St. Sergius of Moscow

Born: c.1314 near Rostov, Yaroslavl Oblast, Russia as Bartholomew of Radonezh

Died: 25 September 1392 at the Trinity Lavra of Saint Sergius of natural causes

Canonized: 1449 by Pope Nicholas V

Feast day: 25 September

Born to the nobility, his family moved to Radonezh to escape attack against the city of Rostov, losing their fortune and becoming peasants in the process. Following the deaths of his parents, Sergius and his brother Stephen became hermits at Makovka in 1335, then each left separately to become a monk. As Sergius's reputation for holiness spread, he attracted so many students that he founded the Holy Trinity monastery for them; following his ordination at Pereyaslav Zalesky, he served as its first abbot. His brother joined the monastery, but when he opposed Sergius's strict rule, Sergius left the community to live again as a hermit. However, the monastery began to decline, causing the metropolitan of Moscow to order Sergius to return as abbot. Advisor to the Prince of Moscow, he encourged the campaign that ended with the Battle of Kulikovo in 1380 which ended the Mongol domination of Russia. In the Russia that followed he founded forty monasteries. Late in life he resigned his position and retired to live his last few months as a prayerful monk. He is venerated as the foremost saint of Russia.

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