

# Saint Alexander Hotovitzky

## New Hieromartyr of Russia and Missionary to America

**2** He studied at the Volhynia Seminary and the St. Petersburg Academy.

**3** He was assigned Reader at St. Nicholas Church, New York City, in 1896.

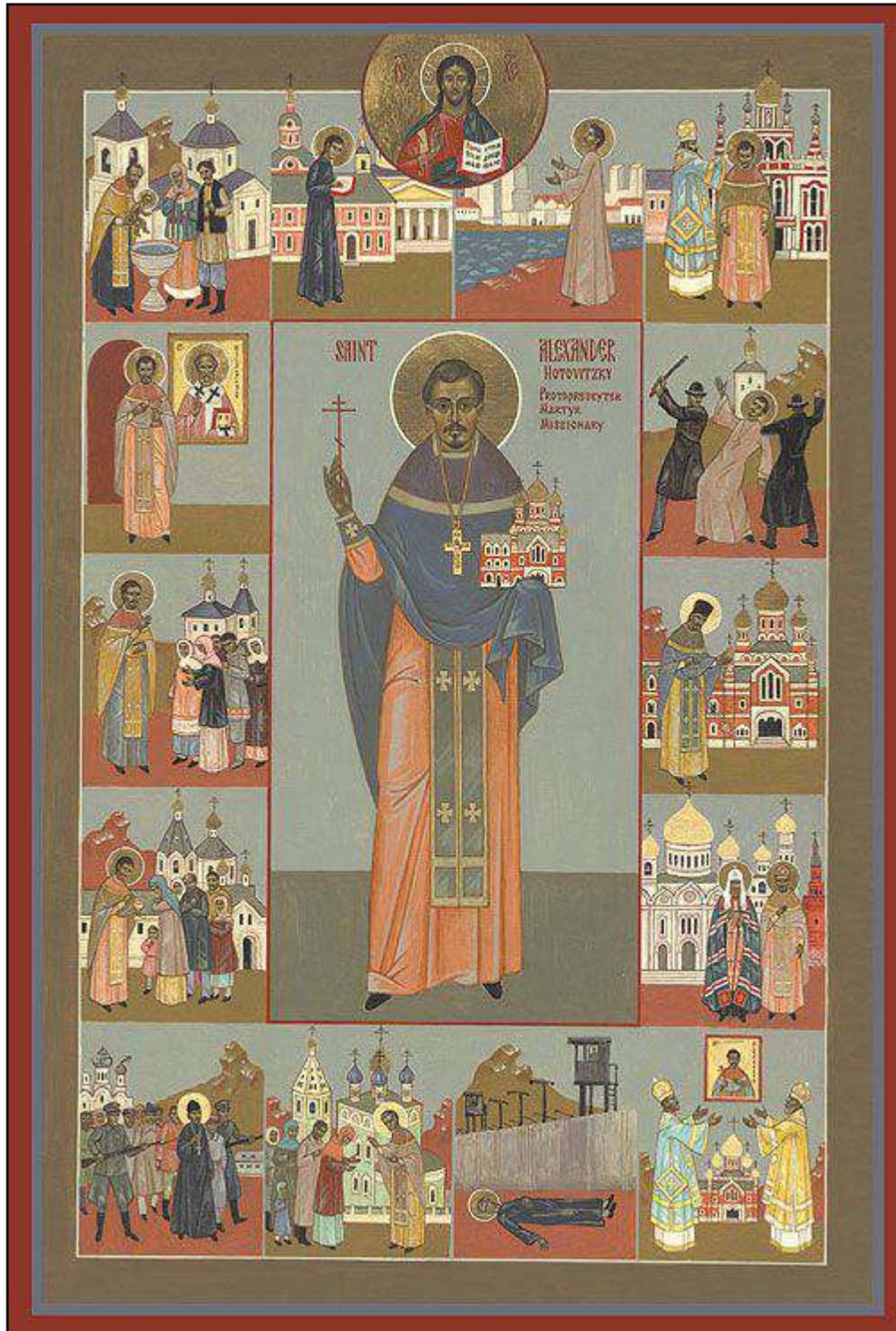
**1** St. Alexander was born on February 11, 1872 in Kremenez, Volhynia, where his father served as Rector of the theological seminary.

