

THE 7th DAY OF THE MONTH OF MAY
COMMEMORATION OF THE APPEARANCE OF THE SIGN OF THE PRECIOUS
CROSS IN THE SKY ABOVE JERUSALEM
FORMED BY STARS STRETCHING FROM GOLGOTHA TO THE MOUNT OF OLIVES, AT THE
THIRD HOUR OF THE DAY, DURING THE REIGN OF EMPEROR CONSTANTIUS.
COMMEMORATION OF THE HOLY MARTYR ACACIUS
AT VESPERS

On “Lord, I have cried ...,” 6 Stichera of the precious Cross, in Tone IV:
Spec. Mel.: “Called from on high ...”:

Today the godly multitude of the faithful rejoiceth, * for the heavenly Cross appeareth * even to the ends of the world, * illumining the firmament with unapproachable light, * making the air brilliant * and adorning the face of the earth. * Wherefore the Church of Christ hymneth it with divine songs, * worshiping it with veneration, * for the divine and all-wondrous Cross * doth preserve it from on high. * By its power are we strengthened; * wherefore, let us approach the Master, saying: ** Grant peace to the world and enlighten our souls!

The all-precious and glorious Cross * hath been seen today * as a most honorable ladder * leading up from earth to the heavens * those who venerate it with steadfast faith. * All nations rejoice, * hastening fervently to baptism, * and the Church adorneth itself in a godly manner like unto a bride; * for that which the Jews sought to hide * doth shine forth from on high in the air ** saving those who approach it with faith.

From on high there hath appeared * the rod of divine power, * the Cross sent to us in Sion, * wholly illumined by grace and boundless light. * The heavenly Cross of our crucified God * hath shone forth above glorious Golgotha, * proclaiming to all that salvation hath come to the world through His sufferings. * And bowing down before it * we chant unceasingly and ask with faith * that He grant peace to the world ** and that He save our souls.

Glory ..., in Tone VI:

The heavens have proclaimed Thy glory, O Lord, the awesome sight of Thy Cross, and all the earth hath bowed down with fear. And we, rendering up glorification, cry out to Thee with thanksgiving: In that Thou as God art dispassionate, Thou hast deigned to suffer for us in the flesh of Thine own will, do Thou save the people whom Thou hast acquired by Thine own blood.

Both now ..., from the Pentecostarion.

Troparion of the precious Cross, in Tone VIII:

The image of Thy Cross hath now shone forth more brightly than the sun, * and Thou, O Savior, hast extended it from the holy mountain to the place of the skull, * thereby revealing Thy might, and strengthening all faithful Orthodox Christians. * O Christ God, preserve them ever in peace, ** and by the supplications of the Theotokos do Thou also save us.

AT COMPLINE

Canon of the holy martyr Acacius, the composition of Joseph, 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.**

Adorned with the beauty of guilelessness, O glorious one, with boldness thou didst stand before the Cause and Well-spring of good things. By thine entreaties render Him now reconciled with us.

Acacius, the true advocate, hath cried out with lofty proclamations, summoning us to the banquet. Wherefore, with zeal and gladness let us hasten, O ye who love the martyrs.

Unable to bear the sight of iniquity being exalted, O glorious one, thou didst manifestly preach the divinity of Christ before the tribunal of the tyrants, O Acacius, showing forth guilelessness of which thou art the namesake.

Theotokion: **I**n thee, O most pure and joyous one, were the ways of God manifestly seen, for He preserved thee a virgin, and even after giving birth He preserved thee who bore Him incorrupt.

ODE III

Irmos: **Not 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.**

Adorned with divine understanding, wisdom and discourse, thou didst destroy the foolish arguments of the sages; wherefore, we honor thy glorious memory.

Resplendent with courageous and steadfast mind, thou didst vanquish the subversions and hordes of the ungodly ones, destroying the foundations of falsehood.

