

THE 6th DAY OF THE MONTH OF MARCH
THE COMMEMORATION OF THE FORTY-TWO MARTYRS OF AMORIUM
AT VESPERS:

On “Lord, I have cried ...,” 3 Stichera of the martyrs, in Tone IV:
Spec. Mel.: “Called from on high ...”:

Having appeared in the latter times, * O right victorious martyrs, * as unwaning stars * in the honored firmament of the Church, * ye illumined all the earth * with the splendor of your suffering * destroying the darkness of deception, O all-praised ones; * and now ye have passed over to the eternal effulgence. * Wherefore, with faith we celebrate * your radiant and sacred suffering, ** enriched by your intercession.

O martyrs of Christ, * ye were bound after being summarily arrested, * and were all incarcerated in prison for a long time, * being divine keepers of the Faith; * whereupon, the infamous beast, became enraged, * and slew with the sword * you who declined to submit * to his evil commands. * And now, ye have joyously inherited the heavens, * having joined yourselves to the kingdom, ** O ye most glorious forty-two.

Let us all praise aloud * Constantine, Basoes and Callistus, * Theodore and Theophilus, * and the rest of the divine company of athletes; * for, joyfully sacrificing themselves, * they chose to die for the Life of all. * And now they rest in the city of the living God, * and ask that we may find * forgiveness of sins * on the day of judgment ** and complete deliverance.

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

As thou art an intercessor for our whole race, * O all-immaculate Birthgiver of God, * from every assault of the enemy * save those who piously bow down before thy birthgiving; * for thee have we all now acquired as our help, * our refuge and confirmation, * and mediatrix before Christ our Lord and Master. * Him do thou beseech, we pray thee, * that He grant peace unto the world, * and forgiveness of sins ** unto those who have recourse to thy protection.

Or this Stavrotheotokion: “Lament not for Me, O Mother, * beholding Me thy Son and God hanging upon the Tree, * Who hath suspended the earth upon the waters unsupported, * and hath fashioned all creation; * for I shall arise and be glorified, * and shall crush the kingdoms of Hades with strength; * destroying its power * and delivering those in bondage from its wickedness, * for I am compassionate; * and I shall bring them to My Father, ** in that I am the Lover of mankind.”

But if it be Saturday or Sunday, the following Doxasticon is chanted;

The composition of Methodius: Glory ..., in Tone II:

Today the Church, arrayed in a new vesture as in purple and fine linen, woven from the blood of the new passion-bearers, doth mystically celebrate: for, nurtured in piety, she hath offered them up as an unblemished sacrifice, acceptable and well-pleasing to Thee, O Christ. Wherefore, Thou Who didst reveal them to be victors over the most iniquitous, hast crowned and glorified them. By their supplications send down upon us great mercy.

On the Aposticha: Glory ..., in Tone VI, the composition of the Sykeote:

Come, ye who love the martyrs, and, spiritually celebrating the most sacred memory of the divinely crowned regiment of newly revealed martyrs, the unblemished immolation sacrificed fervently for Christ, the holy army of the elect, forty-two strong, and let us cry out to them: Break ye the savagery of the godless Hagarenes, and by your supplications deliver the people of Orthodox mind from every evil circumstance.

Troparion of the martyrs, in Tone IV:

In their sufferings, Thy martyrs O Lord, * received imperishable crowns from Thee, our God; * for, possessed of Thy might, * they set at naught the tyrants and crushed the feeble audacity of the demons. ** By their supplications save Thou our souls.

AT MATINS:

The Canon of the martyrs, 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.

At the entreaties of Thy passion-bearers, O Christ, guide me to the haven of salvation, who have fallen into the abyss of sins but have recourse unto the abyss of Thy compassion.

Resplendent in the beauty of the virtues, wearing the robe dyed purple in the blood of the martyrs, holding the Cross as a scepter, thou reignest with the Lord, O Theodore.

In hymns, O ye faithful, let us praise Theodore, Callistus and Basoes, and with them Theophilus and the valiant Constantine and the rest.

Theotokion: **T**he soul-corrupting deceiver and enemy vomited forth his venom into the ears of Eve; but thou, O Mother of God, having given birth unto Christ, hast healed the harm he wrought.

ODE III

Irmos: **O** Lord, Creator of the vault of Heaven * and Builder of the Church, * do Thou strengthen me in Thy love, O Summit of desire, * O Support of the faithful, * O only Lover of mankind.

As one truly enlightened by the radiance of the worship of God and adorned with the beauty of godly deeds, O blessed and glorious one, thou hast broken the dark impiety of the ungodliness of the barbarians.

