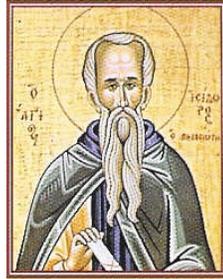


# February 4

*s. † Our Ven. Father Isidore of Pelusium*



Ven. Isidore came from Alexandria of rich and famous parents and received a higher education. Wishing to devote himself to the service of God, he left his parental home and rich inheritance, and went to the northern suburbs of Lower Egypt where he accepted monasticism. He settled on a certain mount near the city of Pelusium, and here he zealously devoted himself to the asceticism of monastic life. He wore clothes made from rough hair and ate only roots and grass. From here Ven. Isidore traveled to Constantinople to see and hear Chrysostom, whose homilies made the deepest impression on Isidore, and he made attentive study and wonder the theme of the rest of his life. After returning from Constantinople, the spiritual wisdom and strict life of Isidore have gathered many adherents of piety around him, and they elected him to be rector and presbyter. The canons and the living example of his life by which Ven. Isidore inspired his brothers were modesty in dress, protection of silence, minimum of food and philanthropy to the poor. Strict asceticism with higher education brought such respect to Ven. Isidore that not only bishops and aristocrats but also the Emperor and Patriarchs of Alexandria turned to him for advice and instructions. A zealous expositor of vices and untruths, Ven. Isidore suffered much from the people for his zealousness, but he always thanked God for his affliction. As a skilled man of faith, he participated in defending true doctrines against the Nestorian heresy. He died in extreme old age, about the year 436, "he finds labors rendered to the heavens". The works of Ven. Isidore consist of more than 2000 letters which have come down to us. In them he is revealed as a zealous teacher of Orthodoxy, a wise interpreter of Holy Scripture and a firm defender of the Christian faith against Jews and Pagans.

*Kontakion, tone 4*

**The church finding you another morning star,  
O Most Glorious One,  
Enlightening her by the lightning of your words,  
She cries out to you:  
Rejoice O All-blessed, Divinely-wise Isidore.**

### *Holy Right-believing Great Prince George*

He was born in 1189, the son of Vsevolod III. And he assumed the throne of the Vladimir Grand Princedom in 1212.

From his young years he was distinguished by warm love for God and for acts of piety, trying to fulfill the commandments of God and keeping the fear of God in his heart. While still in early youth he furthered the good organization of the Vladimir Nativity of Christ (Rozhdestvensky) Monastery (see Vladimir Diocese), ministered to it, entered this monastery where "he fervently attended to every liturgical hymn and readings from the Holy Scripture, and listening to the words of the book he instilled them in his heart, and he often mentally reflected that Christians should enter the kingdom of heaven with many misfortunes".

Having become the great prince, he showed special deference to religious education and confirmations of Christian faith among his subjects, as he also equally did among his neighbors of other faiths. With this goal he founded Nizhni-Novgorod and constructed two magnificent temples<sup>1)</sup> in it, which became the initial nursery of Orthodoxy in that area. Loving the holy faith, he also fervently loved the Orthodox Russian land, for which he was honored while still living by grateful contemporaries with the title "Father and Sovereign".

When the Tatars entered Russia, George armed against them and posted his troops on the shore of the Sitj River. In 1238, Batu was at the walls of Vladimir. The city was seized, George's family perished, most of the inhabitants were beaten and some were taken into captivity. Having learned of the destruction of his family and people, George prepared for a decisive battle and fought the Tatars on the Sitj River. The Russians fought courageously, but had to concede to superior forces. George had fallen among his warriors (March 4, 1238).

The Rostov Bishop Cyril found George's decapitated body in a pile of the dead which he recognized by his princely clothes, brought him to Rostov and placed him there in the Temple of Mother of God. He was placed in the tomb in such a way that his head attached to his body leaving no evidence that it was cut off (see the Troparion).

In 1239, George's body was transferred from Rostov to Vladimir by his brother Iaroslav and was placed in the Dormition Cathedral Church.

In 1645, the relics of St. George were opened and were placed in the silver reliquary built by Patriarch Joseph. His commemoration began about this time.

According to the witness of the chronicles, St. George was adorned with good qualities: he tried to carry out the commandments of God and kept the fear of God in his heart; he even bestowed gifts on his enemies. He was merciful and did not shore up his estate, distributing alms to the poor, adorning temples of God with icons and books; honored the rank of monks and priests and gave them what they needed; and offered prayers to the Lord day and night.

