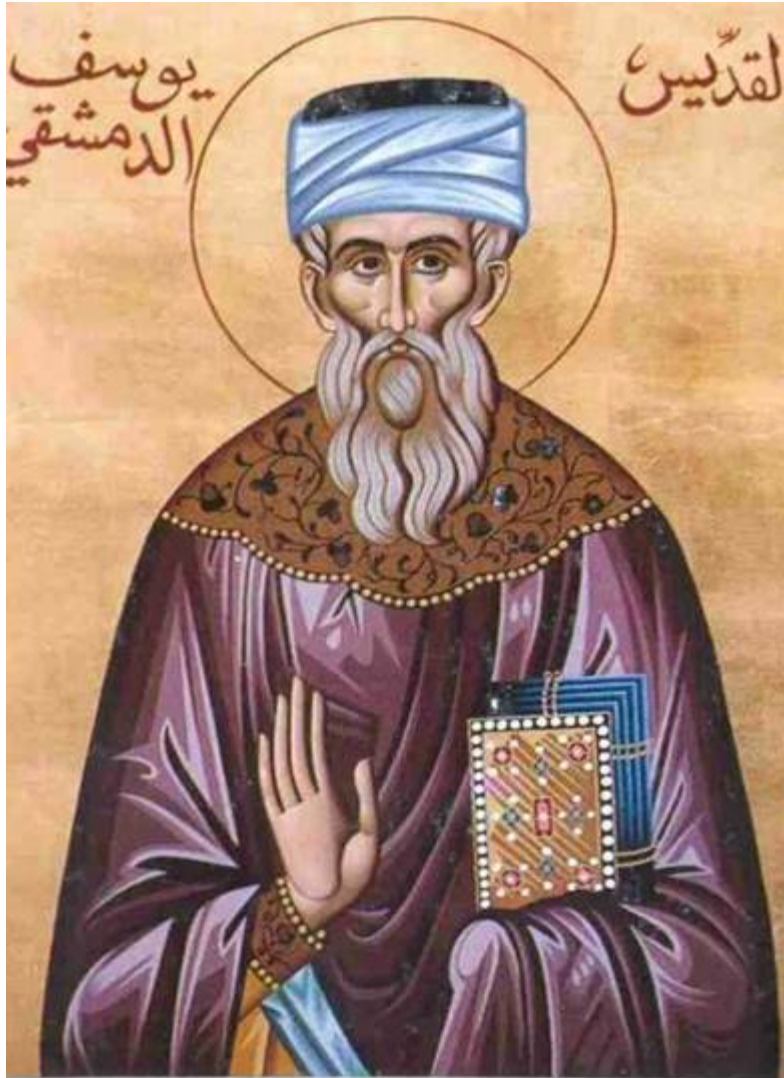


THE AKOLOUTHIA FOR THE COMMEMORATION OF

# THE HOLY HIEROMARTYR JOSEPH OF DAMASCUS AND HIS COMPANIONS

(+ 10 JULY 1860)



The work of the Nun Mariam (Zaka)  
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# TYPIKON

## IF THE COMMEMORATION FALLS ON A SUNDAY

**AT GREAT VESPERS** on Saturday evening, after the Proëmiakon (Ps. 103) *Bless the Lord, O my soul* and the 1<sup>st</sup> Kathisma of the Psalter (Pss. 1-8) *Blessed is the man*, we chant *Lord, I have cried* in the tone of the week with six stichera for the Resurrection in the tone of the week from the Octoëchos and four stichera for the Saints, *Glory* for the Saints, and *Both Now* and the first Theotokion in the tone of the week from the Octoëchos. After the Entrance with the censer we chant *O gladsome Light* followed by the Prokeimenon of the day *The Lord is King* and the three lessons for the Saints. At the Aposticha we chant all of the stichera for the Resurrection in the tone of the week from the Octoëchos, *Glory* for the Saints, and *Both Now* and the Theotokion in tone 8 from the Octoëchos. At the Apolytikia we chant that of the Resurrection in the tone of the week from the Octoëchos, *Glory* and that of the Saints, and *Both Now* and the Resurrectional Theotokion in tone 5 from the Octoëchos. The Great Dismissal as usual.

**AT THE MIDNIGHT OFFICE** on Sunday morning, we chant the Triadikos Canon in the tone of the week from the Octoëchos, the Litiya Troparia for the Saints, followed by *It is truly meet to laud the transcendent Trinity* and the other Megalynaria.

