

Additional Announcements

Pierogi Sale Pickup: Today, Marcy, 7th from 11 am until 2 pm. Potato/Farmer Cheese \$8/doz. Checks should be made payable to St. Mary's U.O. Church.

Kovbasa Sale for Pascha: Ukrainian American Veterans Post 42 is currently taking orders until April 18. And will be ready for pickup after services on Palm Sunday weekend (Saturday, April 24 and Sunday, April 25. Regular kovbase are small/medium/largh and range from 1.75-2.5 lbs. Price is \$6/lb. Kovbanosy is \$7/lb. Krakowska is \$6.50/lb. To place an order please call Bohdan Zelechiwsky (610.972.3712) or Father Richard (201.240.5888)

Gift Card Fundraiser: New order form for gift cards is posted on the website. Orders must be received by March 14th.

Prayers: Among your daily prayers, please remember: Fr. Yakiw Norton, Fr. Oleh Hucut, Tanya Antoniewicz, Richard Antoniuk, Bohdan Baranczyk, Madeline Chorney, John Chorney, Susan Cooke, Gloria Dunski, Joan Hepner, Jennie Kramer, Eva Lazor, Mary Maksymiak, Daniel Milinichek, Michael Onushko, Rosalie Onushko Mary Ellen Mackiewicz, Mary Radio, William Radio, Kathryn Solan, Michael and Elsie Moroz, Myroslav Kmet, Mariya Kmet, Andriy Kmet, Dan Gulack. Rodney Townes, Karina Strashinsky; Katherine Cox

Focus on the Saints: Saint Tarasius, Archbishop of Constantinople

Commemorated on February 25/March10



Saint Tarasius, Patriarch of Constantinople was of illustrious lineage. He was born and raised in Constantinople, where he received a fine education. He was rapidly promoted at the court of the emperor Constantine VI Porphyrogenitos (780-797) and Constantine's mother, the holy Empress Irene (August 7), and the saint attained the rank of senator.

During these times the Church was agitated by the turmoil of the Iconoclast disturbances. The holy Patriarch Paul (August 30) although he had formerly supported Iconoclasm, later repented and resigned his office. He withdrew to a monastery, where he took the schema. When the holy Empress Irene and her son the emperor came to him, Saint Paul told them that the most worthy successor to him would be Saint Tarasius (who at this time was still a layman).

Tarasius refused for a long time, not considering himself worthy of such high office, but he then gave in to the common accord on the condition, that an Ecumenical Council be convened to address the Iconoclast heresy.

Proceeding through all the clerical ranks in a short while, Saint Tarasius was elevated to the patriarchal throne in the year 784. In the year 787 the Seventh Ecumenical Council was convened in the city of Nicea, with Patriarch Tarasius presiding, and 367 bishops attending.

The veneration of holy icons was confirmed at the council. Those bishops who repented of their iconoclasm, were again received by the Church.

Saint Tarasius wisely governed the Church for twenty-two years. He led a strict ascetic life. He spent all his money on God-pleasing ends, feeding and giving comfort to the aged, to the impoverished, to widows and orphans, and on Holy Pascha he set out a meal for them, and he served them himself.

The holy Patriarch fearlessly denounced the emperor Constantine Porphyrogenitos when he slandered his spouse, the empress Maria, the granddaughter of Saint Philaretos the Merciful (December 1), so that he could send Maria to a monastery, thus freeing him to marry his own kinswoman. Saint Tarasius resolutely refused to dissolve the marriage of the emperor, for which the saint fell into disgrace. Soon, however, Constantine was deposed by his own mother, the Empress Irene.

Saint Tarasius died in the year 806. Before his death, devils examined his life from the time of his youth, and they tried to get the saint to admit to sins that he had not committed. "I am innocent of that of which you accuse me," replied the saint, "and you falsely slander me. You have no power over me at all."

Mourned by the Church, the saint was buried in a monastery he built on the Bosphorus. Many miracles took place at his tomb. Saint Tarasius is very much revered in Ukraine. The great bard and poet of the Ukrainian people, Taras Shevchenko, was born on his feast day (in incidentally died a day after his feast day), and so was given the name of the great saint by his parents. Many boys and men of Ukrainian heritage bear this name because of Shevchenko.