

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

TONE SIX

AT 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.

Thy martyrs, O Lord, denied Thee not, nor did they forsake Thy commandments; by their intercessions have mercy upon us.

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

O martyred passion-bearers, citizens of heaven, who suffered on the earth, ye endured many torments. By their prayers and intercessions, O Lord, preserve us all.

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

Those who suffered martyrdom for Thee, O Christ, endured a multitude of torments, and have received perfect crowns in the heavens, may they ever intercede on behalf of our souls.

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.

Thy Cross O Lord, was the invincible weapon of the martyrs. They beheld impending death before them; but, foreseeing the life that is to come, they became strengthened with hope in Thee. By their intercessions have mercy on us.

Then four Stichera from the Menaion (repeating the first)

Glory ..., a composition of St. John the Damascene:

For the reposed: **T**hy command was to me my beginning and foundation. For desiring to fashion me into a living creature from natures visible and invisible: Thou didst form my body from the earth, and given me a soul by Thy divine and quickening breath. Wherefore, O Christ, grant rest to Thy servants in the land of the living, in the habitations of the righteous.

Both now ...,

Theotokion: Who doth not call thee blessed, O most holy Virgin? * Who will not hymn thy most pure birthgiving? * For the only-begotten Son Who shone forth timelessly from the Father, * came forth, ineffably incarnate, from thee, the pure one; * and being God by nature, He becometh man for our sake, * not divided into two Hypostases, but known in two natures without commingling. ** Him do thou beseech, O pure and most blessed one, that our souls find mercy!

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

AT FRIDAY VESPERS APOSTICHA

To the Martyrs: Those who suffered martyrdom for Thee, O Christ, endured a multitude of torments, and have received perfect crowns in the heavens, may they ever intercede on behalf of our souls.

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

To the Martyrs: Thy Cross O Lord, was the invincible weapon of the martyrs. They beheld impending death before them; but, foreseeing the life that is to come, they became strengthened with hope in Thee. By their intercessions have mercy on us.

Verse. Their souls * shall dwell among good things.

For the reposed: Thy command was to me my beginning and foundation. For desiring to fashion me into a living creature from natures visible and invisible: Thou didst form my body from the earth, and given me a soul by Thy divine and quickening breath. Wherefore, O Christ, grant rest to Thy servants in the land of the living, in the habitations of the righteous.

Glory ..., Both now ...,

Theotokion: By the prayers of her that gaveth birth to Thee O Christ,* and of Thy martyrs and apostles, * the prophets and holy hierarchs, * the venerable, the righteous and of all the saints, ** grant rest to Thy departed servants.

AT MATINS ON SATURDAY MORNING

After the 1st chanting of the Psalter, the Sessional Hymns of the Martyrs.

Having patiently endured the struggle of martyrdom, the saints received from Thee the honors of victory; having set at naught the intentions of the iniquitous, they received crowns of incorruption. For their sake be Thou entreated, O God, and grant us great mercy.

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

While the choirs of the incorporeal ones stood by, holding trophies of victory, and tyrants and kings were amazed, the most wise spiritual athletes showed forth a firm opposition amidst the wounds of torture, during their martyrdom at the tribunal, thereby casting down the apostate by their confession of Christ. O Lord Who strengthened them, glory be to Thee!

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

The memorial of Thy saints, O Lord, hath appeared like the the garden of paradise in Eden, for therein all creation rejoiceth. By their prayers grant us peace and great mercy.

Glory ...,

For the reposed: Truly all things are vanity; life is but a shadow and a dream: for in vain doth every mortal trouble himself, as the Scripture hath said, seeking to acquire the whole world, and then departing to the tomb, where kings and paupers are found together. Wherefore, O Christ God, grant rest to Thy departed servants in that Thou lovest mankind.

Both now ...,

Theotokion **O** Thou Who called Thy Mother blessed, Thou didst willingly go to Thy suffering, and shine forth upon the Cross, desiring to seek out Adam, and saying to the angels: Rejoice with Me, for I have found the lost coin! O our God Who hast wisely ordered all things, glory be to Thee!

ON THE PRAISES

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

To the Martyrs: **A**t the commemoration of Thy saints, O Lord, all creation celebrateth; the heavens rejoice with the angels, and the earth with all mankind keepeth festival. By their intercessions have mercy upon us.

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

O Lord, if we had not had Thy saints as intercessors, and Thy goodness being merciful to us, how should we have dared, O Savior, to hymn Thee, Whom angels do unceasingly glorify? O Thou that knowest the hearts of men, spare our souls.

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

The memorial of the martyrs is a joy to those who fear the Lord. For having suffered for Christ's sake, they received from Him crowns of victory; and now they intercede with boldness on behalf of our souls.

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

Our God hath made wondrous His chosen saints. Rejoice and be glad, all ye His servants, for crowns and His kingdom have been prepared for you! We beseech you: Forget us not!

Glory ...,

For the reposed: Of old, the eating of the tree in Eden sickened Adam when the serpent spewed forth its venom; for from this universal death hath arisen, devouring man. But the Master came, and cast down the serpent, granting us resurrection. Unto Him, therefore, let us now cry aloud: Have pity on those whom Thou hast taken to Thyself, O Savior, and, as Thou lovest mankind, grant them rest with the saints.

Both now ...,

Theotokion: We have come to know God Who was incarnate of thee, O Virgin Theotokos. Him do thou entreat that our souls be saved.

AT SATURDAY MATINS APOSTICHA:

A composition by Theophanes:

Spec. Mel.: "Having set aside ...":

O greatly merciful Master, Who hast unapproachable loving-kindness for us and an inexhaustible well-spring of divine goodness. Grant rest in the land of the living to those who have departed unto Thee, that they forever abide in Thy dwelling-place, which they so longed for. For Thou, O Christ, hast shed Thy blood for all, and hast redeemed the world with Thy life.

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

Thou didst willingly endure a life-creating death; pouring forth life upon the faithful, and granting them eternal joy. Do Thou establish in this joy those who have fallen asleep in the hope of the Resurrection, and in Thy mercy forgive them all their offences, for Thou alone art sinless, Thou alone art good and the Lover of mankind, that Thy Name, O Christ, may be hymned by all, and that we may glorify Thy salvific love for mankind.

Verse: Their souls * shall dwell among good things.

Knowing Thee to be, in Thy divine power, the Lord of the living and Master of the dead, O Christ, we pray Thee: With Thy chosen ones, O Lover of mankind, grant rest unto Thy faithful servants who have departed unto Thee, our Benefactor, in a place of comfort, amid the splendors of the saints; for Thou art He Who willest mercy, and as God savest those whom Thou didst create according to Thine image, O only greatly Merciful One.

Glory ..., Both now ..., Theotokion:

Thou wast shown to be a receptacle of divine majesty, O most pure one, for thou didst contain God and gave birth unto Christ in two natures but a single Hypostasis, O Mother who knewest not wedlock. O pure one, entreat thine only-begotten and firstborn Child, Who preserved thee an unblemished virgin even though thou hast given birth, that He grant rest amid light and incorrupt blessedness unto those who have fallen asleep in the Faith.