

THE 16th DAY OF THE MONTH OF JANUARY
THE VENERATION OF THE PRECIOUS CHAINS OF THE HOLY PRE-EMINENT
APOSTLE PETER
AT VESPERS:

On “Lord, I have cried ...,” 6 Stichera of the holy apostle, in Tone IV:

Spec. Mel.: “As one valiant among the martyrs ...”:

Bound to the Lord * and imprisoned in a dungeon, * thou didst bind falsehood, O apostle. * Wherefore, we honor thee lovingly, * and with faith we kiss thy chains, * whence drawing forth health of body * and salvation of soul, * we praise thee as is meet, O thou who hast beheld God, ** converser with the incorporeal ones. (Twice)

They that are held fast in ignorance * receive understanding through thee: * the races of the gentiles * which in the beginning were widely scattered, * the image whereof was shown thee let down from on high * as a vessel wherein was contained every living creature, O apostle. * Wherefore, every generation glorifieth thee, * worshipping the chains ** which thou didst most diligently bear for Christ. (Twice)

He Whom thou didst deny when He was condemned * thou didst hymn when He rose from the dead, O apostle; * and thou didst preach * to the ends of the earth * the God and man * Who in His great goodness entered into fellowship with men. * Wherefore, we lovingly bless thee, O Peter, * worshipping the chains, O most glorious one, ** which thou didst bear for Christ. (Twice)

Glory ..., in Tone VI: the composition of Byzantius:

Today Peter, the rock of faith, the foundation of the Church, appointeth his precious chains for the piety of our souls. Come ye all and, kissing them, let us crown him with hymns of praise, chanting: Rejoice, fervent champion of the faith who confessed Christ the Son of God with ardent knowledge and much boldness! Rejoice, joy of the universe, keeper of the keys of the Kingdom of heaven, who bestowest grace upon those who lovingly honor thee and kiss thy precious chains with longing! For, standing before the throne of Christ the King of all, thou prayest on behalf of us who celebrate thy memory.

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

Spec. Mel.: “On the third day ...”:

Stavrotheotokion: **U**pon beholding our Life suspended upon the Tree, * the all-immaculate Theotokos cried aloud, * maternally lamenting: ** O my Son and my God, save those who hymn Thee!

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

Peter, the rock of faith, the fervent intercessor, doth again raise us up together to a spiritual feast, setting before us his precious chains as though they were most costly

food, unto the healing of infirmities, the consolation of the sorrowful and the harboring of the tempest-tossed. Come ye all, and, kissing them, let us entreat Him Who glorified him, saying: By his prayers, O Christ, save Thou our souls!

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

Stavrotheotokion: Upon seeing Thee crucified, O Christ, * she who gaveth birth unto Thee cried aloud: * “What is this strange mystery that I see, * O my Son How is it that Thou diest?, * suspended upon the Tree, ** O Bestower of life?”

Troparion of the holy apostle, in Tone IV:

Without leaving Rome thou art come to us * by the precious chains which thou didst bear, * O first-enthroned of the apostles; * and bowing down before them with faith we pray: ** by thy supplications unto God grant us great mercy!

AT MATINS:

Both canons from the Oktoechos (without the martyria), and the canon of the holy apostle, with 6 Troparia, the acrostic whereof is: "I hymn Peter, the foundation of the dogmas," the composition of Joseph, in Tone IV:

ODE I

Irmos: The choirs of Israel passed dry-shod across the watery deep of the Red Sea * and beholding the riders and captains of the enemy * swallowed by the waters, they cried out for joy: * 'Let us chant unto our God, for He hath been glorified.'

All the Church of Christ keepeth festival in spirit, joining chorus and praising thee with faith, and lovingly kissing the precious chains which thou didst bear when thou wast bound, thus binding the tyrant.

Fishing for mortals in the deep of deception, O Peter, thou didst draw them forth like fish unto Him Who chose thee from among the fishermen to be truly the foremost of all His disciples. Wherefore, we kiss the chains which thou didst bear.

Upon the foundation of faith didst thou build up the souls of all the faithful; and having demolished the temples of deception, O Peter, thou didst found Churches which ever honor thee out loud, and the chains which thou didst bear.

Theotokion: All the weapons of the deceitful enemy have utterly failed, O most pure Virgin, and the Word Who made His abode in thine immaculate womb was not wounded in the least. I entreat thee: let my heart now be wounded with the desire of Him most sweet.

