

STROGANOV MINYEIAS

MAY

Side A



Row 1

May 1: The Prophet Jeremiah is one of the great prophets of the Old Testament and lived some 600 years before the birth of Christ. Jeremiah spoke most often at the entrance to the Temple in Jerusalem where he rebuked the people for living sinful lives and foretold the coming of Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon. For this he was mocked, beaten, and almost killed. According to tradition, Jeremiah took the Ark of the Covenant after Nebuchadnezzar conquered Jerusalem and brought it to the caves of Mouth Nabath. The Ark has never been recovered and there are many theories as to its current location.

May 1: Saint Gerasimus of Boldino was born in 1490 and is said to have been especially pious even in childhood. He became a monk at a young age and practiced a strict ascetic lifestyle which earned him the respect of his fellows. His master, Saint Daniel, often took Gerasimus with him on travels, including the palace of the Tsar. Saint Gerasimus later left his master to live in the wilderness as a hermit. He traveled to a place called Boldino Hill where the locals had him arrested as a vagrant but when an official from Moscow recognized the saint, he was released and given funds to build a monastery.

May 1: Saint Paphnutius of Borovsk was born in 1394. At the age of 20, he joined a monastery and became its igumen, or leader, at the age of 32. He held this position until he became seriously ill and had to retire. Saint Paphnutius left the monastery after he recovered and lived in the wilderness, forming a new community of monks.

May 2: Saint Athanasius, patriarch of Alexandria, was born in about 297. As a child, he baptized his playmates according to the Church order. Patriarch Alexander observed the children and raised the saint as a reader and then as a deacon. He later inherited the position of Patriarch at the young age of 28. After the death of Julian the Apostate, Saint Athanasius led the Alexandrian Church until he died in the year 373.

May 2: Saints Boris and Gleb, Princes of Rus, were the first Russian saints to be recognized by both the Russian and the Byzantine Church. They are known as Passion-Bearers because they did not raise arms to defend themselves from the assassins sent by their elder brother. May 2 celebrates the day that the relics of Boris and Gleb were moved to a new church built in their honor.

May 3: Saints Timothy and Maura of Egypt were Christians during the reign of the Emperor Diocletian. Saint Timothy was made a reader and a copyist of sacred texts and was denounced as such to the governor. Timothy and his wife both refused to give up the books or to reveal the location. They withstood many tortures and were eventually executed.

May 3: The Repose of Saint Theodosius of the Kievian Caves – Saint Theodius was an 11th century monk at the Kievian Caves Monastery where he was praised for his piety and asceticism. In the year 1054, he became the igumen, or leader, of the monastery and is remembered as the Father of Coenobitic Monasticism in Russia. Coenobitic monasticism refers to an organized community of monks as opposed to the Eremitic tradition which refers to hermitic monks.

May 4: Saint Pelagia of Tarsus was a 3rd century Christian living during the reign of Emperor Diocletian. She was refused the advances of the heir to the emperor when he proposed marriage. She later caught the eye of the emperor himself who also proposed marriage. Pelagia again refused to marry based on her faith; for this she was arrested and subsequently executed.



Row 2

May 5: Saint Irina of Thessalonica was born in the 4th century and named Penelope at birth. She was raised by a Christian teacher and was baptized following her adolescence with the name Irena, meaning “peace.” She converted many people to Christianity, including her parents, and though she was arrested several times, she was said to have been unharmed by all attempts to punish or even execute her.

May 5: Saint Sylvanus was a roman soldier during the reign of the Emperor Diocleian. He later left the military and became Bishop of Gaza. He was arrested for preaching Christianity and sentenced to be a slave in the copper mines. Sylvanus continued to preach to fellow slaves and the guards and was consequently beheaded.

May 6: Saint Job, the Long-suffering, whose name means “persecuted,” was a fifth-generation descendent of Abraham. His story is told in the Book of Job: God allowed Satan to curse Job, a faithful and prosperous man, to prove that his faith was genuine. Job lost everything: his children, home, wealth, and health. Job maintained his faith and, according to scripture, had his wealth and status returned to him in double.

May 6: Saint Barbarus was a repentant robber who lived as a hermit for many years, suffering and awaiting forgiveness. He was accidentally shot by some travelers who thought he was a wild animal and his body was buried where he died. His grave is said to have been the site of many miracles and his relics were relocated to the monastery of Kellios in Thessaly.

