

# The Holy Martyrs Borys and Hlib

**T**HE HOLY, GLORIOUS and right-victorious Martyrs **Borys and Hlib** were the sons of the great Prince Vladimir (Volodymyr), the baptizer of the Ukrainian people. They became known as Passion-bearers, since they did not resist evil with violence. Boris and his brother Hlib are commemorated together on July 24 by the Church. They received the crown of martyrdom in 1015.



Borys (in baptism David) and Hlib (in baptism Roman) were brothers by the same mother. Their father Vladimir, before his baptism, had numerous wives and many children by them. Hence, he divided up the state among all of his sons before his death, and after his death the eldest son, Sviatopolk, became Prince of Kyiv (the main city of the state Kyivan-Rus'). Sviatopolk was jealous and wanted yet more power, and he planned to kill his brothers in order to gain their territories.

Some of Vladimir's advisers told Borys that he should take the army and establish himself as ruler of Kyiv. St Borys, however, said that he could never lift his hand against his own brother. Sviatopolk sent assassins to the Alta to kill Borys, who already knew that his brother wanted him dead. When they arrived they heard him chanting psalms and praying before an icon of Christ. He asked the Lord to strengthen him for the suffering he was about to endure. He also prayed for Sviatopolk, asking God not to count this against him as sin. Then he lay down upon his couch, and the assassins stabbed him with their lances.

After Sviatopolk had killed Borys, he sent Hlib a message saying that their father was ill and wished to see him. As he was on his way, he received word that their father had died and that Sviatopolk had murdered Borys. St. Hlib wept for his father and brother and was lamenting them when the assassins arrived. They seized his boat and drew their weapons, but it was Hlib's cook who stabbed him with a knife. The martyr's body was thrown onto the shore between two trees. Later, he was buried beside St. Borys in the church of St Basil.

## Troparion, Tone 2

O genuine passion-bearers and true followers of the Gospel of Christ, chaste Borys and innocent Hlib, you did not opposed your brother-turned-enemy who killed your bodies but could not touch your souls. Therefore let the wicked lover of power shed tears of lament while you rejoice in the presence of the Holy Trinity with angelic choirs. Pray the land of your kinsmen may be pleasing to God and that all the children of Rus' may be saved.

## Kontakion, Tone 3

Today, your all glorious memory has shone forth, o noble passion-bearers of Christ, Borys and Hlib, summoning us to gather for the praise of Christ our God. Wherefore, we who hasten to your relics, receive the gift of healing by your prayers, O saints, for you are godly physicians.

# Celebrating Our Faith

Byzantine Catholic Worship: *Our Church, Its Customs and Rich Heritage*

## St. Olga - Kyivan Princess

*"With rejoicing we celebrate the glorious day of your holy death,  
O divinely-wise Olga, sending up a prayerful hymn to Christ,  
Who crowned you with an incorruptible crown."*

(Canon of the feast of St. Olga)



**O**N THE FIRMAMENT OF HEAVEN of the Saints of the Church of Christ, the various Saints of the Ukrainian nation shine like stars. Among them, Princess Olga, whose memory we celebrate on July 11, shines with the special brilliancy of holiness. She is the first Christian to occupy the throne of the Grand Principedom of Kyiv; the first enlightener and teacher of the Christian faith in Rus'-Ukraine. She was distinguished for her brilliant character, strong will, and singular wisdom of great political skill. After the death of her husband, Prince Ihor (†945), Olga ruled the great nation for many long years with a firm hand in the name of her young son Sviatoslav. "Not one of the rulers," says the historian, Natalia Polonska-Vasylenko, "was given as much attention as was Olga who, during two decades, wore an aureola of wisdom and feminine charm." (History of Ukraine, Vol. I, p. 101)

The great wisdom of St. Olga manifested itself in her acceptance of the Christian faith, through which she greatly enhanced her own authority and that of the nation in the eyes of Byzantium and the Christian rulers of Western Europe. "Princess Olga," says the historian Mykola Chubatyj, "truly stands at the crossroads of the religious and cultural history of Rus-Ukraine." History of Christianity in Rus-Ukraine, Vol. I, p. 101)

Our Church in the services honouring her feastday extols Olga in the following words: "Like a sun your glorious memory shone forth to us, O divinely-wise Olga, mother of the Rus' princes, little one of Christ... You are our glory and praise, O divinely-wise Olga, for through you we have been delivered from the deceit of idolatry... You are powerful as a lioness, you are clothed with the power of the Holy Spirit... Pure Guardian of the law and Teacher of the Christian faith, we implore you to accept the praise of your unworthy servants, and pray to God for us who devoutly celebrate your memory."

*Troparion of St. Olga, Tone 1:*

On the wings, of the knowledge of God you lifted your mind, O glorious Olga and soared beyond the visible attaining to God, the Creator of all. You found Him and in baptism received the new life abiding forever in incorruption and enjoying the fruits of the life-giving Tree.

