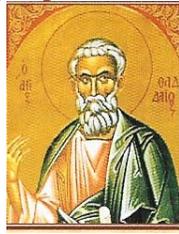


# August 21

## *E. Holy Apostle Thaddeus*



One of the Seventy, born a Jew, he lived in Edessa. Having come to Jerusalem for worship, he accepted baptism from St. John the Baptist and then followed the Lord Jesus. Sent by the Lord to Abgar, the prince of Edessa, St. Thaddeus enlightened him with holy baptism, founded the church in Edessa, and then went to Armenia. Here, "leading pagans to the divine faith" and confirming his preaching with wonders, he converted the daughter of the king, the nobility and many of the people to Christ. The angry king imprisoned his daughter and other Christians in a dungeon, and others he sentenced to death. Thaddeus performed many wonders "in the name of Christ", but the king refused to learn and executed his daughter. Soon a revelation even came to Thaddeus about a martyr's death. He was called before the king and finally, accusing the apostle of abducting his daughter, he ordered him to be thrown to the wild animals, but the animals obediently lay at the feet of the saint. Then they threw the apostle into a furnace, but the wind cooled the furnace and the flame did not touch Thaddeus. Finally, it was ordered to destroy the apostle by the sword. When the sword only touched the martyr, a heavenly light illuminated his body, an earthquake trembled, the stone settled and accepted the body of the saint. The pagans rushed to flight. It was about the year 44.

### *Kontakion, tone 4*

**The church ever sees you as a shining star,  
O Apostle Thaddeus,  
Your wonders are always enlightening. //  
Save those who in faith honor your memory.**

*Holy Martyr Bassa (and her children Theognius, Agapius, and Pistus* suffered for Christ during the reign of Maximinian. St. Bassa was the wife of a pagan priest and lived in Edessa, Macedonia. Secretly confessing Christ, she brought up her children in the Christian faith. Her husband brought her to the court of the persecutors. After severe torture of her sons, they were killed by the sword before the eyes of their mother. St. Bassa had to endure "many visible tortures" and severe suffering. But her soul, "protected by the fear of the Lord", was not frightened "by the commands of the impious", or by "various wounds and tribulations". The Power of God protected her unharmed from fire, water and wild beasts. Then they threw the woman martyr into the sea, but three men of light took her out from the water and put her on a ship. She left the

ship for the Alon Island in the Sea of Marmara. Here the governor tried to force Bassa to sacrifice to the gods and "after extremely painful and great variety of torture "ordered her beheaded. All holy Martyrs are glorified by name in the service of this day.

*✠.Repose of our Ven. Father Archimandrite Abramius, Wonderworker of Smolensk*

He was born in Smolensk in 1172 of wealthy and pious parents. Abramius from his early years was enrolled in school, where he attracted attention for his talent and unusual love of learning. In his free time from his studies he loved to go to church, where he sang beautifully and read. As a young man he began to have an inclination for the single and pious life. As their only heir his parents wanted him to marry, but he rejected their proposal. Having taken care of his parents and after their death, he, following the example of the saints whose lives he loved to read, offered his wealth to the church, to the monasteries and to the poor, and having put on rags went into the city as a poor person and a fool for Christ's sake, asking God to show him the way to salvation. Soon, at the suggestion of God, he entered into the monastery of the Mother of God as a monk. The monastery was located about 6 versts (about 4 miles) from Smolensk, in a place called "Selishche". (Today there is the village Bogoroditsky there, and they point out the location of the cave where the Ven. Abramius practiced asceticism, and the charred remains of the oak tree planted with his own hands). With patience and meekness the young monk zealously fulfilled his ascetical duties with fervor and obedience, spent his time in fasting and prayer, adorned himself with monastic virtues and diligently occupied himself in reading the Holy Scriptures, Lives and Teaching of the Holy Ascetics and the Works of the Holy Fathers. Having absorbed all this, the Ven. Abramius drew out edifying lessons, not only for him, but also for others. Having received many letters, he with their help composed and wrote new collections of edifying articles. At the same time together with poets and artists, the Venerable One quite often poured out pious thoughts and feelings in poetic form. Blessed with the rank of presbyter and elected to the clergy, the Venerable One adorned himself with "priestly grace", and not a single day passed without the celebration of the Divine Liturgy and the preaching of the word of God. He was so skilful a preacher, that he attracted many students. Many spiritual and lay persons in large crowds went to him, in order to take in his godly wise conversations and to hear their spiritual ills. Thus Abramius lived for 30 years. Much slander and persecution came to him from people envying his influence on the people. They even set the hegumen against Abramius, and he forbade him to converse with the people. Then the Venerable One, fleeing the slander and evil gossip, left Smolensk for the poor Monastery of the Holy Cross. But the people even here began to join the crowds for instruction by the Venerable One. Gradually even here the conversations of the people flowed with the strict ascetic life of Abramius. The carnal passions "have died with forbearance", conquering by the power of prayer "the demonic regiments" and by his fervent "way of life without vice" the Venerable One did not fear the "arrows of the enemy" and lived "on earth as an angel". He ate moderately,

