

December 15

A. Holy Hieromartyr Eleutherius and his mother, the Martyr Anthia



His mother, Anthia, brought up St. Eleutherius, the son of a famous Roman citizen, in Christian piety. "Having fixed his most pure mind to God from youth", he "removed fleshly wisdom from his soul and bountifully enriched himself with the grace of wonders". His good works were so great, that at 20 years of age he was already installed as the Bishop of Illyricum (Albania). During the reign of Hadrian St. Eleutherius after being tortured was beheaded in Rome together with St. Anthia for zealously preaching Christ. The Eparch Choribus, who tortured Eleutherius, himself believed in Christ and also was beheaded. The relics of St. Eleutherius repose in Rome. The Holy Martyr Anthia is not mentioned in the church services by name.

Kontakion, tone 2

**We all praise you as the adornment of priests, O Venerable One,
And as the proclamation of passion bearers,
And we ask you, O Hieromartyr Eleutherius,
To free from all kinds of troubles,
Those who celebrate your memory with love, //
Praying unceasingly for us all.**

Our Venerable Father Paul of Latros

He in adolescence devoted himself to serving the Lord in a monastery on Mount Latros in Asia Minor, near Miletus. The Venerable Paul was known for constant prayer, strict fasting, and deep silence. Venerable Paul died in the year 955, knowing beforehand the hour of his death.

Troparion, tone 4

**We sing hymns to you, all glorious Paul,
For you dwell together with the bodiless hosts
And are a co-inhabitant with all the venerable ones.
We pray to you: //
Ever pray for us, that we may find mercy.**

Kontakion, tone 8

**From your youth, O wise One, you bravely decided what passes understanding
And you left the tumult of the world.
Because of your divine way of life you became a dwelling of the Trinity
And enlightened those who turn to you with faith. //
Therefore we cry out to you: rejoice, most wealthy Paul.**

✙ *Our Father among the Saints Stephan the Confessor, Archbishop of Surozh*

Born in Cappadocia, and when 15 years old he came to Constantinople for higher education that he completed so successfully that he surpassed "all the teachers, who were in the city". At a mature age he was tonsured a monk and in order to practice supreme ascetical efforts he left for the desert where he lived for 30 years "as his undefiled way of life showed". Due to a special revelation he was called from the desert by Patriarch German and ordained the Bishop of Surozh (today called Sudak, in Crimea). His pastorate was strongly infected with heresy and he had time to exterminate the heresy and restored Orthodoxy within 5 years. During the reign of the iconoclast Leo the Isaurian he, having gone to Constantinople, "plainly preached the Orthodox tradition" and endured torture and imprisonment for venerating holy icons. During the reign of Copronymus St. Stephan, exhausted from the imprisonment, mutilated from torture, already in old age, received his freedom, and again came back to his pastorate and soon died in about the middle of the VIII century.

Troparion, tone 4

**As a hierarch you dwelled with the bodiless hosts,
O Hierarch Stephan,
For you wielded the Cross as a sword,
And firmly standing against the iconoclasts
And those who warred against the Spirit,
Who would not venerate the most pure image of Christ our God,
You cut down every heresy of the wicked.
Therefore, receiving the crown of martyrdom,
You delivered your city of Surozh from all enmity.
And now we pray to you, O Holy One,
To deliver us from all evil temptation and troubles,
And eternal torments.**

Kontakion, tone 3

**Strengthened by the power of the Most High, O Dedicated One,
You cast down the pride of the iconoclast Emperor.
And today your relics are the glory and holy wealth
Of your city of Surozh and all us faithful**

**Which the angelic hosts offer up,
Glorifying you with hymns and songs,
O greatly Dedicated Stephan.**

Paramoeas see Dec. 6. **Matins Gospel and so forth** see Feb. 14.
There is a temple named for him built in his cathedral.

Martyr Eleutherius the Chamberlain see Aug. 4.

Venerable Pardus

Born a Roman citizen, he originally was a driver. Once when lodging for the night his cart crushed a child, the Venerable Pardus, with troubled conscience, left for Mount Arion in Palestine, and accepted monasticism and before his death he carried out the strict ascetical efforts of desert living, constantly being distressed about his involuntary sin of manslaughter. He died in the sixth century.

The Agarians killed *Bacchus the New Martyr* during the reign of Empress Irene (797-802).

The *Venerable Martyr Deaconess Susanna*, in monasticism Joanna, died a martyr during the reign of Maximian.

