

The 31st Day of October

Commemoration of the Holy Apostles of the Seventy: Stachys, Amplias, Urban, Narcissus, Apelles, and Aristobulus; and Martyr Epimachus of Alexandria.

And the Commemoration of the New Hieromartyr John Kochurov, whose service can be found following this.

Vespers

At “Lord I call...,” 3 stichera of the Apostles, in Tone 1: *To the melody, “O all-praised martyrs....”*

Your proclamation of salvation has gone out into all the earth, /
O apostles of the Lord, /
Illuminating the hearts of all with the radiance of grace /
And dispelling the gloominess of lies and deception. ///
Therefore, pray that our souls be granted peace and great mercy.

Stachys, the godly preacher and apostle of Christ, /
Together with Amplias, Apelles, and Narcissus, /
Urban the blessed, and Aristobulus, /
All preached the Holy Trinity /
And thus they enlightened the Gentiles ///
Delivering them from the bondage of the enemy.

O most splendid luminaries of Christ the Lord, /
O pure vessels and pillars of the Church, /
Who filled all the faithful with the radiance of the Spirit; /
O ye heights of heaven that are telling the glory of God: ///
Beseech Him to grant peace to the world and great mercy to our souls.

And 3 stichera of the Martyr, in Tone 4: *To the melody, “As one valiant among the martyrs....”*

Thou didst reveal thyself as a dwelling of divinity /
By the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, /
O Epimachus the glorious, /
And didst receive from Him the gift of healing, /
Which thou dost richly grant to all in need /
And who cry out ceaselessly: ///
O Giver of life, Christ, Thou art the joy, the glory, and boast of the martyrs!

Thou didst preach the Truth with boldness, O glorious one, /
As a true warrior of Christ, /

And wast not afraid of the beastly tyrant as he sentenced thee, /
Instead, thou didst shame him with thy divinely-inspired words /
When he commanded thee to worship gods who do not exist, ///
For thou didst preach to all our God who is over all.

Adorned with fierce marks of torture /
Thy beautiful feet traversed the path of martyrdom; /
And having kept the faith and completing thy course, /
Thou didst receive thy crown of victory from the hands of the Master. /
Beseech Him now that those who celebrate with faith thy holy memory ///
May be delivered from corruption and every misfortune.

Glory..., now and ever..., Theotokion, in the same Tone: (and melody)

I have been cast into the pit beneath the ground /
Slain by my spiritual and physical passions /
And I lay covered with the darkness of despair: /
But raise me up to the life of incorruption /
And guide me to the homeland on high /
Where the voices of those who keep festival are heard, ///
O most-holy Bride of God.

Or the Stavrotheotokion, in the same Tone: (and melody)

Seeing Thee the Lamb and Shepherd on the tree, /
The ewe-lamb who gave birth to Thee lamented, /
And as a mother cried out to Thee: /
“O desired Son, how art Thou hung on the Tree of the Cross, /
O Longsuffering One? /
How art Thy hands and feet nailed by the transgressors, O Word? /
How dost Thou shed Thy Blood, O Master?

Or, on Saturday evening or Friday evening the Dogmatic Theotokion in the Tone of the Week.

The Troparion of the Apostles, in Tone 3:

O holy apostles, /
Intercede with our merciful God, /
That He may grant to our souls ///
The remission of our transgressions.

Glory..., the Troparion of the Martyr, in Tone 4:

Thy holy martyr, Epimachus, O Lord, /

APOSTLES STACHYS, AMPLIAS AND THOSE WITH THEM;
AND THE MARTYR EPIMACHUS

Through his sufferings received his incorruptible crown from Thee, our God /
For having Thy strength he laid low his enemies /
And shattered the powerless boldness of demons ///
Through his intercessions, O Christ God, save our souls.

Now and ever..., the Theotokion, or the Stavrotheotokion.

Matins

The Canon

One Canon from the Octoechos, and two of the Saints.

Ode 1

The Canon of the Apostles, in Tone 1

*having the acrostic, "With faith I praise the servants of God,"
the composition of Joseph.*

Irmos: As befitted Thy divine majesty, Thy triumphant right hand has been glorified in strength. In its almighty power it dashed the enemy to pieces, O Immortal Lord, and made a new path through the deep for the people of Israel.

Refrain: Holy apostles of Christ pray to God for us!

