

The "Lucan Jump"

The continuous reading of the Gospel of the Holy Evangelist Luke begins on the Monday following the Sunday after the Exaltation of the Holy Cross. The four Gospels are all read in their entirety in the Byzantine Church and their reading of each begins with a great Feast. The Gospel of St. John the Theologian begins with the Feast of Feasts, the Pascha of our Lord and is read until Pentecost. The Gospel of St. Matthew begins with the Feast of Pentecost, the coming of the Holy Spirit, and is read until the Feast of the Holy Cross. The Gospel of St. Luke, then, begins with the Feast of the Holy Cross and is read until the Great Fast. The first Sundays in the Matthew cycle and in the Lucan cycle are of the call of the apostles Peter and Andrew, James and John, indicating that these Gospels also call us to follow after Jesus our Lord. The Gospel of St. Mark is read during the Holy and Great Fast, but since the Divine Liturgy is celebrated only on Saturday and Sunday, the remaining sections are read in the last six weeks of the Matthean and Lucan cycles. This is why, no matter where we are in the cycle of Sundays after Pentecost, we begin the course reading of the Gospel of St. Luke on the Monday that comes before the first Sunday after the Sunday after the Exaltation of the Cross, this year on September 22. The Epistles are read continuously so that sometimes there is a discrepancy between the week for the Epistles and the week for the Gospels. Likewise, even though the Gospel for the Nineteenth Sunday may be read on the Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost, that Sunday remains the Eighteenth Sunday and the Tone of the Week does not change.