

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

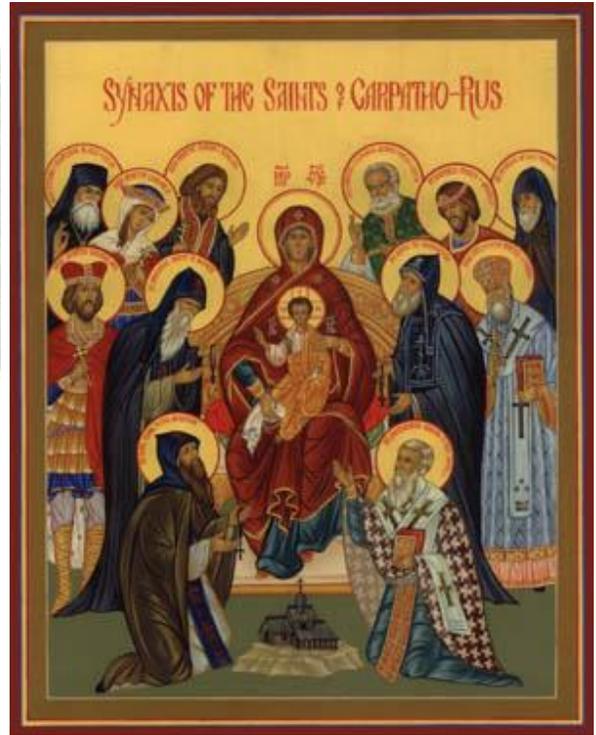
Saturday: Confession 5:00 PM,

Great Vespers 5:30 PM

Sunday: Matins (Orthros) 8:45 AM

Children's Sunday School 9:30 AM

Divine Liturgy 10:00 AM.



June 30, 2019 – 2nd Sunday After Pentecost (All Saints)

On the second Sunday after Pentecost, each region in world Orthodoxy commemorates those Saints who are associated in some way with either its geographic home, or that of its roots. The Saints among the forbearers of our Diocese are primarily identified with the eastern European lands of Carpatho-Rus, especially areas of the present-day Czech and Slovak Republics, Ukraine and Poland. The icon above portrays twelve of these Saints surrounding the young Christ child and the Theotokos. Orthodoxy is relatively new to North America, and although there are already a small number of canonized Saints of North America, we were called by our Metropolitan Nicholas of thrice-blessed memory to specifically remember the Saints of Carpatho-Rus on this day.

One of the first to launch the return to Orthodoxy movement in Carpatho-Russia was Archimandrite Vladimir (Terletsky) (born 1808). At first a Uniat priest, he eventually became Orthodox in Kiev in 1872 after Hungarian persecution at home. In Kiev he wrote of the national awakening in Carpatho-Russia. A second personality was the Uniat priest Ioann Rakovsky (+1885), from the village of Iza near Khust. Although he remained a Uniat until his death-bed, after him others

actually joined the Orthodox Church, despite the fact that in the Austro-Hungarian Empire it was possible to join any religion—except Orthodoxy.

Thus, when in 1903 the villagers of Iza announced their intention to become Orthodox, their Golgotha began. Once the villagers had for the first time sung the Creed without the notorious filioque, Iza was flooded with Hungarian police. There were house searches and liturgical books and icons were confiscated. The police stayed in their village for several months, extorting food from the villagers, oppressing them and mocking the womenfolk. Eventually, the police began arrests and put 22 men on trial.

This trial, known as the “First Maramorosh-Sighet Trial” took place in 1904. The accusation was “Treason,” later changed to “Incitement against the Hungarian Nationality.” Three peasants, including Joachim Vakarov, were sentenced to fourteen months imprisonment and had to pay a huge fine with equally huge costs. Land, homes, cattle and domestic gear were auctioned off to pay these fines. The peasants were released from prison as paupers and their families were looked after by relatives with the help of the parish of Iza. However Joachim and his friends were not daunted. Soon the Hungarians built a police station in the village, which was only three miles from another police garrison. Joachim was seized and tortured to death. The peasants, priestless, buried him themselves, singing the funeral hymn.

