

THE 7th DAY OF THE MONTH OF MAY

COMMEMORATION OF THE APPEARANCE OF THE SIGN OF THE PRECIOUS CROSS IN THE SKY ABOVE JERUSALEM

FORMED BY STARS STRETCHING FROM GOLGOTHA TO THE MOUNT OF OLIVES, AT THE
THIRD HOUR OF THE DAY, DURING THE REIGN OF EMPEROR CONSTANTIUS.

COMMEMORATION OF THE HOLY MARTYR ACACIUS AT VESPERS

On "Lord, I have cried ...", 6 stichera, in Tone IV:

Spec. Mel.: "Called from on high ...":

Today the godly multitude of the faithful rejoiceth, * for the heavenly Cross appeareth to the ends of the world, * illumining the firmament with unapproachable light, * maketh the air brilliant * and adorneth the face of the earth. * The Church of Christ hymneth it with divine songs, * worshiping it with veneration, * and the divine and all-wondrous Cross * preserveth it from on high. * By its power are we strengthened; * wherefore, let us approach the Master, saying: * Grant peace to the world and enlighten our souls!

The all-precious and glorious Cross * hath been seen today * as a most honorable ladder * leading up from earth to the heavens * those who venerate it with steadfast faith. * All nations rejoice, * hastening fervently to baptism, * and the Church adorneth itself in godly manner * like unto a bride; * for that which the Jews sought to hide * shineth forth from on high in the air * and saveth those who approach it with faith.

From on high there hath appeared * the rod of divine power, * the Cross sent to us in Sion, * wholly illumined by grace * and boundless light. * The heavenly Cross of our crucified God * hath shone forth * above glorious Golgotha, * proclaiming to all * that salvation hath come to the world through His sufferings. * And bowing down before it * we chant unceasingly * and ask with faith * that He grant peace to the world * and save our souls.

Glory ..., in Tone VI:

The heavens have proclaimed Thy glory, O Lord, the awesome sight of Thy Cross, and all the earth hath bowed down with fear. And we, rendering up glorification, cry out to Thee with thanksgiving: In that Thou as God art dispassionate, Thou hast deigned to suffer for us in the flesh of Thine own will. Save the people whom Thou hast acquired by Thine own blood.

Now & ever ..., from the Pentecostarion.

Troparion, in Tone VIII:

The image of Thy Cross hath now shone forth more brightly than the sun, and Thou hast extended it from the holy mountain to the place of the skull, and therein hast revealed Thy might, O Savior. Strengthening all faithful Orthodox Christians thereby, O Christ God, save them ever in peace, and by the supplications of the Theotokos do Thou also save us.

AT COMPLINE

Canon of the holy martyr Acacius, the composition of Joseph, in Tone IV:

ODE I

Irmos: Having traversed the depths of the Red Sea with dryshod feet, Israel of old vanquished the might of Amalek in the wilderness by Moses' arms stretched out in the form of the Cross.

Adorned with the beauty of guilelessness, O glorious one, with boldness thou hast stood before the Cause and Well-spring of good things. By thine entreaties render Him now reconciled with us.

Acacius, the true advocate, hath cried out with exalted proclamation, summoning us to the banquet. Wherefore, with zeal and gladness let us hasten, O ye who love the martyrs.

Unable to bear the sight of iniquity exalted, O glorious one, thou didst manifestly preach the divinity of Christ before the tribunal of the tyrants, O Acacius, showing forth the guilelessness of which thou wast the namesake.

Theotokion: In thee, O all-pure and joyous one, were the ways of God manifestly seen, for He preserved thee a virgin, and even after thou gavest birth He kept thee who bore Him incorrupt.

ODE III

Irmos: Neither in wisdom, nor in power, nor yet in riches do we boast, but in Thee, O Christ, the hypostatic Wisdom of the Father; for none is holy save Thee, O Thou Who lovest mankind.

Adorned with divine understanding, wisdom and discourse, thou didst destroy the foolish arguments of the sages; wherefore, we honor thy glorious memory.

