

March 11th

St. SOPHRONIUS, Bishop of Jerusalem

Optional memorial

St Sophronius (approximately 560 - 638) was born in Damascus where he studied and taught Rhetoric and Sophistry. He came to Palestine, to the monastery of St. Theodosius, which he left with a friend named John Moscus, for a brief stay in Egypt. After his return to the monastery of St. Theodosius, he was forced by the Persian invasion to leave, and he went to Rome. He returned to Palestine in 619, but not for long, because the fight against the Monothelites was to take him again to Egypt and elsewhere. We finally find him in Jerusalem in 634, when he was appointed Bishop of Jerusalem as the successor of Modestus. His Synodical Letter is a profession of faith and a call for help against the invading Muslims who occupied the city in 637. By the firmness of his attitude, he succeeded in obtaining from the Caliph Omar an acceptable situation for Christians. He died on 11th March 638 and has left us various dogmatic and hagiographic writings and homilies.

Sophronius was a tireless witness to the true faith and worked for peace and unity among believers. May he obtain us a spirit of reconciliation, so that all believers in this country come together in this unity that Christ willed and for which He gave His life.

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON:                    John 17: 3

Now this is eternal life, that they should know you, the only true God, and the one whom you sent, Jesus Christ.

COLLECT

Lord, you made the Bishop of Jerusalem, St. Sophronius an invincible defender of the true faith, and you have gathered us together from all nations in the confession of your Name. Grant us to strive for and to accomplish what you desire, so that our minds may be guided by a common faith and that we may live in one and the same love.

Through Jesus Christ...

FIRST READING

A reading from the letter of saint Paul to the Colossians

Col 3: 9-15 b

Brethren,

stop lying to one another, since you have taken off the old self with its practices and have put on the new self, which is being renewed, for knowledge, in the image of its creator. Here there is not Greek and Jew, circumcision and uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free; but Christ is all and in all. Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, heartfelt compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience, bearing with one another and forgiving one another, if one has a grievance against another; as the Lord has forgiven you, so must you also do. And over all these put on love, that is, the bond of perfection. And let the peace of Christ control your hearts, the peace into which you were also called in one body.

The Word of the Lord.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

Ps 117: 1. 2 (R. Mark 16: 15)

R. "Go into the whole world and proclaim the gospel to every creature."

1. O praise the LORD, all you nations;  
acclaim him, all you peoples!

2. For his merciful love has prevailed over us;  
and the LORD's faithfulness endures forever.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION                      John 15: 15b

R. Alleluia. Alleluia. I have called you friends, because I have told you everything I have heard from my Father. R.  
Alleluia.

GOSPEL

A reading from the holy Gospel according to John                      17: 1a. 3-11

When Jesus had said this, he raised his eyes to heaven and said,  
"Now this is eternal life, that they should know you, the only true God, and the one whom you sent, Jesus Christ. I glorified you on earth by accomplishing the work that you gave me to do. Now glorify me, Father, with you, with the glory that I had with you before the world began.  
I revealed your name to those whom you gave me out of the world. They belonged to you, and you gave them to me, and they have kept your word. Now they know that everything you gave me is from you, because the words you gave to me I have given to them, and they accepted them and truly understood that I came from you, and they have believed that you sent me.  
I pray for them. I do not pray for the world but for the ones you have given me, because they are yours, and everything of mine is yours and everything of yours is mine, and I have been glorified in them. And now I will no longer be in the world, but they are in the world, while I am coming to you. Holy Father, keep them in your name that you have given me, so that they may be one just as we are."

The Gospel of the Lord.

PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Sanctify, O Lord, these gifts we are about to offer you through the intercession of Blessed Sophronius, and grant us the gift of unity and peace.  
Through Christ our Lord...

PREFACE

Holy, Holy, Holy Lord God of hosts...

COMMUNION ANTIPHON                      1 Cor 10: 17

Because the loaf of bread is one, we, though many, are one body, for we all partake of the one loaf.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

The communion we have just received foreshadows, Lord, the gathering of the faithful in You; may it contribute to the unity of your Church.  
Through Christ our Lord...