

**Martyrs, Saints & Prelates
of
The Syriac Orthodox Church
Volume VII**

Cor-Episcopo K. Mani Rajan, M.Sc., M.Ed., Ph.D.



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Dedicated to

St. Osthatheos Sleeba

(AD 1908 - 1930)

Delegate of the Holy See of Antioch

**Martyrs, Saints & Prelates of
The Syriac Orthodox Church
(Volume VII)**

Cor-Episcopo K. Mani Rajan

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Foreword

In this seventh installment of his *Saints, Martyrs and Prelates of the Syrian Orthodox Church* Cor-episcopo Mani Rajan provides a further set of fifty mini-biographies. As he indicates in the Introduction, some of those included will be less familiar to the general reader; among these will be the father, also named Gregory, of the famous Gregory of Nazianzus, the ‘Theologian’ par excellence; and few people will have heard of David, bishop of Harran (and uncle of St Simeon of the Olives) at the turn of the eighth/ninth century. Much more familiar, however, will be various names of persons who are known from the New Testament: thus, for example, we encounter not only Aquila (husband of Priscilla), and Lydia, the seller of purple, both known from the Acts of the Apostles, but also Pontius Pilate along with his wife Procula. Several of the Seventy-Two apostles also feature, and a list of all their names is provided in the Appendix. Appropriately at a time of great suffering for many Christians in Western Asia, there are a number of Persian martyrs, such as Pethion and the deacon Benjamin. Women are well represented, for beside the New Testament women we also find Julitta, Sophia, Susanna and Theodosia. Monastic saints include Bishoe

(a flourishing monastery under his name exists today in Egypt), Abba Isaiah (whose writings remain favourite reading for many modern Coptic Orthodox monks), and Abraham of Kashkar, the reviver of monasticism in the Church of the East in the sixth century. The sole modern bishop included in this volume is the learned Mor Gregorios Paulos Behnam, bishop of Baghdad, who died in 1969. In the list of the Syrian Orthodox Patriarchs, given in the Appendix, for the more recent Patriarchs the dates of their visits to Malankara are helpfully provided.

Sebastian Brock
Oriental Institute, Oxford
England

Acknowledgement

The seventh volume on *Martyrs, Saints & Prelates of the Syrian Orthodox Church* contains fifty biographies. The volumes I to VI were published in 2007, 2012, 2013, 2016, 2017 and 2018 respectively. I am grateful to all those who supported me in many different ways in authoring and publishing these volumes.

Although biographies of saints and martyrs are available in Syriac and Arabic languages, only a few have been translated either into Malayalam or English. This volume includes a few saints who are less familiar to the faithful but a good number of them are commemorated in the Church.

I am grateful to Prof. Sebastian Brock, Former faculty of Oriental Studies, University of Oxford/Wolfson College, UK, for sparing time to write a preface to this final volume.

The draft of the manuscript was edited and corrected by Prof. Usha Skaria, Retired faculty member of Vimala College, Thrissur. Prof. Usha has spared much of her time in helping this publication. I am grateful to her for the suggestions and corrections.

I am much obliged to JSC Publications, Puthencruz, for taking up the publication of the book. I sincerely thank Mr. Julius C. Abraham, M/s Megapixel Graphics, Kottayam, for the layout and cover design of the book. The printing was done by M/s Mor Julius Press, Puthencruz.

I earnestly wish and hope that the English speaking Diaspora of the Syriac Orthodox Church will find this book useful to understand the life and teachings of our Church fathers. I am happy that I could bring out this volume on the 68th *Dukhrono* of St. Osthatheos Sleeba.

Kunnamkulam Cor-episcopo (Dr.) K. Mani Rajan
19 March, 2019

Abbreviations Used

| | |
|----------|--------------------------------|
| c. | - Circa, meaning approximately |
| d. | - death |
| ed. | - edition |
| cf. | - compare with |
| Ed. | - Editor |
| Eds. | - Editors |
| Fr. | - Father |
| H.E. | - His Eminence |
| H.G. | - His Grace |
| H.H. | - His Holiness |
| M. E. | - Malayalam Era |
| MSS | - Manuscript |
| n.d | - no date |
| p. | - Page |
| pp. | - Pages |
| rev. ed. | - revised edition |
| St. | - Saint |
| Sts. | - Saints |
| Trans. | - Translator(s) |
| Vol. | - Volume |

1. Apostle Aquila

(First Century)

Saint Aquila, is one among the seventy-two Apostles. He, a native of Pontus and a Jew, living in the city of Rome with his wife Priscilla (Acts 18:2) was a disciple of Apostle Paul. During the reign of Emperor Claudius (A.D. 41-54) when all the Jews were banished from Rome, Saint Aquila and his wife were compelled to leave. They settled in Corinth. A short while later, the holy Apostle Paul arrived there from Athens preaching the Gospel. Having made the acquaintance of Aquila, he lived at his house and was engaged with him, making tents which was his occupation (<https://oca.org/saints/lives/2019/07/14/101950-apostle-aquila-of-the-seventy>).

Having received baptism from Apostle Paul, Aquila and Priscilla became his devoted and zealous disciples. They accompanied the apostle to Ephesus. Apostle Paul instructed them to continue the preaching of the Gospel at Ephesus, and he himself went to Jerusalem, in order to be present for the feast of the Pentecost. At Ephesus, Aquila and Priscilla heard the bold preaching of a newcomer from Alexandria, the Jew Apollos. He had been instructed in the fundamentals of the Faith

but knew only about the baptism of John the Fore-runner. They called him over and explained more precisely about the way of the Lord.

After the death of Emperor Claudius, Jews were permitted to return to Italy, and Aquila and Priscilla then came back to Rome. Apostle Paul in his Epistle to the Romans entreats his faithful disciples, “Greet Priscilla and Aquila, my co-workers in Christ Jesus, who put forth their heads for my soul, whom I do not alone thank, but also all the Church of the Gentiles and the church of their household” (Rom. 16: 3-4). Saint Aquila did not long dwell in Rome: Apostle Paul ordained him bishop in Asia. Saint Aquila zealously laboured at preaching the Gospel in Asia, Achaia and Heraklia. He converted pagans to Christ, he confirmed newly-converted Christians in the faith, he established presbyters and destroyed their idols. Saint Priscilla constantly assisted St. Paul in the apostolic work. Saint Aquila died a martyr: pagans murdered him. According to the traditional belief of the Church, Saint Priscilla was killed along with him.

2. St. Christina

(Third century)

St. Christina (of Tyre or Bolsena) lived during the third century. She was the daughter of Urban (Urbain), the governor of Tyre. Urban was an

ardent idol worshipper (https://www.catholic.org/saints/saint.php?saint_id=148). Christina means 'Little Christ' or 'follower of Christ'. He wanted her daughter to be a pagan priestess. He locked her up in a room which had a number of golden idols and instructed her to burn incense before the idols. While Christina was locked up in the room she prayed to the creator of the world and asked him to reveal himself to her. She began to fast and continued to pray. An angel came to Christina and taught her the gospel of Christ. She was then called a bride of Christ, but warned she would suffer for her faith.

Being enlightened of the truth, Christina broke the idols and distributed the pieces among the poor. (<http://magnificat.ca/cal/en/saints/christina.html>). Infuriated by this act, Urban became the persecutor of his own daughter. Urban had her whipped and thrown her into the prison. Her tormentor brought her forth to have her body torn by iron hooks, then she was fastened to a rack beneath which a fire was kindled.

The torments to which this young girl was subjected to would seem as difficult to devise and imagine. But God was beside her at all times. Christina was thrown into the lake of Bolsena, but was rescued by an angel and was seen walking on the water accompanied by several angels.

After the death of Urban, Governor Dion succeeded him. He was a cruel pagan experienced in persecuting the Christians. He tried to win her

over by reminding her of her nobility, suggesting she was in serious error. Her reply infuriated him: “Christ, whom you despise, will tear me out of your hands!” Then Saint Christina suffered the most inhuman torments. The governor also was struck down by divine justice. Like Urban, Dion also suffered an unexpected death. A third one named Julian, succeeded him. “Magician!” he cried, “adore the gods, or I will put you to death!” She survived a raging furnace, after remaining in it for five days. Serpents and vipers thrown into her prison did not touch her but killed the magician who had brought them there. She dispersed them in the name of Christ, after restoring the unfortunate magician to life; he was converted and thanked the God of Christina and the Saint. Later her tongue was cut off.

The Saint prayed to be allowed to finish her course. She was pierced with arrows, and finally gained the martyr’s crown at Tyre, a city which formerly stood on an island in the lake of Bolsena in Italy but has since been swallowed up by the waters. Her relics are now at Palermo in Sicily. Her tomb was discovered in the 19th century at Bolsena, marked with an inscription dating from the 10th century (<https://spiritualray.com/life-of-saint-christina>).

The region’s governor was sent to execute St. Christina’s punishment in her father’s stead but she survived every torture. When fellow believers discovered the miracles, they began to gather at

her cell. During her time in captivity, she converted nearly 300 people until a new governor arrived and resumed her torture. When she survived five days in a red-hot furnace, she was finally executed with a sword. The feast of St. Christina is celebrated in the Syrian Orthodox Church on 24 July.

3. Prophet Micah

(8th Century B.C.)

Prophet Micah, the 6th of the twelve minor Prophets, descended from the tribe of Judah and was a native of the city of Morastha, to the south of Jerusalem, wherefore he was called a Morasthite. His prophetic service began around the year 778 before the birth of Christ and continued for almost 50 years under the kings of Judah – Joatham, Akhaz, and the Righteous Hezekiah (721-691 B.C.).

He was a contemporary of Prophet Isaiah. His denunciations and predictions were in regard to the separate kingdoms both of Judah and of Israel. He foresaw the misfortunes, threatening the kingdom of Israel before its destruction, and of Judah, during the incursions under the Assyrian emperor Sennacherib. To him belongs a prophecy about the birth of the Saviour of the world: “But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in

Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting” (Mic. 5: 2). From the words of Prophet Jeremiah (Jer. 26: 18-19), the Jews evidently were afraid to kill Prophet Micah. His relics were discovered in the IV Century after the Birth of Christ at Baraphsatia, through a revelation to the bishop of Eleutheropolis, Zeuinos. The feast of Prophet Micah is celebrated in the Syrian Orthodox Church on 10 and 14 August.

4. St. Eutychius, Disciple of Apostle John (First/Second Century A.D.)

The Hieromartyr Eutychius, a disciple of the holy Apostles John the Theologian and Paul, lived from the first century into the beginning of the second century, and was from the Palestinian city of Sebastea.

Although Saint Eutyches is not one of the 72 Apostles, he is called an Apostle because of his labors with the older Apostles, by whom he was made bishop. After hearing about Christ the Savior, Saint Eutyches first became a disciple of Apostle John the Theologian. Later he met Apostle Paul and preached together with him on the early journeys (<https://oca.org/saints/lives/2013/08/24/102383-hieromartyr-eutyches-the-disciple-of-st-john-the-theologian>).

Saint Eutyches underwent many sufferings: they starved him, beat him with iron rods, threw him into the fire, and then cast him among wild beasts to be devoured. Once, a lion was let loose upon the saint, which astonished everyone because it praised the Creator with a human voice. The hieromartyr Eutyches completed his labors in his native city, where he was beheaded with a sword at the beginning of the second century. The feast of St. Eutychius is celebrated in the Syrian Orthodox Church on 29 May.

5. Gregory of Nazianzus, the Elder

(c. A. D. 276 – 374)

Gregory of Nazianzus, the Elder, was the bishop of Nazianzus in the Roman province of Cappadocia (now in Turkey). Gregory was convinced by his wife Nonna to convert to Christianity in 325. Both Gregory and Nonna came from wealthy families, and Gregory was able to personally finance the construction of a church in the region. In 328, Gregory was selected as bishop of Nazianzus, a position he held until his death. At one point, Gregory subscribed to an Arian understanding of the Trinity. However, this was for a very brief time and he quickly renounced that position.

Four children were born to Gregory and Nonna. Two daughters, Saint Gorgonia and Sophia; and two brothers, Caesarius and Gregory. Their younger son, Caesarius of Nazianzus, studied in Caesarea Mazaca and at Alexandria and became a physician (<https://www.britannica.com/biography/Saint-Gregory-of-Nazianzus>).

He served in Constantinople as the court physician for both Constantius II and Julian the Apostate, and died in 368. Their elder son, also named Gregory (the Younger is more famous and often known as ‘the Theologian’), served alongside his father first as a priest, and then as coadjutor. Gregory the Younger would later become the Patriarch of Constantinople. The feast of Gregory of Nazianzus, the Elder is celebrated in the Syrian Orthodox Church on 25 January.

6. Mor Gregorius Paulos Behnam

(1914 - 1969)

Sarkis, a monk with three others were tonsured at the ancient Monastery of St. Matthew near Mosul, Iraq on 15 August 1935 (Matti Moosa, 2014).



At the end of the celebration of the Eucharist, Dionysius Yuhanna Mansurati, metropolitan of the monastery, assisted by Athanasius Tuma

Qasir, metropolitan of Mosul, vested Sarkis and his companions with monastic habits, and changed Sarkis' name into Bulus (Paulos).

In 1938, Paulos was appointed a teacher at St. Ephraim Seminary in Zahle, Lebanon, a position he took after spending three years as a monk in the monastery. In 1945, the Patriarch Apheram I Barsoum (d. 1957) transferred Paulose from St. Ephraim Seminary, Zahle, Lebanon to Mosul, Iraq. He chose as its principal the dynamic and learned young monk, Bulus Behnam, who became instrumental in the religious and cultural awakening of the Syrian Church in Mosul. Paulos was fully aware of the past glory of the Syrian Church of Antioch and its fathers and made efforts to epropage the history and culture of his church. As a result a magazine titled *al-Mashriq* was published in the spring of 1946.

It was only one year after the end of World War II, that Behnam found acquiring paper for the publication of his magazine was truly difficult and he had to travel to Baghdad to get paper which he did with much enthusiasm.

Rev. Bulus Behnam who was ordained bishop in 1952, under the name of Gregorius, was a man of many talents. He was a proficient writer in both Syriac and Arabic, a poet, a scholar and a dynamic orator. In the field of Syriac literature, his objective was to present a selection of the literary and philosophical writings of ancient Syrian fathers to his readers. Mor Gregorius once remarked:

“I cherished the idea of carrying this torch, but I was distracted by multiple chores. However, when I read the Introduction of the author of *The Cause of all Causes*, I determined to translate it as well as other books into Arabic to prove the greatness of the graceful Syriac legacy which I have the honor to be one of its faithful servants.”

