



Sunday, May 5

Thomas Sunday

All English Liturgy

Irene the Great Martyr

First Antiphon

Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless His holy Name.

Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all that He has done for you.

The Lord in heaven has prepared His throne, and His kingdom rules over all.

Second Antiphon

Praise the Lord, O my soul; I will praise the Lord in my life; I will chant unto my God for as long as I have my being.

Blessed is He of whom the God of Jacob is his help, whose hope is in the Lord his God.

The Lord shall be King unto eternity; your God, O Zion, from generation to generation.

Third Antiphon

This is the day the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it.

Let the heavens and the earth praise Him.

HYMNS AT THE SMALL ENTRANCE

Apolytikion after the Doxology

After the tomb was sealed Life rose from the grave, Christ the God and when the doors had closed, You stood among the disciples, the Resurrection of all, and through them reviving the righteous spirit in us according to Your great mercy

Apolytikion

Christ is risen from the dead, by death trampling down upon death, and to those in the tombs He has granted life.

Isodikon

In the churches Bless God the Lord, bless Him from the well spring Israel. Save us O Son of God who dist arise from the dead sing we to Thee Alleluia.

Apolytikion

After the tomb was sealed Life rose from the grave, Christ the God and when the doors had closed, You stood among the disciples, the Resurrection of all, and through them reviving the righteous spirit in us according to Your great mercy.

Kondakion

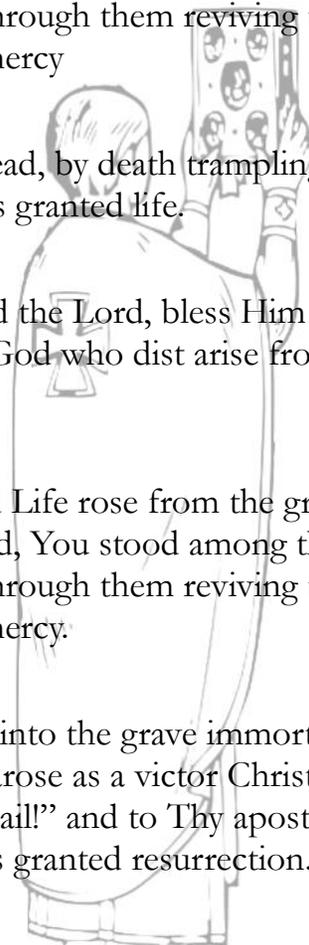
Though Thou descended into the grave immortal one Thou overthrew the power of Hades and arose as a victor Christ the God crying out to the myrrh bearing women "Hail!" and to Thy apostles bestowing peace Thou who to the fallen ones has granted resurrection.

Megalynarion

You are the shining candle and the mother of God the magnificent glory and exalted above all creation with hymns we magnify thee.

Communion Hymn

Praise the Lord Jerusalem, praise your God, Zion. (3 times) Alleluia.



SAINT SOPHIA CATHEDRAL

1324 S. Normandie Avenue

Los Angeles, CA 90006

www.saintsophia.org

facebook.com/StSophiaLA

V. Rev. Father John S. Bakas

Dean

Rev. Fr. Chris Kolentsas

Assistant Priest

Scripture Reading

Faith comes by hearing....

Epistle Reader: Sophia June

Priest: Let Us Attend...

Reader: Make your vows to the Lord our God and perform them...God is known in Judah; his name is great in Israel.

Priest: Wisdom.

Reader: The Reading is from Acts of the Apostles (5:12-20)

Priest: Let us be attentive...

In those days, many signs and wonders were done among the people by the hands of the apostles. And they were all together in Solomon's Portico. None of the rest dared join them, but the people held them in high honor. And more than ever believers were added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women, so that they even carried out the sick into the streets, and laid them on beds and pallets, that as Peter came by at least his shadow might fall on some of them. The people also gathered from the towns around Jerusalem, bringing the sick and those afflicted with unclean spirits, and they were all healed. But the high priest rose up and all who were with him, that is, the party of the Sadducees, and filled with jealousy they arrested the apostles and put them in the common prison. But at night an angel of the Lord opened the prison doors and brought them out and said, "Go and stand in the temple and speak to the people all the words of this Life." .

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO ST. JOHN (20:19-31)

On the evening of that day, the first day of the week, the doors being shut where the disciples were for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said to them: "Peace be with you." When he had said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples were glad when they saw the Lord. Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, even so I send you." And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and said to them: "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained."

