



On Mid-Pentacost a cry is heard from the Lord: “If any man thirst, let him come unto Me, and drink” (John 7:37). If so, then let us all go to Him. Whoever thirsts for anything, as long as it is not contrary to the spirit of the Lord, will find satisfaction without fail. Whoever thirsts for knowledge, go to the Lord, for He is the only light truly enlightening every man. Whoever thirsts for cleansing from sins and to soothe the burning of his conscience, go to the Lord, for He lifted up the sins of the whole world onto the tree [of the Cross] (cf. I Pet. 2:24) and tore up their handwriting (cf. Col. 2:14). Whoever thirsts for peace of heart, go to the Lord, for He is the treasure, the possession of which will force you to forget all deprivations and despise all goods in order to possess Him alone. Whoever needs strength — He has every strength. Glory — He has glory on high. Freedom — He is the giver of true freedom. He will resolve all of our uncertainties, will break the bonds of the passions, will disperse all sorrows and grieving, will enable us to overcome all impediments, all temptations and snares of the enemy, and will smooth out the path of our spiritual life. Let us all go to the Lord!

*Holy Hierarch Theophane the Recluse*

**Christ is Risen!**  
**Χριστός Βοσκρεσε !**  
**Χριστος Ανεστη!**

**Sunday, May 15**

*Fourth Sunday of Pascha*

*Sunday of the Paralytic*

**Divine Liturgy 9:30 A.M.**

Commemoration of Righteous Tabitha (†1st century), Holy Hierarch Athanasius the Great of Alexandria (†373), translation of the relics of Holy Right-believing Princes and Passion-bearers Boris (in 1072) and Gleb (in 1115)

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**Tuesday, May 17**

Great Vespers 6:30 P.M.

**Wednesday, May 18**

**Mid-Pentecost**

Divine Liturgy 9:00 A.M.

Blessing of Water

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**Sunday May 22**

*Fifth Sunday of Pascha*

*Samaritan Woman Sunday*

**Divine Liturgy 9:30 A.M.**

Feast of translation of the relics of Holy Hierarch Nicholas the Wonderworker to Bari in 1087

# Holy New Venerable Martyrs Grand Duchess Elizabeth Feodorovna and Barbara

*by Metropolitan Anastasy (†1965)*

## *Part II*



*Elizabeth Feodorovna and Sergei Alexandrovich*

The grand duke's extended tenure of office as Governor-General of Moscow, the true heart of Russia, where he and his wife were in living contact with the ancient, holy shrines and the immemorial Russian national way of life, must have bound the grand duchess even more to her new homeland.

Even during these years, she dedicated much time to philanthropic activities, though this was considered one of the main obligations of her high position and, therefore, did not earn for her much public merit. As part of her social obligations, the grand duchess was forced to participate in social life which was already beginning to oppress her because of its frivolity. The terrible death of the grand duke Sergei Alexandrovich, who was torn apart by a [terrorist's] bomb in the holy Kremlin began a decisive moral change in the soul of his spouse, which caused her to forsake her former life once and for all. The greatness of spirit with which she endured her trial evoked for her the deserved admiration of everyone. She even found in herself the moral strength to visit Kal'aev, the murderer of her husband, in the hope of softening and healing his heart by meekness and complete forgiveness. These Christian feelings she also expressed, through the person of the slaughtered grand duke, by having the following touching words of the Gospel inscribed upon the memorial cross, erected at the site of his death, "Father, forgive them for they know not what they do..."

However, not everyone was capable of understanding the change which had taken place in her. One had to live through such a staggering catastrophe as this, in order to be convinced of the frailty and illusory nature of wealth, glory and the things of this world, and about which for so many centuries we have been warned by the Gospel. For the society of that time, the decision of the grand duchess to dismiss her court in order to leave the world and dedicate herself to serving God and

neighbor, seemed as scandal and madness. Despising both the tears of friends, gossip and mockings of the world, she courageously set out on her new path. Having earlier chosen for herself the path of the perfect, i.e. the path of ascetic struggle, she began with wisely measured steps to ascend the ladder of Christian virtues.

The advice of wise instructors was not foreign to her, guiding those starting out on the path of Christian activity to learn from others the way of life so as “not to teach oneself, not to go without a guide along a path which one had never traveled and hence quickly lose one’s way; not to travel more or less correctly, nor become exhausted from too swift a run or to fall asleep while resting” (Jerome, *A Letter to the Monk Rusticus*).

Therefore, she strove to understand nothing without the direction of spiritually experienced elders, especially the elders of the Zosima Hermitage to whom she entrusted herself in total obedience. As her heavenly guides and protectors she chose St. Sergii and St. Alexis of Moscow. She was entrusted to their special protection by her late spouse whose remains she buried at the Chudov Monastery in a magnificent tomb, styled after those in the ancient Roman catacombs. The extended period of mourning for the grand duke, during which she retired into her interior world and was continually in church, was the first real break to separate her from what up until then had been her normal everyday life. The move from the palace to the building she acquired on Ordynka [Street], where she allotted only two very modest rooms for herself, signaled a full break with the past and the beginning of a new period in her life.

From now on her main task became the building of a sisterhood in which the inner service to God would be integrated with active service to one’s neighbor in the name of Christ. This was a completely new form of organized charitable Church activity, and consequently drew general attention to itself. At its foundation was placed a deep and immutable idea: no one could give to another more than he himself already possessed. We all draw upon God and therefore only in Him can we love our neighbor. So-called natural love or humanism quickly evaporates, replaced by coldness and disappointment, but one who lives in Christ can rise to the heights of complete self-denial and lay down his life for his friends. The grand duchess not only wanted to impart to charitable activities the spirit of the Gospel but to place them under the protection of the Church. Thus she hoped to attract gradually to the Church those strata of Russian society, which up until that time had remained largely indifferent to the Faith. Highly significant was the very name the grand duchess bestowed upon the institution she established—the Martha and Mary Convent, which name contains within itself the mission, the life of its holy patrons.

