

**SEPTEMBER 27, 2020**  
**MARTYRS CALLISTRATUS AND THOSE WITH HIM**

**Saint Callistratus** was a native of Carthage. An ancestor of St Callistratus, Neochorus, has served under the emperor Tiberius in Palestine, under the command of Pontius Pilate, the procurator of Judea, and was a witness to the suffering on the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, His voluntary death and glorious Resurrection.

The saint's father was a Christian, and he raised his son in faith and piety. Also like his father, St Callistratus became a soldier and excelled among his pagan military comrades by his good conduct and gentle disposition.

At night when everyone slept, he usually stayed up at prayer. Once, a soldier sleeping nearby heard St Callistratus invoking the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and he reported this to the military commander, who in turn summoned Callistratus, interrogated him and wanted to make him offer sacrifice to idols. The saint resolutely refused to do this, so the military commander ordered that the saint be beaten. Then, covered with wounds, the saint was dragged over sharp stones. The beating and the torments did not sway the firm will and brave endurance of the sufferer.

The saint was sewn up in a leather sack and drown him in the sea. By God's mercy, however, the sack struck a sharp rock and was torn open. St Callistratus came to dry land unharmed, carried by dolphins. Viewing such a miracle, forty-nine soldiers came to believe in Christ. Then the military commander threw St Callistratus and the believing soldiers into prison. Before this, all of them were subjected to innumerable floggings.

In jail St Callistratus continued to preach the Word of God to the soldiers and he bolstered their spirits for martyrdom. Summoned again before the military commander, the sufferers firmly confessed their faith in Christ, after which they were bound hand and foot and thrown into a dam. But there their bonds broke, and with bright faces the holy martyrs stood in the water, rejoicing in their Baptism, which coincided with the act of martyrdom.

Beautiful bright crowns appeared over their heads, and all heard a voice: "Be brave, Callistratus, with your company, and come rest in the eternal habitations." At the same time, the earth shuddered and an idol standing nearby fell down and smashed. Seeing this, another 135 soldiers also believed in the Lord Jesus Christ. The military commander, fearing a mutiny in the army, did not put them on trial, but again imprisoned St Callistratus with the others, where they fervently prayed and gave thanks to the Creator for giving them power to endure such sufferings.

At night the martyrs were cut to pieces with swords by order of the military commander. Their holy relics were buried by the 135 soldiers who remained alive. Later, a church was built on the spot of their sufferings, as St Callistratus had foretold.

**GREAT VESPERS**

***LORD I CALL: Seven stikhera of the Resurrection in tone 7, followed by three for the saints Resurrection, tone 7:***

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!

Fulfilling the prophecy of David,  
Christ manifested His greatness in Zion to the disciples.  
He is praised and always glorified,  
together with the Father and the Holy Spirit.  
At first as the Word, He was bodiless,  
but then He took flesh and was slain for our sake. //  
He rose in power as the Lover of mankind!

You descended into hell as You freely willed, O Christ,  
overthrowing death as God, and rising on the third day as Master!  
With Yourself You raised Adam  
from the bonds of hell and from corruption! //  
Glory to Your Resurrection, only Lover of mankind!  
You were placed in the tomb, O Lord, as one asleep.  
On the third day You rose in power,  
raising Adam with Yourself from the corruption of death //  
as the Almighty One!

***Saints, tone 8:***

O suffering martyr Callistratus,  
with your mind illumined by the light of piety,  
you unwaveringly trod the path to heavenly blessedness,  
conquering all the snares of the Enemy.

Therefore we praise you, honoring your sacred memory,//  
O most blessed one.

O divinely wise martyr Callistratus,  
enriched by the word of life, you guided to life  
those who once were dead in the curse through ignorance.  
They died with zeal, O glorious one, for the Resurrection of us all.  
Truly we believe they dwell with Christ.//  
Together with them, remember us to the Lord, transcendent in goodness!

O sacred martyr Gymnasius,  
you were beheaded by the sword  
and indeed drowned the pharaoh of falsehood in the torrent of your blood.  
Now you pour forth healings on all who come to your temple with faith,//  
praising your struggles and celebrating your honored memory, O blessed one.