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

Following in the footsteps of Christ, who in His lovingkindness became incarnate, O richly blessed apostles, you ministered His divinely-authored precepts and guided back to piety those who had gone astray.

Having assembled with faith, let us rightly bless Stachys, and the wise Amplias, Apelles, Narcissus, Urban, and Aristobulus, as true apostles of Christ.

Theotokion: **L**et us bless Mary, the most blessed amongst women, as the manifest mountain of God, the holy tabernacle, the golden jar, and the most pure palace of Christ the King.

The Canon of the Martyr, in Tone 4

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

Refrain: Holy Martyr Epimachus pray to God for us!

I raise a hymn of praise to Thee, O Lord my God, for Thou hast led us to celebrate the memory of Thy martyr which illumineth all things, in that Thou alone art greatly merciful.

I raise a hymn of praise to Thee, O Lord my God, for Thou has revealed Thy martyr Epimachus to be an invincible and true champion among the martyrs in their struggle against ungodliness.

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

Theotokion: **I** raise a hymn of praise 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 3 **The Canon of the Apostles**

Irmos: *Thou who alone knowest human frailty, hast taken upon Thyself from pity the likeness of mortal man: Gird me with the strength on high, that I may cry aloud to Thee: O Lover of mankind, holy is the living temple of Thine ineffable glory!*

Thou didst nurture the famished hungering for faith with the fertile grain, O divinely-blessed Stachys, making them, by the power of the Spirit, partakers of the better food through grace.

Skillfully casting thy words like a net, O Apostle Narcissus, thou didst draw divine nourishment out from the abyss of deception, offering it to the King and Master of Creation, who came to save the lost.

Thou didst proceed from the East like a star, and traversing the world, thou didst come to the lands of Britain, there to preach the Gospel illumining those who faithfully accepted thy words with grace, O blessed Aristobulus.

Theotokion: **T**hou wast revealed as the splendid bridal chamber and the most exalted throne of Christ, O most immaculate Lady Theotokos, for He alone, resting within thee, hath taken away our toils and sorrows, preparing a future place of rest and repose for those found worthy.

The Canon of the Martyr

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

Boasting in the all-praised Cross, Epimachus the invincible martyr crowned by Christ, cast the savagery of the faithless into the dark abyss.

Disdaining the transitory glory of this world, the divinely-wise martyr Epimachus, the heir of Christ, rejoiced as he prepared to face his martyrs' trial.

Theotokion: **R**ejoice, O Ever-virgin Mother, who held God the Word within her womb, and gavest birth Him, incarnate, as both God and man.

APOSTLES STACHYS, AMPLIAS AND THOSE WITH THEM;
AND THE MARTYR EPIMACHUS

The Sessional Hymn of the Apostles, in Tone 1: *To the melody, “Thy tomb”*

Your proclamation has gone out into all the earth /
Enlightening the souls of the nonbelievers with your holy words, /
Therefore, with faith we rejoice, /
O glorious apostles of Christ, ///
As we celebrate your honorable and splendid memory.

Glory..., of the Martyr, Tone 3: *To the melody, “The faith divine....”*

Thou wast a living tower of strength, /
A witness to Truth in thy sufferings, /
Vanquishing invisible foes with thy visible torments. /
Receiving for this a crown from Christ, /
And we, the faithful, cry out to thee: /
O Epimachus, the glorious, /
Cease not to pray that we be granted great mercy.

Now and ever..., Theotokion, in the same Tone:

The Only Lord, /
While not being parted from His divine nature, /
Became flesh in thy womb. /
And being God He became incarnate, /
Preserving thee, as His Mother, yet all-chaste as a Virgin. ///
Earnestly pray that He grant our souls great mercy.

Or this Stavrotheotokion, in the same Tone:

When the chaste ewe-lamb and incorrupt Virgin Mother, /
Beheld Him hanging on the Cross /
The One who sprang forth from her womb without giving pain /
She cried out lamenting with a mothers’ sorrow: /
“Woe is me, O my Child, /
How dost Thou voluntarily endure suffering /
In Thy desire to save mankind ///
From the passion of impiety.

Ode 4
The Canon of the Apostles

Irmos: O Mountain, Habbákuk beheld thee with prophetic eyes overshadowed by the grace of God, and he foretold that from thee should come the Holy One of Israel for our salvation and regeneration.

