



# Sunday of the Holy Fathers of the First Ecumenical Council

## Seventh Sunday of Pascha, Sunday After Ascension

3 / 16 June

**Resurrection Tropar, Tone 6:** The angelic powers were at Thy tomb; / the guards became as dead men. / Mary stood by Thy grave, / seeking Thy most pure Body. / Thou didst capture hell, not being tempted by it. / Thou didst come to the Virgin, granting life. / O Lord who didst rise from the Dead, / Glory to Thee!

**Tropar of The Ascension Of The Lord, Tone 4:** Thou hast ascended in glory, O Christ our God, having gladdened Thy disciples with the promise of the Holy Spirit; and they were assured by the blessing that Thou art the Son of God, the Redeemer of the world.

**Tropar of the Holy Fathers of the First Ecumenical Council - Tone 8:** Most glorified art Thou, O Christ our God, Who hast established our holy fathers as stars upon the earth, and through them didst guide us all to the true Faith. O Most-merciful One, glory be to Thee. Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit,

**Kondak of the Holy Fathers of the First Ecumenical Council - Tone 8:** The preaching of the apostles and the doctrines of the fathers confirmed the one Faith of the Church. And wearing the garment of truth, woven from the theology on high, She rightly divideth and glorifieth the great mystery of piety. Both now and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

**Kondak of The Ascension Of The Lord, Tone 6:** When Thou didst fulfill Thy dispensation for our sake, uniting things on earth with the heavens, Thou didst ascend in glory, O Christ our God, departing not hence, but remaining inseparable from us, and crying unto them that love Thee: I am with you, and no one shall be against you.

### Commemoration of the First Ecumenical Council

The Commemoration and eulogy of the holy fathers of the First Ecumenical Council, which was held in Nicaea in 325 in the reign of Constantine the Great—held during the week before Pentecost, or the seventh week after Easter. It was summoned to remove the confusion which Arius, an Alexandrian priest, had created by his false teaching. He had been spreading the teaching that Christ was created from God in time, and that He is not the pre-eternal Son of God, equal in being with God the Father. Three hundred and eighteen holy fathers took part in this Council. It condemned the Arian teaching, and anathematised Arius when he would not repent. This Council also definitively confirmed the Symbol of Faith (the Creed) which was later amplified at the Second Ecumenical Council. Many bishops were present at the First Ecumenical Council, among whom the following stood out: St Nicolas of Myra in Lycia, St Spiridon, St Athanasius, St Acillius, St Paphnutius, St James of Nisibis, Macarius of Jerusalem, Alexander of Alexandria, Eustathius of Antioch, Eusebius of Caesarea, Mitrophanes of Constantinople, John of Persia, Aristarchus of Armenia and many others from the East. And from the West: Hosius of Cordova, Theophilus the Goth, Cecilianus of Carthage, and others. The most important work of this Council was the confirmation of the Symbol of Faith. The Council also confirmed the time of the celebration of Easter, and prescribed twenty Canons. St. Nicolas in his zeal, struck Arius with his hand. For this act, he was removed from the Council and from his episcopal duties. That very night, several of the fathers had the selfsame vision: how the Lord stood on one side of Nicolas with the Gospels and the Mother of God on the other with a pallium, offering to the saint those marks of rank that had been stripped from him. Seeing this, the fathers were amazed, and quickly returned to Nicolas that which they had taken from him. They began from that time to respect him as a great man, and to interpret his action against Arius not as some senseless rage but as the expression of great zeal for God's truth.

**Vespers:** Gen. 14:14-20; Deut. 1:8-10, 1:15-17; Deut. 10:14-21

Lord I have Cried - Tone 6, on 10: Resurrection 3; Feast: 3 (The Lord was taken up into the Heavens); Fathers 4 (Before the ages, before the morning star); G: Fathers (Let us praise today the mystic clarions of the Spirit); N: Sunday Dogmatic in the tone of the week.

Aposticha: Octoechos; G: Fathers (This day let us, the assemblies of the Orthodox);  
N: Feast (Having fulfilled the mystery)

Troparia: Fathers (Most glorified art Thou, O Christ our God) x2; Feast (Thou hast ascended in glory) x1.

### **Matins Gospel X**

#### **EPISTLE: The Acts of the Apostles 20: 16-18; 28-36**

For Paul had decided to sail past Ephesus, so that he would not have to spend time in Asia; for he was hurrying to be at Jerusalem, if possible, on the Day of Pentecost. From Miletus he sent to Ephesus and called for the elders of the church. And when they had come to him, he said to them: "Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood. For I know this, that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock. Also from among yourselves men will rise up, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after themselves. Therefore watch, and remember that for three years I did not cease to warn everyone night and day with tears. So now, brethren, I commend you to God and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified. I have coveted no one's silver or gold or apparel. Yes, you yourselves know that these hands have provided for my necessities, and for those who were with me. I have shown you in every way, by labouring like this, that you must support the weak. And remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that He said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.' " And when he had said these things, he knelt down and prayed with them all.

