

THE 27th DAY OF THE MONTH OF MARCH
THE COMMEMORATION OF OUR HOLY MOTHER MATRONA OF THESSALONICA
AT VESPERS:

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

Spec. Mel.: “As one valiant among the martyrs ...”:

With reason didst thou oppose * the ferocity and naked savagery of the Jews, * O divinely wise and manly-wise one, * foreseeing the delight of things to come, * which remaineth ever-unchanging throughout the ages. * This didst thou receive, * departing from earth to the mansions of heaven * and the enduring choir, ** O glorious one.

Adorned with the wounds * of thy steadfast suffering, * thou wast deemed worthy to behold * the splendor of the kingdom * and the beauteous comeliness of thy Bridegroom; * and drawing nigh to the Source of good things as is meet, * thou didst richly receive * the fruits of divine gladness ** and undying glory.

Neither the yoke of slavery, * nor feminine weakness, * nor hunger, nor stripes prevented thee * from emulating the steadfastness of the martyrs, * O most glorious one; * for thou didst endure torments with fervor of soul. * Hence receiving a place in the heavenly mansions, * thou hast been adorned with the crown of grace, ** standing before thy Creator.

Glory ..., Both now ..., Theotokion, in the same melody:

Deliver thou my soul * from condemnation and grievous transgressions, * O most holy Bride of God, * and rescue it from death by thy supplications. * Grant that on the day of trial * I may receive the justification * which the assemblies of the saints have received; * and before the end show me forth as cleansed through repentance ** and by the shedding of tears.

Stavrotheotokion: Beholding Thee * nailed to the Cross, O Lord, * the ewe-lamb Thy Mother marveled * and cried out: “What is this that I see, * O my Son most desired? * How hast Thou been rewarded * by the unfaithful and iniquitous assembly * which hath enjoyed Thy many miracles? ** Yet glory to Thine ineffable condescension, O Master!”

AT MATINS:

Canon to the venerable one, the acrostic whereof is: “I hymn the divine glory of Matrona,” the composition of St. Theophanes the Branded, in Tone IV:

ODE I

Irmos: Through the deep of the Red Sea, * marched dry shod Israel of old, * and by Moses’ outstretched hands, * raised in the form of a cross, * the power of Amalek was routed in the wilderness.

In that thou hast now joined chorus with the divine ranks of the bodiless ones before God the Cause of all, and manifestly delighting in the splendor of the Godhead: enlighten those who hymn thee.

He Who deigned to assume the guise of a servant, Christ God, wishing to free mankind from corruption and the bonds of death and the yoke of slavery, O martyr, betrothed thee as His bride.

Making her feminine nature manly through grace, in the weakness of her body, yet strengthened by divine might, she humbled the haughty gaze of him who boasted beyond measure of old that he would obliterate the sea.

Theotokion: Now that the gate of Thy descent to us, O Lord, hath supra-naturally shone forth Thee Who art mystically called the Orient, the Sun, the Light, we praise Thee, the Lover of mankind Who art of two natures.

ODE III

Irmos: Thy Church, O Christ, rejoiceth in Thee crying aloud: * Thou, O Lord, art my strength, * my refuge and foundation.

With steadfastness of mind didst thou endure the cruel and grievous torment of the most iniquitous woman, O glorious and all-blessed Matrona.

Perceiving the sufferings of thy stripes, thou didst nonetheless steadfastly endure them; and by struggling in the darkness thou didst receive divine radiance.

The streams of thy blood quenched the pyre of impiety, and they have given the faithful to drink of the waters of piety.

Theotokion: With godly voice we praise thee, O most pure one, who received in thy womb the beginningless Word of God, as the table and the ark.

Sessional Hymn, in Tone V:

Spec. Mel.: “The co-beginningless Word ...”:

Having piously enslaved thyself to the Almighty, O honored Matrona, thou wast held in bondage by the impiety of thy mistress; but thou didst steadfastly endure a dark imprisonment and the sting of scourgings, and didst pass on to God, O divinely wise martyr. Pray thou on behalf of those who keep thy memory.

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

O fervent and invincible intercessor, * diligent and unashamed hope, * rampart, protection and haven * of those who have recourse to thee, * O pure Ever-virgin do thou, together with the angels, * entreat thy Son and God, ** that He grant peace, salvation and great mercy to the world.

Stavrotheotokion: Beholding Thee suspended on the Cross between two thieves of Thine own will, O Christ, Thy Mother, her womb rent asunder maternally, said: “O my sinless Son, how is it that Thou art unjustly nailed to the Cross like a malefactor, desiring to give life to the human race, in that Thou art compassionate?”

ODE IV

Irmos: Beholding Thee, the Sun of righteousness, * lifted up upon the cross, * the Church now standeth arrayed and doth worthily cry aloud: * Glory be to Thy power, O Lord.

