

THE 18th DAY OF THE MONTH OF DECEMBER
COMMEMORATION OF THE HOLY MARTYR SEBASTIAN & HIS COMPANY
AT VESPERS

On “Lord, I have cried ...,” 3 Stichera of the holy martyrs, in Tone I:
Spec. Mel.: “O all-praised martyrs ...”:

With the dye of thy precious blood * thou didst make for thyself a costly robe of purple, * and, having arrayed thyself therein, * thou truly dwellest * in the kingdom on high, * standing before God, the King of all. * Him do thou entreat, that He grant unto our souls ** peace and great mercy.

With Sebastian there suffered Zoe, * Mark and Marcellinus, * and the divinely wise Tiburtius, * enduring threefold waves of torments; * and they have now made their abode * in divine peace devoid of pain, * wherein they pray that peace and great mercy ** be granted to our souls.

O blessed invincible martyrs, * having forsaken earthly things, * ye have hastened to the heavens, * adorned with your wounds * and splendidly arrayed * in your honored sufferings. * Wherefore, pray ye, that peace and great mercy ** be granted to our souls.

But if Alleluia be chanted at Matins instead of “God is the Lord ...,” we chant the following Stichera of the Theotokos before the foregoing, in the same melody:

Incorruptibly didst thou give birth unto God * Who hath destroyed corruption * and poured forth incorruption, * O incorrupt and undefiled one. * Wherefore, I beseech thee: By thy prayers, O pure one, * renew me who have become corrupt through wicked deeds, * that with love I may glorify and magnify thee ** who hast exalted our race.

O all-hymned Lady, * thou hope and confirmation, * refuge and help of the faithful, * thee do we entreat: From all misfortune keep thou thy servants * that worship thy birthgiving with faith, * and pray thou unto Christ, * that He grant our souls ** peace and great mercy.

Alas! What shall become of me * who have defiled mind, soul and body with transgressions? * What shall I do? * How will I be able to avoid the unquenchable flame * and the everlasting and unbreakable bonds? * But before the end * entreat thy Son, O all-immaculate one, ** to grant me forgiveness.

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

In thy womb * thou didst bear Christ, * the Fire of the divinity, O all-pure one. * Him do thou now beseech, * that He quench the easily kindled matter of my passions, * deliver me from everlasting fire, * and grant me the splendor of the righteous ** when He cometh to judge all things.

Stavrotheotokion: **O**nce, when the unblemished Virgin * beheld on the Tree * Him to Whom she had given birth from her seedless womb, * unable to endure the wounding of her womb, she said, rending her hair: * “O Thou Who sustainest all creation, * how hast Thou been uplifted upon the Cross * as one condemned, ** desiring to save mankind in every way?”

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.

AT MATINS

Both canons from the Oktoechos, and that of the martyrs, with 4 Troparia, the acrostic whereof is: "I wisely render divine honor to thee, O martyr," the composition of Joseph, in Tone I:

ODE I

Irmos: Thy victorious right arm, * in a manner befitting God, * hath been glorified in strength, O Immortal One; * for in its infinite strength it shattered the enemy, * fashioning anew a path for the Israelites through the deep.

Illumined by the divine rays of the adored Trinity, O ever-memorable one, do thou by thy supplications, show forth as partakers of the light those who with faith honor thy luminous and sacred feast.

Possessed of a mind radiant and, replete with honorable effulgence, as one sensible and wise, O martyred spiritual athlete, thine only desire was He Who Is, and through faith thou didst receive Him.

With divine beads of sweat thou didst truly blot out the reasoning of thy flesh, and with the blood of thy suffering thou didst dry up the turgid streams of polytheism, O most noetically rich and divinely wise martyr.

By thy divine teachings thou didst lead to the master a regiment of spiritual athletes, casting down all the impiety of the tyrants by the grace of the Holy Spirit; and with them thou prayest that we be saved.

Theotokion: Thou hast given birth to a little Babe - Him Who hath been with the Father from before the beginning of time; and thou hast renewed the laws of nature, O pure, most pure Virgin Mother, by thy supra-natural, honored and divine birthgiving.

ODE III

Irmos: Thou alone knowest the weakness of human nature * and in compassion hast assumed its form; * do Thou gird me with power from on high, * that I may cry unto Thee: * Holy is the animate temple of Thine ineffable glory, O Lover of mankind!

