

October 28

F. *Holy Martyrs Terence and Neonila (and their seven children: Sarbelius, Photus, Theodulus, Hierax, Nitus (Nitus), Bele and Eunice).*

All of them severely suffered for Christ. After various torments and heavy tortures, they were beheaded by the sword. The place and time of their travails is unknown. In the church service all these holy martyrs are hymned and all of them are called by their names.

Kontakion, tone 4

**The honorable memory of the martyrs comes today,
The All-wise Terence and his friends,
Who are glad in everything.
For let us warmly proceed that we may receive healing.
For this he received grace from the Holy Spirit
To heal the infirmities and illnesses of our souls.**

Our Ven. Father Stephen of St. Sabbas Monastery and Creator of Canons, practiced asceticism in the St. Sabbas Laura in Palestine in the eighth century. According to the church hymns, Ven. Stephen "having adorned his way of life with abstinence and having destroyed the passions", "having conquered regiments of demons and having overcome the impositions of thoughts and passions", "in vigilant prayer and standing all-night gained the lifting up of diligent hands and fountains of tears" and "the wonderworker appeared exulting in eternal glory with the angels" and "standing before the throne of the King of all and the Pantocrator".

Kontakion, tone 4

**You planted a garden of virtues
And watered it with streams of your tears.
Since you have received the tree of life, O All-glorious One,
Save your flock from corruption by your prayers.
Deliver from all evil those who warmly honor you, Stephen.
For we have acquired you, Wise One,
As a great intercessor through faith and love.**

+ Our Father among the Saints Arsenius, Archbishop of the Serbs

Born in Srem [Syrmia], he spent the greatest part of his life as a monk in the Zhicha Monastery. In 1233 for his strict ascetic life he was consecrated the Archbishop of Serbia. "Bearing God in himself from a youthful age", he wisely shepherded his "flock of sheep with his words" to a spiritual pasture, implanting

"the seed of piety" in their hearts. After 30 years of wise management of his flock St. Arsenius peacefully died in 1266. His relics are in the Pec Monastery.

Troparion, tone 8

**A teacher of mercy and treasury of compassion,
You have rejected all as a teacher of Orthodoxy
And hierarch of divine fertilization,
O Our Father Hierarch Arsenius,
You were an intercessor for the needy.
Therefore pray to Christ God to enlighten our souls,
That we shall not then fall asleep in death.**

Kontakion, tone 2

**O God-bearing Arsenius,
Your words as food
Reasonably feeding your children,
Praising with your tongue,
Offering hymns with your mouth,
Crying out with the announcement:
O Christ, Thou art the light unspeakable.**

His Synaxis is done where his relics lay, and where his temple is.

Paramoëa: see October 5. **Matins Gospel:** see January 1. **Epistle:** see January 12. **Gospel:** see January 17.

+ Holy Great Martyr Parasceva called Friday

She was the daughter of wealthy and for that time devout parents living in Iconium during the reign of Diocletian. In childhood she lost her father and mother. Observing strict morals, she accepted the vow of virginity and spread the Christian faith among her fellow-citizen pagans. Being led for this reason for trial to the hegemon of the province, who was sent to Iconium by the emperor to destroy Christians, St. Parasceva, still a young virgin, "rejected feminine weakness", fearlessly repulsed seductions and the threats of the torturer who forced her to sacrifice to the idols. Then the torturer ordered that the confessor be hanged from a tree and to torment her body with iron nails and then pressed her up to the bones and threw her into prison hardly alive. But God did not abandon the holy sufferer and wonderfully healed her. The spiteful torturer did not learn from this wonderful healing of the holy martyress and continued to torture St. Parasceva, having ordered her hanged from a tree which was burned down with torches and finally cut off her head with the sword. According to the words of the martyress Parasceva told to the torturer - Hegemon, her parents always especially revered the day of week devoted to memory of the passions of the Lord, i.e. Friday, - revered

by fasting, prayer and alms-giving. For this God sent them the daughter on this day of week whom they have named for the day of the week of her birth, namely Friday, or in Greek Parasceva¹.