Shining down from heaven, the Sun of righteousness grace the earth with the mystic beacons of light: Stachys and Narcissus, Urban and Amplias, Apelles and Aristobulus, to enlighten those who were sitting in darkness.

Fortified by the power of the Holy Spirit, O Apostle Amplias, thou didst turn those who were sitting in darkness into true children of the light by performing glorious wonders and overthrowing legions of demons.

Thou didst unleash a torrent of divine waters, O all-blessèd Urban, that poured forth salvation, washing away the bitter and stagnant pools of idolatry and watering the pious with grace.

Theotokion: **T**hou art truly more exalted than the angels, O Lady, for thou wast counted worthy of ineffably carrying in thy womb Him whom they hold in awe, and to bear as babe in thine arms Him, who is timeless before all ages.

The Canon of the Martyr

Irmos: *Proclaiming the coming of Thine appearance on earth, O Christ God, the prophet cried out with joy: Glory to Thy power, O Lord!*

Scorning the threats of the ungodly, the righteous martyr Epimachus gird himself for battle, and with boldness cried aloud: Glory to Thy power, O Lord! *(twice)*

Having spurned all earthly things, Epimachus the glorious inherited the Kingdom of heaven through his death, as he cried aloud with faith: Glory to Thy power, O Lord!

Theotokion: **O** all-glorious Mother of God, the right victorious Epimachus, in the arena, gave witness to the ignorant of Him who is glorified on-high with the Father and the Holy Spirit.

Ode 5

The Canon of the Apostles

Irmos: *O Christ, who hast enlightened the ends of the earth by Thy coming, and hast made them shine by Thy Cross, enlighten with the knowledge of God the hearts of those who in the right faith sing Thy praises.*

The Good Shepherd sent His divinely-chosen sheep to go in among the wolves to tame them, and to lead them into the noetic sheepfold of the Faith.

The great Apostle Andrew ordained thee to be Bishop of Byzantium, O holy Stachys, whose people, and all who sailed there with hope, thou didst guide to the calm haven of the Faith.

We rightly honor thee, O blessèd Apostle Apelles, for the honorable Church in Heracleum has thee as its cornerstone, for thou didst strengthen it with the word of Truth.

APOSTLES STACHYS, AMPLIAS AND THOSE WITH THEM;
AND THE MARTYR EPIMACHUS

Theotokion: **T**hou didst ineffably conceive and give birth to the Word, whom the Father begat before all time, O pure Lady, in a manner past all speech and understanding. Therefore, we rightly call thee, His Mother, blessed, O Theotokos.

The Canon of the Martyr

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

Shielded by the grace and the power of the Cross the martyr cried out to the faithless: “Neither sword nor fire shall separate me from the love of Christ!”

Standing before the judgement seat of the faithless, the right-glorious Epimachus cried aloud to them with boldness: “Your gods did not create heavens nor the earth! So let the ungodly perish!”

Inspired by God from above, the right-glorious Epimachus preached the Trinity: the Father, Word, and Holy Spirit, to those who sat in ignorance.

Theotokion: **W**ho is able to describe the most glorious manner of thy childbearing that surpasses all speech, O most pure Lady? For thou didst indescribably give birth to God the Word, One in Essence, in the flesh.

Ode 6

The Canon of the Apostles

Irmos: *The uttermost depths have encompassed us, and there is none to deliver us; we are counted as sheep for the slaughter. Do Thou, our God, save Thy people, for Thou art the strength and restoration of those whose strength fails them.*

Having stirred the sea of nations with your divine acts, O divinely-blessed apostles, you saved those, who in ancient days drowned in the bitter waters, and brought them, saved, to the Deliverer, Christ.

As the Bishop of Athens, thou didst plant a bountiful garden of Faith by preaching God, who showeth mercy to all, and thus, freed the souls of the pious, O divinely bless’t Narcissus.

Pouring streams of living wisdom and healing grace, Urban the divine, drew mankind to the light of divine knowledge by emulating Him, who became incarnate and saved the world.

Theotokion: **W**e praise thee through whom we, the condemned, have been justified, and through whom we have been joined to the angelic ministers and counted worthy of paradise, O joyous Lady, who art bless’t amongst all women.

The Canon of the Martyr

Irmos: *Prefiguring Thy three-day burial, the prophet Jonah cried out in the belly of the whale;*

Deliver me from corruption, O Jesus, King and Lord of hosts.

