



Saint John of Egypt (? - 394), also known as John the Hermit or John the Anchorite (Latin: Iohannes anchorita), was one of the hermits of the Nitrean desert. He began as a carpenter and left to solitude after receiving a divine call. According to hagiographer Alban Butler, John was noted for performing seemingly absurd acts at the bidding of the Holy Spirit, such as rolling rocks from place to place and cultivating dead trees. He then withdrew to the top of a cliff, where he could avoid all human contact.

He avoided seeing women, in particular, to avoid temptation, but he avoided all people for the last fifty years of his life. Saint Augustine wrote that John was tempted by devils and performed miraculous cures. He cured a woman, according to Augustine, of blindness and then appeared to her in a vision to avoid seeing her in person. He possessed the spiritual gift of prophecy and spoke through a window to people twice a week, often predicting the future and knowing the details of persons he had never met. He predicted future victories to the Emperor Theodosius the Great.

According to Butler, John prayed incessantly, and he spent the last three days of his life without food or drink or any interactions but prayer. He was discovered in his cell, with his body in a position of prayer.

His feast day in the West is March 27.