

Month of December
THE 7TH DAY
Commemoration of the Holy Hieromartyr Sabinus,
Wonderworker of Spoleto,
& Those with Him

N.B.: The commemoration of this saint is, in the usage of the Orthodox Church, appointed to be observed on the 30th of December; but, in accordance with the practice current at the time the canon of the saint was composed (11th century), and as stipulated by the author of the canon, Bartholomew the Younger, it is celebrated instead on the 7th of December. The service may be served alone, or combined (as set forth below) with that of the holy hierarch Ambrose of Milan; alternatively, it may be transferred to some other day deemed appropriate and convenient by the ecclesiarch.

At Vespers

On "Lord, I have cried...", 6 stichera: 3 of the hieromartyr, in Tone I: Spec. Mel.: "Joy of the ranks of heaven..."—

The angels of heaven rejoice, beholding the holy Sabinus among the saints that unceasingly intercede for those on earth, that in His surpassing loving-kindness Christ ever extend His mercy unto them.

With unwavering faith in the one true God, Sabinus spurned the imperial decree, refusing to worship the gods of the heathen; wherefore, with Marcellus and Exuperantius his deacons, he shed his blood for Christ.

As a true shepherd of the Christian flock, Sabinus brought new lambs to the fold of the Savior: Venustian the governor, with his family; and together they offer worship on high to the Lord and Creator of all.

And 3 stichera of the holy hierarch, in the same tone & melody (see in the Menaion).

Glory...: Idiomelon of the hieromartyr, in the same tone—

O ye who hold the martyrs of Christ in reverence, come, and with fitting hymnody let us celebrate the memory of Sabinus, the faithful hierarch of God; for though his sacred hands were severed most cruelly as retribution for his steadfast witness, he now ever lifteth up spiritual hands as he standeth before the throne of his Master as a zealous advocate in behalf of our souls.

Now & ever...: Theotokion, or this stavrotheotokion, in the same tone: Spec. Mel.: "Joy of the ranks of heaven..."—

When the immaculate Virgin beheld her Lamb uplifted on the Cross, she cried out, lamenting: "O my sweet child, what is this new and all-glorious sight? How is it that Thou Who holdest all things in Thy palm art nailed to the Tree in the flesh?"

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

Sabinus, the servant of God Most High, took in his hands the idol of Jove, and, denouncing the false and soul-destroying worship of the heathen, he cast it down and broke it asunder; wherefore, his sacred hands were severed, and, beaten pitilessly with rods, he drained the cup of suffering to the end, committing his soul into the hands Christ., from Whose almighty hand he hath now received a glorious martyr's crown.

Now & ever...: Theotokion, or this stavrotheotokion, in the same tone: Spec. Mel.:

"What shall we call you..."—

The ewe-lamb, when she beheld the Lamb stretched out of His own will upon the tree of the Cross, cried out, maternally in pain, with lamentation: "What is this strange sight, O my Son? How is it that Thou diest, O Long-suffering One, Who as Lord grantest life unto all, bestowing resurrection upon mortals? I glorify Thy great condescension, O my God!"

Troparion of the hieromartyr, in Tone VIII—

O martyred hierarch of the Lord, who didst preach Him with boldness, at the tribunal denouncing all belief in many gods; with patience didst thou endure the severing of thy holy hands and the breaking of thy body under savage blows; wherefore, thy soul now abideth in paradise, and, standing now before the throne of the Almighty, O Sabinus, thou intercedest for all who honor thy struggles with faith.

Glory...: Troparion of the holy hierarch (see in the Menaion).

Now & ever...: Theotokion.

At Matins

At "God is the Lord..." , the troparion of the hieromartyr, twice; Glory..., that of the holy hierarch (see in the Menaion); Now & ever...: Theotokion.

One canon from the Octoechos, with 6 troparia, including the irmos; then the canon of the hieromartyr, with 4 troparia, the acrostic whereof is "Let us hymn the mighty struggles of Sabinus", the composition of Bartholomew the Younger, in Tone II—

Ode I

Irmos: Overwhelming power once laid low the whole army of Pharaoh in the deep, and the incarnate Word hath destroyed pernicious sin. All-glorious is the Lord, for gloriously hath He been glorified.

O holy martyr Sabinus, who now truly art wholly resplendent with the uncreated light of the Holy Trinity, enlighten my benighted heart with thine intercession, that I may consider thy sufferings and hymn thy holy memory with joy.

