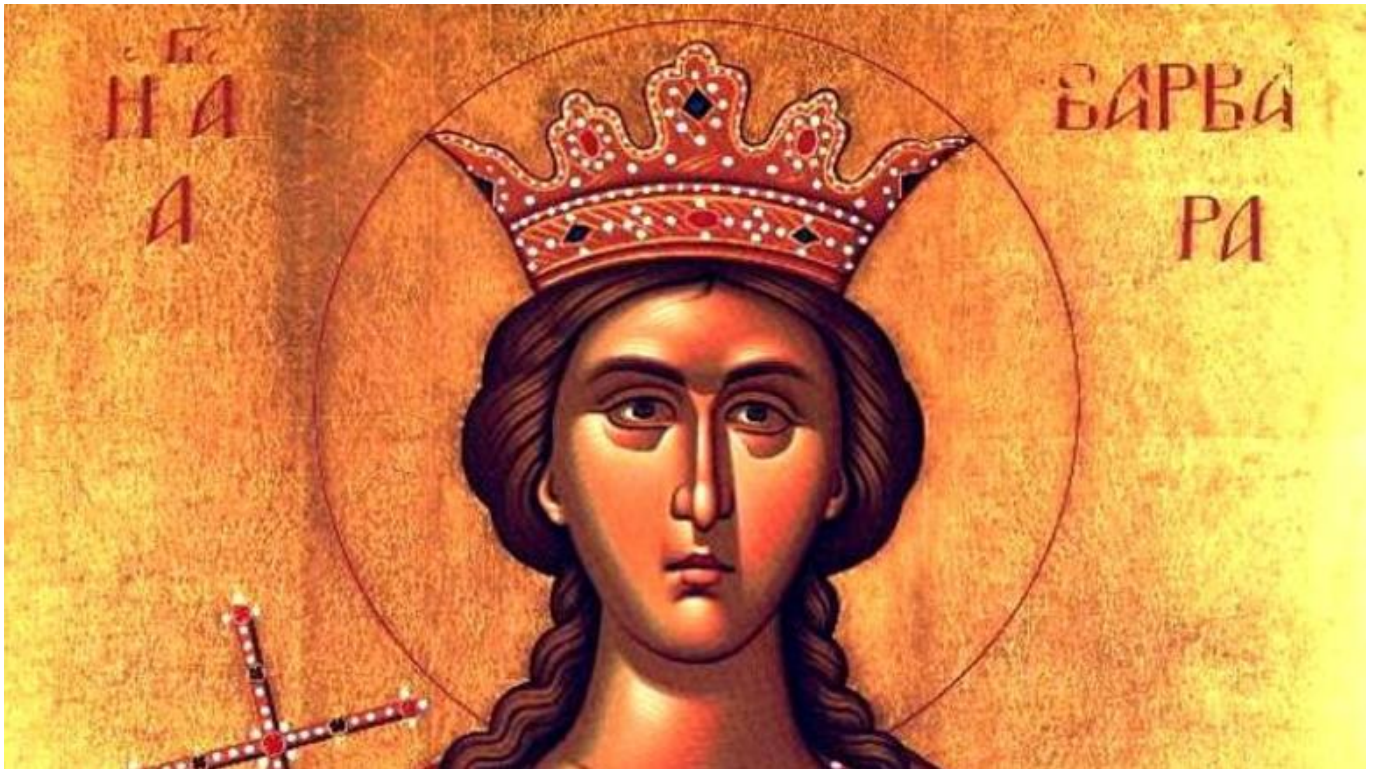


Feast Day of Barbara the Great Martyr today



The Church today venerates the memory of Barbara the Great Martyr.

St. Barbara was from the city of Heliopolis, in ancient Phoenicia, and lived during the reign of the Roman Emperor Maximian.

The daughter of the idolater Dioscorus, she refused to renounce her faith, suffering torture and finally beheading — all at the instigation of her own father. In an instance of Divine Justice, a bolt of lightning later killed her filicidal father.

The avenging lightning strike symbolizes the artillery arm of the Hellenic Army, as St. Barbara is its patron saint.

On Wednesday, the Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople, His All Holiness Bartholomew I, paid a pilgrimage to the cell where St. Barbara was held, near the ancient city of Nicomedia, today's Izmit.

