

# SOBORNOST

**St. Thomas the Apostle Orthodox Church**

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*American Carpatho-Russian Orthodox Diocese*

*ECUMENICAL PATRIARCHATE  
OF CONSTANTINOPLE*

## **SERVICES**

**Wednesday: Lay Vespers 6:30 PM**

**Saturday: Vespers 5 PM**

**Sunday: Matins 8:45 AM**

**Sunday School 9:30 AM**

**Divine Liturgy 10 AM**



**September 10, 2023 – 14<sup>th</sup> Sunday After Pentecost | Afterfeast of the Nativity of the Theokokos | Sunday Before Elevation of the Cross | Martyrs Menodora, Metrodora and Nymphodora**

*Menodora, Metrodora considered, like Nymphodora, the torments of the flesh as gifts.*

*On the tenth were slain the three whose names mean gift and they died.*

The Holy Virgins Menodora, Nymphodora, and Metrodora (305-311), were sisters from Bithynia (Asia Minor). Despite their beauty, and distinguished for their special piety, they wanted to preserve their virginity for the love of Christ and avoid worldly associations. They chose a solitary place for themselves in the mountains called Pythia where there were hot water springs, and spent their lives in fasting and prayer, cultivating the divine virtues and delighting in the honey of contemplation.

Having acquired the grace of the Holy Spirit, reports of the holy life of the virgins soon spread, since healings of the sick and those possessed by demons began to occur through their prayers. The Bithynia region was governed at that time by a man named Frontonus, who ordered that the sisters be arrested and brought before him.

At first he tried to persuade them to renounce Christ, promising great honors and rewards. But the holy sisters steadfastly confessed their faith before him, rejecting

all his suggestions. They told him that they did not value the temporal things of this world, and that they were prepared to die for their Heavenly Bridegroom, for death would be their gateway to eternal life.

Flying into a rage, the governor took out his wrath on Menodora, the eldest sister. She was stripped of her clothes and beaten by four men, while a herald urged her to offer sacrifice to the gods. The saint bravely endured the torments and cried out, "Sacrifice? Can't you see that I am offering myself as a sacrifice to my God?" Then they renewed their torments with even greater severity. After two hours the martyr cried out, "Lord Jesus Christ, joy of my heart, my hope, receive my soul in peace." With these words she fainted and gave up her soul to God, going to her Heavenly Bridegroom.

Four days later, they brought the two younger sisters Metrodora and Nymphodora to the court. They showed them the battered and naked body of their older sister to frighten them. The virgins wept over her, but remained steadfast and their determination to die for Christ was increased by the example of their sister.

Then Metrodora was tortured by being hung up and burnt with torches, then having her limbs shattered by heavy bars of iron. She died, crying out to her beloved Lord Jesus Christ with her last breath. Then they turned to the third sister, Nymphodora. Before her lay the bruised bodies of her sisters. Frontonus hoped that this sight would intimidate the young virgin.

Pretending that he was charmed by her youth and beauty, he urged her to worship the pagan gods, promising great rewards and honors. Nymphodora scoffed at his words, and underwent the same torments of her older sisters. She was tortured and beaten to death with iron rods, then numbered with her sisters in Paradise.

The bodies of the holy martyrs were to be burned in a fire, but a heavy rain extinguished the blazing fire, and lightning struck down Frontonus and his servant. Christians took up the bodies of the holy sisters and reverently buried them at the so-called Warm Springs at Pythia (Bithynia).

The holy skull of Saint Metrodora is preserved in Asomaton Monastery in Petraki, that of Saint Nymphodora in the Monastery of Saint Paul in Mount Athos, and that of Saint Menodora in Great Lavra Monastery in Mount Athos. Further relics of Saint Menodora are in Panagia Goumenissa in Kilkis. Relics of Saint Metrodora are in Pantocrator Monastery in Mount Athos, Panagia Goumenissa in Kilkis and Agathonos Monastery in Fthiotida; her right hand is in Zerbitsa Monastery in Sparta. Panagia Goumenissa Monastery also has relics of Saint Nymphodora. *(from johnsanidopoulos.com)*

