

**St. Mary's Orthodox Church
(Dormition of the Mother of God)**

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Sunday December 18, 2016

Martyr Eubotius, at Cyzicus (320); Saint Florus, Bishop of Amisus (7th c.); Martyrs Phocas and Hermilas, by the sword; Hieromartyrs Zacchaeus the Deacon, and Alphaeus the Reader, at Caesarea (see also November 18); Saint Sophia the Wonderworker; Saint Modestus, Archbishop of Jerusalem (634) (see also December 16); Saint Michael Syngellon the Confessor, at Constantinople (845); Venerable Nomon; Martyrs Rufus and Zosimus, at Philippi in Macedonia (ca.107); Martyr Moses (Moyses), a martyr in North Africa who probably suffered under Decius (ca.250); Martyrs Quintus, Simplicius and Companions, in North Africa under the Emperors Decius and Valerian (ca.255); Martyrs Victurus, Victor, Victorinus, Adjutor, Quartus and 30 other companions, in North Africa; Martyr Sebastian, at Rome, and his companions: Martyrs Nicostratus, Zoe, Castorius, Tranquillinus, Marcellinus, Mark, Claudius, Symphorian, Victorinus, Tiburtius, and Castulus (287); Saint Gatianus of Tours, first Bishop of Tours (3rd c.); Saint Bodagisil, founded and was the first Abbot of a monastery on the Meuse in Belgium (588); Saint Samthann, foundress and Abbess of Clonbroney in Co. Longford in Ireland (6th c.); Saint Flannán, first Bishop of Killaloe in Ireland (7th c.)] Saint Desiderius of Fontenelle (Desideratus), son of St Waningus (700); Saint Winebald (Winibald), Abbot of Heidenheim and Bishop of Eichstatt (Germany) (761); Venerable Daniel the Hesychast (Daniil Sihastrul), of Voronet (Romania) (15th c.); Venerable Sebastian, Abbot of Poshekhonye Monastery (Vologda) (1500); Martyr Victor (1936); New Hieromartyr Thaddeus (Uspensky), Archbishop of Tver (1937); New Hieromartyr Nicholas (Klementiev), Archbishop of Great Ustiug (Velikoustiuzh) (1937); New Hieromartyrs (1937): Andrew Voskresensky of Moscow, John Mironsky of Chimkent, Vladimir Preobrazhensky of Chimkent, and Elias Benemansky of Tver, Priests (1937); New Hieromartyr Sergius, Deacon (1942); Virgin-martyr Vera Truks of Zhitomir (1942);

Services for the week of December 18

Friday, December 23: 7:00 PM Royal Hours of the Nativity.

Saturday, December 24: 9:00 AM Great Vespers and Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom.

6:00 PM Vigil Service for the Nativity of Christ

Parish News

WELCOME: to all of our guests today. We are so glad that you have come to enjoy our Orthodox worship. We invite you to come for coffee and sweets in our church hall and to enjoy fellowship with us. May God bless you!

OFFERING: December 11: \$698.00

PLEASE NOTE the services that are offered for the upcoming feast of the Nativity. Please make them a priority. Consider the need for fasting and holy confession before communing on the Feast. This is of critical importance for a truly serene and joyful Christmas.

The Holy Martyr Sebastian and those with him

This glorious saint was born in Italy and brought up in the city of Milan. While still young, he dedicated himself to military service. Being educated, handsome and courageous, he received the favor of Emperor Diocletian, who appointed him captain of his imperial guard. Secretly he confessed the Christian Faith and prayed to the Living God. As an honorable, just and merciful man, Sebastian was greatly beloved by his soldiers. Whenever he could, he saved Christians from torture and death, and, when he was unable to do so, he exhorted them to die for Christ the Living God without turning back. Two brothers, Marcus and Marcellinus, who had been imprisoned for Christ and were already on the verge of denouncing Him and worshiping idols, were confirmed in the Faith by Sebastian, who strengthened them for martyrdom. As he spoke with them, encouraging them not to fear death for Christ, his face was illumined. Everyone saw his shining face, like that of an angel of God. Sebastian also confirmed his words by miracles: he healed Zoe, the jailer Nicostratus's wife, who had been mute for six years; he brought her, Nicostratus and his entire household to baptism; he healed the two ailing sons of Claudius the commander and brought him and his household to baptism; he healed Tranquillinus, the father of Marcus and Marcellinus, of gout and pains in his legs which had troubled him for eleven years, and brought him to baptism together with his entire household; he healed the Roman eparch Chromatius of the same illness and brought him and his son Tiburtius to baptism. The first of them to suffer was St. Zoe, whom they seized at the tomb of the Apostle Peter, where she was praying to God. After torturing her, they threw her into the Tiber River. They then seized Tiburtius, and the judge placed live coals before him, telling him to choose between life and death, that is, either to cast incense on the coals and to cense the idols or to stand barefoot on the hot coals. St. Tiburtius made the sign of the Cross, stood barefoot on the hot coals, and remained unharmed. After this, he was beheaded. Nicostratus was killed with a stake, Tranquillinus was drowned, and Marcus and Marcellinus were tortured and pierced with spears. Then Sebastian was brought before Emperor Diocletian. The emperor rebuked him for his betrayal, but Sebastian said: "I have always prayed to my Christ for your health and for the peace of the Roman Empire." The emperor ordered that he be stripped naked and shot through with arrows. The soldiers shot him through with arrows until the martyr was so completely covered with arrows that his body was not seen because of them. When all thought that he was dead, he appeared alive and completely healthy. Then the pagans killed him with staves. He suffered gloriously for Christ his Lord and took up his habitation in the Kingdom of Christ in the year 287 at the time of Diocletian the Emperor and Gaius the Bishop of Rome.