

The 9th Day of March

✠ The Holy Forty Martyrs who Suffered at Lake Sebaste in Armenia.

Vespers

At “Lord, I call...,” 10 stichera:

6 stichera of the Day from the Triodion, and

4 stichera, of the Forty Martyrs, in Tone 2: *The composition of the monk John of Damascus.*

Bravely enduring their present torments, /
Rejoicing in their longed-for hopes, /
The holy martyrs said to one another: /
“We are not shedding our outer garments, but are putting off the old man; /
The winter is bitter but paradise is sweet; /
Painful is the chill, but sweet is the enjoyment. /
Let us not stray from our path, O soldiers! /
Let us endure but for a little while /
That we may receive the crowns of victory ///
From Christ God, the Savior of our souls. *(twice)*

Casting off their former clothing /
And going without trembling into the waters of the lake, /
The holy martyrs said to one another: /
Let us not spare our corrupt bodies but regain the paradise which we had lost, /
When we put on the clothes of corruption woven for us by the serpent. /
Let us now pray for the resurrection of all mankind, /
Despising the icy cold and hating the flesh /
That we may receive the crowns of victory ///
From Christ God, the Savior of our souls.

Looking upon their torture as delight /
Hastening into the icy water as toward a thermal spring /
The holy martyrs said to one another: /
We fear not the cold of winter so that we may escape the fires of Gehenna /
Let our feet be burned, that they may dance for joy; /
Let our hands be lost that they may be lifted up unto the Lord; /
And let us not spare our dying nature, but rather welcome death /
That we may receive the crowns of victory ///
From Christ God, the Savior of our souls.

Glory..., now and ever..., Dogmatic Theotokion, in the same Tone:

The shadow of the Law passed when grace came; /
As the bush burned, yet was not consumed, /
So the Virgin gave birth, yet remained virgin; /
The Righteous Sun has risen instead of a pillar of fire; ///
Instead of Moses, Christ, the salvation of our souls.

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

The Entrance and the Prokeimenon of the Day.

Three Readings:

The Reading from the Prophecy of Isaiah: (Chapter 43:9-14)

^{43:9}**T**hus saith the Lord: “All the nations are gathered together, and princes shall be gathered out of them: who will declare these things? Or who will declare to you things from the beginning? Let them bring forth their witnesses, and be justified; and let them hear, and declare the truth. ¹⁰Be ye My witnesses, and I too am a witness, saith the Lord God, and My servant whom I have chosen: that ye may know, and believe, and understand that I am He:

before Me there was no other God, and after Me there shall be none. ¹¹I am God; and beside Me there is no Savior. ¹²I have declared, and have saved; I have reproach-ed, and there was no strange god among you: ye are My witnesses, and I am the Lord God, ¹³even from the beginning; and there is none that can deliver out of My hands: I will work, and who shall turn it back? ¹⁴Thus saith the Lord God that redeems you, the Holy One of Israel.”

The Reading from the Wisdom of Solomon: (Chapter 3:1-9)

^{3:1}**B**ut the souls of the righteous are in the hand of God, and there shall no torment touch them. ²In the sight of the unwise they seemed to die, and their departure is taken for misery, ³and their going from us to be utter destruction; but they are in peace. ⁴For though they be punished in the sight of men, yet is their hope full of immortality. ⁵And having been a little chastised they shall be greatly rewarded, for God proved them and found them worthy for Himself. ⁶As gold in the furnace hath

He tried them and received them as a whole burnt offering. ⁷And in the time of their visitation they shall shine and run to and fro like sparks among the stubble. ⁸They shall judge the nations and have dominion over the people, and their Lord shall reign forever. ⁹They that put their trust in Him shall understand the truth, and such as be faithful in love shall abide with Him, for grace and mercy is to His saints, and He hath care for His elect.

