

THE 15th DAY OF THE MONTH OF JANUARY
COMMEMORATION OF OUR VENERABLE FATHERS PAUL OF THEBES & JOHN
THE HUT-DWELLER
AT VESPERS

On “Lord, I have cried ...,” 6 Stichera: 3 of the venerable Paul, in Tone I:

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

O thrice-blessed Paul, * thou didst show thyself to the world * to be the beginning of the life of the heaven-scaling path of virtue; * for well didst thou appoint spiritual ascents in thy soul, * whereby thou didst achieve the apex of the virtues ** through abstinence and many pangs.

Furnishing thy mind with wings to fly to divine desire, O blessed one, * thou didst ascend to the upper desert * and didst draw nigh unto the divine darkness, * wherein thou wast radiantly illumined by the understanding of God * and wast anointed on the tablets of thy heart ** with the splendor of the virtues.

The desert blossomed with the beauteous flowers of thy virtues; * for thou didst destroy the thorns of the passions therein, * and didst plant the right glorious pangs * of thy divine words. * Wherefore, like a lily planted by God, ** thou dost now perfume us with the sweet fragrance of thy life.

And 3 Stichera of the venerable John, in Tone II:

Spec. Mel.: “When from the Tree ...”:

When at the command of God O father, * thou didst flee the beauties of the world, * rejoicing, thou didst prefer the narrow * and exceeding hard path of pain * to the broad one. * Wherefore, clothed in the image of God, * thou didst receive the care of souls, * O divinely blessed one, ** for thine avoidance and denial of pleasures.

Wounded by the love of Christ, * Whose ineffable poverty thou didst love, * thou didst conceive of a strange life, * a strange undertaking, O father; * and as a homeless pauper at thy parents’ gate, * thou didst endure affliction and oppression. * Wherefore, thou wast filled with spiritual gifts * and hast inherited riches in the heavens ** which cannot be taken away.

Bearing the sacred Gospel * in thy hands, O father, * thou didst become a fulfiller thereof. * Spurning the possessions of thy parents, * by tears and poverty thou didst perfect thy whole life, * O venerable John. * Wherefore, thou dost now delight * in divine consolation and never-ending gladness, ** O most blessed one.

Glory ..., in Tone II:

Rejecting the world and all that is in the world, O venerable one, and taking up the Gospel, thou didst follow Christ evangelically; and living secretly in a hut, as in a garden of paradise, with thine utterly strict manner of life thou didst choke the serpent, the slayer of mankind. Wherefore, abiding in the heavens, O blessed John, beg thou great mercy for us.

Both now ..., Theotokion, or this Stavrotheotokion in Tone II:

Spec. Mel.: “When from the Tree ...”:

When the unblemished ewe-lamb beheld her Lamb * willingly led as a man to the slaughter, * she said, weeping: * “Dost Thou now hasten to leave me childless * who gave Thee birth O Christ,? * What is this that Thou hast done, O Redeemer of all? * Even so I will hymn and glorify Thine extreme goodness, * which is beyond understanding and all telling, ** O Lover of mankind!”

On the Aposticha, the Stichera from the Oktoechos, and Glory ..., in Tone VI:

O venerable father, the proclamation of thy correction hath gone forth unto all the earth; wherefore, thou hast found the reward of thy labors in the heavens, and destroying hordes of the demons thou hast attained unto the ranks of the angels, whose life thou didst blamelessly emulate. As thou hast boldness before Christ God, beg thou peace for our souls.

Both now ..., Theotokion, or this Stavrotheotokion:

Spec. Mel.: “On the third day ...”:

Beholding Thee crucified, O Christ, * she who gave birth to Thee cried aloud: * “What is this strange mystery which I see, O my Son? * How is it that Thou diest, * suspended in the flesh upon the Tree, ** O Bestower of life?”

Troparion of the venerable fathers, in Tone IV:

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.

AT MATINS

One canon from, the Oktoechos, with 6 Troparia, including the Irmos; and two for the saints, with 8 Troparia.

