

January 26: Life of St. Xenophon the Righteous and His Family



Icon of St. Xenophon and his wife and two sons

Our venerable father Saint Xenophon, his wife Mary, and sons Arcadius & John (d. A.D. 520) Saint Theodore and his brother Saint Joseph (d. A.D. 826)

Source:

<http://vatopaidi.files.wordpress.com/2010/01/st-xenophon.jpg>

Life of St. Xenophon the Righteous, and his family

Saint Xenophon was one of the foremost nobles of Constantinople. He possessed abundant worldly goods, but was richer still in inner treasures: faith, piety, and the zealous observance of God's commandments. Well-known because of his rank and distinguished lineage, he was even more renowned for his excellent conduct. Although respected by all, Xenophon was extremely humble, never vaunting himself at others' expense or taking pride in the world's fleeting glory. He laid up treasures in heaven, sending them there by the hands of the poor. His wife Mary

emulated him and was his equal in virtue. The couple was righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless. While giving their sons John and Arcadius the best secular education, they raised them in the fear of the Lord, which is the beginning of wisdom. They hoped that their children would not only inherit their wealth, but also be heirs to their God-pleasing way of life.

Xenophon and Mary sent their children to Beirut, a city in Phoenicia famous for its schools, to study the wisdom of the Hellenes. The boys had been there some time when Xenophon fell gravely ill. Thinking that he was not long for this world, Mary wrote her sons, urging them to return home, receive his last blessing, and be present at his funeral. John and Arcadius hastened back to Constantinople, and their father was so happy to see them that his condition at once improved slightly. Xenophon had them sit by his bed and told them, "Children, it seems my end is near. If you love me, heed what I am about to say, not out of vainglory, but so that you will tread the path of virtue. I believe that if you take my life as a model, you will not need another, for good lessons learned from one's parents, whether imparted by word or deed, are more valuable than any other teaching. You know that I am a devout man, and have always been sincere in dealing with others. Everyone shows me respect, not so much because of my noble lineage, as in recognition of my meek and proper conduct. I try never to offend, reproach, slander, or envy anyone; I do not become angry without a cause; I do not harbor rancor. Rather, I love and have friendly relations with all. I attend church daily, morning and evening; I disdain neither beggar, nor stranger, nor the sorrowful, but console the afflicted. I often visit prisoners, and have ransomed many captives. I set a watch before my mouth, lest I say something evil; I guard my eyes from gazing at beautiful women, to avoid passionate desire. I have never known a woman except for your mother, and shared her bed only until your birth. Since then we have, by mutual consent and with God's help, refrained from conjugal relations. Children, imitate your parents and acquire our faith, patience, and humility. Live to please God, and He will grant you a long life. Give alms to the poor, defend widows and orphans, visit the sick and imprisoned, assist the wronged and unjustly condemned, and be at peace with all. Be faithful to your friends, do good to your enemies, and render not evil for evil. Be kind, gentle, and loving to everyone, and always remain humble. Preserve chastity of soul and body, and if God grants you to marry, keep your bed undefiled. Be generous to churches and monasteries, and honor priests and monks, on whose account the Lord has mercy on the world. Remember especially those wandering for God's sake in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens, and caves of the earth, and provide for their needs. If you feed the poor, you shall never lack. I have provided generously for the needy, but my house has suffered no want. Pray frequently and heed the teachings of holy men. Respect your mother and obey her in the fear of the Lord. Never defy her wishes. Be kind to the slaves: treat them lovingly, as though they were your own children, and free them when they reach old age, but continue to furnish them everything else they require until the day they die. I repeat: do as I have done, that you may be deemed worthy of the blessedness of the saints. Never forget that this life is fleeting and its glory counts for nothing. Children, obey the Lord's commandments and my injunctions, and may the God of peace be with you!"

Hearing this, John and Arcadius cried, "Do not abandon us, father, but beg God for more time! The Lord will surely grant your request. If we are to advance in virtue, your guidance is essential, for we are still very young."

Xenophon sighed, and shedding abundant tears, replied, "Since God visited me with this illness and I was confined to bed, I have been praying continuously that He permit me a little more time, on account of your youth. I wish to see you attain perfection."