#### **YOU MUST SUPPORT THE WEAK: IT IS MORE BLESSED TO GIVE THAN TO RECEIVE**

It is to raise up their minds that he says all this, and to persuade them not only not to flee, but also to bear nobly. This is the reason he calls it a 'course' and a 'ministry' on the one hand, showing it to be glorious from its being a race, on the other, showing what was due from it, as being a ministry. I am a minister: nothing more. He had comforted them, so they would not grieve that he was treated in such a bad way ... For my anxiety is not that you should be saved through me as the means, but only that you should be saved: the person as the instrument is immaterial. You do not know the pangs of spiritual childbirth, how overpowering they are, how he who is in travail with this birth would rather be cut into ten thousand pieces, than see one of those to whom he has given birth perishing and undone.

*St. John Chrysostom. Homily XLIV on Acts XX. B#55, pp. 270-272.*

#### **TO SHEPHERD THE CHURCH OF GOD**

There is no ministry in the Church other than Christ's ministry ... This identification of the Church's ministry with that of Christ has gone beyond the theology of the Fathers and entered the liturgical life of the ancient Church in a decisive way: in the Eucharist, Christ is not only the one who is offered and who receives but also the one who offers ...

The ministry of the Church ... exists as an expression of the totality of the Economy. We cannot, therefore, understand the nature of the ministry by seeing it simply in terms of the past (Christ's ministry in Palestine) or a present (ministry as service to the needs of today) but of the future as well, namely as sustaining for creation the hope of the eschata, of sharing God's very life ...

Just as the Church becomes through the ministry a relational entity both in itself and in its relation to the world, so also the ordained man becomes, through his ordination, a relational entity. In this context, looking at the ordained person as an individual defeats the very end of ordination. For ordination ... aims precisely at making man not an individual but a person, i.e. an ek-static being, that can be looked upon not from the angle of his "limits" but of his overcoming his "selfhood" and becoming a related being ... In the light of the koinonia of the Holy Spirit, ordination relates the ordained man so profoundly and so existentially to the community that in his new state after ordination he cannot be any longer, as a minister, conceived in himself ... Only in terms of love can one understand the mystery of charismatic life and therefore of ministry.

*Metropolitan John (Zizioulas) of Pergamos. Being as Communion, B#82, pp. 210, 211, 226, 227 (note).*

## **GOSPEL: ST. JOHN 17:1-13**

Jesus spoke these words, lifted up His eyes to heaven, and said: "Father, the hour has come. Glorify Your Son, that Your Son also may glorify You, As You have given Him authority over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as You have given Him. And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent. I have glorified You on the earth. I have finished the work which You have given Me to do. And now, O Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world was. "I have manifested Your name to the men whom You have given Me out of the world. They were Yours, You gave them to Me, and they have kept Your word. Now they have known that all things which You have given Me are from You. For I have given to them the words which You have given Me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came forth from You; are Yours, and Yours are Mine, and I am glorified in them. Now I am no longer in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to You. Holy Father, keep through Your name those whom You have given Me, that they may be one as We are. While I was with them in the world, I kept them in Your name. Those whom You gave Me I have kept; and none of them is lost except the son of perdition, that the Scripture might be fulfilled. But now I come to You, and these things I speak in the world, that they may have My joy fulfilled in themselves.

### **THE GREAT INTERCESSORY PRAYER OF CHRIST**

'Seeing He ever lives to make intercession for us' (Heb.7:25). O how beautiful and mystical and kind! For to intercede ...is to plead for us by reason of his mediatorship, just as the Spirit also is said to make intercession for us. For 'there is one God, and one mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus' (Rom.8:26, I Tim.2:5). He still pleads even now as man for my salvation; for He continues to wear the body which He assumed, until He shall make me god by the power of His incarnation ...Thus, too, we have an advocate, Jesus Christ, not indeed prostrating Himself for us before the Father ...but by what He suffered as man, He as the Word and the counsellor persuades Him to be patient. I think this is the meaning of His advocacy.

*St. Gregory of Nazianzus. Fourth Theological Oration, 14. B#7, p. 187.*

### **THE STATUS OF CHRIST**

Many statements in the Scriptures imply, or even openly assert that the Father is greater than the Son; and men have erred because they have not been careful enough to examine the whole tenor of the Scriptures and thus have sought to transfer what is said of Christ Jesus as man to His mode of being before His incarnation, which was and is eternal. And they allege that the Son is inferior to the Father because the Lord Himself is quoted as saying, 'The Father is greater than I'. But it is demonstrable that in this respect the Son is also inferior to Himself. For if 'He emptied Himself, receiving the form of a servant,' He must surely have become inferior to Himself. For this taking of the form of a servant did not entail His losing the form of God ...In both forms He was the same Only-begotten Son of God the Father, in the form of God equal to the Father, in the form of a servant, 'the mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus' (I Tim. 2:5) ...He is equal to the Father in nature, inferior to Him in condition ... Godhead is not changed into a creature, so as to cease to be godhead.