The Reading from the Wisdom of Solomon: (Chapter 5:15 — Chapter 6:3)

^{5:15} **B**ut the righteous live for evermore; their reward also is with the Lord, and the care of them is with the most High. ¹⁶Therefore shall they receive a glorious kingdom and a beautiful crown from the Lord's hand; for with His right hand shall He cover them, and with His arm shall He protect them. ¹⁷He shall take to him His zeal for complete armor and make the creation His weapon for revenge upon his enemies. ¹⁸He shall put on righteousness as a breastplate and indifferent judgment instead of a helmet. ¹⁹He shall take holiness for an invincible shield. ²⁰His severe wrath shall he sharpen for a sword, and the creation shall fight with him against the unwise. ²¹Then shall the right aiming

thunderbolts go abroad; and from the clouds, as from a well drawn bow, shall they fly to the mark. ²²And hailstones full of wrath shall be cast out as a stone bow, and the water of the sea shall rage against them, and the floods shall cruelly drown them. ²³Yea, a mighty wind shall stand up against them, and like a storm shall blow them away; thus iniquity shall lay waste the whole earth, and ill dealing shall overthrow the thrones of the mighty. ^{6:1}Hear therefore, O ye kings, and under-stand; learn, ye that be judges of the ends of the earth. ²Give ear, ye that rule the people, and glory in the multitude of nations. ³For power is given to you of the Lord, and sovereignty from the highest.

Note: The rest of the order of the Presanctified Liturgy now follows.

Note: However, when the Presanctified Liturgy is not served, we take the Readings of the Day (cf. *Triodion*) and the 3 Paremia readings of the 40 Martyrs (see above).

Further, when the Presanctified Liturgy is not served, then:

At the Aposticha, the stichera from the Triodion, and

Glory..., in Tone 6:

Let us the faithful praise in song /
The forty suffering martys, /
And let us sweetly sing to them: /
Rejoice, ye martyrs of Christ, Hesychíos, Méliton, and Heraclius, /
Smarágdus, Dómnus, and Eunoicus, /
Válens, Viviánus, Claudius and Priscus; /
Rejoice, Theodólous, Eutýchius, John and Xanthius, /
Heliánus, Sisínus, and Kyrios, /
Angius, Ætius, and Flavius; /
Rejoice, Acácus, Ecdítus, Lysimáchus and Alexander, /

FORTY HOLY MARTYRS OF SEBASTE

Elias, Gorgónius, Theophilus, /
Dometian, Gorgónius, and godly Gaius; /
Rejoice, Eutýchius, Athanásius, Cyril and Sarkedon, /
Nicholas, Valerian, Philoctimus, /
Sevérian, Chúdion, and Aglajias. /
And as you martyrs, honored by all, /
Have great boldness towards Christ our God, /
Earnestly intercede with Him for those who faithfully celebrate you majestic
 memory ///
That they may be saved.

Now and ever..., Theotokion, in Tone 6:

O Theotokos, /
Thou art the true Vine that hast put forth the Fruit of Life. /
We pray thee, O Lady, intercede together with the apostles and all the saints, ///
That mercy may be granted to our souls.

The Troparion of the Forty 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.

Matins

At “God is the Lord...,” the Troparion of the Martyrs (*twice*), Glory..., now and ever..., Theotokion in the Tone of the Week, and the usual Kathisma readings.

After the 1st and 2nd Kathismas, the Sessional Hymns are from the Triodion. The litanies are not read.

After the 3rd Kathisma, the Little Litany is read, and

The Sessional Hymn, in Tone 4: *To the melody: “Thou hast appeared today....”*

O forty divine martyrs of Christ, /
Like bright stars you ever illumine the holy firmament of the Church, ///
And ye enlighten the faithful.

Glory..., in the same Tone: *To the melody, “Having been lifted up....”*

O wonderful martyrs, /
Undergoing your trials with most courageous minds, /
You passed through both fire and water; /

FORTY HOLY MARTYRS OF SEBASTE

Thus passing over to the meadow of salvation /
You attained the kingdom of heaven as your inheritance. /
Where, O forty holy martyrs ///
You divinely intercede for us all.

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

Calling upon thee from their hearts with thankful praises, /
And earnestly entreating thy mercies, O Lady, /
Thy servants cry aloud to thee and say: /
“Deliver us from our visible and invisible enemies, /
And from every calamity, ///
For thou art our defense, O all-holy Virgin!”

