

THE 4th DAY OF THE MONTH OF AUGUST
COMMEMORATION OF THE SEVEN HOLY YOUTHS OF EPHESUS
AT VESPERS

On “Lord, I have cried ...,” 3 Stichera of the holy martyrs, in Tone I:

Spec. Mel.: “Joy of the ranks of heaven ...”:

Come, let us ever hymn the memory * of the seven honored youths, * the luminous seven-branched candle-stand, * and let us cry out to Christ * Who hath crowned them: ** By their supplications, O Lord our Redeemer, bring peace to our life.

Having died according to nature, * the seven godly youths * rose up straightway as though from sleep, * in a manner truly transcending nature. * For they had slept in the cave as ones dead ** for three hundred and seventy-two years.

Let us now honor Martinian and John, * Anthony and Dionysius, * with the godly Iamblicus and Maximilian, * for they pray on our behalf; * and with them let us piously praise ** the wise Exacustodian.

But if Alleluia is to be chanted at Matins instead of “God is the Lord ...,” we sing first the following Stichera of the Theotokos, in the same melody:

Most glorious art thou among generations of generations, * O Theotokos Mary, Virgin Maiden and Mother, * thou intercessor for the world, * who hast given birth in the flesh to the Son of the beginningless Father, * Who is also truly equally everlasting with the Spirit. ** Him do thou beseech, that He save us.

Held fast by hopeless transgression, O pure Virgin, * we cry out to thee in thanksgiving, * having thee as our sole intercessor: * Cleanse us, O most holy Bride of God, * for thou art the refuge of the world ** and the help of our race.

Tempest-tossed by the deep of sins, O Birthgiver of God, * fleeing to the calm harbor of thy pure supplication * I cry unto thee: * Save me, * stretching forth thy mighty right hand ** unto thy servant, O most immaculate one!

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

With the staff of thine aid, O pure Theotokos, * drive away bestial passions from my wretched soul, * and guide me * peacefully unto life, * and number me among the holy flock ** of thy chosen sheep.

Stavrotheotokion: **S**tanding at the foot of the Cross of thy Son and God, * and looking upon His long-suffering, O pure Mother, * weeping, thou didst say: “Woe is me, O my sweetest Child! * How is it that Thou sufferest these things unjustly, * O Word of God, ** that Thou mayest save mankind?”

Troparion of the holy 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.

Or this Troparion, in the same tone:

Great is the wonder of faith! * The seven holy youths abode in the cave as in a royal chamber, * and died without falling into corruption; * and after much time they arose as from sleep, * as an assurance of the resurrection of all mankind. * Through their supplications, ** O Christ God, have mercy on us.

AT MATINS

Both canons from the Oktoechos, and that of the saints, with 4 Troparia, in Tone II:

ODE I

Irmos: Come, O ye people, * let us sing a song to Christ our God, * Who divided the sea, * and made a way for the nation * which He had brought up out of the bondage of Egypt; * for He hath been glorified.

Come ye, and with faith let us honor the youths who have shone forth seven in number; for they shed greater light upon the Church of Christ than the seven lamps did upon the temple of the law.

While alive of old, the seven youths were clothed in Christ's mortality of flesh, and, most gloriously receiving death as a dream, they confirm the doctrine of the resurrection.

Jericho fell at the seventh sounding of the trumpets, and the uprising of falsehood hath now fallen down to Hades and been destroyed through the sevenfold proclamation of the spiritual athletes' faith.

Theotokion: Thou makest birthgiving new again, O thou who knewest not wedlock; for the everlasting Word Who is co-beginningless with the Father and the divine Spirit became incarnate from thee, without forsaking His union with Them.

ODE III

Irmos: O Lord, who didst slay sin upon the tree, * firmly establish us in Thee, * and in the hearts of us who hymn Thee * plant the fear of Thee.

Ye were shown to be seven fixed stars shining with faith, O spiritual athletes; and ye have guided to the haven of salvation those who are sinking in the abyss of falsehood.

Standing undaunted before the tribunal, O holy ones, as the Maccabees once did, having enrolled in the army of Christ, ye resigned from the army of corruptible life.

