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Church commemorates Gregory V, Holy Martyr and Patriarch of Constantinople; 199th bitter anniversary since his hanging by Ottomans



The Church today honors the memory of Gregory V, the Holy Martyr and Patriarch of Constantinople.

Called to the Patriarchate's throne for a third time in 1818, Gregory V was taken out of the Patriarchal Cathedral on April 10, which was Holy and Great Easter Sunday, based on the Julian calendar, immediately after celebrating the solemn Liturgy and was hanged by Ottoman authorities, in retribution for the start of the Greek War of Independence in the Peloponnese.

His body was left hanging for two days at the main gate of the Patriarchate's compound by order of the Ottoman sultan.

Greek sailors recovered the Patriarch's body after it was tossed into the Bosporus,

and brought it to Odessa for interment.

Gregory V’s remains were eventually interred in a shrine at the Athens Metropolitan Cathedral. He is commemorated by the Greek Orthodox Church as an Ethno-martyr. In his memory, the St. Peter Gate, once the main entrance of the Patriarchate compound, was welded shut in 1821 and has remained impassable ever since.

The Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople, His All Holiness Bartholomew I, on Friday lit a candle and placed a few flowers at the closed gate, something done every year on this grim date.