

THE 31ST DAY OF THE MONTH OF OCTOBER

COMMEMORATION OF THE HOLY APOSTLES STACHYS, AMPLIUS & THOSE WITH THEM COMMEMORATION OF THE HOLY MARTYR EPIMACHUS AT VESPERS

On "Lord, I have cried ...", 6 stichera: 3 of the apostles, in Tone I:

Spec. Mel.: "O all-praised martyrs ...":

Throughout all the earth * your proclamation of salvation hath gone forth, * O ye glorious apostles of the Lord, * illumining the ends of all the earth * with the radiance of grace, * and dispelling the gloom of deception. * Wherefore, make supplication, * that He grant unto our souls * peace and great mercy.

The most godly Stachys, * the preacher and apostle of Christ, * and the wondrous Apellius, * Aristobulus and Urban, * Amplius and the divine Narcissus, * who preached the most Holy Trinity, * have enlightened the nations * and delivered from bondage * all who bless them with faith.

O most radiant beacons of Christ, * most pure vessels * who, through your faith, contained all the effulgence of the Spirit, * O pillars of the Church, * all-glorious heavens * declaring the glory of God: * entreat Him, * that He grant unto our souls * peace and great mercy.

And 3 stichera of the martyr, in Tone IV:

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

Thou wast shown to be a divine habitation * by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, * O glorious Epimachus, * and, receiving from Him the ability to accomplish healings, * thou dost richly impart health to the sick, * who ever cry out: * O Jesus, Bestower of life, * Thou art the gladness. the glory and boast * of Thy martyrs.

With boldness didst thou preach the truth, * O glorious one, * as a most lawful warrior of Christ, * unafraid of the bestial rage of him who judged thee. * By thy divinely inspired words * thou didst put to shame * him who commanded thee to worship gods who do not exist, * O athlete, * and didst preach unto all * our God Who reigneth over all.

In that thy feet are beautiful, * they were adorned * to traverse the path of martyrdom unhindered, * and, finishing thy course, * thou didst preserve the faith, * and hast received a crown from the hand of the Master. * Him do thou entreat, * that those who with faith celebrate * thine all-honored memory * may be delivered from corruption and tribulations.

Glory ..., Now & ever ..., Theotokion, in the same melody:

I have been cast down to the ground, * I have been slain by sins, * by passions, spiritual and bodily; * wherefore, I am covered with the darkness of despair. * But raise me up now, * guiding me to the life of incorruption * and to the homeland on high, * where the pure voice of those who keep festival is heard, * O all-holy Bride of God.

Stavrotheotokion: **W**hen she beheld Thee, * the Lamb and Shepherd, upon the Tree, * the ewe-lamb who gaveth birth to Thee lamented, * and maternally exclaimed to Thee: * "O my desired Son, * O Long-suffering One, how is it that Thou art suspended upon the tree of the Cross? * How is it, O Word, that Thy hands and feet * have been pierced with nails by the iniquitous? * How is it, O Master, that Thou hast shed Thy blood?"

Troparion of the apostles, in Tone III:

O holy apostles, entreat the merciful God, that He grant to our souls remission of transgressions.

Glory ..., Troparion of the martyr, in Tone IV:

In his suffering, O Lord, Thy martyr Epimachus received an imperishable crown from Thee, our God; for, possessed of Thy might, he cast down the tormenters and crushed the feeble audacity of the demons. By his supplications save Thou our souls.

Now & ever ..., Theotokion, or Stavrotheotokion:

AT MATINS

One canon from the Oktoechos, and two for the saints.

ODE I

Canon of the apostles, the acrostic whereof is:

"With faith I praise the servants of God", the composition of Joseph, in Tone I:

Irmos: Thy victorious right arm hath in godly manner been glorified in strength; for as almighty, O Immortal One, it shattered the adversary, fashioning anew the path of the deep for the Israelites.

Deliver from the darkness of the passions those who honor your memory with faith and celebrate it joyously, O right eloquent ones, and make them partakers of everlasting joy.