* * *

If, however, this is a Saturday other than that of the First Week of Lent,

After the 1st Kathisma, the Sessional Hymn, in Tone 4:

“O forty divine martyrs of Christ, like bright stars....” *(twice)*

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

Accept our prayer, O holy Virgin, /
For we have run to take refuge under thy protection: ///
Never cease interceding with thy Son for thy servants to be saved.

After the 2nd Kathisma, the Sessional Hymn, in Tone 4:

“O wonderful martyrs, undergoing your trials....” *(twice)*

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

“Calling upon thee from their hearts with thankful praises....”

* * *

Polyeley and Magnification:

We magnify you, / O holy forty martyrs, / and we honor the precious sufferings, /
which you endured for Christ.

Selected Psalm verses:

God is our refuge and our strength!

Our help in the afflictions that come heavily upon us.

After the Polyeley, the Sessional Hymn, in Tone 5: To the melody, The co-unoriginate Word...

FORTY HOLY MARTYRS OF SEBASTE

Behold, the ornament of the holy martyrs, /
That assembly shining with four-fold brilliance, /
Brought together by God, has now been praised. /
For being tried by ice and fire, /
They were shown to be wise warriors of Christ, the King of all, ///
And they pray to Him that our souls may be saved.

1st Antiphon of the 4th Tone (The Song of Ascents), “From my youth....”

Prokeimenon, in Tone 4:

We went through fire and water, / and Thou didst lead us to place of rest. *Verse:*
For Thou, O God, hast proved us: Thou hast tried us with fire as silver is tried
Let every breath praise the Lord! ...

Gospel: (106) Luke 21:12-19

After Psalm 50 (51), the Post-Gospel sticheron, of the Forty Martyrs, in Tone 2:

“We went through fire and water, /
And Thou hast led us to a place of refreshment,” /
David cried prophetically in the Psalm. /
Thus, O holy martyrs of Christ, ye fulfilled the prophesy, /
Having willingly gone through fire and water and entered into the kingdom of
heaven ///
Where, O forty martyrs, you intercede that we be granted great mercy.

The Canon

Two Canons of the Forty Holy Martyrs

Ode 1

First Canon of the Forty Martyrs, in Tone 2

*having the acrostic, “I praise the divinely-crowned company of martyrs,” the composition of
the Monk John of Damascus.*

Irmos: *(from the Canon of the Nativity of the Theotokos)* O come, you people, let
us sing a song to Christ our God, who parted the sea and through it led His
people whom He had brought of the bondage of Egypt: for He has been
glorified.

Refrain: Holy forty martyrs, pray unto God for us!

I praise the divinely-crowned company of the forty martyrs of Christ in songs
inspired by God, solemnly and joyfully celebrating their annual memorial, for they
have been glorified.

FORTY HOLY MARTYRS OF SEBASTE

Rejecting every earthly title, the forty martyrs wanted only to be called Christians, and therefore, they now dwell in the heavens.

Living in Christ and hating both the flesh and the world, you have put off the old man with his temporal garments and have put on the vesture of incorruption.

Refrain: Most Holy Theotokos, save us!

Theotokion: **W**ho can worthily express thy conceiving beyond all words? For thou, O most holy one, hast borne God in the flesh, who appeared to us as the Savior of all.

The Second Canon of the Martyrs, in the same Tone,

*having the acrostic, "I praise the divinely-crowned company of martyrs,"
the composition of Bishop Theophanes (not included in the Greek Menaion),
having the same Irmosi.*

Irmos: O come, you people....

Incline God's mercy towards us, through your prayers, O forty holy martyrs, who call upon you in love and purity of our heart.

Basking in Heaven illumined by the splendor of the three-fold Sun, protect us, who praise you here on the earth frozen over by the winter of distresses, with the ardor of your warm embrace, O forty holy ones.

Glory...,

O ye pious forty martyrs, you invincible and steadfast ramparts of the Church, pacify the evil assaults now being waged against Christians.

Now, and ever...,

Theotokion: **O** Virgin, Mother of God, thou hast given birth Him, the preternatural Creator and the Lord over all, who for our sake, took our flesh upon Himself.

