

SOBORNOST

St. Thomas the Apostle Orthodox Church

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American Carpatho-Russian Orthodox Diocese

*ECUMENICAL PATRIARCHATE
OF CONSTANTINOPLE*

SERVICES

Wed: Reader Vespers 6:30 PM

Saturday: Vespers 5 PM

Sunday: Matins 8:45 AM

Divine Liturgy 10 AM

June 30, 2024 – 2nd Sunday After Pentecost

Synaxis of All Saints of Carpatho-Rus

By Rev. Fr. Marc Wisnosky, Ph.D.

In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Glory to Jesus Christ!

On the Second Sunday after Pentecost, the Church remembers local saints, and regionally important saints. We might say “our saints.” +Metropolitan Nicholas of thrice-blessed memory declared this Sunday to be that of the Saints of Carpatho-Rus’, and had this icon painted honoring them. The saints represent many different periods in the history of the Rusyn people: the conversion by Sts. Cyril and Methodius, kings of old, bishops and monks, and priests from the 19th century and modern times.

Where we come from is important to who we are today, and we try to honor our forefathers while also recognizing that most of us are thoroughly American. We don’t often commemorate Carpatho-Russian saints, but other jurisdictions are still very attached to their homeland: the Ukrainian Orthodox in the United States embody a kind of Ukrainian-ness, and the Greek Orthodox can be very ethnically-focused.



Our Carpatho-Russian Orthodox Diocese, however, is not very ethnic, in this sense, even though the founders of our churches came from areas in and around the Carpathian Mountains. Most who came to the US in the late 1800s and early 1900s were Greek Catholic, and that name has stuck. We are officially St. John the Baptist Greek Catholic Orthodox Church. Why “Greek Catholic?” In the old country, the Austro-Hungarian government recognized those Catholics who used Latin as “Latin-Rite” Catholics, and those who used the Greek way of worship as “Greek Catholics.”

But the term “Greek Catholic” is being used here in our name as a synonym for Carpatho-Russian or Rusyn. Many of those Greek Catholics who founded our churches came from towns that were, at the time, part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. The Carpatho-Russians have been ruled by Hungarians on and off since the 7th or 8th century, but when they came to the US, if they attended a Greek Catholic Church, it was probably mixed with other kinds of Greek Catholics – the other major group being the Galicians, who we now call Ukrainian Catholics. John Righetti will tell you that when this church was founded, the deal was that if the priest was Ukrainian, then the cantor was Rusyn, and vice versa. But in 1916, the Pope split the Greek Catholics in the US into two separate groups: one for the faithful who came from the ecclesiastical province of Lviv-Halych, or Galicia and Bukovina – who are now called Ukrainian Catholics, and the other for those whose origin was in some part of the kingdoms then called Hungary and Croatia, so areas of Transcarpathia, including Prešov in Slovakia and Uzhorod in modern-day Ukraine, who are now called Byzantine Catholics in the US. Our founders came mostly from what became the Byzantine Catholic Church.

The founders of the diocese realized that the people were American first, and Rusyn second. But even so, we remember the saints who came from the lands of Carpatho-Rus’, some of whom made it here to the USA. One of these saints is St. Alexis of Wilkes-Barre. He was a married Greek Catholic priest from the Prešov diocese who came to serve a parish in Minnesota after his wife died. He was met with so much hostility by the local Roman Catholic bishop, Bishop John Ireland, that he converted to the Russian Orthodox Church, taking his entire congregation with him. He was instrumental in evangelizing many Greek Catholics in the early 20th century, and it is said he brought 20,000 Eastern Rite Catholics back into Orthodoxy. He died in 1909.

But today, while our diocese and our parish have this ethnic Carpatho-Russian distinction, we are thoroughly American. Our parishes and clergy are made up of many converts from other faith traditions, and most of them are not Rusyn. Our bishop is Greek. My own family on my father’s side attended a Polish Roman Catholic Church, but I’ve since discovered that my great-grandparents immigrated

from Russia and Austria, not Poland, and I think 3 out of 4 of them were Greek Catholics. But in the US, the Roman Catholic Church proved stronger, so much of my family identified as Polish, even though their names were thoroughly Ukrainian and Rusyn.

