

December 31

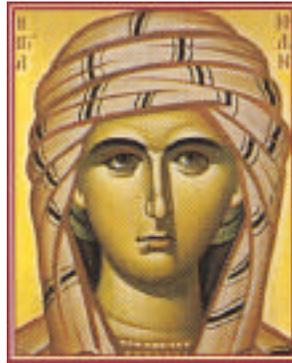
Leavetaking of the Feast of the Nativity of Christ

On this day we leave the feast of the Nativity of Christ and we sing the entire service of this feast.

Epistle: Gal. 1:11-19; sel. 200. **Gospel:** see December 29.

Note the appropriate chapter in the Rubrics and the Menaion. If the Leavetaking of the Nativity of Christ falls on a Sunday consult the rubrics. If the Afterfeast or Leavetaking of the Nativity of Christ falls on a Saturday consult the Rubrics.

Venerable Melania, the Roman



She was married to a famous Roman nobleman. "Having subdued the fleshly passions by abstinence", she shone "with understanding, courage, chastity and divine truth". After the death of her son, she devoted all her life to God-pleasing deeds, after she persuaded her husband about this. She used her large estate for the construction of churches and monasteries, and for the redemption of captives and other of acts of mercy. When she went to Palestine for the adoration of the holy places, she stayed in Jerusalem, and founded a women's monastery near the Mount of Olives and ascetically struggled in it up to a very old age, adorning itself "with the goodness of good deeds". She died in 439.

The service for the Venerable Melania is sung on December 30.

Venerable Gelasius

A hermit in the vicinity of the city of Nicopolis tonsured him. Being present at the Fourth Ecumenical Council, he was revealed a fervent defender of Orthodoxy. The Venerable Gelasius distinguished himself with complete disinterestedness, deep humility and meekness. The Orthodox Church beatifies

Gelasius among the venerable ones and the God-bearing fathers, because of his shining ascetical struggles, and assigned to him the name "ever memorable king of passions".

Gaius was "a wise man pleasing to Christ" (see the Canon for Cheesefare Saturday), who died in peace.

*S. V. Bulgakov, **Handbook for Church Servers**, 2nd ed., 1274 pp. (Kharkov, 1900) p. 486.
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