

THE 13th DAY OF THE MONTH OF JANUARY

AFTERFEAST OF HOLY THEOPHANY

COMMEMORATION OF THE HOLY MARTYRS HERMYLUS & STRATONICUS

ON THIS DAY THE SERVICE OF THE HOLY FATHERS SLAIN AT SINAI & RAITHU IS ALSO CHANTED BECAUSE OF THE APODOSIS OF HOLY THEOPHANY.

AT VESPERS

On “Lord, I have cried ...,” 6 Stichera: 3 of the holy martyrs, In Tone IV:

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

The glorious Hermylus * and the divinely wise Stratonicus, * the wondrous pair, * confessing the uncreated Trinity, * vanquished the delusion of polytheism * after many wounds and tortures, * and, having been crowned with the wreath of victory, * they pray that peace and mercy ** be granted to the ends of the earth.

As a servant of the Word, O martyr Hermylus, * the choice of the divine Spirit, * staining the vesture of the priesthood * with the flow of thy blood, * thou didst truly make it * more sacred and splendid. * And thou hast now passed over to the noetic kingdom, * becoming a most fervent intercessor ** for those who honor thee.

Having endured the blows of the hammer * at the command of the tyrant, * ye were cast into a basket; * and, receiving a blessed end, * both being drowned in water, * ye thereby wisely strangled the exceeding crafty foe. * And ye now dwell most joyously in the heavens, * praying for all, ** O most valiant athletes.

And 3 Stichera of the venerable martyrs, in Tone VIII:

Spec. Mel.: “What shall we call you, O holy ones ...”:

Ye struggled greatly, O saints, * and valiantly endured * the invasions of the barbarians; * and, earnestly rendering up your souls * through the sword, * ye were crowned with martyrs’ wreaths * and dwell with the angels, as is meet. * Great was your endurance and greater still your gifts! ** Pray ye, that our souls be saved.

O saints of Christ, ye struggled, * willingly spurning the fleeting pleasures of life, * valiantly subduing carnal wisdom, * and perishing by the sword for Christ, * ye dwell now worthily * with the angels. * wherefore we honor your memory * and beseech ye, * pray ye that our souls be saved.

Valiantly emulating * the struggles of the martyrs, * ye lived a life of goodness, O holy ones, * and have received crowns from heaven. * And ye lawfully disdained the sword * as ones who trampled torments underfoot, * that together ye might be arrayed * in crowns of suffering. ** Pray ye, that our souls be saved.

Glory ..., the composition of the Studite, in Tone VIII:

O venerable fathers, having studied the law of the Lord day and night, ye were vouchsafed to be grafted onto the tree of life, and the fruit of your suffering hath budded forth wreaths. As ye have boldness before God, the Judge of the contest, ask for us cleansing and great mercy.

Both now ..., the composition of John the Monk, in Tone VIII:

Desiring to fulfill that which Thou hast established from before time, O Lord, Thou didst accept ministers of Thy mystery from among all creatures: Gabriel from among the angels, the Virgin from among men, the star from among the heavens, and the Jordan from among the waters, wherein Thou didst destroy the iniquity of the world. O our Savior, glory be to Thee!

On the Aposticha, these Stichera of the feast, in Tone II:

Spec. Mel.: "O house of Ephratha ...":

The Effulgence of the Father's glory * hath appeared * in the streams of the Jordan, * washing away through baptism ** the defilement of our souls.

Verse: The sea beheld and fled, * Jordan turned back.

Receive as a servant * the Redeemer of the world, * O prophet John, * and baptize the Creator, ** unto the restoration of mankind.

Verse: What aileth thee, O sea, that thou fleddest? * And thou, O Jordan, that thou didst turn back?

Enlightenment hath come! * Deliverance hath appeared * in the streams of the Jordan! * Let us go down to be purified ** and to hymn the Lover of mankind!

Glory ..., in Tone VIII:

Having attained the angelic life with the pangs of asceticism, O venerable fathers, and having enslaved the body through abstinence, ye made it subject to your spirit, becoming doers of the commandments of the Lord. Ye preserved the pristine beauty of your countenance and accomplished struggles of asceticism with the sweat of fasting. Having been adorned with twofold crowns, pray ye earnestly to the Savior, that we be saved.

Both now ..., in the same tone:

The armies of the angels were filled with awe by what they saw today in the Jordan, when Thou didst stand naked in the waters, O Savior, bowing Thy pure head to be baptized by John. For when Thou didst beggar Thyself of Thine own will, the world was enriched. Glory be to Thee, O Lord!

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.

Glory ..., Troparion of the venerable martyrs, in the same tone:

O God of our fathers, * ever deal with us according to Thy meekness. * Take not Thy mercy from us, * but by the prayers of these saints ** direct our life in peace.

