

# SOBORNOST

## St. Thomas the Apostle Orthodox Church

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*American Carpatho-Russian Orthodox Diocese*

*ECUMENICAL PATRIARCHATE  
OF CONSTANTINOPLE*

## SERVICES

**Wed: Moleben to the Theotokos 6:00 AM**

**Friday: Moleben to the Cross 6:00 AM**

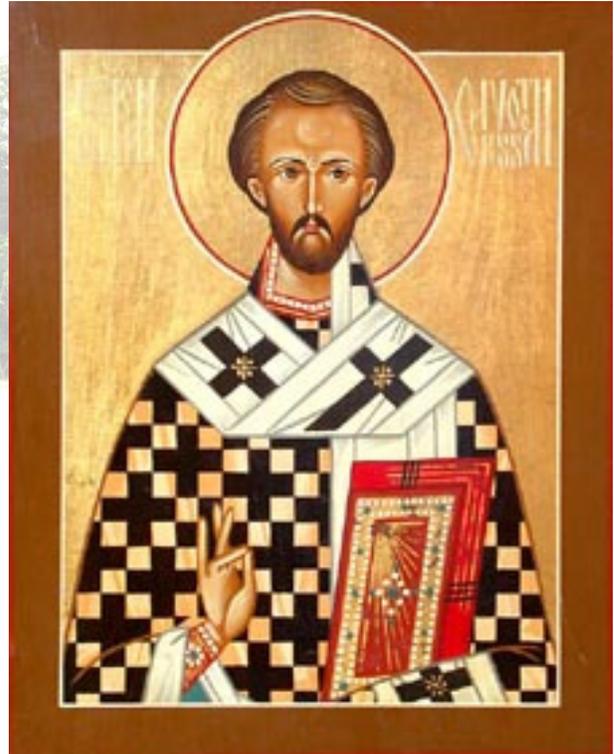
**Saturday: Confession 5:00 PM**

**Great Vespers 5:30 PM**

**Sunday: Matins (Orthros) 8:45 AM**

**Sunday School 9:30 AM**

**Divine Liturgy 10:00 AM**



## January 27, 2019 – 35<sup>th</sup> Sunday After Pentecost | Transfer of the relics of St John Chrysostom, Archbishop of Constantinople

This great ecumenical teacher and hierarch died in the city of Comana in the year 407 on his way to a place of exile. He had been condemned by the intrigues of the empress Eudoxia because of his daring denunciation of the vices ruling over Constantinople. The transfer of his venerable relics was made in the year 438, thirty years after the death of the saint during the reign of Eudoxia's son emperor Theodosius II (408-450).

Saint John Chrysostom had the warm love and deep respect of the people, and grief over his untimely death lived on in the hearts of Christians. Saint John's disciple, Saint Proclus, Patriarch of Constantinople (434-447), during services in the Church of Hagia Sophia, preached a sermon praising Saint John. He said, "O John, your life was filled with sorrow, but your death was glorious. Your grave is blessed and reward is great, by the grace and mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ O graced one, having conquered the bounds of time and place! Love has conquered space, unforgetting memory has annihilated the limits, and place does not hinder the miracles of the saint."

Those who were present in church, deeply touched by the words of Saint Proclus, did not allow him even to finish his sermon. With one accord they began to entreat the Patriarch to intercede with the emperor, so that the relics of Saint John might be brought back to Constantinople.

The emperor, overwhelmed by Saint Proclus, gave his consent and gave the order to transfer the relics of Saint John. But those he sent were unable to lift the holy relics until the emperor realized that he had sent men to take the saint's relics from Comana with an edict, instead of with a prayer. He wrote a letter to Saint John, humbly asking him to forgive his audacity, and to return to Constantinople. After the message was read at the grave of Saint John, they easily took up the relics, carried them onto a ship and arrived at Constantinople.

The coffin with the relics was placed in the Church of Holy Peace (Hagia Eirene). When Patriarch Proclus opened the coffin, the body of Saint John was found to be incorrupt. The emperor approached the coffin with tears, asking forgiveness for his mother, who had banished Saint John. All day and night people did not leave the coffin.

