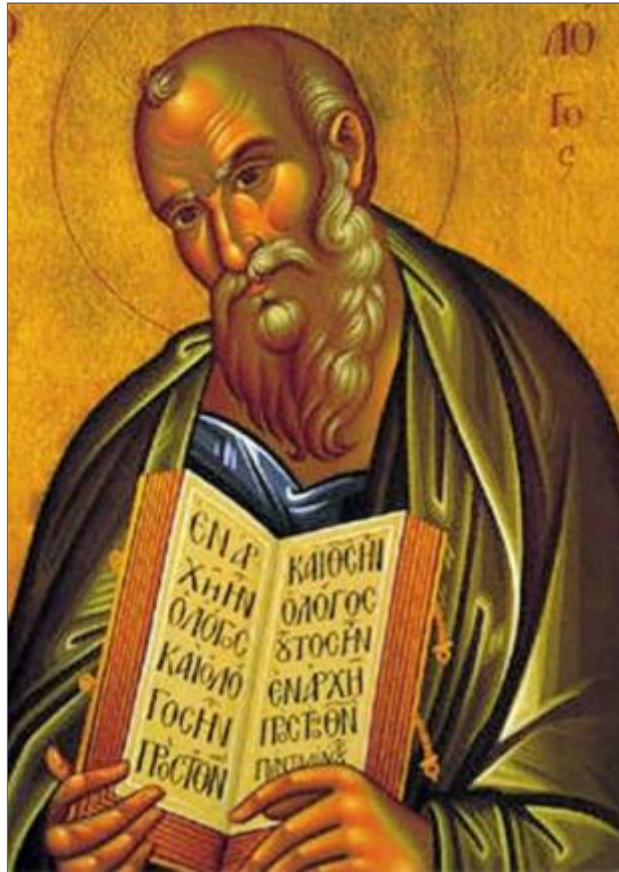


# February 23rd: Memorial of Saint Polycarp, Bishop and Martyr

**Gospel text (Jn 15,18-21): Jesus said to his disciples, «If the world hates you, remember that the world hated me before you».**



**Today, when remembering St. Polycarp, a great Father of the Church, history shows us that Christ and His Gospel are always, a contradiction sign for the world. So did St. Polycarp understand it and lived by it. He was born in Smyrna, in the actual Turkey, and then a Roman province in Asia Minor, and he died a martyr in this city, having been a Bishop of the local Church. Polycarp, whose name means "abundant fruit", had met the apostle John and had been his disciple.**

**—He wrote a letter to the Christians in Philippi (Greece) to encourage them to live by following Jesus Christ: “Wherefore, girding up your loins serve the Lord in fear and truth, as those who have forsaken the vain, empty talk and error of the multitude”.**