

SUNDAY, JANUARY 24, 2021

Synaxis of the Holy New Martyrs and Confessors of Russia

On the Sunday closest to January 25, the Church commemorates the Synaxis of the Holy New Martyrs and Confessors of Russia, remembering all those Orthodox Christians who suffered for Christ at the hands of the godless Soviets during the years of persecution. These include the royal Passion Bearers Tsar Nicholas II and his family, and the Grand Duchess Elizabeth. Countless thousands of martyrs, both clergy and laity also suffered, some of whose names are known, as well as millions of simple believers whose names have been lost to history.

It is estimated that the number of the New Martyrs of Russia, who were glorified by the Russian Orthodox Church at the Jubilee Council of 2000, far exceeds that of all the martyrs who died for Christ during the first three centuries of Christianity. The Russian Church lost millions of its sons and daughters, not only at the hands of external enemies, but also those of their own country. Among those who were murdered and tortured in the years of persecution were countless Orthodox: laity, monks, priests, and bishops, whose only “crime” was their unshakable faith in God.

In the long history of the world, never have so many new heavenly intercessors been glorified by the Church in such a way (more than one thousand New Martyrs were numbered among the saints). Among those who suffered for their faith were some who labored in America before the Russian Revolution: St. Tikhon, Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia (April 7); St. Alexander Hotovitzky (Dec. 4); St. John Kochurov (Oct. 31).

GREAT VESPERS

LORD I CALL: Four stikhera of the Resurrection in tone 8, followed by six for the New Martyrs

Tone 8:

Lord, I call to You, hear me!

Hear me, O Lord!

Lord, I call to You, hear me!

Receive the voice of my prayer,

when I call to You!//

Hear me, O Lord!

Let my prayer arise
in Your sight as incense,
and let the lifting up of my hands

be an evening sacrifice!//
Hear me, O Lord!

We offer to You, O Christ,
our evening song and reasonable service,
for You willed to have mercy on us//
by Your Resurrection.

Lord, Lord, do not cast us away from Your face!
For You willed to have mercy on us//
by Your Resurrection.

Rejoice, O holy Zion!
Mother of the churches, the abode of God!
For you were the first to receive remission of sins//
by the Resurrection.

The Word of God the Father,
begotten before the ages,
in the latter times willed to be incarnate of the Virgin
and endured crucifixion unto death.
He has saved mortal man//
by His Resurrection.

New Martyrs, tone 5:

Rejoice, new martyrs and confessors of Russia,
the adornment of the Orthodox.
lambs of the new slaughter, fellow warriors, and guardians of the faith,
Blameless intercessors for us with God in the latter years,
who in your sufferings appear as emulators of the first martyrs;
O unshakeable pillars of patient endurance,//
entreat God that our souls be granted great mercy.

Rejoice, O glorious passion-bearers!
Following in the steps of the martyrs of old,
you contended firmly for the sake of the faith,
in the cruel and grievous times of your land.
And now you rouse all to the glory and praise of God,
Who strengthened your weaknesses and has enriched you with gifts of the Spirit.//
Ever pray for the salvation of our souls.

O heavenly protectors,
come to us who await the visitation of your prayer,
and deliver us from danger caused by the madness of unbelievers;
for which we are often pursued like prisoners and outcasts,
moving from place to place and wandering in caves and mountains.
Have compassion, O all-praised martyrs and confessors, and grant us relief!
Pacify the storm and extinguish the hostility towards us, //
praying to God Who through you grants to our land great mercy.

Tone 6:

O longsuffering archpastor, Father Tikhon,
in a time of terrible godless persecutions,
comforting the true children of the Church of Russia,
with courage you stood up for Christ and the Orthodox faith;
and, dying day by day for the sake of your pastoral service,
you were revealed as a steadfast confessor. //
For this, we lovingly glorify you.

O true shepherd, Hieromartyr Vladimir,
when lawless men compelled you to depart
from overseeing the Church of Russia,
you remained faithful in deed and word to Hierarch Tikhon.
Like a holy sacrifice from Kiev, the mother of Russian cities,
you offered yourself to God, praying for those who were slaying you. //
For this, we willingly glorify you.

O Hieromartyr Benjamin,
as a true son of Christ's Church,
and having heartfelt zeal for her welfare,
you bravely took your stand against the false shepherds
who were striving to steal your flock,
but not fearing the threats and false testimony of those who questioned you,
you turned the judgment back upon the head of those who tested you;
and then, by your death, you strengthened Orthodoxy. //
For this, we willingly glorify you.

Glory... New Martyrs, tone 5:

O most high Master, glorified and worshipped in Trinity,
take pity on us by the acceptable prayers of Your new martyrs,
who in the presence of tyrants boldly confessed You, the One God,
and Your ineffable saving incarnation, //
from a Virgin Mother, O Son of God.

Now & ever... the Dogmatikon in tone 8:

The King of heaven, because of His love for man,
appeared on earth and dwelt with men.

He took flesh from the pure Virgin
and after assuming it, He came forth from her.

The Son is one: in two natures, yet one Person.