In the morning the coffin was brought to the Church of the Holy Apostles. The people cried out, "Father, take up your throne." Then Patriarch Proclus and the clergy standing by the relics saw Saint John open his mouth and say, "Peace be to all." Many of the sick were healed at his tomb. The celebration of the transfer of the relics of Saint John Chrysostom was established in the ninth century. (*from oca.org*)

### **Today's Epistle Lesson – St. Paul's Letter to the Colossians 3:12-16**

Brethren, as *the* elect of God, holy and beloved, put on tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering; bearing with one another, and forgiving one another, if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so you also *must do*. But above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfection. And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to which also you were called in one body; and be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.

### **Today's Gospel Lesson – Saint Matthew 25:14-30**

The Lord said, "*the kingdom of heaven is* like a man traveling to a far country, *who* called his own servants and delivered his goods to them. And to one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one, to each according to his own ability; and immediately he went on a journey. Then he who had received the five talents went and traded with them, and made another five talents. And likewise he who

*had received* two gained two more also. But he who had received one went and dug in the ground, and hid his lord's money. After a long time the lord of those servants came and settled accounts with them. So he who had received five talents came and brought five other talents, saying, 'Lord, you delivered to me five talents; look, I have gained five more talents besides them.' His lord said to him, 'Well *done*, good and faithful servant; you were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.' He also who had received two talents came and said, 'Lord, you delivered to me two talents; look, I have gained two more talents besides them.' His lord said to him, 'Well *done*, good and faithful servant; you have been faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.' Then he who had received the one talent came and said, 'Lord, I knew you to be a hard man, reaping where you have not sown, and gathering where you have not scattered seed. And I was afraid, and went and hid your talent in the ground. Look, *there* you have *what is* yours.' But his lord answered and said to him, 'You wicked and lazy servant, you knew that I reap where I have not sown, and gather where I have not scattered seed. So you ought to have deposited my money with the bankers, and at my coming I would have received back my own with interest. Therefore take the talent from him, and give *it* to him who has ten talents. For to everyone who has, more will be given, and he will have abundance; but from him who does not have, even what he has will be taken away. And cast the unprofitable servant into the outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'"

## *A Word From the Holy Fathers*

Hospitality... the greatest of virtues. It draws the grace of the Holy Spirit towards us. In every stranger's face, my child, I see Christ himself.... Love giving hospitality, my child, for it opens the gates of Paradise. In this you also offer hospitality to angels. Entertain strangers so that you won't be a stranger to God.

– St. Amphilochios of Patmos

### **Also Commemorated Today: New Martyrs of Russia**

On the Sunday nearest (or after) January 25, we commemorate the New Martyrs of Russia who suffered under the Soviet yoke. Among them are Hieromartyr Peter, Archbishop Of Voronezh and those with him.

Archbishop Peter was born on February 18, 1878, the eldest son of a Moscow protopriest, Fr. Constantine Zverev (who later became the spiritual father of Grand-Duchess Elizabeth Fyodorovna), and his wife Anna. He was given the name of Basil in Holy Baptism after St. Basil the Confessor (February 28). Already as a

child he loved playing church services, and zealously attended church services with his father.

In his early childhood he had a vision of the Saviour. As he described it: "In childhood I was very fat and pudgy. The adults liked to squeeze me, and I couldn't bear this and pushed them away with my hands and legs. And then I saw a vision. We had a table standing by the wall in the living-room, and there I saw the Saviour sitting, dressed in blue and red clothing and holding me in His hands. And under the table was a terrible dog. The Saviour took my hand and stretched it under the table to the dog, saying: "'Eat it, it fights.' "I woke up, and from that moment I never fought, but began to grow up, trying to restrain myself in everything, not getting angry and not doing anything bad.