## **Today's Epistle Lesson – St. Paul's Second Letter to the Corinthians 1:21-2:4**

Brethren, He who establishes us with you in Christ and has anointed us *is* God, who also has sealed us and given us the Spirit in our hearts as a guarantee. Moreover I call God as witness against my soul, that to spare you I came no more to Corinth. Not that we have dominion over your faith, but are fellow workers for your joy; for by faith you stand. But I determined this within myself, that I would not come again to you in sorrow. For if I make you sorrowful, then who is he who makes me glad but the one who is made sorrowful by me? And I wrote this very thing to you, lest, when I came, I should have sorrow over those from whom I ought to have joy, having confidence in you all that my joy is *the joy* of you all. For out of much affliction and anguish of heart I wrote to you, with many tears, not that you should be grieved, but that you might know the love which I have so abundantly for you.

## **Today's Gospel Lesson – Saint Matthew 22:1-14**

The Lord spoke this parable: "The kingdom of heaven is like a certain king who arranged a marriage for his son, and sent out his servants to call those who were invited to the wedding; and they were not willing to come. Again, he sent out other servants, saying, 'Tell those who are invited, "See, I have prepared my dinner; my oxen and fatted cattle *are* killed, and all things *are* ready. Come to the wedding.'" But they made light of it and went their ways, one to his own farm, another to his business. And the rest seized his servants, treated *them* spitefully, and killed *them*. But when the king heard *about it*, he was furious. And he sent out his armies, destroyed those murderers, and burned up their city. Then he said to his servants, 'The wedding is ready, but those who were invited were not worthy. Therefore go into the highways, and as many as you find, invite to the wedding.' So those servants went out into the highways and gathered together all whom they found, both bad and good. And the wedding *hall* was filled with guests. "But when the king came in to see the guests, he saw a man there who did not have on a wedding garment. So he said to him, 'Friend, how did you come in here without a wedding garment?' And he was speechless. Then the king said to the servants, 'Bind him hand and foot, take him away, and cast *him* into outer darkness; there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.' "For many are called, but few *are* chosen."

## **Homily on the Sunday Before the Elevation of the Cross**

By Metropolitan Hierotheos of Nafpaktos and Agiou Vlasiou

*"And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up..."* (Jn. 3:14) The story of the bronze serpent is well known, to which today's Gospel reading refers. Because of the indignation of the ungrateful Jewish

people, God sent snakes that spread death. However, God again took pity on the people and ordered Moses to make a bronze serpent, which when the Jews saw it, they were cured of the snake bites (Num. 8-9). This historical event is adapted in two ways to the case of Christ, according to two ecclesiastical interpretations.

According to the first established interpretation, the bronze serpent is a type of the Crucified Christ. Just as the bronze serpent had the form of a snake but had no poison, so Christ had a human body but had no sin. The Jews saw the brazen serpent and were afflicted by the bites of real snakes. Christians see the Crucified Christ, receive His Grace and are healed from the bites of invisible snakes, evil spirits. The Crucified One gives us spiritual health, purification of the soul, eternal life, unspeakable peace.

According to the second interpretation, the bronze serpent is not a type of Christ, but His counterpart. This is how Saint Gregory the Theologian interprets this event in his Easter sermon. In other words, the bronze serpent is a type of the death of the invisible snake, the devil, which took place with Christ's sacrifice on the Cross. In other words, the Christian who believes that the devil was put to death and lost his power from the great power of Christ, he is saved and moves forward in his spiritual life.

Both of these interpretations of the bronze serpent, a type of the Crucified Christ or His counterpart, show that the Cross of Christ is a great power, it killed the devil's dominion and through its power we defeat all the forces of evil.

Many events of the Old Testament are prototypes of the Cross of Christ, such as the rod of Moses, which opened and closed the Red Sea, the wood that sweetened the bitter waters of Marah, etc. However, it must be noted that these events are not simple prototypes of the Cross, but they are experiences of the mystery of the Cross. The Cross, according to the holy Fathers, is the eternal energy of God, which saved people before the Law, after the Law, before the incarnation, during the incarnation and after it.

Saint Gregory Palamas in one of his sermons develops the truth of the Church that the Cross is one, but its friends are many. There are friends of the Cross even before it appeared. His mystery and His Grace were also active in the Forefathers. God's command to Abraham to leave his homeland and his kinship, the voice that called Moses to ascend Mount Sinai, is an experience of the mystery of the Cross.