Proclaiming Him as perfect God and perfect Man,
we confess Christ our God!//

Entreat Him, O unwedded Mother, to have mercy on our souls.

Three Readings

The Reading from the Book of Acts. As well as Annas the high priest, Caiaphas, John, and Alexander, and as many as were of the family of the high priest, were gathered together at Jerusalem. And when they had set them in the midst, they asked, ‘By what power or by what name have you done this?’ then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them, ‘Rulers of the people and elders of Israel; If we this day are judged for a good deed done to a helpless man, by what means he has been made well, let it be known to you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead, by Him this man stands here before you whole. This is the *stone which was rejected by you builders, which has become the chief cornerstone.*’ Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved. Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John and they perceived that they were uneducated and untrained men, they marveled. And they realized that they had been with Jesus. And seeing the man who had been healed standing with them, they could say nothing against it. But when they had commanded them to go aside out of the council, they conferred among themselves, saying, ‘What shall we do to these men? For, indeed, that a notable miracle has been done through them is evident to all who dwell in Jerusalem, and we cannot deny it. But so that it spreads no further among the people, let us severely threaten them, that from now on they speak to no man in this name.’ So they called them and commanded them not to speak at all nor teach in the name of Jesus. But Peter and John answered and said to them, ‘Whether it is right in the sight of God to listen to you more than to God, you judge. For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard.’ So when they had further threatened them, they let them go, finding no way of punishing them, because of the people, since they all glorified God for what had been done. For the man was over forty years old on whom this miracle of healing had been performed. And being let go, they went to their own companions and reported all that the chief priests and elders had said to them. So when they heard that, they raised their voice to God with one accord and said: ‘Lord, You are God, who made heaven and earth and the sea, and all that is in them, who by the mouth of Your servant David have said: *‘Why did the nations rage, And the people plot vain things? The kings of the earth took their stand, And the rulers were gathered together Against the Lord and against His Christ.’* ‘For truly against Your holy Servant Jesus, whom You anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the people of Israel, were gathered together to do whatever Your hand and Your purpose

determined before to be done. Now, Lord, look on their threats, and grant to Your servants that with all boldness they may speak Your word, by stretching out Your hand to heal, and that signs and wonders may be done through the name of Your holy Servant Jesus.” And when they had prayed, the place where they were assembled together was shaken; and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and they spoke the word of God with boldness. Now the multitude of those who believed were of one heart and one soul; neither did anyone say that any of the things he possessed was his own, but they had all things in common. **Acts 4:6-32**

The Reading from the Second Book of Timothy. I charge you therefore before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who will judge the living and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom: Preach the word! Be ready in season and out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers; and they will turn their ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables. But you be watchful in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry. For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing. **2 Timothy 4:1-8**

The Reading from the Book of Hebrews. who through faith subdued kingdoms, worked righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, became valiant in battle, turned to flight the armies of the aliens. Women received their dead raised to life again. Others were tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection. Still others had trial of mockings and scourgings, yes, and of chains and imprisonment. They were stoned, they were sawn in two, were tempted, were slain with the sword. They wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented – of whom the world was not worthy. They wandered in the deserts and mountains, in dens and caves of the earth. And all these, having obtained a good testimony through faith, did not receive the promise, God having provided something better for us, that they should not be made perfect apart from us. **Hebrews 11:33-40**

APOSTICHA: all stikhera of the Resurrection in tone 8:

Descending from heaven to ascend the Cross,
the Eternal Life has come for death
to raise those who are fallen;
to enlighten those in darkness..//

We glorify Christ, who rose from the dead.
He accepted the human body and soul,

and freed both from suffering.
His most pure soul descended to hell, which He spoiled.
His holy body did not see corruption in the tomb.//
He is the Redeemer of our souls.

In psalms and songs we glorify Your Resurrection from the dead, O Christ.
By it, You have freed us from the tortures of hell//
and as God have granted eternal life and great mercy.

O Master of all, incomprehensible Creator of heaven and earth,
by Your suffering on the Cross You have gained passionlessness for me.
Accepting burial and arising in glory,
You resurrected Adam with Yourself by Your almighty hand.
Glory to Your rising on the third day!
By it You have granted us eternal life and cleansing of sins//
as the only compassionate One.

Glory...New Martyrs, tone 2:

O new house of Ephratha,
splendid and elect region,
O holy Russia,
guard the Orthodox faith,//
in which is your confirmation and support.

Now & ever... Theotokion for the New Martyrs, tone 8:

O marvelous wonder;
the Queen of heaven and earth,
who has been entreated by the saints of our land,
has until now sheltered the Russian land,
tenderly enriching the choir of its people.
O mighty and sovereign Lady,
cease not to pray for confirmation of the Orthodox faith in Rus'//
and to pour out wonders forever. Amen.

TROPARIA

Resurrection, tone 8:

You descended from on high, O Merciful One!
You accepted the three day burial to free us from our sufferings!//
O Lord, our Life and Resurrection, glory to You!