All boys always want to try smoking. My father was strict and said: "If anyone smokes, I'll tear off his lips!" "But I still wanted to try it. I smoked a cigarette and went to the church. It was Forgiveness Sunday and they were chanting: 'Turn not Thy face away from Thy servant, for I sorrow, quickly hear me.' This was my favourite chant. But at this moment my head began to reel and I had to leave the church. From then on I did not try to smoke."

In 1895 Basil finished secondary school. Then he studied for three years at the University of Moscow, finishing two courses at the Historical-Philological faculty. In 1897 he entered the Kazan Theological Academy. There, on January 19, 1900, he was tonsured a monk and given the name Peter in honour of the Apostle Peter, and was ordained to the priesthood. (According to another source, his tonsure took place in 1909.)

On graduating from the Academy, in 1902, he served as a teacher in the Oryol theological seminary and also (until 1906) as a missionary in the diocesan house in Karetny Ryad, Moscow. There he acquired some spiritual children who remained with him to the end of his life. In 1909 he became an inspector at the Novgorod Theological Academy. In 1910 he became rector of the Saviour-Transfiguration Belev men's monastery in Tula province with the rank of archimandrite. He remained in this post until 1917, and raised the monastery from steep decline to a flourishing state. The church was filled during services, especially with children. During the First World War Fr. Peter was also a preacher at the front.

Belev was not far from Optina monastery, and Vladyka had the opportunity to meet the Optina elders frequently. They in their turn valued him highly and directed many people to him for spiritual direction. Elder Anatolius (Potapov) wrote to one woman: "You ask a blessing to turn to Vladyka Peter. God blesses. How fortunate you are that the Lord sends you such wise directors."

In 1917 he became rector of the Vladimir diocesan church in Moscow, and then, on February 21 - of the Zheltikov monastery in Tver. During his time in Tver he re-vested the relics of St. Arsenius of Tver, and witnessed that the hierarch's body was completely incorrupt. Only the lower part of his legs were missing - they had evidently been stolen. In December 1917 Vladyka was arrested for the first time by the Tver Cheka and imprisoned as a hostage. However, by the mercy of God he did not stay long in prison.



On February 2, 1919, the feast of the Meeting of the Lord, he was consecrated bishop of Balakhin, a vicariate of the diocese of Nizhni-Novgorod, by his Holiness Patriarch Tikhon. The archbishop of Nizhni at that time was the future leader of the renovationists Eudocimus, whom Vladyka knew from his time in Belev, when Eudocimus was ruling the Tula diocese. After his consecration, Vladyka also often visited Sarov and Diveyevo and had a particular veneration for Blessed Paraskeva Ivanovna. He would sit at her feet, and she gave him material which he later used to make hierarchical vestments which he kept until his death. Vladyka had also known St. John of Kronstadt.

On his arrival in Nizhni, Vladyka was accommodated in the Caves monastery on the banks of the Volga. In 1919 the monastery was in sharp decline, but Vladyka brought several monks with him, and introduced the full cycle of services according to the Typicon. He had a beautiful, strong voice, and when he served every word could be heard. He also introduced courses in the law of God for children. The children loved him very much.

Vladyka was often invited to serve in city churches, and he became very popular with the people. This popularity of his annoyed Archbishop Eudocimus, and the archbishop's initial friendly attitude towards him soon degenerated into outright hatred. Once, on Forgiveness Sunday, 1920, Vladyka was returning from a service in Sormov, and dropped in at the Diveyevo podvorye to ask forgiveness from Archbishop Eudocimus before the Great Fast. On entering his room, he prayed before the icons, prostrated at the feet of the archbishop and then went up to him with the words: "Christ is in our midst." Instead of the usual reply: "He is and shall be", the future leader of the renovationist heretics said: "He is not and will not

be." Vladyka Peter silently turned and left the room. During the Fast Vladyka attended all the services, which as a rule lasted 13-14 hours in the 24. In the middle of the Fast Archbishop Eudocimus sent him to live in the Gorodets monastery podvorye in Kanavino. This was a very noisy place because the podvorye was situated just next to the railway lines in the Moscow station.

