



# SYNAXIS OF THE SAINTS OF NORTH AMERICA





# ALL SAINTS OF AMERICA ... ALL YEAR ROUND

## SEPTEMBER

PETER THE ALEUT 9/24

ST TIKHON OF NEW YORK 9/26

## OCTOBER

ST INNOCENT OF ALASKA 10/6

ST BARNABUS (NASTIC) OF GARY, INDIANA 10/30

ST JOHN KOCHUROV OF CHICAGO 10/31

## NOVEMBER

ST RAPHAEL 11/8

ST SEBASTIAN OF JACKSON 11/30

## DECEMBER

ST ALEXANDER HOTOVITZKY OF NEW YORK 12/4

ST MARDARIJE OF LIBERTYVILLE 12/12

ST HERMAN OF ALASKA 12/13 ALSO (8/9)

## JANUARY

## FEBRUARY

## MARCH

## APRIL

## MAY

ST ALEXIS TOTH OF WILKES-BARRE 5/7

ST NICHOLAI VELIMIROVIC 5/3

## JUNE

## JULY

ST JOHN MAXIMOVICH OF SAN FRANCISCO 7/2

ST JUVENALY OF ALASKA 7/2

ST JACOB NETSVETOV OF ALASKA 7/26

## AUGUST

# ST PETER THE ALEUT



A native of Kodiak Island, Cungagnaq was baptized by the monks of St. Herman's missionary party. He received the Christian name Peter. We know little about his life except the following.

In 1815, a party of 14 Aleut seal and otter hunters, including Peter, approached the California shore by ship. The Russian-American Trading Company had in 1812 established Fort Ross (derived from the word "Russia") about 50 miles north of San Francisco as a warm climate trading post and as a place to raise crops and cattle to support the communities in Alaska. At that time, Spain still owned California; and some Spaniards perhaps thought that Russia was planning to attack and take possession of San Francisco.

When, therefore, Peter and his party of young fur trappers approached near Fort Ross, Spanish sailors captured them and took them to San Francisco for a mock trial. **Roman Catholic priests in California tried to force the Aleut hunters to embrace Roman Catholicism.** The prisoners answered, "We are Christians; we have been baptized," and they showed their baptismal crosses. "No, you are heretics and schismatics," replied one of the priests. "If you do not agree to take the Catholic Faith, we will torture you"; and they were told to think it over.

Returning a while later, the priests found that the Aleuts again refused to renounce Orthodoxy. They took Peter and cut off a toe from each foot; but Peter simply repeated, "I am a Christian. I will not betray my Faith." The Spanish priest-inquisitor ordered a group of California Indians to cut off each finger of Peter's hands, one joint at a time, eventually cutting off his hands altogether. Finally, he ordered that Peter be disemboweled. **Peter quickly died as a result of the tortures, witnessing to his Faith in God to his last breath.** Just as they were ready to start on the next Aleut, the

Spaniards received an order to stop the proceedings. This eyewitness account of Peter's martyrdom is told by some of his comrades who were eventually released.

When the incident was reported to St. Herman, back on Kodiak Island, the monk turned to his icon, crossed himself, and exclaimed, "Holy, new martyr Peter, pray to God for us!" Peter the Aleut was formally glorified as a saint, as the **"Martyr of San Francisco,"** in 1980.

**His feast day is commemorated on September 24.**

# ST TIKHON



Vassily Ivanovich Belavin was born on January 19, 1865, the son of a priest, near Pskov, Russia. He excelled in his studies in school and at St. Petersburg Theological Academy. Upon graduation, he immediately started teaching at a seminary. He was tonsured a monk in 1891, taking the name Tikhon, and was ordained a priest soon after.

In 1897, Father Tikhon was consecrated as Bishop of Liublin, Poland; but within a few months, he was reassigned as Bishop of the Aleutians and Alaska. He arrived in New York on December 12, 1898. He was the only Orthodox bishop on the continent; and his flock was made up of native Americans (Eskimos, Aleuts, and Indians), Russians, Ukrainians, Belorussians, Greeks, Antiochians, Bulgarians, Serbs, Macedonians, Albanians, Galicians, Carpatho-Russians, Romanians, and others.

**Bishop Tikhon worked to maintain the unity of all these Orthodox faithful while, at the same time, allowing for ethnic and cultural**

**variations.** He used a multitude of languages, and he held services in

English at his cathedral as early as 1904. In 1906, he published a translation of the Liturgy and other church services into English.

**Bishop Tikhon traveled all through North America during his nine years as bishop here. He established many parishes; he opened the first Orthodox seminary in America, in Minneapolis, and he founded the first monastery, in South Canaan, Pennsylvania.** He devoted all his efforts to making the Church in America into a local, self-sustaining, autonomous Orthodox Church, not merely an extension of the Russian Church. Bishop Tikhon requested and received help in an auxiliary bishop for Alaska. To assist him in caring for Arabic-speaking immigrants, in 1904, Bishop Tikhon also consecrated the Antiochian Raphael Hawaweeny as Bishop of Brooklyn.