The energy of the Cross is threefold. The first is our own removal from sin, the second is the removal of sin from us and the third is the vision of the glory of God, through the mystery of the Cross. The historical event of the Crucifixion condemns man, because the human nature through the hypostatic union with the divine nature became by nature a source of uncreated Grace. Therefore, it is not a simple

prototype of the Cross in the Old Testament, but it is an experience of the mystery of the Cross.

All this shows that the sign of the Honorable Cross is not a simple shape, but that which transmits the energies of God. The great power of the Cross is not due to the shape itself, but to Christ who was Crucified on it. From Him it draws strength and grace.

Therefore, the Cross is not a magical instrument, but "the life-giving power of divine energies". This is how we explain that the sealing with the Cross is the necessary characteristic of all the mysteries and the sacramental ceremonies of the Church. For example, the water of the font is sanctified by the descent of the Holy Spirit by the formation of the Cross. The same happens in the mystery of the Eucharist. In "change these by your Holy Spirit" the priest seals the bread and wine and they change into the Body and Blood of Christ. In the Mystery of Marriage with the pronouncement "the servant of God is crowned..." the priest forms the Cross. That is why Saint Gregory Palamas emphasizes that "not only the word of the cross and the mystery, but also the form is divine and venerated, because it is a seal of reverence and finality of all the wonderful and inexpressible goods that come from God."

Many times we make the sign of the Cross on ourselves. The reasons for why this is done are many. We will be content with enumerating the main ones. First, we express our gratitude to Christ, who loved us to the point of enduring the Cross and saved us. Second, we ask for His Grace and blessing to defeat the passions and drive out the cunning enemy. Thirdly, we form the Cross upon ourselves in order to crucify evil thoughts, wicked desires and the unbridled and perverted will, which leads us away from the path of God. Fourthly, with the shape of the hand we confess the doctrine of the Holy Trinity and the doctrine of the unconfused and indivisible union of the divine and human nature in the Person of Christ. That is, with the three fingers united we confess the Holy Trinity and with the other two the God-manhood of Christ. Fifth, we confess that we will live a crucified life, we will love asceticism, we will sacrifice our lives if the Lord allows it as the holy Martyrs did, and in general as all the saints lived. That is why, when we venerate their icons, we make the sign of the Cross.

Our strength, our glory and the hope of our salvation is the Honorable Cross of the Lord, who draws strength from the Crucified Christ. Therefore, by signing our body with the cross, let us pray with all the strength of our soul: "Cross of Christ, save us by your power."

## A Word From the Holy Fathers

"Your birth, O Theotokos, brought joy to the whole world,..." Will not these opening words of the troparion of this great feast seem like an exaggeration to some of you? Would you say that not only Jews, Muslims and Buddhists, but even Lutherans who have departed from the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church, Protestants, and all sectarians do not feel any joy on the birthday of the Most Holy Theotokos, whom they consider only a simple pious woman, of which are very many?

If you think so, then I will in no way agree with you, because the troparion of the feast speaks precisely of the joy of the entire universe, and not just our little land. And the universe is immensely large, and in the night sky we see countless star worlds. It is impossible, of course, to think that all these stellar worlds were only huge masses of luminous matter, that the whole life of these innumerable brilliant worlds was limited to what we know about them on earth.

It is impossible to think that only one of our small planets was inhabited by spiritually intelligent beings, and the rest of the universe was not inhabited by anyone. We do not doubt that all these countless worlds, that the whole universe is inhabited immeasurably by angelic incorporeal powers above us. And for these disembodied powers, the Nativity of the Theotokos was a great, universal joy.

We, the inhabitants of the earth, with our very limited mind, tend to live only by what we see and hear on earth, and rarely, rarely do we go beyond these earthly interests. And the incorporeal powers of heaven, the Archangels and Angels, have access to knowledge and understanding much more than we, the inhabitants of the earth.

In the countless worlds of the universe, created and controlled by God, great events take place, not known to us, but led by the incorporeal powers of heaven, events slowly and gradually are made aware to them as they occur and develop. For them, the Nativity of the Most Holy Theotokos was such an event, which they perceived as a kind of dawn just breaking out of some great work of God. And they fully understood it only when the salvation of the human race was accomplished by the Cross of Christ and the Resurrection.

