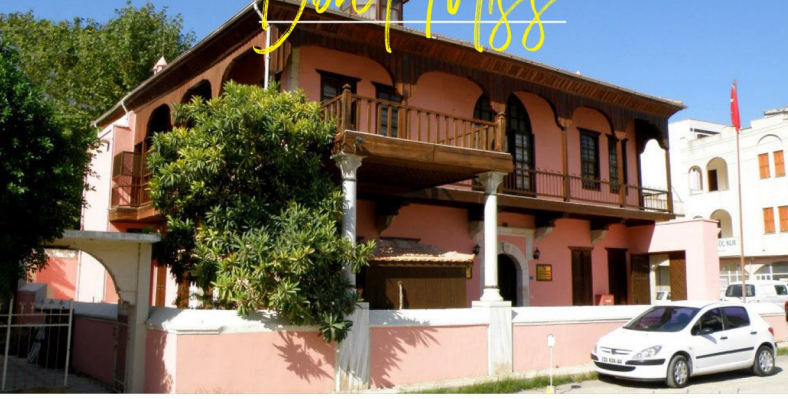


# Atatürk's House Museum

*Don't Miss*



# Aya Tekla Archaeological Site



## Aya Tekla Archaeological Site Visiting Hours

April 1-October 31

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
8.00	8.00	8.00	8.00	8.00	8.00	8.00
19.00	19.00	19.00	19.00	19.00	19.00	19.00

October 31- April 1

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
8.00	8.00	8.00	8.00	8.00	8.00	8.00
17.00	17.00	17.00	17.00	17.00	17.00	17.00

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**Address** Mukaddem Mahallesi - Silifke/ Mersin

Please visit the website for current information.



[www.muze.gov.tr](http://www.muze.gov.tr)



## The History of Christianity: Aya Tekla Church





Church of Aya Tekla; The church built by Emperor Zenon dedicated to Aya Tekla and the North Church; bath, many cisterns, cemeteries and remains of the city walls have survived to the present day.

This archaeological site, also called the Virgin Mary (Meryemlik), is one of the oldest and most important centres of Christianity. This pilgrimage spot, where millions of Christians visit, houses the cave which the first and only female martyr of Christianity known as Aya Tekla (Saint Thekla) was hidden in and later turned into a church.

17-year-old Tekla who was influenced by the sermons of St. Paul, one of the apostles of Jesus Christ, devoted herself to Christianity. When St. Paul set out for the Yalvaç District of Isparta to spread the faith, he assigned Aya Tekla to Christianize Silifke and its region. When she learned that she would be killed, she escaped and came to Seleucia, where she was hidden in a cave that was later turned into a church.



She cured the sick by performing miracles while spreading Christian belief against polytheistic religion from the cave where she sheltered. She was believed to have disappeared in this cave at the time of being murdered. The cave where Aya Tekla lived in was considered sacred by Christians after her disappearance and it was used as a secret place of worship until the ban on Christianity was lifted on 312 AD. This cave was later converted into a church in the 4th century AD.

The golden age of Aya Tekla archaeological site was during the time of Roman Emperor Zenon in the 4th and 5th century AD. Aya Tekla, who devoted herself to spreading the monotheistic faith and healed people by helping them, is commemorated every year by the Catholic Church on September 23, and the Orthodox Church on September 24.