Following in the steps of Christ, Who became incarnate in His lovingkindness, O ye who are most rich, and serving His divinely authored precepts, ye have been shown to be guides to piety for all those astray.

Having assembled with faith, let us bless as is meet those who were disciples of Christ: Stachys and the wise Amplius, Urban and Apellius, Narcissus and Aristobulus.

Theotokion: Let us bless her who is blessed among women: the manifest mountain of God, the holy tabernacle and table, the golden jar, the pure palace of Jesus.

Canon of the Martyr

Irmos: I raise a hymn to Thee, O Lord my God, for Thou didst lead Thy people forth from the bondage of Egypt and didst cover over the chariots of Pharaoh and his might.

I raise a hymn to Thee, O Lord my God, for Thou hast shown unto us the memorial of the martyr, which illumineth all things, in that Thou alone art greatly merciful.

I raise a hymn to Thee, O Lord my God, for Thou hast shown Thy martyr to be invincible, a champion among martyrs against ungodliness.

I raise a hymn to Thee, O Lord my God, for Thou hast adorned Thine athlete Epimachus with divine gifts, and hast crowned him with honor.

Theotokion: I raise a hymn to Thee, O Lord my God, for Thou wast born without seed from the womb of the Virgin, for whose sake Thou savest all, in that Thou alone art greatly merciful.

ODE III

Canon of the Apostles

Irmos: O Thou Who alone hast known the weakness of human nature, having mercifully formed Thyself therein: Thou didst gird me about with power from on high, that I may chant to Thee: Holy is the living temple of Thine ineffable glory, O Thou Who lovest mankind!

Thou wast shown to be greatly fertile grain, nurturing with the word of knowledge those who are famished with a hunger for faith, O divinely blessed and wise Stachys, making them partakers of better food through grace, by the power of the Spirit.

Casting right skillfully with the net of thy tongue, thou didst draw forth divine food from the deep of deception, O apostle Narcissus, and didst offer it to the King and Master of creation Who came to save the lost.

Thou didst proceed from the east like a star, and, traveling, didst reach the cities of Britain, preaching the Gospel and illumining with grace those who accepted thy word with faith, O blessed Aristobulus.

Theotokion: **T**hou wast shown to be the splendid bridal chamber and most exalted throne of Christ, O most immaculate Theotokos; for He alone, resting within thee, hath taken away our toils and prepared ease in the future for those who are worthy.

Canon of the Martyr

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.**

Boasting in the all-praised Cross, the martyr Epimachus, the invincible one crowned by Christ, cast the savagery of the impious into darkness.

Disdaining transitory glory, the divinely wise martyr Epimachus, the heir of Christ, rejoiced, drawn to his contest.

Theotokion: **R**ejoice, O Ever-virgin Mother, who held God the Word in thy womb and gavest birth to the Incarnate One, as both God and man!

Sedalion of the apostles, in Tone I:

Spec. Mel.: "Thy tomb, O Savior ...":

Your proclamation went forth to the earth, enlightening the souls of unbelieving men with your sacred mediations, O glorious apostles. Wherefore, we joyfully celebrate your most honorable and splendid memory today, rejoicing with faith.

Glory ..., Sedalion of the martyr, in Tone III:

Spec. Mel.: "Of the divine faith ...":

An animate tower, thou wast a witness to the truth amid thy suffering, vanquishing invisible foes with visible torturers and receiving a crown from Christ, O most excellent one. Wherefore, we cry out to thee: Cease thou never to pray that we be granted great mercy, O glorious one.

Now & ever ..., Theotokion:

Without separating Himself from the divine nature, God became flesh in thy womb; but though the one Lord became man, yet did He remain God, preserving thee, His Mother, a virgin even after giving birth, as thou wast before birthgiving. Him do thou earnestly entreat, that He grant us great mercy.

