

Great Martyr Demetrios, the Myrrh-streamer

8 November



Apolytikion: *Third Tone*

The world has found in you a great champion in time of peril, as you emerged the victor in routing the barbarians. For as you brought to naught the boasts of Lyaios, imparting courage to Nestor in the stadium, in like manner, holy one, great Martyr Demetrios, invoke Christ God for us, that He may grant us His great mercy.

Kontakion: *Second Tone*

God, who gave you invincible power and with care kept your city invulnerable, royally clothed the Church in purple with the streams of your blood, for you are her strength, O Demetrios.

STONE 2

To the special melody "Joseph of Arimathea"

GLORIOUS MARTYR DEMETRIUS, YOU EVER ENLIGHTEN THE CHURCH LIKE A RADIANT STAR, PROTECTING IT FROM DESTRUCTION BY THE ENEMY, DELIVERING IT FROM MISERY AND EVERY STORM! THEREFORE, BLESSED ONE IT OFFERS YOU PRAISE WITH JOY KEEPING YOUR ANNUAL COMMEMORATION, // SINGING HYMNS WITH FAITH AND LOVE TO THE LORD WHO HAS GLORIFIED YOU! (twice)

HOLY DEMETRIUS, MARTYR AND PASSION-BEARER OF CHRIST, YOU ENLIGHTEN THE WORLD LIKE A SUN WITH MIRACLES! THEREFORE ON THE DAY OF YOUR MEMORIAL, WE ALL DELIGHT IN YOUR WONDERS, BLESSED ONE, AS WE KEEP THE FEAST WITH FAITH! SINCE YOU HAVE BOLDNESS BEFORE THE LORD, // ENTREAT HIM TO SAVE YOUR SERVANTS FROM CORRUPTION AND TRIBULATIONS.

YOUR SIDE WAS PIERCED BY SPEARS FOR THE SAKE OF THE SAVIOR WHOSE SIDE WAS PIERCED ON THE CROSS, FOR WITH LOVE YOU IMITATED HIM IN YOUR WOUNDS, SHOWING ALL THE STEADFASTNESS OF YOUR WITNESS, PASSION-BEARER DEMETRIUS! THEREFORE THE TYRANT FELL WOUNDED, // RECEIVING THE SHAFT OF YOUR CONFESSION, O ATHLETE OF CHRIST!

STONE 8

To the special melody "Most Glorious Wonder"

MOST GLORIOUS WONDER! TODAY JOY SHINES FORTH IN HEAVEN AND ON EARTH AT THE COMMEMORATION OF THE MARTYR DEMETRIUS! HE IS CROWNED WITH PRAISES BY THE ANGELS AND RECEIVES HYMNS FROM MEN! HOW GREATLY HE SUFFERED! HOW WELL HE FOUGHT THE FIGHT! // BY THIS THE EVIL ENEMY WAS FELLED WHEN CHRIST CONQUERED HIM! (twice)

MOST GLORIOUS WONDER! WITH RAYS OF MIRACLES BRIGHTER THAN THE SUN DEMETRIUS EVER ENLIGHTENS THE ENDS OF THE EARTH FOR HE IS ILLUMINED BY THE NEVER-FADING LIGHT AND DELIGHTS IN THE SUN THAT NEVER SETS! BY HIS RAYS HAVE THE CLOUDS OF THE ENEMY BEEN DISPELLED, // INFIRMITIES DRIVEN AWAY AND THE DEMONS VANQUISHED! MOST GLORIOUS WONDER! THE THRICE-BLESSED DEMETRIUS, PIERCED FOR THE SAKE OF CHRIST, EVER REVEALS HIMSELF TO THE FOE AS A TWO-EDGED SWORD, CUTTING DOWN THE UPRISINGS OF THE ENEMY AND CASTING DOWN THE BOLDNESS OF DEMONS! LET US CRY OUT TO HIM: // HOLY DEMETRIUS, SAVE US THAT EVER FAITHFULLY HONOR YOU WITH LOVE!

