

The 24th Day of October

**Commemoration of the Holy Martyr Arethas and those with him;
also, the Commemoration of the Icon of the Most Holy Theotokos,
“The Joy of All Who Sorrow,” whose service follows this. — incomplete**

Vespers

At “Lord I call...,” 3 stichera, in Tone 1: *To the melody, “Thou hast given a sign....”*

Thou didst place thy courage against the savagery of the oppressor,¹ /
O all praised martyr Arethas, /
Revealing thyself as a victory bearer by the grace of God; /
And brought with thyself a militant choir of martyrs to Christ, ///
Composed of every age and every race, O glorious one.

O most glorious martyr Arethas /
Thou didst form a beautiful choir of holy martyrs, /
And didst suffer together with them /
Completing the good and noble race. /
Therefore, we ask thee to beseech Christ the Lord ///
That He may grant peace and great mercy to our souls.

The divinely-wise martyred choir of virgins /
Were enflamed by the love of Christ, /
And unmindful of their feeble nature /
They were strengthened by the power of God. /
Thus, they trampled upon the deceit of the enemy /
Unafraid of the pain of torture, ///
And they feared not the flames of the furnace.

Glory..., in Tone 4: *(by Anatolius)*

Let us, with one accord, O faithful, /
Praise the glorious shepherd Arethas and those who suffered together with him, /
For he denounced the evil king and shed his blood in confession of Christ. /
Hence, a cloud of fire consumed the face of the earth /
In reproof of the ungodly actions of the unrighteous one. /
Therefore, O Christ God who strengthened the martyrs for Thy glorification, /
Preserve us also from every temptation and tribulation ///
By the prayers of Thy saints, for Thou art the Master of all!

¹ Arethas and 4,299 martyrs with him were executed during the persecution of the Jewish Omerite king Dhu Newas in 523.

Now and ever..., Theotokion, or this Stavrotheotokion, in the same Tone: To the melody, “As one valiant among the martyrs....”

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 Dogmatic Theotokion in the Tone of the Week if a Resurrection service.

The Aposticha is from the Octoechos, and

Glory..., in Tone 8:

Understanding beforehand the evil plans of the wicked king /
Thou didst bind thyself with boldness of spirit to suffer for Christ /
Who of old saved the people in the wilderness, and was Himself condemned to
the Cross. /
Likewise now they, being infected with unbelief, passed over from words to deeds /
And condemned thee to the flames; /
But thou, having suffered with courageous endurance and oneness of mind /
Showed thyself to be wondrous among the martyrs. /
And as thou hast great boldness before God, we ask thee to beseech Christ the Lord ///
That He may deliver our souls from the bondage of our grievous transgressions.

Now and ever..., or the Stavrotheotokion, in the same Tone: To the melody “O most glorious wonder....”

“What is this sight that I see, /
What do mine eyes behold, O Master? /
Thou, Who sustainest all creation, lifted up on the Tree, /
Dost die granting life to all,” /
Cried the Theotokos, weeping, when she beheld upon the Cross ///
The God-man Who had ineffably shone forth from her.

The Troparion of the Martyrs, in Tone 1:

We beseech Thee, O Lord and Lover of mankind, /
By the sufferings Thy saints endured for Thee, /
To heal all our afflictions, ///
And deliver us from our transgressions.

Glory..., now and ever..., Theotokion, or Stavrotheotokion.

Matins

The Canon

Canons as prescribed, and the Canon of the Martyr with 4 Troparia,
having the acrostic: *“With what songs shall we honor the beautiful assembly of martyrs,”*
the composition of Theophan, in Tone 8

Ode 1

Irmos: *Let us sing a song of victory, O ye people, to our wondrous God, who delivered Israel from bondage: We raise our song to Thee, who alone art Lord and Master!*

Refrain: Holy martyr Arethas, pray to God for us!

O most blessed passion-bearing martyr Arethas, illumine my mind by the prayers of those martyrs who suffered with thee, that I may praise thy radiant and divine memory.

By submitting thyself to martyrdom at the hands of the lawless people, thou didst emulate Christ, O blessed one, and thus, didst acquire for thyself life in heaven.