Both now ..., Troparion of the feast, in Tone I:

When Thou wast baptized in the Jordan, O Lord, * the worship of the Trinity was made manifest: * for the voice of the Father bare witness unto Thee * calling Thee His beloved Son; * and the Spirit in the guise of a dove * confirmed the certainty of His words. * O Christ God, Who hast appeared ** and enlightened the world, glory be to Thee!

AT MATINS

On “God is the Lord ...,” Troparion of the feast, in Tone I:

When Thou wast baptized in the Jordan, O Lord, * the worship of the Trinity was made manifest: * for the voice of the Father bare witness unto Thee * calling Thee His beloved Son; * and the Spirit in the guise of a dove * confirmed the certainty of His words. * O Christ God, Who hast appeared ** and enlightened the world, glory be to Thee!

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.

Glory ..., Troparion of the venerable martyrs, in the same tone:

O God of our fathers, * ever deal with us according to Thy meekness. * Take not Thy mercy from us, * but by the prayers of these saints ** direct our life in peace.

Both now ..., Troparion of the feast (Once).

After the 1st chanting of the Psalter, the Sessional Hymn, in Tone III:

Spec. Mel.: “Today the Virgin ...”:

Today the Master came to the Jordan; and when He was baptized by the divine forerunner in its waters, the Father bore witness from on high, saying: This is my Son, in Whom I am well pleased! And the Spirit appeared over Him in the strange guise of a dove.

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

After the 2nd chanting of the Psalter, the Sessional Hymn, in Tone VIII:

Spec. Mel.: “Of the Wisdom ...”:

When Thou didst appear in the flesh for baptism, O Invisible One, Jordan ministered to Thee with its streams, and John stretched forth his corruptible hand; yet the one turned back in fear, and the other straightway touched Thee, the Incorruptible One, with trembling. Truly Thou art the Lamb of God, the ever-living Fountain Who hath sanctified the springs, the sea and men; for the Trinity shone forth from on high: the Father calleth Thee His Son, and the Holy Spirit descendeth.

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

Canon of the feast, with 6 Troparia, and two canons of the martyrs, with 8 Troparia.

ODE I

Canon of the feast, the composition of Cosmas the Monk, in Tone II:

Irmos: Israel traversed the stormy depths of the sea, * which had straightway become as dry land; * but the dark waters engulfed the chief captains of Egypt * in a watery grave, * by the mighty power of the right hand of the Master.

When the Light of the radiant Dawn shone forth upon mortal men, coming forth from the wilderness to the waters of the Jordan, Thou, O King of the Sun, didst bow Thy neck before him, that Thou mightest ransom our forefather from the minions of darkness and cleanse creation of all defilement.

O beginningless Word, Thou hast buried mankind with Thyself in the stream, and Thou dost lead him forth new again, that had been corrupted by deception; and the mighty voice of the Father testifieth to Thee ineffably, saying: This is My beloved Son, the Child Who is equal to Me by nature.

Canon of the holy martyrs, the acrostic whereof is: “I honor the glory of Thy martyrs, O Savior”, the composition of Joseph, in Tone VIII

Irmos: Let us sing unto the Lord * Who engulfed Pharaoh in the Red Sea, * singing a hymn of victory, * for He hath been glorified.

O wise martyrs, ye have shown yourselves to be precious stars of godly radiance, shining in the firmament of the Church, illumining us with divine splendors.

O glorious ones, ye were shown to be noetic embers set alight by the fire of the Spirit, and ye quenched the fire of idolatry with the streams of your blood.

Drowned in the waters for the sake of Christ Who drowned our impiety in the waters, O martyrs, ye have dried up the rivers of ungodliness.

Theotokion: Stop thou the torrents of my sins, O thou who by thy birthgiving hast caused the corruption of death to wither away, and grant me compunction, O all-immaculate Birthgiver of God.

Canon of the venerable martyrs, the acrostic whereof is: “I hymn the great glory of the suffering of the fathers”, the composition of Joseph, in Tone IV:

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.

Having become radiant through abstinence, O most blessed ones, ye were manifestly shown to be godly through the outpouring of your blood. Wherefore, ye rejoice together with the fasters and martyrs of Christ.

Ye first drowned the noetic pharaoh with a sea of tears, O wise ones, and later destroyed him with the outpouring of your blood, and relegated him to oblivion.

Illumining your asceticism with patience, O favorites of Christ, the Lord, the Bestower of light, rendered your suffering radiant and manifest, shining more greatly than the rays of the sun.

Theotokion: The Lord Who by nature is incapable of being contained by anything is contained within thee, O Sovereign Lady, becoming man in His loving-kindness, that He might save mankind in His ineffable love.

