



St. Nephon of Constantia, (23rd December)

St Nephon the Wonderworker was born in Paphlagonia (Anatolia). He was brought up in Constantinople at the court of a great commander. Falling into low company, the young Niphon became dissolute and gave himself to great sin and vice. Because of his sin, he could not even pray to God. By the mercy of the most holy Mother of God, he was brought back to the way of righteousness and became a monk. He had innumerable visions of the heavenly world and waged a four-year war with the demons, who whispered to him incessantly: 'There is no God! There is no God!', but, when the Lord Jesus Himself appeared to him alive on an icon, St Nephon received great power over the demons and was freed from these heavy temptations. He had such insight that he saw angels and demons around men as clearly as he saw the people themselves, and he could discern men's thoughts. He often spoke with angels and disputed with demons. He built a church to the most holy Mother of God in Constantinople, gathered many monks together and saved many souls. Alexander, the Archbishop of Alexandria, through a heavenly revelation, consecrated him bishop of the town of Constantia. By that time St Nephon was already old, and, governing the Church of God well for a short period, entered into God's eternal Kingdom. St Athanasius the Great visited him at the time of his death, being then archdeacon of the church in Alexandria. He saw Nephon's face shine like the sun.