ODE III

Irmos: The bow of the mighty hath waxed feeble * and the weak have girded themselves with strength: * therefore is my heart established * in the Lord.

Wholly united to the Light most pure through divine communion, O Peter, thou hast been shown to be a secondary luminary enlightening our souls.

Thou hast confirmed the laws of Christ and taught observance of the law unto the most iniquitous ones, as the foremost of the apostles, the immovable foundation of the dogmas.

With thy sacred tongue thou didst preach God Who suffered and was crucified on the Cross. Wherefore, O Peter, we honor the chains which bound thee.

Theotokion: The unrestrainable onslaught of death came to a halt before thee, for thou hast given birth unto the Wellspring of immortality, O Theotokos, Virgin Mother.

Kontakion of the holy apostle, in Tone II:

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

Christ the Rock doth radiantly glorify the rock of faith, * the first enthroned of His disciples; * for summoning all to celebrate the wonders of thy precious chains, * O Peter, ** He granteth the forgiveness of sins.

Sessional Hymn, in Tone IV: Spec. Mel.: “Having been lifted up ...”:

With faith do we praise thee, O apostle, as the chief of the wise apostles and the keeper of the keys to the kingdom of heaven; and with pure conscience we kiss the chains which thou didst bear as though thou wast a malefactor, O Peter, thereby setting at naught the evil deeds of the enemy. From which pray thou that we be delivered. (Twice)

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

O thou who art more exalted than the cherubim and seraphim, * and more spacious than heaven and earth, * hast been revealed to surpass creation, * visible and invisible, * in an unfathomable distinction; * for He Whom the heavens could not contain, * thou didst contain within thy womb, O pure one. ** Him do thou entreat that thy servants be saved.

Or this Stavrotheotokion: She 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: For 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.

Speaking in oration concerning the mighty works of the Master, thou didst convert the hearts of the disobedient Jews to the divine Faith, in that thou art the foundation of the Faith.

Thy journeys were known unto their Object, Him Who with most abundant love walked upon the waters, O Peter, and Who related to thee the ways of God.

As thy divine chains possess the power to heal all manner of ailments, O blessed one, we kiss them with faith, honoring thee.

Theotokion: The King of all, dwelling within thy holy womb as in a spacious palace, hath appeared incarnate, O all-immaculate Lady.

ODE V

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

By divine revelation, O all-praised one, Thou didst preach the Son Who is co-beginningless with the Father, and wast vouchsafed blessedness from the lips of the Blessed One.

When thou didst behold on Tabor the light which shone forth, blotting out the rays of the sun, thou wast illumined by that light which comest from the Light, O Peter, and hast thereby enlightened the faithful.

Thou didst preach Christ Who was dead for three days, and for Whose sake thou didst bear chains, O Peter, and deemed worthy to bow down before them, we piously honor thee.

Theotokion: Lighten now the burden of me who am heavy laden with the weight of my many sins, O most pure one, giving me strength to bear the easy yoke of Christ.

ODE VI

Irmos: Prefiguring 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.

Most wondrously didst thou endure crucifixion upside-down; for thou didst thus prepare thy feet for the path to heaven. Do thou strengthen us also to walk it, O disciple of Christ.

Thou didst make thine abode in the life of the living and, bound for its sake, didst break the bonds of Belial who had bound thee. Wherefore, we honor thy chains.

Entreat the Master of creation, O all-blessed one, to send down purification, peace and mercy upon those who glorify thee, in that thou art His most fervent disciple.

Theotokion: Our forefather hath been stripped of the skin garments of mortality, for the Creator hath robed Himself therein through thy blood, becoming incarnate in a manner past description, O all-immaculate one.

Kontakion of the holy apostle, in Tone II:

Spec. Mel.: “The Theotokos who is ever-vigilant in prayer ...”:

Let us praise the great Peter, * the preeminent and first among the apostles, * the divine disciple of the Truth, * and with faith let us kiss his chains, ** receiving release from our transgressions.

Ikos: What human tongue is able worthily to praise the great and glorious disciple of the Lord? What mind can praise him whom the Word of God blessed with a blessing? Yet what one attaineth according to his own powers, that should he bring as an offering unto God; and this I attempt to do. O ye that love the feasts of the Church, let us piously crown the first-enthroned one with hymns, receiving release from our transgressions.

ODE VII

Irmos: Of 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.