In 1946, young monk Bulus Behnam published his book in a rather florid Arabic title of *al-Banafsaja al-Dhakiyya fi Khlasat al-Ta'alim al-Masihyya li al-A'ilatwa al-Madaris al-Orthodoxiyya* (The Fragrant Violet: Concise Christian Teachings for the Use of the Orthodox Families and Schools (Mosul, 1946) which was translated into English under the title *Concise Teachings of Christianity for Orthodox Families and Schools* (Beth Antioch Press and Gorgias Press, 2013). Behnam has translated *Ethikon* of Bar Hebraeus (Book of Ethics) which is a demonstration of his erudition and scholarship. The *dhukrono* of Mor Gregorious Paulose Behnam is celebrated on 19 February in the Syrian Orthodox Church.

7. Hananiah who baptised St. Paul

(First Century)

Hananiah in Hebrew means “favoured of the LORD.” He was a disciple of Jesus at Damascus. According to Acts 9:10 Hananiah (Ananias) was living in Damascus. In Paul’s speech, he de-

scribes Ananias as “a devout man and was highly respected by all the Jews living there” (Acts 22:12).

During his conversion Jesus had told Saul (later St. Paul) to go into the city and wait. Jesus later spoke to Ananias in a vision and told him to go to the street which is called Straight and ask “in the house of Judas for Saul of Tarsus” (Acts 9:11). Ananias answered, “Lord, many people have told me about this man and about all the terrible things he has done to your people in Jerusalem. And he has come to Damascus with authority from the chief priests to arrest all who worship You” (Acts 9:13-14). But the Lord told him Saul was “a chosen vessel to serve me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel” (Acts 9:15)

When Ananias went to Saul and laid his hands on him, immediately something like scales fell off from Saul’s eyes, and he could see again. He got up and was baptized (Acts 9:18).

There is a different opinion among scholars about Ananias that he was a prophet despite being mentioned as a disciple in the New Testament. Hippolytus of Rome (A.D. 170-235?) and a few others have listed him as one among the seventy-two emissaries (Luke 10:1, 17). Hippolytus refers to Hananiah as the Bishop of Damascus. Ananias is believed to be martyred in Eleutheropolis. The feast of Hananiah (Ananias) is celebrated in the Syrian Orthodox Church on 1 October.

8. Lydia, who sold purple cloth

(First Century)

Lydia was a convert who was subsequently baptised (Acts 16:11-15). Lydia was originally from Thyatira but was living in Philippi when she met Paul on his second missionary journey. She was a seller of purple cloth, which Thyatira was famous for, being a centre of indigo trade.

Now-a-days it is possible to get any color we want. But it was not like that in the early days. Dyes were natural, not synthetic, and the dye for purple was made from a juice found in minute quantities in shellfish. It took thousands of crustaceans to make a yard or two of purple cloth. So, it was very expensive, worth its weight in silver it was said.

Lydia apparently had moved to Philippi (the first district of Macedonia which was also a Roman colony) to ply her trade in that city. Archaeologists have found among the ruins of Thyatira inscriptions relating to a dyers' guild in the city. It is possible that Lydia was a member of this guild. Lydia was also a worshipper of God, and, when Paul found her, she was honouring the Sabbath, which means she was likely a Jew. The account of Lydia's conversion says that she had gathered with a group of other women on the Sabbath at a place of prayer near the river outside of Philippi. The fact that Paul, Timothy, Luke, and

Silas came to the riverside to speak to the women most likely indicates there were not enough Jewish men in Philippi to open a synagogue there. But to have a synagogue you need ten men who will meet together to say prayers. Philippi, it seems, doesn't have a synagogue. If there's no synagogue, then Jews that happen to be in the town or passing through know to meet near the river on the sabbath to pray. That's where Lydia went.

Lydia heard the gospel of Jesus Christ, and the Bible says that God opened her heart to pay attention to what Paul was saying (Acts 16:14). After she believed, Lydia was baptized, along with the rest of her household. After Lydia's conversion and baptism, she insisted on Paul and his friends to stay at her home, if they judged her to be "a believer in the Lord" (Acts 16:15). Luke says that "she prevailed upon us," which indicates the fervency of her desire to be hospitable. The missionaries did indeed judge Lydia to be a true believer, and they stayed at her home while in Philippi.

Lydia's conversion marks the start of a new beginning. Up to that point, the gospel had not gone further west than Asia Minor. In fact, on this journey, Paul's original intention had been to stay in Asia, but God had changed his plans. The Lord appeared to Paul in a vision calling him westward across the Aegean Sea and into Macedonia (Acts 16: 6-10). Later in biblical history, we discover there is a church in Thyatira (Revelation 2:18). Paul did not visit that city in any of his mission-

ary journeys, and we have no record of who might have established that church. The Bible does not say whether Lydia is the one who brought the gospel to her hometown.

9. Nicodemus

(First Century)

Nicodemus was a Pharisee and a ‘ruler of the Jews.’ He is mentioned by John at three contexts in the Gospel - - (1) Nicodemus’ meeting with Jesus at Jerusalem, (2) Nicodemus defended Jesus before the Sanhedrin, and (3) Nicodemus assisted the burial of Jesus Christ.

1. Nicodemus’s meeting with Jesus at Jerusalem:

This meeting, which is believed to have taken place in the house of John, was one of the results of our Lord’s ministry at Jerusalem during the first Passover (cf. John 2:23; 3:1-3). Although Nicodemus believed in the divine nature of Christ’s mission that he is a teacher (prophet) sent by God, his faith was very incomplete. Nicodemus is supposed to be timid since he visited Christ “by night” (John 3:2). Some scholars have claimed that Nicodemus came as a representative of the Sanhedrin, an enquirer deputed to ask to get an “official” response from Jesus Christ. It is true that Nicodemus

speaks using the first-person plural, “We know You have come from God as a Teacher.” But Nicodemus would not have needed to sneak through the night for an official visit, since other Jewish officials challenged Jesus in public. Secondly, his declaration that Jesus is a Teacher from God hardly seems the language of a disapproving enquirer. But mainly, Nicodemus later reveals himself when he comes with Joseph of Arimathea to take and prepare Jesus’ body for burial (John 19:39). By this time Nicodemus had become bold enough to publicly reveal what he believed.

Christ proclaimed to Nicodemus the necessity for a spiritual regeneration: “No one can see the Kingdom of God unless he is born again” (John 3:3). This was interpreted by Nicodemus only in its materialistic sense, and therefore caused him bewilderment and confusion (John 3:4). The re-birth is not outward but inward, it is not of the body but of the soul (Jn 3:6). But Nicodemus still remained unenlightened (John 3:9). Christ therefore answered, “You are a great teacher of Israel, and you don’t know this?” (John 3:10). Christ returned to the problem underlying the first statement of Nicodemus. If Nicodemus cannot believe in “earthly things,” how can he hope to understand “heavenly things.” The heavenly things are the deeper mysteries of God’s purpose in sending Christ into the world (John 3:12) and of Christ’s Divine Sonship (John 3:13).

2. Nicodemus defended Jesus before Sanhedrin:

At the Feast of Tabernacles, when the Sanhedrin was enraged at Christ's proclamation of Himself as the "living water" (John 7:37, 38), Nicodemus stood up in defence of Jesus saying: "According to our Law we cannot condemn a man before hearing him and finding out what he has done" (John 7:51). Yet here also he showed his natural diffidence that he made no personal testimony of his faith in Christ, but sought rather to defend Him on a point of Jewish law (cf. Deuteronomy 17:6; 19:15).

3. Nicodemus assisted the burial of Jesus Christ:

Nicodemus at last made public confession of his faith in following Christ. His wealth enabled him to provide the "mixture of myrrh and aloes, about a hundred pounds," with which the body of Jesus was embalmed (John 19:39). *The Gospel of Nicodemus* (also known as the *Acts of Pontius Pilate*) and other apocryphal works narrate that Nicodemus gave evidence in favour of Christ at the trial before Pilate, that he was deprived of office and banished from Jerusalem by the hostile Jews, and that he was baptized by Peter and John. His remains were said to have been found in a common grave along with those of Gamaliel (son of Gamaliel?) and Stephen, the deacon and the first martyr. The feast of Nicodemus is celebrated in the Syrian Orthodox Church on 11 March.

10. Mor Phathiyoon (Pethion)

(A.D. ? - 740/741)

Pethion was a Zoroastrian (a pre-Islamic religion) convert who, with his uncle the monk Yazdin, preached in the region of the lower Zab. He helped an aristocratic father, Adorhormizd and his daughter, Anahid to convert. Pethion was martyred under Yazdegerd II.

There are several references to the persecutions of Christians under Yazdegerd II (Drake, 2006). Pathiyoon was a man of virtue who formed a favorable relationship with a Muslim governor, Halid al Qasri, whose mother was a Christian (<http://syriaca.org/person/1409>).

According to Bar Hebraeus: Sliba-zkha was succeeded by Pethion, bishop of Tirhan, a native of Beth Garmaï. He was consecrated at Seleucia while he was still a young man. He was diligent in the performance of his duties and looked after a school he had founded. He gave the students extra rations and a set of new clothes every year, and also gave them presents once a week and on feast days. They say that his school eventually attracted as many as 400 students. He was respected equally by his bishops and his people on account of his chastity. After fulfilling his office for eleven years, he died a martyr in the year AD 740/1 and was succeeded by Aba Bar Brikh Sebyaneh from Kashkar. There was a church in the name of Saint Pethion

at Diyarbakir (Walker, 2006). The feast of Phathiyoon is celebrated in the Syrian Orthodox Church on 25 October.

11. Mor John of Jerusalem

(A. D. 356 - 417)

John of Jerusalem was born in c. A. D. 356. He was a monk from his early years. He later became a noted theologian and bishop, a strong advocate of the Platonistic Alexandrian tradition during the 5th century doctrinal controversies of the Eastern Church (<https://www.britannica.com/biography/John-of-Jerusalem>). He is the co-author of a celebrated collection of catechetical conferences on the Jerusalem Christian creed.

John succeeded the noted theologian Cyril of Jerusalem (d. 386) as bishop in c. A. D. 387. In 393 he was attacked by the Latin biblical scholar St. Jerome and by the influential Bishop Epiphanius of Constantia (now Salamis, Cyprus) for adhering to the views of Origen of Alexandria.

When Epiphanius incited the Palestinian monks to anti-Origenism, John retaliated by denying them access to the holy places in Jerusalem and refusing to baptize their converts or bury their dead. In the fall of 396, Jerome published a virulent manifesto denouncing John. The consequent scandal reverberated throughout the Greek

and Western churches. John reconciled with Jerome at Easter in 397, through the mediation of Theophilus, Patriarch of Alexandria (d. 412). John remained neutral in the continuing Origenist polemic between Jerome and his former theological colleague Tyrannius Rufinus.

Contention arose again, however, over Pelagius' teaching that man is capable of leading a moral life without divine help. Though John received him sympathetically in Palestine, Jerome and an emissary from Augustine of Hippo denounced him as heretical at the Jerusalem synod in July 415. When Augustine's disciples invoked the authority of their master against Pelagius, John retorted that in Jerusalem he alone was the Christian authority. He then devised a compromise formula, distasteful to Jerome, declaring that God can enable the earnest man to avoid sin. Pelagius was judged free of doctrinal error, which was confirmed in December 415 at the metropolitan Council of Diospolis. Soon afterward, John tacitly permitted the Pelagians to sack the monastery at Bethlehem, a centre of vehement anti-Pelagianism, and was sharply reproved by Pope Innocent I.

John is credited with the possible partial authorship, long attributed to Cyril of Jerusalem, of the theologically esteemed Catecheses, a series of Easter instructions for the newly baptized. An English translation of the Catecheses was edited by F. L. Cross (1951). The feast of John of Jerusalem is celebrated in the Syrian Orthodox Church on 7 June.

12. Mor Kauma, Monk of Toralidon

(Fifth/Sixth Century A.D.)

Mor Kauma stands as a luminous star, in the heavenly abode of Saints and Prophets. His strenuous ways of life and steadfast faith in God has brought him the title 'the angel on earth'. He was also called the 'mourner of Mayfarqin' (Phinahas, 2008). The word 'Kauma' means 'standing in an erect position'. The holy angel of God meditated in the shape of a cross on a tree and hence got the name 'Kauma'. He spent forty-five years of his life in solitude, having a little food to sustain life.

Mor Kauma's parents were staunch believers in God. They lived in a place named 'Mayfarqin' (Turkey). They were childless for a long period of time and were quite sad. They prayed continuously and the Almighty blessed them with a son, who later became the solace for millions, the holy saint Mor Kauma.

Shemavoon was the name given to the child and his sister was named as Agastia (Agusia). The complexion of Mor Kauma was reddish white and he had long hairs. They supported each other at every venture. When the children grew up they decided to dedicate their life for Christ and lead a lonely life. (<http://www.stpetersandstpaulschurch.com/hist.aspx>).

They had several boarding places on their way. Everywhere they were protected by the arms of God through His messengers. Every experience they had gone through purified their lives immensely and with the passage of years they became more and more saintly. The transformation of 'Shemavoon' to 'Kauma' and 'Agastia' to 'Folog' happened in these periods of time. Folog was asked to disguise herself as a male. Towards the end of Kauma's life he got an assistant named 'Yeshu'. She was a female dressed as a man, just like Folog.

In the mountains of Mecfrukth, there lived a saint named 'Gabroono'. He lived at the top of a big tree. A stream was flowing near the tree and it is believed that the angels of God made the stream for the holy saint. He spent fifty-three years of his life in the tree, in intense fasting and prayers. Mor Kauma chose this place to spend the rest of his life. He stayed in the hut at the top of the tree and Folog stayed at the bottom of the tree. Kauma became more glorious during this time. He was served by the angels of God. Nobody was allowed to enter the hut.

Mor Kauma came down from the hut only once to visit the tomb of St. Peter and St. Paul in Rome. After several years, one day Mor Kauma called Folog and Yeshu and said: "my time has come. My body should be left in the hut until my bones are done with in the way God wants it to be." The next time when they saw him they were

surprised to find him in the tree in the shape of a cross. They praised the almighty for what they have seen and then the angel of God appeared before them and revealed the truth that Mor Kauma had been praying for the last forty-five years in the shape of the cross. They also said that “God has given him to the people of the earth.” From the very day he blesses humanity in ways enormous through his prayers.

The relics of Mor Kauma were brought to India by St. Osthatheous Sleeba (d. 1930) and were interred at several churches, such as Neelimangalam, Malel curiz, Mazhuvannoor, Perumbavoor, Nadamel church, etc. The water in which the relics of Mor Kauma were kept was used by St. Osthatheos Sleeba in healing several people which attracted many to Arthat Simhasana church. The feast of Mor Kauma is celebrated in the Syrian Orthodox Church on 1 September and 15 November.

