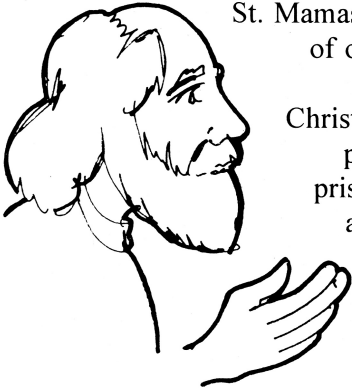


SAINTS IN SEPTEMBER

SAINT MAMAS

Commemorated on September 22



St. Mamas was born in Caesarea, the son of ordinary parents who were both imprisoned because they were Christians during a time of Christian persecutions. His father died in prison and his mother died shortly after Mamas was born. He was adopted by a pious Christian woman who nurtured him and provided him with a Christian education. In school, Mamas came to the attention of his fellow students, who were pagans. Because of his strong denunciation of fire-worship, he was taken before the pagan inquisition at the age of eleven and miraculously escaped the tortures of burning and drowning. He found refuge in the mountains, living as a shepherd and the lonely life of a hermit.

He had such a beautiful voice that wild beasts calmly approached him, and it is said that deer gave birth to their babes inside or near his hut. Although some attributed his talents to wizardry, his fame spread. As time passed, many people inspired by his graces, adopted Christianity. For this reason he was arrested, taken to Caesarea and subjected to horrible tortures. His bold replies amazed the judges and he remained unharmed by all their tortures. They put him in a public circus where wild beasts calmly approached him and simply walked away. The furious crowd stoned him, yet he remained alive. He was finally killed with a blow from a three-pronged lance.

Churches have been built in his name in Caesarea, Constantinople and other places.

SAINT SHOOSHAN

St. Shooshan is commemorated this year, along with St. Margaret, on September 23.

St. Shooshan, whose baptismal name was Varteni, was the daughter of St. Vartan. She received her early education from St. Sahag and her saintly mother, Sahaganoosh. Her father's martyrdom was a powerful impetus to her own piety and grace. When of age, she

was married to Vazken, the son of the Georgian King, to whom she bore three sons and one daughter. Before the death of her father-in-law, Shooshan lived a very happy and peaceful life; but upon his death, events took a drastic change. Vazken became power-hungry and, after being called to Persia, returned to Georgia, having renounced his faith and brought with him another wife. Shooshan was appalled by what he had done and sought sanctuary in the church. Vazken was determined that she also change her faith and proceeded to persecute her mercilessly. He insulted her father's memory and had her chained in prison where she was subjected for more than seven years to all kinds of torture, especially at the hands of those who tried devious methods to have her renounce her faith. Vazken forced her children to apostatize, which was perhaps the most heinous blow. Even after her death, it took the pleas of high-ranking clergy as well as the king's brother and other relatives to have her buried properly. The king's wish was to have her dismembered and her memory erased for all time.

SAINT MARGARET (Marian)

Commemorated on September 23 with St. Shooshan

Born in Antioch, Saint Margaret lived during the reign of Emperor Diocletian. She was the daughter of a pagan priest and, unknown to her father, accepted Christianity because of the efforts of her nurse. After it was discovered that she was a Christian, she was subjected to horrific tortures and then thrown into prison. While in prison she was tempted by phantom apparitions of dragons, which she overcame through the power of prayer.



She was questioned a second time but remained steadfast in her Christian faith. However, she was again tortured and finally beheaded.

ST. DAVID OF DVIN (Tavit Tvinetzi)

St. David will be commemorated this year on September 29.

Born Sourhan, in 701 AD, of a Persian father and a Christian mother, he entered military service of the Arab overlords at a very young age and was assigned to Armenia, where he served side by side with the Armenian

prince Krikor Mamigonian. He accepted the Christian faith and was baptized by Catholicos Nerses the Builder and renamed Tavit. He lived many years in peace and made his home near the Armenian capital, Tvin. When Abdulla Vostigan became overlord of Armenia, he started a series of persecutions against the Christians. Tavit, a former follower of Islam, was among the first to be arrested. When he refused to change his religion, he was crucified and speared upon the cross at the age of sixty. His body was buried near the Mother church of Tvin and the cross and spear used to martyr him were kept in the church.

– Translated from "Soorpk Yev Donk"
by Very Rev. Fr. Haigazoun Melkonian
Cheltenham, PA

RECRUITING TIPS

Ever spent an hour or two on the phone trying to recruit Sunday school teachers, substitutes or assistants or other volunteers but only one or two people actually committed? Try these tips for more effective recruiting:

• **Convince the person of the value of the need.** Focus on your vision for the program you're recruiting for. For example, say, "We need teaching assistants who'll commit to one month in the classroom with a regular classroom teacher. By doing this, we hope to give children one-on-one attention so they know they're special to God. We also believe that God will use our teaching assistants to meet kids' emotional needs that often go unmet at church."



• **Personalize the program to the person.** Detail how you see this person's gifts and talents contributing to the vision of the program. Say, "I've noticed how children run up to you at church. They enjoy the way you shower attention and affection on them. You would be a perfect teaching assistant to carry out the ministry you already have with children in our church."

• **Give more choices than one.** A good salesperson doesn't ask for a yes or no response. Rather, a good salesperson suggests options such as "Would you like Plan A or Plan B?" When asking for a commitment from a potential volunteer, offer levels of commitment, such as time-based levels (Could you commit to one or two months?) or involvement-based levels (Would you like to be a teaching assistant or help with our Christmas pageant?) Allow people to say no, but don't hint that you considered no an option.

• **Ask for a commitment.** Close the "sale." Don't leave the request open-ended. Ask for a specific commitment. Say, "How would you like to be involved in our Sunday school?" If someone needs more time to think about the commitment, ask when you can check back. Then call on that day.

• **Ask for reasons for a "no" answer.** If people still say no, ask them to help you understand the obstacles to their involvement. You may discover that a person is going through a major life-problem such as an illness or divorce. Use this information to minister to the person and inform other church members of the person's needs. If, however, a person says something such as "I'm too busy" or "I don't think I'd be good at it," ask the person to tell what you'd need to do in the future to make it easier for him or her to participate in the Sunday school.

REASONS PEOPLE VOLUNTEER

1. To fill time
2. To repay a perceived indebtedness
3. Because someone they love benefits
4. Because someone they love is also involved
5. To set an example for children
6. To work as a family
7. To meet people
8. To please someone else
9. To have fun
10. To gain skills
11. To gain experience
12. To be visible
13. To express their religion or belief
14. To find happiness
15. To use otherwise unused gifts or skills
16. Because of tradition
17. To heal (grief, personal pain, abuses, etc.)
18. To avert loneliness