

# September 9

## *The Holy and Righteous Parents of God Joachim and Anna.*

SS. Joachim and Anna lived in the Judean city of Nazareth. Joachim came from line of Judah, from the royal family of David, and Anna – from the line of Levi, from the first priestly generation of Aaron and was the daughter of the priest Matthan. As the descendent cut from the root of the royal family line of Jesse, already long ago they were reduced to the category of simple Israelites, were already not considered royal and leaders of the Judeans, did not enjoy any special rights and privileges. But unknown to humans, Joachim and Anna were great in the eyes of God by their own faith and piety. Not with glorious corrupting wealth, they were rich with a righteous life and charitable acts. However, the honorable, modest, hardworking and pious life attributed to them was not only honorable sufficiency, but also abundance, which gave them the opportunity to do more works of piety and philanthropy, rather than how much was legally required. St. Joachim usually had all the fruit of his works and God's blessings on them divided into three parts: one he devoted to God by sacrifices and offerings to the altar of the Lord, the other he distributed to the poor and needy, and only the third part he spent for the needs of his family and house. But all the depth of internal piety of the righteous couple, their purity and holiness, their spiritual perfection in faith and hope in God has been revealed in the course of time, when the Lord blessed them as parents of the One most Blessed among Women, from Whom was born in flesh as the Only-begotten Son of God. Such high selection before hand by God required a preparatory and continuous testing, absolution and improvement. Sts. Joachim and Anna were childless, and childlessness made the whole life of the righteous spouses one continuous, uninterrupted testing of their faith, patience and dedication to will of God. In those times lawful childlessness was considered the greatest disaster and was accompanied with such distress, that is was necessary to transfer all fervency of faith and hope to God. The law considered childlessness to be an obvious sign not only of the deprivation of the blessing of God, but also the weight of the punishment of God, forbade even the acceptance of gifts and sacrifices from the man for not providing an offspring for Israel. And in the opinion of the people childlessness was considered that the man, castaway by the God, was unworthy to be called the son of Abraham, worthy of alienation and solicitude of the Sons of Israel (Gen. 15:2, 30:1; Exodus. 47:9, 49:21; Hosea.

9:14; Luke 1:25). And it, as the church hymn explains, «the shame of childlessness» the pious spouses endured up to their old age, - endured but not weakened in faith, prayed and hoped, in firm assurance, that God can grant a loss of child both in the fruitful and unfruitful posterity. Joachim, by virtue of the law, could divorce the barren spouse and marry another, but he already lived by a faith that in spirit was higher than the law. Both pious spouses, «rich in the pouring out of virtues», not looking at the difficulty sent them by their trial of childlessness, by the brightness of their life surpassed «all other parents on earth» also have been worthy to be the parents of the Most Holy Virgin Mary. The omniscient power of God, as St. Andrew of Crete teaches, soon comes to the aid of poured out tenderness and bitter tears before God, and the aged couple were made capable of bearing fruit. Thus from the infertility of the parents, as from a barren tree, has grown for us a most glorious fruit – the Most Undeiled Virgin. The bond of infertility was destroyed; prayer wonderfully bears fruit; the barren one bears a child; the childless were made happy by the material. For three years the holy elders brought up their God given Daughter at home, and then, under the promise made by them, they brought Her to the residence in the temple in Jerusalem. St. Joachim, according to the will of God, died within a few years after that, being about 80 years old; and St. Anna, after the death of St. Joachim, moved to Jerusalem, where she resided at the temple, close to her God given Daughter, and within two years died, being about 79 years old. The holy church celebrates them now because after celebrating the Nativity of the Theotokos it is only right to offer due glorification also to Her parents. As the ancestors in the flesh of our Lord Jesus Christ, SS. Joachim and Anna are called «Ancestors of God ». Their prayerful intercession is asked daily in every dismissal of worship services.

