

THE 21st DAY OF THE MONTH OF MARCH
THE COMMEMORATION OF OUR VENERABLE FATHER JAMES THE
CONFESSOR, BISHOP OF CATANIA
AT VESPERS

On “Lord, I have cried ...,” 3 Stichera of the holy hierarch, in Tone IV:

Spec. Mel.: “Thou hast given a sign ...”:

Desiring good repute * which is eternal * and in no wise passeth away, * thou didst disdain glory * which is transitory and perishable; * and, taking up thy cross, * didst follow after the Crucified, * making thy flesh submissive by feats of fasting. ** Wherefore, we celebrate thy memory, O James.

Crucified to the world and the passions, * O father James, * thou didst preserve thy soul * undefiled and pure, * untainted by base traits, * taking wing to the heavens in mystic visions. * Therein, as a true friend of Christ, * as a most faithful favorite, ** thou didst set forth thy life, O venerable one.

Innocent, guileless, * merciful and full of brotherly love, * humble-minded and meek, full of love, * adorned with almsgiving, * gifted with patience, * bright with faith and hope, * ornamented with prayer, * and shining sacredly with divine splendors, ** wast thou shown to be, O ever-memorable one.

Glory ..., Both now ..., Theotokion in Tone IV:

O all-hymned Theotokos! * purify my passionate heart from pollution, * and cleanse, O pure one, * the festering wounds of sin from my soul, * make steadfast my mind, * so that I, thy sinful and unprofitable servant, ** may magnify thy might and thy great intercession.

Stavrotheotokion: The most pure one, * beholding Christ, the Lover of mankind, crucified, * His side pierced by a lance, * cried out, lamenting: * “What is this, O my Son? * How have these thankless people rewarded Thee * for the good things Thou hast done for them? * Dost Thou hasten to leave me childless, O most Beloved? ** I marvel, O Compassionate One, at Thy voluntary crucifixion!”

AT MATINS

The Canon of the holy hierarch, the composition of Ignatius, in Tone II:

ODE I

Irmos: Come, O ye people, * let us sing a song to Christ our God, * Who divided the sea, * and made a way for the nation * which He had brought up out of the bondage of Egypt; * for He hath been glorified.

Receiving the effulgence of the Trinity in thy soul, O James, thou didst forsake the dark deception of the world and receive transcendent glory.

Shouldering thy cross, O venerable one, thou didst follow after the Crucified One; and having most wisely struggled in monasticism, thou didst cause the passions to dry up through abstinence, O father.

From thine infancy thou wast a vessel containing the gifts of the Spirit, and a citizen and heir of the heavenly Sion, O blessed James.

Theotokion: O Maiden, thou hast given birth unto the one infinite God of all Who in His goodness hath become bounded within thee. Him do thou entreat, that He save those who hymn thee.

ODE III

Irmos: O Lord, who didst slay sin upon the tree, * firmly establish us in Thee, * and in the hearts of us who hymn Thee * plant the fear of Thee.

Thy life was beautiful, thy discourse seasoned with the salt of love, thy heart right compunctionate, O divinely wise one; wherefore, with faith we call thee blessed.

In honoring the divine image of Christ Who revealed Himself in the flesh for our sake, O father, thou didst endure persecution, tribulation and sorrows, O all-blessed one.

Mortifying sin, thou didst offer thyself to the Lord as a pure sacrifice; and as a lawful hierarch thou didst offer Him un-bloody sacrifices.

Theotokion: Thee, O Virgin, do we truly call the golden censer, the jar of manna, the divine mountain and the all-beauteous palace of God.

Sessional Hymn, in Tone IV:

Spec. Mel.: “Go thou quickly before ...”:

Forsaking the world and manifestly reducing the flesh to submission by abstinence, O most blessed James, whence thou didst have the holy anointing of the priesthood; and now thou hast passed on to the immaterial choirs, praying for all of us who praise thee.

Glory ...Both now ..., Theotokion in Tone IV:

O Bride of God who alone hast given birth unto the Creator of all, adorning mankind by thy birthgiving, deliver me from the snares of the alien one, and set me upon the rock of Christ’s will, earnestly entreating Him to Whom thou gavest flesh.

Stavrotheotokion: Upon beholding Thee suspended upon the Cross, * O Word of God, * Thy most pure Mother exclaimed, lamenting maternally: * “What is this new and strange wonder, O my Son? * How is it that Thou, the Life of all, hast tasted death, * desiring to bring life to mortals, ** in so far as Thou art compassionate?”

ODE IV

Irmos: I have heard report of Thy dispensation, O Lord, * and have glorified Thee * Who alone lovest mankind.

In mortifying the pleasures of the body with night-long entreaties, thou didst show thyself to be a perpetual lamp of dispassion, O venerable one.

Ever cleansing thyself with streams of tears, O all-blessed one, thou didst reveal thyself to be a pure receptacle for the Holy Spirit.

A holy hierarch humble and meek, sympathetic, guileless and chaste, wast thou, O venerable one.

