

Holy Trinity Russian Orthodox Church

1723 E. Fairmount Avenue, Baltimore, MD. 21231
 410-276-6171 www.HolyTrinityOrthodox.com



4th Sunday after Pentecost
Tone 3

July 1/14, 2019

Holy and Wonderworking Unmercenaries Cosmas and Damian, martyrs at Rome (284); Martyr Potitus at Naples (2nd c.); Venerable Peter the Patrician, monk, of Constantinople (854); Righteous Angelina, despotina of Serbia (16th c.); Holy Hierarch Arsenius, bishop of Tver; Venerable Tikhon, Basil and Nikon Sokolovsky (16th c.); Hieromartirs Neophytus, Jonah, Neophytus, Jonah, and Parthenius of Lampsacus; Synaxis of the Venerable Fathers of Pskov-Pechersk; Synaxis of Saints of Tver; Hieromartyr Arcadius, priest (1918); Hieromartyr Alexis, deacon (1942).

Today's Scriptural Readings:

Romans 6: 18-23 / Mathew 8: 5-13

What does a person need in order to learn the ways of the Lord? A person needs to be meek and humble, and then the Lord Himself will teach him how to walk the way of the Lord. Venerable Ambrose of Optina

This Week's Liturgical Calendar	
Saturday, July 20 th	No Services
Sunday, July 21 st – 10:00 AM <i>Private Confessions start at 9:15 AM</i>	Divine Liturgy in Church

Saints Peter & Paul Chapel
Holy Trinity Orthodox Cemetery at Cathedral Gardens
6480 Elibank Drive, Elkridge, MD. 21075

Welcome to our Chapel

Today, Sunday, July 14th, the Divine Liturgy will be celebrated at Sts. Peter & Paul Chapel. After Divine Services in the chapel we will conduct a Shashlik Picnic. The menu will feature traditional shashlik, hamburgers, hot dogs and picnic fare. We offer our thanks to everyone who donated salads, fruit, side dishes and desserts. Your generosity is truly appreciated. Thank you.

Divine Services at Holy Trinity are live-streamed at
<https://www.youtube.com/user/HolyTrinitySermons>

Parish Picnics at ‘Cathedral Gardens’ / Ray Zaitin Pavilion

On August 18th, Divine Liturgy will be celebrated at Sts. Peter & Paul Chapel located at Cathedral Gardens, our parish cemetery. Afterwards, we will conduct picnics at the Ray Zaitin Pavilion.

Sunday, August 18 – Liturgy at the Chapel (10:00 AM) and our Annual ‘Spas’ Fish Fry – An expanded menu of various grilled fish and fish kabobs will be offered. More information to come... To help contact Albert Blaszak 410-799-3226 or Vadim Radchenko 410-465-6172.

Brotherhood Crab Fest – Friday, July 19th – 6:30 PM

The St. Alexander Nevsky Brotherhood will sponsor a **Crab Fest on Friday, July 19th** beginning at 6:30 PM at Cathedral Gardens Ray Zaitin Pavilion. All-you-can-eat fresh steamed crabs, corn on the cob and soft drinks will be served. **Reservations are strongly recommended.** Price: \$30/person if RSVP by Wednesday, July 17th; Price at the door: \$45/person. For reservations/information, call Albert Blaszak: 410-799-3226.

Russian Festival Meeting – July 21st

The Kick-Off Meeting of the 2019 Russian Festival will take place on Sunday, July 21st after Divine Liturgy. Everyone is asked to stay and offer your input to make this year’s festival even better! Thank you.

Cleaning Group – Group #2 / Join a Group – Help your brothers and sisters

Group #2 will clean the week of **July 15-20**: Natalie, Andrei Burbelo and family, Elena Terekhina and Valentina Bosaya. Please join a group. We always need more members. Thank you!

This week the cleaning group needs extra volunteers to move many items in church back to their places. Please contact Natalie Burbelo 732-547-9928. Please help!