**AT ORTHROS** on Sunday morning, we chant the Apolytikion of the Resurrection in the tone of the week from the Octoëchos (twice), *Glory* and that of the Saints, and *Both Now* and the Resurrectional Theotokion in tone 5 from the Octoëchos. We read the appointed stichologia from the Psalter with the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Poetic Kathismata of the Resurrection in the tone of the week from the Octoëchos, chant the Polyeleos Psalms (Ps. 134 and 135) and the verses from the Eclogarion for Martyrs. We then chant the 3rd Poetic Kathisma for the Saints followed by the Resurrectional Evlogitaria and the rest as usual through the exclamation on the Intercession. At the Canons we chant that of the Resurrection (for four), and of the Cross-Resurrection (for three) in the tone of the week from the Octoëchos, that of the Theotokos (for three), with that of the Saints (for four), and the seasonal Katabasiae *I shall open my mouth ....* At the Exaposteilaria we chant that of the appointed Eothinon followed by that of the Saints with its accompanying Theotokion. We chant the Praises in the tone of the week with four stichera for the Resurrection from the Octoëchos and four for the Saints, *Glory* and the Doxastikon of the Eothinon, and *Both Now* and the usual Theotokion *Most blessed art thou, O Virgin Theotokos*. The Great Doxology and the concluding Troparion for the Sunday.

**AT DIVINE LITURGY** on Sunday morning, the Epistle is for the Saints (that appointed for the 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of the Great Fast) and the Gospel is that appointed for the Sunday.

# TYPIKON

## IF THE COMMEMORATION FALLS ON ANY OTHER DAY

**AT GREAT VESPERS**, after the Proëmiakon (Ps. 103) *Bless the Lord, O my soul* and the 1<sup>st</sup> Stasis of the 1<sup>st</sup> Kathisma of the Psalter (Pss. 1-3) *Blessed is the man, we chant Lord, I have cried* in tone 5 with the six stichera for the Saints.

### In Tone 5.

*Verse 6: If Thou shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, O Lord, who shall stand? For with Thee there is forgiveness.*

Rejoice, thou who didst blossom in the desert of the Lord from an Arabic Ghassanid root! For Christ our God made thee a shepherd of His sheep in the Church of Antioch, and today, on thy memorial, we bear witness that thou becamest an example for Priests and all believers. Therefore, O Lord, by the intercessions of Thy Martyr Joseph have mercy upon us and save us.

*Verse 5: For Thy Name's sake have I patiently waited for Thee, O Lord; my soul hath waited patiently for Thy word, my soul hath hoped in the Lord.*

Yearning for knowledge from thy youth, thou overcamest poverty by weaving cloth by day and thine own soul by sciences at night, beseeching thy Lord to weave for thee a vestment to clothe thy temple, O His Spirit-bearer.<sup>1</sup> Thou standest witnessing in thy Church that the Lord, One of the Three Hypostases, became man for our salvation.

*Verse 4: From the morning watch until night, from the morning watch let Israel hope in the Lord.*

Poverty encouraged thee in thy youth, O Joseph, to study Arabic language, logic and sciences, and with thy soul thou didst eagerly study the Torah, the Psalms, and the Gospel's Word. And so thou didst teach and proclaimed, crying out: "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit in your poverty the kingdom prepared for you, and be enriched by the kingdom of the King of the heavens."

*Verse 3: For with the Lord there is mercy, and with Him is plenteous redemption; and He shall redeem Israel out of all his iniquities.*

O Priest Joseph, showing a diligence befitting thy calling, thou didst honor thyself by preserving thy soul like Mary who conceived in her womb by the Holy Spirit. Thou didst labor and teach for the sake of Divine Love, and worthily delivered thy soul and those of thy companions unto thy Creator as a gift of love. Through their intercessions, O God, have mercy upon us and save us.

*Verse 2: Praise the Lord, all ye nations; praise Him, all ye peoples.*

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<sup>1</sup> This and similar allusions to the work of a weaver of cloth found elsewhere in this Akolouthia are directly related to St Joseph's occupation as a weaver prior to his ordination.

O Priest of the Most High, thou didst weave the vestment of thy salvation on the night of the night of thy marriage, when thou didst read of thy love for God the Word to thy spouse Mariam, and remained in thy poverty seeking the face of thy Lord. Thy children nourished thee with bread as thou didst nourish the world with bread of everlasting life, feeding their souls and teaching them to wait peacefully upon the Lord in all of their afflictions.

*Verse 1: For He hath made His mercy to prevail over us, and the truth of the Lord abideth for ever*

O Priest Joseph, today we praise thee on the feast of thy martyrdom, because thou wast fervent in faith, patient with great patience, meek, compassionate, humble, kind, zealous, calm, shrewd, strong, having no pride other than Christ thy God. Through thine intercessions make worthy of these Divine Gifts all of us who celebrate thy memory with faith.

### **Glory and the Doxastikon in Tone 5.**

Today is thy fullness of time! Today thou didst finish thy course and keep thy faith. Therefore Christ thy God honored thee with martyrdom, as thou didst fly from roof to roof over houses like a beam of Divine Light. And when thou didst enter into thy tomb, which is thy Church of the Theotokos, thou didst strengthen the faith of the Lord's sheep, saying unto them, "Behold, the completed mystical sacrifice is escorted in to take and receive us as participants in the Blood. Therefore, let us with faith and longing draw near and become partakers in the Crucifixion, the Death of martyrdom and the Resurrection."