13. St. Isaiah, the Solitary

(A.D. c. 370 – 491?)

Isaiah, the solitary was a monk in Scetis and was a contemporary of St. Macarius, the Great (A.D. 300-390). He moved to Palestine after 431 and died there at great old age in c. A. D. 491 as a hermit near Gaza. He is known for 27 texts on guarding the intellect against demonic deception,

some of which are: without anger a man cannot attain purity: he has to feel angry with all that is sown in him by the enemy. Unless a man hates all the activities of this world, he cannot worship God. What then is meant by the worship of God? It means that we have nothing extraneous in our intellect when we are praying to Him: neither sensual pleasure as we glorify Him, nor malice as we sing His praise, nor hatred as we exalt Him, not jealousy to hinder us as we speak to Him and call Him to mind. For all these things are full of darkness; they are a wall imprisoning our wretched soul, and if the soul has them in itself it cannot worship God with purity.

When the intellect rescues the soul's senses from the desires of the flesh and imbues them with dispassion, the passions shamelessly attack the soul, trying to hold its senses fast in sin; but if the intellect then continually calls upon God in secret, He, seeing all this, will send His help and destroy all the passions at once.

When a man severs himself from evil, he gains an exact understanding of all the sins he has committed against God; for he does not see his sins unless he severs himself from them with a feeling of revulsion. Those who have reached this level pray to God with tears, and are filled with shame when they recall their evil love of the passions. Let us therefore pursue the spiritual way with all our strength, and God in His great mercy will help us. Examine yourself daily in the sight of God, and discover which of the passions is in your heart. Cast it out, and so escape His judgment.

At the time of prayer, we should expel from our heart the provocation of each evil thought, rebutting it in a spirit of devotion so that we do not prove to be speaking to God with our lips, while pondering wicked thoughts in our heart. God will not accept from the hesychast a prayer that is turbid and careless, for everywhere Scripture tells us to guard the soul's organs of perception. (Palmer, Sherrard & Ware, 1979, pp. 22-28).

14. St. Nikitha

(A. D. ? – 372 ?)

Nikitha was born into a wealthy family of the Gothic people who lived near the Danube River in the 4th century, in what is now Romania (<https://russianicons.wordpress.com/tag/st-nikitha/>). The word Nikitha is derived from Greek *Nicetas* which means victor. He was baptized by Bishop Theophilus, said to have been a participant in the First Ecumenical Council (A.D. 325). An intertribal war broke out, and Nikitha became a soldier on the Christian side, the leader of which was Fritigern. Their opponent was the leader Athanaric.

Fritigern's forces defeated Athanaric, and Christianity was further spread among the Goths by Wulfila (Ulphilas), Nikitha also worked to spread Christianity and convert others to that belief.

Over time, however, Athanaric regained power, massed forces and returned to attack and persecute the Christian Goths. Nikita was captured and tortured, and finally thrown into fire (some say burnt at the stake in Moldavia in 378?). There is considerable difference in sources for dates in Nikita's life and death.

According to a less reliable account, Nikita was actually the son of the Roman Emperor Maximilian. He was persecuted by his father for holding the Christian faith, Nikita was severely tortured and cast into prison for three years. Nikita also raised a couple of people from the dead, but Maximilian was still not convinced. Then his Queen and the people rose against the Emperor, and Nikita managed to baptize a huge number of people. The feast of St. Nikitha is celebrated in the Syrian Orthodox Church on 4 August.

15. Apostle Philemon

(First Century)

Apostle Philemon who was the bishop of Gaza, is numbered among the Seventy-two emissaries (https://orthodoxwiki.org/Apostle_Philemon). The Church has included a letter he received from Apostle Paul in the canon of the Holy Scripture. He, with Apostle Archippus, ministered to the town of Colossae from its Christian center, Philemon's home. During a pagan feast the Church

had gathered in his home for prayer. When the pagans learned of it they raided the home and took Sts. Philemon, Apphia, and Archippus to be killed. They were whipped, buried up to their waists and then stoned. Sts. Philemon and Apphia gave up their souls to God.

The New Testament letter was written by Paul the Apostle to a wealthy Christian of Colossae, Asia Minor, on behalf of Onesimus, Philemon's former slave. Paul, writing from prison, expresses affection for the newly converted Onesimus and asks that he be received in the same spirit that would mark Paul's own arrival, even though Onesimus may be guilty of previous failings. While passing no judgment on slavery itself, Paul exhorts Philemon to manifest true Christian love that removes barriers between slaves and free men. The letter was probably composed in Rome about AD 61 (<https://www.britannica.com/topic/The-Letter-of-Paul-to-Philemon>).

From Ephesus, where he was imprisoned (c. 53–54), Paul wrote his shortest and most personal letter to a Phrygian Christian (probably from Colossae or nearby Laodicea) whose slave Onesimus had run away, after possibly having stolen money from his master. The slave apparently had met Paul in prison, was converted, and was being returned to his master with a letter from Paul appealing not on the basis of his apostolic authority but according to the accepted practices within the system of slavery and the right of an owner over

a slave. He requested that Onesimus be accepted “as a beloved brother” and that he be released voluntarily by his master to return and serve Paul and help in Christian work. Paul appealed to the owner that Onesimus (whose name in Greek means ‘useful’) is no longer useless because of his conversion and claimed that the owner owed Paul a debt (as he probably was also instrumental in his conversion) and that any debt or penalty incurred by the slave would be paid by Paul.

The Epistle of St. Paul to Philemon, however, is not a purely personal letter, because it is addressed to a small Christian community that usually met in a room of a person’s home. The letter ends with salutations and a benediction in the plural form of address. The body of the letter, however, uses “you” (singular) and is addressed to the slave’s owner, a man whom Paul himself has not met. Philemon, the first name in the address, is called a “beloved fellow worker,” which implies that he knew Paul.

The letter was written from prison, and Paul apparently expected a release in the near future, because he requested a guest room, a suggestion that he was not very far from Colossae or Laodicea, which would be true of Ephesus. Colossae would be reached from Ephesus via Laodicea, and the letter could be addressed to a house-church there. The feast of Apostle Philemon is celebrated in the Syrian Orthodox Church on 22 November.

16. Onesimus, Disciple of St. Paul

(A.D. ? - 117)

In a letter to the Ephesians by Ignatius, bishop of Antioch, the language is very reminiscent of Philemon, and the name of the bishop of Ephesus (c. 107–117) was Onesimus. It has been suggested that the slave was released to help Paul, that in his later years he might have become bishop of Ephesus, and that his “ministry” or “service” was the collection of the Pauline corpus. This is based not simply on the identity of name, but on similarities to Philemon found in Ignatius’ letter to the Ephesians. Paul in his apostolic ministry, furthering the message of Christ and seeing beyond the limitations of the social order of his day, in which both slaves and freemen are servants of God.

According to the New Testament Onesimus was a slave who, after robbing his master Philemon, fled to Rome, where he was converted by apostle Paul (<http://www.learningscriptures.info/bible-people/onesimus.htm>). Paul met Onesimus while the former was in a Roman prison, and Paul baptized the slave and came to consider him as his own son. Paul sent Onesimus back to Philemon with the epistle, asking Philemon to accept him “no longer as a slave, but more than a slave, a brother, beloved especially to me, but even more so to you, as a man in the Lord. So if you regard me as a partner, welcome him as you would

me. And if he has done you any injustice or owes you anything, charge it to me". In Paul's Letter to the Colossians, Onesimus is again mentioned as accompanying Tychicus (Colossians 4: 7-10), the bearer of the letter (https://www.catholic.org/saints/saint.php?saint_id=4908). The feast of Onesimus is celebrated in the Syrian Orthodox Church on 15 February.

17. Pontius Pilate and his wife Procula

(? – A.D. 39?)

Pontius Pilate was a Roman governor under the Emperor of Tiberius in the First century. Pontius Pilate's date of birth is unknown. He is believed to have hailed from the Samnium region of central Italy. After the deposition of the eldest son of Herod, Archelaus (who had succeeded his father as ethnarch), Judea was placed under the rule of a Roman procurator. Pilate was the fifth, succeeding Valerius Gratus in A.D. 26. Roman Emperor Tiberius appointed Pontius Pilate prefect of the Roman provinces of Judaea, Samaria and Idumæa, although Pilate is best known for his leadership of Judaea (<https://www.biography.com/people/pontius-pilate-9440686>). While the typical term for a Roman prefect was 1–3 years, Pilate was to hold his post as the fifth Roman procurator for 10 years. His unusually long period of office (A.D. 26-36) covers the whole of the active ministry both of

St. John the Baptist and of Jesus Christ (Barnes, 1911).

His duties as a prefect included such mundane tasks as tax collection and managing construction projects. But, perhaps his most crucial responsibility was that of maintaining law and order. Pontius Pilate attempted to do so by any means. What he couldn't negotiate he is said to have accomplished through brutal force.

As governor of Judaea, Pontius Pilate faced a conflict of interests between the Roman Empire and the Sanhedrin Jewish council. When Pontius asked Jesus if he was the King of the Jews, he claimed that Jesus embraced the title, which he never did. This accusation was considered an act of treason by the Roman government.

The Gospels indicate Pontius Pilate's indecision, citing that he conceded to letting Jesus go at one stage of the trial, but later repealed the offer. Matthew 27:24 describes Pontius Pilate as refusing involvement in Jesus' crucifixion: So when Pilate saw that he was gaining nothing, but rather that a riot was beginning, he took water and washed his hands before the crowd, saying, "I am innocent of this man's blood; see to it yourselves."

The New Testament suggests that Pilate had a weak, wavering personality. Would the mob be just as happy if he had released Barabbas instead of Jesus on the feast day (Mark 15:6). Pilate's wife sends him word of a revelatory dream

she has had about Jesus and urges him to “have nothing to do with that innocent man” (Matthew 27:19), and Pilate abdicates his responsibility to the emperor. In John (19:7–11), Pilate is depicted as having accepted the Christian interpretation of the meaning of Jesus, and he rejects Jewish leaders’ reminder that Jesus has merely said that he is “the king of the Jews” (John 19:21).

The official residence of the procurators was the palace of Herod at Cæsarea; where there was a military force of about 3,000 soldiers. These soldiers came up to Jerusalem at the time of the feasts, when the city was full of strangers, and there was greater danger of disturbances, hence Pilate had come to Jerusalem at the time of the Crucifixion. He would gladly have acquitted Christ, and even made serious efforts in that direction, but gave way at once when his own position was threatened.

The efforts of Pilate to acquit Christ, and thus pass as lenient a judgment as possible upon his crime, goes further to the claim that he actually became a Christian. This belief goes back to the second century and may be found in apocryphal literature such as the *Gospel of Nicodemus*. His rule was brought to an end through trouble which arose in Samaria and was later summoned to Rome to answer their charges, but before he could reach the city Emperor Tiberius had died.

Claudia Procula, according to the third-century early Christian sources such as *Gospel of*

Nicodemus, was the wife of Pontius Pilate, the Roman governor (<http://orthochristian.com/102542.html>). It is known from the ancient tradition that Pontius Pilate and his spouse were executed. They may have been executed not for their faith in Jesus Christ as there was no punishment for worshipping “other gods” in the Roman Empire. However, those who refused to perform divine honors before an emperor’s statue could be executed. The memory of Pontius Pilate and his wife Procula is observed in the Syrian Orthodox Church on 25 June.

18. Sophia, the Martyr

(Second Century A.D.)

The Holy Martyrs Saint Sophia and her daughters were born in Italy (<http://www.st-sophia.com/st-sophia/>). Sophia (which means wisdom) was a pious Christian widow who named her daughters - - Faith, Hope and Love. Faith was twelve, Hope was ten, and Love was nine. Saint Sophia raised them in the love of the Lord Jesus Christ. Saint Sophia and her daughters did not hide their faith in Christ, but openly confessed it before everyone.

An official named Antiochus condemned them before emperor Hadrian (A.D.117-138), who ordered that they be brought to Rome. Hadrian

urged them to offer sacrifice to the goddess Artemis. The young girls remained steadfast in their faith (<https://oca.org/saints/lives/1999/09/17/102638-martyr-sophia-and-her-three-daughters-at-rome>). Then the emperor ordered them to be tortured. They burned the holy virgins over an iron grating, then threw them into a red-hot oven, and finally into a cauldron with boiling tar, but the Lord preserved them.

The youngest child, Love, was tied to a wheel and they beat her with rods until her body was covered all over with bloody welts. Each of the daughters were tortured. After undergoing unspeakable torments, the holy virgins glorified their Heavenly Bridegroom and remained steadfast in the Faith. They subjected Saint Sophia to another grievous torture: the mother was forced to watch the suffering of her daughters. She urged her daughters to endure their torments for the sake of the Heavenly Bridegroom. All three maidens were beheaded, as they joyfully bent their necks beneath the sword.

In order to intensify Saint Sophia's inner suffering, the emperor permitted her to take away the bodies of her daughters. She placed their remains in coffins and loaded them on a wagon. She drove beyond the city limits and reverently buried them on a high hill. Saint Sophia sat there by the graves of her daughters for three days, and finally she gave up her soul to the Lord. Even though she did not suffer for Christ in the flesh, she was not

deprived of a martyr's crown. Instead, she suffered in her heart. Believers buried her body there beside her children. A very detailed account of the torture and trial comparable to that of Morth Shumni can be found in other websites (e.g., <http://www.st-sophia.com/st-sophia/>). (There is a mention of Morth Sophia of Edessa in the calendar of the Syrian Orthodox Church, whose feast is on 5 November).

19. Trophimus, One among the Seventy-two (First Century)

Trophimus, a disciple of Paul, a Gentile and an Ephesian by birth (Acts 21:29), came to Corinth with the apostle, and accompanied him in his whole journey to Jerusalem in A. D. 58. Trophimos, literally means, "a foster child" (Bromiley, 1996). When the apostle was in the temple there, the Jews got hold of him, crying out, "He hath brought Greeks into the temple, and hath polluted this holy place;" because, having seen him in the city accompanied by Trophimus, they imagined that he had introduced him into the temple (Acts 21:28).

His name is mentioned in the Acts of the Holy Apostles (Acts 20:4) and in Saint Paul's second Epistle to Timothy (2 Tim. 4:20). He was a disciple and companion of Apostle Paul, sharing

with him all the sorrows and persecution (<https://oca.org/saints/lives/2015/01/04/100082-apostle-trophimus-of-the-seventy>).

He was with Paul in Jerusalem, and the Jews, supposing that the apostle had brought him with him into the temple, raised a tumult which resulted in Paul's imprisonment. In writing to Timothy, the apostle says, "I left Trophimos in Militus, because he was ill" (2 Timothy 4:20).

