

Month of March

THE 20TH DAY

Commemoration of Our Father among the Saints Cuthbert, Bishop of Lindisfarne, Wonderworker of Durham & Northumbria

At Vespers

On “Lord, I have cried...”, these stichera, in Tone I: Spec. Mel.: “Joy of the ranks of heaven...”—

Loving chastity and meekness from thy youth, O Cuthbert, with steadfast intent thou didst acquire pure love for Christ, and thereby hast drawn nigh unto God. Wherefore, entreat Him now most earnestly, that He deliver from all afflictions those who celebrate thy yearly memorial.

Assembling today, O ye Orthodox, with psalms and hymns let us praise the holy Cuthbert, crying out to him with reverence: O blessed and most glorious one, boast of hierarchs and monastics, beseech the Lord in our behalf, that He take pity and save our souls.

O venerable hierarch Cuthbert, the multitudes of pilgrims who piously have recourse to thee in prayer are filled with joy and gladness; for the shrine of thy precious relics is shown to be a fount of healing for all the afflicted who approach with faith and love unfeigned.

Glory..., Now & ever...: Theotokion, in the same melody—

With the staff of thy prayer, O pure Theotokos, do thou swiftly drive away the bestial passions from my wretched soul, peacefully guiding my life; and number me among the holy flock of thy chosen ones.

Stavrotheotokion—

Standing before the Cross of thy Son and God, and beholding His long-suffering, thou didst say, weeping, O pure Mother: “Woe is me, my Child most sweet! How is it that thou sufferest unjustly, O Word of God, that Thou mightest save mankind?”

If the feast fall on Saturday, we chant this troparion of the holy hierarch, in Tone I—

O successor of the godly apostles of Christ, steadfast pillar of the Orthodox Faith, teacher and defender of true piety, holy hierarch Cuthbert! Like a good shepherd thou didst watch over thy flock with vigilance, for which cause thou hast won great favor with Christ, the Chief Shepherd, and standest now with the sheep at His right hand in glory. Wherefore, intercede thou for all of us who honor thy holy memory as is meet.

At Matins

Canon of the saint, with 4 troparia, the acrostic whereof is “Lindisfarne’s bishop is Durham’s boast”, in Tone VI—

Ode I

Irmos: When Israel of old, traversing the surging sea with dryshod feet, beheld proud Pharaoh drowned, they joyfully cried out: Let us sing unto the Lord Who hath wrought glorious wonders!

Let us now praise Cuthbert, the radiant star shining brightly in the firmament of the Church of Christ, and let us sing unto the Lord Who through him hath wrought glorious wonders!

In Melrose Cuthbert began his monastic journey, guided by Eata and Boisil as by pillars of fire and cloud, led by them to cry: Let us sing unto the Lord Who hath wrought glorious wonders!

Not to his monks alone did the holy one confine his gracious admonitions, but as an obedient servant of Christ he went forth into the highways and byways, to summon all to righteousness.

Theotokion: Drowning in a sea of tribulations beneath the weight of our iniquities, we are overwhelmed by waves of trials and temptations; but rescue us, O Lady, who workest glorious wonders!

Ode III

Irmos: Establish Thou Thy Church, O Lord Who didst set up the heavens with understanding, that it may hymn Thine all-pure dispensation, O Thou Who alone lovest mankind.

In the care of his flock, Cuthbert imitated the apostles of the Lord, admonishing them with sound teaching and fending off the demons by his prayers as with a shepherd's staff.

Seeing his coming death with spiritual eyes, the wondrous hierarch left the world and withdrew again to his isle of solitude, where, praising the Lord unceasingly, he gave up his spirit.

For us who honor thee, O Cuthbert, turn thou the tide of temptations, as the moon does the sea, that we may advance unto God, Who by grace sustained thee on thy holy isle.

Theotokion: All creatures—both the angelic hosts on high and we born on earth—hymn the ineffable dispensation, whereby God, in His incarnation through the Virgin, hath saved mankind.

Sessional hymn, in Tone IV: Spec. Mel.: “O Thou Who wast willingly lifted up on the Cross...”—

Alight with grace like a radiant beacon, O father Cuthbert, thou didst illumine thy flock with the teachings of the true Faith; and having wrought many miracles by the power of God, thou art now glorified among all Christians. Wherefore, we honor thee with faith, as a holy hierarch and dweller with the angels.

Glory..., Now & ever...: Theotokion—

Though I love sin, I beseech thee, O all-pure one, who gavest birth to the sinless God Who taketh away the sins of the world: Have pity on my most sinful soul, and wash away my many sins; for thou art the cleansing of sinners, the salvation and help of the faithful.

Stavrotheotokion—

She who in latter times gave birth in the flesh to Thee Who wast begotten of the unoriginate Father, O Christ, seeing Thee hanging upon the Cross, cried out: “Woe is me, O Jesus most beloved! How is it that Thou Who art glorified as God by the angels art now of Thine own will crucified by iniquitous men? O my long-suffering Son, I hymn Thee!”

Ode IV

Irmos: Thou hast restored the beauty of Thine image; for, leaving the bosom of the Father, Thou didst lower Thyself thereto. And we cry aloud unto Thee: Glory to Thy power, O Thou Who lovest mankind!

Reverence and awe fill our hearts and souls when we bow down before the image of the saint of God, in whom He hath restored the pristine beauty of man. Wherefore, we cry: Glory to Thee Who lovest mankind!

Northumbria is exceeding glad, cherishing the sacred relics of the holy Cuthbert in its bosom; and England exulteth in his intercessions; but all the Orthodox throughout the world trust in his heavenly mediation.

Exalt ye the Lord of hosts, Who, knowing our weakness, hath given us His chosen ones as mighty guardians, that, protected by them, we may cry aloud to Him: Glory to Thy power, O Thou Who lovest mankind!

