

THE 21st DAY OF THE MONTH OF JANUARY
COMMEMORATION OF THE HOLY MARTYR AGNES OF ROME
AT VESPERS

On “Lord, I have cried ...,” these Stichera, in Tone VIII:

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

O wondrous solemnity! * O sacred memorial! * The martyred maiden, * adorned with virginity and arrayed in light, * is received into the eternal habitations, * her garments whitened on earth in the blood of the Lamb; * wherefore, we join chorus with the angels, * and clapping our hands, cry aloud: ** Rejoice, O Agnes, thou bride of Christ!

O most glorious passion-bearer, * thou unblemished ewe-lamb, * thou meek turtledove, * thou chosen vessel of purity: * how can we hymn thy sufferings, * how can we venerate thy wounds? * Yet, marveling at thy struggles, * we cry out to thee with compunction: ** Rejoice, O Agnes, thou bride of God!

O Peter, preeminent among the apostles, * who wast a good shepherd for thy lambs and sheep, * in the city which received thy blood * greet the unblemished ewe-lamb who now cometh forth from there, * and hath been slaughtered for Christ * and with her own blood doth purify it of pagan defilements. * Wherefore, lead her quickly unto the Lamb, to be wedded, * while the angels and the choirs of the righteous chant in hymnody: ** Rejoice, O Agnes, thou bride of Christ!

Glory ..., in Tone VI:

The Christians hid thy suffering body beneath the earth, O immaculate Agnes, shedding bitter tears, persecuted and oppressed by the heathen; but the maiden Emerentiana, obtaining boldness, denounced their mindlessness, and, slain by stoning, she died a martyr’s death at thy grave. And when thou didst appear with her in joy and glory undimmed, all the faithful ineffably rejoiced in thee. And now, having recourse to the precious shrine of thy relics, we fervently cry to thee: Forget us not, O Agnes, in thy most bold supplications!

Both now ..., Theotokion, or this Stavrotheotokion, in Tone VI:

Spec. Mel.: “Having set all aside ...”:

A sword passed through thy heart, * O most pure Sovereign Lady, * as Symeon said, * when thou didst behold Him Whom, at His ineffable utterance, * shone forth from thee * lifted up upon the Cross, * as One condemned from among the iniquitous, * given vinegar and gall to drink, * His side pierced, His feet and hands nailed; * and, lamenting, thou didst exclaim, * crying out maternally: “What is this new mystery, ** O my Child most sweet?”

On the Aposticha, the Stichera from the Oktoechos; and, Glory ..., in Tone VI:

Having set all her hope upon Christ the Savior, Agnes, the immaculate maiden, was cast into a den of sin; yet was she arrayed in divine light as in a robe. She confounded the mindless and ungodly, raising from the dead one struck down by the wrath of God, and then was unjustly beheaded with a sword, that, standing in heaven before the life-creating Trinity, she might intercede for the world and pray with boldness on behalf of our souls.

Both now ..., Theotokion, or this Stavrotheotokion, in Tone VI:

Spec. Mel.: “On the third day ...”:

Thy pure Virgin Mother was wounded within, as Symeon foretold, beholding the most iniquitous of people nailing Thee unjustly to the Tree.

Troparion, in Tone IV:

Thy ewe-lamb Agnes, O Jesus crieth out with a loud voice: * “ Thee do I love, O my Bridegroom, * and, seeking Thee, I endure suffering. * In Thy baptism I am crucified and buried with Thee. * I suffer for Thy sake, that I may reign with Thee; * I die for Thee, that I may live with Thee. * Accept me, who with love sacrifice myself for Thee, * as an unblemished offering!” ** By her supplications, in that Thou art merciful, save Thou our souls.

AT MATINS

Both canons from the Oktoechos, with 8 Troparia, including the Irmos; and that of the martyr, with 4 Troparia.

ODE I

Canon of the martyr, the acrostic whereof is: “The unblemished ewe-lamb is slain for God”, the composition of Valeria, in Tone IV:

Irmos: **T**here is none likened unto Thee, * **O** exceedingly glorious Lord; * for by Thy mighty arm * **T**hou didst deliver the people * whom Thou hast acquired, **O** Lover of mankind.

Having followed the Lamb of God on earth, O most glorious martyred maiden, standing before Him in heaven thou dost rejoice.

Come thou from Rome, O immaculate bride of Christ! For, lo! the heavenly Father extendeth His arms to thee, and the divine Bridegroom calleth thee to the bridal-chamber of light.

Having preserved the incorrupt purity of virginity, and been slain unjustly for God, O martyr, with the virgins on high thou chantest a hymn of victory, emulating the holy Miriam.

Theotokion: **H**e Who beforehand portrayed the image of thy birthgiving in the Red Sea hath been formed of thee, O most pure one, in His extreme love for mankind.