Cleaning Groups Need More Volunteers...please help!

We need more volunteers for our cleaning groups. Only 38 individuals work in eight groups. With a new floor the cleaning responsibilities have changed. Please help you fellow brothers and sisters; join a group. Contact Larisa Hidar for more information: 443-986-0047.

Challenge Grant – Matching Donations

Three families in our parish have pledged to match all donations for the flooring and altar icons on a 1:1 ratio. For every dollar you donate, they will match one dollar, up to \$30,000, towards the Church Restoration Fund. Double the value of your donation: \$20 becomes \$40, \$50 becomes \$100, and \$100 becomes \$200! Special donation forms are on the candle stand in the vestibule of the church.

Water Park Trip – August 17

Again this summer we will conduct a Sunday School trip to Guppy Gulch <http://guppygulchcamp.com> a water park north of Bel Air on a **Saturday August 17th** from 10:00 AM – 5:00 PM. Everyone in the parish is invited. Please make your reservations (\$22 per person) by July 28th. Contact Olga Hansen 410-967-6738.

Convocation of the Patriarchal Parishes

The 14th Convocation of the Patriarchal Parishes is scheduled for September 30 – October 3, 2019 at Antiochian Village in Western PA. In addition to the parish clergy, one (1) lay delegate and one (1) alternate for each parish with up to 250 families/individuals shall participate in the convocation. Delegates are selected from the devout members of the parish. Active pledging members of our parish who are interested in participating in the convocation should submit their names to Victor Marinich 443-512-0985 who will then bring the list to the parish council at its regularly scheduled meeting in August for selection. Our registration must be received by Sept. 7th. Also, at this conference we will discuss plans for celebrating in 2020 the 50th Anniversary of the Patriarchal Parishes in the USA. All parishes are requested to present proposals on how best to mark this milestone. Please discuss your ideas with any member of the parish council. Contact Fr. John for more information.

Please join the WhatsApp group!

As many of you know, the Jerusalem pilgrimage group of 2019 created its WhatsApp group. It was a great decision promoting our Christian unity, human connections, allowing memories and information exchange, and simply bringing us a lot of joy. We stay in touch continuously to this day. During the Centennial celebration of our parish, the incredible feeling of unity of our church family gave birth to the idea- to create our own, independent, church WhatsApp group. We hope that this mode of communication will bring us all even closer together, and the multi-lingual beauty of our unique parish will continue to grow and blossom! Open this link to join the Holy Trinity WhatsApp Group: <https://chat.whatsapp.com/LCMO7XxsMgfBEDIwaHY13L> We sincerely thank Nikolai Shashev and Natalia Gerachenko for creating this for us! O Lord bless!

Birthday / Anniversary Celebrations: July 14-20

We offer our best wishes and birthday congratulations to Lara Marinich (7/15), Sofia Pearson (7/16) and Fr. Deacon Michael Bishop (7/19). May God bless them with health, prosperity and many years. To include your birthday/anniversary in the bulletin call Fr. John.

Join the Brotherhood

All men of our parish are encouraged to join the St. Alexander Nevsky Brotherhood. And we welcome your suggestions for organizing special activities. Please contact Fr. John or Albert Blaszak.

Amazon Smile & Popular Gift Cards

Every time you shop on Amazon go to <https://smile.amazon.com/> log in as you usually do, select our church – Holy Trinity Russian Orthodox Church (Baltimore, MD) – as your targeted charity, and Amazon will donate 0.5% of your purchase (every purchase) to our church.

Vigil Candles: On the Altar and near St. Barbara

July 14-20: Candles offered by Olga Mychko and Alexey Shevelkin for the health/salvation of the servants of God: Mark Bogdanov, Alla and Yuliana Mychko and Olga Shevelkina. A \$15 donation will keep all three candles lit for one week. Please schedule your candle offering with Elena Loyko 443-537-8978.

