

Daily Orthodox - January 4th, 2025

Today is Saturday of the 28th Week after Pentecost.

Fasting Obligations

- **OCA, GOARCH, Antioch:** No fasting obligations.

Today, we commemorate...

1. The Synaxis of the Seventy Holy Apostles

“ Besides the Twelve Great Apostles, the Lord chose seventy lesser apostles and sent them to preach the Gospel: *Behold, I send you forth as lambs among wolves* (Luke 10:3). But just as Judas, one of the Twelve, fell away from the Lord, so some among the Seventy abandoned the Lord—not with the intention of betrayal, but because of human weakness and faintheartedness (John 6:66). As Judas' place was filled by another apostle, so also were the places of these lesser apostles filled by others that were chosen. These seventy lesser apostles labored at the same work as did the Twelve Great Apostles; they were co-workers with the Twelve in spreading and establishing the Church of God in the world. They endured many sufferings and malevolent acts from men and demons, but their strong faith and fervent love for the resurrected Lord made them victors over the world and inheritors of the Kingdom of Heaven.

2. Jevstatije, Archbishop of Serbia

Jevstatije [Eustathius] was born in the district of Budim, of God-fearing parents. As a young man he was tonsured a monk in Zeta; then he entered a higher form of asceticism in Hilandar Monastery [on Mount Athos]. In time, Jevstatije became the Abbot of Hilandar. As abbot, he was elected Bishop of Zeta and, after a certain period of time, was elected Archbishop of Serbia. Jevstatije was a man of great charity, who governed Christ's flock with zeal and love. He reposed peacefully at a great age in the year 1279, crying out before his death: "Into Thy hands, O Lord, I commend my soul." His relics are interred under the floor of the church at the Patriarchate of Peč.

3. **Martyr Djan Darada, the Ethiopian eunuch of Queen Candace** (1st c.)

“ The Apostle Philip baptized this Ethiopian eunuch (Acts 8:26-40). Following his baptism, he returned to his home and began to preach Christ. This eunuch was the first apostle of the Faith among the Ethiopians. He died a martyr and was found worthy of the Kingdom of God.

4. **The Venerable Martyr Onuphrius of Gabrovo and Hilandar Monastery** (1818)

“ In his youth, Onuphrius became angry with his parents and declared before the Turks that he was going to convert to Islam. Immediately afterward, he repented of these words and went to Hilandar Monastery, where he was tonsured a monk. Tormented by his conscience, Onuphrius resolved upon martyrdom. Because of his determination, and with the blessing of his spiritual father, he departed for Trnovo, Bulgaria, where he reported to the Turks, proclaimed himself a Christian, and ridiculed Mohammed. Because of that, Onuphrius was beheaded on January 4, 1818, in his thirty-second year. The body of this spiritual knight is not preserved, for the Turks threw it into the sea.

5. *Martyr Zosimas the Hermit and Athanasius the Commentarisius* (prison warden), of Cilicia (3rd-4th c.)
6. *St. Gregory of Langres* (Gaul) (539-540)
7. *St. Evagrius* (fellow-ascetic of St. Shio of Mgvime), *St. Elias the Deacon, and others* (Georgia) (6th c.)
8. *St. Theoctistus*, abbot of Cucomo Monastery in Sicily (800)
9. *St. Euthymius the Younger*, monk, of Thessalonica
10. *Hieromartyr Euthymius*, abbot, and twelve monk-martyrs of Vatopedi (1285)
11. *St. Aquila*, deacon, of the Kiev Caves (14th c.)
12. *St. Symeon*, metropolitan of Smolensk (1699)
13. *New Hieromartyr Mark* (Novoselov), bishop of Sergievsk (1938)

14. *The Holy Matryrs Chrysanthus and Euphemia*, venerated at Constantinople
15. *The Venerable John Scholarios*, disciple of Saint Sabas and Abbot of the Monastery of the tower of Eudocia
16. *Six Holy Martyrs* who, after their contests, died in peace

For more information on today's saints or commemorations not provided, see

<https://www.oca.org/saints/lives> (Slavic) and/or <https://www.goarch.org/chapel> (Greek).

Reflection

Reflections are added when it includes additional stories from the life of a saint commemorated today.

Daily Scriptures

Slavic and Greek

- **Epistle:** 1 Timothy 3:14-4:5 [Greek includes v. 13]

“ [<13> For those who have served well as deacons obtain for themselves a good standing and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus.] <14> These things I write to you, though I hope to come to you shortly; <15> but if I am delayed, I write so that you may know how you ought to conduct yourself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth. <16> And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifested in the flesh, Justified in the Spirit, Seen by angels, Preached among the Gentiles, Believed on in the world, Received up in glory. <1> Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons, <2> speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their own conscience seared with a hot iron, <3> forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from foods which God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and know the truth. <4> For every creature of God is good, and nothing is to be refused if it is received with thanksgiving; <5> for it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer.

- **Gospel:** Matthew 3:1-6 [Slavic includes vv. 7-11]

“ <1> In those days John the Baptist came preaching in the wilderness of Judea, <2> and saying, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand!" <3> For this is he who was spoken of by the prophet Isaiah, saying: "The voice of one crying in

the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the Lord; Make His paths straight.'" <4> Now John himself was clothed in camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist; and his food was locusts and wild honey. <5> Then Jerusalem, all Judea, and all the region around the Jordan went out to him <6> and were baptized by him in the Jordan, confessing their sins. [<7> But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to his baptism, he said to them, "Brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? <8> Therefore bear fruits worthy of repentance, <9> and do not think to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our father.' For I say to you that God is able to raise up children to Abraham from these stones. <10> And even now the ax is laid to the root of the trees. Therefore every tree which does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. <11> I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance, but He who is coming after me is mightier than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.]

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