Joachim's martyrdom only increased resistance. Several villages, Luchki, Tereblia and others, decided to return to Orthodoxy. The peasants searched for an Orthodox priest so they could be received into the Church, but at that time it was impossible for Russian priests to cross the border.

Therefore the peasants approached the Serbian bishop in Budapest. The latter was afraid of the Hungarian authorities and refused to see the delegation. The peasants then went to the Serbian Patriarch in Karlovtsy, since his Church cared for all Orthodox in the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Although he received them, he too was fearful of Austro-Hungarian terror. The peasants replied that if he refused, then he would have to answer for this at the Last Judgement. The Patriarch decided to send a priest. When the Uniat bishop of the nearby town of Mukachevo heard this, he rushed to Vienna to denounce it, saying that if it were allowed, then his whole diocese would go over to Orthodoxy and he would be unemployed. His denunciation was heard favorably; this act will be on his conscience for all eternity.

Meanwhile, the peasants of Iza began holding their own services, until they were able to cross the border secretly to Romanian Bukovina, where a priest baptized their children. The peasants built a chapel in the village, but this was demolished

by the Hungarian police, who forbade them to pray together. Nevertheless, other villages began to follow Iza in the great return to Orthodoxy. It was only in 1910 that Carpatho-Russia at last received a spiritual leader in the person of Hieromonk Alexis (Kabaliuk). It was in that year that he arrived in their village secretly, in a hay cart.

Fr. Alexis (Kabaliuk)

This confessor of Orthodoxy was born on 1 September 1875 in the Carpatho-Russian village of Yasinie, to the pious family of a wood-cutter, Ivan Kabaliuk and his very devout wife Hannah. The child, one of eight, was named after the holy Prince Alexander Nevsky. As a child he began parish school at the age of six and showed both piety and intelligence, reading all he could about Orthodoxy. He frequently visited the Orthodox monasteries in neighboring Bukovina, and also the Uniat monastery of Kish-Baran. As a young man, he completed his military service only to return home and find his father on his death-bed. He then visited the Monastery of Biskad, now in Romania, to ask the clairvoyant Elder Arcadius whether he should marry or become a monk. The answer was monasticism.

Since this sensitive soul could not accept the lie of Uniatism, in 1905 and 1906 Alexander visited the Lavras in Kiev and Pochaiev, where he met both the elderly Metropolitan of Kiev, Flavian, and the dynamic Archbishop Antony (Khrapovitsky), who was to play a vital role in Fr. Alexis' later life. In 1908 he decided to go on pilgrimage to Mt Athos and Jerusalem. He became Orthodox in July 1908 at the Russian monastery of St. Panteleimon on Mt Athos and then returned to Russia, with the gift of an icon of the Mother of God of the Akathist, which was to accompany him for the rest of his life. In early 1910 he became a monk at the Yablochino monastery (now in Poland), took the name Alexis and undertook theological studies. On 15 August 1910, again with the support of Archbishop Antony, he was ordained hieromonk, with the name of Alexis. From there he was invited to Iza. He celebrated secretly here, also in Mukachevo and elsewhere.

In his homeland Fr. Alexis' first enemy, and that of Carpatho-Russian spiritual identity, was Uniatism. The Austro-Hungarian policy of divide and rule meant separating the inhabitants of the Russian borderlands (the meaning of the word "Ukraine") from the Russian motherland. This meant the religious artifice of Uniatism, which would later lead to the invention of a separate nationalist identity through "ukrainianization". This weapon was especially used in the west of Little Russia (now the Ukraine), known as Galicia, which had long been under Polish influence. However, the lie was given to this Austro-Hungarian invention by the Carpatho-Russian Orthodox. Their own name for themselves, "Rusiny", clearly

showed that they were not some entirely different nationality and their whole history was in fact part of Russian Orthodoxy. They are not “Carpatho-Ukrainians”, but Carpatho-Russians. This explains why the Austro-Hungarians were so frightened of Rusin Orthodoxy and tried to suppress it.