The unrighteous and lawless people, violating the word of God, destroyed the divinely-elect flock of Christ, and brought down upon themselves the just retribution of God.

Thou didst take the sure path leading to heaven, bringing with thyself a company of martyrs composed of every age and every race, O glorious and all-praised Arethas.

Theotokion: **L**et us praise with songs and hymns Mary, the all-holy and joyous Mother of God, the tranquil haven and intercessor of all the faithful.

Ode 3

Irmos: *O Lord, Creator of the vault of heaven and founder of the Church, strengthen me in Thy love, for Thou art our supreme desire and the support of the faithful, O Thou who lovest mankind.*

Seeing Thy Church flourishing by the grace of the Cross, O Lover of mankind, the wicked children of those who persecuted Thee were consumed with jealousy and pitilessly tortured Thy faithful flock.

The wicked people blasphemed thee with their venomous tongues, O Savior, and slaughtered those who believed on Thee, who delivered our first parents from their ancient torments.

Who can fathom the depths of Thy providence, O Christ, who alone fashioned our hearts with Thy divine hands? For, the faithful flock which Thou hadst gathered was delivered into the hands of the ravenous wolves.

Thy divinely-wise flock being barbarously cut down by the sword, called out to Thee:
“Accept our spirits and our souls, O Savior, and guide them to the light of Thy kingdom!”

Theotokion: **T**hou who alone gavest birth to the triune, hypostatic Life, O all-pure Lady, hast led me up to life again, who of old wast slain, for malicious death, has itself, been struck down and destroyed.

Katavasia as prescribed.

Sessional Hymn, in Tone 8: To the melody, “Of Wisdom....”

Armed with the power of the Cross /
And having fortified thy city with faith, /
Thou didst put the savagery of the tyrant to shame, /
And as a model of patience, thou didst bring an army of martyrs to Christ. /
Therefore, having assembled, we rightly honor thy most festive memory /
And we beseech thee, O blessed one, /
To entreat Christ for the remission of sins ///
Of those who lovingly honor thy holy memory, O all-praised martyr Arethas.

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

Having fallen into the clever snares of mine enemies /
Both visible and invisible, /
And beset by the storms of my countless transgressions, /
I run to the harbor of thy goodness and warmth of thy protection. /
Therefore, O pure Lady, earnestly pray on our behalf /
To the One ineffably born incarnate without seed, /
That all thy servants, who unceasingly and worthily praise thee ///
May receive the remission of their sins.

Or, the Stavrotheotokion, in the same Tone:

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 through Thee, /
Yet my womb burns at the sight of Thy crucifixion, /
Which Thou dost endure in Thy compassion and mercy. /
O longsuffering 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: *Thou art my strength, O Lord, my God, my power, my joy; without leaving Thy Father's bosom Thou hast visited our wretchedness. So with the Prophet Habakkuk I cry to Thee: Glory to Thy power, O Lover of mankind!*

Made strong by grace, the divine and radiant assembly, the victorious army and choir of martyrs led by their commander Arethas, suffered. Let them all be lovingly praised and honored by those who sing: Glory to Thy power, O Lover of mankind!

Thy divinely-wise residents of thy city, sustained by thy bold and courageous struggle against the evil king, seized the trophy together with thee and now sing unto the Savior: Glory to Thy power, O Lover of mankind!

Protected by the new Law of the Life-creating Spirit, and disdaining the written edicts of the law, thy God-loving city prevailed with spiritual beauty and noble character, singing unto God: Glory to Thy power, O Lover of mankind!

Truly the city of God revealed itself to be the divine abode of martyrs, for they praised thee as their great and wondrous leader who brought them to the Master singing: Glory to Thy power, O Lover of mankind!

Theotokion: **S**pringing from the royal house of David, O Virgin, thou gavest birth to the Word who reigns ineffably from before the beginning of time, and hath shone forth from thee in a manner beyond all understanding. Therefore, we, the faithful, call thee blessed, O Theotokos.

Ode 5

Irmos: *Why hast Thou cast me away from Thy face, O never-setting Light? Why hast this dismal darkness covered me, the wretched one? Guide me in return to the light of Thy commandments, I pray Thee.*

The divinely-bless't company of martyrs, called by God, struggled bravely and fervently strengthening one another, the victorious martyrs gave themselves over to be slaughtered for the sake of Christ by the evil king.

