

Saint Sabbas as he was walking, he found a spacious cave in the form of a church. In 491, Patriarch Salustius of Jerusalem ordained him a priest. In 494, the patriarch named Saint Sabbas the archimandrite of all the monasteries in Palestine.

Saint Sabbas founded several other monasteries including the New Lavra, the Lavra Heptastomos, and Heptastomos. Many miracles took place through the prayers of Saint Sabbas: at the Lavra: a spring of water welled up, during a time of drought, there was abundant rain, and there were also healings of the sick and the demoniacs. Saint Sabbas composed the first monastic Rule of church services, the so-called "Jerusalem Typikon", that became accepted by all the Palestine monasteries. He died in his lavra on December 5, 532 and is buried in a tomb in the courtyard between two ancient churches in the midst of the remnant of the great Lavra Mar Saba monastery. His relics had been taken to Italy in the twelfth century by Crusaders, but were returned to the monastery by Pope Paul VI in 1965 in a goodwill gesture toward the Orthodox.

Saint Sabbas championed the Orthodox cause against the Monophysite and Origenist movements of his day, personally calling upon the Roman emperors in Constantinople, Anastasius I in 511 and Justinian in 531, to influence them in opposing the heretical movements.



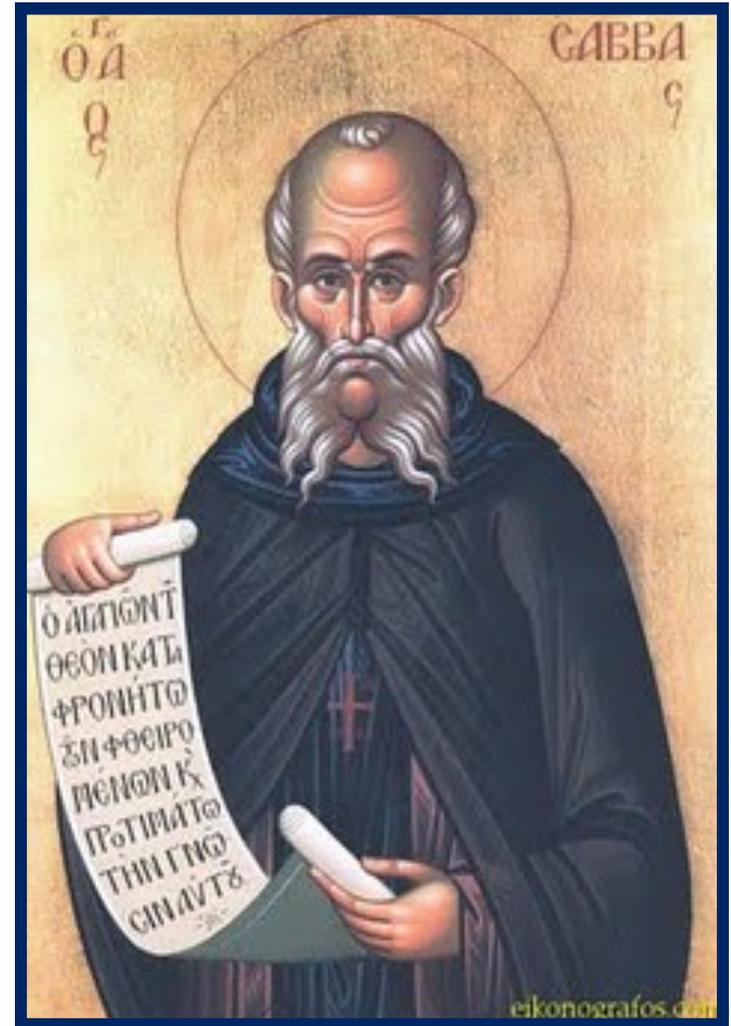
LAVRA MAR SABA MONASTERY

*(excerpted from: [//orthodoxwiki.org](http://orthodoxwiki.org))

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Saint Sabbas the Sanctified

Feast Day: December 5



**Composer of the first monastic rule
of Church services.**

Saint Sabbas the Sanctified

*The Venerable Sabbas the Sanctified was a Palestinian monastic who is credited with composing the first monastic rule of church services, the so-called "Jerusalem Typikon". He was a staunch opponent of the heretical Monophysites and Origenist movements. His feast day is December 5.

Sabbas was born in Mutalaska, near Caesarea in Cappadocia of pious Christian parents, John and Sophia, during the year 439. His father was a military commander. Traveling to Alexandria on military matters, his wife went with him, but they left their five-year old son in the care of an uncle. When the boy reached eight years of age, he entered the monastery of Saint Flavin located nearby. The gifted child quickly learned to read and became an expert on the Holy Scriptures. In vain did his parents urge Saint Sabbas to return to the world and enter into marriage.

When he was seventeen years old, he received the monastic tonsure, and attained such perfection in fasting and prayer that he was given the gift of wonderworking. In 456, after spending ten years at the monastery of Saint Flavin, he traveled to Jerusalem, and from there to the monastery of Saint Euthymius the Great (January 20). But Saint Euthymius sent Saint Sabbas to Abba Theoctistus, the head of a nearby monastery that practiced a strict cenobitic rule. Saint Sabbas lived in obedience at this monastery until the age of thirty.

After the death of the Elder Theoctistus, his successor, blessed Saint Sabbas to seclude himself in a cave. On Saturdays, however, he left his hermitage and came to the monastery, where he participated in divine services and ate with the brethren. After a certain time, Saint Sabbas received permission not to leave his hermitage at all, and he struggled in the cave for five years.

Saint Euthymius attentively directed the life of the young monk, and seeing his spiritual maturity, he began to take him to the Rouba wilderness with him. They set out on January 14, and remained there until Palm Sunday. Saint Euthymius called Saint Sabbas a child-elder, and encouraged him to grow in the monastic virtues.

When Saint Euthymius fell asleep in the Lord (+ 473), Saint Sabbas withdrew from the Lavra and moved to a cave near the monastery of Saint Gerasimus of Jordan (March 4). In 478, he moved to a cave on the cliffs of the Kedron Gorge southeast of Jerusalem. His hermitage formed the foundation of the monastery later named after him (Lavra Mar Saba) and known in ancient sources as the *Great Lavra*. After several years, disciples began to gather around Saint Sabbas, seeking the monastic life. As the number of monks increased, the lavra came into being. When a pillar of fire appeared before