That night Xenophon learned in a dream that God had commanded that he remain among the

living. He informed his wife and children, and the entire family rejoiced and glorified the Lord. The sick man continued to recover and instructed his sons, "Children, return to your studies. When you have completed them, come back at once, and I will arrange for you to marry." John and Arcadius took provisions and boarded a ship for Beirut. Their father bade them Godspeed, and at first the voyage went well. Then suddenly a contrary wind arose, a storm came up, and the sea became very rough. The sailors released the rudder, and the vessel was tossed to and fro. In despair of their lives, all on board wept bitterly. John and Arcadius also wept and prayed, "O kind Master, Creator of all things, disdain not those whom Thou didst fashion! Remain with us and remember our parents' good deeds. Let us not die in the flower of youth; permit not the abyss to swallow our ship; and forget not Thy mercy, but look down from the height of Thy glory and behold our distress. Hearken unto our groans and cries, for with a contrite heart and a humble spirit we pray unto Thee. Stretch forth Thine all-powerful right hand and deliver us from the gates of death; deal with us according to Thine abundant compassion. Deliver us for the sake of Thy mercy, for not the dead shall praise Thee, nor any that go down to Hades, but we the living will glorify Thy dread name."

Because the tempest was quickly becoming even more violent and the ship was in imminent danger of foundering, the crewmen, pretending they were lightening the vessel, dropped a covered lifeboat designed to remain afloat in the roughest weather. They transferred to it and drew away, hoping the sea would deposit them on shore. John, Arcadius, and their servants remained on the ship, which was already beginning to break up. The youths took off their clothes, and awaiting final separation and death, exclaimed to their parents as if they were present, "May you ever enjoy good health, beloved father and mother! You will not see us again, nor shall we see you. Nevermore shall we enjoy the pleasures of home together." Then each cried to the other, "Woe, beloved brother; woe, light of my eyes! How hard it is to part! What good has come of our parents' prayers? Where are their alms to the poor? Where is their generosity to monks and their respect for them? Did any of their prayers for us reach God? If they did, they were powerless, rendered ineffectual by our many sins, on account of which we are not worthy to remain alive. Woe to us! Not long ago we were lamenting by our father's death-bed; now we shall bring inconsolable grief to our parents. O father, you were solicitous that we receive a good education and lead virtuous lives, but you will never even see our corpses! O mother, you hoped that we would marry and were preparing for our nuptials, but you will never visit our graves! It is hard for parents to witness the death and burial of their offspring, but much harder, sweetest father and mother, to lose children without trace and never know the details of their end. We had hoped to lay you to rest in old age, but are unworthy to be buried by you." To this each added, "Save yourself, brother, and forgive me!" Then, having embraced and exchanged a last kiss, they cried to God once more, "O King and Master of all, a cruel death awaiteth us! If our lives must end in the deep, at least do not separate us. Let a single wave cover us and a sea-monster's belly be our common tomb." Finally, they shouted to their slaves, "Save yourselves, good brothers and friends, and forgive us!"

After this the ship went down, and the passengers remained afloat by clinging to boards. By the grace of God all were saved, although thrown to shore at different places: the slaves at Tyre, John at Malmephetan, and Arcadius at Tetrapyrgia. Thinking the others had drowned, each youth grieved over the loss of his brother more than he rejoiced at his own deliverance. Reaching land, John asked himself, "Where now? I cannot appear naked in a city. Best that I find a monastery where pious ascetics labor in poverty and obscurity for God my rescuer. Of what use are the riches of this world? Perhaps the Lord did not hear us when we prayed on the ship because our parents had plans for us to marry and inherit great wealth and possessions. We would have perished in the vanity of the world as though in the sea. Knowing what is to our benefit, the omnipotent and all-seeing God loosed the storm upon us. We cannot foresee the

future, but our divine Benefactor does and orders events with a view to our salvation." Then John raised his hands to God and prayed, "O Lord, my Lord, Who didst save me from death in the turbulent waves, save also my brother Arcadius! Deliver him from a bitter death as Thou didst deliver me in Thy mercy. If Thou hast brought him safely to land already, enlighten his mind, that he may please Thee in the monastic life. Keep unharmed our servants as well, that Thy holy name may be glorified." He continued his prayer as he walked on the shore, saying, "O Lord Jesus Christ, Only-begotten Word of God, hearken unto Thy slave, direct my footsteps in the doing of Thy commandments, and guide me by Thy holy will; for Thou, O Master, art mine only helper."

