

THE 17th DAY OF THE MONTH OF FEBRUARY
COMMEMORATION OF THE HOLY GREAT MARTYR THEODORE THE RECRUIT
AT VESPERS

On “Lord, I have cried ...,” 6 Stichera of the great martyr; 3 in Tone II:

Spec. Mel.: “When from the Tree ...”:

As God our Benefactor, * Christ hath given thee to the world * as a rich gift, O Theodore, * having received the gift of thy precious blood * which was offered to Him, * shed for His sake with the zeal of piety: * Standing now before Him with pious boldness, * O martyr, save thou all ** who have recourse to thee.

Thou art a steadfast pillar * which repelleth the assaults of the adversaries, * an invincible champion for those * who praise thee, * a most speedy aid, a fervent advocate, * quick deliverance, general assistance, * a most powerful intercessor, a ready redeemer of all * who entreat thee with faith, ** O blessed Theodore.

Possessed of a torrent of sweetness * and the water of forgiveness, * and being a most true witness * to the right merciful Christ, * deliver me from the torrent of my sins, * and calm the troubled waters for me, * still the tempest of temptations * and guide me to the calm haven on high, ** O right blessed Theodore.

And 3 Stichera, in Tone IV:

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

Moved by zeal divine, * thy soul aflame with the love of Christ the Savior, * O glorious one, * thou didst reduce to ashes * the false goddess and her temple, * proclaiming the name of the true God and Master, * and having put to shame the arrogance of the tormentors, * thou hast been granted everlasting joy, ** O passion-bearer Theodore.

Having ascended, O Theodore, * to the summit of the knowledge of Christ, * thou didst pass beyond visible things, * seeking only Him; * and having found Him, thou didst love Him, * and for His sake didst suffer with a valiant soul. * Him do thou entreat, * that those who celebrate thy most glorious memory ** be delivered from corruption and misfortune.

Covered with God-given power * and the wounds of thy struggle, * O passion-bearer Theodore, * thou didst stand before Christ God, the King of all creation, * receiving crowns of honor from Him; * Him do thou beseech, * that those who celebrate faithfully * thy most glorious memory ** be delivered from corruption and misfortune.

Glory ..., in Tone VI:

The gift of sanctification and the richness of divine life hast thou revealed to the world, O Theodore. For Christ hath glorified thy memory, O wise one, whereupon we, the faithful, rejoicing together, hymn the struggle of thy sufferings.

Both now ..., Theotokion from the Triodion or Oktoechos; or in Tone VI:

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

Stavrotheotokion: **A** sword pierced through thy heart, * as Simeon foretold, O most pure Lady, * when thou didst behold Him * Who shone forth from thee * ineffably raised up upon the Cross * by the iniquitous ones, * as one condemned, * given vinegar and gall to drink, * His side pierced, His hands and feet nailed; * and, lamenting, thou didst exclaim, * crying out maternally: ** What is this new mystery, O my Child most sweet?

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

Having piously armed thyself with martyric courage, O struggler of Christ, and mystically allied thyself with His power, struggling to offer rational sacrifice unto God, and despising tortures and transitory fire, thou didst show the godlessness of idolatry and the threats of the tormentors to be empty. But, Oh! the gifts divine! Both in reality and in name, from every evil circumstance by thy prayers do thou save those who celebrate thy memory.

Both now ..., Theotokion; or this, in Tone VIII:

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

Stavrotheotokion: **T**he unblemished heifer, * beholding her Bullock * willingly nailed to the Tree, * cried out aloud, lamenting piteously: * “Woe is me, O my most beloved Child! * How hath the ungrateful assembly of the Jews rewarded Thee, * desiring to leave me childless * and bereft of Thee, ** my most beloved Child?”

Troparion of the great martyr, in Tone II:

Great are the achievements of faith! * The holy martyr Theodore rejoiced in the fountain of the flames * as though in the still waters of rest; * consumed in the fire, he was offered as a sacrifice to the Trinity. ** By his intercessions, O Christ God, save Thou our souls.