*St. Augustine of Hippo. On the Trinity 1.14. B#15, p. 214.*

### **Saints of the Week**

**3 / 16 June — Holy Martyr Lucillian and those with him: Claudius, Hypatius, Paul, Dionysius and the Virgin Paula** - Lucillian grew to old age as a pagan priest. Only as a grizzled old man did he learn the truth of Christianity and receive baptism. His conversion to Christianity caused great excitement among the pagans of Nicomedia, and he was brought to trial for refusing to deny his new faith. He was harshly whipped and, all black and blue, thrown into prison. In the prison were four young men: Claudius, Hypatius, Paul and Dionysius, who had likewise been imprisoned for the Faith. The old man rejoiced in the company of these young men, and they in his, and they spent their time together in spiritual converse, prayer and the singing of psalms. When they were taken from the prison, they were tortured in various ways and then taken to Byzantium, where the young men were beheaded with the sword by the soldiers, and Lucillian crucified by the Jews. The wicked Jews pierced his body all over with nails. A maiden, Paula, openly took the martyrs' bodies and gave them burial. She was denounced for this and, after torture, was beheaded, receiving a twofold wreath: of virginity and of martyrdom. Their martyrdom took place in the time of the Emperor Aurelian, between 270 and 275.

**St. Kevin** - Abbot of Glendalough, Ireland, b. about 498, the date being very obscure; d. 3 June, 618; son of Coemlog and Coemell. His name signifies fair-begotten. He was baptized by St. Cronan and educated

by St. Petroc, a Briton. From his twelfth year he studied under monks, and eventually embraced the monastic state. Subsequently he founded the famous monastery of Glendalough (the Valley of the Two Lakes), the parent of several other monastic foundations. After visiting Sts. Columba, Comgall, and Cannich at Usneach (Usny Hill) in Westmeath, he proceeded to Clonmacnoise, where St. Cieran had died three days before, in 544. Having firmly established his community, he retired into solitude for four years, and only returned to Glendalough at the earnest entreaty of his monks. He belonged to the second order of Irish saints and probably was never a bishop. So numerous were his followers that Glendalough became a veritable city in the desert. His festival is kept throughout Ireland. St. Kevin's house and St. Kevin's bed of rock are still to be seen: and the Seven Churches of Glendalough have for centuries been visited by pilgrims.

**Also commemorated this day:** "Chelnsk" Icon of the Most Holy Theotokos named "Tenderness" (movable holiday on the 7th Sunday of Pascha). New Hieromartyr Cyprian. New Hieromartyr Michael priest. Translation of the relics (1606) of the slain Crown Prince Demetrius of Moscow. Hieromartyr Lucian the bishop, Maxianus the presbyter, Julian the deacon and Martyrs Marcellinus and Saturninus in Belgium. "Yougskaya" Icon of the Most Holy Theotokos. Venerable Athanasius, the wonderworker of Cilicia. The Meeting of Venerable Demetrius, monk of Priluki (Vologda). St. Hieria, widow, of Mesopotamia. St. Clotilde (Chlotilda), queen of France. Venerable Pappus monk. St. Achilles, patriarch of Alexandria. Monk-martyr Barsabus, abbot of Ishtar, and ten companions in Persia. New Hieromartyr Joseph, metropolitan of Thessalonica.

**4 / 17 June — Metrophanes of Constantinople** - His father Dometius, brother of the Roman Emperor Probus, fled from Rome as a Christian during a persecution and went to Byzantium. The Bishop of Byzantium, Titus, ordained Dometius priest and, after Titus's death, Dometius became Bishop of Byzantium. After Dometius's death, his elder son Probus occupied the episcopal throne (Dometius had children from his earlier, pagan days), and Metrophanes succeeded him on his death. When the Emperor Constantine first set eyes on Metrophanes, he loved him as a father. At the time of the First Ecumenical Council, Metrophanes was a very old man and, being unable to take a full part in the Council's deliberations, appointed his assistant bishop, Alexander, as his representative. The Emperor had Metrophanes raised to the rank of Patriarch by the Council, and he thus became the first Patriarch of Constantinople. The Emperor further invited the whole Council to visit the sick and aged hierarch. When the Emperor asked him who he wished to succeed him on the patriarchal throne, Metrophanes named Alexander of Alexandria, after which he said to him: 'My brother, you are my chosen successor!' He also took Archdeacon Athanasius (later Athanasius the Great, Patriarch of Alexandria) by the hand and praised him before them all. After this prophetic act, he took leave of them all and, ten days later, gave his soul to God, in 325.