ODE III

Canon of the feast

Irmos: From the ancient snares have we all been set loose, * and the teeth of the lions have been smashed asunder. * Let us then rejoice with great joy * and open wide our mouths, * weaving with words a sweet hymn to the Word, * Who delighteth in bestowing gifts upon us.

He who once assumed the form of a malignant serpent and planted death in the garden of creation, is now cast into darkness by Christ's coming in the flesh; and by assailing the Master, the Dawn which hath shone forth upon us, he hath crushed his own hateful head.

The Master draweth to Himself the divinely fashioned nature of mankind, which had been overcome by the tyranny of greed; and He restoreth mortals, granting them a new birth, and accomplishing thereby a mighty work; for He is come to cleanse our nature.

Canon of the holy martyrs

Irmos: Thy fear, O Lord, do Thou plant * in the hearts of Thy servants * and be Thou the confirmation of us * who in truth call upon Thee.

Despising the inconstancy of transitory things, O valiant athletes of Christ, the King of all, ye desired the incorrupt enjoyment of things to come.

Ye manfully opposed Him Who most iniquitously commanded you to submit to impiety, O divinely wise ones, and have received crowns of victory from heaven.

Ye cast down the temples of delusion and raised yourselves up as honored temples and pillars of divine knowledge, O martyrs of Christ.

Theotokion: The sword which before was brandished hath given way before me, withdrawing before the spear which pierced Him Who was born of thee, O Virgin Mother.

Canon of the venerable martyrs

Irmos: Not in wisdom, nor in power, * nor yet in riches do I boast, * but in Thee O Christ, the hypostatic Wisdom of the Father; * for there is none more holy than Thee, O Lover of mankind.

Having pleased God with a contrite mind, ye crushed the arrogance of the enemy, O blessed ones who were broken and slain by the sword.

Looking toward things which abide forever O wise ones, ye rejected inconstant and corrupt things which drag one down; wherefore, ye have been called blessed, O venerable martyrs.

Having submitted to the law of God with a right dutiful mind, ye destroyed the carnal passions with abstinence, and having suffered, ye have now received glory.

Theotokion: O most holy one who hast given birth to the most holy Word: sanctify the souls and bodies of us who bless thee, O immaculate one.

Kontakion of the venerable martyrs, in Tone II:

Spec. Mel.: “Seeking the highest ...”:

Ye fled from the tumult of the world * and having found rest in the calm haven, * ye were crowned With the blood of martyrdom * and the labors of asceticism. ** Wherefore, ye have been shown to dwell together with the martyrs and the venerable.

Ikos: O ye who mortified your members on earth, with life-bearing mortality ye portrayed the suffering of Christ God, first in goodly asceticism, and later again in suffering. Wherefore, He Himself hath sent down twofold crowns upon your heads, O fathers, preparing for you a heavenly abode and an everlasting place, where, rejoicing now, ye have been shown to dwell together with the martyrs and the venerable.

Sessional Hymn of the holy martyrs, in Tone I:

Spec. Mel.: “Thy tomb, O Savior ...”:

Together ye received a blessed end in the waters, O wise ones, drowning Belial therein by the grace of our God, O martyrs; wherefore, having received crowns as victors, ye rejoice with the angelic choirs. With them be ye mindful of us.

Glory ..., Sessional Hymn of the venerable martyrs, in Tone IV:

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

Revealed as wanderers and sojourners on earth, establishing cells in the deserts, ye manifestly undertook ascetic labors, O venerable ones, and having adorned yourselves in nakedness as with the vesture of the virtues, ye became images of the sufferings of Christ. Wherefore, ye endured slaughter at the hands of the barbarians.

Both now ..., Sessional Hymn of the feast, in the same melody:

Thou didst hallow the streams of the Jordan and didst crush the might of sin, O Christ our God. Thou didst bow down beneath the hand of the forerunner, and hast saved the human race from delusion. Wherefore, we pray: Save Thou our souls!

ODE IV

Canon of the feast

Irmos: Purified by the fire of a mystical vision, * the prophet praiseth the restoration of mankind; * and, filled with the inspiration of the Spirit, * he lifteth up his voice to reveal the incarnation of the ineffable Word, * by Whom the dominion of the mighty hath been abolished.

O most radiant Word, Who hast been sent forth by the Father, Thou comest to repel utterly the night of evil darkness and to uproot the sins of men, and by Thy baptism to draw forth children O flight from the streams of the Jordan, O Good One.

When he saw in very truth the Word Who had been foretold, the herald bare witness of Him to creation, and cried, plainly saying: This is He Who was before me, yet cometh after me. Though like us in form, He hath shone forth with divine power to take away our hateful sin!

