

THE 18th DAY OF THE MONTH OF APRIL

COMMEMORATION OF OUR VENERABLE FATHER JOHN, THE DISCIPLE OF SAINT GREGORY THE DECAPOLITE

On "Lord, I have cried ...", these Stichera, in Tone VIII:

Spec. Mel.: "O most glorious wonder ...":

O venerable father John, * furnishing thy mind with wings to fly to God with faith, * thou didst disdain the disorderly state of the world * and, taking up thy cross, thou didst follow after Him * Who beholdeth all things, * enslaving to thy mind * the intemperance of thy body * through feats of asceticism, ** by the power of the divine Spirit.

O venerable John, thou didst find Gregory * to be like a sun of great radiance, * shining with the light of the virtues * and the effulgence of miracles, * and thou didst illumine the eyes of thy soul, * and dispel the dark passions, * becoming a light; * and rejoicing, O most blessed father, ** thou didst pass over to the never-waning Light.

Thou didst spend thy whole life * in great stillness, * in weeping and tears, * becoming a true monk by faith, * adorned with non-acquisitiveness * and made beautiful through abstinence, * showing thyself to be a stranger and a sojourner on earth. * Wherefore, O right wondrous one, ** thou hast found the delight of the good.

Glory ..., Now & ever ..., Theotokion in Tone VIII:

The pre-eternal God, * taking flesh from thy blood, * hath shown thee forth, O pure one, * as an intercessor for all mankind. * Wherefore, deliver thy servants * from all misfortune * and every evil circumstance, * and grant that all who glorify and bow down before thee ** be deemed worthy of the splendor of the elect.

Stavrotheotokion: "What is this sight which I see, * which mine eyes behold, O Master? * How is it that Thou Who dost sustain all creation, * art lifted up upon the Tree and diest, * granting life unto all?" * thus said the Theotokos weeping, * upon seeing God and man * Who had shone forth ineffably from her ** hanging upon the Cross.

AT MATINS

Canon of the venerable one, in Tone VIII:

ODE I

Irmos: **T**he wonderworking staff of Moses, * striking and dividing the sea in the figure of a cross, * once drowned Pharaoh the pursuing charioteer, * while it saved the fleeing people of Israel * as they fled on foot, * chanting a hymn unto God.

By thy supplication, O venerable and blessed John, guide me to the safe haven of dispassion and the harbor of salvation, for I am ever assailed by the threefold waves of the passions and am now engulfed amid the tumult of evil thoughts.

Thou hast truly been translated to the heavens by thy desire, having lived angelically on earth and mortified the wisdom of thy flesh by abstinence, O father, whereby, thou hast been revealed to be a habitation of God, O wondrous John.

Desiring to obtain things of beauty which pass understanding, O blessed one, thou didst find the glorious Gregory as thine instructor, who moved thee to godly struggles, and in whose steps thou didst follow, O divinely wise John.

Theotokion: **T**he only-begotten Word, Who with the Father and the Spirit is co-eternal, hath appeared on earth through thee as a man, O Theotokos Mary, and thereby saved the whole world, which chanteth hymns to the Lord.

ODE III

Irmos: **O** Christ fortify me on the rock of Thy commandments, * Thou who in the beginning didst establish the heavens with understanding * and didst establish the earth upon the waters, * for there is none holy but Thee, O only Lover of mankind.

Beholding the beauties of heaven with sobriety of mind, thou wast in nowise restrained by material sorrows, and, soaring aloft on wings of non-acquisition, O father, thou wast wholly translated.

As a lover of the stillness of Gregory, the pastor who loved tranquility, O thrice blessed John, thou didst zealously forsake the tumults of this life and by never-ceasing entreaties obtain divine serenity.

Thou didst make thyself subject to the law of the Spirit, O divinely wise and blessed one, having by strict abstinence and asceticism, and by earnest supplications and vigils, mortified the natural law contending against this.

Theotokion: **O** most immaculate one, thou hast been truly shown to be the radiant and impassable gate through which He Who reigneth throughout all ages Himself passed, leaving thee still sealed.

