

**STICHERA AND SESSIONAL HYMNS
SUNG ON FRIDAY EVENING AND SATURDAY
MORNING IN THE EIGHT TONES FROM THE
OKTOECHOS**

TONE ONE

VESPERS ON FRIDAY EVENING

On “Lord, I have cried ...,” after the Stichera of the day from the Triodion, we chant the following Stichera of the holy martyrs:

Verse: Out of the depths have I cried unto Thee, O Lord; * O Lord, hear my voice.

By the prayers, O Lord, of all the saints and of the Theotokos, grant us Thy peace and have mercy upon us, for Thou alone art compassionate.

Verse: Let Thine ears be attentive * to the voice of my supplication.

The confession of faith that ye made at the tribunal, O ye saints, set at naught the strength of the demons, and set men free from error. As ye were beheaded ye cried aloud: “May the sacrifice of our lives be acceptable in Thy sight, O Lord; for, desiring Thee the Lover of mankind, we have spurned this quickly passing life.”

Verse: If Thou shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, O Lord, who shall stand? * For with Thee there is forgiveness.

Wise was the trade that ye made, O saints! Giving your blood, and inheriting heaven as your reward; Having suffered tribulation for a time, ye now rejoice eternally. Truly wisely have ye traded: forsaking things corruptible, ye have received things incorruptible; and rejoicing with the choirs of angels ye now hymn eternally the praises of the consubstantial Trinity.

Verse: For Thy name’s sake have I patiently waited for Thee, O Lord; my soul hath patiently waited for Thy word, * my soul hath hoped in the Lord.

O all-praised martyrs, the earth did not hide you, but heaven hath received you; the gates of Paradise were opened to you, and entering within ye have partaken of the tree of life. Pray ye to Christ that He grant peace and great mercy to our souls.

**Then 4 Stichera from the Menaion (repeating the first)
For the Reposed, a composition of St. John the Damascene:**

Glory ...,

For the reposed: **W**hat sweet-pleasure in this life remaineth untouched by grief? What glory endureth unchanged upon the earth? All is feebler than a shadow, more deceptive than a dream; for death in a single moment taketh away all these things. But in the light of Thy countenance, O Christ, and in the enjoyment of Thy beauty, grant rest to those whom Thou hast chosen, for Thou lovest mankind.

Both now ...,

Theotokion: **L**et us hymn the whole world's glory, * who sprang forth from mankind and who gave birth to the Master, * the Portal of heaven, Mary the Virgin, * the hymn of the Bodiless Powers and adornment of the faithful; * for she hath been revealed as the Heaven and Temple of the Godhead. * By destroying the middle wall, she hath brought forth peace, * and opened wide the Kingdom. * Therefore, holding fast to her as a firm confirmation of the faith, * we have as our champion the Lord born from her. * Take courage therefore, take courage, O ye people of God; ** for as the Invincible one he shall conquer our adversaries.

If the Liturgy of the Presanctified gifts is not served, the following is chanted at the Aposticha:

AT FRIDAY VESPERS APOSTICHA

O all-praised martyrs, the earth did not hide you, but heaven hath received you; the gates of Paradise were opened to you, and entering within ye have partaken of the tree of life. Pray ye to Christ that He grant peace and great mercy to our souls.

Verse: **Blessed are they whom Thou hast chosen * and taken to Thyself, O Lord.**

For the reposed: **W**hat sweet-pleasure in this life remaineth untouched by grief? What glory endureth unchanged upon the earth? All is feebler than a shadow, more deceptive than a dream; for death in a single moment taketh away all these things. But in the light of Thy countenance, O Christ, and in the enjoyment of Thy beauty, grant rest to those whom Thou hast chosen, for Thou lovest mankind.

Verse: **Their memorial * is from generation to generation.**

For the reposed: **T**here is none free from sin, save Thou, O immortal One. Wherefore, by Thy loving-kindness, in that Thou art a compassionate God, grant unto Thy servants a dwelling-place in the Light, with the choirs of Thine angels, and overlooking their transgressions, grant them forgiveness.

Glory ..., Both now ...,

Truly wondrous beyond understanding * are the mighty works of thy birthgiving O Bride of God, * which all the prophets proclaimed, * and thy conception and birth giving are most glorious, * O all-hymned one, * whereby thine Offspring hath incomprehensibly and ineffably saved the world, ** in that He is full of loving-kindness.

AT MATINS ON SATURDAY MORNING

After the first chanting of the Psalter, the Sessional Hymns of the Martyrs:

As valiant warriors, believing with oneness of mind, ye were undaunted by the threats of the tyrants, O holy ones. Eagerly coming to Christ, and taking up the precious Cross, ye finished the race and received victory from heaven. Glory be to Him Who strengthened you! Glory be to Him Who crowned you! Glory be to Him Who through you worketh healings for all!

Verse: Wondrous is God in His saints, * the God of Israel.

Accept in supplication, O Lord and Lover of mankind, the sufferings that the saints endured for Thee; and, we beseech Thee, heal all our suffering.

