

**The 4<sup>th</sup> Day of August**  
**The Seven Holy Youths (Seven Sleepers) of Ephesus.**

**Vespers**

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

**C**ome, and let us ever praise the memory /  
Of the seven-circled light /  
Which shone upon the seven worthy youths, /  
And let us cry out to Christ, Who hath so crowned them: /  
Through their prayers, grant peace to our lives, ///  
O Lord, our Redeemer.

**T**he seven godly youths /  
Who were dead according to the laws of nature /  
Truly rose together, as if from sleep, surpassing nature. /  
O most awesome wonder! /  
For three hundred and seventy-two years ///  
They had slept in a cave as if they were dead!

**L**et us now praise the divine Iamblicus, /  
Maximillian, Martinian and John, /  
Antoninus and Dionysius, /  
For they ever pray for us, /  
And with them, let us piously praise ///  
Exacustodian the wise.

**Note:** *But if we sing “Alleluia” at the 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 Saints, in the same Tone and melody:*

**M**ost glorified art thou from generation to generation, /  
O Virgin Mother and Maiden, Mary the Mother of God, /  
The intercessor for the world, /  
Thou gavest birth in the flesh to the Son of the Unoriginate Father /  
Truly of One Essence with the Spirit. ///  
Pray to Him that we may be saved

**W**e who are hopelessly possessed by sins, O pure one, /  
Have thee alone as our intercessor, O Virgin. /  
And we gratefully cry out to thee: /  
Cleanse us, O most holy bride of God. /

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For thou, art the refuge of the world ///  
And the defender of the race of mankind.

Tossed about by the storm of my sins, /  
I flee to the calm haven of thy prayers, O Mother of God, /  
And I cry out to thee: /  
Stretch out thy mighty right hand to me, thy servant ///  
And save me, O most pure one!

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

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.

**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?'

*Or Dogmatic Theotokion if a Resurrection service.*

**The General Troparion of Martyrs, or this one of the Martyrs, in Tone 4:**

**O** great miracle of faith, /  
The seven holy youths remained in a cave /  
As if in a royal palace /  
And died without corruption. /  
After a long time they arose as from sleep, /  
Confirming the resurrection of all mankind. ///  
Through their prayers, O Christ God, have mercy on us.

**Matins**

After the usual readings from the Psalter, both Canons from the Octoechos, and that of the Martyrs, with 4 Troparia, in Tone 2:

## THE SEVEN HOLY YOUTHS OF EPHEBUS

### Ode 1

#### The Canon of the Holy Martyrs, in Tone 2

*Irmos:* O come, ye people, let us sing a song to Christ our God who parted the sea and through it led his people whom He had brought out of the bondage of Egypt: for He hath been glorified!

*Refrain:* Holy Seven Martyrs, pray to God for us!

**C**ome, all ye faithful, and let us honor the seven holy youths who have shone forth for us; for they shed greater light upon the Church of Christ than the seven lamps did upon the temple of the Law.

**I**n days gone by, the seven youths were clothed in Christ's mortal flesh, and, receiving death as if it were a dream, they confirm the truth of the resurrection.

**J**ericho fell at the seventh sounding of the trumpets, and the uprising of falsehood in the world hath been destroyed and hath fallen into hades through the sevenfold miracle the seven martyrs' faith.

*Theotokion:* **T**hou didst bring a new birthgiving into the world, O thou who knewest not wedlock; for the everlasting Word who is coeternal with the Father and the divine Spirit became incarnate from thee, without forsaking His union with Them in the Trinity.

*Katavasia from the Exaltation of the Cross.*

### Ode 3

*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..

**Y**ou were revealed as seven fixed stars shining with faith in the heavens, O spiritual martyrs; and you guided to the haven of salvation those who are sinking in the abyss of falsehood and deceit.

**S**tanding unafraid at your trial, O holy martyrs, as once did the Maccabees having been enrolled in the army of Christ, you resigned from the army of this corruptible life.

**O** ye seven holy youths, ye showed yourselves worthy to be a prayerful sacrifice pleasing unto God, and you thus dispelled the foul stench of falsehood with the sweet smelling fragrance of your martyrdom.

