

# Month of December

## THE 12<sup>TH</sup> DAY

### Commemoration of the Venerable Finnian, Founder of the Monastery of Clonard Teacher of the Saints of Ireland

#### At Vespers

*On "Lord, I have cried..." , these stichera, in Tone V: Spec. Mel.: "O venerable father..."—*

O Finnian most wise, taking up the easy yoke of Christ thy Master, thou wast a model for thy disciples in fasting and vigil and constant prayer. Wherefore, thou hast passed over to the mansions on high, where thou joinest chorus with the angelic hosts, unceasingly glorifying Christ:, the only-begotten Son and Word of God, begotten of the Father before time began. Him do thou entreat, to Him do thou pray, O venerable one, that He grant unto the Church concord, peace and great mercy.

O venerable father Finnian, by ascetic struggle thy didst make thyself a pure vessel wherein the Spirit was well pleased to make His abode as in a most radiant lamp, shining forth beams of grace divine. Wherefore, thou didst unceasingly glorify the Word of God, Who was incarnate in the Virgin's womb and was born as a man in Bethlehem, in fulfillment of all the prophecies. Him do thou beseech, to Him do thou pray, O saint, that He grant to the world oneness of mind, peace and great mercy.

O blessed father Finnian, having struggled manfully on earth, thou didst attain unto the angelic life by heartfelt prayer and fasting; for, having lived in holiness and righteousness, thou hast passed over to paradise, where with the ranks of all the saints thou dost utter praises before the throne of Christ, Who ineffably took flesh of the Virgin, that He might save fallen humanity. Him do thou entreat, to Him do thou pray, O glorious one, that He grant to the world oneness of mind, peace and great mercy.

*Glory...: Idiomelon, in Tone VI—*

O God-bearing father Finnian, even after death thou livest on high with Christ, for Whose sake thou didst crucify thyself to the world; for by ascetic struggle thou didst subdue the rebellion of the flesh and didst overcome the world, spurning the allure of material things. Yet didst thou not live for thyself alone, but within thee dwelt Christ the Lord, Whom do thou ever earnestly beseech that our souls find mercy.

*Now & ever...:Theotokion, or this stavrotheotokion, in the same tone: Spec. Mel.: "Having set all aside..."—*

A sword passed through thy heart, O all-pure Mistress, as Symeon said, when thou didst behold Him Whom, at His ineffable utterance, shone forth from thee lifted up upon the Cross, as One condemned from among the iniquitous, given vinegar and gall to drink, His side pierced, His feet and hands nailed; and, lamenting, thou didst exclaim, crying out maternally: "What is this new mystery, O my Child most sweet?"

*Aposticha stichera from the Octoechos; and Glory...: Idiomelon, in Tone IV—*

As the sun shineth in the heavens, shedding rays of light and warmth upon the earth, O Finnian our venerable father, so dost thou shine forth as a brilliant luminary in the firmament of the Church, filling the faithful with the light of grace and warming them with countless miracles. Wherefore, with fervor entreat Christ, O saint of God, that He grant great mercy unto us who celebrate thy holy memory with love.

*Now & ever...: Theotokion, or this stavrotheotokion, in the same tone: Spec. Mel.: "As one valiant among the martyrs..."—*

When she beheld Thee, the Lamb and Shepherd, upon the Tree, the Ewe-lamb who gave Thee birth lamented and exclaimed to Thee maternally: "How is it that Thou hast been suspended upon the tree of the Cross, O Long-suffering One? How is it that Thy hands and feet have been pierced with nails by the iniquitous, O Word, and Thou hast shed Thy blood, O Master?"

*Troparion of the saint, in Tone II—*

As one who labored with zeal in the vineyard of God, by ascetic struggles and toils thou didst ascend from glory to glory, O God-bearing saint. Wherefore, joining chorus now with all the venerable on high, thou standest with boldness before the throne of the King of all, Whom do thou beseech, O Finnian most wise, that He have mercy and save our souls.

### **At Matins**

*At "God is the Lord...", the troparion of the saint, twice; Glory..., Now & ever...: Theotokion.*

*Canon of the saint, with 4 troparia, the acrostic whereof is "The whole Church praiseth Erin's boast", in Tone I—*

#### Ode I

*Irmos:* Guiding Israel with a pillar of fire and cloud, as God He divided the sea and overwhelmed the chariots of Pharaoh in the deep. Let us chant a hymn of victory, for He alone is glorious!