Forsaking all the things of this world, Epimachus courageously gave his body to torture for the sake of the Master, and thus, became an heir of Christ.

The martyr Epimachus abolished the deception of the idols and thus, became worthy of true glory and received the grace of healings, from which we, the faithful, all draw.

Sharing in the sufferings of Christ, through the very power of Christ God who was crucified in the flesh, Epimachus, as His faithful servant, received his crown of glory from Him.

Theotokion: Entreat our God, O Virgin Theotokos, who was incarnate of thee, on behalf of us thy servants, for we know thee to be our only intercessor.

The Kontakion of the Apostles, Tone 8: *To the melody “As the first-fruits”*

Let us properly praise the pure vessels of the Holy Spirit, /

The brilliant rays of light and glory: /

The wise apostles Stachys, Amplias, Apelles, Urban, Narcissus, and Aristobulus, ///

Who have been joined together by the grace of God.

Ode 7

The Canon of the Apostles

Irmos: *We the faithful perceive thee, O Theotokos, as a spiritual furnace; for as the Most-High once saved the three youths, so hath He fully renewed the world from within thy womb as the All-praised and glorified God of our Fathers.*

Enduring perils, you were delivered from the enemy who tested you, and you quenched the flames of deception with the showers of the living Word, O glorious apostles, as you cried aloud: Blessèd art Thou, and praised above all, O Lord God of our fathers!

Splendidly didst thou counsel thy disciples, and most excellently didst thou instruct them, O blessèd Aristobulus, for thou possessed the knowledge of the hypostatic Wisdom which taught thee to proclaim the praised and all-glorious God of our fathers.

The assemblies of the faithful call thee blessèd, O Apelles, for thou didst have a blessèd end to thine angelic life, ever glorifying and praising the all-glorious God of our fathers.

Theotokion: Deliver us from all perils, tribulations, dangers, and the invasion of enemies, O all-praised Lady, that we may glorify thee and praise thy Son, crying: Blessèd art Thou, and praised above all, O Lord God of our fathers!

The Canon of the Martyr

Irmos: *In Babylon of old, the children of Abraham trampled upon the flames of the furnace as they sang aloud: Blessèd art Thou, O God of our fathers!*

APOSTLES STACHYS, AMPLIAS AND THOSE WITH THEM;
AND THE MARTYR EPIMACHUS

Courageously vanquishing deception with the flames of the fire, the right-victorious Epimachus cried aloud to the crucified God: Blessèd art Thou, O Lord God of our fathers!

Fearing neither flames, wild beasts, nor torture, the invincible martyr Epimachus cried aloud: Blessèd art Thou, O Lord God of our fathers!

Preaching the Father, the Son, and the Most-Holy Spirit to those who knew not God, Epimachus the martyr cried aloud: Blessèd art Thou, O Lord God of our fathers!

Theotokion: **T**hou wast prefigured by the unconsumed bush and the furnace sprinkled with dew, O pure Mother, for thou didst ineffably give birth to Christ God in the flesh, O blessed Lady.

Ode 8
The Canon of the Apostles

Irmos: *In the furnace as in a crucible the children of Israel shone more purely than gold with the beauty of godliness, as they sang: All ye works of the Lord, bless the Lord, praise and exalt Him above all throughout all ages!*

You appeared in the world like bolts of lightning, O eye-witnesses of God, and consuming the falsehoods all around you, you showed forth as children of the day those who cry aloud: Bless the Lord, all ye works of the Lord, praise and exalt Him above all throughout all ages!

The sweet salt of thy teachings, O Amplias, scoured away all the corruption of deception. Therefore, honoring thee, we cry aloud: Bless the Lord, all ye works of the Lord, praise and exalt Him above all throughout all ages!

Let us praise Stachys and Amplias, Apelles and Narcissus, Urban and Aristobulus the wise, and let us cry out in faith: Bless the Lord, all ye works of the Lord, praise and exalt Him above all throughout all ages!

Theotokion: **K**nowing thee as our wall of protection, a haven of refuge, and a ladder leading mankind to heaven, O pure Lady, we cry aloud: Bless the Lord, all ye works of the Lord, praise and exalt Him above all throughout all ages!

The Canon of the Martyr

Irmos: *Christ God appeared in the form of an angel in the fiery furnace as the youths cried out: Bless Him, O you children, praise Him, O ye priests, exalt Him, O ye people, throughout all ages.*

We praise Him who revealed Epimachus as a crowned victor over the ungodly and to God we sing: Bless Him, O you children, praise Him, O ye priests, exalt Him, O ye people, throughout all ages!

