

THE 30th DAY OF THE MONTH OF MARCH

THE COMMEMORATION OF OUR VENERABLE FATHER JOHN, AUTHOR OF “THE LADDER”

AT VESPERS:

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

Spec. Mel.: “O most glorious wonder ...”:

O venerable father John, * thou didst truly bear continually * the high praises of God in thy throat, * meditating, O all-wise one, * upon active, divinely inspired words; * and as one blessed, * thou wast enriched by the grace * which floweth forth therefrom, ** overthrowing the designs of all the impious.

O most glorious father John, * having cleansed thy soul * with an upwelling of tears * and having moved God to mercy by thine all-night standing, * thou didst take wing, O blessed one, * to His love and beauty, * wherein thou dost now delight as is meet, * rejoicing unceasingly, with thy fellow strugglers, ** O divinely wise and venerable one.

O venerable father John, * having by faith given thy mind wings to fly to God, * thou didst abhor the instability of the confusion of the world; * and, taking up thy cross, * thou didst follow after Him Who seeth all things, * enslaving to thy mind * the body which is hard to bridle * through struggles of fasting, ** by the power of the divine Spirit.

If it be Saturday or Sunday, the following is also chanted:

Glory ..., in Tone VI: Idiomelon:

O venerable father, the sound of thy corrections hath gone forth into all the earth; wherefore, thou hast found the reward of thy labors in the heavens, having destroyed hordes of demons, and attained unto the ranks of the angels, whose life thou didst blamelessly emulate. Since thou possesseth great boldness before Christ God, ask peace for our souls.

But if it be a fast day, after the Stichera we chant:

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

I beseech thee, O most honored one, * thou vessel of virginity * and pure and comely habitation of God: * comfort my soul * which hath been tormented by the venom of the serpent, * and hath been mortified by transgressions, * that I may glorify thee * who art magnified by all the faithful, ** O divinely joyous one.

Stavrotheotokion: “What is this thing * which mine eyes see? O Master, * Who sustainest all creation, * dost Thou die, lifted up upon the Tree, * bestowing life upon all?” * the Theotokos said, weeping, * when she beheld the God and man * Who had shone forth from her ineffably, ** suspended upon the Cross.

On the Aposticha, Glory ..., in Tone VIII:

We honor thee as the instructor of a multitude of monks, O John our father, for following thy steps we have truly come to know how to walk aright. Blessed art thou, O converser with angels, partaker of the bliss of heaven with the venerable and the righteous, who, having labored for Christ, didst put the might of the enemy to open shame. With the saints pray thou to the Lord, that He have mercy upon our souls.

Troparion of the venerable one, in Tone VIII:

With the streams of thy tears thou didst irrigate the barren desert, * and with sighs from the depths of thy soul thou didst render thy labors fruitful an hundredfold, * becoming a beacon for the whole world, resplendent with miracles. ** O John our father, entreat Christ God, that our souls be saved.

AT MATINS:

The canon of the venerable one, the composition of Ignatius, in Tone VIII:

ODE I

Irmos: **H**aving passed through the water as upon dry land, * and having escaped the malice of the Egyptians, * the Israelites cried aloud: * Unto our God and Redeemer let us sing.

O venerable John, having risen from the coarseness of material things to the immaterial and noetic Light, enlighten me through thy prayers to the Lord.

Having tasted the sweetness of abstinence, thou didst spurn the bitterness of the passions; wherefore, thou delightest our senses more than honey and the honeycomb.

Having mounted to the summit of the virtues and spat upon pleasures which love the depths, thou wast shown to be the sweetness of salvation for thy flock, O venerable father.

Theotokion: **O** thou who ineffably hast given birth unto the Wisdom and Word of the Father, heal thou the grievous wounds of my soul and quell the pain of my heart.

ODE III

Irmos: **O** Lord, thou art the confirmation of those who flee to Thee, * Thou art the Light of those in darkness, * and my spirit doth hymn Thee.

With the burning coal of fasting thou didst utterly consume the thorns of the passions, and warming the companies of monastics.

From the aromatic essence of fasting thou wast wholly distilled as a myrrh of sanctification, unto the fragrance of the sweet savor of God.

Learning instruction in the laws of God, with the flow of thy tears thou didst drown the passions, as though they were other minions of Pharaoh.

Theotokion: **Q**uell the raging tumult of my thoughts, O pure Mother of God, directing their movements toward thy Son.

