

Our Venerable and God-bearing Father Anthony the Great

January 17

GREAT VESPERS
FOR POLYELEOS

At Psalm 140

In Tone 4

8.

Burning with divine love and radiant with the Spirit,
your soul rose to desire truly infinite love!
You despised flesh and blood, and lived apart from the world,
yet you were united to it by great silence and abstinence.
Therefore you were fulfilled as you desired,
and as a star radiant with blessings, Anthony, you illumine our souls!

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5.

Anthony, you were radiant with divine light
by the grace of the Holy Spirit;
you shattered the flying weapons of the demons;
by your godly teachings you exposed their evil snares.
You were a radiant light for monks: the first to adorn the desert;
a prayerful and skilled physician of the sick,
and the first clear example of the ascetic life.

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2.

Anthony, pure in heart and soul;
an earthly angel, a heavenly man!
A teacher of chastity, a clear measure of abstinence!
Now you live with your Master, blessed saint.
As you offer Him unceasing praise with the angels, all holy monastics and martyrs,
set free from sin and danger those who ever keep your holy memory.

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In Tone 6, Glory...

You set your mind as master over the disturbing passions,
keeping the image unharmed through the ascetic life.
Thus you rose into the perfect likeness,
for bravely curbing nature,
you hastened to subject what is lower to that which is above:
you made the body servant to the Spirit.
Therefore you were revealed as the chief of those living the monastic life,
a citizen of the desert,
a master teaching those who hasten to you,
a perfect example of virtue.
Now the image has been broken, Anthony,
and in heaven you behold in purity the holy Trinity,
as you pray with boldness for those who honour you with faith and love!

Now...

Who would not call you blessed, O Virgin most holy?
Who would not sing a hymn of praise
to the glory of your giving birth without pain or travail?

The Only-begotten Son Himself,
begotten of the Father before all ages,
was made flesh out of you in a manner
that cannot be explained, O Woman most pure!
And for our sake, He Who is God by nature
assumed the nature of a man.
He is not divided into two persons;
He is understood to have two natures
without commixion or confusion.
O noble and blessed Woman,
intercede with Him that He may mercy on our souls.

Readings

Wisdom 5:15-6:3

The righteous live for ever, and their reward is with the Lord; the Most High takes care of them. Therefore they will receive a glorious crown and a beautiful diadem from the hand of the Lord, because with his right hand he will cover them, and with his arm he will shield them. The Lord will take his zeal as his whole armor, and will arm all creation to repel his enemies; he will put on righteousness as a breastplate, and wear impartial justice as a helmet; he will take holiness as an invincible shield, and sharpen stern wrath for a sword, and creation will join with him to fight against the madmen. Shafts of lightning will fly with true aim, and will leap to the target as from a well-drawn bow of clouds, and hailstones full of wrath will be hurled as from a catapult; the water of the sea will rage against them, and rivers will relentlessly overwhelm them; a mighty wind will rise against them, and like a tempest it will winnow them away. Lawlessness will lay waste the whole earth, and evil-doing will overturn the thrones of rulers. Listen therefore, O kings, and understand; learn, O judges of the ends of the earth. Give ear, you that rule over multitudes, and boast of many nations. For your dominion was given you from the Lord, and your sovereignty from the Most High, who will search out your works and inquire into your plans.

Wisdom 3:1-9

The souls of the righteous are in the hand of God, and no torment will ever touch them. In the eyes of the foolish they seemed to have died, and their departure was thought to be an affliction, and their going from us to be their destruction; but they are at peace. For though in the sight of men they were punished, their hope is full of immortality. Having been disciplined a little, they will receive great good, because God tested them and found them worthy of himself; like gold in the furnace he tried them, and like a sacrificial burnt offering he accepted them. In the time of their visitation they will shine forth, and will run like sparks through the stubble. They will govern nations and rule over peoples, and the Lord will reign over them for ever. Those who trust in him will understand truth, and the faithful will abide with him in love, because grace and mercy are upon his elect, and he watches over his holy ones.

Wisdom 4:7-15

The righteous man, though he die early, will be at rest. For old age is not honoured for length of time, nor measured by number of years; but understanding is gray hair for men, and a blameless life is ripe old age. There was one who pleased God and was loved by him, and while living among sinners he was taken up. He was caught up lest evil change his understanding or guile deceive his soul. For the fascination of wickedness obscures what is good, and roving desire perverts the innocent mind. Being perfected in a short time, he fulfilled long years; for his soul was pleasing to the Lord, therefore he took him quickly from

the midst of wickedness. Yet the peoples saw and did not understand, nor take such a thing to heart, that God's grace and mercy are with his elect, and he watches over his holy ones.

Aposticha

In Tone 5

Rejoice, Anthony, as you dwell on high with the angelic choirs!
For you truly learned their virtue, blessed saint.
You lived on earth, and appeared as a clear, undefiled image;
as a glass which received the brilliant lights of the Holy Spirit.
Thus enlightened, you saw what was to come,
foretelling all things taught by the divine manifestations of the light of Christ.
entreat Him to grant our souls great mercy.

Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints!

Rejoice, leader of ascetics and their unconquered champion!
For cutting down passions to the root and opposing the attempts of devils,
you bravely laid bare their weakness and soul-destroying error.
You made plain the invincible power and might of the Saviour's cross.
Girded with it, you defeated all who reject
the divine appearance of Christ in the flesh.
Entreat Him to grant our souls great mercy.

Blessed is the man who fears the lord. He has great delight in His commandments.

You were an overshadowing cloud,
strengthened as a shining pillar of virtues,
leading those in the desert from earth to heaven.
Thus you were a seer of God!
With the staff of the cross you destroyed the sea of the passions,
and having defeated the reasoning of Amalek,
you easily found the way into heaven, blessed one of God,
and an incorruptible inheritance.
Rejoicing, you stand with the angels beside the throne of Christ.
Entreat Him to grant our souls great mercy.

In Tone 8, Glory...

We honour you, Anthony our father, the instructor of a multitude of monks!
We have indeed learned to walk rightly in your footsteps!
You are blest, for having laboured for Christ,
you denounced the power of the enemy!
Conversor with the angels, companion of Paul of Thebes!
Together with them, entreat the Lord that He may grant mercy to our souls!

Now...

O Virgin, You have never known wedlock,
Yet You conceived God in the flesh
in a manner which words can never describe.

You thus became the Mother of God on high.
O Immaculate Lady, receive the supplication of your servants
and grant us the cleansing of our sins.
Accept now our prayers and beseech God to save all of us.

Troparia

In Tone 4

By your life you imitated the zealous Elias,* and by following straight paths you emulated the baptist, John.* O Father Anthony,* you peopled the desert and strengthened the world by your prayers;* intercede with Christ God to save our souls.

Glory... Now...

The mystery hidden from eternity* and unknown to the angels* is manifested to those on earth through you, O Theotokos!* God being incarnate of you by union without confusion,* and of His own will freely enduring the cross for us* and raising the first-formed man,* has saved our souls from death!

Note:

Texts of hymnography taken from a variety of sources.

Scripture used from the [Revised Standard Version](#).

Troparia taken from *The Divine Liturgy: An Anthology for Worship* ([Metropolitan Andrey Sheptytsky Institute of Eastern Christian Studies at Saint Paul University](#): Ottawa, 2004).