As is meet, O holy youths, ye showed yourselves to be a sacrifice of prayer pleasing unto God, firmly dispelling the foul stench of falsehood with a savor of sweet fragrance.

Theotokion: The bush on Sinai prefigured thy most glorious birthgiving, O Virgin; for thou wast not consumed by the fire of the Godhead when thou didst receive it into thy womb with faith.

Sessional Hymn of the holy martyrs, in Tone IV:

Spec. Mel.: "Go thou quickly before ...":

As pillars of the Church of Christ, ye firmly overturned the ramparts of unbelief, O ye seven martyred brethren. Wherefore, having driven off the wrath of the Greeks before your death, and the tempest of heresy again after your death, holding fast to your faith in the resurrection, pray ye that we be made steadfast in the Faith.

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

O all-immaculate Virgin * who hast given birth to the transcendent God: * do thou unceasingly entreat Him with the incorporeal ones, * that He grant forgiveness of transgressions * and correction of life before the end, * to us who, as is meet, hymn thee with faith and love, ** O thou who alone art all-hymned.

Stavrotheotokion: **W**hen Thy most pure Mother beheld Thee uplifted upon the Cross, O Word of God she exclaimed, lamenting maternally: “What is this new and strange wonder, O my Son? How is it that Thou, the Life of all, dost taste of death desiring to bring life to the dead, in that Thou art compassionate?”

ODE IV

Irmos: **I** have heard report O Lord, * of Thy glorious dispensation, * and I have glorified, Thine unapproachable power, * O Lover of mankind.

We hymn the seven honored youths, the sacred company manifestly honorable in their number.

The youths of Ephesus revealed the ungodly emperor to be foolish, whose mind was filled with the vainglory of falsehood.

O holy youths, through your faith ye were truly shown to be all-immaculate offerings and sacrifices for the Lord.

Theotokion: **O** pure and ever blessed one, cease not to pray for us, that we be delivered from all tribulation.

ODE V

Irmos: **O** Lord, Bestower of light and Creator of the ages: * guide us in the light of Thy commandments, * for we know none other God than Thee.

Dying first a common death on earth without feeling it, O youths of Ephesus, ye straightway arose in a manner transcending nature, manifestly assuring all of the resurrection of the dead.

Consecrating yourselves to God through the confession of the true Faith, as lawful spiritual athletes of the Lord ye were delivered from prison and wounds, O wise ones, and have received crowns.

Having firmly vanquished the delusion of idolatry and the teachings of impious heresies, O glorious martyrs, ever preserve those who confess the resurrection of the dead.

Theotokion: **T**he Transcendent One, Who, without commingling, is perfect man and perfect God and was born of the holy Mother, existeth in two natures but one hypostasis.

ODE VI

Irmos: **W**hirled about in the abyss of sin, * I appeal to the unfathomable abyss of Thy compassion: * Raise me up from corruption, O God.

Let the seven holy youths, equal in number to the pillars of the wisdom of God, be praised, for with their words they crushed the ungodly command of the tyrants as with stones.

Preserved by the law of divine providence, ye received ready burial in the cave, O saints, wherein ye were revealed as both dead and incorrupt.

Ye arose as witnesses to incorruption, driving away a corrupt and moribund religion, and pray to God on behalf of those who set their hope on the resurrection.

Theotokion: **N**ow hath women's nature rejoiced! Now hath grief come to an end and joy blossomed forth! For Mary hath given birth to Joy: Christ, our Savior and God.

Kontakion of the holy martyrs, in Tone IV:

Spec. Mel.: "Having been lifted up ...":

Spurning the corrupt things of this world * and accepting gifts of incorruption, * the seven died yet remained untouched by corruption. * Wherefore, having arisen after many years, * they buried the unbelief of the wicked. * O ye faithful, lauding them today with praises, ** let us hymn Christ!

ODE VII

Irmos: **T**he wise children did not adore the golden idol, * but went themselves into the flame and defied the pagan gods. * They prayed in the midst of the flame, * and an Angel bedewed them saying: * 'The prayer of your lips hath been heard'.