The Holy Church praises St. George as "an intelligent lamp of faith", "who suffered for good and who empurpled his church with the blood of martyrdom" as

"the Great Prince and Passion-bearer, who enlightened the Russian land and drove away the sinful darkness with healing grace flowing to all".

*Troparion, tone 8*

**Sitting on the height of your great pryncedom,  
You were revealed as pious and faithful  
Shining like the sun on your country:  
Zealousness kindled by the Holy Trinity,  
And having strongly suffered for the faith, you poured out your blood.  
Therefore by cutting off your head  
They openly witness for Christ for you,  
Attaching it to your body after death.  
Together with this your relics remain incorruptible to this day.  
From them you have poured out healing to our souls and bodies.  
But for having boldness before Christ, O Passion-bearer George,  
Also continually pray by your power  
To keep your relatives unharmed through your prayers.**

*Kontakion, tone 8*

**Simulating the death of Christ and drinking His coveted cup as life;  
Having bravely moved for Him and having disdained the earthly kingdom,  
You suffered death from the godless barbarians, O Divinely-wise George.  
Therefore pray to save our Christ-loving Emperor through your prayers.**

**Paramoia:** 1) Is. 43:9-14; 2) Wis. 3:1-9; 3) Wis. 4:7-15. **Matins Gospel:** Mt. 10:16-22; sel. 36. **Epistle:** Eph. 6:10-17; sel. 233. **Gospel:** Lk. 21:12-19; sel. 106.

**His synaxis is done, where his relics lie.**

*Our Ven. Father Cyril, Wonderworker of Novoezero (New Lake)*

Ven. Cyril descended from the nobleman family of Belii (White) in Galich, Kostroma Province. Having the strong desire to devote himself to monasticism, he secretly left his parent's home while yet a child to Ven. Cornelius of Komel (see May 19). The latter accepted the youth with love and soon tonsured him a monk. St. Cyril zealously began to do the ascetic deeds of monasticism: to learn obedience, fasting and prayer. Within seven years the father of St. Cyril came to the Komel Monastery and recognizing his son, also wished to be tonsured a monk. At the same time the mother of St. Cyril also accepted monasticism and within a few days peacefully departed to the Lord. After the death of his father, who lived in the monastery for about 3 years, St. Cyril with the blessing of Cornelius left for the wilderness and there practiced asceticism in solitude for about seven years, going from time to time to Novgorod and Pskov to venerate the Holy Places. Finally, by suggestion of God, he went to Novoezero (New Lake) and there on

Krasnii (Red) Island he built a cell for himself and two churches: one in the name of the Resurrection of Christ and other in the name of the Hodigitria Mother of God. Soon many lovers of the silent life came to him and founded a monastery on Krasnii Island known by the name Novoezersky (New Lake) (see Novgorod Diocese). St. Cyril, elected rector of the monastery, wisely ruled the brothers with love and served as a paradigm of asceticism for them. He spent "all his life" "in tears and lamentations", was the first to enter into the temple and the last to leave, partook little food, tilled the soil himself, cut fire wood, and frequently went barefoot and ragged clothes in bitter cold. Rewarded by the Lord with the gift of insight and wonders, "the sick were healed [by him], the lame walked". Ven. Cyril reposed on February 4, 1532 and is buried in the monastery founded by him, where his relics repose until now. They were found incorruptible in 1649, and then (not later than 1652) St. Cyril was also added to the choir of the saints.

*Troparion, tone 8*

**By wrestling with the Spirit of God,  
You poured out tears from drier clouds,  
And you have demonstrated a way of life in the barren wilderness.  
And from the depths of your heart, with vigilant prayers and fasting,  
You bore the fruit of beneficial labors.  
And you shone the light of your wonders on the entire world.  
O our Father Cyril, pray to Christ God to save our souls.**

*Kontakion, tone 8*

**As impenetrable and mighty adamant,  
As the master disperser of evil spirits,  
As the new wonderworker,  
Victorious, being freed from evil passions,  
We send up thanksgiving to you, O our Father Cyril.  
But having boldness at the throne of Christ,  
For those honoring you in faith,  
Protect this city and people by your prayers.  
For you are the confirmation and praise  
Of the cross-bearing Emperor and your flock.**

