

Sunday of the Publican and the Pharisee, Holy New Martyrs and Confessors of Russia

23 January / 5 February 2012

Resurrection Tropar, Tone 1: When the stone had been sealed by the Jews; / while the soldiers were guarding Thy Most Pure Body; / Thou didst rise on the third day, O Saviour, / granting life to the world. / The Powers of Heaven therefore cried to Thee O Giver of Life: / glory to Thy Resurrection O Christ! / Glory to Thy Kingdom; / Glory to Thy Dispensation, O Thou who lovest mankind.

Tropar to the New Martyrs of Russia, Tone 4: O ye holy hierarchs, royal passion-bearers and pastors, monks and laymen, ye countless new martyrs and confessors, mean, women and children, flowers of the spiritual meadow of Russia, who blossomed forth wondrously in time of grievous persecutions, bearing good fruit for Christ in your endurance: entreat Him as the One Who planted you, that He deliver His people from godless and evil men, and that the Church of Russia be made steadfast through your blood and suffering unto the salvation of our souls.

Resurrection Kondak, Tone 1: As God, Thou didst rise from the tomb in glory, / Raising the world with Thyself. / Human nature praises Thee as God, for death has vanished. / Adam exults O Master, Eve rejoices, for she is freed from bondage, and cries to Thee; / Thou art the Giver of Resurrection to all, O Christ.

Kontakion of the New-Martyrs and Confessors (Tone 2): O ye new passion-bearers of Russia, who have with your confession finished the course of this earth, receiving boldness through your sufferings: Beseech Christ Who suffered for you, that they who pray to you in the hour of the testing of their faith may receive the gift of courage. For ye are a witness to us who kiss your feet, that neither tribulation, prison, nor death can separate us from the love of God.

Kondak for the Publican and the Pharisee, Tone 4: Let us flee the bragging of the Pharisee, and learn the humility of the Publican, while crying out unto the Saviour with groanings: Be gracious unto us, O Thou Who alone dost readily forgive.



Matins Gospel I

After Matin Gospel, **Publican and the Pharisee, Troparion, Tone VIII** — Open to me the doors of repentance, O Life-giver. For my spirit rises early to pray towards Thy holy temple, bearing the temple of my body all defiled. But in Thy compassion, purify me by the loving kindness of Thy mercy.

Theotokion: Make straight for me the paths of salvation, O Mother of God. For I have profaned my soul with shameful sins, and have wasted my whole life in easy-going indifference. But by thy intercessions deliver me from all uncleanness.

Tone VI — Have mercy on me, O God, according to Thy great mercy; and according to the multitude of Thy compassions, blot out my transgression. When I think of the multitude of ghastly things I have done, wretch that I am, I tremble at the fearful day of Judgment. But trusting in the mercy of Thy loving kindness; like David I cry to Thee: Have mercy on me, O God, according to Thy great mercy.

(Note: These penitential songs are sung on Sundays during the Great Fast from the Sunday of the Publican and Pharisee to the fifth week.)

Second Epistle: II Timothy 3: 10-15

10 But you have carefully followed my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, love, perseverance, 11 persecutions, afflictions, which happened to me at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra—what persecutions I endured. And out of them all the Lord delivered me. 12 Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution. 13 But evil men and impostors will grow worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived. 14 But as for you, continue in the things which you have learned and been assured of, knowing from whom you have learned them, 15 and that from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.

ALL WHO DESIRE TO LIVE GODLY IN JESUS CHRIST WILL SUFFER PERSECUTION

True faith will be persecuted in this world. The Saviour Himself said this to His apostles clearly and publicly (Jn. 16:32). And St. Apollinarius of Hierapolis, writing against the Montanist heretics, asserts: 'Let them tell us, before God, who of

all their prophets, beginning with Montanus and his wives, has been persecuted by the Jews and killed by the ungodly. No-one. Who among them has been arrested for the name of Christ, and crucified? Again, no-one ...Heresies are usually closer to the worldly and demonic spirit, and therefore the world and the demons do not persecute their own. To be constantly under persecution, with short breathing-spaces, is a distinguishing mark of the Faith and of the Orthodox Church. This persecution has existed throughout the whole of history, whether externally or internally; externally from unbelievers and internally from heretics.

