

Archdeacon's Corner Continued

A century later, Saint Dorotheus of Tyre, Lebanon (CE 255–362) expands on Hippolytus' work in *Ejusdem de LXXII, Christi Discipulis* (*Likewise on the 72, Christ's Disciples*), where he states: "Timon, one of the seven (deacons), and who was made bishop of Arabian Bostra, who burnt alive by the pagans."

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By the time of the Middle Ages, there was new features added to the story of Saint Timon. Usuard of Paris (CE 800–877), compiling a martyrologue that would serve as the basis for those printed over the next several hundred years, writes: "St. Timon, one of the first seven deacons, who taught first at Beroea. Afterwards while preaching the word of the Lord at Corinth, he was delivered to the flames by both the Jews and the Greeks; but remaining uninjured, he was ultimately martyred by crucifixion."

Of note is that Usuard states that Saint Timon was martyred in Corinth, and not Bostra. It is possible that the Beroea mentioned is the one in Acts 17. Other possibilities are that it is an error for the city of Bostra mentioned in the other sources.

In modern times, the most recent biographies of Timon include details surrounding his trial in Bostra, his prayers during the hours of his burning in the flames, the conversion of a nearby soldier and guard, and his personal connection to Saint Stephen.

Regardless of the question of factuality through tradition, Saint Timon has served as a martyr (witness) to Christ for nearly two millennia. His vocational calling as a proto-deacon certainly involved more than serving widows and other works of charity and included the powerful proclamation of the gospel, even to his own suffering and death. Most likely the first bishop of the area of Bostra, Timon's legacy lives on in the hearts of all who answer the call of service, to bring good news of Jesus to the world.

Today, let us remember Timon, his character, and his witness through the κοντάκιον/*kontakion* hymn of the Eastern Church:

*You were a holy deacon and eyewitness of the Word,
And chosen vessel of the faith, O glorious Timon.
Therefore today we celebrate your sacred memory,
Blessing you in gladness of heart.
Praying that our Lord finds you and yours well.*

Archdeacon,
The Ven. Mark Richardson