Kontakion, in Tone I: Spec. Mel.: “The choir of angels ...”:

Bringing forth ever-blooming fruits of teaching from thy book, O blessed and most wise one, thou dost delight those who with vigilance attend thereto; for it is a ladder of the soul leading from the earth to heavenly and lasting glory, for those who honor thee with faith.

Sessional Hymn, in Tone VIII: Spec. Mel.: “Of the Wisdom ...”:

Shining forth supra-naturally in vision and deed, thou dost enlighten with doctrines, proclaiming divinely wise laws, O blessed one, setting as rungs the beauties of the virtues, indicating the deceits and machinations of evil. Hence, thou dost lead up from the passions to dispassion, those who follow thy divine teachings, O angelic John. Entreat Christ God to grant forgiveness of transgressions unto those who with love honor thy holy memory.

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

All we, the generations of mankind, * call thee blessed, * in that thou art the Virgin who alone among women * hast given birth without seed unto God in the flesh; * for the fire of the Godhead made its abode within thee, * and thou didst feed the Creator and Lord * with milk as an infant. * Wherefore, we, the race of mankind and of angels, * glorify thy birthgiving, * and together we cry out to thee: * Entreat Christ God to grant forgiveness of sins ** unto those who with faith worship thy most holy Offspring.

Stavrotheotokion: Upon beholding the Lamb, Shepherd and Redeemer * upon the Cross, * the ewe-lamb exclaimed weeping, bitterly lamenting, and crying aloud: * “The world rejoiceth, having received deliverance through Thee, * but my womb doth burn, beholding Thy crucifixion, * which Thou hast endured in Thy merciful loving-kindness. * O long-suffering Lord, * Thou abyss and inexhaustible well-spring of mercy, * take pity, and grant forgiveness of sins ** unto those who hymn Thy divine sufferings with faith!”

ODE IV

Irmos: O Lord, I have heard the mystery of Thy dispensation; * I have considered Thy works, * and I have glorified Thy Divinity.

Like a most fragrant meadow and animate garden of the virtues, thou didst blossom forth with abstinence, wherewith thou dost nurture all who honor thee.

Having truly acquired thee, O father, as Moses and David, we bless thee, the giver of the law of instruction and a most meek model for monastics.

Thou hast been shown to be a right flourishing branch, planted by the waters of abstinence, putting forth the grapes of piety, O blessed father.

Theotokion: For us, O Mother of God, hast thou given birth unto Him Who timelessly shone forth from the Father, yet came under time; to Him do thou pray, that He save those who hymn thee.

ODE V

Irmos: O Light never-waning, * why hast Thou turned Thy face from me * and why hath the alien darkness surrounded me, * wretched though I be? * But do Thou guide my steps I implore Thee * and turn me back towards the light of Thy commandments.

Having quenched all the passions with the dew of thy struggles, O blessed father, and abundantly kindled the lamp of abstinence with the ember of love and faith, thou didst become a beacon of dispassion and a child of the day.

Thou didst nurture the grapes of faith with thy godly cultivation, O father, placing them in the winepress, and squeezing out instructions through thy labors; and having filled the cup of thy spirit with abstinence, thou hast made glad the hearts of thy flock.

Having valiantly endured the assaults and wounds of invisible foes, thou wast shown to be a pillar of patience, establishing thy flock on the fields of abstinence with thy divine staff, O blessed one, and nurturing thy sheep on the waters thereof.

Theotokion: Following the words of thy lips, O all-pure one, we call thee blessed; for the Lord, Who accomplished mighty works through thee, hath magnified thee and, born of thy womb, hath shown thee to be the true Mother of God.

ODE VI

Irmos: Cleanse me, O Savior, * for many are mine iniquities; * lead me up from the abyss of evils I pray Thee, * for unto Thee have I cried, * and Thou hast hearkened unto me, * O God of my salvation.

Within thy soul thou didst amass the divine wealth of the Spirit: blameless prayer, purity, honesty, constant vigil, and labors of abstinence, whereby thou hast come to be known as a house of God.

Thou didst transcend the baseness of matter here below, giving wings to thy mind through immaterial prayer, and through the perfection of thy life wast manifested as an heir to the serenity of the Most High.

With the sweat of thy fasting thou didst truly extinguish the burning darts of the enemy, and having kindled the fire of the faith, utterly consume the arrogance of the infidelity of the heresies.

