

# Sunday, March 9, 2025 – First Sunday of the Great Fast: Sunday of Orthodoxy; The Holy Forty Martyrs of Sebaste.

***Troparia and Kontakia*** *Troparion, Tone 1:* Though the stone was sealed by the Judeans,\* and soldiers guarded Your most pure body,\* You arose, O Saviour, on the third day,\* and gave life to the world.\* And so the heavenly powers cried out to You, O Giver of Life:\* Glory to Your resurrection, O Christ!\* Glory to Your kingdom!\* Glory to Your saving plan,\* O only Lover of mankind.

*Troparion, Tone 1:* Be swayed by the pains that the saints have suffered, for You, O Lord,\* and heal all our pains,\* O Lover of mankind, for this we pray.

+Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

*Kontakion, Tone 6:* Leaving behind every army on earth,\* you cleaved to the Master in heaven\* O Forty passion-bearers of the Lord.\* For passing through fire and water\* you rightly received glory from heaven\* and a myriad of crowns, O blessed saints.

Now and for ever and ever. Amen.

*Kontakion, Tone 8:* The uncircumscribed Word of the Father\* became circumscribed when He took flesh of you, O Mother of God,\* and when He restored the divine image to its ancient glory,\* He suffused it with the beauty of God.\* Therefore, confessing our salvation in deed and word,\* we portray it in images.

***Prokeimenon, Tone 4*** Blessed are You, Lord God of our fathers,\* and praised and glorified is Your Name for ever. *verse:* For You are righteous in everything You have done to us. (Daniel 3:26,27)

***Prokeimenon, Tone 5*** You, O Lord, will guard and will keep us, from this generation and for ever.

***Epistle: Hebrews 11:24-26,32-40; 12:1-2; Hebrews 12:1-10 - A reading of the Epistle of Paul to the the Hebrews Hebrews 11:24-26,32-40; 12:1-2 (NRSV)***

Brothers and Sisters, by faith Moses, when he was grown up, refused to be called a son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to share ill-treatment with the people of God than to enjoy the fleeting pleasures of sin. He considered abuse suffered for the Christ to be greater wealth than the treasures of Egypt, for he was looking ahead to the reward. And what more should I say? For time would fail me to tell of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, of David and Samuel and the prophets— who through faith conquered kingdoms, administered justice, obtained promises, shut the mouths of lions, quenched raging fire, escaped the edge of the sword, won strength out of weakness, became mighty in war, put foreign armies to flight. Women received their dead by resurrection. Others were tortured, refusing to accept release, in order to obtain a better resurrection. Others suffered mocking and flogging, and even chains and imprisonment. They were stoned to death, they were sawn in two, they were killed by the sword; they went about in skins of sheep and goats, destitute, persecuted, tormented— of whom the world was not worthy. They wandered in deserts and mountains, and in caves and holes in the ground. Yet all these, though they were commended for their faith, did not receive what was promised, since God had provided something better so that they would not, apart from us, be made perfect. Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight and the sin that clings so closely, and let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus the pioneer and perfecter of our faith, who for the sake of the joy that was set before him endured the cross, disregarding its shame, and has taken his seat at the right hand of the throne of God.

***Hebrews 12:1-10 (NRSV)***

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sin which clings so closely, and let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus the pioneer and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God. Consider him who endured from sinners such hostility against himself, so that you may not grow weary or fainthearted. In your struggle against sin you have not yet resisted to the point of shedding your blood. And have you forgotten the exhortation which addresses you as sons?— “My son, do not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord, nor lose courage when you are punished by him. For the Lord disciplines him whom he loves, and chastises every son whom he receives.” It is for discipline that you have to endure. God is treating you as sons; for what son is there whom his father does not discipline? If you are left without discipline, in which all have participated, then you are illegitimate children and not sons. Besides this, we have had earthly fathers to discipline us and we respected them. Shall we not much more be subject to the Father of spirits and live? For they disciplined us for a short time at their pleasure, but he disciplines us for our good, that we may share his holiness.

#### ***Alleluia, Tone 4***

*verse:* Moses and Aaron are among His priests and Samuel among those who call upon His name.

*verse:* They called on the Lord, and He heard them. (*Psalm 98:6*)

*verse:* Shout to the Lord, all the earth, sing now to His name, give glory to His praise. (*Psalm 65:2*)

#### ***Gospel: John 1:43-51; Matthew 20:1-16***

##### ***John 1:43-51 (NRSV)***

At that time Jesus decided to go to Galilee. He found Philip and said to him, “Follow me.” Now Philip was from Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter. Philip found Nathanael and said to him, “We have found him about whom Moses in the law and also the prophets wrote, Jesus son of Joseph from Nazareth.” Nathanael said to him, “Can anything good come out of Nazareth?” Philip said to him, “Come and see.” When Jesus saw Nathanael coming toward him, he said of him, “Here is truly an Israelite in whom there is no deceit!” Nathanael asked him, “Where did you get to know me?” Jesus answered, “I saw you under the fig tree before Philip called you.” Nathanael replied, “Rabbi, you are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!” Jesus answered, “Do you believe because I told you that I saw you under the fig tree? You will see greater things than these.” And he said to him, “Very truly, I tell you, you will see heaven opened and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man.”

##### ***Matthew 20:1-16 (NRSV)***

“For the kingdom of heaven is like a householder who went out early in the morning to hire laborers for his vineyard. After agreeing with the laborers for a denarius a day, he sent them into his vineyard. And going out about the third hour he saw others standing idle in the market place; and to them he said, ‘You go into the vineyard too, and whatever is right I will give you.’ So they went. Going out again about the sixth hour and the ninth hour, he did the same. And about the eleventh hour he went out and found others standing; and he said to them, ‘Why do you stand here idle all day?’ They said to him, ‘Because no one has hired us.’ He said to them, ‘You go into the vineyard too.’ And when evening came, the owner of the vineyard said to his steward, ‘Call the laborers and pay them their wages, beginning with the last, up to the first.’ And when those hired about the eleventh hour came, each of them received a denarius. Now when the first came, they thought they would receive more; but each of them also received a denarius. And on receiving it they grumbled at the householder, saying, ‘These last worked only one hour, and you have made them equal to us who have borne the burden of the day and the scorching heat.’ But he replied to one of them, ‘Friend, I am doing you no wrong; did you not agree with me for a denarius? Take what belongs to you, and go; I choose to give to this last as I give to you. Am I not allowed to do what I choose with what belongs to me? Or do you begrudge my generosity?’ So the last will be first, and the first last.”

***Hymn to the Mother of God*** In you, O Full of Grace, all creation rejoices: the angelic ranks and all the human race. Sanctified temple and spiritual paradise, virgins’ pride and boast, from whom God is made flesh and became a little Child; and He who is our God before all ages, He made your womb a throne, and He made it wider than all the heavens. In you, O Full of Grace, all creation rejoices. Glory be to you.

***Communion Hymn*** Praise the Lord from the heavens;\* praise Him in the highest. (*Psalm 148:1*)\* Rejoice in the Lord, O you just;\* praise befits the righteous.\* Alleluia, alleluia,\* alleluia. (*Psalm 32:1*)