

# 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: Confession 4:30 PM**

**Great Vespers 5:00 PM**

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

**Sunday School 9:30 AM**

**Divine Liturgy 10:00 AM**

**February 4, 2024 – 35<sup>th</sup> Sunday After Pentecost**

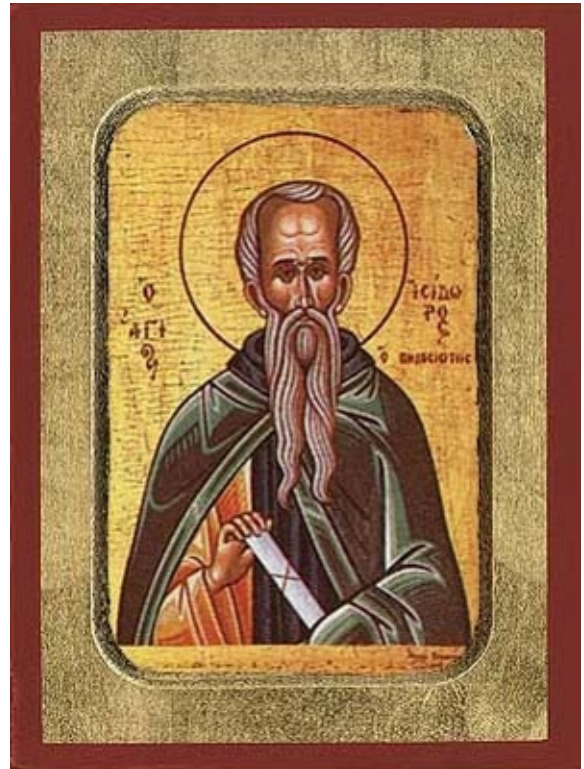
**Afterfeast of the Meeting of the Lord in the Temple**

### **Venerable Isidore of Pelusium**

By Protopresbyter Fr. George Papavarnavas

The venerable Isidore of Pelusium was born in Egypt around 360-370 A.D. He was a scion of noble and pious parents and he was a brilliant student. Before he became a monk he was a Catechist and Teacher of the Church of Alexandria. He settled in a Monastery near Pelusium, an area of Egypt east of the Nile, and for this reason he is known as "Pelousiotis". Because of his erudition, and especially his virtue, he acquired great prestige and fame. He is regarded as one of the best interpreters of the Divine Scriptures. After being ordained a Priest he was promoted to Abbot. His entire personality offered much to the Church, but also his discourses and writings.

Many people resorted to Saint Isidore to discuss matters with him, and find solutions to their problems. There were not few, however, who communicated with him by letter. He answered their letters, and consoled them and spiritually guided them. Most of the letters refer to the clarification and interpretation of passages of Holy Scripture, and for this reason he is characterized as an interpreter of the Divine Scriptures. He also sent letters to mediate and settle various issues for the



common good. 2212 of his letters have been preserved. Two of these, namely "On That Which Has Not Been Destined" and "Discourse to the Greeks", are extensive and characterized as short treatises.

"Saint Isidore of Pelusium is one of the eminent figures of the tradition of Orthodoxy." Photios the Great characterizes him as a "rule of the priestly and ascetic state", but also as a "muse of our courtyard" for his philosophical mind, excellent theological training, ascetic life, and especially for his ethos and blameless way of life.

He was "perfected in peace" in 440 A.D.

His life and deeds give us the opportunity to emphasize the following:

First, a letter is a means of communication. In earlier times it was perhaps the only means of communication between people of great distances. This is why many letters of various important people, and Saints of our Church, are preserved. Some of these letters are monuments of speech and culture. The letters of the Saints, besides the historical and geographical data they contain, exude the aroma and fragrance of the Holy Spirit and for this reason they have the ability to inspire, to move, to comfort and bring sweetness to the human heart.

The words recorded in letters, according to Basil the Great, are icons of the soul and thus through the letter you come to know the sender. In a letter to Maximus the Philosopher he writes: "Words are truly the icons of the soul. We have come to know you well, therefore, through letters, as much, as they say, as 'a nail on a lion'."