Trophimus, the one among the seventy-two, was martyred along with St. Paul in Rome (<http://www.orthodox.net/saints/70apostles.html>; http://biblehub.com/library/hippolytus/the_extant_works_and_fragments_of_hippolytus/the_same_hippolytus_on_the.htm). Saint Trophimus is commemorated in the Syrian Orthodox Church on 14 April.

20. Theodorus, the Hermit

(A.D. 314 –367)

Theodorus, also known as Abba Theodorus, was the disciple of Pachomius. Theodorus, the Sanctified, was the disciple and spiritual successor to Pachomius and played a crucial role in preventing the first Christian coenobitic monastic federation from collapsing after the death of its founder. Theodorus was born in Upper Thebais in c. A.D. 314. His parents were wealthy but Theodorus did

not find any happiness in the worldly things and possessions. At the age of eleven or twelve, on the feast of Epiphany he dedicated himself to God by the inspiration of Gospel. He spent his time in prayer and sometimes did not eat anything for a whole day (Butler, 1800). He lived in this manner at his house with his devout mother.

At the age of fourteen he joined the company of monks in the diocese of Latopolis (Esna, Egypt). The reputation of St. Pachomius drew him to Tabenna. Once his mother wanted to see him which Theodorus thought will tempt him to look back to the world. Theodorus did not allow his mother to visit him. Edified by the conviction of Theodorus his mother joined a nearby nunnery which was established by St. Pachomius. She had the opportunity to see her son among the company of monks. At the age of twenty-five Theodorus was one among the company of Pachomius and accompanied him on his visit to monasteries under his care. Theodorus was ordained priest at the age of 30.

Pachomius retired to a small monastery in Paban. Theodorus went to Paban every evening to assist Pachomius in his exhortation to the monks there. Theodorus repeated the exhortations to the monks at Tabenna. Theodorus suffered from frequent violent head-aches, and Pachomius told him that greater spiritual advantages accrue to our souls from diseases and involuntary afflictions, when received and suffered with patience, than from voluntary abstinence and longer prayers (Butler, 1800).

Fellow monks requested him to take over the charge as head of the monastery when Pachomius fell sick at Paban about two years before his death in A.D. 348 (?). Pachomius called on Theodorus to preach to the brothers despite his youth, and eventually appointed him steward of Tabennese after several new monasteries had been built. Retiring to the monastery of Phbow, Pachomius gave Theodorus complete control over Tabennese, though recalled him from the position after witnessing several monks under Theodorus' watch violating the monastic rules without reprimand. Having failed to prove his governing ability and once more in a position no higher than when he had entered the monastery, Theodorus became a personal assistant to Pachomius and remained relatively quiet for some years. Theodorus accused himself of having fallen into vanity and presumption, for which he served the community in the last rank for two years.

In 348 (?) Pachomius died, naming the brother Petronios as his successor rather than the clearly better qualified Theodorus. The federation of monasteries was falling apart, and Theodorus rushed to Tabennese to placate the rebels. Soon after his arrival, Theodorus was the new leader, though he claimed to be only acting on behalf of Horsiesios (Orsisius). For eighteen years Theodorus administered from Pachomius' old headquarters in Phbow, using techniques far more assertive than those of his predecessors, such as constantly shuffling the offices and locations of the most ambitious monks.

St. Theodorus instructed, comforted, encouraged and corrected everyone with a sweetness which gained the heart of everyone. He performed many miracles and foretold many things. Theodorus predicted that he would soon die. Within a few months his prediction came true, and Horsiesios once more took his place as the head of the communities in both title and authority. Theodorus prepared fervently for his departure and entrusted the community to the care of Orsisius and entered into eternal rest on 27 April A.D. 367. The feast of St. Theodorus is celebrated on 16 May in the Syrian Orthodox Church.

21. Abraham of Keshkar

(A. D. ? – 588)

The monasticism in Iraq rapidly expanded in the second half of the sixth century at the hands of the disciples of Abraham of Keshkar. They were closely associated with the school in Nisbin. Many of them were from Iranian cultural background and converts from Zoroastrianism (Pre-Islamic religion). Many legislations came into force regarding marriage, worship, attending the feast of Jews and pagans, use of amulets and burial practices. The purpose was ‘to regulate the boundaries of Christianity as an exclusive set of cultural practices, in a world where Christians did not all share the same cultural backgrounds and assumptions’ (Wood,

2013, p. 145). Monasteries existed in Iraq in the fifth century which banned celibate monasticism as a part of a wider reform of marriage practices of the Church of East. Abraham was a missionary in Hira in south-west Iraq and converted many heathen inhabitants at Hira.

In the second half of the fifth century considerable laxity crept into the Nestorian monasteries of Mesopotamia, monks being even allowed to marry (Butler, 1898). The revival of celibate monasticism is associated with the ascetic Abraham of Keshkar. He had travelled to the Pachomian cenobitic monasteries of Egypt and studied at the school of Nisbis. He visited Egypt and Sinai; and finally settled as a hermit in a cave on Mount Izla, near Nisbis (Wright, 2016). He led the life of a hermit for thirty years. At Izla, Abraham had a great number of followers and subsequently a monastery was built. He is said to have reformed the custom and dress of his monks who had been dressed like Egyptians so that they could be distinguished from heretics. The monastic practices resembled those of the Pachomian ascetism. The focus was on integrating fasting, prayer and silence in monastic life and the importance of academic learning and physical labour.

Abraham died at Hazzah in AD 588 (Allen & Jeffreys, 2017), but his body was secretly removed to his native place Keshkar. Abraham has written a treatise on the monastic life. It is likely that the feast of Abraham of Keshkar is on 5 December.

22. Susanna, Virgin & Martyr

(A. D. ? - 295?)

Susanna (Suzanne) was nobly born in Rome, and is said to have been niece to Pope Caius. Having made a vow of virginity, she refused to marry; on which account she was impeached as a Christian, and suffered with heroic constancy a cruel martyrdom (Butler, 1866).

Susanna's father, Gabinius, had raised her with great care in the fear of God and love of Jesus Christ, and she had made a private vow of virginity. Diocletian, wishing to obtain the consent of this very beautiful maiden to marry his favorite, Maximian, sent a certain Claudius, another member of her family, to propose the espousals. She refused to consent, making known to her father and Saint Caius her vow, and saying that even if she had not resolved to conserve her chastity, she would not wish to marry a man responsible for the massacre of an infinite number of Christians. The Emperor's messenger was converted by her confession of faith and became a fervent penitent.

When Diocletian received no answer from his messenger concerning the results of the commission, and then learned of the conversion of Claudius, he was very irritated; then with Claudius he arrested Suzanne, Gabinius her father, and several other Christians. He had Suzanne beaten in her residence, then had her decapitated secretly. The emperor's wife, Prisca, who was also a Christian,

buried her body clandestinely and prayed to her as a holy martyr. (https://sanctoral.com/en/saints/saint_susanna.html).

Sufferings to the martyrs were the most distinguishing mercy, extraordinary graces, and sources of the greatest crowns and glory. All afflictions which God sends are in like manner the greatest mercies and blessings; they are the most precious talents to be improved by us to the increasing of our love and affection to God, and the exercise of the most heroic virtues of self-denial, patience, humility, resignation, and penance. They are also most useful and necessary to bring us to the knowledge of ourselves and our Creator, which we are too apt to forget without them. Wherefore whatever crosses or calamities befall us, we must be prepared to bear them with a patient resignation to the divine will; we ought to learn from the martyrs to comfort ourselves, and to rejoice in them, as the greatest blessings. How base is our cowardice, and how criminal our folly, if, by neglecting to improve these advantageous talents of sickness, losses, and other afflictions, we make the most precious mercies our heaviest curse!

23. St. Benjamin, Deacon & Martyr

(A.D. ? – 424)

The Christians in Persia had enjoyed twelve years of peace during the reign of Isdegerd, son

of Sapor III, when in 420 it was disturbed by the indiscreet zeal of Abdas, a Christian Bishop who burned the Temple of Fire, the great sanctuary of the Persians. King Isdegerd threatened to destroy all the churches of the Christians unless the Bishop would rebuild it.

As Abdas refused to comply, the churches were demolished, Abdas himself was put to death, and a general persecution began which lasted forty years. Isdegerd died in 421, but his son and successor, Varanes, carried on the persecution with great fury. The Christians were submitted to the cruellest tortures.

Among those who suffered was St. Benjamin, a Deacon, who had been imprisoned a year for his Faith. At the end of this period, an ambassador of the Emperor of Constantinople obtained his release on condition that he would never speak to any of the courtiers about religion (https://www.catholic.org/saints/saint.php?saint_id=338; <http://www.catholic-saints.info/roman-catholic-saints-a-g/saint-benjamin.htm>).

St. Benjamin, however, declared it was his duty to preach Christ and that he could not be silent. Although he had been liberated on the agreement made with the ambassador and the Persian authorities, he would not acquiesce in it, and neglected no opportunity of preaching. He was again apprehended and brought before the king. The tyrant ordered that reeds should be thrust in between his nails and his flesh and into all the tenderest

parts of his body and then withdrawn. After this torture had been repeated several times, a knotted stake was inserted into his bowels to rend and tear him. The martyr departed for heavenly abode in the most terrible agony about the year 424. The feast of St. Benjamin is conjectured to be on 29 April.

24. Sts. Patrobas, Philologus & Gaius

(First Century A.D.)

The three saints Patrobas, Philologus and Gaius are considered to be among the seventy-two emissaries our Lord had sent as we read in Luke 10:1 – “After this the Lord appointed seventy-two others and sent them two by two ahead of him to every town and place where he was about to go.” Patrobas is referred by St. Paul in Romans 16:14 – “Salute Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermas, Patrobas, Hermes, and the brethren who are with them.” He became bishop of Pottole, Italy and there he baptized many.

Philologus is mentioned in Romans 16:15 – “Salute Philologus & Iulia, Nereus, and his sister, and Olympas, and all the Saints who are with them.” Philologus was made bishop of Sinope by the first-called disciple Andrew (<https://www.johnsanidopoulos.com/2016/11/holy-apostles-hermas-patrobas-gaius.html>).

Gaius is mentioned in Romans 16:23 –“Gaius, whose hospitality I and the whole Church here enjoy, sends you his greetings.” He became bishop of Ephesus after Timothy. All the three emissaries endured tribulations and witnessed Christ and brought many into salvation. The feast of Saints Patrobas, Philologus & Gaius is celebrated on 5 November in the Syrian Orthodox Church.

25. Hermas, the Evangelist

(A.D. ? - 162?)

The Holy Apostle Hermas was a bishop in Philippopolis (Philippi, Greece). He was a Greek, but he spent some time in Rome. The holy Apostle Paul greets him in the Epistle to the Romans (Rom 16:14) –“Greet Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermes, Patrobas, Hermas and the other brothers and sisters with them.” Apostle Hermas endured much grief from the pagans for preaching the Gospel, but he died in peace or as a martyr (http://www.spc.rs/eng/apostle_hermas_seventy; https://www.catholic.org/saints/saint.php?saint_id=3736). The feast of Hermas is celebrated on 8 March in the Syrian Orthodox Church.

26. Hesychius of Antioch, Martyr

(A.D. ? - 305 ?)

The Holy Martyr Hesychius (Hessakiya) of Antioch lived in Antioch during the reign of Maximian Galerius (305-311), and he occupied a high official position. Maximian issued an edict by which all Christians were to be deprived of military rank and expelled from military service. Those who would not renounce Christianity were stripped off their soldier's belt and military insignia, and degraded to the level of hired servants. Saint Hesychius was one of these.

Maximian ordered Hesychius to remove his robes of office, put on common attire, and to be placed among the women servants. After several days he summoned Hesychius and asked, "Are you not ashamed to remain in such dishonor? Or maybe you don't know that the Christians, whose way of life you preferred, have no power to restore you to your previous great honour and office?" The saint replied: "Your honour, O king, is temporary but the honour and glory which Christ gives is eternal and without end." Because of these words the king got angry and ordered his men to tie a great millstone around the saint's neck and then to throw him in the middle of river Orontus (near Antioch, which lies in Coele, Syria and which is commonly called Oronge). Thus, the blessed man received the crown of martyrdom from the Lord. The feast of Hesychius is celebrated on 29 May in the Syrian Orthodox Church.

27. St. Barsabas, Persian Martyr

(A.D. ?–342?)

Barsabas, a Persian martyr, was an abbot who died with eleven of his monks during the persecution conducted by the Sassanid King Shapur II. Tortured and beheaded near the ruins of Persepolis, in modern Iran, these martyrs brought about the conversion of a pagan Persian who joined them in death in c. A.D. 342 (https://www.catholic.org/saints/saint.php?saint_id=1681). The feast of St. Barsabas is celebrated in the Syrian Orthodox Church on 28 August.

28. St. Cyril of Axiopolis

(A.D. ? – 303)

Christian life started very early in Axiopolis (earlier known as Herakleia) as many old martyrologies both Syrian and Greek note the martyrs in Axiopolis during Diocletian's persecution, from 303. Saint Cyril or Kyrillos was very popular in Axiopolis. The historian Procopius from Caesarea (6th century) writes about the renowned fortress of Justinian near Axiopolis that it bore the patronage of St. Cyril. It is also possible that the ruins discovered here of a big cemetery church may be the original place of his tomb. It is likely that Cyril have been the bishop of Gortina (Crete) who died

during the same persecution (<http://theodialogia.blogspot.com/2013/04/sts-martyrs-from-axiopolis-in-scythia.html>). The feast of St. Cyril of Axio-
polis is celebrated in the Syrian Orthodox Church on 12 May.

29. Moran Athanasius I Gammolo

(A.D.? – 631)

Athanasius I Gammolo was the 42nd Patriarch of Antioch, and head of the Syriac Orthodox Church of Antioch from 595 until his death in 631. Athanasius was also the author of *The Life of Severus of Antioch*, a biography of the first Syriac Orthodox Patriarch of Antioch.

Athanasius was born in the 6th century in the city of Samosata where he was brought by his mother, Mania, after the death of his father. He and his brother Severus later entered the Monastery of Qinnasrin where they became monks, and Athanasius became Gammolo (Syriac for “camel driver”), because he delivered salt to the monastery from salt mines at Gabbula (Aleppo) by camel (Aphrem I, 2003). Following the death of Patriarch Julian I (A.D. 591-595), bishops gathered at the Monastery of Qinnasrin to elect a new patriarch. According to tradition, the bishops had a vision from God that the new patriarch would be the first monk to knock on the door of the monastery in the following morning. The next morning, Athanasius

arrived with his salt and was chosen to be the patriarch.

