

**THE 24<sup>th</sup> DAY OF THE MONTH OF SEPTEMBER**  
**COMMEMORATION OF THE HOLY PROTOMARTYR AND EQUAL OF THE**  
**APOSTLES THECLA**  
**AT VESPERS**

At "Lord, I have cried ...," six stichera, in Tone VIII:

Spec. Mel.: "O Lord, even though at the tribunal ...":

○ Lord, \* though Thecla was added to the windows of Thy love, \* yet, standing noetically in the highest before Thy throne, \* she marveled at Thine incomparable majesty \* which hath been manifested in Thy love for mankind, \* that Thou mayest save our souls. (Twice)

○ Lord, \* though Thecla was involuntarily separated from her teacher Paul, \* yet during her suffering, stripped of her garments, \* she had Thee abiding with her, \* and was covered with Thy glory; \* and crowned by Thy hand, she defendeth our souls. (Twice)

○ Lord, \* though Thecla made haste to the bound Apostle Paul, \* yet she rejected the bond of attachment to earthly things, \* and with the chain of the might of Thy love \* she bound herself fast to Thee, \* the Savior of our souls.

○ Lord, \* though Thy pure protomartyr \* was committed to the fire, \* yet she was not consumed therein, having Thee as a cooler of the flames; \* and, preserved by the hand of Thee, \* the Savior of our souls, \* she remained unconsumed amid many wild beasts.

Glory ..., in Tone VI:

In thine athletic struggles thou didst trample the enemy underfoot, O most blessed Thecla, and having set at naught his wiles as a struggler, thou didst flee from Thamyris and betroth thyself to Christ thy true Lover. O converser with Paul and fellow sufferer with Stephen, as thou among women hast boldness, O protomartyr of Christ, by thy supplications deliver from misfortunes them that keep thine all-festive memory.

Now and ever ..., Theotokion, or this Stavrotheotokion:

Spec. Mel.: "Having set all aside ...":

As Symeon said, O most holy Mistress, \* a sword pierced thy heart, \* when thou beheldest \* the ineffable Word Who shone forth from thee \* as one condemned among malefactors, \* lifted up on the Cross, \* partaking of vinegar and gall, \* His side pierced with a spear, His hands and feet nailed; \* and thou didst cry out with lamentation, \* exclaiming maternally: \* "What is this new mystery, \* O my sweet Child?"

At the Aposticha, the stichera from the Oktoechos, and Glory ..., the composition of Anatolius, in Tone VIII:

The assault of the lions didst thou trample down, and thou didst put Thamyris to shame, O much suffering protomartyr; and thou didst follow after thy Bridegroom, crying out: I have fled to the fragrance of Thy myrrh, O Christ! Wherefore, seeking out Paul, thou didst receive a gift from heaven and wast given a crown by God, the Judge of the contest; and thou prayest unceasingly, that forgiveness of sins be given to them that with faith keep thy sacred memory.

Now and ever ..., Theotokion, or this Stavrotheotokion:

Spec. Mel.: "O all-glorious wonder ...":

"What is this sight which I see, \* which mine eyes behold, O Master? \* Thou Who upholdest all creation \* hast been suspended on a tree; \* and, slain, Thou givest life unto all!" \* the Theotokos said, weeping, when she saw the God and man \* Who had shone forth from her ineffably, hanging upon the Cross.

Troparion, in Tone IV:

Taught by the words of Paul, O Thecla, bride of God, and confirmed through faith by Peter, O divinely called one, thou wast shown to be the protomartyr and first sufferer among women. Thou didst enter the flame as it were a place abloom with flowers, and the wild beasts and bulls stood in awe of thee, for thou didst arm thyself with the Cross. Wherefore, O most lauded one, entreat Christ, that our souls be saved.

## AT MATINS

Both canons from the Oktoechos, without their martyrica; and the canon of the protomartyr, with six troparia, the acrostic whereof is:

"Let the protomartyr be divinely glorified":

The composition of John the Monk, in Tone VIII:

### ODE I

**Irmos:** Let us chant unto the Lord Who led His people across the Red Sea, for He alone hath gloriously been glorified.