*Troparion, Tone 1*

**Since you were righteous under the law of grace, Joachim and Anna,  
For our sake you gave birth to the God given infant.  
The divine church today therefore feasts radiantly,  
Joyfully celebrating your honorable memory  
And giving glory to God who has raised up a horn of salvation//  
For us from the house of David.**

*Kontakion, Tone 2*

**Now Anna is no longer barren and nurses the all-pure one!**

**She rejoices and calls us to sing a hymn of praise to Christ//  
Who gave mankind the only ever virgin mother!**

*Epistle: Gal. 4: 22-31; Sel. 210. Gospel: Luke 8:16-21; Sel. 36.*

*Our Venerable Father Joseph, Wonderworker of Volotsk.*

In the world John Sanin, he was born in the village of Yazvishch (Pokrov or Protection) close to the city of Volokolamsk (Moscow Government) and received his education in the Volokolamsk Elevation of the Holy Cross Monastery (later abolished and converted to a parish church). "From his youth he was a fervent worker for Christ his God", for when he was 20 years old, he submitted himself to the Venerable Paphnutius Borovsky (see May 1), from whom he also accepted monasticism. Not considering his youth, the Venerable Joseph strictly followed the life, precisely performing his monastic obedience, lovingly reading the Divine Scriptures and with diligence to the Divine Services surpassed all the monks and consequently was the favorite disciple of the Venerable Paphnutius, who, before his death, chose him to manage the monastery. In 1479 the Venerable Joseph founded his own monastery (see the Moscow Eparchy) and introduced into it a strict way of life. In this monastery he was abbot to his death, "very" ascetically defeating "his bodiless enemies, with hymns, fasting and prayers. There was an image of discipleship and foolishness to his working for Christ". The strictness of life obligatory for everyone living in the monastery, and especially the care for the poor and ill persons, for whom were built special rooms, soon brought glory to the Volokolamsk Monastery. The wise advice and pious life of Joseph drew to his monastery not only simple people, but boyars and princes, who chose him to be their spiritual father and it is unconditional to hearers of his oral instructions and written exhortations, in which he convinced princes and dignitaries to be charitable to the poor, indulgent to slaves and to have love for everyone. Having discerned a fervent zeal for the Christian faith and having a rich knowledge of the Word of God, the Venerable Joseph acted with strong conviction against the heresy of the Judaizers. "Resulting from the witness from Divine Scriptures", the Venerable Joseph, "like a lion is feared in the desert", fell on the discovery of the heretics "with a spiritual sword", "for there is the Word of God", cutting "the lie from the truth" and rooting out "the tares of unbelief", "the slander of the teachings". With the fruit of such activity the Venerable Joseph wrote his work "The Enlightener" against the heretics, which was the first in dogmatic theology in Russia, in which with

his deep knowledge of the Holy Scriptures the venerable one denied the errors of the Judaizers, explaining, that the one whom the Judaizers expect" is not the Christ, but is the Antichrist". In 1504 the Venerable Joseph was among the fathers who gathered themselves for the condemnation of the heresy of the Judaizers at a Council in Moscow. Moreover Joseph accepted a greater participation and on the question of church property, being a fervent advocate of churches and monasteries having the right and even the necessity to own movable and immovable property the Russian Church of that time owing to his strong speeches did not have landed property and peasants confiscated from her. The Venerable One died in 1515. Many healings came from his grave. His relics are under the porch in the Volokolamsk Monastery (see the Moscow Eparchy). The Holy Church magnifies the Venerable Joseph as "a faster and abstainer and leader of monks, the relater of the truth of the word and the upholder of the icon of Christ" and "the accuser of the impure".