ODE I

Canon of the venerable Paul, the composition of John the Monk, in Tone VIII

Irmos: Let us sing unto the Lord, * who led His people through the Red Sea: * for He alone hath gloriously been glorified.

Assembling, O ye faithful, let us honor with hymns, as is meet, the God-bearing Paul, as the adornment of monastics.

Thou wast the first inhabitant of the desert, O glorious Paul, and through fasting didst show thyself to be an heir to the kingdom of heaven.

Having cleansed thyself wholly through abstinence, O all-blessed one, thou wast shown to be a habitation of God and a dweller with the angels.

Theotokion: O most pure Theotokos, we hymn thee who, in a manner transcending nature, hast given birth to the transcendent and supremely divine Word incarnate.

Canon of the venerable John, the acrostic whereof is: “By thy supplications, O blessed one, show me to be bereft of the passions”, the composition of Joseph, in Tone II:

Irmos: In the deep of old the infinite Power overwhelmed Pharaoh’s whole army. * But the Incarnate Word annihilated pernicious sin. * Exceedingly glorious is the Lord, * for gloriously hath He been glorified.

Enriched by divine virtues, thou didst disdain earthly wealth and didst receive that of heaven. Wherefore, with grace enrich me who am poor in the understanding of God, O father, that I may hymn thine angelic life.

Having shouldered the good yoke of the Lord from thy youth, O blessed one, armed with the humility of Christ thou didst bring down the enemy with battles of fasting, whereby thou wast exalted to the heights of heaven, O John.

Having trod the narrow path with sorrows and tears, sighs and afflictions, O venerable one, thou didst attain unto a broad space, discovering a habitation which befitted thy pangs, O right wondrous father John.

Theotokion: Tempest-tossed by the cruel attacks of the passions and brought low by the assaults of sin, O maiden, with love I flee to thine ever-vigilant and invincible intercession. Take pity and save me, O all-hymned Ever-virgin.

ODE III

Canon of the venerable Paul

Irmos: O Thou Who established the heavens by Thy word * and founded the earth upon the multitude of waters, * establish me unto the hymning of * Thy glorification O Lord.

Looking toward God with the eye of thy soul, thou didst love Him, hating the things of earth and perfecting an angelic life.

With rays of the virtues thou didst manifestly dispel the darkness of the passions, receiving in thy heart the enlightenment of the Spirit.

Fed with heavenly bread as Elijah was fed of old by the raven, thou didst escape the noetic Jezebel, O father, fleeing to the protection of Christ.

Theotokion: The Creator and King of glory, having stained and dyed His royal robe with blood, mystically empurpled it, O Birthgiver of God.

Canon of the venerable John

Irmos: The desert of the barren Church of the nations, * blossomed like a lily * at Thy coming, O Lord, * therein hath my heart been established

Thou didst offer thy prayers to Him Who seeth all things, like fragrant incense, O venerable one; and, perfumed thereby, He accepted them and enrolled thee in the choirs of fasters.

Thou wast shown to be a magnificent wonder, O venerable one, filling the hearts of the pious with awe; for thou didst endure poverty and abuse at thy parents' gates.

Enduring all lawfully in prayers and fasting, O venerable one, thou didst clothe thyself in dispassion, humbling the reasoning of the flesh with the might of the divine Spirit.

Theotokion: The Pure One found thee to be like a myrrh-scented lily of the valley, wholly-living in hymnody and fasting, in prayers and vigils, O pure one, and He made His abode within thee, filling mankind with sweet fragrance.

Kontakion of the venerable Paul, in Tone III:

Spec. Mel.: "Today the Virgin ...":

Assembling today, let us praise in hymns * the never-failing lamp of the noetic Sun; * for shining forth upon those in the darkness of ignorance, * thou didst lead all to the divine heights, * O venerable Paul, adornment of the Thebans, * steadfast foundation of the fathers ** and the venerable.

Sessional Hymn of the venerable Paul, in Tone I:

Spec. Mel.: "Thy tomb, O Savior ...":

Hating the beauties of this world with all thy heart, and loving the one God with all thy soul, thou didst enter the desert, O Paul, as thy city of sojourning. And exercising thyself in vision alone, thou wast shown to live as an angel in the flesh. Wherefore, we honor thee.