Theotokion: The Splendor of the Most High shone forth from Sion clad in flesh taken from thee, O thou who knewest not wedlock, in an ineffable union; and thereby He enlightened the world.

Kontakion of the venerable one, in Tone IV:

Spec. Mel.: “Thou hast appeared ...”:

In the firmament of true abstinence * hath the Lord set thee as a true star guiding the ends of the earth with light, ** O father John our instructor.

Ikos: Truly thou didst make thyself a house of God, O father, manifestly adorning it with thy godly virtues as with radiant gold, expounding the divine laws of faith, hope and love, learning through abstinence, like one of the bodiless ones, understanding and courage, and acquiring chastity and humility, whereby thou hast been exalted. Wherefore, having been enlightened by unceasing prayer, thou didst take wing through mystical visions and didst receive the mansions of heaven, O father John our instructor.

ODE VII

Irmos: The Children of Judaea, * who of old came to dwell in Babylon, * trampled underfoot the flame of the furnace * through their faith in the Trinity, * as they sang: ‘O God of our fathers, blessed art Thou.’

Thou didst nurture thy flock on the verdure of the kingdom of the Most High, O father, and, driving away the wild beasts of heresies with the staff of Orthodox dogmas, thou dost chant: O God of our fathers, blessed art Thou!

Into the upper bridal chamber of the kingdom of Christ hast thou entered, clad in vesture worthy of a guest, and therein thou didst recline at the banquet, crying aloud: O God of our fathers, blessed art Thou!

A river of abstinence devoid of sin wast thou shown to be, O father, drowning evil thoughts and washing away the defilement of those who with faith cry aloud: O God of our fathers, blessed art Thou!

Theotokion: From thy womb did the Lord of all issue forth incarnate, O Virgin. Wherefore, understanding in an Orthodox manner that thou art the Theotokos, we cry out to thy Son: O God of our fathers, blessed art Thou!

ODE VIII

Irmos: The King of heaven, * Who is glorified by the hosts of angels, * let us praise and supremely exalt throughout all ages.

Having truly acquired thee as an animate pillar and model of abstinence, O father, we all honor thy memory, O John.

The multitude of monastics rejoiceth, and the assembly of the venerable and the righteous join chorus; for with them thou hast received a crown as is meet.

Adorned with the virtues thou didst enter into the bridal chamber of ineffable glory, chanting a hymn unto Christ throughout all ages.

Theotokion: Spurn not those who are in need of thine aid, O Virgin, and who hymn and supremely exalt thee throughout all ages.

ODE IX

Irmos: O ye people, with glory let us honor the pure Theotokos, * who received the fire of the Divinity in her womb * yet remained unconsumed, * let us magnify her with hymns.

Thou hast been revealed by God as a physician for those who suffer amid their transgressions, and a destroyer and expeller of evil spirits; wherefore, we call thee blessed.

Thou hast left the earth as the abode of corruption, O father, and made thy dwelling in the land of the meek; with them dost thou rejoice, delighting in divine sweetness.

Today is a day of festivity, for the whole flock of monastics summoneth us to a spiritual chorus, a banquet and meal of a life of incorruption.

Theotokion: He Who hath cast down the wicked slayer of mankind who of old deceived the first of our race, hath made His abode within thee, O all-immaculate one, and saved us all.

Exapostilarion in Tone III:

Spec. Mel.: "Hearken, ye women ...":

Thou didst avoid the defilement of this most passionate world and, having laid waste to thy flesh with hunger, didst restore the strength of thy soul, O venerable one, and hast been enriched with heavenly glory, O ever-memorable one. Wherefore, cease not to pray for us, O John.

Theotokion: **W**e that have been saved by thee, O Sovereign Lady, with authority confess thee to be the Theotokos; for thou didst ineffably give birth to God Who hath destroyed death by the Cross, and Who hath drawn to Himself the assemblies of the venerable. With them do we praise thee, O Virgin.

AT LITURGY

Troparion of the venerable one, in Tone VIII:

With the streams of thy tears thou didst irrigate the barren desert, * and with sighs from the depths of thy soul thou didst render thy labors fruitful an hundredfold, * becoming a beacon for the whole world, resplendent with miracles. ** O John our father, entreat Christ God, that our souls be saved.

Kontakion of the venerable one, in Tone IV:

In the firmament of true abstinence * hath the Lord set thee as a true star guiding the ends of the earth with light, ** O father John our instructor.