

St Ambrose famously stood firm against Emperor Valentinian II, his Arian mother Justina, and the Arian community. In 384, when they demanded the use of two churches in Milan, Ambrose refused and was backed by a zealous crowd, forcing the imperial court to back down. He declared he would die rather than betray the church. He also successfully argued against requests from pagans to restore the Altar of Victory and related rites. While he discouraged imperial favoritism towards Jews, he did not oppose punishing those who destroyed a synagogue.

He resisted efforts to restore pagan rites, arguing that such practices were incompatible with the duties of a Christian emperor. Equally, Ambrose held firm with the Emperor against any show of favoritism for the Jews, pointing out to the Emperor, when he was favoring rebuilding a synagogue that a mob had destroyed, the many houses of wealthy people and churches that had been destroyed by unruly mobs, with many then still not restored. Yet, Ambrose did not oppose punishing those who were directly responsible for destroying the synagogue.

His influence grew through his popularity with the people, reforms in worship, and bold preaching, even when these displeased the court. Yet he remained respected, and his diplomatic missions—such as attempts to dissuade Magnus Maximus from invading Italy—were sought after, though not always successful.

St Ambrose did not shrink from reproving Emperor Theodosius I, notably after the massacre at Thessalonica, urging repentance; nor from encouraging the enactment of decrees suppressing pagan rites. St Ambrose died on 4 April 397, two years after Theodosius, and was succeeded by Simplician.

(Source: Orthodox Wiki Saints)



Liturgy this week

Friday 12 December

St Spyridon the Wonderworker, Bishop of Tremithus.

Hours and Holy Liturgy, from 8:15am

St Helen't Chapel.

Orthodox Parish of St Martin & St Helen Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of the British Isles and Ireland Patriarchate of Antioch and all the East

Charity number: 1192469

Sunday 7 December 2025. Issue 6.

Tone 1.

**10th Sunday of Luke. Ambrose, Bishop of Milan; Athenodoros the
Martyr of Mesopotamia; Righteous Father Gerasimus, Ascetic of
Euboia**

Epistle Reading

Ephesians 5:8-19

Prokeimenon in Tone 1

Prokeimenon in Tone I

Let Thy mercy, O Lord, be upon us, as we have put our hope in Thee.

Verse: Rejoice in the Lord, O ye righteous; praise becometh the just.

Brethren, walk as children of light (for the fruit of the Spirit is in al goodness and righteousness and truth), proving what is acceptable to the Lord; and have no communion with the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them; for it is a shame even to speak of the things which they do in secret. But all things when they are exposed are made manifest by the light, for everything that is made manifest is light. Therefore he says: “Awake, O sleeper, and arise from the dead, and Christ will shine upon thee.”

See then that you walk circumspectly, not as unwise, but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil. Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is. And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit; speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and chanting in your heart to the Lord.

Alleluia.

Verse 1: It is God who avengeth me, and who subdueth the peoples under me.

Verse 2: He magnifieth the salvations of the King and shows mercy unto his anointed, unto David and his seed for evermore.

Gospel Reading
John (1:35-51)

At that time, Jesus was teaching in one of the synagogues on the Sabbath day. Behold, there was a woman who had had a spirit of infirmity for eighteen years. She was bent over and could not straighten herself up. When Jesus saw her, he called her, and said to her, “Woman, you are freed from your infirmity!” He laid his hands on her and immediately, she stood up straight and glorified God. However, the ruler of the synagogue was indignant because Jesus had healed on the Sabbath. He said to the crowd, “There are six days in which people should work! Therefore, come on those days and be healed, not on the Sabbath day!” Then the Lord answered him, “You hypocrites! Does not each one of you free his ox or his donkey from the stall on the Sabbath, and lead it out to water? Should not this woman, a daughter of Abraham who was bound by Satan for eighteen years, be freed from this bondage on the Sabbath day?” As he said these things, all his adversaries were put to shame and all the people rejoiced over all the glorious things that were done by him.



Troparion of the Resurrection. Tone 1.

When the stone had been sealed by the Jews; while the soldiers were guarding Thy most pure Body; Thou didst rise on the third day, O Saviour, granting life to the world. The powers of heaven therefore cried to Thee, O Giver of Life: Glory to Thy Resurrection O Christ! Glory to Thy Kingdom! Glory to Thy dispensation, O Thou who lovest mankind.

St Ambrose Bishop of Milan
Troparion

In truth thou wast revealed to thy flock as a rule of faith, an image of humility and a teacher of abstinence; thy humility exalted thee; thy poverty enriched thee. O Hierarch Father Ambrose, entreat Christ our God that our souls may be saved!



St Martin the Merciful
Troparion

In signs and in miracles thou wast renowned throughout the land of Gaul. By grace thou art a light for the world, O Martin, Bishop blessed of God. Deeds of mercy and compassion filled thy life with their splendours, teaching and wise counsel were thy riches and treasures, which still thou dost dispense freely to those who honour thee.

St Helen
Troparion

We behold thee, glorious Helen, with thy God-inspired son, in the joys of the kingdom of Heaven, and we magnify Christ, for he hath revealed to us thine honoured festival, giving light more brilliant than the sun. Therefore we cry in faith: O People, exalt Christ above all forever!

Preparation of Christ's Nativity
Kontakion

Today the Virgin cometh to the cave to give birth in an ineffable manner to the pre-eternal Word. Rejoice, therefore, O universe, when thou hearest, and glorify with the angels and shepherds him who shall appear by his own will as a new Child, the pre-eternal God.

St Ambrose

St Ambrose was born a Roman citizen in Trier between 337 and 340, to a Christian family of distinction. Educated in Rome for a career mirroring that of his father, he progressed in literature, law, and rhetoric before being placed by Anicius Probus on the council of Liguria and Emilia, later becoming consular prefect in Milan, where he proved an excellent administrator.

Following the death of the Arian Auxentius in 374, conflict between the Nicene and Arian parties led to Ambrose being acclaimed bishop of Milan after an address he delivered during the crisis. Though only a catechumen, he was swiftly baptised and installed, and soon studied theology under Simplician. After settling his affairs and dividing his wealth among the poor, he devoted himself entirely to the church.

Ambrose soon championed the Nicene cause in disputes with the Arians. With the support of Emperor Gratian he opposed attempts by Arian leaders to call a general council and succeeded in restricting the synod of 381 to Western bishops. Presiding at Aquileia, he oversaw the deposition of Palladius and Secundianus.