O invincible martyr, who led forth an honorable army, arrayed in the divine armor of the Faith, ye have cast down the legions of the foe and all the wiles of the tyrants by the power of the Spirit.

Having established the ascents of thy heart upon the noetic rock with pious wisdom, O much-suffering martyr, thou didst not fall prey to the wiles of the deceitful serpent; but hast been a foundation of piety for all in spirit.

Bound and suspended on a tree, thou didst endure the cruel piercing of your members, O martyr; yet by the divine power of God thou wast straightway shown to be whole and unharmed, O glorious one, putting the wiles of the enemy to shame.

Theotokion: O all-immaculate one, thou hast been revealed to be the noetic sanctuary and pure abode of Him Who sanctifieth all things; for from thee hath God appeared incarnate, known to the world in two natures, but in a single Hypostasis, O Bride of God.

Sessional Hymn of the holy martyrs, in Tone IV:

Spec. Mel.: “Having been lifted up ...”:

With the staining of thy blood thou didst dye a robe of martyrdom, and thou didst array thyself therein as with a costly robe of purple, O Sebastian. Wherefore, thou hast made thine abode with Christ in the endless kingdom on high, and with those who suffered with thee hast received a cross. Joining chorus with them, O wise one, be thou ever mindful of us.

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

He that sitteth upon the throne of the cherubim * and abideth in the bosom of the Father * sat in thy womb as upon a throne, O Lady; * for, being truly God incarnate, * He reigneth over all nations, * and with understanding we now chant to Him. * Him do thou also entreat, ** that thy servants be saved.

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: Perceiving thee with prophetic eyes * as the mountain overshadowed by the grace of God, * Habbakuk proclaimed that the Holy One of Israel * would come forth from thee, * for our salvation and restoration.

O Tiburtius, the Lord gave thee power to vanquish the enemy in thy weak flesh; for when the fire was kindled, thou didst enter therein like the youths, O most mighty martyr, and didst receive the dew of heaven.

Thou hast joined the heavenly ministers, O Tiburtius, for, serving Christ, thou didst offer up pure sacrifices in spirit, O sacred minister, thou glory and boast of the martyrs; wherefore, we joyfully honor thee.

Suspended upright, lacerated with sharp blades, pierced with the grievous wounds of arrows, and buried in a pit, wherein he received his divine end, Castulus of valiant mind rejoiced.

Performing healings by the Holy Spirit, O blessed Sebastian, thou didst magnificently proclaim salvation to the people who piously looked for enlightenment, and didst finish the race of martyrdom.

Theotokion: **T**he transcendent God chose thee alone from among all generations, O all-immaculate Lady, Birthgiver of God, and, becoming a man, the Creator of human nature assumed the essence of mankind.

ODE V

Irmos: **O** Thou hast shone upon us with the radiance * of Thy coming O Christ, * and illumined the ends of the world with Thy Cross, * enlighten with the light of thine understanding * the hearts of those who with right worship hymn Thee.

Thy paths and ways, which lead to the Lord alone, tripped the aimless steps of the enemy and were for many a straight and firm path, O most honored martyr of Christ.

Before the tribunal the most wise Marcellinus and Mark spake with eloquence of the saving advent of Christ, and, bound together, they were pierced with sharp blades, receiving the adornment of martyrdom.

Marcellinus and Mark, mightily emulating the suffering of Him Who slew our passions, were pierced with spears, and, crowned, have joined the choirs of passion-bearers.

Theotokion: **O** all-immaculate one, thou most radiant cloud of the Sun, by thy supplications dispel the clouds from my soul and illumine my mind, which hath become darkened by negligence, that I may hymn thee, O all-hymned one.

ODE VI

Irmos: **T**he deepest abyss hath surrounded us, * and there is none to deliver us, * yea we have been counted as sheep for the slaughter; * save Thy people O our God, * for thou art the strength and restoration of the weak.

By steadfastness of mind thou wast most honorably shown to be tireless when thou wast pitilessly beaten with staves and pierced by many arrows. Wherefore O martyr, thou hast passed, rejoicing, over to the never-waning light.

Christ imparted life to thee, who struggled and fought the demons, sustained grievous wounds, and looked to Him with the eyes of thy heart, O invincible martyr Sebastian.