Eventually, John came to a monastery. He knocked on the door and the porter opened. Seeing that he was naked, the monk covered him with his cloak, then took him to his cell, where he offered him bread and vegetable broth. When John had finished eating, the porter inquired, "Where are you from, brother?"

John answered, "I am a castaway, my lord. I held on to a board and by your prayers escaped death in a fierce storm. God brought me to shore not far from your holy monastery." Moved to compunction, the monk glorified God, the Saviour of those who trust in Him, and asked John, "Where will you go now, brother?"

"Wherever God wishes," John replied. "I shall become a monk, if the compassionate Master overlooks my sins and deems me worthy to take up His light yoke."

The monk exclaimed, "Truly, child, you desire a good thing! The Lord will bless you, if you serve Him with zeal."

John inquired, "Father, would it be possible for me to remain here?"

"I must inform the abbot about you," replied the monk. "God will reveal to him what you should do. Be obedient, and you will be saved."

The gatekeeper related to the superior everything about the youth; whereupon, the abbot ordered that John be brought to him. As soon as he laid eyes on the blessed one, the abbot realized that John's calling was from God. Foreseeing that the youth would excel in virtue, he cried, "Blessed be the God of your father and mother, Who delivered you from the abyss and brought you here!" Then he instructed him at length in the principles of the soul-saving monastic life, blessed him with the sign of the Cross, and permitted him to join the community. Before long he tonsured John in the angelic schema. The saint struggled in prayer, fasting, and every monastic labor and obedience, but never ceased grieving for his brother Arcadius, whom he feared had drowned. By God's will, however, Arcadius remained alive and came to shore at Tetrapyrgia. Falling to his knees, he prayed, "O Lord God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the God of my father, I thank Thee for delivering me from tempest and death. As thou didst save me when all hope was lost, and set my feet upon land, O most merciful One, rescue also Thy servant, my brother John: do not permit him to be swallowed by the abyss. Hear me, Lord, my Lord, for great is Thy compassion. Do not allow John to vanish in the sea; do not permit one so young to die! Grant me to see his face again; then take me from this life, if Thou must." So saying, Arcadius wept bitterly and collapsed.

After rising, Arcadius made his way to a nearby village, where a pious man gave him old clothes. He dressed, ate some bread, and regained a little strength. Then he entered a church and again prayed and shed tears for his brother. Upon completing his supplication, he fell asleep on a table

outside and in a dream heard John say, "Arcadius, do not lament: by the grace of Christ I am alive."

Arcadius awoke, and believing the dream to be true, rejoiced greatly and thanked God. He told himself, "If I return home without my brother, I shall only bring my parents sorrow. If I go back to school and complete my study of philosophy, then go home, I shall only delay bringing them grief. I am uncertain what to do. My father often extolled the ascetic life, which brings a man close to God. I know: I will embrace monasticism!"

After praying, Arcadius set out for Jerusalem. Having venerated the Holy Places where the Lord accomplished the world's salvation, he decided to seek admission to a desert monastery and departed for the wilderness. On the road he encountered a saintly, clairvoyant monk of venerable appearance, adorned with gray hair. Arcadius fell at his feet, kissed them, and exclaimed, "Pray for me, holy Father: I am very downcast!"

"Do not sorrow, child; your brother is alive," responded the elder. "He and your servants were preserved by God and have entered various monasteries. John is already a monk. Your prayer has been heard: soon you will see your brother."

Arcadius was astonished and again fell at the elder's feet, exclaiming, "God has revealed to you everything about me! Do not reject me, but take me to a monastery and save my soul as you know best."

The elder said, "May God be blessed; follow me, child." He took Arcadius to the Lavra of Saint Chariton, called Souka in the Syriac tongue, tonsured him, and gave him a cell in which one of the great fathers had struggled for fifty years. The clairvoyant elder lived with Arcadius for a year, teaching him how to combat invisible enemies, then retired into the desert, leaving the saint on his own, but promising that he would see him three years thence. Arcadius faithfully carried out the rule given him by the elder, and toiled day and night for God.