The sound of the tongue is unable to recount the most glorious sufferings of the protomartyr, for it falleth short of fitting praise.

The all-prideful superstition of the tyrant ceased, for in Christ women have piously prevailed like men against him.

Instructed in the Gospel by thine ineffable words, O most blessed Paul, the virgin betrothed herself to Christ.

**Theotokion:** The Virgin gaveth birth unto Thee, O Christ, the life-bearing Cluster of grapes, Who pourest forth the sweetness of universal salvation.

### ODE III

**Irmos:** Thou art the confirmation of them that flee to Thee, O Lord; Thou art the Light of them that are in darkness, and my spirit doth hymn Thee.

O thy love which passeth understanding, O most honored one, whereby, having united thyself in the Spirit, thou didst bind thyself to Paul in Christ!

The mind was unable to wound thee who wast wounded with the desire of the Spirit, O delight of mortals.

Having rejected all fleshly attachments, thou wast not softened by the conversations of thy mother, O most laudable athlete.

**Theotokion:** Thou wast the correction of our first mother Eve, O Theotokos, having given birth unto the Author of life for the world.

Kontakion, in Tone VIII:

Spec. Mel.: "As first-fruits ...":

In the beauty of thy virginity thou didst shine forth, and thou wast adorned with the crown of martyrdom; as one all-glorious, O virgin, thou didst entrust thyself to the Apostle Paul, and didst transform the flame of the fire into dew; and by thy supplication, O thou who wast the first among women to suffer, thou didst quell the raging of the bull.

**Sedalion, in Tone VIII:**

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

**T**ransforming thy womanhood into manliness through the virtues and the love of Christ, by both thou becamest a dwelling place of God; for, having diminished the gloom of the passions by fasting, by martyrdom, thou wast shown to be the boast of suffering. Wherefore, thou shinest forth with twofold radiance upon the world like a beacon, illumining all with rays of the Spirit, O most lauded protomartyr, entreat Christ God, that He grant remission of transgressions unto them that with love honor thy holy memory. **(Twice)**

**Glory ..., Now and ever ..., Theotokion:**

**A**ll we, the generations of men, bless thee as the Virgin who, alone among women, gavest birth without seed to God in the flesh; for the fire of the Godhead made its abode within thee, and thou gavest suck unto the Creator and Lord as a babe. Wherefore, as is meet, we, the race of angels and men, glorify thy most holy birthgiving; and together we cry out to thee: Entreat Christ God, that He grant remission of transgressions to them that hymn thy glory as is meet.

**Stavrotheotokion:** **T**he ewe-lamb, beholding the Lamb, Shepherd and Deliverer upon the Cross, exclaimed, weeping, and, bitterly lamenting, cried out: "The world rejoiceth, receiving deliverance through Thee; but my womb is in pain, beholding the crucifixion which Thou endurest in the loving-kindness of Thy mercy! O longsuffering Lord, abyss and inexhaustible wellspring of mercy: have mercy, and grant remission of transgressions unto them that hymn Thy divine sufferings!"

**ODE IV**

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

**P**aul, as the arranger of marriage, joined thee, O most honored Thecla, who hadst been betrothed to Thamyris, to the heavenly Bridegroom, as one undefiled.

**T**hou wast brought to the love of piety by the words of Paul, O martyr, and didst spurn the words of Thamyris as foolishness.

**B**y the sprinkling of the divine Blood hath the race of Adam been blessed; and Eve rejoiceth, seeing the deceitful serpent brought down by women.

**L**oving piety, the protomartyr cast away all the beautiful things of life: riches, family, beauty, and the pleasures of a betrothed.

**Theotokion:** **A**ll we, the enlightened, know thee to be the Theotokos, O most pure one; for thou, O Ever-virgin, gavest birth to the Sun of righteousness.