That He might bring His own back to the life-giving pastures of paradise, the Word of God hath fallen upon the lairs of the dragons, and destroying their manifold snares, he hath assailed him who hath bruised all mankind, and, imprisoning him, hath delivered creation.

Canon of the holy martyrs

Irmos: O Lord, I have heard the mystery of Thy dispensation; * I have considered Thy works, * and I have glorified Thy Divinity.

As a minister of the Word thou didst most diligently denounce the irrationality and foolishness of the iniquitous ones, O martyr Hermylus.

Preaching the one nature of the Godhead, the single authority and dominion, O divinely wise ones, ye held the delusion of polytheism in contempt.

Suspended aloft and lacerated, afflicted with wounds, thou didst remain unmoved, O divinely wise martyr and passion-bearer Hermylus.

Theotokion: As the Mother of the Word, O most pure one, call me to repentance, who slumber in despondency and am covered with sin.

Canon of the venerable martyrs

Irmos: Beholding Thee, the Sun of righteousness, * lifted up upon the cross, * the Church now standeth arrayed and doth worthily cry aloud: * Glory be to Thy power, O Lord.

Unvanquished by carnal passions, ye conquered the enemy; and, slain by the sword, O all-blessed ones, rejoicing together, ye have passed over to the life of heaven.

Fattened on abstinence like lambs, like excellent sheep, ye were slain at the hands of bloodthirsty wolves, O venerable ones, and brought to Christ as perfect sacrifices.

O ye priests, elders and youths who lived at Raithu and on Mount Sinai, having lived a holy life ye became martyrs, dying a violent death.

Theotokion: Having appeared through the Virgin and become a man, the pre-eternal Lord, the newborn Babe, hath renewed the human race. To Him let us chant: Glory to Thy power, O Lord!

ODE V

Canon of the feast

Irmos: Washed clean of the poison of the dark and defiled enemy * by the cleansing of the Spirit, * we have set out upon a new path * which leadeth to unapproachable joy, * to which only they whom God hath reconciled with himself * can draw near.

The Creator, beholding him whom He had formed of dust bound by inescapable bonds in the darkness of sin, raised him up and laid him on His shoulders; and now, in the midst of abundant waters, He washeth him clean from the ancient shame of Adam's sinful inclination.

With piety let us eagerly make haste to the most pure wellsprings of the stream of salvation, and, gazing upon the Word Who is come forth from the incorrupt Virgin, let us drink the pure water which quencheth our holy thirst, gently healing the infirmity of the world.

Canon of the holy martyrs

Irmos: O Light never-waning, * why hast Thou turned Thy face from me * and why has the alien darkness surrounded me, * wretched though I be? * But do Thou guide my steps I implore Thee * and turn me back towards the light of Thy commandments.

The clouds of tortures did not cover your courage, O all-praised martyrs; for it was shown to be brighter than the sun through the radiance of piety, which guideth the pious with light and dispelleth the gloom of the demons.

Having passed beyond the bounds of humanity, O divinely blessed ones, and united yourselves with perfect purity to Him Who transcendeth being, ye endured bitter tortures, laceration and wounds with firmness of mind.

Thou didst mightily oppose him who condemned thee, O most blessed and glorious martyr Hermylus, and wast vouchsafed to hear a voice from heaven, telling thee to drawn nigh with love to the Judge of the contest Who called thee and Who strengtheneth His martyrs.

Theotokion: In that thou art beautiful, comely and resplendent in purity, thou didst give flesh to Him Who is comely in beauty, O Virgin Mother, and hast given birth to Him Who in the richness of His goodness granteth that all may become divine.

Canon of the venerable martyrs

Irmos: Thou, O Lord, who camest into the world, * art my light, * a holy light turning from the darkness of ignorance * those who sing Thy praises in faith.

Ye were shown to be the sweet garden of paradise, having in your midst the Lord, the Tree of life, Who hath accepted your blood as a sacrifice.

Mingling the torrents of your blood with the streams of your tears, O God-bearers, ye therein drowned the serpent of many guises.

Ye were vouchsafed to behold the beauty of God, O blessed ones, and have received everlasting gladness for your labors and pangs.

Theotokion: Thou hast given birth to God in a manner beyond all telling and comprehension, O pure and divinely joyous one, and even after giving birth didst remain a virgin as thou wast before birthgiving.

ODE VI

Canon of the feast

Irmos: With a supremely blessed voice * the Father revealed His Beloved One, * Whom He had begotten from the womb. * Verily, saith He, this is the splendid Son, * of the same nature as Myself, * and He hath come forth from the human race. * He is My living Word, * Who by My providence hath become a man.