**New Martyr Archbishop Andonicus of Perm** - an outspoken critic of the Communist decree which ordered the separation of Church and State. Upon reading the Moscow Overland Assembly's instructions on the matter, Archbishop Andronicus ordered his archdeacon to anathematize the Communists. The Archbishop was arrested, shot by two members of the Perm CHEKA, then buried on the road from Perm to Motoviliha. Bishop Theophanes, an assistant to Archbishop Andronicus, was also arrested about this time. He was then drowned in the River Kama. When they learned of the execution of the Perm bishops, the Moscow Church Assembly sent a special commission, headed by Bishop Basil of Chernigov, to investigate their murder. The Communists, however, took steps to conceal the facts from the investigators. As the members of the commission were on their way back to Moscow, their train was attacked by Red soldiers somewhere between Perm and Viatka. Bishop Basil and the others were killed, and their bodies were thrown from the coach. The bodies were buried by peasants, but were later dug up and burned by the Communists when pilgrims began flocking to the graves.

**New Martyr Basil of Chernigov, and those with them (1918)** - Archbishop Basil (Bogoyavlensky) was born on February 1, 1867, into the family of a priest in Tambov diocese. Brought up in strict church piety, Basil was filled from early childhood with love for the Church and his earthly homeland, and for that reason, on attaining adulthood, he never had any hesitation in following in the steps of his father and devoting himself to the service of the Church. In 1888 he finished his studies at Tambov seminary, and in the same year was ordained to the diaconate. Two years later, on March 11, he was ordained to the priesthood and appointed to serve in the church of the village of Ovsyanki, Kirsanvosky uyezd, Tambov province. The incurable illness of his wife forced Fr. Basil to think of other conditions of service to the Holy Church. In 1896 he entered the Kazan Theological Academy, where he became friendly with the rector, Bishop Anthony (Khrapovitsky). In 1900 Fr. Basil graduated from the academy, and accepted the suggestion of his abba that he stay on to serve as a teacher there. After the death of his wife, Fr. Basil took the advice of Bishop Anthony and entered the Holy Trinity Alexander Nevsky Lavra, where on August 14, 1908 he was tonsured into monasticism. On October 15 of the same year he was appointed rector of the Chernigov theological seminary with promotion to the rank of archimandrite. On July 26, 1909 (May 12, 1911, according to another source), he was consecrated Bishop of Sumsk, a vicariate of

the Kharkov diocese, in St. Petersburg. On March 4, 1911, he was transferred to the see of Novgorod-Seversk, a vicariate of the Chernigov diocese, and on May 12 - to the see of Chernigov and Nezhin. Bishop Basil's period of service in Chernigov was marked by the successful completion of many projects: the construction of two large houses for pilgrims coming to venerate the relics of St. Theodosius, and a sanatorium for the students at the seminary; the opening of the second women's school in the diocese with funds given from the state treasury by Tsar Nicholas; a large increase in the sphere of activity of the Orthodox Brotherhood of St. Michael, Prince of Chernigov; the publication of the journal Faith and Life by the same Brotherhood (in 1912); the creation in Chernigov of a yedinovertsy deanery in whose administration were numbered twelve churches. Vladyka also devoted much attention to charitable work, supporting the existing charitable institutions and organizing the collection of alms for the starving peasants of the eastern provinces during years of bad harvests. On July 6, 1916 he was appointed president of the Publishing Council attached to the Holy Synod. On October 5, 1916, in recognition of his services to the diocese, Vladyka was raised to the rank of Archbishop of Chernigov and Nezhin. On May 6/19, 1917 he was retired, and was appointed administrator of the Nikolayevsky Terebensky Desert in Tver diocese. From August 11 (or 14), 1917 he was placed in charge of the Moscow Zaikonospassky monastery. In 1917 Vladyka Basil was called to Moscow to participate in the Preconciliar Commission which was preparing for the Council of the Russian Orthodox Church. When Archbishop Andronicus of Perm was killed by the Bolsheviks in 1918, the Moscow Church Council sent a special commission, headed by Archbishop Basil, who had a high reputation as an administrator, to investigate the circumstances of the murder. The Soviet government consented to an investigation and even provided a private coach for the use of the commission. (During the early days of the Soviet government, the Church Assembly addressed it several times with requests, declarations and protests). But the activity of the investigating committee in Perm aroused the indignation of the communists, especially those who were guilty of the crime, and they took measures to conceal information from the Moscow Assembly. After concluding its investigation, the commission was on its way back when a band of Red soldiers broke into the coach, between the towns of Perm and Viatka. On May 6, 1919, according to one account, Archbishop Basil, Archimandrite Matthew, rector of the Perm seminary (who is called a bishop in one account) and a layman, all the members of the commission, were killed, and their bodies thrown out of the moving train into the water from the Kama bridge. They were buried by local peasants, but as their graves began to attract pilgrims, and miracles were recorded, the communists dug up the bodies and burned them. According to another version, Archbishop Basil was arrested and after a short imprisonment was shot together with other members of the commission.