*The Troparion, tone 5.*

**As the fertilizer of fasters, and the beauty of the fathers,  
The bearer of mercy, the lighter of the lamp,  
All the faithful are gathering to eulogize,  
The teacher of meekness, and the humbler of heretics.  
O most wise Joseph, the Russian star: //  
Pray to the Lord to have mercy on our souls.**

*Kontakion, tone 8.*

**The stormy way of life, and the rebellion of the world,  
And the passionate leaping for joy being regarded as nothing,  
You have shown yourself a citizen of the desert.  
The guide of many, O Venerable Joseph,  
The gatherer of monks and faithful in prayer, the zealot for purity: //  
Pray to Christ God to save our souls.**

*His synaxis is celebrated in his monastery and also his temple is there.*

*The Readings: Matins Gospel, see January 10. The Epistle and Gospel, see January 15.*

*Holy Martyr Severian.*

He was from a noble family of the city of Sebaste. Being strengthened by the ascetic efforts of the 40 martyrs of Sebaste (see March 9), Severian himself was taken to the governor, and when that required him to be in court, he proclaimed himself to be a Christian before it. The torturer hoped to win the courage of Severian with kindness and promises, but Severian remained unmoved. Then, by command of the governor, he was handed over to terrible tortures: he was "unmercifully beaten for Christ resulting in open wounds", "his veins were cut" and "his body scraped with nails", and finally was imprisoned and there suffered hunger and thirst. Seeing the firmness of the martyr, "constantly enduring torments, terrified the impious" torturer. The holy sufferer, joyfully bearing "various torments", cried out: "if greater force cannot be sent to me, so therefore the existing flesh may be able to endure the cutting ten times more". Finally, the brave martyr was destroyed in a special way: they tied him up with a rope, hung him up on the city wall and tied a stone to his neck and another one to his feet. "With loving hands" the blessed body of the martyr" was "buried cleansed as a saint, and healings flowed out of it as from a spring to the glory of God". This happened in the year 320.

*The service for St. Severian is sung at Compline.*

*The Uncovering of the Relics of the Hierarch Theodosius Uglitsky,  
Archbishop of Chernigov.*

Until 1896 the commemoration of the Hierarch Theodosius was revered locally. (See February 5.). By the decision of the Holy Synod in 1896 the Hierarch Theodosius is numbered among the saints, his uncorrupted body is recognized as holy relics, a special service to him was written, for before time of the writing of this service the general service to hierarchs was used. The memory of the hierarch is to be celebrated both on the day of his burial, February 5, and on the day of the uncovering of his relics, September 9. (1).

Note (1).

Yet in 1895, in view of this the Orthodox people more and more grew and were assured to believe in the holiness of the Hierarch Theodosius (see February 5), through the working of wonderful healing at his grave, the Holy Synod found the proper time to begin the necessary procedures for the verification of the incorruption of the body of the Hierarch Theodosius and about the wonderful deeds made at his grave over the believers. The Holy

Synod assigned the closest inspection of this matter to the Most Reverend Joannicius, Metropolitan of Kiev, and the local Bishop Anthony, who, joined by the vicar of the Chernigov diocese, Bishop Pitirim, rector of the Chernigov Seminary, a member of the Kiev Spiritual Consistory the Archpriest Preobrazhensky and two archpriests from the local cathedral clergy, on July 5, 1895 found in the caves at the Saints Boris and Gleb Temple of the Chernigov cathedral and, after performing here a Panakhida for the Hierarch Theodosius, made the detailed verification of the grave, his vestments and the very body of the Hierarch Theodosius, and it appeared that the body of the Hierarch Theodosius, thanks to God, was kept incorrupt, despite its stay of 200 years in the cave of the Saints Boris and Gleb Temple which is not known for its dryness. Regardless the Right Reverends Joannicius and Anthony, together with others assigned clergymen, invited the persons who have tested on themselves or on their relatives the wonderful healings of the intercessor the Hierarch Theodosius, after prayers of thanksgiving for his help, collected from them under oath signed affidavits verifying the miracles worked over them. They surveyed forty-nine such events. From this number twelve were in due time brought into the books of the Chernigov Cathedral for writing the life of the wonder-working Hierarch. The Holy Synod, having examined in full detail and with all possible care the above declaration, has come to the complete conviction of the truth about the incorrupt body of the Hierarch Theodosius and in the reliability of the miracles performed through him and offered wonderful praise in saints of their Lord God, ever for the beneficial firmness in the first father of Orthodoxy of the Russian Empire, and now, in the days of the blessed reign of the most pious Sovereign Emperor Nicholas Alexandrovich, as of old, revealed to his benevolence the glorification of a Hierarch of the Russian Church a new and great sign to her of the benefactions, brought to His Imperial Highness the most devoted report, which expressed the following opinion: 1) to number in the ranks of the saints in blessed memory the reposed Theodosius, Archbishop of Chernigov, with gratitude to God for the glorification, and to recognize his incorruptible body as holy relics; 2) to create a special service to the Hierarch Theodosius, and up to the time of the drawing up of those services to render him the General Service to a Hierarch; the commemoration of the Hierarch is to be celebrated on the day of his canonization, February 5, and on the day which His Imperial Highness is pleased to name for the opening of the relics of the Hierarch, and 3) to proclaim this in the national news by the decrees of the Holy Synod. On the most devoted memo of the Over-Procurator, which he turned over to His Highest Sovereign Emperor for his gracious consideration the above

