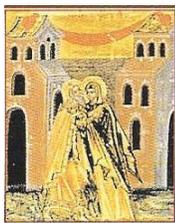


September 23

*G. + Conception of the Honorable, Glorious, Prophet, Forerunner
and Baptist of the Lord John*



(Luke 1:5-25). See January 7, June 24 and September 5.

Troparion, tone 4

**Be glad, O barren one,
Who before did not give birth:
For behold you have conceived a Lamp of the Sun
To openly illumine the whole universe, sick with blindness:
Exult, Zechariah, crying out with boldness:
The prophet of the Most High is about to be born.**

Kontakion, tone 1

**Great Zechariah is radiantly glad,
With his wife, the all glorious Elizabeth,
For she worthily conceives John the Forerunner,
Whom the Archangel announced rejoicing,
And whom we humans worthily honor as the hidden passage of grace.**

**The service is prescribed for this day as a ✙ feast with Polyeleon.
Epistle: see September 9. Gospel: Lk. 1:5-25; sel. 2.**

*Martyrs Andrew and John and the children of John: Peter and
Antonina*

They were born in the city of Syracuse, Sicily and suffered for Christ in Africa by a certain Saracen sovereign in the 9th century during the reign of Basil the Macedonian.

Martyr Iraida (Rhais, Raissa)

She was born in Alexandria where she practiced asceticism in one of the monasteries. Once seeing a group of imprisoned Christians who were being led to torture, she voluntarily joined them and was the first decapitated after their arrival in Antinoe, Egypt about the year 310.

Venerable Xanthippe and Polyxenia

Women disciples of the Holy Apostles, they labored much for the conversion of pagans to Christ and died peacefully in Spain.

Martyr Nicholas the Grocer

Born in the town of Karpenesi, Greece he was slandered by the Turks as accepting Islam when he was 15 years old, but he confessed being a Christian and for this he was tortured and beheaded in Constantinople in 1672. His relics are in the Zeropotamou Monastery on Mount Athos.

Martyr John

Born in Konitsa (Konica) in ancient Epirus, he suffered for his faith in Christ by the Turks in Aetolian Vrachori in 1814.

Slovenian Icon of the Most Holy Theotokos

This icon appeared in 1635 (but according to other sources in 1628). On this icon the Mother of God, having inclined His head to the right side, looks at the Divine Child, half-lying on her robes. The Savior with his right hand touches the face of the Mother of God, who holds her Divine Son with both hands: with her left hand under the shoulder of the right hand of the Divine Child, and with her right hand his feet, and her hand touches His right hand lowered downwards. Today this icon is found in Kostroma province in the former (abolished in 1764) Slovenian Hermitage (now called New Slovenian).

*S. V. Bulgakov, Handbook for Church Servers, 2nd ed., 1274 pp. (Kharkov, 1900) pp. 0346-0347
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