Glory ..., that of the venerable John, in Tone III:

Spec. Mel.: "Awed by the beauty of thy virginity ...":

O blessed father, thou didst receive heavenly riches and truly everlasting glory. Wherefore, we bless thy holy repose and, celebrating thereon, we cry out to thee: Be thou mindful of us, O John, in that thou hast boldness before the Lord.

Both now ..., Theotokion in Tone III:

As an uncultivated vine, O Virgin, * thou didst sprout forth the most comely Cluster of grapes * Which poureth forth upon us the wine of salvation * making glad the souls and bodies of all. * Wherefore, ever blessing thee as the cause of good things, * with the angel we cry out to thee: ** Rejoice, O thou who art full of grace!

Stavrotheotokion: **T**hy pure unwedded Mother, O Christ, * upon seeing Thee hanging dead upon the Cross, * said, weeping maternally: * “How hath the iniquitous and thankless council of the Jews * repaid Thy many and great wonders, O my Son, * Thou Who filled them with Thy gifts? ** I hymn Thy divine condescension!”

ODE IV

Canon of the venerable Paul

Irmos: **M**ystically foreseeing Thee * incarnate of the Virgin, O Word, * the prophet cried aloud: * **G**lory to Thy power, O Lord!

Planted in the house of God, thou didst put forth the goodly fruit of the virtues and by thy fasting didst cause the uprising of the flesh to wither away.

With the fire of the love of God thou didst reduce to ashes the thorns of the passions, O father, and didst show thyself to be a dwelling-place of the Spirit.

With the rod of thy virtuous life thou didst drive away the passions like wild beasts. Wherefore, thy death brought together the wild beasts for thy burial.

Theotokion: **A** mystic robe of purple was woven of thy pure blood for the God of all, O Theotokos; and clad therein, He hath united us to God the Father.

Canon of the venerable John

Irmos: **F**rom a Virgin didst Thou come forth, not as an ambassador, * nor as an Angel, * but the very Lord himself incarnate, * and didst save me, the whole man; * wherefore I cry unto Thee: * **G**lory to Thy power, O Lord!

Thou wast shown to be a treasure hidden in poor rags, O divinely inspired one; for thou didst love the vesture of God, and clad therein, thou hast entered the bridal-chamber on high.

Receiving the seed of heaven, O divinely inspired one, in the furrow of thy heart thou didst cultivate the comely grain which feedeth to repletion the minds of those who with veneration honor thy memory.

Of thine own will thou didst endure in a hut most close, as poor as another Lazarus, O wondrous one. Wherefore, thou hast now found rest in the bosom of Abraham, O venerable father.

Theotokion: **D**irect the movements of my soul toward the divine commandments of Him Who shone forth from thy womb, O all-immaculate one, delivering me from the storm of the temptations of life by thy mediation.

ODE V

Canon of the venerable Paul

Irmos: Rising early we cry to Thee, O Lord; * save us, for Thou art our God, * and we know none other besides Thee.

O venerable one, thou didst make thine abode with God, forsaking corruptible wealth and fleeting glory.

Thy life was most honorable in the Lord, O all-blessed Paul, and thy burial most glorious.

Finishing the race of asceticism, O venerable, thou didst become a companion of the heavenly hosts.

Theotokion: We hymn thee, who wast a Virgin even after giving birth, O Theotokos, for thou hast given birth in the flesh unto God the Word for the world.

Canon of the venerable John

Irmos: O Christ my Savior, the enlightenment of those lying in the darkness of sin. * I rise early to hymn Thee O King of Peace, * enlighten me with Thy radiance, * for I know no other God than Thee.

Thou wast a stranger to the pleasures of this world and a stranger to thine own parents by thine own volition. And purifying thyself by abstinence, thou didst unite thyself to the Almighty, O father John, becoming poor in spirit.

