

THE 28th DAY OF THE MONTH OF OCTOBER

COMMEMORATION OF THE HOLY MARTYRS TERENCE & NEONILLA

COMMEMORATION OF OUR VENERABLE FATHER STEPHEN THE SABBATTE, THE
COMPOSER OF CANONS

AT VESPERS

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

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

Manfully partaking * of multifarious torments, * ye cast down the uprisings of the enemy, * confessing before the tyrants * Him Who for our sake * appeared in the coarseness of the flesh, * Who willingly endured most pure sufferings * and hath poured forth upon the world ** enlightenment and dispassion, O blessed ones.

With Terence shone forth * the glorious Neonilla, * the wondrous Nitus and Sarbelus, * and with them Photus and Hierax: * who suffered lawfully, * quenching the fire of torments with the divine dew of the Spirit, * becoming pillars of piety, * right-acceptable sacrifices ** and most pure offerings.

Like a sun of surpassing brilliance * thou didst join with the moon, Neonilla, * and didst beget, O Terence, * a choir of seven stars * who were stained with the blood of martyrdom * and emit splendid radiance, * and who have made their abode in never-waning peace, * where the flock of all the spiritual athletes ** joineth chorus in splendor.

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

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

O God-bearing father Stephen, * having most splendidly strengthened thy mind with divine thought, * with righteousness thou didst direct all the power of thy soul * against anger with courage * and against desire with chastity. * And with love of wisdom * thou didst fashion an all-comely chariot of the virtues, * and, seated therein, thou didst ascend on high, rejoicing, ** O glorious one.

O God-bearing father Stephen, * thou didst enlighten thy mind * with theology, * directing thine anger like a spear * against the blasphemous heretics, O venerable father * and, desiring the food of heaven, * thou hast been deemed worthy to partake thereof, O wondrous one, * standing before the throne of the Almighty, ** the King of all.

O God-bearing father Stephen, * ever satisfying thy mind with abstinence, * thou didst cause it to hasten to the prime Cause, * and didst spurn the tumult of the world, * avoiding the turmoil thereof, * truly mingling purity of mind * with uttermost desire, * O all-wise one, ** who art venerable and divinely wise.

Glory ..., Both now ..., Theotokion, in the same melody:

I beseech thee, * the vessel of virginity * and habitation of God, pure, beautiful and most precious: * Calm thou my soul, * which hath been afflicted by the venom of the serpent * and is mortified by my transgressions, * that I may glorify thee * who hast magnified all the faithful, ** O divinely joyous one.

Stavrotheotokion: “**W**hat 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.

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 one, in Tone VIII:

Teacher of Orthodoxy, instructor of piety and chastity, * luminary of the Church, God-inspired instructor of Hierarchs, * O most wise Stephen, thou hast illumined all by thy teaching; ** entreat Christ God that our souls be saved.

Both now ..., Theotokion, or Stavrotheotokion.

AT MATINS

One canon from the Oktoechos; and two canons for the saints, with 8 Troparia.

ODE I

Canon of the martyrs, in Tone IV:

Irmos: I shall open my mouth, * and be filled with the Spirit, * and utter discourse to the Queen and Mother; * and be seen radiantly keeping festival, * joyfully praising her wonders.

Tempest-tossed on the abyss of sin, O Lover of mankind, I lift up the eyes of my heart to the only abyss of Thy compassion: direct and save me through the supplications of the spiritual athletes.

The never-waning Sun showed you to be stars in the firmament of His Church, illumining the fullness thereof with the radiance of your struggles, O all-praised martyrs.

Terence and Nitus, Sarbelus, Theodulus and Hierax, Neonilla and the wondrous Belle, Eunice and Photus became champions of the Faith, the foundation of the Church.

Theotokion: In that thou didst receive the fullness of the whole Godhead, O all-immaculate one, thou hast been revealed to be the mediatrix of joy for us; wherefore, with the angels we all cry out to thee: Rejoice, O divinely joyous one.

Canon of the venerable one, 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.

With divine light dispel thou all the darkness of my despondency, O father Stephen, granting me the divine grace to hymn thy memory.

Thou didst have a taste for the virtues alone, O Stephen, for thou didst utterly reject the evil of the world, cleaving unto God from childhood.

Bringing thyself wholly to Christ the Savior as a splendid sacrifice through abstinence, O glorious one, in a God-pleasing manner thou didst become a partaker of immortal life.

Theotokion: O most pure Theotokos, joy of all, O undefiled one who contained God within thy womb, pray thou, that we who hymn thee be delivered from our enemies.