Having finished this explanation, let us turn again to the troparion of our great feast: "... for from you dawned the sun of righteousness, Christ our God. Freeing us from the curse, He gave us His blessings. Abolishing death, He granted us eternal life." And the inhabitants of heaven saw the dawn of that great day, just dawning, when the Sun of righteousness Christ our God shone from the womb of the Theotokos, and by His honorable Cross the curse of God for the original sin of

Adam and Eve was lifted from the human race, when by the glorious Resurrection of Christ the human race received a new blessing, when the Cross of Christ abolished the death that weighed on us, and the entrance to the Kingdom of Heaven, the kingdom of eternal truth and Divine glory, was opened for us.

Let us give with all the strength of our hearts praise, and honor, and immeasurable thanksgiving to the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, the Holy Trinity, who by the Nativity of the Most Holy Theotokos laid the foundation for our salvation by the Son of God. Amen.

– St. Luke, Bishop of Simferopol, *Homily 2 on the Nativity of the Theotokos*

## **Holy New Martyr Tatiana**

That we live in an increasingly secularized society, as contemporary Christians so often lament, is undeniable. Yet how many of us can honestly claim that we have suffered anything beyond the slightest inconvenience or embarrassment for our beliefs? While it is true that displays of explicit religiosity in public settings have become increasingly frowned upon, personal faith continues to be valued. Works of charity and philanthropy, whether performed by individual believers or religious organizations, are universally praised. As much as the tide may be changing, few of us need to worry about being carried away by it so long as we stand firm. In this, we are very fortunate.

Not so very long ago – indeed, within living memory – the situation was very different in the Soviet Union. A young woman named Tatiana Nikolaevna Grimblit, unexceptional in any way apart from her virtue, was repeatedly arrested and exiled, and finally executed, for doing no more than helping and supporting others who had likewise been arrested and exiled. Such was the nature of the militantly atheist regime of the twenties and thirties of last century that these simple acts of Christian charity, performed by an ordinary young woman with no political allegiance, were regarded as anti-revolutionary agitation deserving of capital punishment. One cannot help but recall the prophecy of St. Anthony the Great recorded in *The Sayings of the Desert Fathers*: “A time is coming when men will go mad, and when they see someone who is not mad, they will attack him saying, ‘You are mad, you are not like us.’”

Born in 1903 in Tomsk, a town in southern Siberia, Tatiana received an upbringing typical of her time and place. By 1920, when the civil war had spread to Siberia and political repression had begun to take hold of the country, Siberia became a place of exile and imprisonment for many. Young Tatiana, only seventeen years old, began to use her own earnings (she then worked as a teacher in a home for troubled children) and whatever she could collect in the local churches to acquire

provisions for those incarcerated in the local prison. Her practice was to visit the prison, ask the administration which of the prisoners had not received any parcels with foodstuffs, and then ask that the provisions she had brought be given to them.

In 1923, when Tatiana was twenty, she traveled with provisions for prisoners in Irkutsk, over 1,500 miles away – which even under today’s conditions is more than a full day’s drive from Tomsk. Here she was arrested and charged with anti-revolutionary activities: quite simply, for showing Christian charity to the imprisoned. She was released after four months in prison, but then was again briefly imprisoned in 1925, at the age of twenty-two, again for helping inmates. During this time Tatiana, who had always been a sincere believer – her grandfather, Archpriest Anthony Misiurov, instilled in her love of God and Church – became acquainted with many outstanding bishops and clergy imprisoned in Siberia.

Her works of mercy began to draw more attention from the authorities, who began assembling testimonies about her activities, resulting in the following appraisal: “Tatiana Nikolaevna Grimblit has contact with the counter-revolutionary element of the clergy that is in the Narym region, Arkhangelsk, and in the Tomsk and Irkutsk prisons. She carries out collections and sends them in part by mail, usually with a letter. Grimblit has close contacts in all the Tikhonite parishes, among whom she carries out collections.” [“Tikhonite” parishes were loyal to Patriarch Tikhon, not recognizing the government-sponsored Renovationist church.]