Katavasia: I shall open my mouth....

Ode 3

The First Canon of the Martyrs

Irmos: Establish us in Thee, O Lord, who by the wood of the Cross didst put sin to death, and didst implant the fear of Thee in our hearts as we sing praises to Thee.

The glorious forty martyrs, disdaining both the army and the life of this world, with all its wealth and beauty, chose Christ instead as their inheritance.

FORTY HOLY MARTYRS OF SEBASTE

The forty were being mercilessly stoned by a decree of the tyrant, but through the Spirit of God, the stones were hurled back against their tormentors.

The serpent once uttered his blasphemy against the Creator, and now his mouth that once fought God, is broken by the stones thrown at the martyrs.

Theotokion: **W**ithout seed thou didst conceive God in thy womb, O Ever-virgin Lady, and gavest birth to the ineffably incarnate Lord, upon whom the ranks of Heaven dare not gaze.

The Second Canon of the Martyrs

Irmos: Establish us in Thee....

O crown-bearing company of holy martyrs, standing now before the Master of all united in chorus, pray for the salvation of us who sing thy praises.

We flee to you for help, O forty holy martyrs, for we are beset by the waters of the lake of temptations and battered by the waves of evil passions.

Warmed in the bosom of Abraham and adorned in glorious apparel, pray that we may be delivered from this winter of dread.

Theotokion: **O** Virgin, bride of God, be thou the refuge and protection for those who flee to thee, and with faith confess thee as the Mother of God.

Katavasia.

Sessional Hymn, in Tone 8: To the melody, "Of wisdom...."

Waging war for Christ as martyrs, /
And laying low the enemy /
By thine acts you have fulfilled the words of the prophets: /
By passing bravely through fire and water, /
And finding refreshment and eternal life. /
Having now received your crowns
You rejoice together with the choirs of bodiless powers, /
O ye martyrs, praised throughout the world, /
Intercede with Christ our God ///
For the remission of sins of those who lovingly celebrate your holy memory. (twice)

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

Having fallen into the clever snares of mine enemies /
Both visible and invisible, /
And beset by the storms of my countless transgressions, /

FORTY HOLY MARTYRS OF SEBASTE

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.

Ode 4

The First Canon of the Martyrs

Irmos: I have heard, O Lord, the news of Thy dispensation, and I have glorified
Thee who alone lovest mankind.

“O most godless and foolish of men, vain are the attempts of your rewards,” said the holy martyrs.

Then the tormentors offered the sharp edge of the sword, wild beasts, fire, and the cross to the saints of Christ.

“Indeed, the fires of Gehenna are frightful to us, but we fear not these present flames,” replied the holy martyrs.

“Though our hands be cut off, and our feet be burned, yet we will receive them back incorrupt,” said the holy martyrs.

Theotokion: We pray thee, O most pure one, who didst conceive God without seed, ever intercede for us, thy servants.

The Second Canon of the Martyrs

Irmos: I have heard, O Lord....

O holy martyrs, God hath sent you for our illumination, for you have clothed yourselves in light unfading.

O divinely-chosen assembly of crown-bearing martyrs, pray that we who praise you be delivered from every trouble.

Since you are accounted worthy of beholding the everlasting Light of Christ, shine down upon them that sit in darkness, O holy ones.

Shining with mystical radiance, O glorious ones, guide us to behold the Radiance divine.

Theotokion: Praising Him who came incarnate from thy womb, O most pure one, we glorify thee as Theotokos.

Ode 5

The First Canon of the Martyrs

Irmos: O Lord, bestower of light and the Creator of the ages, by the light of Thine

FORTY HOLY MARTYRS OF SEBASTE

ordinances guide Thou us, for we know no other God but Thee.

Made to stand naked in the cold on the ice by the mad rage of the persecutors, the martyrs sang a song of thanksgiving to God.

The forty martyrs of Christ stood in the lake rejoicing as they endured the painful ice, strengthened in the hope of receiving their crowns.

The serpent which before had nested in the waters, was now made an object of laughter by the holy forty martyrs of Christ, for he was deprived of his soul-destroying power.

