

SUNDAY, JANUARY 17

Venerable and Godbearing Father Anthony the Great

Anthony was an Egyptian and was born in about the year 250 A.D. in the village of Koman near Heraclea. Following the death of his noble and wealthy parents, he divided the inherited estate with his sister, who was a minor, and made sure that she was cared for by some relatives. Anthony distributed his half of the estate to the poor, and in his twentieth year he dedicated himself to the ascetic life for which he had yearned from his childhood. In the beginning, Anthony lived a life of asceticism in the proximity of his village, but in order to flee the disturbances of people he withdrew into the wilderness on the shore of the Red Sea. There he spent twenty years as a recluse, not associating with anyone except God. Through constant prayer, reflection and contemplation, he patiently endured unspeakable temptations from the devil. His fame spread throughout the entire world, and many disciples gathered around him, whom he set on the path of salvation by his example and words. During the eighty-five years of his ascetic life, only twice did he go to Alexandria: the first time to seek martyrdom during a time of persecution of the Church, and the second time at the invitation of St. Athanasius the Great, in order to refute the accusation of the Arians that he too was an adherent of the Arian heresy. Anthony reposed in the 105th year of his life, leaving behind an entire army of disciples and emulators. Even though Anthony was not a scholar, he was nevertheless a counselor and teacher of the most learned men of his time, as was St. Athanasius. When certain Greek philosophers tempted him with literary wisdom, Anthony shamed them with the question: "Which is older, the understanding or the book? Which of these two was the cause of the other?" Ashamed, the philosophers dispersed, for they perceived that they only had literary knowledge without understanding, whereas Anthony had understanding. Here is a man who attained perfection insofar as man, in general, can attain on earth. Here is an instructor to instructors and a teacher of teachers, who for a full eighty-five years perfected himself; and it was only in that way that he was able to perfect many others. Filled with many years of life and great works, Anthony reposed in the Lord in the year 356 A.D.

GREAT VESPERS

LORD I CALL: Four stikhera of the Resurrection in tone 7, followed by three for St. Anthony

Come, let us rejoice in the Lord,
Who destroyed the dominion of death!
Let us sing to Him with the bodiless hosts,
for He enlightened the human race! //
Our Maker and Savior, glory to You!

You endured the Cross and burial for our sake.
By Your death, You destroyed death as God.
We fall down before Your Resurrection on the third day, //
O Savior, glory to You!

When the Apostles beheld the Resurrection of the Maker,
they were amazed and sang the angelic praise.
This is the glory of the Church.
This is the richness of the Kingdom. //
O Lord, crucified for our sake, glory to You!

You were held by lawless men, O Christ,
but to me, You are God, and I am not ashamed.
You were smitten on the cheek, but I do not deny You.
You were nailed to the Cross and I do not conceal it,
for I glory in Your Resurrection: Your death is my life. //
Almighty Lord and Lover of mankind, glory to You!

St Anthony, tone 4:

Burning with divine love and radiant with the Spirit,
your soul rose to desire truly infinite love.
You despised flesh and blood and lived apart from the world,
yet you were united to it by great silence and abstinence.
Therefore you were fulfilled as you desired, //
and as a star radiant with blessings, O Anthony, you illumine our souls.

You were radiant with divine light by the grace of the Holy Spirit,
O Father Anthony.
You shattered the flying weapons of the demons.
By your godly teachings you exposed their evil snares.
You were a radiant light for monks:
the first to adorn the desert;
a prayerful and skilled physician of the sick, //
and the first clear example of the ascetic life.

O Anthony, pure in heart and soul,
an earthly angel and a heavenly man,
a teacher of chastity, a clear measure of abstinence;
now you live with your Master, O blessed saint.
You offer Him unceasing praise,
as do the Angels, all holy monastics, and martyrs.//
Set free from sin and danger those who ever keep your holy memory!

Glory... tone 6:

You set your mind as master over the deadly passions,
keeping the image unharmed through the ascetic life.
Thus you rose into the perfect likeness,
for, bravely curbing nature, you hastened to subject to that which is better:
and made the body servant to the spirit.
Therefore you were revealed as the chief of those living the monastic life,
a citizen of the desert,
a master teaching those who came to you,
a perfect example of virtue.
Now the shadows have been set aside, O Anthony,
and in heaven you behold in purity the Holy Trinity,//
as you pray with boldness for those who honor you with faith and love.

Now & ever... the Dogmatikon, tone 7:

No tongue can speak of your wonderful childbearing,
for the order of nature was overruled by God.
You were revealed to be a Mother above nature,
for you remained a Virgin beyond reason and understanding.
Your conception was most glorious, O Theotokos!
The manner of your giving birth was ineffable, O Virgin!
Knowing you to be the Mother of God,
devoutly we pray to you://
“Beseech Him to save our souls!”

