

Martyrs of Sebaste



A group of forty Christian soldiers martyred by Emperor Licinius Licinianus at Sebaste, in modern Armenia. They are also called the Martyrs of Sebaste. The martyrs were forced to march naked upon the ice of a frozen lake after they refused to abjure the faith. Upon the shore were kept warm baths and hot food as inducements for abjuring Christ. One soldier gave up the faith unable to endure any more cold, and an officer of the pagan units maintaining the baths declared this to be a dishonorable act and marched out onto the ice to take the lapsed Christian's place. The martyrs were praised by Sts. Basil, Gregory of Nyssa, and others. Their cult was suppressed in 1969.