**Also commemorated on this day:** New Hieromartyr Peter priest. New Hieromartyr George priest. Joanikije Lipovac, Metropolitan of Montenegro. Uncovering of the relics of Hieromartyr Peter, archbishop of Voronezh. Venerable Methodius, abbot of Peshnosh, disciple of St. Sergius of Radonezh. Martyrs Frontasius, Severinus, Severian, and Silanus of Gaul. Martyr Concordius of Spoleto. Hieromartyr Astius, bishop of Dyrrachium in Macedonia. Venerable Zosimas of Cilicia, bishop of New Babylon. Hieromartyr Ioannicus, metropolitan of Montenegro and Littoral. Sts. Mary and Martha, sisters of St. Lazarus. Venerables Eleazar and Nazarius, wonderworkers of Olonets. Venerable Sophia of Thrace. Venerable John, abbot of Monagria near Cyzicus. Venerable Alonius of Scete in Egypt. St. Titus, bishop of Byzantium. Hieromartyr Apotacius and Martyrs Camarus, Zoticus, Gaddanus, Ninnitus, Julius, Attalus, Eutyches, Amasus, Carinus, Saturninus and 30 others, beheaded at Noviodunum in Scythia Minor. St. Optatus, bishop of Milevum in Numidia. St. Petroc of Cornwall.

**5 / 18 June — The Hieromartyr Dorotheus, Bishop of Tyre** - He was Bishop of Tyre from the time of Diocletian right up to the time of Julian the Apostate, under whom he was tortured and suffered for the Orthodox faith. He lived on earth to the age of 107, and, being pleasing to God, entered into eternal life in 361. He was a great scholar and wrote many learned books both in Greek and Latin.

**Hieromartyr Boniface (Wynfrith) of Crediton, England (754), archbishop of Mainz, Germany** - born around the year 680 at Crediton in Devonshire, England. Educated at monastery schools near Exeter and at Winchester, he decided to become a missionary to the continent. Pope Gregory II made him a regional bishop in Germany. Boniface started a monastery at Ohrdruf in Thuringia. He brought English monks there as missionaries. Then he moved to Bavaria, founding missionary monasteries at Reichenau, Murbach and Fritzlar. In the year 735 he and his disciple Sturmius founded the most famous of all these monasteries, at Fulda. In 747 he was made supreme bishop of Germany. On the peak of Mount Gudenberg at Geismar in Germany, grew a huge oak, which the heathen venerated as sacred to the god Thor. Boniface arrived at Geismar and announced that he was about to cut it down. A huge crowd of pagans gathered, in the belief that their god would strike him dead. But Boniface had hardly begun to strike at the tree with his axe when it split into four and crashed to the ground. The pagans were astonished. Many of them became Christians; and Boniface built a chapel dedicated to Saint Peter out of the wood of Thor's tree.

Tropar (Tone 8): Thou hast shown thyself, O God-inspired Boniface, as a guide to the orthodox faith, a teacher of true worship and purity, O star of the universe and companion of the bishops, O wise one.

Through thy light thou hast enlightened all, O harp of the Spirit. Therefore, intercede with Christ to save our souls.

**Also commemorated on this day:** New Hieromartyr Michael priest. New Hieromartyr Nicholas priest. Translation of the relics of the Blessed Igor-George, tonsured Gabriel, great prince of Chernigov and Kiev to Chernigov. Blessed Constantine, metropolitan of Kiev. Repose of St. Theodore Yaroslavich, brother of St. Alexander Nevsky. Finding of the relics of Venerables Jonah and Bassian, monks, of Petroma (Solovki). Martyrs Marcian, Nicander, Hyperechius, Apollonius, Leonides, Arius, Gorgias, Selenias, Irenaeus, and Pambo, of Egypt. Venerable Theodore the Wonderworker, hermit of the Jordan. Venerable Anubius, confessor and anchorite of Egypt. Venerable Abba Dorotheos of Palestine. "Igor" Icon of the Mother of God. Venerable Peter, monk, of Korisha, Serbia. New Martyr Mark of Smyrna, who suffered in Chios. St. Illidius (Allyre), bishop of Clermont. Martyr Christopher of Rome. Martyr Conon of Rome. St. Dorotheus, abbot at Chiliokama on the Black Sea. Sts. Agapius and Nicodemus, stewards of Vatopedi.