The prophet, mysteriously swallowed up for the space of three nights in the belly of the sea monster, came forth again, making manifest beforehand to all our regeneration in the last times, and our deliverance from the dragon that slayeth mankind.

When the shining vaults of heaven were opened, he who knew the Scriptures beheld the Spirit, Who proceedeth from the Father and abideth in the most pure Word, descending in ineffable manner in the form of a dove; and he commanded the multitudes to hasten to the Master.

Canon of the holy martyrs

Irmos: I will pour out my prayer unto the Lord, * and to Him will I proclaim my grief; * for my soul is filled with evils, * and my life unto Hades hath drawn nigh, * and like Jonah I pray unto Thee: * Raise me up from corruption, O my God.

Full of life-creating waters, ye were cast into the river's streams, O all-praised ones, and receiving your end therein, ye strangled the princes of evil. And now ye pour forth upon us torrents of healing.

Cast into a basket, ye were committed to the deep, O athletes; and ye have been borne up to the life on high, joyously finding the things for which ye had hoped from of old, O holy martyrs great in wisdom.

Thou wast shown to be tormented with bitter torture, beaten with staves, O martyr Stratonikus, and wast an invincible pillar of endurance set upon the pedestal of the Faith, setting at naught the opposition of the tormenters with thy words and deeds.

Theotokion: As thou art merciful, O most holy one, cure thou the sick passions of my soul, the pain of my heart and the multifarious changes of my mind, and still thou the cruel turmoil of mine evils, I pray.

Canon of the venerable martyrs

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

Having cast off the bonds of passionate attachment through ascetic labor, ye were released from the bonds of the flesh by a violent death, and have bound yourselves with the sacred love of the Creator.

Having shown yourselves to be like lofty mountains by your manner of life, with the power of Christ ye trampled underfoot him who boasted that he would seize the mountains and all creation.

Drenched with the waters of tears, O blessed ones, like good and fertile soil ye brought forth the grain of martyrdom as fruit, which is stored up in the eternal granaries for Christ.

Theotokion: Still thou the waves of the passions of my flesh by thy ceaseless supplication, O Virgin, and grant that I not fall into the most heavy sleep of sin.

Kontakion of the feast, in Tone IV:

Thou hast appeared today to the whole world, * and Thy light, O Lord, hath been signed upon us * who with understanding hymn Thee. * Thou hast come, Thou hast appeared, ** the Light unapproachable.

Ikos: Upon Galilee of the nations, upon the land of Zebulon and the land of Naphthali, as the prophet said, a great Light hath shone, even Christ. A radiant darkness hath dawned upon those who sat in darkness, shining forth from Bethlehem. The Lord born of Mary, the Sun of righteousness, shineth forth with splendor upon the whole world. Come, therefore, all ye naked children of Adam, and let us clothe ourselves in Him, that we may be warmed; for He Who covereth the naked and enlighteneth those in darkness, hath come. He hath appeared, the Light unapproachable!

ODE VII

Canon of the feast

Irmos: He Who burnt the heads of the dragons in the waters, * cooled the lofty flame * that encircled the pious youths in the furnace; * He it is that doth wash away all the unbearable gloom of sin * by the dew of the Spirit.

The fierce Assyrian flame that prefigured Thee hast Thou quenched, transforming it into dew. And now, O Christ, Thou hast clothed Thyself in water as in flame, burning up the harmful malice hidden in its depths, which calleth men to fall with stumbling step.

When the Jordan was parted of old, the people of Israel passed clean over on dry ground, prefiguring Thee, O most powerful Lord, Who now bearest up creation in the waters without touching it, leading it to a better and imperishable path.

We know that in the beginning Thou didst, in Thy mercy, bring the waters of the flood upon the earth to destroy every living creature that Thou hadst made. And now, O Christ, Who workest wonders strange and most great, Thou hast drowned sin in the waters of Thy compassion, unto the salvation of mortal men.

Canon of the holy martyrs

Irmos: The Hebrew children in the furnace * boldly trampled upon the flames, * changing the fire into dew, they cried aloud: * 'Blessed art Thou, O Lord our God, throughout the ages'.

Honeyed discourse flowed from thy mouth, O Hermylus, cutting short the bitterness of the despondency of Stratonicus, thy fellow sufferer, which cried: Blessed art Thou, O God, throughout the ages!

Holding the Cross of the Savior as a staff of power, O valiant martyr Hermylus, thou didst zealously endure beating with a staff, chanting to thy Creator: Blessed art Thou, O God!

He Who most gloriously saved the prophet who was held fast in the belly of the sea monster saved your victorious relics from the waters of the river after your end, O athletes.