AT MATINS

Both canons from the Oktoechos, and 1 for the great martyr, the acrostic whereof is:
“Save those who call upon thee, O all-blessed one,” 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.

Having fought the good fight and finished the course, O martyr of Christ, thou didst keep the divine faith and obtain a crown of righteousness.

Having received from Christ glory which surpasseth nature, O passion-bearer, thou dost go about the whole earth, delivering all who have recourse unto thee with faith and reverence.

As thou art a member of the heavenly choir with the incorporeal powers, O glorious one, from misfortune and temptation do thou deliver those who call upon thee.

Theotokion: **O** thou who hast given birth ineffably to the Wisdom and Word of the Father, heal the grievous wounds of my soul and still 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.

The fire of torment did not frighten thee, O Theodore; wherefore, thou dost still the fire of temptation for those who have recourse to thee.

By thy praise deliver me from the grief that ever besetteth me, O martyr of Christ, smoothing all the roughness of life.

All my heart, thought and soul do I stretch forth to thee, O passion-bearer, seeking thine aid.

Theotokion: **Q**uell the constant turbulence of my thoughts, O Mother of God, and direct their movements toward thy Son.

Sessional Hymn, in Tone IV, Spec. Mel.: “Having been lifted up ...”:

Adorned with the comeliness of martyrdom, O martyr, crowned, thou dost stand rejoicing before the King of heaven; for thou wast raised aloft upon a cross for His sake steadfastly enduring the bite of the nails and iron claws, the lash of the knout, and the gouging of thine eyes. Wherefore, we honor thee with faith, O thou who art most great. *(Twice)*

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

He that sitteth upon the throne of the cherubim * and abideth in the bosom of the Father * doth sit in thy womb as upon a throne, O Lady; * for, being truly God incarnate, * He reigneth over all nations, * and with understanding we now chant to Him. * Him do thou also entreat, ** that thy servants be saved.

Stavrotheotokion: She who in the latter days * gave birth in the flesh unto Thee O Christ, * Who wast begotten of the beginningless Father, * upon seeing Thee hanging upon the Cross, cried aloud: * “Woe is me, O Jesus, most beloved Christ! * How is it that Thou Who art glorified as God by the angels * dost now consent to be crucified by iniquitous men O my Son? ** I hymn Thee, O Thou Long-suffering One!”

ODE IV

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

Thee do I set as my helmsman, O favored one of God; guide me with the sail of the Spirit and divine winds, O most glorious one.

From every threat do thou deliver those who bless thee with faith and honor thy divine memory, we pray thee, O all-blessed Theodore.

Neither life, nor death, nor things present, nor things to come, nor fire, nor wounds were able to separate thee from Christ, O divinely Wise one.

Theotokion: O Mother of God, who for us didst give birth unto Him Who shone forth eternally from the Father, yet became subject to time. Him do thou beseech, that He save those who praise thee!

ODE V

Irmos: Rising early we cry to Thee, O Lord; * save us, for Thou art our God, * and we know none other besides Thee.

As thou art the adornment of the martyrs, O martyr of Christ, be thou an invincible rampart and an aid for the faithful.

Delighting in that loftier union which is of blessings which surpass understanding, O Theodore, save those who honor thee.

Overcome by the love of the Creator, thou didst shed the attachments of life and wast well-pleasing unto God.

Theotokion: God the Word, to Whom thou hast given birth, O all-immaculate one, do thou earnestly entreat Him on behalf of us who praise thee.

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.

Being a most fervent champion of piety and a denouncer of the deception of idolatry, do thou destroy the images of demonic delusion and the passions of my soul.

O martyr Theodore, be thou my confirmation and an invincible rampart for me, replacing the weakness and corruption of my mind with strength, preserving it unharmed.

