

STICHERA AND SESSIONAL HYMNS
SUNG ON FRIDAY EVENING AND SATURDAY
MORNING IN THE EIGHT TONES FROM THE
OKTOECHOS

TONE EIGHT

AT VESPERS ON FRIDAY EVENING

On “Lord, I have cried ...,” after the Stichera of the day from the Triodion, we chant the following Stichera of the holy martyrs:

Verse: Out of the depths have I cried unto Thee, O Lord; * O Lord, hear my voice.

O martyrs of the Lord, ye sanctify every place and heal every manner of infirmities: and now we entreat you to intercede on our behalf, that our souls may be delivered from the snares of the enemy.

Verse: Let Thine ears be attentive * to the voice of my supplication.

Thy martyrs, O Lord, no longer mindful of the temporal things of this life, despised not torture for the sake of the life to come, which they manifestly inherited, wherefore they rejoice with the angels. By their supplications grant great mercy to Thy people.

Verse: If Thou shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, O Lord, who shall stand? * For with Thee there is forgiveness.

What virtue, what praise, are due the saints? For they bowed their heads beneath the sword for the sake of Thee Who bowed down the heavens and descended to us; they shed their blood for Thee Who abased Thyself and assumed the form of a servant; they humbled themselves even unto death, imitating Thy poverty. By their intercessions, O God, have mercy on us, in the multitude of Thy compassions!

Verse: For Thy name’s sake have I patiently waited for Thee, O Lord; my soul hath patiently waited for Thy word, * my soul hath hoped in the Lord.

O ye martyrs of the Lord, we beseech you to intercede before our God: pray ye that abundant mercy be granted to our souls, and the cleansing of our many sins.

Then four Stichera from the Menaion (repeating the first)
Glory ..., a composition of St. John the Damascene:

For the reposed: I weep and lament when I contemplate death and behold our beauty, which hath been created according to the image of God, lying in the grave, bereft of form, devoid of glory, unsightly. O the wonder! What is this mystery concerning us? How have we been given over to corruption? How have we been yoked together with death? Truly, as it is written, this is by the command of God, Who giveth rest unto the departed.

Both now ...,

Theotokion: In His love for mankind, the King of heaven appeared on earth * and dwelt among men; * for He Who received flesh from the pure Virgin * and cameth forth from her having received human nature, * is the only Son of God, * twofold in nature but not Hypostasis. * Therefore, proclaiming Him to be truly perfect God and perfect man, * we confess Christ our God. * Him do thou beseech, O unwedded Mother, ** that our souls find mercy!

If the Liturgy of the Presanctified gifts is not served, the following is chanted at the Aposticha:

AT FRIDAY VESPERS APOSTICHA

O ye martyrs of the Lord, we beseech you to intercede before our God: pray ye that abundant mercy be granted to our souls, and the cleansing of our many sins.

Verse: Blessed are they whom Thou hast chosen * and taken to Thyself, O Lord.

I weep and lament when I contemplate death and behold our beauty, which hath been created according to the image of God, lying in the grave, bereft of form, devoid of glory, unsightly. O the wonder! What is this mystery concerning us? How have we been given over to corruption? How have we been yoked together with death? Truly, as it is written, this is by the command of God, Who giveth rest unto the departed.

Verse: Their souls * shall dwell among good things.

Thy death, O Lord, won immortality for us; for if Thou hadst not been laid in the tomb, paradise would not have been opened. Wherefore, grant rest to the departed, in that Thou lovest mankind.

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

O pure Virgin, portal of the Word, Mother of our God: pray thou that we be saved.

AT MATINS ON SATURDAY MORNING

After the 1st chanting of the Psalter, the Sessional Hymns of the Martyrs:

O holy martyrs, ye were shown to be noetic beacons, for by faith ye have dispersed the gloom of deception, ignited the lamps of our souls, and entered with glory into the heavenly bridal chamber of the Bridegroom. * Wherefore we now entreat you, intercede that our souls be saved.

Verse: Wondrous is God in His saints, * the God of Israel.

By their temperance, the martyrs of Christ mortified the fiery impulses of the passions, and received the grace of Christ, whereby they drive infirmities from the sick, and work miracles, in that they are alive, even after death. O what a truly all-glorious wonder it is, that their bare bones pour forth healings. Glory be to our one God.

Verse: In the Saints that are in the earth * hath the Lord been wondrous.

O prophets, martyrs of Christ, and holy hierarchs, who with the wisdom of piety lawfully finished the good race and received unfading wreaths from God, unceasingly ask His grace for us, that He grant us the forgiveness of our transgressions, in that He is a readily conciliatory God.

