

Sunday of the Blind Man

Commemorated on [June 5](#)

After the Midfeast (John 7:14), the Lord Jesus Christ came to the Temple again and taught the people who came to Him (John 8:2). After leaving the Temple, He opened the eyes of a man “who was blind from his birth (John 9:1).

The miracle described in today’s Gospel (John 9:1-38) is even more remarkable than it might seem at first. St Basil and other Fathers tell us that this was not just a case of giving sight to a blind man born with eyes that did not function, but to someone who had no eyes at all! The second Exapostilarion for this Sunday says, “Along the way, our Savior found a man who lacked both sight and eyes...”.

The Gospel says, “Since the world began, it was not heard that any man opened the eyes of one who was born blind” (John 9:32). There are examples in the Old (Tobit 2:17) and New (Mark 8:22-26) Testaments of blind people receiving sight, but this is something completely unprecedented.

The Savior placed clay in the man’s empty sockets and told him to wash in the pool of Siloam. When he obeyed these instructions, the eyes of clay became living eyes!

In his MENAION, St Demetrius of Rostov calls the blind man St Celidonius (see his account of St Lazarus in the Synaxis of the Seventy Apostles on January 4).

Translation of the relics of slain Crown Prince Demetrius of Moscow

The Tsarevich St Demetrius, murdered on May 15, 1591, was glorified in the year 1606. The reason for this was the desire, in the expression of Tsar Basil Shuisky, “to stop lying lips and blind unbelieving eyes from saying that the Tsarevich had escaped alive from the hands of the murderers.” This was because of the appearance of a pretender, who declared himself to be the Tsarevich Demetrius.

The holy relics were solemnly transferred and placed in the Arkhangelsk cathedral of the Moscow Kremlin, “in the side altar of John the Forerunner, where his father and his brothers were buried.”

After numerous miracles of healing from the holy relics, three feastdays for the Tsarevich Demetrius were established during this same year of 1606, his birthday (October 19), his murder (May 15), and the transfer of his relics to Moscow (June 3).”

St Metrophanes the first Patriarch of Constantinople

Commemorated on [June 4](#)

Saint Metrophanes, Patriarch of Constantinople, was a contemporary of St Constantine the Great (306-337). His father, Dometius, was a brother of the Roman emperor Probus (276-282). Seeing the falseness of the pagan religion, Dometius came to believe in Christ. During a time of terrible persecution of Christians at Rome, St Dometius set off to Byzantium with two of his sons, Probus and Metrophanes. They were instructed in the law of the Lord by Bishop Titus, a man of holy life. Seeing the ardent desire of Dometius to labor for the Lord, St Titus ordained him presbyter. After the death of Titus first Dometius (272-303) was elevated to the bishop’s throne, and thereafter his sons, Probus (303-315) and in 316 St Metrophanes.

The emperor Constantine once came to Byzantium, and was delighted by the beauty and comfortable setting of the City. And having seen the holiness of life and sagacity of St Metrophanes, the emperor took him back to Rome. Soon Constantine the Great transferred the capital from Rome to Byzantium and he brought St Metrophanes there. The First Ecumenical Council was convened in 325 to resolve the Arian heresy. Constantine the Great had the holy Fathers of the Council bestow upon St Metrophanes the title of Patriarch. Thus, the saint became the first Patriarch of Constantinople.

St Metrophanes was very old, and was not able to be present at the Council, and he sent in his place the chor-episcopos (vicar bishop) Alexander. At the close of the Council the emperor and the holy Fathers visited with the ailing Patriarch. At the request of the emperor, the saint named a worthy successor to himself, Bishop Alexander. He foretold that Paul (at that time a Reader) would succeed to the patriarchal throne after Alexander. He also revealed to Patriarch Alexander of Alexandria that his successor would be the archdeacon St Athanasius.