Now Thomas, one of the twelve, called the Twin, was not with them when Jesus came. So the other disciples told him: "We have seen the Lord." But he said to them: "Unless I see in his hands the print of the nails, and place my finger in the mark of the nails, and place my hand in his side, I will not believe." Eight days later, his disciples were again in the house, and Thomas was with them. The doors were shut, but Jesus came and stood among them, and said: "Peace be with you." Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here, and see my hands; and put out your hand, and place it in my side; do not be faithless, but believing." Thomas answered him, "My Lord and my God!" Jesus said to him, "Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet believe." Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in his name.

Myths about the Crusades

Paul Cranford

In 2001, former president Bill Clinton delivered a speech at Georgetown University in which he discussed the West's response to the recent terrorist attacks of September 11. The speech contained a short but significant reference to the crusades. Mr. Clinton observed that "when the Christian soldiers took Jerusalem [in 1099], they . . . proceeded to kill every woman and child who was Muslim on the Temple Mount." He cited the "contemporaneous descriptions of the event" as describing "soldiers walking on the Temple Mount . . . with blood running up to their knees." This story, Mr. Clinton said emphatically, was "still being told today in the Middle East and we are still paying for it."

This view of the crusades is not unusual. It pervades textbooks as well as popular literature. One otherwise generally reliable Western civilization textbook claims that "the Crusades fused three characteristic medieval impulses: piety, pugnacity, and greed. All three were essential." The film *Kingdom of Heaven* (2005) depicts crusaders as boorish bigots, the best of whom were torn between remorse for their excesses and lust to continue them. Even the historical supplements for role-playing games drawing on supposedly more reliable sources contain statements such as "The soldiers of the First Crusade appeared basically without warning, storming into the Holy Land with the avowed literally task of slaughtering unbelievers"; "The Crusades were an early sort of imperialism"; and "Confrontation with Islam gave birth to a period of religious fanaticism that spawned the terrible Inquisition and the religious wars that ravaged Europe during the Elizabethan era." The most famous semipopular historian of the crusades, Sir Steven Runciman, ended his three volumes of magnificent prose with the judgment that the crusades were "nothing more than a long act of intolerance in the name of God, which is the sin against the Holy Ghost."

The verdict seems unanimous. From presidential speeches to role-playing games, the crusades are depicted as a deplorably violent episode in which thuggish Westerners trundled off, unprovoked, to murder and pillage peace-loving, sophisticated Muslims, laying down patterns of outrageous oppression that would be repeated throughout subsequent history. In many corners of the Western world today, this view is too commonplace and apparently obvious even to be challenged.

But unanimity is not a guarantee of accuracy. What everyone "knows" about the crusades may not, in fact, be true. From the many popular notions about the crusades, let us pick four and see if they bear close examination.

Myth #1: The crusades represented an unprovoked attack by Western Christians on the Muslim world.

Nothing could be further from the truth, and even a cursory chronological review makes that clear. In a.d. 632, Egypt, Palestine, Syria, Asia Minor, North Africa, Spain, France, Italy, and the islands of Sicily, Sardinia, and Corsica were all Christian territories. Inside the boundaries of the Roman Empire, which was still fully functional in the eastern Mediterranean, Orthodox Christianity was the official, and overwhelmingly majority, religion. Outside those boundaries were other large Christian communities not necessarily Orthodox and Catholic, but still Christian. Most of the Christian population of Persia, for example, was Nestorian. Certainly there were many Christian communities in Arabia.

By a.d. 732, a century later, Christians had lost Egypt, Palestine, Syria, North Africa, Spain, most of Asia Minor, and southern France. Italy and her associated islands were under threat, and the islands would come under Muslim rule in the next century. The Christian communities of Arabia were entirely destroyed in or shortly after 633, when Jews and Christians alike were expelled from the peninsula. Those in Persia were under severe pressure. Two-thirds of the formerly Roman Christian world was now ruled by Muslims.

What had happened? Most people actually know the answer, if pressed though for some reason they do not usually connect the answer with the crusades. The answer is the rise of Islam. Every one of the listed regions was taken, within the space of a hundred years, from Christian control by violence, in the course of military campaigns deliberately designed to expand Muslim territory at the expense of Islam's neighbors. Nor did this conclude Islam's program of conquest. The attacks continued, punctuated from time to time by Christian attempts to push back. Charlemagne blocked the Muslim advance in far western Europe in about a.d. 800, but Islamic forces simply shifted their focus and began to island-hop across from North Africa toward Italy and the French coast, attacking the Italian mainland by 837. A confused struggle for control of southern and central Italy continued for the rest of the ninth century and into the tenth. In the hundred years between 850 and 950, Benedictine monks were driven out of ancient monasteries, the Papal States were overrun, and Muslim pirate bases were established along the coast of northern Italy and southern