Troparion, tone 4

**Wise and all-praised martyress of Christ Parasceva,
You received masculine strength and rejected feminine infirmity,
Conquering the devil and shaming the torturer,
Crying out and saying:
O come cut my body with the sword and burn it with fire,
For rejoicing I go to my Groom Christ:
Through these prayers, O Christ God, save our souls.**

Kontakion, tone 3

**You were offered the all holy and blameless torture,
For a payment to the most pure, immortal Groom Christ,
You gladdened a place in the angelic choir
And you conquered the demonic snares.
For this reason we honor you through faith,
O Much-suffering Martyress Parasceva.**

Paramoëa: see Mar. 9. **Matins Gospel:** Mt. 15:21-28; sel. 62. **Epistle 2** Cor. 6:1-10; sel. 181. **Gospel:** Lk. 7:36-50; sel. 33.

Martyrs Africanus, Terence, Maximus and Pompeius and those (36) with them, see April 10.

Ven. John the Chozebite (see October 3).

Hieromartyr Cyriacus, Patriarch of Jerusalem.

He was that same Jude, who pointed out to the Empress Helena the place where the life-giving Cross of the Lord was hidden. After the discovery of the Holy Cross, he believed in Christ and then for his virtuous life he was made patriarch. He suffered for Christ by the Emperor Julian the Apostate. After prolonged torture St. Cyriacus was burned on a frying pan.

Martyr Anna, mother of St. Cyriacus, Patriarch of Jerusalem, suffered for Christ together with her son. She died, being burned with candles.

Venerable Father Firmilianus, Archbishop of Caesarea, and Malchion, Presbyter actively participated in the refutation of the false doctrine of Paul of Samosata in the 3rd century.

St. Febronia was the daughter of Emperor Heraclius. Since youth she refused all the various advantages of her status and led a life in deserted solitude, sincerely ministering to the Lord God. She died in 622.

Repose of Ven. Job, Hegumen of Pochaev

Ven. Job, in the world John, was born in Pokutia, Galicia, of pious parents, surnamed Zhelezo (Iron). Barely taught to read, the juvenile John already began to strive to achieve the high ascetic ideal of the moral life. Being only 10 years old, he secretly left his parental home and arrived at the Ugornits Transfiguration Monastery (in the Carpathian Mountains) to accept monasticism. Here with all humility and zealously performing the obediences bestowed on him: with the strictness of fasting he exhausted his flesh. Freed from the time of his obediences he devoted all his spare time to prayer and salutary reading. For his good behavior, deep humility and piety he soon was tonsured a monk with the name of Job. The strictly pious life of Job soon became known in all Western Russia. The advocate of Orthodoxy, Constantine Constantinovich, Prince of Ostrog, wishing to protect the Dubno Elevation of the Holy Cross Monastery founded by him (see the Volhynia Diocese) from the snares of the Jesuits and to enter the strict order of the monastic way of life into it, invited Job, "a paradigm of diligence and a God-pleasing way of life" as its Rector. After 22 years of management of this monastery, St. Job, desiring to practice asceticism as a simple monk, secretly left for the Pochaev Laura (see the Volhynia Diocese), but the monks of this monastery at once recognized this great ascetic of God and asked him to be their rector. Toward the end of the life of Ven. Job he accepted the Schema and practiced asceticism as a strict hermit. He died in 1651. His relics were incorrupt in 1659 and now repose in the Pochaev Laura. During the centenary of his life Ven. Job worked hard for the benefit of Orthodoxy and Russian nationality in the southwest country, which was so long oppressed by the Jesuits and Poles.

Hieromartyr Neophytus, Bishop of Urbnisi

Up to his conversion to Christ he was Captain of the Persian Army. During a campaign in Georgia he was sent by his Sultan to the Monastery of St. Shio with a petition to pray to his God. Approaching the Monastery of St. Shio, Omar (the original name of Neophytus) saw countless numbers of heavenly powers soaring in the air, and among them was the venerable starets (elder) with a long, grey beard. Both the vision and the closest acquaintance with the life of a monk, caused Omar through a little bit of time to secretly come to the monastery with two of his faithful servants to accept baptism with the name of Neophytus (and his servants were given the Christian names Christodoulos and Christopher). Neophytus was soon tonsured into monasticism. By his virgin life, fasting and prayer he became so glorified that he became an adornment of the Monastery. Subsequently for his

holy life the he was installed as bishop in the 7th century and killed by the pagans for preaching Christ.

