

*Phos Ilaron:*

## the Hymn of Athenogenes the Martyr

According to tradition, the Holy Martyr Athenogenes was an aged priest, who in the year 196 AD was burned alive for his faith in Christ in Pontus of Asia Minor. It is said that as he approached the fire to be burned, he sang the joyful evening hymn *Phos Ilaron* (Φως Ιλαρόν - Gladsome Light) as his disciples stood by. Many attribute to him authorship of this hymn and it is still said today during the Evening Vespers service.

This tradition is confirmed by Basil the Great in Chapter 29 of his treatise "On the Holy Spirit," where he cites the ancient texts and traditions of the Church that referred to the divinity of the Holy Spirit, among which is the "Hymn of Athenogenes" *Phos Ilaron*. He wrote:

"It seemed fitting to our fathers not to receive the gift of the light at eventide in silence, but, on its appearing, immediately to give thanks. Who was the author of these words of thanksgiving at the lighting of the lamps, we are not able to say. And if any one knows the Hymn of Athenogenes, which, as he was hurrying on to his perfecting by fire, he left as a kind of farewell gift to his friends, he knows the mind of the martyrs as to the Spirit."

St. Athenogenes the Martyr is celebrated by the Orthodox Church on July 16th together with another martyr named Athenogenes, who is said to have been martyred in 290 with his ten disciples by beheading. There is no valid reason to confuse the two besides the similarity of name, as many do.

Though Mark of Ephesus and Symeon of Thessaloniki confirm St. Athenogenes to be the author of *Phos Ilaron*, some attribute its authorship to Sophronios of Jerusalem. Nikodemos the Hagiorite in his *Synaxarion* argues that this attribution is without foundation, since Sophronios lived in the 7th century, while Basil confirms the hymn was written before his time in the 4th century. He further writes that the hymn was found written on an ancient Alexandrian Codex of the Septuagint from before the time of Sophronios. Nikodemos also notes that Sophronios likely perfected the hymn to its present form, which is why it is attributed to him.

St. Nikodemos the Hagiorite wrote the following Verse for St. Athenogenes:

*Athenogenes ran towards the fire saying, O Gladsome Light Christ the Holy Glory.*

Below is the hymn in English:

*O Gladsome Light of the holy glory of the Immortal Father, heavenly, holy, blessed Jesus Christ. Now we have come to the setting of the sun and behold the light of evening. We praise Father, Son and Holy Spirit, God. For it is right at all times to worship You with voices of praise, O Son of God and Giver of Life, therefore all the world glorifies You.*

From "Mystagogy" online blog

## Ss Constantine & Helen

Greek Orthodox Cathedral of the Pacific



July 21, 2013

4th Sunday of Matthew

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July 21, 2013

## 4th Sunday of Matthew

### Commemoration of:

Sts. Symeon the Fool for Christ, Parthenios, Bishop of Arta, Ezekiel the Prophet

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### Apolytikia - Entrance Hymns

*Efrainestho ta Ourania* (Hymn of the Day) Tone 3

*Tou Stavrou Sou* (Hymn of the Church) Tone 8

*Having seen in the sky the form of Your Cross and, like Paul, having received his calling not from men, Your apostle among Kings, Lord, placed his reigning city in Your hand, which you guard in peace forever, by the intercessions of the Theotokos, for You alone love mankind.*

### Kontakion

*Prostasia ton Christianon* Tone 2

*Champion of Christians not put to shame, advocate before the Maker always steadfast, do not spurn sinners' voices raised in prayer. In your goodness respond to bring help to us who devoutly petition you. Hasten your intercession and urgently make entreaty; for you unfailingly defend, O Theotokos, those who honor you.*

### Epistle Reading

Romans 6: 18-23

Brethren, having been set free from sin, you have become slaves of righteousness. I am speaking in human terms, because of your natural limitations. For just as you once yielded your members to impurity and to greater and greater iniquity, so now yield your members to righteousness for sanctification.

When you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness. But then what return did you get from the things of which you are now ashamed? The end of those things is death. But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves of God, the return you get is sanctification and its end, eternal life. For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

### Gospel Reading

Matthew 8:5-13

At that time, as Jesus entered Capernaum, a centurion came forward to him, beseeching him and saying, "Lord, my servant is lying paralyzed at home, in terrible distress." And he said to him, "I will come and heal him." But the centurion answered him, "Lord, I am not worthy to have you come under my roof; but only say the word, and my servant will be healed. For I am a man under authority, with soldiers under me; and I say to one, 'Go,' and he goes, and to another, 'Come,' and he comes, and to my slave, 'Do this,' and he does it." When Jesus heard him, he marveled, and said to those who followed him,

"Truly, I say to you, not even in Israel have I found such faith. I tell you, many will come from east and west and sit at table with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven, while the sons of the kingdom will be thrown into the outer darkness; there men will weep and gnash their teeth." And to the centurion Jesus said, "Go; be it done for you as you have believed." And the servant was healed at that very moment.

### This Week

Sat - St Panteleimon - Divine Liturgy in Kihei, Maui 1:00 am

### To Our Visitors:

We are pleased that you have chosen to worship with us. Just a reminder, however: the Sacrament of Holy Communion is a manifestation of the *unity of the Body of Christ*. As such, only those who are *members in spiritual good standing* of the Orthodox Church – and who have prepared themselves for the Sacrament – may partake of the Holy Chalice. However, *everyone* is welcome to come up with our people at the end of the service to receive blessed bread.

*Please be sure to join us at Coffee Hour following Services.*

### He Always Outgave Me

Tithing - giving the first tenth of my income back to God - was just as unquestioned in our home as putting on my socks before my shoes. And a nickel out of every fifty cents was quite a lot when I got up every day before dawn to pedal around my paper route.

But as the years went by and my income increased, I found out I could never win in this game of giving to God - He always outgave me. He gave to me physically, financially and in a dozen other ways. He led me to a satisfying career in baseball. Actually, if I belong to Him, He owns me and my income, too, all of it. I have learned that tithing is just a symbol of my trust in Him.

(Alvin Dark, former manager of the San Francisco Giants)