The streams of blood which gushed in rivers from the most pure bodies of Thy passion-bearers, O compassionate Lord, won for them Thy kingdom and a torrent of delight.

The most valiant athletes, having now shone forth like true stars of the firmament of the Holy Church, have illumined the whole universe with the rays of their sufferings.

Theotokion: **H**e Who alone is the Lover of mankind, having taken flesh in thy womb and become a man, for the sake of what is best, hath saved mankind from the gates of death, O most pure Mother of God who alone art all-hymned.

Kontakion of the martyrs, in Tone IV:

Spec. Mel.: “Having been lifted up ...”:

Having suffered on earth for the sake of Christ * and been revealed to be pious crown-bearers, * ye have received the reward of dwelling in joy in the heavens; * for, having set at naught every scheme of the enemy, * by the pain and blood of your wounds * ye ever bestow forgiveness of sins from on high ** upon those who praise you.

Sessional Hymn, in Tone VIII:

Spec. Mel.: "Of the Wisdom ...":

Ye were led, bound, by the enemy and imprisoned in a dungeon; yet, preserved by your faith, ye remained unharmed. And having been released from your bodies by the sword, O holy ones, ye were revealed to be bound by divine desire. Wherefore, ye shone forth in the world like beacons, illumining all with the grace of the Spirit, O blessed passion-bearers. Entreat Christ God, that He grant forgiveness of sins unto those who with love celebrate your 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: **U**pon 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: **T**hou, O Lord, art my strength and Thou art my power, * Thou art my God and Thou art my joy, * Thou Who, while never leaving the bosom of Thy Father, * hast visited our poverty. * Therefore with the Prophet Habbakuk I cry unto Thee, * 'Glory to Thy power, O Lover of mankind!'

Adorned with the beauties of thy struggles, invested with a robe empurpled with thy martyr's blood, thou wast adorned with the diadem of victory. Wherefore, thou hast joined chorus with the martyrs before the face of the Lord, O all-blessed Theodore.

Thy feet fettered with irons in prison, O invincible Callistus, thou didst pray to walk the straight path without faltering; and, parted from thy body by the sword, thou wast straightway bound by the love of the Creator.

Having contended lawfully and been beheaded for Christ, the Head of all, the divine army, the regiment mustered by God, the forty-two spiritual athletes from many places and cities, have now shone forth.

Theotokion: **T**hou art the boast of the faithful, O unwedded one; thou art the intercessor, thou art the refuge, the bulwark and haven of Christians; for thou dost bring our entreaties to thy Son, O all-immaculate one, saving from tribulations those who with faith and love glorify thee as the pure Theotokos.

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.

Foreseeing crowns and lasting glory, O Theodore, thou didst cry out with boldness to those who were suffering with thee: “In no wise be ye daunted by death, in but a little while ye will receive gladness and ineffable life!”

Wounded with the love of thy Master and consumed by the fire of desire for Him, O blessed one, thou didst drain the cup of martyrdom, which in no wise is polluted by secondary defilements, O ever-memorable athlete Callistus.

With steadfast resolve thou wast the first to go forth to combat, and wast a lesson in courage for those who suffered with thee, O Theodore. With them thou hast inherited the everlasting resting places and everlasting delight.

Theotokion: **B**y thy supplications grant forgiveness of sins unto thy servants, delivering them from temptations, tribulations and sorrows, and conquest by blaspheming heretics, O all-immaculate Virgin Theotokos.

ODE VI

Irmos: **C**leanse 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.

Watered with the streams of thy blood as by a river, thou didst dry up the torrents of turbid error; giving drink to the hearts of all the faithful, O right wondrous Theodore.

Leding Thy martyrs up from the depths of suffering, Thou didst establish them upon the rock of endurance when they had left the paths of the enemy and the ways of the perverse, O Lover of mankind.

Having piously cleansed yourselves of the defilement of ungodliness, O martyrs, ye made glad the city of God with your blood which flowed beautifully like a river from Eden.

Theotokion: **L**ike an animate ark thou didst contain the Bestower of the law, and like a holy temple thou hast received the Holy One Who became a man, unto the benefit of all mankind, O pure one.

Kontakion of the martyrs, in Tone II:

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

With wreaths of praise, as is meet, * let us all crown the newly-revealed stars of faith * who fervently suffered for Christ * and who pray to Him on our behalf, ** in that they are pillars and ramparts of the Christian realm.