## ODE V

**Irmos:** **W**aking at dawn we cry to Thee: Save us, O Lord! for Thou art our God, and we know none other than Thee.

**W**ith most grievous suffering thou didst struggle in the arena, O most blessed Thecla, and wast counted worthy of honors.

**T**he wicked serpent hath been laid waste, for the virgin learned obedience by divine sufferings.

**B**y divine boldness hath thy shame been overcome, for the fire at the heart of the Trinity set thee aflame.

**Theotokion:** **O** Mary, unwedded Theotokos, make vain the hopes of our enemies and gladden them that hymn thee.

## ODE VI

**Irmos:** **I** pour forth my prayer unto the Lord, and to Him do I declare my grief, for my soul is full of evil and my life hath drawn nigh unto hell, and like Jonah I pray: Lead me up from corruption, O God!

**H**aving fortified the weakness of her nature with the might of the Cross, and repudiated youthful adornment by divine love, at night the maiden took courage and ran forth, seeking the fragrant teachings of Him Who was her Desired One.

**W**ith love, of her own will, the right glorious protomartyr Thecla supernaturally left her bridal chambers to dwell in a dungeon with malefactors; for her desire for the Creator overcame her desire for habitations.

**D**rinking in the words of Paul in prison as in a divine meadow, the martyr kissed the chains of her divine teacher; and she grew and truly brought forth most comely fruit for the Master.

**Theotokion:** **C**hoosing thee from among the beautiful valleys of the world as a rose, a most comely lily, a sweet-scented fragrance, O Maiden, the Creator made His abode within thy womb; and, having been born, He hath filled all things with a sweet savor.

**Kontakion, in Tone II:**

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

**H**aving wounded thy heart with the love of Christ, O good virgin, thou didst spurn a transient betrothed as of no account; and didst brave the fire and shut the mouths of the wild beasts. And, saved from them, O Thecla, first among women to suffer, thou didst take care to seek out Paul.

**Ikos:** **H**aving learned the path of truth from Paul, thou didst follow after him without wavering, O all-glorious one, and having abandoned thine own people as strangers, with manly mind and in manly guise thou didst follow a stranger. Wherefore, the Master hath shown thee forth as the first to suffer among women contenders in the world, wherein thou didst remain, O Thecla, first among women to suffer, going about the ends thereof in search of Paul.

## ODE VII

**Irmos:** **The children that went down from Judea in Babylon once trod down the flame of the furnace by their faith in the Trinity, saying: O God of our fathers, blessed art Thou!**

**L**ike a prisoner thou wast bound to Paul with unbreakable bonds by love, O most blessed one, piously crying out with faith and chanting with him: O God of our fathers, blessed art Thou!

**T**hou didst stand with Paul before the unjust tribunal, O good virgin, and moved by love of the Master, thou didst cry out in awe, rejecting what was unseemly: O God of our fathers, blessed art Thou!

**T**hou gavest thy body over to the furnace for divine love, O martyr, and by the power of Him Whom thou didst desire thou didst remain unconsumed, crying out: O God of our fathers, blessed art Thou!

**T**he storm cloud, dousing the flame with rain and hail, rightly consumed the mindless ones and saved the martyr, who chanted thy hymn: O God of our fathers, blessed art Thou!

**Theotokion:** **A** rod sprung forth from the root of Jesse wast thou, O all-blessed one, putting forth the Fruit of salvation for them that with faith cry out to thy Son: O God of our fathers, blessed art Thou!

## ODE VIII

**Irmos:** **The King of heaven Who all the hosts of angels hymn, praise ye and exalt supremely for all ages.**

**S**trange was thy thought; for thou, O virgin martyr, madest thine abode in a grave as in Eden, hymning Christ forever.

**U**nable to endure that the magnificence and splendor of the beauty of thy virginity be dimmed, thou didst will to die and to live forever.

**H**aving united thyself to Christ the life-creating and supernatural Bridegroom, O protomartyr, thou wast pleased that wild beasts be the preservers of thy virginity.

**H**aving shed thy garment of corruption, O beautifully clad runner of Christ, thou didst pass onto the life which ageth not, forever.