Theotokion: **A**nnulling the curse of Eve, Thou didst make Thine abode within the all-immaculate Virgin, pouring forth springs of blessing upon those who cry: Blessed art Thou, O Lord God, forever!

Canon of the venerable martyrs

Irmos: **I**n the Persian furnace the youths and descendants of Abraham, * burning with a love of piety * rather than by a flame of fire, * cried aloud saying: * **Blessed art Thou in the temple of Thy glory, O Lord.**

Illumined by the splendors of abstinence and sacred sufferings, O martyrs, manifestly sanctified, ye have passed over to the never-waning Light and have become children of the day.

Voluntarily withdrawing from the sweet pleasures of the world, ye united yourselves to Him Who strangely appeared to mankind in the flesh, inheriting the good things which abide and grow not old, O venerable ones.

Let the godly fasters and glorious martyrs Paul and John, Theodulus and Nilus, and all who most gloriously lived and died together, be blessed.

Theotokion: **T**he jar which held manna of old truly and manifestly prefigured thee, who held the Manna of life in thy womb. Blessed art Thou among women, O all-immaculate Sovereign Lady.

ODE VIII

Canon of the feast

Irmos: **C**reation hath found itself set free, * and those who previously sat in darkness are now sons of light; * alone the prince of darkness moaneth, * wherefore let His inheritance * which was formerly in misery * now bless Him **Who hath accomplished this.**

The three godly children, sprinkled with dew in the midst of the fire, plainly prefigured how the transcendent Nature, which is resplendent with the most radiant rays of threefold holiness, doth, through human nature, mercifully consume all pernicious falsehood with the fire of dew.

Let the whole of earthly creation be clothed in white, for this day it is raised up from its fall to heaven; and, washed and most splendidly cleansed in the flowing waters by the Word, by Whom all things are preserved, it hath escaped its former sins.

Canon of the holy martyrs

Irmos: In his wrath the Chaldean Tyrant made the furnace blaze, * with heat fanned sevenfold for the servants of God; * but when he perceived that they had been saved by a greater power * he cried aloud to the Creator and Redeemer; * ‘ye children bless, ye priests praise, * ye people, supremely exalt Him throughout all ages’.

Beaten and cruelly lacerated, covered with masses of wounds, thou didst endure, O glorious Hermylus; for thou wast the instructor of Stratonicus in struggles of piety, and with him thou didst cry out: Ye priests, bless; ye people, supremely exalt the Lord throughout all ages!

Unbowed in understanding, valiant through suffering, worthy of heavenly gifts, precious stones and bulwarks of the faithful, when ye were commanded, ye did not offer worship to stones, but cried out to God, the Master of all: Ye people, supremely exalt Him throughout all ages!

Raking thy sides with iron claws and pitilessly beheading thee with the sword, the torturer did not deprive thee of intelligence, who wast strengthened by divine love and didst look toward the beauty of the Redeemer. And standing now before Him with boldness, thou criest out: Ye people, supremely exalt the Lord throughout all ages!

Theotokion: He Who through thee was clad in the flesh, being perfect in all things, showed Himself to be unapproachable by me in His essence, O thou who knewest not wedlock. Him do thou earnestly entreat, that He cut short the time of mine iniquities and save me who chant: Ye priests, bless; ye people, supremely exalt the Lord throughout all ages!

Canon of the venerable martyrs

Irmos: Having 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.

Adorned with feats of asceticism, the magnificent choir of the venerable displayeth today all its godly chanters, who praise it chanting unto Christ: Bless the Lord, all ye works of the Lord!

Ye were slaughtered like lambs, cut down by the swords of the barbarians, and have been brought as perfect sacrifices to the Word Who was slaughtered; and ye have made your abode in the tabernacles of the first-born, chanting: Bless the Lord, all ye works of the Lord!

Having stripped yourselves bare of all pleasures, O venerable fathers, ye stripped naked the most wicked enemy, who had exposed our first parents' nakedness; and having received sacred vesture through your suffering, ye clothed him in shame, O wise ones.

Theotokion: Ancient paradise is again made accessible because of thee, and mankind, who before was condemned, entereth therein and is most truly deified, O pure one who art full of the grace of God, unto the restoration of mankind, who chanteth: Bless the Lord, all ye works of the Lord!

ODE IX

Canon of the feast

Irmos: The wonders of thy birthgiving pass all understanding, * O all-pure Bride, blessed Mother! * Through thee we have received the most perfect salvation, * wherefore we praise our Benefactor as is meet and right, * bearing a hymn of thanksgiving unto Him as a gift.

That which was revealed to Moses in the bush we see here fulfilled in a wondrous manner; for as it bare fire, yet was not consumed, so hath the Virgin been preserved, who gaveth birth unto the Benefactor Who bringeth us light, and the streams of the Jordan suffered no harm when they received Him.