Archbishop Tikhon was transferred to an important diocese back in Russia in 1907. In 1914, he was transferred again, to the diocese of Vilnius, Poland. World War I broke out and Archbishop Tikhon traveled to the front lines and personally cared for sick and wounded soldiers. **In 1917, he was elected Metropolitan of Moscow. That same year, the patriarchate was restored and Tikhon was elected as the first Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia in 217 years.** That same year, communist Bolsheviks began terrorizing Russia with gunfire, murdered the Tsar and his family, and began a fierce persecution against the Church. **Patriarch Tikhon stood firm in denouncing the Bolsheviks' political abuses and violence, yet he also appealed to the Russian people to obey all legitimate decrees of the new Soviet government – anything that did not violate the Faith.** The atheists confiscated churches and melted down chalices, censers, tabernacles, and other precious liturgical items. Through all this, the Patriarch shepherded his persecuted flock.

**In 1922, the communists placed him under house arrest. He was admitted to a hospital in 1925, suffering from very poor health. There, he was given a lethal dose of morphine “to ease the pain” of his heart attacks.** Patriarch Tikhon fell asleep in the Lord on March 25, 1925, at the age of 60. The Russian Orthodox Church proclaimed him a saint in 1989, designating him as **“Enlightener of North America and Confessor of Moscow.”**

**His feast day is September 26th.**

# ST INNOCENT OF ALASKA

## EQUAL TO THE APOSTLES AND EVANGELIZER OF NORTH AMERICA



John Evseyevich Popov-Veniaminov was born August 8, 1797 in the village of Anginsoye in Irkutsk, Russia. His father was a church server, so it was natural that John began reading the Epistle during services at an early age. When John was only six years old, his father died. Later John entered the Irkutsk Theological Seminary. In 1817, he married, was ordained to the diaconate, and was assigned to serve at the Annunciation Church in Irkutsk. After his ordination to the priesthood in 1821, he taught catechism to children while serving the parish as its priest.

In 1823, Father John embarked on a great adventure. The Bishop of Irkutsk had been instructed to send a priest to Unalaska in Alaska's Aleutian islands. The clergy all refused to go – all, that is, except Father John. In May 1823, he and his wife, their infant son Innocent, and his mother and brother Stefan began the perilous journey. Fourteen months later they arrived on Unalaska Island where he and his family lived in an earthen hut they had constructed themselves. **A multi-talented man, he trained a group of local faithful in construction techniques and helped them build Holy Ascension Church, which they completed in 1826.**

Father John made numerous missionary journeys around Unalaska and the neighboring islands. He frequently traveled by dogsled or canoe, his tiny craft buffeted by storms in the Gulf of Alaska. In 1834, he was transferred to New Archangel, later renamed Sitka, where he dedicated himself to ministering to the Tlingits. **He studied their language and customs and produced scholarly notes and a dictionary.** Among his other journeys was that he undertook in 1836, when he visited Fort Ross north of San Francisco and northern California's Spanish missions.

In 1838, Father John returned to Russia to report on his missionary efforts. While there, he received the sad news that his wife had died. After some time, he decided to enter monastic orders with the name Innocent, in honor of the sainted missionary Bishop of Irkutsk. Two years later, he was consecrated Bishop of Kamchatka and the Kurile Islands and the Aleutian Islands at the Cathedral of the Kazan Icon of the Mother of God in Saint Petersburg. After his return to Alaska as **the first resident Bishop in America**, Bishop Innocent continued his missionary journeys, during which he proclaimed the Gospel in ways the people could easily understand and remember.

During one of his missionary journeys, Bishop Innocent encountered dangerously rough waters off Kodiak Island. Turning in the direction of Spruce Island, where Saint Herman of Alaska lived and was buried, **he fervently entreated Saint Herman to pray to God for assistance. Within minutes, the waters became calm.** His ongoing travels helped him to master local languages and dialects. **He also developed alphabets for previously unwritten languages and translated Scripture and other works into Unagan and Yakut.**

In 1848, Bishop Innocent had the joy of consecrating Saint Michael Cathedral in Sitka, which he used his talents to design and build. The cathedral still serves as the main cathedral for the Diocese of Alaska. In recognition of his exceptional ministry, he was elevated to the dignity of Archbishop in 1850. **Archbishop Innocent was elected Metropolitan of Moscow and Kolomna in 1868.** As Metropolitan, he worked diligently to uplift the faithful spiritually and improve the living conditions of the clergy. He fell asleep in the Lord on March 31, 1879 and was buried in the Church of the Holy Spirit at the Trinity-Saint Sergius Lavra near Moscow. He was canonized in 1977 by the Church of Russia. **His feast day is October 6th.**



## ST BARNABAS OF GARY INDIANA



Barnabas was born in Gary, Indiana, on January 31, 1914 into a family of Serbian immigrants. When Barnabas was nine, his parents returned to their homeland. In 1940, Barnabas took monastic vows in the Mileševa Monastery, and was ordained deacon. Deacon Barnabas remained in Sarajevo during World War II, but after taking a stand against fascists, he had to leave Sarajevo in order to save his life.