Resplendent with courageous and steadfast mind, thou didst vanquish the subversions and hordes of the ungodly, and didst destroy the bases of falsehood.

Strengthened by the power of God Almighty, thou didst cleanse away the putrid affliction of ungodliness; wherefore, we proclaim thee a victory, O martyr.

Thou didst reject vile and deceptive drink and filth, O martyr Acacius, illumining thy mind with the enlightenment and radiant effulgence of piety.

Theotokion: Having conceived Life, O Theotokos, thou didst abolish the dominion of death and the condemnation of the ancient curse; wherefore, we honor thine all-pure birthgiving.

ODE IV

Irmos: Seated in glory upon the throne of the Godhead, Jesus most divine hath come on a light cloud, and with His incorrupt arm hath saved those who cry: Glory to Thy power, O Christ!

Through faith thou didst remain like a tower, un-toppled by either bursts of torture or the assaults of wounds, and unshaken by the winds of blows; and thou didst cry aloud: Glory to Thy power, O Lord!

Propelled by the sails and breath of the Holy Spirit, O blessed one, thou didst come to rest in the calm haven, and thou wast not afraid of the onslaught of the waves and winds, O most honored martyr of Christ.

Entreating the invincible might of God, thou didst prevail over all the power of the adversaries; and, rejoicing, thou didst take away all their weaponry, in that thou wast victorious, O right glorious one.

Instructed by divine revelation, and having reached the end of thy course, the city of the King, thou becomest a citizen thereof, O all-blessed one, fending off every attack of the barbarians.

Theotokion: O only Virgin Mother of God who didst conceive Life everlasting and grantest deliverance to all the faithful, raise me up who have been slain and am held fast by the inescapable bonds of sin.

ODE V

Irmos: The ungodly perceive not Thy glory, O Christ; but, waking at dawn out of the night, we hymn Thee, O Only-begotten One Who lovest mankind, Thou effulgence of the glory of the Father's divinity.

Thou didst carry thy cross upon thy shoulders without stumbling, following Christ Who leadeth thee to life incorruptible and bringeth thee into never-waning light, O thou who art most rich.

The bitter wounds of thy body and the severing of thy members have won for thee never-ending sustenance, the crown of martyrdom and the joy of the angels. O most blessed one.

O ever most memorable one, thou hast been shown to be a youth innocent, chaste and meek, mighty against the carnal passions, fearsome to the demons and aloof from the infidels.

Theotokion: Lifting up our voices together to hymn thy birthgiving, we call thee the most pure Theotokos who for us gavest birth in the flesh to the true God, the Only-begotten of the Father.

ODE VI

Irmos: I will sacrifice to Thee with a voice of praise, O Lord, the Church crieth unto Thee, having been cleansed of the blood of demons by the blood which, for mercy's sake, flowed from Thy side.

They who were starving for the gifts of God condemned thee to starvation, O martyr who dost ever partake of heavenly gifts and enjoyest endless sustenance.

Having put to shame the ungodly arrogance of the tyrants, thou didst drown the serpent, the author of evil, in the deep of thy blood, and didst soar aloft to the heavens as a victor, O Acacius.

Emulating the death of the Master by thy death, O martyr, thou dost reign eternally with Him, delighting in the sight of Him and His joy.

Theotokion: **T**hou hast destroyed the condemnation of death and the curse of the law, O pure one who gavest birth to Christ, the Destroyer of death, Who hath poured forth blessing upon all.

Sedalion, in Tone IV: Spec. Mel.: "Go thou quickly before ...":

Having drowned the enemy in the outpourings of thy blood, O martyr Acacius, thou didst put to shame all the legions of the tyrants; and attaining unto the immaterial choirs of the angels thou hast received a never-fading wreath of incorruption. Wherefore, by thine entreaties save us from misfortunes.

ODE VII

Irmos: **O** all-hymned Lord God of our fathers, Who saved the children of Abraham in the fire, slaying the Chaldeans whom justice rightly overtook: blessed art Thou!