Strengthened by the power of God Almighty, thou didst cleanse away the putrid affliction of ungodliness; wherefore, we proclaim thee victorious, O martyr.

Thou didst reject vile and deceptive drink and filth, O martyr Acacius, illumining thy mind with the enlightenment and radiant effulgence of piety.

Theotokion: **H**aving conceived Life, O Birthgiver of God, thou didst abolish the dominion of death and the condemnation of the ancient curse; wherefore, we honor thy most pure birthgiving.

ODE IV

Irmos: **He who sitteth in glory upon the throne of the Godhead, * Jesus the true God, * is come in a swift cloud * and with His sinless hands he hath saved those who cry: * Glory to Thy power, O Christ.**

Through faith, remaining like a tower, un-toppled by either storms of torture or assaults of wounding, and unshaken by the winds of blows, thou didst cry aloud: Glory to Thy power, O Lord!

Propelled by the breath of the Holy Spirit upon thy sails O blessed one, thou didst come to rest in the calm haven, unafraid of the onslaught of the waves and winds, O most honored martyr of Christ.

Entreating the invincible might of God, thou didst prevail over all the power of the adversaries; and, rejoicing, didst take away all their weaponry, in that thou wast victorious, O right glorious one.

Instructed by divine revelation, and having reached the end of thy course, thou didst become a citizen of the city of the King, O most blessed one, fending off every attack of the barbarians.

Theotokion: O only Virgin Mother of God who didst conceive Life everlasting and grant deliverance to all the faithful, raise me up who have been slain and am held fast by the inescapable bonds of sin.

ODE V

Irmos: The wicked will not behold Thy glory, O Christ, * but we who rise early to hymn Thee shall behold Thee, * the Only-Begotten effulgence of Thy Father's divinity, * O Lover of mankind.

Thou didst carry thy cross upon thy shoulders without stumbling, following Christ Who led thee to life incorruptible and brought thee into the never-waning light, O most noetically rich martyr.

The bitter wounds of thy body and the severing of thy members have won for thee never-ending nourishment, the crown of martyrdom and the joy of the angels. O all-blessed one.

O ever most memorable one, thou wast shown to be an innocent youth, chaste, meek, and mighty against the carnal passions, fearsome to the demons and unapproachable to the infidels.

Theotokion: Lifting up our voices together to hymn thy birthgiving, we call thee the all-pure Theotokos who for us gave birth in the flesh to the true God, the Only-begotten of the Father.

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.

They who were starving for the gifts of God condemned thee to starvation, O martyr who dost ever partake of heavenly gifts, enjoying endless nourishment.

Having put to shame the ungodly arrogance of the tyrants, thou didst drown the serpent, the author of evil, in the depths of thy blood, soaring aloft to the heavens as one victorious, O Acacius.

Emulating the death of the Master by thy death, O martyr, thou dost reign eternally with Him, delighting in the sight of Him and His joy.

Theotokion: **T**hou hast destroyed the condemnation of death and the curse of the law, O pure one, having given birth to Christ, the Destroyer of death, Who hath poured forth blessing upon all.

Sessional Hymn, in Tone IV:

Spec. Mel.: “Go thou quickly before ...”:

Having drowned the enemy in the outpourings of thy blood, O martyr Acacius, thou didst put to shame all the legions of the tyrants; and having attained unto the immaterial choirs of the angels thou hast been granted a never-fading wreath of incorruption. Wherefore, by thine entreaties save us from misfortunes.

ODE VII

Irmos: **T**hou didst save the children of Abraham in the fire * and slay the Chaldeans, * who unjustly entrapped the righteous ones. * O God of our fathers, * supremely praised, and blessed art Thou O Lord.

Beheaded by the sword, thou didst take wing to the noetic Head of the Church, O most noetically rich martyr, adorned with the crown of victory, and crying: O God of our fathers, supremely praised, and blessed art Thou O Lord!