After the war he was ordained a priest. The Holy Assembly of the Serbian Orthodox Church elected Fr. Barnabas auxiliary bishop to the Serbian Patriarch with the title of Bishop of Hvosno. He was consecrated on May 20, 1947. In his new position **Bishop Barnabas began openly criticizing the new communist regime for mistreating the church. He was soon arrested and sentenced to twenty years in prison. He was accused of being an American spy.**

Bishop Barnabas was subjected to torture, lack of food, and was kept in the most isolated wing of the prison. But Bishop Barnabas remained calm. Every day he sang the hymns of the Church. The communist Government arranged a train accident in order to get rid of him. His leg was shattered. **Although the communist secret police did not allow doctors to provide him medical assistance, he recovered, though he suffered from his injuries until his death.** He was released after the accident to house arrest in the Gomionica Monastery until his release in 1960.

**Throughout his life, Saint Barnabas remained in touch with his home parish of St. Sava in Indiana. He was the first person baptized in that parish after its founding.** At one point, his parish raised the money to buy him an expensive car for his high-priestly ministries.

Bishop Barnabas died on November 12, 1964, in circumstances that led some to believe that he was poisoned. In 2005, he was canonized and his name was added to the list of other saints of the Serbian people and of Orthodox Christian faith. **His feast Day is October 30th.**

# ST JOHN OF CHICAGO

## MISSIONARY TO AMERICA AND

## FIRST HIEROMARTYR UNDER THE BOLSHEVIKS



The New Martyr John Kochurov was born in July 1871 in the village of Bigildino- Surky in the Ryazan region of Russia . His parents, Priest Alexander and his wife, Anna, gave their several children a healthy experience of being a priestly family, which stayed with John all his life. He was an outstanding student at the Ryazan Theological Academy, from which he graduated in 1891.

He spent the next four years at the Saint Petersburg Theological Academy, where his vision of service in the parish priesthood and missionary work were formed . Soon after his marriage and graduation in **1895, he was ordained to the priesthood, sent to America, and assigned as Pastor of Saint Vladimir Church in Chicago, Illinois.**

Father John faced a parish situation that was very different from that in Russia. The Chicago parish and its affiliated missions in Streator, Joliet and other Illinois towns were not well-organized, had little money, and were isolated from the other parishes scattered across the country.

**With his considerable gifts for teaching, preaching and writing, Father John stabilized his existing parish community spiritually, created two church schools and took part in the diocese's publication activities. He also mentored many new converts.** When Bishop [now Saint] Tikhon arrived in the diocese, he recognized Saint John's administrative abilities and appointed him chair of the Mutual Aid Society. Father John worked hard to raise funds to erect a new church building to replace the inadequate Saint Vladimir Church. Soon after his return from a 1902 visit to Russia, where he collected additional funds, construction for the new Holy Trinity Church.

After a decade of ministry, which was praised as including "sleepless nights, worn-out nerves and countless woes," Father John was awarded the right to wear a gold pectoral cross in 1905. He continued working on the pressing issues of diocesan administration.

Homesick for his homeland, Father John received permission to return to Russia in 1907. In recognition of his educational skills he was assigned to teach catechism in Narva, Estonia, where, as in America, Orthodox Christians were a minority. He taught there for nine years. In 1916, he welcomed the chance to serve Saint Catherine Cathedral near Saint Petersburg. He became well known for his dedication and his inspiring sermons.

**On October 30, 1917, the Bolshevik forces, having seized Petrograd, attacked Tsarskoye Selo. As distraught believers flocked to the churches, the clergy held a procession through the town, praying for peace . The next day, the Bolsheviks arrested Father John and other clergy. He was taken to the outskirts of the town where he was confronted by an angry mob and shot, making him the first clergy martyr of the 1917 Russian Revolution.**

On December 4, 1994, Father John was canonized by the Council of Bishops of the Russian Orthodox Church as **the first of 20th century Russia's new martyrs.** He is especially remembered in America as a missionary and an inspired preacher of God's Word. **His feast day October 31st.**

# ST RAPHAEL OF BROOKLYN

## DEFENDER OF ORTHODOXY IN AMERICA



Our holy Father Raphael was born in Syria in 1860 to pious Orthodox parents. His family had fled from Damascus because of persecution against Christians. Among the martyrs was his family's parish priest. After returning to Damascus he did very well in elementary school. Invited to become a student of the Patriarchate and to prepare for priestly ordination, he again excelled in his studies.

