

November 28

Commemoration of the Venerable Martyr Stephen; the New and Holy Martyr Irenarchos (5th Class)

VESPERS

Stichera for Stephen (Tone 6)

6. Consecrated to the Lord from your youth, you were a stranger to the flesh and the customs of the world, O holy father, for you were an outstanding monk, a vessel of the Holy Spirit. From the narrow cell where your body lay ill, your spirit ascended to Heaven to contemplate the ineffable splendor of Christ, our King and our God. For Him, you waged your resolute combat, O blessed Stephen, as you prostrated yourself before the icon resembling Him.
5. Fasting for forty days, like the Master, in the prison where you lay ill, you prepared yourself for combat, O holy Stephen, pillar of monks and jewel of martyrs. Then, like wolves, your pitiless aggressors dragged you out like a gentle lamb and slaughtered you unjustly. They buried you among criminals, O you who waged a resolute struggle and forever have the power to intercede for our souls.
4. A band of criminals made themselves accomplices of the plots of the unjust emperor and cruelly stoned you, O venerable father, like the first martyr. They crushed your head, O blessed Stephen. Then they dragged your body through the streets, scattering your remains without pity or mercy for the dead. What courage, what patience you had in your heart, that won you an unfading crown.

For Irenarchos (Tone 6)

3. O faithful, as we fittingly celebrate the combats of the sacred athlete Irenarchos, the pains endured by the soldier of Christ, let us sing to the Lord: "Deliver us from all evil. through his prayers!"
2. Great peace came to you from God, for you struggled for Him and passed through a storm of torments, O blessed Irenarchos, valiant soldier who intercede for the faithful.
1. A choir of women and children, as well as holy Acacios, accompanied you in your resolute struggle when you triumphed over error, O Irenarchos, blessed martyr.
- v. Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit,

Doxastikon (Tone 6)

Consecrated to the Lord from infancy like the great prophet Samuel, O venerable Stephen, you were pleasing in His sight as a monk on the mountain. You courageously went down to your struggle; and for His icon, you patiently endured exile, affliction, chains and prison. Dragged about, beaten by whips, stoned, your head crushed, you received a crown from Christ our God. Intercede before Him that our souls be saved, and that the faithful who wholeheartedly celebrate your sacred memory be delivered from trials, passions and all disasters in the age to come.

- now and forever and to the ages of ages. Amen.

Theotokion

No one who has recourse to you has ever been confounded, O pure Virgin Theotokos; but whoever implores your grace receives whatever is needful according to his prayer.

"O Joyful Light..." Prokimenon of Wednesday evening.

APOSTICHA (*Tone 2*)

1. O Savior, You exalted the names of Your chief Apostles throughout the whole world: they were instructed in the ineffable mysteries of heaven; they became a source of healing for those on earth; their shadow alone was enough to heal the sick. The first wonderworker was once a fisherman; the second, who explained the divine mysteries of grace, was chosen from the Jews. At their prayers, O compassionate God, grant us Your great mercy.

All: To You I have lifted up my eyes, to You who live in heaven. Behold: the eyes of the servants are turned to the hands of their masters, and the eyes of the maid-servants to the hands of their mistresses; thus do our eyes watch the Lord our God until He takes pity on us.

2. Assailed unjustly on every side, we take refuge in You, O God of truth, and call out to You with the words of Your Disciples: "Save us, O Lord, for we are perishing!" We entreat You to show our enemies that You people and save them from all danger. At the protect Your Your Apostles, pardon the multitude of our sins in Your prayers of great goodness: O Lord and Master, glory to You!

All: Have mercy on us, O Lord, have mercy on us, for we have been filled with shame: our soul has been filled to overflowing. May scorn befall detractors, and humiliation come to the proud.

3. Great is the glory which you acquired through your faith. You not only overcame the enemy in your sufferings, but devils and heal the sick, O physicians you still cast out of souls and bodies. O holy martyrs, intercede with God that He have mercy on our souls.

All: Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit,

Doxastikon (Tone 8)

Having kept the image of God within you unsullied, you struggled valiantly for the icon of Christ, without fearing the threats of Copronymos, the emperor with the stained name. But you fought him with the sword of the Spirit. Through the boldness you have before God, save your flock from all heresy, O blessed Stephen of countless struggles!

- now and forever and to the ages of ages. Amen.

Theotokion

O Lady, receive the prayers of your servants: deliver us from all danger and all affliction.

TROPARION OF STEPHEN (Tone 4)

O blessed Stephen, your training in ascetical life on the mountain and the Power of the Cross made you capable of routing your spiritual enemies. By your courage in battle and your strong faith, you defeated Copronymos. For both these reasons, God has crowned you with immortal life, O martyr among the Saints, Stephen, worthy of all praise!

v. Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit,

TROPARION OF IRENARCHOS (Tone 4)

Your martyr, O Lord, received the crown of immortality from You, O our God, on account of his struggle. Armed with Your strength he has vanquished his persecutors and crushed the powerless arrogance of demons. Through his supplications, O Christ God, save our souls!

OR TROPARION OF IRENARCHOS (Tone 4)

As you confessed the Prince of Peace with faith, O divinely-minded Irenarchos, you wisely abandoned the troubled confusion of error. Passing through fire and water bearing your crown of victory, you went up to the blessedness of Heaven where you entreat peace and mercy for us all.

- now and forever and to the ages of ages. Amen.

THEOTOKION OF THURSDAY (*Tone 4*)

O Virgin Theotokos, we acknowledge that the Word of the Father, Christ our God, was incarnate of you, the only pure one, the only blessed one. Wherefore we sing to you a hymn of praise and we exalt you.