

A COLLECTION OF BELARUSIAN SAINTS

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---ST. SYLVESTER OF KYIV, THE NEW CONFESSOR---

Stefan Adamovich Kosov was born in 1607 in the village of Zharebichi (also spelled Zharobichi) in the Vibetsk Voivodeship in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth (now modern day Shulmilino district, Belarus). His father Adam Kosiv was a city clerk in the Vibetsk Voivodeship, with the Kosiv family was a mixed Belarusian-Rusyn Orthodox noble family under the Korczak coat of arms. The Kosiv family had hereditary ownership of the village of Zharebichi.

The young Stefan was sent to Vilnius for education, being taught by St. Leonity (Karpovich) of Vilnius at the Orthodox Brotherhood School; whilst there he showed an unusual interest in the sciences and grammar. To pursue his education further, he was sent to Lublin and taught at the Jesuit college there, and despite being pressured to become a Roman Catholic, he held fast to Orthodoxy. He was well educated in philosophy, rhetoric and language by the time he graduated in 1622.

He would then travel to the Calvinist-run Zamoyski Academy, where he graduated top of his class. After graduating in Zamoyski, he would travel to Vienna and Olomouc by 1628 to study further. Being introduced to the teachings of the Papists in Lublin, and the Calvinists in Zamoyski gave him a better understanding of their errors, and would prepare him for his apologetic work. Returning to Vilnius in 1629 he decided to take monastic vows at the Monastery of the Holy Spirit, receiving the tonsure to the lesser Schema with the name Sylvester after St. Sylvester the Great, Pope of Rome, who baptized St. Constantine.

Shortly after his tonsure, he was appointed as a teacher of the Brotherhood school in Vilnius, teaching the students well in the Orthodox spirit, specifically teaching rhetoric and theology. In 1631 he was invited to Lviv to help restore the Brotherhood school at the Monastery there. While in Lviv he met the Archmandrite of the Kyiv-Pechersk Lavra, Fr. Petro Mohyla. The two became close friends quickly, and in 1632 at Fr. Petro Mohyla's request, Fr. Sylvester would travel to Kyiv to teach in the newly established Kyiv Theological Academy.

Fr. Sylvester was elected as the Academy's first dean, and consolidated the Lavra Brotherhood School curriculum with the previous Kyiv Orthodox school's curriculum. He personally taught classes in rhetoric and philosophy, developed courses for the sciences, and personally selected teachers based on their knowledge and devotion to Orthodoxy, helping create what was named the "Mohyla circle" by contemporaries.

While at the Kyiv Theological Academy, Fr. Sylvester would begin writing apologetic works against the Uniates. One of his most famous works, the “Interpretation, or the apology of the Kyiv and Vinnitsa schools” (1635). When the Kyiv Theological Academy started to teach Latin – so as to write materials against the Papists – Fr. Sylvester and the rest of the teachers were accused of being crypto-Uniates. Fr. Sylvester wrote that he feared they would soon: “...share the stomachs with Dnieper sturgeons...”

The school and Fr. Sylvester quickly overcame these slanders. At the request of Fr. Petro Mohilya, he compiled a modern edition of the Kyiv-Pechersk Patericon (1635), and also wrote an article about the mission of Saints Cyril and Methodius, the baptism of the Rus', and other articles about Russian history. He also wrote a book called the “Didaskalia”, a book about the metaphysics of the Mysteries of the Orthodox Church (1637), and “On Ordination” (1652). He wrote in the Kyiv-Pechersk Patericon a dedication to Orthodox Sejm member A.G. Kisel, but their exact relationship is unknown.

After having taught in Kyiv for three years, he was selected by the recently elected Metropolitan of Kyiv and Galicia, Petro Mohilya to succeed Bishop Joseph (Bobrykovich) as the Bishop of Orsha, Mstislav and Mohilya in Belarus. He consecrated on Belarusian soil in 1635, being the first Bishop consecrated there after the Union of Brest-Litovsk in 1596. He managed to obtain his father's land in Vibetsk, and sold it to an Orthodox nobleman, using the proceeds from the transaction to fund his diocese. He disregarded the 1624 Royal Edict of King Sigismund III Vasa prohibiting Orthodox clergy from serving in Vibetsk and Polotsk.

