BOOKLET TO PRINT

Saint Euthymius the Younger

Life, prayer and novena

Feast day: October 15

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IN BRIEF

Saint Euthymius the Younger

Byzantine monk of the 9th century, hermit on Mount Athos and founder of the monastery of Peristerai.

Feast day	October 15
Born	823, Opso, in Galatia (Asia Minor)
Died	October 898, island of Hiera (Aegean Sea)
Canonized	immemorial cult
Era	9th century

In this booklet

Life

Prayer to Saint Euthymius the Younger for Those Seeking Their Vocation

Novena to Saint Euthymius the Younger

Credits and sources

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LIFE

Saint Euthymius the Younger

Saint Euthymius the Younger was a Byzantine monk of the 9th century, born in 823 in Galatia, in the heart of present-day Turkey, and died in 898 on the island of Hiera, in the Aegean Sea. A hermit on Mount Athos, a stylite near Thessalonica, then a founder of monasteries in Chalcidice, he is one of the first great monks of the Holy Mountain. His feast day is October 15.

Who was Saint Euthymius the Younger?

He is called "the Younger" to distinguish him from Saint Euthymius the Great, a 5th-century monk of Palestine. Euthymius lived at the time when the Byzantine Empire was emerging from the iconoclast crisis and when Mount Athos was beginning to welcome hermits from all over the East. His life is known through the account of Basil, a monk to whom he himself gave the monastic habit. This text, studied by historians of Athonite monasticism, is one of the oldest sources on the beginnings of the Holy Mountain. Euthymius is venerated in the Orthodox Church and counted among the saints of the Catholic Church, since he lived before the separation of the Churches of East and West.

Key dates in the life of Euthymius the Younger

- **823**: Born at Opso, in Galatia.
- **831**: Death of his father, Epiphanius.
- **840**: He marries Euphrosyne.
- **September 15, 841**: He leaves for Mount Olympus in Bithynia, a great monastic center of the time.
- **842**: He receives the lesser monastic habit and takes the name Euthymius.

- **859-862**: After receiving the great habit, he lives for three years on Mount Athos, deep in a cave.
- **c. 867**: Ordained a priest, he settles on the island of Saint Eustratios with two companions; all three are captured, then released, by Saracen pirates.
- **871**: He founds the monastery of Saint Andrew at Peristerai, east of Thessalonica.
- **May 8, 898**: He withdraws to the island of Hiera with a single companion.
- **October 898**: Having fallen ill on October 13, he dies shortly afterward on the island.

From marriage to monastic life

Euthymius grew up in a Christian family of Asia Minor. His father died when he was only eight. At seventeen, he married Euphrosyne. Yet barely a year later, he left the world for Mount Olympus in Bithynia, a mountain covered with monasteries and hermitages. There he received the monastic habit in 842 and placed himself under the guidance of an elder named Theodore. His Life does not explain everything about this departure; it simply shows a man gripped very young by the desire for God alone. Later, members of his family would join him, a sign that the bonds had not been broken forever.

Hermit, stylite and priest

Around 858 or 859, after receiving the great habit, Euthymius went to Mount Athos, then almost deserted. He spent three years there in a cave, in extreme poverty. In 863, he went back to fetch his master Theodore and settled him at Macrosina; the old man died there soon afterward and was buried in Thessalonica. Euthymius then lived for a time as a stylite, on a pillar near that city, in the manner of the great Syrian ascetics. He was ordained a deacon, then

a priest around 867. With two companions, Joseph and Symeon, he settled on the island of Saint Eustratios. Saracen corsairs captured them, then released them: the Aegean was a dangerous place for monks at that time.

The founder of Peristerai

In 871, Euthymius founded in Chalcidice, about twenty kilometers east of Thessalonica, the monastery of Saint Andrew at Peristerai. Disciples gathered around him. In 875, he gave the monastic habit to Basil, who would become his biographer. Around 883 or 884, members of his family joined him: he entrusted the men's monastery to his grandson Methodius and the leadership of a women's monastery, founded nearby, to his granddaughter Euphemia. He himself went back to the eastern side of Athos. On May 8, 898, he withdrew with a single monk, George, to the island of Hiera. He fell ill there on October 13 and died a few days later.

Devotion and art

Euthymius the Younger is celebrated on October 15. His memory is especially alive in the Greek world and in the monasteries of Athos. Icons show him like other Byzantine monastic saints: an old man with a long beard, wearing the great habit, his face thinned by fasting. The sources do not make it possible to say with certainty where his relics are today.

What can we learn from Saint Euthymius the Younger?

Euthymius sought God without stopping: from Olympus to Athos, from the cave to the pillar, from the island to the monastery. This wandering life was not instability, but obedience to an inner call that grew ever more demanding. He was a teacher of novices and a founder, then he left everything to end his life in

silence. You can pray to him for those seeking their vocation, for the monks of Mount Athos, and for families in which one member has chosen consecrated life.

To pray with him, see the prayer to Saint Euthymius the Younger and the novena to Saint Euthymius the Younger.