# Christ's Choice of the Apostles

**WE HAVE SEEN** that on the occasion of singling out the twelve Apostles from the circle of disciples who followed Him, Jesus was in the process of instituting the new Israel. On that occasion, "He appointed twelve" - literally, "He made twelve" (Mark 3: 14). The term *made* is Semitic, used in the LXX for the appointment of priest (1 Samuel 12: 6; 1 Kings 12: 31; etc.) Thus the ordination of the Twelve is implied in the word "appoint" or "made." Jesus, therefore, appointed the twelve Apostles to be leaders, to teach, and to sanctify (to give grace).

The concept of 'apostle' is not something Jesus invented; there was the Jewish proselyte, the *shaliach*, who was 'sent' as a plenipotentiary (a person invested with full power or authority to transact business on behalf of another) in the name and person of the sender. Jesus utilized this concept and made His Apostles plenipotentiaries. But the Apostles did not receive an unlimited right to act in His name; they could not enact or sanction something that was against God's will or commands, such as polygamy, fornication, etc. They were to exercise only the power in the Lord's name which has been entrusted to them: preaching the Gospel, baptizing, confirming, making the Eucharist, imposing laws and injunctions in accordance with God's will and as the Holy Spirit inspired them to know these. However, they had one right that the Jewish shaliach did not have: to appoint successors. The Apostles ordained men to the sacred ministry.



The Church's sacred ministry has a threefold function. The Apostles and their successors (the pope and bishops) were to continue Jesus' work (1) as prophets, having teaching power, (2) as kings, having pastoral or royal power (= legislative, juridical, and punitive power), and (3) as priests, having sacerdotal power — offering worship, giving graces.

The purpose of leadership and authority in the Church is to ensure unity and order. Jesus Himself admitted that there will be leaders in the Church when, after having instituted the Holy Eucharist at the Last Supper, He said, "Let the greatest among you become as the youngest, and the leader as one who serves" (Luke 22: 26). It is thus a leadership for service.

Authority deals with one person having the right to direct and compel others for the achievement of an end. The source of authority here on earth is the authority of our father and mother over us (the 4th Commandment); from this basic authority of the parents flows the authority of the school, the provincial and federal governments, the courts, the police, etc. Jesus even admitted that there will be authority in the Church, for after having spoken about the greatest and the leader become as those who should serve. He went on to say, "As my Father appointed a kingdom for me, so do I appoint for you that you may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones judging (ruling) the twelve tribes of Israel" (Luke 22: 29-30). Jesus thus conferred authority on the Apostles. All authority in the Church is meant for service, the service of unity in the Church.

# Five Ways to Make Summer More Spiritual

By Whitney Hetzel

**BEFORE YOU TURN THE PAGE**, stop and listen for a moment. It's generally accepted that summer is our time to de-stress, unwind, relax, and maybe even (God forbid) let go of a few commandments. Yet if we think about it, summer is also an opportunity to flex our spiritual muscles a little.

God has already given us His Spirit, a spirit of self-control and discipline (2Timothy 1:7). This summer we can ask Him to develop within us the fruits of self-discipline.

Here are five ways that many of us can try to make more spiritual — read on...

## 1. Commit to a new daily prayer.

Choose a prayer to a special patron saint and say it daily this summer. (It'll be your chance to develop a closer bond with that particular saint). Whatever prayer it is, adding a new one this summer will bring a fresh perspective and help to put a daily focus on God for the next few months. It can be a short, simple one. The point is to inspire, not to overwhelm!

## 2. Tell God you are sorry.

Get to confession this summer. Before going, think about the past year. Think about next year. Although January marks the beginning of the calendar year, many of us think of summer (and the old school year) as the end of one year, and Autumn as the start of the next year. Take a little time this summer to evaluate how things are going. It can be a time to refresh and ask God to forgive us and give us His grace so that we can attain a deeper growth.

## 3. Make a Holy Hour.

Summer schedules shouldn't really be that hectic and in reality, we can all find an hour to pray or to meditate, other than attending Divine Liturgy. And you'll be surprised how that hour with Our Lord goes by so fast, and perhaps even make it a few minutes longer, and eventually part of your regular routine.

## 4. Be grateful.

Summer goes by so quickly for many of us and before we know it, we are back to school, sports, and other activities that crowd our days during the year. Summer is the time to be grateful for the many gifts that God has given us. We just have to look around. Sometimes we forget to reflect on all that we have. Summer is full of blessings: the smell of fresh-cut grass, the sound of children playing and laughing, ripe fruit in abundance, fresh vegetables from the garden...there are so many things we can easily overlook. Don't let these blessings pass by unnoticed!

## 5. Read the Psalms.

Continuing the theme of the previous point (#4), we can discover words of gratitude when we read the Psalms. Here's an idea; read one psalm every day for the rest of the summer. Try Psalm 118, a beautiful psalm of David.