Sedalion, in Tone I: Spec. Mel.: "Thy tomb, O Savior ...":

Having buried the wicked pursuit of the demons through great abstinence and prayers, O father, lying dead in the grave thou didst remain incorrupt. Wherefore, rejoicing, we celebrate thy most holy memory, magnifying Christ with gladness of heart.

Glory ..., Now & ever ..., Theotokion in Tone I:

O pure Virgin Theotokos who knewest not wedlock, thou sole intercessor and protection of the faithful: from tribulations, sorrows and cruel circumstances deliver all who place their trust in thee, O Maiden, and save our souls by thy divine supplications.

Stavrotheotokion: **B**eholding Thee stretched out dead upon the Cross, O Christ, Thine all-immaculate Mother cried aloud: "O my Son, Who with the Father and the Spirit, art beginningless, what is this ineffable dispensation, wherewith Thou hast saved the work of Thy most pure hands, O Compassionate One?"

ODE IV

Irmos: **T**hou, O Lord, art my strength and Thou art my power, * Thou art my God and Thou art my joy, * Thou Who, while never leaving the bosom of Thy Father, * hast visited our poverty. * Therefore with the Prophet Habbakuk I cry unto Thee, * 'Glory to Thy power, O Lover of mankind!'

Ever buffeted by the waves of the adversary, O blessed one, thou wast shown to be a rock of patience, thy pious thoughts in nowise shaken. Wherefore, the Master hath set thee in His eternal treasury as an all-precious stone.

The Father of compassions received thee as one who loved Him sincerely, and who abode in His commandments, O father; and through grace He made thee His son, and deemed thee worthy of a share of His eternal glory, O divinely wise John.

As thou wast merciful and humble-minded, meek, full of love and faith, and possessed of a heart rendered steadfast by hope, O ever-memorable John, proceeding toward life thou didst shine forth in word and deed among monks.

Theotokion: **T**hou art the boast of the faithful, O unwedded one, thou art the help and refuge of Christians, their rampart and refuge; for thou dost bring supplications to thy Son, O all-immaculate one, saving from misfortunes those who with faith and love acknowledge thee to be the pure Theotokos.

ODE V

Irmos: **O** Light never-waning, * why hast Thou turned Thy face from me * and why hath the alien darkness surrounded me, * wretched though I be? * But do Thou guide my steps I implore Thee * and turn me back towards the light of Thy commandments.

The great Shepherd made thee to dwell in the eternal courts, as an innocent lamb pastured on the meadows of abstinence, O blessed John, and He hath shown thee to share a place with the sheep of His right hand, O venerable one.

Thou didst mightily endure the burden and heat of the day; O father, working well in the vineyard of the divine virtues; wherefore, departing in the evening of thy life thou didst receive a worthy reward.

Thou hast truly been deemed worthy to dwell with the assembly of ascetics, O father, and when thou didst flee from material things through vision and active love of wisdom, O all-praised one, thou didst come to rejoice with the choir of the righteous.

Theotokion: **R**estore me to life, who have been slain by the sting of death and disobedience, O Virgin who didst conceive the uncreated Life and hast given birth to the Redeemer and King of the world; and guide me to the light, O pure one.

ODE VI

Irmos: **C**leanse me, O Savior, * for many are mine iniquities; * lead me up from the abyss of evils I pray Thee, * for unto Thee have I cried, * and Thou hast hearkened unto me, * O God of my salvation.

With the drops of thy tears thou didst dry up the deep of the passions, and, strengthened by Christ, O blessed John, thou didst trample underfoot all the feeble power of the noetic foe.

Like lustrous gold tried in the fire of abstinence, O most glorious father, Christ the incorrupt King hath placed thee in the incorrupt treasures of life everlasting.

Thou didst find Gregory shining on earth with the virtues, like the sun; and, illumining the eyes of thy soul with his noetic effulgence, thou didst reveal thyself to be a most radiant star.