Nowadays, as is well known, sending letters has been restricted because of contemporary means of communication. The letter, however, is something tangible and in a certain way makes the presence of the sender felt. Also, serious issues cannot be communicated or arranged by telephone, but personally, and if this is difficult, with the written word, which has other capabilities and other value.

Second, the study of the letters of the venerable Isidore brings great benefit to those who have the disposition to be obedient to the Church and to live according to the will of God.

Below we will attempt a brief tour in the spiritual garden of the letters of the Venerable One, to reap even a few of his sweetest fruits.

The 24th letter of the venerable Isidore advises the recipient to study the Sacred Scriptures with much diligence and effort and not frivolously. He writes, among other things: "It is of benefit to you to study with much attention and wisdom Divine Scripture and investigate with soberness its deeper meanings and not dare approach with superficiality its untouched and inaccessible mysteries, allowing

them into unworthy hands. In this way the most daring Uzziah, who took courage and reached out his hands to that which should not be touched by hands, acquired leprosy because of his audacity and he was exiled from the palace."

The 35th letter advises Emperor Theodosius to distribute wealth as it should be, because "not even a king is saved by his great power, nor does one avoid the irreverence of idolatry who avoids the generous disposal of wealth, which flows like water and goes away."

The 437th letter advises a physician Orivasio to heal not only for others their physical ailments, but also his own passions of soul and body, in order to obtain the health that he lacks, saying that without this health "you will neither be an excellent physician, nor wise in reality."

The 69th letter refers to gluttony and its devastating consequences, as well as the great value of fasting. He writes, among other things: "Was it not fasting that gave life to the Ninevites? ... Was it not fasting that showed Daniel and those like-minded with him wondrous? ... Was it not fasting and a modest life that made John the baptizer of the incarnate God?" He concludes urging the recipient of his letter to imitate the above and not be a slave of the flesh, but to return to his nature and become a natural man. A natural man is not one who likes to live in nature, but one who has acquired the first-formed beauty. That is, the Saint who has been regenerated by the Grace of God, having struggled spiritually, and returned to the condition of the First-Formed in Paradise or even higher, after being united with Christ.

Hopefully we also will be made worthy to become natural people. (*from johnsanidopoulos.com*)

### **On the Presentation of the Lord in the Temple**

Prooimion 1 - Let the choirs of angels stand awestruck at the miracle of the Presentation. We mortals shall raise our voices in a hymn of praise, as we behold the ineffable descent of God into our midst. The powers of the heavens tremble before him whom Simeon now cradles in his aged arms – the only Lord of Compassion.

Prooimion II – Lord, you became flesh by a virgin for our salvation and were cradled as an infant in the arms of a temple-elder. Now raise on high the majesty of our faithful emperor and his wife. Word of God, bolster them with your divine power, and glorify their hallowed reign, for you are the only Lord of Compassion.

Prooimion III – Once you sanctified a virgin's womb by your birth and graciously blessed the arms of Simeon, even now you have come in time to redeem us, Christ

the Lord. Grant peace to our war-torn realm and protect your beloved pair, for you are the only Lord of Compassion.

Let us rush before the Mother of God, if we wish to watch her Son entrusted to the arms of Simeon. When the heavenly spirits beheld that sight, they cried out in awe: “We are witnesses to a stupendous miracle, incomprehensible, ineffable. The one who created Adam is being carried like an infant; the infinite Lord is encompassed by the grasp of a temple-elder. The one who lives eternally in the infinite bosom of the Father is willingly molded in human flesh, his divinity unbound, for he is the only Lord of Compassion.”

Those were the angels' cries. Then they invisibly bowed to adore the Lord and to bless the human race, because the one borne on the shoulders of cherubim had begun to live with mortals. He whom angels dare not approach now welcomes humans into his presence. The Creator supports and protects the universe; he who forms human offspring in their mothers' wombs is miraculously born to a Virgin – and yet remains one God, eternally present with the Father and the Holy Spirit, for he is the only Lord of Compassion.

The angels sang these hymns of praise to the compassionate Lord, while Mary carried him cradled in her arms. She pondered the mystery: how she became a mother, yet remained a virgin. Mary knew this birth was supernatural; she trembled and shuddered, mulling these silent words of wonder: “How shall I address you, my dear Son? Even as my eyes tell me to call you human, you surpass all humans. You guarded my immaculate virginity, for you are the only Lord of Compassion.”