### **Both Now and the Theotokion in the same Tone.**

The sign of the Virgin Bride who knew not wedlock was at one time revealed in the Red Sea; for there Moses did cleave the waters, and there Gabriel was the minister of a miracle. At that time Israel crossed the deep and their feet were not wet, and now the Virgin hath given birth to Christ without seed. The sea remained uncrossed after the passing of Israel, and the blameless one remained incorruptible after giving birth to Immanuel. Therefore, O eternal God, who wast before eternity, and who didst appear as man, have mercy upon us.

### **The Readings from the Old Testament.**

- 1- The Reading from the Wisdom of Solomon (5:15-6a)
- 2- The Reading from the Book of the Prophet Isaiah (43:9-14a)
- 3- The Reading from the Book of Prophet Ezekiel (43:27-44:4)

### **The Litiya Troparia in Tone 5.**

O Chaste Joseph, thou didst refuse vain glory and the riches of this world, wherefore the Lord accounted thee worthy to share His Life. He forged thee upon the anvil,<sup>2</sup> fashioned thee with the hammer, molded thee as a new vessel and temple for the Holy Spirit,

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<sup>2</sup> This and similar allusions to the work of a blacksmith found elsewhere in this Akolouthia are directly related to St Joseph's family name – al-Haddad الحَدَّاد – which, in Arabic, means "the blacksmith."

honoring thee for thy poverty and thy love for the Word and showed thee forth as a martyr for His Word and a witness to His great power.

O Priest Joseph, thou, like the chaste Joseph who fled from the riches and fame of Egypt, didst realize salvation by thy poverty and by undertaking to heal the wounds of thy Church, for thou didst love her poor, teach her ignorant, and bore her infirmities. Thou didst never take pleasure in the delights of mammon, but rather offered up thine own body as bread of life for those who love Christ thy Master, thy God and thy Teacher, for by all thine actions thou didst teach His Word and keep His Commandments.

Strike, O Joseph thou blacksmith, strike the face of falsehood with the word of truth! Dispel, O our Father, dispel the words of the heretics and the foreign sects by the holy Gospel! Having broken thy body as bread for those who hunger, and shed thy blood for those who thirst, thou didst hear the voice of thy Christ, O blessed Father, having pleased Him by accomplishing His will. Therefore, intercede with Christ God that He would grant unto us His love for thee.

O Joseph thou Priest of the Lord, thou didst stand as a firm rock in the face of infirmities and as an instructor in ordeals, revealing the presence of God for those who knew Him not. You defended the sacraments and doctrines of the Church, breathing into thy students the Spirit of peace and the power of God the Indivisible Trinity.

#### **Glory and the Doxastikon of the Litiya in Tone 5.**

Rejoice, O Joseph, thou Priest of the Most High and martyr for Christ! When thy slayers approached, thou didst remove from upon thy breast the Divine Sacrament and didst consume it, becoming thyself the broken Body of Christ. They spilled thy blood with that of thy companions, slashed thee, beat thee, spat upon thee, and dragged thee through the streets, thus making thee worthy of the love of thy Master. Having become like thy Lord in His Passion, intercede with Christ God to circumcise our minds, our souls and our hearts, thus making us, like thee, martyrs for His Word and for His Love.

#### **Both Now and the Theotokion of the Litiya in the same Tone.**

We bless thee, O Virgin Theotokos, and we faithful rightly glorify thee, O thou unshakeable tower, impregnable house of defense, invincible help and shield, and refuge of our souls.

#### **The Aposticha in Tone 8.**

O Joseph Priest of the Most High, thou didst preach and teach, and didst copy a great number of manuscripts to instruct by the written word what thou didst proclaim by word, leaving as an inheritance for those who love the word and the Word of God, faithfully preserved and gathered in thy library the thousands of books that were incinerated upon thy martyrdom. Grant us who praise thee to learn from the unburned Vessel of the Word.

*Stichos: Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His Saints. (Ps. 115:6)*

O Hieromartyr Joseph, when thou wast known as a preacher of the word and a teacher of logic and sciences, thy Lord chose thee to serve Him and called thee, saying, “ O lamb of

Christ, come! O Priest of the Most High, approach!” Thus thou didst draw near to Him as a poor youth full of love, endurance, knowledge, and evangelical steadfastness. Since thou didst receive the gift of Christ, intercede with the compassionate God to accept us also.

*Stichos: Wondrous is God in His Saints; the God of Israel. (Ps. 67:35)*

O Martyr Joseph, thou didst establish a new kind of martyrdom for divine love when thou didst found a school to teach theology as love of God, that those yearning for the word may become shepherds and Priests leading with the staff of Christ His rational sheep.<sup>3</sup>

### **Glory and the Doxastikon in Tone 8.**

Thou didst excel in preaching, O Joseph, for thy Lord granted thee the gift of proclaiming His Word, wherefore thou wast called the second John Chrysostom. To purify thee of vanity, Christ permitted the enemies of truth to confront thee so that thou couldst conquer them by the Name of thy Lord Who created thee and knew thee from the womb and guided thee and thy flock to salvation.