Bishop Sylvester's efforts to restore Orthodoxy in Belarus brought him in conflict with Uniate bishop Anastasy Anton Sileva (who would later lead an army against the Russian Tsar and die whilst retreating from battle.) – who conspired to have him arrested for violating the 1624 Edict. A warrant for Bishop Sylvester's arrest was issued by King Wladyslaw IV Vasa and he was arrested. In court Bishop Sylvester argued for his innocence, and noted that his cathedral seat was in Polotsk, and thus he had to serve in Polotsk. While still under a ban to serve elsewhere in Polotsk and Vibetsk, he still continued to serve the Orthodox faithful in the city of Polotsk from his cathedral.

Vladyka Sylvester came into many other conflicts with the Uniates and their leader Anastasy Sileva. He established many new monasteries and churches on the private land of Orthodox noblemen, and in this way he established the Monastery of the Epiphany in Polotsk, the St. John the Forerunner Monastery in Hrozov and the Monastery of the Holy Spirit in Tupichevshchnya. The consecration of new churches outraged the Uniates, who often tried to attack or kill him, led by Anastasy Sileva.

In 1640 he participated in a Synod meeting of the Orthodox Church within the Polish-

Lithuanian Commonwealth. At this Synod he was asked by Metropolitan Petro Mohilya to help write and review the catechism he was working on, which would eventually be published in 1643. The popularity of the so-called “Shorter Catechism” by Metropolitan Petro Mohilya and Bishop Sylvester transcended its usage in Ukraine and the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. It was published in the Russian Empire, and due to its popularity, was translated into South Slavic languages such as Serbian and Bulgarian.

The catechism Vladyka Sylvester and Metropolitan Petro made was written in both Russian and Polish, being the first publication of this kind in Ukraine. Bishop Sylvester would also be present at the glorification of St. Juliana Olshanskaya in Kyiv in 1646. On December 19th 1646, St. Petro Mohilya fell asleep in the Lord, and shortly thereafter a Synod was held to elect a successor to the seat of Metropolitan of Kyiv and Galicia.

The Rusyn and Belarusian nobility immediately suggested Bishop Sylvester, to which the Bishops of the Ukrainian Eparchy agreed and shortly thereafter Vladyka Sylvester was elected as Metropolitan. Metropolitan Sylvester's appointment would not be legally formalized for a few months, due the Roman Pope Innocent X protesting his appointment and King Wladyslaw IV Vasa thus unwilling to give him a charter as a result. Eventually his appointment to Kyiv was confirmed by Royal charter in late 1647.

Shortly after his elevation, he wrote a letter to Tsar Alexei Mikhailovich, giving his thoughts on the reforms of Patriarch Nikon – which he supported – and expressing his desire for the Ukrainian Church to be independent, where he echoed St. Petro Mohilya's idea that the Ukrainian Church should be autocephalous. In 1649 at the request of the Tsar and Patriarch Nikon, he sent many teachers – including Epifaniy Slavientsky – from the schools in Kyiv to teach in Moscow, where they helped elevate the schools in Russia with the curriculum of sciences and theology taught in Kyiv.

He spoke publicly against the Unia and the Uniates, including on the 1634 Laws that limited the rights of Orthodox Christians in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. When Zaporozhian Cossack Ataman, Bogdan Khmelnytsky, launched a revolt against the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and captured the city of Kyiv, Metropolitan Sylvester welcomed him and met him with bread and salt. He returned to Belarus shortly after the Khmelnytsky revolt, and while there defrocked many clergymen who were participating in Simony.

He visited the Sejm and spoke to the congressmen of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth about giving legal recognition to the Polotsk diocese. After a year of negotiating in 1650, King Jan III Casimir Vasa gave legal recognition to the Polotsk diocese and also returned the Monastery of the Transfiguration in Mohilya – occupied by Uniates since the Union in 1596 – back to the Orthodox.

In 1654 Ataman Bogdan Khmelnytsky had formed an Alliance with the Russian Tsar in Peresiaslav. Metropolitan Sylvester twice refused to take an oath to the Russian Tsar, fearing that doing so would cause repressions by the Poles to occur. He would also not be present at oath-taking ceremonies done by the Zaporozhian Cossacks thereafter. While Metropolitan Sylvester's attitude had changed the disposition of some of the clergy of the Ukrainian Eparchy, he insisted his opinion on the matter was individual.

He did write more harshly about the attempts of to place the Ukrainian Church under the auspices of Moscow, which he criticized as being uncanonical and counter-productive. Most of his sermons around this time called people to the remembrance of death, many of which were written down and printed later, including “Temporary beauty and lamentation” and “the Cherubim and our Lives.”

