

# August 26

**Tikhon di Zadonsk** (1724-1783) pastor and monk

Tikhon of Zadonsk, a monk and bishop of his local Russian diocese, died in 1783.

Born in Korotsk in 1724, Timothy Savelich Sokolov entered the seminary of Novgorod at the age of sixteen. In 1758 he received monastic tonsure and was ordained a priest. Elected bishop of Voronezh in 1763, Tikhon retired to the monastery of Zadonsk after only five years because of serious health problems.

Well versed in Latin theology and German pietism, Tikhon attracted the attention of many of his contemporaries to a spirituality based on contemplation of the mystery of God's love revealed in the suffering Christ. His meditation of the mystery of the Cross helped him face his own limitations, in particular moodiness and irritability, and taught him to be welcoming and gentle towards the poor and outcast of his society, whom he could be counted on to defend when the need arose. For this reason the poor considered him a true starets, and he became one of modern Russia's favorite saints. He was one of the figures who inspired Dostoevsky's portrayal of Starets Zosima in *The Brothers Karamazov*.

Tikhon spent the last four years of his life in total seclusion, preparing himself in solitude and prayer for his face to face meeting with God.

## BIBLICAL READINGS

Heb 7:26-8:2; Mt 5:14-19

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## Jewish martyrs of the Stalinist regime

(d. 1952)

In 1952, twenty-six Jewish intellectuals were secretly assassinated at the command of Stalin.

A short time before, the Soviet dictator had ordered the arrest of all Jewish artists and the closure of every Yiddish institution. Among those arrested were a number of directors and organizers of the Jewish Antifascist Committee, which played a key role in Jewish cultural life. Accused of practicing "Jewish nationalism," they were eliminated in a move designed to strike at the heart of Russian Judaism.

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## THE CHURCHES REMEMBER...

### WESTERN CATHOLICS:

*Alexandre of Bergamo* (3rd-4th cent.), martyr (Ambrosian calendar)

*Gerontius* (1st cent.), bishop of Italica (Spanish-Mozarabic calendar)

### COPTS AND ETHIOPIANS (20 misra/nahasse):

*The 7 sleepers of Ephesus* (3rd cent.; Coptic Church)

*Salama the Translator* (d. 1388), metropolitan (Ethiopian Church)

### LUTHERANS:

*Wulfila* (d. ca. 383), evangelist of the Goths

*Werner Sylten* (d. 1942), witness to the point of bloodshed at Berlin

### MARONITES:

*Zephirinus I* (3rd cent.), pope

*Adrian and Natalia of Nicomedia* (4th cent.), martyrs

### ORTHODOX CHRISTIANS AND GREEK CATHOLICS:

*Adrian, Natalia and companions of Nicomedia*, martyrs

*Tikhon of Zadonsk*, bishop and thaumaturge (Russian Church)

### EAST SYRIAN ORTHODOX:

*Sirin* (Meskenta) and her two sons (d. 445), martyrs (Assyrian Church)