Theotokion: O Sovereign Lady who knewest not wedlock, conceiving God in thy womb, deliver all from temptations and grief.

ODE V

Irmos: O Lord, Bestower of light and Creator of the ages: * guide us in the light of Thy commandments, * for we know none other God than Thee.

Desires for glory, which are truly eminent among mankind, thou didst clearly abhor, O venerable father; and like a beacon, thou didst shine with the radiance of humility of mind

With much abstinence and in diligent vigil, prayer and the endurance of evils, didst thou seek God, Who hath translated thee to the mansions on high.

Thou didst stand, O holy father, divinely wise James, exercising thyself in night-long prayers, receiving divine rays through the eye of thy soul.

Theotokion: In that thou art sympathetic, O most pure one, who ineffably hast given birth to Him Who was wounded in the flesh on the Cross, heal my heart which hath been wounded by the assaults of the evil one.

ODE VI

Irmos: Whirled about in the abyss of sin, * I appeal to the unfathomable abyss of Thy compassion: * Raise me up from corruption, O God.

The streams of thy tears dried up a sea of grievous sufferings, O venerable one, and brought heavenly consolation for thy precious soul.

Guileless, meek, harmless, venerable, sweet, humble-minded, serene and full of enlightenment, wast thou, O most glorious father.

Thy memory, O father, hath been glorified with that of the divine pastors, as that of a good shepherd, O wise pastor James, in that thou didst tend thy flock in holiness.

Theotokion: **H**e Who by His will created all that exists, in His good pleasure made His abode within the womb of her who knew not wedlock, honoring those who have been sickened by corruption, with incorruption, in that He is full of tender compassion.

ODE VII

Irmos: **W**hen the golden image was worshipped on the plain of Dura, * Thy three children spurned the impious command, * and, cast into the midst of the flame, * they were bedewed, and sang: * O God of our fathers, Blessed art Thou!

Much persecution and inexorable trials didst thou endure, vanquishing the iconoclasts, shining forth in Orthodoxy, illumining all who watched, and crying aloud, O James: O God of our fathers, blessed art Thou!

Mindful of the awesome coming of Christ, thou didst pass all thy life in compunction, O blessed one, until thou didst find complete cleansing of sins, eternal consolation, true enlightenment and ineffable glory.

In meekness of soul thou wast shown to be a lamb of Christ the Shepherd, and, guided by Him, thou didst become known as a shepherd of the reason-endowed sheep in the Spirit, O father, chanting ever with them: O God of our fathers, blessed art Thou!

Theotokion: **O** glorious most pure Virgin, who knew not wedlock, O blessed one, thou restoration of the fallen and deliverance of sinners, save me, a prodigal! Save me who crieth out to thy Son: O God of our fathers, blessed art Thou!

ODE VIII

Irmos: **G**od Who descended into the fiery furnace * with the Hebrew children, * and transformed the flame into dew, * do ye works hymn, * and supremely exalt as Lord throughout all ages.

Thy most pure mind, illumined with divine purity, didst thou consciously turn away from the darkness of the demons and the gloom of the passions, O venerable one, crying aloud: Hymn the Lord, all ye works, and supremely exalt Him throughout all ages!

With a rain of incessant tears thou didst quench the fiery darts of the enemy, O wise one, and, kindled with the love of Christ, thou didst utterly consume the abundant thorns of the pleasures, O all-blessed one.

By thy supplications, O most wise one, preserve thy flock from temptations and tribulations, having gathered them together by thy teachings, and who with faith celebrate thy sacred and honored divine memory which is full of light.

Theotokion: **O** Virgin Theotokos who, being a fountain of life, hast given birth unto the Water of life: Water my soul which is wasting away in the flame of sin, that I may glorify thee throughout all ages.

ODE IX

Irmos: **G**od the Word, God of God, * Who by ineffable wisdom came to create Adam anew * after his grievous fall to corruption through eating * and Who took flesh beyond all telling from the Holy Virgin for our sake, * Him we faithful with one accord magnify in song.

After manifold labors and countless sufferings, after fastings and sorrows, thou didst truly find rest in a harbor, laden with the celestial riches of divine virtues, O most sacred father, the adornment of the venerable.

A lamp of discernment, a throne of sensibility, guileless, meek, merciful and most compassionate wast thou; and having lamented and watered thy couch, as David said, with him be thou mindful of all who honor thee with faith.

O James, we honor thee as a wise hierarch, as a star of the day, as a temple of the Spirit, as a rose full of mystic fragrance, as a tree of lofty branches, as one who sharest in eternal glory.

Torrents of tears sent down upon the soil of thy heart in abundance truly caused ripe grain to grow which nurtureth the souls of those who ever honor thee with faith, O divinely wise hierarch, James our father.

Theotokion: **H**ave pity, have pity on me when Thou wilt judge me, and condemn me not to the fire, neither disdain me in thy wrath! For the sake of the Virgin who gaveth birth to Thee, O Christ, and entreateth Thee, together with the multitudes of angels, the venerable and the martyrs.