January 9

John of Scetis (ca. 585-ca. 675) monk

In the Egyptian desert, one of the best loved monks was John, an igumen of Scetis who lived from the late sixth to the mid-seventh centuries.
The Coptic Church, which commemorates him today, has always listed his name in all three of the anaphoras it uses to celebrate the Eucharist: those attributed to Basil, Cyril and Gregory of Nazianzus.
John, baptized Arwat, was born around the year 585 in the Egyptian village of Gebromenenosin. At the age of eighteen he entered the monastery of Saint Macarius, where he was ordained a priest and later became igumen.
He was a man who formed deep friendships, and his fame is tied to the ability he had to teach evangelical humility and gentleness to a very large number of disciples, at a time when Coptic Christians were suffering persecution at the hands of both Chalcedonese Christians and the Berbers of the desert.
During the long years he spent in exile John learned, through his assiduous attachment to God, to treat all people with mercy and compassion, and to hold fast to no more than what is most essential in the journey towards the Kingdom.
He died probably in the year 675, at his monastery of Saint Macarius, where he had guided an entire generation of monks to the fullness of monastic experience.

TRACCE DI LETTURA

The work of prayer consists in never abandoning the remembrance of God; invoke him at all times, seek him constantly and in all places, whether you are eating, drinking, walking, or whatever you may be doing. It is by praying in this way that your intelligence will be enlightened, the suffering of your heart will find peace, desire will be satisfied, the one who divides will be driven back, sin will no longer tempt you, and your soul will be renewed.
For prayer makes all sin foreign to human beings, as our Savior taught in the Gospel: "Pray that you may not come into the time of trial"

Life of St. John of Scetis 228-230

BIBLICAL READINGS

Heb 11:17-31; Jas 1:2-21; Acts 19:11-20; Mt 4:23-5:16

THE CHURCHES REMEMBER...

WESTERN CATHOLICS:
40 martyrs of Sebaste (d. 320; Spanish-Mozarabic calendar)

COPTS AND ETHIOPIANS (30 kiyahk/tahsas):
Second day of the glorious Nativity
Memorial day of the Adoration of the Magi
John, igumen at Scetis (Coptic Orthodox Church)

LUTHERANS:
Jan Laski (d. 1560), reformer in West Frisia and Poland

ORTHODOX CHRISTIANS AND GREEK CATHOLICS:
Polyeuctus of Melitene (3rd cent.), martyr