The Lord Jesus both foretold this and showed it by His own example. And the apostles said it, and showed it by their own example. And all the God-bearing Fathers of the Church, and confessors and martyrs, said this, and showed it by their own example. Can we have any further doubt that it is by the narrow gate that one enters into the Kingdom of God? No; in this there is no foundation or justification for doubt. Can sheep live among wolves and not be molested by them? Can a candle burn among cross-draughts and not be bent to and fro? Can a fruit-tree grow on a high road and be left alone by passers-by? And so, can the Church of devout souls not be persecuted again and again - by pagans, by idol-worshippers, by heretics, by schismatics, by passions and vices, by sin and lawlessness, by the world and by demons? Thus, not one godly soul can remain without persecution, either external or internal, until it is parted from the body and from this world. Maybe someone will challenge this, and expound something different, according to his assessment and logic. But that would not help either the understanding or the logic of a single man. Thousands of those crucified have spoken otherwise; thousands of those burned by fire have cried otherwise; thousands of those beheaded have proved otherwise, and thousands of those drowned have testified otherwise. Oh, my brothers, the Christian faith is strong, not only when it is in accord with secular understanding and logic, but when (and even especially when) it is opposed to them. All who desire to live godly lives shall be persecuted. This the apostles foretold at the beginning of the Christian era, and twenty Christian centuries give a many-voiced echo, confirming the truth of this prophecy. O risen Lord, give us light that we may be godly to the end and strength that we may endure persecution likewise to the end. To Thee be glory and praise for ever. Amen.

Bishop Nikolai Velimirovic, The Prologue, 27th April

Second Epistle: Romans 8: 28-39

The Gospel According To St. Luke 18: 10-14

10 Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. 11 The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank You that I am not like other men— extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this tax collector. 12 I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all that I possess. 13 And the tax collector, standing afar off, would not so much as raise his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner! 14 I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other, for everyone who exalts himself will be abased, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.

“Great Lent is preceded by three preparatory Sundays. The first preparatory Sunday of Great Lent is termed the “Sunday of the Publican & Pharisee”. This Sunday’s Gospel parable of the Publican & the Pharisee is read in order to demonstrate that only prayer with heartfelt tears & humility, like that of the publican, & not with a recounting of one’s virtues, like that of the Pharisee, can call down upon us the mercy of God. Starting with this Sunday & continuing until the fifth Sunday of Great Lent, following the reading of the Gospel, during the All-night Vigil, the contrite prayer is chanted, “The doors of repentance open unto me, O Giver of Life...”

Archpriest Seraphim Slobodsky, The Law Of God

Many are the faults of the Pharisee: for first of all he is boastful, and without sense, for he praises himself, even though the sacred Scripture cries aloud, ‘Let a neighbour praise you, and not your own mouth: a stranger and not your own lips’ (Prov. 27:2) ...Our virtue, therefore, must not be contaminated with fault, but must be single-minded and blameless and free from all that can bring reproach. For what profit is there in fasting twice a week, if you so doing serve only as a pretext for ignorance and vanity, and if it makes you supercilious, haughty and selfish? You tithe your possessions and make a boast of it; but in another way you provoke God’s anger, by condemning men generally on this account and accusing others. And you yourself are puffed up, though not crowned by the divine decree for righteousness, but on the contrary, heap praises upon yourself. For I am not, he says, as the rest of mankind. Moderate yourself, O Pharisee: ‘Set a guard, O Lord, over your mouth, keep watch over the door of your lips’ (Ps. 140:3). You speak to God Who knows all things. Await the decree of the Judge. None of those skilled in the practice of wrestling ever crowns himself; nor does any man receive the crown of himself, but awaits the summons of the arbiter. Lower your pride, for arrogance is both accursed and hated by God. Although, therefore, you fast with puffed up mind, your so doing will not avail you; your labour will be unrewarded; for you have mingled dung with your perfume. Even according to the law of Moses a sacrifice that had a blemish was not capable of being offered to God; for it was said unto him, ‘Of sheep, and ox, that is offered for sacrifice, there must be no blemish therein’ (Lev. 22:21). Since, therefore, your fasting is accompanied by pride, you must expect to hear God saying, This is not the fast that I have chosen (Cf Isa. 58:5) ...You offer tithes, but you wrong in another way Him Who is honoured by you, in that you condemn men generally. This is an act foreign to the mind that fears God.

St. Cyril of Alexandria. Commentary on the Gospel of Saint Luke, Homily 120. B#42, pp. 480-481.