Ikos: **With** all your soul, loathing and abhorring the ungodly religion of the Moslems and the deceit of the cruel demon, and encompassing the divine seal of Christ whole in your hearts, ye gave no support to those who despise Him; moreover, like lambs diligently slaughtered for Him, ye shone forth like the sun after your repose, attaining immortal glory, as pillars and ramparts of the Christian realm.

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.’**

As one who lawfully contended, thou didst receive crowns of righteousness from the one Master, and now delighting in the divine beauty, O Theodore, thou dost cry aloud: O God of our fathers, blessed art Thou!

Led voluntarily to the slaughter, like a lamb to the sacrifice, O martyr, thou wast laid upon the exalted altar of sacrifice, chanting when thou wast slaughtered: O God of our fathers, blessed art Thou!

Aflame in his heart with the fire of Thy love, O Word, Thy martyr Callistus burned up the thorns of impiety, chanting unto Thee: O God of our fathers, blessed art Thou!

Thinking to persuade the divinely wise ones to renounce Christ, the all-mindless Ishmael was put to shame; for as they died, they cried out piously: O God of our fathers, blessed art Thou!

Theotokion: **Thou** didst reveal Thyself incarnate from the Virgin’s womb for our salvation. Wherefore, knowing Thy Mother to be the Theotokos, we cry out in thanksgiving: 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’.

The choir of spiritual athletes received thee as another of its number, shining with the beauties of martyrdom; the air was sanctified, and a multitude of angels assembled at thy return, O martyr, and the ground where thy body lieth hath been hallowed thereby, O thrice-blessed Theodore of steadfast mind.

Being already heir of the Lord, led of thine own will to slaughter, O Callistus, thou didst not allow thyself to be bound with bonds when thy head was cut off. Wherefore, having ascended as a crown-bearer, thou dost hold chorus with the hosts on high throughout all ages.

Let Callistus be blessed, and let Theodore be praised, and the wondrous Basoes and the rest of the choir of the martyrs, joining chorus with the choirs of angels and chanting unceasingly: Ye children, bless; ye priests, hymn; ye people, supremely exalt God throughout all ages!

Cast into the river, the glorious martyrs were led, after the retribution of the sword, to the right calm haven which is rest in Christ; and having dried up the waters of deception with torrents of blood, they have taught all to chant: Ye children, bless; ye priests, hymn; ye people, supremely exalt God throughout all ages!

Theotokion: **O** all-pure Birthgiver of God, cleanse thou the wounds of my soul and the stripes of my sins, washing them with springs which gush forth from the side of thine Offspring and purifying them with streams therefrom; for to thee do I cry, to thee do I flee, and thee, who art full of the grace of God, do I invoke.

ODE IX

Irmos: **H**eaven was stricken with awe, * and the ends of the earth were filled with amazement, * for God hath appeared in the flesh, * and thy womb was rendered more spacious than the heavens. * Wherefore, the ranks of men and of angels * magnify thee as the Theotokos.

Emulating the valor of the passion-bearers of old, thou didst truly receive both their title and joy, O Theodore. Be mindful of us who piously keep thy holy memory, in that thou hast boldness before the Master, that we may be saved.

He Who was baptized in the streams of the Jordan, joined in the river those who were baptized in their own blood and who emulated His death, joining to their bodies their cast-away heads, and guiding them to the safe harbor.

O divine forty-two martyrs, who now dwell in the joy of the heavens, make entreaty, we pray, on behalf of us who celebrate your most holy and radiant memory on earth, that we be delivered from every evil circumstance.

Theotokion: **W**ithout seed, and separate from the passions of the flesh, O Virgin, didst thou conceive the Word of God Who hath created all things, and given birth to Him without corruption and maternal pangs. Wherefore, confessing thee with tongue and heart to be the Theotokos, we magnify thee.

Exapostilarion: Spec. Mel.: “Hearken, ye women ...”:

How can one who loveth the martyrs ever be satiated with the divine memory of the martyrs, as Basil the Great said in the past? Before us now lieth the task of hymning the forty-two godly martyrs who suffered steadfastly for Christ the Savior.

Theotokion: **O** Virgin who hast given birth unto the hypostatic Wisdom, the transcendent Word, the Physician of bodies and souls: heal the grievous sores and wounds of my soul, and calm the pain of my heart.

AT LITURGY

Troparion of the martyrs, in Tone IV:

In their sufferings, Thy martyrs O Lord, * received imperishable crowns from Thee, our God; * for, possessed of Thy might, * they set at naught the tyrants and crushed the feeble audacity of the demons. ** By their supplications save Thou our souls.

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