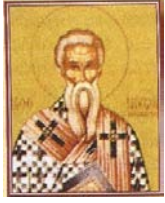


## March 23

### *B. Holy Ven. Martyr Nikon and Two Hundred of his Disciples*



At first, St. Nikon was a warrior, but then, after he wonderfully made himself sure of the truth of the Christian faith, he was baptized by Bishop Theodosius of Cyzicus in Thrace and began to lead a monastic life with him in the wilderness. Dying, Theodosius entrusted him with his 190 disciples and consecrated him a bishop. Nikon and all the monks went to Sicily and on the way converted 9 more people to Christ. They all settled near the city of Tauromenium [Taormina] in Sicily. During the Decius persecution in 250, St. Nikon and his disciples underwent terrible torture, accompanied by wonderful signs, and, finally, he was executed by the sword. His disciples received the same crown of martyrdom.

### *Ven. Nikon, Hegumen of the Monastery of the Caves*

First disciple and co-laborer of Ven. Anthony, he came to him already a priest. With his blessing he tonsured all the newly arrived monks. For tonsuring the favorites of Great Prince Iziaslav, Barlaam and Ephraim, the anger of prince fell upon him and he was exiled to the Tmutarakan (Taman) Peninsula, where together with another monk of the monastery, St. Menas, he founded a monastery with a church in the name of the Theotokos. When he returned to the Kievan Monastery of the Caves, Ven. Theodosius rendered him the most respectful love.

According to Nestor's Chronicles, Ven. Theodosius, needing to go somewhere, put Nikon in charge of leading all the brethren. Sometimes he asked Nikon to teach the brethren instead of himself. Quite often, when Nikon sat and bound books, Theodosius sat by him and spun the thread needed for this business.

After Hegumen Stephen was removed from the Kiev Monastery of the Caves, St. Nikon was elected Hegumen of this monastery. He labored much to adorn his monastery with painted icons and mosaics. After pleasing God for a long time with his asceticism, Nikon peacefully died on March 23, 1088. His relics are in the Ven. Anthony Cave.

### *Martyr Philetus the Syncleticos (Senator), his wife Lydia and their children Macedonius and Theoprepus, St. Cronides the Notary and Amphilocius the Dux (leader)*

All these martyrs suffered for Christ during the reign of Hadrian. Their suffering began in Rome but ended in Illyricum. Thrown in boiling oil, they remained whole and unharmed. Wishing to unite with Christ sooner, the martyrs asked for death for themselves and by prayer they departed to the Lord. Cronides and Amphilocius, seeing the steadfastness of St. Philetus, converted to Christ.

*Martyr Dometius of Phrygia* was beheaded by the sword during the reign of Julian the Apostate.

*New Ven. Martyr Luke of Mitylene*

When he was a boy, the Turks converted him to Islam. Having recognized his sin, he left for Mount Athos and was tonsured a monk. Later, having come to Mitylene, he declared himself a Christian and the Turks hanged him for this on March 23, 1384.

*Repose of Ven. Pachomius of Nerekhta*

In the world James [Jacob], son of a priest of the city of Vladimir on the Klyazma, when seven years old he "was given to learn from the sacred books" and that is why from childhood "he was skilled in the divine writings", and he was accustomed, as often it was possible, to visit the temple of God. Desiring to renounce the world, he soon accepted monasticism in the Vladimir Nativity Monastery and like a lamb being led to the slaughter he spent his time doing various obediences in the Monastery. When it was revived in 1362 in Vladimir as the Equal-of-the-Apostles Constantine and Helena Monastery (now a parish church), Pachomius was named its Hegumen.

Aspiring to the silent eremitic life, he secretly left the monastery and left for the area of Nerekhta, Kostroma Province. Bypassing surrounding places, he finally selected a place according to his thinking (Sypanovo, on the river Gridevka) and with the blessing of St. Alexis constructed a monastery here with a Temple of the Holy Trinity (abolished in 1764; now the large village of Trinity-Sypanovo, Kostroma Province, 2 versts [1.3 miles] from Nerekhta).

According to the Ustav [Typikon] of the venerable, no one should have property in his monastery. All are obliged to eat from the labor of their hands. The venerable one, cultivating the ground, even plowed it himself, setting an example for the others.

The Venerable One practiced asceticism in this monastery for many years, teaching virtue to the neighboring inhabitants and healing their illnesses.

He died on March 23, 1384. His relics repose in a hidden place in the church he constructed (now a parish).

*Suffering of St. Basil [Vasili] Mangazeisky*

Son of a petty Iaroslavsky merchant, he served as a clerk for a merchant in the city of Mangazea (in northern Siberia). Hardworking and honorable Basil was distinguished with special piety: he loved to visit the temple of God, fervently prayed at home, helped the needy according to his strength and visited the sick.

His owner was a greedy and cruel person and the holy martyr suffered much from him. Once, during Paschal Matins, the bench of the merchant was robbed. The merchant accused St. Basil for this, subjected him to torture and, finally, killed him with a bunch of keys, and threw the body of the holy sufferer into a marshy place. This happened on March 23, 1600. Through 50 years the grave of St. Basil seemed to be atop of the bog and signs and wonders began to be shown from it.

In 1670 the uncorrupt relics of St. Basil were transferred to the Turukhansky Trinity monastery (see Yenisei [Enisei] Diocese) and were placed in a wealthy reliquary there. In the new place of repose many wonders were done from the relics of St. Basil [Vasili]. The memory of the local holy martyr is revered in all of Siberia.

*S. V. Bulgakov, **Handbook for Church Servers**, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., 1274 pp. (Kharkov, 1900), pp. 0117c-0118.  
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