### **Both Now and the Theotokion in the same Tone.<sup>4</sup>**

O most reverend Virgin, O thou by means of whom my Savior Christ the Lord did appear to those lying in darkness, He being the Sun of justice, wishing to enlighten those whom He had made with His own hands after His likeness: thou art the temple, the gate, the palace and the throne of the King. Wherefore, O all-praised one, thou hast attained with Him maternal privilege. Intercede ceaselessly for the salvation of our souls.

### **The Apolytikion in Tone 5.**

*(Chanted once at Vespers but twice at Orthros)*

Come, ye faithful, let us honor the martyr of Christ, a Priest of the Church of Antioch who by the word of the Word and by his blood and the blood of his companions baptized the land of Damascus, its Church and its people. Being immersed in the light of the Gospel from his youth, he worked and taught and defended the Church of Christ and her flock. O holy Joseph of Damascus, be for us an example, defending us and interceding for us fervently before the Savior.

### **The Theotokion in the same Tone.**

Rejoice, O uncrossed gate! Rejoice, O wall and protection of those who hasten unto thee! Rejoice, O quiet haven who hast not known wedlock! O thou who hast given birth

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<sup>3</sup> In the original Arabic language version of this Akolouthia there is an additional stichos and troparion, but only a Resurrectional Aposticha consists of three stichoi and four troparia (see the Octoëchos) while an Aposticha for a Feast of the Master or of the Mother of God and for a Commemoration of a Saint consists of two stichoi and three troparia (see the Menaion). The additional troparion for Saint Joseph has been utilized in Orthros as the post-Gospel Idiomelon.

<sup>4</sup> The original Arabic language version of this Akolouthia seems to indicate that this particular Theotokion should be chanted in Tone 8 like the rest of the Aposticha, however the text is, in fact, identical with the Theotokion of the Tone 5 Resurrectional Aposticha from the Octoëchos.



in the flesh to thy Creator and God, thou shalt continue to interceded for the sake of those who praise and worship thy birth-giving.

**AT ORTHROS**, after the Six Psalms and the Litany of Peace we chant God is the Lord with its verses in Tone 5 and the Apolytikion (twice) and accompanying Theotokion as at the end of Great Vespers. Then, after the Little Litany and the 1<sup>st</sup> stichologion from the Psalter, we chant the 1<sup>st</sup> Poetic Kathisma.

#### **In Tone 5.**

Today we praise with hymns the Hieromartyr Joseph and his companions who, in the flesh of sin and death, conquered death by death for Christ's sake, wherefore He elevated them to His Light and eternal life.

#### **Glory in the same Tone.**

O our righteous Father Joseph, thou didst love Christ and desire His Passion, wherefore thou didst offer thy body and thy companions to be devoured by the ignorant lions of this world, thus making thee an exquisite bread for the Savior.

#### **Both Now and the Theotokion in the same Tone.**

Rejoice, O holy mountain whom the Lord crossed in passing! Rejoice, O burning bush yet unconsumed! Rejoice, O thou who alone art a bridge for the world towards God, translating the dead to eternal life. Rejoice, O pure one, free of corruption, who didst give birth without wedlock to the Savior of the World!

After the Little Litany and 2<sup>nd</sup> stichologion from the Psalter, we chant the 2<sup>nd</sup> Poetic Kathisma.

#### **In Tone 3.**

Rejoice, O Joseph thou boast of Antiochian ascetics, for thou didst inherit the spirit of thy predecessor, John of Damascus, joining him in preaching the theology of the Word. Thou wast slain together with thy companions for the love of the Triune God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit, Who breathed upon thee the spirit of martyrdom.

#### **Glory in the same Tone.**

Glory be to Thee, who hast breathed Thy Holy Spirit upon Thy chosen Joseph, whereby he became Thy son by following in the footsteps of Thy Son the Word. He enlightened Thy Church by his knowledge, fed her with Thy Body and Blood, and accepted martyrdom, offering up his body and blood as life for those who cry out: Glory to Thy supreme love for us, O Lord, since Thou hast accepted a Martyr from Antioch. Glory to thee!

#### **Both Now and the Theotokion in the same Tone.**

Thee, who art the mediatrix for the salvation of our race, we praise, O Virgin Theotokos; for in the flesh assumed from thee, after that He had suffered the Passion of the Cross, thy Son and our God delivered us from corruption, because He is the Lover of mankind.

After the Little Litany, the chanting of the Polyeleos Psalms (134 and 135) and the verses from the Eclogarion for Martyrs, we chant the 3<sup>rd</sup> Poetic Kathisma.

#### **In Tone 5.**

O ye faithful, let us eagerly praise Joseph the Martyr of Christ and Priest of Antioch; for, in his youth, he offered himself at the altar of the Lord, learning of the divine mystery that he would become, like his Master, a sacrifice upon the holy table of the world's temple in order to water the land of Antioch with his blood, wherefrom we drink the water of eternal life.