***GLORY...saints, tone 4:***

Before the time of your precious Cross,  
death was fearful to men,  
but after Your glorious Passion,  
man is feared by death.  
Thus the athlete was able to abolish all the power of the Enemy.//  
By his prayers, O Christ, save our souls!

***NOW AND EVER...the Dogmatikon in 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!”

***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 human race 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 has 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 mankind.

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 mankind!

### ***THEOTOKION:***

All the earth born run to your protection, O Lady.  
You are our hope, O Theotokos.  
Deliver us from our countless sins, //  
and pray that our souls may be saved!

### **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.

#### **Saints, tone 3**

In contest you were strengthened by the Holy Spirit, Martyr Callistratus,  
and were glorious in casting down the Enemy.  
You offered a noble army of athletes  
as sweet-smelling incense to Christ.  
With them pray for us who praise you with hymns.

#### **Resurrectional Dismissal Theotokion, tone 3**

We praise you as the mediatrix of our salvation,  
O Virgin Theotokos.  
For your Son, our God, Who took flesh from you,  
accepted the Passion on the Cross, //  
delivering us from corruption as the Lover of Man.

<b>THE DIVINE LITURGY</b>
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### **TROPARIA**

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To the thief, Thou didst open paradise!

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And Thou didst command Thy disciples, O Christ God,  
To proclaim that Thou art risen,  
Granting the world great mercy.

### **Saint John of Damascus**

Teacher of Orthodoxy, piety, and purity!  
Enlightener of the universe!  
And divine inspiration to monastics  
by your teachings we are all enlightened,  
and by your spiritual music, O all-wise John of Damascus,  
pray to Christ our God for the salvation of our souls!

### **Saints, tone 3**

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and were glorious in casting down the Enemy.  
You offered a noble army of athletes  
as sweet-smelling incense to Christ.  
With them pray for us who praise you with hymns.

### **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!

### **Saints, tone 4**

Like stars you have shone upon the world  
shedding the light of your contests and miracles upon all who cry to you:  
“Rejoice, Martyr Callistratus and fellow company of martyrs.”

### **Steadfast Protectress of Christians**

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!

**EPISTLE: (181) 2 Corinthians 6:1-10** Brethren, we as workers together with Him beseech you also not to receive the grace of God in vain. For He saith: "I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation I have succored thee." Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation. We give no offense in anything, that our ministry may not be blamed. But in all things we commend ourselves as ministers of God: in much patience, in afflictions, in necessities, in distresses, in stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labors, in sleeplessness, in fastings; by purity, by knowledge, by longsuffering, by kindness, by the Holy Spirit, by love unfeigned, by the word of truth, by the power of God, by the armor of righteousness on the right hand and on the left, by honor and dishonor, by evil report and good report; as deceivers, and yet true; as unknown, and yet well known; as dying, and behold, we live; as chastened, and yet not killed; as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things.

**Alleluia in the seventh tone:** It is good to give thanks to the Lord, to sing praises to Thy Name, O Most High!

**Vs.** To declare Thy mercy in the morning and Thy truth by night.

**GOSPEL: (17) Luke 5:1-11** So it was, at that time, as the multitude pressed about Him to hear the word of God, that He stood by the Lake of Gennesaret, and saw two boats standing by the lake; but the fishermen had gone from them and were washing their nets. Then He got into one of the boats, which was Simon's, and asked him to put out a little from the land. And He sat down and taught the multitudes from the boat. When He had stopped speaking, He said to Simon, "Launch out into the deep and let down your nets for a catch". But Simon answered and said to Him, "Master, we have toiled all night and caught nothing; nevertheless, at Your word I will let down the net." And when they had done this, they caught a great number of fish, and their net was breaking. So they signaled to their partners in the other boat to come and help them. And they came and filled both the boats, so that they began to sink. When Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying; "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord!" For he and all who were with him were astonished at the catch of fish which they had taken' and so also were James and John, the sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon. And Jesus said to Simon, "Do not be afraid. From now on you will catch men." So when they had brought their boats to land, they forsook all and followed Him.

**COMMUNION HYMN:** Praise the Lord from the heavens, praise Him in the highest!

Alleluia....