

June 12

E. Our Venerable Father Onuphrius the Great

One of the strictest ascetics of the east, who lived in the Fourth Century, not being satisfied with the asceticism in the Thebaid Eratus Monastery in Egypt and seeking full solitude, he left there for the desert, having settled in a certain cave, where for sixty years he led a severe ascetic life, not seeing anyone, enduring the heat of the day and the cold of the night and many deprivations and misfortunes so that "often he despaired for his life and thought himself already close to death"; but the Lord protected him. The angel of the Lord brought him a little bread and water for the strengthening of his body, and after 30 years of asceticism a date palm wonderfully grew and a spring of pure water bubbled up in front of his cave. Before his end, the Ven. Onuphrius met the Ven. Paphnutius and told him about his life. After this, having received the blessing of the Ven. Paphnutius, the ascetic of God began his prayer and during its time, he died.

Kontakion, tone 3

**Enlightened by the light of the Most Holy Spirit, O Wise in God,
You already left the life of rumors.
You have reached the desert, O Venerable Father;
You rejoiced in the God and Creator, Who is over all.
Therefore Christ, the Great Giver of gifts, glorified you, O Blessed One.**

Our Venerable Father Peter of Mt. Athos

A Constantinopolitan Greek, a former military dignitary, he, in a war with the Agarians in Syria, was captured in 667 and imprisoned in a fortress in Samara on the Euphrates River for nine years during which he began his ascetic life. After he was released he accepted monasticism in Rome, from where he left for Mt. Athos in 681 and, having settled at the very top of the Holy Mountain, covered only with "a shield of belief", "fervently sought God in silence". He spent his entire 53 years alone, not having clothes or any earthly things necessary for life. Rather dense and long hair grew on his body, and his beard grew to the ground. Zealous faith, unhypocritical love, firm hope, true patience, perfect humility, tenderness and continual crying, meekness, subjugation of the flesh, passionlessness, corporal and spiritual purity, silence and seeing God are all those virtues which adorned the Ven. Peter. He died in 734. His relics, translated from a cave in the St. Clement

Monastery, became known for wonderworking. During the time of iconoclasm they were hidden in a secret place in the same monastery, but later, due to miracles, were again opened and in the year 969, after occasional troubles on Mt. Athos, were transferred to the Thracian settlement of Photokami.

Kontakion, tone 2

**Having removed yourself from human cohabitation,
You have even lived in caves of stone,
With the divine desire and love of your Lord, O Peter,
From whom you have received your crown:
Pray unceasingly to save us.**

Epistle: Gal. 5 22-26; 6 1-2; Sel. 213. **Gospel:** Mt. 11 27-30; Sel. 43.

The Ven. Arsenius of Konevets

He was born in the environs of Novgorod, and brought up "with good discipline and learning and respect for everyone and purity". He hated and shunned games and the "ridiculous words that exist among the young". He did not eat sweet food, but "loved abstention and embraced it more", he often came to the holy churches, and listened with attention "to the divine words" and was consumed with reading them. His parents trained him in a craft. The adolescent "zealously completed his apprenticeship and thus soon learned the applied art and became a coppersmith". From his work he with the greatest care gave alms to the needy, "for he was extremely merciful". Always loving to pray to God, he thrived on the commandments of the Lord. With the aim "to labor for the Lord in silence", he as a young man became a monk in the Novgorod Lisich Monastery (now closed) where he patiently spent eleven years of various obediences. Striving for the highest asceticism and for absolute virtue, the venerable one left for Mt. Athos and settled there in one of the monasteries. As skilful coppersmith, he, on behalf of the rector, made all the similar ware for the monastery, accepted orders without charge even from other monasteries. Within three years he toured all the Athonite monasteries and worked in them for the brotherhood. His work usually continued all day long, but he prayed most of the night. Subsequently he returned to Russia, bringing with himself an icon of the Most Holy Virgin (see July 10), and, with the blessing of Bishop John of Novgorod, founded a monastery in 1393 on the Konevets Island in Lake Ladoga (see the Finland Eparchy). During the episcopate of Archbishop Simeon the venerable one returned to Mt. Athos a second time. During his absence, extreme scarcity in provisions plunged all the brotherhood in such

confusion that they decided to abandon the monastery. In deep grief over the crisis that had overtaken them, one of the closest disciples of the venerable one, the pious starets Joachim, in a deep forest far from the monastery, overcome with tears, prayed to the Most Holy Virgin to help them in their great affliction. The All good Queen of heaven and earth in heavenly glory appeared in a light dream to this starets, and announced the imminent arrival of the venerable one. On another day the Ven. Arsenius actually arrived with two large vessels with many provisions. In unforgettable memory of this joyful and wonderful appearance of the Mother of God and in eternal gratitude for Her motherly care for the monastery, with the blessing of the venerable one, the monks placed a cross and a holy icon of the Mother of God on the place of her appearance. The same mountain where the beneficial appearance dawned has been called "Holy" since that time. Subsequently a chapel and a Skete were constructed at the place of the appearance. In the care and labor for the monastery and in his monastic asceticism the Ven. Arsenius reached an extreme old age and has died in peace on June 12, 1444. His relics rest in his monastery. In 1819, according to the decision of the Holy Synod, the day for the commemoration of the venerable one was brought into the printed Church Menaion and service books. In the Ustav of 1885 the commemoration of the venerable one is not shown. In the 1868 Monthly Menaion this commemoration is noted, but there is no service or even a Troparion or a Kontakion.

Sts. John, Andrew, Heraclambon (Heraclemon) and Theophilus

They practiced asceticism in the Egyptian desert in the Sixth Century, simultaneously with the Ven. Onuphrius the Great.

St. John the warrior, an Egyptian ascetic of the end of the Sixth or the beginning of the Seventh Century.

The Repose of the Ven. Onuphrius of Malj

The Ven. Onuphrius, named in the hand-written calendar of new wonderworkers, founded the Monastery of the Nativity of the Theotokos in Malj (Pskov Province). He died in peace on June, 12, 1592. His relics are in a hidden place in the former monastic, but now parish, church.

Ven. Onuphrius and Auxentius

From Vologda, they established the Pertsevoj Hermitage in 1499, about 35 versts (23 miles) from Vologda. They died in 1521. Their relics are in a hidden place in the Trinity Temple in their monastery, now a parish temple.

The Repose of the Ven. Stephan of Ozero or Komel

Born in Vologda, the son of pious and notable parents, he received an appropriate education. In his youth he secretly left his parent's house and accepted monasticism in the Glushitsky Monastery. Seeking solitude he left for the shore of Lake Komel and there in the dense forest he built himself a cell. Later, by resolution of the Metropolitan of Moscow, he established a monastery in the name of St. Nicholas in 1534, known as Ozero or Komel. The Venerable One died at a very old age on June 12, 1542. Soon after his death the sanctity of Ven. Stephan was marked with miracles. His relics rest in the church established in his name and now is a parish church.

The Ven. Bassian and Jonah of Solovki

The disciples of the hegumen of the Solovki Monastery, St. Phillip (later Metropolitan of Moscow), were sent in 1561 to the difficult area for being recognized, were overtaken by a storm on the shore of the Northern Dvina. Their bodies were thrown by the waves on to the east shore of the "Dvina Gulf", and were buried by the peasants. According to a special vision and subsequent wonders worked on their graves, the Pertominsk Monastery was later constructed there (see the Archangelsk Eparchy). The opening of their relics, reposing in the monastery in a hidden place, is celebrated on June 5.

*S. V. Bulgakov, **Handbook for Church Servers**, 2nd ed., 1274 pp. (Kharkov, 1900) pp 202-4
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