God Who knoweth all things set thee upon a hierarchal throne. And later, O father, having struggled with fervor of heart, thou didst acquire the most sublime glory of martyrdom.

Armed with the Cross as a mighty weapon, O illustrious one, thou didst mightily fend off all the assaults of the wicked foe; and all the hosts that the devil had raised thou madest true sons of divine regeneration.

Theotokion: O Lord, when Thou becamest incarnate of the Virgin, clothing Thyself in us through her, it was Thy desire to render virginity illustrious; wherefore, all of us, Thine heirs and friends, fall prostrate around Thee, rendering honor unto her whom Thou didst make worthy to possess it without spot.

And the canon of the holy hierarch, with 4 troparia (see in the Menaion).

Ode III

Irmos: Establishing me upon the rock of faith, Thou hast enlarged my mouth against mine enemies, for my spirit doth exult when I chant: There is none holy as our God, and none righteous save Thee, O Lord!

Upon the rock of faith was the house of thy soul built, unshaken by the tempest of torments in the midst whereof thou didst ever chant: Thou art our God, and there is none holier than Thou, O Lord!

O Sabinus, thy holy life was adorned with splendor of speech, and thy words, resplendent with this splendor and enlivened by the splendors of the holiness of thy life, raised thee up to the sublime glory of martyrdom, in the midst whereof thou didst chant unto God: None is holier than Thou, O Lord!

Entering upon the contest with boldness, thou didst bring with thee thy two disciples; and after, having contended gloriously, O blessed one, thou now chantest with them: Thou art our God, and there is none holier than Thou, O Lord!

Theotokion: As is thy wont, O Theotokos, save from perils those who set their hope on thy protection, and crush beneath thy feet the deceitful enemy. Drive away the carnal passions, and make them worthy to praise thee with a pure heart.

Kontakion of the holy hierarch (see in the Menaion).

Sessional hymn of the hieromartyr, in Tone IV: Spec. Mel.: "Having been lifted up..."—

Thou didst reverently offer up the sacrifice of praise and the unbloody oblation to God during thy lifetime, O hieromartyr; and, having suffered maiming and beating with staves, thou wast slain as a sacrifice to Him Who was slaughtered for our sake, Whom do thou earnestly beseech, that He forgive all who lovingly hymn thee with faith.

Glory...: Sessional hymn of the holy hierarch (see in the Menaion)

Now & ever...: Theotokion (see in the Menaion).

Or stavrotheotokion (see in the Menaion).

Ode IV

Irmos: Thou camest forth from the Virgin, neither a mediator nor an angel, but Thyself incarnate, O Lord, and hast saved me, the whole man; wherefore, I cry to thee: Glory to Thy power, O Lord!

O martyr Sabinus, thou wast seen to be slaughtered like a lamb, and thy holy disciples, Marcellus and the noble Exuperantius, followed thee, that they might struggle with thee. With them be thou mindful of us.

Inasmuch as Sabinus and his disciples followed Thee, O Savior, Who of Thine own will didst deign to submit to judgment by Pilate, before the judgment-seat of the enemy they affirmed Thee to be their God and Lord.

Thou didst stand before the tribunal to condemn error, and to confess Christ, the God and Lord of all; and thou didst break asunder the impotent idol that stood in the midst thereof.

Gazing upon the tyrant, O martyr, thou didst obey the divine law, and, despising the iniquity commanded by the emperor, thou didst shatter the inanimate image, as thine own noble and comely face was shattered.

Theotokion: O merciful Christ, Who dost possess an uncommingled will, Who becamest incarnate of the Virgin and hast planted virginity throughout the earth: O how earnestly do all those sigh who cling to Thy Tree!

Ode V

Irmos: Thou art a Mediator between God and man, O Christ God; for by Thee, O Master, are we led up out of the night of ignorance to Thy Father, the Source of light.

Christ was uplifted upon the Cross of His own will, stretching forth His hands thereon; and as thou didst confess Him before the ungodly, O martyr, thine own hands were cut off.

O blessed one, holding fast in hope to constant love, thou didst rejoice in spirit; and, as thy hands were severed, thou didst render strong and perfect those Christians who

had fallen through fear, encouraging them with thy holy words.