Saints of the week

Fast Free Week



23 January / 5 February — Sunday of the Holy New Martyrs & Confessors of Russia (celebrated on the Sunday nearest to January 25 o.s.) — In any case, the world can and must wholeheartedly use for its edification and correction the present suffering by fire of the Russian people. The Russian people undoubtedly will come out of this fire holier, stronger and greater than it ever was before. No good blacksmith throws nails into the fire to be rid of them, he does it to make something better out of them. We think and believe that the Creator of the Russian people allowed this great people to experience this flame of suffering not to punish and kill it, but in order that by its terrible example other peoples may come to their senses and understand that the Russian people will be even more greatly glorified before heaven and earth. Do not cry, but be happy. A great harvest of souls has ripened in Russia. In these days the tortured Russian people fill Paradise more than any other Christian people on earth.
St. Nikolai (Velimirovic) of Ochrid

"Blessed is God! And in our time martyrs have sprung up and we have been vouchsafed to see people slain for Christ, people who have shed their blood which has watered the whole Church" (3rd Homily of St. John Chrysostom on 1 Chronicles)

We also in our times together with the golden-mouthed preacher can say the same of the Holy New Martyrs and Confessors of Russia, who now stand in the choir of the God-pleasers before the throne of the King of Glory and intercede on behalf of our people.

The congregation of the New Martyrs of Russia consists of representatives of all the professions and ranks of the Russian land - beginning from the time of the Tsar-Martyr down to the last homeless wanderer, the finest children of our Fatherland, who were fated to water the whole Russian Church with their holy blood.

The tortures which the holy passion-bearers endured were little different from the Christian martyrdoms of the first centuries, and the refined cruelty of the modern persecutors in no way yields to the cruelty of their predecessors.

Being incited by the devil — the first cause of all persecution against the Church in all ages, the new tormentors subjected their victims to the same kinds of sufferings which the Jews, pagans, and Moslems used in the first and following centuries of persecution.

To these God-pleasers can be ascribed the words of the apostle concerning the first martyrs of the Church of God in the Old Testament ... of them many were "stoned, sawn asunder, were slain with the sword" "not accepting deliverance: that they might obtain a better resurrection" (Heb 11:37, 35)

Tortures for Christ and death itself the new martyrs met fearlessly they rejoiced that in their sufferings they resembled their Redeemer.

Before their deaths many of them prayed for their tormentors, they blessed their murdered, they called them to repentance.

Their valour irradiates the Russian Church with a new glory presenting to the world a countless congregation of crowned passion-bearers. And together with them the whole Universal Church is harvesting the fruits of their victories. The New Martyrs have united heaven with the earth in common joy, for both the Church militant together with the Church triumphant now rejoices over them.

The celebration of the glorification of the Holy New-Martyrs and Confessors of Russia took place abroad on October 19/November 1, 1981.
Life" 1/1987 "Orthodox

The Hieromartyr Clement, Bishop of Ancyra - He was born in 258 in the town of Ancyra of a pagan father and a Christian mother. His devout mother, Euphrosyne, prophesied a martyr's death for her son, and left this world when Clement was twelve years old. Her friend Sophia took Clement into her own home as her son and saw that he was brought up a Christian. Clement became so famed for his virtuous life that he was chosen as bishop of Ancyra at the age of twenty. He acquired a mature wisdom in his early years, and harnessed and conquered his body by great restraint. He ate only bread and vegetables, and never anything slaughtered or with blood. In the reign of Diocletian, he was tortured as terribly 'as anyone has ever been since the foundation of the world'. He spent twenty-eight years under torture and imprisonment. Eleven different torturers tormented him. When, at one time, they were smiting him on the face, spitting on him and breaking his teeth, he cried out to Domentian the torturer: 'You are doing me honour, O Domentian, not torturing me, for the mouth of my Lord Jesus Christ was struck in like manner, and His cheeks slapped; and lo, I, unworthy as I am, am now made worthy of this!' When he was brought before the Emperor Diocletian in Rome, the Emperor placed on one side various instruments of torture, and on the other side gifts—medals, clothing, money—whatever the Emperor was able to bestow, and then told Clement to choose. Christ's martyr, with a scornful glance at all the Emperor's gifts, chose the instruments of torture. And he was terribly tortured; piece by piece the flesh was flayed from his body until the bones showed white beneath. He was healed of these wounds, and was finally beheaded by a soldier in 312, while he was presiding at the Liturgy as bishop in the church in Ancyra. St Clement's miracles are without number. The Sixth Ecumenical Council; St Paulinus the Merciful;
St. Colman - Died c. 702. Saint Colman succeeded Saint Hierlug (Zailug) as abbot-bishop of Lismore in 698. During his rule the fame of Lismore monastery, Ireland reached its peak