ODE III

Irmos: **N**ot in wisdom, nor in power do we glory, * but we glory in Thee **O** Christ, * the Hypostatic Wisdom of the Father, * for there is none more holy than Thee, **O** Lover of mankind.

Preserving the flower of chastity, O Agnes, thou didst flourish like a sweet-smelling lily amid the thorns of sin; and delighting now in the divine garden of paradise, thou art resplendent in never-fading glory.

The alabaster phial of thy virginal body, which held the priceless myrrh of thy soul, did the ungodly mindlessly destroy; but thy soul, like myrrh, hath been poured out upon the faithful in the perfume of sweet spiritual fragrance.

Not with sword, nor with opposition and power, but with faith free from doubt and with great purity didst thou vanquish the impious, O Agnes, thou meek turtle-dove.

Theotokion: **O** Mary Theotokos, thou only daughter of a barren woman, the righteous Anna, O only Mother of the Beginningless One: make supplication for us who entreat thee.

Sessional Hymn, in Tone III:

The triumph of the great purity of virginity is witnessed today; for, lo! when they shamelessly stripped her of her garments, the holy maiden was clothed in light instead of raiment; he who intended evil against her was smitten by the wrath of God, and all were filled with fear. But she prayeth with boldness on behalf of our souls.

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

O Theotokos, thou didst mystically contain within thy womb the Unapproachable and Uncircumscribable One Who is consubstantial with the beginningless Father. And, magnifying thy birthgiving in the world, we acknowledge the Godhead of the Trinity to be One and Unconfused. Wherefore, we cry out to thee with thanksgiving: Rejoice, O joyous one!

Stavrotheotokion: Thy pure unwedded Mother, O Christ, * upon seeing Thee hanging dead upon the Cross, * said, weeping maternally: * “How hath the iniquitous and thankless council of the Jews * repaid Thy many and great wonders, O my Son, * Thou Who filled them with Thy gifts? ** I hymn Thy divine condescension!”

ODE IV

Irmos: This is our God, Who hath become incarnate of the Virgin * and hath deified our nature! * Hymning Him, let us cry aloud: * Glory to Thy power, O Lord!

He who devised evil against thee was struck dead in an instant; yet thou, O innocent lamb, didst raise him from the dead by thy supplication, crying: Glory to Thy power, O Lord!

Having loved the heavenly Father more than thine earthly father, and choosing the Church of Christ as thy mother, thou didst wed thyself to Christ, the Son of God, O most glorious passion-bearer.

O divinely elect child of Rome, thy native city ever hath recourse with love to the shrine of thy relics; and throughout all the earth, from noonday even unto the midnight lands, Christians send up prayers to thee.

Theotokion: God hath come forth from Thee, the Holy One from thee, the mountain overshadowed and densely wooded, O all-immaculate and blessed one; wherefore, all the earth is full of thy glory, O Theotokos.

ODE V

Irmos: Having acquired the chosen people by Thy blood, O Lord, * do Thou grant us peace, * preserving Thy flock in oneness of mind.

A divine light which miraculously shone forth suddenly concealed thee from the eyes of the shameless, O right victorious virgin martyr, as the angels watched thy sufferings.

With the hair of thy head thou didst cover thy virginal nakedness, O Agnes; and by thine intercession protect me, who am stripped naked of every good deed, from the assaults of the enemy.

O unblemished ewe-lamb of the flock of Christ, when the cruel wolves beset thee, thou didst flee to the good Shepherd Who now feedeth thee in the everlasting pastures.

Theotokion: **T**hou didst reveal the Light to the world, O Virgin Theotokos; for ungodliness hath ceased, and those who live on earth have learned righteousness. For by thee have we been taught to cry aloud: O Lord our God, grant us peace, for Thou hast given us all things!

ODE VI

Irmos: **F**or three days O Christ, Jonah lay within the sea monster, * prefiguring Thee, the Immortal One, * for Thou didst willingly lay dead for three days * in the heart of the earth.

Those who worshiped Christ, Who sojourned through the Sabbath in the bosom of the earth, hid themselves underground out of fear of the heathen; and with them, like Jonah from the belly of the sea monster, thou didst send forth thy supplications, O Agnes.

We fervently bow down before thy shrine and lovingly venerate thine icon; we marvel at thy purity, praise thy faith, and honor thy dormition, O virgin martyr.

Rescue us from the temptations and tribulations which surround us, and deliver us from the sorrows which beset us, O thou who didst gladly bow thy head beneath the sword, O most joyous martyred maiden.

Theotokion: **W**ho can describe the sorrows of thy heart, O Sovereign Lady, when thy Son and God spent three days in the heart of the earth? Wherefore, thou dost suffer fervently with men, changing their sorrows into joy.