This is to say that the Church is larger than national boundaries or ethnic identity. And while I agree that remembering and embracing our heritage is very important, it should not be the thing that brings us to Church every Sunday. Rather, we come to worship God and offer praise and sacrifice. We do this in the Greek manner that our forefathers brought with them from Austria-Hungary, Ukraine, Transcarpathia, Poland, and other places. We sing the hymns and melodies born from the Carpathian Mountains, our beautiful Plain Chant – the prostopinije. We work to hang on to our traditions, such as Christmas Holy Supper and our catalog of devotional hymns. Our traditions and our singing is unique to us and they serve to complement and add further beauty to those Traditions and customs the Church has handed down to us from the time of the Apostles. The Orthodox faith has been handed down from generation to generation since the Rusyn people received Christianity from St. Methodius. The saints of Carpatho-Rus’ shared this same faith, they preserved it, often with their lives, so that today, more than one thousand one-hundred years later, we still sing, joyfully, “We have seen the true light. We have received the heavenly Spirit. We have found the true faith. We adore the undivided Holy Trinity, Who has saved us.”

In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Glory to Jesus Christ! (*from orthodoxambridge.org*)

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

Brethren, glory, honor, and peace are for everyone who does good; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek, because there is no partiality with God. Hence, all those who have sinned apart from the law will also perish without the law, and as many as 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 will be declared righteous. (Indeed, when Gentiles who do not have the law do by nature the things of the law, they are a law to themselves, even though they do not have the law, by showing that the practical expression of the law is written in their hearts. Their conscience bears witness, and their thoughts alternately accuse or defend them). This is for the day when, according to my proclamation of the gospel, God, through Jesus Christ, will judge the secret thoughts of all.

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

At that time, walking by the sea of Galilee, Jesus saw two brothers: Simon who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother. They were casting a net into the sea since they were fishermen. He said to them, "Come after me, and I will make you fish for people!" Immediately, they left their nets and followed him. Going on from there, he saw two other brothers, James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother. They were in a boat with their father Zebedee, mending their nets. Jesus called them. At once, they left the boat and their father, and followed him. Jesus traveled throughout Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the Good News of the Kingdom, and healing all kinds of diseases and sickness among the people. His fame spread into all Syria, and they brought him all who were sick, afflicted with various diseases and torments, people possessed with demons, epileptics, and paralytics; and he healed them. Great crowds from Galilee, Decapolis, Jerusalem, Judea and from beyond the Jordan followed him.

A Word From the Holy Fathers

Prooimion I – O brothers, let us love the bridegroom, let us make ready our lamps, shining out with brightness and true faith, so that, like the wise virgins at the Lord's coming, we may arrive with Him at the marriage; for He, the Merciful, since He is God, offers to all as a gift the incorruptible crown.

Prooimion II – You, O God, the bridegroom of salvation, the hope of those who hymn You, grant to us who pray to You that we may be found unblemished at Your marriage feast and attain, like the virgins, the incorruptible crown.

Prooimion III – Now the time for virtues has appeared, and the Judge is at the doors. Let us not be dismayed, but let us go and fast, and let us offer tears, contrition and alms as we cry out, "We have sinned more than the sands of the sea; but grant, O Creator of all, that we, too, may have the incorruptible crown."

When I heard the sacred parable of the virgins which is in the gospels, I stopped, amazed, and pondered over my reflections: how was it that the ten possessed the virtue of immaculate virginity, and still for five virgins the suffering remained fruitless, whereas the others shone with lamps of humanity, with the result that the Bridegroom drew them to Him and led them in joy into the bridal chamber when He opened up the heavens and distributed to all the just the incorruptible crowns?

Shall we, then, seek out the grace and the way of life of the Holy Scriptures, for it is for all men the guide for undying hope, just as indeed all inspired scripture has been ordained as helpful? Let us then fall down before Christ, the Savior, and cry with fervor, "King of kings, Friend of man, give knowledge to all. Guide us to

Your commandments in order that we may know the way to the Kingdom, for we are eager to follow it in order that we may have the incorruptible crown.”