Venerable Trypho of Kola

In the world called Metrophanes, the son of a priest, who lived near the city of Torzhok within the Novgorod Province, was born in about 1485. Trained by literate parents, he loved to visit God's temple, and sang and read in it, and, from youth he was brought up in piety, and from time to time liked to leave the vain world to a deserted place to pray alone and to talk with the Lord. Fervently desiring to remain in this deserted place forever, he once while praying heard a wonderful voice: "this is not your place, an uninhabited and thirsting world is waiting for you". Having accepted this voice as instruction from above, Trypho decided to devote himself to homiletic works for those not knowing the One God. Having decided this, he went to an unknown country for him and after wandering for a long time in the wilderness, and taught by God, he reached the western part of Lapland occupied by nomadic tribes of pagans, the Lopars. The heaviest work of apostleship among the rough idolaters without human help or protection against rage of pagans stood ahead of the preacher of Christ. But the heart of the preacher burned with love for Christ for their conversion to the faith in Christ, and he for 20 years wandered alone among the dwellings of the Lopars, scattered on various sides of the vast expanse of the tundra, the bogs and the mountains, without means, and sometimes without hope for kind acceptance of him in

one dwelling so that he goes to another to meet the same situation. Quite often the kebuns, pagan priests, subjected the Venerable Trypho to severe tortures and beatings because of his sacred work. The kebuns more than once rose up against the holy preacher to challenge him with pride and hope, "spinning with the preacher of God and raging like beasts and playing dirty tricks on him behind his back, pulling his hair and throwing him to the ground and beating him, and pushing him, calling him an unknown wanderer and fool, shouting at him without limit, and for him to continue to live with them there will bring bitter torments and hating him until his very death". But the holy adherent of heavenly truth with meekness endured the abuse and beatings, and for a while went to the mountains and caves, and when the rage and the anger of pagans quieted down, he again went there to preach, and the Lord protected His servant. After 20-years of hard work the Venerable Trypho converted the rough idolaters, and a significant number of them accepted the Lord and were ready to receive baptism. But, being a layman with humility, the preacher would not do holy baptism by himself, and meanwhile in all Lapland there was no priest who could baptize the Lopars, and no temple to receive the newly illumined children into the bosom of Church. This forced Trypho to go to Novgorod to Archbishop Macarius to request a sacred charter to build a church and to assign a priest to it. Having received the charter, he led carpenters to the Pechenga River, and carrying wood on his shoulders built a church in 1532, which, however, remained 3 years unconsecrated, and without a priest. Such new difficulty forced Trypho to go to the Kola village, in which he by chance met Hieromonk Elias going there, and whom he invited to go with him to the Pechenga River. The Hieromonk Elias baptized the Lopars, consecrated his church and tonsured Trypho into monasticism. Having taken advantage of the services of the Hieromonk Elias, the Venerable Trypho started the foundation of his church of the holy monastery in the name of the Holy Life-originating Trinity. The Lord obviously blessed the work of the Venerable One: a considerable number of brothers soon gathered near the lonely church, and within 20 years a large monastery with many brothers was founded and services were performed. During this time all the Lopar tribes of western Lapland accepted sacred baptism. In 1556 St. Trypho went to Moscow to the Tsar Ivan the Terrible with a petition for the protection and the security of the monastery in the future. Being graciously accepted by the tsar, he received from him rich gifts for the church and the imperial charter for the possession of the land areas, the necessary streams and the sea bay for eternity. In memory of the imperial generosity, in carrying this out in 1565 he built a temple in the name of the Saints Princes Boris and Gleb for the Lopars on the Pazreke River, which and until now stands as guards on our border with Norway. On a primitive, lonely place of his residence on the Manna Rivulet, which runs into the Pechenga River, the Venerable One constructed a small temple in the name of Dormition of the Mother of God. The extensive, favorable river and sea industry delivered sufficient means for external accomplishment and protection of the monastery, for the special growth in the number of the brothers with postulants. And the holy monastery under the skilled management

of the Venerable Trypho blossomed as a garden of belief and piety, as a brightly burning lamp illuminating and recovering all desert areas. The newly illumined children of the Venerable One are the nomadic Lopars who so loved the holy monastery that some began to give it money, some arable land, and others entered the monastery to work for it, and became so strong in the Orthodox faith, that during 300 years there was no instance of anyone converting to another faith or schism among them. Having built his monastery, the Venerable Trypho spent most of his last years in solitude at his favorite place near the Dormition Church. Having lived in Lapland for 70 years and having reached a very old age, the Venerable Trypho became seriously ill. Before his end he taught his brothers consolation and received the Holy Sacraments. He turned over his soul to the Lord on December 15, 1583, being 98 years old, and was buried in a place ordered by him, and his relics rest even up to now in a little hermitage. (See the Archangel Diocese).

*S. V. Bulgakov, **Manual for Church Servers**, 2nd ed., 1274 pp. (Kharkov, 1900) pp. 457-9
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