24 January / 6 February — Our Holy Mother Xenia - Born in Rome, she was the only daughter of a famous senator. Drawn by the love of Christ, she refused to marry as her parents desired. In order to escape this, she fled from her home with two of her slaves and came to the island of Kos, to a place called Mylassa, where she started a community for virgins, remaining there in asceticism till her death. Though she was a weak woman, she had a man's perseverance in fasting, prayer and vigils. She often spent entire nights standing in prayer, was dressed more poorly than her sisters, and on her bread, when she ate, she often put ashes from the censer. At

the hour of her death (in 450), a wonderful sign appeared over the monastery: a wreath of stars encircling a cross more resplendent than the sun. Many of the sick were healed by her relics. Her two slaves girls followed the example of their abbess in all things, and when they died, they were buried, by their wish, at the feet of blessed Xenia. The Holy Martyr Babylas; Our Holy Father Macedonius; Our Holy Father Philo, Bishop of Cyprus; Our Holy Father Dionysius of Olympus;

St. Cadoc of Llancarvan Wales - Son of Saint Gwynllyw, a king in Wales, a robber chieftain who led a band of 300; his mother, Saint Gladys, had been stolen in a raid on a neighbouring chief. Raised by an Irish monk; Cadoc's father had stolen the monk's cow, and when he came to demand its return, the king decided it was sign. Studied in Wales and Ireland. Priest. Once chased through a wood by an armed swineherd from an enemy tribe. His hiding place spooked an old, grey, wild boar that made three great leaps at him - then disappeared; Cadoc took this as a sign, and the location became the site of the great church and monastery at Llancarvan. He once saved his brother monks in a famine by tying a white thread to the foot of a (well-fed) mouse; he then following the thread to an abandoned, well-stocked, underground granary. Another time he and his brothers went out to meet a band of thieves, chanting and playing harps; it surprised the highwaymen so much, they turned and left. Lived as a hermit with Saint Gildas on the Island of Flatholmes off Vannes, Brittany. Established a monastery on a small island just off Brittany, joined by a stone bridge so local children could walk out for school. Returned to Britain to evangelize, and work with Christian survivors of Saxon raids. Born 6th century Welsh Died martyred by Saxons while serving at Mass c.580 near Weedon, Northamptonshire, England

25 January / 7 February — St Gregory the Theologian - Born in Nazianzus of a Greek father (who later became a Christian and a bishop) and a Christian mother, he studied in Athens before his baptism with St Basil the Great and Julian the Apostate. He often foretold to Julian that he would be an apostate and a persecutor of the Church, and so it came to pass. Gregory was especially influenced by his mother, Nonna. He was baptised when he had completed his studies. St Basil consecrated him bishop of Sasima, and the Emperor Theodosius quickly called him to the vacant archiepiscopal throne of Constantinople. His works were manifold, the best-known being his theological writings, for which he received the title 'the Theologian'. He is particularly famed for the depth of his Sermons on the Holy Trinity. He also wrote against the heretic Macedonius, who taught wrongly of the Holy Spirit (that the Spirit was a creature of God), and against Apollinarius who taught that Christ did not have a human soul but that His divinity was in place of His soul. He also wrote against the Emperor Julian the Apostate, his sometime schoolfellow. In the year 381, when a quarrel broke out in the Council concerning his election as archbishop, he withdrew himself, declaring: 'Those who deprive us of the (archiepiscopal) throne cannot deprive us of God.' He then left Constantinople and went to Nazianzus, remaining there in retirement, prayer and the writing of instructive books until his death. And, although he was in weak health all his life, he lived to the age of seventy. His relics were later taken to Rome, and his head to the Cathedral of the Dormition in Moscow. He was, and remains, a great and wonderful light of the Orthodox Church, as much for the meekness and purity of his character as for the unsurpassable depth of his mind. He entered into rest in the Lord in the year 389. Our Holy Father Publius; Our Holy Father Mares; The Holy Martyr Felicitas and her seven sons;

St. Theneva (also known as St Dwyn) - British princess. When she became pregnant before marriage, her family threw her from a cliff. She survived the fall unharmed, and was soon met by an unmanned boat. She knew she had no home to go to, so got into the boat; it sailed her across the Firth of Forth to land at Culross where she was cared for by Saint Serf; he became foster-father of her son, Saint Kentigern.. Born British Isles. Died 7th century.