In May, 1921, Vladyka was arrested for "arousing religious fanaticism". But this elicited a three-day strike of the Sormov factories, and the authorities promised to release him. Instead, however, they sent him to Moscow: first to the Lubyanka, then to Butyrki, and then to the Taganka prison. In Lubyanka Vladyka converted a sailor to the faith, and then took off his cross and put it round the sailor's neck. In general Vladyka was a tireless preacher, and when he converted someone he would take off his cross and put it round the neck of the convert. In Taganka there were up to twelve hierarchs and many clergy at that time. The believers sent prosphorae and vestments to the prison, and the hierarchs concelebrated together round a little table. In the Taganka prison Vladyka fell ill from exhaustion and went to hospital. Boils came out on his head. Then he was transferred to a prison in Petrograd. Vladyka was freed from prison on December 23, 1921, and was appointed bishop of Staritsky, a vicariate of the Tver diocese. He lived in the same Zheltikov monastery where he had been rector in 1918. In Zheltikov he introduced the same strict monastic order that he had introduced in the Caves monastery.

On March 18, 1922, Bishop Peter blessed his flock to give the valuables of the Church to the authorities for the relief of the starving. However, in accordance with Patriarch Tikhon's decree of February 23, he excepted those valuables which were necessary for the carrying out of the sacraments. But on June 16, 1922, Metropolitan Sergius (Stragorodsky) of Vladimir (the future first Soviet patriarch), Archbishop Eudocimus of Nizhni-Novgorod and Archbishop Seraphim of Kostroma issued an appeal published in the journal Living Church to give these valuables, too, to the starving. When the Diveyevo nun Margarita brought a copy of the appeal to Vladyka Peter he said: "I expected this. Metropolitan Sergius is deaf: he hears what he is required to hear and does not hear what he is not required to hear."

Metropolitan Sergius remained for fourteen months in the renovationist schism, and according to the Moscow Patriarchal historian Metropolitan Manuel (Lemeshevsky), many hierarchs and clergy followed his example. Bishop Alexander of Tver also joined Sergius at this time. But Vladyka Peter remained faithful to the True Church. On November 10, 1922, in spite of his strictly apolitical stand, Bishop Peter was arrested together with Bishop Theophilus of Novotorzhsk, Archimandrite Benjamin, Archimandrite Innocent and several priests. They spent the whole winter in Butyrki prison in Moscow. Then, on April

1, 1923 (according to another source, 1924), Vladyka was exiled to Kzyl-Orda in Central Asia. There he suffered from scurvy and lost all his teeth.

In the summer of 1923 Patriarch Tikhon was released from prison and petitioned for the release of a list of hierarchs without whom he considered that he could not rule the Church. Among them was Vladyka Peter. And so, at the end of the summer of 1924 he returned to Moscow, where he helped in the administration of the Moscow diocese. According to one source, at the end of 1924 and the beginning of 1925 Vladyka Peter was in prison or exile in Petrovsk.

After the death of Patriarch Tikhon, Vladyka Peter was offered either of two dioceses: that of Nizhni-Novgorod, or that of Voronezh. He chose Voronezh because of his devotion to the saintly hierarchs of Voronezh, Metrophanes, Tikhon (of Zadonsk) and Anthony. Bishop Peter arrived at his new see on July 16, 1925 with the reputation of being the first preacher of the Moscow metropolia. He took up residence in the Alexeyev Akatov monastery.

The people loved Vladyka Peter very much. He was exceptionally welcoming, attentive and kind. Everyone felt close to him, and he called everyone: "my dear ones". During his services the church was so full that it was literally impossible for an apple to fall to the ground. He most often served in a large, five-altared church on the edge of the town, at Ternovaya glade, because most of the churches, including the cathedral, were in the hands of the renovationists. In Voronezh Vladyka was helped by Archimandrite Innokenty, whom he had first met in Tver. Vladyka sent him to Sarov and Diveyevo to get a copy of the akathist with music to St. Seraphim of Sarov. He used to serve this akathist every Wednesday during his time in Voronezh.