The youths have been shown to be pure and chosen receptacles of God. Through them the doctrines of heresy are driven from the Church and Orthodoxy shineth forth, for He is the resurrection of every soul and all flesh, in that He hath been born.

Truly the holy youths were revealed to be steadfast in their suffering immediately before death; and after death they were shown to be alive through divine glory, in themselves assuring the pious of the true resurrection.

"The resurrection will be for both souls and material bodies; for as it is not possible to come into the world without a body, so can the body not exist without a soul!" the all-praised ones said; "The soul is either glorified or put to shame."

Theotokion: **O** Mary who hast given birth to God, the Savior of all, thou art the setting aright of the despairing, the restoration of sinners, the hope of the hopeless, and the help of those who chant: Blessed is the God of our fathers!

ODE VIII

Irmos: **O**f old in the furnace of the holy children, * Thou didst prefigure Thy Mother, O Lord, * in the image of those who entered therein, * and rescued therefrom remained unconsumed. * Her who hath been revealed today do we hymn * unto the ends of the earth, * supremely exalting her throughout all ages.

O divine youths, having severed the root of ungodly bitterness and the delusion of heresy which grew malignantly, ye bring forth the fruit of faith; and, buried alive for your faith, ye rose from the dead.

O ye seven holy youths and spiritual athletes, foremost among the Ephesians, ye have been shown to be the divine confirmation of the Church of Christ and the kingdom of the faithful, which we supremely exalt throughout all ages.

Revealing themselves to be steadfast on the earth and equal in number to the stars, and having made an unwavering transit of the divine faith, the youths cried aloud: We supremely exalt Thee, O Christ, throughout the ages!

Theotokion: **N**o one hath perished, O pure Mother of God, who, in an Orthodox manner, placeth his hope and faith in thee, but only they who out of envy refuse to venerate the image of thy countenance.

ODE IX

Irmos: **T**hee do we magnify, O blessed and all-pure Theotokos, * who through thy virginal womb ineffably brought forth * God incarnate, * the Luminary Who shone forth before the sun * and hath come to us in the flesh.

The resurrection of the saints hath now been revealed as a wealth of wonders and a revelation of the mysteries of God; for though they once died a natural death, they have now risen devoid of corruption, arrayed as though they had never died.

A treasury of strength and a firm bulwark of faith hath the cave of the children been shown to be, proclaiming the coming resurrection of all; for it hath resurrected not Lazarus four days dead, but those dead for centuries.

O ye seven youths, pillars of the wisdom of God, having suffered lawfully, ye have been invested with the crown of martyrdom; and by your Orthodox teaching ye have revealed the resurrection, as champions of the Church who pray for those who hymn you.

Theotokion: **T**hou didst preserve thy soul and body undefiled, O pure one, and Christ the King desiring thy beauty, revealed thee to be the Mother of His incarnation, O most glorious Mary, ever bestowing salvation upon me.

Exapostilarion of the holy martyrs:

Spec. Mel.: “Hearken, ye women ...”:

Having armed themselves with the sword of thy precious Cross, O Word, the spiritual athletes firmly vanquished the hosts of the adversary; and they reign with Thee, O my Christ, Thou King of all.

Theotokion:

Saved for thy sake, O Lady, we truly confess thee to be the Theotokos; for thou didst ineffably give birth to God, Who hath destroyed death by the Cross and drawn multitudes to Him; and with them we praise thee, O Virgin.

AT LITURGY

Troparion of the holy 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.

Or this Troparion, in Tone IV:

Great is the wonder of faith! * The seven holy youths abode in the cave as in a royal chamber, * and died without falling into corruption; * and after much time they arose as from sleep, * as an assurance of the resurrection of all mankind. * Through their supplications, ** O Christ God, have mercy on us.

Kontakion of the holy martyrs, in Tone IV:

Spurning the corrupt things of this world * and accepting gifts of incorruption, * the seven died yet remained untouched by corruption. * Wherefore, having arisen after many years, * they buried the unbelief of the wicked. * O ye faithful, lauding them today with praises, ** let us hymn Christ!