**Paramoëa: Matins Gospel, the Epistle and Gospel for the Liturgy: see Jan. 10.**

**His synaxis is done in his monastery.**

*Ven. Nicholas the Confessor, Hegumen of the Studite Monastery*

He was born in the village of Cydonia (Canea, Khania) on the island of Crete in 793. When he was 10 years old, his parents sent him to his uncle, the Monk Theophanes, in the Studite Monastery in Constantinople. After he enrolled in the monastery school and finished his studies when he was 16 years old, he

accepted monasticism and within a few years he was worthy of the priesthood. During the reign of Emperor Leo the Armenian, St. Nicholas and St. Theodore the Studite (see Nov. 11) as defenders of iconolatriy, suffered imprisonment (from 819 to 820). The Holy Confessor was subjected to severe torture, cruelly beaten and starved. With the accession of the pious Theodora (see Feb. 11), Ven. Nicholas returned to the Studite Monastery and became its last rector. During the reign of Emperor Michael III, when the Holy Patriarch Ignatius (see Oct. 23) was dethroned, Ven. Nicholas left for the Prikoness Island (near Cyzicus), to Mitylene and then to the Chersonese Peninsula (Crimea). Within seven years, at the will of the Emperor, he was returned to his monastery and confined to the monastery prison for two years. After the accession of Emperor Basil I the Macedonian, Ven. Nicholas, according to the wish of the Emperor, again accepted the rectorship and soon died in 868 at 75 years of age. It was pleasing to the Lord to bestow on St. Nicholas the grace of healing for his life of suffering.

*Martyr Jadorus* suffered for Christ during the reign of Emperor Decius <sup>2</sup>).

*Hieromartyr Abramius, Bishop of Arbela*

He was bishop in Arbela, Persia. Having refused to renounce Christ and to worship the sun, he was cruelly tortured by the Persians and then beheaded in the fifth year of the persecution of Shapur II about the year 344 or 347 in the village of Thelman.

*John, Bishop of Irenopolis*, was one of the fathers who participated in the First Ecumenical Council and who died in peace.

*Martyr Joseph of Aleppo*

Accused by some malicious Moslems in the city of Aleppo that he wanted to become a Turk even though he never thought of apostasy, St. Joseph refused their unprecedented promises and for that the fanatics with their usual fury brought him before the judge. After various and vain admonitions to accept Islam, he was subjected to torture and then beheaded in 1686.

*Venerable Abraham and Coprius*, practiced asceticism on the Pechenga River in the Savior Hermitage where in 1492 they founded a monastery now converted to a parish church (the Vladimirsko-Pechenga church yard, Vologda Province and District, Nesvoisky Volost {Township}, about 21 versts {14 miles} from Vologda). Their relics repose in a hidden place in this church.

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<sup>1</sup>) In the first Savior-Transfiguration Cathedral in Nizhni Novgorod built by St. George, there is a chapel altar built in 1863 in honor of the Holy Right-believing Prince. In this sanctuary on the altar table is a glass bell cap housing a small hat with the relics of Holy Prince George sent by the residents of Vladimir in 1889 (during the commemoration of the 700th anniversary of the birth of St.

George) for the blessing for Nizhni Novgorod by the Saint of its founder. The Nizhni-Novgorodians, in place of what was sent, made a new little hat which was placed on the incorruptible head of the holy prince. The little hat of St George in the Nizhni Novgorod Cathedral is made of crimson velvet, adorned like princely crown, with a cross over a cross gold braid. On the top of the little hat is a cross consisting of cut glass. The bottom of the little hat or its band is made of ermine. This little hat serves as an example of the reverent honor of not only the citizens of Nizhni Novgorod, but also of their neighbors. (Nizhegorodskiiia Eparkhialjniia Vedomosti (Diocesan News). 1894, 5).

2) There is no such name in the Greek and Slavonic documents until the 17th Century. Therefore there is a proposal that this is either Jader (the African bishop martyr whom Cyprian mentions in his letters), or with the changed name Diodorus, who will be found in the ancient eastern commemorations under Feb. 4 (for details refer to the {Mesiatseslov Vostoka} Eastern Menaion, notes on pages 44-45).

*S. V. Bulgakov, **Handbook for Church Servers**, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., 1274 pp (Kharkov, 1900) pp. 66-69  
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