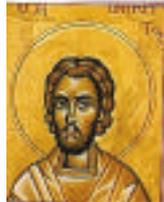


August 12

g. The Holy Martyrs Photius and Anicetus and many others with them who suffered for Christ under Diocletian in Nicomedia.



St. Anicetus, the leader of a military group in Nicomedia, accused the emperor of impurity and of spilling the innocent blood of the Christians. The angry emperor turned him over to cruel torture, after which he commanded that the martyr be thrown to wild beasts. But the lion that was loosed on him became so meek that it caressed him. Anicetus prayed to God and a strong earthquake occurred, destroying the temple of idols, collapsing a part of the city wall and killing many pagans. The angry torturer ordered the saint beheaded, but the executioner lifting up his sword, himself fell dead without feeling; they began to break the martyr on the wheel, but the wheel stopped; they started to burn him, but fire went out; they threw him into molten tin, but the tin cooled down. Then the nephew of martyr, Photius, greeted him and began fearlessly to accuse the king. Photius was seized, and the executioner raised the sword over his head, but the raised sword struck the executioner himself. Meanwhile the torturer ordered the construction of a vast furnace for the confessors of Christ. Anicetus and Photius were among the first to enter this furnace, and behind them came many others saying: "we are Christians"! All died with prayers on their lips. The bodies of Saints Anicetus and Photius were shown to be perfectly intact. This was about the year 306.

We sing the service to the **Venerable Maximus** on this day.

The **Martyrs Pamphilus and Captain** were beheaded for their faith in Christ.

Hieromartyr Alexander, Bishop of Comana (in Pontus).

He lived in city of Comana, near Neocaesarea. At first he was a simple charcoal dealer and with this occupation he earned his livelihood. Being always

found black with soot and in old clothes, St. Alexander seemed to everyone to be a simple man and not a scholar. Meanwhile he while working found time to enrich his mind with useful knowledge, and thoroughly studied the Holy Scriptures and in the purity of his heart surpassed many. When the bishop of the city died, the citizens asked Gregory the Wonderworker, Bishop of Neocaesarea, to nominate as him as bishop. Many rich, noble, eloquent and of majestic mien city dwellers stood before St. Gregory at the request of the citizens, but he hesitated to make the election, awaiting notice of the will of God. Many grumbled at the bishop and said that if he does not pay attention to the external position of the elected, but of his place, as expressed by St. Gregory, then maybe it is necessary to elect the charcoal dealer Alexander as bishop. St. Gregory thought to himself that it was not without the will of God to have mentioned the name of the charcoal dealer and wished to see him. Being led into the assembly, Alexander generated general laughter by his blackened appearance. But St. Gregory began to see clearly in him a man worthy of the rank of bishop, and, having secretly asked the people about him, decided to insist on the election of Alexander. After he washed and was dressed in decent clothes Alexander again was brought into the people's assembly and before all revealed wisdom and knowledge of the Holy Scriptures all of which he learned by the will of God, the assembly unanimously elected the charcoal dealer as bishop. St. Alexander quite justified the acclamation on him of the hope of the citizens: he pastured the flock of Christ with all zealousness, was charitable, meek, magnanimous, tireless in his work. During the persecution under Diocletian, the hierarch sealed his worthy service by a martyr's death.

The **Venerable Palamon**, guide of the Venerable Pachomius, was tonsured at the beginning of the Fourth Century in Egypt.

*S. V. Bulgakov, **Handbook for Church Servers**, 2nd ed., 1274 pp. (Kharkov, 1900) pp 279-280
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