St. Eochod - Died 597. One of Saint Columba's (f.d. June 9) twelve companions, Saint Eochod was chosen by Columba to evangelize northern Britain. He is called the Apostle of the Picts of Galloway.

Tropar of St Eochod tone 6: The Picts of Galloway honoured thee as their Apostle,/ O righteous Hierarch Eochod,/ for at the behest of Father Columba/ thou didst open to them the Gospel of Salvation./ Wherefore, O Saint, cease not in thy pious labours,/ praying that our souls may be saved.

St. Theoritgitha, virgin, novice-mistress of Barking on the Thames.

26 January / 8 February — Fast Day - Our Holy Father Xenophon and our Mother Maria, and their sons John and Arcadius - They were rich and respected citizens of Constantinople. Xenophon and Maria lived godly lives, and made every effort to give their sons a Christian upbringing. When the boys were grown, their parents sent them to Beirut to study, but a storm capsized their ship. By God's providence, both John and Arcadius were somehow saved and thrown onto the shore by the waves; in two separate places, however, so that each thought the other had perished. Out of grief for each other, they became monks in two different monasteries. After two years of mourning, their parents travelled to Jerusalem to venerate the holy places. There, helped by the insight of a holy man, the brothers were first united with each other and then with their parents. Out of gratitude to God, Xenophon and Maria gave away all their goods to the poor and both embraced the monastic state. This touching story of these four holy souls demonstrates clearly how the Lord guides most wonderfully the destinies of those who believe in Him; how He looses on them trials and sorrows, that they may later, yet more greatly strengthened in their faith, experience the greater joy. They lived and died in the fifth century. Our Holy Father Simeon the Ancient; St David, King of Georgia;

St. Conan of Iona - Died 648 -A bishop of Ireland, pr possibly from Scotland. It is believed that Conan taught St. Fiacre before going to the Isle of Man, where he served as a missionary and was consecrated bishop;

St. Theofrid - Died c. 690. Saint Theofrid was a monk of Luxeuil who became abbot of Corbie in 622 and a regional bishop

27 January / 9 February - SAINT JOHN CHRYSOSTOM, THE GOLDEN TRUMPET OF ORTHODOXY - The memory of this illuminary of the Church is celebrated on November 13 and January 30 but, on this date, the Church celebrates the translation of his honourable relics from the village of Comana, where he died in exile, to Constantinople, where earlier he had governed the Church. Thirty years after his death, Patriarch Proculus delivered a homily in memory of his spiritual father and teacher. He so enflamed the love of the people and Emperor Theodosius the Younger toward this great saint that all of them desired that Chrysostom's relics be translated to Constantinople. It was said that the sarcophagus, containing the relics of St. John Chrysostom, did not allow itself to be moved from its resting place until the emperor wrote a letter to Chrysostom begging him for forgiveness (for Theodosius' mother, Eudoxia, was the culprit responsible for the banishment of this saint) and appealing to him to come to Constantinople, his former residence. When this letter of repentance was placed on the sarcophagus, its weight became extremely light. At the time of the translation of his relics, many who were ill and who touched the sarcophagus were healed. When the relics arrived in the capital, then the emperor in the name of his mother as though she herself was speaking over the relics, again, prayed to the saint for

forgiveness. "While I lived in this transient life, I did you malice and, now, when you live the immortal life, be beneficial to my soul. My glory passed away and it helped nothing. Help me, father; in your glory, help me before I am condemned at the Judgment of Christ!" When the saint was brought into the Church of the Twelve Apostles and placed on the patriarchal throne, the masses of people heard the words from St. Chrysostom's mouth saying: "Peace be to you all." The translation of the relics of St. John Chrysostom was accomplished in the year 438 A.D.

28 January / 10 February — Our Holy Father Ephraim the Syrian - Born in Syria of poor parents in the reign of the Emperor Constantine the Great, his early youth was spent somewhat tempestuously, but he suddenly underwent a spiritual crisis and began to burn with love for the Lord Jesus. He was a disciple of St James of Nisibis (Jan. 13th). By the great grace of God, wisdom flowed from his tongue like a stream of honey and from his eyes tears flowed unceasingly. Loving work like a bee, Ephraim was constantly either writing books or teaching the monks in the monastery or the people in the city of Edessa, or was giving himself to prayer and pondering. His books are numerous; his prayers are beautiful. The best-known of the latter is the prayer in the Great Fast: 'O Lord and Master of my life ...' When they wished to take him by force and make him bishop, he feigned madness and began to run through the city of Edessa, trailing his garments along behind him. Seeing him mad, they left him in peace. He was a contemporary and friend of St Basil the Great. St Ephraim was especially the apostle of repentance. Even today his writings soften many hearts, strengthen them against sin and turn them back to Christ. He entered into rest at a great age in 373. Our Holy Father Isaac the Syrian; Our Holy Father Palladius; Our Holy Father Ephraim of the Kiev Caves;