Theotokion: Seeing thee, O pure Maiden in whom hath been restored the beauty of the image of God, which was man's birthright before his Fall, we cry aloud unto God: Glory to Thy power, O Thou Who lovest mankind!

Ode V

Irmos: On Thee have I set my hope, O Lord, and unto Thee, the all-divine Beauty, do I rise early. Gladden thou my soul in the light of Thy divine knowledge, and save me.

By standing in the cold waters of the sea while at prayer, Cuthbert mortified his flesh and its passions; but in His loving-kindness Christ sent otters to warm his feet.

In the power of thine intercession do we trust, O holy hierarch, for thou standest in glory, the gaze of thy holy soul filled with rapture by the ineffable beauty of God.

Superstition and heathen habits did the glorious Cuthbert zealously uproot from the hearts of men, planting in their stead the true consolations of grace and repentance.

Theotokion: Having risen at dawn unto the knowledge of the divine Light Who shone forth from thee, O Theotokos, we cry out with hope and love: By thine intercessions save us!

Ode VI

Irmos: The uttermost abyss of sin hath encompassed me; the multitude of mine evils hath slain me; and, groaning, I cry unto Thee, O my God: Deliver me, as Thou didst the Prophet Jonah, O greatly Merciful One!

On sea-girded Farne thou didst struggle in ascetic labors, O saint, and though encompassed on every side by hordes of demons, thou didst prevail mightily over them, crying: Deliver me, O greatly Merciful One!

Pursued by hordes of demons that set upon us with fangs and claws, seeking to slay our souls, groaning and in agony we cry out to Cuthbert: Deliver us from their savagery, O good servant of the all-good God!

In great humility Cuthbert would not withdraw from the field of his war against the flesh and the minions of Satan; but in yet greater humility he bowed to the pleas of king and council, to serve the salvation of many.

Theotokion: Sinking into the uttermost abyss of evils, beset on every side by the monsters of the deep, in terror I cry out to thee, O Mother of our Redeemer, Deliverer and God: Save me, as He delivered the Prophet Jonah!

Kontakion, in Tone V—

O Cuthbert, boast of monastics and true model for the servants of God, by thy struggles and pure manner of life thou hast come to shine forth like the brilliant sun upon the faithful; for Christ hath enriched thee with the gift of miracles. Wherefore, O

venerable hierarch, we cry out to thee most fervently: In thy supplications be thou ever mindful of those who honor thy most splendid memory with faith and love!

Ikos: Spurning the corruptible glory of this world, throughout his life the blessed Cuthbert desired to please God alone; wherefore, harrowing soul and body with constant labors, cultivating them with the plough of ascetic toil, and enriching them with prayer, he sowed within himself the seeds of Christian virtue in abundance, and in due season reaped a goodly harvest for his Master, wherewith the faithful ever find nourishment in their spiritual hunger. And, considering the fleeting things of this world as naught, he set his mind steadfastly upon that which is above; wherefore, he hath been shown to be a friend of the angels and a great intercessor for those who honor his most splendid memory with faith and love.

Ode VII

Irmos: By the Angel, O Bestower of light, Thou didst bedew the children in the furnace, who said: Blessed art Thou, O Lord God of our fathers!

Durham is filled with heavenly light, for there doth thy tomb fill with rays of splendor those who chant: Blessed is the God of our fathers!

Unto the shrine of thy relics do we, the faithful, earnestly have recourse, as to a wellspring of healings and a fountain of miracles, O holy one.

Reflecting the divine radiance of the countenance of the Most High, Cuthbert sheddeth the light of grace upon all who honor his memory with faith.

Theotokion: How shall we hymn thee, O Mother of the Bestower of light, other than to cry with the angel of God: Blessed art thou among women!?"

Ode VIII

Irmos: Rejecting the melodious music, from the midst of the flame, the children sang a divine hymn, saying: Ye priests, bless! Ye people, tribes and nations, exalt the Lord supremely!

Amid the fiery furnace of temptations Cuthbert burned with ascetic zeal, ever singing the hymn: Ye priests, bless! Ye people, tribes and nations, exalt the Lord supremely!

Men and women, elders and children, youths and maidens, alike sing the praises of the wondrous hierarch, saying: Ye people, tribes and nations, exalt the saint of God supremely!

Singing in jubilation, with tongues and mouths instead of psaltery and timbrel we honor the memory of the holy hierarch of God, chanting: Ye Orthodox people, exalt him supremely!

Theotokion: Blessing thee, the all-beauteous Bride of God, with hearts full of praise we chant: Ye priests, bless! Ye people, tribes and nations, exalt the Queen of heaven and earth supremely!

Ode IX

Irmos: O thou who alone gavest birth to the Word at the word of the archangel, stop thou the blasphemous mouths of the heretics. O all-pure one, we magnify thee as a new heaven, a garden of paradise, which cannot be taken away.

Overcome with awe at the sight of the incorrupt body of the saint, the blasphemous heretics dared not defile his precious relics, but sealed the tomb, leaving the holy remains as a treasure which cannot be taken away.

Angels and archangels surround the holy Cuthbert in the courts of the house of our God, and with them he uplifteth his voice to magnify the King of kings and Lord of lords, Who sitteth in glory upon the cherubim as upon a throne.

Sinful through we are, yet do we not despair of divine mercy, for the wondrous Cuthbert standeth as advocate for us before the dread tribunal of the Judge of all. that with him we also may come to dwell in paradise on high.

Theotokion: Though our minds are polluted with vice and our tongues besmirched by the mire of our iniquities, O all-pure one, yet do we make bold to magnify thee as the garden of paradise, wherein the Tree of Life grew and flourished.