May 7: Saint Acacius was a 3rd century officer in the Roman army. He was denounced as a Christian and was beheaded in the year 303.

May 7: Commemoration of the Apparition of the Cross over Jerusalem – In the middle of the 4th century Saint Cyril, Patriarch of Jerusalem, fought against Arianism which was backed by the Emperor Constantius. According to tradition, the sign of the Cross appeared over the city of Jerusalem on May 7th, 351. It was said to have stretched over five miles and shone brighter than the sun. Many non-Christians were converted after seeing the cross. Saint Cyril wrote of the occurrence to the emperor and pleaded with him to heed the sign and repent from Arianism. The imagery on this icon depicts some of the violence that resulted from the Arian Controversy.

May 7: Unknown Saints. These two Saints are labeled as Saint Anthony of Pechersk (Kiev) and Saint Anthony of Novgorod. There are several saints by the name of Anthony from both Kiev and Novgorod but none are celebrated on May 7. It is unclear why these two are pictured here.



Row 3

May 8: Saint John the Theologian is commemorated on this day because of the annual pilgrimage to his grave. When he was more than one hundred years old, he asked his seven disciples to dig him a grave in the shape of a cross. Later, the grave was opened and the saint's body was not there. Each year on May 8, a red dust is said to rise and is collected to heal illnesses. The main feast day of Saint John is September 26.

May 8: Saint Arsenius the Great was a 4th century Christian and scholar who was hired by the Emperor Theodosius to educate his sons. He was given a position of high honor but he soon left in secret to join a monastery and practice strict asceticism.

May 9: The Prophet Isaiah lived 700 years before the birth of Christ and prophesied during the reign of kings Joatham, Achaz, Hezekiah and Manasseh. The book of Isaiah, which records his prophecies, is believed to foretell the coming of Christ and the significance of His suffering and death. According to some sources Isaiah was executed by King Manasseh.

May 9: Saint Christopher was a 3rd century Christian who was said to have legendary strength and a disfigured face. He is remembered as a wonderworker who converted many to Christianity and as a martyr. Christopher is often depicted, as he is here, with the head of a dog. There are several theories as to the origins on this. One is a mistranslation of the Latin term cananeus (Canaanite) to canineus (canine). Another tradition states that Christopher prayed to be made ugly so that he would not be tempted or tempt others.

May 9: On this day, the Orthodox Church commemorates the Transference of the Relics of Saint Nicholas from Myra to Bari which took place in the 11th Century. Saint Nicholas had been interred in a church in Myra, Lycia, which later fell under Turkish rule. It is said that many churches in that region had been pillaged and so efforts were made to safeguard the relics of Nicholas. Merchants from Bari came to the church and restrained the monks who lived there. The relics were then taken by ship to Bari, Italy.

May 10: Saint Simon the Zealot was one of the 12 apostles and was present when Christ performed his first miracle, turning water to wine, at the wedding in Cana. Saint Simon was said to be an especially fervent follower of Christ and to have traveled far, preaching Christianity after the Ascension.

May 11: Saint Mocius lived during the reign of Diocletian and was brought to trial before the governor of Laodicea. He is said to have shattered many statues when he was forced to enter a pagan temple and for this he was severely punished and ultimately beheaded.

May 12: Saint Epiphanius, Bishop of Cyprus, was a 4th century Christian and disciple of Saint Hilarion the Great. He lived for some time in the desert before being ordained as Bishop in 367. He is remembered as a wonderworker and as a zealot.

May 12: Saint Germanus, Patriarch of Constantinople, born in the 7th century, was the son of a senator. His father was executed under orders of the emperor Constantine Pogonatos and the boy was sent to live in a monastery. Saint Germanus rose in rank and eventually became the Patriarch of Constantinople. In this role he opposed Iconoclasm and the Emperor Leo III. Germanus was forced to relinquish his position and was exiled to a monastery.



Row 4

May 13: Saint Glyceria of Heraclea was a 2nd century Christian who was arrested after she proclaimed her faith in a pagan temple. The prefect had her alternately punished and imprisoned but it is said that she was miraculously healed each time. She was sent into a pit with two wild lionesses. The first laid at her feet, but the second attacked.

