

Nikephoros the Leper and the Coronavirus Pandemic

The following testimony is from a priest named Father Ananias Koustenis. Sometime in early March, 2020, Saint Nikephoros the Leper (4 Jan), revealed himself to an old gentleman, who told him not to be afraid of the new virus (Coronavirus) because if you have faith and pray to him, because of his boldness before God, we will be protected and healed.

Orthodox Christians must have faith and not fall prey to hysteria regarding diseases and disasters and pestilence. We also should pray. There are people suffering from the coronavirus, and it is unknown in God's will whether or not any of us will become infected. Therefore, in our church, we are going to begin singing the Troparia and Kontakion to our Holy father, Nikephoros the Leper, a struggler in our days, at the end of the vigil and during the Divine liturgy. **I am asking everyone in our church to sing or say these hymns daily.**



We will continue to gather and pray, and partake of the Holy Mysteries, believing that they are source of life and never a source of sickness. We will continue to present the Holy Cross for veneration, but not judge anyone who chooses not to kiss it. We will continue to have the icons in the church available for veneration, but not judge anyone who chooses not to kiss them. If anyone is afraid to partake of the Holy Mysteries because of possible disease, they should speak to the priest. Father Nicholas and I are perfectly willing to talk to about this. Please do not make any decisions on your own. This is not our way.

Troparion (Tone 1) O venerable father Nicephorus the Leper, Thy struggles and courageous asceticism dumbfounded heaven's angels. Like another Job in pain, thou didst endure and gave glory to God. And so, He arranged for thee a resplendent crown of miracles. Rejoice, O guide of monastics! Rejoice, O prism of light! Rejoice, O delightful fragrance radiating from thy relics!

Kontakion (Tone 2) O venerable father Nicephorus, shunning pain and bodily corruption, like a horse thou dost gallop towards the heavens, the steadfast support of lepers. A brilliantly lit temple of God, thy body shone in its illness.

Another Kontakion (Tone 8) The valiant athlete of endurance and fortitude, the steadfast diamond of great patience and long-suffering, was tried by the affliction and pains of illness, and who in this way did glorify the Most High God, let us praise and laud the leper Nicephorus, saying unto him: Rejoice, true namesake of victory."

Тропарь, глас 4. Плоти твоя прокажѣние/
мужемудренно, яко Иов,/ претерпѣл еси,
Никѣфоре,/ рѣзу же душѣ твоя/ свѣтле очѣстѣл
есѣ,/ совершенне же на лѣствицу добродѣтелей
восшѣд,/ подвиги твоими/ жѣтельства
Ангельскаго достѣже,/ непрестанно Богу поя:/
Тебѣ слава подобает,// Троице Единосущная.

Перевод: Телесную болезнь - проказу,
мужественно, как Иов, претерпел ты, Никифор,
одеяние же души твоей светло очистил ты, в
совершенстве же по лестнице добродетелей
взойдя, подвигами твоими достиг ангельского
образа жизни, непрестанно Богу воспевая: «Тебе
слава подобает, Троица Единосущная».

<http://www.orthodox.net/articles/prayer-to-nikephoros-the-leper-during-the-coronavirus-pandemic.pdf>
<http://www.orthodox.net/articles/prayer-to-nikephoros-the-leper-during-the-coronavirus-pandemic.doc> Original
video (in Greek) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UHF1Z7koY4&feature=share&fbclid=IwAR0c318APx-qfHE--p2QsL07rhe5pFcCnLoRlizeUEWZqblE2bli9bC4iVc>

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Our venerable Father Nicephorus the Leper lived in the twentieth century as a monk in the leper colony of Chios. He was a disciple of St. Anthimus of Chios. On January 4, 1964, which became his day of commemoration, Fr. Nicephorus reposed in the Lord, at the age of 74. His holy relics were fragrant when they were later uncovered. On December 1, 2012, the Ecumenical Patriarchate in Constantinople glorified St. Nicephorus and added his name to the calendar of commemorations.