However, nothing could stop Fr. Alexis, neither torture, nor persecution. His strong faith, zeal and desire to serve his people were such that he worked as a wood-turner, for he was unwilling to live off poor peasants. He went around all the villages that had returned to Orthodoxy, celebrating the sacraments, teaching and strengthening in the faith. In one day he baptized 200 children and gave communion to over 1,000 faithful. According to a Hungarian newspaper, in the area of Maramorosh around Iza over 14,000 people became Orthodox.

Within two years Fr. Alexis had set up 28 Orthodox communities in various villages. He searched for help everywhere, returning again to Athos and also meeting the Patriarchs of Constantinople and Serbia. The persecutions worsened and Fr. Alexis was arrested several times. The police surrounded churches, searched homes, confiscating prayer-books, icons, crosses and religious literature. Huge fines were imposed on the peasants, the area was flooded with police and chapels were closed. Those who had become Orthodox were imprisoned. In reply, even more villages became Orthodox. Fr. Alexis was hunted by the Hungarian Catholic authorities like a wild animal. In mid-1912 he was forced to leave first for Yablochino, then in the spring of 1913 for Russia, finally for America, where there was a large Carpatho-Russian colony. There, together with Fr. Alexander Khotovitsky, he continued his missionary exploits and hundreds of thousands of Carpatho-Russians returned to the Orthodoxy of their forebears. From here Fr. Alexis corresponded unceasingly with his flock and the Austro-Hungarians began arresting anyone with a letter bearing an American stamp. Several hundred were imprisoned, including all of Fr. Alexis' relatives.

The police resorted to torture. Orthodox were hung up on trees so that their feet did not touch the ground. In this way their noses, mouths and ears began to bleed. If the tortured began to lose consciousness, the police threw water over them so that the torment would continue. One woman from the village of Lezhie died as a result of this torture. Many underwent “the tree of torment”, but they did not renounce Orthodoxy. Others fled to the mountains and the forests. In this way eleven girls, instructed by Fr. Alexis' sister, Vasilisa, became nuns secretly. They went off to the mountains, built a house in the forest and lived the monastic life there. The police found out about this and hunted them down. They forced them to strip, made them stand in their undergarments in icy water for two hours and then threw them into prison. In 1910, the Orthodox, priestless, turned to Russia for help. Candidates for ordination were sent to the monastery in Yablochino.

Meanwhile, the people of Iza gathered to pray at the home of a villager, Maxim Prokop. In 1913 his niece, Juliana Prokop, suffered for Christ, becoming a holy confessor. No more than a young girl, in 1913 she set up in her village what was in fact a convent.

On 23 July that year another Maramorosh-Sighet trial began. In this the prosecutor charged “Alexander” Kabaliuk, aged 36, and another 94 individuals, including the priests Gregory Gritsak and Nicholas Sabov and other peasants from Iza. Fr. Alexis voluntarily returned from his few months in the USA for the trial, in order to suffer together with his flock. With others they were charged with receiving help from Orthodox Russia and Mt Athos to convert Uniats to Orthodoxy. This was seen as treason by the Austro-Hungarians.

At this trial Fr. Alexis defended them, saying that they had no political axe to grind, their sole interest was the Orthodox Faith and that if they had to suffer for this holy cause, then so be it. The trial lasted for two months. Finally, on 3 March 1914 Fr. Alexis was sentenced to four and a half years' imprisonment and fined. The others received between three years and six months. On hearing the sentence, the Russian Emperor, Nicholas II, awarded Fr. Alexis a golden pectoral cross for his confession of the Faith and services were celebrated in the churches of Russia glorifying his feat.