May 14: Saint Isidore of Alexandria lived during the reign of Emperor Decius in the 3rd century. The saint confessed himself as a Christian and was subjected to many punishments in an effort to convert him to paganism. His father then asked the governor if he could take his son and try to convert the boy himself. The Governor relented, but the father was unsuccessful and Saint Isidore was beheaded.

May 14: Saint Isidore Tverdislov of Rostov was born to a prosperous family in Germany but left to live as a wanderer and distributed his wealth to the poor. He moved to a small handmade hut in Rostov where he lived as a Holy Fool until his death in 1474.

May 15: Saint Pachomius the Great was as a 3rd century retired soldier who became a monk, dwelling with an elder in the Egyptian desert. He later started a monastery where he instituted coenobitic life. Coenobitic monasticism refers to an organized community of monks as opposed to the Eremitic tradition which refers to hermitic monks. Several monasteries for both men and women opened in the region following the principles laid down by Pachomius. He is remembered as the founder of coenobitic monasticism.

May 15: Saint Euphrosynius Wonderworker of Pskov was a 15th century monk living on the River Tolva, where many came for his help and guidance. In 1447, he built a church in honor of the Three Holy Hierarchs. Saint Euphrosynius established a strong tradition of monasticism in the Pskov region and his disciples established many communities.

May 15: Saint Isaiah, Wonderworker of Rostov, was an 11th century monk who became the second Bishop of Rostov. He worked to convert the people of that region to Christianity and to remove traces of the old religion. After his death, the position of Bishop of Rostov was not filled for more than 100 years. His relics, and those of his successor, were moved to a new cathedral in Rostov in the year 1474.

May 15: Saint Prince Dmitry of Uglich was the youngest son of Tsar Ivan the Terrible who died when the prince was still a boy. The throne passed on to Dmitry's elder brother Feodor; however, true political rule was held by their brother in law Boris Godunov. Godunov saw Dmitry as a threat. Feodor was childless and so rule could have passed to the young prince. Dmitry and his mother were sent into exile but the boy soon died. The official investigation at that time concluded that Dmitry had fallen upon his knife during a seizure. However many believed, and continue to believe, that he was killed by assassins dispatched by Godunov; this belief was strongest amongst the faithful. Some also believed the boy had escaped an assassination attempt. There were three separate "False Dmitrys" who came forward during the Time of Troubles (1595-1613). The prince is recognized as a saint and is celebrated on his birthday, (October 19), the anniversary of his death (May 15), and the anniversary of the transferal of his relics to Moscow (June 3).

May 16: Saint Theodore the Sanctified was the first in his monastery ordained into priesthood. He was a disciple of Saint Pachomius and was given the task of instructing the Holy Scriptures to many monks. He lived with Saint Pachomius until his death, and then directed the Thebaid monasteries until his own death in 368.

May 16: The life of Saint Ephraim of Novgorod is celebrated on September 26 with May 16 commemorating the transfer of his relics to a new monastery. Saint Ephraim was a 15th century monk who founded a monastery along the shores of Lake Ilmen in Novgorod.

May 16: Saint George was bishop of Mytelene between 820 and 829. There is a 12th century account of a Russian traveler who stopped to see his relics in Mytelene.

May 17: Saint Andronicus and those with him – Saint Andronicus, an Apostle of the Seventy, was bishop of Pannonia but then traveled to preach Christianity. Andronicus was martyred with others of the Seventy and his relics were later discovered at the gate of Eugenius.

May 17: Saint Stephan, Patriarch of Constantinople, son of Emperor Basil the Macedonian, and brother to Emperor Leo the Wise, became Patriarch of Constantinople in 886. He held that position until his death in 893.

Side B



Row 1

May 18: Saints Theodotus, Peter, Dionysius, Andrew and Paul were martyred in the 3rd century during the reign of Emperor Decius. Saint Theodotus was arrested after he was found to be secretly burying martyred Christians as well as holding Divine Liturgy in his inn. The other four had been arrested and executed after refusing to make sacrifices in the pagan temples.

May 18: Saints Claudia, Phaine, Ephrosina, Matrona, Julia, Thecusa, and Alexandra –These seven women were arrested in their old age for practicing Christianity. When they refused to renounce their faith, they were cast into a lake with weights on their feet. Saint Theodotus, who is also celebrated on May 18, worked with other Christians to recover and bury their bodies.