Thrice didst thou deny Christ; wherefore by a threefold question did He heal thine offense, O most glorious Peter; and He showed forth the steadfastness of many that waver.

As a prisoner for Christ thou didst have thy share of divers bonds because of thy most sweet desire. Wherefore, with faith do we bow down before thy chains which loose the passions, O Peter.

Traversing the whole world like the sun most great, O Peter, glory of the apostles, who thyself didst behold Christ, thou hast banished the profound darkness of cruel polytheism.

Thou didst glorify Christ with thy members and didst become His boast, O most glorious Peter. Wherefore, we glorify thee and bow down before the chains which bound thee.

Theotokion: **H**e that descended upon the earth like rain hath in His divine knowledge, watered the whole earth; and He hath shown thee forth, O pure Virgin, as more honorable than all the angels.

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.

Working hard hearts like the soil, O Peter, thou didst render them most fruitful for the Husbandman of creation Who gave thee the divine keys and the authority to loose and bind transgressions.

We ever bless thee, O Peter, and we venerate the chains which thou didst bear as though a malefactor, slaying the prince of evil and binding him with thy chains, O apostle.

Preserving the fullness of the Church by thine immovable rock of faith, O Peter, drive temptations from its midst and ask a peaceful estate therefore, O blessed Peter.

Thou didst splendidly preach Him Who bound Hades and death with His bonds and most pure sufferings; wherefore, O all-blessed one, we are sanctified, kissing thy chains.

Trinitarian: **L**ike the ranks of heaven we now cry out with thrice-holy voices, glorifying the Father, the Cause of all, and the Son and the Spirit: one Essence, one Power, and one Activity.

Theotokion: **I**n writing, the prophet described thee beforehand as a noetic candlestick bearing the divine Candle which hath illumined those who before were darkened by the darkness of evil, O Birthgiver of God.

ODE IX

Irmos: Thy birthgiving was revealed to be incorrupt, * God came forth from thy womb, * and He appeared upon earth in mortal flesh * and dwelt among mankind; * Wherefore we all magnify thee, O Theotokos.

Thou wast deemed worthy to behold things afar off for which thou didst faithfully hope, O Peter; and, rejoicing, thou hast received honors for thy labors from God Who is the Lover of mankind, and Whose divine suffering thou didst depict with thy flesh.

As the divine keeper of the keys of the kingdom, open the gates thereof unto those who faithfully honor thee on earth and kiss the precious chains wherewith thou wast bound, O Peter.

Whilst thou wast with the Son on Tabor, thou wast deemed worthy to hear the voice of the Father reveal Him; for thy heart, cleansed by the divine Spirit, was most gloriously illumined, O Peter.

O Peter, ask thou cleansing, release from debts and the delight of the kingdom of heaven for us who with love honor thee and kiss the chains with which thou wast bound.

Theotokion: Thou wast the abode of the Light, O Maiden; wherefore, by thy light guide me who am darkened by all the temptations of the enemy, that I may magnify thee with faith, O all-pure Virgin Mother.

Exapostilarion of the holy apostle:

Spec. Mel.: “By the Spirit in the sanctuary ...”:

O most blessed Peter, chief among the apostles, loose me, who am bound by the chains of the passions, wretch that I am, as once the angel of God loosed thy chains, most gloriously leading thee forth from the dungeon wherein thou wast imprisoned, O blessed one.

Theotokion: O all-immaculate Virgin, thou art known as a Mother, for thou hast given birth unto God and man in a manner transcending nature; and thine Offspring hath become the salvation of those who chant with love: Glory, honor and worship are due to the unapproachable and divine Trinity!

On the Aposticha, Stichera from the Oktoechos, and Glory ..., the composition of John the Monk, in Tone IV:

By His thrice put question, “Lovest thou Me, O Peter?”, Christ set aright thy threefold denial. Then Simon said to Him Who knoweth the secrets of men: “O Lord, Thou knowest all things; Thou knowest that I love Thee.” Then the Savior said to Him: “Feed my sheep; feed Mine elect; feed My lambs, which I have acquired for salvation by Mine own blood.” Him do thou entreat, O divinely blessed apostle, that He grant us great mercy.

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

Spec. Mel.: “As valiant among the martyrs ...”:

Upon beholding Thee, * the Lamb and Shepherd, upon the Tree, * the ewe-lamb who bore Thee lamented, * and maternally exclaimed to Thee: * “O most desired Son, * how is it that Thou art suspended upon the tree of the Cross? * How is it that Thine arms and legs are nailed * by the iniquitous ones, O long-suffering Word, ** and that Thou hast shed Thy blood, O Master?”