In 1879, he was tonsured a monk by Patriarch Hierotheus of Antioch and was assigned to serve as his personal attendant. Later he was sent to study at the renowned seminary at Halki, near Constantinople, and in 1885 he was ordained to the diaconate. Returning to his homeland, he began accompanying Patriarch Gerasimus of Antioch on pastoral visits. Eager to serve a wider range of people, he went to study at the Theological Academy of Kiev. In 1889, he was ordained to the priesthood. The Patriarch appointed him to serve as head of the Antiochian Patriarchate's Representation Church in Moscow, a position he held until 1895. **Over the next years, Archimandrite Raphael campaigned to restore the administration of the Church of Antioch to its own clergy**

**and people, but he still ministered to Russian and Greek Orthodox as well as Arabs.**

**In 1895 he accepted an invitation to come to New York as Pastor of the Arab Orthodox community. Energetic as always, he established Saint Nicholas Church in Brooklyn, NY and supervised the building of churches in other places.** In 1896 he began the first of several continental journeys to find and minister to Arab Orthodox Christians scattered across the United States. He preached and taught, heard confessions, celebrated the Divine Liturgy, and performed countless baptisms and marriages. He founded a periodical – still published as **"The Word" magazine** today. In 1902 Bishop Tikhon (later Saint Tikhon), as head of the North American Church, consecrated Saint Nicholas Church, Brooklyn, NY.

Two years later, in the same church, **Father Raphael became the first Orthodox bishop to be consecrated on American soil**. As a new bishop, he assisted in consecrating the grounds of Saint Tikhon's Monastery in South Canaan, Pennsylvania and continued his missionary travels. His gentle, loving manner enabled him to settle serious disputes among his flock. He continued his outreach to Greeks and Russians, encouraging all the Orthodox to use English in worship and education.

After years of declining health, Bishop Raphael reposed in February 1915, at the age of 55. His funeral was held at Brooklyn's Saint Nicholas Church. In 1989 his incorrupt relics were transferred to Antiochian Village in Ligonier, Pennsylvania. In March 2000, the Holy Synod of Bishops of the Orthodox Church in America proclaimed him a saint. **His feast day is November 8th.**



# ST SEBASTIAN OF JACKSON AND SAN FRANCISCO



St Sebastian was a prominent Serbian priest in the Russian Mission in America in the 1890s and early 1900s. He founded numerous churches and was the author of several books.

St Sebastian was born in San Francisco, California on June 21, 1863 to Serbian immigrant parents who named him John Dabovich. He grew up in the church in San Francisco where his parents operated a store. After finishing high school he served his parish as a reader and teacher.

In 1884, he was assigned to assist at St. Michael's Cathedral in Sitka, Alaska before he was sent to Russia to prepare for a life as a missionary priest. After three years of study at the St. Petersburg and Kiev Theological Academies, John was tonsured a monk in 1887 with the name Sebastian and ordained a deacon.

Following his ordination, Dn. Sebastian returned to San Francisco where he served as deacon at the San Francisco cathedral. He also taught at the pastoral school in San Francisco. On August 16, 1892, Dn. Sebastian was ordained a priest and was soon sent to Minneapolis, Minnesota to replace Fr. Alexis Toth as the priest of St. Mary's Church there. While there he also taught at the Missionary School.

**After a year, Fr. Sebastian returned to San Francisco where he organized the first Serbian Orthodox Church, dedicated to St. Sava, in Jackson, California. He became a member of the North American Mission administration and was a legitimate force in helping organize the Orthodox Christians - particularly in the Pacific Northwest of the United States, to Seattle, Washington, Portland, Oregon as well as Arizona, Montana, and Alaska.**

Also Fr. Sebastian lead a Serbian Mission in the North American diocese and was elevated to archimandrite in 1905. **For the next five years Archim. Sebastian led the Serbian Mission from its center at the Holy Resurrection Serbian Orthodox Church in Chicago, Illinois, where he was the parish priest.**

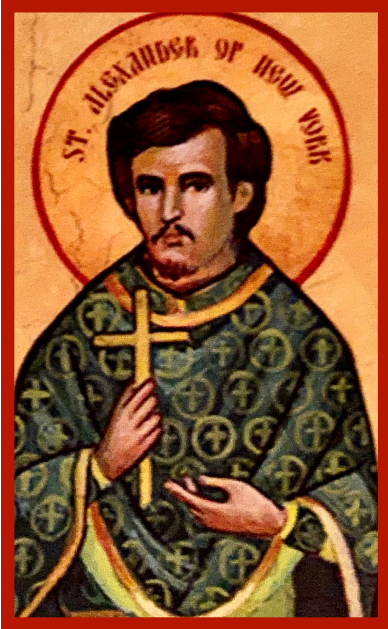
In 1910, Fr. Sebastian asked for a release from the Serbian mission so that he could return to missionary work. Then in 1913, he joined the faculty of the newly opened St. Platon Seminary in Tenafly, New Jersey.