Through this faith and assurance, most of mankind are eager to attain the Kingdom of God, and it is for this reason that they press on to guard the virtue of virginity. Also, they practice fasting, the greatest good work in life. They persevere in their prayers and guard the dogma undefiled. But charity is wanting in them, and for this reason all is in vain; for every one of us who does not have mercy does not receive the incorruptible crown.

Men sailing [on the sea of life], though all is prepared, will never achieve a straight course in the sea if they lose the sail; for then the ship is checked in its course and remains idle, since it is not obedient to the skill of the pilot nor to the helm. In the same way, even if they heap up the cargo with every virtue but are devoid of mercy, all of those hastening to the Kingdom will not anchor in the harbor of heaven, and will not possess the incorruptible crown.

Since the Judge of all considered the giving of alms better than all other virtues, He has given to men the teaching of this parable. He in His wisdom called wise the five virgins who brought their oil, and He called foolish those who came to the end of their journey without oil. Also, we have heard Matthew as he pointed out the meaning of this. I think it pointless to go back over his words for those who know the Scriptures; and so, let us get to the point of this parable in order that we may have the incorruptible crown.

The teaching of this parable is full of significance; it is the guide and path for all of us to humility and mercy for all men. It controls kings and teaches compassion to the leaders of the people. Indeed, if anyone builds and furnishes a splendid house, unless he puts a roof over it, his effort is in vain. Just so, the one who has built an edifice of virtues, unless he has erected over them a roof of compassion, has lost his labor, and so does not attain the incorruptible crown.

We are able to see the meaning of this divine Scripture if we raise up watchful eyes of intelligence to Christ. Let us expect to see with spiritual eyes the universal resurrection of Christ, the Savior, appearing as King of all, the one now King, Lord, and Master. And even if some rebel refuses to recognize Him, the flame of the fire will act as a smelter for all men [*referring to 1 Cor. 3:12-15 – Ed.*], for no will be able to resist [*Phi. 2:9-11*] when he obtains the incorruptible crown.

For we all know that the voice of the trumpet will suddenly, as the angel sounds it, raise up the dead who through the centuries awaited Christ, the beautiful Bridegroom, the Son of God, our eternal God. When the cry suddenly sounds, all will be present, and those who are ready with their lamps filled with oil will enter

at once with the Bridegroom as inheritors of the Kingdom of Heaven. For then their faith, along with works, will justly give them the incorruptible crown.

Alms-giving surpasses other virtues; in truth it stands out as more brilliant than all virtues in the sight of God. It cleaves the air; it surpasses the sun and moon; it arrives without wandering at the entrance of the celestial world; and even there it does not stop but goes up to the angels; it passes over the choirs of archangels; it intercedes before God on behalf of man; it stands before the throne of the King, beseeching Him for the incorruptible crown.

Shall we not, then, consider the five very wise ones arising from sleep as from a nuptial couch and not from the tomb of the dead? For they had oil, and at once they equipped the lamps of the spirit; but the others likewise awoke suddenly with them, with faces gloomy and despondent, for their lamps were put out, and their vessels appeared empty. They tried to get oil from the prudent ones who had acquired the incorruptible crown.

The wise virgins, in their reply, said to the foolish ones, "Is what we have in the world enough for us and for all of you? Indeed, we do not feel reassured, nor do we have a sure guarantee of the outcome. For, indeed, the entire group of the just remains in suspense; there is fear of the Judgment, of the secret decision of the tribunal, until the time when the last decision will be made public and will free them from slavery, for He who distributes mercy, the Creator, is the One who gives the incorruptible crown."

In exact terms, the wise virgins spoke: "Go and ask the merchants who sell oil, if you can still purchase oil at this time." The others are self-deceived, as foolish ones always are, and they hasten to make the purchase. Since the appropriate time for such business was over for everyone, it had slipped by and set a limit to the fruitless course of the foolish virgins. It called attention to their confusion at the time, and clearly put their clamor to shame. For they were asking the impossible and they were not sensible; and so, they did not gain the incorruptible crown.