Preparing for Holy Communion? *O Lord, Jesus Christ, before I partake of Thy most pure Body and Thy most precious Blood, I run to Thee in Confession to ask forgiveness and admit my fault*

because: I have angered others, been angry, impatient and resentful; I have not attended Sunday Divine Liturgy and missed other services; I have been harsh and judgmental toward others; I have been prideful, lustful, selfish and stubborn; I have neglected prayer, been lazy, ignored the fasts and have not been to Confession in several weeks... O Lord, help me to more worthily prepare to receive the Holy Mysteries...

Special Petitions for the Unity of the Orthodox Church

Again we pray to the Lord and our Savior to preserve the Orthodox Church abiding in the whole world in unity and right belief, and to grant her peace and tranquility, love and consent, let us all say, Lord, hearken and have mercy.

Again we pray to look upon the Holy Orthodox Church with the goodness of heart and with mercy, and to preserve her from divisions and schisms, from hostility and disorder, so her unity will not be diminished or shaken, but Thine Thrice-Holy name be glorified in her, let us all say, Lord, hearken and have mercy.

Submit your 2019 Pledge

The mission of our parish is to spread the Word of God, to grow, to expand, to improve and not just to preserve our traditions. Our parish shouldn't become stale, but pursue holiness. We strive to fulfill the mission of our parish, through prayer, work and sacrifice. Prayer – because we are called to “pray without ceasing” (1 Thess. 5:17); work – because we are taught to increase the talents given to us (Matt. 25: 14-30); and sacrifice – because "everyone to whom much is given, from him will much be required" (Luke 12:48).

*When you are generous, you are not bestowing a gift, but repaying a debt. Everything you possess materially comes from God, who created all things. And every spiritual and moral virtue you possess is through divine grace. Thus you owe everything to God. More than that, God has given you his Son, to show you how to live: how to use your material possessions, and how to grow in moral and spiritual virtue. **St. John Chrysostom***

Please Remember in Your Prayers...

Archpriest Michael Hatrak; **Deacon Michael** Bishop; **Mat. Myra** Kovalak; **Mat. Klavdiya** Burbelo; **Kh. Frederica** Mathewes-Green; **Nun Elizabeth**; **Nun Magdalena**; **Mat. Natalia** Kosich; **Priest Gregory** and **Mat. Diane** Winsky; **Mat. Catherine** Kowalchik; **Marie** Vass; **Charles** Snipes; **Arthur-Stephen** Lisowsky; **Yelena** Radchenko; **Lydia** Zorina; **Tatiana**; **Katherine** Plaskowitz; **Philip** Plaskowitz; **Bernadine** Borawick; **Julia** Aymold; **Lilli Ann** Hoffman; **Lara** Marinich; **Oleg** Marinich; **Ioann** and **Galina** Zernetkin; **Monika-Anastasia** & **Stephanie** Handley; **Blanche-Julia** Stolkovich; **Ekaterina** Koroleva; **Nina** Lewis; **Maryann** Black; **Lyudmila, Anton** & **Aleksander** Karnup; **John Alexander** Bylen; **Katherine** Garrett; **Stephen** Kaminitzky; **John-Thomas** Planinshek; **Kenneth** Pukita; **William** and **Ann** Ferkile; **Irina** Kononova; **Petr** and **Lyudmila** Borodkin; **Anthony** Bakie; **Svetlana** & **Aleksey**; **Alla**; **Anna**; **Alla**; **Raisa, Zinaida**; **Joseph** Germano; **Pavel, Vladimir, Valentina, Nina,** and **Maria**; **Maria** Pappas; **Bonnie** Duke; **Joseph** Lacomy; **Diana** Radchenko; **Aleksey** & **Lidia** Potapov; **Oleg** and **Andrei**; **Vitaliy, Tatiana, Olena** & **Nicholas** Berchuk; **David, Selina-Sophia, John, Maryann, David, Joseph, Lisa Ann** Eichelberger; **Cynthia** and **Bill (Basil)** Popomaronis; **Andrei, Marina, Valentina** and **Vladimir**; **Archpriest** Cezar, **Mat. Christina, Cezara-Maria, Darius, Justina, Christian**; **Victoria** Lardiero; **Richard** Wright; **Valentina** Shultieva; **Shanna, Stephen, Trent-Michael, Grant-Alexander, Adalynn** Lisowsky; **Julie** Smith; **Tayisia** Solvieva; **Lubov** Pavuk; **Leonid** and **Zoya**; **Jayne** Sudol; **Rita** and **Richard** Herber, **Mary** Orzolek, **Shane-Michael** Sierakowski; **George** Matassov; **Janice** DesLauriers; **John** DesLauriers.