Theotokion: **W**e cry out to thee who hast borne Christ, the Creator of all: Rejoice, O pure Lady, who hast made the Light to shine upon us; Rejoice, thou who hast contained the uncontainable God!

The Second Canon of the Martyrs

Irmos: O Lord, bestower of light....

Deliver the honorable Church of Christ from the deceit of the heretics, O holy forty martyrs, for being been born in Her, ye have attained to great honor and glory.

You have appeared to us as fiery beacons, O forty divinely-splendid holy martyrs, illuminating for the faithful the salvific path of piety.

Passing from the earth to the shelter of heaven and standing before Christ, the author of all virtuous deeds, count me worthy to attain this divine joy

Theotokion: **O** Virgin Lady, truly didst thou bear God as thy divine Child, and thy divine conceiving is a mystery ineffable and incomprehensible, passing all human understanding.

Ode 6

The First Canon of the Martyrs

Irmos: *Compassed about in the depths of sin, I entreat the unfathomable depth of Thy compassion; bring me out of corruption, O Lord.*

The arch-enemy watched with glee when he suborned him that fell away from the forty, man in the Garden of Eden, and the wretched Judas away from the twelve.

As with the thief and the publican in days gone by, so now again is the tormentor put to shame as one of the guardsmen cried out and proclaimed himself a Christian.

Miserable indeed and worthy of his tears is the man that fell away, for twofold was his transgression: by delivering himself from the fire he faced, he plunged into the fire eternal.

Theotokion: **O** Virgin who conceived knowing not a man, thou didst remain Ever-virgin, thus revealing the image of the true Godhead of thy Son and God.

The Second Canon of the Martyrs

Irmos: *Compassed about in the depths of sin....*

O brave and vigilant soldiers, truly you revealed yourselves as watchful and vigilant defenders of the human race, ceaselessly praying that we be delivered from all sorrow.

Deliver us from every temptation who lovingly honor you, O all-praised martyrs, for your unexcelled virtues shine forth throughout the Church.

Once you were the destroyers of evil tormentors and all their deceptions, be now our bastion wall and quick defense.

Theotokion: **I**n thee, O Ever-virgin Mother, have I placed my sure hope that I shall be saved, for I have thee as the firm and steadfast intercessor of my life.

Katavasia.

The Kontakion of the Forty Martyrs, in Tone 6:

Forsaking all the warfare of the world, /
O holy forty martyrs of the Lord, /
You have truly passed through fire and water, /
And have received your just reward in heaven; /
Joining yourselves unto the Master of all ///
And receiving from Him your many crowns of glory.

Ikos: I fall down, unworthy as I am, before Christ Almighty, our Creator and our God, who sits upon the unapproachable throne, who stretched out the heavens like a tent, who established the earth and gathered together the waters in the seas, who created everything out of nothing at all, and gave breath to all living things, who receives praise from the archangels, is worshipped by the angels, and is glorified by all; and offering Him my prayer, I beg that I be granted the words with which to piously praise the saints whom He Himself has shown to be triumphant, granting them the glory of heaven and the crowns of victory.

Ode 7

The First Canon of the Martyrs

Irmos: *The three children trampled upon the ungodly command to adore the golden idol on the field of Dura, and besprinkled with dew in the midst of the fire they sang: Blessèd art Thou, O Lord God of our fathers.*

The guardsman set to watch over the forty was struck with amazement as he beheld their crowns, and casting aside his love for this life, took wings on the love of Thy glory made manifest, and joined together with the martyrs as they sang: Blessèd art Thou, O Lord God of our fathers.

When the delinquent lover of life who left the just company went into the warm bath with a corrupt soul, he went to his death; while the lover of Christ was seen on the ice as in a bath of incorruption together with the martyrs as they sang: Blessèd art Thou, O Lord God of our fathers.

A mystical fire was kindled in the minds of the forty, and it melted like wax the senseless cunning of the impious, while the martyrs sang to Thee, O Christ: Blessèd art Thou, O Lord God of our fathers.

Great is the power of Thy Cross, O Christ, full of beauty and of light, weaving garlands for the holy martyrs as they suffered: for passing through fire and water they were left unharmed as they sang: Blessèd art Thou, O Lord God of our fathers.

