

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 3, 2021
HIEROMARTYR DIONYSIUS THE AREOPAGITE

The Hieromartyr Dionysius the Areopagite.

He is counted among the seventy lesser apostles. This wonderful man was of a noble, pagan family in Athens. Finishing his education in Athens, he went to Egypt to learn more. One day while he was there, the Lord Christ breathed His last on the Cross, and the sun was darkened and it was dark in Egypt for the space of three hours. Then Dionysius cried out: 'Either God the Creator of the world is suffering, or the world is ending.' Returning to Athens, he married a woman called Damaris and had sons by her. He was a member of the highest court in Greece, the Areopagus, and was always thereafter known as the Areopagite. When the Apostle Paul preached the Gospel in Athens, Dionysius was baptized with his whole household (Acts 17:34). Paul consecrated him bishop of Athens (he having left his wife and children and status from love of Christ), and he traveled widely with Paul, coming to know all the other apostles. He went especially to Jerusalem, to see the most holy Mother of God, and wrote of his meeting with her in one of his works, being at the burial of the Most Pure along with the other apostles. When his teacher, St Paul, suffered martyrdom, Dionysius desired to die such a death himself, so he went off to Gaul to preach the Gospel among the barbarians, accompanied by Rusticus, a priest, and a deacon called Eleutherius. They endured much but met with great success. By their labors, many were turned to the Christian faith and Dionysius built a small chapel in Paris* where he celebrated divine service. When he was ninety years old, he was seized and tortured for Christ, together with Rusticus and Eleutherius, until they were all three beheaded with the sword. The severed head of St Dionysius jumped a long way and fell in front of a Christian woman, Catula, who buried it with his body. He suffered in the time of Domitian, in the year 96. He wrote several famous works: on the names of God, on the heavenly and

ecclesiastical hierarchies, on mystical theology and on the most holy Mother of God.

***Author's note:** Some historians think that Dionysius of Paris was other than St Dionysius the Areopagite.

GREAT VESPERS

LORD I CALL: Six stikhera of the resurrection in tone 6 (spiral bound vespers book), followed by four stikhera for the Martyr Martyr, tone 1:

As with your mind you entered into the innermost darkness of the Unapproachable Light,
you came to understand the divine, incomprehensible mysteries of the Word;
and on earth, you clearly explained the ranks of the Angels,//
O Dionysius, sacred disciple of Christ.

With your soul enlightened by the rays of the Threefold Splendor and your body consumed by material fire,
you departed, O Father, to the Immaterial Brightness,
and were joined with the Angels.//
With them unceasingly pray that our souls may be saved!

The divine Paul, speaking out in public,
caught you with the hook of grace, O wise one.
Seeing you as a chosen vessel,
he made you a teacher of the sacred mysteries
and a beholder of ineffable things.
Pray together with him, O truly eloquent Dionysius,//
that those who sing your praise with love may be saved!

Through virtue, O most wise Father Dionysius,
you made your mind equal in honor to the Angels.
You wrote a sacred account of the heavenly order of their hierarchies,

aligning the ranks of the Church with theirs, //
likening them to the ranks of heaven.

GLORY...for the Martyr, tone 2:

Come, O faithful,
let us rejoice in the annual celebration of the hierarchs Dionysius
and Cyprian!

When Dionysius had rejected the Stoic philosophers,
and was taught by the Chosen Vessel,¹
he came to be one who knew the ineffable mysteries.
And Cyprian, enlightened by the fair virgin Justina,
fled the deception of the demons,
and, casting his books of magic into the fire,
became a herald of the Gospel.

Therefore, glorifying the Savior Who has glorified them,
let us sinners cry out:

“O Christ God, Who crowned Your victors with glory, //
through their supplications, save our souls!”

***NOW AND EVER... the Dogmatikon in tone 6 (spiral
bound vespers book)***

***APOSTIKHA: All stikhera of the Resurrection in tone 6 (spiral
bound vespers book)***

GLORY... Martyr, tone 4:

We call you the unseen depth of heavenly knowledge,
O resplendent martyr of Christ.
We hymn you as a warrior and steadfast champion of the Church,
O wise one.

Having been found worthy, together with the hosts on high,
to wear the robe of the light of Christ,
and having enlightened your mind
with the radiance of the Holy Spirit,
you shone forth with the purest fire, O Dionysius.
Therefore as we celebrate the festival of you universal memory, //
we glorify with faith the Lord Who glorified you.

***NOW AND EVER... Resurrectional Theotokion in tone 4
(spiral bound vespers book)***

TROPARIA

Resurrection, tone 6

The Angelic Powers were at Your tomb;
the guards became as dead men.
Mary stood by Your grave,
seeking Your most pure body.
You captured hell, not being tempted by it.
You came to the Virgin, granting life.
O Lord, Who rose from the dead, //
glory to You.

Saint Dionysius, tone 4

Having learned goodness and maintaining continence in all things,
you were arrayed with a good conscience as befits a priest.
From the Chosen Vessel you drew ineffable mysteries;
you kept the Faith, and finished a course equal to his. //
Hieromartyr Dionysius, entreat Christ God that our souls may be saved!

Resurrectional 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.

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