O beginningless King, through the communion of the Spirit dost Thou anoint and make perfect the nature of mankind, and cleansing it in the pure streams of baptism, putting the arrogant might of darkness to shame, Thou now dost raise it up to eternal life.

Canon of the holy martyrs

Irmos: All are awestruck at hearing of God's ineffable condescension, * for the Most High voluntarily descended and assumed flesh, * becoming man in the Virgin's womb; * wherefore we the faithful magnify the most pure Theotokos.

Having sailed across the abyss with the sail of torments, O martyrs of Christ, ye put in at the havens of rest, where the choirs of martyrs and assemblies of the righteous are, and where the never-waning light and the joy of those who keep festival in the Spirit are found.

Today, the Church of Christ, observing the sacred memorial of your suffering, O all-blessed ones, doth celebrate a joyful and radiant feast, magnifying God Who crowned as His favorites you who magnify Him.

Ye have truly been caught up to the exultingly radiant heights of confession, and having attained to the Summit of desires, truly received the immovable kingdom of God, O martyr Stratonikus and wise and divinely intelligent Hermylus, ye blessed saints.

Theotokion: **O** Savior Who wast born and hast preserved her who gave Thee birth incorrupt, even after giving birth, spare me when Thou shalt sit to judge my deeds, overlooking mine iniquities and sins, in that Thou art sinless, as a merciful God and the Lover of mankind.

Canon of the venerable martyrs

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.

Come, and with holy and hallowed words let us magnify aloud the sacred fathers who lived at Raithu and Sinai in holiness, and suffered piously.

Having sanctified yourselves with the sweat of asceticism, in holiness ye have dedicated your souls and bodies to the Lord, drying up the sea of barbarian wickedness with the outpouring of your blood.

Your divinely radiant memory of the pangs ye endured for Christ, illumined by the effulgence of the East, O blessed ones, enlighteneth the thoughts of all with the grace of the all-accomplishing and divine Spirit.

Theotokion: **T**he cherubim tremble, beholding the Word, Who sitteth upon them ineffably, carried as a babe in His Mother's arms, O most holy Lady who art more exalted than all creation.

Exapostilarion of the venerable martyrs:

Spec. Mel.: "By the Spirit in the sanctuary ...":

With the pangs of fasting ye utterly destroyed the serpent, the author of evil, and in death received the crown of martyrdom, O boast of the fathers and glory of the martyrs, ye most sacred multitude of wondrous fathers in Raithu and Sinai.

Glory ..., Both now ..., Exapostilarion of the feast:

The day of never-waning light hath dawned, for Christ, the Truth, hath now come and appeared! As is meet let us hymn Him with psalms and hymns as Creator and Master! O the new mystery! The Creator of Adam hath of His own will appeared as a man!

On the Aposticha, these Stichera, in Tone VI:

Spec. Mel.: "O angelic hosts, go ye before ...":

Come, let us hasten to the streams of the Jordan with heartfelt emotion, ye faithful, and, beholding Christ baptized in the flesh by John the forerunner, and offering up glory with him, let us cry aloud: Blessed art Thou! O God Who hast appeared, glory be to Thee!

Verse: The sea beheld and fled, * Jordan turned back.

A rod hath budded forth from Jesse, the divine ark and receptacle of manna, from whence the incorrupt Flower of life hath issued forth, of Whom the Jordan was in awe. And when he touched Christ with his hand, John cried aloud: Blessed art Thou! O God Who hast appeared, glory be to Thee!

Verse: What aileth thee, O sea, that thou fleddest? * And thou, O Jordan, that thou didst turn back?

Chant hymns, ye hosts of heaven! Sing, and rejoice together, O men! For, lo! the Master, the Effulgence of the Father, cometh to the streams of the Jordan to be baptized by a servant! O ye people, let us cry aloud: Blessed art Thou! O God Who hast appeared, glory be to Thee!

Glory ..., in Tone VIII:

Blessed art ye, O venerable martyrs of Christ God: venerable, because ye were persecuted for righteousness' sake, and martyrs, because the sword was unable to separate you from the love of Christ. Wherefore, rejoice!, for great is your reward in the heavens!

Both now ..., in the same tone:

Today creation is enlightened! Today all things are glad, those of heaven and those on earth! Angels and men mingle together! For where the King arriveth, there doth order prevail. Wherefore, let us all hasten to the Jordan and see how John baptizeth the sinless head which no man fashioned. And, chanting the cry of the angel, let us exclaim together: The grace of God hath appeared, saving all men, illumining and granting mercy unto the faithful!