When they recognized the folly of their course, the five at last turned around; and they found the bridal chamber of Christ closed, and all of them - with mournful voices - cried out with groans and tears, "O Immortal One, open up the door of Your mercy to us also, who have served Your power in virginity." Then the King cried to them, "The Kingdom is not open to you. I do not know you. Depart from our midst, for you do not carry the incorruptible crown."

But once the five heard Christ, the King of all men, crying to them, "I do not know who you are," they were overcome with trouble. As they wept, they cried out, "O most just Judge, we have guarded virginity. We have practiced self-control of every sort. We have observed feast days zealously. We have conquered the flame

of the fire of licentiousness, and we have gained this end. We have always lived a pure life, in order that we too might have the incorruptible crown.”

“But after these virtues and the grace of virginity, and after trampling down the fire of lust and the flame of voluptuousness, after many struggles, when we emulated the life of those in Heaven – for we strove to have the kind of life of the immortal ones – all these things of such great importance, as it seems, have been found without merit. We have shown the struggle for great virtue, and all of our hope has been shown to be in vain. Why, then, do You pretend ignorance of us – for You offer to all, to all whom You desire to offer it, the incorruptible crown?”

“O Savior, nod acquiescence. Open Your door to us too, for You are the only just Judge. Receive into Your bridal chamber Your virgins, O Redeemer, Christ, and do not turn away Your face from those who invoke You, so that we may not be deprived of Your immortal grace, and so that we may not face shame and disgrace before the angels. And do not ever permit us to stand outside Your bridal chamber, O Christ. They have not practiced chastity any more than we have, those to whom You offer the incorruptible crown.”

Christ spoke as follows to the foolish virgins who were speaking to the Judge of all: “The judgment set out just now is just and in line with truth; the door of mercy is no longer open to men, since – indeed – the time for repentance is no more given to men down on earth. He Who was merciful a short time ago is no longer sympathetic, but the Merciful One is a severe Judge. You were lacking in charity in the world; how can you ask for the incorruptible crown?”

“I am going to tell you plainly in the presence of all the archangels and all the saints the treatment I received from those who entered with Me: They found me in trouble and exceedingly hungry, and they hastened to give me nourishment; again, when I was thirsty, they gave me to drink with all haste; when they saw me, a stranger, they took me in as though a close friend; when I was held in chains, they cared for me; they visited me when I was sick; They scrupulously kept each of My commandments, with the result that they have found the incorruptible crown.”

“You did nothing such as this in the world. You have kept the fasts; you have kept virginity; and – in words – you have kept virtue. But without completely reverent works, you have worked in vain. You have ignored strangers in need, and the sick; you have not stretched out a helping hand to the hungry. Hypocrisy alone has nourished you; always you honored harshness. In no way did you aid the poor who knocked at your door. How then do you seek the incorruptible crown?”

“Never have you given yourself to the point of giving pity for the naked and the newcomers, and you did not receive strangers under your roof. You presented deaf ears to those who were miserably in chains and under guard. You did not see those

who were ill; you did not look with pleasant face on those begging in poverty and need. But you were always lacking in humanity, and you had pride rather than compassion. How, then, when you have done these things in your life, do you now ask for the incorruptible crown?”

“You looked on all people with haughty eyes; you scorned the poor; to all of them you were without sympathy – without pity. You moved harshly against sinners: those who made a mistake every day. You have an attitude of inhumanity toward those of your kind, as though you never made a false move, bragging of your uprightness. Again, you considered those who did not fast as rejected, and those who were married as loathsome. Only yourselves did you consider righteous, although you had not received the incorruptible crown.”

“You practiced fasting without touching nourishment; but towards men, you made use of scorn and calumny. You did have chastity, but it was not pure; for you smeared it everyday with uncleanness of words. What is the value of pompous virtue, if it does not have every thought completely holy? Of what value is it for someone to eat and drink and lead her life wisely, if indeed she fasts and harms those who do not fast? For how would she claim the incorruptible crown?”