Next Council Meeting: Tuesday, July 23rd – 7:00 PM in the Church Hall

Fr. John Vass, Rector 443-527-7067	Fr. Deacon Michael Bishop: 410-563-0472
Victor Marinich, <i>Council President:</i> 443-512-0985	Vadim Radchenko, <i>Vice President:</i> 410-465-6172
Andrei Burbelo, <i>Recording Secretary:</i> 443-567-6031	Albert Blaszak, <i>Treasurer:</i> 410-799-3226
Oxana Chumak-Strianese, <i>Stewardship Chair:</i> 831-673-1937	Anna-Zumrat Shkurba <i>Member-At-Large:</i> 443-857-8541
Natallia Makarava <i>Sisterhood President:</i> 443-625-8470	Michael Mickel, <i>Cemetery Manager:</i> 410-666-2870

EPISTLE: Romans 6: 18-23

And having been set free from sin, you became slaves of righteousness. I speak in human terms because of the weakness of your flesh. For just as you presented your members as slaves of uncleanness, and of lawlessness leading to more lawlessness, so now present your members as slaves of righteousness for holiness. For when you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness. What fruit did you have then in the things of which you are now ashamed? For the end of those things is death. But now having been set free from sin, and having become slaves of God, you have your fruit to holiness, and the end, everlasting life. **For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.**

GOSPEL: Matthew 8: 5-13

Now when Jesus had entered Capernaum, a centurion came to Him, pleading with Him, Saying, "Lord, my servant is lying at home paralyzed, dreadfully tormented." And Jesus said to him, "I will come and heal him." The centurion answered and said, "Lord, I am not worthy that You should come under my roof. But only speak a word, and my servant will be healed. For I also am a man under authority having soldiers under me. And I say to this one, 'Go,' and he goes; and to another, 'Come,' and he comes; and to my servant, 'Do this,' and he does it." When Jesus heard it, He marveled, and said to those who followed, "Assuredly, I say to you, I have not found such great faith, not even in Israel! And I say to you that many will come from east and west, and sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven. But the sons of the kingdom will be cast out into outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth." Then Jesus said to the centurion, "Go your way; and as you have believed, so let it be done for you." And his servant was healed that same hour.

St. Theophan the Recluse: *Thoughts for Each Day of the Year*

What faith the centurion has! The Lord Himself marveled. The essence of this faith is that he confessed the Lord to be the God of all things, an all-powerful sovereign and master of all that exists; for this reason he beseeched, speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed. I believe that everything is under Your authority and everything obeys Your slightest beckoning. The Lord requires the same faith of us, as well. He who has this faith knows no lack, and whatsoever he asks, he receives. Thus has the Lord Himself promised. Oh, when will we have if only a little of such faith! But this faith is also a gift; we must ask for it as well, and ask for it with faith. Let us ask for it, with a feeling of need for it, ask for it continually, fervently, at the same time aiding its unfolding within us through corresponding thoughts, and most of all by submitting to God's commandments.

