

IC XC NI KA SAINTS PETER AND PAUL ORTHODOX CHURCH

A Parish of the Orthodox Church in America
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Who is so great a God as our God?! Thou art the God who does wonders!

June 8, 2014 Sunday of Holy Pentecost
Great Vespers (Kneeling Vespers)

June 14 Saturday

June 15 Sunday of All Saints

Divine Liturgy 9:30 am
immediately after Liturgy

Great Vespers 4:00 pm

Divine Liturgy 9:30 am

Saints of the Day: Translation of the relics of Great-martyr Theodore Stratelates (319). Saint Theodore, Bishop of Rostov and Suzdal (1023). Finding of the relics (1501) of Saints Basil (1249) and Constantine (1257), Princes of Yaroslavl. Venerable Ephraim, Patriarch of Antioch (546). Venerable Monk Zosimas, of Phoenicia (Syria) (6 c.). New Martyr Theophanes at Constantinople (1559). Venerable Atre (Athre) of Nitria (Egypt). Venerable Naucratius, Abbot of the Studion (848). Venerable Theophilus of Luga and Omutch (1412), disciple of Saint Arsenius of Konevits (Valaam). Martyrs Nicander and Marcian at Dorostulum in Moesia (303). Saint Medardus, Bishop of Noyon (560). Translation of the relics of Hieromartyr Alphege, Abbot of Canterbury. Martyr Callopia. Venerable Melania the Elder. Martyr Nicander. Martyr Mark..New Hieromartyrs Barlaam (1942) and his brother Herman (1937) (Riaschentsov) (1937). Saint Paul the Confessor, of Kaiuma in Constantinople (766). Holy Hieromartyr Tevdore of Kvelta (1609). Synaxis of the Church of the Cross at Mtskheta, Georgia. Venerable Naucratius, Brother of Saint. Basil the Great (4 c.).

Please remember in your prayers: Suffering Christians of Egypt, Syria, the Middle East and Ukraine. Bishop BOULOS Yazigi, Bishop YOHANNA Ibrahim, of Aleppo. Archimandrites Athanasy, Nectarios, Pachomy. Archpriests Alvian, John, Jason, John, Vincent. Priests Sergius, Jacobus, Leonid, Andrij, Vasil, Vasil. Deacons Mark, Demetrios, Philip. Meriam, 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, Stanley, Albert, Kevin, Robert, Robert, Andrew, David, Warren, Vincent, Diane, Abigail

God Grant Many Years! Prayers for the health of Georges Grentzinger were offered today at Liturgy and Moleben at the request of Father John Udics.

PRAYERS AND PETITIONS FOR ETHIOPIAN ORTHODOX WOMAN SENTENCED TO DEATH SYOSSET, NY [OCA] May 31, 2014

The young mother stood before her accusers and boldly stated without reservation, “I am a Christian, and I will remain a Christian.”

These words, which sound as if they had been lifted straight out of an early Christian martyrology, were proclaimed in mid-May 2014 in a Sudanese courtroom by Meriam Yehya Ibrahim, 27, as she was condemned to death by hanging for allegedly apostatizing from the Islamic faith. The court further convicted her of adultery and sentenced her to 100 lashes because her marriage to a Christian man is considered void under Sharia law.

But Meriam had not, in reality, apostatized. While the court insisted that she was Muslim—the faith of her Sudanese father—her mother was an Ethiopian Orthodox Christian, the tradition into which Meriam was baptized and raised. As such, she remained adamant that she will not renounce Christianity, even if it means saving her own life.

The court’s decision immediately drew swift outrage from civil, religious and human rights organizations and countless concerned individuals around the world. Meanwhile, Meriam, eight months pregnant at the time, returned in shackles, her 20-month-old son Martin by her side, to prison where, on Tuesday, May 27—one day before Orthodox Christians celebrate the Leavetaking of Holy Pascha—she gave birth to a daughter.

Despite her unimaginable circumstances, her husband, Daniel Wani—an American citizen—stated in an exclusive May 30 interview with CNN that Meriam is “holding firm to her beliefs.

“There is pressure on her [to] return to the faith,” Wani continued. “She said, ‘How can I return when I never was a Muslim? Yes, my father was a Muslim, but I was brought up by my mother.’”

While the sentence is not likely to be carried out for some time—in past cases involving pregnant or nursing women, the Sudanese government waited until the mother weaned her child before carrying out any sentences—Meriam and her two children are likely to continue to endure in prison as the world awaits her fate.

During the last week of May, His Beatitude, Metropolitan Tikhon, called upon the clergy and faithful of the Orthodox Church in America to pray fervently for Meriam and her family, as well as all who are “suffering persecution for their faith in Jesus Christ.

“May we join with people of faith the world over in praying for Meriam and her family, that our Lord will

comfort and strengthen them as they endure their most unimaginable ordeal,” he said. “At the same time, may we reflect on our own commitment to our own faith in our all-merciful Savior, asking ourselves whether we would have the fortitude and tenacity to echo her bold words, and those of countless Christian martyrs through the ages—‘I am a Christian, and I will remain a Christian’—if we found ourselves in a similar position.

