

THE MIRACLE OF THE BOILED WHEAT

THE TOW SAINTS DEPICTED ON TODAY'S BULLETIN SHARE THE SAME NAME: Theodore TYRON and Theodore STRATILATES. Their lives quite similar as well for both were originally officers in the Roman Army before pledging their allegiance to Christ. Both suffered martyrdom for their convictions.

Although they were not acquainted with each other in life, they are said to have shared an important role in a great miracle AFTER their death! In the early Church, it was a common practice for Christians to cleanse themselves spiritually and physically during the first week of the Great Fast. Indeed, the Church still refers to this time as the WEEK OF PURIFICATION. IN 362., the Emperor Julian the Apostate, a bitter enemy of the Church, secretly had all of the food supplies in the marketplace sprayed with the blood of animals sacrificed to idols in an attempt to defile the fasting efforts of the Christians.

The Lord intervened, however, causing Theodore TYRON and Theodore STRATILATES to appear in a dream to Aphroxius, the Archbishop of Constantinople, revealing this diabolical scheme. The hierarch was instructed to inform the faithful to avoid the polluted food and to sustain themselves only on boiled wheat. Julian's plot was foiled, and the Christians remained pure in their Lenten abstinence.

For this reason, the first Saturday of Great Lent is traditionally referred to as "Theodore Saturday," a day when this wonderful miracle is remembered. This is also the basis of the custom of preparing the boiled wheat, known as KOLIVA for memorial services in the Church.