**6 / 19 June — Fast Day - Our Holy Father Bessarion** born and educated in Egypt, he devoted himself to the spiritual life at an early age, and 'never soiled the spiritual garment in which he was clothed at his baptism'. He visited St Gerasim by the Jordan and learned from St Isidore of Pelusium. He conquered his flesh in strict fasting and vigils, but, as far as possible, hid his asceticism from men. He once spent forty days in prayer, neither eating nor sleeping, and had one single garment that he wore summer and winter. He had a great gift of wonderworking. He had no fixed abode, but lived in the mountains and forests, healing the sick and performing many other miracles to help men and glorify God. He entered peacefully into rest in 466.

**Also commemorated on this day:** Venerable Dodo of the St. David-Gareji Monastery, Georgia (movable holiday on the Wednesday of Holy Ascension). Venerable Hilarion the New, abbot of the Dalmatian Monastery. Venerable Raphael confessor. St. Jonah, bishop of Perm. Venerable Paisius, abbot, of Uglich. Venerable Jonah, abbot of Klimetz. Virgin-martyrs Archelais, Thecla, and Susanna, beheaded at Salerno. "Pimen" Icon of the Mother of God (was brought to Moscow from Constantinople in 1381 by Metropolitan Pimen). Five virgins of Caesarea in Palestine: Martha, Mary, Cyria, Valeria, and Marcia. Venerable Attalus the wonderworker. Martyr Gelasius. Venerable Photius, monk. St. Justus, patriarch of Alexandria. Martyrs Amandus, Amantius, Alexander, Lucius, Alexander, Alexandria, Donatus, and Peregrinus at Noviodunum in Scythia Minor. St. Claudius of Besancon. St. Basil of Mangazea, Siberia. St. Jarlath of Cluain Fois.

**7 / 20 June — The Holy Martyr Theodotus of Ancyra** - was a secret Christian and, as such, used to help the Church and give burial to the bodies of the martyrs. He buried the bodies of seven young maidens who had suffered for Christ. When the pagans discovered this, they attacked him and he was killed (see May 18th for more about him).

**Also commemorated on this day:** Venerable David of the Gareji Monastery and Lukiane, Georgia (movable holiday on the Thursday of Holy Ascension). New Hieromartyr Archbishop Andronicus of Perm, Alexander, Alexis, Alexander, Valentine, Benjamin, Viktor, Alexander, Paul, Vladimir, Ignatius, Michael, Nicholas, Paul, Alexander, Nicholas priests, Gregory deacon and Martyrs Athanasius and Alexsander. New Hieromartyrs Nicholas and Peter priests. St. Paul of Taganrog (Glorification 1999). Hieromartyr Marcellinus, pope of Rome and with him the Holy Martyrs Claudius, Cyrinus and Antoninus. Hieromartyr Marcellus, bishop of Rome, and those with him: Sisinius and Cyriacus deacons, Smaragdus, Largus, Apronian, Saturninus, Pappias, Maurus, Crescentian, Priscilla, Lucina, and Princess Artemia. Martyrs Kyriaki, Caleria (Valeria), and Mary, of Caesarea in Palestine. Synaxis of All Saints of Ivanovo Metropolia. Venerable Daniel of Scete in Egypt. Virgin-martyr Potamiaena of Alexandria. Martyr Zenais (Zenaida) of Caesarea in Palestine. St. Colman, bishop of Dromore, Ireland. Holy women Aesia and Susanna, disciples of Venerable Pancratius of Taormina and martyred with him. Martyr Lycarion of Hermopolis in Egypt. Venerable Panagis of Cephalonia. Martyrs Tarasius and John. St. Stephen the hieromonk. St. Anthimus the hieromonk. St. Sebastian the Wonderworker. St. Anthony (in schema Abramius), monk, of Kozha Lake.

**8 / 21 June — Fast Day - St Ephraim, Patriarch of Antioch** - during the reign of the Byzantine Emperor Anastasius, Ephraim was governor of the eastern regions. He was famed for his great piety and compassion, and was much esteemed for these virtues. When the rebuilding of Antioch, which had been destroyed by earthquake and fire, was put in hand, the Emperor ordered Ephraim to oversee the work. Ephraim performed this work with diligence and love. There was among the ordinary workers a certain bishop who had left his see for unknown reasons and was working as a labourer. Not a soul knew that the man was a bishop. One day he lay down to take a rest from the exhausting work with the other labourers, and fell asleep. Ephraim glanced at him, and saw a flaming pillar rising above the man and reaching up to heaven. Amazed and frightened, Ephraim summoned him and bound him under oath to reveal who he was. The man hesitated a long time, but finally admitted that he was a bishop and foretold

that Ephraim would shortly be consecrated Patriarch of Antioch (the patriarchal throne having been empty since the old Patriarch, Euphrasius, perished in the earthquake). Ephraim was indeed elected and consecrated as Patriarch. For his goodness, purity and zeal for Orthodoxy, a great gift of wonderworking was given him by God. Once, in order to convince some heretic that Orthodoxy is the true Faith, he placed his omophor in the flames and prayed to God. The omophor remained unharmed in the fire for three hours. When the heretic saw this, he was afraid and cast his heresy aside. Ephraim entered peacefully into rest in 546.