even drank water with measure and spent most of his time in ascetical efforts, fasting and praying. His face was drawn unusually dry. His clothes were most poor and shabby. Having gone to the Monastery of the Holy Cross, the Venerable One wrote the "Icon of the Last Judgment", "the Living Martyrdom" and others with his own hands. Yet his enemies were not sleeping. They spread rumors throughout the city that the Venerable One preaches heresy, lives impurely and with the veneer of sanctity covers dark deeds. These false reports reached the bishop and the entire city became confused. And here they called the Venerable One to the spiritual court, and he was led to the bishop in disgrace. At this time it so happened that princes and boyars were with the bishop. Having heard the reports of the slanderers, the prince decided that there was no truth in their words, and that the crowds must leave immediately. On another day the slanderers have again returned to the bishop and demanded that Abramius be punished. But quietly and worthily Abramius told the truth, and the defense of one of the pious monks Luke, demonstrated to the court the innocence of Abramius, but it did not save the venerable one. For the general peace of mind the bishop forbade him to serve and talk to the people. And then in city many troubles were opened up: drought and illnesses. Prayers were said in vain and nothing helped. Then the Priest Lazarus appeared before the Bishop Ignatius and asked him to permit Abramius to serve, lest even other greater troubles afflict the inhabitants. Ignatius requested Abramius to make petition against his unrighteous condemnation and pray for the city and its inhabitants. The humble monk asked the bishop to pray. Having returned to his cell, the Ven. Abramius turned to fervent prayer, and suddenly heavy rain fell and ended the drought. Then all were personally convinced in the righteousness of the venerable one and began to highly respect him. Ignatius built a new monastery in honor of the Placing of the Robe of the Mother of God (now the Abramius) and installed the Ven. Abramius in it as the rector in the rank of archimandrite. The Venerable One died in peace, after fifty years of monastic asceticism in the year 1221 or 1222. During the Polish invasion in 1611 the relics of the venerable one were hidden, but it is not known where.

*Troparion, tone 8*

**Today your memory has shone to us, O Glorious One,  
As the sun brightly beams its rays lighting up the world,  
And driving away evil spirits from us in the darkness of the night.  
Today the heavenly powers of holy angels,  
And the souls of the righteous celebrate, rejoicing.  
Today even we sinners fall down in prayer,  
O Venerable Father Abramius,  
Pray unceasingly to Christ our God to save this city and people,  
Who lovingly honor you.**

*Kontakion, tone 3*

**O Lord, flashing the memory of Your favorite to Your city,**

**Like the bright sun, is joyful for all like shining rays.  
It is more than the prayers of the Your Immaculate Mother  
That saves us from all troubles and suppresses barbarous shaking.  
Therefore, we Your people and our city are much praised,  
And are saved by the prayers of Your favorite, the Venerable Father Abramius.**

**His synaxis is performed, where his relics repose.**

*Ven. Abramius of the Monastery of the Caves*, hardworking ascetic of the Monastery of the Caves in the XIV century. His relics repose in the St. Anthony caves.

*Ven. Theoclitia, Wonder-worker*. Born in Asia Minor, and having entered into marriage, she persuaded her husband to live with her as with a sister, and remaining a virgin, she devoted herself ascetically to feats of piety. She occupied herself in reading soul-pleasing books and with all her strength devoted her labor to help her neighbors. She knowing beforehand the day of her death died in the IX century. Her relics have become glorified for many miracles.

*Ven. Ephraim of Smolensk*. The favorite disciple of Ven. Abramius of Smolensk and a fervent imitator of the virtues of his instructor: meekness, humility and love for neighbor, he died in about the year 1238.

**Ven. Cornelius and his disciple Abramius of Paleostrov**. The Ven. Cornelius was born in Pskov. Early having left the world, he thirsted for the strict monastic life and strict asceticism. Having left through Finland to the shores of the White Sea, drawing upon his zealotry in preaching the Gospel, he worked hard here, wandering in the dense forests, from settlement to settlement, quite often in danger of being lost or attacked by wild animals, or being killed by the followers of paganism. But the Lord protected the righteous one, and his apostolic activity was fruitful. Then reaching up to the small Paley Island on Lake Onega, the Venerable One decided to settle here for solitary asceticism and a life of contemplation. He constructed a small hut on this island, and devoted all his life to that of a hermit. The asceticism of the venerable one and his righteous life soon attracted many thirsting for help and spiritual strengthening and many visited the hut of the ascetic. They did not leave Paley Island any more, but remained to share prayerful work with the venerable one. The Venerable Cornelius did not interfere with their pious desire to work for the Lord. Having constructed cells for the newcomers near his hut, and then a small temple in honor and glory of the Nativity of the Virgin, the venerable one founded the Paleostrovskii Monastery, becoming its first hegumen. The management of the monastery involuntarily diverted the Venerable Cornelius from his rule of prayer and asceticism and he frequently, for observance of the rules went out to build a natural cave at the foot of one of the rocky mountains and there he practiced his ascetic fast and prayer, carrying on himself a heavy iron chain. Shortly before his death,

the venerable one late at night during his prayer in the cave became worthy of the wonderful appearance of the Savior with a cross in His hands before him, and who blessed the humble ascetic and his monastery. The wonderful appearance was so delightful for the venerable one that he decided not to leave the cave where he became worthy of the beneficial vision. Having given his blessing to the brotherhood, and having installed his favorite disciple Abramius as the head of the monastery, he left for the cave for ever, as though having shut himself in it from all memory of the world, and here he soon reposed in peace in the Lord, about the year 1420.

The Ven. Abramius was the disciple and fervent follower of the ascetic life of Cornelius, who having come to Paley Island yet in the first days of building the monastery and worked hard together with his teacher for the benefit of the monastery. During his heguminate, the Lord glorified the first head of the monastery, the Ven. Cornelius, reposing from the date of his death in the cave, and the Ven. Abramius and the brothers solemnly transferred his incorrupt, honorable relics to the cathedral monastic temple in honor of the Nativity of the Mother of God. The Ven. Abramius died at the beginning of the second half of the XV century. The Lord awarded him with the crown of incorruption. At the present time the relics of both ascetics repose in a hidden place in the temple of their monastery.

*S. V. Bulgakov, **Handbook for Church Servers**, 2nd ed., 1274 pp., (Kharkov, 1900), pp 0291-4.  
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