Having enclosed thyself in a meager hut, thou didst make thyself a temple of the Holy Trinity, and didst endure, cleansing thy soul with divine teachings, ever gazing toward the ineffable goodness of God, O father John.

Thou didst show thyself to be a fulfiller of the law of God, O divinely wise father, preferring naught to His love; for neither thy brethren, nor the love of thy parents, nor riches, nor dignity, nor the sweetness of the flesh weakened thee.

Theotokion: Thou hast given birth incorruptibly to Emmanuel, the Master of all, O Virgin Mother, remaining a virgin even after giving birth. Him do thou unceasingly entreat, that He deliver those who flee to thy protection from the temptations of the enemy.

ODE VI

Canon of the venerable Paul

Irmos: O Thou that puttest on light as a garment * grant me also a robe of light, * O All-merciful Christ, our God.

Stretching forth thy hands to God, O venerable one, thou didst offer Him thy soul, pleasing Him day and night.

The armies of heaven, the ranks of the prophets and the holy apostles glorified thy repose, O venerable father.

Flying before the tempest of the passions with the sail of extreme asceticism, O venerable one, thou didst make for the calm harbor of Christ.

Theotokion: O thou who alone hast given birth to the Word in the flesh, at the word of the archangel, deliver our souls, we pray, from the snares of the enemy.

Canon of the venerable John

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

Thou didst cast down the prideful serpent with the sword of humble-mindedness, O all-blessed one; and, exalted in spirit, thou hast made thine abode in the mansions of everlasting life.

Thou wast full of the gifts of the Spirit and, as one knowledgeable, most wise and greatly inclined toward God, thou didst subdue evil spirits.

Shining from the heights of dispassion, O father John, strengthened by God thou didst endure enclosure in a meager hut and the abuse directed at thee.

Theotokion: From thy womb, O pure one, thou gavest flesh to the Word Who is co-enthroned with the Father and, with Him, is the Creator. And He hath borne our whole nature, in His ineffable compassion.

Kontakion of the venerable John, in Tone II:

Spec. Mel.: "Seeking the highest ...":

Loving the riches which cannot be stolen, O most wise John, * thou didst hate the riches of thy parents; * and, holding the Gospel in thy hands, * thou didst follow after Christ God, ** praying unceasingly for us all.

Ikos: Who is able to hymn thy labors and pangs, thy many works, thy glory and greatness as is meet? Yet by thy right acceptable prayers to God grant me now the grace of the Spirit, O all-blessed one, that I may faithfully recount thy struggles which transcend nature, and may hymn thine endurance and firmness of conscience, which pass all telling, wherewith thou didst put the deceitful enemy to shame. Cease thou never to pray for us all.

ODE VII

Canon of the venerable Paul

Irmos: O Thou who in the beginning founded the earth * and by Thy word made the heavens firm, * blessed art Thou throughout the ages, * O Lord God of our Fathers.

Subjecting the mind of the flesh to the spirit, the venerable one cried out: blessed art Thou throughout the ages, O Lord God of our fathers!

Saved from the snares of the enemy, O venerable one, thou didst cry out in joy: Blessed art Thou throughout the ages, O Lord God of our fathers!

Having trampled all the flame of the passions underfoot by fasting, the venerable one cried out: Blessed art Thou throughout the ages, O Lord God of our fathers!

Theotokion: Blessed art Thou throughout the ages, O Lord God of our fathers, Who made the Virgin heaven, shining forth from her like the sun.

Canon of the venerable John

Irmos: The godless order of the lawless tyrant * fanned the roaring flame; * but Christ bedewed the God-fearing children with the Spirit, * therefore He is greatly blessed and supremely exalted.

Thou didst choose the narrow path over that which is broad, O right glorious one, and, rejoicing, thou didst endure abuse before the gates of thy parents, afflicted with many pangs, O divinely blessed one.

Thou didst adorn thyself with most beautiful ascents, mortifying the understanding of the flesh, O wise one. Wherefore, thou hast made thine abode in the heavens, ever numbered among the choirs of the honored fathers, O right wondrous one.