Verse: In the Saints that are in the earth * hath the Lord been wondrous.

Let us all pray to the martyrs of Christ, for they intercede for our salvation. Let us all draw near to them with love, for they pour forth the grace of healing, and as guardians of the faith they drive away the hosts of demons.

Glory ...,

For the reposed: Abolishing the dominion of death, O Christ, Thou didst pour forth incorruption upon mortals; for those who believe on Thee do not die, but abide continually in Thee. Wherefore, grant rest to the souls of Thy servants, O Lord, and number them among Thy saints, granting them forgiveness and resurrection by the prayers of the Theotokos.

Both now ...,

Theotokion: When Gabriel announced to thee, “Rejoice!”, O Virgin, * the Master of all became incarnate within thee, the holy tabernacle, * at his cry, as the righteous David said. Thou wast shown to be more spacious than the heavens, * having borne thy Creator. * Glory be to Him Who made His abode within thee! * Glory be to Him Who came forth from thee! ** Glory be to Him Who hath set us free by thy birthgiving.

ON THE PRAISES

Verse: Praise Him for His mighty acts, * praise Him according to the multitude of His greatness.

To the Martyrs: Come, all ye peoples, and with hymns and spiritual odes let us honour the passion-bearers of Christ, the luminaries of the world and preachers of the faith, the ever-flowing fountain from whence poureth forth healing upon the faithful. By their prayers, O Christ our God, grant peace to Thy world, and to our souls great mercy.

Verse: Praise Him with the sound of trumpet, * praise Him with the psaltery and harp.

These are the warriors of the mighty King, who opposed the edicts of the tyrants and bravely scorned all tortures. Trampling every delusion underfoot, they have been crowned as is meet: and they entreat Thee O Savior that peace be granted to Thy world, and great mercy upon our souls.

Verse: Praise Him with timbrel and dance, * praise him with strings and flute.

O ye most lauded martyrs, neither tribulation nor oppression, nor hunger, neither scourging, nor the fury of wild beasts nor the sword, nor the threat of fire, could separate you from God. But suffering out of love for Him, as though in others' bodies, ye forgot your own nature and spurned death. Wherefore as is meet, ye received the reward of your pangs, inheriting the heavenly Kingdom. Pray ye on behalf of our souls.

Verse: Praise Him with tuneful cymbals, praise Him with cymbals of jubilation. * Let every breath praise the Lord.

Rejoice in the Lord, O ye martyrs, for ye have fought the good fight. Ye resisted emperors and vanquished tyrants; ye feared neither fire nor the sword, nor the wild beasts that devoured your bodies. But, sending up hymnody with the angels to Christ, ye received crowns from heaven. Pray ye that peace be granted to the world, and great mercy to our souls.

Glory ...,

For the reposed: In very deed O my Savior, Thou hast revealed Thyself to be the resurrection of all; for by Thy word Thou didst raise Lazarus from the dead, O Word. And when the dead arose from the graves, and the gates of Hades were shattered, Thou didst reveal the death of man, to be but sleep. O Thou Who came to save, and not judge, Thy creature: grant rest in Thy loving compassion to those whom Thou hast chosen.

Both now ...,

Theotokion: Rejoice, O holy Virgin Theotokos * who art one of us, * thou pure vessel of all the world, * inextinguishable lamp, * dwelling-place of the Boundless One, * indestructible temple! * Rejoice, thou from whom the Lamb of God was born, ** who taketh away the sins of all the world.

AT SATURDAY MATINS APOSTICHA:

A composition by Theophanes:

We entreat Thee, O Savior: Grant Thy sweet fellowship unto those who have fallen asleep, and by Thy loving-kindness cause them to dwell with Thy saints in the habitations of the righteous and the abodes of heaven, overlooking their iniquities and granting them rest.

Verse: Blessed are they whom Thou hast chosen * and taken to Thyself, O Lord.

Transcending things visible, O Savior, are Thy promises, which eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, and which have never entered the heart of man. We beseech Thee, O Master: Grant that those who have passed over to Thee may receive Thy sweet fellowship; and life everlasting.

Verse: Their souls * shall dwell among good things.

Rejoicing in Thy Cross and setting their hope thereon, Thy servants have passed over to Thee, O Thou Lover of mankind. Grant them now deliverance from their transgressions, by Thy Cross, and the Blood which Thou didst shed for the life of the world, forgiving them their offenses in Thy kindheartedness, and illumining them with the light of Thy countenance.

Verse: Their memorial * is from generation to generation.

There is none free from sin, save Thou, O immortal One. Wherefore, by Thy loving-kindness, in that Thou art a compassionate God, grant unto Thy servants a dwelling-place in the Light, with the choirs of Thine angels, and overlooking their transgressions, grant them forgiveness.

Glory ..., Both now ...,

Theotokion: Pray to Christ Thy Child, O Virgin Mother, * that He may grant to Thy servants forgiveness of sins, * who with a proper faith in the dogmas of the Church * proclaim thee to be the Theotokos; * and may He deem them worthy ** of the radiance and glory of the saints in His Kingdom.