For thine endurance thou hast been numbered among the martyrs of Christ as a martyr most true, having vanquished the ungodly tyrants, O Acacius, crying out: O God of our fathers, supremely praised, and blessed art Thou O Lord!

Furnishing thy mind with wings to fly aloft to the divine hope preserved for the faithful, thou didst enter the tyrants’ tribunal, chanting in the Spirit: O God of our fathers, blessed art Thou!

Theotokion: **T**he ancient sayings and images of the prophets manifestly prefigured thy pure birthgiving, O Mother of God; and hymning it, we cry: O God of our fathers, blessed art Thou!

ODE VIII

Irmos: **H**aving 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.

O most wise one, thou hast truly made thine abode in the royal city on high, which the Lord founded and prepared for those saints who place their hope in Him and cry out with faith: Bless the Lord, all ye works of the Lord!

With love thou didst endure the infliction of wounds, O excellent one, and by thy starvation thou didst serve them as everlasting sweetness and sustenance, and abiding joy, unto those who cry aloud: Bless the Lord, all ye works of the Lord!

Easily and quickly didst thou engage thine adversaries in battle, O most noetically rich martyr, having Christ as thine invincible Ally, Helper and Aid contending with thee; to Him do we cry aloud: Bless the Lord, all ye works of the Lord!

O all-famed and blessed Acacius, having been so named, thou didst have a life which was innocent and blameless, adorned with the blood of suffering and made beautiful by the virtues of martyrdom; wherefore thou didst cry aloud: Bless the Lord, all ye works of the Lord!

Theotokion: **T**hou alone hast shown forth a mystery truly strange under the heavens, O pure one, for thou hast given birth to God, invisible and beginningless, unbounded by anything, and unapproachable. To Him do we cry aloud: Bless the Lord, all ye works of the Lord!

ODE IX

Irmos: **E**ve dwelt under the curse of sin * because of the infirmity of disobedience; * but thou, O Virgin Theotokos, * hast through the Offspring of thy pregnancy * blossomed forth blessing upon the world. * Wherefore, we all magnify thee.

Possessed of the splendor of the victory of thy martyric opposition, O blessed one, thou dost stand before the throne of the Master, joining chorus with the angelic armies, and asking salvation for all who bless thy memory.

Radiantly bright were thy courageous victories over the enemy, O most noetically rich martyr, and the Judge of thy contest hath given thee many more honors and the fullness of divine effulgence. Wherefore, we all call thee blessed.

Thou wast close to Christ, O most valiant one, for thou didst endure suffering and affliction; wherefore, He hath manifestly deemed thee worthy of vision and divine revelation, which thou didst attain to on earth, seeing things from afar.

Theotokion: **O** all-immaculate one, thy Fruit hath appeared more comely in beauty than all others, adorning creation with the radiance of the beauty of virtue. Him do we earnestly beseech, that He save those who unceasingly magnify thee.

Stichera of the martyr, in Tone IV:

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

Wielding anger against the serpent alone, * and girding thyself with the insuperable * and invincible power of Christ, * O divinely wise Acacius, * thou didst cast down to the ground * the author of evils, * overthrowing his vaunted power; * and put to shame ** his active servants.

Having learned from on high * estrangement from evil * and the assimilation of that which is good, * thou didst become indeed * that for which thou wast named of old, O most wise Acacius; * for that for which thou wast named * thou didst later become. * For from afar providence ineffably and invisibly set before thee ** the manifestation of great things.

The greatest of cities * which reigneth over all * possesseth thine honored temple
* as a royal diadem, * setting thee forth as a pillar for those * who have acquired thee,
as a wise citizen, * a pleasing guardian, a valiant warrior * and as one who doth turn
away ** the sudden incursions of enemies and adversaries.

Theotokion, in the same melody:

I bless thee, O most pure one, * who hast rescued mankind * from the depths of
evil and despair; * I hymn thee, O Bride of God, * the ever-blessed one, * and glorify
thine inexpressible birthgiving, O pure one, * for thou hast given birth * to the Savior
of the world, freeing mankind ** from the curse of our ancestors, O Virgin.