Moved by Thee, O Almighty, with steadfast courage strong, Exuperantius and Marcellus are nailed to crosses, bearing with the greatest fortitude the severing of their limbs.

Theotokion: The sword of cruel sin hath wounded me, O immaculate Lady, and I lie as one dead. I beseech thee to restore me to life by your prayer, slaying the deadly passions within me.

Ode VI

Irmos: Whirled about in the abyss of sin, I call upon the unfathomable abyss of Thy loving-kindness: Lead me up from corruption, O God!

Emboldened by Thy Cross, O Christ, Thy martyr broke asunder the inanimate idol, and as he was beaten, he cried aloud: We glorify Thy beautiful face!

O Savior, Exuperantius and Marcellus were dragged before the tribunal of the ungodly. They preached the great God, and were therefore cruelly beaten with staves.

The godly martyrs, enduring with fortitude the laceration of their ribs with hooks and the burning of their feet, committed their souls to God.

Theotokion: The God Who holdeth the whole world in His hands, dost thou ineffably hold in thine arms, O Lady. Entreat Him, that He open His arms unto me.

Kontakion of the hieromartyr, in Tone II—

Illumined by thy glorious witness, the Church of Spoleto praiseth thee as a model of piety and an adornment of the martyrs, O wondrous Sabinus. Wherefore, as thou dost possess great boldness before Christ the Savior, entreat Him, we beseech thee O holy one, that He preserve in peace profound those who honor thy struggles.

Ikos: Spurning the emperor's ungodly command, O steadfast hieromartyr, thou didst give thyself over to sufferings for the sake of Christ, as before thou hadst mortified the passions of the flesh; and, taking up thy cross, thou didst follow thy Redeemer without wavering. And now, abiding with Him on high, make fervent entreaty, O holy one, that He preserve in peace profound those who honor thy struggles.

Ode VII

Irmos: When the golden image was worshiped on the plain of Dura, Thy three youths spurned the ungodly command, and, cast into the midst of the fire, bedewed, they sang: Blessed art Thou, O God of our fathers!

Strengthened by the power of God, O holy martyrs, ye endured torments and surrendered your souls to God; and your bodies, which had been cast into the river, were gathered up and buried by a pious man.

O wise Sabinus, when thou didst behold thy friends braving tortures and sending their spirits to the creator with their death, thou didst rejoice; and, returned to prison, where, laden with chains, thou didst work wondrous miracles.

Once, the widow of Zarephath gave shelter to the Prophet Elijah when he was persecuted and lacking in everything; and she freed him from hunger. And thou, O Serena, didst love Sabinus greatly out of love for Christ, and helping him with the spices, you won a wellspring of miracles.

The woman of Zarephath saw that, by a divine miracle, his pitcher full of oil that never decreased; and thou, O blessed Serena, having placed sacred the hands of Sabinus in a sacred vessel with spices, didst say, trembling with delight: "This is possessed of mighty wonders!"

Theotokion: I suffer terrible hunger, O immaculate one, for I have squandered the wealth of grace given me by divine Goodness, for which cause I am become like a mindless beast; but do thou receive me as I return to God, and present me to thy Son, as I cry out: O God of our fathers, blessed art Thou!

Ode VIII

Irmos: God, Who descended into the fiery furnace for the Hebrew children and transformed the flame into dew, hymn ye as Lord, O ye works, and exalt Him supremely for all ages!

The God who once, at the supplications of the prophet, restored to to life the mother of Zarephath's dead son, now, through the entreaties of Sabinus, O holy Serena, restore the gift of sight to the blind man.

O most noble martyr, fellow heir of Christ, they who were present at the great miracle, when the sight of the blind man was restored, fell at thy feet, begging to receive the divine baptism.

When thou didst offer up thy holy prayers to God in prison, O martyr, Christ visited the terrible punishment of blindness upon the tyrant; but when he embraced the Faith with all his house, thou didst make him a worthy son of the unapproachable Light.

He who before was a persecutor, O merciful Christ, along with his wife and children is beheaded for Thy name and worthily enrolled in the choir of the holy martyrs, chanting: Thee do we exalt forever!

Theotokion: Once, when the Creator desired to raise me up who through sin had fallen into the abyss of evil, He Who was virginally born of thee, O Virgin, gave thee, the gift of virginity, unto all who exalt Him for ever.