Old Testament Readings

The reading from the Wisdom of Solomon. But the righteous live for ever, and their reward is with the Lord; the Most High takes care of them. Therefore they will receive a glorious crown and a beautiful diadem from the hand of the Lord, because He will cover them with

His right hand, and with His arm He will shield them. The Lord will take His zeal as His whole armor, and will arm all creation to repel His enemies; He will put on righteousness as a breastplate, and wear impartial justice as a helmet; He will take holiness as an invincible shield, and sharpen stern wrath for a sword, and creation will join with Him to fight against the madmen. Shafts of lightning will fly with true aim, and will leap to the target as from a well-drawn bow of clouds, and hailstones full of wrath will be hurled as from a catapult; the water of the sea will rage against them, and rivers will relentlessly overwhelm them; a mighty wind will rise against them, and like a tempest it will winnow them away. Lawlessness will lay waste the whole earth, and evil-doing will overturn the thrones of rulers. Listen, therefore, O kings, and understand; learn, O judges of the ends of the earth. Give ear, you that rule over multitudes, and boast of many nations. For your dominion was given to you from the Lord, and your sovereignty from the Most High, who will search out your works and inquire into your plans. **(5:15-6:3)**

The reading from the Wisdom of Solomon. But the souls of the righteous are in the hand of God, and no torment can ever touch them. In the eyes of the foolish, they seem to have died, and their departure was thought to be an affliction, and their going from us to be their destruction — but they are at peace. For though in the sight of men they were punished, their hope is full of immortality. Having been disciplined a little, they will receive great good, because God tested them and found them worthy of Himself; like gold in a furnace He tried them, and like a sacrificial burnt offering He accepted them. In the time of their visitation they will shine forth, and will run like sparks through the stubble. They will govern nations and rule over peoples, and the Lord will reign over them for ever. Those who trust in Him will understand truth, and the faithful will abide with Him in love, because grace and mercy are upon His elect, and He watches over His holy ones. **(3:1-9)**

The Reading from The Wisdom of Solomon: But the righteous man, though he die early, will be at rest. For old age is not honored for length of time, nor measured by number of years; but understanding is gray hair for men, and a blameless life is ripe old age. There was one who pleased God and was loved by him, and while living among sinners he was taken up. He was caught up lest evil change his understanding or guile deceive his soul. For the fascination of wickedness obscures what is good, and roving desire perverts the innocent mind. Being perfected in a short time, he fulfilled long years; for his soul was pleasing to the Lord, therefore he took him quickly from the midst of wickedness. Yet the peoples saw and did not understand, nor take such a thing to heart, that God's grace and mercy are with his elect, and he watches over his holy ones. **(4:7-15)**

APOSTIKHA: all stikhera of the Resurrection in tone 7:

As the Savior of the world You arose from the tomb.
As God You resurrected the race of man with Your flesh.//
O Lord, glory to You!

Come, let us worship the One Who rose from the dead,
and enlightened all creation!
By His death, He saved us from the torments of hell.//
By His Resurrection He has granted us eternal life and great mercy.

You descended into hell, capturing death, O Christ.
In three days You arose again,
resurrecting us who glorify Your Resurrection.//
O Lord and Lover of man.

When You were placed in the tomb as one asleep,
the sight was great and awesome.
But when You rose on the third day as almighty God,
You resurrected Adam with Yourself.//
Glory to Your Resurrection, only Lover of man!

Glory...for the saint, tone 8:

We honor you, O Anthony our father,
as the instructor of a multitude of monks.
We have indeed learned to walk rightly in your footsteps.
Blessed are you, for having labored for Christ,
you denounced the power of the enemy.
You were a converser with the Angels and a companion of Paul of Thebes.//
Together with them, entreat the Lord that He grant mercy to our souls!

Now & ever... the Resurrection Theotokion, tone 8:

O unwedded Virgin,
who ineffably conceived God in the flesh,
O Mother of God most high,
accept the cries of your servants, O blameless One!
Grant cleansing of transgressions to all!//
Receive our prayers and pray to save our souls!

TROPARIA

Resurrection, tone 7

By Thy Cross, Thou didst destroy death!
To the thief, Thou didst open paradise!
For the myrrhbearers, Thou didst change weeping into joy!
And Thou didst command Thy disciples, O Christ God,
To proclaim that Thou art risen,
Granting the world great mercy.