Thou didst reject corrupting and corrupted warfare, O all-blessed Theodore, yet didst wholly love the battle of life wherein thou wast shown to be a victor, O right wondrous one.

Theotokion: Splendor shone forth from the Zion on High, and robed in the flesh He had received from thee, O thou who knewest not wedlock, and ineffably united thereto, He hath enlightened the world.

Kontakion of the great martyr, in Tone VIII:

The faith of Christ didst thou carry as a shield within thy heart, * trampling underfoot the power of the enemy * O greatly-suffering martyr; as one unconquerable ** thou hast received a heavenly and eternal crown.

Ikos: With thanksgiving and faith we praise Thee Who art borne aloft upon a throne of light; for Thou, O Christ, hast given us a divine gift in the suffering of the valiant Theodore, in the life of the thrice-blessed one, for he is a champion of the truth who with pious thoughts desired Thee, O mighty conqueror of the deceiver, for he is invincible.

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.'

O divinely wise one, thee do I have as an intercessor for my life, an aid to my salvation and a protector who giveth confirmation unto those who cry: O God of our fathers, blessed art Thou!

As a wondrous and most sacred sacrifice thou didst bring thyself to the Lord, O all-blessed one, and though utterly consumed by the fire of thy torments, O glorious one, thou didst cry aloud: O God of our fathers, blessed art Thou!

Partaking of the living inspiration of the Spirit of God, O blessed one, thou dost drive away evil spirits, heal infirmities and criest aloud, rejoicing: O God of our fathers, blessed art Thou!

Theotokion: The Lord of all, incarnate, issued forth from thy womb, O Virgin. Wherefore, regarding thee in an Orthodox manner as the Theotokos, we cry out to thy Son: O God of our fathers, blessed art Thou!

ODE VIII

Irmos: In his wrath the Chaldean Tyrant made the furnace blaze, * with heat fanned sevenfold for the servants of God; * but when he perceived that they had been saved by a greater power * he cried aloud to the Creator and Redeemer; * 'ye children bless, ye priests praise, * ye people, supremely exalt Him throughout all ages'.

Surrounded by all manner of threefold waves, O most glorious one, and caught fast by the temptations of life, all we, the faithful, lead thee to the Master as a most speedy intercessor, a helper and champion, crying: Cease not to pray for those who praise thy most honorable memory!

Bound with the chains of my sins, O most noetically rich martyr, and fettered with the shackles of my transgressions, I flee to thy protection, begging forgiveness, O crowned one. But as thou hast wondrous boldness before the Master of all, O divinely wise one, entreat thou that those who praise Christ be saved throughout all ages.

Illumined with the splendor of martyrdom, O all-praised one, thou wast numbered among the angelic choirs. Ever rejoicing in spiritual fellowship with them, O martyr, with miracles of healing thou dost enlighten those who praise thee with love, chanting: O ye people, supremely exalt Christ throughout all ages!

Theotokion: **T**he Maker and Author of creation, as compassionate, shared flesh with mankind which He had received from thee, O Birthgiver of God who knewest not wedlock. Wherefore, we, the faithful, truly glorify thee as the Theotokos, ever singing and crying aloud: O ye people, supremely exalt Christ throughout all ages!

ODE IX

Irmos: **W**ith never ceasing praises we magnify thee, * the Mother of God Most High, * who art higher than the all-pure hosts, * and who beyond comprehension knew not wedlock, * yet hath truly given birth to God.

Having acquired thee, O great martyr, as a watchful guardian, we unceasingly bless thee as one who dispels the depravity of the enemy and grants peace to the Church, O passion-bearer.

The Master hath given thee power over the demons, and to heal sufferings of body and soul, O blessed one, praying to the Savior with most pious boldness; wherefore, we all bless thee.

As thou dost contemplate the radiance of the single threefold Sun, the One Godhead in Three, the Principle beyond all beginning, the Source of goodness, O passion-bearer, protect those who praise thee.

