

The 7th Day of December

Our Father among the Saints, Ambrose, Bishop of Milan.

Vespers

At “Lord, I call...,” 3 stichera, in Tone 1: *To the melody, “Joy of the ranks of heaven....”*

Adorning the court of the Empire with godly works, /
Thou wast then adorned with the dignity of a hierarch, /
Given thee in godly time by divine inspiration. //
Thus, both in Church and State thou wast a faithful builder of grace. ///
Therefore, O Ambrose, thou didst inherit thine incomparable crown in heaven.

Thou didst purify thy soul and body, O divinely-wise Ambrose, /
With fasting, vigilance, and constant prayer; /
For this thou wast revealed as a chosen vessel of Christ God, /
And received the Gifts of the Holy Spirit ///
As truly Equal-to the-Apostles.

Thou didst reprove the grievous sin of the pious Emperor, /
As Nathan reproved David of old; /
Courageously didst thou cast him out of the Church /
And disciplined him wisely with repentance ///
Numbering him again among thy flock.

***Note:** But if we sing “Alleluia” at Matins instead of “God is the Lord,” then the following 3 stichera to the Theotokos are sung at Vespers, at “Lord, I call,” before the above stichera of the Saint, in the same Tone and melody:*

Armed with the staff of thy protection, O most pure Mother of God, /
Drive away the beastly passions of mine accursèd soul; /
And direct my life in peace ///
And number me among thy chosen flock of sheep.

As thou art the help of the helpless /
And the hope of the hopeless, /
Be thou my release and aid amidst all evils, /
Delivering me from every sin and tribulation ///
As thou art most merciful.

Quench the fiery urgings of my perverse passions, O Virgin, /
With the divine dew and the shower of thy will, /
That even I, like the youths may render thanks to God who was born of thee, ///
And glorify and bless thy grace, O Lady.

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

I am laid low and lie in the filth of my vices, /
Yet I crawl to thy peaceful refuge, O Virgin! /
Deliver me from the storms of passion and from every temptation /
That I may ever extol thy grace ///
O Ever-virgin Mother of God.

Or the Stavrotheotokion, in the same Tone:

Standing before the Cross of thy Son and God, /
And beholding His long-suffering,
O pure Mother, thou didst cry out weeping: /
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 is from the Octoechos.

The Troparion to the Saint, in Tone 4:

In truth thou wast revealed to thy flock as a rule of faith, /
A model of humility and teacher of abstinence, /
So, thou didst win the heights of humility, riches by poverty; /
O holy hierarch, father Ambrose, ///
Intercede with Christ our God to save our souls.

Matins

**Both Canons from the Octoechos, and the Canon of the Saint,
with 4 Troparia, in Tone 4**

having the acrostic: “I praise Ambrose the Great,”

Ode 1

Irmos: In days of old, Israel crossed the depths of the Red Sea with dry-shod feet and vanquished the power of Amalek in the wilderness by Moses' arms upraised in the form of the Cross.

Refrain: Holy hierarch father Ambrose, pray to God for us!

O venerable one, by thy prayers thou didst splendidly illumine those who piously honor thy radiant, light-bearing, and holy repose.

The Word of God gave thee words of wisdom adorned with true knowledge with which to dispel the irrational and malicious thoughts of the heretics.

Having cleansed thy mind of the darkness of the passions, O richly-bless't hierarch, thou didst make it receptive to the pure light of the Holy Spirit, O all-blessèd one.

Glory...

Having fended off the destructive attacks of the followers of Arius by thy wise and holy teachings, thou didst shepherd thy sheep in the sweet meadow of Orthodoxy, O wise father Ambrose.

Now and ever...

Theotokion: **B**y the will of the Father and through the action of the Divine Spirit, thou didst conceive without seed and gavest birth in the flesh to the Son who, for our sake, was begotten of the Father without mother and was born of thee without an earthly father.

