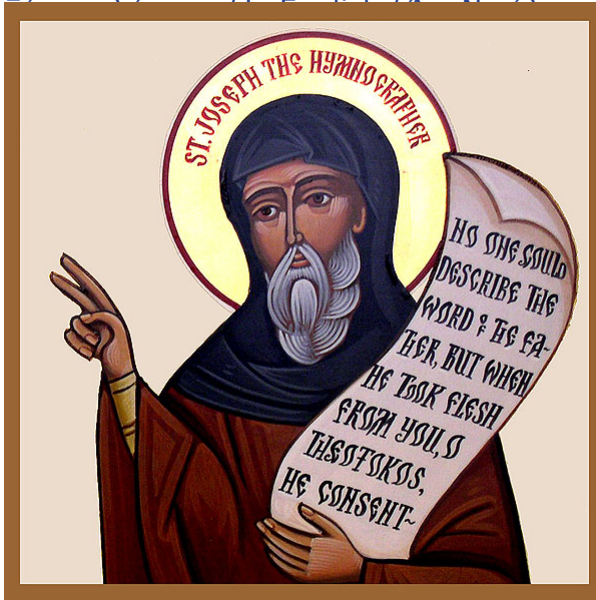


Venerable Joseph the Hymnographer, Holy Martyr Pherbutha, Venerable Zosimas and Venerable Martyr Nicetas (April 4)

(Βελιμίροβιτς) Επίσκοπος Αχρίδος / Άγιοι - Πατέρες -



1.

VENERABLE

JOSEPH

THE

HYMNOGRAPHER

Joseph was born in Sicily of pious and virtuous parents, Plotinus and Agatha. After the death of his parents, Joseph moved to Thessalonica where he was tonsured a monk. As a monk, he was a model to all in fasting, extreme restraint, ceaseless prayer, chanting of the Psalms, vigils and labor. The bishop of Thessalonica ordained him a priest [Heiromonk]. While visiting Thessalonica the distinguished Gregory Decapolis was so impressed with Joseph, because of his rare character, that he invited him to his monastery in Constantinople. When the flame of the Iconoclastic heresy erupted again under Leo V, the Armenian, Joseph was sent to Rome to call upon the Pope and the Roman Church to battle for Orthodoxy. While enroute, Joseph was captured by pirates and taken to Crete where the heretics detained him in prison for six years. Joseph rejoiced that he was made worthy to suffer for Christ and, for that, he continually praised God, considering the iron chains on him as an adornment of gold. Early in the morning on Christmas day, in the sixth year of Joseph's imprisonment, the wicked Emperor Leo was slain in church while attending Matins. At that same moment, St. Nicholas appeared to Joseph in prison and said to him: "Arise and follow me!" Joseph felt himself being elevated in the air and, all at once, found himself before the gates of [\(περισσότερα...\)](#)