
SS. Cyril & Methodius
Bulgarian Orthodox Mission
McLean, VA



The Samaritan Woman

**Христос воскрес из мертвых,
смертию смерть поправ,
и сущим во гробех живот даровав!**

Sunday, May 25, 2008

SS Cyril & Methodius Orthodox Mission

www.bocdc.org

Orthodox Church in America

www.oca.org

Diocese of Washington and New York

**Христос Возкресе!
Воистина Возкресе!**

**The Parish Council of SS Cyril &
Methodius is elected each year at the
Annual Parish Meeting in January.**

**In support of our pastor the Very
Reverend Timothy Perry, who is
appointed by the Orthodox Church in
America, this year's Council members
are:**

**Mr. Mat Mathews, President
Ms. Nadya Choparinoff, Vice-President
Ms. Elena Murphy, Treasurer
Ms. Elisabeth Sipkov-Piñeros, Secretary
Ms. Nadia Baltiyska, Council Member
Mr. George Kochev, Council Member
Ms. Virginia Tancheva, Council Member**

The Samaritan Woman, St. Photina

**The Holy Martyr Photina (Svetlana) the Samaritan Woman, her
sons Victor (named Photinus) and Joses; and her sisters Anatola,
Phota, Photis, Paraskeva, Kyriake; Nero's daughter Domnina;
and the Martyr Sebastian: The holy Martyr Photina was the**

Samaritan Woman, with whom the Savior conversed at Jacob's Well (John. 4:5-42).

During the time of the emperor Nero (54-68), who displayed excessive cruelty against Christians, St Photina lived in Carthage with her younger son Joses and fearlessly preached the Gospel there. Her eldest son Victor fought bravely in the Roman army against barbarians, and was appointed military commander in the city of Attalia (Asia Minor). Later, Nero called him to Italy to arrest and punish Christians.

Sebastian, an official in Italy, said to St Victor, "I know that you, your mother and your brother, are followers of Christ. As a friend I advise you to submit to the will of the emperor. If you inform on any Christians, you will receive their wealth. I shall write to your mother and brother, asking them not to preach Christ in public. Let them practice their faith in secret."

St Victor replied, "I want to be a preacher of Christianity like my mother and brother." Sebastian said, "O Victor, we all know what woes await you, your mother and brother." Then Sebastian suddenly felt a sharp pain in his eyes. He was dumbfounded, and his face was somber.

For three days he lay there blind, without uttering a word. On the fourth day he declared, "The God of the Christians is the only true God." St Victor asked why Sebastian had suddenly changed his mind. Sebastian replied, "Because Christ is calling me." Soon he was baptized, and immediately regained his sight. St Sebastian's servants, after witnessing the miracle, were also baptized.

Reports of this reached Nero, and he commanded that the Christians be brought to him at Rome. Then the Lord Himself appeared to the confessors and said, "Fear not, for I am with you. Nero, and all who serve him, will be vanquished." The Lord said to St Victor, "From this day forward, your name will be Photinus, because through you, many will be enlightened and will believe in Me." The Lord then told the Christians to strengthen and encourage St Sebastian to persevere until the end.

All these things, and even future events, were revealed to St Photina. She left Carthage in the company of several Christians

and joined the confessors in Rome.

At Rome the emperor ordered the saints to be brought before him and he asked them whether they truly believed in Christ.

All the confessors refused to renounce the Savior. Then the emperor gave orders to smash the martyrs' finger joints. During the torments, the confessors felt no pain, and their hands remained unharmed.

Nero ordered that Sts Sebastian, Photinus and Joses be blinded and locked up in prison, and St Photina and her five sisters Anatola, Phota, Photis, Paraskeva and Kyriake were sent to the imperial court under the supervision of Nero's daughter Domnina. St Photina converted both Domnina and all her servants to Christ. She also converted a sorcerer, who had brought her poisoned food to kill her.