#### **Glory in the same Tone.**

In thy childhood, O Joseph, thou didst acquire knowledge, and, when faced with poverty, thou wast obliged to work to earn thy bread. But the Son and Word of the Father dwelt within thee and nourished thee with the bread of His commandments, and chose thee to carry His Word and teach it to His sheep. Today we praise thee, for thou hast been glorified by the Lord with martyrdom; wherefore, intercede with Christ God for the salvation of our souls.

#### **Both Now and the Theotokion in the same Tone**

O all-blameless one, thou hast been shown to be a brightly shining bridal chamber and golden tabernacle containing God the Word Who, for our salvation, took flesh from thee and destroyed the power of death.

Then, for the Hymns of Ascent, the 1st Antiphon in Tone 4 *From my youth in the festal manner.*

#### **The Prokeimenon in Tone 4.**

Wondrous is God in His saints.

*Stichos:* In the saints that are in His earth hath the Lord been wondrous.

Then *Let every breath* and the reading from the Holy Gospel according to the Holy Apostle and Evangelist Luke, *The Lord said to his disciples, "Whosoever shall confess me before men ..." (Luke 12:8-12; see the Menaion section of the Gospel Book for November 6<sup>th</sup>).* And straightway Psalm 50 *Have mercy on me, O God.*

#### **Glory in Tone 2.**

By the intercessions of the prizewinners, O Merciful One, blot out the multitude of mine offenses.

#### **Both Now and the Theotokion in the same Tone.**

By the intercessions of the Theotokos, O Merciful One, blot out the multitude of mine offenses.

*Stichos:* Have mercy on me, O God, according to Thy great mercy; and according to the multitude of Thy compassions blot out my transgression.



## The Post-Gospel Idiomelon in Tone 6.<sup>5</sup>

When thou, O Priest, wast building temples of the human soul by the evangelical word, thou didst also erect holy temples to shelter the flock of Christ that crieth out His Name. Thou didst establish churches, inscribe and seal them with the Name of the All-holy Trinity that they might be witnesses of our Holy Faith.

After the Intercession, we chant the Canon of the Theotokos *Traversing the water* in Tone 8 and the following in Tone 5, doubling as needed to make a total of fourteen in each Ode.<sup>6</sup> Before each troparion of the following we say, *O Holy Martyrs of Christ, intercede in our behalf*. We end each Ode with its seasonal Katabasia in Tone 4.<sup>7</sup>

## The Canon of the Saints in Tone 5.

### Ode I

*Israel passed dry-shod upon the depths which Thou didst lay bear ...*

O Joseph, in thy youth thou didst traverse the sea of thine earthly marriage by thy love for the Word. The world could not distract thee from this love, and, when thou didst hasten unto it as unto a refuge, Thy Lord elevated thee to know Him by His Word. Glory to Thee, our God, glory to Thee!

O Joseph, thou overcamest bodily delights by holding fast to the Word, the anchor of thy salvation, thus preparing thyself for what was to come, and while yet living on earth thou didst long for the life on high. Therefore thy Lord honored thee by making thee a clarion of His Word. Glory to Thee, our God, glory to Thee!

Sing we all a triumphal hymn unto God the Word, Who sanctified thee by martyrdom, O Saint, because thou didst love Him more than thyself, wherefore He received thee at the end of thy struggle.

*The Theotokion:* In peace we cry unto thee, O pure Lady who gavest birth for our joy: Enlighten our minds and souls, O all-praised one, and lead us along the path of knowledge, beseeching thy Son and God to grant us all remission of sins.

### Ode III

*Strengthen my heart which is tossed about by the waves of life,, O Lord ...*

O our blessed Father Joseph, we wretched ones praise thee for the Lord confirmed thee

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<sup>5</sup> This was originally written to be chanted as a fourth troparion on the Vesperal Aposticha. See note 3 above.

<sup>6</sup> This is accomplished by chanting the Heirmos of the Canon of the Theotokos twice (without an intervening refrain), then saying the three troparia of that Canon twice each (the refrain before each troparion being *Most Holy Theotokos, save us*), omitting the Heirmos of the Canon of the Saint and beginning immediately it with the refrain *O holy Martyrs of Christ, intercede on our behalf* which precedes each of the three troparia – the first and second troparia being done twice and the third being done once, then *Glory...Both Now* and the theotokion done once, and ending the Ode with the chanting of its appropriate seasonal Katabasia.

<sup>7</sup> The seasonal Katabasiae are those of the Theotokos, *I shall open my mouth ...*

upon the rock of His commandments, for thou wast poor like Him and taught His Word by the Divine Spirit.

O Joseph the Priest, thou daily overcamest the disturbances of human nature by thine obedience to the Gospel of thy Master. By thy gentleness thou didst console His wretched ones and wipe away the tears of the sorrowful, and, in thine own poverty, thou didst feed His poor ones. Account us worthy of the same!

