

THE 7th DAY OF THE MONTH OF DECEMBER
COMMEMORATION OF OUR FATHER AMONG THE SAINTS, AMBROSE,
BISHOP OF MILAN
AT VESPERS

At "Lord, I have cried ...," these stichera to St. Ambrose, in Tone I:

Spec. Mel.: "Joy of the ranks of heaven ...":

Adorning the seat of government with thy virtues, thou didst likewise receive the hierarchal office through divine inspiration, wherefore, having been a faithful steward of grace in both, O Ambrose, thou didst inherit a twofold crown.

In abstinence and sorrow, in many vigils and in lengthy prayers, thou didst cleanse soul and body, O divinely wise one; henceforth manifest as a chosen vessel of Christ God, equal to the apostles, thou didst receive heavenly gifts.

As Nathan reprov'd David, so didst thou boldly reprove the pious emperor who once had sinned, O most blessed Ambrose, and thou didst openly cut him off from the Church; and having chastised him in godly manner with a penance, thou didst number him again amongst thy flock.

Other stichera, to the Theotokos, chanted if Alleluia is sung instead of "God is the Lord ...," in which case, these stichera are chanted before those to St. Ambrose, in the same tone and melody:

O pure Theotokos, with the staff of thine intercession drive thou the bestial passions from my wretched soul; and, peacefully guiding me to life, number me among the holy flock of thy chosen sheep.

As thou art the helper of helpless men, as thou art the hope of all the hopeless, O Theotokos, be thou my release and aid amid evils, O all-pure one, delivering me from sins and tribulations, in that thou art merciful.

The fiery urgings of my most pernicious passions do thou quench, O Virgin, with dew divine, with the rain of thy will, that even I, like the youths, may give thanks unto God Who was born of thee, and glorify and bless thy grace, O Mistress.

Glory ..., Now and ever ..., Theotokion, in the same tone and melody:

Drugged down by my corrupt will, I lie prone, yet I have recourse to thy serenity, O Virgin. Deliver me from the adverse tempest and from diverse temptations, that I may unceasingly hymn thy grace, O Ever-virgin Mother Theotokos.

Or this Stavrotheotokion: **S**tanding before the Cross of thy Son and God, and beholding His longsuffering, O pure Mother, weeping, thou didst say: Woe is me, O my Child most sweet! What are these things which Thou dost suffer unjustly, O Word of God, that Thou mightest save mankind?

The Aposticha from the Oktoechos, and this Troparion, in Tone IV:

The very truth of things revealed thee to thy flock as a rule of faith, a model of meekness and teacher of abstinence. Wherefore, thou didst attain the heights through humility, and riches through poverty. O father Ambrose, entreat Christ God that our souls be saved!

AT MATINS

Both canons from the Oktoechos, and the canon to the saint, with four troparia, the acrostic whereof is: "I praise Ambrose most great, " in Tone IV:

ODE I

Irmos: Israel of old, having traversed the depths of the Red Sea with dryshod feet, conquered the might of Amalek in the wilderness through Moses' hands stretched forth in the form of a cross.

O venerable one, radiant with divine splendors, by thy prayers illumine them that piously honor thy radiant, light-bearing and holy repose.

The Word of God gave thee the discourse of wisdom adorned with true knowledge, O hierarch Ambrose, dispelling the irrational and malicious thought of the heretical.

Having cleansed the vision of thy mind of the darkness of the passions, O thou that art most rich, thou didst render it receptive to the pure effulgence of the all-holy Spirit, O all-blessed one.

Having, as a pastor, fended off the destruction of the Arian-minded with thy most wise and sacred dogmas, O all-wise one, with faith thou didst shepherd thy rational sheep on the meadow of Orthodoxy.

Theotokion: **B**y the Father's will and through the divine Spirit of God, thou didst, without seed, conceive and give birth in the flesh unto the Son Who was begotten of the Father without mother and was born of thee without father for our sake.

ODE III

Irmos: Not in wisdom, nor in power, nor yet in wealth do we boast, but in Thee, O Christ, the hypostatic Wisdom of the Father; for none is holy save Thee, O Lover of mankind.

Having received of God tremendous grace and power, O father Ambrose, by thy tangible touch thou didst heal the divers passions of them that had recourse to thee.

O venerable one, having learned all the knowledge of the Scriptures, in that thou wast a godly hierarch, thou didst manifestly make plain to the ignorant things difficult to understand, O father Ambrose.

With the sentence of God thou didst instantly strike dead the vile woman who audaciously and senselessly strove to draw nigh unto thee, who shone forth with spiritual wisdom.

Theotokion: **T**hou alone hast renewed the human race, having given birth unto the Creator and Lord of our nature. Wherefore, we glorify thee, O divinely joyous one.

Sedalion, in Tone VIII: Spec. Mel.: "Of the Wisdom ...":

Emulating zealously Elijah the Prophet, and likewise John the Baptist, thou didst manfully denounce the iniquitous emperor, O hierarch; in godly manner didst thou adorn thy see, and hast enriched the world with a multitude of miracles. Wherefore, learned in the divine Scriptures, thou didst establish the faithful therein, and didst convert the unbelieving. O hierarch Ambrose, entreat Christ God, that He grant remission of transgressions unto them that, with love, celebrate thy holy memory.

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

Tripped up by wicked thoughts, I have fallen into the abyss of sins and, groaning, I cry out to thee from the depths of my heart, O all-pure one: Show forth the wonder of thy rich mercy upon me, and the unfathomable abyss of thy lovingkindness, and the incalculable wealth of thy compassion; and grant me repentance and forgiveness of sins, that I may cry out to thee with love: Entreat Christ God, that He grant me remission of transgressions, for thee do I, thy servant, have as my hope.

