



# Main Church *Iconography*

SAINT JOHN THE BAPTIST GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

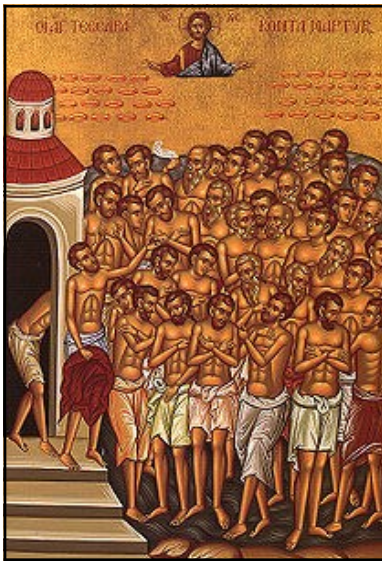
TOGETHER, LET US ADORN OUR PARISH

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## ***The Holy 40 Martyrs of Sebaste***

*March 9*



The holy, glorious and right-victorious Forty Martyrs of Sebaste are a group of Roman soldiers who became martyrs for their Christian faith. Sts. Cyrion (Quirio), Candidus, Domnus, Hesychius, Heraclius, Smaragdus, Eunoicus, Valens, Vivianus, Claudius, Priscus, Theodulus, Euty chius, John, Santhias, Helianus, Sisinius, Angius, Aetius, Flavius, Acacius, Ecdicius, Lysimachus, Alexander, Elias, Gorgonius, Theophilus, Dometian, Gaius, Leontius, Athanasius, Cyril, Sacerdon, Nicholas, Valerius, Philoctimon, Severian, Chudion, Aglaius, and Meliton are commemorated by the Church on March 9. St. Constantine the Great issued an edict granting Christians religious freedom, and officially recognized Christianity as equal with paganism under the law. But Licinius, a pagan, continued to persecute the Christians of the East.

These Holy Martyrs, who had openly confessed themselves Christians, were taken into custody. They were interrogated, stripped of their clothing and cast onto a frozen lake. They endured the whole night, encouraging one another to be patient until the end. A soldier that guarded them, named Aglaius, had a vision in which he saw heavenly powers distributing crowns to all of the martyrs, except one, who soon after abandoned the contest and sought warmth in a bath nearby. Seeing this, Aglaius professed himself a Christian and joined the martyrs on the lake, and the number of forty remained complete. In the morning, when they were almost dead from the cold, they were cast into a fire, after which their remains were thrown into the river.

*Apolytikion: Those noble soldiers of the Master of all let us honor, for they were united by their faith as they passed through fire and water, and being enlisted by Christ they entered to divine refreshment. Now those pious warriors stand and intercede with Christ God for those who cry out. Glory to Him that hath given you strength. Glory to him that hath crowned you. Glory to Him that made you wondrous, Holy Forty Martyrs.*