Ode 3

Irmos: *We glory not in wisdom nor in power, nor yet in riches, but in Thee, the hypostatic Wisdom of the Father, O Christ, for there is none more holy than Thee, O lover of mankind.*

Receiving abundant grace and power from God, O father Ambrose, thou didst heal the passions of those who came to thee by a single touch of thy hand.

Thou wast indeed a good and godly hierarch, O venerable father Ambrose, for having learned the knowledge of the Scriptures, thou didst make plain to the ignorant, things difficult to understand.

With the single word from thee, O spiritually wise father, God struck down the vile temptress who maliciously and senselessly accused thee of laying your hands upon her.

Theotokion: **T**hou alone hast renewed the human race, by giving birth to the Creator and Lord of our natural order. Therefore, we glorify thee, O divinely joyous one.

Sessional Hymn to the Holy Hierarch, in Tone 8: To the melody: "Of Wisdom ..."

Zealously emulating Elijah the Prophet, /
And John the Baptist, /
Courageously didst thou denounce the impious emperor; /
And thou didst adorn thy flock with thy many virtues, /
And enriched the world with thy miracles. /
And with thy knowledge of the holy Scriptures, /
Thou didst convert the unbelieving and confirm the faithful. /
O holy hierarch father Ambrose, /
Entreat Christ God, that He may grant the remission of sins /
To those who lovingly celebrate thy holy memory.

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

Though I crawl under the weight of my wicked thoughts /
 And have fallen into the abyss of sin, /
 I cry to thee in the groaning of my heart: /
 Show thy wondrous mercy upon me, O pure Lady, /
 And the unfathomable depth of thy loving-kindness /
 And incalculable wealth of thy bounty,
 And grant me repentance and the forgiveness of my transgressions /
 So that I may cry out to thee with love: /
 Entreat Christ God that He grant me the remission of my sins. ///
 For I, thy servant, have placed my only hope in thee.

Or this Stavrotheotokion:

When she beheld the Lamb, /
 The Shepherd and Deliverer stretched out upon the Cross, /
 With maternal tears the ewe-lamb cried aloud: /
 “The world rejoiceth for it hath received deliverance though Thee, /
 Yet my womb burns at the sight of Thy crucifixion, /
 Which Thou dost endure in Thy compassion and mercy. /
 O long-suffering Lord, and infinite source of mercy, /
 Have pity and grant the remission of sins ///
 To those who faithfully praise Thy divine suffering.”

Ode 4

***Irmos:** Out of love didst Thou ascend the Cross, O Compassionate One, and the nations submitted themselves, and Thou art my strength and my praise, O Lover of mankind.*

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

Thou didst protect thy flock from the harm of the heretics, O blessed one, and didst blind the delusion 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 rebukes, O blessed father Ambrose.

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

Ode 5

***Irmos:** Thou hast come, O Lord, as a light into the world: a holy light turning from the darkness of ignorance those who sing to Thee with faith.*

Thy mind became resplendent with the immaterial light, O blessed hierarch father

Ambrose, and thou didst emit rays of healing and miracles.

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

Thou didst put emperors to shame, shining with the brilliance of thy great virtues, and their malicious words did not cause thy tongue to falter.

Theotokion: **H**e who created all things in wisdom through His own will, O holy Virgin, in His desire to renew mankind, took up His dwelling within thy womb.

Ode 6

Irmos: *I will sacrifice to Thee with a voice of praise, O Lord! The Church cries out to Thee, having been cleansed of the blood of demons by the blood which, for mercy's sake, flowed from Thy side.*

Amazed, Rome faithfully praises thy honored deeds; for like a radiant star, O hierarch, thou dost shed the rays of thy wonders upon all the world.

Rising early at the dawn for Christ, thou hast been richly illumined with His splendor and filled with divine light; enlightening those who faithfully honor thee.

Having sanctified body and soul, O holy hierarch, thou didst make thy heart, attending to thy sweet desire, receptive to the gifts of grace.

Theotokion: **H**eal thou the wounds of my soul, O Virgin, by thy divine protection, and enlighten my mind which hath been darkened by sloth and by the malice of the enemy.