**Theotokion:** **I**n manner transcending nature thou gavest birth unto God the Word, the Creator and Savior, O Virgin; wherefore, we honor thee, O pure one, forever.

## ODE IX

**Irmos:** **With unceasing glorification we magnify thee, the Mother of the Most High, who knewest not wedlock, who didst truly give birth unto God the Word in manner which passeth understanding, and art more highly exalted than the powers more pure.**

**Who** doth not marvel at thine invincibility, O protomartyr? For, having subdued the passions, the noetic beasts, to thy soul, thou wast not afraid of the unrestrained assaults of wild beasts, but remained incorrupt in their midst.

**At** the command of God, the hard and impassible rock split apart for thee, O God-bearing martyr who wast sealed by the laver of regeneration as a blessed bride, and it received thee like a chamber as thou fleddest.

**Heal** thou the wounds of my soul, O protomartyr; grant peace to the world, bestowing victories over heresies and schisms to all true Orthodox hierarchs, and bring peace to the Churches by thy prayers.

**Theotokion:** **W**ith unceasing hymns all we, the faithful, glorify thee, the all-glorious and most holy Theotokos, and we hymn thee as her who gaveth birth unto the Lord of all, unto the salvation of them that praise thee.

**Exapostilarion:**

**Let** us praise Thecla, the equal of the apostles and first woman to suffer, the glory of women, the instructor of athletes, who opened for all the way of martyrdom.

**Theotokion:** **W**ith thy mighty protection preserve all of us, thy servants, unharmed by the assaults of the enemies, O pure one; for thee alone have we acquired as a refuge in our needs.

**On the Praises, four stichera, the composition of Anatolius, two in Tone II:**

**Having** Christ God as thy Bridegroom in the heavens, O Thecla first to suffer, thou didst reject a transitory betrothed and bridegroom; for, wisely paying no heed to the blandishments of thy mother, thou didst follow Paul, taking the sign of the Cross upon thy shoulders, and didst not fear the fire. The savagery of the wild beasts thou didst transform into meekness. Thou didst slay Phocas by the immersion of holy baptism in Christ. Yet, O thou who didst valiantly shine forth divinely in sufferings, cease not to entreat Christ unceasingly in behalf of them that with faith keep thy most precious memory.

**Having** offered thyself for the bidding of the Almighty, and forsaken earthly love, strengthened as the protomartyr of Christ, thou didst array thyself in the light of everlasting life, discovering the entrance to the blessed bridal chamber of eternal life wherein the flock of women rest. With them pray thou for our souls, O Thecla, equal of the apostles.

**And two in Tone IV:** **F**orm a choir, O ye who love the martyrs, for the time of struggles is come, the annual commemoration of the protomartyr, which exhorteth all to the glorification of God. For Thecla, first martyr among women, having finished the course of suffering, hath been shown to be the first crown-bearer, who prayeth with boldness in behalf of our souls.

**T**hy superhuman suffering, O protomartyr of Christ, not only astonished the nations of men, but also amazed the savage beasts. Flames were not considered flames by thee, O good virgin Thecla, for the sake of Christ thy Bridegroom; and, suffering for His sake, thou didst rejoice. And, cut off from the world, mayest thou receive the blessedness of heaven, praying with boldness in behalf of our souls.

**Glory ..., the composition of Anatolius, in Tone I:**

**T**he struggle of the contest lieth before us, let us join chorus, O people, and look upon the most glorious things accomplished therein: for the good virgin Thecla, the bride of God, the unblemished ewe-lamb, presenteth herself for sacrifice, following Christ God Who sacrificed Himself for our sake. Wherefore, with faith in the Trinity she destroyed ungodliness, and, dancing with the angels, she beseecheth the Savior to save our souls.

**Now and ever ..., Theotokion, or this Stavrotheotokion:**

**Spec. Mel.: "O most lauded martyrs ...":**

**A**s she beheld Christ hanging on the Tree, \* the Virgin said: \* "A sword hath pierced my heart \* and rendeth it, O my Son and Master, \* as of old Symeon foretold to me. \* Yet arise Thou, O Immortal One, \* and with Thyself glorify Thy Mother and handmaid, I pray!"