On May 6, 1925, the head of a secret division of the OGPU questioned the twenty-two year old Tatiana about whether she helped clergy and through whom she had parcels with provisions delivered. She readily explained her activities, saying that for the past five years she had been arranging to have parcels sent or brought to bishops, clergy, laity, and people completely unknown to her. All the while, she refused to name any of the clergy whom she had helped or to name anyone else who had assisted her in providing and delivering these provisions. She was arrested the next day and was thereafter in penal exile – first being moved around Siberia, then through Kazakhstan, and finally to Turkistan – until March 1928. She was twenty-four when released from her third term of imprisonment.

Shortly after her release, Tatiana moved to Moscow’s historic district, Zamoskvorechie. There she sang on the kliros at the Church of St. Nicholas in Pyzhy, the rector of which was her close acquaintance, Archimandrite Gabriel (Melekessky, 1888-1959), who was later to be glorified as a Confessor of the faith. Undeterred by the unimaginable suffering she must have gone through, Tatiana not only resumed her acts of charity, but in fact increased them.



By the age of twenty-five, after several arrests and two years of imprisonment, Tatiana had already become a nationwide benefactor. Helping prisoners by visiting them, providing them with material goods, and offering them moral support became her means of serving Christ and neighbor. In terms of her labors of charity and assistance, of her dependability and persistence, and of the breadth of people she helped, there was no one like her. For many she came to be a new Philaret the Merciful.

At the beginning of the thirties a new wave of religious persecution swept through the country, during which tens of thousands of clergy and faithful were arrested. On April 14, 1931, Tatiana was arrested for the fourth time. At her interrogation a few days later, she again readily admitted to helping the imprisoned and exiled. She explained that she helped everyone she could, especially at the beginning, regardless of whether they belonged to the Church or not, and regardless of whether they were imprisoned for political or criminal charges. All that concerned her was that they were in need of assistance and had no one to help them.

A few days later, on April 30, 1931, Tatiana was sentenced to three years imprisonment and sent to the Vishersky labor camp in the Perm Oblast. Here she found a new way of helping her neighbors by training as a medical assistant. In 1932, having been released with restriction of movement, she chose to move to the old town of Yuryev-Polsky in the Vladimir Oblast. Once the restrictions were lifted in 1933, Tatiana left for the ancient town of Alexandrov, in the same region, where she found work as a medical assistant in a local hospital. She made her final move in 1936, this time to the village of Konstantinovo in the Moscow Oblast (quite near the Trinity-Sergius Lavra), where she found employment in the regional hospital as a nurse and laboratory assistant.

Tatiana continued not only to use all means at her disposal to render material help to imprisoned clergy and believers but, just as importantly, she wrote letters to them, often becoming their only source of moral support from the outside world. One of her imprisoned correspondents, Bishop John (Pashin) of Rilsk (1881-1938), who was later glorified as a New Martyr, wrote the following to her from the camp in which he was imprisoned:

“My very own, dear Tatiana Nikolaevna! I received your letter and do not know how to thank you for it. It breathes with such warmth, love, and good cheer that the day on which I received it was among the very happiest for me. I read it three times in a row, and then read it again to my friends: Vladyka Nicholas and Fr. Sergius, my spiritual father. Yes! You have a good heart, and you are happy – for which you should thank the Lord. This is not from us; it is a gift of God.

“You, by God’s mercy, have understood that the greatest happiness here on earth is to love and help people. And you – weak, poor thing – with God’s help warm the unfortunate like the sun by your kindness, helping them as much as you can. Remember the words of God spoken through the mouth of the Holy Apostle Paul: *my strength is made perfect in weakness*. May the Lord grant you the strength and health to follow this path for many, many years and to do good humbly in the Lord’s name. Your story about illness [code for an arrest] was also moving, as were your further adventures. How wisely and mercifully has the Lord arranged it, so that you, having experienced a serious illness, [code for a period of imprisonment] went on to study medicine and now work in the field of treating the sick and suffering, simultaneously earning a little money, essential for you to live on and for helping others. How many tears will be wiped away, how much suffering will be eased by this holy work... You work in the laboratory, in the pharmacy? Wonderful! Remember the Holy Great-Martyr Panteleimon the Healer with his box of medicines in his hands (as he is depicted in icons) and work in the name of the Lord, labor for the glory of God. May the sign of the Holy Cross guard all the medicine, spread into powders or poured into vials. Glory to the Lord God!”