He recorded several of Bishop Joseph (Bobrykovich)'s sermons from memory, and wrote a Typography for the Kuneetsky Monastery and a collection of Canons – a work he began in 1653. On April 1st 1657 Metropolitan Sylvester fell asleep after a brief illness; his repose interrupted the efforts for the independence of the Ukrainian Church. St. Sylvester's successor, Metropolitan Dionysius (Balaban) wrote his life in 1658, and praised him for his virtues, as well as being a Confessor and spiritual father for the Ukrainian, Rusyn and Belarusian peoples.

His relics were interred in the St. Michael of the Golden Dome Monastery in Kyiv – where he lived while as Metropolitan – and was buried next to his predecessors. The proto-icon of St. Sylvester the New Confessor – or sometimes known as St. Sylvester of Kyiv – was placed in the Monastery Church. In Ukraine and Belarus he is well remembered as a Confessor for Orthodoxy. There is a street in Kyiv named “Kosiv street” in his honor. On icons he is depicted as Bishop holding a Cross. His feast day is April 1st.

---ST. ZOFIA OF SLUCK---

Zofia Alelkovich was born on May 1st 1585 to father Yuri Alelkovich and mother Barbara Kiskisky in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. She was a member of the princely Lithuanian Alelkovich-Slucksi family that was founded in the 15th century by Aleksandr Vladimirovich Alelkovich – a descendant of St. Vladimir the Great – who married Anastasia Vasilevna, a descendant of St. Euphrosyne of Moscow. The last male descendant of the Alelkovich family died in 1592, being her brother Jan Alelkovich.

She was baptized at the Church of the Great Martyr Barbara in Sluck by the priest Fr. Matthew Stefanovich, and spent most of her early life in the family estate in Sluck, where she showed special interest in Orthodoxy from a young age. After the passing of her brothers, sisters and eventually her father in 1596, she was left as the sole inheritor

of her father's estate, and was placed under the guardianship of Lithuanian general Yuriy Yuriyovich Khodeyvch – of the Orthodox Khodeyvch family – a relative who had previously served as the Grand Marshal of the military of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth.

Even after her mother became a Uniate, she refused to abandon Orthodoxy. She kept with her a handwritten copy of the Gospels in Old Slavonic that her grandfather Yuri Alelkovich had made. She followed the example of her father and his piety, refusing to renounce Orthodoxy even as there were almost no Orthodox priests left in Belarus after the Union of Brest-Litovsk in 1596. She was very well educated, having been taught to read from a young age.

At the age of eleven, Zofia was noticed by a Polish nobleman, Janusz Radzwill, who was 26. Despite being a Calvinist, he developed an unclean obsession for the young Orthodox girl. Upon learning the Khodeyvch family had previously borrowed large sums of money from the Radzwill family, he demanded that they repay the debt with interest, or give him Zofia Alelkovich in marriage. Despite the Khodeyvch family managing to gather the funds to pay the debt, Janusz' father Kryzstof had the young Zofia forcibly brought into their castle and betrothed to Janusz.

Zofia was still under the legal guardianship of Yuriy Khodeyvch, which led to hostilities between the two families; the Khodeyvch family gathered 6,000 soldiers to besiege the Radzwill castle. However King Sigismund III Vaza eventually intervened and declared a ruling between the two families; with the Khodeyvch family receiving 360,000 zlotys and 500 hectares of land, and renouncing guardianship of Zofia Alelkovich. This ruling came as a result of a bribe of Jerzy Radzwill – a relative of Janusz Radzwill – who was a Judge for the King. Due to her being too young by Polish law to marry, the date of October 1st 1600 was set for the marriage between Janusz and Zofia, which happened to be the feast of the Protection of the Mother of God.

Despite many attempts to convert her to Calvinism and Catholicism, Zofia refused all of them. She remained in Sluck and patronized the Orthodox Church in Belarus with what she kept of her father's estate until 1600 – when Janusz and Zofia were finally married in a Catholic church in Brest. She continued to patronize the Orthodox, providing material and moral support for the Holy Transfiguration Monastery Brotherhood in Minsk to resist the Unia.

She wrote letters to King Sigismund III Vaza asking for more rights to be restored to the Orthodox. One of her prized possessions was an icon of the Protection of the Mother of God which was given to her as a gift at her wedding, having considered her situation to be similar to that of the Mother of God, who also did not wish to marry.