**At the Aposticha, the stichera from the Oktoechos, and Glory ..., the composition of Anatolius, in Tone II:**

**C**ome, ye who love the martyrs, and in hymns let us honor the protomartyr Thecla, the boast of women; for with the power of the Cross she trampled down the adverse foe, and, receiving the victory, hath been crowned as is meet. Wherefore, the much suffering one prayeth that they that keep her memory with faith and love be delivered from misfortunes and the judgment to come.

**Now and ever ..., Theotokion, or this Stavrotheotokion:**

**Spec. Mel.: "When from the Tree ...":**

**M**any pangs didst thou endure at the crucifixion of thy Son and God, O all-pure one, groaning, weeping and crying aloud: "Woe is me, O my Child most sweet! How is it that Thou didst suffer unjustly, desiring to deliver those born on earth of Adam?" Wherefore, O most pure Virgin, we entreat thee with faith: render Him merciful unto us.

## AT LITURGY

On the Beatitudes, eight troparia: four from the Oktoechos, and four: from Ode III of the canon of the protomartyr.

**O** thy love which passeth understanding, O most honored one, whereby, having united thyself in the Spirit, thou didst bind thyself to Paul in Christ!

**T**he mind was unable to wound thee who wast wounded with the desire of the Spirit, O delight of mortals.

**H**aving rejected all fleshly attachments, thou wast not softened by the conversations of thy mother, O most laudable athlete.

**Theotokion:** **T**hou wast the correction of our first mother Eve, O Theotokos, having given birth unto the Author of life for the world.

### Troparion, in Tone IV:

**T**aught by the words of Paul, O Thecla, bride of God, and confirmed through faith by Peter, O divinely called one, thou wast shown to be the protomartyr and first sufferer among women. Thou didst enter the flame as it were a place abloom with flowers, and the wild beasts and bulls stood in awe of thee, for thou didst arm thyself with the Cross. Wherefore, O most lauded one, entreat Christ, that our souls be saved.

### Kontakion, in Tone VIII:

**I**n the beauty of thy virginity thou didst shine forth, and thou wast adorned with the crown of martyrdom; as one all-glorious, O virgin, thou didst entrust thyself to the Apostle Paul, and didst transform the flame of the fire into dew; and by thy supplication, O thou who wast the first among women to suffer, thou didst quell the raging of the bull.

### Kontakion, in Tone II:

**H**aving wounded thy heart with the love of Christ, O good virgin, thou didst spurn a transient betrothed as of no account; and didst brave the fire and shut the mouths of the wild beasts. And, saved from them, O Thecla, first among women to suffer, thou didst take care to seek out Paul.

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

**Stichos:** In congregations bless ye God, the Lord from the wellsprings of Israel.

## THE SECOND EPISTLE OF PAUL TO TIMOTHY [3:10-15]

**B**ut thou hast fully known my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, charity, patience, persecutions, afflictions, which came unto me at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra; what persecutions I endured: but out of them all

the Lord delivered me: Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution. But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived. But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them; and that from a child thou hast known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.

**Alleluia, in Tone I:** With patience I waited patiently for the Lord, and He was attentive unto me, and He hearkened unto my supplication.

**Stichos:** And He brought me out of the pit of misery, and from the mire of clay.

### THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO ST. MATTHEW [25:1-13].

**T**hen shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom. And five of them were wise, and five were foolish. They that were foolish took their lamps, and took no oil with them: but the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps. While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept. And at midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him. Then all those virgins arose, and trimmed their lamps. And the foolish said unto the wise, Give us of your oil; for our lamps are gone out. But the wise answered, saying, Not so; lest there be not enough for us and you: but go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves. And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage: and the door was shut. Afterward came also the other virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us. But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not. Watch therefore; for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh.

**Communion Verse:** Rejoice in the Lord, O ye righteous; praise is meet for the upright.