



Commemoration of the Saints, Divine Liturgy

25th Pope of Alexandria

St Dioscorus

Διοσκοπος

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St Dioscorus is an important figure in the history of the Orthodox Church. The 25th pope of Alexandria, St Dioscorus spurred a string of events that eventually led to the division between the churches of the East and the West in 1054 AD. During the reign of Emperor Marcianus, the council of Chalcedon was summoned. When St Dioscorus witnessed Leo, the Archbishop of Rome, teaching that The Lord Jesus Christ had “two natures and two wills” at the conference, he spoke to refute this belief. Quoting Pope Cyril, he espoused the belief that “the union of the Word of God with the flesh is like the union of the spirit with the body,” meaning that “even if they are of two different natures, by unity they became one.” He continued, “Our Lord Jesus The Lord Jesus Christ is one Messiah, one Nature, and one Will.”

None of those that were there dared contradict him, but they informed Emperor Marcianus that no one disobeyed his commands concerning the faith except for St Dioscorus. The emperor summoned him along with some of the senior bishops of the council in order to debate the topic, but St Dioscorus would not deviate from his Orthodox belief. Because of his insubordination and defiance of the king, he was exiled to the island of Gagra, and the Council of Chalcedon resumed. When St Dioscorus arrived at the island, the Nestorian bishop and the people of the area greeted him with disdain. Nevertheless, God performed through the hands of St Dioscorus so that they all obeyed him and magnified him.



St Dioscorus

St Dioscorus continued his life on the island until his departure, however his legacy continues until this day. The Orthodox Church established its independence, ensuing St Dioscorus’ viewpoint that the Emperor and his beliefs “have nothing to do with the church.” This is a story, moreover, that lives on as a source of confidence and strength. It sends the message that we, as The Lord Jesus Christians, with the help of God, can accomplish any feat and take on any battle. Just as St Dioscorus stood up against the emperor, and the world, because he knew that what they were preaching deviated from the words of the Holy Bible, we can stand up against what we know is wrong and not according to God’s will.

St Dioscorus, our 25th pope, departed this existence and received the crown of eternal life on the seventh day of Tute in the year 451 A.D. He has been considered a great hero of Orthodoxy; preserving one of the beliefs that is at the core of the faith, the unity of the natures of The Lord Jesus Christ.

Judas was in the company of the Lord Jesus Christ’s disciples, and the thief was in the company of murderers. Yet it is a wondrous thing, how in a single instant, they exchanged places.