He went on to serve as a chaplain in the Serbian army in the Balkan Wars and World War I. He spent most of the rest of his life serving the Church of Yugoslavia. He died in Serbia in 1940 and was glorified as a saint on May 29th, 2015. In 2007, his remains were disinterred and brought back to the cemetery at St. Sava Church in Jackson, California for reburial.

**His feast day is November 30th.**

# ST ALEXANDER HOTOVITZKY

## NEW HIEROMARTYR OF RUSSIA AND MISSIONARY TO AMERICA



St. Alexander was born in 1872 in Kremenetz, Russia, where his father served as Rector of the theological seminary. He studied at the Volhynia Seminary and in 1895 he graduated from St. Petersburg Academy.

The following year, he was assigned to the Diocese of the Aleutians and North America and served as a Reader at Saint Nicholas Church in New York City. After his marriage to Maria Scherbuhina, he was ordained to the priesthood at San Francisco's Holy Trinity Cathedral and **appointed Rector of St. Nicholas Church, New York City.**

Once, while encouraging others to embrace the Orthodox faith, he was beaten and injured for his witness. **St. Alexander engaged in missionary work and helped to establish many new parishes. He oversaw construction of New York's St. Nicholas Cathedral.**

From 1914 to 1917 he served at the Dormition Cathedral, Helsinki, Finland. In 1917, he was assigned Assistant Pastor of Moscow's Christ the Savior Cathedral.

**St. Alexander was arrested several times for challenging the Soviet government's persecution of the Church.** Despite suffering much at the hands of the Soviet leaders, St. Alexander continued to serve in various Moscow churches and offer help to the poor and needy.

**St. Alexander was arrested for the last time in 1936. The following year, he suffered a martyr's death in a Soviet concentration camp. In 1994, St. Alexander was glorified and his feast day is commemorated on December 4th.**



## ST MARDARIJE OF LIBERTYVILLE



St. Mardarije was born in Podgoritsa, Montenegro, in 1889. In 1907, he embraced monasticism at the Studenitsa Monastery and then relocated to Russia to study at the St. Petersburg Theological Academy. After graduation, he was ordained by the Russian Orthodox Church and in 1917 he was sent to America to organize the Serbian Orthodox Church. Here he served as head of the Serbian Mission, and at the Cleveland Conference of the Russian Metropolitanate he was elected the Serbian Bishop. At this most chaotic time in the history of the Russian Orthodox Church, it was impossible to secure the written blessing of Patriarch so Archimandrite Mardarije did not wish to accept episcopal consecration without the knowledge and approval of the Serbian Orthodox Church in the homeland. Instead, he returned to his country and became head of Rakovica Monastery and rector of its monastic school.

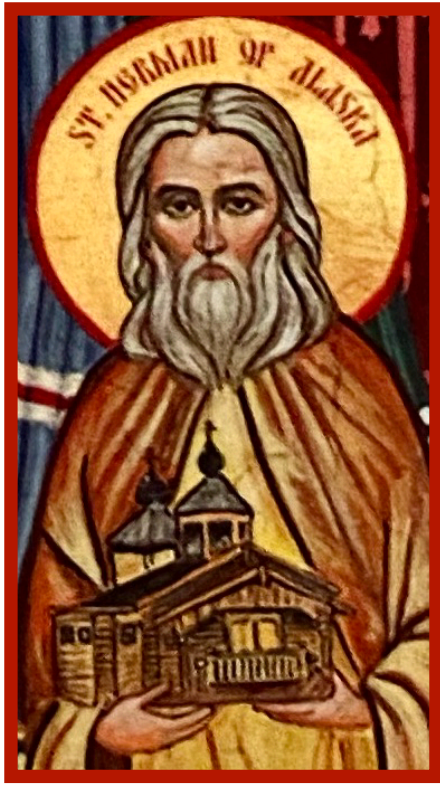
Later, in 1926, Archimandrite Mardarije was consecrated to the episcopacy in Belgrade. Prior to his episcopal consecration, he had carried out most of the actual work of organizing the Serbian diocese. **He also served as parish priest in Chicago and purchased with his personal funds the land for St. Sava Monastery in suburban Libertyville. He was the first Serbian Bishop of America and Canada. Bishop Mardarije undertook a wide range of ministries. He did not spare himself, nor did he fear work, although he knew that he was gravely ill with an advancing case of tuberculosis.**

In 1927, he convened the first National Church Assembly of the Serbian Orthodox American-Canadian Diocese to address a variety of organizational issues. Then at a clergy conference held in Youngstown, OH in 1931, **he renewed his appeal for all to work for the unity and good of the diocese. His kindness, patience and reluctance to use punitive measures resulted in a great measure of unity within the diocese.** Bishop Mardarije died on December 12, 1935 at the age of 46, and was buried at St. Sava Monastery in Libertyville, which, together with the Serbian people, he had built at great sacrifice and superhuman effort. His holy relics were found to be incorrupt.