During the trial the police burst into Iza and captured Juliana Prokop and her monastic sisters. Taken to the police station, they were tortured and the police tried to persuade them to renounce Orthodoxy. Then, in the frost, the girls were showered with water and forced into the street. Here they were stripped and beaten mercilessly. Barefoot and bare-breasted, they were paraded around the village in the hope they would renounce the Orthodox Faith. The streets remained empty and the villagers shocked, though helpless. The Uniat priest, who had called in the police, invited Juliana and craftily tried to persuade her to renounce the Faith. She remained firm, even though the tortures continued for another three months. Not a single sister gave up the Faith.

In early 1914 three priests arrived from Russia, Fr. Amphilochius, Fr. Matthew and Fr. Seraphim (later killed in the war). They were arrested immediately and sent to the nearby local center of Khust. The first two were placed under house arrest and Fr. Seraphim was sent to the army. When the First War began, Fr. Amphilochius and forty peasants were arrested. He was sentenced to four years imprisonment. They also arrested Juliana and her sisters in Christ and they too were sent to Khust. They were freed only when Russian troops entered the town. After the Russian retreat, the sisters remained faithful and met together at night to pray. For spiritual guidance they went to Fr. Amphilochius, by then in prison.

In 1917 all the sisters were again placed under house arrest, but this time they had to go to the police station for interrogation three times a day. In 1918 they beat Juliana almost to death. Her body was covered with wounds, her nose broken, her head badly bruised. The beatings were accompanied by words to persuade her to renounce Orthodoxy and the monastic life. But they failed. Disfigured and covered in blood Juliana was taken to the basement and covered in sand. Nobody was allowed to see her. On the fourth day Juliana came to. The police had not expected her to survive. She was taken to her father and a doctor called. However, she refused medical help and was healed miraculously. In 1924 Juliana the Confessor was tonsured with the name of Paraskeva and became Abbess of the Convent at Maramorosh. On her repose she was buried in the Monastery of St. Nicholas in Mukachevo.

After the First World War and the collapse of the prison of the peoples, the Austro-Hungarian Empire, Carpatho-Russia found itself in the new state of Czechoslovakia. Although the atrocities of the Austro-Hungarians had now stopped, unfortunately, the Saint Germain en Laye agreement of 1919 which had given rise to the new state, was not truly implemented. As a result, Carpatho-Russia did not receive autonomy within Czechoslovakia and attempts to Uniatize and ukrainianize continued. However those who tried this would now have to reckon with a free Fr. Alexis.

At the end of the First World War Fr. Alexis had been imprisoned and bayoneted for his Faith by the Austrians. Returning from imprisonment and hospital, Fr. Alexis lived in the Monastery of St. Nicholas, which he had founded in Iza, next to the church in which Fr. Ioann Rakovsky had served. Here in 1921 he became Abbot. By then the villages around Iza had all come over to Orthodoxy. Thanks to the work initiated by Fr. Alexis, over a relatively short period of time more than a thousand Rusin parishes would eventually return to Orthodoxy. Fr. Alexis was aided in his missionary work by two of Adolph Dobriansky's grandsons, Alexis Gerovsky (1883-1972) and George Gerovsky (1886-1959).

On the Feast of the Transfiguration 1921, Fr. Alexis opened the Council of the Carpatho-Russian Orthodox Church. There were over 400 delegates from all the Orthodox villages of the region. The delegates accepted a constitution and the official name "The Carpatho-Russian Eastern Ortho-dox Church." The Conference decided to remain within the Serbian Church, then under the excellent Bishop (now St.) Dositheus, as before, especially as so many of the Serbian representatives had studied in Russia and the Russian Orthodox Church Outside Russia was based in Serbia. The head of the exiled Russian Church in Serbia was Fr. Alexis' old patron, Met. Antony Khrapovitsky, who continued to help the Carpatho-Russians. He sent the famed missionary, Archimandrite Vitaly