Her husband was a very crude and vainglorious man, but thankfully he often fought in the military campaigns of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and was rarely at home, leaving Zofia free to live piously and attend Church. She often visited the churches by walking to them on foot over long distances, she would volunteer to clean the churches and donated many of the pearls and gems her husband gave her to be used on church vessels.

She continued to patronize Orthodox Churches throughout Belarus including the Monastery in Zmeniy and the Resurrection Church in Minsk. Due to her efforts many of the Orthodox churches in Minsk, Sluck and elsewhere in Belarus remained open. She campaigned for the 1624 Religious Law – that declared properties that were used as Orthodox Churches to be taken away and given the Uniates – to be repealed.

She became with child in 1611, however she would repose during childbirth on March 6th 1612, with her only child being stillborn, in the village of Omelevo near Chervyen at the age of 26. She requested to be buried with her ancestors in the catacomb of the Monastery of the Holy Trinity in Sluck. An epitaph was added to her tomb several years after her repose by the poet Solomon Risinski that read: “Thou survived the constellation of stars in Sluck alone. In Lithuania, thou art a daughter of much glory! Aren't thou as much of a knight as thine proud husband pig? Yet the Power didst take thee unexpectedly!”

Shortly after her repose many miracles began to occur at her grave, including light shining from it in during the night and people being healed of spiritual and physical maladies. Many Orthodox faithful began to flock to her grave. An icon that belonged to her of the Protection of the Mother of God also began to work miracles and was eventually placed near her tomb.

Despite her writing in her will that she wished for what she owned of the estate to go to the Orthodox Church, her wicked husband Janusz Radzwill kept the money for himself. Later he would try to overthrow the King of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, and despite his martial prowess, would fail miserably and die penniless as a wanted criminal in 1620.

In the middle of the 19th century, the elderly Hieromonk Makariy who lived as a Hermit in the Belarusian forest, but had previously been a caretaker of the tomb of St. Zofia was asked to record the miracles that he witnessed from the time he served as the warden, his following writing recorded such:

“Miracles of the virtuous handmaiden of God, Zofia Alelkovich, whose relics are in the Monastery of the Holy Trinity in Minsk, and whose relics were incorrupt after uncovering:

In July 1811 I had gotten a severe affliction on my right hand, a disease like arthritis of which I suffered for five weeks. The pain was so great that it gave me insomnia, and for as many as nine days at a time, I could not sleep. I took many drugs which affected my appetite, and after a few weeks the disease went away. However in March 1815 the same thing happened again. It was worse than the last time, and knowing my unbearable pain I began to weep and was very afraid. I began to think, what should I do? I began to weep and pray before our Lord to help me and take this disease away from me.

It was after a while I thought perhaps I should visit the Minsk Monastery, where the Righteous Princess Zofia Alelkovich is sleeping. I visited the monastery and went to her tomb and started weeping with a broken heart, imploring her to heal my illness, I promised if she did so, I would speak about her to all of my friends. However my pain did not go away; and I declared if she were to heal me, I would no longer live in rebellion from God and appreciate all of His Graces.

After this prayer, my pain went away, and within a few days I was completely healed. Having a Christian conscience, I knew I had to keep my word I made before her tomb, or else a worse fate would befall me. I enrolled in the seminary and became a monk tonsured with the name Makariy: This is my own testimony about the Righteous Princess Zofia Alelkovich.

I heard shortly before I visited the Blessed Zofia, when the French Army gathered around the Monastery, and on July 7th there was a fierce battle between the Russians and French. Many of the Russian soldiers tried to persuade the monks to leave the Monastery, or at least bring the relics of Blessed Zofia away from the Monastery, to which the faithful of the city came and told the Russian officers: 'Do not move her, for she has told us that if her relics are moved, the city would be destroyed, and there would be much violence.'

The Russian Army rescinded their request, – and shortly thereafter, the French Army surrendered, thus fulfilling her side of the request – there was no violence and the city was left intact. In 1848 a fierce cholera outbreak began in Minsk and Sluck, and the townspeople requested me to allow a procession with the relics of Blessed Zofia throughout the city. There were two main routes which formed a Cross, and the relics were brought to the four corners of the city and at each of the stops, we etched a Cross into the stone sidewalks and sang hymns. After the procession, the cholera epidemic ceased.