Two years after the shipwreck, Xenophon, who knew nothing about what had happened, sent one of his servants to Beirut with orders to find John and Arcadius and report on their health and studies. Both Xenophon and Mary were worried by their sons' failure to write and the lack of any word about them. The slave arrived in Beirut and learned that his master's children had not returned to the city. He said to himself, "Perhaps they decided to complete their education in Athens." He went there to look for them, but did not find them, nor did he hear anything about them. Feeling very despondent, he started to make his way back to Constantinople. One evening a monk stopped at the inn where he was staying. The two men struck up a conversation, and the monk, who recognized the servant but gave no indication of this at first, mentioned that he was travelling to Jerusalem to venerate the Holy Places. When the servant looked closely at the monk's face, he realized the monk was his friend, a slave who had left for Beirut with their master's children. He inquired, "Are you not one of the slaves my master Xenophon sent to Beirut with his sons John and Arcadius?"

"I am," admitted the monk. "We are friends and both Xenophon's slaves."

"How is it, then, that you are clothed in the habit, and where are our lords John and Arcadius?" the servant asked. "Tell me whatever you know, for I have made a diligent search, but found no trace of them."

The monk's eyes filled with tears, and he sighed, "Our masters and all the passengers on their

ship drowned, except for me. I thought it better to end my days in a monastery than to bear such grievous tidings to our owners and the other members of our household."

Hearing this, the servant beat his breast and cried, "Woe is me! How terrible was your fate, young masters! How you suffered! What a dreadful way to die! How can I tell your parents what happened, or endure the sight of your father's tears and your mother's grief, and the sound of their lamentation? Woe is me, kind masters: with you, our hopes have perished! Thinking you would inherit everything belonging to your parents, we slaves looked forward to a happy future. The poor awaited abundant alms, strangers hospitality, churches adornment, and monasteries provisions, but in vain. What shall I do? How can I face my lord Xenophon with word that his children drowned? Both father and mother will expire upon hearing it. Better to abandon my mission and flee, than to be responsible for their deaths!"

The servant insisted that he would not go back to Constantinople, but the people listening, both travelers and local villagers, calmed him and urged him to return. "You must tell your masters the truth," they said, "lest they call down divine punishment upon you. Sudden death may befall you, and you may lose your salvation." In the end he accepted the advice and made his way to the Imperial City. Entering his masters' house, he sat down silent, downcast, and with head hung low.

When Mary learned that the slave had returned, she summoned him and inquired, "How are my sons?"

"They are doing well," replied the servant.

"Have you letters from them?" she asked.

The slave answered, "I lost them on the road."

At this she became troubled and demanded, "By God, tell the truth! My soul is in turmoil and my strength is drained."

Weeping piteously, the servant divulged everything. He said, "Alas, mistress, the lights of your life have been extinguished in the sea. Your sons' ship was wrecked and the passengers drowned."

Having firm trust in God, Mary remained in control of herself. She neither fainted nor shrieked, but marvelled silently for a moment, then sighed, "Blessed is God, Who arranged this according to His will. Blessed be the name of the Lord henceforth and forevermore." Afterwards she instructed the slave, "Speak about this to no one. The Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away. He knows what is best for us."

It was three hours later, in the evening, when Xenophon returned from the imperial palace, accompanied by an enormous retinue. He dismissed his attendants and cut a slice of bread for supper. Xenophon always ate once daily, after sunset. Mary joined him at the table and announced, "My lord, the slave is back from Beirut."

"Blessed be God," said Xenophon. "Where is he?"

"He is ill and resting," Mary answered.

"Bring me our children's letters," Xenophon said.

Mary replied, "Rest now and eat. Tomorrow you will see the letters. The servant has much to relate about our sons."

"Bring the letters now," insisted Xenophon. "I want to know whether Arcadius and John are well. I can speak with the slave tomorrow." Suddenly, Mary, unable to restrain herself any longer, burst into tears. Xenophon became alarmed and asked, "What is it, my lady? Why are you weeping? Are the children ill?"

Mary choked out the reply: "Would that they were ill. Our dear children have perished in the sea!"

Tears rolled down Xenophon's cheeks and he moaned, "Blessed be the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit unto the ages. Amen! Do not grieve, my lady; God would not destroy our children. I have never dared offend the good Lord and refuse to believe that He would bring grief to me in my old age. Let us keep vigil tonight, entreating God to show mercy. He will reveal whether our sons are alive."