Theotokion: **W**e piously hymn the most pure Mary, the habitation of God, truly divine and most precious; for she contained God, having received the Infinite and Unapproachable One.

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

Adorning thy life with abstinence, O father, * thou didst mortify thy flesh; * wherefore, having vanquished the attacks of the enemy, O most blessed John, * thou hast passed over to God, * to everlasting life free from sorrow, * as a worthy heir. ** Pray thou to Him, that we be saved.

ODE VII

Irmos: **T**he Children of Judaea, * who of old came to dwell in Babylon, * trampled underfoot the flame of the furnace * through their faith in the Trinity, * as they sang: 'O God of our fathers, blessed art Thou.'

Contemplating the second coming of the Judge, thou didst put away the dream of despondency from thine eyes, O wise one, and, saved, didst chant: O God of our fathers, blessed art Thou!

From earliest infancy thou didst choose the good portion, O wise father: to labor for the Lord with fear and to follow His precepts, chanting: O God of our fathers, blessed art Thou!

God set thee in the granaries of heaven like ripe wheat, full of the ways of the Spirit, O God-bearer, for thou dost chant: O God of our fathers, blessed art Thou!

Theotokion: **O** pure and blessed Lady, who for the world hast given birth to God incarnate, save my soul, which hath mindlessly become enslaved to unseemly sins, that I may glorify thee.

ODE VIII

Irmos: **I**n his wrath the Chaldean Tyrant made the furnace blaze, * with heat fanned sevenfold for the servants of God; * but when he perceived that they had been saved by a greater power * he cried aloud to the Creator and Redeemer; * ‘ye children bless, ye priests praise, * ye people, supremely exalt Him throughout all ages’.

Having rightly inherited the grace of thy glorious pastor, as Elisha had inherited the mantle of Elijah, O father John, thou didst thereby cleave the deep of pleasures in half; and, saved and undrowned, wast revealed to be a fellow citizen with the angels, crying out with them: Ye people supremely exalt the Lord throughout all ages!

Thou didst piously emulate the supremely good Lord Who humbled Himself for our sake, O father John, and having acquired a lack of acquisition rivaling that of the birds, thou didst also obtain a wealth of eternal good things, chanting: Ye priests bless; ye people supremely exalt the Lord throughout all ages!

Rejoicing, O thou who art most rich, thou didst pass over to never-ending life, to incorruptible joy, to gladness past understanding, to beauteous magnificence, to a sojourn with the angels, crying: Ye children bless; ye priests hymn; ye people supremely exalt the Lord throughout all ages!

Theotokion: **S**anctified by the Spirit, O most immaculate Theotokos, thou didst truly receive in thy womb the beginningless and eternal Son, Who became incarnate within thee for the benefit of those who chant with faith: Ye children bless; ye priests hymn; ye people supremely exalt the Lord throughout all ages!

ODE IX

Irmos: **H**eaven was stricken with awe, * and the ends of the earth were filled with amazement, * for God hath appeared in the flesh, * and thy womb was rendered more spacious than the heavens. * Wherefore, the ranks of men and of angels * magnify thee as the Theotokos.

Having shaped the furrow of thy soul with the plough of prayer, O John, thou didst sow therein the life-bearing seeds of the virtues and piety. Wherefore, thou didst reap the grain of godly healings and divine gifts, by which thou dost nurture those who hymn thee.

Having finished the race of fasting and kept the Faith, O blessed one, as one of truly full spiritual stature thou hast received the crown of righteousness from Christ, and dost now rest with the righteous in the mansions of light, O most glorious one.

Thou hast reaped the rewards for thy pangs, translated to pure perfection devoid of pain, of all change and alteration, unmingled with bitter and adverse deformities; and therein thou hast dwelt. O father, be thou mindful of those who with faith hymn thee before the Master.

Theotokion: O most pure one, as thou art the Mother of the Redeemer, thou hast called us back, who rejected the life of heaven and wickedly fell into spiritual death, since thou hast granted us to hasten to our first homeland, O Mother of God, we unceasingly magnify thee.