Stavrotheotokion: The unblemished ewe-lamb of the Word, the incorrupt Virgin Mother, beholding Him Who had sprung forth from her painlessly, suspended upon the Cross, cried out, lamenting maternally: "Woe is me, O my child! How is it that Thou sufferest of Thine own will, desiring to deliver man from the infamy of the passions?"

ODE IV

Canon of the Apostles

Irmos: Habbakuk, gazing with the eyes of foresight upon thee, the mountain overshadowed by the grace of God, prophesied that the Holy One of Israel would come forth from thee unto our salvation and restoration.

Shining forth on earth, the Sun of righteousness manifestly emitted mystic rays: Stachys and Narcissus, Urban and Amplius, Aristobulus and Apellius, who enlighten those who are in darkness.

Fortified by the strength of the divine Spirit, O apostle Amplius, thou didst show forth as children of the light those who live in darkness, performing most glorious works of miracles and setting at nought legions of demons.

Full of divine waters, O all-blessed Urban, thou didst flow like a torrent of salvation, driving away bitter and un-potable waters and watering the pious with grace.

Theotokion: Thou wast shown to surpass the angels, O Mistress; for thou wast counted worthy ineffably to contain in thy womb Him Whom they hold in awe, and to bear in thine arms as a babe Him Who is more ancient than time itself.

Canon of the Martyr

Irmos: Preaching the advent of Thine appearance on earth, O Christ God, the prophet cried out with gladness: Glory to Thy power, O Lord!

Scorning the threats of the ungodly, the right glorious Epimachus arrayed himself for the struggle, crying out with boldness: Glory to Thy power, O Lord! (Twice)

Having spurned earthly things, the glorious Epimachus inherited the kingdom through death, crying out with faith: Glory to Thy power, O Lord!

Theotokion: **H**e Who by the Faith and the Spirit is glorified in the highest did the right victorious Epimachus preach to all the ignorant in the arena.

ODE V

Canon of the Apostles

Irmos: **O** Christ Who hast enlightened the ends of the world with the radiance of Thy coming and hast illumined them with Thy Cross: with the light of Thy divine knowledge enlighten the hearts of those who hymn Thee in Orthodox manner.

The divinely chosen sheep of the good Shepherd were manifestly sent by Him among wolves, taming and leading them to the noetic fold by faith.

The great Andrew ordained thee bishop of Byzantium, O most sacred Stachys, who by divine grace dost guide to calm havens those who sail thither with faith.

The honorable Church of Heraclium hath thee as its precious cornerstone, O blessed Apellius, strengthening it with the word of truth. Wherefore, we honor thee as is meet.

Theotokion: **I**n a manner transcending speech thou didst conceive and give birth to the Word Whom the Father begat from the womb before time began, O pure one. Wherefore, we call thee, His Mother, blessed, as is fitting.

Canon of the Martyr:

Irmos: **S**end down Thine enlightenment upon us, O Lord, and release us from the gloom of transgressions, O Good One, granting us Thy peace.

Defending himself with the weapon of the grace of the Cross, the martyr cried out to the impious ones: "Neither the sword nor fire will cut me off from the love of Christ!"

Standing before the tribunal of the iniquitous, the right glorious Epimachus cried out with great boldness: "Your gods did not create heaven and the earth! Let the ungodly perish!"

Inspired by God, the right glorious Epimachus preached to the ignorant the Trinity: the Father, the Word and the Holy Spirit.

Theotokion: **W**ho is able to describe the all-glorious manner of thy birthgiving which transcendeth speech, O pure one? For thou didst indescribably and essentially give birth to God the Word incarnate.

ODE VI

Canon of the Apostles

Irmos: **The uttermost abyss hath surrounded us, and there is none to deliver us. We are accounted as lambs for the slaughter. Save Thy people, O our God, for Thou art the strength and correction of the weak!**

Having stirred up the sea of the nations with divine ascents, O divinely blessed ones, ye saved those who of old drowned in the bitter sea and brought them saved, to the Deliverer.