A peasant child in a nearby village by the name Samuel Prokofiev-Shilovich was stricken with a terrible affliction in the eleventh year of his life: He was struck with lightning, and for four years was in a terrible stupor, being paralyzed and falling into

several comas. The doctors were powerless, and the fellow villagers considered the boy to be accursed and condemned, telling his parents: 'There is nothing you can do for the boy Samuel.'

Eventually the boy's mother asked for the relics of the Blessed Zofia to be brought to her son – as he was unable to move and visit them himself – she donated a good portion of silver that was to be used for taxes to fund this. Due to the village being far, I decided to have the silver cast into a bell, and placed the bell before the relics of the Blessed Zofia. The Saint saw the intention of this and the boy was healed soon after, and the villagers who denied he would ever be healed would have to tell him to get off the roofs of their homes!...

There was a saying amongst the people that Blessed Zofia had told people there would never be a fire on Yuriev street in Minsk and the people; residents and foreigners alike all believe this! Despite many fires starting in homes, they would all be put out by an invisible power before the firefighters could come... The maid Olga Baranovska, who served on the estate 'Nekrasha' and worked on the boilers, got tired with her life and fled from the estate. She moved into a homestead for 12 years and lived in a sinful manner, living with a boy whom she was not married to.

In her miserable state, she asked even for death and did not go to Church, with the only religious item that she kept being an engraved wreath made of porphyry, with an image of the Mother of God. One day the Mother of God appeared to her, in the place where the wreath was on the oven, and told her: 'Go to the Holy Trinity Monastery in Minsk, and find the tomb of Saint Zofia, there you will find healing.' She went and lit a candle before her tomb, donated her money to the Monastery, and on April 23rd confessed her sins, amending her life completely.”

After the report of Hieromonk Makariy spread throughout Russia, even more people came to venerate the relics of Saint Zofia Aleklovich, and in particular she showed great mercy to women during childbirth. A portrait of made during her lifetime still survives and was preserved. Today the portrait is kept in the National Art Museum in Minsk, Belarus. In the 19th century due to the increasing popularity of the Saint, her proto-icon was placed in the Holy Trinity Monastery Church, of which there have been many copies made since.

In icons she is depicted as a young noblewoman, usually with a white veil under her royal cap, holding a Cross in a prayerful gesture. In the 19th century many letters belonging to her and the original epitaph on her tomb were rediscovered. One of her letters to King Sigismund III Vasa read:

“By giving everyone the need and access for the Greek Russian Church, and throughout

the regions of Minsk, Sluck, Kapil, Zabluski, Nevelsiy, Sebezhsky and others... To be allowed in freedom to practice the Greek Faith and the power of the Church Canons and spiritual wealth of the Eastern Church. I charge also that the churches, archimandrites, hegumens, monasteries and brotherhoods in these regions to be immovable and preserved in perpetuity, without change in complete freedom...”

During the 19th century the relics of the New Martyr Gavril of Biaylostok were placed next to hers in the Holy Trinity Monastery. Moliebens were served at her grave consistently until the Bolsheviks came to power. Due to the amount of visitors to her and St. Gavril's tombs, their relics were moved to a separate chapel in 1904. In 1912 the Archimandrite Afansi wrote about how the chapel was decorated with gifts and signs bearing the names of grateful pilgrims and natives who were healed by St. Zofia.

In February 1930 the Bolsheviks seized the Holy Trinity Monastery and sent a “scientific committee” to “prove” that the incorruption of her and St. Gavril's relics were a hoax. Despite the committee acknowledging there was no signs of embalming, and that it was impossible for the bodies to have been preserved for so long otherwise, they still declared the relics to be a hoax – yet could not prove how – and placed their relics in a local museum.

During the Second World War, the Germans captured the city of Minsk, and allowed a monk by the name of Archimandrite Seraphim to take the relics from the museum and bring them back to the Monastery. As a result, after the war his actions were considered “treason” and “collaboration” with the German forces and he was executed by the Soviet state.

Only in 1984 was the Monastery of the Holy Trinity in Minsk re-opened for the public, with the relics of St. Zofia and St. Gavril once again available for public veneration. Recently in the later half of the 20th century, she has appeared to people and told them to pray for her stillborn daughter, whom she wanted to name Ekaterina. In the 20th century it was also discovered St. Petro Mohilya may have locally glorified her in the 1640s shortly before his repose, although whether or not he ever visited her relics is unknown.

