27/12/2019

# RUSSIAN SYNOD CANONIZES NEW MARTYR PAVEL LAZAREV

Meeting in Moscow yesterday under the chairmanship of His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia, the Holy Synod of the Russian Orthodox Church resolved to add the name of Hieromartyr Pavel Lazarev to the Synaxis of the New Martyrs and Confessors of the Russian Church.

Having heard the report of His Grace Bishop Pankraty of Troitsk, the Chairman of the Synodal Commission for the Canonization of Saints, concerning the petition of His Eminence Metropolitan Vladimir of Vladivostok and Primorye to include the name of Fr. Pavel, the Synod resolved to glorify him among the saints and establish his feast day as May 20/June 2, the day of his martyrdom, reports the site of the Russian Orthodox Church.

If found, his remains will be venerated as holy relics, and icons of the newly-glorified saint will be painted for the veneration of the faithful.

In October, the Synod added the name of Archpriest Theodore Kallistov to the Synaxis of the New Martyrs and Confessors.

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Fr. Pavel Lazarev was born in the city of Kolyvan on the Ob River in 1877. He studied at a veterinary-paramedic school and served 3 years as a paramedic in the Siberian Reserve Artillery Division. In 1904, he was the choir director at St. Nicholas' Church in Nikolsk-Ussuriysk. He was married in 1908 and his family eventually had four children.

He was ordained as a deacon in 1912 and as a priest in 1915. In 1918, he was serving as the full-time priest of the Church of the Life-Giving Trinity in the village of Antonovka in the Primorsky Province. He collected food for the impoverished among his parishioners and delivered it to the needy himself. He also taught children the basics of religious life and the Law of God.

On the eve of the Feast of Pentecost in 1919, a parishioner warned Fr. Pavel that red partisans would come for him at night and asked him to hide with his relatives in a nearby town, but Fr. Pavel refused. He was already dressed and waiting for the men who came to arrest him. He stood before the icons of the Savior and the Mother of God, prayed, put on his cross, said goodbye and blessed his children, and told his wife: "Do not grieve! Pray to the Queen of Heaven. She will not leave you."

The partisans took Fr. Pavel to a nearby village and interrogated him in the local elementary school. As a condition of his release, Fr. Pavel was asked to declare that he had deceived people with a made-up God and to publicly remove his cross and cassock. He firmly declared that he would never renounce God and that he was ready to accept death for his faith in Christ.

Fr. Pavel was martyred on the feast of Pentecost, May 20/June 2, in 1919. Seriously wounded after being shot, he was left to die in the forest near Nikitovka.

Fr. Pavel's wife Claudia preserved some of his words in her diary: "I clearly see that the people's task is not to remake the state system, but to work on the human person, and to be better yourself, and even to suffer for the truth." He often advised his wife: "Pray to the Lord for me that I might not be afraid of suffering and torment but might cheerfuly stand for faith in Christ the Lord even unto death.
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