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George of Choziba (7th cent.) monk

George of Choziba led an arduous but fruitful monastic life in the seventh-century Judean desert.
A native of Cyprus, he had an elder brother, Heracles, who had left the island andhad gone to live as an anchorite in the Palestinian desert. After the death of their parents, George decided to follow his brother and joined him at the lavra of Calamon, on the banks of the Jordan.
For a young man from Cyprus, adjusting to such an austere way of life was not easy. His brother came to his rescue and sent him to the cenobitic community of Choziba, in the Wadi al-Kelt gorge that connects Jericho with Jerusalem, so that George could prepare himself for the trials of the desert. But George was not able to hold out at Choziba either, and after being repeatedly humiliated by the igumen, he fled and returned to Calamon.
Matured through his experience of humiliation, George eventually became capable of sustaining his brothers spiritually, with kindness and a steadfast spirit. When Arab and Persian invaders arrived at the beginning of the seventh century, George was the last to abandon his monastery, and he was among the first to return to the ruins of Choziba. He spent the last days of his life's parable there, and was sought out by many because of his spiritual gifts.
The lavra of Choziba, which still exists today, was founded by a monk named John but soon came to be called St. George's Monastery, in memory of the monk from Cyprus who had made it possible for monastic life to continue there in a period of history that by no means favored its existence.

THE CHURCHES REMEMBER...

WESTERN CATHOLICS:
Holy innocents, martyrs (Spanish-Mozarabic calendar)

COPTI ED ETIOPICI (29 kiyahk/tahsas):
Glorious nativity

LUTHERANS:
Severinus (d. 482), evangelist in Bavaria

MARONITES:
Carterius of Caesarea (3rd-4th cent.), martyr

ORTHODOX CHRISTIANS AND GREEK CATHOLICS:
George of Choziba, monk
Domnica of Constantinople (5th cent.), igumen

WEST SYRIAN ORTHODOX:
Stephen, deacon and first martyr