This election, according to Michael the Great, took place in 595, immediately after Julian's death. As the Syriac Orthodox Patriarch was forbidden from entering Antioch, Athanasius resided at the Monastery of Mor Zacchaeus near Raqqa. He later appointed his brother Severus as the bishop of Samosata. In 603, the final and longest war between the Romans and Sassanians began as Khosrau II invaded Mesopotamia and Syria, and by 610 Antioch had been conquered. In 607, upon receiving a letter from Pope Anastasius of Alexandria, head of the Coptic Orthodox Church, who hoped to establish closer relations since the split in 580, Athanasius travelled to Alexandria with five bishops, including his brother Severus, to discuss implementing their new-found unity. Athanasius remained at the Monastery of the Ennaton outside Alexandria, where Anastasius resided as he was forbidden from residing in the city, for a month before returning to Syria (<https://www.revolvy.com/main/index.php?s=Athanasius+I+Gammolo>).

In 628, after Emperor Heraclius' victory over Khosrau, Athanasius sent his secretary and eventual successor, John of the Sedre to meet with the new king, Kavadh II in Ctesiphon, the capital of the Sasanian Empire. He then appointed Marutha of Tagrit in A.D. 628 as Maphrian of the East, who resided in Tagrit and reorganised the Jacobite Church in the Sassanian Empire. Athanasius also

gave special privileges to the Monastery of Mopr Mattai. The following year, Athanasius and twelve other bishops met with Heraclius in Mabbogh for twelve days to discuss union with the Imperial Church. Athanasius refused to yield to Heraclius' demands that he accept monoenergism (the doctrine that the two natures of Christ have one operation or energy) and the emperor ordered the confiscation of many Syriac Orthodox churches and monasteries.

30. St. Cyril of Caesarea, Martyr

(A.D. ? – 251)

Saint Cyril of Caesarea (Kayseri) was raised in a wealthy pagan family. In his youth, Cyril was baptized in secret. When his family learned of his conversion, his father banished him from the family estate.

Saint Cyril suffered while still a boy at Caesarea in Cappadocia, during the persecutions of the third century (<http://www.catholic-saints.info/roman-catholic-saints-a-g/saint-cyril.htm>). He used to repeat the name of Christ at all times and confessed that the mere utterance of this name moved him strangely. He was beaten by his heathen father, but he bore all this with joy. He drew many of his own age to Christ. When his father in his fury turned him out of doors, he said he had lost little, and would receive a great recompense instead.

On account of his faith Cyril was brought before the magistrate. Cyril was imprisoned for his faith, and ordered by local officials to renounce Christianity and offer sacrifice to idols. No threats could make him show a sign of fear, and the judge, pitying perhaps his tender years, offered him his freedom, assured him of his father's forgiveness, and besought him to return to his home and inheritance. But the blessed youth replied, "I left my home gladly, for I have a greater and a better home which is waiting for me." He was filled with the same heavenly desires to the end. He was taken to the fires as if for execution, and was then brought back and re-examined, but he only protested against the cruel delay. He was beheaded in A.D. 251 in Caesarea, Cappadocia (<https://catholicsaints.info/tag/died-in-cappadocia/>). The feast of St. Cyril of Caesarea is celebrated on 28 May in the Syrian Orthodox Church.

31. St. Julitta of Caesarea

(A.D. ? – 303)

Saint Julitta was from Caesarea, Cappadocia (in modern Turkey) whose property was stolen by an influential, greedy and covetous man who was a local pagan. She took him to court where he objected that she had no standing or rights in court as she was a Christian. The judge ordered her to prove her standing by offering sacrifice to an idol;

she refused. She was immediately arrested. She confessed saying that she will not renounce her Creator God, Who fashioned her. She was convicted to be cast into a furnace in A.D. 303 (<https://www.johnsanidopoulos.com/2015/07/saint-julitta-of-cesarea.html>). Fire embraced the body of Saint Julitta but she miraculously remained unburnt. Her body was buried by the faithful befitting a Christian (<https://catholicsaints.info/tag/died-in-cappadocia/>). In c. A.D. 375 St. Basil of Caesarea honoured the martyr with an encomium.

32. St. Theodosia, Virgin & Martyr

(A.D. ? – 307?)

Theodosia was from the city of Tyre, Lebanon. A virgin, who was not even eighteen years old, was brought before Uranus, the governor of Palestine (Eusebius of Caesarea, 1861). She was brought before the tribunal of the governor on the second of Nisan (A. D. 307 ?) for confessing her faith in God.

Theodosia was commanded to offer sacrifice. She refused to offer sacrifice like a heroine and defied the imperial orders. Urbanus was filled with rage and ordered to torture Theodosia (by combing her sides and breast with iron combs). Again she was asked to offer sacrifice. She with a loud voice addressed the governor: “Why, oh man, do you deceive yourself, and not perceive that I

have found the thing which I prayed for to obtain at your hands? I rejoice greatly in having been deemed worthy to be admitted to the participation of the sufferings of God's martyrs: for indeed, for this very cause, I stood up and spoke with them, in order that by some means or other they might make me a sharer in their sufferings, so that I also might obtain a portion in the kingdom of heaven together with them, because so long as I had no share in their sufferings, I could not be a partaker with them in their salvation. Behold therefore now, how, on account of the future recompense, I stand at present before you with great exultation, because I have obtained the means of drawing near to my God, even before those just men, whom but a little while ago I entreated to intercede for me." Then that wicked judge, seeing that he became a laughingstock, and that his haughty threats were manifestly humbled before all those who were standing in his presence, did not venture to assail the girl again with great tortures like the former, but condemned her by preparing the verdict to throw her into the depths of the sea (Eusebius of Caesarea, 1861).

After he passed the condemnation of this pure girl, he proceeded to the rest of those confessors, on whose account this blessed maiden had been called to this grace, and they were all delivered over to the copper mines in Palestine. The feast of St. Theodosia is celebrated in the Syrian Orthodox Church on 3 April and 27 May.

33. Sts. Antoninus, Zebinas, Germanus, and Mannathus

(A.D. ? – 308?)

The administrators of cities and commanders of military compelled all men, together with their wives and children and slaves to offer libation to the forces of evil, and also to force them to eat off the sacrifices. An order was issued that everything that was sold in the market should be polluted with libations and the sprinkling of the blood of the sacrificed animals. Even the heathens hated these actions (Eusebius of Caesarea, 1861). Many faithful were tortured on account of this. The first among them was Antoninus, and the second was called Zebinas, and the third person's name was Germanus; and these things were done on the thirteenth of Teshrin (October). The faithful were able to overcome the threats of the judges.

A virgin (Mannathus) was brought from the city of Baishan by Maxys. Maxys was the one who was in charge of the streets of the city. Maxys stripped her and tortured and later was taken to the tribunal of the governor. She confessed that she is a Christian. The governor ordered to burn her by fire. The governor forbade the burial of the corpse of Christians. The bodies were left to be eaten up by animals and birds.

34. St. Absalom (Abselma)

(A.D. ? – 309?)

Peter, who was called Absalom (Abselma) was a famous confessor of the Kingdom of God in Casesarea, a village which is on the confines of Beth Gobrin (Eusebius of Caesarea, 1861). On the tenth day of the month Conun (January), Absalom was asked to renounce his faith but he disregarded all such temptations.

Some reminded him of his youth and the fire before him in which he was to be burnt. Some other faithful believers reminded him of the Judge of all judges and the fire in hell. They also called upon him to regard this temporary life which will soon pass away and to look up to the Kingdom of heaven. Finally, after prolonged persecutions, Absalom was burnt to death. The feast day is conjectured to be on the tenth of the month of Conun (January?). (There is another Abselma, who was the Episcopo of Edessa and the feast day is on 19 October.)

35. St. Themotheos of Gaza

(A. D. ? – 304?)

During the second year of Urbanus' reign as the governor of Palestine, the persecution was more violent than the first. In the first, orders were given in respect of the rulers of the Church, but

in the second a strict ordinance was promulgated that compelled all persons to offer sacrifice to dead idols.

And when these commands of the emperor were put into effect, the blessed Themotheos, in the city of Gaza, was bound in fetters and brought before Urbanus. He was charged that he did not comply with the law to worship idols. Themotheos was pious and of good virtues. Even before he was brought before the governor, he had already endured severe sufferings from the inhabitants of the city of Gaza. The people of the city of Gaza were present in the judgment hall of the governor.

And the judge cruelly employed against him severe tortures, and showered upon his body terrible scourging without number, inflicting on his sides horrible lacerations, such as it is impossible to describe; but, under all these trials this brave martyr of God suffered the conflict like a hero, and at last obtained the victory in the struggle, by enduring death by means of a slow fire: for it was a weak and slow fire by which he was burned, so that his soul could not easily make its escape from the body, and be at rest (Eusebius of Caesarea, 1861). And there he was tried like pure gold in the furnace of a slow fire, manifesting the perfection and the sincerity of his religion towards his God, and obtaining the crown of victory which belongs to the glorious conquerors of righteousness. And because he loved God, he received, as the meet recompense of his will, that perfect life which he

longed for in the presence of God, the sovereign of all. The feast of St. Themotheos of Gaza is celebrated in the Syrian Orthodox Church on 20 August.

36. St. Epiphanius, Martyr

(First Decade of fourth Century)

Epiphanius hailed from one of the most illustrious families in Lycia. His parents were wealthy and Epiphanius was sent to be educated in the city of Beirut. Epiphanius who had not yet attained the age of twenty withdrew from society and company of young men and practiced virtues (<http://www.syriacstudies.com/2016/09/22/bishops-of-the-city-of-harran/>).

When he had finished his education from Beirut, he left his family without taking care to carry with him the means of providing sustenance and came to Caesarea. He conducted himself, however, in his travels, with purity, and by the power of God which accompanied him, he came to the city where the crown of martyrdom was prepared for him. He was instructed in the Holy Scriptures by Pamphilus, the martyr (d. 309).

All men admired him for his boldness of speech, at his daring, at his patience, at his words addressed to the governor, and his answers to the judge. For when the persecution had been

proclaimed a second time, in the third year of this same persecution, the former edicts of Maximinus by which he gave command that the governors of the cities should use great pains and diligence in order to compel all men to offer sacrifice and libations to devils came into force (Eusebius of Caesarea, 1861). All the cities made a diligent proclamation, that the men, together with their wives and children, should assemble in the temples of the idols, and were compelled to offer sacrifice.

Epiphanius, a perfectly holy man, came to the governor of the place, and stood boldly before him and while Urbanus was offering libations, he came up to him and laid hold of his right hand, and held him back from offering the foul libation to idols, to persuade him to turn away from his error, saying to him: That it was not right for them to turn away from the one and only God of truth, and offer sacrifice to lifeless idols and wicked devils.

When this holy martyr of God had done these things, the servants of devils, together with the officers of the governor, struck him on the face, and when he had been thrown down on the ground they kicked him, and tore his mouth and lips with a bridle. He was imprisoned, where his legs were then stretched for a day and a night in the stocks. The next day they brought Epiphanius before Urbanus. And he ordered them to lacerate his sides until his bones and entrails became visible. This martyr of Christ, however, was strengthened both in body and soul. And when the governor

interrogated him, he gave him no further answer than that he was a Christian. Therefore, the fury of the governor became more fierce, and he gave command that his feet should be wrapped up in cotton dipped in oil, and then be set on fire. And the martyr was hung up at a height, in order that, the onlookers can be terrified.

They once again took him back to the prison, and on the next day they brought him forth again before that the judge, but he still continued the same confession as before. And then the governor and his officers, gave orders at last that he should be cast into the depths of the sea.

After this, the man of God had been cast into the depths of the terrible sea, with stones tied to his feet, forthwith a great storm and frequent commotions and mighty waves troubled the vast sea, and a severe earthquake made even the city itself tremble, and every one's hands were raised towards heaven in fear and trembling, for they supposed that the whole place, together with its inhabitants, was about to be destroyed on that day. The sea, vomited back the holy body of the martyr of God, and carried it with the waves and laid it before the gate of the city. Men and women of all ages with children went out to see this sight. And the whole city together, even the very children as well, gave glory to the God of the Christians alone, confessing with a loud voice the name of Christ, who had given strength to the martyr in his lifetime to endure such afflictions. This happened

on the second of the month Nisan (April). The feast of Ephiphanius, the martyr, is celebrated in the Syrian Orthodox Church on 14 July.

37. Mor David, Bishop of Harran

(A.D. ? – 880)

Harran is an ancient city of Jazira, south of Edessa. The learned Bar Hebraeus said, “Harran was built by Qinan, son of Arphaxad, and named after his son Haran (<http://www.syriacstudies.com/2016/09/22/bishops-of-the-city-of-harran/>). To Harran fled Abraham with his father Terah and his brother Nahur and Lot (Genesis 12:1-4). The natives of Harran spoke classical Syriac, which is the Aramaic language. It was also the language of the natives of Edessa and outer Syria.

Mor David (Dawud) of Man`em, was bishop of Harran after Gewargi (Jirjis) II. He was well known as Dawud of Man`em, after the name of his native village in Tur `Abdin. He was a relative of Mor Shim'un d-beth Zayte. He became a monk at the Monastery of Qartmin and was ordained a bishop by the Patriarch, John III (d. 873).

Mor David bequeathed his books and other precious items to his monastery (of Qartmin). They included a collection of canons copied on vellum by his nephew (son of his sister) Sawera (Severus) of Man`em. The feast of Mor David is celebrated on 10 February in the Syrian Orthodox Church.

38. Mor Abraham, Bishop of Harran

(A. D. ? - 431?)

Abraham was born and brought up in Cyrrhus. He succeeded Protogenes, the bishop of Harran. He was a man of piety, virtue and religious zeal. His biography was written by Theodoret of Cyrrhus in his *History of Monasticism*. Theodoret said, "Mor Abraham was an excellent fruit which ripened in Cyrrhus. He devoted himself to piety, worship, spiritual exercise, fasting and prayer, until his body grew feeble and he became sick. When he recovered, he went to a big village in the Mountain of Lebanon which adhered to heathenism. He arrived at the village disguised as a merchant and redeemed its people for fifty dinars, which he had borrowed from his acquaintances in the city of Homs. He continued to treat the villagers with compassion, despite their roughness and callousness, and they were astonished by his patience. They came to appreciate him and asked him to take charge of their village affairs. He did so, but only after they fulfilled his desire. The villagers built a church in a short period of time and embraced Christianity. They prevailed on him to become their presbyter, and he agreed. He took charge of them for three years, teaching them the fear of God. Later he chose a presbyter for them and returned to his own monastery. When the reputation of his virtues spread, he was made a

bishop for Harran, which was drunk with the wine of idolatry and deception. As a good shepherd, he labored in his field with determination, educating the villagers and directing them to the true path (<http://www.syriacstudies.com/2016/09/22/bishops-of-the-city-of-harran/>).