Thou didst preach God, Who willeth mercy, and didst free the souls of the pious; O divinely blessed and godly Narcissus, as the great primate of the Athenians and planter of beauteous gardens.

Pouring forth life-giving discourse and the grace of healings, the divine Urban drew men to the enlightenment of divine knowledge, as an emulator of Him Who became incarnate and saved the world.

Theotokion: **W**e hymn thee through whom we, who before were condemned, have been justified, and through whom we have joined the immaterial ministers and have been counted worthy of paradise, O divinely joyous one who art blessed among women.

Canon of the Martyr

Irmos: **Prefiguring Thy three-day burial, within the whale the prophet Jonah cried out, saying: Deliver me from corruption, O Jesus, King of hosts!**

Epimachus forsook the world and the things of the world and manfully gave his body over to tortures for the Master; and he became an heir of Christ.

Epimachus abolished the falsehood of the idols and hath been counted worthy of true glory, receiving the grace of healings, from which all the faithful draw forth.

Sharing in the sufferings of Christ through the power of Christ God Who was crucified in the flesh; Epimachus received crowns of glory from Him, as one who is faithful.

Theotokion: **O** Virgin Theotokos, entreat our God, Who was incarnate of thee, in behalf of thy servants, for we know thee to be our only intercessor.

Kontakion of the apostles, in Tone VIII:

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

Let us hymn the wise apostles as is meet: Apellius, Urban and Aristobulus, Amplius, Narcissus and Stachys, whom the grace of our God brought together, as sacred treasures of the most Holy Spirit and effulgence of the Sun of glory.

ODE VII

Canon of the Apostles

Irmos: O Theotokos, we, the faithful, perceive thee to be a noetic furnace; for, as the supremely Exalted One saved the three children, in thy womb the praised and most glorious God of our fathers wholly renewed the world.

By enduring perils ye were delivered from the enemy who tested you, and with the showers of the living Word ye quenched all the flame of deception, O glorious apostles, crying out: O praised and supremely exalted God of our fathers, blessed art Thou!

Most splendidly and excellently didst thou counsel thy disciples, O blessed Aristobulus, and didst perfectly instruct them; for thou wast possessed of the hypostatic Wisdom, which instructed thee to proclaim the praised and all-glorious God of our fathers.

With sacred voices the hallowed concourse of the faithful calleth thee blessed, O Apellius, for thou didst have a blessed and an angelic life, ever hymning the praised and all-glorious God of our fathers.

Theotokion: Deliver us from perils, tribulations and divers griefs, and from the invasion of aliens, O all-hymned Mistress, that we may glorify thee and cry out to thy Son: O praised God of our fathers, blessed art Thou!

Canon of the Martyr

Irmos: Once, in Babylon, the children of Abraham trampled down the flame of the furnace, crying aloud in hymns: O God of our fathers, blessed art Thou!

Manfully trampling upon falsehood with the fire, the right victorious Epimachus cried out to the Crucified One: O God of our fathers, blessed art Thou!

Fearing neither the flame, nor wild beasts, nor tortures, the invincible Epimachus cried out: O God of our fathers, blessed art Thou!

Preaching the Father, the Son and the most Holy Spirit to those who knew not God, Epimachus cried out: O God of our fathers, blessed art Thou!

Theotokion: Thou wast prefigured by the unconsumed bush and the dew-laden furnace, O pure Mother; for thou didst ineffably give birth to Christ God incarnate, O blessed one.

ODE VIII

Canon of the Apostles

Irmos: The children of Israel in the furnace, shining more brightly than gold in a crucible in the beauty of their piety, said: Bless the Lord, all ye works of the Lord; hymn and exalt Him supremely for all ages!

Ye appeared in the world like lightning bolts, O beholders of God, consuming falsehood and showing forth as children of the day those who chant and cry out: Bless the Lord, all ye works of the Lord; hymn and exalt Him supremely for all ages!