Another of her correspondents, Archbishop Averky (Kedrov) of Volhynia and Zhitomir (1879-1937), who was himself later executed, wrote the following to Tatiana from his place of exile in Birsk, a town in Bashkortostan located on the right bank of the Belaya River:

“I received your sealed letter, and afterwards your postcard. For both one and the other I offer you my heartfelt thanks. Glory to God – they are, as before, full of good cheer and light, strong faith and firm trust in the providential guiding hand of the Almighty. Glory to God! May this life-giving spring never run dry and be diminished in your soul, which here on earth makes the acceptance of life’s adversities, misfortunes, blows, failures, and disappointments so much easier. The path of your life, blessed by the Lord, has not yet been long, but how many storms have flown over your head. And not only over your head: like sharp weapons they have gone through your heart as well. But they have neither shaken it nor moved it from its cornerstone, the rock on which it rests – by which I mean Christ the Savior. These storms have not extinguished the flame of faith, burning brightly and ardently. Glory to God: I rejoice in, and bow down before, your struggle of unwavering devotion to the Creator and before those painful afflictions, trials, and moral suffering through which your path has gone, leading to the victory in your soul of Christ over Belial, of heaven over earth, of light over darkness.

May Christ save, protect, and help you continue to stand fearlessly and unwaveringly upon the divine watch of His holy saints...”

Of all places on earth, Tatiana most loved Divyevo, home of the convent that had had such a place in the heart of St. Seraphim of Sarov. Her spiritual father, Archpriest Pavel Peruansky – who was later to repose in prison on the first day of Pascha, 1938 – served as rector of the Church of the Kazan Icon in Divyevo. In a letter written to Archbishop Averky (Kedrov) on September 5, 1937, who was then in exile in Birsk, Tatiana expressed her love for Divyevo: “My dear Vladyka Averky! For some reason I have not heard any news from you in a long time. I traveled to Divyevo and Sarov, spending a wonderful month there. Wonderfully good. No, it cannot be any sweeter in Paradise, because it is impossible to love anything more. May God bless those people whose beautiful souls are now before me. I fell deeply in love with that place and I am always drawn there. This is already the third year I have been there, each time staying longer. I would stay there forever, but I do not have a blessing to do so. But everyone blessed traveling there on break.”

On the same day she wrote this letter, Tatiana was arrested for the final time. The officers from the NKVD found her writing a letter to a priest in exile, breaking her off mid-sentence. Leaving for prison, she left a simple, calm note to a friend with careful instructions for informing her mother. She concluded the note with these words: “I embrace you all firmly. I thank you all for everything. Putting on my cross, the one I have on me, I knew that I would be going again. I will not only go to prison for God, but even to the grave with joy.”

The NKVD, after interrogating Tatiana herself, questioned her colleagues from the hospital in Konstantinovo about her activities there. One spoke of her relationship with patients:

“I know that Grimblit visited a patient in the hospital with whom she had no relationship in terms of medical care. As a result, the next morning the patient told the doctor that he had dreamed all night of monasteries, monks, cellars, and so forth. This fact led me to think that Grimblit held conversations with patients about religion.”

Another colleague, speaking of Tatiana’s firm profession of faith, reported: “Grimblit, in the winter of 1937, while sitting with a gravely ill patient in the ward, stood up and demonstratively made the sign of the cross over the patient in the presence of patients and medical staff. In conversations comparing the situation in prisons during the Tsarist regime with the present, Grimblit said: ‘Under Soviet rule one can find just as many outrageous things as before.’ Replying to the question of why she leads a frugal life, Grimblit said: ‘You spend money on wine

and movies, and I spent it on helping prisoners and the Church.’ When asked about the cross she wears around her neck, Grimblit repeatedly replied: ‘I will give my head for the cross I wear around my neck. No one will remove it while I am alive. If anyone tries to remove my cross, he will have to remove it along with my head, since it is worn for ever.’”

Another accused her of abusing her authority: “I know that Grimblit is a very religious person who places religion above all... Moreover, Grimblit used her official position for inculcating religious feelings among the hospitalized patients. When on duty, Grimblit would issue medication to patients with the words: ‘With the Lord God!’ She simultaneously made the sign of the cross over patients. Grimblit put crosses around the neck of weak patients.”