Mor Abraham was so self-disciplined that he never touched bread once he became a priest, but restricted his meals to mere beans. He spent the night hours in worship and prayer, catching some sleep only while sitting in a chair. He was compassionate toward the poor and strangers, taking care of their needs. He also took care of the needs of the natives of his city, asking them to live in peace and shun malice. They responded to his counsel. When his fame spread far and wide, Emperor Theodosius, the Young, a believer invited him to Constantinople, the capital. At the capital the emperor received him with great honor. He even kissed his damaged garment and wiped his eyes with it for a blessing. His prominent men knelt down to kiss Abraham's knees, realizing that the saints of God exude the scent of piety in this life and the life to come.

Mor Abraham passed away in Constantinople. The emperor and his wife Eudoxia, men of his state, and soldiers attended his funeral. His body was transported to Harran, where it was received with great honor by the natives of the cities through which it passed, especially great Antioch. When the procession reached the River Euphrates, a great

crowd rushed to grab a piece of his garment in order to receive the blessing of his body, although the soldiers surrounded his coffin. The voices of chanters mingled with those of the lamenters. Finally the procession reached Harran, where he was entombed.

This saint performed many miracles after his death. He served the priesthood for nineteen years. Most likely he passed away shortly before the Council of Ephesus convened in 431. The feast of Mor Abraham of Harran is celebrated in the Syrian Orthodox Church on 7 August.

39. St. Dimetrios of Thessaloniki, Martyr

(A.D. ? – 303?)

Saint Demetrius was born in the third century (https://www.huffingtonpost.com/evagelos-sotiropoulos/saint-demetrius-the-myrrh_b_4163607.html?guccounter=1) as the son of a wealthy military commander of Thessaloniki (https://orthodoxwiki.org/Demetrius_of_Thessaloniki). He received good education. The family belonged to the Province of Macedonia. He joined the army and became an officer. When he was young, he decided to get baptized secretly a Christian, something forbidden in those years, when idols were still worshiped.

When his father died, the Roman emperor Galerius Maximian ordered Dimitrios to chase and kill the Christians of Thessaloniki. Dimetrios refused to do so and revealed his faith (<http://www.pravoslavie.ru/57278.html>). He was asked to change his religious beliefs but refused once again and expressed his disgust for idolatry. Therefore, he was put to prison and was tortured. An angel of God appeared to Dimitrios saying, "Peace be with you, you sufferer for Christ; be brave and strong!" After several days, the Emperor sent soldiers to the prison to kill Dimitrios. The soldiers came into the cell finding the Saint at prayer, and killed him with their spears. Christians secretly took his body and buried it, and his relics began producing a healing fragrant myrrh. When Emperor Constantine, the Great ended the persecution of Christians (324 A.D.) and made Christianity the official religion of the Byzantine Empire, people built a small church on the place of the martyrdom of St. Demitrios in Thessaloniki, Greece. Leontius, a noble man, was completely cured by the relics of Dimitrios. He built a much larger church replacing the small one. Before Demitrios died, he had donated all his wealth to the poor through his servant Lupus. Later Demitrios' servant Lupus was beheaded for using his master's blood-stained tunic and signet ring to work many miracles.

When Emperor Justinian attempted to move the Saint's relics to Constantinople, flames flared out of the tomb and a voice commanded them to, "Leave them there, and don't touch!" and thus

the relics have remained in Thessalonica. When a young man responsible for the candles of the church was stealing them and reselling them from his home, Dimitrios appeared to him and told him that he was harming himself and the church. The embarrassed man obeyed for a little while but soon returned to his old ways. One day, when he was about to steal some large candles that had just been lit near the tomb of St. Dimitrios, a booming voice said, "Are you doing this again!" He fell over unconscious, and when he awoke, he related the whole story. The feast of St. Dimitrios is celebrated on 26 October in the Syrian Orthodox Church.

40. St. Paul of Tamouiah, Ascetic

(A.D. ? – 417 ?)

Abba Paul (Paula) was from Tamouiah, Egypt. He was inclined since his young age to solitary life and he went to Ansena Mountain. There he lived with his disciple Ezekiel, who was the witness of his virtues (<https://st-takla.org/books/en/church/synaxarium/02-babah/07-baba-tamouh.html>).

Paul, because of his exceeding love for the Lord Christ, he exhausted his body with asceticism, forsaking earthly things through fasting and prayers. Lord Christ appeared to him and blessed him for his conduct in this life for such is the behavior of those who are perfect and who fight against the flesh, the world and the devil till they overcome

them. St. Paul said to the Lord, “All that is due to Your care, O You creator and redeemer of the human race, by Your death on our behalf, we the undeserving sinners.” The Lord Christ comforted and strengthened him.

When St. Bishoy (d. 417?) went to Mount Ansena, he was joined by the saint Abba Paula. The Lord Christ told Abba Paul (Paula), “Your body will be buried with that of My chosen Bishoy.” When Abba Paula departed, his body was placed with the body of St. Bishoy. When they wanted to move the body of St. Bishoy to the wilderness of St. Macarius in Scete, they carried it onto a boat and left St. Paul’s body behind; however, the boat would not move, until they brought the body of St. Paul and placed it beside St. Bishoy’s body. Then they brought them to the wilderness of Scete. The feast of St. Paul the solitary is celebrated on 4 October in the Syrian Orthodox Church.

41. Sts. Ruphos & Zosimus

(A.D. ? – 107)

Saints Ruphos (Rufus) and Zosimus are the second century Christian martyrs. They lived in Antioch and were martyred with Saint Ignatius of Antioch during the persecution of Christians under the Roman emperor Trajan (<https://www.redirectify.com/people/rufus-and-zosimus.html>; Aphrem, 1963). They were killed by beasts in

the Roman arena. Their feast is celebrated on 20 December in the Syrian Orthodox Church.

42. St. Zosimus, the solitary

(Third Century ?)

The Holy martyr Zosimus (Zosimos or Susima), the solitary, was an anchorite monk during the time of the persecution of emperor Diocletian in the late third century, who joined after his release from prison with the prison warden Athanasius to live out their lives together as hermits (https://orthodoxwiki.org/Zosimus_the_Hermit).

The monk Zosimus, who was from Cilicia, had been seized and subjected to fierce torture for his faith. Athanasius, a prison warden, witnessed the torture of the Zosimus. Seeing him unharmed after the torture, Athanasius came to believe in Christ and was baptized.

When Zosimus was released, Athanasius joined with him and traveled into the wilderness. There, they found a crevice in a mountain in Cilicia that became their shelter, and where they lived as hermits until their death. The feast of St. Zosimus is celebrated on 5 November in the Syrian Orthodox Church.

43. Eustathius, his wife and two sons

(First & Second Century)

Eustathius was a great Roman general during the reigns of Emperors Titus (79-81) and Trajan (98-117). Though he was a pagan, Placidus (for that was his pagan name) was a just and merciful man. One day, he went out for hunting and pursued a stag. By God's providence, a cross appeared between the antlers of the stag and the voice of the Lord came to Placidus directing him to go to a Christian priest and to get baptized. Placidus was baptized along with his wife and two sons. At baptism, he received the name Eustathius; his wife, Theopiste (meaning 'faithful to God'); and his sons, Agapitus and Theopistus. After his baptism, he returned to the place where he had experienced the revelation of the stag and, kneeling, gave thanks to God that He had brought him to the truth. Just then, the voice of the Lord again manifested itself to him, foretold that he would suffer for His name, and strengthened him (<http://www.gometropolis.org/orthodox-faith/feast-days/eustathius-the-great-martyr-his-wife-and-two-children-2/>).

Then Eustathius secretly left Rome with his family, intending to hide among the common people and serve God in humility and in unknown surroundings. Arriving in Egypt, he was immediately beset by trials. An evil barbarian (ship owner) abducted his wife, and both of his sons were seized by wild beasts and carried away. However,

the barbarian soon lost his life, and the children were saved from the wild beasts by shepherds.

Eustathius settled in the Egyptian village of Vadisis (Badessos) and lived there for fifteen years as a hired laborer. Then barbarians attacked the Roman Empire, and Emperor Trajan grieved that he did not have the brave General Placidus, who had won all his battles. The emperor sent two of his officers (Antiochus and Acacius) to seek the great commander throughout the empire. By God's providence, these officers (who were once companions of Eustathius), came to the village of Vadisis, found Eustathius and brought him back to the emperor. Eustathius amassed an army and defeated the barbarians. On the way back to Rome, Eustathius found his wife and both sons. Meanwhile, Emperor Trajan had died and Emperor Hadrian was on the throne.

When Hadrian (A.D. 117-138) summoned General Eustathius to offer sacrifices to the gods to celebrate the victory, Eustathius declined, declaring himself a Christian.

The emperor asked: "Why don't you want to worship the gods? You, above all others, ought to offer thanks to them. They not only preserved you in war and granted you victory, but also they helped you find your wife and children." Saint Eustathius replied: "I am a Christian and I glorify and give thanks to Him, and I offer sacrifice to Him. I owe my life to Him. I do not know or believe in any other god than Him."

In a rage, the emperor ordered him to take off his military belt and brought him and his family before him. They did not succeed in persuading the steadfast confessors of Christ to offer sacrifice to idols. The whole family of Saint Eustathius was sentenced to be torn apart by wild beasts, but the beasts would not touch the holy martyrs (<https://oca.org/saints/lives/2018/09/20/102674-greatmartyr-eustathius-eustace-placidus-with-his-wife-and-children>).

Then the cruel emperor gave orders to throw them all alive into a red-hot brass bull, and Saint Eustathius, his wife Theopiste, and their sons Agapius and Theopistus endured a martyr's death. Before being placed in the bull, Saint Eustathius prayed, "Grant, O Lord, Your grace to our relics, and grant to those who call upon us a place in Your Kingdom. Though they call upon us when they are in danger on a river or on the sea, we entreat You to come to their aid."

Three days later, they opened the brass bull, and the bodies of the holy martyrs were found unscathed. Not one hair on their heads was singed, and their faces shone with heavenly beauty. Many seeing this miracle came to believe in Christ. Christians then buried the bodies of the saints. The feast of St Eustathius, his wife and two sons is celebrated on 21 September in the Syrian Orthodox Church.

44. St. Bishoy (Bishoe)

(A.D. 320 – 417)

Saint Bishoy (Bisve) was born in A.D. 320 in a pious family in a small village called Shensha, in the province of Menoufeya, Egypt (<http://www.coptic.net/synexarion/Bishoy.txt>; <http://www.copticchurch.net/topics/synexarion/bishoy.html>). ‘Bishoy’ is a Coptic word, which means ‘lofty’ or ‘elevated’. He was the only one to be called “the perfect man”, also known as ‘the Great of Cyrus’. An angel appeared to his mother, and announced to her that her son was chosen from among his six brothers to be the servant of God. She obeyed gladly and prepared him for his mission. In A.D. 340 Saint Bishoy went to live in Wadi-El-Natrum and there he became a friend of Saint John the Short; both were disciples of Saint Pambo (d. 385).

When Saint Pambo died, Saint Bishoy and Saint John prayed for God’s guidance, and an angel appeared to Saint Bishoy, directing him to the site of the present monastery, where he lived the life of a hermit. There, Saint Bishoy became the spiritual father to many monks who gathered around him. He grew famous for his love, simplicity, kindness, as well as for his extreme ascetic life.

He was serious, wise and a great recluse, loving seclusion and quietness. It is said that because of his love for God and his desire to be with Him always, he used to tie his hair with a

rope to the ceiling of his cell in order to resist sleep during his long night prayers.

In the year 407 A.D., barbarians attacked the monasteries at Scete. During this time Saint Bishoy, accompanied by some of his disciples, went to Antinopolis where he met Saint Paul of Tamouiah and their love for each other was such that God promised them that they would never be parted. Until this day, the body of Saint Bishoy and the relics of Saint Paul lie together in the main church of the monastery of Saint Bishoy in Wadi-El-Natrum. Saint Bishoy died in 417 A.D. and the feast of St. Bishoy is celebrated on 2 July in the Syrian Orthodox Church.

45. St. Agapitus, Metropolitan

(Second/Third Century)

Saint Agapitus was born of Christian parents in Cappadocia during the reign of the emperors Diocletian (284-305) and Maximian (305-311). From his youth he yearned for the monastic life and so he entered a monastery, where he struggled in fasting, prayer, and service to all the brethren of the monastery.

The Lord granted Saint Agapitus the gift of working wonders. The emperor, Licinius (311-324), learned that Saint Agapitus was endowed with great physical strength, and he commanded

the saint to be enrolled into military service against his wishes.

During the persecution against the Christians initiated by Licinius, Saint Agapitus was wounded by a spear, but remained alive (<https://oca.org/saints/lives/2018/02/18/109054-martyr-agrippa-of-phrygia>). After the death of emperor Licinius, he obtained his freedom from military service in the following manner.

The holy Emperor Constantine the Great (306-337) heard that Saint Agapitus had healed people by his prayers. The emperor sent him a sick servant, who also received healing. The emperor wanted to reward Saint Agapitus, who instead asked only that he be permitted to resign from military service and return to his monastery. Permission was granted, and he joyfully returned to the monastery.

Soon after this, the Bishop of Sinaus in Bithynia summoned Saint Agapitus and ordained him to the holy priesthood. After the death of the bishop, Saint Agapitus was unanimously chosen by the clergy and all the people to the See of Sinaus. The new hierarch wisely governed his flock, guiding it in the Orthodox faith and virtuous life. Through his prayers, numerous miracles occurred. The saint died in peace.

46. St. Julian, Martyr

(A.D. ? - 284?)

St. Julian or Elian, was born to pagan parents in the city of Emesa (modern-day Homs, Syria) in the 3rd century. St. Julian (also known as Ellien) accepted the Christian faith even though his father and family were not Christians. Because of this, he and his family were at odds with one another (<http://full-of-grace-and-truth.blogspot.com/2010/02/st-julian-elian-martyr-and-unmercenary.html>). He heard the Gospel of our Lord concerning the parable of talents and decided to use his talents to benefit others.

“Having set his hopes in Jesus Christ, Julian was not tempted by the glory of this temporary world. He prayed day and night, practiced fasting, visited prisoners and comforted them. He gave out large alms of what remained in excess in his father’s house. Julian studied and practiced medicine skillfully. He strived to cure the diseases of both the body and soul. He cured sick people by Christ’s grace and the faith of the Apostles, while preaching God’s Word and urging them to follow the path of virtue. ‘It is not’, he says, ‘with medicines that you will be cured of your illness nor thanks to your idols which drive to eternal punishment all those who kneel before them, but by the power of Jesus Christ’s name who has been crucified by the Jews under Pontius Pilate in Jerusalem, who has been buried and rose on the third day.’”