With the sweet salt of thy teachings, O Amplius, thou didst cleanse away the corruption of falsehood. Wherefore, honoring thee, we chant: Bless the Lord, all ye works of the Lord; Hymn and exalt Him supremely for all ages!

Let the glorious Stachys and Amplius, Apellius and Narcissus, Urban and the most wise Aristobulus be hymned, crying out with faith: Bless the Lord, all ye works of the Lord; Hymn and exalt Him supremely for all ages!

Theotokion: **K**nowing thee to be a rampart, a refuge and a ladder which leadeth mankind up to heaven, O pure one, we cry out: Bless the Lord, all ye works of the Lord! Hymn and exalt Him supremely for all ages!

Canon of the Martyr

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

Him Who showed forth the crowned Epimachus as victor over iniquitous men do ye hymn, O children; bless, O priests! Ye people, exalt Him supremely for all ages!

Him Who hath given the athlete Epimachus to us as a physician of sufferings and cruel infirmities do ye hymn, O children; bless, O priests! Ye people, exalt Him supremely for all ages!

Christ Who magnified the memory of Epimachus on earth and through him hath healed divers infirmities, do ye hymn, O priests, and exalt Him supremely forever!

Theotokion: **T**he Virgin, who ineffably conceived and gaveth birth to Christ our God without seed, do ye hymn, O children; bless, O priests! Ye people, exalt her supremely forever!

ODE IX

Canon of the Apostles

Irmos: **The bush aflame with fire yet unconsumed showed forth an image of thy pure birthgiving; and now we pray thee to extinguish the furnace of temptations which rageth against us, that we may unceasingly magnify thee, O Theotokos.**

That Thou mightest illumine with the light of the goodness of knowledge the ends of the earth, which were full of the deception of the enemy and replete with the darkness of ungodliness, Thou didst send forth Thy saving rays upon them, O Compassionate One.

Thou wast shown to be the namesake of the wheat of salvation which beareth for those in need the grain which imparteth confirmation of divine knowledge and easeth the noetic starvation of those who with faith and love hymn thee, O glorious and sacred preacher.

Ye were living and God-see in the heavens, O divine apostles. Vouchsafe that those who honor thee on earth in a pure manner and ever sincerely call you blessed may be partakers of everlasting radiance.

Theotokion: **T**hou holdest Him Who holdeth all things and dost nurture with milk Him Who giveth food unto all. Great and awesome and past understanding is thy mystery, O Virgin Theotokos, ark of precious sanctity. Wherefore, with faith we call thee blessed.

Canon of the Martyr

Irmos: **O** pure Theotokos, with hymns we magnify thee who contained the infinite Word within thy womb, and art more spacious than the heavens and more glorious than the cherubim.

As thy love was perfect, thou didst desire to die for Christ Who died for our sake. Wherefore, thou hast been enrolled by Him in His army in the highest, O martyr. With hymns we magnify Him with the Father and the Spirit.

As Thou didst with faith confess God the Savior on earth before the impious torturers, O martyr Epimachus, thou hast now been crowned by Him and the Father and the Spirit in the highest, in the presence of the angels.

Theotokion: **T**hee, the pure and glorious Virgin and Mother, of God, the light-bearing cloud, the unconsumed bush who mystically appeared to Moses on Mount Sinai, do we magnify in hymns.

Exapostilarion: Spec. Mel.: "Hearken, ye women ...":

Let the godly Aristobulus, Stachys most rich, the divinely wise Apellius and Narcissus, and the most wise Amplius and Urban now be honored by us as apostles of Christ by whom the world hath been delivered from all manner of deception.

Glory ..., Now & ever ..., Theotokion:

Thou hast been shown to surpass the cherubim, O all-hymned one; for thou didst hold in thine embrace Him Who sitteth upon their shoulders, O all-pure Maiden, and didst nourish Him with milk as a babe. Him do thou earnestly entreat in behalf of us who hymn thee as the true Theotokos.