AT LITURGY

On the Beatitudes, 8 Troparia: 4 from ODE VIII of the canon of the feast, and 4 from ODE VI of the canon of the venerable martyrs.

The three godly children, sprinkled with dew in the midst of the fire, plainly prefigured how the transcendent Nature, which is resplendent with the most radiant rays of threefold holiness, doth, through human nature, mercifully consume all pernicious falsehood with the fire of dew. (Twice)

Let the whole of earthly creation be clothed in white, for this day it is raised up from its fall to heaven; and, washed and most splendidly cleansed in the flowing waters by the Word, by Whom all things are preserved, it hath escaped its former sins. (Twice)

Full of life-creating waters, ye were cast into the river's streams, O all-praised ones, and receiving your end therein, ye strangled the princes of evil. And now ye pour forth upon us torrents of healing.

Cast into a basket, ye were committed to the deep, O athletes; and ye have been borne up to the life on high, joyously finding the things for which ye had hoped from of old, O holy martyrs great in wisdom.

Thou wast shown to be tormented with bitter torture, beaten with staves, O martyr Stratonikus, and wast an invincible pillar of endurance set upon the pedestal of the Faith, setting at naught the opposition of the tormenters with thy words and deeds.

Theotokion: As thou art merciful, O most holy one, cure thou the sick passions of my soul, the pain of my heart and the multifarious changes of my mind, and still thou the cruel turmoil of mine evils, I pray.

Troparion of the feast, in Tone I:

When Thou wast baptized in the Jordan, O Lord, * the worship of the Trinity was made manifest: * for the voice of the Father bare witness unto Thee * calling Thee His beloved Son; * and the Spirit in the guise of a dove * confirmed the certainty of His words. * O Christ God, Who hast appeared ** and enlightened the world, glory be to Thee!

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.

Troparion of the venerable martyrs, in the same tone:

O God of our fathers, * ever deal with us according to Thy meekness. * Take not Thy mercy from us, * but by the prayers of these saints ** direct our life in peace.

Glory ..., Kontakion of the venerable martyrs, in Tone II:

Ye fled from the tumult of the world * and having found rest in the calm haven, * ye were crowned With the blood of martyrdom * and the labors of asceticism. ** Wherefore, ye have been shown to dwell together with the martyrs and the venerable.

Both now ..., Kontakion of the feast, in Tone IV:

Thou hast appeared today to the whole world, * and Thy light, O Lord, hath been signed upon us * who with understanding hymn Thee. * Thou hast come, Thou hast appeared, ** the Light unapproachable.

Prokeimenon, in Tone IV: Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord. * God is the Lord and hath appeared unto us.

Prokeimenon, in Tone VII: Precious in the sight of the Lord * is the death of His saints.

Verse: What shall I render unto the Lord for all that He hath rendered unto me?

EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS, §99 (8: 28-39)

Brethren: We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified. What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things? Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Alleluia, in Tone IV: Bring unto the Lord, ye sons of God, bring unto the Lord the sons of rams.

Alleluia, in Tone IV: The righteous cried, and the Lord heard them, and He delivered them out of all their tribulations.

Verse: Many are the tribulations of the righteous, but the Lord shall deliver them, out of them all.

GOSPEL ACCORDING TO LUKE, § 24 (6: 17-23).

At that time, Jesus stood in the plain, and the company of his disciples, and a great multitude of people out of all Judea and Jerusalem, and from the seacoast of Tyre and Sidon, which came to hear him, and to be healed of their diseases; and they that were vexed with unclean spirits: and they were healed. And the whole multitude sought to touch him: for there went virtue out of him, and healed them all. And he lifted up his eyes on his disciples and said: Blessed be ye poor: for yours is the kingdom of God. Blessed are ye that hunger now: for ye shall be filled. Blessed are ye that weep now: for ye shall laugh. Blessed are ye, when men shall hate you, and when they shall separate you from their company, and shall reproach you, and cast out your name as evil, for the Son of man's sake. Rejoice ye in that day, and leap for joy: for, behold, your reward is great in heaven.

Instead of "It is truly meet ...," we chant the Refrain and Irmos of ODE IX:

Refrain: Magnify, O my soul, the most pure Virgin Theotokos, who is more honorable than the armies on high.

Irmos: Every tongue is at a loss to praise thee as is due: * even a spirit from the world above is filled with dizziness, * when it seeketh to sing thy praises, O Theotokos. * But since thou art good, accept our faith: * Thou knowest well our love inspired by God, * for thou art the Protector of Christians and we magnify thee.

Communion Verse: The grace of God that bringeth all men to salvation hath appeared.

Communion Verse: Rejoice in the Lord, O ye righteous; praise is meet for the upright.