

## ***Blessed Nina, New Martyr***

(†1938)

Commemoration Days: February 7, May 14

Blessed Nina was the only child of Alexei Kuznetzov, a *police sergeant*, and his wife, Anna. She was born in 1887 in the village of Lalsk, Arkhangelsk region, three decades before the Revolution that would change the country to the very core. Most Russian people at that time were still God-fearing, sincere Christians. The small village where the Kuznetzovs lived had six churches. Alexei and Anna baptized their baby in honour of St. Nina, Equal to the Apostles, who brought the light of Christianity to a *pagan* land. Years later, their daughter would give her life to keep this light alive – in a land that was *receding* into darkness.



Unable to have more children, Nina's parents *cherished* their daughter and gave her much love and attention. They wanted her someday to marry and have a family. But, as Nina was growing up, it became clear she had a different mission in life. More than anything else, the girl liked reading the Scriptures, learning prayers and attending church. Nina had an exceptional memory and, at a young age, learned the entire Psalter by heart. Respecting his daughter's *inclinations*, Alexei purchased spiritual literature for her. He cleared his shed and built shelves for Nina's many books, so she could have her own prayer house and library.

In the 1920s, after the new government closed a monastery in the Arkhangelsk region, Nina's parents offered shelter to the *abbot* and several monks. All homeless and *displaced* people were welcome in the Kuznetzovs' large house. Nina gave her bed to the guests and slept on a stool, getting up each night at two o'clock for prayer. Thanks to multiple petitions to the *authorities*, and a delegation to Moscow she had organized, one church in their village remained open longer than all others in the area.

In 1932 Nina's elderly parents were arrested and imprisoned. They couldn't *endure the harsh treatment* and both soon died. Nina, devastated by the loss, suffered a *stroke*, which left her partially paralyzed. She lost the use of her right arm. Moving with much difficulty, she crossed herself with the help of her left arm. The local government allowed Nina to keep the house, and she continued to give refuge to anybody who needed a place to stay. Guests

and neighbours brought food, which *the blessed one* never ate but kept for others. She herself lived on bread and water for years.

The Cathedral of the Resurrection, the only remaining place of worship in Lalsk, still functioned, but the number of parishioners declined. Out of fear of *persecution*, people were afraid to attend. Blessed Nina never missed a service. If the priest or deacon forgot which part of the Gospel to read, she always directed him to the correct passage. Since her childhood, she knew all the words of the divine service by heart.

In 1937 the NKVD arrested the priest, deacon, *church elder*, *acolytes*, and choir members. After a quick trial, they all were sent to labour camps, where many *perished*. But the authorities couldn't find anyone to testify against Nina. People in the village loved her and felt sorry for her disability. Many days after Nina's imprisonment, one person agreed to say that the blessed one worked to undermine Soviet power. The weak, *infirm* woman was sentenced to hard labour. In May of 1938, Blessed Nina died in a concentration camp.

### Vocabulary

blessed	[ 'ble sɪd]	блаженный, блаженная
police sergeant	[pə'li:s 'sɑ:r dʒənt]	урядник (в данном значении)
pagan	[ 'peɪ gən]	языческий
recede	[rɪ' si:d]	погружаться
cherish	[ 'tʃe rɪʃ]	лелеять, нежно любить
inclination	[ ,ɪn klə'nei fən]	предрасположение, склонность
displaced	[dɪ'spleɪst]	депортированный
authorities	[ə'θɔ: rə tɪz]	власти
endure the harsh treatment	[ɪn'dju:ər ði: hɑ:rʃ 'tri:t mənt]	вынести жестокое обращение
stroke	[strouk]	инсульт
the blessed one		блаженная, блаженный

Пояснение. Слово *blessed* в английском употребляется только как прилагательное, поэтому в предложении подлежащим быть не может. С ним нужно обязательно использовать или имя (Blessed Matrona, Blessed Nina), или слово *one*, которое отдельно не переводится.

persecution	[ ,pə: sə' kju: fən]	преследование
church elder	[ 'tʃə:tʃ 'eldər]	староста церкви
acolyte	[ 'ækə laɪt]	прислужник (в церкви)
perish	[ 'periʃ]	погибать
infirm	[ɪn' fə:m]	немошный