“Shall I call you totally human, knowing your conception was divine? No mere mortal ever was conceived without human union and man's seed – but you were, my flawless Lord. Shall I call you divine, when I gasp to see that you are like me in every way? Not even in one respect do you seem different from other men, even though you were conceived and born without stain. Shall my breasts nurse you, or my lips glorify you? These signs mark you as eternal God, even if you are now a man, for you are the only Lord of Compassion.”

And so the Lord was carried into the temple, with burnt offerings, as the gospel says. Then the venerable Simeon took him from his mother's arms. Joy and fear gripped this holy man; for, with the eyes of his soul, he beheld the ranks of archangels and angels standing near in awe and glorifying Christ. Then Simeon cried out in silent prayer: “Protect me, Lord. Do not let the flame of your divinity consume me, for you are the only Lord of Compassion.”

“Though an old man, I surge with strength to see your redemption. You are the totally perfect projection of the inconceivable being of the Father, the

unapproachable beacon of God. You are the unalterable medallion of divinity, the gleaming signal of glory which floods men's souls with beams of truth. You existed before time began and created the universe. Your light dazzles, the light of your Father, unquenchable, boundless, incomprehensible – even if you are now man, for you are the only Lord of Compassion.”

“Kind and compassionate Lord, once you accepted the offerings of Abel and those of other just men. To whom can you offer sacrifice or burnt gifts, All-holy One? I know there is no one greater than you, Incomprehensible Lord. Even your Father is, in essence, exactly equal to you: you are consubstantial and coeternal with him. However, to prove that you truly are what you have become, and to keep your own commandments, you present these offerings – for you are the only Lord of Compassion.”

“All-holy Son of Mary, you are the Son of Power and Glory, whom the almighty Father miraculously sired: I call you one person, visible and invisible, finite and infinite. I acknowledge and proclaim you as the Father's Son on earth the eternal son of God. And above all the laws of nature, you are also the Virgin's Son. And so, I am bold enough to hold you like a blazing lamp. Whatever man carries this lamp is filled with light, not scorched. Let your light fall upon me, my Unquenchable Lamp – for you are the only Lord of Compassion.”

Hearing this, the Immaculate Virgin stepped aside in wonder. Then the temple-elder addressed her: “Every prophet has heralded your Son, conceived without seed of man. In his vision of the sanctuary, Ezekiel spoke about you and proclaimed this miracle. Mother of God, you are the 'locked gate.' For through you the Lord came in and went out; and the gate of your virginity was not opened, nor was it moved. He alone passed through it and he left it sealed, for he is the only Lord of Compassion.”

“All-holy, flawless Virgin, my prophecy now reveals all to you. Your son is destined for the rise and the fall of many. He is the life, the redemption, and the resurrection of all men; He has not been born so that some might fall, and others rise. The All-merciful Lord does not rejoice in the fall of any man, nor do I mean that those who stand in grace shall fall. Rather, the Lord is here eager to raise those who have fallen, to redeem his own creatures from death, for he is the only Lord of Compassion.”

“That 'fall and rise' is a paradox, posed to the just, in the radiating light of grace. Those who stand shall fall through sin and appear to lie dead; then, saved by grace, they shall rise in justice and faith. The passions of their flesh will be purified and banished; the virtues which lead to God will shine in their souls. When lust completely falls away, self-control will stand firm. He lays low what corrupts, and raises up what glorifies – for he is the only Lord of Compassion.”

“Inspired by Christ, I warn you that there will come to be a sign of contradiction. This sign is the cross which the lawless will erect for the Lord. Some will hail the crucified Christ as god; others will call him a mere mortal. There will be doctrines true and heretical: for one faction his body will be 'heavenly'; for another it will be a 'phantom'; for some, it will have no soul, even though he is the only Lord of Compassion.”