With the hard staves of thy most wise words thou didst smash delusion, demolish the sanctuaries of the enemy, destroy their idolatrous temples and raise thyself up as a temple of the divine Spirit.

Theotokion: **T**hou hast restored our nature, which had become corrupt through disobedience, having given birth to Him Who reneweth all things by His divine will, O divine joyous one, who alone among women art blessed.

N.B.: There is no Kontakion for this service.

ODE VII

Irmos: **We** the faithful perceive thee, O Theotokos, * to be a noetic furnace; * for as He, the supremely exalted One, * saved the three children, * so hath He wholly refashioned fallen humanity, in thy womb, * O Thou praised and supremely glorified God of our fathers.

Strengthened by Thy mighty power, O Christ, Thy passion-bearers vanquished the foe, trampling delusion underfoot, and giving their bodies over to wounding, as they chanted: Praised and supremely glorious is the God of our fathers!

Having struggled well, Marcellinus and the glorious Mark, Tiburtius and the all-wise Castulus, the divinely radiant passion-bearers and martyrs, have passed over to heaven, hymning our praised and supremely glorious God.

As a youth thou didst noetically tread upon the flame, O spiritual athlete Tiburtius, like the children of old, receiving the dew of the Spirit from on high, and chanting earnestly: Praised and supremely glorious is the God of our fathers!

Suspended aloft like a lamb, O glorious martyr Zoe, thou didst choke the enemy with the cords of thy patiently-endured pangs, and thou livest even after death, O all-praised one, chanting: Praised and supremely glorious is the God of our fathers!

Theotokion: **O** pure one, we call thee the golden jar, the all-holy table of the divine Bread of life, the place of sanctity, the throne most high, whereon God hath rested: the praised and supremely glorious God of our fathers.

ODE VIII

Irmos: **In** the furnace as in a fiery smelter * the Israelite children shone more brightly than gold * with the beauty of godliness, * as they exclaimed: **Bless the Lord all ye works of the Lord, * hymn and supremely exalt Him throughout all ages.**

Desiring to die to the world and all things in the world, O all-honored one, thou wast deemed worthy of life, crying out most earnestly: Bless the Lord, all ye works of the Lord; hymn and supremely exalt Him throughout all ages!

The iniquitous ones cruelly placed thee in an exceedingly deep pit, and, filling it in, slew thee, O ever-memorable Castulus, who chanted fervently: Bless the Lord, all ye works of the Lord; hymn and supremely exalt Him throughout all ages!

As the namesake of life, O Zoe, thou hast obtained blessed life; for thou didst leave this life of corruption by violent strangulation, chanting: Bless the Lord, all ye works of the Lord; hymn and supremely exalt Him throughout all ages!

Theotokion: **I**n giving birth to the comely God and Master Who adorneth the human race with divine beauties, O pure one, thou thyself wast adorned. To Him do we chant: Bless the Lord, all ye works of the Lord; hymn and supremely exalt Him throughout all ages!

ODE IX

Irmos: **T**he Bush, which burnt without being consumed, * prefigured thy pure birthgiving, O Theotokos. * Wherefore we now entreat Thee: * quench the raging furnace of temptations that beset us, * that we may unceasingly magnify Thee.

That thou mightest be counted worthy of divine splendor, everlasting glory and beauty, O all-blessed Sebastian, thou didst manfully endure torment, pain and death; wherefore, we all magnify thee.

Thou wast revealed to be like the sun amid stars, with those who suffered with thee, O martyr; and now, through your sacred sufferings, ye illumine with pure splendors the divine foundation of the Church, dispelling all the boastfulness of the demons.

Tiburtius, Marcellinus and Mark, Zoe and Castulus, loving Christ, and suffering together with the divinely wise Sebastian, their instructor, they equally received crowns of victory, ever interceding on our behalf.

The divine choir of the martyrs, having been taken up and granted to dwell in the radiant mansions, go about the heavens rejoicing, ever entreating Him Who is the Lover of mankind, on behalf of us who bless them forever.

Theotokion: **T**he noetic armies are filled with awe, beholding the divine Effulgence of the Father ineffably held in thine arms and assuming our form, that He might deify mortals, O all-immaculate Virgin Mother.

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.

There is no Kontakion.