

# **SAINETS PETER AND PAUL ORTHODOX CHURCH**

A Parish of the Orthodox Church in America  
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## Have Mercy on Me O God, Have Mercy on Me.

<b>March 16, 2014</b>	<b>Sunday of Saint Gregory Palamas</b>	Divine Liturgy	9:30 am
March 19	Wednesday	Liturgy of Presanctified Gifts	6:00 pm
March 21	Friday	Akathistos Hymn for the Departed	6:00 pm
March 22	Saturday	Soul Saturday	Divine Liturgy 9:30 am
	Saturday	Great Vespers	4:00 pm
<b>March 23</b>	<b>Sunday of the Veneration of the Holy Cross</b>	Divine Liturgy	9:30 am

**Saints of the Day:** **Saint Gregory Palamas, Archbishop of Thessalonica**, Martyr Sabinas of Hermopolis, Egypt (303). Martyr Papas of Lycaonia (305). Saint Serapion, Archbishop of Novgorod (1516). Hieromartyr Alexander, Pope of Rome (119). Martyr Julian of Anazarbus (305). Martyrs Trophimus and Thalus of Laodicea (300). Venerable Christodulus, Wonderworker of Patmos (1093). Martyr Romanus at Parium on the Hellespont. 10 Martyrs in Phoenicia. Saint Pimen, Fool-for-Christ and Enlightener of Dagestan, and his companion Anton Meskhi, the Censurer of Kings (13 c.). Saint Ambrosi (Khelaia) the Confessor, Catholicos-Patriarch of All Georgia (1927). New Martyr Malachi of Rhodes, who suffered at Jerusalem (1500). Apostle Aristobulus, One of the Seventy, Bishop and Martyr in Britain. Saint Boniface Curitan of Ross, Bishop (630). Saint Patrick of Auvergne, Bishop. Saint Abban of Kill-Abban, Abbot (5th c). Saint Abban of Magheranoidhe (620). Saint Finnian Lobhar (the Leper), Abbot (520)

**Please remember in your prayers:** Suffering Christians of Egypt, Syria, the Middle East and the Ukraine. Bishop BOULOS Yazigi, Bishop YOHANNA Ibrahim, of Aleppo. Archimandrites Athanasy, Isidore, Nectarios, Pachomy. Archpriests Jason, John, Vincent. Priests Bohdan, Sergius, Jacobus, Leonid, Andrij, Vasil, Vasil. Deacons Mark, Demetrios, Philip. Mother Raphaela, Dimitri, Nina, Daniel, Catherine, Helen, Anna, Peter, Helen, Michael, Stephanie, Zara, Nolan, Emelie, Connie, Michael, Ed, Nettie, Maria, Michael, John, James, Nancy, Susan, Daniel, Aaron, Mark, Jennifer, Nina, Nadine, Michael, Anna, Gregory, Marianna, Mykola, Helen, Isaiah, Albert, Kevin, Robert, Robert, Andrew, David, Warren, Vincent, Archpriest Leonid, Diane, Abigail, Juanita, Alex, Anne Marie, Helen, Joseph, Carla.

**God Grant Many Years!** Prayers for the health of the servants of God Priest David Cochran, Priest Sergius Willis, Pat Medvick, Archpriest Andrew Nelko, Mickey Kurap, Mitred Archpriest Vincent and Matushka Patricia Saverino were offered today at Liturgy and Moleben

**Memory Eternal.** Prayers for the repose of Elizabeth Garcia were offered at Liturgy and Litiya today at the request of Sonia Buttino.

**Memory Eternal.** Prayers for the repose of Metropolitan IRENEI, Archimandrite Sebastian Gyza, cousin Bill Fox and Archpriest Mikola Dovgan were offered at Liturgy and Litiya today at the request of Father John Udics.

**Memory Eternal.** Prayers for the repose of Martha Karpowich were offered at Liturgy and Litiya today at the request of the "Memory Eternal Requiem Service Fund."