AT LITURGY:

On the Beatitudes, 8 Troparia, 4 from ODE III and 4 from ODE VI of the canon of the holy apostle.

Wholly united to the Light most pure through divine communion, O Peter, thou hast been shown to be a secondary luminary enlightening our souls. (Twice)

Thou hast confirmed the laws of Christ and taught observance of the law unto the most iniquitous ones, as the foremost of the apostles, the immovable foundation of the dogmas.

With thy sacred tongue thou didst preach God Who suffered and was crucified on the Cross. Wherefore, O Peter, we honor the chains which bound thee.

Most wondrously didst thou endure crucifixion upside-down; for thou didst thus prepare thy feet for the path to heaven. Do thou strengthen us also to walk it, O disciple of Christ.

Thou didst make thine abode in the life of the living and, bound for its sake, didst break the bonds of Belial who had bound thee. Wherefore, we honor thy chains.

Entreat the Master of creation, O all-blessed one, to send down purification, peace and mercy upon those who glorify thee, in that thou art His most fervent disciple.

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Without leaving Rome thou art come to us * by the precious chains which thou didst bear, * O first-enthroned of the apostles; * and bowing down before them with faith we pray: ** by thy supplications unto God grant us great mercy!

ODE III, Kontakion of the holy apostle, in Tone II:

Christ the Rock doth radiantly glorify the rock of faith, * the first enthroned of His disciples; * for summoning all to celebrate the wonders of thy precious chains, * O Peter, ** He granteth the forgiveness of sins.

ODE VI, Kontakion of the holy apostle, in Tone II:

Let us praise the great Peter, * the preeminent and first among the apostles, * the divine disciple of the Truth, * and with faith let us kiss his chains, ** receiving release from our transgressions.

Prokeimenon, in Tone VIII: Their sound hath gone forth into all the earth, * and their words unto the ends of the world.

Verse: The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament proclaimeth the work of His hands.

ACTS OF THE APOSTLES, §29 (12:1-11)

At that time: Herod the king stretched forth his hands to vex certain of the church. And he killed James the brother of John with the sword. And because he saw it pleased the Jews, he proceeded further to take Peter also. (Then were the days of unleavened bread.) And when he had apprehended him, he put him in prison, and delivered him to four quaternions of soldiers to keep him; intending after Easter to bring him forth to the people. Peter therefore was kept in prison: but prayer was made without ceasing of the church unto God for him. And when Herod would have brought him forth, the same night Peter was sleeping between two soldiers, bound with two chains: and the keepers before the door kept the prison. And, behold, the angel of the Lord came upon him, and a light shined in the prison: and he smote Peter on the side, and raised him up, saying, Arise up quickly. And his chains fell off from his hands. And the angel said unto him, Gird thyself, and bind on thy sandals. And so he did. And he saith unto him, Cast thy garment about thee, and follow me. And he went out, and followed him; and wist not that it was true which was done by the angel; but thought he saw a vision. When they were past the first and the second ward, they came unto the iron gate that leadeth unto the city; which opened to them of his own accord: and they went out, and passed on through one street; and forthwith the angel departed from him. And when Peter was come to himself, he said, Now I know of a surety, that the LORD hath sent his angel, and hath delivered me out of the hand of Herod, and from all the expectation of the people of the Jews.

Alleluia, in Tone I: The heavens shall confess Thy wonders, O Lord, and Thy truth in the congregation of saints.

Verse: God Who is glorified in the council of the saints.

GOSPEL ACCORDING TO JOHN, §67 (21:15-23)

At that time: having dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my lambs. He saith to him again the second time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my sheep. He saith unto him the third time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed my sheep. Verily, verily, I say unto thee, When thou wast young, thou girdest thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldest: but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldest not. This spake he, signifying by

what death he should glorify God. And when he had spoken this, he saith unto him, Follow me. Then Peter, turning about, seeth the disciple whom Jesus loved following; which also leaned on his breast at supper, and said, Lord, which is he that betrayeth thee? Peter seeing him saith to Jesus, Lord, and what shall this man do? Jesus saith unto him, If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? follow thou me. Then went this saying abroad among the brethren, that that disciple should not die: yet Jesus said not unto him, He shall not die; but, If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee?

Communion verse: Their sound hath gone forth into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world.