ODE III

Canon of the holy martyrs

Irmos: Not in wisdom, nor in power do we glory, * but we glory in Thee O Christ, * the Hypostatic Wisdom of the Father, * for there is none more holy than Thee, O Lover of mankind.

Uniting himself to Neonilla, like the sun with the most radiant moon, the glorious Terence begat a choir of seven martyrs of Christ like stars.

The breaking of thy limbs crushed the bones of delusion like dust, O spiritual athlete Terence, and won for thee ineffable glory.

Having furnished thyself with wings of gold, O Eunice, thou didst escape the wiles of the iniquitous pursuers and came to dwell within the noetic bridal-chamber.

Theotokion: The Wisdom of God, having acquired thee as a most pure habitation, became incarnate from thy pure blood and showed thee forth as incorrupt even after birthgiving.

Canon of the venerable one

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.

From thy childhood the desert purified thee through the forethought of God, O Stephen, who avoided the carnal passions which defile a man's soul in this life.

The ascetics whose life was heavenly, upon receiving thee, O blessed one, made thee steadfast in divine wisdom through the fear of the Lord.

Submitting to the fathers' teachings of wisdom, O father, thou didst set the fear of God as the foundation of thy heavenly life.

Theotokion: Without seed thou didst conceive the Savior and Lord Who delivereth from corruption us who truly hymn thee, O Bride of God.

Kontakion of the venerable one, in Tone IV:

Spec. Mel.: "Having been lifted up ...":

Thou didst plant a garden of the virtues * and water it with the torrents of thy tears, O all-glorious Stephen, * having received the tree of life, * save thy flock from corruption by thy supplications * and deliver from evil circumstances those who fervently honor thee; * for through faith and love, O wise one, ** we have acquired thee as an intercessor most great.

Sessional Hymn of the martyrs, in Tone VIII:

Spec. Mel.: "Of the Wisdom ...":

As radiant stars shine with the sun, the sacred children of Terence manifestly shine with him and illumine creation, valiantly resplendent in their courageous struggles; and they dispel the night of polytheism. With gladness and faith we bless them as favorites of God, and we cry aloud: O all-praised spiritual athletes, entreat Christ God, that He grant remission of sins unto those who honor thy holy memory with love.

Glory ..., Sessional Hymn of the venerable one, in Tone V:

Spec. Mel.: "The co-beginningless Word ...":

Having adorned thy life with abstinence and mortified the passions, thou didst trample underfoot the assaults of the enemy, O father Stephen; and, offering thyself to God, thou wast revealed to be a worker of wonders, joining chorus with the angels in everlasting glory. With them do thou unceasingly pray that we find mercy.

Both now ..., Theotokion, in Tone V:

O fervent and invincible intercessor, * diligent and unashamed hope, * rampart, protection and haven * of those who have recourse to thee, * O pure Ever-virgin do thou, together with the angels, * entreat thy Son and God, ** that He grant peace, salvation and great mercy to the world.

Stavrotheotokion: Beholding Thee suspended on the Cross between two thieves of Thine own will, O Christ, Thy Mother, her womb rent asunder maternally, said: “O my sinless Son, how is it that Thou art unjustly nailed to the Cross like a malefactor, desiring to give life to the human race, in that Thou art compassionate?”

ODE IV

Canon of the holy 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!

Steered by the hand of the Almighty, ye crossed the deep of torments without foundering, reaching the calm haven of the kingdom on high, O martyrs.

O all-praised martyrs, with the weaponry of faith ye cast down the prideful tyrant who vaunted himself in the might of his ungodliness; and ye chanted: Glory to Thy power, O Lord!

The choir of the seven brethren with their two parents were an unblemished sacrifice to Thee Who wast wondrously slain for their sake, O Christ Master, and brought themselves to Thee like lambs.

Theotokion: He Who created all things by His will desired to take form through thee in a manner past all telling, O thou who knewest not wedlock, saving those who cry out with faith: Glory to Thy power, O Lord!

Canon of the venerable one

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

Thou didst make all the wisdom of thy flesh subject to the divine laws of the Spirit, O wise Stephen, and by thy discourse hast driven off the irrational assaults of the passions.

O Stephen, with waves of wrath thou didst make war upon the enemy, and set thy desire upon God alone, Whom thou didst love.

Thou didst behold the radiant light of dispassion, O venerable Stephen, and, guided by grace, shed the gloomy darkness of the passions.