**He was glorified as a saint on May 29, 2015, and his feast day is celebrated on December 12th.**

# ST HERMAN OF ALASKA

## WONDERWORKER OF ALL AMERICA



Saint Herman was born between 1756 and 1760 to a merchant family in Serpukhov, Russia. As a teenager, and already a monk at the Trinity-Saint Sergius Monastery, the Mother of God healed him from a disfiguring abscess. After five or six years, Saint Herman moved to Valaam Monastery on Lake Ladoga.

In 1794, the abbot chose him as one of the monks who would go to America as missionaries. Saint Herman and his companions arrive in Kodiak, Alaska in 1794. These zealous missionaries baptized thousands of natives, built schools and constructed a church. But over the years, the lives of the others were lost in various ways, until only Saint Herman was left.

**Then Saint Herman chose Spruce Island for his hermitage, which he called “New Valaam”. Saint Herman was never alone on Spruce Island. Because of his holiness, he befriended the animals and conversed with the angels. Everyone, especially the children, loved listening to Saint Herman as he shared the Gospel.**

Saint Herman protected his beloved native people, from severe governors and natural disasters. Once fearing a tidal wave, Saint Herman placed an icon of the Mother of God on the shore, preventing a flood. Another time Saint Herman prayed and dug a ditch around his hermitage, which was then saved from a raging forest fire. And during a terrible month-long smallpox epidemic, he visited and prayed with the victims and their families, urging them to repentance and preparing the dying for the end.

Saint Herman died on December 13, 1837. That night, a vision of a man rising from Spruce Island into the clouds was seen in various places. Though his body stayed in the warm home of his disciples for one month, there was no sign of decomposition.

Saint Herman was buried in his beloved “New Valaam.” In 1907, a woman with a serious leg ailment prayed at Saint Herman’s grave. Miraculously, she was cured of her ailment through his intercession. In 1842, the newly consecrated Bishop Innocent prayed to Saint Herman when his ship, sailing from Russia to Alaska encountered a terrible storm. Immediately, the storm subsided.

In August 1970, at special services celebrated in Kodiak, Alaska, Father Herman was glorified as **NORTH AMERICA’S FIRST SAINT** and his relics were enshrined there in the Holy Resurrection Cathedral. **His Feast day is commemorated on December 13th.**



# ST ALEXIS TOTH

## DEFENDER OF ORTHODOXY IN AMERICA



Our holy Father Alexis Toth was born in the Austro-Hungarian Empire in 1854. His father and brother were priests of the Greek Catholic Church, while his uncle was a bishop. Many citizens of the Austro-Hungarian Empire who traditionally had been of the Orthodox Christian Faith, were compelled to enter into communion with the Roman Catholic Church after the Union of Uzhorod in 1646. Known thereafter as “Greek Catholics” or “Uniates”.

Alexis was always close to the Church, and began studies for the priesthood. An excellent student; he was fluent in Latin, German, Magyar and Russian, and acquired a reading knowledge of Greek.

In 1878, he married Rosalie Mihalich, whose father also was a priest. Later the same year, he was ordained to the priesthood and assigned Associate Pastor of a Greek Catholic parish. Tragedy soon followed as both his wife and their only child died.

Father Alexis was filled with grief, but he continued to serve God with love and prayerful dedication. The next year brought new responsibilities as Father Alexis began teaching Church History and Canon Law at the seminary in Presov. He also served as secretary to the Bishop of Presov and Administrator of the Diocese.

Greater changes were to come. In October 1889, Father Alexis was sent to Minneapolis, Minnesota, where he had been assigned Pastor of Saint Mary Greek Catholic parish. The Roman Catholic Archbishop of Saint Paul and Minneapolis, John Ireland, refused to recognize him as a Catholic priest.