St. Cannera of Inis Cathaig, virgin - (also known as Cainer, Conaire, Kinnera) Died c. 530. Little is known of Saint Cannera except that which is recorded in the story of Saint Senan, who ruled an abbey on the Shannon River, which ministered to the dying- -but only men. Cannera was an anchorite from Bantry in southern Ireland. When she knew she was dying, she travelled to Senan's abbey without rest and walked upon the water to cross the river because no one would take her to the place forbidden to women. Upon her arrival, the abbot was adamant that no woman could enter his monastic enclosure. Arguing that Christ died for women, too, she convinced the abbot to give her last rites on the island and to bury her at its furthest edge. Against his argument that the waves would wash away her grave, she answered that she would leave that to God. Cannera told the abbot of a vision she had in her Bantry cell of the island and its holiness. Her appearance signalled a change in the attitude of the monks toward women, whose contamination they feared. Cannera charges Senan with this unchristian prejudice. She reminded him that "Christ is no worse than yourself." If He could find comfort in the presence of women, so should the monks. The monks believed that the holier a man, the more he distances himself from Eve. They saw their celibacy as a taboo against women, rather than a sacrifice of love to Christ. They also failed to recognize that Jesus broke the conventions of His time. Again, Cannera said, "Christ came to redeem women no less than to redeem men," and "women gave service and tended to Christ and His Apostles," so why should the monks so distance themselves? Other double (men and women) monasteries already existed in Ireland for Saint Patrick (March 17) and his followers did not reject the fellowship and ministry of women. Probably because Saint Cannera walked across the water, sailors honor their patron by saluting her resting place on Scattery Island (Inis Chathaigh). They believed that pebbles from her island protected the bearer from shipwreck. A 16th-century Gaelic poem about Cannera prays, "Bless my good ship, protecting power of grace. . . ." St. Anthimus of Brantome, abbot;

St. Glastian of Kinglassie - (also known as Glastian of MacGlastian) Born in County Fife, Scotland; died at Kinglassie (Kinglace), Scotland, in 830. As bishop of Fife, Saint Glastian mediated in the bloody civil war between the Picts and the Scots. When the Picts were subjugated, Glastian did much to alleviate their lot. He is the patron saint of Kinglassie in Fife, and venerated in Kintyre,

29 January / 11 February —The Hieromartyr Ignatius - The chief feast of St Ignatius is in winter, on December 20th. Today we celebrate the translation of his relics from Rome, where he suffered martyrdom, to Antioch, where he had been archbishop. When St Ignatius was summoned to Rome to answer for his faith before the Emperor Trajan (98 - 117) a number of citizens from Antioch accompanied him on this long journey, prompted by their great love for their chief pastor. The saint of God, in no wise willing to deny the faith of Christ and scorning all the flattery and promises of the Emperor, was condemned to death and thrown into the Great Circus before the wild beasts. They tore him to pieces and he gave his soul to God. Then his companions collected his bare bones, took them to Antioch and buried them. When the Persians occupied

Antioch in the sixth century, the relics of St Ignatius were again taken from Antioch to Rome; The Holy Martyrs Romanus, James, Philotheus, Hyperechius, Abibus, Julian and Paregorius; Our Holy Father Laurence of the Kiev Caves; New Martyr Demetrius of Chios; St. Andrew (Rublev) of Russia, iconographer;

St. Flora (Blath) of Kildare - virgin. Died 523. Saint Blath was the lay-sister who served as cook at Saint Brigid's convent in Kildare. She earned a reputation for heroic sanctity, and of her cooking it is said that bread and bacon at Brigid's table were better than a banquet elsewhere; **St. Dallan Forgaill the Blind** - (6th.cent.) A kinsman of St. Edan of Ferns, born in Connaught and a great scholar who, through his application to study, became blind. He wrote a poem in honour of St. Columba, called Ambra Cholaim Kille which was only published after St. Columba's death. It is said that on its publication Dallan's sight was restored to him. St. Dallan was murdered at Triscoel by pirates (AD 598) and his head thrown into the sea. It was recovered and miraculously reunited to his body.