(Maximenko), to the area around Presov (now in Slovakia). Before the Revolution Fr. Vitaly had headed the typography at the Pochaev Laura. Now, to the north of Presov, he founded the Monastery of St. Job, brought monks from Valaam and started to publish a newspaper “Ortho-dox Carpatho-Russia.” This later became the official journal of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside Russia. The Carpatho-Russians also received help from the seminary in Bitol in Serbia, especially from its most distinguished representatives Fr. (later St.) John (Maximovich) and Fr. (later St.) Justin (Popovich). The latter served for some time as a missionary around Presov.

Despite immense difficulties, the Rusin Orthodox movement, led by Fr. Alexis, blossomed in the 1920s and 1930s. Thus, according to 1936 statistics, the Mukachevo-Presov diocese consisted of 127 churches, had 138 priests and 140,000 faithful. Not only a strict ascetic and man of prayer, he was also a national leader and stood up for organizations like the Party of Native Orthodox of Subcarpathian Russia, the Russian People's Party for Reunion and the Orthodox Russian Bloc, which later struggled against the pro-Nazi regime of the Uniat Augustine Voloshin.

After the Nazi invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1938, the mainly Galician Ukrainian nationalists received financial and political support from another Austrian—Hitler. Led by the Uniat Voloshin, the Ukrainian nationalists who supported Hitler, tried genocide against the Rusins, sending many to concentration camps in Svaliava and Rakhov. Between 1939 and 1944 Carpatho-Russia was taken over by Hungary under Hitler's orders, but after liberation in 1944 by the Soviet Red Army, the Rusin Golgotha proved to be far from over. In the face of the atheist scourge, once more it was Fr. Alexis who tried to oppose what was happening. On 18 November 1944 scholars, social leaders and 23 Orthodox priests, attended an Orthodox Conference in Mukachevo. The Conference launched an appeal to Stalin, signed among others by Abbot Theophan Sabov, locum tenens of the Diocese of Mukachevo and Presov, and Archimandrite Alexis. They asked for an Autonomous Carpathian Republic to be formed for all Rusins—”sons of Russia”. Having lived in slavery to the Hungarians and Germans for centuries until 1919, they wished to be joined to Great Russia. As they rightly said, they had first heard the word “Ukraine” only during the Czechoslovak period, when Galician nationalists had come to make their propaganda around it.

However, despite the valiant efforts of Fr. Alexis, the atheist and anti-Russian Soviet Communist Party was to have no truck with their pleas and betrayed the Rusin Orthodox patriots. Ukrainian Communists, headed by Khrushchev, were with Stalin already organizing the transfer of Carpatho-Russia from Czechoslovakia to the Soviet Ukraine. At the same time, the Orthodox, previously in the jurisdiction of the very supportive Serbian Church, were transferred to the

Moscow Patriarchate. At once, the Soviet authorities began to close down both the remaining Uniat churches and also Orthodox churches and monasteries. Their property was seized, just as had happened in Russia itself after 1917. Forced ukrainianization began in the cradle of Russia.

The Soviet persecution of Carpatho-Russia was perhaps the greatest tragedy of all in the life of Archimandrite Alexis, who took the schema on 22 November 1947. Seeing the cruelty and dishonesty of the atheists, on 2 December his good and generous heart stopped beating, he was aged 70.

In 1998 the Serbian Orthodox Church canonized Bishop Dositheus who did so much for Carpatho-Russian Orthodoxy before the Second World War. Then, in February 1999, at St. Nicholas Monastery in Iza, Bishop Agapit of Khust and Archimandrite Stratonikus uncovered the relics of Schema-Archimandrite Alexis (Kabaliuk). They found them to be almost completely incorrupt. The body, skin and monastic mantle were all intact and only the feet and the wrists had perished in the extremely damp earth. From the grave was taken the Ivron icon of the Mother of God, which Fr. Alexis had brought with him from Mt Athos. Its colors had not even faded. This was an extremely important event in the spiritual life of Carpatho-Russia. Its spiritual father was intact, as was its spiritual ideal.