Pondering in thy mind the things that are to come, thou didst spurn the senselessness of transitory things. Wherefore, through thy pangs thou hast inherited all that is everlasting.

Theotokion: O pure Virgin, entreat God to Whom thou hast given birth, that He grant thy servants forgiveness of offenses and deliverance from the adversary.

ODE V

Canon of the holy 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.

Having acquired Thee as their strength, O Lord, the martyrs manfully overcame laceration, wounds, fire, and death.

O sacred children! O God-pleasing immolations! O company who have destroyed the intricate wiles of the enemy who wagemeth war upon us!

Thou didst crown thy head with immortal victories, O goodly virgin Eunice, vanquishing the serpent who vanquished Eve.

Theotokion: O all-immaculate one, thou hast given birth for us to the timeless Light, the Effulgence of the Father, Who in the richness of His goodness came under time.

Canon of the venerable one

Irmos: Illumine us O Lord with Thy commandments, * and with Thine arm raised on high * grant us Thy peace, * O Lover of mankind!

Thou wast revealed to be like a luminary shining forth from the heavens upon those who hymn thee, driving away the darkness of evil deeds and disclosing the radiance of divine activity.

O father Stephen, thou hast attained vigilant prayer and all night vigil, the earnest uplifting of thy hands and a well-spring of tears.

Thou hast truly been shown to be a radiant beacon of the desert, O Stephen, enlightening those held fast in the darkness of evils.

Theotokion: Ever beseech thy Son and our God, O pure Mary who knewest not wedlock, that He send down mercy upon us, the faithful.

ODE VI

Canon of the holy 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.

Mercilessly commanding that the martyrs be stretched out and bound to wheels for multifarious tortures, the tyrant was put to shame, seeing them to be invincible.

Cast to the wild beasts for devouring, O saints, by your unceasing supplications ye made them more tame than lambs, and were in nowise harmed by them.

Let Sarbelus, Neonilla, Photus and Theodulus, Belle, Hierax and Eunice, the godly Nitus and Terence be piously praised as valiant martyrs.

Theotokion: The bush, surrounded on all sides by fire, yet in nowise consumed, prefigured the great mystery of thy birthgiving which passeth understanding, O all-hymned Virgin.

Canon of the venerable one

Irmos: Thou O Lord, didst place Jonah alone within the sea monster. * Do Thou save me, * who am ensnared in the nets of the enemy, * as thou didst save him from corruption.

Thou wast seen feeding a doe with thine own hands, O Stephen; for, having shaken off the passions of the soul, thou didst come to reign over wild beasts as Adam had of old in Eden.

Preparing thine inward parts as a habitation for Christ in the chamber of thy soul, O Stephen, and restraining thy tongue, thou didst utterly mortify the carnal pleasures.

Thou wast crowned with the victor's crowns of fasting, O Stephen; for thou didst vanquish hordes of the demons and set at naught the assaults of the passions, O blessed one.

Theotokion: In a manner past understanding thou didst render the Lord, Who became incarnate in thy womb, merciful to thy servants by thy supplications, O pure one, that we may be delivered from dread torment.

Kontakion of the holy martyrs, in Tone IV:

Spec. Mel.: "Having been lifted up ...":

Today the honored memorial of the martyrs, * Terence the most wise and his company, hath arrived, bringing gladness to all; * wherefore, let us receive healing, * for they have received from the Holy Spirit ** the grace to heal the infirmities and pain of our souls.

ODE VII

Canon of the holy martyrs

Irmos: In 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.

Cast into the furnace of torments, O martyrs, by your patience ye obtained dew from heaven, crying out in thanksgiving: Blessed art Thou in the temple of Thy glory, O Lord!

Having the wisdom of their souls rooted in the rock of the immutable Faith of Christ, by their supplication the martyrs called forth an earthquake, setting at naught the savagery of the ungodly.

Suspended aloft, your sides mightily lacerated, most cruelly given vinegar to drink and burned with fire, O blessed and glorious ones, ye consumed all delusion like tinder.

Theotokion: He Who clotheth the sky with clouds hath shown thee to be heaven on earth, O most pure one, for through thee He clothed Himself wholly in man and doth deify me in His boundless tender compassion.

Canon of the venerable one

Irmos: Thou didst bedew the Children in the furnace, * and Thou didst preserve Thy Mother as a Virgin after childbirth: * Blessed art Thou, O Lord God of our fathers.