**St. Merdadus** - Bishop of Noyon, b. at Salency (Oise) about 456; d. in his episcopal city 8 June, about 545. His father, Nectardus, was of Frankish origin, while his mother, named Protagia, was Gallo-Roman. It is believed that St. Gildardus, Bishop of Rouen, was his brother. His youth was entirely consecrated to the practise of Christian virtues and to the study of sacred and profane letters. He often accompanied his father on business to Vermand and to Tournai, and frequented the schools, carefully avoiding all worldly dissipation. His exemplary piety and his knowledge, considerable for that time, decided the Bishop of Vermand (d. 530) to confer on him Holy Orders, and caused him to be chosen as his successor. Forced, in spite of his objections, to accept this heavy charge, he devoted himself zealously to his new duties, and to accomplish them in greater security, since Vermand and the northern part of France in general were then generally troubled by wars and exposed to the incursions of the barbarians, he removed his episcopal see in 531 from Vermand, a little city without defence, to Noyon, the strongest place in that region. The year following, St. Eleutherius, Bishop of Tournai, having died, St. Medardus was invited to assume the direction of that diocese also. He refused at first, but being urged by Clotaire himself he at last accepted. This union of the two dioceses lasted until 1146, when they were again separated. Clotaire, who had paid him a last visit at Noyon, had his body transferred to the royal manor of Crouy at the gates of the city of Soissons. Over the tomb of St. Medardus was erected the celebrated Benedictine abbey which bears his name. St. Medardus was one of the most honoured bishops of his time, his memory has always been popularly venerated in the north of France.

**Also commemorated on this day:** Translation of the relics of Great-martyr Theodore Stratelates. St. Theodore, bishop of Rostov and Suzdal. Finding of the relics (1501) of Sts. Basil and Constantine, princes of Yaroslavl. Venerable Zosimas, monk, of Phoenicia. "Yaroslavl" (13th c.) and "Uriupinsk" (1827) Icons of the Mother of God. New Martyr Theophanes at Constantinople. Venerable Atre (Athre) of Nitria. Venerable Naucratus, abbot of the Studion. Venerable Theophilus of Luga and Omutch, disciple of St. Arsenius of Konevits (Valaam). Martyrs Nicander and Marcian at Dorostulum in Moesia. Translation of the relics of Hieromartyr Alphege, abbot of Canterbury. Martyr Callopa. Venerable Melania the Elder, of Palladius' Lausiac History. Martyr Nicander. Martyr Mark. New Hieromartyrs Barlaam and his brother Herman (Riaschentsov). St. Paul the Confessor, of Kaiuma in Constantinople. Holy Hieromartyr Tevdore of Kvelta. Synaxis of the Church of the Cross at Mtskheta, Georgia. Venerable Naucratus, brother of St. Basil the Great.

**9 / 22 June — Commemoration of the Departed - St Cyril, Archbishop of Alexandria** - He was of noble birth and a close kinsman of Theophilus, Patriarch of Alexandria, after whose death he was chosen as Patriarch. He fought three fierce battles in the course of his life: against the Novatianist heretics, against Nestorius and against the Jews of Alexandria. The Novatianists began in Rome, and were so called after their leader, the heretic priest Novatian. They were filled with pride at their virtues, went about dressed in white, banned second marriages and declared that one must not pray for those who had committed mortal sin nor receive back into the Church those who had once fallen away, however deeply they might repent. Cyril overcame them and drove them out of Alexandria, together with their bishop. The battle with the Jews was harder and bloodier. The Jews had been in the ascendant in Alexandria right from the time that Alexander the Great founded the city. Their hatred towards the Christians was vicious and mindless. They killed Christians by treachery, by poison and by crucifixion. After a long and difficult struggle, Cyril succeeded in inducing the Emperor to drive the Jews out of Alexandria. His battle, however, against Nestorius, Patriarch of Constantinople, was resolved at the Third Ecumenical Council in Ephesus. Cyril himself presided at this Council, and also represented Pope Celestine of Rome at his request, he being prevented by old age from attending the Council. Nestorius was condemned, anathematised and exiled by the Emperor to the eastern borders of the Empire, where he died. After the end of these battles, Cyril lived in peace and guided Christ's flock with zeal. He went to the Lord in the year 444. It is said that he composed the hymn: 'Hail, Mother of God and Virgin.' St Kiril of Byelozersk (White Lake).