Where to pray to Saint Euthymius the Younger

- **Mount Athos** (Greece): the Holy Mountain where he lived as a hermit and where his memory is honored.
- **Peristerai** (Chalcidice, Greece): the site of the monastery of Saint Andrew he founded in 871.
- **Thessalonica** (Greece): the great city near which he lived as a stylite.

PRAYER

Prayer to Saint Euthymius the Younger for Those Seeking Their Vocation

Saint Euthymius the Younger, a 9th-century monk, left everything for God: he lived as a hermit on Mount Athos and as a stylite near Thessalonica, then founded monasteries before ending his life in the silence of an island. Prayer composed for Saintspedia, in the spirit of Church tradition. It entrusts to him those who are seeking their vocation and those who live by prayer.

Prayer to Saint Euthymius the Younger

Saint Euthymius,
you who left your home for the mountain of God,
teach me to seek the Lord before all else.
In the cave of Athos and on your pillar,
you learned to keep watch and pray without ceasing:
give me an attentive heart and a wakeful spirit.

You welcomed disciples and founded houses of prayer,
then you left everything to end your life in silence.
Help me to serve without clinging,
and to give back to God what he has entrusted to me.
Watch over monks and nuns,
over those who are seeking their way,
and over families who offer one of their own to the Lord.
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

When to pray to Saint Euthymius the Younger

- On his feast day, October 15.
- When you are seeking your vocation or discerning a call.
- For the monks of Mount Athos and all monastic communities.
- For the unity of Christians of East and West, who venerate him together.
- For families in which one member has chosen consecrated life.

A short invocation

> *Saint Euthymius, friend of silence and prayer,*
> *keep me faithful to God's call. Amen.*

To prepare for his feast, you can pray the novena to Saint Euthymius the Younger from October 7 to 15, and read the life of Saint Euthymius the Younger.

NOVENA

Novena to Saint Euthymius the Younger

This novena follows nine stages in the life of Saint Euthymius the Younger, a 9th-century Byzantine monk. Novena composed for Saintspedia, in the spirit of Church tradition. To finish it on his feast day, October 15, begin on October 7. You can also pray it at any other time of the year.

How to pray this novena

Each day, make the Sign of the Cross and entrust your intention to God. Read the meditation, say the prayer of the day, then an Our Father, a Hail Mary and a Glory Be. End with: "Saint Euthymius, pray for us." The act of the day helps you live the novena concretely.

Day 1: A child of Asia Minor

Euthymius was born in 823 in Galatia and lost his father at the age of eight. God often prepares his servants through early trials.

Prayer: Lord, comfort children who have lost a parent, and be an attentive Father to them.

Act of the day: Pray for a child or young person in mourning.

Day 2: The call of the mountain

In 841, Euthymius left everything for Mount Olympus in Bithynia. He answered a call that went beyond his human plans.

Prayer: Lord, let me hear your call and not put it off until later.

Act of the day: Take ten minutes of silence to ask God what he expects of you.

Day 3: In the school of an elder

A monk from 842, Euthymius was formed by Theodore. He learned obedience and prayer from an experienced master.

Prayer: Lord, thank you for those who have guided me in the faith. Give me the humility to learn.

Act of the day: Ask advice from a person of faith whom you respect.

Day 4: The cave of Athos

For three years, Euthymius lived deep in a cave on Mount Athos. There he discovered that God is enough.

Prayer: Lord, free me from what is superfluous, and teach me to find my joy in you.

Act of the day: Go without something today that you could do without.

Day 5: Faithful to his master

In 863, Euthymius went back for Theodore, now old, and settled him at Macrosina, where he died soon after. The monk did not forget the one who had formed him.

Prayer: Lord, bless the elderly who handed on the faith to me, and make me attentive to them.

Act of the day: Visit or call an elderly person.

Day 6: On the pillar

Near Thessalonica, Euthymius lived for a time as a stylite. Exposed to all, he prayed for the city spread out at his feet.

Prayer: Lord, make me a watchman who prays for those around him.

Act of the day: Pray for your town and for those who govern it.

Day 7: Captive of pirates

On the island of Saint Eustratios, Euthymius and his companions were captured by corsairs, then released. Even in danger, they remained in God's hand.

Prayer: Lord, protect persecuted Christians and hostages, and keep them in hope.

Act of the day: Pray for someone held captive or for persecuted Christians.

Day 8: Founding and handing on

At Peristerai, Euthymius founded a monastery, trained disciples, then entrusted his foundations to others. He kept nothing for himself.

Prayer: Lord, teach me to hand on what I have received and to make room for others.

Act of the day: Entrust a responsibility to someone, showing them your trust.

Day 9: The silence of the island

In 898, Euthymius withdrew to the island of Hiera with a single companion. He died there in October, after a whole life given to God.

Prayer: Lord, grant me to end my life in your peace. Through the intercession of Saint Euthymius, grant me the grace I ask in this novena, if it is your will.

Act of the day: Attend Mass or pray for the dying.

Closing prayer

Saint Euthymius the Younger,
monk of Athos and father of many disciples,
you sought God from mountain to island
without ever growing weary.
Present to the Lord the intention I have entrusted to you,
and keep me faithful to his call.
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

You can also pray the prayer to Saint Euthymius the Younger at any time, and read the life of Saint Euthymius the Younger.

Credits and sources

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