“Fasting is not edifying, unless it has the power to remove all of the thoughts that are disgusting and the acts that are cruel; nor can self-control be strengthened in the flesh, if one spends one's life with no command of self. For there is a foundation stone of fasting, and in protection from danger it is necessary that it be placed as security – as in building a house. Compassion makes it shine, and piety also enriches it. For these virtues guard it on all sides like a rampart, and procure for it the incorruptible crown.”

“To what end, therefore, have fasting and chastity, along with vanity, helped you? You have denied gentleness, always you have loved anger; but I, Who am meek, love the meek – granting them pardon. I deny those who have kept fasting but without mercy, and prefer to receive those who eat but are full of mercy. I hate virgins who are without humanity, but I honor those who are married and who love mankind. Marriage with self-control is precious; hence, it obtains the incorruptible crown.”

“I have not sharpened a sword against sinners, but I had a gentle glance for men; I am the Maker of men. I received kindly the weeping harlot [Luke 7:37-50] and gave her pardon. I took pity on the tax-gatherer as he lamented, and I did not reject him [Luke 18:10-14]; since I saw the true repentance that lived in him. As Creator, I have shown Myself compassionate toward all. I took pity on Peter who had denied Me [Matthew 26:75]; I felt compassion for his tears when he sought the incorruptible crown.”

“As for those who have entered with me into the marriage chamber, I say before all the world: They have zealously kept My commandments on earth. They have always been the protector of widows, and they have pitied orphans. They have had sympathy for those in grief and tribulation, and never have they closed their doors to the poor and to strangers. Always they ministered to those who were ill – whom you considered as people to be rejected. I do not know you. I deny those who are without humanity; but to these others, I shall give the incorruptible crown.”

The chorus of angels marveled on hearing Christ, the King, Who witnessed for the five who entered with Him. O freedom of the saints of Christ, their very great boast! Before all the people, they brought the verdict of immortality. And also, before these wise virgins, the others received their last sentence; and they mourn bitterly – with endless lamentation – when they see the chorus of saints possessing the liberty that comes from compassion – all of them carrying off the incorruptible crown.

Behold, therefore, these things are clearly revealed as to what calls men into the Kingdom. Then let us hasten to keep the commands of Christ. If we wish to buy it, the oil is on sale in the markets. Those who have it for sale are those in need of mercy; they sell it everyday. Why, then, are we negligent? Indeed, for two small coins we receive just as much as someone who has given a great deal of money. For the Creator of all examines our means and thus offers the incorruptible crown.

The commandment of God is not harsh, for He does not command what you do not have the means to give; but He asks for our purpose. You have only two coins in the world? You own nothing more? Then the All-Merciful One receives these, for He is the Master; and He will give you preference over the one who has given much. Or do you not even have a small coin to offer? Give a glass of cool water to the one in need. Christ receives it with gratitude, as He most assuredly gives you the incorruptible crown.

Taking a little, the Savior gives back to us a great deal; for in return for transitory things, He grants the joy of eternal life. Give a bit of bread, and you will receive a paradise of delights in return for it. Poverty will not harm you, or want, if you have patience. You will not be subject to an audit of accounts; do not seek it. For the least one will receive pardon, while the powerful will be held rigorously to account. Become generous [so] that you may find the Kingdom, and that you may receive the incorruptible crown.

Remit my sins, pardon me, Savior, condemned as I am by all men; for I do not do what I tell the people and advise them to do. And so, I fall down before You; grant me Your peace, Savior, and grant it to those who hear me, in order that we may keep Your commandments – all of them – in our lives. And let us not remain

groaning and crying outside the bridal chamber. Have pity on us with Your compassion, for You have always willed to save all men. Call us, O Savior, into Your Kingdom, in order that we may have the incorruptible crown.