The grace of the incorrupt Trinity, truly finding thee to be a chosen vessel, as it desired, O Stephen, rested in thee, enriched thee with gifts and hath shown thee to be a physician healing the passions of the soul.

O initiate of the mysteries of the most radiant Godhead, seer partaking of the ineffable glory of God: grant enlightenment to us who celebrate thy memory with faith, O most blessed Stephen, favorite of Christ.

Tracing the sign of the Cross in the dry earth with thy staff, like Moses, O Stephen, thou didst cause water to pour forth for thy thirsty disciple, chanting to Christ Almighty: O God of our fathers, Blessed art Thou!

Theotokion: It was fitting that thou pass over to Him Who became incarnate of thee without seed, O pure and undefiled Mary, having shone forth more brightly than the sun; for thou didst bear God Almighty in thine arms, O blessed one.

ODE VIII

Canon of the holy 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.

The godly martyrs, receiving divine coolness from heaven, braved the fire, illumined with the light of the divine Spirit, and showed the frenzy of the horses to be without effect. Let us praise them as is meet, O ye faithful.

A multitude of angels appeared, manifestly strengthening you in the arena, O all-praised martyrs, taking away your pain; and with them ye cried aloud the hymn of the youths: Bless the Lord, all ye works of the Lord!

Having the eye of thy heart directed vigilantly toward God, O Sarbelus, thou didst endure the plucking out of thine eyes, denouncing the tyrant who was held fast in the darkness of ungodliness: Wherefore, we all bless thee as a child of the Day.

Theotokion: At the Father's good pleasure thou didst receive the Son in thy womb when thou wast overshadowed by the divine Spirit, O most pure one; and having given birth, thou didst remain as pure as thou wast before conceiving. To Him do thou pray unceasingly, O Virgin, that all be delivered from corruption and tribulation.

Canon of the venerable one

Irmos: The instruments of music sounded out in harmony, * and countless multitudes worshipped the image in Dura; * but the three Children, refusing to bow in obeisance, * hymn and glorify the Lord throughout all ages.

Thou didst submit to the Lord in the constancy of thy blameless life, O blessed one, and, strengthened thereby, thou didst subdue the enemy and trample them under thy feet, wielding thy pangs like weapons against them.

Possessing a uniform life, simple and upright habits, an innocent demeanor and a God-loving mind, thou didst show forth the word of truth; wherefore, hymning thee, we supremely exalt Christ throughout the ages.

Thou didst love God with all thy soul, O father, and didst turn away from tumult; and going about the trackless deserts, thou didst please Him Whom thou didst love alone, for Whose sake thou didst account all things as but dung.

Theotokion: Knowing thee fully to be the Virgin Mother of God in a manner past all telling, we hymn thee most piously, chanting with faith: Hymn the Lord and exalt supremely Him throughout the ages!

ODE IX

Canon of the holy 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.

Ye have been revealed to be a garden of paradise having in your midst the tree of life, a well-spring pouring forth drops of healing, and a river truly full of the divine waters of the Spirit, O saints.

O martyrs, ye have been revealed to be pillars of the Church of Christ, most calm havens for those who are tempest-tossed on the abyss of evils, nurturers of the world and companions of the angels.

Ye dwell with joy in the mansions of heaven, gazing together upon inconceivable beauties and enjoying true deification, O crowned ones of great renown.

Theotokion: O Birthgiver of God, who art more spacious than the heavens, holier than the cherubim and more honorable than all creation, entreat God, to Whom thou hast given birth, on behalf of us who honor thee.

Canon of the venerable one

Irmos: O ye people, with glory let us honor the pure Theotokos, * who received the fire of the Divinity in her womb * yet remained unconsumed, * let us magnify her with hymns.

Thou didst walk the narrow path than which naught in the world is more needful; wherefore, thou hast entered into Eden, the spacious place of rest.

Thou hast been revealed to be most fortunate, O blessed Stephen, for as is meet thou hast been crowned in the heavens with a wreath of glory, hymning Him Who crowned thee.

Thy wondrous life hath shone forth, as fragrant as a rose in a garden, radiantly illumining those who honor thee like a beacon in the air, O all-blessed one.

Theotokion: O ye faithful, in hymns let us all magnify the Virgin Theotokos Who ineffably bore God the Savior in her womb.

AT LITURGY

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.

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Teacher of Orthodoxy, instructor of piety and chastity, * luminary of the Church, God-inspired instructor of Hierarchs, * O most wise Stephen, thou hast illumined all by thy teaching; * entreat Christ God that our souls be saved.

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