

# January 14

## *F. Leavetaking of Theophany*

**On this day the Feast of Lights is taken leave and "all the services of the Feast of Lights are repeated, evening and morning, except for the Entrance, Paramoedas, Polyeleon, and the Antiphons in the Liturgy" (see the Ustav [Typikon]).**

**Note the Chapter in the Ustav [Typikon] and Menaion: If the Leavetaking of Theophany falls on the Sunday before the Publican and the Pharisee; if it falls on January 14 the Sunday of the Publican and the Pharisee.**

## *Our Venerable Fathers Killed on Sinai and in Raithu*

On this day is commemorated the double killing of the Holy Fathers adorned with "Lenten valor", who practiced asceticism in the monasteries and caves of Mount Sinai and in the neighboring hermitage in Raithu on the shore of the Red Sea. The first happened about the year 300-311 by the Saracens and Blemmyes (one of the Arab tribes). Ammonius, an Egyptian monk was an eyewitness who described the event. The Saracens killed forty of the Holy Fathers on Mt. Sinai and the Blemmyes at the same time killed 39 fathers in Raithu. The eyewitness Monk Nilus described the second killing in the Fifth Century. Glorifying the Holy Fathers, the Church sings: "Blessed are the Venerable Ones and Martyrs of Christ God. For the Venerable Ones were banished for the sake of righteousness because the sword will not separate the Martyrs from the love of Christ". Paul, John, Theodulus and Nilus (see about them below) are mentioned in the service.

## *Kontakion, tone 2*

**Having escaped from worldly fame,  
And having died to the quiet refuge,  
You were crowned with the blood of martyrdom and labor of fasting:  
Therefore you demonstrated the universality of martyrs and venerable ones.**

**Epistle:** Rom. 8:28-39; sel. 99. **Gospel:** Lk. 6:17-23; sel. 24.

**Their service is sung on January 13, but as said above the Leavetaking of Theophany is sung on this day.**

**Venerable Fathers Isaiah, Sabbas, Moses and his disciple Moses, Jeremiah, Paul, Adam, Sergius, Domnus, Proclus, Hypatius, Isaac, Macarius,**

**Mark, Benjamin, Eusebius, Elias and others with them** are the Holy Fathers in Sinai and Raithu who were killed or practiced asceticism at that time.

*Ven. Stephen*

Imitating the life of great ascetics, he went around to many monasteries in Palestine. Everywhere he spent time in great labor, fasting and prayer. He accepted monasticism in Constantinople and was the founder of the Henolakkos [by the goose pond] Monastery in Bithynia, at Mount Oxia near Chalcedon. Having foreseen his death, he peacefully reposed in the Eighth Century.

*Ven. Theodulus*

The son of Ven. Nilus, who described the second killing of the Mt. Sinai hermits (see above), he together with his father practiced asceticism on Mt. Sinai. Captured by the barbarians during the second period of the killing of the Holy Fathers in Sinai and Raithu, he was chosen by them to be the sacrifice offering to the morning star, esteemed by them as divinity, but by the grace of God he was saved from this. Then sold into slavery, he was bought by the Bishop of Emesa. After this, as his father found him among the bishop's church clergy, St. Theodulus returned again with his father to Mt. Sinai where both practiced asceticism the remainder of their life and died in peace in the Fifth Century. Emperor Justin the Younger transferred their bodies to Constantinople and placed them into the Church of the Holy Apostles in Orphanotrophia.

*Ven. Joseph Analytinus*

A strict Raithuan ascetic, he reached such an amazing degree of perfection in his spiritual life that light shone on him during the time of prayer. Having predicted the time of his death to his disciple Gelasius, he peacefully died in the Fourth Century before the killing of the fathers of Mt. Sinai.

*Holy Equal-to-the-Apostles Nina, Enlightener of Georgia*

A niece of the Patriarch of Jerusalem Juvenal, she loved God with her whole heart from her youth and was deeply sorry for the people who have not been enlightened by the true faith. After this, her father Zebulon (he was a Cappadocian) left for a hermitage and her mother became a deaconess, St. Nina was educated by a certain pious elder nun. Often the stories this elder nun told about Iberia [present Georgia] about not yet being enlightened with the light of the faith in Christ, stirred up a strong desire in Nina's heart to visit this country to enlighten its inhabitants with the light of the Gospel. The desire became still

stronger when once she saw in a vision the Mother of God handing her a cross made from grapevines. And her desire came true: according to one tradition, St. Nina fled to Iberia [Georgia] to escape the persecution raised up by Diocletian, and according to another that she was captured and imprisoned by the Iberians. In Iberia [Georgia] St. Nina settled at the home of a certain woman in the imperial vineyards and very soon she became known in the area because of the wonderful help she rendered to all the suffering. The sick began to come to her in large numbers and through prayer she healed them and spoke to them about God who created the heavens and earth and about Christ the Savior. The sermon about Christ, the wonders St. Nina worked, and her virtuous life strongly affected the inhabitants of Iberia [Georgia] and many of them believed in the true God. She converted to Christ the Georgian Emperor Mirian who was formerly a pagan. Then priests and a bishop were called from Constantinople and the first in Iberia [Georgia] temple in the name of the Holy Apostles was constructed. Soon even all Iberia [Georgia] accepted Christianity. St. Nina, not loving honors or glory, left for a certain mountain and there in solitude thanked the Lord for the conversion of idolaters to Christianity. After a short time she abandoned her solitude and went to Kakhetia where she converted the Kakhetian Empress Sophia to Christianity. After 35 years of asceticism St. Nina peacefully died on January 14, 335. On the spot of her death Emperor Marianus constructed a temple in the name of the Great Martyr George. See July 10.

**Martyr Agnes** died in prison for her faith in Christ.

*S. V. Bulgakov, **Handbook for Church Servers**, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., 1274 pp. (Kharkov, 1900) pp. 0031-0032.  
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