With this they rose, locked themselves in their chapel, and prayed until dawn, shedding copious tears and trusting that the Lord would grant their request. At first light they lay down on horsehair mats. Both had the same dream: they saw their children standing in glory before Christ the Lord. A throne had been prepared for John, and he held a scepter and wore a crown richly adorned with pearls and jewels. A radiant couch had been made ready for Arcadius, who held a cross in his right hand and wore a diadem of stars. Upon awakening, each told the other about the dream, and they understood that their sons were alive and under the protection of the Lord's mercy. They were very much consoled, and Xenophon said, "My lady Mary, I somehow think our children are in Jerusalem. We should go there and venerate the Holy Places. Perhaps we shall also find our sons."

Mary agreed, and the pious couple began making preparations for travel. They issued instructions to their steward and dispensed alms; then, taking gold for expenses and charity, they departed. Reaching Jerusalem, they visited the Holy Places, everywhere distributing largess. Afterwards they made the rounds of the monasteries near the city, looking for their sons, but not finding them. They did, however, encounter one of the slaves who had been on the ship with their children and become a monk. They embraced and kissed him, and cast themselves to the ground before him. He prostrated himself in turn and objected, "Masters, this is most unseemly. For God's sake, I beg you not to grovel before your servant."

Xenophon replied, "We have the deepest respect for the holy schema. Do not be grieved, but tell us anything you can about our sons."

The monk's eyes clouded with tears, and he said, "Our ship was wrecked and each passenger seized a plank. The storm carried us in various directions. I do not know whether anyone else was saved, but only that I reached shore at Tyre."

Xenophon and Mary let the monk continue on his way, rewarding him generously and asking that he pray for them and their children. Then they went down to the Jordan, with the intention of praying and dispersing alms there. On the road they providentially encountered the clairvoyant elder who had clothed Arcadius in the schema. They fell prostrate before him and asked for his prayers. After sending up entreaty to God, Who made known to him everything about the family,

the elder announced, "It was love for their children that brought my lord Xenophon and lady Mary to Jerusalem. Do not grieve: your sons are alive. God has, in a dream, revealed to you the glory that awaits them in heaven. Be on your way, laborers in the Lord's vineyard: pray at the Jordan and return to the Holy City. You will see your children again." With this they parted. Xenophon and Mary went to the Jordan, the elder to Jerusalem.

Upon reaching the Holy City, the elder went directly to the temple of Christ's Resurrection. He was resting near Golgotha when Xenophon's son John, who had come to Jerusalem from the monastery at Malmephetan, entered the church. John made a prostration before the holy elder, who saluted him warmly, blessed him, and asked, "Where have you been, master John? Your father and mother are searching for you, and you have come seeking your brother."

Amazed by the great elder's clairvoyance, John fell prostrate again and cried, "I beg you, abba: tell me what happened to my brother. I have long and earnestly entreated the Lord to make known to me whether he is dead or alive, but until now He has revealed nothing. You have given me fresh hope that I will learn the truth, holy Father."

"Sit beside me, and your brother will be here soon," the elder assured him.

Presently another young monk appeared: this was Arcadius. His body was emaciated, his face was withered, and his eyes were deeply sunken from harsh asceticism. After venerating the holy places in the church, he noticed the elder, fell at his feet, and exclaimed, "Father, you abandoned the field entrusted to your care and for three years have not visited it! Many thorns and weeds have sprung up in it, and clearing it will require much labor on your part."

The elder replied, "Child, I have visited my field daily, and have seen that it is producing, not thorns or weeds, but ripe wheat, worthy of the King of king's table. Sit beside me." Arcadius obeyed, and the elder remained silent for some time. Then the elder asked "Where are you from, brother John?"

"I am a pauper and a wanderer," John replied. "Pray, Father, that the Lord show mercy and grant my heart's desire."

"Indeed," the elder said; "but tell me about your parents, and where you were born and educated, that the name of the Lord may be glorified." John explained that he was a nobleman's son from Constantinople; that he once had a brother named Arcadius, with whom he was sent to Beirut to study; and that, as far as he knew, he was the only survivor of a shipwreck.

Listening intently to the story, Arcadius realized that he had found his brother. Unable to restrain himself, he exclaimed, "Truly, Father, this is my brother John!" With tears in their eyes, the brothers embraced and kissed, then praised the Lord for permitting them to see each other alive, clothed in the schema, and committed to a God-pleasing life.