**5** After his ordination, St. Alexander was assigned Rector of St. Nicholas Church, New York City.

**7** St. Alexander engaged in missionary work and helped to establish many new parishes.

**9** From 1914 to 1917 he served at the Dormition Cathedral, Helsinki, Finland.

**11** St. Alexander was arrested several times for challenging the Soviet government's persecution of the Church.



**4** After marriage, he was ordained to the priesthood at San Francisco's Holy Trinity Cathedral and appointed Rector of St. Nicholas Church, New York City.

**6** Once, while encouraging others to embrace the Orthodox faith, he was beaten and injured for his witness.

**8** He oversaw construction of New York's St. Nicholas Cathedral.

**10** In 1917, he was assigned Assistant Pastor of Moscow's Christ the Savior Cathedral.

**14** In 1994, St. Alexander was glorified in services concelebrated in Moscow by Patriarch Aleksy II and Metropolitan Theodosius.

**12** Despite suffering much at the hands of the Soviet leaders, St. Alexander continued to serve in various Moscow churches and offer help to the poor and needy.

**13** St. Alexander was arrested for the last time in 1936. The following year, he suffered a martyr's death in a Soviet concentration camp.

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The New Martyr of Russia Alexander Hotovitzky was born in 1872 in Kremenez, Russia to parents who raised him with a strong faith and sincere concern for God's people [1]. The young Alexander studied at the Volhynia Theological Seminary, where his father served as Rector. In 1895, he graduated from the Petersburg Theological Academy [2].

The following year, he was assigned to the Diocese of the Aleutians and North America and served as a Reader at Saint Nicholas Church in New York City [3]. After his marriage to Maria Scherbufhina, he was ordained to the diaconate and then the priesthood [4]. Bishop Nicholas of the Aleutians, speaking at his priestly ordination in San Francisco, mentioned Father Alexander's "special spark from God" which attracted people "like a magnet."

A week later, Father Alexander was appointed Rector of Saint Nicholas Church in New York City and soon became editor of the *Russian Orthodox American Messenger* [5]. This publication chronicled the life of the Diocese, educated the faithful, and served as a witness to Orthodox Christianity for the American public.

Father Alexander also engaged in missionary work. Despite once being attacked and injured by a fanatic as he encouraged some Russians to abandon the Unia with Rome and return to Orthodoxy [6], he brought many people back to their ancestral faith and established parishes in Yonkers, NY; Philadelphia, PA; Passaic, NJ and other places [7]. He also traveled extensively to raise money for the construction of the majestic Saint Nicholas Cathedral in New York City, which replaced the parish church. The new church was designated the diocesan cathedral in 1903 [8].

From 1914 to 1917, Father Alexander served at Holy Dormition Cathedral in Helsinki, Finland, where he urged the local Orthodox Christians to remain faithful to their faith in the Lutheran-majority country [9]. In 1917, he took part in the All-Russian Council, during which Saint Tikhon was elected Patriarch of Moscow, and was appointed Assistant Pastor at Moscow's Christ the Savior Cathedral [10].

Working closely with Saint Tikhon, Father Alexander resisted Soviet oppression of the Church after the Russian Revolution. When the government marked the cathedral for destruction, he helped draft a document challenging believers: "People of Russia! Will you really surrender this wonderful church to mockery? Rise up and protect your holy things!" He was imprisoned several times, accused of violating Soviet decrees concerning the separation of the Church from the state by operating a Church school [11]. He further angered the Soviet authorities by distributing alms, supporting Patriarch Tikhon's refusal to let them confiscate holy objects that they claimed would be sold to help the poor. Throughout the 1920s and 1930s, Father Alexander suffered false accusations and exile, but served at various Moscow churches when he could and continued to help the poor [12]. His final arrest, which took place in 1936, led to his death in a concentration camp the following year. His place of burial remains unknown [13].

In 1994 the Council of Bishops of the Russian Orthodox Church proclaimed Father Alexander a saint. Patriarch Aleksy II of Moscow and Metropolitan Theodosius of the Orthodox Church in America concelebrated at the glorification services in Moscow that December [14].

O Holy Father Alexander, pray unto God for us! ■