Stavrotheotokion: Beholdings 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 condescen-
sion, O Master!”

AT MATINS

Canon from the Pentecostarion, with 6 Troparia, including the Irmos; and that of the precious Cross, with 6 Troparia.

Canon of the precious Cross, in Tone IV:

ODE I

Irmos: **The chariots of pharaoh and his power * were cast into the sea by Him Who is mighty in battles: * Let us chant a new hymn, * for He hath been glorified!**

Thou hast revealed on earth the radiance of the Cross, and having thereby cast down the devil, Thou hast saved the human race, O Lord. Wherefore, we hymn Thy glory.

At the behest of the Father, the Redeemer destroyed disobedience and enmity of mind by the Cross, wherefore we chant unto Him a new hymn, for gloriously hath He been glorified.

As thou didst plant the tree of life in Eden, O Christ, so hast Thou shone Thy Cross forth in radiance upon the holy mountain as a scepter of victory.

Theotokion: **T**hee, whom the choir of the prophets foresaw as the gateway of heaven and the unburnt bush, O pure Virgin Mother, do we acknowledge as the one who gave birth to God.

ODE III

Irmos: **The bow of the mighty hath waxed feeble * and the weak have girded themselves with strength: * therefore is my heart established * in the Lord.**

As with a shield we are protected by the sign of the invincible Cross, O Master, and the abominable one, unable to endure it, doth vanish with the demonic multitudes.

Thy Cross hath made glad all who confess Thee to be God crucified; and it shineth forth as with most radiant and unapproachable beauty.

Theotokion: **R**ejoice, O Mother who knew not wedlock, who contained God the Word in thy womb and gave birth to the Incarnate One, Who is both God and man.

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

O Christ God, Thou hast shown the divine image of the Cross in the sky, as a guide to those on earth who acknowledge Thee, for having revealed today, the never-waning splendor, and light of Thy countenance which hath been signed upon us, all of us the faithful now possess it as a weapon of peace, and an invincible trophy.
(Twice)

Glory ..., Both now ..., the foregoing is repeated.

ODE IV

Irmos: **I have heard report of Thee, O Lord, * for Thou hast appeared upon the earth; * and I have glorified Thy power.**

Mystically before, but visibly today, Thou hast shone forth the image of Thine all-precious Cross, O Christ.

Shining forth the image of the Cross, O compassionate Savior, Thou hast set at naught the audacity of the iniquitous slayers of God.

Thou hast confirmed the Christian Faith, forming the Cross for us in immaterial light, O Christ.

Theotokion: **O** pure Mother, blessed Sovereign Lady, by thy supplications render God, Whom thou didst bear, merciful to us.

ODE V

Irmos: **O** Thou Who hast caused the light to shine, * who hast made bright the dawn and revealed the day; * glory be to Thee, glory be to Thee, * O Jesus Thou Son of God.

When Adam was disobedient in Eden, the deadly tree brought death into the world; but the life-bearing Cross, which hath now appeared, hath illumined the ends of the world.

The Father, Who by His Word created the primordial light, doth now trace a radiant Cross, bearing witness to the divinity of His crucified Son.

Through faith, in the Father we behold Thee, the Son, the Light above the flood-chambers of the firmament in never-waning light, O Christ, and Thy Spirit hath shone forth upon our souls.

Theotokion: **T**hou hast not known the pangs of motherhood, O Maiden, having conceived God and supra-naturally given birth to Him in the flesh; wherefore as is meet, we all glorify thee.

ODE VI

Irmos: **I**n mine affliction I cried unto the Lord, * the God of my salvation, * and He hearkened unto me.

Let the eyes of the iniquitous be closed, for they are unable to look upon the radiant beauty of the Cross.