The community was intended to be like the home of Lazarus which the Saviour so often visited. The sisters of the convent were called to unite both the high lot of Mary, attending to the eternal word of life, and the service of Martha, to that degree in which they found Christ in the person of His less fortunate brethren. In justifying and explaining her thought, the ever-memorable foundress of the convent said that Christ the Saviour could not judge Martha for showing Him hospitality, since the latter was a sign of her love for Him. He only cautioned Martha, and in her all women in general, against that excessive fussing and triviality which draw them away from the higher needs of the spirit. To be not of this world, and at the same time live and act in the world in order to transform it — this was the foundation upon which she desired to establish her convent.

*To be Continued*

## ..... News From All The Ends Of The Earth .....

**Jerusalem:** May 9, the Holy Synod of the Patriarchate of Jerusalem unanimously decided to sever the eucharistic communion with the Romanian Orthodox Church. This decision is a result of the conflict of construction of a Romanian church in Jericho, on the canonical territory of the Jerusalem Patriarchate. Neither negotiations of the representatives of the two Churches, nor the exchange of letters among the two Patriarchs were successful in resolving the contentious issue. In January, Patriarch Theophilos of Jerusalem sent a letter to the Romanian Patriarch Daniel demanding for the unlawful construction of the Romanian church on the canonical territory of the Jerusalem Patriarchate to be stopped. However, in his response Patriarch Daniel, although acknowledging the Jerusalem Patriarchate's jurisdiction over Israel and Palestine, remarked that in today's situation it is impossible in all strictness to literally follow the territorial demarcation of the Local Churches and offered the Jerusalem Patriarchate to recognize the construction of the Romanian church and to give his blessing to conducting services in it. Having examined the Romanian Patriarch's letter, the Holy Synod of the Jerusalem Patriarchate saw the demands outlined in the letter unlawful and the construction of the Romanian church in the Holy Land – uncanonical. Since it is clear from Patriarch Daniel's letter that the Romanian Church is not going to stop the construction of the controversial church in Jericho, the Holy Synod of the Jerusalem Church decided to stop commemorating of the Romanian Patriarch Daniel at the Divine Liturgy. It is worth noting that the Romanian Church has rather difficult relationships with the Moscow Patriarchate, having established the so-called Bessarabian Metropolia on the canonical territory of the Moscow Patriarchate.

**Strasbourg, France:** A French court on Monday acquitted a blogger of a charge of provoking discrimination related to burning a copy of the Qur'an in an internet broadcast and urinating on the book. The court in the north-eastern city of Strasbourg found that Ernesto Rojas Abbate had been acting within the boundaries of freedom of expression when he used the Qur'an as a prop in a simulation of the September 11 2001 terrorist attacks on New York. The Mosque of Strasbourg and a local anti-racism organisation had pressed charges against the man. The advocate demanded acquittal and reminded the court that, since the French revolution of 1789, any punishment for blasphemy has been annulled. The court ruled the video was aimed at terrorist acts and not the wider Muslim community, which "could not be associated with the terrorist acts".

**Islamabad, Pakistan:** In Pakistan, rat is a symbol of fertility, since it produces abundant litter. According to Sufi (a sect within Islam) tradition, barren women who come to pray at the Sufi shrine of Shah Daula, become fertile, provided that their firstborn would be donated to the shrine as an offering. These children, called 'rats of Shah Daula', (now number about 20,000) are then disfigured and sold by the guardians of the shrine to make them beg. The children, besides suffering the oppression of the local gangsters, are smuggled in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) every year to work as camel jockeys. Between 2002 and 2010 about 1,000 children brought to the UAE are from areas of southern Punjab and northern Sindh.

**Alexandria, Egypt:** A group of armed Muslims marched May 7 on Saint Mena Coptic Orthodox Church, one of the oldest churches in Egypt, and the resulting violence caused at least three deaths. Witnesses said Muslims and Christians exchanged gunfire in Alexandria, sending people running for cover. Intensified violence between Muslims and Christians in Egypt over the weekend sparked an emergency meeting of the country's Cabinet. Spokesmen for Egypt's Coptic Christians issued calls for international protection. In Cairo, at least 12 people were killed and 232 others were wounded in clashes outside a church. Egypt's Prime Minister, Essam Sharaf, postponed a trip abroad to hold the emergency meeting. A small group of Coptic Christians gathered near the U.S. Embassy in Cairo May 9 to condemn the government for not doing more to protect them and called for international

protection of the country's Christian community. Christians and Muslims debated as soldiers blocked access to the U.S. embassy. In Cairo's Maspiro neighborhood, bricks were thrown from rooftops on predominantly Christian protesters demonstrating in favor of national unity. Chants of "with our souls and blood we will sacrifice ourselves for the cross" were heard. Military riot police separated the demonstrators, some of whom were Muslim, from hostile onlookers.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. May bulletin covers' sponsors are Djuric family — Ryan Campbells' Chrismation and birthday and Alexander Djuric's 2nd birthday.
2. Next Sunday, May 22, we collect the non-perishable food items for Hobart Food Pantry. Please do not forget. If you cannot be in church that day, bring the food any other day and deposit it in the Food Pantry box.
3. Next Sunday, May 22, the Eternal Light is offered by George Feczko and his family in memory of Michael Feryo. May his memory be eternal!
4. It is the last week that the Camp Nazareth raffle tickets are on sale for \$20.00 and kept in the Camp Nazareth envelope in the office.