Finally, another colleague spoke of Tatiana’s feelings about the younger generation: “Regarding the upbringing of children in the present time, Grimblit said more than once: ‘What could be expected of today’s children in the future, if their parents themselves do not believe and forbid their children to believe.’ And, in reproach to parents, she said: ‘Even if you turn away from God, sooner or later He will call everything to account.’ In 1936, my nine-year-old daughter told me that Grimblit had taught her how to make the sign of the cross, for which she gave her treats.”

Following these testimonies, Tatiana was again interrogated. In reply to a question about how she showed her religious beliefs in regard to the Soviet authorities and the people around her, Tatiana replied: “Before the authorities and those around me, I have tried to show myself to be an honest and conscientious worker, thereby demonstrating that a religious person can also be a necessary and useful member of society. I have not hid my religiosity.” Asked whether she admitted her guilt in carrying out anti-Soviet agitation while working in the hospital, she replied: “I have never carried out any anti-Soviet agitation anywhere. When people felt sorry for me and said ‘You would do better to dress and eat better than to send money to someone,’ I would reply: ‘You can spend your money on nice clothes and on choice foods, but I prefer to dress more modestly and eat more simply, and then use the money left to send to those who need it.’”

Following her interrogation, Tatiana was placed in a prison in Zagorsk (known before and after the Soviet era as Sergiev Posad, the town in which the Trinity-Sergius Lavra is located). On September 13, 1937, the investigation was concluded and the indictment compiled. On September 21, before the indictment was submitted for judgment, Tatiana faced a final series of questions:

“You have been accused of anti-Soviet agitation. Do you admit your guilt?”

“I do not admit my guilt. I have never engaged in anti-Soviet agitation.”

“You are accused of carrying out sabotage and of the deliberate killing of patients in the hospital in the village of Konstantinovo. Do you admit your guilt?”

“I do not admit my guilt. I have never engaged in subversive activities.”

On September 22, Tatiana was sentenced to death. On the following day she was sent to a prison in Moscow, where she was photographed for her executioner. She was shot on September 23, 1937, and buried in an unmarked mass grave in Butovo. She was thirty-three years old.

The memory of the Holy New Martyr Tatiana is celebrated on September 10/23, as well as on the feast day of the New Martyrs and Confessors of Russia (the Sunday nearest to January 25/February 7) and the feast day of the Synaxis of the New Martyrs of Butovo (the fourth Saturday after Pascha).

### **Troparion, Tone III:**

Emulating the myrrh-bearing women in virtue, you ministered diligently to those in prisons and shackles; and, showing to us the image of evangelic mercy, you accepted a martyric death for Christ, O all-glorious Tatiana; standing now before the throne of God, pray that our souls be saved.

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A notebook filled with poems written by St. Tatiana, dating from 1920 through her times in the camps and prisons, has been preserved. One commentator has described nicely the impression made by these poems: “It is not grandeur of poetic style that attracts the reader of these verses, but primarily the limitless and eternal love for Christ expressed in word and attested to by the very life and death of the holy martyr.” The titles of the poems give some idea of their content: “Eternal Memory,” “At the Cross,” “All-Night Vigil,” “Quiet,” “In Prison,” “The Mystery of Siberia,” “Prayer,” “Tears,” “In Exile,” “To the Guardian Angel,” “Have Mercy on Me, O God,” and many more. Employing a simple ABAB rhyme scheme, they contain reflections on her life, her faith in God, and the fate of her nation.

We conclude by offering our rendition of two of her poems into English:

### **Eternal Remembrance**

Lies and slander shall I get / For my love and my labor, / Any my name every soul  
will forget. / Your remembrance of me is the greatest favor.

O my Christ, would You remember my name? / Your eternal remembrance grant  
me, I implore. / And behold! Joyfully I advance on my way. / Gone the grief, and  
the torment’s no more.

Who has granted relief to my mournful heart, / And filled it with love and with joy,  
/ Into great deeds turned a labor so hard / And ennobled my wearisome toil?

I have clothed my youth in the cloth of repentance / And drunk this cup to the  
dregs, / You will grace me with Your everlasting remembrance, / In my faith, when  
I am laid to rest.

### **Twelve Years**

Twelve years are drawing to a close, / My end is looming nigh. / Thus come to me  
my childhood hopes, / The days I left behind.