Blessed Parasceva Ivanovna had once told Vladyka that he would be imprisoned three times. He had already been in prison three times, so Vladyka did not fear anything anymore. "There will be no fourth [term]," he said. However, the Diveyevo eldress Maria Ivanovna warned him through the nun Margarita: "Let Vladyka sit quietly, otherwise the Heavenly Queen will turn away from him." But he, remembering the words of Paraskeva Ivanovna, paid no attention to this warning. On November 10 (or 16, according to another source), 1925, he was arrested and taken to the GPU headquarters at the Lubyanka in Moscow, to the well-known head of the Bolsheviks' anti-church activity, Eugene Tuchkov - "Metropolitan Eugene", as Vladyka jokingly called him. The people were greatly saddened at this parting, and Vladyka Peter said that wherever he stayed he left a part of his heart. "And so here in Voronezh I am again leaving a part of my heart," he said.

On arriving at the northern station in Moscow, Vladyka shouted: "Are there any Diveyevo nuns here?" There were two sisters there. "Give Blessed Maria Ivanovna a bow from me."

After Vladyka Peter's departure to Moscow, Metropolitan Vladimir died, on December 24. The people were constantly asking: "When is Vladyka Peter coming back?" A blessed fool-for-Christ living in the Voronezh Devichi monastery, Theoctista Mikhailovna, said: "He'll come when we'll be eating meat". And sure enough, he returned on December 28, in the fast-free period after Christmas. On December 30, he buried Metropolitan Vladimir. After the burial he again had to go to Moscow, but returned for the fortieth day after the repose of the hierarch.

On February 2, 1926, after serving the Feast of the Meeting of the Lord in the Devichi monastery, Vladyka was asked to take upon himself the task of administering the diocese. Vladyka agreed, and on February 5 he again travelled to Moscow, probably with the aim of receiving a sanction for his election from the higher church authorities. On returning with the rank of archbishop, he began to live in a small house not far from the St. Alexeyev monastery. Here Theoctista Mikhailovna constantly visited him - evidently, he was a friend of the blessed one. She would go straight to his cell and sit on his bed, where she would wait until Vladyka sent away those who were constantly coming to him. She would always call Vladyka by his first name and patronymic.

Vladyka kept very strictly to the church typicon, allowing no shortening in the services. As he said to his cell-attendant: "Your Peter is sinful in everything, but he never breaks the typicon." For this reason the services lasted many hours. But the people did not mind, and no-one thought of leaving the church before the end of the services, which were always very well attended. After the services he would instruct the people, and people were constantly visiting him at home. It was observed that a person entered his cell sad and gloomy, he would come out radiant and consoled.

Under Vladyka Peter almost all the churches in Voronezh returned from renovationism to the Orthodox Church. Vladyka would carry out the return to Orthodoxy very majestically. All returning priests had to repent in front of the whole people. Vladyka stood in his cathedra while the priests from the ambon pronounced their repentance before him and the whole people. The penitents would prostrate to the ground and "Thee, O God, do we praise" was chanted. Vladyka did not immediately allow the penitent to serve, but put them on the kliros for a certain time. The churches of the penitent, which included the Vvedensky, Nikolsky, Voskresensky and Mitrophanievsky monasteries, were first consecrated,

and he was always met in them by a cross procession and a vast crowd of people. Of course, not all the priests returned by conviction, with sincerity. Some admitted in private conversations that they were frightened of remaining alone, without the people. Thus Protodeacon Simeon Silchenko was a renovationist, repented in front of the people and served with Vladyka Peter, but then renounced his priesthood and published an article against the Church in Vechernij Voronezh. The repentance of the renovationists was also received by Fr. John Andreyevsky, who later joined the Catacomb Church and died in 1961.

The renovationists were very disturbed by Vladyka Peter's activity, which they called "peterzverian" at their diocesan assembly. There they elected a new metropolitan to replace the dead Tikhon. Vladyka Peter declared from the ambon that prayers in church for the deceased heretic were out of the question. However, people could pray for him privately with the words: "Deal with him, O Lord, according to Thy mercy".