Glory ...,

For the reposed: **O** Thou Who by the depth of Thy wisdom dost provide all things out of love for mankind, and grantest unto all that which is profitable, O only Creator: Grant rest, O Lord, to the souls of Thy servants; for in Thee have they placed their hope, O Creator and Fashioner and God.

Both now ...,

O Good One, Who for our sake wast born of the Virgin * and, having endured crucifixion, cast down death by death, * and as God revealed the resurrection: * disdain not that which Thou hast fashioned with Thine own hand. * Show forth Thy love for mankind, O Merciful One; * Accept the supplications of the Theotokos who bore Thee, ** and save Thy despairing people, O our Savior!

ON THE PRAISES

Verse: Praise Him for His mighty acts, * praise Him according to the multitude of His greatness.

O holy martyrs, ye were shown to be noetic beacons, for by faith ye have dispersed the gloom of deception, ignited the lamps of our souls, and entered with glory into the heavenly bridal chamber of the Bridegroom. * Wherefore we now entreat you, intercede that our souls be saved.

Verse: Praise Him with the sound of trumpet, * praise Him with the psaltery and harp.

Ye struggled greatly, O saints, valiantly enduring tortures at the hands of the iniquitous; and though ye have passed from this life, ye still work wonders in this world and heal those made sick by their passions. O holy ones, pray ye that our souls be saved.

Verse: Praise Him with timbrel and dance, * praise him with strings and flute.

O invincible martyrs of Christ, having triumphed over delusion by the power of the Cross, and gained as your reward the grace of eternal life. Ye feared not the threats of tyrants, and suffering tortures ye rejoiced; and now your blood hath become for us the healing of our souls, pray ye that our souls be saved.

Verse: Praise Him with tuneful cymbals, praise Him with cymbals of jubilation. * Let every breath praise the Lord.

Having clothed yourselves with the breastplate of the Faith, and armed yourselves with the Cross as a sword, ye showed yourselves to be mighty warriors, bravely opposing the tyrants and casting down the delusion of the devil; and, victorious, ye were deemed worthy of crowns. Pray ye ever on our behalf, that our souls be saved.

Glory ...,

For the reposed: **F**or those who have lived in fornication infinite is the torment, the gnashing of teeth, the inconsolable weeping, the fiery Gehenna, the outer darkness, the worm which sleepeth not, the ineffectual tears, and the implacable judgment; wherefore, before the end let us cry aloud, saying: O Master Christ, grant rest with the elect unto those whom Thou hast taken to Thyself!

Both now ...,

Theotokion: **I** flee to thy protection, O holy Virgin Theotokos, for I know that through thee I shall obtain salvation; for thou art able to help me, O pure one.

AT SATURDAY MATINS APOSTICHA:

A composition by Theophanes:

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

Dipping Thy fingers in Thy blood and staining them therewith as with red ink, Thou hast signed for us a royal reprieve, O Master; wherefore, we entreat Thee with faith: Among Thy firstborn number those who have departed unto Thee, the tenderly compassionate One, and grant that they may receive the joy of Thy righteous.

Verse: Blessed are they whom Thou hast chosen * and taken to Thyself, O Lord.

Having fulfilled Thy priestly ministry as a man, and been sacrificed as a lamb, Thou didst redeem mankind from corruption, offering Thyself as an oblation to the Father. As Thou lovest mankind, do Thou enroll the departed in the land of the living, where torrents of delight pour forth, and well-springs of eternal life flow.

Verse: Their souls * shall dwell among good things.

O Thou Who, in the depths of Thine ineffable wisdom, dost set the bounds of life, and foresee things to come, cause the servants whom Thou hast taken to Thyself to dwell in the life to come. Settle them, by peaceful waters, in the splendor of the saints, O Lord, where the voice of joy and praise is heard.

Verse: Their memorial * is from generation to generation.

O Word Who art invisible, of the same nature and form as the Father and the Spirit, for my sake Thou didst appear as a man in the flesh. In that Thou art merciful and lovest mankind, with the beauties of Thy majesty and comeliness enlighten those who have passed from this life, O Author of life.

Glory ..., Both now ...,

Theotokion: In that thou didst conceive the beginningless Word of God the Father, with thy maternal boldness earnestly entreat Him, O Theotokos, that He number thy servants where the jubilation of the righteous who rejoice and praise thee, is continuous, and where the radiance is eternal, and the voice of him who keepeth festival is sweet.