

Deacon David will again be presenting the catechesis of the Good Shepherd Church School Program beginning October 2. We strongly encourage all parents of school-aged children to please include them in this excellent program. Please see Deacon David for details. Let us not neglect the education of our children in the Faith that will prepare them for life in this difficult world.

Adult education will resume in two weeks on October 2 at 8:45 AM before Sunday Divine Liturgy. Please join us! We look forward to meeting again after the long COVID break. God Bless You!

Please join the Sisterhood as they continue the preparation for the Holiday Bazaar with the making of potato pierogi on September 30 and October 1. Your help is greatly needed. Thanks for offering your time and help in this charitable work!

The Orthodox Church in America has been blessed with an increase in Monastic vocations and there is a shortage of housing for the monks at St. Tikhon Seminary. Archbishop Michael has asked all of our diocesan parishes to ask for donations toward the building of new housing to accommodate this happy development. We will have a collection jar in the back of the church for the next several weeks. Your help is greatly appreciated and Blessed by God! Thank you!

**Donations for the Church and Hall Video Security System
\$100 by David Lupo in Memory of David and Rocco Lupo
\$300 by Pauline and Glenn Peters
\$1500 by the St. Marion Sisterhood**

Donations

\$20 by Pauline and Glenn Peters in Memory of their friend Phillip Parker who died in the Twin Towers in NYC on 9/11.

Decorated Candles for the Feast of the Nativity of the Most Blessed Theotokos by Dave Lupo in Memory of Anthony and Julie Lupo

Saints Polyxene and Xanthippe, disciples of the Apostles, who died in Spain



Commemorated on [September 23](#)

The Monastic Women Xanthippe and Polyxene were sisters by birth and they lived in Spain in the time of the holy Apostles. They were among the first to hear the divine teaching of Christ the Savior from the holy Apostle Paul, when he preached in their land. Saint Xanthippe and her husband Probus accepted Christianity, but Saint Polyxene was still a pagan when a certain man became entranced with her extraordinary beauty and forcibly carried her off to Greece on a ship. The Lord preserved her unharmed. On the voyage, the saint heard the preaching of the holy Apostle Peter and believed in Christ.

When she arrived in Greece, Saint Polyxene turned to the Christians for protection and defense and they hid her in the city of Patra in Achaia, where she formally accepted Christianity and was baptized by the holy Apostle Andrew the First-Called himself.

She became a witness to his miracles, and how he patiently and humbly endured his sufferings and death. She stood at the cross upon which they crucified the holy Apostle Andrew. After his martyric death, Saint Polyxene returned to Spain, where she and her older sister Xanthippe converted many pagans to Christ. Saint Polyxene toiled for about forty years preaching the Gospel in Spain. Saint Xanthippe shared in her sister's work and preached in the populous city of Toledo.

Saint Polyxene reposed in about the year 109, having preserved her virginity to the end of her earthly life.

Martyr Phocas the Gardener of Sinope



Commemorated on [September 22](#)

The Holy Martyr Phocas the Gardener came from the city of Sinope on the southern shore of the Black Sea. Having a small garden, he lived modestly. He sold what he grew, and supported himself on the proceeds. He helped the needy and paid for the housing of vagrants. The Christian piety of the saint had a great influence on other people. Even pagans deferred to him with deep respect. Under his influence they often abandoned their error and accepted the Christian Faith.

The governor of the district, aware that Saint Phocas was spreading Christian teachings, gave orders to find and kill him. The saint himself accidentally came upon those sent after him, and without revealing his name, he courteously received them, fed them and prepared a place for them to spend the night.

At night he went into the garden, then prepared a grave and a place for his burial. He even made arrangements for all his possessions to be distributed to the poor after his death. In the morning Saint Phocas declared to the strangers that it was he for whom they were searching, and told them to fulfill the duty entrusted to them. The visitors were distressed, not wanting to kill the kindly saint. They felt honor bound to spare Saint Phocas, but he would not hear of it, and humbly bent his head beneath the sword.

They buried the holy Martyr Phocas in the grave that he himself had prepared in the garden. The place of his burial was glorified by miracles, and later a church was built there. An accurate account of the martyr's death was collected by Asterius of Amasea (+ 410). The holy Martyr Phocas is especially venerated by seafarers, and he is called upon by those traveling by sea.

New Saints of the Orthodox Church of the Czech Lands and Slovakia



On Saturday, February 8, 2020 in the Orthodox Cathedral in Prague, the Orthodox Church of the Czech Lands and Slovakia canonized as martyr-saints several clergy and lay people who were martyred by the Nazis during World War II. The new saints include the priests Father Vladimir Petrek, Father Vaclav Ciki and the laymen Jan Sonnevend, Vaclav Ornest, Karel Louda and their families. All these Orthodox Christians suffered for Christ with their Bishop Gorazd Pavlik who had been previously canonized as a martyr-saint in 1987. (see acrod.org; Orthodox Reading Room, Lives of the Saints).