When thou foundest the Word of God to be thine own calm harbor, thou didst fill thyself with divine love, whereby thou leddest thy people and flock. Therefore the Lord preserved thee for them as a helpful father in their lives. Glory to our God in thee!

*The Theotokion:* When the multitude of women martyrs beheld thee, O Ever-Virgin Mother who art blessed amongst women, they strove all the harder and offered themselves unto thy Son.

#### Ode IV

*I have heard of Thy coming, O Lord, and was afraid ...*

‘Thou, O Lord, hast chosen me and known me from the womb.’ Therefore, O our Father Joseph, thou didst devote thyself to learn the Word, whereby thou didst conquer thine ignorance and transmit the word to thy flock. Glory to the One who taught thee!

O our Father Joseph, thou becamest a clarion of theology and thereby defeated the deceivers who came to scatter the sheep of thy flock, for thou didst repel them by the staff of the Word of God and preserved Christ’s lambs by the power of His Word.

O great athlete Joseph, by the sweet love of Christ and His Power which dwelt within thee, thou didst destroy the snares of the enemy which surrounded thee. And when thy Lord came unto thee, thou didst hasten unto Him, thus glorifying Him by thy love, thy struggles and thy martyrdom.

*The Theotokion:* Beseech, O Virgin, the Timeless One who entered time through thee, to deliver my soul from the multitude of its persistent sins.

#### Ode V

*Come forth, have mercy, and may the day-bright beams of the discerning Sun ...*

O our Father Joseph, when thou wast wed in thy youth thou overcamest the devices of thy nature by taking the Book of thy Lord from its shelf and thereby calmed thy bodily passions.

O our Father Joseph, thou didst manifest great love for thy Lord when thou wast led to bodily slaughter upon the altar of worldly concerns. Thou didst offer up thy life in martyrdom as a service to the Lord and His Church and as instruction for His people in theology, demonstrating that thou dost love thy Lord more than thine own self.

Thou didst defeat the darkness of thy soul by the Light of the Gospel through thine obedience to thy Master. And thus struggling against the passions of love for money and power, thou didst remain a loyal servant of thy Lord, proving to be a good steward of thy

poverty and of the flock entrusted to thy care, building a temple for Him in thy heart until the noëtic Sun Himself enlightened thee with His Light, making of thee a ray to illumine His Church with thy light.

*The Theotokion:* We praise Thee, O Virgin, for through thee God became man and wast revealed upon earth. Rejoice, O Good Land which brought forth the Grain of Wheat which feedeth every thing that hath breath.

#### Ode VI

*Raise me from the abyss of impure passions, I beseech Thee, O Lord ...*

Thou didst spend thy days in weeping, O Joseph, and struggling against thy nature in order to be delivered from the monster of self-will and, by obedience, to enter into the bosom of God thy Savior.

When, with the Light of Christ, thou didst enlighten the life of thy family, all purified themselves for the sake of the Gospel, each according to his talent, and thus assisted thee in thy struggle and labored to feed thee and thy flock, O poor one of Christ.

O Hieromartyr Joseph, thou wast asked to abandon thy flock by the temptation of money. But thou didst say, 'I have been ordained to serve this flock, and He who chose me sufficeth me.'

*The Theotokion:* Entering the womb of the Virgin, O Lord, Thou didst take upon Thee the form of a servant and thereby renewed my nature, O Master of all Who in the beginning formed Eve.

#### **The Kontakion**

Let us praise the all-zealous Martyr of Christ, Joseph the Priest of the Most High, who from his childhood chose the Lord's good part and bore the word of the powerful staff of the Spirit, instructed, struggled, erected holy temples and offered his body and those of his companions for the sake of the Gospel. Therefore, let us cry out, saying, 'Rejoice, O Holy New Martyrs of Antioch!'

#### **The Oikos**

Made strong with the might of God, O godly-minded Joseph, thou wast shown by divine deeds to be worthy of thy calling as a Priest of the Most High. Thy blood, mingled with that of the multitude of thy companions, like the blood of the righteous Priest Zacharias and the fourteen thousand Holy Innocents, crieth out to God and beareth witness to thy martyrlic slaughter. Since thou now dost stand in company with them before the divine throne of the Creator, we cry out, saying: 'Rejoice, O Holy New Martyrs of Antioch!'

