

The Epistle and Gospel Readings at the Liturgy on the Feast of St. John of Shanghai and San Francisco, the Wonderworker

THE EPISTLE OF THE HOLY APOSTLE PAUL TO THE HEBREWS

7:26-28

Jesus: the High Priest of the New Covenant

²⁶ For such a High Priest was fitting for us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and has become higher than the heavens;

²⁷ Who does not need daily, as those high priests^[3], to offer up sacrifices, first for His own sins and then for the people's, for this He did once for all when He offered up Himself.

²⁸ For the law appoints as high priests men who have weakness, but the word of the oath, which came after the law, appoints the Son who has been perfected forever.

8:1-2

Superiority of the New Covenant

¹ Now this is the main point of the things we are saying: We have such a High Priest, who is seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens^[4],

² A Minister of the sanctuary and of the true tabernacle^[5] which the Lord erected, and not man.

1. John — from the Hebrew, *Lord's grace*.

2. Jesus — from the Aramaic, *the Saviour*.

3. Old Testament high priests.

4. Majesty in the heavens — God the Father.

5. Tabernacle — from the Latin, *tent, or hut*. A tent sanctuary used by the Israelites before the construction of the First Temple in Jerusalem by King Solomon (about 950 B.C.).

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO SAINT JOHN

10:9-16

Jesus: the Good Shepherd

⁹ **“I am the door. If anyone enters by Me, he will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture.**

¹⁰ **The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.**

¹¹ **I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep.**

¹² **But a hireling, he who is not the shepherd, one who does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and flees; and the wolf catches the sheep and scatters them.**

¹³ **The hireling flees because he is a hireling and does not care about the sheep.**

¹⁴ **I am the good shepherd; and I know My sheep, and am known by My own.**

¹⁵ **As the Father knows Me, even so I know the Father; and I lay down My life for the sheep.**

¹⁶ **And other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they will hear My voice; and there will be one flock and one shepherd.”**

*The Gospel Reading at the liturgy on the Feast of St. John, consists entirely of words by Jesus Christ.

St. John of Shanghai and San Francisco, the Wonderworker

The holy hierarch John was born on June 4 (June 17 New Style), 1896 in southern Russia in the village of Adamovka of the Kharkov district and was named Michael in honour of the Holy Archangel. He came from the Maximovitch lineage of Serbian nobility that settled in Russia. One of his ancestors was the famous enlightener of Siberia, St. John of Tobolsk. Michael's parents brought him up in piety, to stand always for the truth and with a passionate love for his fatherland.

Upon completion of his studies at the Military School in Poltava (Emperor Peter's Cadet Corps), Michael entered the Law School at the Kharkov Imperial University from which he graduated in 1918. During his university years, he was greatly influenced by the Archbishop of Kharkov, the future Metropolitan Anthony (Khrapovitsky). Simultaneously with the study of lay knowledge, he delved deeply into the study of the spiritual life.

During the Russian Civil War, the Maximovitch family was forced to flee their home and was evacuated to Yugoslavia. There Michael graduated in 1925 from the School of Theology at the Belgrade University. In 1926 Metropolitan Anthony (Khrapovitsky), the head of the Russian Church Outside of Russia, tonsured Michael to the monastic order with the name of John, in honour of St. John of Tobolsk. In 1929, he was ordained to the holy priesthood.

In 1934, Metropolitan Anthony consecrated Hieromonk John as Bishop of Shanghai. Upon his arrival in Shanghai Bishop John quickly reconciled the Orthodox parishes there, finished the building of the cathedral in honour of the Icon of the Mother of God "The Surety of Sinners", founded the St. Tikhon of Zadonsk orphanage, and opened a home for seniors. He visited the sick daily and led a strict ascetic life. It was here that he first became known for the power of his prayers — many miracles were a result of them.

When in 1949, the communists took power in China; some 5,000 Russian immigrants from China were evacuated to the island of Tubabao in the Philippines. Archbishop John left Shanghai on the last ship. For more than two years, the refugees stayed on the island in a tent city, which was set up by their own efforts in the tropical jungle. By traveling personally to Washington, D.C., Archbishop John in 1950 successfully petitioned the American government to grant the Russian emigrants on Tubabao a refugee status that allowed them to move to the US and Australia. By 1951, all refugees had left the island of Tubabao.

In 1951, St. John was appointed head of the Western European Diocese. Here his charitable and pastoral work continued, as well as the publication of liturgical literature in French and Dutch. In his private life, Archbishop John was unpretentious — he wore very simple vestments and walked barefoot in sandals.

In 1962 due to the difficulties in building the new Holy Virgin "Joy of All Who Sorrow" cathedral in San Francisco and by request of his spiritual children who were saved by him from the communists in China, Archbishop John was appointed to head the Western American Diocese. Here he pacified the parish and completed the construction of the new cathedral.

On July 2, 1966, this great righteous man reposed in the Lord. He was placed in a sepulcher beneath the cathedral that he had built.

In 1994, he was canonized as a saint of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia. His incorrupt relics are now in a shrine in the nave of the Holy Virgin Cathedral. Many people have acquired faith and received physical healing and spiritual strength by the prayers said at St. John's incorrupt relics. Today hundreds of miracles are attested to him worldwide. By his truly Christian example, St. John unites the Russian Orthodox faithful abroad with the fatherland of their ancestors.

The feast day of St. John is celebrated on the Saturday closest to July 2, the day of his repose.