### 2014 LENTEN DIOCESAN YOUTH RETREAT

The diocese will host an overnight **Lenten Youth Retreat at Holy Resurrection Orthodox Church in Wayne NJ for students grades 7-12 on Friday-Saturday, 4-5 April 2014.** The theme for the Lenten Youth Retreat is: *"Miracles in our Midst."* Orthodox and non-Orthodox students are invited to attend. This is a great opportunity for Orthodox young people to invite a friend. The event is featured as the banner news item on the diocesan website and listed in the "Upcoming Events" section..

### SYNAXIS OF PRIMATES CONCLUDES

SYOSSET, NY [OCA] At the invitation of His All Holiness, Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew of Constantinople, a Synaxis of Primates of the Orthodox Church convened at the Phanar March 6-9, 2014. The gathering was called to consider a variety of issues related to the convocation of a Great and Holy Synod by the Ecumenical Patriarch in 2016. It is felt that such a gathering would offer the world a coherent and united Orthodox witness and voice while serving as an occasion for discerning a much-needed united Orthodox response to today's social and moral challenges.

The Orthodox Church in America, which was granted autocephaly, or self governing status, by the Church of Russia in 1970, was not invited to the Synaxis of Primates, as many of the Orthodox Churches, while maintaining Eucharistic communion with the OCA, do not recognize its autocephalous status. Also absent from the gathering was the Church of the Czech Lands and Slovakia.

Due to the illness of His Holiness, Patriarch John X of Antioch, the Patriarchate of Antioch was represented by a delegation. In view of the fact that a current dispute between the Patriarchates of Antioch and Jerusalem remains unresolved, the Antiochian participants suspended their participation in the Synaxis before its official close.

The texts of the Communiqué and Statement, as released by the Ecumenical Patriarchate, appear below.

**COMMUNIQUÉ: March 9, 2014**

By the grace of God, the proceedings of the Synaxis of the Primates of the Orthodox Autocephalous Churches concluded today, on the Sunday of Orthodoxy. The Synaxis took place at the Phanar from 6-9 March, 2014, at the invitation and under the presidency of His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, and was attended by all the most venerable Primates in person, with the exception of His Beatitude Patriarch John of Antioch, who, due to illness, was represented by Hierarchs of his Church.

The proceedings of the Synaxis were carried out in a very fraternal spirit; the Hierarchs discussed matters concerning the life of the Orthodox Church in the contemporary world, and particularly in regions where Orthodoxy and Christianity in general face serious problems and difficulties; the Hierarchs also expressed their support and profound interest of the Orthodox Church in its entirety concerning their fellow human beings suffering in those regions. Above all, the Synaxis considered the prevailing situation in the Middle East and recent developments in Ukraine, as well as the ongoing uncertainty about the fate of the bishops, Metropolitan John of Aleppo, and Yuhanna Ibrahim of the Syriac Church, who were kidnapped by unknown persons a very long time ago.

In the framework of their Synaxis, the Primates also deliberated on the matter of the Holy and Great Synod of the Orthodox Church and decided that, upon expediting the process of preparation, it will be convened and presided by the Ecumenical Patriarch in Constantinople in 2016.

With regard to this matter, the Primates also determined issues related to representation and participation of the Orthodox Autocephalous Churches in this Synod, as well as the manner of decision-making at the Synod. On Sunday morning, 9th March, the feast of Orthodoxy, the Primates concelebrated in the Patriarchal Church of Saint George at the Phanar, where their Message to the Orthodox faithful throughout the world, their Christian brothers and sisters everywhere, and all people of goodwill, was read officially from the pulpit.

At the Phanar, March 9, 2014 From the Chief Secretariat of the Holy and Sacred Synod

**MESSAGE**

March 9, 2014

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Through the grace of God, the Primates of the Most Holy Autocephalous Orthodox Churches, to the Orthodox faithful throughout the world, all of our Christian brothers and sisters as well as every person of goodwill: we extend God's blessing and our greeting of love and peace.

"We always give thanks to God for all of you and mention you in our prayers, remembering before our God and Father your work of faith, labor of love, and steadfastness of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ." (1 Thess. 1.2-3)

1. Having convened by the grace of our compassionate God, at the invitation of the Archbishop of Constantinople and Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, at the Phanar, from March 6-9, 2014; having deliberated in fraternal love on matters concerning our Holy Church today; and concelebrating in the Patriarchal Church of St. George on the glorious occasion of the Sunday of Orthodoxy, we address you with these words of love, peace and consolation.