Kontakion, in Tone II:

Spec. Mel.: “Seeking the highest ...”:

Finding thy holy relics to be an ever-flowing well-spring * of healing for our afflicted souls and bodies, * O holy martyr, all of us, the faithful, cry out to thee in thanksgiving: * O most blessed Agnes, * thou innocent and unblemished ewe-lamb of the flock of Christ * the Chief Shepherd, ** pray thou unceasingly, that our souls be saved!

ODE VII

Irmos: **B**lessed art Thou, O supremely exalted God of our fathers, * O only begotten Son and beginningless Word, * Who didst exist in the beginning * with the Father and the Spirit.

Having made thine immaculate body a temple of the Holy Spirit, thou didst commit thine innocent soul into the hands of God, crying aloud: Blessed art Thou, O supremely exalted God of our fathers!

Having betrothed thyself to God, thou didst reject an earthly bridegroom; and, passing unharmed through the fire of trials, O Agnes, thou didst cry aloud: Blessed art Thou, O supremely exalted God of our fathers!

Loving Christ exceedingly, thou dost quickly render aid to all who honor thy memory and chant in thanksgiving for thee: Blessed art Thou, O supremely exalted God of our fathers!

Theotokion: **S**hadrach and his friends prefigured the glory of thy perpetual virginity, O most pure one: they glorified God and have taught us to chant: Blessed art Thou, O supremely exalted God of our fathers!

ODE VIII

Irmos: **Christ Who dost bear all things in His unapproachable glory, * bedewed The venerable children in the midst of the flame, * who cried aloud unto Him: * Bless the Lord, all ye works of the Lord!**

O meek turtle-dove, O innocent lamb, when thou didst offer thyself as a sacrifice unto God, thou didst cry: Bless the Lord, all ye works of the Lord!

Having joined the martyric tribe of Abel, O Agnes, standing on the sea of glass before the Lamb of God, thou dost chant: Bless the Lord, all ye works of the Lord!

A heavenly swallow heralding the spiritual springtime, thou didst soar aloft from the winter of sin to the land of Eden, where thou dost ever chant: Bless the Lord, all ye works of the Lord!

Theotokion: **I**f thou hadst not been shown to be worthy to become the Mother of the Almighty, God would not have appeared to mankind; and celebrating thee, O Theotokos, we cry aloud: Bless the Lord, all ye works of the Lord!

ODE IX

Irmos: **With hymns do we magnify thee, O most glorious Bride, * and all-holy Theotokos, * who hast given birth to the Creator of all things, * visible and invisible.**

As many things as are lovely, glorious and desirable dost thou now enjoy, O martyr. Before the throne of the Almighty remember us who magnify thee.

Deprive us not of thy confident intercession, O passion-bearing virgin; for with fervor we fall down before thy shrine, crying out with our hearts and mouths: Remember us who magnify thee with love!

Behold, O martyred maidens Agnes and Emerentiana, ye have passed over from sorrows to things which are full of joy, and from sorrows to things which are profitable; and we who do battle on earth are in need of your aid, which do thou render quickly unto us who magnify you with love.

Theotokion: Show us thine ineffable tender compassion, O thou who hast revealed to the world the invisible God and Savior; for, lo! confessing our weakness, we cry out unceasingly: Save those who magnify thee, O Theotokos!

Exapostilarion, in Tone III:

Great is the wonder! An innocent lamb hath driven away cruel wolves! A meek dove hath slain a hawk! Soft wax hath destroyed tempered steel! Drops of heavenly dew have quenched the fire of Gehenna! Weakness hath proved mightier than strength, and purity hath mocked the council of the sin-loving and iniquitous! For a David hath again slain Goliath, and the power of God hath been most gloriously revealed in a martyred maiden. Wherefore, we cry out to Christ: Through the supplications of the holy Agnes, O Savior, save Thou our souls!

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

Thee do we sinners have as our aid O most pure Virgin. By thy maternal supplications render thou thy Son reconciled with us.

AT LITURGY

Troparion of the martyr, in Tone IV:

Thy ewe-lamb Agnes, O Jesus crieth out with a loud voice: * “ Thee do I love, O my Bridegroom, * and, seeking Thee, I endure suffering. * In Thy baptism I am crucified and buried with Thee. * I suffer for Thy sake, that I may reign with Thee; * I die for Thee, that I may live with Thee. * Accept me, who with love sacrifice myself for Thee, * as an unblemished offering!” ** By her supplications, in that Thou art merciful, save Thou our souls.

Kontakion of the martyr, in Tone II:

Finding thy holy relics to be an ever-flowing well-spring * of healing for our afflicted souls and bodies, * O holy martyr, all of us, the faithful, cry out to thee in thanksgiving: * O most blessed Agnes, * thou innocent and unblemished ewe-lamb of the flock of Christ * the Chief Shepherd, ** pray thou unceasingly, that our souls be saved!