We praise Him who has given us the martyr Epimachus as a physician of our sufferings and infirmities and to God we sing: Bless Him, O you children, praise Him, O ye priests, exalt Him, O ye people, throughout all ages!

We praise Christ who magnified the memory of His martyr Epimachus on earth and through him heals our sickness and diseases, and to Him we sing: Bless Him, O you children, praise Him, O ye priests, exalt Him, O ye people, throughout all ages!

Theotokion: **We** praise the Virgin who ineffable conceived and gave birth to Christ our God without seed, and to her we sing: Bless her, O you children, praise her, O ye priests, exalt her, O ye people, throughout all ages.

Ode 9 **The Canon of the Apostles**

Irmos: *The bush burning but unconsumed, prefigured thy pure conceiving, O Theotokos; so do we now entreat thee: quench the raging furnace of temptations that beset us, that we may never cease to magnify thee.*

Thou, O Compassionate Lord, didst send forth Thine apostles as beacons of light shining with the knowledge of Goodness to illumine the ends of the earth, that were shrouded in the darkness of godlessness, with the bright rays of salvation.

Thou art the namesake of the stalk of wheat, bearing the grain of salvation to all who are famished and in need, imparting to them the knowledge of faith as nourishment, as they praise thee with faith and love, O glorious and holy preacher, Stachys.

O Aristobulus, thou wast like the voice of God that silenced the mouths of the rhetors, and delivered from their thrall, the souls of the people, bringing them, saved, to the Lord.

You, O divine apostles, the eye-witnesses of God and the very heights of heaven, gaze down upon the earth and vouchsafe that those who honor thee with purity of heart and sincerely call you blessed, may also become partakers of the everlasting glory on high.

Theotokion: **Thou**, O most pure Lady, holdest in thine embrace Him who holdest all creation, and dost nourish with thy milk Him who nourishes all things! Great and awesome, indeed, is thy mystery, O Virgin Mother of God, and therefore we, the faithful, call thee blessed, O sacred tabernacle of the Lord!

The Canon of the Martyr

Irmos: *We magnify thee in song, O pure Theotokos, for thou hast 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 for Christ the Lord, so was thy desire to die for Him, who had died for our sake. Therefore, He hast enrolled thee in His army in the heavens, O martyr,

APOSTLES STACHYS, AMPLIAS AND THOSE WITH THEM;
AND THE MARTYR EPIMACHUS

and with hymns of praise, we magnify Him together with the Father and the Spirit.

As thou didst faithfully confess God the Savior on the earth before the faithless torturers, O martyr Epimachus, so hast thou now been crowned by Him together with the Father and the Spirit in the presence of the angels.

Theotokion: **We** magnify with hymns of praise thee, the light-bearing cloud, and the bush unconsumed by fire, who mystically appeared to Moses on Mount Sinai, O pure and glorious Virgin Mother of God.

Exapostilarion of the Apostles:

Let us all now honor the godly Aristobulus, the richly-blessed Stachys, Apelles, and Narcissus wise in God, together with the most-wise Urban and Amplias, as apostles of Christ, by whom the world has been delivered from manifold deceit.

Glory..., now and ever.... Theotokion:

Thou art indeed more exalted than the cherubīm, O all-praised Lady, for thou didst hold in thine embrace and nourished with thy milk, Him. who sits upon their shoulders. Entreat Him earnestly on behalf of those who praise thee as the true Theotokos.

Liturgy

The Troparion of the Apostles, in Tone 3:

O holy apostles, /
Intercede with our merciful God, /
That He may grant to our souls ///
The remission of our transgressions.

And, the General Troparion of the Martyr, in Tone 4:

Thy holy martyr, Epimachus, O Lord, /
Through his sufferings received his incorruptible crown from Thee, our God /
For having Thy strength he laid low his enemies /
And shattered the powerless boldness of demons ///
Through his intercessions, O Christ God, save our souls.

The Kontakion of the Apostles, Tone 8:

Let us properly praise the pure vessels of the Holy Spirit, /
The brilliant rays of light and glory: /
The wise apostles Stachys, Amplias, Apelles, Urban, Narcissus, and Aristobulus, ///
Who have been joined together by the grace of God.