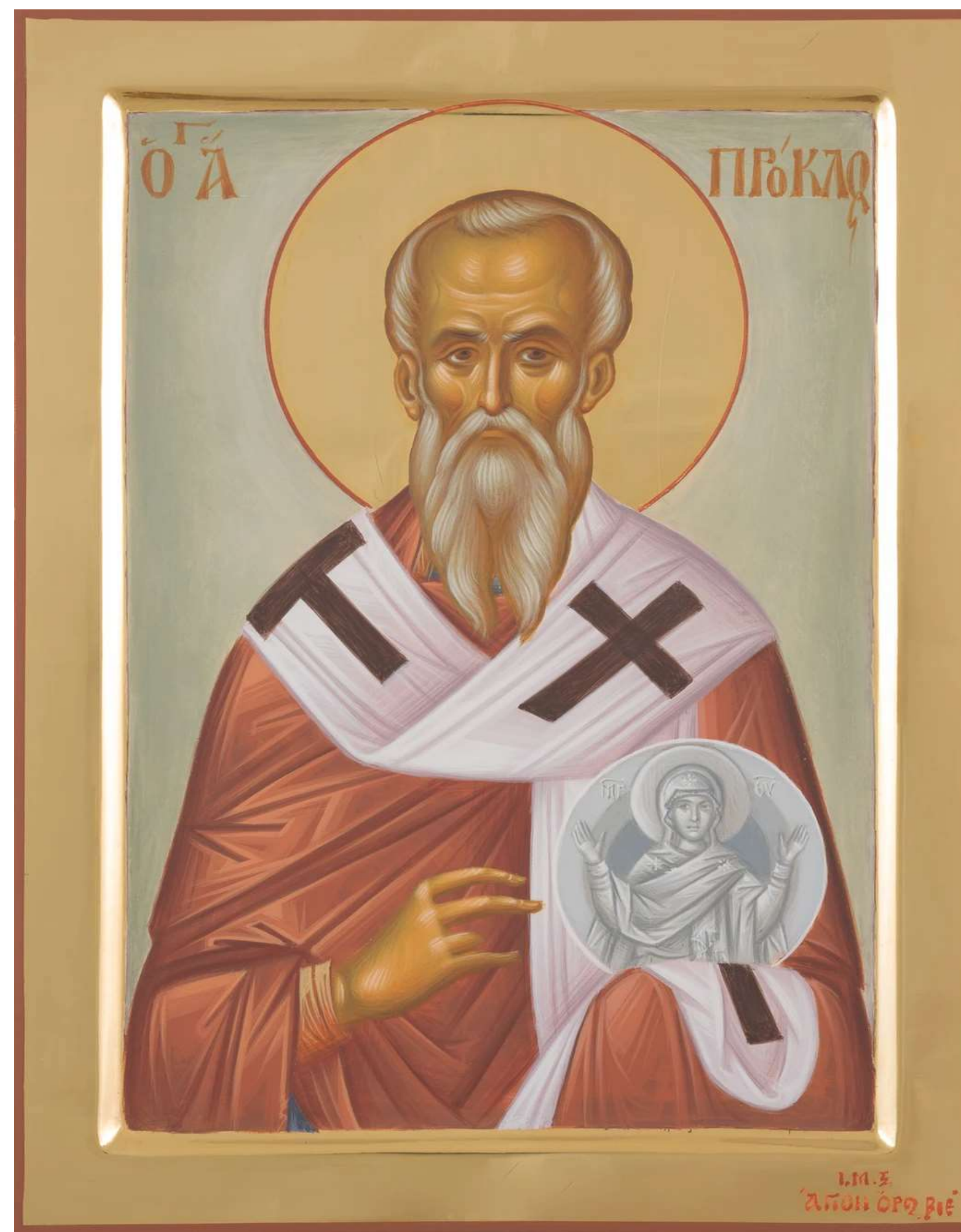


Incarnation and Redemption in the Christology of Proclus of Constantinople (d. 446)

Who is Proclus?

- Birthplace: Constantinople
- Time: c. 390 AD
- Education: rhetoric, classical literature, philosophy and logic
- Bishop of Cyzicus (426—434)
- Patriarch of Constantinople (434—446)
- 126 recorded homilies
- *Tomus ad Armenios* (435)



St Proclus of Constantinople, tempera on wood, 38 x 28 cm. Holy Monastery of Xenophontos, Mt Athos, 2015 (private collection).

Proclus the Preacher

Exhortation through interaction:

Come, let us observe a virgin's womb wider than creation. For he who is not limited there, is contained in her [Mary] without being limited, and he who in his hand carries his very mother, together with all, is being carried by her (*hom.* 4, 1).

Refutation through polemics:

Let the pagans therefore be annihilated, and the Jews destroyed. Let the Samaritans be put to shame, and the Manichaeans be dispersed. Let heretics be destroyed, and all the enemies of the immaculate catholic and apostolic church (*hom.* 15, 6).

Metaphorical language:

Mary and Christ → bridal chamber and groom; loom and fleece; workshop and sword; field and ear of corn; temple and priest (*hom.* 1, 1; 3); earth and fruit; port and ship; cloud and sun (*hom.* 4, 1; 3).

Sources

Constas, Nicholas P. *Proclus of Constantinople and the Cult of the Virgin in Late Antiquity: Homilies 1-5, Texts and Translations*. VCS 66; Boston/Leiden: Brill, 2003.
 Leroy, François-Joseph-Marie. *L'Homilétique de Proclus de Constantinople: Tradition manuscrite, inédits, études connexes*. StT 247; Vatican: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, 1967.
 Marx, Benedikt. *Procliana: Untersuchung über den homiletischen Nachlaß des Patriarchen Proklos von Konstantinopel*. MBT 23; Münster: Aschendorffsche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1940.

Leading Questions:

- 1) How did Proclus influence the Christology of the Council of Ephesus (431), the Formula of Union (433), and the Council of Chalcedon (451)?
- 2) How did he interpret the terms *physis*, *hypostasis* and *prosopon*?
- 3) How did he preach his Christology to the audience of Constantinople?

Proclus the Theologian

Holy Trinity: See the Holy Spirit worshipped along with the Father and the Son; the Trinity glorified in unity, being divided in three *hypostases* and united in nature (*hom.* 15, 4).

Christology: Having been piously taught one Son, I confess one *hypostasis* of God the Word incarnate. [...] In order to prove that being God and existing as Logos and staying as he was, he became flesh and infant and human, without degrading the mystery through change, the same one works miracles and suffers, implying what he was [before the incarnation] through the miracles, and proving through passions that he became what he created (*Arm.*, 19).

A union of two natures, and the birth of one Son. A union of the Word and flesh without confusion. And he who was born in the flesh, is God in so far as he is of the Father, and man in so far he is of me. O awesome and miraculous mystery! (*hom.* 3, 5)

The Holy Scripture stated “became” (John 1:14) and preached “assumed” (Phil. 2:7), so that *the person's singularity* is described through the former, and nature's unchangeability is declared through the latter (*Arm.*, 14).