

Daily Orthodox - January 2nd, 2025

Today is Thursday of the 28th Week after Pentecost.

Fasting Obligations

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

Today, we commemorate...

1. **Saint Sylvester, Bishop of Rome**

“ Sylvester was born in Rome, and from his early youth was learned in worldly wisdom and in the Faith of Christ. He always conducted his life according to the Gospel commandments. He benefitted much from the instruction of Timothy the priest, whose death for the Faith Sylvester himself witnessed. Observing the example of the heroic sacrifice of his teacher, he was imbued with just such a spirit throughout his entire life. Becoming Bishop of Rome at age thirty, he reformed certain Christian customs. For example, he dispensed with the fast on Saturdays, which had been practiced by many Christians up to that time, and ordered that fasting be observed only on Holy and Great Saturday, as well as on those Saturdays that fall within the fasting seasons. By his prayers and miracles, Sylvester assisted in bringing Emperor Constantine and his mother Helena to the true Faith and baptism. With the Empress Helena he took part in finding the Honorable Cross. He governed the Church of God for twenty years. His earthly life ended honorably and he entered into the Heavenly Kingdom.

2. **The Venerable Seraphim, wonderworker of Sarov**

Seraphim was one of the greatest Russian ascetics, clairvoyant elders and wonderworkers. He was born in 1759 and he reposed in 1833. Seraphim was distinguished by great humility. While the whole world praised him, he referred to himself as "the wretched Seraphim."

3. Saint Theodota

“ Theodota was the mother of the brothers Cosmas and Damian, the Unmercenaries and Miracle-workers. Theodota lived a God-pleasing life and in such a life she instructed her sons.

4. The Venerable Ammon

“ Ammon was a great ascetic of the fifth century. He was the abbot of the Tabennisiot Monastery in Upper Egypt. Three thousand monks lived the ascetic life under his direction. He possessed the grace-filled gifts of miracle-working and clairvoyance. When a monk once asked him for advice, he said to him: "Be like a convict in prison, as he continually asks, 'When will the judge come?' So also should you ask with trembling."

5. *Martyr Sergius of Caesarea in Cappadocia* (301)
6. *Hieromartyr Theogenes*, bishop of Parium on the Hellespont (ca. 320)
7. *St. Schottin*, hermit, of Kilkenny, Ireland (6th c.)
8. *St. Cosmas I*, patriarch of Constantinople (1081)
9. *St. Sylvester of the Kiev Caves* (12th c.)
10. *Righteous Juliana of Lazarevo* (1604)
11. *New Martyr George (Zorzes)* the Georgian, at Mytilene (1770)
12. *St. Gerasimus II*, patriarch of Alexandria (1714)
13. *New Confessor Smaragda*, abbess, of Nezhinsk (Ukraine) (1935)
14. *Saint Theopemptus*, who died in peace
15. *The Holy Martyr Theopistis*, who was stoned to death
16. *The Venerable Nilus the Sanctified*, founder of the Monastery of Geromerion

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

- **Epistle (for St. Seraphim):** 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.

- **Epistle (Day):** Titus 1:5-2:1

“ <5> For this reason I left you in Crete, that you should set in order the things that are lacking, and appoint elders in every city as I commanded you— <6> if a man is blameless, the husband of one wife, having faithful children not accused of dissipation or insubordination. <7> For a bishop must be blameless, as a steward of God, not self-willed, not quick-tempered, not given to wine, not violent, not greedy for money, <8> but hospitable, a lover of what is good, sober-minded, just, holy, self-controlled, <9> holding fast the faithful word as he has been taught, that he may be able, by sound doctrine, both to exhort and convict those who contradict. <10> For there are many insubordinate, both idle talkers and deceivers, especially those of the circumcision, <11> whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole households, teaching things which they ought not, for the sake of dishonest gain. <12> One of them, a prophet of their own, said, "Cretans are always liars, evil beasts, lazy gluttons." <13> This testimony is true. Therefore rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith, <14> not giving heed to Jewish fables and commandments of men who turn from the truth. <15> To the pure all things are pure, but to those who are defiled and unbelieving nothing is pure; but even their mind and conscience are defiled. <16> They profess to know God, but in works they deny Him, being abominable, disobedient, and disqualified for every good work. <1> But as for you, speak the things which are proper for sound doctrine:

- **Gospel (for St. Seraphim):** Luke 6:17-23

“ <17> And He came down with them and stood on a level place with a crowd of His disciples and a great multitude of people from all Judea and Jerusalem, and from the seacoast of Tyre and Sidon, who came to hear Him and be healed of their diseases, <18> as well as those who were tormented with unclean spirits. And they were healed. <19> And the whole multitude sought to touch Him, for power went out from Him and healed them all. <20> Then He lifted up His eyes toward His disciples, and said: "Blessed are you poor, For yours is the kingdom of God. <21> Blessed are you who hunger now, For you shall be filled. Blessed are you who weep now, For you shall laugh. <22> Blessed are you when men hate you, And when they exclude you, And revile you, and cast out your name as evil, For the Son of Man's sake. <23> Rejoice in that day and leap for joy! For indeed your reward is great in heaven, For in like manner their fathers did to the prophets.

- **Gospel (Day):** Mark 12:38-44

“ <38> Then He said to them in His teaching, "Beware of the scribes, who desire to go around in long robes, love greetings in the marketplaces, <39> the best seats in the synagogues, and the best places at feasts, <40> who devour widows' houses, and for a pretense make long prayers. These will receive greater condemnation." <41> Now Jesus sat opposite the treasury and saw how the people put money into the treasury. And many who were rich put in much. <42> Then one poor widow came and threw in two mites, which make a quadrans. <43> So He called His disciples to Himself and said to them, "Assuredly, I say to you that this poor widow has put in more than all those who have given to the treasury; <44> for they all put in out of their abundance, but she out of her poverty put in all that she had, her whole livelihood."

Greek

- **Epistle:** Hebrews 5:4-10

“ <4> And no man takes this honor to himself, but he who is called by God, just as Aaron was. <5> So also Christ did not glorify Himself to become High Priest, but it was He who said to Him: "You are My Son, Today I have begotten You." <6> As He also says in another place: "You are a priest forever According to the order of Melchizedek"; <7> who, in the days of His flesh, when He had offered up prayers and supplications, with vehement cries and tears to Him who was

able to save Him from death, and was heard because of His godly fear, <8> though He was a Son, yet He learned obedience by the things which He suffered. <9> And having been perfected, He became the author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him, <10> called by God as High Priest "according to the order of Melchizedek,"

- **Gospel:** John 3:1-15

“ <1> There was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews. <2> This man came to Jesus by night and said to Him, "Rabbi, we know that You are a teacher come from God; for no one can do these signs that You do unless God is with him." <3> Jesus answered and said to him, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." <4> Nicodemus said to Him, "How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born?" <5> Jesus answered, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. <6> That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. <7> Do not marvel that I said to you, 'You must be born again.' <8> The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear the sound of it, but cannot tell where it comes from and where it goes. So is everyone who is born of the Spirit." <9> Nicodemus answered and said to Him, "How can these things be?" <10> Jesus answered and said to him, "Are you the teacher of Israel, and do not know these things? <11> Most assuredly, I say to you, We speak what We know and testify what We have seen, and you do not receive Our witness. <12> If I have told you earthly things and you do not believe, how will you believe if I tell you heavenly things? <13> No one has ascended to heaven but He who came down from heaven, that is, the Son of Man who is in heaven. <14> And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, <15> that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life.

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