**After further difficulties, Father Alexis appealed to the Russian Orthodox Church, the North American and on March 25, 1891, he and 361 parishioners of Saint Mary Church were reunited to the Orthodox Christian faith of their ancestors.** Father Alexis was very devoted to his flock, healing and comforting the sick and, despite his personal poverty and that of his flock, giving generously to those in need. He wrote and published many educational resources explaining the differences between Orthodox Christianity’s fullness of faith and other faiths. In 1893 Father Alexis was transferred to the parish in Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania, which would be his home for the rest of his life. He helped Saint Tikhon establish Saint Tikhon of Zadonsk Monastery and Orphanage in South Canaan, Pennsylvania. Father Alexis traveled far and wide to proclaim Orthodox Christianity while encouraging Greek Catholics to return to their ancestral faith. **He has been credited with inspiring tens of thousands of former Greek Catholics to return to the Orthodox Faith.**

Saint Alexis died on May 7, 1909. Seven years after his death, his body was transferred from Wilkes-Barre to a prominent burial site behind the altar of Saint Tikhon Monastery Church. At that time, it was discovered that his remains were incorrupt. **His feast day is May 7th.**

# ST NICHOLAI VELIMIROVICH



Nikolaj Velimirović was born in the small village of Lelich in Western Serbia in 1881. He attended the Seminary of St. Sava in Belgrade and graduated in 1905. He earned doctoral degrees from the University of Berne in 1908, and from King's College, Oxford in 1909. When he returned home, he fell ill with dysentery and vowed to serve God for the rest of his life if he recovered. He recovered and at the end of 1909 he entered a monastic order and was ordained a priest the same day. He received the title of Archimandrite in 1910 and was named in 1911 an assistant professor in St. Sava Seminary in Belgrade. Then in 1919, he was consecrated Bishop of Žiča in the Church of Serbia.

After completing his studies, he returned to Belgrade and taught philosophy, logic, history, and foreign languages at the seminary. He spoke seven languages, and this ability proved very useful to him throughout his life. In April 1915, he was delegated to England and America by the Serbian Church, where he held numerous lectures, fighting for the unison of the Serbs and South Slavic peoples. At the beginning of 1919 he returned to Serbia, and in 1920 was sent to the Ohrid archbishopric in Macedonia, where in 1935, he reconstructed the cemetery of the killed German soldiers.

During the Second World War in 1941 Bp. Nikolai was arrested by the Nazis in the Monastery of Žiča, which was soon afterwards robbed and ruined. After which he was confined in the Monastery of Ljubostinja where there were occasions of mass deaths by firing squad. Later, this "new Chrysostom" was transferred to the Monastery of Vojlovica in which he was confined together with the Serbian patriarch, Gavriilo (Dožić) until the end of 1944. On December 14, 1944 he was sent to Dachau, together with Serbian Patriarch Gavriilo, where **he suffered both imprisonment and torture.**

**After the War he left Communist Yugoslavia and immigrated as a refugee to the United States in 1946 where he taught at several Orthodox Christian seminaries** such as St. Sava's Serbian Orthodox Seminary in Libertyville, Illinois and St. Tikhon's Orthodox Theological Seminary and Monastery in South Canaan, Pennsylvania (where he was rector and also where he died), and St. Vladimir's Orthodox Theological Seminary, New York. During his time teaching at St. Vladimir's, he was very involved with the life of St. Sava Cathedral in New York City. He died on March 18, 1956.

He was canonized on May 19, 2003, the Holy Assembly of Bishops of the Serbian Orthodox Church. **St. Nikolai Velimirovich is often referred to as Serbia's "NEW CHRYSOSTOM".**

**His Feast Day is May 3rd.**

**His most widely-known work is the Prologue from Ohrid.**



# ST JOHN MAXIMOVICH OF SAN FRANCISCO



The future Saint John was born on June 4, 1896, in the village of Adamovka in Kharkiv. He was educated at the Poltava Military School (1907-14); Kharkiv Imperial University, from which he received a law degree (in 1918); and the University of Belgrade (where he completed his theological education in 1925). He and his family fled their country as the Bolshevik revolutionaries descended on the country, emigrating to Yugoslavia. He was tonsured a monk in 1926.

Hieromonk John was consecrated bishop on May 28, 1934, after which he was assigned to the Diocese of Shanghai. Twelve years later he was named **Archbishop of China**.

In time, **he worked to build a large cathedral church that was dedicated to the “Surety of Sinners Icon to the Mother of God”, with a bell tower and large parish house. Additionally, he inspired many activities: building of churches, hospitals, and orphanages among the Orthodox and Russians of Shanghai. He was intensely active, constantly praying and serving the daily cycle of services, while also visiting the sick with the Holy Gifts. He often would walk barefooted even in the coldest days. Yet to avoid the appearance of secular glory, he would pretend to act the fool.**

With the end of World War II and the coming to power of the communists in China, Bishop John led the exodus of his community from Shanghai in 1949. Initially, **he helped some 5,000 refugees to a camp in the Philippines, He travelled successfully to Washington, D.C., to lobby to amend the law to allow these refugees to enter the United States.** It was while on this trip that Bishop John took time to establish a parish in Washington dedicated to Saint John the Forerunner.

In 1951, Archbishop John was assigned to the Archdiocese of Western Europe with his cathedra in Paris. During his time there, he also served as arch-pastor of the Orthodox Church of France.