Fortified by faith and enflamed with their zeal for piety, Thy favorites, O Christ, were not afraid of the terror of the wicked king, and wisely binding themselves to Thy love, they willingly gave themselves over to death.

Committing their whole lives to the divine forethought and inescapable judgements of God's providence, the divine and valiant company boldly embraced their fate at the hands of the wicked and murderous mob.

Trusting in Thee and believing in Thy resurrection, O Savior, Thy most valiant martyrs were slain by the impious for confessing Thee, neither weeping nor protesting.

Theotokion: **G**od, the very Word of God, who, from before the beginning of time, is equally co-eternal with the Father, impoverished Himself by taking His abode within thy womb in the richness of His compassion, and taking flesh, He appeared on earth as a man, O most praised Virgin Theotokos.

Ode 6

Irmos: *Cleanse me, O Savior, for many are my transgressions, and lead me from the depths of evil, I pray Thee, and I cry: Hear me, O God of my salvation.*

Signed with the blood of Christ, the holy and glorious martyrs fervently shed their own blood and have now been counted worthy to reign together with Him.

Mute tongues prophetically spoke of peace, speechless babes preached Christ, and divinely-wise virgins offered themselves to God for piety's sake.

The light which abundantly pours forth healing from Christ was apportioned to thee, O divinely-eloquent Arethas, and thou didst depart unto His presence while still pouring with sweat from the heat of thy struggle.

A multitude of martyrs was divinely led to Thee, O Savior, and dancing in chorus around Thee, the choirs of angels ask remission of sins for those who ever glorify them.

Theotokion: **I**neffably assuming our flesh from thee in order to unite Himself to mankind, He shone forth in majesty from Sion on high and illumined the whole world, O Lady who knew no wedlock.

Katavasia as prescribed.

The Kontakion of the Martyr, in Tone 4:

The feast of the passion-bearing martyrs has dawned for us today /
Bringing great joy and gladness ///
And celebrating it we glorify the Lord on high.

Ikos: **I**lluminate Thou my mind with the splendor of the struggles of the valiant martyr Arethas and all the saints who suffered with him. For he showed himself to be faithful, courageously waging battle against those who reject Thine incarnation, by which Thou didst ineffably take flesh, that Thou mightest deliver us from deception and show us how to walk, without wavering, the path of witness which Thy martyrs trod, ever praising Thee, the Lord who livest on high.

Ode 7

Irmos: *Once, in Babylon, the fiery flames stood in awe before the condescension of God; and the children, dancing in the furnace as though in a meadow sang in joy: Blessed art Thou, O Lord, God of our fathers!*

Torrents of the blood of Thy holy martyrs pour forth healing upon those who praise their memory with faith, and earnestly cry out to Thee, the Creator: Blessèd art Thou, O Lord, God of our fathers!

The victorious company put the whole assembly of the wicked to shame, for being adorned with divine understanding and insight of mind, they rejoiced as they were being slain, singing: Blessèd art Thou, O Lord, God of our fathers!

Being moved with their love of Thee, O Christ, mothers, in their compassion, spared not their children, and being burned alive in the furnace they cried out to Thee: Blessèd art Thou, O Lord, God of our fathers!

The brightly burning lamps, the God-bearing virgins, in their struggles, rejoiced with the wise virgins in the bridal chamber of God, and sang: Blessèd art Thou, O Lord, God of our fathers!

Theotokion: **T**hou art the cleansing of the souls and the mediatrix of the salvation of those who with faith and love proclaim thee as the Theotokos and cry out to thy Son: Blessèd art Thou, O Lord, God of our fathers!

Ode 8

Irmos: **The Chaldean torturer became enraged; he ordered the furnace to be heated sevenfold; but seeing the godly youths saved by a greater might, he sang to the Creator and Redeemer: Bless Him, O ye children, praise Him, O ye priests, exalt Him throughout all ages!**

The holy martyrs cried out to their persecutors: “Clearly, perfection is not manifest in the law; rather, Salvation has been given us in Christ! Therefore, as we are being slain, we die rejoicing, singing unto Him: Bless Christ, O ye people! Exalt Him throughout all ages!

