

PRAYERS ARE REQUESTED FOR ...

The health and salvation of –

Abducted Bishops Paul & John	Pauline
Hieroschemamonk Ambrose	Ann
Archpriest Ian	Stefan
Archpriest Eugene	John
Reader Aleksei	Vivian
Monk Philaret	Jung Sook
Matushka Mary	Thomas
Matushka Mary Sara	Cheyenne
Andrea	Nancy
Virginia • Thomas	Randall
John • Jacqueline	Rose
Euphrosynos	Don
John • Catechumen Rebecca	Norma

The repose and salvation of –

Subdeacon Nikolai (December 31)	Michael (January 6)
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Please let Father know if there are any names you would like added to the list.

Contact Father to schedule your house blessing

This Wednesday, February 1, 6:30 PM –

Great Vespers + Litya for the Meeting of the Lord

THIS THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 2, 7:00 AM – DIVINE LITURGY FOR

THE MEETING OF THE LORD + BLESSING OF CANDLES

Sunday, February 12 – Parish Council

*A mission parish under the omophorion of His Eminence Benjamin,
Archbishop of San Francisco and the Diocese of the West,
Orthodox Church in America*



Sunday of Zacchaeus • Trans. of the Relics of
Hieromartyr Ignatius, Bishop of Antioch
Holy New Martyrs & Confessors of Russia



The Relics of the Hieromartyr Ignatius of Antioch, altar of the Basilica di San Clemente, Rome

Sunday Hours & Divine Liturgy at 9:10 AM, followed by agape potluck
Other services as announced

Rev. Alexander Vallens, *Rector*

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The Holy New Martyrs and Confessors of Russia

We remember today the martyrs of the Russian Church who gave their lives – and I say gave their lives, because it was not taken only, but offered – in the last century. We remember them with love and with deep feeling. But it is not enough to remember; we must learn from them.

To be a martyr means to be a witness. They have witnessed to their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and their faithfulness to what God in Christ has taught them. Their life has been a testimony and a glory to God. One may say that the first martyr, the first witness to Love absolute and life perfect is the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, the Son of God Who became man in order to save us, Who chose to die that we might live, and after Him, millions of men, of women, of children followed in His footsteps.

I remember now the first martyrs of Russia, Boris and Gleb, who were in danger of death from their brother, and who said to one another and those who surrounded them, ‘If blood is to be shed, let it be ours.’ And they allowed the murderers to put an end to their holy life on earth. These were the first witnesses, the first martyrs of Russia. They gave their lives rather than defend them at the cost of anyone else’s. But it is not always without a struggle that heroic deeds are performed.

I remember that I was told about a Russian priest who, at the beginning of the Revolution, terrorised by the death of thousands of believers around him, renounced his faith. And then he was dragged before his parish in order to testify before his spiritual children that he had lied to them all his life: that there was no God, there was no salvation in Christ; and to prove it he was to tread under his feet a crucifix. And when he was brought forth and saw the crucifix, he burst into tears, fell on his knees, kissed the cross – and died a martyr. So it is not always an easy path of holiness.

There are thousands and thousands of men, of women, of children, who have been witnesses of that kind – not always murdered; many simply died. I remember a story told me by a witness, an eye-witness, of a small child of eleven years of age, who said to his parents, ‘God wants me to leave you and to go into the woods to pray for the salvation of Russia.’ He left his family and he disappeared for a while. And one day he was met in the wood by a peasant. The boy was in rags and barefoot in the snow, and this little boy of eleven said to this man, ‘Could you find a pair of shoes for me, because it is so painful to stand in the snow all winter.’ When the peasant came back, the child was dead, lying in the snow. He had given his life for the salvation of the land and of the Church.

All these are examples, great – too great, perhaps – for us. All of us who are called to be faithful, if we can say honestly that we believe in Christ, that we believe that Christ is God’s own Son Who became the Son of Man to die with us and for us, because of our unworthiness and our sinfulness, then can’t we respond by being faithful to Him in what He commands us: to love one another, to be faithful to each other, to be faithful to the way of life He has offered up to us at the cost of His own death?

We will now celebrate a moleben to sing the glory of those who proved faithful to the end. And we will pray that by their prayers, faithfulness may grow in us and determination will become greater in us to be worthy not only of Christ Who gave His life for us, but our brothers, our sisters, our children, who believed in Christ in such a way as to give everything, including their lives and at times not in one moment of martyrdom but in years and years of torment, in camps and in prisons – and with an open heart.

I remember a man who had been 36 years in prison and in concentration camp: a priest of my age. And he was sitting in front of me and he was telling me with eyes shining with gratitude, ‘Can you not see how incredibly

good God has been to me? At the moment of persecution He chose me, an unworthy, inexperienced, young priest, and He sent me first to prison for five years, to a prison where no priest was allowed to minister, but where I being one of the prisoners could minister to all my companions. And then for the rest of my captivity to a concentration camp where I continued my ministry. How infinitely good and merciful He proved to be.’

Can we not learn something from these simple examples? May God give us courage to be faithful, as much as we can, as perfectly as we can.

Metropolitan Anthony of Sourozh

Also this week: SYNAXIS OF THE ECUMENICAL TEACHERS AND HIERARCHS BASIL THE GREAT, GREGORY THE THEOLOGIAN, AND JOHN CHRYSOSTOM (January 30); Holy Wonderworkers and Unmercenaries Cyrus and John, and with them Martyrs Athanasia and her daughters Theoctiste, Theodotia, and Eudoxia, at Canopus in Egypt (January 31); Ven Brigid of Ireland, Martyr Tryphon (February 1); THE MEETING OF OUR LORD AND SAVIOR JESUS CHRIST IN THE TEMPLE (February 2); Holy and Righteous God-Receiver Simeon and Anna the Prophetess (February 3); Ven. Isidore of Pelusium (February 4).

*** REGULAR FASTING THIS WEEK ***

Epistle: I Timothy 4:9-15 (Sunday)

Gospel: Luke 19:1-10 (Sunday)

Troparion – Tone 7 (Sunday)

By Thy Cross Thou didst destroy death / To the thief Thou didst open Paradise /
For the Myrrhbearers Thou didst change weeping into joy /
And Thou didst command Thy disciples, O Christ God, /
To proclaim that Thou art risen, /// Granting the world great mercy.

Troparion – Tone 4 (Hieromartyr)

Like the apostles in character, / A successor on their throne, O divinely-inspired one /
Through visions thou didst find thy work / Rightly dividing the word of truth. /
Thou didst suffer for the sake of the faith / Even to the shedding of thy blood ///
O Hieromartyr Ignatius, pray to Christ God that our souls may be saved.

Kontakion – Tone 7 (Sunday)

The dominion of death can no longer hold men captive, /
For Christ descended, shattering and destroying its powers! /
Hades is bound, while the Prophets rejoice and cry: /
The Savior has come to those in faith; ///
Enter, you faithful, into the Resurrection!”

Kontakion – Tone 4 (Saint)

O holy and God-bearing father Ignatius, /
Thou hast shone forth from the East adorned with the crown of martyrdom ///
Enlightening all creation with thy teachings.