Treading the paths which lead to divine rest, thou didst avoid the defiles of the demons, protected by divine grace, O blessed one; and thou didst cry out: Blessed art Thou and exceedingly glorious!

Theotokion: We hymn thy birthgiving, O blessed one, whereby we have been delivered from the ancient condemnation; and thee alone do we bless, O blessed of God, whom He Who is blessed and exceedingly glorious hath loved.

ODE VIII

Canon of the venerable Paul

Irmos: The Beginningless King of glory, * before Whom tremble all the hosts of heaven, * ye priests sing and ye peoples * supremely exalt throughout all ages.

Fasting in the desert, thou didst emulate the divinely wise John the forerunner; and with him thou hast been deemed worthy to receive truly everlasting life.

With the dew of abstinence thou didst extinguish the furnace of the passions, O our father, reverently crying aloud: Ye people, supremely exalt Christ throughout all ages!

Thou didst truly make the desert a garden of paradise, excelling therein in every virtue. Wherefore, thou hast been vouchsafed the sweetness of paradise.

Theotokion: As thou hast boldness before God, O all-praised Mary, Mother of God, entreat Him to deliver from tribulations those who hymn thee with faith.

Canon of the venerable John

Irmos: God Who descended into the fiery furnace * with the Hebrew children, * and transformed the flame into dew, * do ye works hymn, * and supremely exalt as Lord throughout all ages.

When thou didst wear rags, O John, thou didst weave for thyself a robe embroidered with the virtues; and clothed in the garb of a pauper, thou didst take on the appearance of a beggar, enduring abuse at the gates of thy parents.

Blameless as another Job, thou didst suffer affliction at thy parents' gates, enduring the mockery of their servants as he had the dunghill, O wise one; and thou wast subjected to starvation and thirst. Wherefore, thou hast inherited the kingdom on high.

Thou didst follow the Gospel which thou didst hold in thy hands, O blessed one, and impoverish thyself, being sad of countenance all thy life. Thou wast meek and innocent, and art an heir to the kingdom on high.

Theotokion: **O** pure one, thou pourest forth an ever-flowing stream upon us who have recourse to thee; and drawing forth abundant grace therefrom, we hymn thy birthgiving, O pure one, and supremely exalt it throughout all ages.

ODE IX

Canon of the venerable Paul

Irmos: **O** thou who received the Invisible One divine in appearance, * **O unwedded Virgin and Mother, * with hymns we magnify thy birthgiving.**

God revealed thee to Anthony like a hidden mystic treasure, O venerable one, unto our glory and joy.

Nailing thyself to the fear of God, O venerable father, and having finished thy life with an instruction on death, thou hast been deemed worthy of life.

As thou hast acquired boldness before God, pray for those on earth who keep this thy memorial with faith, a blessed Paul.

Theotokion: **O** Virgin who conceived and ineffably hast given birth to Christ, Who with the Father and the Holy Spirit is beginningless: pray thou that we be saved.

Canon of the venerable John

Irmos: **The Son of the Beginningless Father, God and Lord, * hath appeared to us incarnate of a Virgin, * to enlighten those in darkness, * and to gather the dispersed; * therefore the all-hymned Theotokos do we magnify.**

“The Lord is my strength and my song,” thou didst cry. “In Him do I vanquish the prince of darkness; and I fear not his imaginary deceits, thinking only of the unapproachable beauty of God.”

Like rich soil thy heart received the heavenly seed in its noetic furrows, O venerable one, and bore fruit a hundredfold, feeding all the souls who with faith honor thee, O blessed of God.

The Lord hallowed thee from thy mother's womb, O blessed one, and directed thy steps toward Him. Wherefore, thou hast been numbered among the venerable who lived piously. With them thou dost now enjoy deification, O most glorious one.

Theotokion: Thy womb became the dwelling-place of the Light, whereby those who sit in darkness have seen the light. Wherefore, with unceasing voices we ever hymn and honor thee with love, O Mother of God, as the hope of our souls.

