



# Main Church *Iconography*

SAINT JOHN THE BAPTIST GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

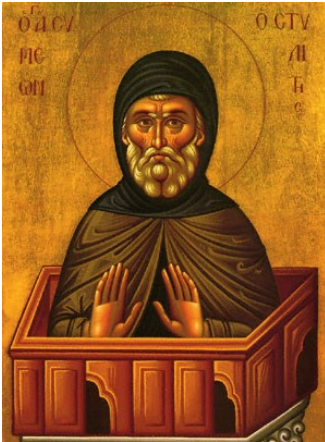
TOGETHER, LET US ADORN OUR PARISH

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## *Saint Symeon the Stylite*

*September 1*



Our righteous Father Symeon was born in Sis, in the mountain region of Cilicia and Syria. Having first been a shepherd, he entered the monastic discipline at a young age. After trying various kinds of ascetical practices, both in the monastery and the wilderness, he began standing on pillars of progressively greater height, and heroically persevered in this for more than forty years; the greater part of this time he spent standing upright, even when one of his feet became gangrenous, and other parts of his body gave way under the strain. He did not adopt this strange way of life out of vainglory, a charge that some of his contemporaries made against him at the first. Because he was already famous for his asceticism and holiness before ascending his first pillar, many pious people

came to him wishing to touch his garments, either for healing or for a blessing. To escape the continual vexation they caused, he made a pillar about ten feet high, and then higher and higher, until the fourth, and last, was about fifty feet high. God gave him the grace to persevere in such an astonishing form of asceticism: multitudes came to see him from Persia, Armenia, South Arabia, Georgia, Thrace, Spain, Italy, Gaul, and the British Isles. Theodoret says that he became so famous in Rome that the Nomadic Arabs, by the thousands, believed in Christ and were baptized because of him; the King of Persia sent envoys to inquire into his way of life, and the Queen asked to be sent oil that he had blessed. He also was a great defender of sound doctrine, and confirmed the Orthodoxy of the Holy Council of Chalcedon for many who had been beguiled by the teachings of the Monophysites.

*Apolytikion: Thou becomest a pillar of patience and didst emulate the Forefathers, O righteous one: Job in his sufferings, Joseph in temptations, and the life of the bodiless while in the body, O Symeon, our righteous Father, intercede with Christ God that our souls be saved.*