Theotokion: **R**escue me from captivity of mind, O all-immaculate Lady, bestowing upon me redemption; for the crucifixion of thy Son hath been the redemption, peace and salvation of all who praise thee.

Exapostilarion, in Tone III:

Spec. Mel.: “The heavens with stars ...”:

Tried like gold with fire and torture, thou wast most clearly revealed to be a worthy gift of the Most High God, O passion-bearer Theodore. Pray thou now on our behalf.

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

By thy mighty protection, O pure one, * preserve all of us, thy servants unharmed, * by the attacks of enemies; ** for thee alone do we have as our refuge in times of need.

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

O thrice-blessed Theodore, I honor thee as the namesake of divine gifts; for, appearing as an unwaning beacon of light divine, thou hast enlightened all creation with thy sufferings; and, shown to be stronger than the fire, thou didst extinguish the flame and didst crush the head of the lying serpent. Wherefore, Christ, touching thee amid thy sufferings, crowned thy divine head. O great martyr and sufferer, as thou hast boldness before God, do thou earnestly pray for our souls.

Both now ..., Theotokion in Tone II; or this:

Spec. Mel.: “When from the Tree ...”:

Stavrotheotokion: **U**pon beholding the ripe Cluster, * Whom thou didst bear in thy womb without being tilled, * hanging upon the Tree, O pure one, * thou didst exclaim lamenting and crying aloud: * ‘I beseech Thee O my Child, * pour forth that sweetness * by which the drunkenness of the passions is taken away, * for my sake, O Benefactor, ** who didst bear Thee in Thy tender compassion!

AT LITURGY

On the Beatitudes, 8 Troparia: 4 from the Oktoechos, and 4 from ODE III of the canon for the great martyr.

The fire of torment did not frighten thee, O Theodore; wherefore, thou dost still the fire of temptation for those who have recourse to thee.

By thy praise deliver me from the grief that ever besetteth me, O martyr of Christ, smoothing all the roughness of life.

All my heart, thought and soul do I stretch forth to thee, O passion-bearer, seeking thine aid.

Theotokion: Quell the constant turbulence of my thoughts, O Mother of God, and direct their movements toward thy Son.

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Kontakion of the great martyr, in Tone VIII:

The faith of Christ didst thou carry as a shield within thy heart, * trampling underfoot the power of the enemy * O greatly-suffering martyr; as one unconquerable ** thou hast received a heavenly and eternal crown.

Prokeimenon, in Tone VII: The righteous man shall be glad in the Lord, * and shall hope in Him.

Verse: Harken, O God, unto my prayer, when I make supplication unto Thee.

THE SECOND EPISTLE TO TIMOTHY (2:1-10)

Timothy my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also. Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier. And if a man also strive for masteries, yet is he not crowned, except he strive lawfully. The husbandman that laboreth must be first partaker of the fruits. Consider what I say; and the Lord give thee understanding in all things. Remember that Jesus Christ of the seed of David was raised from the dead, according to my gospel: wherein I suffer trouble, as an evildoer, even unto bonds; but the word of God is not bound. Therefore I endure all things for the elect's sake, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory.

Alleluia, in Tone IV: The righteous man shall flourish like a palm tree, and like a cedar in Lebanon shall he be multiplied.

Verse: They that are planted in the house of the Lord, in the courts of our God they shall blossom forth.

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO ST. JOHN (15:17-16:2)

The Lord said unto His disciples: these things I command you, that ye love one another. If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own; but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you. Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also. But all these things will they do unto you for my name's sake, because they know not him that sent me. If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin; but now they have no cloak for their sin. He that hateth me hateth my Father also. If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not had sin: but now have they both seen and hated both me and my Father. But this cometh to pass, that the word might be fulfilled that is written in their law, They hated me without a cause. But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me: and ye also shall bear witness, because ye have been with me from the beginning.

Communion Verse: In everlasting remembrance shall the righteous be; he shall not be afraid of evil tidings.