“O Immaculate Mother, this mystery of contradiction is so deep that confusion will creep even into your mind, when you see you Son nailed to that cross, although you remember the angel's annunciation, the Lord's divine conception, and all his incredible miracles, still you will waver. The pain of suffering will pierce you like a sword, but the Lord will swiftly cure your wounded heart and give his disciples perpetual peace – for he is the only Lord of Compassion.“

After holy Simeon had spoken those words to the Lord's sinless mother, he cried out to the infant Christ: “Now that I have seen you, Lord, allow your servant to go in peace. O life without compare, send me into life without end, since you made that promise before you came into the world. Word of God, fulfill the letter of your words to me: send me to Abraham's bosom, to my forefathers, All-holy Lord. Do not hesitate. Release me from my mortal cares, for you are the only Lord of Compassion.“

“O Lord, Lord, though life is packed with pain, the world passes away and our time obviously comes to its end. For this reason you delivered all your faithful from their mortal cares. Lord, you promised that Enoch and Elijah would not taste death, and granted that they were miraculously removed from earth to live in light-gardens of angelic ease. My Creator, deliver me from the grasp of time and accept my soul. Number me in the ranks of your holy ones, because you are the only Lord of Compassion.”

“In your mercy you have become the life and resurrection of all men. O Lord, now deliver me from this mortal life, and, Incorruptible One, escort me into the life of incorruptibility. Hand my body, like the bodies of all whom you love, over to death of the flesh, but, merciful Lord, grant me the eternal life of the spirit. As I was worthy of seeing you and holding you in the flesh, so may I behold you in glory with the Father and the Holy Spirit. You remain there in heaven, even though you have come to earth, because you are the only Lord of Compassion.“

The King of Heavenly Powers accepted this prayer of his just servant and spoke in secret to Simeon: “Now I release you from this world, my dear servant, and take you to the world without end. I send you into the presence of Moses and the other prophets to deliver this good news to them: The one whom they spoke about long ago has now become flesh. I have been born of a virgin, must as they proclaimed.

I have shown myself to those on earth and live among men. When I have redeemed all men, I shall soon be with you in heaven, for I am the only Lord of Compassion.”

All-holy, Ever-patient Lord, our life and salvation, source of all mercy, we lie at your feet. Look down from heaven; watch over all of us who totally rely on you. Lord, deliver our lives from every pain and every tribulation. Guide us all on the paths of the true faith, through the prayers of the Immaculate Virgin, Mother of God. Save this world and preserve all those who live in it. You did not change, yet you became a man for all of us, since you are the only Lord of Compassion.

- St. Romanos the Melodist, *Kontakion O.4*

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

Brethren, as God’s elect, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with a heart of compassion, kindness, lowliness, humility, and perseverance. Bear with one another, and forgive each other! If anyone has a complaint against anyone else, forgive, even as Christ forgave you.

Above all, walk in love, which is the bond of perfection. Let the peace of God (to which also you were called in one body) rule in your hearts, and be thankful! Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly. In all wisdom, teach and admonish each other with psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your heart to the Lord.

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

The Lord said, “the Kingdom is like a man who was leaving for another country. He called his own servants and entrusted his goods to them. To one he gave five talents, to another two, to another one; to each according to his own ability. Then he went on his journey. Immediately, the one who received five talents went off, did business with them and earned another five talents. In the same way, the one who had received two gained another two. But the servant who received one talent went off, dug [a hole] in the ground and hid his lord’s money.

After a long time, the lord of those servants returned and settled accounts with them. The one who had received the five talents came forward and brought another five talents, saying: ‘Lord, you delivered to me five talents. Behold, I have gained another five!’

The lord said to the servant, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful over a few things, I will set you over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord!’

The one who had received the two talents also came forward and said, ‘Lord, you entrusted me with two talents. Behold, I have gained another two talents!’

The lord said to this servant, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful over a few things, I will set you over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord!’

The one who had received one talent now came forward and said, ‘Lord, I knew a you that you are a hard man, reaping where you did not sow, and gathering where you did not scatter. I was afraid! I went away and hid your talent in the earth. Behold, you have what is yours!’