Vladyka was often called to interrogations by the GPU. He would go into the room of the investigator and look round, as if looking for an icon. Not finding one, he would make the sign of the cross with a bow to the waist towards the right corner, and then begin to talk with the investigator. The officials would involuntarily bared their heads at his entry, even when they had agreed not to.

Although Vladyka remained in freedom, a group of 10-12 people was formed to guard him day and night. They tried to organize a manifestation to defend him from administrative arbitrariness, and to meet the local party and GPU officials, demanding that they "refrain from disturbing our archbishop".

During the Dormition fast Vladyka served the akathist to the Dormition of the Mother of God every day, after which he would make a cross procession around the church (of the Alexeyev monastery) chanting the troparion to the Dormition. The workers were very frightened of some kind of ambush and unpleasant consequences during these cross processions, and formed a cordon around him. After the service they would escort Vladyka to his home. Many of these workers were later arrested and condemned on the charge of resisting the authorities.

During this period the police, who were stationed not far from Vladyka's flat, called him for interrogation. After the service the whole church accompanied Vladyka in a huge crowd. They waited a long time for him outside the police station. Four people forced themselves into the office of the chief policeman, but attempts to arrest the "troublemakers" were frustrated by a crowd of angry women. Then a detachment of cavalry was called, who rode into the crowd and dispersed them. At the feast of the Dormition Vladyka was not able to serve because of the

interrogation. They waited for him at the Voskresensky church, but in vain. The atmosphere was very tense.

Nine believers wrote a protest to the 15th party conference protesting at the proposed transfer of Vlaydka Peter to Moscow by the GPU. On November 14, the authors of this letter were condemned at a public meeting, and a local newspaper declared: "The servant of the Tsar Archbishop Peter (Zverev) has tried to incite the Voronezh workers. A broad conference of the workers demands the investigation of the provocative actions of Peter (Zverev)."

On November 15, Vladyka served for the last time. Perhaps he sensed this, because he was very sad. In the morning rumours flew round the town that he had been arrested, and by the evening some managed to see him being taken away and put in a car. They rushed to the station, but no-one was allowed onto the platform until the train had gone.

Archbishop Peter was accused of spreading counter-revolutionary rumours whose aim was to arouse distrust towards Soviet power and discredit it, and to incite believers against it. He was asked about his relationship to Patriarch Tikhon and Metropolitan Sergius. He did not know the Patriarch, but he had corresponded with Metropolitan Sergius, whose position on relations with the government he did not share. Archbishop Peter shared a prison cell with ten fellow believers from Voronezh. These included Archimandrite Innocent (Panteleimonovich Byeda), the rector of the Alexeyev monastery, whom Vladyka had known since his time in Tver and whom he had invited to Voronezh from Moscow in May, 1926. Other Voronezh clerics and monastics who suffered at this time included Archimandrite Nectarius (Venediktov), who was a priest of the Devichi monastery. He was arrested after Christmas in 1925. He died in Central Asia in about 1931.

The investigation came to an end on March 7, 1927, with the archbishop refusing to accept any guilt. On March 13 the OGPU gave its verdict: Archimandrite Innocent, P.T. Atamanov, I.M. Nemakhov and S.A. Tsykov were given three years in the camps; the novices of the Pokrov Devichi monastery Maria Barchenko and Anna Budanova were exiled to Central Asia for three years; G.I. Pushkin was sent for three years to Kazakhstan. On March 22 Archbishop Peter and D.K. Moskalev were sentenced to ten years' deprivation of freedom.

After Pascha Archbishop Peter, Archimandrite Innocent, P.T. Atamanov and S.A. Tsykov were sent to Solovki. Archimandrite Innocent died "like an angel" of a stomach illness in the monastery hospital in the "Kremlin" on December 24, 1927. He was buried by Archbishop Peter. It is not known what happened to the two laymen. D.K. Moskalev worked on the White Sea canal, and in the middle of the 1930s was transferred to Mevezhyegorsk.

