

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 22, 2023
HOLY EQUAL-TO-THE-APOSTLES BISHOP ABERCIUS
THE HOLY SEVEN YOUTHS OF EPHESUS

October 22

St Abercius, Equal to the Apostles.

In the time of the Emperor Antoninus (138-161), St Abercius was bishop in the city of Hierapolis in Phrygia. The great majority of the town's inhabitants were pagans, and St Abercius governed his little flock with a heart greatly saddened by the great number of pagans and idolaters, and with fervent prayer to God that He would bring them to the true Light. At the time of a rowdy idolatrous festival, Abercius became inflamed with godly zeal and went into the temple, smashing all the idols. When the furious pagans tried to kill him, three young madmen fell down before the man of God, foaming at the mouth and bellowing. The man of God drove the demons out of them, and they were healed and became calm. Seeing this, the fury of the pagans turned to marveling at Christ's wonderworker, and five hundred of them were immediately baptized. Little by little, everyone in the city of Hierapolis came to believe in Christ and was baptised. The proconsul of the region, Publius, had a blind mother whose sight Abercius restored by prayer, and both Publius and his mother came to faith in Christ, along with many other people. In old age, Abercius was summoned to Rome, where he healed the Emperor's mad daughter. The Lord Christ appeared to His faithful follower several times. People from far and near came to him for help in chronic sickness, and the demons not only feared him but were obedient to his commands. At the order of the Lord Himself, he preached the Gospel throughout Syria and Mesopotamia, and went to his beloved Lord in great old age, in the city of Hierapolis at the end of the second century.

GREAT VESPERS

***LORD I CALL:** Four stikhera of the Resurrection in tone 3 (spiral bound Vespers book), followed by three for Saint Abercius and three for the Holy Youths*

St. Abercius, tone 2:

With the splendors of divine teachings
you destroyed the night of polytheism, O Father Abercius.
You revealed the dawn in all-glorious miracles,
making those who were in darkness children of the day.
Therefore, we all celebrate your holy memory with faith,//
singing hymns to you, O divinely inspired one.

You performed a miracle, O Father,
mingling wine and oil in a single vessel, preserving them in that
way,
but when needed you caused them to separate by divine grace.
By your supplication you caused a gift of warm water to gush forth
healing the infirmities of those who approach you with faith//
and call you blessed, O Father Abercius.

Dedicating your whole self to God, O Abercius,
you fulfilled the teachings of God.
You received grace from on high, O venerable one,
driving away mankind's many infirmities.
You destroyed the temples of the idols,//
planting the knowledge of God in those who languished in
wretched ignorance, O blessed one.

The Holy Youths, tone 4:

The blessed Youths spurned the evil commands:
submitting to God, they were bound, breaking the bonds of
falsehood.
Rejecting worldly rank, they have received the glory of
perfection,//
which won for them the joy of the heavenly Kingdom.

You trained yourselves mightily for the struggles of suffering,
O Saints.
You hid in a cave, entreating the Lord.
With unceasing supplications you sought power and might from
Him
through His wisdom and judgments as the Lover of mankind.//
In a godly manner He commanded all of you to fall asleep in peace.

Come, O people, let us earnestly hymn the witnesses of piety:
the divinely assembled regiment,
the blessed choir, the invincible company of martyrs,
the beautiful triumph of the Church of God,
the indivisible assembly,//
the unvanquished army and unshakable foundation of piety!

GLORY... St. Abercius, tone 3:

Venerable hierarch, most blessed Father Abercius,
You are a wonder-worker and favorite of God.
Shining forth in your prophetic life,
You have been granted apostolic gifts.
Together with the Angels you ever minister before the Savior.//
Pray that our souls may be delivered from all harm!

***NOW AND EVER... the Dogmatikon in tone 3 (spiral
bound Vespers book)***

***APOSTIKHA: All stikhera of the Resurrection in tone 3, (spiral
bound Vespers book)***

He has delivered us from the depths of hell,
And has granted to the world
Great mercy.

Saint Abercius, tone 5

You emulated the zeal of the Apostles
And shone forth like a morning star,
And your works showed your God-given power:
You guided the erring to God,
O hierarch Abercius.

Resurrectional Dismissal Theotokion, tone 5

Rejoice, Impassable Gate of the Lord!
Rejoice, Wall and Protection of those who run to you!
Rejoice, Unshakable Refuge!
Rejoice, you who knew not wedlock,
who gave birth in the flesh to your Creator and God!//
Do not cease praying for those who praise and worship your Son!

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TROPARIA

Resurrection, tone 3

Let the heavens rejoice!
Let the earth be glad!
For the Lord has shown strength with His arm!
He has trampled down death by death!
He has become the first born of the dead!