May 19: Saint Patrick, Bishop of Prusha, was a 1st century Christian who was arrested by the prefect Julies for practicing Christianity. He was beheaded after several failed attempts to persuade him to renounce his faith.

May 19: Unknown Saint. This figure is labeled as the Martyr Anastasia. There are many martyrs with that name; however, according to Museum sources, none are celebrated on May 19.

May 19: Unknown Saint. This figure is labeled as Saint Cornelius but there are two saints by that name celebrated on May 19. One is Saint Cornelius of Komel Vologda, who was a 16th century Monk who practiced asceticism and established a monastery at Komel. The other is Saint Cornelius of Paleostrov, a 15th century monk who established a monastery on Pali island in Lake Onega.

May 19: Saint Ignatius of Vologda, whose birth name was John, was a Prince of Uglich who was imprisoned with his brother by their uncle. John became a monk, took the name Ignatius, and is remembered as a wonderworker.

May 20: Saint Thallelaeus of Cilicia was 18 when he was arrested and brought before the city prefect for practicing Christianity. This was during the reign of the emperor Numerian (283-284) and the young saint is said to have miraculously survived several execution attempts until he was beheaded in 284.



Row 2

May 20: Uncovering the relics of Saint Alexis, Metropolitan of Moscow – The incorrupt relics of Saint Alexis were uncovered in the year 1430 when a stairway at the Chudov monastery was crumbling and needed to be rebuilt. The relics were moved again in 1485 to a church built in his honor.

May 21: Emperor Constantine and his mother Helen are honored with the title “Equal to the Apostles.” Saint Helen, a Christian, is believed to have influenced her son’s Edict of Milan (313), which guaranteed tolerance for Christians. The Edict of Milan was extended in 323 when Constantine became the sole ruler of Rome and moved its capital to the newly named Constantinople. Helen was later sent by her son on a successful mission to locate the Holy Cross and other great relics of Christianity.

May 21: Commemoration of the Mother of God Vladimirskaya – In 1521 invading Tatars neared Moscow, pillaging and burning along their route. The Great Prince Basil raised an army while the Metropolitan Barlaam led the people in fervent prayer before the icon of the Mother of God of Vladimir. It is said that the Tatar Khan received a disturbing vision of the Mother of God commanding a fearsome host and thus fled in fear.

May 21: Saint Constantine and his sons Michael and Theodore were 11th and 12th century descendants of Saint Vladimir the Great. Saint Constantine ruled the city of Murom and attempted to convert the people there to Christianity with his sons Michael and Theodore. The three were buried in a church built by Constantine and dedicated to the Annunciation.



Row 3

May 22: Saint Basiliscus of Comana was arrested with his brothers Eutropius and Kleonikos during the reign of Maximian Galerius (305-311) for practicing Christianity. His brothers were crucified but Basiliscus

was sent to prison where he earned the respect of his guards and converted many to Christianity. Basiliscus was later beheaded and his body was taken in secret to be buried by Christians. According to tradition, miraculous healings occurred at his grave site and a church was built there.

May 23: Saint Michael, Bishop of Synnada was an 8th century monk who became bishop of Synnada and was present at the 7th Ecumenical Council. He spoke against the iconoclast Leo the Armenian (813-820) and was subsequently banished to the city of Eudokiada.

May 23: Saint Leontius, Bishop of Rostov is celebrated on May 23 with the other Saints of Rostov and is remembered as a wonderworker.

May 23: Saint Euphrosyne, Abbess of Polotsk, was a 12th century nun who was given the task of organizing a women's monastery in Seltso. That monastery was enormously successful and a cathedral was built on the site in 1161. She was then asked to also organize a men's monastery. Her relics were first interred at the monastery at the Kievan Caves but in 1910 they were moved to the monastery she founded.

May 24: Saint Simeon the Stylite (the younger) was born in 521 and, according to tradition, left his home at age six to travel through the wilderness to a monastery. He studied under the Abbott John who practiced a unique form of asceticism that involved living atop a pillar. Simeon embraced this act and at the age of 11 built his own pillar. Simeon wrote several texts on monasticism and repentance and established a monastery at a place called Wonderful Mountain.