mentioned most devoted report of the Holy Synod, the Sovereign Emperor, on the 13 of April, 1896, consented and in own hand wrote: "I agree. I have read it through with humility". In concurrence with this by the Synod the most devoted Over Procurator reported that the celebration of opening of the relics of the Hierarch Theodosius was, in the opinion of the Holy Synod, to be timely performed in the first half of September of the present year. In the fulfillment of the expressed will of His Highness, the Holy Synod, by the decision of June 19-24, 1896, decided to charge the Right Reverend Joannicius, Metropolitan of Kiev together with the Right Reverend Anthony of Chernigov, to complete the solemn opening of the relics of the Hierarch Theodosius Uglitsky, Archbishop of Chernigov, and for this celebration to be assigned to the 9-th day of September, 1896. The Holy Synod announced this to the god-fearing sons of the Orthodox Church, calling them jointly to render glory and thanksgiving to the Lord, such as to His will, and to accept this appearance of the new defender and wonder-worker as a new heavenly blessing on the reign of our most august Monarch, the uplifting vigilant works for the good of the Russian Orthodox people and their Tsar's love and care bestowed on all his loyal subjects of every calling and position (Tserkovniya Vedomosti (Church News), 1896, 30).

Saturday before the Elevation: Epistle, 1 Cor. 2:6-9, Sel. 126; Gospel, Mt. 10:37-42, 11:1, Sel. 39. Then read the appointed Epistle and Gospel for the Saturday; also for the saint, if indicated.

Sunday before the Elevation: Epistle, Gal. 6:11-18, Sel. 215; Gospel, Jn. 3:13-17, Sel. 9. And then read the appointed order for the Sunday; also for the saint, if indicated. See September 12 and 13.

Martyr Chariton, who for his faith in Christ was slain by the sword.

Martyr Strator, who for his faith in Christ was destroyed, tied between two bent cedar trees. (See September 13).

The Blessed Nicetas, a hidden saint of God, tonsured in Constantinople in the 11<sup>th</sup> century.

The Venerable Theophanes the Confessor and faster. He was Greek by birth and tonsured a monk in his youth. Having lived in solitude for 58 years, he preached Christ among the pagans and many times he suffered for this preaching. He died in about the year 300.

The commemoration of the Third Ecumenical Council held in 431 in the city of Ephesus.

The Venerable Joachim, founder and abbot of the now abolished OPOCHKA St. Elias Monastery 20 versts (about 13 miles) from the city of PORKHOV (Pskov Government). He was tonsured at the end of the 16<sup>th</sup>

and the beginning of the 17<sup>th</sup> century. His relics repose under the porch of the church of his abolished monastery.

*S. V. Bulgakov, Handbook for Church Servers, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., 1274 pp. (Kharkov, 1900,) pp 321-325.*

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