

Monasticism Month

St. Ammonius The Hermit

This week will be learning about St. Ammonius The Hermit, whose feast is on the 20th of Bashons. St. Ammonius was born in a village near Mariot in 294 A.D. to a righteous and rich Christian family. At a young age St. Ammonius lost his parents and was taken in by his uncle. He longed for a life of purity, chastity, and holiness. Although St. Ammonius desired a life of chastity, his uncle forced him to get engaged to a rich girl against his will. Since he could not disobey his uncle, he was able to engage his bride to be in a spiritual dialogue and was able make her long for a life of purity and consecrate herself a bride for the True Bridegroom Jesus Christ. They were then married and lived together as brother and sister. The two lived like this for 17 years until his wife departed.

St. Ammonius then saw in a vision in which St. Antonios was calling him to put on the monastic garb. When St. Ammonius awakened, he went to St. Isidore who put on him the holy Eskeem and they dwelt together for some time. After this he went to mount Tounah where St. Antonios dwelt, and remained with him and became his disciple where he studied the cannons of the holy monasticism.

St. Ammonius built himself a cell at mount Tonuah where he worshipped God. The devil envied him and came to him in the form a nun and knocked on his door. When St. Ammonius opened the door and asked the devil to pray with him, the devil became like a flame of fire. The devil hoping to be succussed went and dwelt in a woman and came him at dusk asking for a place to stay for the night since she was a traveler lost in the wilderness. St. Ammonius knew the snare of the devil who sent her, and he started to preach her and put the fear in her heart of the tortures of hell which is awaiting the sinners, and indicated to her the delight and the bliss which is awaiting the righteous. God opened this woman's heart and she knelt to his feet weeping and asked him to help her to save her soul. St. Ammonius called her "Naive" and she then began her life of prayer and fasting and surpassed many saints by this

The devil tried to snare him again. This time in the form of a monk who went around in the monasteries weeping and saying: "Abba Ammonius the hermit had married, and he kept the woman with him in his cell. He had put the monks to shame and disgraced the monastic garb." When Abba Apollo, who was like the angels, heard of that, he took with him Abba Yousab and Abba Nohi, and came to mount Tounah to the cell of Abba Ammonius. They knocked on the door of the cell, and when she opened to them, they realized the matter. They entered and prayed together as the custom and sat to talk about the greatness of God. At the end of the day, Abba Ammonius told them, let us go to see the "Naive" for she was baking some bread. When they went out to where she was, they saw her standing in the midst of a great fire, and her hands were

stretched out towards heaven praying. They marveled exceedingly and glorified God. After they had eaten the bread, everyone went separately to sleep and the angel of the Lord revealed the story of the “Naive” with St. Ammonius to Abba Apollo, and that God brought them there to be present at the time of her departure. About the third hour of the night, she became sick with fever. She knelt down and delivered up her soul at the hand of the Lord.

After this St. Antonios sent him to El-Natroun valley to establish new monasteries and many believers followed him. Soon after this, St. Ammonius departed in peace.

May his prayers be with us all.

Sources:

https://www.copticchurch.net/synaxarium/9_20.html?lang=