The Wages of Sin is Death, but the Gift of God is Eternal Life in Christ Jesus our Lord

[In the Orthodox Church] sin is identified not with transgression and guilt, but with failure and “missing the mark.” The idea cultivated in western Christendom, which identified sin with legal transgression and salvation with individual justification and atonement, linked Christian ethics in people’s minds with a host of psychological complexes offering no way of escape. The striving for individual justification and atonement leaves man still enslaved to his autonomous individuality, separated from the possibility of life and existence ...The egocentric fear of transgression, and the tendency to gloss over sin or to reach an accommodation with it are extensions and consequences of the psychological guilt complex, and neither has any place in the spiritual climate of Orthodox ethics... In man’s sin, in his failure to be what he is called to be, the Church sees an affirmation of the truth of the person: personhood is affirmed even in man’s capacity to say no even to life and existence itself, to say no to God, although relationship and communion with Him are all that makes existence into a hypostasis of life. In man’s sin, the Church sees the tragic adventure of human freedom ...Sin is the measure of our awareness of separation from God, of separation from life it is the measure of our conscious recognition of death ...Thus sin becomes a starting point for repentance, metanoia. This word in Greek means “change of mind,” in other words a change in man’s whole attitude... Christ’s assumption of human nature is the event which brings the Church into being. What Christ has assumed is all of us who make up the body of the Church, burdened as we are with daily failure: and He shows us to be partakers in His life, in His own mode of existence ...Participation in the antropic body of Christ, in the existential unity of the communion of saints, is not secured by individual merit or the objectively recognized “virtues” of the individual: it is secured by repentance, by the new attitude of trust in God... Repentance is a change in our mode of existence: man ceases to trust in his own individuality. He realizes that existing as an individual, even a virtuous individual, does not save him from corruption and death, from his agonizing existential thirst for life. This is why he takes refuge in the Church, where he exists as someone loving and loved. He is loved by the Saints, who give him a “name” of personal distinctiveness and take him into the communion of their love despite his sinfulness; and he himself strives to love others despite their sinfulness, to live free from the necessities of his mortal nature. He struggles to overcome his individual resistances, his individual wishes and autonomous impulses, not in order to “improve himself” individually, but in order to measure up to the “frenzied love” of Christ and the saints, to the preconditions required for personal life as opposed to natural survival. Christos Yannaras. *The Freedom of Morality*. Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1984, pp. 38- 42.

THE ROMAN CENTURION

“Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness” (Mt. 6:33). This is what last Sunday’s Gospel left with us. On the day of Pentecost, the Lord sent down upon His Church the Holy Spirit. Just as all of nature which, after it had been warmed up by the sun, began to grow flowers, plants, and fruits—so the Holy Church, upon receiving the Holy Spirit, the Giver of Life, began to grow spiritual flowers—her wonderful Saints. All the Gospel readings since the coming down of the Holy Spirit have been telling us what we must do to obtain the Kingdom of Heaven; what all the Saints did, how they sought and how they found “the Kingdom of God and His righteousness.” We were given the commandments of the Lord. But today we are not given commandments, or a teaching. No, but rather life itself, a living example. And as an example for us, the Gospel reading gives us a Roman centurion, a pagan. This is an example of the most profound humility. This example shows us how a master, out of love for his neighbor, becomes a slave. After all, according