New Martyrs, tone 4:

Today the Church of Russia forms a chorus in joy,
praising her new martyrs and confessors;
hierarchs and priests, royal passion-bearers, right-believing princes and princesses,
venerable men and women, and all Orthodox Christians.
Having laid down their life for faith in Christ during the days of godless persecution,
they preserved the truth by the shedding of blood.//
By their protection, O long-suffering Lord, preserve our land in Orthodoxy till the end of
the age.

Resurrectional Dismissal Theotokion, tone 4:

The mystery of all eternity,
unknown even by Angels,
through you, Theotokos, is revealed to those on earth:
God incarnate by union without confusion.
He voluntarily accepted the Cross for us,
by which He resurrected the first-created man,//
saving our souls from death.

DIVINE LITURGY

Troparia

Resurrection, tone 8:

You descended from on high, O Merciful One!
You accepted the three day burial to free us from our sufferings!//
O Lord, our Life and Resurrection, glory to You!

New Martyrs, tone 4:

Today the Church of Russia forms a chorus in joy,
praising her new martyrs and confessors;
hierarchs and priests, royal passion-bearers, right-believing princes and princesses,
venerable men and women, and all Orthodox Christians.
Having laid down their life for faith in Christ during the days of godless persecution,
they preserved the truth by the shedding of blood.//
By their protection, O long-suffering Lord, preserve our land in Orthodoxy till the end of
the age.

Kontakia

Resurrection, tone 8:

By rising from the tomb, You raised the dead and resurrected Adam.
Eve exults in Your Resurrection,//

and the world celebrates Your rising from the dead, O greatly Merciful One!

New Martyrs, tone 3:

Today the new martyrs of Rus' stand in white robes before the Lamb of God, and with the angels they sing to God the hymn of victory:
“Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and praise, and honor,
and power, and strength be to our God//
unto the ages of ages. Amen.”

Steadfast Protectress

Steadfast protectress of Christians,
constant advocate before the creator:
do not despise the cry of us sinners,
but in your goodness come speedily to help us who call on you in faith.
Hasten to hear our petition and to intercede for us, O Theotokos,
for you always protect those who honor you.

Prokeimenon, tone 8: Pray and make your vows before the Lord, our God!

v. In Judah God is known; His name is great in Israel.

2nd Prok, tone 7: God is our refuge and strength, a help in afflictions that severely befall us.

Epistles: (257) Colossians 3:4-11 (Forefathers) Brethren, when Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory. Therefore mortify your members which are upon the earth: fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry: for of these things the wrath of God is coming on the children of disobedience, in which you also once walked when you lived in them. But now you must also put away all anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, and filthy language out of your mouth. Do not lie to one another, since you have put off the old man with his deeds, and have put on the new man who is renewed in knowledge according to the image of Him who created him, where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free, but Christ is all, and in all.

(99) Romans 8:28-39 Brethren, we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose. For whom He did foreknow, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom He did predestine, them He also called; and whom He called, them He also justified; and whom He justified, them He also glorified. What then shall we say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things? Who shall bring a charge against God's elect? It is God that justifies. Who is he who condemns? It is Christ that died, and furthermore that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is

written: “For Thy sake we are killed all day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.” Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor Angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Alleluia in the eighth tone: Come, let us rejoice in the Lord! Let us make a joyful noise to God our Savior!

v. Let us come before His face with thanksgiving; let us make a joyful noise to Him with songs of praise!

V. The righteous cried, and the Lord heard them and delivered them out of all their troubles.

Gospels: (93) Luke 18:35-43 At that time, as He was coming near Jericho, a certain blind man sat by the road begging. And hearing a multitude passing by, he asked what it meant. So they told him that Jesus of Nazareth was passing by. And he cried out, saying, “Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!” Then those who went before warned him that he should be quiet, but he cried out all the more, “Son of David, have mercy on me!” So Jesus stood still and commanded him to be brought to Him. And when he had come near, He asked him, saying, “What do you want Me to do for you?” He said, “Lord, that I may receive my sight.” Then Jesus said to him, “Receive your sight; your faith has made you well.” And immediately he received his sight, and followed Him, glorifying God. And all the people, when they saw it, gave praise to God.

(105-106) Luke 21:8-19 The Lord said, “Take heed that you are not led astray; for many shall come in My name, saying, ‘I am he!’ and, ‘The time is at hand!’ Do not go after them. * And when you hear of wars and tumults, do not be terrified; for this must first take place, but the end shall not be at once.” * Then He said to them, “Nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; * there shall be great earthquakes, and in various places famines and pestilences; and there shall be terrors and great signs from heaven. * But before all this they shall lay their hands on you and persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues and prisons, and you shall be brought before kings and governors for my name’s sake. * This shall be a time for you to bear testimony. * Settle it therefore in your minds, not to meditate beforehand how to answer; * for I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which none of your adversaries shall be able to withstand or contradict. * You shall be delivered up even by parents and brothers and kinsmen and friends, and some of you they shall put to death; * you shall be hated by all for My name’s sake. * But not a hair of your head shall perish. * By your endurance you shall win your souls.”

Communion Hymns: Praise the Lord from the heavens, praise Him in the highest! Rejoice in the Lord, O you righteous! Praise befits the just! Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!