*Theotokion:* **T**he burning bush on Mount Sinai prefigured thy glorious birthgiving, O Virgin; for thou wast not consumed by the fire of the Godhead when thou didst faithfully receive it into thy holy womb.

*Katavasia.*

**The Sessional Hymn of the Martyrs, in Tone 4: To the melody, “Quickly go before...”**

**A**s pillars of the Church of Christ, /  
You courageously overturned the ramparts of unbelief, /  
O ye seven holy martyrs. /  
You negated the wrath of the Hellenes before your deaths; /  
And destroyed the tempest of heresy after your deaths, /  
By holding fast to your faith in the resurrection. ///  
Pray now, that we too may be made steadfast in the Faith.

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

**O** all-immaculate and all-praised Virgin /  
Who hast given birth to the transcendent God: /  
Do thou ceaselessly entreat Him together with the bodiless angels /  
That He may grant the forgiveness of sins /  
And the correction of life before the coming of the end, ///  
To us who rightfully praise and glorify thee with faith and love.

**Or this Stavrotheotokion, in the same Tone:**

**W**hen she beheld Thee raised upon the tree, /  
Thy most pure Mother, O Word of God, cried out lamenting: /  
“What is this new and awesome miracle, my Son? /  
How dost Thou, the Life of all, partake of death ///  
In Thy compassionate desire to enlive the world.

#### Ode 4

*Irmos: I have heard of Thy glorious dispensation, O Lord: and I have glorified Thine unapproachable power, O Lover of mankind.*

**We** praise the seven honored youths, the sacred company of seven holy martyrs.

**The** youths of Ephesus revealed the ungodly emperor to be foolish, whose mind was filled with the vainglory of falsehood and deceit.

**O** holy youths, you were truly shown to be all-immaculate offerings and sacrifices for the Lord through your faith.

*Theotokion:* **O** pure and ever-blessèd Lady Theotokos, cease not to pray for us, that we be delivered from all danger and tribulation.

## THE SEVEN HOLY YOUTHS OF EPHEBUS

### Ode 5

*Irmos:* O Lord, bestower of light and Creator of the ages, by the light of Thine ordinances guide Thou us, for we know no other God but Thee.

**D**ying first a common death on earth without travail, O youths of Ephesus, you straightway arose in a manner transcending nature, giving assurance to all of the resurrection of the dead.

**C**onsecrating yourselves to God through the confession of the true Faith, ye were delivered from prison and wounds by your martyrdom for the sake of the Lord, and thus, O spiritually wise ones, and have received your crowns in heaven.

**H**aving decisively vanquished the delusion of idolatry and the teachings of impious heresies, O glorious martyrs, preserve now those who confess with you the resurrection of the dead.

*Theotokion:* The transcendent Lord, who, without any co-mingling of His natures, is perfect man and perfect God, was born of His holy Mother. He is one in two natures and one hypostasis.

### Ode 6

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

**L**et us all praise the seven holy youths, equal in number to the pillars of the wisdom of God; for with their words they crushed the ungodly command of the tyrants as if it were stone.

**P**reserved by the law of divine providence, you received a ready burial within the cave, O ye saints; where, in time, you were revealed as both dead and incorrupt.

**Y**ou arose as witnesses to incorruption, driving away a corrupt and moribund religion; pray now to God on behalf of those who have set their hope in the resurrection.

*Theotokion:* Now hast the nature of women been fully glorified. Now doth womanly nature rejoice! Now hath all grief come to an end as joy doth blossom forth! For Mary hath given birth to Joy of the world: Christ, our Savior and our God!

*Katavasia.*

### **The Kontakion of the Holy Martyrs, in Tone 4:**

Spurning the corruption of this world /  
And accepting the gifts of incorruption, /

Though the seven youths died they were not touched by corruption; /  
And they arose after many years thus burying the unbelief of the wicked. ///  
Therefore, let us the faithful praise them as we glorify Christ.