Strengthened by divine power, O Matrona, thou didst flee the slavery of thy cruel mistress; for, laboring for thy Master alone, thou didst acquire a humble inclination of soul.

Bellowing and insane with drunkenness, enraged with wrath, with Hebraic cruelty thy most impious mistress flayed thy body, O passion-bearing martyr.

Imprisoned in dark places and tortured with hunger, O martyr, thou didst show forth the endurance of youth and didst win thy reward, the banquet of immortality.

Theotokion: The golden candlestick prefigured thee who art truly the Mother of God who bore the incarnate God Who enlighteneth all things with the splendor of divinity.

ODE V

Irmos: Thou, O Lord, who camest into the world, * art my light, * a holy light turning from the darkness of ignorance * those who sing Thy praises in faith.

O Bestower of life, the divinely wise one acquired Thee as a splendid crown of praise and went forth from darkness to divine effulgence.

Christ set thy feet on the rock of faith, O blessed one, and thou didst wisely direct thy steps to Him.

Possessed of a truly divine, wise and God-centered mind, O all-blessed Matrona, thou shinest amongst the choir of martyrs.

Theotokion: O Mother of God, thou hast given birth unto the form of divinity and the form of humanity, in an uncommingled union.

ODE VI

Irmos: The church crieth out unto Thee O Lord, * ‘I will sacrifice unto Thee with a voice of praise’ * having been cleansed of the blood of the demons’ * by the blood that for mercy’s sake flowed from Thy side.

Deified by unceasing prostrations, thou didst studiously embrace the Desire of Eve, O passion-bearer Matrona; and rightly hast thou been deemed worthy of everlasting glory. (Twice)

It is not slave or freeman who is judged in Christ, but nobility of virtue, O thou who art adorned with the inclinations of piety. And thou hast been shown to be a model thereof, O invincible passion-bearer.

Theotokion: We know thee to be the temple and chamber of God, the jar, candlestick and tablet who acquired within thee the inscription of the Word Who became incarnate in His tender compassion, O all-immaculate one.

ODE VII

Irmos: In the Persian furnace the youths and descendants of Abraham, * burning with a love of piety * rather than by a flame of fire, * cried aloud saying: * Blessed art Thou in the temple of Thy glory, O Lord.

Thou didst truly cleave to Thy heavenly Benefactor with love and boldness, O all-praised one, crying out in thanksgiving: Blessed art Thou in the temple of the glory, O Lord! (Twice)

Full of all manner of virtues, with gladness and joy didst thou pass over from earth to the choirs of heaven, O glorious Matrona, receiving an immortal inheritance.

Theotokion: Resplendent and adorned with all the virtues as with varied colors, O Mother of God, thou hast given birth unto the Word of the Father in a manner past all telling. Blessed art thou among women, O all-immaculate Sovereign Lady!

ODE VIII

Irmos: Having spread his hands, Daniel closed the lions jaws * in their den; * while the zealously pious youths, * girded with virtue, * quenched the power of the fire and cried aloud: * Bless ye the Lord, all ye works of the Lord.

Released from the flesh, thou wast deemed worthy to behold rays of abundant light, and to dwell in a tabernacle of heaven instead of the dark and gloomy place wherein thou hadst been incarcerated, O glorious one, crying out: Bless the Lord, all ye works of the Lord! (Twice)

Beautiful is the crown wherewith thou hast now been crowned by the life-creating right hand of the Almighty, O glorious one; for, beholding thee, His bride, empurpled by the streams of thine own blood, He joyfully illumined thee. To Him do we chant: Bless the Lord, all ye works of the Lord!

Theotokion: Thou hast truly been shown to be her who truly gaveth birth unto the God of truth, bearing the Divine Name for the faithful in corresponding manner, O all-pure one. Wherefore, with divine wisdom we glorify thee as the Theotokos, O all-immaculate Sovereign lady.

ODE IX

Irmos: **A** cornerstone not cut by hand O Virgin, * was cut from thee the unhewn mountain: * even Christ, Who hath joined together the disparate natures; * therefore rejoicing we magnify thee, * O Theotokos.

Thy day shineth with noetic outpourings of light and the most radiant splendors of the three-Sunned Effulgence, O martyr. Thereon we now pray: illumine those who hymn thee.

The rewards for thy painful stripes didst thou find to be the inheritance of heaven, O glorious passion-bearer, in the assembly of the firstborn; holding festival therein, protect us by thy supplications.

Truly hast thou now united thyself unto Christ, thine immortal Bridegroom, having splendidly blossomed like a flower through His divine wounds, O all-wise one, shining with the precious blood of martyrdom.

Theotokion: **L**oose now the chains of my transgressions, O Virgin Theotokos who hast given birth to the Wellsprings of tender compassion; and fill me with sweetness of soul, O thou who alone art blessed of God, that I may magnify thee as is meet.