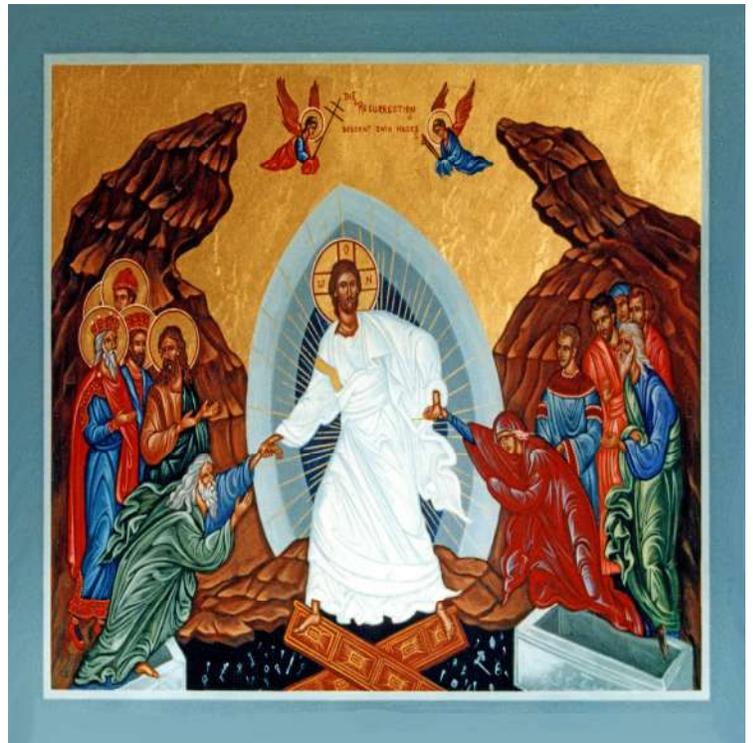
St Metrophanes reposed in the year 326, at age 117. His relics rest at Constantinople in a church dedicated to him. It should be noted that the Canons to the Holy Trinity in the Midnight Office in the Octoechos were not composed by this Metrophanes, but by Bishop Metrophanes of Smyrna, who lived in the middle of the ninth century.

John 9:1-38 (Gospel)

Now as Jesus passed by, He saw a man who was blind from birth. And His disciples asked Him, saying, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" Jesus answered, "Neither this man nor his parents sinned, but that the works of God should be revealed in him. I must work the works of Him who sent Me while it is day; the night is coming when no one can work. As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world." When He had said these things, He spat on the ground and made clay with the saliva; and He anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay. And He said to him, "Go, wash in the pool of Siloam" (which is translated, Sent). So he went and washed, and came back seeing. Therefore the neighbors and those who previously had seen that he was blind said, "Is not this he who sat and begged?" Some said, "This is he." Others said, "He is like him." He said, "I am he." Therefore they said to him, "How were your eyes opened?" He answered and said, "A Man called Jesus made clay and anointed my eyes and said to me, 'Go to the pool of Siloam and wash.' So I went and washed, and I received sight." Then they said to him, "Where is He?" He said, "I do not know." They brought him who formerly was blind to the Pharisees. Now it was a Sabbath when Jesus made the clay and opened his eyes. Then the Pharisees also asked him again how he had received his sight. He said to them, "He put clay on my eyes, and I washed, and I see." Therefore some of the Pharisees said, "This Man is not from God, because He does not keep the Sabbath." Others said, "How can a man who is a sinner do such signs?" And there was a division among them. They said to the blind man again, "What do you say about Him because He opened your eyes?" He said, "He is a prophet." But the Jews did not believe concerning him, that he had been blind and received his sight, until they called the parents of him who had received his sight. And they asked them, saying, "Is this your son, who you say was born blind? How then does he now see?" His parents answered them and said, "We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind; but by what means he now sees we do not know, or who opened his eyes we do not know. He is of age; ask him. He will speak for himself. His parents said these things because they feared the Jews, for the Jews had agreed already that if anyone confessed that He was Christ, he would be put out of the synagogue. Therefore his parents said, "He is of age; ask him." So they again called the man who was blind, and said to him, "Give God the glory! We know that this Man is a sinner." He answered and said, "Whether He is a sinner or not I do not know. One thing I know: that though I was blind, now I see." Then they said to him again, "What did He do to you? How did He open your eyes?" He answered them, "I told you already, and

you did not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you also want to become His disciples?" Then they reviled him and said, "You are His disciple, but we are Moses' disciples.

We know that God spoke to Moses; as for this fellow, we do not know where He is from." The man answered and said to them, "Why, this is a marvelous thing, that you do not know where He is from; yet He has opened my eyes! Now we know that God does not hear sinners; but if anyone is a worshiper of God and does His will, He hears him. Since the world began it has been unheard of that anyone opened the eyes of one who was born blind. If this Man were not from God, He could do nothing." They answered and said to him, "You were completely born in sins, and are you teaching us?" And they cast him out. Jesus heard that they had cast him out; and when He had found him, He said to him, "Do you believe in the Son of God?" He answered and said, "Who is He, Lord, that I may believe in Him?" And Jesus said to him, "You have both seen Him and it is He who is talking with you." Then he said, "Lord, I believe!" And he worshiped Him.



**CHRIST IS RISEN!
INDEED HE IS RISEN!**