Three years passed, and Nero sent to the prison for one of his servants, who had been locked up. The messengers reported to him that Sts Sebastian, Photinus and Joses, who had been blinded, had completely recovered, and that people were visiting them to hear their preaching, and indeed the whole prison had been transformed into a bright and fragrant place where God was glorified.

Nero then gave orders to crucify the saints, and to beat their naked bodies with straps. On the fourth day the emperor sent servants to see whether the martyrs were still alive. But, approaching the place of the tortures, the servants fell blind. An angel of the Lord freed the martyrs from their crosses and healed them. The saints took pity on the blinded servants, and restored their sight by their prayers to the Lord. Those who were healed came to believe in Christ and were soon baptized.

In an impotent rage Nero gave orders to flay the skin from St Photina and to throw the martyr down a well. Sebastian, Photinus and Joses had their legs cut off, and they were thrown to dogs, and then had their skin flayed off. The sisters of St Photina also suffered terrible torments. Nero gave orders to cut off their breasts and then to flay their skin. An expert in cruelty, the emperor readied the fiercest execution for St Photis: they tied her by the feet to the tops of two bent-over trees. When the ropes were cut the trees sprang upright and tore the martyr

apart. The emperor ordered the others beheaded. St Photina was removed from the well and locked up in prison for twenty days.

After this Nero had her brought to him and asked if she would now relent and offer sacrifice to the idols. St Photina spit in the face of the emperor, and laughing at him, said, "O most impious of the blind, you profligate and stupid man! Do you think me so deluded that I would consent to renounce my Lord Christ and instead offer sacrifice to idols as blind as you?"

Hearing such words, Nero gave orders to again throw the martyr down the well, where she surrendered her soul to God (ca. 66).

On the Greek Calendar, St Photina is commemorated on February 26.



Greatmartyr George the New at Sofia
(Bulgaria – 1515)

Commemorated on May 26

The Holy Martyr George the New was born into an illustrious Bulgarian family, living in the capital city of Bulgaria, Sredets (now the city of Sofia). St George's childless parents, John and Mary, in their declining years entreated the Lord to send them a child. Their prayer was answered, and they baptized the infant with the name of the holy Great Martyr George (April 23).

Young George received a fine upbringing, he attentively studied the Holy Scriptures, and he was pious and chaste. His parents died when George was twenty-five. At that time Bulgaria found itself under the rule of the Turks, who forcibly converted Christians to Islam.

Once, several Moslems tried to convert George. They put a fez on the saint's head. This is a red circular hat which Moslems wear to enter their house of prayer. But George threw the fez on the ground. The Turks brought the martyr to their governor with beatings and abuse.

The governor was impressed with St George's appearance and bearing, and he urged him to accept Islam, promising honors and wealth from Sultan Selim (1512-1520). The saint boldly and steadfastly confessed his faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and reproached the errors of Islam. The governor in a rage gave orders to beat St George with rods, but the saint persevered in his confession of faith in Christ.

The governor ordered the tortures to be increased. The passion-bearer bore all his sufferings, calling on the Lord Jesus Christ for help. Then they led the martyr through the city to the beat of a drum and shouts: "Do not insult Mohammed nor abase the Moslem faith".

Finally, a large fire was lit in the city, to burn St George. Weakened by his wounds, the saint fell to the ground. They threw him into the fire still alive, and they threw corpses of dogs on top of him so that Christians would not be able to find the relics of the martyr.

Suddenly, a heavy rain fell and extinguished the fire. With the onset of darkness, the place where the body of the martyr was thrown was illumined with a bright light. They gave permission to a certain Christian priest to take the venerable relics of the martyr for burial. Informed about the occurrence, Metropolitan Jeremiah and his clergy went to the place of execution. In the ashes of the fire they located the body of the holy Martyr George and carried it to the church of St George the Great Martyr in the city of Sredets.

