The New Martyr Soldier Evgeny of Chechnya (1984-2002)
Canonized on August 20th by the Russian Orthodox Church

In 1996, during the fighting between Russia and the Republic of Chechnya, a young soldier named Evgeny Rodionov, along with four other Russian border guards, were captured by the Chechens on February 14. Imprisoned and tortured for 3 months, he did not betray either his fatherland or his faith.

The Chechens promised not to kill the young Russian soldiers if they converted to Islam. The others agreed, but Evgeny refused to give up his cross and his Orthodox Christian faith. He was martyred on his 18th birthday, 6 months after he started his military service.

In a spontaneous, popular movement of among the Russian Orthodox people, the young soldier was recognized in many places in Russia as a martyr. His picture began to appear in many places, usually with the caption *"Martyred Soldier Evgeny."*

The New Martyr Evgeny the Soldier was canonized on August 20th, 2002. A giant wooden cross (over six feet high), paid with donations by the Russian people, was placed on his grave. Many people from different parts of Russia have come to visit his grave.

His mother, Lubov Radionova, donated his own cross, the one that he refused to give up, to St. Nicholas Church in Ordinka, Moscow. A Church in his name is to be build in Hankala, near Groziniy. It will be the only Orthodox Christian Church in Chechnya.