Theotokion: **M**oses foresaw thee, O pure Virgin, in the flames of the burning bush on Mount Sinai, bearing, without being consumed, the ineffable radiance of One of the Divine Three Hypostases, uniting Himself with our unworthy flesh.

The Second Canon of the Martyrs

Irmos: *The three children....*

The day of your annual commemoration has radiantly dawned, O richly-blessed ones, brilliantly shining forth with the splendor of the Fast. Celebrating this day we sing out with you in faith: Blessèd art Thou, O Lord God of our fathers.

You have been revealed to all as destroyers of the passions; lamps shining from afar upon the world with cleansing rays annihilating all deceit; clear-voiced preachers proclaiming the truth, chasing away the darkness of deception, as you sing: Blessèd art Thou, O Lord God of our fathers.

You shine forth as mystical beacons, O holy martyrs, for you guide them that sail upon the storm-tossed sea of life and save them from the tempest, as you sing: Blessèd art Thou, O Lord God of our fathers.

Beautiful to God and wondrous to the angels is that divinely-inspired assembly of the splendid company of the forty holy martyrs, that awesome troop of men-at-arms who sang and cried: Blessèd art Thou, O Lord God of our fathers.

Theotokion: **T**hou, O Virgin, who knew no wedlock, art the candle-stand of light, the bright cloud filled with light, and the most-holy resting place of the Holy, for thou

didst ineffably receive the Word, the Holy of the Holies, and singing out to Him we cry: Blessèd art Thou, O Lord God of our fathers.

Ode 8

The First Canon of the Martyrs

Irmos: God came down upon the Hebrew children in the fiery furnace and changed the flames into dew. Praise the works of the Lord, and exalt Him throughout all ages.

The enemy was furiously enraged against all creation for again he was confounded by it, as the forty holy martyrs sang: Praise the Lord, sing and exalt Him throughout the ages.

Your bodies were mercilessly tortured for Christ as you offered them to God as a holy sacrifice; now you rejoice with the angels singing to Christ throughout all ages.

The pious mother finding her son yet to be alive, with courageous resolve carried upon her shoulders the fruit of piety which she had borne, thus imitating the act of sacrifice of Abraham, offering him a martyr together with his companions.

“O my son,” cried the Christ-loving mother to her Christ-loving child, “make straight the path to everlasting life together with thy companions, that thou mayest not be the last of them that shall present themselves before Christ.”

Glory...,

Triadicon: (not in the Slav Menaion) Reverently understanding the One Nature to be as in three suns cleaving to each other, One Light in three Persons, we, the works of the Lord praise the Lord, singing and exalting Him throughout all ages.

Now and ever...,

Theotokion: We praise the Son who is not parted from the bosom of the Father, yet made His abode within thy maternal womb, O most pure Virgin bride of God, and we exalt Him through all ages.

The Second Canon of the Martyrs

Irmos: God came down....

Bravely giving yourselves over to a cold and cruel death, you came to the true life which is in Christ, ever praying for our salvation and the remission of our sins.

Having passed over from earth to heaven, O crown-bearing and victorious assembly of the martyrs of the Church, pray now for our salvation and deliverance from every passion, trial, and tribulation.

The Savior broke the bonds of death giving victory over death to His holy forty martyrs, and being warmed by the cold, they sang asking for the salvation of all the faithful.

Overcoming all dangers through their prayers, the divine choir of martyrs drives the assaults of the passions, and the temptations of the demons, away from those who praise Christ throughout all ages.

Let us bless the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, the Lord!

Theotokion: **T**hou alone, O pure Lady Virgin Theotokos, hast raised us up who are given over to corruption and the dust of mortality, by giving birth to Christ our God, the author and fashioner of our life.

We praise, bless, and worship the Lord singing and exalting Him throughout all ages!

Katavasia.

Ode 9

The First Canon of the Martyrs

Irmos: God the Word from God, who in His ineffable Wisdom came to renew Adam, grievously fallen through food into corruption, and who was made flesh ineffably for our sakes from the Virgin, do you faithful magnify in hymns with one accord.