Beheaded by the sword, thou didst take wing to the noetic Head of the Church, O thou who art most rich, adorned with the crown Of victory, and crying: O all-hymned Lord God of our fathers, blessed art Thou!

For thine endurance thou hast been numbered among the martyrs of Christ as a martyr most true, having vanquished the ungodly tyrants, O Acacius, crying out: O all-hymned Lord God of our fathers, blessed art Thou!

Furnishing thy mind with wings to fly aloft to the divine hope preserved for the faithful, thou didst enter the tyrants' tribunal, chanting in the Spirit: O God of our fathers, blessed art Thou!

Theotokion: **T**he ancient sayings and images of the prophets manifestly prefigured thy pure birthgiving, O Mother of God; and hymning it, we cry: O God of our fathers, blessed art Thou!

ODE VIII

Irmos: **S**tretching forth his hands, Daniel shut the lions' mouths in the pit; and the young lovers of piety, girded about with virtue, quenched the power of the fire, crying out: Bless the Lord, all ye works of the Lord!

O all-wise one, thou hast truly made thine abode in the royal city on high, which the Lord founded and hath prepared for the saints who place their hope on Him and cry out with faith: Bless the Lord, all ye works of the Lord!

With love thou didst endure the infliction of wounds, O excellent one, and by thy starvation thou didst serve them as everlasting sweetness and sustenance, and abiding joy, unto those who cry: Bless the Lord, all ye works of the Lord!

Easily and right quickly didst thou engage thine adversaries in battle, O thou who art most rich, having Christ as thine invincible Ally, Helper and Aid contending with thee; to Him do we cry out: Bless the Lord, all ye works of the Lord!

O blessed and all-praised Acacius, having been so named, thou didst have a life which was innocent and blameless, adorned with the blood of suffering and made beautiful by the virtues of martyrdom; and thou didst cry: Bless the Lord, all ye works of the Lord!

Theotokion: **T**hou alone hast shown forth a mystery truly strange under the sun, O pure one, for thou gavest birth to God, invisible and unoriginate, unbounded by any thing, and unapproachable. To Him do we cry: Bless the Lord, all ye works of the Lord!

ODE IX

Irmos: **E**ve, through weakness, abode under the curse of disobedience; but thou, O Virgin Theotokos, hast put forth blessing for the world through the Offspring of thy child-bearing. Wherefore, we all magnify thee.

Possessed of the splendor of the victory of thy martyric opposition, O blessed one, thou didst stand before the throne of the Master, joining chorus with the angelic armies, and asking salvation for all who bless thy memory.

Splendid were thy courageous victories over the enemy, O thou who art most rich, and the Judge of thy contest hath given thee many more honors and the fullness of divine effulgence. Wherefore, we all call thee blessed.

Thou wast close to Christ, O most valiant one, for thou didst endure suffering and affliction; wherefore, He hath manifestly vouchsafed thee vision and divine vision, whereby thou hast attained unto causes on earth, embracing them from afar.

Theotokion: **O** most immaculate one, thy Fruit hath appeared more comely in beauty than all others, adorning creation with the radiance of the beauty of virtue. Him do we earnestly beseech, that He save those who unceasingly magnify thee.

Stichera of the martyr Acacius, in Tone IV:

Spec. Mel.: "As one valiant among the martyrs ...":

Wielding anger * against the serpent alone, * and girding thyself with the insuperable and invincible power of Christ, * O divinely wise Acacius, * thou didst cast down to the ground * the author of evils, * overthrowing his vaunted power; * and thou hast put to shame * his active servants.

Having learned from on high * estrangement from evil * and the assimilation of that which is good, * thou becamest indeed * that for which thou wast named of old, * O all-wise Acacius; * for that for which thou wast named * thou didst later become. * For from afar providence ineffably and invisibly set before thee * the cause of great things.

The greatest of cities * which reigneth over all * hath thine honored temple * as a royal crown, * and setteth thee forth as a pillar for those who have acquired thee, * a wise citizen, * a pleasing guardian, * a valiant warrior * who turneth away * the sudden incursions of enemies and adversaries.

