

## **Parish Prayer List (Living)**

*(Parish)*

Evangelos	Carolyn	Robert	Sharon
John	Maria	Anamay	Ron
Lawrence	Dianna	Seraphim	Evdokia
Anthony	Pauline	Nadja	Jerry
Beverly	David	Michael	Anastasia
Nina	Walter	Nathan	Mary
Joseph	Duncan	Thecla	Michael
Reader Mark	Tatiana	Travis	Jason
Susan Mary	Clint	John	George
Magdalini	Connie	Emil	Sophia
Barbara	Yevgeniya	Roman	Ilija
Olga	Marina	Efthalia	Denny

*(non-Parish)*

Alexandra	Rachael	Jessilyn	Amanda
Christopher	Fr. Michael	Paige	Sean
James	Nicholas B.	Karin	Grant
Michael	Helen	Susan K	Blake
Anna	Brian	Kathy Tanner	Salvatore
Josephine	Nicholas (Nadja's brother)	Alma	Randy
Peter	Maria	Michael	Timothy
Petrese	Genevieve	Jeremy	Amy

## **Parish Prayer List (Fallen Asleep)**

Nicholas Georgeopoulos (+11/3)    Betty Pilja (+12/6)  
 Mary Louise Blomeley (+12/10)    Josephine Urban (+12/15)  
 Dominick LoGalbo (12/25)    Joseph Visconti (+1/26)

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## **Thoughts from the Fathers**

This execution was sad, cruel and universal: no abatements made for the dire shriekings of the mothers, no tender-hearted soldier was employed, no hard-hearted person was softened by the weeping eyes, and pity-begging looks of those mothers, that wondered how it was possible any person should hurt the pretty sucklings; no connivances there, no protections, or friendships, or consideration, or indulgences, but Herod caused that his own child what was at nurse in the coasts of Bethlehem should bleed to death; which made Augustus Caesar to say, that in Herod's house it were better to be a hog than a child, because the custom of the nation did secure a hog from

Herod's knife, but no religion could secure his child.

*Jeremy Taylor, "The Holy Innocents,"*

In what sense then her firstborn? By firstborn she here means, not the first among several brethren, but one who was both her first and only son; for some such sense as this exists among the significations of "first born." For sometimes also the Scripture calls that the first which is the only one; as I am God, the First, and with Me there is no other. To show then that the Virgin did not bring forth a mere man, there is added the word firstborn; for as she continued to be a virgin, she had no other son but Him Who is of the Father; concerning Whom God the Father also proclaims by the voice of David, And I will set Him Firstborn high among the kings of the earth. Of Him also the all-wise Paul makes mention, saying, But when He brought the First-begotten into the world, He saith, And let all the angels of God worship Him. How then did He enter into the world? For He is separate from it, not so much in respect of place as of nature; for it is in nature that He differs from the inhabitants of the world; but He entered into it by being made man, and becoming a portion of it by the incarnation. For though He is the Only-begotten as regards His divinity, yet as having become our brother, He has also the name of the Firstborn; that, being made the first-fruits as it were of the adoption of men, He might make us also the sons of God.

*Saint Cyril of Alexandria, Commentary on the Gospel of Saint Luke*

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## **The Fourteen Thousand Holy Children of Bethlehem**

*14,000 Holy Infants Slaughtered By Herod*

By St. Nikolai Velimirovich

When the Magi from the east did not return to Jerusalem from Bethlehem to inform Herod about the newborn King but rather, at the angel's command, returned to their homeland another way, Herod became as enraged as a wild beast and ordered all the children

two years old and under in Bethlehem and its surroundings to be killed.

This frightening command of the king was carried out to the letter. His soldiers beheaded some of the children with swords, smashed others against stones, trampled others underfoot, and strangled others with their hands. And the cries and wails of the mothers rose to heaven, lamentation, and bitter weeping; "Rachel weeping for her children" (Jeremiah 31:15, Matthew 2:18), as had been prophesied.

This crime against the multitude of innocent children was carried out a year after the birth of Christ, at the time when Herod was seeking to find the Divine Child. He asked Zacharias about his son John, so that he might kill him, since he naturally thought that John was the new king. As Zacharias did not turn John over, he was slain in the Temple by order of Herod. St. Symeon the God-Receiver would also have been murdered soon after the Presentation in the Temple, had he not already reposed in God.

After murdering the children of Bethlehem, Herod turned against the Jewish elders who had revealed to him where the Messiah would be born. He then killed Hyrcanes, the high priest, and the seventy elders of the Sanhedrin. Thus, they who had agreed with Herod that the new Child-king must be killed came to an evil end. After that, Herod murdered his brother, sister, wife and three sons.

Finally, God's punishment came to him: he began to tremble, his legs became swollen, the lower part of his body became putrid, and worms came out of the sores; his nose became blocked and an unbearable stench emanated from him. Before his last breath, he

remembered that there were many captive Jews in prison, and he ordered that they all be killed so that they would not rejoice in his death. Thus, this terrible ruler gave up his inhuman soul and handed it over to the devil for eternal possession.

### **HYMN OF PRAISE: The Fourteen Thousand Holy Children of Bethlehem**

A voice in Rama was heard, and much weeping,  
And sorrowful mothers crying out to God.  
In blood lay the slaughtered children,  
And, over them, sorrowful mothers lamented.  
The city of David, with all the surrounding region, moans;  
Heaven was horrified at the misdeed of men;  
Heaven and earth were horrified and quaked,  
When the screams of the innocent pierced the air.  
The blow intended for the Son of God  
Fell with its weight on the innocent children,  
Upon young and helpless ones of the same age as Christ.  
The servants of the wicked king attacked  
Where the angels of God sang  
And where Christ's shepherds humbly knelt.  
There a torrent of blood flowed.  
Why? In order that Herod would always be first!  
As soon as the Eternal Physician appeared on earth,  
The earth revealed its wounds and sins,  
Showing how much mankind is infected,  
And how necessary healing from heaven is.  
Upon the young forerunners of His suffering,  
Christ bestowed the eternal joy of Paradise.