His canonization took place at the Monastery of St. Nicholas in Iza on 21 October 2001, under His Beatitude Metropolitan Vladimir of Kiev and all the Ukraine with many bishops and some twenty thousand faithful. His title is “Apostle of Carpatho-Russia.” Holy Father Alexis and all the Confessors of Carpatho-Russia, pray to God for us! (*adapted from orthochristian.com*)

Today’s Epistle Lesson – St. Paul’s Letter to the Romans 2:10-16

Brethren, glory and honor and peace for every one who does good, the Jew first and also the Greek. For God shows no partiality. All who have sinned without the law will also perish without the law, and all who have sinned under the law will be judged by the law. For it is not the hearers of the law who are righteous before God, but the doers of the law who will be justified. When Gentiles who have not the law do by nature what the law requires, they are a law to themselves, even though they do not have the law. They show that what the law requires is written on their hearts, while their conscience also bears witness and their conflicting thoughts accuse or perhaps excuse them on that day when, according to my gospel, God judges the secrets of men by Christ Jesus.





Today's Gospel Lesson – Saint Matthew 4:18-23

At that time, as Jesus walked by the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon who is called Peter and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea; for they were fishermen. And he said to them, "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men." Immediately they left their nets and followed him. And going on from there he saw two other brothers, James the son of Zebedee and John his brother, in the boat with Zebedee their father, mending their nets, and he called them. Immediately they left their boat and their father, and followed him. And he went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and preaching the gospel of the kingdom and healing every disease and every infirmity among the people."

A Word From the Holy Fathers

God neither repudiates nor abhors anyone, but to each according to his own disposition and readiness He bestows bounteous and beneficent gifts beyond what we deserve according to what was said: "Open your mouth wide, and I will fill it" (Ps. 80:11 LXX). Not the mouth of that one or some other one, for 'with him there is no partiality' (Eph. 6:9), but for each person chosen beforehand who, with longing and patience, seeks him – as once again it is written: 'Ask, and it will be given you; search, and you will find; knock, and the door will be opened for you' (Mt. 7:7).

But blessed and chosen servants of God, honorable fathers and brothers, let us, too, pray to God, in order to excel by means of the perfection of our way of life with the virtues of the monastic profession, and with complete fear and desire to present to God reverently and unceasingly the devotion owed to Him, a devotion that is reciprocal and pure. Let us safeguard for our neighbor the fiery and warming bond of love, the spiritual treasure that is true wealth which, with peace in the treasury of our hearts, is invulnerable and indissoluble. Surrounded by the prayers of the immaculate and most-favored Mother of God and of our father George of Cyprus (*St. George the Chozibite – Ed.*) and all the saints, may we offer up spiritual virtues and light-bearing fruits worthy of eternal inheritance with God the sovereign of all, and be considered worthy of eternal blessings in heaven by the grace and loving-kindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, with whom together with the Father and the Holy Spirit be honor, glory and adoration forever and ever. Amen.

– Anthony of Choziba

July Anniversaries and Birthdays



Anniversaries:

Jacob & Hillary Maher 19th
Jim & Jessica Stiver 26th Doug & Lauren Chadwick 28th



Birthdays:

Phyllis Kopan 4th Olga Dewey 6th Shannon McNeil 7th
Avery Lynne Robinson 19th Melanie Samson 20th Phyllis Thomidis 21st
Tudor Stefan Popescu 23rd Valentina Makowelski 25th Jamila Madison 30th

Social Team for July 7

Team 3 is up next week – Blaydoe P., Chumak, Connour, Samson. Thank you!

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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 Dominiecki, 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.)