#### **The Synaxarion**

On the tenth of this month we commemorate the Holy Hieromartyr Yousef ibn Jirjis Mousa ibn Mouhana al-Haddad and his Companions. A married man, St Joseph of Damascus, as he is popularly known, was at first a weaver and then was ordained to the holy priesthood at the age of twenty-four in 1817, and assigned

Great Economos of the Patriarchal Cathedral of the Dormition of the Most Holy Theotokos (al-Mariamiyeh) in the heart of the Old City of Damascus. On Monday, July 9<sup>th</sup>, 1860 the brutal massacre of Christians, which began in the mountains of the Lebanon, spread to Damascus. Some Damascenes (including Michael Hawaweeny and his young wife Mariam who was bearing in her womb a son, the future St Raphael of Brooklyn) fled the Damascus for the port city of Beirut. The majority, however, took refuge in al-Mariamiyeh. Many had previously fled to Damascus from their mountain villages, while others came to the Cathedral from the Christian Quarter of Damascus and the villages that surrounded the city. St Joseph took up his communion kit containing the Reserved Sacrament, left his home and began to make his way to the Cathedral by jumping from rooftop to rooftop across the narrow streets of the Old City. As he went, he stopped to confess and commune the aged and infirm who could not flee their homes, encouraging them with stories from the Lives of the Great Martyrs. On Tuesday morning, July 10<sup>th</sup>, the Cathedral was surrounded, pillaged and burned by a fanatical crowd. Those inside the holy temple perished in the flames; of those who escaped and fled into the streets, most were shot or caught and forced back into the burning building, while only a few, including St Joseph, survived. As he roamed the narrow streets searching for survivors who needed confessed and communed, St Joseph was surrounded by the enemies of Christ. Seeing that his end was near, St Joseph took out his communion kit and consumed what remained of the Body and Blood of Christ. Recognizing him as the “leader of the Christians,” the persecutors savagely attacked him with axes. Then, binding his legs with ropes, they dragged his mutilated body through the streets to be mocked and spat upon by jeering onlookers. St Joseph’s sacred relics were then unceremoniously pitched into the city dump along with those of the other New Martyrs (numbering two thousand five hundred men plus women and children). St Joseph and his Companions were glorified by the Holy Synod of the Patriarchate of the Great City-of-God Antioch and all the East in the year of our salvation 1993. Through their intercessions, O Christ our, have mercy upon us. Amen.

#### Ode VII

*The prayer of the Youths wast seen extinguishing the fire ...*

O Joseph the contender, Priest of the Most-High, as thou didst feed the poor, shouldered the sick, preached the Gospel and expelled the strange teachings of the heretics, thine enemies were burnt with rage, preparing their axes to strike thee down like a showbread for thy Christ.

O Hieromartyr Joseph, thou didst spend thy life instructing the Lord’s sheep of His evangelical love for their salvation, preparing them for the day of their slaughter upon the altar of His Church, to abundantly water the land of Damascus athirst for Divine martyrdom.

Ye mortified your flesh with poverty, O Martyrs, and animated your souls with the evangelical word. Therefore ye deserved the wreaths of the Kingdom prepared for your martyrdom. Through their intercessions, O God, have mercy upon us and save us.

*The Theotokion:* Through thine intercessions, O Lady, we who rightly believe that thou art the Theotokos, hope to be delivered from eternal fire, from darkness and from unseen and frightful enemies.

#### Ode VIII

##### *The King and Creator of all, O hosts of Angels ...*

We venerate you, O strivers, for bearing the crucifixion of Christ in your bodies and watering His Church with your blood, whereby ye entered eternal life and everlasting Light. Wherefore beseech Christ God for the salvation of all who believe in Him.

O Martyrs, we behold the choirs of angels surrounding you and holding the crowns of glory prepared for you. For when the Lord called out to you through the voice of your Priest, ye bravely responded, saying as ye offered up your spirits in martyrdom as a gift of love, "Now let us enter the Divine Mystery! Now let us enter into the Bridal Chamber of Light!"

Rejoice, O women martyrs now clothed with the glory of Christ, for ye accepted your poverty and raised your children in obedience to the Gospel. Therefore ye became worthy to be mothers and witnesses for the Divine Love.

*Theotokion:* Let us praise the Virgin full of grace, since she is the Gate of Divine Entry, the Good Ladder for ascent to God, and the Directress for those who are saved.

*The deacon intones The Theotokos and Mother of the Light and we chant My soul doth magnify and More honorable in Tone 8.*

#### Ode IX

##### *For that is mighty hath done great things for Thee ...*

Today we praise those who, in the flesh, overcame the weakness of their bodies and elevated their souls in evangelical struggle, loving their God more than themselves. Therefore the Lord honored them with martyrdom and accepted them in the Heavenly Bridal Chamber as a sacrifice of love for the Trinity.

Joseph the Priest of the Most High and his companions preceded us to Thee, O Lord. Through their intercessions look upon us who struggle each day to do Thy Will, and if Thou shouldest accept us, permit us to dwell beneath Your feet in Thy glory.

O Theotokos, Mother of the One Who Is, Mary the Ever-Virgin, receive the souls of our holy and righteous Martyrs, and present them to the Lord God as a gift of faith and love from our Church.

*The Theotokion:* With the beauty of purity, O Virgin Mother, thou becamest a beautiful house of splendor; therefore we praise and exalt thee unto all ages.