### Ode 7

*Irmos:* *The wise children did not worship the golden idol, but went themselves into the flame and defied the pagan gods. They prayed in the midst of the flame, and an angel bedewed them saying: "The prayer of your lips hath been heard."*

**T**he youths have been revealed as pure and chosen receptacles of God. Through them the doctrines of heresy are driven from the Church as Orthodoxy shineth forth! for Christ hath been born for us and He is the resurrection of every body and every soul.

**T**ruly the holy youths were revealed to be steadfast in their sufferings before their death; and after death they were shown to be alive through divine glory; themselves assuring the pious of the coming true resurrection.

**T**he resurrection will be for both souls and for material bodies; for as it is not possible to come into the world without a body, so can the body not exist without a soul!" the all-praised martyrs said. The soul is either glorified or it is put to shame.

*Theotokion:* **O** Virgin Mary who hast given birth to God, the Savior of all, thou art the consolation of the despairing, the restoration of the sinners, the hope of the hopeless, and the firm help of those who sing: Blessèd is the God of our fathers!

### Ode 8

*Irmos:* *Thou didst prefigure Thy Mother, O Lord, in the fiery furnace of old when the three holy children remained unconsumed and were rescued from the flames; and we praise her who hath been revealed today to the ends of the earth, exalting her throughout all ages!*

**O** ye divine seven youths, having severed the root of ungodly bitterness and the malignant delusion of heresy, you brought forth the fruit of faith; and, being buried alive for your faith, ye rose from the dead.

**O** ye seven holy youths and spiritual martyrs, foremost among the people of Ephesus, you have been shown to be the divine confirmation of the Church of Christ and the kingdom of the faithful, and we joyfully exalt you throughout all ages.

**R**evealing themselves to be steadfast on the earth and like seven stars in the heavens, the seven youths made an unwavering journey through life having divine faith, as they cried aloud: we exalt Thee, O Christ, throughout all ages!

*Theotokion:* **N**o one will perish, O pure Mother of God, who, in an Orthodox manner, hath placed his hope and faith in thee; but only they who out of envy refuse to venerate thy most holy image.

## THE SEVEN HOLY YOUTHS OF EPHESUS

*Katavasia.*

### Ode 9

*Irmos:* *We magnify thee, O blessed and all-pure Theotokos, who through thy virginal womb ineffably gave birth to God incarnate, the Light who shone forth before the sun and hath come to us in the flesh..*

The resurrection of the saints hath now been revealed as a bountiful revelation of the mysteries of God; for though they once died a natural death, the seven youths have now risen free of all corruption, and arrayed in glory, as though they had never died.

The cave holding the children has been shown to be a treasure-house of power and an impregnable bulwark of faith, proclaiming the coming resurrection to all; for in it hath not risen Lazarus, who had been dead but for four days, but those lying dead for centuries.

O ye seven youths, pillars of the wisdom of God, you, having suffered under the edict of the law, have been invested with your crown of martyrdom, and by your Orthodox teaching, you have revealed the resurrection! Thus, you are true champions of the Church who pray for those who now praise you.

*Theotokion:* Thou didst preserve thy soul and body undefiled, O pure Lady, for Christ the King desiring thy beauty, revealed thee to be the Mother of His own incarnation, O most glorious Mary, who hath bestowed salvation upon us all.

*Katavasia.*

### **Exapostilarion of the Martyrs:**

Arming themselves with the sword of thy precious Cross, O Word, Thy seven holy witnesses completely vanquished the hosts of the adversary; and now they reign with Thee, O Christ, Thou King of all, forever.

### **Theotokion:**

Saved through thee, O pure Virgin, we confess thee to be truly Theotokos, for thou didst ineffably give birth to God, who hath destroyed death by the Cross and drawn multitudes of faithful souls to Him; and with them we praise thee, O Virgin.

### **Liturgy**

### **The General Troparion of Martyrs, or this one of the Saints, in Tone 4:**

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And died without corruption. /

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After a long time they arose as from sleep, /  
Confirming the resurrection of all mankind. ///  
Through their prayers, O Christ God, have mercy on us.

**Kontakion of the Saint, in Tone 4:**

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And accepting the gifts of incorruption, /  
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RLE 7/29/2024 SDA