Let those who acknowledge that God was crucified in the flesh on the Tree delight in the radiance of the most pure Cross.

Theotokion: **O** Virgin who knewest not wedlock, who hast given birth to God, do thou never cease to entreat thy Son on our behalf.

Kontakion of the precious Cross, in Tone IV:

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

Opening the heavens which were shut, * the most pure Cross hath shed most radiant heavenly beams upon the earth; * wherefore, receiving the effulgence of its activity, * we are guided to the never-waning Light; * and amid battles * we have it as a weapon of peace, ** an invincible trophy.

Ikos: Behold, the awesome sign of the great God which Constantine the Great beheld! And in which we have heard Jesus speak, He Who spake of old to the sovereign emperor of faithful Christians: “Until the Second Coming this sign shall preserve the inheritance of thy city, and it shall remain until the end of time, and shall be the first of all cities. Let the Cross be its rampart, the weapon of peace, the invincible trophy!”

ODE VII

Irmos: Thou didst save the children of Abraham in the fire * and slay the Chaldeans, * who unjustly entrapped the righteous ones. * O God of our fathers, * supremely praised, and blessed art Thou O Lord.

The material sun hid its rays when it beheld the Sun Who was lifted up upon the Cross at noonday. O God of our fathers, supremely praised, and blessed art Thou O Lord!

He Who of old conversed with the God-seer in the fire and darkness is glorified as God today in the radiant brilliance of the Cross which hath appeared. O God of our fathers, supremely praised, and blessed art Thou O Lord!

O equally everlasting Light, shining forth from the Light in the Light, Thou hast shown forth the victory of Thy Cross with Thy most pure light. O God of our fathers, supremely praised, and blessed art Thou O Lord!

Theotokion: We piously hymn forever as Mother of our God her who ineffably and supra-naturally received in her womb the immutable God Who came to mankind in His tender compassion.

ODE VIII

Irmos: Christ God, Who appeared in the form of an Angel * in the fiery furnace * to those who sang therein, * ye children, hymn; ye people, bless * and supremely exalt Him throughout all ages!

Him Who was seen on the throne of glory and was nailed to the tree of the Cross in His fleshly nature; ye children hymn, ye people, bless and supremely exalt Him throughout all ages!

Him Who formed a cross with most pure light from Golgotha to the holy mountain; ye children hymn, ye people, bless and supremely exalt Him throughout all ages!

Glorifying One of the Trinity Who illumineth the whole world with the radiance of the Cross; ye children hymn, ye people, bless and supremely exalt Him throughout all ages!

Theotokion: Her who ineffably and without seed conceived and gave birth to Christ God, the joy of the whole world; ye children hymn, ye people, bless and supremely exalt Him throughout all ages!

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.

O Thou Who in the fire and darkness of old didst set forth the laws for the disobedient, Thou hast now traced the image of Thy Cross, more resplendent than the stars, for Thy faithful people, which as is meet we magnify.

Creation lamented in darkness the audacity of those who crucified Thee; and now Thy life-bearing Cross hath shone forth with a most gloriously radiant light showing forth the hidden beauty of the Church.

Having set their hope on Thee, Thy noetically rich people set before thee as an advocate the Cross, Thine awesome protection. Yet in a goodly appropriate time grant us deliverance, O Word of God.

Theotokion: **S**hed light upon us O Virgin, for thou hast given birth to the unapproachable Light, and with gladness, joy and divine understanding, fill us who in a divinely wise manner magnify thee in purity of heart.

Exapostilarion of the precious Cross:

Spec. Mel.: “To the disciples ...”;

The Cross is the guardian of the whole world! The Cross is the beauty of the Church! The Cross is the dominion of kings! The Cross is the confirmation of the faithful! The Cross is the glory of the angels and the wounding of the demons!