to his civic position, this Centurion was master not only over the hundred soldiers which he commanded, but also over all Jews, which meant even over Christ; because the Jews were enslaved by the Romans. This Centurion had a servant. And this servant fell sick and was suffering terribly. And here the Centurion was told that among the Jews who were subject to him there was a remarkable man who had the supernatural power of healing. Now the Centurion was a pagan. He did not know Holy Scripture, he knew nothing about the Messianic expectations of the Jews. For him Christ was without doubt a great man, but nevertheless just a man, and subject to him besides. He could have sent for Him, summoned Him. But humility blots out all boundaries. His servant was in danger, and this man could help him. The Centurion himself went to Christ. He went and asked: not for his wife, not for his son, not for his daughter, father or mother, but for a servant. And he asked a Jew, enslaved by Rome; a Roman citizen asked for mercy, as a slave would ask his master. And he said: "Lord, my servant lieth at home sick of the palsy, grievously tormented" (Mt. 8:6). He said nothing more. In these words trembled all his sorrow. And he brought his sorrow to Christ. Now he stood humbly and with bowed head waited for an answer. "I will come and heal him" (Mt. 8:7), Christ quickly answered. How very simple. But look what happened here, to what incredible height the Centurion's faith and humility rose. He stopped Christ: "Lord, I am not worthy that thou shouldst come under my roof" (Mt. 8:8). Listen... "I am not worthy." Now this is repentance. This is the same as if he had said: I am a sinner and you are a righteous man. "But speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed" (Mt. 8: 8). Only a word. Even the Lord was surprised at such faith. "I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel" (Mt. 8:10). And indeed the Centurion's faith was so simple, so very humble. "I am a man under authority, having soldiers under me; and I say to this man, Go, and he goeth, and to another, Come, and he cometh" (Mt. 8:9). What do these words express? This is what: Thou art Lord over sickness and health, over life and death. Only say the word! One word! And Christ said this word: "Go thy way, and as thou hast believed, so be it done unto thee. And his servant was healed in the very same hour" (Mt. 8:13). What a reward for humility! This is what humility can do! May the Lord grant us this humility of the Centurion. **The One Thing Needful Archbishop Andrei**

The Holy Martyrs, Wonderworkers and Unmercenaries Cosmas and Damian

The Holy Martyrs, Wonderworkers and Unmercenaries Cosmas and Damian – were brothers by birth, born at Rome, and physicians by profession. They accepted a martyr's death at Rome under the emperor Carinus (283-284). They were brought up by their parents in the rules of piety, they led strict and chaste lives, and they were granted by God the graced gift of healing the sick. By their good and unselfish attitude towards people, combined with their exceptional kindness, the brothers converted many to Christ. The saints usually said to the sick: "It be not by our power that we treat the sick, but by the power of Christ, the True God. Believe in Him and be healed". For their unselfish doctoring of the infirm, the holy brothers were called "unmercenary physicians".

Their active service towards neighbor and spiritual influence on the surroundings, leading many into the Church, attracted the attention of the Roman authorities. Soldiers were sent after the brothers. Hearing about this, Christians implored Saints Cosmas and Damian to hide themselves away for a while until they could render them help. But the soldiers, not finding the brothers, arrested instead other Christians of the settlement, where the saints lived. Saints Cosmas and Damian then came out of hiding and delivered themselves over into the hands of the soldiers, asking them to set free those arrested because of them.

At Rome, the saints were at first locked up in prison, and then were taken for trial. The saints openly confessed before the Roman emperor and the judge their faith in Christ God, having come into the world to save mankind and redeem the world from sin, and they resolutely refused to offer sacrifice to the pagan gods. They said: "We have caused evil for no one, we have not involved ourselves with the magic or sorcery, of which you accuse us. We doctor the infirm by the power of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and we do not take any sort of recompense for rendering aid to the sick, because our Lord commanded His disciples: "Freely ye have received, freely give" (Mt. 10: 8).

The emperor however continued with his demands. Through the prayer of the holy brothers, imbued with the power of grace, God suddenly struck Carinus blind, so that he too in his own experience might know the almightiness of the Lord, not forgiving blasphemy against the Holy Spirit. The people, beholding the miracle, cried out: "Great is the Christian God and no other is God, except Him!" Many of those that believed besought the holy brothers to heal the emperor, and he himself implored the saints, promising to convert to the True God Christ the Savior. The saints healed him. After this, Saints Cosmas and Damian were with honor set free and again they set about doctoring the sick.

But what the hatred of the pagans and the ferocity of the Roman authorities could not do, was done by black envy, one of the strongest passions of the sinful nature of man. An older physician – an instructor, under whom in their time the holy brothers had studied the medical craft, became jealous of their fame. Driven to madness by this malice, and all overcome by passion, he summoned the holy brothers, formerly his most beloved students, that they should all get together for a gathering of various medicinal herbs, and setting far off into the mountains, he murdered them, throwing their bodies into a river.