– St. Romanos the Melodist, *Kontakion 47 “On the Ten Virgins”*

Venerable Thomas of Mount Maleon

*Spreading your wings, as Moses said, O Father, as an eagle you fly off towards the heavens. * On the seventh Thomas was seized from the sensible darkness of death.*

Saint Thomas of Mount Maleon was a successful military commander before he became a monk. Strong and brave, he had participated in many battles, and brought victory to his countrymen, for which he gained glory and esteem. But, striving with all his heart towards God, Thomas abandoned the world and its honors, and he took monastic vows.

With great humility he visited monastic Elders, asking for guidance in the spiritual life. After several years Thomas received the blessing for solitary wilderness life and, led by a pillar of fire at night by the holy Prophet Elias, whom he imitated in his way of life and zeal, he settled on Mount Maleon (Akra Maleas or Kavos Malias or Cape Maleas in southern Lakonia of the Peloponnese, otherwise known as the "Small Holy Mountain", with Mount Athos being the larger Holy Mountain). Dwelling in complete seclusion, Thomas fought with invisible enemies with as much courage as he had displayed against the visible enemies of his country.

On Mount Maleon Thomas lived a life of austerity, with prayer and vigils, and this caused him to become a light that vanquished the darkness of sin. The life and deeds of Thomas could not be concealed from the surrounding area. People began to flock to him seeking spiritual guidance, and even those suffering from sicknesses, since he received from God the blessing to heal infirmities.

By divine grace he wrought wonders, cast out demons, gave sight to the blind, caused springs of water to gush forth, healed many, and while in prayer appeared as a pillar of fire. The century in which he lived is not exactly known, though it is believed to have been the tenth century.

Many believers received help through the prayers of the holy monk. Even after his death, he does not cease to heal those who seek his aid, from every passion and sickness. (*from johnsanidopoulos.com*)

Saint Euphrosyne, in the world Eudokia, Grand Duchess of Moscow

The Holy Grand Duchess Eudokia was born in 1353. She was the daughter of the Suzdal prince Demetrius Constantovich (+ 1383) and his wife the princess Anna.

From infancy, brought up in the spirit of Christian piety, Eudokia was distinguished by a quiet, meek disposition.

In 1367, at the age of thirteen, she became the wife of the Moscow Great Prince Demetrius of the Don, who was fifteen. Their happy union was for Russia a pledge of unity and peace between Moscow and Suzdal. The affairs of Christian charity the princess and her husband combined with the exploits of fasting and prayer. Together they had eight sons and four daughters (one son died in infancy and two sons died as young children).

Saint Alexis, Metropolitan of Moscow, and even Saint Sergius of Radonezh, who baptized their eldest son Basil, had a great influence upon the spiritual life of Princess Eudokia. Saint Demetrius of Priluki (Feb. 11) was the godfather of another son.

Almost in the very year of the marriage of Prince Demetrius and Eudokia, a pestilence raged in Moscow, people died in the thousands, and weeping and lamentations of orphaned children were heard on Moscow's streets. Another disaster joined in - a terrible fire in Moscow. A sea of fire swept through the streets of the city, mercilessly devouring wooden buildings, houses, property, cattle burned, people perished. The groan and cry of the people reached the prince's tower, leaving their mark on the heart of the young princess - and then Eudokia showed herself to be the mother and patroness of destitute victims of fire, widows and orphans.

As soon as Moscow recovered from the ashes, in 1368 the Lithuanian prince Algerd besieged the Kremlin, in which the great prince and princess were shut, together with Metropolitan Alexy and the boyars. And Moscow burned again, again groans and screams of Moscow residents, beaten by the Lithuanians, were heard. All of Moscow was devastated. The young princess constantly prayed for her native land, and with all her might tried to alleviate the situation of the afflicted.

The building of churches and the foundation of the monasteries by the efforts of the Princess Eudokia contributed to the flourishing of Russian temple construction in the fourteenth century, which began with the construction of the church in honor of the Holy Trinity. In 1387 she founded the Ascension Convent in the Moscow Kremlin.