Theotokion, in the same tone & melody:

I bless thee, O all-pure one, * who hast rescued men * from the depths of evil and despair; * I hymn thee, O Bride of God, * the ever-blessed one, * and glorify thy glorious birthgiving, O pure one, * for thou gavest birth to the Savior of the world, * and hast freed mankind * from the curse of our ancestors, O Virgin.

Stavrotheotokion: As she beheld Thee * nailed to the Cross, O Lord, * the ewe-lamb, Thy Mother, marveled and said: * "What is this that I see, * O my Son most desired? * Hath the iniquitous and unbelieving council thus repaid Thee, * which enjoyed Thy many miracles? * Yet, glory to thine ineffable condescension, * O Master!"

AT MATINS

Canon from the Pentecostarion, with 6 troparia, including the Irmos; and that of the Cross, with 6 troparia.

Canon of the Cross, in Tone IV:

ODE I

Irmos: He Who is mighty in battle cast the chariots of Pharaoh and his power into the sea. Let us chant a new hymn, for He hath been glorified!

Thou hast revealed on earth the radiance of the Cross, and casting down the devil therewith, Thou hast saved the human race, O Lord. Wherefore, we hymn Thy glory.

At the Father's will the Deliverer destroyed disobedience and enmity of mind by the Cross. We sing to Him a new hymn, for gloriously hath He been glorified.

As thou didst plant the tree of life in Eden, O Christ, so hast Thou shone Thy Cross forth in radiance upon the holy mountain as a scepter of victory.

Theotokion: Thee, whom the choir of the prophets foresaw as the portal of heaven and the bush unburnt, O pure Virgin Mother, have we acknowledged as her who gave birth to God.

ODE III

Irmos: The bow of the mighty is become weak, and the strengthless have girded themselves with power; wherefore, my heart is established in the Lord.

We are protected by the sign of the invincible Cross as with a shield, O Master, and the abominable one, unable to endure it, doth vanish with the demonic multitude.

Thy Cross hath made glad all who confess Thee to be God crucified; and it hath shone forth as with all-radiant and unapproachable beauty.

Theotokion: Rejoice, O Mother who knew not wedlock, who contained God the Word in thy womb and gave birth to the Incarnate One, Who is both God and man.

Sedalion, in Tone IV: Spec. Mel.: "Having been lifted up ...":

O Christ God Who showed forth the divine image of the Cross in the sky, to guide those on earth to acknowledge Thee, today never-waning splendor hath shone forth, and the light of Thy countenance hath been signed upon us. And all of us, the faithful, have it as a weapon of peace, an invincible trophy. (Twice)

Glory ..., Now & ever ..., The foregoing is repeated.

ODE IV

Irmos: I have heard report of Thee, O Lord, for Thou didst appear upon the earth; and I have glorified Thy power.

Mystically before, but visibly today, Thou hast shone forth the image of Thine all-precious Cross, O Christ.

Shining forth the image of the Cross, O compassionate Savior, Thou hast set at nought the audacity of the iniquitous slayers of God.

Thou hast confirmed the Christian Faith, forming the Cross for us in immaterial light, O Christ.

Theotokion: **O** pure Mother, blessed Mistress, by thy supplications render God, Whom thou didst bear, merciful to us.

ODE V

Irmos: **Glory to Thee! Glory to Thee, O Jesus, Son of God, Who hast shone forth the light, hast illumined the morning, and made manifest the day!**

When Adam disobeyed in Eden, the deadly tree brought death into the world; but the life-bearing Cross, which hath now appeared, hath illumined the ends of the world.

The Father, Who by His Word created the primeval light, now traceth a radiant Cross, bearing witness to the divinity of His crucified Son.

Through faith, in the Father we behold Thee, the Son, the Light above the flood-chambers of the firmament in never-waning light, O Christ, and Thy Spirit hath shone forth upon our souls.

Theotokion: **T**hou didst not know the pangs of motherhood, O Maiden, having conceived God and given birth to Him in the flesh supernaturally; wherefore, we all glorify thee as is meet.