May 24: Saint Nikita the Stylite was a 12th century ascetic in Pereslavl who lived, bound in chains, upon a pillar. He was murdered by robbers who believed his chains were made from silver and is remembered as a wonderworker.

May 25: The Third Finding of the Head of Saint John the Baptist occurred in about 850 in Komana. The head had been hidden in the early 9th century during periods of war and political unrest. The head was returned to Constantinople and was placed in a church. There is some debate as to the present location of the head; some sources claim it is in Rome while others say Damascus. It is believed that a fragment of the skull is on Mount Athos.

May 26: Saint Carpus was one of the Apostles of the Seventy and held the seat of bishop of Verria in Macedonia.

May 26: Saint George the New was a Bulgarian Christian in the 16th century when the country was under Ottoman rule. Though the Ottomans did not typically require citizens to convert to Islam, there were cases when individuals or groups were forced to renounce their faith. Saint George was sentenced to death by the Governor of his city and the Metropolitan of Georgia had him buried in a church dedicated to Saint George the Great.

May 26: Saint Macarius of Kalyazin is celebrated on March 17, and May 26 commemorates the discovery of his relics. While building a new church was to be built at the Kalyazin Monastery, which was founded by Saint Macarius, workers uncovered a grave. The grave was said to have the incorrupt remains of Saint Macarius and he was later placed inside the new church. Many miracles were said to have taken place there. These were investigated, and affirmed, by Metropolitan Daniel of Moscow (1522-1539). In 1547 Macarius was added to the official list of Russian Saints.



Row 4

May 27: The Translation of the Relics of Hierarchs Cyprian, Photius and Jonah took place on May 27, 1472, during the construction of the cathedral dedicated to the Dormition located in the Kremlin. This was done under orders from Metropolitan Philip and Prince Ivan III. The first figure on this row is the Bishop who made arrangements for the transfer of the relics. This is followed by the three hierarchs.

May 27: Saint Therapon of the White Lake was a 14th century Christian who practiced asceticism as a layman until the age of 40, when he became a monk. He moved north to the White Lake region and established a monastery there.

May 28: Saint Nicetas, Bishop of Chalcedon, lived during the end of the 8th and beginning of the 9th centuries and was known for the charity he bestowed upon the poor, travelers, orphans, and widows. He was arrested and exiled for denouncing Leo the Armenian during the Iconoclastic period.

May 28: Saint Ignatius, Bishop of Rostov, was seen leaving his coffin after his death in 1288 and floating above the church blessing the people. He is remembered as a wonderworker with many miracles being reported at his grave.

May 29: Saint Theodosia of Tyre, who is also celebrated on April 3, was martyred at the start of the 4th century. It is said that when officials tried to drown her, she was rescued by angels. When she was thrown to wild animals, they would not touch her. Theodosia was beheaded and May 29 celebrates the day her relics were brought to Constantinople and Venice.

May 29: Saint John of Ustiug was a 15th century Christian who was an extreme type of ascetic known as a Holy Fool. He endured acts of great humility, such as walking about in rags with bare feet and at sleeping in a hut at night. Saint John is also remembered as a wonderworker and his relics were later placed in a church dedicated to him.

May 29: King Constantine XI is not an official Saint of the Orthodox Church but is commemorated in many Orthodox communities as a martyr. He was the last reigning emperor of Byzantium and died during the siege and fall of Constantinople.

May 30: Saint Isaac of Dalmatius was a 4th century monk who lived in the wilderness. He traveled to Constantinople during the Arian controversy to confront the emperor Valens (364-378), a fervent Arian. The emperor was then preparing for battle with the Goths. Isaac declared that if Valens did not stop the persecution of Orthodox believers (those who did not follow the Arian movement), he would be captured and burned alive. Isaac's words proved to be prophetic and he was held in high esteem, eventually establishing a monastery in Constantinople.

May 31: Saint Hermias of Comana was a 2nd century Christian who was arrested for failing to offer sacrifices at the pagan temple. He withstood many punishments before he was beheaded. He is remembered as a martyr and a wonderworker.

May 31: Saint Hermas of the Seventy was a bishop in Philippopolis, Thrace, and is mentioned in Paul's Epistle to the Romans (Romans 16:14). He is said to have been derided by those he lived amongs, but he was not martyred.