St. Anthony, tone 4:

You imitated the ways of zealous Elijah,
and followed the straight path of John the Baptist.
You became a desert-dweller,
strengthening the world by your prayers.//
O Father Anthony, intercede with Christ God that our souls may be saved!

Resurrection Dismissal Theotokion, tone 4

The mystery of all eternity,
unknown even by Angels,
through you, Theotokos, is revealed to those on earth:
God incarnate by union without confusion.
He voluntarily accepted the Cross for us,
by which He resurrected the first-created man,//
saving our souls from death.

DIVINE LITURGY

Troparia

Resurrection, tone 7

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To the thief, Thou didst open paradise!
For the myrrhbearers, Thou didst change weeping into joy!
And Thou didst command Thy disciples, O Christ God,
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St. Anthony

You imitated the ways of zealous Elijah,
and followed the straight path of John the Baptist.
You became a desert-dweller,
strengthening the world by your prayers.//
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Kontakia

Resurrection, tone 7

The dominion of death
Can no longer hold men captive
For Christ descended shattering and destroying its powers
Hell is bound, while the prophets rejoice and cry:
The Savior has come to those in Faith,
Enter, you faithful, into the Resurrection!

St. Anthony, tone 2

You rejected the tumult of this life
living your life to the end in solitude, imitating the Baptist in every way.
With him we honor you, most venerable Anthony,//
the foundation of the Fathers.

Steadfast Protectress

Steadfast protectress of Christians,
constant advocate before the creator:
do not despise the cry of us sinners,
but in your goodness come speedily to help us who call on you in faith.
Hasten to hear our petition and to intercede for us, O Theotokos,
for you always protect those who honor you.

Prokeimenon, tone 7: The Lord shall give strength to His people. / The Lord shall bless His people with peace.

Vs. Offer to the Lord, O ye sons of God! Offer young rams to the Lord!

2nd Prok, tone 7: Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints.

Epistles: (250) Colossians 1:12-18 Brethren, give thanks unto God the Father who has made us worthy to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in the light. Who has delivered us from the power of darkness and translated us into the Kingdom of His dear Son, in Whom we have redemption through His Blood, even the forgiveness of sins. Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. For by Him all things were made that are in heaven and that are on earth, both visible and invisible, whether they be thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created by Him and for Him. And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist... And He is the head of the body, the Church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things He may be preeminent...

(335) Hebrews 13: 17-21 Brethren, obey those who rule over you, and submit yourselves, for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account. Let them do so with joy and not with grief, for that would be unprofitable for you. Pray for us; for we are confident that we have a good conscience, in all things desiring to live honestly. But I beseech you rather to do this, that I may be restored to you the sooner. Now may the God of peace, that brought up our Lord Jesus from the dead, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the Blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do His will, working in you that which is well pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ; to Whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Alleluia in the seventh tone: It is good to give thanks to the Lord, to sing praises to Your Name, O Most High. (Ps. 91:1)

V. To declare Your mercy in the morning, and Your truth by night.

V. Blessed is the man who fears the Lord, who greatly delights in His commandments.

Gospels: (91) Luke 18:18-27 At that time, a certain ruler asked Him, saying, “Good Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?” So Jesus said to him, “Why do you call Me good? No one is good but One, that is, God. You know the commandments: ‘Do not commit adultery, Do not murder, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Honor your father and your mother.’” And he said, “All these things I have kept from my youth.” So when Jesus heard these things, He said to him, “You still lack one thing. Sell all that you have and distribute to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me.” But when he heard this, he became very sorrowful, for he was very rich. And when Jesus saw that he became very sorrowful, He said, “How hard it is for those who have riches to enter the kingdom of God! For it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God.” And those who heard it said, “Who then can be saved?” But He said, “The things which are impossible with men are possible with God.”

(24) LUKE 6:17-23 At that time He came down with them and stood on a level place with a crowd of His disciples and a great multitude of people from all Judea and Jerusalem, and from the seacoast of Tyre and Sidon, who came to hear Him and be healed of their diseases, as well as those who were tormented with unclean spirits. And they were healed. And the whole multitude sought to touch Him for power went out from Him and healed them all. Then He lifted up His eyes toward His disciples, and said: “Blessed are you poor, For yours is the kingdom of God. Blessed are you who hunger now, For you shall be filled. Blessed are you who weep now, For you shall laugh. Blessed are you when men hate you, And when they exclude you, And revile you, and cast out your name as evil, For the Son of Man’s sake. Rejoice in that day and leap for joy! For indeed your reward is great in heaven, For in like manner their fathers did to the prophets.

Communion Hymns: Praise the Lord from the heavens, praise Him in the highest! The righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance. He shall not fear evil tidings. Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!