**In 1962, Archbishop John was assigned to the Diocese of San Francisco. He was able to bring peace such that the new cathedral, dedicated to the Joy of all Who Sorrow Icon of the Mother of God, was completed. He reposed during a visit to Seattle on July 2, 1966 and was officially glorified by the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad on July 2, 1994. His Feast Day is July 2nd.**

# ST JUVENALY OF ALASKA



He was born in 1761 in Ekaterinburg, Russia, and was named Jacob Govouchkin. In his monastic life he was tonsured and given the name Juvenaly. After becoming a monk he was successively ordained deacon and then priest, becoming a hieromonk. He lived much of his early monastic life in the area around Lake Ladoga in northern Russia near Finland at the Konyavesky and Valaam Monasteries.

In 1793, a missionary group of eight monastics, which included St Juvenaly, was organized at the Monastery of Valaam, to preach the Word of God to the natives of Alaska. This group of missionaries was led to the Russian settlement on Kodiak Island in the Gulf of Alaska, some 8,000 miles away across the length of Asia through Siberia and then the cold Bering Sea of the northern Pacific Ocean. The group arrived on Kodiak Island in 1794, to an unexpected scene. The settlement was primitive beyond what they were told, and violence was commonplace. The promised church was not there, and the promised supplies for three years were absent.

**Hieromonk Juvenaly and the others in their party began their missionary work and within two years their zeal had brought more than 12,000 Alaskans to the Orthodox Christian faith.**

They did this not by degrading their former shaman based faith but by showing them that Christianity was the fulfillment of that faith.

As the group continued preaching further away from the settlement on Kodiak, Hieromonk Juvenaly began missionary work on the mainland of Alaska 1796. Here he continued the success of the past two years as he baptized hundreds of Chugach Sugpiag and Athabaskan Indians. But **as his mission continued along northwest toward the Bering Sea, he disappeared. No material evidence of his disappearance has been found, but among the Alaskan people oral tradition relates of his martyrdom.** The tradition is that as he moved into territory inhabited by Eskimos, some Eskimos did not understand some of his gesturing while making the sign of the cross. Disturbed, a Yupiat shaman ordered an attack upon the hieromonk, and he was killed by spears and arrows.

The holy, glorious, right-victorious **Hieromartyr Juvenaly of Alaska, was the first Orthodox Martyr in America. His feast day is celebrated on July 2**, and he is also commemorated with all the saints of Alaska (September 24), and with the first martyrs of the American land (December 12).



# ST JACOB NETSVETOV OF ALASKA



Saint Jacob Netsvetov was born on Atka Island, Alaska in 1802. His mother was an Aleut native of the island, and his father was Russian. Though poor, they made sure their four children were well-educated .

In 1823, he and his family moved to Siberia. He enrolled in the Irkutsk Theological Academy.

In 1825, he married Anna Simeonovna and was tonsured to the order of subdeacon. One year later, he graduated from the seminary and was assigned to serve at Holy Trinity-Saint Peter Church in Irkutsk. In March 1828, he was ordained to the priesthood.

**Father Jacob's deepest desire was to serve in Alaska. In the spring of 1828, his wife and father joined him on the arduous 13-month journey to his island birthplace . Immediately upon his arrival on Atka, he began plans to build a church. In the meantime, he celebrated services in a large tent, which he often took with him on**

**his missionary journeys . These journeys took him across his huge "parish" – a vast area stretching some 2,000 miles. Exhaustion and violent weather did not deter him from visiting remote villages and settlements .**

**After construction of the Church of Saint Nicholas was completed, Father Jacob turned to overseeing the building of a school. Several of its graduates would become leaders of the Aleut communities in the next generation.**

Father Jacob had varied interests. He prepared many specimens of fish and marine animals for natural history museums in Russia. At the same time, he consulted with Saint Innocent on translation issues while devising an Unangan-Aleut alphabet. He then translated the Scriptures and important Church texts.

Soon personal tragedy struck. In 1836, his beloved wife Anna died, and a year later he lost his father. In deep sorrow, he asked for permission to return to Irkutsk and become a monk., Saint Innocent comforted the grieving priest, dissuaded him from entering the monastic life, and convinced him that he should continue his ministry in Alaska .

With renewed zeal, Father Jacob carried on until 1844, when Saint (Bishop) Innocent appointed him to oversee a new mission in the Yukon. **He began traveling to hundreds of settlements on the Yukon River, preaching the Gospel to the Yup'ik people.**

**While Father Jacob was visiting a village in 1845, the local chief or shaman angrily told him that the villagers wanted no part of his preaching. But after several hours of spiritual conversation, Father Jacob brought him and the whole village to faith in Christ.**

In later years, Father Jacob faced false charges which were eventually dropped, although they further impaired his declining health. He spent his final year serving a Tlingit chapel in Sitka, Alaska, where he died in 1864. **His feast day is celebrated on July 26th** the day of his repose

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