

Daily Orthodox - December 5th, 2024

Today is Thursday of the 24th Week after Pentecost.

Fasting Obligations

- **OCA:** Wine and oil permitted.
- **GOARCH, Antioch:** Fish, wine, and oil permitted.

Today, we commemorate...

1. **The Venerable Sabbas the Sanctified** (532)

“ The unknown village of Mutalaska, in the province of Cappadocia, became famous through this great luminary of the Orthodox Church. Sabbas was born there of his parents John and Sophia. At the age of eight, he left the home of his parents and was tonsured a monk in a nearby monastic community called Flavian's. After ten years, he moved to the monasteries of Palestine and remained longest in the Monastery of St. Euthymius the Great (January 20) and Theoctistus. The clairvoyant Euthymius prophesied of Sabbas that he would become a famous monk and a teacher of monks and that he would establish a lavra greater than all the lavras of that time. After the death of Euthymius, Sabbas withdrew to the desert, where he lived for five years as a hermit in a cave shown to him by an angel of God. Afterward, when he had been perfected in the monastic life, he began by divine providence to gather around him many who were desirous of the spiritual life. Soon, such a large number gathered that Sabbas had to build a church and many cells. Some Armenians also came to him, and for them he provided a cave where they would be able to celebrate services in the Armenian language. When his father died, his aged mother Sophia came to him, and he tonsured her a nun. He gave her a cell located at a distance from his monastery, where she lived a life of asceticism until her death.

This holy father endured many assaults from all sides; from those who were close to him, from heretics, and from demons. But he triumphed over them all: those close to him, by kindness and indulgence; the heretics, by his unwavering confession of the Orthodox Faith; the demons, by the sign of the Cross and calling upon God for help. He had a particularly great struggle with demons on Mount Castellium, where he established his second monastery. In all, Sabbas established seven monasteries. He and Theodosius the Great, his neighbor, are considered to be the greatest lights and pillars of Orthodoxy in the East. They corrected emperors and patriarchs in matters of the Faith, and to everyone they served as an example of saintly humility and the miraculous power of God. After a toilsome and very fruitful life, St. Sabbas entered into rest in the year 532, at the age of ninety-four. Among his many wondrous and good works, let it at least be mentioned that he was the first to compile the Order of Services for use in monasteries, now known as the Jerusalem Typikon.

2. St. Cosmas of Vatopedi (1276) and the monks of Karyes, Mt. Athos, all martyred by the Latins (1283)

“ They suffered at the hands of the Papists at the time of the Union of Lyons [1274], which was the work of Emperor Michael Palaeologus (1260-1281) and the pope. The Protos of the Holy Mountain was hanged, and the others were beheaded. (For details about this, see October 10.)

3. The Venerable Nectarius of Bitola (1500)

“ Nectarius was born in Bitola and lived a life of asceticism in the Monastery of the Holy Unmercenary Physicians Cosmas and Damian, together with his father, Pachomius, who was also tonsured. After that he went to Karyes, where he continued his asceticism in the Cell of the Holy Archangels under the guidance of Elders Philotheus and Dionysius. After conquering human envy, demonic assaults and difficult illnesses, he entered into rest in the Kingdom of Christ on December 5, 1500. His incorrupt and fragrant relics rest in this same cell.

4. The Venerable Karion (Cyrion) and Zacharias, of Egypt (4th c.)

“ Karion and Zacharias were father and son, and both were great Egyptian ascetics. Karion left his wife and two children and set off to become a monk. As a child, the young Zacharias was taken into the monastery, and in his ascetic

labors he surpassed both his father and many other notable ascetics. When they asked Zacharias, "Who is a true monk?" he replied: "He who constantly applies himself to the fulfilling of God's commandments."

5. *Monk-martyr Justinian of Ramsey Island, South Wales* (560)

6. *St. Nicetius*, bishop of Trier (566)

7. *St. Gurias*, archbishop of Kazan (1563)

8. *New Hieromartyrs Elias*, archpriest, of Moscow (1932) and *Gennadius*, hieromonk of the Belogostitsky Monastery (Yaroslavl) (1941)

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.

“A man may be great in some skill, as a statesman or a military leader, but no one among men is greater than a man who is great in faith, hope and love. How great St. Sabbas the Sanctified was in faith and hope in God is best shown by the following incident: One day, the steward of the monastery came to Sabbas and informed him that the following Saturday and Sunday he would be unable to strike the *semantron* [*ed. note: the wood plank that gets hit by a small hammer*] , according to tradition, to summon the brethren to the communal service and meal because there was not a trace of flour in the monastery nor anything at all to eat or drink. For this same reason, even the Divine Liturgy was not possible. The saint replied without hesitation: "I shall not cancel the Divine Liturgy because of the lack of flour; faithful is He Who commanded us not to be concerned about bodily things, and mighty is He to feed us in time of hunger." And he placed all his hope in God. In this extremity, he was prepared to send some of the ecclesiastical vessels or vestments to be sold in the city so that neither the divine services nor the brother's customary meal would be omitted. However, before Saturday some men, moved by divine providence, brought thirty mules laden with wheat, wine and oil to the monastery. "What do you say now, Brother?" Sava asked the steward. "Shall we not strike the *semantron* and assemble the fathers?" The steward was ashamed because of his lack of faith and begged the abbot for forgiveness. Sava's biographer describes this saint as

"severe with demons but mild toward men." Once, some monks rebelled against St. Sabbas, and for this they were driven from the monastery by order of Patriarch Elias. They built themselves huts by the river Thekoa, where they endured privation in all things. Hearing that they were starving, St. Sabbas loaded mules with flour and brought it to them personally. Seeing that they had no church, he built one for them. At first, the monks received him with hatred, but afterward they responded to his love with love and repented of their former misdeeds toward him.

Daily Scriptures

Slavic and Greek

- **Epistle (Slavic: for St. Sabbas the Sanctified):** Galatians 5:22-6:2

“ <22> But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, <23> gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law. <24> And those who are Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. <25> If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. <26> Let us not become conceited, provoking one another, envying one another. <1> Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness, considering yourself lest you also be tempted. <2> Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.

- **Gospel (Slavic: for St. Sabbas the Sanctified):** Matthew 11:27-30

“ <27> All things have been delivered to Me by My Father, and no one knows the Son except the Father. Nor does anyone know the Father except the Son, and the one to whom the Son wills to reveal Him. <28> Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. <29> Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. <30> For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.”

Slavic

- **Epistle (Day):** 1 Thessalonians 5:1-8

<1> But concerning the times and the seasons, brethren, you have no need that I should write to you. <2> For you yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night. <3> For when they say, "Peace and safety!" then sudden destruction comes upon them, as labor pains upon a pregnant woman. And they shall not escape. <4> But you, brethren, are not in darkness, so that this Day should overtake you as a thief. <5> You are all sons of light and sons of the day. We are not of the night nor of darkness. <6> Therefore let us not sleep, as others do, but let us watch and be sober. <7> For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk are drunk at night. <8> But let us who are of the day be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love, and as a helmet the hope of salvation.

- **Gospel (Day):** Luke 21:28-33

“ <28> Now when these things begin to happen, look up and lift up your heads, because your redemption draws near." <29> Then He spoke to them a parable: "Look at the fig tree, and all the trees. <30> When they are already budding, you see and know for yourselves that summer is now near. <31> So you also, when you see these things happening, know that the kingdom of God is near. <32> Assuredly, I say to you, this generation will by no means pass away till all things take place. <33> Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away.

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