

**SUNDAY, OCTOBER 24, 2021**  
**18TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST (5TH OF LUKE)**  
**MARTYR ARETHAS AND 4,299 MARTYRS WITH HIM**

The Martyr Arethas and with him 4299 Martyrs suffered for the Lord Jesus Christ in the sixth century. Arethas was prefect of the Christian city of Negran in Arabia. The Arabian (or Omirite) king, Dunaan, who was Jewish, decided to eliminate Christianity from the land. He issued an edict that all followers of Christ were to be put to death.

Because the inhabitants of Negran remained faithful to the Lord, Dunaan came with a large army to destroy the city. At the city walls of Negran the king's heralds announced that Dunaan would only spare those who renounced Christ and referred to His Cross as a "sign of malediction."

Not daring to assault the Christian city by force, Dunaan resorted to a ruse. Dunaan swore an oath that he would not force the Christians into Judaism, but would merely collect a tribute from Negran. The inhabitants of the city would not heed the advice of Saint Arethas, and putting their trust in Dunaan, they opened the city gates.

The very next day Dunaan gave orders to light an immense fire and throw all the clergy of the city into it in order to frighten the rest of the Christians. 427 men were burned. He also threw the prefect Arethas and the other chief men into prison. Then the oppressor sent his messengers through the city to convert the Christians to Judaism. Dunaan himself conversed with those inhabitants brought from the prisons, saying, "I do not demand that you should renounce the God of heaven and earth, nor do I want you to worship idols, I want merely that you do not believe in Jesus Christ, since the Crucified One was a man, and not God."

The holy martyrs replied that Jesus is God the Word, the Second Person of the Holy Trinity, Who for the salvation of mankind was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary. Those suffering said, "We shall not abjure Christ, since He is Life for us. To die for Him is to find Life."

More than four thousand Christians, men, women, both the aged and children, from the city of Negran and surrounding villages suffered martyrdom for Christ.

**GREAT VESPERS**

***LORD I CALL: Seven stikhera of the resurrection in tone 1 (spiral bound Vespers book), then three for St. Arethas in tone 1***

***St. Arethas, tone 1:***

You set your courage, O most praised Martyr Arethas,  
against the savagery of evil men.  
By the grace of God, you were shown to be victorious.  
O glorious one, you brought to Christ//  
a choir of martyrs formed by soldiers of all ages and races.

You formed a beautiful choir, O most glorious Arethas,  
of your holy fellow martyrs.  
You struggled together with them, completing the good race  
and the good fight of your courageous contest://  
Therefore entreat Christ that He may grant our souls peace and  
great mercy!

The godly-minded virgin martyrs,  
enkindled by the love of Christ,  
did not heed the weakness of their nature.  
Manifestly strengthened by the power of God  
they trampled down the delusion of the enemy.  
They were not afraid of the pain of torture//  
and did not fear the fiery furnace.

***GLORY ... for St. Arethas, tone 4:***

Today, united in mind and singing hymns of praise, O faithful,  
let us honor the glorious chief shepherd Arethas and his  
companions.

When he denounced the evil one and shed his blood in confession  
of Christ,  
a pillar of fire consumed the face of the earth  
in reproof of the enemy's ungodliness.  
Therefore, O Christ God, as You strengthened the athletes for Your  
glory,  
by the prayers of Your saints,  
preserve us also from temptations and tribulations,//  
for You are the Master of all!

***NOW AND EVER ... the theotokion-dogmatikon in tone 1  
(spiral bound Vespers book)***

***APOSTIKHA: All stikhera of the Resurrection in tone 1 (spiral  
bound Vespers book)***

***GLORY ... for St. Arethas and those with him, tone 8:***  
Understanding beforehand the wicked and evil plan of unbelieving  
men,  
you strove to suffer for Christ with a bold spirit.  
You struggled for Him, Who in days of old in the time of the Law,  
delivered out of Egypt and led through the wilderness  
those who condemned Him to the Cross.  
So now also, those who were infected with unbelief  
went from words to deeds as they condemned you to the fire.  
You suffered with strong patience and unity of mind,  
showing yourselves to be great among martyrs.  
Since you have boldness before God,//  
entreat Him that our souls may be delivered from sins!

***NOW AND EVER ... theotokion in tone 8 (spiral bound  
Vespers book)***

### **TROPARIA**

#### **Resurrection, tone 1:**

When the stone had been sealed by the Jews,

while the soldiers were guarding Your most pure body,  
You rose on the third day, O Savior,  
granting life to the world.  
The powers of heaven therefore cried to You, O Giver of Life:  
“Glory to Your Resurrection, O Christ!  
Glory to Your Kingdom!//  
Glory to Your dispensation, O Lover of mankind!”

#### **St. Arethas, tone 1:**

Through the sufferings which Your holy martyrs Arethas and his  
companions endured for Your sake, O Lord,  
we beseech You, O Lover of mankind://  
“Heal all of our infirmities!”

#### **Resurrectional dismissal theotokion, tone 1:**

When Gabriel announced to you, O Virgin, saying “Rejoice!”  
with that word the Master of all was incarnate in you,  
the holy Ark, spoken of by the righteous David!  
Your womb became more spacious than the heavens,  
for you carried your Creator.  
Glory to Him Who took abode in you!  
Glory to Him Who came forth from you!//  
Glory to Him Who freed us by being born of you!

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