

# THE ORTHODOX CHURCH OF SAINT ELIZABETH THE NEW-MARTYR

Volume XXI

Number 43

22 June / 5 July 2020

THE FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST (*Tone 3*)

Commemoration of Holy Alban of Verulamium, Protomartyr of Britain

## SCHEDULE OF SERVICES THISWEEK

### 4TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST (*Tone 3*)

**Holy Martyr Alban, Protomartyr of Britain**

*Saturday, 4 July (21 June, o.s.)*

6:00 PM Vigil Service;  
Confessions

*Sunday, 5 July (22 June, o.s.)*

9:10 AM Third and Sixth Hours  
9:30 AM Divine Liturgy

### NATIVITY OF ST JOHN THE BAPTIST

*Monday, 6 July (23 June, o.s.)*

6:00 PM Vigil Service;  
Confessions

*Tuesday, 7 July (24 June, o.s.)*

9:10 AM Third and Sixth Hours  
9:30 AM Divine Liturgy

### 5TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST (*Tone 4*)

**HOLY APOSTLES PETER & PAUL**

*Saturday, 11 July (28 June, o.s.)*

6:00 PM Vigil Service;  
Confessions

*Sunday, 12 July (29 June, o.s.)*

9:10 AM Third and Sixth Hours  
9:30 AM Divine Liturgy

At the direction of His Eminence, Metropolitan Hilarion, St Elizabeth's Church is observing the restrictions of the civil authority which currently require us to have a gathering of no more the 25% of our normal capacity (up to 50 persons), which we conservatively estimate at this time to be twenty (20) persons. These people must be able to space themselves six (6) feet apart. Parishioners are asked to take turns attending the services offered in church. The Parish is using a software tool used by many churches called 'Sign-Up Genius'. With this tool we are able to fix capacity at 20 for inside the church, so the first 20 who register using the tool will be permitted inside. All others are welcome to participate in the services from the pavilion, where we have a live video and audio feed of the service as it happens inside the church. The link for the St Elizabeth's Sign-Up Genius page is:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/904054aaaa82ba0f58-service>

## FASTING DAYS Week of 5 July

Day of Week	Date	Commemoration and Type of Fast
<i>Sunday</i>	5 July (22 June, o.s.)	Hieromartyr Eusebius of Samosata Fast: fish, wine & oil permitted
<i>Monday</i>	6 July (23 June, o.s.)	'Vladimir' Icon of the Theotokos Fast: fish, wine & oil permitted
<i>Tuesday</i>	7 July (24 June, o.s.)	Nativity of St John the Baptist Fast: fish, wine, & oil permitted
<i>Wednesday</i>	8 July (25 June, o.s.)	Martyr Febronia Xerophagy ( <i>No oil</i> )
<i>Thursday</i>	9 July (26 June, o.s.)	'Tikhvin' Icon of the Theotokos Fast: fish, wine & oil permitted
<i>Friday</i>	10 July (27 June, o.s.)	St Sampson the Hospitable Xerophagy ( <i>No oil</i> )
<i>Saturday</i>	11 July (28 June, o.s.)	Ss Sergius & Herman of Valaam Fast: fish, wine & oil permitted

## SCRIPTURE READINGS Week of 5 July

<i>Su</i>	<b>4th Sunday after Pentecost</b>	
	<i>4th Resurrectional Matins Gospel:</i> Luke §112 (24:1-12)	
	Rom. §93 (6:18-23)	Mt §25 (8:5-13)
	<b>5TH WEEK after PENTECOST</b>	
<i>M</i>	Rom. §109 (12:4-5, 15-21)	Mt §45 (12:9-13)
<i>Tu</i>	<b>Nativity of St John the Baptist</b>	
	<i>Vespers Paramia:</i> (1) Genesis 17:15-17, 19; 18:11-14; 21:1-8 • (2) Judges 13:2-8, 13-14, 17-18, 21 • (3) Isaiah 40:1-3, 9; 41:17-18, 45:8; 48:20-21; 54:1	
	<i>Matins Gospel:</i> Luke §3 (1:24-25, 57-68, 76, 80)	
	Rom. §112 (13:11b-14:4)	Luke §1 (1:1-25, 57-68, 76, 80)
<i>Tu</i>	Rom. §114 (14:9-18)	Mt §46 (12:14-16, 22-30)
<i>W</i>	Rom. §117 (15:7-16)	Mt §48 (12:38-45)
<i>Th</i>	Rom. §118 (15:17-29)	Mt §49 (12:46-13:3a)
<i>F</i>	Rom. §120 (16:1-16)	Mt §50 (13:3b-9)
<i>Sa</i>	Rom. §97 (8:14-21)	Mt §30 (9:9-13)
<i>Su</i>	<b>5th Sunday after Pentecost</b>	
	<i>5th Resurrectional Matins Gospel:</i> Luke §113 (24:12-35)	
	Rom. §103 (10:1-10)	Mt §28 (8:28-9:1)

## THIS WEEK'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Apostles' Fast ends next Sunday after the Divine Liturgy on the Feast of Ss Peter and Paul. Every day this week is therefore a fast day. From 12 July onward we still observe the regular Wednesday and Friday Fasts.

**The Feast of the Nativity of St John the Baptist** (24 June / 7 July), though not one of the Twelve Great Feasts, is nonetheless a very important Holy Day in the Church Calendar. Nearly every Orthodox parish has services on this Feast Day. It commemorates the birth of the Saviour's Forerunner, of whom our Lord said, 'Verily I say unto you, among them that are born of women, there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist....' (St Matthew 11:11) St John the Baptist's holy birth was miraculous. His parents, Ss Zacharias and Elisabeth, were advanced in age when the Archangel Gabriel announced that Elisabeth would bear a son, though she had been barren. And this came to pass as the Archangel had foretold.