But his lord answered, ‘You wicked and lazy servant! You understood that I reap where I did not sow, and that I gather where I did not scatter. And so, you should have deposited my money with the bankers, and at my coming, I would have received it back with interest. Therefore, take away the talent from this one, and give it to the one who has the ten talents. For to everyone who has, [more] will be given and he will have in abundance. But from the one who does not have, even what he has will be taken away. Throw out the unprofitable servant into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’”

## A Word From the Holy Fathers

Whence is it that evil thoughts come forth from the heart, and defile a man? Doubtless, because the laborers are asleep who should be keeping watch, so as to safeguard and preserve the fruits of good seed that is growing up. For unless we have weakened in our vigilance, by gluttony and by sloth, defiling the divine image, that is, corrupting the good seed, the sower of tares [the devil] would not have found a way to creep up on us, nor would he have sown within us tares worthy of the fire; that is, “evil thoughts which come forth from the heart and which defile a man”.

“Do you want us to go and gather it up?” Thus speak the Angels, ever prepared with eager devotion to serve the divine will, as they see our inactivity and sloth, and the infinite forbearance of God. But they are forbidden, lest they uproot the good wheat together with the tares, that is, so that the sinner may not be cut off while in his mind there is yet a possibility of repentance; lest innocent children be destroyed together with their parents, who though perhaps yet in their parents’ loins, nevertheless with God, who sees all things, they already are.

For the ranks of the Angels, fellow servants of creation, do not know the things that do not yet exist. But God both knows and has wrought because of these very circumstances. For He did not cut off the evil-doing Esau, who had not yet



begotten; lest together with him Job might also perish, who from him took descent. Nor did he slay Matthew, who had given himself to the exacting of the tribute, so that He might not thus impede the preaching of the gospel. Neither did He destroy the harlots who served lust and immodesty, lest models of repentance might be wanting. He did not avenge Peter's denial, because already He beheld his burning tears of repentance. Nor did he strike down with death the persecuting Saul, lest the ends of the earth be deprived of salvation.

All tares therefore that await the time of the harvest, and do not change themselves into fruits of repentance, are being made ready for the great fire, since they have flowered wholly into fruitlessness. But those whose roots are deep, whose ears of corn are abundant, who are bending over at harvest time with the weight of fruit and all but calling for the sickle of the harvesters, these Christ orders to be carried by the Angels to the heavenly seats, to share their joy, to reign with Him, and be sharers of His immortal happiness, who with the Father and the Holy Spirit lives and reigns world without end. Amen.

– St. Isidore of Pelusium, *Commentary on Mat. 15:19*

## **The Mystery of Marriage**

Metropolitan Hierotheos of Nafpaktos and Agiou Vlasiou

The Church, my beloved brethren, is interested in all the moments of human life and blesses all the actions of man and of course also marriage, through which the family develops and life is perpetuated, but also becomes the vestibule of the Kingdom of God.

Marriage, that is, the communion of a man and a woman which results in the birth of children, was blessed twice by God. The first time was immediately after the creation of Eve. The Old Testament says that God blessed them and said: "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth" (Gen. 1:28). Of course, according to the interpretation of the Fathers, God blessed the couple at that time, gave the opportunity for children to come from the couple, but this took place after the fall of the couple. The way people are born today is the fruit and result of the fall. The second time God blesses marriage is during the mystery of marriage. Precisely because the fall of Adam and Eve preceded it, for this reason marriage must pass within the Church and be blessed, because the world outside the Church is the world of the fall and decay. After all, Christ performed His first miracle at the wedding in Cana, where He blessed the water and turned it into wine, and this shows that Christ transforms biological union into a blessed relationship.

The purpose of marriage, as it is clearly seen in the mystery of marriage, is twofold, according to Saint John Chrysostom: "For moderation of life and to

become a parent." The first purpose is moderation. If one cannot follow the path of virginity, as the Apostles and the ascetics did, one can acquire the virtue of moderation, through which sin and the passion of lust are cured in various ways. The second purpose of marriage is the birth of children, which is the result of the love of spouses and which children not only perpetuate life, but can become members of the Church and saints. That is why marriage is called the parent of saints. Parents do not aim only at the perpetuation of life, but at the emergence of saints.