Two days later Xenophon and Mary returned from the Jordan. After praying at Golgotha, they venerated the life-giving Sepulcher of the Lord and gave a large amount of gold to the Church of the Resurrection. Encountering the clairvoyant elder, they fell at his feet and entreated his prayers. Afterwards, they said, "For the Lord's sake, Father, keep your promise, and tell us where we can find our sons."

Both of their children were standing next to the elder, but he had told them not to speak or lift their eyes. They recognized their parents, but neither Xenophon nor Mary could tell who they

were, because they were clothed in the habit and an austere way of life had changed their appearance. The holy elder instructed Saints Xenophon and Mary, "Prepare a meal at your lodgings. I will come with my disciples, and when we have eaten, I shall tell you where your children are." After the overjoyed parents had agreed and hurried off to make ready the supper, the elder ordered the young monks, "While eating with your father and mother, say nothing until I tell you."

The brothers replied, "We shall do as you command."

"Dining and talking with your parents, you will not endanger your salvation," said the elder.

"Believe me: whatever labor you may undertake for the sake of virtue, you will never attain the spiritual stature of your father and mother."

After eating and enjoying devout conversation, blessed Xenophon and Mary asked, "Holy Father, how do our children fare?"

The elder replied, "They are valiantly struggling for their salvation."

"May God, who will have all men to be saved, make them determined laborers in Christ's vineyard," said the parents. To this Xenophon added, "How admirable are your disciples, Father! Would that our children were like them. From the moment we laid eyes on these young monks, our hearts rejoiced and we loved them like our own sons."

The elder said to Arcadius, "Child, tell us where you were born, a little about your background, and how you came here."

"This my brother and I, Father, were born in Constantinople and are sons of one of the most eminent nobles serving in the palace," explained Arcadius. "Our parents sent us to Beirut to receive a Hellenic education, but our ship was broken up in a storm. The passengers laid hold of boards and were carried away in every direction on the waves. By God's mercy we survived and were cast to shore."

Before Arcadius had finished speaking, the parents shouted, "You are certainly our children, the offspring of our loins and the light of our eyes!" Throwing their arms around John and Arcadius, they kissed them lovingly and wept for joy, as did the elder. Then all rose, and glorified and thanked God, praising His wondrous mercy. Xenophon and his wife requested tonsure, and the elder obliged them, after explaining the principles of monasticism. John and Arcadius bade their parents farewell and retired to the wilderness with the elder, while Xenophon wrote to the Imperial City with instructions that his slaves be freed and everything he owned be sold. When the proceeds had been distributed to the poor, Xenophon took up the solitary life and Mary entered a convent.

The members of this family pleased God until the end of their days and were deemed worthy of abundant blessings of grace. John and Arcadius shone for many years as chief luminaries among the dwellers of the desert. Both knew beforehand their day of departure to the Lord. Saint Mary performed numerous miracles, giving sight to the blind and expelling demons. Following her blessed repose, her soul was transported to the heavenly realm. God also gave the venerable Xenophon power to work miracles and granted him the vision of great mysteries which eye hath not seen. Now Xenophon, the blessed Mary, and their sons John and Arcadius, as members of the choir of saints who have fervently served the Lord in righteousness and holiness, behold the

divine countenance of the Master, Christ our Saviour, unto Whom, with the Father and the Holy Spirit, be glory, honor, and worship unto the ages. Amen.

In his Life of John of the Ladder, Daniel, a monk of Raithu, writes, "I cannot say for certain in what memorable city this great man was born and reared." Some speculate that Saint John, son of Xenophon and Mary and brother of Arcadius, was John of the Ladder. Others believe he was the brother of George Arselaites, who was called John before becoming a monk and whose father, a citizen of Constantinople, was named Xenophon

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Apolytikion in the Fourth Tone

O God of our Fathers, ever dealing with us according to Thy gentleness: take not Thy mercy from us, but by their entreaties guide our life in peace.

Kontakion in the Fourth Tone

With thy yoke-mate and thy sons didst thou keep vigil in the courts of Christ thy Lord and thou didst cheerfully disperse thy wealth to paupers, O blessed one. Hence, ye have all now inherited joy divine.

Source: email from Protopresbyter Panagiotes Carras, HOTCA, Toronto, Canada