**Concerning Confession and Holy Communion:** Those who have been to Confession during the past two weeks may receive Holy Communion at the Liturgy on the Feast of the Nativity of St John the Baptist, provided that no serious sin has been committed which would require another Confession and that the other usual preparations for Holy Communion are observed (i.e. attendance of the Vigil Service the evening before Holy Communion, reading the Pre-Communion Prayers, and the forgiveness of others). Likewise, those who have been to Confession for the Feast of the Nativity of St John the Baptist may receive Holy Communion at the Liturgies on the following two Sunday mornings and on the Feasts of Ss Peter and Paul and St Elizabeth under the same conditions.

**The Feast of the Holy Apostles Peter and Paul** (29 June / 12 July), honours Saints 'Peter and Paul, who were separate in body yet united in spirit, the foremost of the preachers of God, the first as Leader of the Apostles, and the other who laboured more than the rest' (Sticheron on 'Lord I have cried...' at Great Vespers for the Feast.) Though not numbered with the Twelve Great Feasts, the Feast of Ss Peter and Paul is nonetheless a most important Holy Day in the Church Calendar. This is demonstrated by the fact that Orthodox Christians keep a Fast of varying length from 8 to 42 days to prepare to celebrate this Feast. All the faithful should attend the services for this Holy Day. This will be made easier because the Feast falls on a Sunday this year.

**Our Parish's Patronal Feast**, honouring our heavenly Intercessor, St Elizabeth the New-Martyr, is on Saturday, 18 July (5 July, o.s.). The Vigil Service will be served at 6 PM on Friday, July 17th, and the Divine Liturgy at 9:30 AM on the Feast Day itself. Please reserve these dates so you can attend services either indoors in church or outside in the pavilion for our Parish Feast Day.

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## SAINT ALBAN, PROTOMARTYR OF BRITAIN

Saint Alban (or Albanus), the protomartyr of Britain, was a Roman citizen who lived at Verulamium (modern Saint Albans), a few miles northwest of London, during a time of persecution. Nothing is known about his family or his occupation.

The chief magistrate of the city had orders to arrest all Christian clergy. One of them, a priest named Amphibalus, fled to Alban's home in order to hide from the soldiers who wished to kill him. Alban was impressed by the priest's constant prayer and vigil, and so he questioned Amphibalus about his beliefs. As a result, Alban came to believe in Christ and asked to be baptized.

Eventually, Amphibalus was forced to move on, and Alban changed clothes with him so that he could get away. The soldiers heard there was a priest hiding in Alban's house, so they came to search it. Seeing Alban dressed in the priest's clothes, they arrested him and brought him before the judge.

The magistrate was offering sacrifice to idols when Saint Alban appeared before him. After questioning him, he discovered how Alban and the priest had switched clothes. Furious because Alban had allowed a fugitive to escape, the magistrate threatened him with death unless he returned to paganism and revealed where Amphibalus had gone. Saint Alban replied, "I am also a Christian, and I worship the true God."

After having the saint beaten and tortured, the magistrate threatened him with execution. Saint Alban rejoiced and glorified God. The magistrate ordered the soldiers to take Saint Alban to the Holmhurst Hill to be beheaded. When they came to the river Ver, they saw that the bridge was crowded with people who had come to witness Alban's martyrdom. Since they could not proceed because of the multitude of people, Saint Alban prayed and made the Sign of the Cross over the river. At once, the waters parted so that they were able to cross over to the other side.

The executioner was so astonished by the miracle that he threw down his sword and refused to behead the saint. He was arrested, and another man was found to behead them both. There is a tradition that Saint Alban became thirsty while climbing the hill and asked for water. A small spring gushed forth near the top of the hill, and he was able to drink from it. Pilgrims used to come and drink from Saint Alban's well, but it is now dry.

The date of Saint Alban's martyrdom is uncertain, but it is believed that it took place during the reign of Decius (ca. 251) or Valerian (ca. 257). The eighteenth century Turin manuscript (which may be based on a fifth century source) suggests that Saint Alban may have been executed as early as 209, when the emperor Septimus Severus and his two sons were in Britain. The name of the executioner who was converted has not been preserved. The priest Amphibalus was ultimately caught and put to death at a place called Redbourn, four miles from Verulamium.

When people began to cry out against the magistrate, he put an end to the persecution. In later years a cathedral was built on the site of the martyrdom, and the relics of Saint Alban, the priest Amphibalus, and perhaps even the executioner were enshrined within. Saint Bede (May 27) tells us that miracles frequently took place at Saint Alban's tomb. When the Danes invaded England in 860, the relics were removed for safekeeping, then later returned.

A new chapel and shrine were built for the relics in the early fourteenth century. Two hundred years later, during the dissolution of the monasteries under Henry VIII, the marble shrine was destroyed. Much later, the fragments of the shrine were reassembled on its former site. What happened to the relics is uncertain, but it is probable that they were either destroyed or buried in an unmarked spot.

Although Saint Alban is sometimes depicted in military garb, there is no evidence that he was a soldier. After all, he was living in a private home when he was arrested, and not in a barracks. There is a medieval painting in the south aisle beside

the Choir in the Abbey which depicts Saint Alban with red hair. A medieval seal, now in the Durham Cathedral Chapter Library, shows him with a thick beard. He is stocky, with a high, round and balding forehead, and a cloak covers his left side and right shoulder.