The mystery of marriage has wonderful blessings, which show the purpose of marriage, as defined by the Church. It even has many symbolic events and acts, such as the ring, the crown, the wedding dress, the candles, the chalice, etc. Each of them has an exalted and deep symbolic meaning and great significance. I would like to dwell on one of them.

At the end of the ceremony, the so-called Dance of Isaiah takes place and along with other hymns, the following hymn is chanted: "O Holy Martyrs, who have contested well and have been crowned, intercede with the Lord, that mercy be granted to our souls." In fact, during the dance the priest precedes holding the holy Gospel. This means that the steps of the couple's life will be a martyrdom, which is why we refer to the intercessions of the holy martyrs. In order for the couple to walk this path successfully, it is necessary for the spiritual father to precede, who will guide them with the holy Gospel, that is, with the commandments of Christ. After all, in all things the existence of a specialist is required. For sports we need a coach and a referee, for the acquisition of human knowledge the scientist, the teacher, the professor is necessary. The medical physician is necessary for the treatment of physical ailments. In the same way, in marriage, the spiritual father is necessary, who will guide them with discernment, wisely, with a spirit of wisdom and discernment, without abolishing their freedom.

The help of the spiritual father is not limited or reduced to some details of the conjugal life, but mainly to how the marriage will be connected with the mystery of the Eucharist and will draw strength and illumination from it. After all, all the mysteries are intended to lead people to the divine Eucharist, to the divine Communion, since the mystery of the Eucharist is the center and purpose of all the mysteries. Without Christ nothing has value. With Christ, all things and all moments and aspects of human life take on meaning and purpose. The love of a couple must be inspired by Christ's love for the Church, and the difficulties and martyrdom of marriage must be strengthened by Christ's outpouring and sacrificial offering.

Also, the spiritual father tries to lead the love of the spouses and in general the whole family life towards spiritual love and the life of the spiritual marriage, of the Kingdom of God, as many parables that Christ said emphasize. Through the perspective of the Kingdom of God and in the spirit of the divine Eucharist, marriage acquires meaning and purpose. How this will be done is a matter of the disposition of the couple, but also of the spiritual father's wisdom.

Let us pray and strive for our lives to be sanctified by the mysteries of the Church, especially by the Kingdom of God itself. *(from johnsanidopoulos.com)*

### **Virgin-martyr Rafaela of Spaso-Vlahernsky Monastery**

Martyr Rafaela was born in 1887 in the village of Vylyatovo, Novogrudskoe uyezd, Minsk province, in the family of a peasant, Arkhip Vyshnyakov, and was baptized Marina. When she turned nineteen years old, she entered a women's monastery in the Grodno province; during the First World War, the monastery was evacuated to the depths of Russia, and Marina settled in the Spaso-Vlahernsky Monastery in the Moscow province. It is not known when she received the monastic tonsure, but she was already tonsured in the scheme with the name of Raphaela during the time of persecution under Soviet power. She did not have a fixed place of residence, living for a long time with believers and nuns.

On January 21, 1938, the Shymon nun Rafaela was arrested together with a large group of monks of the Trinity-Sergius Lavra and believers and imprisoned in Butyrskaya prison in Moscow. On the same day, the investigator interrogated the nun. The first thing that interested the investigator was where and with what means she lives. The nun Rafaela answered that she does not have a specific place of residence and lives on donations. The investigator demanded to know with whom she stayed while living in Moscow - the nun replied that she would not answer this question.

During the arrest, the NKVD officers photographed her in a monastic habit, which they considered sufficient evidence of her criminal activity, and the investigator did not ask her whether she recognized herself as guilty.

The on-duty witnesses called for questioning showed that the nun Raphaela is hostile to Soviet power, that she visits holy places all the time and conducts a lot of anti-Soviet work, that the nun said that it was God, punishing the people for their sins, who sent him an ungodly power, but He has mercy - there will be a war, this antichrist power will be cleansed by fire; the witnesses also showed that the nun engaged in predictions, proving the inevitable demise of Soviet power. The nun Rafaela "lives illegally without a passport, goes to Moscow churches... spreads... rumors... about the alleged persecution of religion, clergy, monks, and believers in the USSR. Yes, she said in the Church of the Sign in Krestovsky Zastava that the

Soviet power is the power of the antichrist, persecuting religion, breaking shrines, and innocently arresting the clergy and monks and sending them to remote places in Russia, where they are tortured." During the voting for the Supreme Council, she told her admirers: "Do not vote for antichrists who only know how to destroy the Orthodox faith."