Inasmuch as our One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Orthodox Church dwells in the world, it also experiences the challenges of every age. Faithful to Holy Tradition, the Church of Christ is in constant dialogue with every period of time, suffering with human beings and sharing their anguish. For "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and to the ages" (Heb. 13.8).

The trials and challenges of history are especially acute in our days, and Orthodox Christians cannot remain uninvolved or indifferent to them. This is why we have assembled "together in one place" (Acts 2.1) in order to reflect on the problems and temptations facing humanity today. "There is fighting without and fear within." (2 Cor. 7.5) These Apostolic words are also valid for the Church today.

2. In reflecting upon people's suffering throughout the world, we express our support for the martyrdom and our admiration for the witness of Christians in the Middle East, Africa, and other parts of the world. We call to mind their dual martyrdom: for their faith as well as for the safeguarding of their historical relationship with people of other religious conviction. We denounce the lack of peace and stability, which is prompting Christians to abandon the land where our Lord Jesus Christ was born and whence the Good News spread to the entire world.

Our sympathy extends to all victims of the tragedy in Syria. We condemn every form of terrorism and defamation of religion. The kidnapping of Metropolitans Paul and Youhanna, other clergymen as well as the nuns of Saint Thecla Convent in Maaloula remains an open wound, and we demand their immediate liberation. We appeal to all involved for the immediate cessation of military action, liberation of captives, and establishment of peace in the region through dialogue. Christians in the Middle East are a leaven of peace. Peace for all people also means peace for Christians. We support the Patriarchate of Antioch in its spiritual and humanitarian ministry, as well as its efforts for reconstruction and the resettlement of all refugees.

3. We fervently pray for peaceful negotiation and prayerful reconciliation in the ongoing crisis in Ukraine. We denounce the threats of violent occupation of sacred monasteries and churches, and pray for the return of our brothers presently outside of ecclesiastical communion into the Holy Church.

4. A fundamental threat to justice and peace – both locally and globally – is the global economic crisis. The ramifications of this are evident on all layers in society, where such values as personal integrity, fraternal solidarity and justice are often wanting. The origins of this crisis are not merely financial. They are moral and spiritual in character. Instead of conforming to the worldly idols of power, greed and hedonism, we emphasize our vocation to transform the world by embracing the principles of justice, peace, and love.

As a result of self-centeredness and abuse of power, many people undermine the sacredness of the human person, neglecting to see the face of God in the least of our brothers and sisters (cf. Matt. 25.40,45). Many remain indifferent to the poverty, suffering and violence that plague humanity.

5. The Church is called to articulate its prophetic word. We express our genuine concern about local and global trends that undermine and erode the principles of faith, the dignity of the human person, the institution of marriage, and the gift of creation.

We stress the undisputed sanctity of human life from inception until natural death. We recognize marriage as the union of man and woman that reflects the union between Christ and His Church. Our vocation is to preserve the natural environment as stewards and not proprietors of creation. In this period of Great Lent, we exhort our clergy and laity to observe a spirit of repentance, to experience purity of heart, humility and forgiveness, bearing witness to the timeless teachings of our Lord Jesus Christ in society.

6. This Synaxis of Primates is a blessed occasion for us to reinforce our unity through communion and cooperation. We affirm our commitment to the paramount importance of synodality for the unity of the Church. We affirm the words of St. John Chrysostom, Archbishop of Constantinople, that “the name of the Church signifies unity and concord, not division.” Our heart is set on the long-awaited Holy and Great Synod of the Orthodox Church in order to witness to its unity as well as to its responsibility and care for the contemporary world.

The Synaxis agreed that the preparatory work to the Synod should be intensified. A special Inter-Orthodox Committee will work from September 2014 until Holy Easter of 2015, followed by a Pre-Synodal Pan-Orthodox Conference to be convened in the first half of 2015. All decisions at the Synod and in the preparatory stages are made by consensus. The Holy and Great Synod of the Orthodox Church will be convened by the Ecumenical Patriarch in Constantinople in 2016, unless something unexpected occurs. The Synod will be presided by the Ecumenical Patriarch. His brother Primates of the other Orthodox Autocephalous Churches will be seated at his right and at his left.