¹ St. Parasceva is given special respect by the people and for the most part is called: Piatnitsa, Piatina or Petna. They pray to her for protection from animal afflictions, especially from the death of a cow. Ancestors also considered her as a healer of various human illnesses. They especially turned to her in diabolical cases, for fevers and toothaches. Besides this St. Parasceva-Piatnitsa was still considered as the patroness of marriage. Our ancestors have adopted her for protection in trade and from her we have known the Friday bargain.

She is also considered as a Protectress of water and has, according to national insight, a special affinity for it. This conviction notes the existence among the people of the tradition that an image of St. Parasceva wonderfully appearing on water, on the river or over a spring, consequently imputing to that water special salutary power. On this basis and now quite often they put an icon of St. Parasceva at fountains, over springs and wells.

Further, she is considered as the main Protectress for simple people doing female winter work - spinning yarn. It is apparent from this that for the people she bears the name Parasceva - flaxen and since the day of her memory, i.e. since October 28, everywhere they usually begin to rumple flax.

But the main thing in these folk beliefs concerning the person of St. Parasceva is that she is considered as a Protectress of her day of the week, i.e. Friday and consequently all beliefs that exist among the people concerning Friday relates also to the person of St. Parasceva.

The day of Friday is respected from of old in our simple people, especially among women. Many of them if they do not completely abandon work on this day, then they are kept from the more difficult and important tasks. Especially, according to popular belief, they should not spin on this day, in order not "to cover Mother Friday with dust and not to litter her eye with flax lint".

Many of the women vow to observe an especially strict fast or to make some kind of good works on Fridays, such as to distribute alms, to complete their prayers with a determined number of prostrations and so forth. These vows are given for or in gratitude for receiving blessings from God, or for protection and deliverance from some kind of misfortune or illness, or as voluntarily imposing on themselves penances for some kind of sins. Such penances from heavy sins are imposed on Fridays for the cleansing of those sins such as the sin of the woman who smothers a child at night is especially remarkable. In the opinion of the people it is possible to smooth down this sin not any differently than with some kind of ascetical feats done weekly on Fridays. In general the day of Friday in the eyes of our people has some kind of special mystery and consequently during former times was considered as the most convenient time for fortune telling also of various omens.

In the opinion of the people, all the Fridays in the year have their importance and should be esteemed, but twelve have special importance: 1st Friday in the first week of the Great Fast, 2nd before Annunciation, 3rd in the Week of Palms, 4th before the Ascension, 5th before Trinity Day, 6th before the Nativity of John the Forerunner, 7th before Prophet Elijah, 8th before the Dormition, 9th before Archangel Michael, 10th before Sts. Cosmas and Damian, 11th before the Nativity of Christ, 12th before the Epiphany. Concerning these 12 Fridays there is a special legend in the national apocryphal literature. "Whoever honors the first Friday, will not die suddenly; whoever honors the second Friday, will not be captured by the enemy...; and whoever honors the twelfth Friday, his name will be written by the Lord Himself in the Book of the Living".

This national reverence of Friday interestingly for us is that this day is not simply esteemed for the memory of the suffering and death of the Savior, but is represented by a living being to which it is possible to address with prayer and petition, in a word, is personified in the image of the Holy Martyress Parasceva. In the language and concepts of the people the person of St. Parasceva and the day Friday are completely intertwined and almost identified.

Any temple devoted to the name of this martyress and also her icon is representing what is called Parasceva, which is Friday. In the temple dedicated to the name of St. Parasceva, people come when they have the goal to honor the day of Friday, for ex., the ninth Friday, the paschal Friday and so forth. In that explanation of why our day of Friday is especially esteemed by the people and why it is personified in the image of St. Parasceva, certainly, first of all it is necessary to note that she is named Friday and was born on this day of the week and in itself her birth parents saw the merit for the long-term reverence of the day Friday.