Exapostilarion of the venerable John:

Spec. Mel.: “Hearken, ye women ...”:

O father John, forsaking thy paternal attachment, and transitory wealth, thou didst take up thy cross and zealously follow after Christ, slaying the passions by fasting, and making haste to dispassion, thou dost ever pray for us, O God-bearer.

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

Thou O all-hymned Maiden, * hath given birth to Christ, the King of glory, * the Angel of the Father’s great counsel, * Whose Cross the venerable fasters took upon themselves, * following in His footsteps. ** With them do thou unceasingly pray for us, O Theotokos.

On the Aposticha, the Stichera of the Oktoechos, and Glory ..., in Tone VIII:

We honor thee, O Paul our father, as the instructor of a multitude of monks; for, following thy steps, we have truly learned to walk aright. Blessed art thou who didst labor for Christ and put down the power of the enemy, O converser with the angels, companion of the venerable and the righteous. With them entreat the Lord, that our souls find mercy.

Both now ..., Theotokion, or this Stavrotheotokion:

Spec. Mel.: “O most glorious wonder ...”:

“What is this sight which I see, * which mine eyes behold, O Master? * How is it that Thou Who dost sustain all creation, * art lifted up upon the Tree and diest, * granting life unto all?” * thus said the Theotokos weeping, * upon seeing God and man * Who had shone forth ineffably from her ** hanging upon the Cross.

AT LITURGY

On the Beatitudes, 8 Troparia: 4 from ODE III of the canon of venerable Paul, and 4 from ODE VI of the canon of venerable John.

Looking toward God with the eye of thy soul, thou didst love Him, hating the things of earth and perfecting an angelic life. (Twice)

With rays of the virtues thou didst manifestly dispel the darkness of the passions, receiving in thy heart the enlightenment of the Spirit.

Fed with heavenly bread as Elijah was fed of old by the raven, thou didst escape the noetic Jezebel, O father, fleeing to the protection of Christ.

Thou didst cast down the prideful serpent with the sword of humble-mindedness, O all-blessed one; and, exalted in spirit, thou hast made thine abode in the mansions of everlasting life.

Thou wast full of the gifts of the Spirit and, as one knowledgeable, most wise and greatly inclined toward God, thou didst subdue evil spirits.

Shining from the heights of dispassion, O father John, strengthened by God thou didst endure enclosure in a meager hut and the abuse directed at thee.

Theotokion: From thy womb, O pure one, thou gavest flesh to the Word Who is co-enthroned with the Father and, with Him, is the Creator. And He hath borne our whole nature, in His ineffable compassion.

Troparion of the venerable fathers, in Tone IV:

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.

Kontakion of the venerable Paul, in Tone III:

Assembling today, let us praise in hymns * the never-failing lamp of the noetic Sun; * for shining forth upon those in the darkness of ignorance, * thou didst lead all to the divine heights, * O venerable Paul, adornment of the Thebans, * steadfast foundation of the fathers ** and the venerable.

Kontakion of the venerable John, in Tone II:

Loving the riches which cannot be stolen, O most wise John, * thou didst hate the riches of thy parents; * and, holding the Gospel in thy hands, * thou didst follow after Christ God, ** praying unceasingly for us all.

Prokeimenon, in Tone VII: The saints shall boast in glory, * and they shall rejoice upon their beds.

Verse: O sing unto the Lord a new song, for the Lord hath wrought wondrous things.

THE EPISTLE TO THE GALATIANS §213 (5:22-6:2)

Brethren: the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law. And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. Let us not be desirous of vainglory, provoking one another, envying one another. Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such a one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted. Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.

Alleluia, in Tone VI: Blessed is the man that feareth the Lord; in His commandments shall he greatly delight.

Verse: His seed shall be mighty upon the earth.

GOSPEL ACCORDING TO MATTHEW, §43 (11: 27-30)

The Lord said to His disciples: all things are delivered unto Me of my Father; and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal Him. Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.

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

Be it known that, following the leave-taking of the feast of the Theophany (i.e., from January 15th), until the leave-taking of the feast of the Meeting of the Lord, on Sundays and the major feasts of saints, we chant as *Katavasia*, the *Irmoi* of the canon of the Meeting.