

SAINT CONSTANTINE OF JEWISH DESCENT

—Commemorated on December 26th—

The righteous Constantine was a descendant of the Jewish people from the city of Sinada (found in Greater Frygia). While he was still a young lad, one day as he was walking with his mother through the city streets, he noticed a certain Christian making the sign of the Cross over his mouth as he yawned. From that moment on, he started to cross himself just as he would see the Christians doing. Not only this, but he proceeded to emulate with fervent faith the other acts of Christians as well. Over the course of time, his face became more and more radiant, and he was taught the entirety of Christian beliefs through divine illumination—directly from God. He also fasted from food completely for days at a time.

Once, a young Jewish girl drew near to the Saint in a very provocative and shameless manner. Immediately, Constantine made the sign of the Cross, and the girl dropped dead; however, he straightaway resurrected her again. Led by a heavenly cloud, he went to a Monastery called Phouboution, where there dwelled men renowned for their ascetic way of life and virtuous conduct. After relating his life to the Abbot, the Abbot ordered the monks to bring a Cross, which he instructed Constantine to kiss and venerate. When this blessed man fearfully and reverently kissed the bottom of the Cross, an unexpected miracle occurred: the Cross tilted forward and touched his venerable head and etched upon it the sign of the Cross. This mark remained indelible upon the Saint's skull until his death.

Afterwards, he received Holy Baptism and was named Constantine. At that time, another extraordinary event took place: when he stepped out of the baptismal font, his footprints became imprinted upon the marble floor where he stood. In following, this ever-memorable man undertook many spiritual struggles, aspiring to surpass all the monks of the Monastery in hardship and asceticism. He worked the same trade as the Apostle Paul, constructing tents by sewing together pieces of leather. Whenever he stood to pray, the area around him would be filled with fragrance; whenever he desired to enter the church, the doors would open for him spontaneously on their own. On account of his

exceptional purity, he could mentally perceive the hidden thoughts of the other monks.

Eventually he left the Monastery and went to Olympus, and from there he travelled to Myra in Lycia. In turn, he visited Cyprus, and from there to Attalia, where he crossed—on foot—a wide and deep river that could only be crossed by boat. After visiting many other places, he returned to Olympus again. There he spent forty days not only without food, but also buried waist high in a ditch. Afterwards, he involuntarily accepted ordination to the Priesthood, and he subsequently went to Atroan, all the while persisting in his usual asceticism. Finally, he foresaw his death eight years prior to the actual day, and at the completion of this time, after clearly relating the events surrounding his life, he departed for the Lord.

Through his holy prayers, may Christ have mercy on our souls. Amen.