Holy 20000 Martyrs for Christ / Living of the Holy 20000 Christ Martyrs of Nicomedia

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On 28 of December, just a day after the Nativity of Christ in Bulgarian Orthodox Church, we mark up the feast of 20000 Holy Martyrs for Christ from Nicomedia.

Here is the story shortly re-told.

When Emperor Maximian (284-305) returned victorious from a battle wtih the Ethiopians and desired to offer thanks sacrifice to the idols, he ordered all around the Roman Empire people from Nicomedia to gather, to bow down the pagan gods. Christians of Nicomedia refused to Sacrifice to the idols knowing the idols are not God but demons who pretend to be different gods making fake miracles to cloud the spiritual eye sight of their worshippers. Antim bishop of Nicomedia at these time, hearing for the order, gathered all Christians in Nicomedia and the whole night before the Nativity of Christ, he served a night vigil and Holy Liturgy teaching the people in trutful Christ faith. Finding out about this Maximian ordered Roman soldiers to surround the whole Cathedral Church with dry twigs and bushes and fire them up.in order to burn all the Christians inside. Knowing about the bonfire prepared for him and Christ's flock, he hurried up to baptize the newly believed Christians still unbaptized believing Christians (the so called ÑƒÐ³Ð»Ð°ÑˆÐµÐ½Ð¸), and present them with the Holy Eucharist (mysteries). This happened in year 302. This fearful event completed the most fierce persecution against Christians that continued for 10 years. The early Church persecution ended with the[enthronement of the new emperor Saint Constantine](#).

20000 Thousand of Martyrs for Christ in a day is one of the greatest victory for Christ's Church. It is a clear indication of the truthfulness of our faith. As never in whole human history has been 20000 of innocent people were killed for sharing one and the same believe.