But how the people personifies the day of Friday and how the original representation was made by them about the martyress, herself personifying this day, - concerning this one must think that this day was personified in the image of some kind of mythic being in our people before their acceptance of Christianity and that there is some tie between the present national representation of the holy martyress Parasceva and among the first pagan beliefs of our people. In the opinion of some, Friday was devoted in honor of the goddess Zhiva (Life) or Freia in Pagan times, therefore the Council of the 100 Chapters called these beliefs "impious, demonic seductions". In some places of Russia up to the present time there is a belief that in the night from Thursday to Friday a supernatural being in the appearance of a beautiful woman goes among the log huts, and where she finds rubbish underfoot she punishes the hosts. Therefore before Friday from evening they put out any rubbish from the log huts. Obviously, this very mythical being to which Friday was dedicated in antiquity was later was replaced by St. Parasceva. The belief of the

people that an icon of St. Parasceva often appears over the rivers and springs tells them that the water has healing power, obviously, stands in connection with an ancient national tradition that in the water lives a special watery being (rusalka), which is ordered by these verses and can direct her action to harm or help a person.

Our people call St. Parasceva "the flaxen one" and considers her the Protectress of female labor - weaving and spinning yarn, that this belief, certainly, explains what he in his presentation mixes the person of this Saint with the ancient mythical being considered as the patroness of female labor.

Also the origin of the belief that Parasceva is the patroness of trade easily could have received its beginning in antiquity that Friday, especially in the south and the west of Russia, served as a trading day for the peasants, as Saturday, the day Jews celebrate as the Sabbath, trading was not done.

What is stupid in the observed national representations and understanding about the person of St. Parasceva? First of all the vagueness and uncertainty of the national understanding and representations cannot be approved. People do not know clearly and distinctly that the St. Parasceva to whom the temples are often dedicated, before whose image candles are placed and Moliebens sung, - whether it is the day of the week, or some kind of living being. This obviously occurs because people personify the day Friday in the image of St. Parasceva, who has replaced the ancient goddess of fertility in their consciousness. But the personification of various periods of time, having sense and value in their poetic attitude is not meaningful in the religious attitude and is worthy of full condemnation. There is nothing prejudicial in this if in the poetic national legends there are references to spring or to any day of week as some kind of living being. But it is rather harmful in the religious attitude to attribute an active existence to this imagined being, or to mix it with an actual being, and furthermore to render special honor to it. The belief of the people that St. Parasceva reveals her image over the rivers and springs, that she is the patroness of spinners as the rest of the pagan legends about ancient mythical beings, clearly not only cannot be tolerated in the people, but should be exterminated in every possible way.

The best means for the correction of national understanding and representations about St. Parasceva may be to serve as the explanation of the superstitiousness of the people's views of St. Parasceva and for the day Friday and the faithful depiction of the life of this holy martyress, without the impurity of doubtful legends about her wonders. With the spread of the faithful witness about the life of St. Parasceva the false representation about it should disappear among the people.

In 1896 the Bishop of Samara recommended to his subordinate clergy, as a means in the struggle against the superstitious Friday reverence, that the people honoring Friday do the solemn divine services to the Life-giving Cross of the Lord, the same as on the first of August, except for the carrying of the cross (which should be placed on the Analogion before the All-night Vigil), but with the Polyeleon and magnification for September 14; the Matins Gospel and the Liturgy is also for September 14. The festal divine services for the Holy Martyr Parasceva, honored by the people on Friday, are not to be done at all. According to the Ustav [Typikon] it is necessary to do the festal divine service to this holy martyress only once a year on October 28 and none from the priests has any right to break this ruling of the Ustav [Typikon]. One may serve Moliebens to the Holy Martyr Parasceva for the people honoring Friday but only when the parishioners make a special request for it. If the people are not satisfied with the divine service to the Holy Cross, then it should be explained to them that Friday, according to the church Ordo, is the day of honoring the Holy Cross of the Lord on which Jesus Christ sacrificed Himself for us sinners as an offering to Divine Justice and to reconcile us with God. For an explanation to the people of how the celebration in honor of Friday as a week day came to be, it necessarily follows that they read through the Trinity book "about the twelve Fridays" and to ensure the greater distribution of this edition of the Trinity Laura to the people. (Samarskiia Eparkhialniia Vedomosti [Samara Diocesan News], 1896, 14).

*S. V. Bulgakov, **Handbook for Church Servers**, 2nd ed., 1274 pp. (Kharkov, 1900) pp. 0391-0395
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