His fellow physicians who were not followers of Christ were jealous because of his mastery of the healing arts. They asked his father to force his son to stop healing in the name of Jesus Christ. But St. Julian refused to listen to these men or his father.

The Roman governors were ordered to persecute Christians. Julian's father was a high-ranking officer in the city, so he arrested Bishop Silvanos of Homs, Syria, Deacon Luke and Reader Mokimos, to torture them. They beat them; then dragged them through the city behind a chariot, in order to publicly terrorize the Christians. They were tortured repeatedly. Julian sneaked into the prison and tended to their wounds. There he was arrested and brought to his father, who turned him over to the governor. He witnessed the execution of Silvanos, Luke and Mokimos. When these men were about to be put to death, St. Julian prayed to God and an angel appeared to him and said: "Do not be grieved, O Julian, a crown has been prepared for you. You will conquer your enemies and the devil's tricks. Do not fear their torture, for I am with you!" Then his father had him tied to a horse and dragged through the streets.

He was imprisoned and tortured for months, but would not renounce the faith, instead he led all the tormentors to Christ. Finally, his father had blacksmiths drove long spikes into Julian's head and feet. When his executioners left, he managed to crawl to a cave owned by a potter. When the

potter came to the cave and discovered the body of St. Julian he took it by night to the church of the Apostles and St. Barbara where he was buried at the East of the Altar. Julian entrusted his soul to the Lord on 6 February, 284. (<http://www.antiochianarch.org.au/stJulian.aspx>).

Later, a church dedicated to St. Julian was built on the spot of the cave where he died and his body was laid in a marble coffin. Many miracles attributed to St. Julian's intercessions occurred after his death and they continue to occur to this day. There is a church dedicated to this great saint: the original church of St. Julian in Homs, Syria. The feast of St. Julian (Ellien) is celebrated on 7 February in the Syrian orthodox Church.

47. St. Poemen of Egypt

(c. A.D. 340 – 450?)

Abba Poemen (means “shepherd”) was an Egyptian monk born around A.D. 340. He is an early Desert Father, the most quoted Abba (Father) in the *Sayings of the Desert Fathers*.

Abba Poemen lived in a monastery in Scetis, one of the first centers of early Christian monasticism. In 407 A.D. the monastery was overrun by raiders, scattering the monks. Abba Poemen and Abba Anoub, along with a handful of monks, fled to Terenuthis, on the river Nile (<https://infogalactic.com/info/Poemen>). After leaving Scetis, Abba

Poemen and his group first lived in an abandoned pagan temple. The various raids on Scetis were a turning point in desert monasticism. The remaining diaspora comprising Abba Poemen and his group kept alive the collective wisdom of the monks of Scetis by creating the bulk of the *Sayings of the Desert Fathers*.

Abba Poemen was a wise shepherd rather than a desert ascetic. He was known for his tolerance of the weakness of others. Once some of the older monks approached Abba Poemen for his advice on how to treat monks who fell asleep during their prayers. They were inclined to wake the sleeping monk, while Abba Poemen took a more compassionate approach, advising, “For my part, when I have seen a brother who is dozing, I put his head on my knees and let him rest.” Abba Poemen was opposed to giving harsh penances to those who slipped spiritually.

Abba Poemen was also described as a charismatic speaker who still taught more by example than by lecturing others. When a visiting monk asked him if he should assume a role of authority over the brothers he was living with, Abba Poemen responded by saying, “No, be their example, not their legislator.” Judgment of others was also foreign to his nature. He once stated that, “A man may seem to be silent, but if his heart is condemning others, he is babbling incessantly.” His sayings make up one seventh of the entire *Sayings of the Desert Fathers*. Many of his sayings

and deeds are also preserved in the *Paradise of the Fathers*.

Poemen said, “Do not give your heart to that which does not satisfy your heart.” He also said, “If you are silent, you will have peace wherever you live.” Abba Poemen heard of someone who had gone all week without eating and then had lost his temper. The old man said, “He could do without food for six days, but he could not cast out anger.” Abba Isaac came to see Abba Poemen and found him washing his feet. As he enjoyed freedom of speech with him he said, “How is it that others practice austerity and treat their bodies rigidly?” Abba Poemen said to him, “We have not been taught to kill our bodies, but to kill our passions” (<http://www.omhksea.org/2012/08/abba-poemen-brief-life-and-sayings/>).

Repentance and grieving over one’s sins is the beginning of the Divine path is the teaching of St. Poemen. When we repent and stand against evil we will do good and begin to do the will of God. If we do not repent then we will not recognize our evil actions and continue to go against the will of God. This is why we so often find ourselves separated from God. This effort is mostly a struggle with our thoughts. We must be ever watchful and ever ready to attack thoughts which are temptations to go against the will of God (<http://orthodoxwayoflife.blogspot.com/2011/08/saint-poemen-on-beginning-of-spiritual.html>).

It is not the elimination of thoughts that we seek as this is impossible but the ability to minimize and resist them. How do we do this? In general, Saint Poeman would say, “the thing you need most is a sober mind.” One way to do this is to avoid those situations, places and people who lead to conditions that arouse thoughts that tempt us. Why maintain a friendship with a person who continually is asking to do things which you know are not proper? Why engage in discussions that you know will lead to heated arguments where you end up saying things you wish you had never said? Act on eliminating these temptations from your life. This combined with a life of prayer, repentance and regular participation in the sacraments will bring you closer to God. Saint Poemen says, the cure is obvious but not easy to do as we must exercise our will to order our lives is a way that avoids undue temptations. The feast of Poemen of Egypt is celebrated on 27 July in the Syrian Orthodox Church.

48. St. Silas, one among the Emissaries

(A.D. ? – 50)

Saint Silas, probably born at Rome was a missionary and companion of Apostle St. Paul. It is generally believed that the Silas in Acts (15:22, 32) and the Silvanus in 2 Corinthians (1:1), and 2 Thessalonians (1:1), and 1 Peter (5:12) are the

same (<https://www.britannica.com/biography/Saint-Silas>). Acts 15:22 first mentions him as one of the “leading men among the brethren.” They sent Silas to Antioch (now Antakya, Turkey), where he is identified as a prophet (Acts 15:32).

Silas was sent with Paul and Barnabas to Antioch to communicate the decisions of the Council of Jerusalem to the Gentile community in Syria (https://www.catholic.org/saints/saint.php?saint_id=447). Silas was one of the Elders of the church at Jerusalem. His name may indicate him to have been a Hellenistic Jew. He appears to have had the rights of a Roman citizen (Acts 16:35-39). He supposedly remained in Antioch until he was chosen to join Paul on his second journey. With Paul, Silas traveled through what is now Turkey, visiting Syria and Cilicia, the churches which they strengthened; from Derbe they went to Lystra where they were joined by St. Timothy. Their journey brought them to Galatia and Troas, from where they sailed to Macedonia.

Silas and Paul were beaten up and imprisoned for healing a slave girl possessed by “a spirit of divination.” After their release, they missioned in Thessalonica. Expelled, they went to Beroea, where Silas remained with Timothy while Paul traveled to Athens. He later rejoined Paul at Corinth. Sometime later he apparently joined Apostle St. Peter, whom he seems to have served as secretary; 1 Peter 5:12 suggests that he wrote this letter with Peter, and some scholars give him a prominent

place among the New Testament writers. Tradition says he was the first bishop of Corinth and that he died in Macedonia (<http://www.saintsilas.org.uk/section/111>).

49. St. Urbanus, Bishop and Martyr

St. Urbanus was one among the seventy-two emissaries (Luke 10: 1). He was ordained by St. Andrew as the Bishop of all Macedonia. Saint Paul refers to Urbanus as ‘Great Urbanus, our co-worker in Christ’ (Rom. 16:9). Macedonia is a region already rich in tradition and an area recognized throughout the civilized world for its literary and artistic contributions (<http://pemptousia.com/2017/10/october-31-the-life-of-st-stachys/>). St. Urbanus was more than equal to the task of converting Macedonians, who for centuries had a sophistication of ideas on faith that were not easily dislodged. Urbanus set a fine example in Macedonia but did not escape the avenging pagans. He was martyred for the cause of Christ. The feast of Urbanus is celebrated on 7 September in the Syrian Orthodox Church.

50. St. Archippus, one among the Emissaries

(First Century)

Saints Archippus, Philemon and Apphia, among the Seventy-two Emissaries were students and companions of the holy Apostle Paul (<https://oca.org/saints/lives/2017/02/19/100557-martyr-archippus-of-the-seventy-apostles>). In the Epistle to Philemon (1:2), Apostle Paul names Saint Archippus as his companion, and mentions him again in the Epistle to the Colossians (Col. 4:17).

Saint Archippus was bishop of the city of Colossae in Phrygia. Saint Philemon was an eminent citizen of this city, and the Christians gathered in his home to celebrate church services. During a pagan feast the Church had gathered in Philemon's home for prayer. When the pagans learned of it they raided the home and took Sts. Archippus, Philemon, and Apphia to be killed.

During the persecution against Christians under emperor Nero (54-68), they were brought to trial by the ruler Artocles for confessing faith in Christ. They were whipped, buried up to their waists and then stoned. St. Archippus survived this attack, barely, and the pagans then pulled him out and left him for the children's amusement. They stabbed him all over with knives and he gave up his soul to God (https://orthodoxwiki.org/Apostle_Archippus). The Church remembers St. Archippus on 20 February and 20 March.

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Appendix - I

The List of Seventy-two Emissaries

We read in Luke:10:1, “After this the Lord appointed seventy others and sent them two by two ahead of him to every town and place where he was about to go.” There is no consistent list of the 72. Seventy-two is the accepted Syriac tradition of the number of emissaries which St. John of Damascus (d. 749?) has confirmed. The prayer book printed about a century ago lists the feast of seventy-two emissaries on 5 July. Also, the prayer before the Holy confession reads: “. . . to the seventy-two emissaries . . . I confess my sins.” Therefore, it is the traditional belief that there are seventy-two emissaries.

Eusebius (d. 339?) states that no list of the seventy is anywhere extant and goes on to list a few names who are reckoned to be members of the Seventy (see, Eusebius, 1926, Vol. I, p. 83). Hippolytus of Rome (d. 235?) had produced an early list of the Seventy Apostles and was put in the Ap-

pendix of his works in the voluminous collection of *Early Church Fathers*. Dorotheus of Tyre (d. 362) has listed the names of the Seventy Apostles. These names were also given in the *Chronicon Paschale*, a seventh century Byzantine universal chronicle of the world. However, there are repetition of names such as Aristarchus and Stephen. There are omission of names such as Adai, and the inclusion of some who were Apostles at first, but later fell from the faith such as Demas, Hermogenes and Phygellus. Some have incorporated the names of Dionysius Areopagite (Acts 17:34) and Simon Niger (Acts 13:1) which are not included in the list given below.

It was Dimitrius (2002) who compiled another list in his collection of *The Lives of the Saints*. There are several digital resources such as <http://newadvent.org/fathers/0524.htm>; https://orthodoxwiki.org/Seventy_Apostles; <http://www.orthodox.net/saints/70apostles.html>. I have compared all available lists and compiled a list which is not claimed to be correct since the task is to reproduce the names of those who lived about two millenniums ago.

1. ACHIPPUS, was bishop of Colossae
(Col. 4:17)
2. ADAI, the twin brother of St. Thomas and the
first bishop of Edessa
3. AGABUS, the prophet (Acts 11:28, 21:10)
4. AMPLIAS, was bishop of Diospolis
(Rom. 16:8)
5. ANANIAS (HANANIAH), who baptized
St. Paul and was bishop of Damascus
(Acts 9:10, 17-19, 22:12)
6. ANDRONICUS, was bishop of Pannonia
(Rom. 16:7)
7. APELLES, was bishop of Heraclea
(Rom. 16:10)
8. APOLLOS, was bishop of Caesarea
(Acts 18:24; 1 Cor. 1:12, 3:4, 4:6, 16:12;
Titus 3:13)
9. AQUILLA was bishop of Heraclea
(Acts 18:2, 22, 26; Rom. 16:3;
1 Cor. 16:19; 2 Tim. 4:19)
10. ARISTARCHUS, was bishop of Apamea,
Syria (Acts 19:29, 20:4, 27:2; Colo. 4:10;
Phile. 1:24)
11. ARISTOBULUS, was bishop of Britain
(Rom. 16:10)
12. ARTEMUS, was bishop of Lystra (Titus 3:12)

13. ASYNCRITUS, was bishop of Hyrcania
(Rom. 16:14)
14. BARNABAS, who served the Word together
with Paul, and was bishop of Milan
(Heraclea?) (Acts 4:36, 15:35, 13:1,2;
1 Cor. 9:6; Gal. 2:1)
15. CARPUS, bishop of Berytus (Berrhoe) in
Thrace (2 Tim. 4:13)
16. CEPHAS, was bishop of Iconium
(1 Cor. 15:5)
17. CLEMENT, was bishop of Sardinia, not
Clement of Rome (Phil. 4:3)
18. CLEOPAS, younger brother of Joseph, the
betrothed, and was the second bishop of
Jerusalem (Luke 24:18)
19. CRISPUS (CRESCENS), was bishop of
Galatia (Acts 18:8; 2 Tim. 4:10;
1 Cor. 1:14)
20. DEMAS, who loved this present world and
fell out of true faith (2 Tim. 4:10;
Col. 4:14; Phile. 1:24)
21. EPAPHRAS (EPAENETUS), was bishop of
Andriaca (Colossae ?) (Col. 1:7, 4:12;
Phile. 1:23)
22. EPAPHRODITUS, bishop of Andriaca
(Phil. 2:25, 4:18)
23. EPENETUS, was bishop of Carthage
(Rom. 16:5)

24. ERASTUS, was bishop of Panellas (Paneas)
(Acts 19:22; Rom. 16:23; 2 Tim. 4:20)
25. EVODIUS (EVODUS or EUODIA), was
bishop of Antioch after St Peter (Phil. 4:2)
26. GAIUS, was bishop of Ephesus after the
apostle Timotheus (Acts 19:29, 20:4;
Rom. 16:23; 1 Cor. 1:14).
27. HERMAS, was bishop of Philippi
(Rom. 16:14)
28. HERMES, was bishop of Dalmatia
(Rom. 16:14)
29. HERMOGENES, was bishop of Thracian
Megara who later deviated from faith
(2 Tim. 1:15)
30. HERODION (RODION or RHODION), was
bishop of Tarsus (Patfas or Patras)
(Rom. 16:11)
31. JACOB (YACOUB or JAMES), brother
of the Lord, first bishop of Jerusalem
(Mathew 13:55; Gal. 1:19)
32. JASON, was bishop of Tarsus
(Acts 17:5)
33. JESUS, Joseph called Barsabbas (also known
as Justus), was bishop of Eleutheropolis
(Acts 1:23; Col. 4:13)
34. LINUS, was bishop of Rome after St. Peter
(2 Tim. 4:21)
35. LUCIUS, was bishop of Laodicea in Syria
(Acts 13:1).