A babe instructs us in the mysteries and teaches the mindless ones to look upon Thine all-pure image, O Christ, and thus, to faithfully embrace Thine appearance here on earth; and, by the hands of the unrighteous, he is cast into the flames together with his mother, as they cried aloud: Bless Christ, O ye people! Exalt Him throughout all ages!

Struggling mightily here on earth, O ye martyrs, you rightly received your victors’ crowns from Christ in heaven, where is the habitation of those who rejoice and ceaselessly sing aloud in faith: Bless Christ, O ye people! Exalt Him throughout all ages!

Having vanquished the cruel prince of this world and those who serve his will, O ye martyred saints, you passed over with boldness and inexpressible joy to the Ruler and Lord of all, crying out: Bless Christ, O ye people! Praise Him, O ye priests! Exalt Him throughout all ages!

Theotokion: **E**ntreat thy Son and Lord for us who truly praise thee and purely confess

thee as the Mother of God, O immaculate Lady, and ask that salvation and the remission of sins be given those who with faith sing: Bless Christ, O ye people! Praise Him, O ye priests! Exalt Him throughout all ages!

Katavasia as prescribed.

Ode 9

Irmos: Every ear trembled with fear at hearing of the ineffable condescension of God: how the Most High of His own will came down even unto the flesh and was made man from a virgin womb. Therefore, we the faithful magnify the most pure Theotokos.

Having partaken of death, you have become partakers of the Christ's glory, O holy Martyrs, and have been splendidly adorned with crowns. Now, you stand before God and ask for the salvation of our souls, O glorious ones!

You were numbered as Christ's warriors by the law, O invincible martyr Arethas the most wise, and those who suffered with thee, together with the passion-bearing women and virgin maidens. Therefore, we earnestly beseech thee to pray the Lord on our behalf!

Direct my life, O Word of God, and by the prayers of Thy favored and loving martyred saints, pilot me, O Master, and count me worthy to have a share with them, overlooking all my sins, in that Thou art good and lovest mankind!

Theotokion: Thou wast the dwelling-place of God containing the infinite and incorporeal One, who cannot be contained, within thy womb, and gave birth to Him for us, incarnate. Beseech Him now, O pure Lady, that He may grant the remission of transgressions to all who with faith ever magnify thee!

Katavasia as prescribed.

Exapostilarion of the Martyr:

God fulfilled the prophetic plea of Arethas and raised up the courageous king, Saint Elesbaan, who pursed and slayed the legions of the impious Omerite Dhu Newas, bringing great joy and gladness to all the people of Negran.

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

Saved by thee, O Lady, we confess thee to be truly Theotokos, for thou gavest birth to God, who by the Cross destroyed death, and surrounded Himself with great multitudes of saints who are pleasing to God. Together with them, we praise thee, O Virgin.

Liturgy

The Troparion of the Martyrs, in Tone 1:

We beseech Thee, O Lord and Lover of mankind, /

MARTYR ARETHAS AND THOSE WITH HIM

By the sufferings Thy saints endured for Thee, /
To heal all our afflictions, ///
And deliver us from our transgressions.

The Kontakion of the Martyrs, in Tone 4:

The feast of the passion-bearing martyrs has dawned for us today /
Bringing great joy and gladness ///
And celebrating it we glorify the Lord on high.

Prokeimenon, in Tone 4: The Lord has shown the wonders of His will / to the saints who are in His land. *Verse:* I keep the Lord always before me; for He is at my right hand, and I shall not be moved.

Epistle: (330) Hebrews 11:33-40

Alleluia, Tone 4: The righteous cried and the Lord heard them and He delivered them from all their troubles. *Verse:* Many are the afflictions of the righteous, and the Lord will deliver them out of them all.

Gospel: (38) Matthew 10:32-33, 37-38; 19:27-30

Communion Hymn: Rejoice in the Lord, O ye righteous! Praise befits the just!

RLE 10/1/2020 SDA
UPDATED 10/29/2022 SDA