Stripped bare for the sake of Christ and stoned, you endured the icy air and the freezing waters, the breaking of your bones and the burning of the fire; and in the swiftly flowing waters you shone forth as beacons from afar, O forty holy martyrs.

Having obtained the Cross and the staff of divine strength, the forty holy martyrs cried aloud to Christ: O All-powerful and Victorious Master, crown us with Thine own hand, that we may all magnify Thee in song forever.

As painful as the ice and the extreme cold were in your travail, so sweet is Paradise, O forty holy martyrs, for the bosom of Abraham the Patriarch now gives you warmth in the eternal mansions.

Having conquered through your sufferings and received your crowns from the divine right hand of the Master, O forty holy martyrs, pray now that He grant peace to the world and salvation to our souls.

Theotokion: **O** bride and Virgin Mother, accept our supplications for thou art the only hope of the faithful, and together with the heavenly choirs of angels beseech thy Son that He grant peace to the world and salvation to those who love thee.

The Second Canon of the Martyrs

Irmos: God the Word from God....

Having attained the glory of the preternatural dawn and ineffable joy, deliver from all danger, misfortune, temptation, and wickedness those who lovingly honor you, O soldiers of Christ, ye forty holy martyrs.

Having received divine power and might from heaven, dispel all lies, drive away the falsehood and gloominess of idolatry and enlighten the world, O fellow prisoners in Christ and martyrs rich in spirit, ye forty holy martyrs.

Having been adorned with the beauty of your honorable sufferings, you now share communion with the divine nature and are united to the pure and radiant light, O warriors of the Lord, ye forty holy martyrs.

Having come to stand with boldness and piety before Christ and being thus illumined with the light Divine, earnestly beseech ye Him that those who praise you also be illumined by the thrice-radiant Light, O ye glorious and holy forty martyrs.

Theotokion: **O** Virgin, thou portal of divine Light, enlighten the dark shadow of my souls with thine immaterial brilliance, so that I, who magnifies thee with faith and love, be delivered from the fire eternal.

Katavasia.

The Exapostilarion of the Martyrs:

Let us worthily praise the holy and victorious company of the forty holy martyrs, for with fire, ice, and water they put to shame the army of the enemy and have received from Christ the Savior, their crowns of glory.

Glory..., another Exapostilarion of the Martyrs:

Let the choir, ten-times-four, of forty holy martyrs, representing the four-fold virtues of the transcendent Trinity, the four elements of fire, air, water and earth, be praised with hymns divine, for they have suffered for Christ, the Master of all.

Now and ever..., Theotokion:

O Virgin Mother, who though being a maiden, gavest birth to the Creator and Master of all, deliver me from the passions which torment me, and guide me to the radiant source of mercy and compassion — the most beautiful Pascha of thy risen Son.

At the Praises, 4 stichera, in Tone 5: To the melody, Rejoice”

Come, O ye brethren, /

And let us praise the company of martyrs in song, /

FORTY HOLY MARTYRS OF SEBASTE

Who were burned by the fire and burned by the ice, /
Yet burned up with their zeal the freezing cold of error; /
That noble army, that most holy assembly. /
That defense that can neither be broken nor conquered, /
That breastplate and guardian of the Faith: /
The divine choir of forty holy martyrs, /
The intercessors for the Church ///
Earnestly praying Christ to send down on our souls peace and great mercy. *(twice)*

Rejoice, O strong and valiant assembly /
Longsuffering and victorious army, /
Pillars of piety, and soldiers of Christ, /
Steadfast and invincible regiment /
Formidable in mind and brave in spirit, /
O truly divine company of forty holy martyrs chosen by God: /
Truly equal in resolve and equal in suffering /
You have now received your co-equal crowns; ///
Pray Christ God that He grants our souls peace and great mercy.

Rejoice, O victorious band of soldiers that stood bravely in battle, /
Like stars ye passed through fire and frost melting the ice of the lake, /
Making the earth seem like heaven and shining light upon all. /
Now you are warmed, O forty martyrs, in the bosom of Abraham /
Rejoicing together with the ranks of the angelic host /
Amidst the fragrance of the flowers which is indeed the fragrance of the Spirit, ///
Pray Christ God that He grants our souls peace and great mercy.