ODE VI

Irmos: **When I was troubled, I cried unto the Lord, and the God of my salvation hearkened unto me.**

Let the eyes of the iniquitous be closed, for they are unable to look upon the radiant beauty of the Cross.

Let those who acknowledge that God was crucified in the flesh on the Tree delight in the radiance of the all-pure Cross.

Theotokion: **O** Virgin who knewest not wedlock, who gavest birth to God, do thou never cease to entreat thy Son in our behalf.

Kontakion, in Tone IV: Spec. Mel.: "Having been lifted up ...":

The all-pure Cross, which opened the heavens which were shut, hath shed upon the earth all-radiant heavenly beams; wherefore, receiving the effulgence of its activity, we are guided to the never-waning Light; and amid battles we have it as a weapon of peace, an invincible trophy.

Ikos: Behold, the awesome sign of the great God which Constantine the Great beheld! And we have heard Jesus speaking therein, Who spake of old to the sovereign emperor of faithful Christians: "Until the Second Coming this sign shall preserve the inheritance of thy city, and it shall remain until the end of time, and shall be the first of all cities. Let the Cross be its rampart, the weapon of peace, the invincible trophy!"

ODE VII

Irmos: O all-hymned Lord God of our fathers, Who saved the children of Abraham in the fire, slaying the Chaldeans whom justice rightly overtook: blessed art Thou!

The material sun hid its rays when it beheld the Sun Who was lifted up upon the Cross at noonday. O all-hymned Lord God of our fathers, blessed art Thou!

He Who of old conversed with the God-seer in the fire and the gloom is glorified as God today in the radiant brilliance of the Cross which hath appeared. O all-hymned Lord God of our fathers, blessed art Thou!

O equally everlasting Light, shining forth from the Light in the Light, Thou hast shown forth the victory of Thy Cross with Thine all-pure light. O all-hymned Lord God of our fathers, blessed art Thou!

Theotokion: We piously hymn forever as Mother of our God her who ineffably and supernaturally received in her womb the immutable God Who came to men in His loving-kindness.

ODE VIII

Irmos: Christ God, Who appeared in the guise of an angel in the fiery furnace of the chanting youths, do ye hymn, O children, and bless, O priests! Ye people, exalt Him supremely for all ages!

Him Who was seen on the throne of glory and was nailed to the tree of the Cross in His fleshly nature, do ye hymn, ye children; bless, ye priests; ye people, exalt Him supremely for all ages!

Him Who formed a cross with all-pure light from Golgotha to the holy mountain do ye hymn, ye children; bless, ye priests; ye people, exalt Him supremely for all ages!

Glorifying One of the Trinity Who illumineth the whole world with the radiance of the Cross, hymn, ye children; bless, ye priests; ye people, exalt Him supremely for all ages!

Theotokion: Her who ineffably and without seed conceived and gave birth to Christ God, the joy of the whole world, do ye hymn, ye children; bless, ye priests; ye people, exalt her supremely for all ages!

ODE IX

Irmos: Christ, the Chief Cornerstone uncut by human hands, Who united the two disparate natures, was cut from thee, the unquarried mountain, O Virgin. Wherefore, in gladness we magnify thee, O Theotokos.

O Thou Who in the fire and darkness of old didst set forth the laws for the disobedient, Thou hast now traced the image of Thy Cross, more resplendent than the stars, for Thy faithful people, which we magnify as is meet.

Creation lamented in darkness the audacity of those who crucified Thee; and now Thy life-bearing Cross hath shone forth with most reverent light and shown forth the hidden beauty of the Church.

Having set their hope on Thee, Thy rich people set before thee in advocacy the Cross, Thine awesome protection. Yet in good time grant us deliverance, O Word of God.

Theotokion: Shed light upon us, O thou who gavest birth to Light unapproachable, O Virgin, and with gladness, joy and divine understanding fill us who in honesty magnify thee with purity of heart.

Exapostilarion: Spec. Mel.: "To the disciples ...";

The Cross is the guardian of the whole world! The Cross is the beauty of the Church! The Cross is the dominion of kings! The Cross is the confirmation of the faithful! The Cross is the glory of the angels and the wounding of the demons!

