

THE 19th DAY OF THE MONTH OF DECEMBER
COMMEMORATION OF THE HOLY MARTYR BONIFACE
AT VESPERS

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

Spec. Mel.: “Thou hast given a sign ...”:

Thou didst desire the goodly name given to martyrs, * O much suffering passion-bearer, * enduring pangs * with bold resolve, O all-blessed One, * thou didst expect to be translated * to the rest which is devoid of pain, * seeking to receive heavenly honors, * a dwelling-place in paradise, ** never-waning light and everlasting life.

Thou didst endure the most savage of pangs: * the tearing away of thy finger-nails, * cruel piercing, * molten lead * and the severing of thy head, * and didst join the choir of spiritual athletes, rejoicing, O much suffering one. * Wherefore, we celebrate thine annual memorial, * O spiritual athlete Boniface, ** converser with the angels.

Sending thee, her manservant, before her, O Boniface, * Aglais acquired a divine master * who tamed the passions, * attained mastery over tyrants, * cast down the enemy, * and was arrayed in a crown of victory. * Wherefore, having constructed for thee * a holy temple all-adorned, ** she enshrined thee therein, praising thee in sanctity.

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

O Lady, rain down upon me * the depths of thy mercy, * and as thou art merciful, O Maiden, * give drink to my heart, which hath been consumed by the burning heat of the passions; * cause drops of compunction * to pour forth continually, I pray, * whereby I may be deemed worthy of thy consolation, O pure one, * which those who shed tears in sincerity ** shall receive.

O Lady, take pity on me * who am shaken by the assaults of the demons * and have been cast into the pit of destruction; * and establish me upon the rock of the virtues. * Destroying the counsels of the enemy, * grant that I may follow * the precepts of thy Son and our God, * that I may receive remission ** on the Day of Judgment.

I have fallen among vile and murderous thieves, * O all-immaculate one, * and by their assaults, O Maiden, * I have been stripped of the incorrupt garments of heavenly splendor, * and have been pitilessly wounded by them * and cast down in a place of affliction, * barely alive. * Yet go thou before me, extend thy hand ** and raise me up, I pray.

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

I lie upon the bed of despondency, O all-immaculate one, * and pass my life in slothfulness, * and I fear the time of mine end, O Theotokos. * Let not the all-evil serpent * mercilessly rend my lowly soul asunder * like a lion. * Wherefore, going before me in thy goodness * before mine end, ** raise me up to repentance.

Stavrotheotokion: Beholding Christ crucified, * Who is the Lover of mankind, * His side pierced by the spear, * the most pure one wept, crying aloud: * “What is this, O my Son? * How have the thankless people rewarded Thee * for the good things Thou didst do for them? * And dost Thou hasten to leave me childless, O most Beloved? ** I marvel, O Compassionate One, at Thy voluntary crucifixion!”

AT MATINS

Both canons from the Oktoechos; and that of the martyr, with 4 Troparia, the acrostic whereof is: “With faith I hymn thee, O most radiant martyr”, the composition of Joseph, in Tone IV:

ODE I

Irmos: **O** Thou who wast born of the Virgin, * drown I implore Thee, in the depth of dispassion * the triune nature of my soul, * as Thou didst the mighty strongholds of the warriors, * that in the mortality of my flesh * as on a timbrel * I may chant a hymn of victory.

Emulating the feats of the valiant spiritual athletes with zealous intent, thou didst suffer mightily; and didst slay the serpent with thy life-bearing sufferings, O spiritual athlete Boniface, converser with the angels.

Beholding the delusion of the enemy cruelly poured forth on the earth, O valiant passion-bearer, and, having enkindled thy soul with divine desire, thou didst enter the arena with fearless resolve, O thrice-blessed one.

Illumined with divine wisdom, O blessed one, thou didst make foolish the unwise foe, proclaiming Christ, Who made Himself like us in the coarseness of the flesh, whereby He desired to become manifest, O much-suffering martyr Boniface.

Theotokion: **A**ll of us, the faithful, hymn the pure Mary with oneness of mind: the mountain of God, which Daniel foresaw, the noetic tabernacle, the sanctuary of glory, the table which held the divine Bread.

ODE III

Irmos: **L**ikened to a barren woman * the Church from among the nations hath given birth, * and the assembly abundant in children, hath grown weak. * Let us cry out to our wondrous God: * Holy art Thou, O Lord!

As thou didst desire the freedom on high, O glorious one, thou wast delivered from the yoke of slavery, O glorious one, having emulating the honored sufferings of Him Who in His tender compassion became a servant.

Shown to be above carnal understandings by divine favor, O martyr Boniface, rejoicing, thou didst suddenly endure every assault of evils.

Thou didst deny thyself, and didst go forth to struggles and contests against the enemy, armed with the Cross as a weapon; and having become a victor, thou hast been glorified, O martyr Boniface.

Theotokion: **T**he transcendent God poured Himself forth into thy womb without leaving the bosom of the Father, O all-immaculate one, and became thy Son, saving mankind.

Sessional Hymn of the holy martyr, in Tone IV:

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

Sent to the company of martyrs, thou didst become a true martyr, suffering most mightily for Christ, O all-praised one; and thou didst give thyself to her who sent thee forth with faith, O blessed Boniface, earnestly pray that we all may receive perfect forgiveness.

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

As one who loveth sin, I beseech thee who hast given birth to the sinless God Who taketh away the sins of the world: O most pure one, have compassion on my greatly sinful soul and cleanse me of my many sins; for thou art the cleansing, salvation and aid of the faithful.