Gradually, the life of Princess Eudokia became a feat of self-denial and self-surrender entirely to the will of God. In 1383, the Great Prince of Moscow was to appear before the Tatar Khan Tokhtamysh. But due to Tokhtamysh's extreme bitterness, they decided to send to the Horde his eldest son Basil, who at that time was about thirteen years old. Saint Eudokia released her son and thereby

condemned herself to two years of suffering: Prince Basil was detained in the Horde as a hostage. Tokhtamysh, in addition to tribute, demanded a ransom for Basil - eight thousand rubles. The amount at that time was huge, and the ruined Moscow principality could not pay the full amount. Therefore, Basil had to live in captivity with the khan for two long years, after which he managed to escape. In 1389, Prince Demetrius, not reaching forty years old, dangerously fell ill and departed to the Lord. His son Basil succeeded him, though he and his brothers were to remain obedient to their mother according to the last will of Prince Demetrius (he advised his sons: "listen to your mother in everything").

The widowed princess continued to build churches and monasteries, and dedicated her life to the upbringing of her children until they were married or tonsured. Meanwhile she began to lead a secret ascetic life. By the magnificent clothes in which the holy princess appeared before people, it was impossible to guess that she was exhausting herself with fasting, vigils and heavy chains underneath her clothes.

Human malice and slander did not pass over her. Ridiculous rumors began to circulate around Moscow, affecting the honor of the widowed princess. These rumors reached the ears of her sons. The princes, although they loved their mother and did not believe in the slander, still could not help but be embarrassed. One of them, Yuri, turned to his mother with a question about the matter. Then the princess gathered all her sons and took off part of the grand-ducal robes - the children saw that the ascetic was so emaciated from fasting and labors that her body was dried up and blackened and "the flesh adhered to the bones." Yuri and the other brothers asked for forgiveness from their mother and wanted to avenge the slander. But their mother forbade them to think about revenge. She said that she would gladly endure humiliation and human slander for the sake of Christ, but when she saw the embarrassment of the children, she decided to reveal her secret ascetic labors to them.

After the blessed death of her husband, the Holy Princess refrained from directly participating in state affairs, but nevertheless it was precisely according to her advice that in 1395, during Tamerlane's invasion into the southern regions of Russia, the Vladimir Icon of the Mother of God was transferred to Moscow. On August 26, 1395, Grand Duchess Eudokia, with her sons, the Metropolitan, the clergy, and the boyars, met the icon of the Mother of God on the Kuchkovo field with many gathered residents of Moscow. On that very day and hour, Tamerlane saw in his sleep a vision of the Radiant Woman, surrounded by radiance and many lightning-fast warriors, menacingly rushing forward. On the advice of his mentors, Tamerlane ordered the troops to turn from the borders of Russia.

In 1407, after seeing a vision of the Archangel Michael, foreshadowing her imminent demise, Princess Eudokia decided to leave the princely tower and accept monasticism, for which she had been striving all her life. At her direction, the image of the Archangel was painted and placed in the Kremlin church in honor of the Nativity of the Theotokos. During the transition to the Ascension Convent, Princess Eudokia healed a blind man who received his sight, wiping his eyes with the edge of her clothes, and thirty other people were healed of various ailments during this procession. In the monastery, the princess took tonsure with the name of Euphrosyne on 17 May 1407. On July 7, 1407, she peacefully reposed. Her body was buried in the Ascension Convent founded by her.

The sanctity of the Nun Euphrosyne is confirmed by the wonderful signs of God's mercy that have been performed at her tomb for several centuries. Many times a candle lit by itself at the tomb of Saint Euphrosyne has been seen. And in the nineteenth century, several miraculous healings took place there. In 1869, having attached himself to the tomb with the relics of the Saint, a possessed youth was healed. In 1870, the Nun Euphrosyne appeared in a dream to a paralyzed girl and restored her health. A terminally ill man was brought back to life through the laying on him of a veil from the tomb of Saint Euphrosyne. On July 7, 1907, the 500th anniversary of the death of Saint Euphrosyne was celebrated in the Kremlin.