Ode IX

Irmos: Who among mortals hath ever heard or seen such a thing as a virgin being found to have conceived in her womb and given birth to a babe without pain? Such a miracle was thine, O pure Theotokos, and we magnify thee.

Darkness cannot bear the splendor of the rays of the divine Light which is in the children of the Truth, and which enabled thee to undergo a multitude of torments, cruelly scourged with balls of lead, until thy holy spirit returned to God, O holy martyr.

O holy martyr Sabinus, having prevailed in thy contest and kept the Faith pure, thou hast been crowned in heaven where the choirs of angels, martyrs, apostles and holy hierarchs keep festival. With them remember all of us who honor thee.

Where life everlasting and true happiness reign, where the ranks of angels dwell, O hieromartyr Sabinus and ye holy martyrs Marcellus and Exuperantius, offer up to the Savior prayers in our behalf.

Fervently desiring Thee Who art the Life of all, O Word of God, Thy martyrs went forth to meet torture with fortitude; and now they worthily share in Thy glory. By their supplications save us and grant us Thy kingdom,

Theotokion: Thee, O Word of God, do we desire, Who issued forth virginally from the pure Virgin, for we know none other God than Thou. Unto Thee do we make our vow to remain virgin; wherefore, through the prayers of Thy Mother make us worthy to fulfill it.

Exapostilarion of the hieromartyr: Spec. Mel.: "O Light immutable..."—

The Word filled thy heart with grace divine, O Sabinus, and thou didst manfully endure the cruelest of tortures; wherefore, thou hast received from on high the gift to cure

the passions and to heal every malady that afflicteth man.

Theotokion—

The Light that shone forth timelessly from the Father before the ages hath now in these latter days sprung forth in time from thee, O Virgin, for the salvation of the world. Him do thou never cease to entreat in behalf of the world.

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

Today, all creation rejoiceth exceedingly, for the Church of God is adorned with the sufferings of the martyr as with precious stones, and crieth out in exultation: O Sabinus, faithful servant of Christ, graciously accept these hymns of praise, and lift up your hands in supplication, that all Christians may

be delivered from tribulation and woes.

Now & ever...: Theotokion, or this stavrotheotokion, in the same tone: Spec. Mel. : "Thou hast given a sign..."—

Beholding Christ, Who loveth mankind, crucified, His side pierced by a spear, the all-pure one cried out, weeping: "What is this, O my Son? What have the thankless people done to Thee in return for the good Thou hast done for them? Thou makest haste to leave me childless, O most Loving One. I marvel at Thy voluntary crucifixion, O Compassionate One!"

At Liturgy

Prokimenon, in Tone IV—

Wondrous is God in His saints, the God of Israel.

Stichos: In congregations bless ye God, the Lord from the well-springs of Israel.

EPISTLE TO TIMOTHY, § 292

Timothy my child, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also. Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. No man who warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier. And if a man also strive for masteries, yet is he not crowned, except he strive lawfully. The husbandman who laboreth must be first partaker of the fruits. Consider what I say; and the Lord give thee understanding in all things. Remember that Jesus Christ of the seed of David was raised from the dead, according to my Gospel: wherein I suffer trouble, as an evildoer, even unto bonds; but the word of God is not bound. Therefore I endure all things for the elect's sake, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory.

Alleluia, in Tone IV—

Stichos: The righteous man shall flourish like a palm-tree, and like a cedar in Lebanon shall he be multiplied.

Stichos: They that are planted in the house of the Lord, in the courts of our God they shall blossom forth.

GOSPEL ACCORDING TO MATTHEW, § 39

The Lord said: "He who loveth father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me: and he who loveth son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he who taketh not his cross, and followeth after Me, is not worthy of Me. He who findeth his life shall lose it: and he who loseth his life for My sake shall find it. He who receiveth you receiveth Me, and he who receiveth Me receiveth Him Who sent Me. He who receiveth a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive a prophet's reward; and he who receiveth a righteous man in the name of a righteous man shall receive a righteous man's reward. And whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward."

Communion Verse—

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

The canon of the holy Hieromartyr Sabinus is the work of the 11th century Calabrian hymnographer Bartholomew the Younger, who composed it in Greek. With the exception of the sessional hymn (also composed by Bartholomew), and the various theotokia and irmoi, the remaining hymns of Vespers and Matins are newly composed for this service by the translator.