AT LITURGY

Troparion, in Tone VIII:

The image of Thy Cross hath now shone forth more brightly than the sun, and Thou hast extended it from the holy mountain to the place of the skull, and therein hast revealed Thy might, O Savior. Strengthening all faithful Orthodox Christians thereby, O Christ God, save them ever in peace, and by the supplications of the Theotokos do Thou also save us.

Kontakion, in Tone IV:

The all-pure Cross, which opened the heavens which were shut, hath shed upon the earth all-radiant heavenly beams; wherefore, receiving the effulgence of its activity, we are guided to the never-waning Light; and amid battles we have it as a weapon of peace, an invincible trophy.

Prokimenon, in Tone VII: Exalt ye the Lord our God, and worship the footstool of His feet, for it is holy.

Stichos: The Lord is King, let the peoples rage.

EPISTLE TO THE CORINTHIANS, §125 [1 COR. 1: 18.:24]

Brethren: The preaching of the cross is to them that perish, foolishness; but unto us which are saved, it is the power of God. For it is written: I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent. Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom: but we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks foolishness; but unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God.

Alleluia, in Tone I: Remember Thy congregation which Thou hast purchased from the beginning.

Stichos: God is our King before the ages, He hath wrought salvation in the midst of the earth.

GOSPEL ACCORDING TO ST. JOHN, §60 [JN. 19: 6-11, 13-20,25-28,30-35]

At that time, the high priests and elders took council against Jesus to put Him to death. And they delivered Him to Pilate saying: "Away with Him! away with Him! Crucify Him!" Pilate said unto them: "Take ye Him, and crucify Him: for I find no fault in Him. The Jews answered him: "We have a law, and by our law He ought to die, because He made Himself the Son of God." When Pilate therefore heard that saying, he was the more afraid; and went again into the judgment hall,

and said unto Jesus: "Whence art Thou?" But Jesus gave him no answer. Then said Pilate unto Him: "Speakest Thou not unto me? Knowest Thou not that I have power to crucify Thee, and have power to release Thee?" Jesus answered: "Thou couldst have no power at all against Me, except it were given thee from above." When Pilate therefore heard that saying, he brought Jesus forth, and sat down in the judgment seat in a place that is called the Pavement, but in the Hebrew, Gabbatha. And it was the preparation of the Passover, and about the sixth hour: and he said unto the Jews: "Behold your King!" But they cried out: "Away with Him! Away with Him! Crucify Him!" Pilate said unto them: "Shall I crucify your King?" The chief priests answered: "We have no king but Caesar." Then delivered he Him therefore unto them to be crucified. And they took Jesus, and led Him away. And He bearing His Cross went forth into a place called the place of the skull, which is called in Hebrew Golgotha: where they crucified Him, and two others with Him, on either side, and Jesus in the midst. And Pilate wrote a title, and put it on the Cross. And the writing was: "Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews". This title then read many of the Jews; for the place where Jesus was crucified was nigh to the city: and it was written in Hebrew, and Greek, and Latin. Now there stood by the Cross of Jesus His Mother, and His Mother's sister, Mary the wife of Cleophas, and Mary Magdalene. When Jesus therefore saw His Mother, and the disciple standing by, whom He loved, He said unto His Mother: "Woman, behold thy son!" Then said He to the disciple: "Behold thy Mother!" And from that hour that disciple took her unto his own home. After this, Jesus knowing that all things were now accomplished, bowed His head, and gave up the ghost. The Jews therefore, because it was the preparation, that the bodies should not remain upon the cross on the Sabbath day, (for that Sabbath day was a high day,) besought Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away. Then came the soldiers, and broke the legs of the first, and of the other who was crucified with him. But when they came to Jesus, and saw that He was dead already, they broke not His legs: but one of the soldiers with a spear pierced His side, and forthwith came there out blood and water. And he that saw it bore record, and his record is true.

Communion Verse: The light of Thy countenance hath been signed upon us.