7. Inseparably interconnected with unity is mission. The Church does not live for itself but is obliged to witness to and share God’s gifts with those near and afar. Participating in the Divine Eucharist and praying for the oikoumene, we are called to continue this liturgy after the liturgy, sharing the gifts of truth and love with all humankind, in accordance with the Lord’s last commandment and assurance: “Go ye, and make disciples of all nations . . . And lo, I shall be with you until the end of the ages” (Matt. 28.19-20).

8. We live in a world where multiculturalism and pluralism are inevitable realities, which are constantly changing. We are conscious of the fact that no issue in our time can be considered or resolved without reference to the global, that any polarization between the local and the ecumenical only leads to distortion of the Orthodox way of thinking.

Therefore, even in the face of voices of dissension, segregation, and division, we are determined to proclaim the message of Orthodoxy. We acknowledge that dialogue is always better than conflict. Withdrawal and isolationism are never options. We reaffirm our obligation at all times to be open in our contact with “the other”: with other people and other cultures, as well as with other Christians and people of other faiths.

9. Above and beyond all challenges, we proclaim the good news of a God, who “so loved the world” that He “dwelt among us.” Thus, we Orthodox remain full of hope. Despite all tensions, we nevertheless dare to hope in the “almighty God, who is and who was and who is to come” (Rev. 1.8) For we remember that the last word – the word of joy, love, and life – belongs to Him, to whom is due all glory, honor and worship to the ages of ages. Amen.

At the Phanar, the 9th of March, 2014

+ Bartholomew of Constantinople	of	+ Irinej of Serbia	+ Ieronymos of Athens
+ Theodoros of Alexandria		+ Daniel of Romania	+ Sawa of Warsaw
+ Theophilos of Jerusalem		+ Neophyte of Bulgaria	+ Anastasios of Tirana
+ Kirill of Moscow		+ Ilia of Georgia	
		+ Chrysostomos of Cyprus	

## **FANAR: CHURCHES REACH AGREEMENT ON PAN-ORTHODOX HOLY SYNOD IN 2016.** 03/08/2014 12:30 TURKEY

Representatives of the various expressions of orthodoxy have agreed to meet in synod in two years. Meanwhile, a Preparatory Commission consisting of a bishop from each church will prepare the introductory documents.

Istanbul (AsiaNews) - The "sacred and great" pan-Orthodox Synod will be held in Istanbul in 2016 at the Cathedral of St. Irene. In the meantime, the Orthodox Churches, a Preparatory Commission - composed of a bishop from each church will begin preparatory work "in a fruitful manner" for the meeting. The same group will then serve as the secretariat during the meeting. This was decided by the Synaxis, the meeting of all the heads of the Orthodox Churches, gathered at the initiative of the Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew I.

Prior to this pan-Orthodox meeting , convened in theory to discuss the situation in the Middle East and Ukraine, the head of the Phanar and the Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia Kirill had a long private discussion. Kirill's participation was in doubt until the very last, as the Russian patriarch had asked for "another date and another location" for the meeting . In the end, however, he was present when the Synaxis opened.

According to some reports, the great Synod of the Orthodox Churches will be attended by 20 bishops from each Church (if each church has that many), every church will have a single vote during the final voting , decisions will be taken by consensus (ie, by the unanimous vote of the Fathers present).

In the Orthodox world historically there the autocephalous patriarchates of Alexandria , Antioch and Jerusalem , while the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople is called the " Mother Church", as she gave birth to the Churches of Moscow , Bulgaria, Serbia , etc. .

Currently, two realities coexist within the Orthodox world . Firstly, Constantinople, towards which the patriarchates of Alexandria, Antioch, Jerusalem, Sofia, Belgrade, the Churches of Greek language and culture , and the Church of Albania look. Secondly, the Patriarchate of Moscow which includes Georgia and the Churches of Poland and the Czech Republic; and, surprisingly, the Patriarchate of Romania. The Moscow Patriarchate does little to hide its hegemonic ambitions, especially among the Orthodox diaspora .