Kontakion of the Holy Hierarch, in Tone 3: *To the melody, "Let the heavens rejoice..."*

Shining with the truth of divine dogmas, /
Thou didst darken the Arian delusion. /
O venerable father Ambrose. /
By working miracles by the power of the Spirit /
Thou didst heal the festering sores of passions. /
O blessed hierarch and pastor Ambrose, ///
Pray to Christ God that our souls may be saved.

Ode 7

Irmos: *In the Persian furnace the youths, descendants of Abraham, burned with a love of piety rather than by the flames of fire, and they cried aloud saying: Blessed art Thou in the temple of Thy glory, O Lord!*

Thy divine teachings and dogmas have flashed throughout all the earth like lightning, O all-wise father; shining with the light of thy miracles, enlightening the hearts of those who were in darkness.

Following the command of the Savior, O father, thou didst, like the blessed servant, increase the talent given thee, and hast been deemed worthy of the Master's joy.

Having deepened thy theological wisdom, like a river thou didst pour forth streams of holy dogmas, giving drink to all the faithful, O father Ambrose, thou teacher of the divine mysteries.

Theotokion: **B**ehold, O Virgin, thou didst conceive within thy womb the Word who is co-eternal with the Father and gavest birth in the flesh to Him who grants restoration to all who from Adam have fallen, O immaculate Lady.

Ode 8

Irmos: **S**tretching forth his hands, Daniel the prophet closed the mouths of the lions in the pit; and the young lovers of piety, girded with strength, quenched the power of the fire, crying out: Bless ye the Lord, all ye works of the Lord!

Having mortified the members of thy body and slain the passions of the flesh, thou didst impart life to thy soul and poured fountains of miracles upon those who had been slain by the passions, O venerable one, granting life to all who cry: Bless ye 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, and after telling this prophetically to thy companions, thou didst pass over to the heavens crying out with joy: Bless ye the Lord, all ye works of the Lord!

Having cleansed thy body, mind, and heart of the turbulence of the passions, O father Ambrose, a fiery beam of light illuminated thee from on high, and thou didst cry out like the divine disciples: Bless ye the Lord, all ye works of the Lord!

Theotokion: **T**hou hast been revealed as one more exalted than the heavens, O most pure Lady, having given birth to God who united those of earth with those of heaven, and who granted the knowledge of Himself to all who cry aloud to Him: Bless ye the Lord, all ye works of the Lord!

Ode 9

Irmos: **C**hrist, the chief Cornerstone not cut by human hands, who united two different natures, was cut from thee, the unquarried mountain, O Virgin. Therefore, we joyfully magnify thee, O Theotokos!

In ecstasy, didst thou behold the everlasting honors which are prepared in heaven for the saints, O holy father; and having passed over to them, thou hast received the reward of thy labors rejoicing, O glorious one.

Like a ripe cluster of grapes wast thou gathered into heaven, from which thou dost now pour the wine of immortality and the gifts of healing upon those who piously turn to thee, O divinely wise Ambrose.

With mighty voices we bless thee, O hierarch father Ambrose, thou holy beacon of the divine Spirit, which illuminates all the faithful with thy pious teachings and the radiance of thy healings.

The Church, O all-blessèd father, acquired thee as a daystar, and being guided by it, she escaped the deception of darkness. Now, being illumined by the splendors of thy holy teachings, she rightfully blesses thee.

Theotokion: **W**e joyfully utter to thee the salutation of the archangel: Rejoice, O holy Virgin! Rejoice, thou abolition of the curse! Rejoice, thou deliverance from all evils! Rejoice, thou who, in a manner beyond understanding, hath deified our mortal race!

At Liturgy

The Troparion of the Holy Hierarch, Tone 4:

In truth thou wast revealed to thy flock as a rule of faith, /
A model of humility and teacher of abstinence, /
So, thou didst win the heights of humility, riches by poverty; /
O holy hierarch, father Ambrose, ///
Intercede with Christ our God to save our souls.

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