36. LUKE, the Doctor and Evangelist and was bishop of Thessalonica (Salonika) (Col 4:4)
37. MARK, the Evangelist, who was ordained bishop of Alexandria by St. Peter (1 Peter 5:13).
38. MARK, called John, the nephew of Barnabas, was bishop of Byblos in Phoenicia (Acts 12:12, 25, 15:38; Col. 4:10)
39. MATTHIAS, who filled the vacant place in the number of the twelve apostles (Acts 1:23, 26)
40. NARCISSUS, was bishop of Athens (Rom. 16:11).
41. NICANOR, one of the seven deacons, died on the same day when Stephen was martyred (Acts 6:5, 8:5)
42. NICOLAS, one of the seven deacons, was bishop of Samaria (Acts 6:5)
43. OLYMPUS, who was martyred in Rome (Rom. 16:15).
44. ONESIMUS died in Potiole (Puteoli) at the hands of Tertillus, prefect of Rome and was bishop of Byzantium (Col. 4:9; Phile: 1:10)
45. ONESIPHORUS, was bishop of Colophon and Cyrene (2 Tim. 1:16)
46. PARMENAS, one of the seven deacons, and bishop of Soli (Acts 6:5)
47. PATROBAS (PATROBULUS), was bishop of Pottole (Puteoli) (Rom. 16:14).

48. PHILEMON, was bishop of Gaza (Phile. 1:1)
49. PHILIP, one of the seven deacons, who baptized the eunuch, minister of the Ethiopian Queen (Acts 6:5, 8:26-40)
50. PHILOLOGUS, was ordained bishop of Sinope by St. Andrew (Rom. 16:15)
51. PHLEGON (PHLEGON), was bishop of Marathon, a town in Thrace (Rom. 16:14)
52. PHYGELLUS, was bishop of Ephesus, who later deviated from faith (2 Tim. 1:15)
53. PROCHORUS, one of the seven deacons, and was bishop of Nicomedia in Bithynia (Acts 6:5)
54. PUDENS (2 Tim. 4:21)
55. QUARTUS, was bishop of Berytus (Rom. 16:23)
56. RUFUS, was bishop of Thebes (Mark 15:21; Rom. 16:13)
57. SILAS, who preached the Gospel together with Paul and was bishop of Corinth (Acts 15:22)
58. SILVANUS, was bishop of Thessalonica (Salonica) (1 Peter 5:12)
59. SOSIPATER, was bishop of Iconium (Rom. 16:21)
60. SOSTHENES, was bishop of Colophon (Colophon) (1 Cor. 1:1; Acts 18:17)

61. STACHYS, was bishop of Byzantium
(Rom. 16:9)
62. STEPHEN, one among the seven deacons, the
first martyr (Acts 6:5, 7:54-60)
63. SYMEON (Simon), brother of the Lord
(Mathew 13:55)
64. TERTIUS, was the second bishop of Iconium
(Rom. 16:22).
65. THADDEUS, not Apostole Jude Thaddeus,
but who was called Labbaeus (Mathew
10:2-4), who baptized Abgar, the prince
of Edessa
66. TIMON, one of the seven deacons, was
bishop of Bostra, the Island of Arabia
(Acts 6:5)
67. TIMOTHY, was the bishop of Ephesus
(Acts 16:1)
68. TITUS, was bishop of Gortyna in Crete
(2 Cor. 2:13)
69. TROPHIMUS, who was martyred along with
St. Paul (Acts 20:4; 2 Tim. 4:20)
70. TYCHICUS, was the first bishop of Bithynian
Chalcedon with whom the Epistle to
Colossians was sent (Acts 20:4;
Ephesians 6:21; Titus 3:12)
71. URBAN, was bishop of Macedonia
(Rom. 16:9)
72. ZENAS, the lawyer and was bishop of
Diospolis (Titus 3:13)

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Appendix - II

The List of the Patriarchs of Antioch

This is the list* of the canonical Patriarchs of Antioch and all the East of which eleven of them were Maphrians of the East who were later selected as Patriarchs of Antioch.

| | | |
|----|--|---------|
| 1 | St. Peter the Apostle | 37-67 |
| 2 | St. Evodius | 67-68 |
| 3 | St. Ignatios I Nurono (the Illuminator) | 68-107 |
| 4 | St. Heron | 107-127 |
| 5 | St. Korneilos | 127-154 |
| 6 | St. Heros | 154-169 |
| 7 | St. Theophilos | 169-182 |
| 8 | St. Maximos I | 182-191 |
| 9 | St. Seraphion | 191-211 |
| 10 | St. Ascelpiadis the Confessor | 211-220 |
| 11 | Philitus | 220-231 |
| 12 | Zbina | 231-237 |

* <http://sor.cua.edu/Patriarchate/PatriarchsChronList.html>
<http://catholicose.org/PauloseII/Catholicate.htm>

| | | |
|----|------------------------|---------|
| 13 | St. Babulas the Martyr | 237-251 |
| 14 | Fabius | 251-254 |
| 15 | S. Demetrianos | 254-260 |
| 16 | Paul I of Samosate | 260-268 |
| 17 | Domnus I | 268-273 |
| 18 | Timos | 273-282 |
| 19 | Cyrille I | 283-303 |
| 20 | Tyrannos | 304-314 |
| 21 | Vitalis | 314-320 |
| 22 | St. Philogone | 320-323 |
| 23 | Paulinos of Tyre | 323-324 |
| 24 | Ostatheous | 324-337 |

After the Nicea Synod in AD 325, the Arians (who taught that Christ is a creation and not equal to the father) took control of the See of Antioch and appointed the following seven Patriarchs during AD 331-360.

| | |
|------------|---------|
| Eulalius | 331-333 |
| Euphornius | 333-334 |
| Philaclus | 334-342 |
| Stephanos | 342-344 |
| Leonce | 344-357 |

| | |
|-----------------|---------|
| Eudoxynos | 358-359 |
| Euzoios | 360 |
| 25 Milithius | 360-381 |
| 26 St. Flavin I | 381-404 |
| 27 Porphyros | 404-412 |
| 28 Alexander | 412-417 |
| 29 Theodotos | 417-428 |
| 30 John I | 428-442 |
| 31 Domnus II | 442-449 |
| 32 Maximos II | 449-455 |

Maximos abdicated and the Chalcedonians seized control over the See of Antioch and appointed the following two Patriarchs.

| | |
|---------------------------------|---------|
| Basil | 456-458 |
| Aqaq | 458-459 |
| 33 Martoros | 459-468 |
| 34 Peter II the Fuller (Qassar) | 468-488 |
| 35 Bladius | 488-498 |
| 36 Flavin II | 498-512 |

37 St. Severius the Great 512-538

The Chalcedonians (who taught that Christ has two natures) took control of the See of Antioch in 518 and sent Patriarch Mor Severius to exile and appointed the following three Patriarchs whose line continues in the Byzantine (Rum/Antiochene Orthodox) Patriarchate:

Paul the Jew 518-521

Euphrosius 521-528

Ephrem of Amid 528-546

Six years after the death of Mor Severius, Sargius of Tella became the Syriac Orthodox Patriarch.

38 Sargius of Tella 544-546

During this turbulent time, the Holy See remained vacant for 4 years.

39 Paul II the Black of Alexandria 550-575

He was deposed in 575 for joining the Chalcedonians. The Holy See remained vacant for the next few years.

40 Peter III of Raqqa 581-591

41 Julian I 591-595

42 Athanasius I Gammolo 595-631

| | | |
|----|------------------------|---------|
| 43 | John II of the Sedre | 631-648 |
| 44 | Theodore | 649-667 |
| 45 | Severius II bar Masqeh | 667-681 |
| 46 | Athanasius II | 683-686 |
| 47 | Julian II | 686-708 |
| 48 | Elias I | 709-723 |
| 49 | Athanasius III | 724-740 |
| 50 | Iwanis I | 740-754 |

After the death of Iwanis, two Patriarchs were appointed at the behest of the Caliph:

| | | |
|----|------------------------------|---------|
| | Euwanis I | 754 - ? |
| | Athanasius al-Sandali | ? - 758 |
| 51 | George I | 758-790 |
| 52 | Joseph | 790-792 |
| 53 | Quryaqos of Takrit | 793-817 |
| 54 | Dionysius I of Tellmahreh | 817-845 |
| 55 | John III | 846-873 |
| 56 | Ignatius II | 878-883 |
| 57 | Theodosius Romanos of Takrit | 887-896 |
| 58 | Dionysius II | 897-909 |

| | | |
|----|------------------------|-----------|
| 59 | John IV Qurzahli | 910-922 |
| 60 | Baselius I | 923-935 |
| 61 | John V | 936-953 |
| 62 | Iwanis II | 954-957 |
| 63 | Dionysius III | 958-961 |
| 64 | Abraham I | 962-963 |
| 65 | John VI Sarigta | 965-985 |
| 66 | Athanasius IV of Salah | 986-1002 |
| 67 | John VII bar `Abdun | 1004-1033 |
| 68 | Dionysius IV Yahya | 1034-1044 |

Due to internal conflicts within the Church, the Holy See was vacant for the next few years.

| | | |
|----|---------------------|------------|
| 69 | John VIII | 1049-1057 |
| 70 | Athanasius V | 1058 -1063 |
| 71 | John IX bar Shushan | 1063-1073 |
| 72 | Baselius II | 1074-1075 |

After the death of Baselius, John Abdun got himself appointed Patriarch and caused trouble in the Church. He was deposed but continued causing trouble until 1091.

| | | |
|----|---------------------|-----------|
| 73 | Dionysius V Lazaros | 1077-1078 |
|----|---------------------|-----------|

| | | |
|----|---|-----------|
| 74 | Iwanis III | 1080-1082 |
| 75 | Dionysius VI | 1088-1090 |
| 76 | Athanasius VI bar Khamoro | 1091-1129 |
| 77 | John X bar Mawdyono | 1129-1137 |
| 78 | Athanasius VII bar Qutreh | 1138-1166 |
| 79 | Michael I the Great | 1166-1199 |
| 80 | Athanasius VIII | 1200-1207 |
| 81 | John XI | 1208-1220 |
| 82 | Ignatius III David (Before being elevated to the Patriarchate, Mor David was the Maphrian of the East from 1215 to 1222) | 1222-1252 |
| 83 | John XII bar Ma`dani | 1252-1263 |
| 84 | Ignatius IV Yeshu | 1264-1282 |
| 85 | Philoxenos I Nemrud | 1283-1292 |
| 86 | Michael II | 1292-1312 |
| 87 | Michael III Yeshu | 1312-1349 |
| 88 | Baselius III Gabriel | 1349-1387 |
| 89 | Philoxenos II the Writer | 1387-1421 |
| 90 | Baselius IV Shem`un | 1421-1444 |
| 91 | Ignatius Behnam al-Hadli | 1445-1454 |
| 92 | Ignatius Khalaf | 1455-1483 |
| 93 | Ignatius John XIII | 1483-1493 |

| | | |
|-----|---|-----------|
| 94 | Ignatius Nuh of Lebanon | 1493-1509 |
| 95 | Ignatius Yeshu I | 1509-1512 |
| 96 | Ignatius Jacob I | 1512-1517 |
| 97 | Ignatius David I | 1517-1520 |
| 98 | Ignatius Abd-Allah I | 1520-1557 |
| 99 | Ignatius Ne`met Allah I (Before being elevated to the Patriarchate, Mor Ne`met Allah was the Maphrian of the East from 1555 to 1557) | 1557-1576 |
| 100 | Ignatius David II Shah (Before being elevated to the Patriarchate, Mor David was the Maphrian of the East from 1575 to 1576) | 1576-1591 |
| 101 | Ignatius Pilate I (Before being elevated to the Patriarchate, Mor Pilate was the Maphrian of the East from 1576 to 1591) | 1591-1597 |
| 102 | Ignatius Hadayat Allah (Before being elevated to the Patriarchate, Mor Hadayat Allah was the Maphrian of the East in 1597) | 1597-1639 |
| 103 | Ignatius Simon I | 1640-1659 |
| 104 | Ignatius Yeshu II Qamsheh | 1659-1662 |
| 105 | Ignatius Abdul Masih I (Before being elevated to the Patriarchate, Mor Abdul Masih was the Maphrian of the East from 1655 to 1662) | 1662-1686 |
| 106 | Ignatius George II (Before being elevated to the Patriarchate, Mor George was the Maphrian of the East from 1674 to 1687) | 1687-1708 |

- 107 Ignatius Isaac Azar 1709-1722
(Before being elevated to the Patriarchate, Mor Isaac Azar was the Maphrian of the East from 1687 to 1709)
- 108 Ignatius Shukr Allah II 1722-1745
(Before being elevated to the Patriarchate, Mor Shukr Allah was the Maphrian of the East in 1722)
- 109 Ignatius George III 1745-1768
- 110 Ignatius George IV 1768-1781
(Before being elevated to the Patriarchate, Mor George was the Maphrian of the East from 1760 to 1768)
- 111 Ignatius Matthew 1782-1817
- 112 Ignatius Yunan 1817-1818
- 113 Ignatius George V 1819-1837
- 114 Ignatius Elias II 1838-1847
(Before being elevated to the Patriarchate, Mor Elias was the Maphrian of the East from 1827 to 1838)
- 115 Ignatius Jacob II 1847-1871
- 116 Ignatius Peter IV 1872-1894
(Moran Peter IV convened the Mulanthuruthy Synod and ordained six metropolitans for the Syrian Orthodox Church in Malankara)
- 117 Ignatius Abdul Masih II 1895-1905
(Abdul Masih was deposed in 1905 by the Synod of the Universal Syrian Orthodox Church)
- 118 Ignatius Abd Allah II 1906-1915
(Also known as Abded Aloho II, visited and stayed in Malankara from 1910 to 1912)

- 119 Ignatius Elias III 1917-1932
 (Visited Malankara to establish peace in the church at the invitation of Lord Irvin in 1931 and departed for heavenly abode in 1932 and was entombed at Manjinik-kara)
- 120 Ignatius Afram I Barsoum 1933-1957
- 121 Ignatius Jacob III 1957-1980
 (Has stayed at Manjinikkara during 1933-1946 while he was a Ramban - Abdul Ahad Ramban)
- 122 Ignatius Zakka I Iwas 1980-2014
 (Visited Malankara for the first time in 1982 and later visited in 2000, 2004, 2008)
- 123 Ignatius Aphrem II 2014-
 (Visited Malankara for the first time in 2015)

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