

# Orthodox Christian Fellowship at Penn State Newsletter

11/20/2020

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## Featured Saint: Great Martyr Catherine of Alexandria

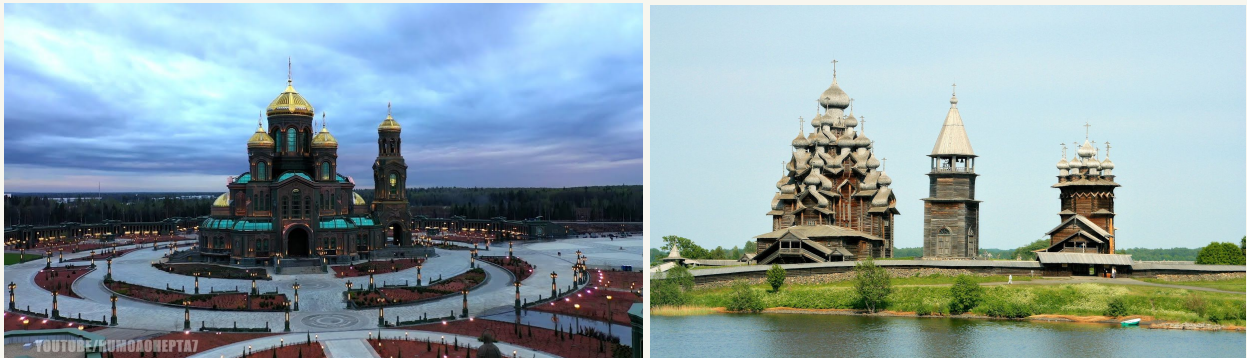


Saint Catherine is commemorated on November 24th. Saint Catherine was the daughter of the governor of Alexandria and lived in the fourth century. Saint Catherine's mother was secretly Christian, and sent her to an elder to learn about Christianity. Saint Catherine converted to Christianity and pledged her life to Christ, wearing a ring on her hand as a symbol of her commitment. When Emperor Maxmilian came to Alexandria, Saint Catherine spoke out against the martyrdom of Christians. Emperor Maxmilian ordered her to be tortured with a wheel, in the hopes that she would renounce her faith, but before she could be tortured, an angel smashed the wheel. This event converted the Empress and 200 other people to Christianity, but Emperor Maxmilian remained unconvinced. Saint Catherine said a prayer, and then was beheaded. Saint Catherine, pray for us who keep your most sacred memory!

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Orthodox churches around the world: The Church of the Transfiguration and The Main Cathedral of the Russian Armed Forces



Today we have featured one of the newest and one of the oldest Orthodox Churches in Russia. The picture on the left is The Main Cathedral of the Russian Armed Forces located outside of Moscow, Russia which was consecrated June 14th 2020. It was built in honor of its military to commemorate 75 years since the end of WWII. The picture on the right is The Church of the Transfiguration located in the southwestern part of Lake Onega on Kizhi Island in Russia. It was built in 1714 exclusively out of wood and without any nails. Also it is included in the UNESCO list of World Heritage sites.

Videos:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gAsysbwX5bI> (The Main Cathedral of the Russian Armed Forces)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3uEaJki7W8s> (The Church of the Transfiguration)

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Hymn of the Week: Kontakion of the Nativity of Christ



The term *Kontakion* means "from the pole," and came into use to describe hymns that were wound around a pole for storage during services. This particular *Kontakion* is dedicated to the nativity of Christ, and is widely considered to be the first one ever written and consequently has defined this genre of hymns. It is especially fitting as we find ourselves at the end of the first week of the Nativity fast. May God grant you a fruitful Nativity season!

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Holy Day - Entrance of the Most Holy Theotokos



Commemorated on November 21st, the Entrance of the Most Holy Theotokos marks the day that the Virgin Mary entered the temple as a child. Holy tradition teaches that her parents, Saints Joachim and Anna, had vowed that if God granted them a child they would dedicate that child to the service of God. God granted them Mary, and when she was three her parents decided to make good on their vow. They led the child Mary to the temple, where she was met by the high priest. The priest then led her up to the top of the temple where she entered the Holy of Holies, which was absolutely unprecedented seeing as she was both not a priest and was a female. Mary then stayed near the temple and lived in quarters with other women, where she studied scripture and prayed constantly. The Feast of the Entry of the Most Holy Theotokos into the Temple foretells God's blessing for the human race, the preaching of salvation, and the promise of the coming of Christ.

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Featured Prayer: Prayer for Travel

O Lord Jesus Christ our God, the true and living Way, Who didst will to journey with Thy guardian Joseph, and Thy most pure Virgin Mother into Egypt, and didst accompany Luke and Cleopas on their way to Emmaus: we now humbly entreat Thee, O most holy Master: do Thou accompany now this Thy servant(s) N. by Thy grace. Send unto him as to Thy servant Tobias, an angel as a guide and guardian, protecting and delivering him from every evil assault of enemies both visible and invisible; directing him to the fulfillment of Thy commandments, sending him on his way peacefully, profitably, and soundly and bringing him back again safely and in peace. Grant that he may fulfill all his good purpose unto Thy good pleasure, and favorably unto Thy glory. For Thine it is to be merciful and to save us, O Christ our God, and to Thee do we send up glory, together with Thy Father Who is without beginning, and Thy most holy, good, and life-giving Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

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