They want to give my soul delight, / Their gaieties abound, / Their prayer's pure,  
their heart is light, / With faith they do resound.

My comfort did not lie in game, / In pranks and joyful play. / You I invoked and to  
You I prayed, / And early chose my way.

O Lord, I give You all my youth, / My vigor and my strength, / I shall stand firmly  
by Your Truth," / At sixteen thus I prayed.

"My heart is pure. By troubles of the world / It has not been yet enslaved. / Take it,  
make it Your abode, / From sin it shall abstain."

I always prayed before Your Cross. / To me You've patiently inclined Your ear, /  
I've know what prison is since seventeen, / You have given me strength and taken  
my fear.

And here I've been for thirteen years / In service of Your will, / My strength and  
youth, my joys and tears, / I place before Your feet.

O Lord, accept me on my path, / My end is drawing nigh. / Forgive me in Your  
love. / And grant Your likeness as my guide. *(from pramvir.com)*

### **Also Commemorated Today**

New Hieromartyr [Alexander](#), priest in Solikamsk, Perm (1918)

New Hieromartyrs [Ismail](#), Eugene, John, Constantine, Peter, Basil, Gleb, Basil,  
John, Nicholas, Palladius priests, Hieromartyrs Meletius and Gabriel, Martyr  
Symeon (1937).

New Hieromartyr Warus (Shmarin) bishop of Lipetsk (1938).

Venerable [Paul](#) the Obedient of the Kiev Caves (13th c.).

Venerable Prince [Andrew](#), in monasticism Joasaph, of Kubensk, Vologda (1453).

Synaxis of the Holy Apostles [Apelles](#), [Lucius](#), and Clement of the Seventy..

Martyr [Barypsabas](#) in Dalmatia (2nd c.).

Blessed [Pulcheria](#), the Empress of Greece (453).

Sts. [Peter](#) (hieromartyr) (826) and Paul (9th c.), bishops of Nicaea.

Venerable [Ioasaph](#), monk, of Kubensk (Vologda) (1453).  
Venerable Cassian, abbot of Spaso-Kamenny and St. Cyril of White Lake Monasteries (1469).  
St. [Salvius](#), bishop of Albi (584) (Gaul).  
Venerable [Finian](#) of Ulster (Ireland), abbot (589) (Celtic & British).  
St. [Autbert](#), bishop of Avranches (France)(720)  
St. [Theodaard](#) of Maastricht (668) (Neth.).  
St. [Frithestan](#) (+932), Bishop of Winchester, England  
St. [Isaiah](#), founder of Kykkos Monastery (Cyprus)  
3 holy [female](#) ascetics whose names are known only to God  
St. [Agapius](#) (Agapitus), Bishop of Novara in Piedmont (447)  
Ven. [Candida](#) the Younger of Naples (586)  
Hieromartyrs [Nemesian](#), Felix, Lucius, Felix, Litteus, Polyanus, Victor, Jader, Dativus, bishops of Numidia, and companions condemned to slavery in the quarries of Sigum (257)  
St. [Peter](#) Martinez, Archbishop of Conpostella (c.1000)  
St. [Veranus](#), Bishop of Vence (France)(c. 480)

## Social Team for September 17

Team 3 – Edgington, Victor Barzykin, R&C Wright . Thank you!

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

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***In Your Prayers – Please Remember...*** His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch BARTHOLOMEW, His Eminence Metropolitan GREGORY, Fr. Joseph & Family, His Grace Bishop Neofitos of Nyeri & Mt. Kenya, Bennett family, Tatyana & Slava Chumak & family, Luke & Marlena Cooper, Roberta Corson, Jon Church, Tina Crull, Mary Diane David, Marlene Doukas, Linda A. Georgiev, Sandi Hebel, Howl family, Helen P. Janowiak, John M. Janowiak, Andrew Kinn, Kopan family, Helen, Brian, Luke and Mia Mahony, Valentina Makowelski, Susan Matula, David & Kathryn Newman, Bobby Nutter & family, Nicholas Pavlik, Weston Perry & family, John Reece, Mary Reed, Marge Rusnak, Rose Song, Fr. Nectarios & Ia, Mother Virginia Marie & the Carmelite Nuns of Port Tobacco, the suffering people of Ukraine, and those in need of our prayers. (Please advise Fr. Joseph of changes.)