Glory..., in the same Tone: *(the composition of the Monk John of Damascus)*

O ye martyrs of Christ, /
The celebration of your precious feast is made glorious by the remembrance of
your deeds, /
For being forty in number, ye hallow the number forty, /
Imitating the redeeming Passion through your sufferings for Christ. /
Therefore, as you have boldness before Him, /
Pray that we who are on the earth may see the third day Resurrection ///
Of Christ God, the Savior of our souls.

Now and ever..., Theotokion:

We bless thee, O Virgin Mother of God, /
And we the faithful worthily glorify thee, /

O invincible city that cannot be broken, ///
O steadfast protectress and the refuge of our souls.

At the Aposticha, the stichera from the Triodion and

Glory..., in Tone 2:

They gave the faithful to drink from the cup of truth of their own blood /
Through the fiery torment and the icy water, /
For singing in fourfold time a tenfold song to the Savior, /
They, being one in spirit, were offered in forty bodies to the Christ. /
And the godly mother said to her Christ-loving child as she carried him on her
shoulders: ///
It is meet and right for thee, O martyr, to complete thy suffering with thy
companions.

Now and ever..., Theotokion:

O gate impassible, mystically sealed, /
O most-blessèd Virgin Mother of God, /
Accept our prayers and bring them before thy Son and God ///
That through them He may save our souls.

Then, “It is a good thing to give praise..., and the Trisagion, the Troparia, Litany and the Prayer of St. Symeon with three full prostrations, the First Hour with Kathisma, and the Dismissal. Then at the proper time, the Third, Sixth and Ninth Hours, with their Kathismas. The Beatitudes are read quickly, and the rest. At each Hour, we do the prayer with three full prostrations.

* * *

On this Same Day,

Vespers

Note: See the Triodion for detailed instructions for the coincidence of this day with the days of the Great Fast.

At “Lord, I call...,” 10 stichera: 6 stichera of the Day from the Triodion, and

4 stichera, of the Forty Martyrs, in Tone 1:

The choir of the forty holy martyrs, /
That radiant company truly chosen by God: /
By their honorable sufferings hath shone upon the Fast. /
Illumining and enlightening our souls. *(twice)*

In Tone 2:

The freezing lake seemed like paradise to the martyrs ,
 And the wintry cold like the heat of Summer, O Christ God; /
 And the threats of the tyrant did not frighten them, /
 Nor did they fear being given over to any new torturing, /
 For having acquired the weapon of the Cross, they were mighty, ///
 And vanquishing the enemy they have received their crowns.

Who shall not honor the forty holy martyrs? /
 For they walked bravely into the icy waters of the lake, /
 And huddling in the cold, they sang a song of praise to the Lord: /
 We are not in the flowing waters because Thy wrath is stirred against us! /
 We are not in the flowing waters because of Thy rage, O Lover of mankind! /
 Just relieve the burden of our oppression and the bitterness of the wind /
 For our feet are already purple with our own blood; /
 O lead us into Thine everlasting abode, O God, ///
 Where we shall be warmed in the bosom of Abraham.

Glory..., in the same Tone:

“We went through fire and water, /
 And Thou hast led us to a place of refreshment,” /
 David cried prophetically in the Psalm. /
 Thus, O holy martyrs of Christ, ye fulfilled the prophecy, /
 Having willingly gone through fire and water and entered into the kingdom of
heaven ///
 Where, O forty martyrs, you intercede that we be granted great mercy.

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

In thee I place my whole trust, /
 O Mother of God, ///
 Keep me under thy protection.

The Troparion of the Forty 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.

The Kontakion of the Forty Martyrs, in Tone 6:

Forsaking all the warfare of the world, /

FORTY HOLY MARTYRS OF SEBASTE

O holy forty martyrs of the Lord, /
You have truly passed through fire and water, /
And have received your just reward in heaven; /
Joining yourselves unto the Master of all ///
And receiving from Him your many crowns of glory.

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