“So often, we perceive martyrdom as something that occurred ages ago, in some other place,” he continued. “The example she offers us today presents us with a new and personal challenge that we cannot ignore, especially as we conclude our celebration of Pascha and prepare to receive the Holy Spirit on Pentecost, to recommit ourselves all the more to Christ and His People, and tests us in embracing our Lord’s comforting words, “Do not be afraid.”

Numerous petitions in support of Meriam and her family have been circulating of late on the internet and via social media, including that found on the White House web site.

RUSSIA'S MUSLIM REALITY BY VASILY RUDICH

From ‘Foreign Affairs,’ May/June 2014 Issue

Even with all its reservations and caveats, Robert Crews’ essay (“Moscow and the Mosque,” March/April 2014) still presents an assessment of Muslims in Russia that is rosier than reality. The most important part of the story today is not the maneuvering of Russian President Vladimir Putin vis-à-vis Muslim clerics but rather the rising tensions between the country’s two largest religious communities.

One source of conflict that Crews does not mention centers on the construction of religious buildings. From Moscow to the western city of Kazan, non-Muslim Russians are growing increasingly resentful of what they consider expansive Islamic religious building programs. The Orthodox Church, meanwhile, has expanded rapidly and aggressively, with the full support of the state, and often its financial support as well. In Moscow, the Orthodox patriarchate recently announced plans to build hundreds more churches, whereas in several instances, the building of new mosques has been prohibited -- in spite of the city’s growing Muslim population.

Another source of tension is the increasing prevalence of Muslim religious festivals being celebrated out in the open, such as the holiday of Kurban Bayrami, when multitudes of the faithful flow into the streets and proceed to publicly slaughter, cook, and feast on lambs. In Moscow, owing to the shortage of mosques and special religious housing, Muslims celebrate even more of these festivals in the open air, generating anger among non-Muslim residents. Moscow’s Muslims have also faced difficulty exercising their political rights in public. Just recently, city authorities denied a request by Muslim community leaders to hold a rally protesting Islamophobia and the harassment of Muslims.

Meanwhile, the Russian state’s ongoing effort to privilege the Orthodox Church continues to annoy Islamic leaders. For example, an attempt has already been made in the Duma, the lower house of Russia’s parliament, to introduce a constitutional provision declaring Russian Orthodoxy the official state religion, which is already the de facto state of affairs. In Kazan, there are signs of public unrest. The city recently witnessed a series of incendiary attacks by young Muslims on church buildings. This sort of thing is not publicized in Russia’s state media -- nor mentioned by Crews -- but one can find reports of these episodes on the Internet. And the Salafists whom Crews argues are “distributed in small pockets throughout the country” may not be as apolitical as he suggests. Although there are currently few terrorists in Russia from outside the Caucasus, that might not be true for long.

Crews does make one factual error, claiming that “many Russians suspect, with good reason, that the Federal Security Service had a hand in” the terrorist attack on the Dubrovka Theater in 2002. Even Putin’s worst enemies (with the possible exception of a few fanatics) have never made such an accusation. What Crews says at the end of his piece, however, is correct: irrespective of Putin, Russia’s Muslims will ultimately determine their own future. It remains unclear how firmly Russian leaders will stand in their way.

VASILY RUDICH, *New Haven, Connecticut*

Saint Andrew’s Camp and Annual Diocesan “YOUTH DAY”

The **2014 Camping Season at Saint Andrew’s Camp** will begin soon. Details and information, including on-line registration for campers, is available on the diocesan website. See the banner news headline and refer to the “Upcoming Events” section for specific dates and themes for each week of the camping program. They have also announced the Annual Camp Bicycle Ride on 23 August 2014. **The camp is seeking additional counselors (especially male counselors), staff, and volunteers** to support the 5-week season. If you know any potential counselors or volunteers who might enjoy this incredible summer opportunity of youth ministry, please contact the camp as soon as possible: info@saintandrewscamp.org

Our **Annual Diocesan “YOUTH DAY”** will take place in Jackson NJ (Six Flags Great Adventure) on **THURSDAY, 21 AUGUST 2014**. You will find the event flyer published on the diocesan website in the “Upcoming Events” section.

Clergy of the Diocese of New York and New Jersey and Choir Directors

Music Workshops on 19 July 2014

Two music workshops, lead by Dr. David Drillock and David Lucs, will be held in conjunction on **Saturday, 19 July 2014 at Saint Nicholas Church in Cohoes NY**.

Sponsored by the Commission on Liturgical Music [CoLM], one workshop (for adults) is “**Basic Conducting: What’s All That Hand-Waving About?**” and the other workshop (for children) is “**Making Music with Kids: An Orthodox Experience**.” The event, with information & registration documents, is now featured as the banner news item on the diocesan website, and it is also listed in the “Upcoming Events” section.