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Sophronius of Jerusalem (d. ca. 638) pastor

A native of Damascus, Sophronius received a good education in the ancient classics, especially the Greek tragedies, and in the ample Christian literature of the first centuries.
He had a wide range of interests and was skilled in many professions and disciplines. His interest in the study of Scripture led him to the Palestinian monastery of St. Theodosius. There he met John Moschos, who became his spiritual father and lifelong friend, and who later dedicated his Spiritual Meadow to Sophronius.
Still longing to broaden his horizons, Sophronius travelled to Egypt with John. He met the prominent scholars and spiritual figures of the time and gradually became a skilled theologian.
His life took on a definite direction when he returned to Palestine. He became a monk, and several years later, in 634, he was elected patriarch of Jerusalem. In this role he contributed knowledgeably to theological debates, without settling for the unsatisfying compromises some of his contemporaries proposed as a means of reconciling supporters and adversaries of the Council of Chalcedon. Most significantly, Sophronius defended Palestinian Christians against Arab invasions, using a shrewd combination of restraint, candor and diplomacy.
In addition to his dogmatic writings, Sophronius left important hagiographical and liturgical works. He is probably the author of the first version of the Impropers, which are sung during the Western Good Friday liturgy.

BIBLICAL READINGS
Eb 13:7-16; Mt 5:14-19

THE CHURCHES REMEMBER...

COPTS AND ETHIOPIANS (2 baramhat/maggabit):
Macrobius (3th-4th cent.), bishop of Nikiu, martyr (Coptic Church)

LUTHERANS:
Pionius (d. 250), martyr in Asia Minor

MARONITES:
Sophronius of Jerusalem, bishop

ORTHODOX CHRISTIANS AND GREEK CATHOLICS:
Sophronius, patriarch of Jerusalem
Sophronius of Vraca (d. 1813), bishop and confessor (Bulgarian Church)