

Celebrating the Great Patron



St. Clement of Ohrid is the most acclaimed saint of the Macedonian people and the patron of the Macedonian Orthodox Church. His deeds go well beyond religious work. He is not only the first bishop, but also the first original author and educator, and the founder of the Ohrid Literary School. So since 2007, the Day of St. Kliment Ohridski, December 8, is celebrated as a national holiday in Macedonia.

Clement of Ohrid (835-916), and Naum of Ohrid are the most renowned and loyal disciples of Ss. Cyril and Methodius, the inventors of the Slavic alphabet. The works of St. Clement played a significant role in the development of Macedonian culture and literacy. Especially important was the Ohrid Literary School that had about 3 500 students. St. Clement used the Glagolitic script that was later replaced by the Cyrillic version. According to his hagiography by

Theophylact of Ohrid, Clement was born in the region then known as Kutmicevica, which is believed to have been close to the lake. Clement participated in the mission of Cyril and Methodius to Great Moravia. After the death of Cyril, Clement accompanied Methodius on his journey from Rome to Pannonia and Great Moravia. After the death of Methodius himself in 885, Clement headed the struggle against the German clergy in Great Moravia along with Gorazd. After spending some time in jail, he was expelled from Great Moravia and in 885 or 886 reached the borders of Bulgaria together with the other disciples, Naum of Preslav, Angelarius and possibly Gorazd. There they were commissioned by Boris I to instruct the clergy of the state in the Slavic language. Clement was commissioned by Boris I to organize the teaching of theology to future clergymen in Kutmicevica. In 893 he was ordained Archbishop of Dremvica (Velika), also in Kutmicevica.

Saint Clement of Ohrid was one of the most prolific and important writers in Old Church Slavonic. He is credited with the canonical Hagiography of Saint Cyril and Saint Methodius. Clement also translated the Flower Triode containing church songs sung from Easter to Pentecost and is believed to be the author of the Holy Liturgy and the Life of St. Clement of Rome, as well as of the oldest service dedicated to St. Cyril and St. Methodius.

Upon his death in 916 he was buried in his monastery, Saint Panteleimon, in Ohrid. Already during his lifetime, Clement was very popular among the people. But after his death, many miracles were ascribed to him, creating a wide spread cult. Many legends about his literary work and other teachings in such diverse areas as healing, agriculture and construction emerged.

As his monastic name Clement is associated with another great saint of the

Christian Church, Pope Clement of Rome, his name day and later his feast fell on 8 December. The day of his death, 9 August, is celebrated as the day of all the 7 disciples of St. Cyril and St. Methodius. Nowadays, many churches, institutions, schools and associations bear his name. St. Clement of Ohrid Award is the highest national recognition for life-long achievements in the field of education, culture, art, health-care, sports and environment. It is presented ceremonially in the Parliament. On the eve of the holiday, Skopje National and University Library, which bears his name, also organizes different events, such as exhibitions, scientific meetings, and readings. St. Clement is the patron saint of the City of Ohrid, and every year the city pays tribute to the saint with different festivities. According to the legends, it was the spirit of the saint that protected the city from many misfortunes.



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and a Happy New Year 2014!*