### **The Exaposteilarion in Tone 3.**

*(O ye Apostles from afar, being now gathered together ...)*

O assembly of the faithful, being now gathered together, let us celebrate the feast of the Martyrs of our Church and extol those who overcame with patience and steadfastness the wiles of the demons: Father Joseph of Damascus and his Companions, who now hear from the heavenly chambers our supplications and who implore our God to have mercy upon us and save us.

### **The Theotokion in the same Tone.**

When Jacob saw the ladder, which was a foreshadowing of thee, O Theotokos – thou glory of Martyrs, boast of the Righteous, magnificence of Angels, and Mediatrix for the salvation of Prophets and of believers – he cried out, saying, “How dreadful is this place! This is none other than the house of God and the gate of heaven!”

*We chant the Praises in Tone 5 with four stichera for the Saints.*

### **In Tone 5.**

Today we enter the Promised Land, for the blood of our Martyrs paved our way, the supplications of our Fathers assisted us, and God, regarding the lowly state of His Church, sowed in the womb of its land the seeds of holy martyrdom. Rejoice, all ye who have crossed the threshold into heavenly glory, and intercede with the Compassionate God for the salvation of our souls. *(Twice)*

The sheep of Thy flock were slaughtered for The Name’s sake, O Lord. Accept today once more our prayers as a holocaust of thanksgiving offered upon the altar of Thy Divine Glory, and make us, together with Thy Martyrs, worthy to see Thy Light and to abide in it rather than in the darkness which envelops us.

Today we offer up supplication to the All-holy Trinity and ask the intercessions of Mary the Most Holy Theotokos, and of the Forerunner of Christ, the Angels of God, the Righteous ones, the Martyrs and all the Saints, as we present our Martyrs Joseph and his Companions to the Lord God, beseeching Him to restore to the Church of Antioch her dignity through the blood of her Martyrs. Therefore, O Thou Who alone art able to blot out transgressions, accept us sinners and save our souls.

### **Glory and the Doxastikon in Tone 5**

O Joseph thou first man of the renaissance! In thy time thou alone didst bear the Cross of Antioch, having suffered schism in thy flock, faced the machinations of foreign missionaries, and shed copious tears for the infirmity, loss and ignorance of the people and shepherds of thy Church, beseeching the Lord God to release them from captivity. Thus we rejoice and exult in the Spirit of the Lord Who dwelleth in us as a result of thy martyrdom and that of thy companions. Now celebrating thine annual memorial we glorify Christ our Lord who, through thine intercessions, granteth us great mercy.



### **Both Now and the Theotokion in the same Tone.**

Beneath thy compassion we take refuge, O Theotokos. Despise not our prayers in our necessity, but deliver us from harm, O only pure, only blessed one.

*The Great Doxology and the Apolytikion in Tone 5 Come, ye faithful, let us honor ...*

### **AT DIVINE LITURGY.**

#### **The Epistle.**

*The Prokeimenon:* The saints shall boast in glory, and they shall rejoice upon their beds.

*The Stichos:* Sing unto the Lord a new song; His praise is in the church of the saints.

The Reading from the Second Epistle of the Holy Apostle Paul to Timothy (2:1-10).

Timothy, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus, and what you have heard from me before many witnesses entrust to faithful men who will be able to teach others also. Share in suffering as a good soldier of Christ Jesus. No soldier on service gets entangled in civilian pursuits, since his aim is to satisfy the one who enlisted him. An athlete is not crowned unless he competes according to the rules. It is the hard-working farmer who ought to have the first share of the crops. Think over what I say, for the Lord will grant you understanding in everything. Remember Jesus Christ, risen from the dead, descended from David, as preached in my gospel, the gospel for which I am suffering and wearing fetters like a criminal. But the word of God is not fettered. Therefore I endure everything for the sake of the elect, that they also may obtain salvation in Christ Jesus with its eternal glory.

#### **The Alleluïarion.**

- 1. Thy priests shall be clothed with righteousness, and Thy righteous shall rejoice.*
- 2. For the Lord hath elected Sion, He hath chosen her to be a habitation for Himself.*

#### **The Gospel**

The Reading from the Holy Gospel according to John the Theologian (15:17-16:2).

The Lord said to His Disciples: This I command you, to love one another. If the world hates you, know that it has hated Me before it hated you. If you were of the world, the world would love its own; but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you. Remember the word that I said to you, 'A servant is not greater than his master.' If they persecuted Me, they will persecute you; if they kept My word, they will keep yours also. But all this they will do to you on My account, because they do not know Him Who sent Me. If I had not come and spoken to them, they would not have sin; but now they have no excuse for their sin. He who hates Me hates My Father also. If I had not done among them the works which no one else did, they would not have sin; but now they have seen and hated both Me and My Father. It is to fulfill the word that is written in their law, 'They hated me without a cause.' But when the Comforter comes, Whom I shall send to you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth,

Who proceeds from the Father, He will bear witness to Me; and you also are witnesses, because you have been with Me from the beginning.

**The Koinonikon.**

*(Ps. 111:6)*

*The righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance; he shall not be afraid of evil tidings.  
Alleluia.*