The faithful were guided to the promised land of heaven by the holy Finnian, as the pillar of fire and cloud led Israel. With him let us chant to God a hymn of victory, for He alone is glorious!

Having freed himself from slavery to the passions and lusts, Finnian drowneth our sins in the infinite abyss of the mercy of God, to Whom we chant a hymn of victory, for He alone is glorious!

Erin ever rejoiceth in the sacred memory of Finnian, the great and excellent teacher of the Irish saints, for with Patrick he taught all to sing: Let us chant a hymn of victory, for He alone is glorious!

*Theotokion:* We praise Mary, the bush that burned with Fire yet was not consumed, the cloud of the Light, the star of the sea; and for her sake we sing to God a hymn of victory, for He alone is glorious!

#### Ode III

*Irmos:* Let no mortal boast in his wisdom or riches, but rather in his faith in the Lord, crying out to Christ God in Orthodox manner, and ever chanting: On the rock of Thy commandments establish me, O Master!

Humility and faith were the riches that the holy Finnian possessed in abundance, and in his wisdom he hath instructed us ever to chant: On the rock of Thy commandments establish me, O Master!

Orthodox believers of every realm and land join Ireland in boasting of the venerable Finnian, the servant of Christ God, who ever chanted: On the rock of Thy commandments establish me, O Master!

Let us not thy boast be of warriors and kings of old, O Ireland, but let thy boast rather be of Finnian, a man of holy wisdom, who hath taught all to chant: On the rock of

Thy commandments establish me, O Master!

*Theotokion:* Exult ye, O Christians, in the all-immaculate Maiden, praising her in Orthodox manner as the only Theotokos, for her sake crying out to Christ: On the rock of Thy commandments establish me, O Master!

*Sessional hymn, in Tone IV: Spec. Mel.: "Thou hast appeared..."—*

O God-bearing Finnian, thou didst appear as a brilliant star in the vast firmament of the Irish Church, illumining the faithful with thy virtues as with rays of light and moving all to holy awe by thy manifold wonders.

*Glory..., Now & ever...: Theotokion—*

Stretching forth thine all-pure hands, O Virgin Mother, protect those who set their hope on thee and cry out to thy Son: O Christ, grant Thou Thy mercies unto all!

*Stavrotheotokion—*

Seeing thy Son hanging on the Tree, O all-pure one, thou didst cry out in pity, thy maternal womb rent asunder: "Woe is me! How is it that Thou hast set, O my eternal Light?"

#### Ode IV

*Irmos:* Foreseeing in the Spirit the incarnation of the Word, O Prophet Habbakuk, thou didst announce, crying out: When the years draw nigh, Thou shalt be acknowledged; when the season cometh, Thou shalt be shown forth! Glory to Thy power, O Lord!

Christ, the incarnate Word, sent the Spirit of God upon the land of Erin, O saint, and as in Israel of old its old men dreamt dreams and its young men beheld visions; so with thee the saints of Ireland cried with faith: Glory to Thy power, O Lord!

Having faith like a grain of mustard, O holy one, thy holiness grew into a mighty tree that gave shade to the people of Ireland; and the saints of that land lodged like melodious birds in the branches thereof, singing: Glory to Thy power, O Lord!

Upon the holy hierarch Patrick was the burden laid to bring the Christian Faith to the heathen of Ireland, and the Lord blessed his apostolic labors. And taking up this holy task thou, O Finnian, didst teach all to exclaim: Glory to Thy power, O Lord!

*Theotokion:* Revelation was granted to the prophets of God, that the womb of the Virgin would contain the Infinite One, and that, in the fullness of time, she would give birth unto Him incarnate as a man, to Whom we ever chant. Glory to Thy power, O Lord!

#### Ode V

*Irmos:* Rising at dawn out of the night, we send up glory to Thee, O Lord our God. Grant us Thy peace, for we know none other God than Thee.