On February 14, 1938, the troika of the NKVD sentenced the nun Rafaela to be shot. The nun Rafaela (Vyshniakova) was shot on February 17, 1938 and buried in an unmarked mass grave at the Butovo training ground near Moscow. ([from www.newmartyros-ru](http://www.newmartyros-ru))

## **Also Commemorated Today**

St. George, prince of Vladimir (1238).

Venerable Cyril, abbot, wonderworker of New Lake (Novgorod) (1532).

New Hieromartyr [Methodius](#) bishop of Petropavlovsk (1921).(old calendar)

New Hieromartyrs Eustaphius, John, Alexander, Sergius, John, Theodora, Aleksander, Nicholas, Alexis, Nicholas, Alexis, Alexander, Arcadius, Boris, Michael, Nicholas, Alexis, Andrew, Demetrius, John, Peter priests, Martyr Seraphim, Virgin-martyrs Rafaila, Anna, Catherine, and Martyrs John, Basil, Demetrius, Theodore, and Demetrius (1938).

Venerable Abraham and St. Coprius, monks, of Pechenga (Vologda) (15th c.).

Martyrs Jadorus (Jader, bishop) and Isidore who suffered under Decius (249-251).

Hieromartyr Abramius, bishop of Arbela in Assyria (ca. 344-347).

Venerable Nicholas the Confessor, abbot of the Studion (868), w/w.

St. John, Bishop of Irenopolis (325).

Venerable Aldate, hieromartyr of Gloucester, England (6th c.) (Celtic & British).

St. Modan, abbot of Stirling and Falkirk. (6<sup>th</sup> c.)

Martyr Theoctistus (1686) (Greek).

St. Jasim the Wonderworker (1686) (Greek).

New Martyr Joseph of Aleppo (1686) (Greek).

Hieromartyr Phileas, bishop of Thmuis & martyr Philoromus the Magistrate (303).

St. Evagrius, fellow-ascetic of St. Shio of Mgvime (6th c.) (Georgia).

St. Liephard of England, Bishop and Martyr (649)

Martyrs Aquilinus, Geminus, Gelasius, Magnus & Donatus of Fossombrone (3<sup>rd</sup> c.) (Italy)

St. Aventinus, Bishop of Chartres (c. 520) (Gaul)

St. Eutychius, martyr in Rome (4<sup>th</sup> c.)

St. Nithard of Corbie, monk-martyr and missionary to Sweden (845) (Germany)

+St. Rembert, bishop of Hamburg-Bremen (888) (Germany)

St. Vincent of Troyes, bishop (c. 546) (Gaul)

St. Vulgis of Lobbes, Bishop and abbot (c. 760) (Belgium)

St. Aventine of Troyes, priest-monk (538) (Brittany)  
St. Mogenoc, Bishop of Cill Duma Glyn (5<sup>th</sup> c.)  
St. Kido (unk) (Brittany)

## **Social Team for February 11**

Team 4 is up next week – Carol V., Katie Matthews, Joseph Frey. Thank you!

## **Upcoming Conference**

The Institute for the Study of Eastern Christianity at The Catholic University of America is hosting a two day conference on the topic: **Ascetic Practices and the Mind: Mental Healing in Eastern Christianity.**

It will take place at The Catholic University of America on 1-2 March 2024 (Great Room B in the Pryzbyla Center).

This is a conference exploring the early Christian and Byzantine traditions of monastic training in dialogue with current medical therapies derived from neurological research and therapeutic practice and will be a fascinating dialogue between theology and science. Speakers include Athonite monks, theologians, and psychologists. The program includes a prayer clinic and an iconography clinic. For more information and registration directions, see <https://trs.catholic.edu/lectures-and-events/ascetic-practices-and-the-mind/index.html>

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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, Anna Meinhold, 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 & the Holy Land, and those in need of our prayers. (Please advise Fr. Joseph of changes.)