continued

France, from which attacks on the deep inland were launched. Desperate to protect victimized Christians, popes became involved in the tenth and early eleventh centuries in directing the defense of the territory around them. The surviving central secular authority in the Christian world at this time was the East Roman, or Byzantine, Empire. Having lost so much territory in the seventh and eighth centuries to sudden amputation by the Muslims, the Byzantines took a long time to gain the strength to fight back. By the mid-ninth century, they mounted a counterattack on Egypt, the first time since 645 that they had dared to come so far south. Between the 940s and the 970s, the Byzantines made great progress in recovering lost territories. Emperor John Tzimiskes retook much of Syria and part of Palestine, getting as far as Nazareth, but his armies became overextended and he had to end his campaigns by 975 without managing to retake Jerusalem itself. Sharp Muslim counterattacks followed, and the Byzantines barely managed to retain Aleppo and Antioch.

The struggle continued unabated into the eleventh century. In 1009, a mentally deranged Muslim ruler destroyed the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem and mounted major persecutions of Christians and Jews. He was soon deposed, and by 1038 the Byzantines had negotiated the right to try to rebuild the structure, but other events were also making life difficult for Christians in the area, especially the displacement of Arab Muslim rulers by Seljuk Turks, who from 1055 on began to take control in the Middle East. This destabilized the territory and introduced new rulers (the Turks) who were not familiar even with the patchwork modus vivendi that had existed between most Arab Muslim rulers and their Christian subjects. Pilgrimages became increasingly difficult and dangerous, and western pilgrims began banding together and carrying weapons to protect themselves as they tried to make their way to Christianity's holiest sites in Palestine: notable armed pilgrimages occurred in 1064-65 and 1087-91.

In the western and central Mediterranean, the balance of power was tipping toward the Christians and away from the Muslims. In 1034, the Pisans sacked a Muslim base in North Africa, finally extending their counterattacks across the Mediterranean. They also mounted counterattacks against Sicily in 1062-63. In 1087, a large-scale allied Italian force sacked Mahdia, in present-day Tunisia, in a campaign jointly sponsored by Pope Victor III and the countess of Tuscany. Clearly the Italian Christians were gaining the upper hand.

But while Christian power in the western and central Mediterranean was growing, it was in trouble in the east. The rise of the Muslim Turks had shifted the weight of military power against the Byzantines, who lost considerable ground again in the 1060s. Attempting to head off further incursions in far-eastern Asia Minor in 1071, the Byzantines suffered a devastating defeat at Turkish hands in the battle of Manzikert. As a result of the battle, the Christians lost control of almost all of Asia Minor, with its agricultural resources and military recruiting grounds, and a Muslim sultan set up a capital in Nicaea, site of the creation of the Nicene Creed in a.d. 325 and a scant 125 miles from Constantinople. Desperate, the Byzantines sent appeals for help westward, directing these appeals primarily at the person they saw as the chief western authority: the pope, who, as we have seen, had already been directing Christian resistance to Muslim attacks. In the early 1070s, the pope was Gregory VII, and he immediately began plans to lead an expedition to the Byzantines' aid. He became enmeshed in conflict with the German emperors, however (what historians call "the Investiture Controversy"), and was ultimately unable to offer meaningful help. Still, the Byzantines persisted in their appeals, and finally, in 1095, Pope Urban II realized Gregory VII's desire, in what turned into the First Crusade. Whether a crusade was what either Urban or the Byzantines had in mind is a matter of some controversy. But the seamless progression of events which lead to that crusade is not.

Far from being unprovoked, then, the crusades actually represent the first great western Christian counterattack against Muslim attacks which had taken place continually from the inception of Islam until the eleventh century, and which continued on thereafter, mostly unabated. Three of Christianity's five primary episcopal sees (Jerusalem, Antioch, and Alexandria) had been captured in the seventh century; both of the others (Rome and Constantinople) had been attacked in the centuries before the crusades. The latter would be captured in 1453, leaving only one of the five (Rome) in Christian hands by 1500. Rome was again threatened in the sixteenth century. This is not the absence of provocation; rather, it is a deadly and persistent threat, and one which had to be answered by forceful defense if Christendom were to survive. The crusades were simply one tool in the defensive options exercised by Christians.

To put the question in perspective, one need only consider how many times Christian forces have attacked either Mecca or Medina. The answer, of course, is never.