Come, ye Christians, and let us praise Finnian, who taught all to cry unto Christ: Grant us Thy peace, for we know none other God than Thee

Having been wakened out of the night of ignorance by Finnian, we cry to the Lord: Grant us Thy peace, for we know none other God than Thee

Peace that passeth all understanding abode in the holy soul of the Finnian, who prayeth: Grant us Thy peace, for we know none other God than Thee

*Theotokion:* Rising early out of the night, we send up glory to the pure Virgin Mother, through whom Christ, the Wisdom and Peace of God, hath dawned.

#### Ode VI

*Irmos:* Lead up my life from corruption as Thou didst the Prophet Jonah, I cry to

Thee, O Christ God Who lovest mankind, for with Thee is life, incorruption and power.

Aghowle and Mugna, where Finnian gathered ascetics together, were beacons of heavenly light for Leinster, for therein the deifying power of the Christ God abounded.

In His saints in the land of Erin hath the Lord been truly wondrous; for in the venerable Finnian and his fellows hath He who loveth mankind wrought all His desires.

Seeking true life in blessedness, the holy one forsook all the pleasures of this earthly life; and, having made his flesh subject to his spirit, he inherited life incorruptible.

*Theotokion:* Ever drowning in the abyss of corruption, I cry out to the Queen of heaven, entreating her to rescue me from the depths of my transgressions and offenses.

*Kontakion, in Tone VIII—*

Imitating the desert-dwellers of old, forsaking all the allurements of this world, O venerable one, thou didst found houses for monastics throughout the Irish land, filling its hills and vales with a host of noetic warriors who, trained by thee, cut down the evil serpent with the sword of patience and put his vile minions to flight through prayer. Wherefore, we cry out to thee: Rejoice, O Finnian our father, radiant beacon of the grace of God!

*Ikos:* Assembling, O ye faithful, let us praise the God-bearer Finnian, the earthly angel and dweller with the saints on high, whom the right hand of God raised up among the Irish people to be a beacon of piety and a teacher of the knowledge of God. Wherefore, let all monastics of every realm and land lift up their voices in praise of him, who was a fortress of faith and the founder of many monasteries! And let all Orthodox Christians cry out to him in thanksgiving for the many signs and wonders he hath bestowed upon us: Rejoice, O Finnian our father, radiant beacon of the grace of God!

#### Ode VII

*Irmos:* He Who delivered the children from the furnace, having become man suffered as a mortal, and by suffering clotheth mortal splendor in incorruption. He alone is the blessed and all-glorious God of our fathers!

Eagerly did the pious men of Erin have recourse to the holy one, for he was wise and full of knowledge; and he taught them to chant unto Him Who alone is the blessed and all-glorious God of our fathers!

The River Boyne doth water Meath in abundance; but the Monastery of Clonard, which Finnian founded, poured forth rivers of enlightenment upon the pious servants of the all-glorious God of our fathers.

How shall we praise Finnian, who by his teaching hath delivered us from ignorance as from a fiery furnace, and who taught all to chant: "Christ alone is the blessed and all-glorious God of our fathers!"?

*Theotokion:* Exult ye the Word, the Angel of Great Counsel, Who, incarnate of the Virgin, suffered as man that He might deliver mortals from corruption, for He alone is the blessed and all-glorious God of our Fathers.

#### Ode VIII

*Irmos:* The children who did not defile themselves with food from the table of the king once entered, rejoicing, into the fire; and cooled even in the midst of the flame, they chanted fervently: Bless the Lord, ye works of the Lord!

Replete with faith, the holy one exercised himself in feats of abstinence, thus cooling the fiery flames of lust; and rejoicing, he cried out unto the Bestower of all good things with fervor: Bless the Lord, ye works of the Lord!

In all the virtues did Finnian excel, having put down the rebellions of the flesh and subdued all the passions; and ascending the ladder of salvation to the sublime heights of holiness, he cried: Bless the Lord, ye works of the Lord!

Never pleasing his belly with rich and dainty foods, Finnian mortified the flesh with abstinence and fasting; and with the dew of grace he utterly quenched the fires of gluttony, crying: Bless the Lord, ye works of the Lord!

*Triadicon:* Sing we now in worship of the triune Godhead, the Unity in three Hypostases—the unoriginate Father, the only-begotten Son, and the deifying Spirit. And with one mind we chant with fervor: Bless the Lord, ye works of the Lord!

*Theotokion:* Believers delight to praise the Theotokos, for in conceiving the Word in her womb she revealed the image of the fiery furnace; for as the three youths remained unburned therein, so was she not consumed by the fire of the Godhead.

