

January 26

A. Our Ven. Father Xenophon, Wife Maria and Their Two Sons, Arcadius and John



Ven. Xenophon, notable Constantinopolitan grandee, was known for his pious life. His wife Maria imitated her husband. Both were simple in soul and good in heart: wealth and fame did not raise vanity and pride in their souls. Wishing to give their two sons, John (Refer to Mar. 30) and Arcadius, fuller formation, their parents sent them to Phoenician Beirut. By divine Providence the ship that both brothers were on was wrecked. The waves tossed the brothers to different places on the coast. With one grieving about the destiny of the other, the separated brothers dedicated themselves to God and entered into monasticism. Their parents, having met them after some years in Jerusalem and struck by their unusual fate, also accepted monasticism. All of them pleased God and were honored with eternal glory. They died peacefully in the Fifth Century.

Kontakion, tone 4

**You kept vigil in the commandments of the Master,
Distributing your wealth to the poor, O Blessed One,
Silently with your wife and children:
Therefore you inherited divine pleasure.**

Ven. Simeon the Ancient

From his youth he practiced asceticism for many years in perfect solitude in a cave in Syria. Strict fasting, continuous prayer, internal introspection and meditation of God were his constant occupation. For food, he ate the grass growing around the cave. When men began flowing down wishing to see him, breaking his vow of silence, he left this cave and settled on one of the mountains of the Aman range. But here also he did not find rest from the many flowing to him. Then he left for Mount Sinai.

But it was not the will of God for Ven. Simeon to remain on Mount Sinai: but that he should serve the salvation of others in the former place of his asceticism. And here he left the holy mountain and returned to Aman. Soon two monasteries for ascetics of piety appeared here: one at the top of

the mountain and the other at the foot of the mountain. Ven. Simeon at the same time was the teacher and leader of the monks. He warned them of the attacks and snares of the enemy against our salvation, encouraged and strengthened them in the asceticism of piety, raised their internal attention to introspection, had them develop meekness and condescension for their neighbors and magnanimity towards their enemies. A vigilant man of prayer and strict faster, he received from God the grace to rule over the most ferocious beasts.

The holy ascetic reposed about the year 390. He was called ancient to distinguish him from Simeon the New, whose memory is celebrated on September 1 and who lived after him.

Martyrs Presbyter Ananias, and Prison Sacristan Peter and Seven Warriors

The Holy Presbyter Ananias suffered in the Diocletian persecution. Arraigned before the court by a denunciation of an idolater, he mocked the pagan deities before all the people and bravely preached about Christ. For this they beat Ananias with iron canes, branded him with a heated iron and poured vinegar and salt on his wounds. Imprisoned after these tortures, St. Ananias was comforted with the appearance angels. After this wonderful appearance the prison guard Peter and seven warriors converted to Christ. After they converted they bravely confessed their own faith in Christ and for this they after severe torture and the holy presbyter were drowned in the sea, at Phoenicia.

Translation of the Relics of Ven. Theodore, Hegumen of Studion, and the Commemoration of his Brother Joseph, Bishop of Thessalonica

The relics of St. Theodore (see Nov. 11) were transferred from Akrita, Chersonese to Constantinople and placed in the same place with the relics of his uncle St. Plato (see Apr. 5) and his brother Joseph in the Studite Monastery in 845 during the reign of Patriarch Methodius. St. Joseph suffered from the iconoclasts and died in exile in the year 830. The relics of Sts. Theodore and Joseph were seen by the pilgrim Anthony in 1200. These saints composed the Lenten Triodion which, however, was expanded in its composition after them until the Fourteenth Century (see the Triodion below).

Ven. Gabriel, Hegumen of Jerusalem, died peacefully in the Fifth Century.

St. David III, King of the Georgians (1089-1125)

St. David was called the "renewer" because in mind and activity he lifted up his state that was almost completely destroyed. He was also the renewer of his local church. Conquering enemies, the pious king restored destroyed temples and holy monasteries, patronized education and convoked councils for the restoration of order in church affairs. Visiting temples of God, the king in full reverence heard the word of God and the writings of the Holy Fathers. At home his favorite occupation was reading the divine books. For the aging and the poor he built alms-houses, hospitals and covered all their needs from his own substance. Often he visited the sick in person, calmed them, increased their patience, tied up their wounds, brought food and by that set a good example for others. With good advice and comfort he wiped the tears of those crying and gave a helping hand to all the poor and those needing help. Among the constant cares and labors for the good of his country, David approached the hour of death and peacefully died in 1130 at the age of 53 years. His body was buried in the Gelati Monastery built by him.

*S. V. Bulgakov, Handbook for Church Servers, 2nd ed., 1274 pp. (Kharkov, 1900), pp 0051-0052.
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