The monks of Solovki who chose to remain at the monastery after its dissolution as voluntary workers had been given the church in the cemetery in honour of St. Onuphry, where there were daily services. At 6 in the evening, after work, the all-night vigil began. Vladyka always read the six psalms (he particularly loved the Psalms). Then there would come the check and everyone lay down to sleep. At 4 a.m. the Liturgy would begin, and would end at about 6, when there was a general reveille and control, after which Vladyka would go to the bread-cutting section. He blessed the bread and the priests cut it and handed it out in rations. The believers who lived on Anzer island would come to Solovki to receive communion. In Solovki it was very muddy, and wooden foot-bridges would be laid down for those coming in by foot. They say that the bosses had respect for Vladyka that on meeting him they would step into the mud, letting him walk on the foot-bridge.

However, this reverential attitude changed when Uspensky, the son of a priest who had killed his own father, became camp commandant. He immediately removed the crosses from the churches, and in punishment for Vladyka's conversion and baptism of an Estonian woman in Holy Lake, in 1928 he transferred him to the Trinity skete on Anzer island. Here he lived in a remote deserted place, considered himself a desert-dweller and composed an akathist to St. Herman of Solovki. From Anzer Vladyka wrote that he was sorry to be separated from the grave of Fr. Innocent. He remembered his former cell-attendant Fr. Seraphim, who had earlier died in the Nizhni Caves monastery and with whom, he said, he was united "by mutual love". He also asked his correspondent to send his blessing to his cell-attendant Fr. Paphnutius. Fr. Paphnutius used to interpret the significance of Vladyka's dreams.

In a letter dated 25 February, 1928 (OS), Vladyka wrote that he was working as an accountant in a production warehouse where the only workers were priests. He lived in a small room with Bishop Gregory (Kozlov) of the Caves monastery in Nizhni. During an outbreak of typhus, Vladyka fell ill and was transferred to the hospital of the Trinity skete, where he lay for 14 days. Vladyka would have survived the illness, but he refused to eat. A hieromonk came from Solovki and gave him communion.

In the same ward as Vladyka there lay one of his spiritual sons, a vet by profession. On the day of Vladyka's death, at 4 in the morning, he heard a noise as if a flock of birds were flying in. He opened his eyes and saw the holy Great-Martyr Barbara with many other virgins, among whom he recognized the Martyr Anysia and the Great-Martyr Irina. On the same day, at 7 in the evening, Vladyka died. Just before his death, he was constantly writing with a pencil on the wall: "I do not want to live any longer. The Lord is calling me to Himself." And he wrote this several times. As he was writing "not" for the last time, his hand fell, and he died.

It was January 25 / February 7, 1929, the feast of the Mother of God "Console my sorrows", and of all the holy new martyrs and confessors of Russia. Vladyka was the last to die of typhus - after his death the epidemic came to an end.

According to another account, when Vladyka was dying of typhus on Anzer, a prisoner by the name of G. Osorgin was called to bring the Holy Gifts to him. Now Anzer was 12 kilometres from the monastery, and in January there was no access. Many tried to dissuade Osorgin, saying that Vladyka was unconscious and he would be subjecting himself to danger for no purpose. But Osorgin took a boat and made his way through the ice and water to Anzer. Vladyka came to for a very short moment, during which he received the Holy Gifts and immediately died... Osorgin was later shot, but not for this journey.

Vladyka's body was taken to the morgue and was at first thrown into a common grave with all the other victims of typhus. However, after a formal request from the prisoners, the commandant allowed him to be buried separately. Using some money that had been sent to him, the prisoners had a coffin built for him, and at 5 a.m. on the fifth day after his death they chanted the burial service. Then while four men dug a grave, they opened the common grave. All those who had died lay with blackened bodies, but Vladyka lay, like the Savior, all white, in a shirt, with his hands folded on his breast. Three priests - Archimandrite Constantine Almazov (Saint Petersburg), Fr. Basil from Barnaul and Fr. Demetrius from Tver - raised him from the grave, placed him on a sheet, combed his hair, washed his face and began to vest him in new vestments and a wooden panagia that had been made for him only the night before. His body was white and soft as if he had only just died. After laying him in the ground they placed a cross over the grave, which was later removed. One of the priests said that as they were filling in the earth of the grave, a column of light suddenly appeared over it, and in the light stood Vladyka blessing them. After his death Vladyka was seen by the wife of his brother. He was standing in the air in their room in a bright light, blessing them. He was sometimes seen in this light even during his lifetime. Archbishop Peter's cell-attendant, Monk Seraphim was arrested for commemorating his deceased hierarch in his home. *(adapted from orthodox.net)*

