

April 12

C. Our Venerable Father and Confessor Basil, Bishop of Parium (in Asia Minor).

"Having destroyed the vanity and passion of his flesh", "having made" his "life chaste and righteous", he "observed a pure priesthood up to the end". During the reign of Leo the Isaurian he suffered much for venerating holy icons. Ven Basil died in peace.

Kontakion, tone 2

**Illumined with the light from on high, O Blessed Father,
You enlighten all who with love honor your honorable suffering,
O Suffering Hierarch Basil,
Pray continually to Christ God for us all.**

Ven. Anthusa

Daughter of Constantine Copronymus, not inclined to the desire of her father for her to marry, she decided to protect her virginity. After the death of her father (in 775) she distributed her estate for the adornment of temples and the needy. She devoted herself entirely to the asceticism of piety: she constantly lifted prayers to the Lord and read Holy Scripture. Wishing for solitary asceticism, she entered as a nun in the monastery of St. Euthymia and soon was installed as the rector of the Constantinople Omonia [Concord] Monastery. In this dignity Ven. Anthusa, full of love and humility, fulfilled all monastic work and served the sisters as a simple nun. The Venerable Nun died in the year 811 at the age of 57.

Ven. Athanasia, Hegumena of Aegina

The daughter of wealthy and noble inhabitants of the Aegean Islands, married at the will of her parents, on the 17th day after marriage she lost her husband, who was killed while defending the island from attacking Arabs. Soon Athanasia married another man and together with him turned all to the asceticism of piety: they helped the poor, visited the sick, served them food, and clothed them as much as they could. Soon she convinced her husband to enter a monastery, but their home was made a shelter for those wishing to keep their virginity for the sake of the Lord. At the request of the zealots for the virginal life who gathered around her, she became their rector and even more strengthened the asceticism of the holy way of life: she observed the strictest fast, wore a hair shirt and slept on stones. After 4 years she built a monastery in a remote area, in which she also settled with her sisters. Soon the monastery became glorified and many came here with the sick, who were healed by the prayers of Ven. Athanasia. Empress Theodora came to hear the advice of Athanasia. St. Athanasia died in 860, after she ordered before

her death to feed the needy in her memory for 40 days. She appeared in a dream to the sisters who did not fulfill all this and explained the great value of the memory of the departed.

Ven. Martyrs Menas, David and John practiced asceticism in the 7th century in Palestine. They were killed by the arrows of the Saracens.

Ven. Isaac the Syrian

Coming from Syria, he practiced asceticism in a certain deserted place in Italy. Severe ascetic efforts of the holy hermit attracted many adherents of the ascetical life to him, who, finally, asked him to be their rector. Ven. Isaac founded a monastery in the city of Monte Luco near Spoleto for them and directed their monastic efforts. He died about the year 550. During his lifetime he had from the Lord the gifts of prophesy and spiritual visions. (He should be distinguished from Isaac the Syrian, a writer of the 7th century).

Hieromartyr Zeno, Bishop of Verona

Born a Greek in Syria, traveling to various countries for his Christian formation, he arrived in Italy and settled in Verona. The inhabitants of this city elected him bishop because of his lofty virtuous life. St. Zeno labored much, confirming the Christian faith and eradicating paganism. He became a confessor during the reign of Valens, when he suffered for the true teaching about the Son of God. He died about the year 380. According to his life, on April 12, 558 (on the day of the memory of the Hieromartyr) there was a flood in the city of Verona, but the water did not come into the Temple of St. Zeno, even though it towered almost up to the roof, and the doors of the temple were open. Many other wonders were made at the tomb of the man who pleased God. His relics were transferred to Hungary.

Commemoration of the translation of the honorable belt of the Mother of God from Zela [Zile] to Constantinople. See August 31.

Venerable Martyr Acacius

A lover of monasticism since youth and a tonsured one of St. Dionysius of Mt. Olympus since he was 23, he surprised all the brethren by his asceticism. Having left for the Kavsoalyvites [hut-burner] Skete on Mt. Athos, he spent 20 years in the most amazing asceticism, constantly struggling with the flesh and ennobling the spirit to the God. He "was a lamp on Mt. Athos, lighting up those invisibly sitting in darkness". For his holy life he was worthy from the Lord of the gift of insight, having predicted many things in the future. He died at a very old age in 1730.

St. Basil, Bishop of Ryazan

First St. Basil was the bishop in Murom. He was a true lover of peace, comforting, supporting and teaching those who suffered from the Batu destruction. But dirty slander blackened the righteous man: suspicion of an impure life had fallen on him. The Muromites decided to expel the hierarch. The hierarch was not justified.

Having prayed all night before the Murom Icon of the Mother of God (see below) and having performed the liturgy in the morning, St. Basil came to the Oka River during an enormous gathering of people; having spread out his mantiia on the water and having made the sign of the cross, he stood on the mantiia and has sailed across the Oka, leaning on his staff and holding the Murom Icon of the Mother of God on his chest. The Muromites came around and began to call to the hierarch, but it already was too late.

St. Basil came to Ryazan and began to serve as a hierarch there, having also brought to the new flock a compassionate heart, wiser activity and also a bright word. St. Basil did not rule his new flock for long as he died in 1295.

In 1609 the relics of the hierarch were opened and transferred from the Temple of Sts. Boris and Gleb to the Dormition Temple in Ryazan, now the Nativity Cathedral, where the icon depicting the procession of the hierarch to the Oka River is found.

The hierarch is glorified as an "intercessor for orphans and widows, a warm shelter for those not having a shelter and provider to those who hunger, a comfort to the grieving and desponding, a reconciler to those in enmity and a marvelous wonderworker".

Contemporary Ryazan (before Pereiaslavl Ryazan) is indebted for its elevation by St. Basil who in 1291 transferred the episcopal see here from Old Ryazan.

Local commemoration of St. Basil is also made on May 21, July 10 and on the Sunday of All Saints.

There is an Akathistos to the Saint, published by the Ryazan Brotherhood of St. Basil, Bishop of Ryazan.

Murom Icon of the Mother of God

It was brought to Murom by the Holy Prince Constantine (see May 21) in the 12th century. With the help of it the holy prince converted the Muromite-pagans to Christianity. St. Basil, Bishop of Ryazan transferred this icon from Murom to Ryazan and is found in the Ryazan cathedral. The icon was celebrated at various times earlier, but since 1814 it was established to celebrate it on April 12.