#### Ode IX

*Irmos:* Ineffable is the mystery of the Virgin! For she hath been shown forth as heaven, the throne of the cherubim, and the light-bearing bridal chamber of Christ God Almighty. Her do we piously magnify as the Theotokos.

O the surpassing love of the saint for his fellow man! For in time of tribulation, when pestilence stalked the land, he laid down his life for his flock, and was admitted into the bridal-chamber of the Most High with glory.

Angelic was thy manner of life, O Finnian, and seraphic thy godly praise; wherefore, having entered the most splendid bridal-chamber of the Almighty, thou art magnified by the pious as His faithful servant.

Sanctified by grace, thou becamest an initiate of the dread mysteries of the heavenly kingdom, O saint, for thou hast entered the splendid temple of Christ God Almighty, the great High Priest of our salvation.

*Theotokion:* The womb of the Virgin, in manner past all understanding, was shown to be more spacious than the heavens. And it is more exalted than the cherubim on whom the Most High sitteth enthroned. Wherefore, we magnify her.

*Exapostilarion: Spec. Mel.: "By the Spirit in the holy place..."—*

The grace of God abounded in thy soul, and thou didst live on earth like one of the bodiless beings, O all-wise Finnian. Wherefore, free from the oppression of the passions those who honor thee with love, delivering them from every affliction, and driving away the hordes of the demons with the divine power wherein thou wast clothed.

*Theotokion—*

We, the faithful, bring before Thee as is meet Thine all-holy Mother as an intercessor and fervent helper, O Christ. Vouchsafe that Thy servants may share in Thy glory, in the inheritance of the righteous and the food of paradise; and grant us the kingdom of heaven.

*Aposticha stichera from the Octoechos; and Glory...: Idiomelon, in Tone VIII—*

On this day, O ye faithful, our venerable and God-bearing Finnian, the great boast of the Irish land and of the whole Orthodox Church, finished the race of the virtues and completed his ascent into paradise, where, making his abode amid the splendors of the saints, he ever delighteth in the Tree of Life which is in the midst thereof. Wherefore, endowed with the radiance of the glory of God, he doth not cease to offer supplication, that we may be granted deliverance from misfortunes, and great mercy and peace profound.

*Now & ever...: Theotokion, or this stavrotheotokion, in the same tone: Spec. Mel. : "O all-glorious wonder..."—*

Beholding Thee nailed to the Cross and accepting suffering of Thine own will, O Jesus, Thy Virgin Mother, cried aloud, O Master: "Woe is me, O my sweet Child! How is it that Thou dost endure wounds unjustly inflicted, O Physician Who healeth human infirmities, and hast delivered all from corruption in Thy loving-kindness?"

### **At Liturgy**

*Prokimenon, in Tone VII—*

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

*Stichos:* What shall I render unto the Lord for all that He hath rendered unto me?

EPISTLE TO THE GALATIANS, § 213

Brethren: The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law. And those who are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. Let us not be desirous of vain glory, provoking one another, envying one another. Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye who are spiritual, restore such a one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted. Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.

*Alleluia, in Tone VI—*

*Stichos:* Blessed is the man that feareth the Lord; in His commandments shall he greatly delight.

*Stichos:* His seed shall be mighty upon the earth.

GOSPEL ACCORDING TO LUKE, §24

At that time, Jesus stood in the plain, and the company of His disciples, and a great multitude of people out of all Judæa and Jerusalem, and from the sea coast of Tyre and Sidon, who came to hear Him, and to be healed of their diseases; and those who were vexed with unclean spirits: and they were healed. And the whole multitude sought to touch Him: for there went virtue out of Him, and healed them all. And He lifted up His eyes on His disciples, and said: "Blessed be ye poor: for yours is the kingdom of God. Blessed are ye who hunger now: for ye shall be filled. Blessed are ye who weep now: for ye shall laugh. Blessed are ye, when men shall hate you, and when they shall separate you from their company, and shall reproach you, and cast out your name as evil, for the Son of man's sake. Rejoice ye in that day, and leap for joy: for, behold, your reward is great in heaven."

*Communion Verse—*

In everlasting remembrance shall the righteous be; he shall not be afraid of evil tidings.