**Житие на св. преподобни Софроний
Български (Софийски)**

**Енорийският свещеник на село Пенкьовци
(Софийско) Стефан избягал в София със жена си
поради турско насилие, отгдето после избягал чак
във Влашко при великия влашки войвода Радул.**

Там жена му починала и той приел монашество с името Софроний.

Подир смъртта пък на войводата Радул той се завърнал отсам Дунава в родината си и се поселил в един манастир край Русе (вероятно пещерния манастир на св. Йоаким I, патриарх Търновски и преподобни Димитрий Бесарабовски), гдето се подвизавал с пост, молитва, труд и милостиня. Дяволът не изтърпял неговите монашески подвизи и настроил против него един манастирски слуга, който го ударил с брадва по главата и така го лишил от живот.

Три години по-късно Софроний се явил на живеещите в манастира, които изпълнили неговото внушение, разкопали гроба му и намерили мощите му нетленни и благоуханни. Те ги поставили в ковчег за всеобщо поклонение.

Вероятно преподобни Софроний живял през втората половина на XV век и началото на XVI век, към второто десетилетие на който трябва да е пострадал. Тия сведения за него ни съобщава българският книжовник поп Пею, автор на житието на св. Георги, който пострадал през 1515 година.

Saints Commemorated Today

5th SUNDAY OF PASCHA—Tone 4. Samaritan Woman. Third Finding of the Honorable Head of the Holy Glorious Prophet, Forerunner and Baptist John (ca. 850). Hieromartyr Therapon, Bishop of Cyprus (14th c.). Hieromartyr Urban, Pope of Rome (230).

Those Who Are In Need of Prayer

Bryndyn, Tzvety, Aleksandr, Jane, Catherine, Bojanka, Albana, Presbyteras Marie, Miriam, Barbara, Artemis, Barbara, Marie, & Priests Joseph, Photius, Joseph, Anthony, and Joseph.

(If you wish to add a name to this list, please contact Fr. Timothy)

† May Their Memory Be Eternal †

Newly departed Elena, Archbishop GREGORY, Olivera, Helen,
Christo, Radka, Anna, Dale, Mary, Priest Peter, Philemon,
Carmel, Thomas, Vasili, Mary Ellen, George, Marianne,
Panaigiotti, Christophor, Rada, & Julia.

(If you wish to add a name to this list, please contact Fr. Timothy)

Services (Services begin at 2:00)

Sunday, June 8: **Holy Fathers of the First Ecumenical Council.**

Sunday, June 22: **All Saints**

Sunday, July 6: **Uncovering of the Relics of Ven. Sergius of
Radonezh.**

The Next Parish Council Meeting is the *second* Monday is June
The next Parish Council Meeting will take place on Monday,
June 9 between 7 and 9 PM. The meeting will take place at St.
Luke Serbian Orthodox Church in McLean, VA. Everyone is
invited to attend and listen or discuss the issues, however, only
Parish Council members may cast a vote.

International Orthodox Christian Charities (IOCC)

This organization is a pan-Orthodox charity with activities throughout the world. It is possible to specifically designate where your donation goes.

www.iocc.org

IOCC IS EFFECTIVE

Every dollar you give helps IOCC
secure \$6.65 support from
governments, foundations,
ecumenical organizations and other
funding sources.

Source: IOCC audited financial
statements 1992 – 2005

IOCC IS EFFICIENT

92% of IOCC's resources are used
for humanitarian relief and
development programs.

Source:
IOCC audited financial statements



**Х р и с т о с В о з к р е с е !
В о и с т и н а В о з к р е с е !**

**The Angel cried to the Lady Full of Grace: Rejoice, O Pure
Virgin!**

Again I say: Rejoice!

Your Son is risen from His three days in the tomb.

With Himself He has raised all the dead.

Rejoice, all ye people!

Shine, shine, O New Jerusalem,

The glory of the Lord has shone on you.

Exult now and be glad, O Zion,

Be radiant, O Pure Theotokos,

In the Resurrection of your Son!