# June 13

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**Evagrius Ponticus** (ca. 345-399) monk
In the desert Evagrius worked out a synthesis of theology and practical monasticism that was unique for his time

Evagrius Ponticus, a monk and spiritual master of the Egyptian desert, died on the feast of the Epiphany in the year 399.
He was born around the year 345 in Ibora, Pontus. His family was aristocratic, which gave him access to an excellent education.
Ordained a lector by Basil, he became a member of the clergy of Caesarea, where he remained faithful to his bishop until the latter's death. He then moved to Constantinople and was ordained a deacon by his friend Gregory of Nazianzus, who asked Evagrius to join forces with him in the arduous struggle against the Arians.
After Gregory left Constantinople, Evagrius spent a certain amount of time serving the new patriarch Nettarius, until a dramatic sequence of events "exiled Evagrius to the desert," in his own words.
He fled Constantinople, went first to Jerusalem, and then made his way into the Egyptian desert of Nitria around the year 384. After two years of semi-anchorite life under the guidance of Macarius of Alexandria and Macarius the Great, he sought greater seclusion in the desert of Kellia.
His spiritual struggle in the desert, not entirely chosen but fully accepted, was not without fruit. There Evagrius worked out a synthesis of theology and practical monasticism that was unique for his time. His sensitivity to psychological issues and his finely tuned analytical skills made him one of the greatest spiritual guides in antiquity. Maximus the Confessor, Isaac the Syrian, and Symeon the New Theologian, to name only the best-known fathers, all looked to Evagrius for inspiration.
The condemnation of several of his affirmations, which happened almost two centuries after his death in unclear circumstances, made Evagrius' name suspect for centuries to come. Yet his writings, often copied under a pseudonym, survived two millennia, and modern criticism has finally restored to him the honor he merits.

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THE CHURCHES REMEMBER...

WESTERN CATHOLICS:
*Antony of Padua* (d. 1231), priest and doctor of the church (Roman and Ambrosian calendars)
*Cyriacus and Julitta* (d. ca. 305), martyrs (Spanish-Mozarabic calendar)

COPTS ANDD ETHIOPIANS (6 ba'unah/sane):
*Theodore of Alexandria* (4th cent.), monk and martyr (Coptic Church)

LUTHERANS:
*Antoine Court* (d. 1760), witness to the faith in France

MARONITES:
*Aquilina of Byblos* (d. 293), martyr; *Antony of Padua*, confessor

ORTHODOX CHRISTIANS AND GREEK CATHOLICS:
*Aquilina of Byblos*, martyr
*Triphyllus* (4th cent.), bishop of Leucosia (Melkite Church)