

March 12

F. Ven. Theophanes, Confessor of Sigriana

He was born in Constantinople in 760 of rich, famous and pious parents. Orphaned since childhood, he was taken to the court of Emperor Constantine Copronymus for his formation. In adolescence he was betrothed to the young daughter of the patrician (senator) Leo whom he married upon reaching his majority according to the will of Leo. The God-loving youth from the first day of his marriage agreed with his wife to protect their chastity and lived together as brother and sister, distributing bountiful favors to the needy and preparing for monastic life. In 780 Theophanes, having freed all his slaves and having used most of his huge estate for works of charity, accepted monasticism, having settled in Polychronius locale (on Mount Sigriana) and built a monastery there. At the same time his wife also became a nun, entered into a monastery on Princes Islands (Sea of Marmara). Later the Ven. Theophanes built a monastery on Kalonymos Island (Sea of Marmara), and another in the Sigriana Mountains, within 30 versts (20 miles) from Cyzicus, and in this latter monastery he was the hegumen for about 27 years. As a skilful writer, he occupied himself with copying sacred books that fed not only him, but also others. Besides his labor of love he set an example for his brethren in prayerful efforts, trust in God, patience, disinterestedness, fasting and strictness with himself, unfeigned love, friendliness with his neighbor and humility. He liked to visit neighboring monasteries to talk with the elders and all of the brethren and received through these conversations useful and instructive information. For his strict ascetic life he was glorified by God with signs and wonders, gifts of healing incurable diseases, expulsion of evil spirits, dominion over natural elements, insight and prophecy. Struck in the 50th year of his life with a serious illness, he did not ask God for recovery, but endured his suffering with patience and thanksgiving. As a zealous iconolater, during the reign of the iconoclast Emperor Leo the Armenian he was taken to Constantinople, put into prison, starved, dehydrated and subjected to other bitter afflictions. But nothing could shake the faith of the Holy Elder (starets). "Enduring bitter exile in infirmity" he "patiently persevered, not sparing his body for the precious icons". After two years languishing in a darkened Constantinople prison he was banished to imprisonment on Samothrace Island where within 23 days, knowing beforehand the day of his death, he turned over his spirit to God in 818. The "holy confessor of Christ, a second Job, an adornment of monks, the organizer of love, the favorite husband of all, man of God, eye of many tears, the inquisitive mind enriched with divine insight, constantly chaste and distinguished by wisdom, in view of the monastic image, well-known and excellent in monastic perfection", having finished his holy life witnessed by his travails, wonderworker during his life, he was glorified by the Lord and after his death by the incorruptibility of his relics and works of wonder.

The holy confessor left for us his "Chronographia" (annals of events) from 285 to 813.

Kontakion, tone 2

**Having received divine revelation from above,
With care you left living fame,
And having lived in solitude, O Venerable One,
You accepted the wonder of action,
And the worthiness of prophecy,
Having lost wealth and wife.**

Holy Righteous Phinehas

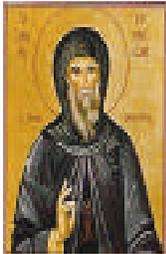
The grandson of the Old Testament high priest Aaron, he was a priest, and then the high priest. He abhorred evil and with own hands struck the breakers of the law of God, for that he received from God the forgiveness of his people, and the hereditary priesthood (Num. 22-25). He died peacefully in old age and was buried in the town of Gibeah, about 1500 years before the Nativity of Christ.

St. Gregory Dialogus, Pope of Rome

He was born in Rome (about the year 540) of rich, famous and pious parents and received a brilliant education. First he held the honorable post of praetor in Rome, but soon, having concluded that temporal life is vanity, he sold all the property inherited from his parents, and used the money on works of charity and on the construction of monasteries in Rome and he himself accepted monasticism. He settled in one of the monasteries he built and, not looking back on his frequent severe illnesses, he began strictly to carry out all the rules of monastic life: his abstinence, nightly vigil, prayer and obedience were examples for the other monks of the monastery. In 577 he was ordained a deacon, and in 590 he was elected Archbishop of Rome. In this high office he tirelessly labored for the good of the church and his flock. He sent Augustine to England, (who in 597 baptized King Ethelbert), he concerned himself with the formation of clergy and zealously fought against simony. He introduced the best order into church management and stopped dissensions. He labored hard at correcting the divine service rites and gave to the order of the services much of the same form that is kept hitherto. He founded a school for singers and established a way of chanting that bears his name. He sincerely preached to the people and also motivated the clergy. Together with this St. Gregory was unusually philanthropic: he sent help to monasteries and temples, he gave bread, vegetables and fish to the poor on the first day of each month and ransomed captives from the cruelty of the Lombards. When a poor person was found dead on a street of the city, St. Gregory for a short time refrained from performing the Eucharist, as though including himself as guilty of his death. St.

Gregory died in 604. His relics are in the Vatican Cathedral of the Apostle Peter. He wrote: "Dialogues on the Lives of the Italian Fathers" the treatise for which he was also called Dialogus; "Pastoral Rule" (Regula __st_r_lis), containing instructions on what a pastor should be and how he should execute his duties; the Order of the Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts (see the details below, in the Practical Church section); Commentaries on the Gospels and on the Book of the Prophet Ezekiel; Letters and so forth.

St. Simeon, the New Theologian



Born in Galatia, Paphlagonia, the son of notable parents, with a brilliant education, he, burning with love for asceticism, entered the Studite Monastery while yet a youth, where there were the strictest ascetics. Having been transferred to the Monastery of St. Mamas, he was elected hegumen and ordained a presbyter. For his holy life the Lord granted him the gift of insight and wonders. He died peacefully in 1022. Within 30 years his relics were found incorruptible and became known for many miracles. St. Simeon left many treatises on the spiritual life where he talks about those mysteries of inner asceticism never before heard, and for this he was called the new theologian.

Roman Icon of the Mother of God

Originally this icon was represented invisible by the power of God in the days of the apostles on a column in the Temple of the Most Holy Theotokos, created by the Apostles Peter and John in Lydda, and became known as wonderworking. In the beginning of the 8th Century according to an order of St. Germanus, Patriarch of Constantinople, a copy of this icon was made, which is called of Lydda according to its origin, and Roman because this copy was in Rome for more than 100 years.

*S. V. Bulgakov, **Handbook for Church Servers**, 2nd ed., 1274 pp. (Kharkov, 1900) pp 0109-0110
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