



NAME DAYS

May 6



Did you know that our patron saint chooses us?

Our Name Day is the day on which we celebrate the feast of our patron saint(s) or holy event — the name given to us on the day of our baptism or chrismation. It is said that we do not choose our patron saint but that our patron saint chooses us. From there, we form a deeper friendship with Christ, the Theotokos, or the saint(s).

For “Cradle Orthodox” — those raised in the Church — the name is usually chosen by the family, and it is often a family name. For “Orthodox Converts” — those joining the Church — they often get to choose. Providentially, there are certain “coincidences” of a saint entering into one’s life through a suggested book, an icon that stands out, or even a semi-miraculous intervention. Sometimes one’s priest gives the name.

At our baptism or chrismation, an icon of the patron saint is usually given with a cross necklace. The icon is placed in our icon corner or wherever we pray.

It is ideal to attend church on one’s Name Day or the closest Sunday. Often, the congregation wishes the person(s): “God grant you many years” (Greek: Χρόνια πολλά). At home, one can place flowers and light a candle by the feast’s icon, read the saint’s life, and pray the hymn.

In some traditions, a person’s Name Day — their “birthday” into the Church — is celebrated in place of one’s secular birthday. Gifts are sometimes given, but often, it is the person celebrating their Name Day who gives gifts — an icon card, treats, or the Artoklasia (the five loaves of blessed sweet bread).

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