**St. Columba of Iona, enlightener of Scotland (597)** - born in County Donegal, Ireland, and spent fifteen years preaching to his native Irish and founding monasteries - the greatest of which were at Derry, Durrow and Kells. In 563 Columba sailed to the Scottish island of Iona, there to found a monastery that for centuries was the most famous in the west. Iona became the heart of Celtic Christianity. Daughter houses sprang up in England and on the Scottish mainland. The next thirty-four years of Columba's life were spent in missionary service. On 8 June 597 Columba was copying out the psalms. At the verse, 'They that love the Lord shall lack no good thing' he stopped, and said that his cousin Baithin must do the rest. He died the next day. 'Alone with none but Thee, my God, I journey on my way; What need I fear when Thou art near, Oh King of night and day? More safe am I within Thy hand. Than if a host did round me stand,' attributed to St. Columba. The Venerable Bede said, 'We know for certain that Columba left successors distinguished for their purity of life, their love of God, and their loyalty to the rules of the monastic life.'

**Also commemorated on this day:** Venerable Cyril, abbot of White Lake (Byelozersk). St. Alexius Mechev, priest of Moscow. Uncovering of the relics of Venerable Raphael, the Confessor (2005). Venerable Alexander, abbot of Kushta. Five nuns beheaded in Persia: Martyrs Thecla, Mariamne, Martha, Mary, and Enmatha. Righteous Cyril of Velsk or Vazhe. St. Baithene of Tiree. Hieromartyr Alexander, bishop of Prusa. Venerable Cyril, monk. Three Virgin-martyrs of Chios. St. John of Shavtel-Gaenati, Georgia.

### ‡ **Daily Scripture Readings** ‡

**Monday** - Acts 21: 8-14; John 14: 27-15:7

**Tuesday** - Acts 21: 26-32; John 16: 2-13

**Wednesday** - Acts 23: 1-11; John 16: 15-23

**Thursday** - Acts 25: 13-19; John 16: 23-33

**Friday** - Acts 27: 1-44; John 17: 18-26

**Saturday** - Acts 28:1-31; John 21:15-25; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-17 (Departed); John 5:24-30 (Departed)



## WHY ARE THE DEAD COMMEMORATED ON SATURDAYS?

The Saturdays of commemorations of the dead are called ancestral Saturdays (the first universal commemoration on Meat Fare Saturday, the second, third, and fourth Saturdays of Great Lent, Trinity Saturday, and St. Demetrius Saturday). Why do these take place specifically on Saturdays? What are the historical roots of this tradition? They were not all instituted at the same time.

God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because in it he ceased from all His works which God began to do (Gen. 2:3). Saturday (Sabbath) for the Jews was a day of festive rest. Christ's resurrection placed the beginning of the new Israel: a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light (1 Pet. 2:9). The resurrection day of the Savior of the World became the seventh, festive day that completes the week. Sunday [in Russian, *voskresenie*, meaning "resurrection") is a day of prayer in church at Divine Liturgy and pious rest. From a day of earthly rest, Saturday became a symbol of joyous rest in the Kingdom of Heaven: There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God. For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his (Heb. 4:9-10). This is where the custom, fixed by the Church typicon, came from of having special services on Saturday for the commemoration of the dead.

The establishment of the universal ancestral Meat Fare Saturday dates back to the first century of Christianity. In the Synaxarion for this day (The Lenten Triodion) it says that the holy fathers established, having received it from the holy Apostles, that on this day should be commemorated all people from the ages who have reposed in faith and piety. This day was chosen because Meat Fare week reminds us of the future Last Judgment. On the eve of this day, Saturday, as if preceding the Last Judgment, the Church prays especially for all of its reposed children, begging the Lord to have mercy on them and make them partakers of blessed eternal life.

Just like Meat Fare Saturday, ancestral Saturday before Holy Trinity Day (Pentecost) is called universal. The custom of commemorating the dead on that day also dates from Apostolic times. On that Saturday, prayers are raised for all people from the ages who have died with the hope of resurrection and eternal life, because on the day of Pentecost, the Kingdom of Christ appeared by the descent of the Life-creating Most Holy Spirit. Therefore, on the eve of this feast, the Church prays for all of its children who have reposed up to then, that they would be gathered into the Heavenly Kingdom and vouchsafed eternal blessed life.

During Great Lent, the Church does not serve the usual daily commemorations of the dead (*pannikhidas*, *litas*). As a supplement to this, so that the dead are not deprived of the Church's saving intercessions, the commemorations were established for the Saturdays of the second, third, and fourth weeks of Lent.

St. Demetrius Saturday is celebrated on the nearest Saturday before the commemoration day of Great Martyr Demetrius of Thessalonika (October 26/November 8). This Saturday commemoration was established in the Russian Church after the battle of Kulikovo<sup>[1]</sup> (September 8, 1380), with the blessing of St. Sergius of Radonezh. At first, commemorations were served for all soldiers who fell in that battle. Eventually, St. Demetrius Saturday came to be a day when all reposed Orthodox Christians are commemorated.

*Hieromonk Job (Gumerov)*  
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