The story of the new martyrs begins September, 1941 when Reinhard Heydrich was appointed as the Nazi Deputy Reich-Protector (Governor) of Bohemia and Moravia. Heydrich had a reputation as a violent, heartless Nazi. Adolph Hitler called him "*The man with the iron heart*" and others referred to him as "*The Butcher*". Within five days of his arrival in Prague, 142 people were executed and it was Heydrich who was the architect and key organizer of the Holocaust which led to the extermination of over six million Jews and others. Today, as we look at the historical photos of piles of emaciated bodies in Nazi concentration camps,

we ask: *“Did anyone care? Why didn’t someone stop this evil? Why didn’t someone do something?”*

In May, 1942 a group of courageous people did take action to stop this evil. The Allied forces had previously secreted into the region several members of the Czechoslovak army in exile. The code name for their mission was *Operation Anthropoid* and its goal was the removal and assassination of Reinhard Heydrich. On the morning of May, 27, 1942 Heydrich was being driven to his Prague office in an open top car. Stepping out into the roadway the Czechoslovak soldiers opened fire with a machine gun and a bomb which led to Heydrich’s death several days later.

The Nazis unleashed a wave of terror in reprisal for Heydrich’s assassination. On June 9, in the village of Lidice 172 boys and men between age 14 to 84 were shot, women and children were deported to concentration camps. The same pattern repeated in the village of Ležáky: all adults were murdered. In Prague the Czechoslovak soldiers took refuge by hiding in the Sts. Cyril and Methodius Orthodox Cathedral while the Nazis began a furious search for their hideout. After a ferocious gun battle, all of the soldiers were killed in the crypt of the Cathedral. The Nazis then turned their wrath on the leadership of the Orthodox Church: Bishop Gorazd Pavlik with his priests Fathers Vladimir Petrek and Vaclav Cíkl were tortured and executed by firing squad. Jan Sonnevend, Vaclav Ornest, and Karen Louda, lay leaders of the Orthodox Cathedral in Prague were likewise subjected to torture and executed by firing squad. Today, at the site of their martyrdom at the Kobylisz Shooting Range, a monument has been erected in their memory and those others who suffered at the hands of the Nazis. Sonnevend’s wife Marie, daughter Ludmilla and her husband along with Father Cíkl’s wife Marie were sent to the Mauthausen concentration camp where they were all executed. These news martyrs are known as “The Holy New Martyrs of Bohemia” and are remembered each year on their feastday of September 5.

A Just War?

The assassination of Reinhard Heydrich raises troubling theological and ethical questions. St. Paul in his epistle to the Romans wrote *“Repay no one evil for evil.....Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good. (Romans 12:21)* This Biblical teaching is clear but the question remains: is an act of violence ever permitted to stop greater evils from occurring? Was the act of the

Czechoslovak partisans necessary to try to stop the Nazi atrocities against Jews and others? Some theologians and ethicists refer to these questions as the *“just war theory”*. This theory holds that war is always an evil act to be avoided but there exist exceptions such as to defend the innocent or to prevent greater evils and violence. While the just war theory was proposed by St. Augustine, a 4th century bishop in North Africa the other Fathers of the early Church agree that war and violence are always evil but at times they are the lesser of greater evils. The Church has always advocated for peace and seeks the peaceful resolution of differences. However throughout history there exist many examples of the unfortunate need for war and acts of violence to protect the innocent and to stop evil. The Church, following the teaching of St. Paul, has canonized as martyrs Sts. Boris & Gleb who in the 11th century accepted a violent death at the hands of their brother rather than defend themselves against him with violence. These two brothers are honored with the title *“Passion-bearers”* meaning they imitated the Lord Jesus in the acceptance of His passion and death. My own patron saint: the 10th century King Edward of England is also honored with the title *“Passion-bearer”* for his refusal to defend himself with violence. On the other hand, the Church also honors soldiers who gave their lives in battle and has canonized numerous warriors as saints such as the early Christian martyrs St. George and St. Demetrios and St. Alexander Nevsky, the warrior-prince of Russia. The Church remembers the words of our Lord: *“Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one’s life for his friends”*. (John 15:13)

Tropar of the Holy New Martyrs of Bohemia (Tone 4)

**Today we all praise Christ who is both God and man,
Who is glorified in His witnesses,
the priests Václav and Vladimir, together with the faithful members of God’s
people,
the martyr Ján, and a host of men and women who did not fear the tyranny of the
godless,
but full of the hope of immortality,**

Source: The American Carpatho-Russian Orthodox Diocese of the U.S.A.

Fr. Edward Pehanich | 05 September 2022