AT LITURGY

Troparion of the precious Cross, in Tone VIII:

The image of Thy Cross hath now shone forth more brightly than the sun, * and Thou, O Savior, hast extended it from the holy mountain to the place of the skull, * thereby revealing Thy might, and strengthening all faithful Orthodox Christians. * O Christ God, preserve them ever in peace, ** and by the supplications of the Theotokos do Thou also save us.

Kontakion of the precious Cross, in Tone IV:

Opening the heavens which were shut, * the most pure Cross hath shed most radiant heavenly beams upon the earth; * wherefore, receiving the effulgence of its activity, * we are guided to the never-waning Light; * and amid battles * we have it as a weapon of peace, ** an invincible trophy.

Prokeimenon, in Tone VII: Exalt ye the Lord our God, * and worship the footstool of His feet, for He is holy.

Verse: The Lord is King, let the peoples rage. He sitteth on the cherubim, let the earth be shaken

EPISTLE TO THE CORINTHIANS, §125 (1 COR. 1: 18.:24)

Brethren: The preaching of the cross is to them that perish, foolishness; but unto us which are saved, it is the power of God. For it is written: I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent. Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom: but we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks foolishness; but unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God.

Alleluia, in Tone I: Remember Thy congregation which Thou hast purchased from the beginning.

Verse: God is our King before the ages, He hath wrought salvation in the midst of the earth.

GOSPEL ACCORDING TO ST. JOHN, §60 (JN. 19: 6-11, 13-20,25-28,30-35)

At that time, the high priests and elders took council against Jesus to put Him to death. And they delivered Him to Pilate saying: “Away with Him! away with Him!

Crucify Him!” Pilate said unto them: “Take ye Him, and crucify Him: for I find no fault in Him. The Jews answered him: “We have a law, and by our law He ought to die, because He made Himself the Son of God.” When Pilate therefore heard that saying, he was the more afraid; and went again into the judgment hall, and said unto Jesus: “Whence art Thou?” But Jesus gave him no answer. Then said Pilate unto Him: “Speakest Thou not unto me? Knowest Thou not that I have power to crucify Thee, and have power to release Thee?” Jesus answered: “Thou couldst have no power at all against Me, except it were given thee from above.” When Pilate therefore heard that saying, he brought Jesus forth, and sat down in the judgment seat in a place that is called the Pavement, but in the Hebrew, Gabbatha. And it was the preparation of the Passover, and about the sixth hour: and he said unto the Jews: “Behold your King!” But they cried out: “Away with Him! Away with Him! Crucify Him!” Pilate said unto them: “Shall I crucify your King?” The chief priests answered: “We have no king but Caesar.” Then delivered he Him therefore unto them to be crucified. And they took Jesus, and led Him away. And He bearing His Cross went forth into a place called the place of the skull, which is called in Hebrew Golgotha: where they crucified Him, and two others with Him, on either side, and Jesus in the midst. And Pilate wrote a title, and put it on the Cross. And the writing was: “Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews.” This title then read many of the Jews; for the place where Jesus was crucified was nigh to the city: and it was written in Hebrew, and Greek, and Latin. Now there stood by the Cross of Jesus His Mother, and His Mother’s sister, Mary the wife of Cleo ph as, and Mary Magdalene. When Jesus therefore saw His Mother, and the disciple standing by, whom He loved, He said unto His Mother: “Woman, behold thy son!” Then said He to the disciple: “Behold thy Mother!” And from that hour that disciple took her unto his own home. After this, Jesus knowing that all things were now accomplished, bowed His head, and gave up the ghost. The Jews therefore, because it was the preparation, that the bodies should not remain upon the cross on the Sabbath day, (for that Sabbath day was a high day,) besought Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away. Then came the soldiers, and broke the legs of the first, and of the other who was crucified with him. But when they came to Jesus, and saw that He was dead already, they broke not His legs: but one of the soldiers with a spear pierced His side, and forthwith came there out blood and water. And he that saw it bore record, and his record is true.

Communion Verse: The light of Thy countenance hath been signed upon us.