The decision to convene a pan-Orthodox Synod seems to finally draw to a close an issue that has lasted for at least five decades. The Eastern Churches are autocephalous, and the internal discussions of the Orthodox world, there have been significant divisions that have prevented the possibility of a joint discussion . Perhaps the most critical moment was when Moscow - at the time led by Alexei II - ceased to name the patriarch of Constantinople in liturgies, as a reaction to Bartholomew I's proximity to the Orthodox Church of Estonia. The tension between the two patriarchates - derived from a theological discussion on the issue of "primus inter pares" - had effectively barred any progress on the preparation of a pan-Orthodox council/

. <http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Fanar:-Churches-reach-agreement-on-pan-Orthodox-Holy-Synod-in-2016-30509.html>

## **RENOVATION OF BASILICA OF THE NATIVITY IN BETHLEHEM WILL COST \$20 MILLION**

Jerusalem, February 19, Interfax - Italian specialists are working on renovating the roof and stained-glass panels of the Basilica of the Nativity in Bethlehem, which is located over the cave where, according to the legend, Christ was born.

The work may take from four to five years. The total cost of the renovation is estimated at \$20 million. The committee on the renovation of the church is headed by Ziyad al-Bandak, an adviser to Palestinian leader Mahmoud Abbas on Christians' affairs, the press service for the Jerusalem department of the Imperial Orthodox Palestine Society has reported.

"Our task is to save everything that can be saved, for example, the main pylons of the central nave. We believe 80-90% of the roof can be restored," Marcello Piacenti of Italy, project manager on the renovation of the roof of the basilica, said.

The rest of the timber (300-400-year-old timber of the same color and density as the existing beams) has already been delivered from Italy. The beams will be coated with water-repellent and anti-fungal substances and will be packed in waterproof felt, and waterproof felt will also be put between the roof leaves and wooden structures to protect them from water and heat.

The first stage of the renovation of the roof should be completed by September. Crusade-era mosaic, medieval frescos, external facades, and other parts of the basilica will then be renovated.

Ziyad al-Bandak said the cost of the roof renovation is covered by Palestinian sources by more than 50%. The rest is covered by donations from the Vatican, Hungary, France, Greece, and Russia.

Russia is actively involved in the development of Bethlehem. In 2012, the Imperial Orthodox Palestine Society built a culture center, where the Russian Science and Culture Center is now located. In March 2013, Imperial Orthodox Palestine Society Director Sergey Stepashin took part in the ceremony for laying down the foundation of a school, whose construction is financed by Russia and where the Russian language will be taught. The school will open its doors to students this year.

Not far from these facilities, private Russian investors are building three buildings of a culture and business center with large sports grounds. The street where this center is located was named after Russian President Vladimir Putin. Russia also plans to finance the historical square around the Basilica of the Nativity.

The basilica is the main tourist attraction of Palestine. It is visited by some two million people every year. In June 2012, the basilica was included in the UNESCO list of World Heritage Sites. It was built in the 4th century on the orders of Roman Emperor Constantine and was restored after burning down in a fire in the 6th century.

## **REPORTS: 13 NUNS FREED BY KIDNAPPERS IN SYRIA**

Thirteen nuns and three workers kidnapped in late November from a Greek Orthodox monastery in Syria were freed Sunday, a pro-Syrian government news network and Lebanese state media reported.

A convoy of around 30 vehicles picked up the nuns and workers in one part of Syria and took them into Lebanon, the country's National News Agency reported late Sunday. The convoy will travel through Lebanon to another border crossing to Syria, Jdaidet Yabous, where the group will be met by Greek Orthodox church officials, who will welcome them back into Syria, Syrian state news agency SANA reported.

Qatari intelligence chief Saadeh Kobeisi reportedly crossed deep into Syrian territory to obtain the release of the Syrian nuns. He crossed into Syria as part of a Lebanese Internal Security delegation, the state news agency said. Senior Orthodox Bishop Lucas al-Khoury earlier Sunday spoke to pro-Syrian government Ikhbariya television. He stood on the Syrian side of the border hoping to greet the nuns and said the negotiations for their release took several months because the kidnapers "made false requests intended to stall the process."