаивался, и никто из происходящих от святых предков сим не хвалился.** — Чудо сие намекает и на общее спасение, бывшее для всего рода человеческого.

Десять прокаженных обозначают всю природу человеческую, прокаженную злобою, носящую на себе безобразие греха, живущую за нечистоту свою вне города небесного и отстоящую далеко от Бога.

Это самое отстояние вдали от Бога ходатайствовало о милости.

Ибо для человеколюбивого и желающего всех спасти и облагодетельствовать Бога самое сильное побуждение к милости видеть, что никто не участвует в благости.

По сему-то самому Он преклонился у врачевать находящихся в таком положении.

И хотя Он врачевал всю прокаженную природу, воплотившись и вкусивши смерть за всякого человека, однако ж иудеи, несмотря на то, что со стороны Господа очищены от всех нечистот прокаженного греха, оказались неблагодарными и не обратились от суетного своего пути, чтоб дать славу Спасителю Богу, то есть поверить Ему, что Он, истинный Бог, благоволил претерпеть самые тяжкие страдания.

Ибо плоть и крест суть слава Божия.

Итак, они воплощенного и распятого не признали Господом славы.

А язычники, народ чуждый, признали очистившего их и прославили Его верою, что Бог столько человеколюбив и силен, что ради нас принял на Себя крайнее бесчестие, что составляет дело человеколюбия, и, приняв оное, никакого вреда не потерпел в Своем естестве, что составляет дело могущества.

Аминь.



Saint Lucia, pray for us!



The Children's Word is a weekly bulletin for Orthodox Christian young people. Copyright 2024 Alexandra Houck. Email is orthodoxchildrensword (at) gmail.com. Find it each week at myocn.net.

The Children's Word

"Let the little children come to me, and do not forbid them, for to such is the Kingdom of Heaven." Mark 10:14

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Orthodox Christian Network



Joined together in Christ

Have you ever watched your priest or deacon use his censer? Do you watch where he censens? He censens the altar, and he blesses the holy things. He censens the icons, and we remember the saints in the pictures. He censens the people, and we remember that we want to be like the saints too.



When the priest or deacon censens the whole church, we remember that we are all one body, one church. We have differences, but we are all one church.

We hear the same thing in the epistle reading today. Our Lord, Jesus Christ came to bring us together, to bring us to Him in heaven! Saint Paul writes in the epistle today, "You are citizens with the saints and also members of the household of God." In Jesus, we are all "joined together and grow into a holy temple in the Lord." The church is one body together.

The saints who have already died are together with us as a church. We are all one body together. We are all joined together and we grow into a holy temple in the Lord.

So, the next time you see your priest or deacon censening, watch! You'll remember that he is censening one church body. You'll remember that we are all joined together to grow into a holy temple in the Lord.

WORD SEARCH

Can you find these words in the jumble?

Body
Censer
Church
Citizens
Epistle
Italy
Light
Lucia
Martyr
Prayers
Together

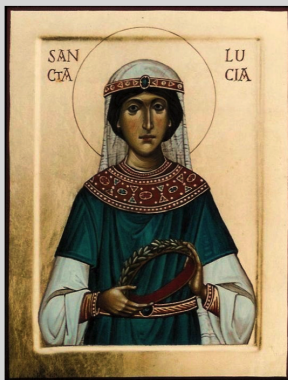
C	R	H	Y	U	R	R	B	Z	N	D	F	E	I	F
E	R	G	E	V	S	A	Y	A	M	U	X	P	H	Q
N	K	E	X	E	N	G	A	T	C	Q	O	J	L	S
S	S	T	O	G	E	T	H	E	R	L	G	B	U	H
E	H	U	Z	I	Z	G	J	M	F	A	J	Z	C	L
R	W	E	K	M	I	T	H	G	I	L	M	R	I	Y
R	Y	U	O	I	T	U	F	E	Q	U	U	S	A	X
B	A	R	T	U	I	T	P	Z	N	H	E	E	M	Q
Z	U	A	O	F	C	I	X	X	C	W	S	D	L	N
C	L	W	T	X	S	M	O	Q	M	S	I	W	L	W
Y	U	Y	G	T	K	S	Z	A	Z	X	F	G	K	W
U	L	Y	L	U	X	B	P	E	W	Z	E	V	Q	S
T	H	E	R	O	E	J	O	M	E	T	D	O	A	D
Y	F	A	X	S	X	R	J	D	H	B	O	D	T	N
S	R	E	Y	A	R	P	K	F	Y	B	X	U	Y	X

WHAT'S IN THE ICON?

In this icon, you can see Saint Lucia (or Lucy) again. But what is she holding?

It's a crown. When Saint Lucia lived, in Italy, a crown was a reward for winning something.

What did Saint Lucia win?



SAINT LUCIA

A SAINT WITH THE LIGHT OF CHRIST

In just a couple weeks, we will have the darkest day of the year. The days grow shorter and shorter and the nights grow longer and longer, all until December 21st, the day with the shortest daylight hours. Sometimes people start to feel sad during these long, dark winter days. Most people like being in the light. Do you?



We have another kind of light too, of course. It's the light of Christ, and when we grow close to Christ, we can start to see real happiness and joy.

On Friday, we celebrate the feastday of Saint Lucia (or Lucy). Her name even means "light," and she really was a saint who was close to Christ. Lucia lived in Italy, and she came from a wealthy family. She was supposed to marry a rich man, who happened to be a pagan (he worshipped idols). Lucia didn't want to marry him, because she was a Christian and they didn't have much in common. She wanted to spend her life growing close to the light, to Christ!

Lucia was punished for refusing to marry this man. She was even killed because she wouldn't change her mind. But now, she lives in the light of heaven, with Christ Himself!

Christians all over the world love Saint Lucia, especially people in the country of Sweden. Winters are very long and dark there, and people celebrate with beautiful Saint Lucia parties and processions.

We celebrate St. Lucia on Friday, December 13th (OC: December 28th).