Stavrotheotokion: **S**he 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: **F**or the sake of love for Thine image, * O compassionate One, * Thou didst ascend the cross * and the nations melted away. * For Thou, O Lover of mankind, * art my strength and my praise.

Blessing the endurance of those who suffer, O most noetically rich and divinely wise martyr, thou didst liken thyself to them, emulating their honored sufferings.

Going forth with faith to the divine company of the martyrs, O blessed one, thou didst give thyself to her who desired a right wondrous burden, O divinely wise one.

Purified like gold in the crucible of wounds, O martyr, thou wast revealed to be most pure, bearing the image of the sufferings of the Creator.

Theotokion: **R**ealizing that thy virginity was sealed in thy birthgiving, O Maiden, with faith thou didst magnify the Word Who was ineffably born from thy womb.

ODE V

Irmos: **D**o Thou O Lord send down upon us * Thine enlightenment, and free us * from the gloom of transgression, O Good One, * granting us Thy peace.

Like a radiant star thou didst rise above the western lands and didst set in the endurance of sufferings, O martyr; and thou didst straightway shine upon the lands of the West, illumining the ends thereof.

As a martyr thou didst suffer the rending away of thy fingernails, and beatings with sharp reeds, O martyr, thereby breaking the sting of the evil one by faith and grace.

Thou didst weaken the machinations of the enemy directed against thee, O divinely wise one, for, constantly directing thy gaze toward God, thou didst endure the wounding of thy flesh as though one incorporeal.

Theotokion: **I** cry to thee: Wash my clean of all defilement, O pure Virgin who hast given birth on earth to God, our true Savior.

ODE VI

Irmos: **P**refiguring Thy three-day burial * Prophet Jonah praying in the belly of the sea-monster cried aloud: * Deliver me from corruption * O Jesus Thou King of hosts.

Beaten, thou didst inflict fleshly wounds upon the ungodly who were incurably afflicted with ignorance, and hast been revealed to be a physician of the sick, O spiritual athlete Boniface.

Exalted unto God by thy contest of struggles, O blessed passion-bearer, thou didst cut down the invisible foe and become an ally of the down-trodden.

Dragged across the ground, O spiritual athlete, like a precious stone thou didst cast down the foundation of falsehood, and with faith hast made yet more steadfast the hearts of the faithful.

Theotokion: **O**f old, the bush, which burned yet was not consumed, prefigured thee, O all-immaculate Virgin; for, like it, thou wast not consumed when thou didst surrender thy flesh to God.

Kontakion of the holy martyr, in Tone IV:

Spec. Mel.: “Thou hast appeared ...”:

Of thine own will thou didst bring thyself * as an unblemished sacred offering to Him * Who was born of the Virgin for thy sake, * O most wise Boniface, ** holy crown-bearer.

ODE VII

Irmos: **O**f old the Children of Abraham in Babylon * trampled down the flame of the furnace, * crying aloud with hymns: * O God of our Fathers, blessed art Thou.

Refusing to bend thy knee before graven images, thou wast truly cast into a furnace for an even greater trial; and bedewed therein; thou dost give thanks to Christ throughout the ages.

Seeking to destroy the might of thy confession, the deluded one pitilessly caused molten lead to be poured into thy bowels; yet was he manifestly put to shame.

In earnestly enduring the severing of thy precious head, thou didst cut off the most wily head of the deceitful enemy with the sword of thy courage, O divinely wise martyr of Christ.

Theotokion: **L**et me hymn thee with fitting melodies, O Maiden. By thy supplications deliver me from sufferings, misfortunes and tribulations, and from evil men who seek to oppress me.

ODE VIII

Irmos: **O** almighty Redeemer of all, * having descended and bedewed the children * in the midst of the flame, * Thou didst teach them to sing: * All ye works bless and hymn the Lord.

Devising profitable salvation for thee who sought the relics of the right-victorious martyrs, O Boniface, Christ strengthened thee, that thou thyself might become a martyr through faith.

Thou wast given as a blessed treasure to thy blessed mistress, O blessed one; and having been enriched thereby, she chanted with gladness of heart: All ye works bless and hymn the Lord!

Having erected a most sacred temple with zeal, the glorious woman enshrined thee therein, who art the temple of the divine Trinity, O Boniface, passion-bearer of Christ.

Having died for love of the Creator Who slayeth the corrupting passions, by thy supplication clearly bestow life upon those who cry: All ye works bless and hymn the Lord!

Theotokion: **T**he supremely divine One, descending upon thee, the pure one, became incarnate, as He alone knew how O Virgin, delivering mankind who chanteth unto thee: All ye works bless and hymn 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.

Beholding thee as a sacred burden, the ever-memorable handmaid rejoiced, crying: "I sent thee forth, O blessed one, but I accept thee as my true master, delivering me from slavery to evils by thy right acceptable entreaties!"

Thou hast blossomed like a lily in the noetic valleys of the martyrs, O Boniface; like a palm tree hast thou grown tall; like a cedar thou hast been recognized as sweetly fragrant; and thou hast been shown to be like a choice cypress, perfuming our souls.

Today the day of thy commemoration hath shone forth like the sun with the radiance of divine gifts, O passion-bearer, illumining the souls of those who hymn thee and dispelling the gloom of the passions, O divinely wise and all-blessed martyr.

Thou didst shine forth from the West like the sun, and didst attain unto a city of the East, where, having suffered and set in death, thou didst hasten to life and reach splendid Rome, which thou dost now protect by thy prayers.

Theotokion: **W**ith thy light illumine me who am stuck fast in the darkness of sin, O Theotokos; and grant that I may walk in the daylight of the divine precepts, O Bride of God, that I may hymn thee, the all-hymned one.