In 1929, by decision of the Soviet government, the destruction of the buildings of the Ascension Convent began. Museum staff tried to save the tomb of the Saint. The basement of the Archangel Cathedral was chosen for its placement. The white stone tomb of the Nun Euphrosyne turned out to be damaged, and they could not take it out entirely from the earth. The relics of the Saint were saved from destruction, but it was hardly possible to isolate them, because they were located along with other remains from burials in two white-stone tombs of the fifteenth century. The remains of the stone tomb of the Saint remained in the same basement.

On May 28, 2008, after the liturgy in the Cathedral of the Archangel performed by Patriarch Alexy II, her relics were transferred from the Court of Justice (basement of the Cathedral of the Archangel) to the chapel of the martyr Uara, where they can be venerated till this day.

Her spiritual feats testify to the fact that neither wealth nor high social status, nor family bond can be an insurmountable obstacle to acquiring the grace of God and holiness.

An old Russian church poem has survived, the lament of the princess for her husband, who had died at the age of thirty-nine.

In 2015, the Synod of the Russian Orthodox Church established a new church feast day - Memorial Day of Prince Demetrius of the Don and Princess Eudokia, falling on May 19th. *(from johnsanidopoulos.com)*

Also Commemorated Today

Venerable [Acacius](#) of Sinai, who is mentioned in The Ladder (6th c.).

New Hieromartyr Paul priest (1918).

Uncovering of the relics (2001) of Venerable Gerasimus, abbot of Boldino.

Martyrs Peregrinus, Lucian, Pompeius, Hesychius, Pappias, Saturninus, and [Germanus](#), of Dyrrachium in Macedonia.

[Blachernae](#) Icon of the Theotokos

Martyrs [Epictetus](#), presbyter, and Astion in Scythia (290).

Martyr Evangelus, Bishop of Tomi (Constanta) in Rumania.

Martyr [Cyriaca](#) (Domnica or Nedelja) of Nicomedia (289).

St. Hedda, bishop of the West Saxons (Winchester)(705) (Celtic & British).

St. Willibald, bishop of Eichstatt (786) (Celtic & British).

St. Maelruin of Tallaght (792) (Celtic & British).

St. Pantaenus the Confessor of Alexandria (203).

Hieromartyr Eustace (Greek).

Martyr Polycarp the New (Greek).

St. Illtud (Illtyd, Illtut, Iltut) Abbot of Llantwit Major, Wales (505) (priest)

St. Boisil (Boswell) of Melrose, Abbot (664)

Sts. Medran and Odran (Oudran) of Muskerry, Ireland (6th c.)

St. Ercongota of Faremoutiers, virgin (660)

St. Ethelburga of Faremoutiers, Abbess (664)

St. Sethrida, Abbess virgin (660)

Camp Nazareth Wishlist

Dear Diocesan Faithful, the 2024 Camp Nazareth Wishlist is now out! Please sponsor one of the items on the list (or even part of one) and help Camp fulfill its Wishlist goal for 2024. Some of the items are related to the Campers, some to the Staff, some to the Kitchen, some to the Camp Church, and some for Programming and New Internship Positions. The Camp Wishlist is a great way for you to support the Camp in its mission. You can access the Wishlist by clicking this link: [2024 Camp Nazareth Wishlist](#). Once you sponsor/reserve an item (or part of an item), you will be sent an email with instructions about how to give towards the item. You will be directed to the "Donate" Tab or the "Support Camp Nazareth" Button on the Camp Website Homepage (campnazareth.org) to make your contribution. Just remember to put in the Memo line the name of the item you are sponsoring. Again, please help us make it to our goal of having each item sponsored by visiting the Wishlist link above.

Social Team for July 14

Team 5 – Marlena Cooper, Mary Watts, Andrew Joseph, Deborah Koory. Thank you!

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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, Tina Crull, Marlene Doukas, Linda A. Georgiev, Sandi Hebel, Howl family, Helen P. Janowiak, John M. Janowiak, Johnson family, 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 & the Holy Land, and those in need of our prayers. (Please advise Fr. Joseph of changes.)