## **Notes from the Annual Meeting**

Last Sunday, St. Thomas the Apostle held its annual parish meeting. Here are some quick hits:

- ❖ Kelsey Moore will continue as trustee.
- ❖ Josh Moore will continue as treasurer.
- ❖ Phyllis Thomidis will continue as auditor.

- ❖ Olga Dewey is stepping down as secretary; the new secretary is Tabitha Single.
- ❖ The 2019 budget has been approved.
- ❖ The auditor found no issues in her examination of church financial records.
- ❖ If you are interested in buying something from Ancient Faith, contact Anna Connour; you'll pay the same price, but your purchase through the kiosk supports the church financially because we don't pay retail prices when ordering.
- ❖ While we thankfully had enough money on hand to pay for needed basement renovations after it flooded, and we were able to decrease our mortgage debt by 10%, donations were down 13% from 2017's level. We need your help to keep the lights on, and we've committed to paying off our current debt before fundraising for Phase 2 (the Parish Hall).

## **St. Thomas the Apostle Represents at the March for Life**





## Upcoming Events

- ❖ Holy water was blessed on Theophany and is available at the church for people to take some home for personal use. Contact Fr. Joseph to schedule a house blessing.
- ❖ There will be a St. Barbara meeting Feb 3rd after lunch to elect officers. After three years, Phyllis Thomidis is stepping down. There is also new business to address.

### Follow Our Diocese On-Line

Diocesan Website: <http://www.acrod.org>

Camp Nazareth: <http://www.campnazareth.org>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/acroddiocese>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/acrodnews>

You Tube: <https://youtube.com/acroddiocese>

***In Your Prayers – Please Remember...*** His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch BARTHOLOMEW, His Eminence Metropolitan GREGORY, Fr. Joseph & Family, Greek Orthodox Archbishop Paul Yazigi of Aleppo, Syriac Orthodox Archbishop Yohanna Ibrahim of Aleppo, His Grace Bishop Neofitos of Nyeri and Mt. Kenya, Fr. John & Pani Betty Jean Baranik, Presbytera Katie Baker and family, Santiago Alzugaray, Jeffrey Carey, Tatyana and Slava Chumak & family, Xenia Chilkowich, Jon Church, Ramius Connour, Curtis Cooper, Luke Cooper, Tina Crull, Mary Diane David, Ron Domieniecki, Linda A. Georgiev, Heather Himler, John Homick, Cameron Houk, Helen Janowiak, John M. Janowiak, Tucker Karl and family, Robert & Pam Karpin, Andrew Kinn, Kopan family, Brian, Helen, and Luke Mahony, Valentina Makowelski, Susan Matula, Anna Meinhold, Dn. Henry Middleton, David & Kathryn Newman, Bobby Nutter & Family, Henry & Lisa Osborne, Westin Perry & Parents, John Reece, Mary Reed, Chris & Kaitlin Rixey, Jerry Von Ronne, Anne Rosario, James, Theodore and Christina Ristas, Samson Family, Sharon Sheptak, Alexander Shostko, Bernie Takabayashi & family, Dawn & Faith Ulmschneider, Lydia Vita, Christine, Marshall, Nathaniel, Subdcn. Nectarios and Ia, the Syrian Christians displaced by war, Mother Virginia Marie and the Carmelite Nuns of Port Tobacco, and all those in need of our prayers. (Please advise Fr. Joseph of changes.)