Thus as martyrs ended the earthly journey of these holy brothers – the Unmercenary Healers Cosmas and Damian. They had devoted all their life to a Christian service to neighbor, having escaped the Roman sword and prison, but treacherously murdered by a teacher.

The Lord glorified His God-pleasing ones. And now through the prayers of the holy Unmercenaries Cosmas and Damian is received healing from God for all, who with faith recourse to their saintly intercession. © 1996-2001 by translator Fr. S. Janos.

**Holy Royal Martyrs of Russia: Tsar Nicholas II, Tsaritsa Alexandra, Crown Prince Alexis, and
Grand-duchesses Olga, Tatiana, Maria, and Anastasia, and those martyred with them (1918)
Commemorated on July 4/17**

"Tsar Nicholas II was the son of Alexander III, who had reposed in the arms of St John of Kronstadt. Having been raised in piety, Tsar Nicholas ever sought to rule in a spirit consonant with the precepts of Orthodoxy and the best traditions of his nation. Tsaritsa Alexandra, a granddaughter of Queen Victoria of England, and a convert from Lutheranism, was noted for her piety and compassion for the poor and suffering. Their five children were beloved of all for their kindness, modesty, and guilelessness.

"Amidst the political turmoil of 1917, Tsar Nicholas selflessly abdicated the throne for what he believed was the good of his country. Although he had abdicated willingly, the revolutionaries put him and his family under house arrest, then sent them under guard to Tobolsk and finally Ekaterinburg. A letter written from Tobolsk by Grand Duchess Olga, the eldest of the children, shows their nobility of soul. She writes, 'My father asks that I convey to all those who have remained devoted to him... that they should not take vengeance on his account, because he has forgiven everyone and prays for them all. Nor should they avenge themselves. Rather, they should bear in mind that this evil which is now present in the world will become yet stronger, but that evil will not conquer evil, but only love shall do so.'

"After enduring sixteen months of imprisonment, deprivation, and humiliation with a Christian patience which moved even their captors, they and those who were with them gained their crowns of martyrdom when they were shot and stabbed to death in the cellar of the Ipatiev house in Ekaterinburg in 1918. "Together with them are also commemorated those who faithfully served them, and were either slain with them, or on their account..." (Great Horologion)

Martyrdom of St. Elizabeth Romanov and Nun Barbara (1918) Commemorated on July 5/18

Grand Duchess Elizabeth was a grand-daughter of Queen Victoria of England and the older sister of the Empress Alexandra (July 4). After marrying Grand Duke Sergei she converted to the Orthodox faith, though this was not required by her position. After her husband was assassinated in 1905, she took monastic vows and withdrew from the world, founding the Convent of Saints Mary and Martha. There she served as superior, devoting her time to prayer, fasting, and caring for the sick and the poor.

During the Russian Revolution, she was seized by the God-hating Bolsheviks and taken to the Urals, where she and several with her were martyred by being thrown alive down an abandoned mine-shaft. When the fall did not kill them, soldiers threw grenades down the shaft to complete their work. Saint Elizabeth was singing the Cherubic Hymn when she died.

The Nun Barbara, her cell-attendant, voluntarily followed St Elizabeth into exile and received martyrdom with her. Their relics were recovered and taken at great risk to China, then to Jerusalem, where they were deposited in the Convent of St Mary Magdalene. When their reliquaries were opened in 1981, their bodies were found to be partly incorrupt, and gave off a sweet fragrance.

Footnote: After the assassination of her husband in Moscow, Grand Duchess Elizabeth had a cross erected at the site of his death, bearing the inscription "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." After the revolution, the cross remained standing through the devotion of the people of Moscow to St Elizabeth, until it was personally torn down by Lenin.