

THE ORTHODOX WEEKLY BULETIN VESTAL, CLIFFWOOD, NEW JERSEY

SAINTS ZENOBIUS & ZENOBIA

A Brother and Sister, whose lives were intertwined on Earth and in Heaven

“LIFE WITHOUT CHRIST IS NOT LIFE”

The relationship between a brother & sister can take many different paths. There is often a competition or rivalry between the two, as they seek the attention & affection of their parents. Many times, however, an unbreakable bond is formed between the two – almost to the point where they act and think as “one.” Such was the case of Zenobius and his sister Zenobia.

Zenobius & Zenobia came from the town of Aegae in Cilicia. They inherited a great deal of material wealth from their parents, but Zenobius & Zenobia received an even greater “gift” from them: a deep love for the Christian Faith. Like many of the saints of the early Church, this pious brother & sister willingly shared their abundance with those less fortunate – they literally gave away all that they had to the poor and needy. God blessed the pair in other ways, bestowing the gift of healing upon Zenobius, who was able to cure the sick with the mere touch of his hand. His popularity among the Christians in Aegae brought about his election as Bishop.

This was still the era of religious persecution in the Roman Empire, and Zenobius and Zenobia were arrested. They were brought before the magistrate, who gave them this ultimatum: bow down to our gods, or die! Zenobius responded quickly with these words: “Life without Christ is not life, but death, and death for Christ’s sake is not death, but life.” When Zenobius was handed over to be tortured, his blessed sister pleaded to be able to “. . . drink from this cup of suffering.” Her wish was gladly granted, so Zenobius & Zenobia gave their lives for the Lord in 285 A.D.