

Daily Orthodox - December 30th, 2024

Today is Monday of the 28th Week after Pentecost — 6th Day after Nativity.

Fasting Obligations

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

Today, we commemorate...

1. **The Holy Virgin Martyr Anysia at Thessalonica** (298)

“Anysia was born in Thessalonica of eminent and wealthy parents and was brought up in the Christian Faith. She was orphaned at an early age and gave herself completely to godly thoughts and prayer in her own home. Fervent in her love for Christ, she often said: "Oh, how false is the life of youth, for you either scandalize or are scandalized. Better is old age; but sorrow overcomes me because of the length of time that separates me from heaven." She sold all her possessions, distributed the proceeds to the poor, and lived from the labors of her own hands. She kept a strict fast, slept very little, and constantly shed tears at prayer. When sleep overcame her she would say to herself: "It is dangerous to sleep while my enemy keeps vigil." At that time, the wicked Emperor Maximian issued a decree that anyone could kill Christians when and where he encountered them, without trial or sentence. This holy virgin once went out into the streets to attend church. That day was a pagan feast of the sun. A soldier saw her beautiful countenance, and he approached her with an impure desire, asking for her name. She made the sign of the Cross and said to him: "I am Christ's handmaid, and I am going to church." When the impudent soldier came closer and began to speak to her insanely, she shoved him away and spat in his face. The soldier struck her with his sword below the ribs and ran her through. This holy virgin suffered in the year 298. She was honorably buried by Christians

and was crowned with the wreath of glory by God in the Heavenly Kingdom. A church was built over her grave.

2. The Venerable Theodora of Constantinople

“ Theodora was a nun and servant of St. Basil the New (March 26). After her death, she appeared to St. Gregory, a disciple of Basil, and described for him all twenty toll-houses through which her soul had passed until, through the prayers of St. Basil, she had entered into eternal rest. Theodora presented herself to the Lord on December 30, 940.

3. The Holy Apostle Timon the Deacon, of the Seventy

“ Timon was one of the Seven Deacons and one of the Seventy Apostles (Acts 6:5). He was appointed Bishop of Bostra in Arabia. There he preached the Gospel and endured much ill-treatment at the hands of the pagans. He was thrown into fire but remained unharmed. He finally died, being crucified, and entered into the Kingdom of Christ.

4. The Venerable Theodora of Caesarea in Cappadocia

“ After many ascetic labors in the convent of St. Anna, she entered peacefully into rest in the year 755. *[ed. note: more in the reflection below]*

5. The Venerable Martyr Gideon of Karakallou Monastery, Mt. Athos

“ Gideon was a Greek by birth, of very poor parents. In his youth he was forced to embrace Islam. Repentant, he fled to the Holy Mountain, where he received the monastic tonsure in the Monastery of Karakallou. Desiring martyrdom for Christ, he received the blessing of his spiritual father and returned to the same place where he had become a Moslem. There, before the Turks, he openly confessed the Christian Faith and denounced Mohammed as a false prophet. The Turks shaved his head, placed him upside-down on a donkey, and led him through the town, but he rejoiced at this ridicule for the sake of Christ. They then chopped off all his fingers and toes with an axe, as they had once done to St. James the Persian (November 27). Finally they threw him into a place filled with

excrement, where he gave up his holy soul to God in the year 1818, in Trnovo in Thrace. His miracle-working relics are preserved in the Church of the Holy Apostles in the village of Trnovo, and a part of his relics can be found in the Karakallou Monastery.

6. *Martyr Philoterus of Nicomedia, and with him six soldiers and one count* (311)
7. *Martyrs Magistrinus, Paulinus, Umbrius, Verus, Severus, Callistratus, Florentius, Arianus, Anthimus, Ubricius, Isidore, Euculus, Sampson, Studius, and Thespesius*, who suffered under Julian the Apostate (361-363)
8. *St. Egwin*, bishop of Worcester (717)
9. *St. Tryphon*, bishop of Rostov (1468)
10. *St. Macarius*, metropolitan of Moscow (1563)
11. *Uncovering of the relics* (1625) of *St. Daniel of Pereyasavl*, founder of St. Daniel Monastery (1540)

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.

“ Here are two more examples of how the Merciful God helps those in misfortune who hope in Him with faith. Blessed Theodora of Caesarea was born into a noble house and then entrusted to the Convent of St. Anna for her education. There Theodora was not only educated but also lived a life of asceticism, preparing herself to receive the monastic tonsure. Emperor Leo the Isaurian took her from the convent by force and betrothed her to one of his commanders. Theodora protested this marriage with all her soul, but was as powerless as a lamb in the paws of a wolf. She lamented and prayed constantly in her heart to God that He would not forsake her. On the day of the marriage, while the guests were feasting, news unexpectedly came to the emperor that the Scythians had attacked his empire. The emperor ordered his commander to go out immediately against the Scythians. The commander went and never returned, for he was killed in battle. Thus, by God's help, St. Theodora was freed. As a pure maiden she returned to her convent, where she received the monastic tonsure and, as a nun, became famous for her rare asceticism.

A second example: In the Monastery of the "Sleepless Ones," there was great want during a year of famine. St. Marcellus, the abbot, received some poor men

one day, refreshed them, and then wanted to give them some money for their journey. Marcellus asked the steward of the monastery how much money they had altogether. The steward told him they had ten silver coins. Marcellus asked the steward of the monastery how much money they had altogether. The steward told him they had ten silver coins. The abbot ordered that all ten silver coins be given to these poor men. However, the steward did not give them all ten; instead he gave them nine and kept one for the needs of the monastery. The steward was very concerned about the monastery, for it was in extreme poverty. A rich man suddenly visited the monastery and brought the abbot ninety talents of gold. Then the discerning Marcellus summoned the steward and said to him: "Behold, God wanted to send us one hundred talents through this devout man, but because you disobeyed me and withheld one silver coin, the Provider of all deprived us of ten talents."

Daily Scriptures

Slavic and Greek

- **Epistle:** 2 Timothy 2:20-26

“ <20> But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and silver, but also of wood and clay, some for honor and some for dishonor. <21> Therefore if anyone cleanses himself from the latter, he will be a vessel for honor, sanctified and useful for the Master, prepared for every good work. <22> Flee also youthful lusts; but pursue righteousness, faith, love, peace with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart. <23> But avoid foolish and ignorant disputes, knowing that they generate strife. <24> And a servant of the Lord must not quarrel but be gentle to all, able to teach, patient, <25> in humility correcting those who are in opposition, if God perhaps will grant them repentance, so that they may know the truth, <26> and that they may come to their senses and escape the snare of the devil, having been taken captive by him to do his will.

- **Gospel:** Mark 12:13-17

“ <13> Then they sent to Him some of the Pharisees and the Herodians, to catch Him in His words. <14> When they had come, they said to Him, "Teacher, we know that You are true, and care about no one; for You do not regard the person of men, but teach the way of God in truth. Is it lawful to pay taxes to Caesar, or not? <15> Shall we pay, or shall we not pay?" But He, knowing their hypocrisy, said to them, "Why do you test Me? Bring Me a denarius that I may see it." <16> So they brought it. And He said to them, "Whose image and inscription is

this?" They said to Him, "Caesar's." <17> And Jesus answered and said to them, "Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's." And they marveled at Him.

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