

Parish Prayer List (Living)

Alexandra	Dennis	Paige	Reader Mark
Andrea	Amanda	Sherry	Joretta
Fr. Michael	Barry	Sean	Tina
James	Nicholas B.	Karin	Andrea & Kirby
Lawrence	Alexandra	Illisa	Rachael
Michael	Helen	Susan K	Bob Wedder
Anna	Erin and baby	Connie	Dcn. William
Fr. George	Kathy Tanner	Emil	Pauline
Anthony	Samantha	Autumn	

Parish Prayer List (Fallen Asleep)

Ruby Kesselak (+7/1) John Kesselak, Jr. (+7/6) John Maydek (+7/12)
Andrew Kesselak (+7/14) Shawn Visconti (+7/21)

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Coffee Hour Schedule

July 24 – Christine Scrantom July 31 – Paula Visconti
August 7 – Bev Shenberger August 14 – Paula Visconti
August 21 – open August 28 – open

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Schedule of Epistle Readers

July 24 – Rdr. Mark Wolcho July 31 – Jeff Robel
August 7 – Misha Shenberger August 14 – Bob Piljay
August 21 – Van Crikis August 28 – Reader Mark

Please let me know if you would like to added to the list of Epistle readers, or if you will not be available on the day when you are scheduled.

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Words from the Fathers

Just as the sun's rays are sometimes hidden from the earth by thick cloud, so for a while a person may be deprived of spiritual comfort and of grace's brightness. This is caused by the cloud of the passions. Then, all of a sudden, without that person being aware, it is all given back. Just as the surface of the earth rejoices at the rays of the sun when they break through the clouds, so the words of prayer are able to break

through to drive the thick cloud of the passions away from the soul.

St. Isaac the Syrian

Our Father Who art in Heaven! With tenderness I stand before Thee on my knees; I ask for neither wealth nor glory; I won't debase my holy prayer with earthly matters. I would wish for my soul to rest in heaven, my heart to be radiant with love heralded by Thee, I would wish to be able to ask forgiveness of mine enemies, even if they pierce me in the heart: Forgive them, Lord, for they know not what they do!

St. Iliia Chavchavadze, 1837-1907

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Passion-bearers Boris and Gleb (July 24)

Boris and Gleb were the younger and much beloved sons of Grand Prince Vladimir, the ruler of Kievan Rus, who in 988 brought his subjects to the waters of Holy Baptism. The two brothers were also baptized at which time they received the Christian names Romanus and David. The older of the two, Boris, was very gifted and learned to read and write. He shared with his brother his knowledge of the Scriptures and the lives of the Saints whom they both strove to emulate. Indeed, by the time they came of age to rule their respective patrimonies, the territories of Ryazan and Murom, they had already cultivated in their hearts Christian virtues of mercy, compassion and kindness, traits still rare in a land freshly converted from barbarous paganism.

Boris was particularly esteemed among the people and the soldiery. His popularity provoked bitter jealousy in his eldest brother Svyatopolk (known to history as "the Accursed") who scorned the laws of the newly adopted Christian religion, so dear to his younger brothers, in favor of satisfying his unbridled ambition. He saw Boris as a rival for the position of Grand Prince, and when Vladimir died Svyatopolk wasted no time in plotting his brother's murder.

Boris had been sent by his father to fend off an anticipated raid by the Pechenegs. He was returning to Kiev when he was met by emissaries sent by Svyatopolk, from whom he learned of his father's death and his brother's self-willed accession to the throne. The latter,

knowing that the people would rather have Boris as ruler and desiring to forestall any opposition that this news might stir up, bade his messengers assure Boris of his fraternal goodwill and his intent to increase Boris' domain.

Boris was well aware of his brother's long-standing hatred for him and recognized in this message the kiss of Judas. The young prince knew that his life was threatened. His immediate concern, however, was not the adoption of some military strategy--whether offensive or defensive--but how to act in such circumstances as befits a Christian. Reflecting upon the words of the Gospel: "If any man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar," and "Love thine enemies," he firmly rejected the advice of his father's retainers who urged Boris to oust the unpopular Svyatopolk, pledging their support to such a plan, "Be it not for me," he replied, "to raise my hand against my brother. Now that my father has passed away, let him take the place of my father in my heart."

Knowing that armed resistance would only provoke needless bloodshed, Boris sent away his soldiers and remained alone where they had encamped on the bank of the Alta, together with a few servants, it was Saturday evening and he retired to his tent to recite the vigil service. As he read the Six Psalms, the cry of the Psalmist echoed in his heart: "O Lord, why are they multiplied that afflict me, Many rise up against me..." (Ps. 3:1). Informed that his murderers were approaching, the Prince turned to an icon of the Saviour and prayed beseechingly: "Lord Jesus Christ, Thou didst accept Thy Passion on account of our sins; grant me al so the strength to accept my passion. I receive it not from my enemies but from my brother, Lord, lay not this sin to his charge."

As the murderers burst into the tent, Boris' faithful servant George, a young Hungarian, placed himself between the prince and his attackers in an attempt to save his master's life. The servant was killed at once, while the Prince, grievously wounded by the thrust of a lance, was bound up in the tent canvas and taken on a cart to Kiev. But he never reached the city. When Svyatopolk learned that his brother was still alive, he sent two Varangians to consummate the bloody deed, which was accomplished when one of them plunged his sword into Boris' heart.

Svyatopolk's next victim was Gleb. He sent word to the guileless prince that his father was very ill and was calling for him. Always obedient to his father, Gleb set off at once with a small retinue. Near Smolensk, where his route took him by boat down the river Smyadyn, he was met by emissaries from his brother Yaropolk bearing a letter of warning from their sister Predislava: "Do not come," she wrote. "Your father has died and Svyatopolk has killed your brother."

But the warning had come too late. The murderers hired by Svyatopolk caught up with Gleb on the river. He knew that he alone was the object of the pursuit and, like his brother, Gleb urged his company not to offer armed resistance, as they were outnumbered and all would perish. After a momentary weakness in which he begged his assassins to spare his young life, he calmly accepted his fate in the understanding that the voluntary suffering of the innocent is a direct imitation of Christ. Gleb was killed by his own cook who, terrified into compliance by Svyatopolk's henchmen, seized the head of the young prince and cut his throat. His body was thrown onto the shore and covered with brush.

Five years later, when Yaroslav finally succeeded in overthrowing the treacherous Svyatopolk, the bodies of the two royal martyrs, discovered to be incorrupt, were laid to rest together in the church of St. Basil in Vyshgorod, Yaroslav's residence near Kiev. Their tomb immediately became a place of pilgrimage, and the many miracles which took place before their relics persuaded Church authorities to consent to Yaroslav's request and canonize the two brother-princes.

Although Boris and Gleb were not martyred for their faith (they are properly called 'passion-bearers' rather than martyrs), their voluntary and meek sacrifice for the sake of averting the suffering of others and preserving the Christian ideal, had a profound effect on the subsequent development of Christianity in Russia. Whereas in Byzantine Christianity God was often depicted as Pantocrator--stern and all-powerful, in Russia the emphasis was on Christ as the sacrificial Lamb Who 'opened not his mouth before his shearer'. Russian piety came to be characterized by a tender humility and an acceptance of suffering following the example of Christ. In this century Russia's New Martyrs offer a supreme testimony to the enduring influence of this otherworldly orientation which that country first witnessed in the exploit of the two youthful brother-princes and passion-bearers, Boris and Gleb.