Or this- Stavrotheotokion:

Beholding the Lamb, Shepherd and Deliverer upon the Cross, the Ewe-lamb cried out, weeping, and exclaimed, bitterly lamenting: The world rejoiceth, receiving deliverance through Thee, but my womb doth burn, beholding Thy crucifixion, which Thou dost endure in the lovingkindness of Thy mercy, O longsuffering Lord, Abyss of mercy and inexhaustible Wellspring! Take pity, and grant remission of offenses unto them that, with faith, hymn Thy divine sufferings.

ODE IV

Irmos: Out of love for that which is created in Thine image, O Compassionate One, Thou didst take Thy stand upon the Cross, and the nations melted away; for Thou, O Lover of mankind, art my strength and boast.

Having been anointed with the chrism of the priesthood, thou wast shown forth as a hierarch, ordaining priests and granting the cleansing of salvation unto all.

Thou didst protect thy flock from all the harm of the adversaries, O blessed one, and didst blind the falsehood of Arius with the radiance of thy words.

Invested with the power of the Spirit, thou didst dispel the evil spirits of malice, who could not endure thy rebuke, O most blessed one.

Theotokion: He that wrought all things by His will is Himself wrought of thy pure blood, saving them that acknowledge thee to be the pure Mother of God.

ODE V

Irmos: **T**hou hast come into the world as a light, O my Lord; a holy light which turneth from the gloom of ignorance them that hymn Thee with faith.

Having attained a mind resplendent with immaterial light, O blessed Ambrose, thou hast emitted rays of healing and miracles.

Thou didst raise thyself up as a sacred dwelling place of the Spirit, O divinely inspired Ambrose, and didst raze the temples of idolatry.

Emperors were put to shame by thee, shining with the effulgence of the greatest of virtues, and their restrictions did not cause thy tongue to falter.

Theotokion: **H**e that wrought all things in wisdom through His will, desiring to renew man, O Virgin, made His abode in thy womb.

ODE VI

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

Amazed, Rome faithfully praiseth thine honored deeds; for, like a radiant star, O hierarch, thou dost put forth the rays of thy wonders everywhere.

Having risen at dawn for Christ, thou hast been richly illumined with splendors and filled with divine light; and thou dost enlighten them that ever faithfully honor thee.

Having sanctified body and soul, O father, thou didst render thy heart, which ever attendeth unto sweet desire, receptive to the gifts of grace.

Theotokion: **H**eal thou the wounds of my soul, O Virgin, with thy divine overshadowing, and enlighten my mind, which hath been benighted by slothfulness and by the malice of the adverse foe.

Kontakion, in Tone III: Spec. Mel.: "Of divine faith ...":

Shining with divine dogmas, thou didst darken the deception of Arius, O Ambrose, pastor and teacher of the mysteries. And working wonders through the power of the Spirit, thou didst manifestly heal divers passions, O venerable father. Entreat Christ God, that our souls be saved.

ODE VII

Irmos: **T**he children of Abraham in the Persian furnace, afire with love of piety more than with the flame, cried out: Blessed art Thou in the temple of Thy glory, O Lord!

Like lightning hath the divine proclamation of thy dogmas flashed throughout all the earth, O father most wise; and it shone forth as light with the revelations of miracles, enlightening hearts that were in darkness.

Following the command of the Savior, O father, thou didst, like a most blessed servant, diligently increase manifold the talent given thee, and art vouchsafed the Master's joy.

Having deepened thy theological mind, like a river thou didst put forth streams of sacred dogmas, giving drink unto the fullness of the faithful, O father Ambrose, teacher of the mysteries.

Theotokion: **B**ehold, O Virgin, in thy womb didst thou conceive the Word, Who is co-unoriginate with the Father, and thou gavest birth in the flesh unto Him Who granteth restoration unto all that from Adam's time have fallen, O all-immaculate one.

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!**

Having mortified thy members and slain the wisdom of the flesh, thou didst impart life unto thy soul and didst pour forth a fountain of miracles upon them who have been slain by the passions, O venerable one, granting life unto them that cry: Bless the Lord, all ye works of the Lord!

Thou wast informed of thine approaching repose in the body by the Spirit of God, O wise one; for thou didst say so prophetically unto them that were with thee, and didst pass over to the heavens crying out with joy: Bless the Lord, all ye works of the Lord!

Having rid body, mind and heart of the turbulence of the passions, O Ambrose, from on high thou didst receive a fiery ray of light, crying out like the divine disciples: Bless the Lord, all ye works of the Lord!

Theotokion: **T**hou art shown to be more exalted than the heavens, O all-pure one, having given birth unto the God of heaven, Who hath united those of earth with those of the heavens, and Who granteth knowledge of Himself unto all that cry out: Bless the Lord, all ye works of the Lord!

ODE IX

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

In ecstasy thou didst behold the everlasting honors which are being laid up for the saints, O father; and thou didst pass over to them, receiving the reward of thy labors, rejoicing, O glorious one.

Like a ripe cluster of grapes wast thou gathered into the vats of heaven, pouring forth the wine of immortality and gifts of healing, as is meet, O divinely wise Ambrose, upon them that piously have recourse to thee.

With a mighty voice we bless thee, O father, the golden candlestick of the divine Spirit, which putteth forth the light of pious teachings and the radiance of healings, enlightening the faithful.

The Church, O most blessed one, having acquired thee as a daystar, doth escape all the deception of darkness, and, illumined with the splendors of thy sacred dogmas, she doth bless thee.

Theotokion: **W**ith joy we utter unto thee the salutation of the archangel, O Virgin: Rejoice, thou abolition of the curse! Rejoice, deliverance from all evils, O thou that, in manner incomprehensible, doth deify mortals by thy birthgiving!