---ST. LAURENCE OF TURAU---

Laurence was born in the princely capital of Turau most likely in the 1130s. His secular name, the names of his parents, and whether he was of princely birth is unknown. Some traditions say he was of princely or boyar background, but these cannot be confirmed. He was raised in a pious spirit by his parents, and from a young age renounced the world and was tonsured a monk with the name Laurence after St. Laurence the Archdeacon.

He lived in the Borisoglebsky Monastery in Turau, and there met the venerable Fathers

St. Cyril the pillar-dweller and the ascetical St. Martin of Turau. He became close to these great Saints and received much instruction from them. In the 1150s Fr. Laurence received a blessing from St. Cyril of Turau to move to the famous Kyiv-Pechersk Lavra; he set off on foot and arrived after a few weeks, after asking for the intercessions of Saints Anthony and Theodosius, and lived in the Hermitage in the Far Caves.

Being zealous for greater ascetical struggles, Fr. Laurence locked himself in a small cell, with barely any room to lay down. In the Kyiv Caves Patericon it is written that he began to live in “total seclusion” and practiced “extreme asceticism”. Living in total silence, he refused to speak any words by mouth that weren't dedicated to God, he guarded his thoughts carefully and wept daily. He put his temptations to flight by his prayers, humility and tears. It is also written in the Patericon that the trials St. Laurence endured in the Caves are “...only known by God.”

By his humility, tears, asceticism and heartfelt prayer, he gained the power to cast out demons and heal people of mental and physical illnesses. As written in the Patericon: “By the Grace of God, not only was he himself free from the wounding of demons, but received from the all-generous Lord the ability to miraculously heal various wounds, illnesses and ailments in people and cast out demons.”

He didn't want to show these gifts, but despite this he became known as a miracle-worker during his lifetime. After healing a demoniac before the Pechersk Mother of God icon, he returned to hermitic living in the Far Caves. After the repose of his beloved co-struggler St. Cyril of Turau in 1183 – who had become the Bishop of that city – the Metropolitan of Kyiv Nikephoros II had heard about Fr. Laurence's ascetical struggles and wished to consecrate him as the next Bishop of Turau.

Fr. Laurence accepted this position despite wishing to be unseen, and was consecrated in 1183. Vladyka Laurence's episcopal term coincided with the reign of Prince Svyatoslav Yurievich, who launched several campaigns against the Princes of Suzdal and Vladimir, Vladimir Mistislavich and Vladimir Yaroslavich. These wars went poorly for the Duchy of Turau-Pinsk and left the lands in ruins. Vladyka Laurence restored many destroyed churches and tried to negotiate a peace treaty among the princes.

While serving as the Bishop of Turau, he still made sure to take care of his spiritual life, always walking barefoot, wearing worn clothing and praying while standing on hills for long periods at a time. A contemporary account written about him states: “...his beard was split in two like the Theologian, with his episcopal cowl often on his shoulders over his riassa and cassock... he would always walk barefoot, no matter what season it was; in so doing caused so much damage to his feet, that he needed a cane...”

He was still working miracles while as a Bishop, and participated and organized many

Synods to ordain new clergy for the Church and deal with moral and political issues. He founded a new Monastery in Turau dedicated to the Great Martyr Demetrios, whom he had a deep reverence for. He continued to write letters to the Kyiv-Pechersk Lavra, and was present in 1184 when Fr. Basil was made the Hegumen of the Lavra.

Upon his return to Turau, he fell ill and asked to be relieved from the Episcopacy – which was soon granted – and he retired to the St. Demetrios Monastery, wishing to be treated as a simple monk. At an unknown date in late 1184 St. Laurence fell asleep in the Lord. There are differing accounts about his repose, but it is known he was buried in the Borisoglebsky Monastery – where he had originally taken monastic vows. Shortly after his repose, his relics were uncovered and discovered to be incorrupt, and miracles soon began to occur at his grave.

His veneration as a Saint began immediately after his repose. His life and miracles were recorded in the Kyiv Caves Patericon, and due to contemporary descriptions of his apperance, icons of him are quite distinct. The ancient date recorded for his veneration is January 29th, but it is not known if this is the day he reposed or not. He is also commemorated on September 28th with the Synaxis of All Saints of the Kyiv-Pechersk Lavra, on the Synaxis of All Belarusian Saints (third week after Pentecost), and on July 15th for all the Saints of Kyiv.