GLORY... (by the emperor Leo the wise)

STONE 6

TODAY THE UNIVERSAL FEAST OF THE PASSION-BEARER HAS ASSEMBLED US! COME, LOVERS OF THE FEASTS OF THE CHURCH! LET US CELEBRATE HIS COMMEMORATION BRILLIANTLY, SAYING: REJOICE, FOR YOU TORE THE GARMENT OF IMPIETY WITH FAITH, ROBING YOURSELF WITH A SPIRIT OF COURAGE! REJOICE, FOR YOU DESTROYED THE SCHEMES OF THE ENEMY WITH THE POWER GIVEN YOU BY GOD! REJOICE, FOR WITH YOUR PIERCED LIMBS YOU SPIRITUALLY PORTRAYED THE SUFFERINGS OF CHRIST FOR US! ENTREAT HIM, DEMETRIUS, ADORNMENT OF ATHLETES, THAT WE BE DELIVERED FROM ENEMIES, VISIBLE AND INVISIBLE, AND THAT OUR SOULS MAY BE SAVED!

NOW AND EVER...

STONE 5

To the special melody "Let Us Sound The Trumpet"

LET US RUN WITH FAITH AND LOVE AND CRY OUT WITH HYMNS OF THE FEAST! LET US ALL CLAP OUR HANDS FOR THE CELEBRATION OF OUR CHIEF AND LEADER! LET THE ARMIES OF HEAVEN REJOICE OVER HIM WHO WAS PIERCED FOR THE KING AND LORD WHO HIMSELF WAS PIERCED WITH A SPEAR, BOLDLY CASTING DOWN THE DARING OF THE ENEMY! LET THE EARTH AND SEA MARVEL AT THE MOST GLORIOUS SIGNS WROUGHT BY THIS BRILLIANT LIGHT! LET THE YOUNG FITTINGLY PRAISE THE TRAINER OF YOUTH, THE STAFF OF OLD AGE, THE INTERCESSOR IN THE MIDST OF MISFORTUNES, THE ENRICHER OF THE POOR, THE GUIDE ON THE WAY, AN ALLY IN BATTLE! COME, CITY OF THESSALONICA AND LET US SAY IN PRAYER: MOST GLORIOUS DEMETRIUS, GO BEFORE US AND RESCUE US FROM EVERY NEED AND BY YOUR PRAYERS, SAVE YOUR SERVANTS!

NOW AND EVER... (by Patriarch Germanus)

Saint Demetrios - His Life:

Saint Demetrios was born in Thessaloniki, Greece in 270 AD. He came from a wealthy family and because he was athletic in appearance and heroic in spirit, he became a high-ranking officer in the Roman Army at a very young age. (This is why he is depicted in Byzantine icons in military dress, either standing or riding a horse.) He considered himself a soldier of Christ first, and a military soldier second. He spent most of his time as a devout missionary, preaching the Gospel at secret meetings and converting pagans to the Christian faith. At one of these meetings, he was captured and placed in front of the Emperor Maximian, who wanted to learn the truth about the conversions. Saint Demetrios proclaimed his faith by saying: "...only in Christ do I believe." With that proclamation, Maximian ordered that Saint Demetrios be sent to prison and subjected to the cruelest tortures.

Even though Saint Demetrios was imprisoned, he did not stop preaching the gospel to those who came to see him. In jail, he was visited by his follower, Nestoras. Nestoras was a man of small stature and had come to ask for his beloved teacher's blessing to fight in the upcoming gladiator games. The emperor had decided to use the games as a duel between Christianity and paganism by challenging any Christian to a fight against the athletic giant, Leo. With the blessing of Saint Demetrios, Nestoras fought and killed Leo.

Enraged at the loss of his favorite gladiator, the emperor commanded that Nestoras be beheaded on the spot. Recognizing that Saint Demetrios was the inspiring power behind Nestoras, the emperor ordered that Saint Demetrios be executed by spear on October 26, 306 AD. Christians buried the body of Saint Demetrios at the place of his execution and because of the beautiful scent that emanated from his tomb, he was named *Mirovritis* or "The Myrrh Gusher".

The most ancient icons of Saint Demetrios may be found in his temple in Thessaloniki where he is the patron saint. This is not just because he was born and died there, but because the people believe it was his intervention that saved the city during many attacks by Slavic nations, the Bulgarians, Arabs, Saracens and others. Even the liberation of Thessaloniki during the Balkan wars of 1912 coincide with the feast day of Saint Demetrios on October 26th. In ancient times, the life of Saint Demetrios was commemorated with celebrations that lasted for months. These celebrations were accompanied by many events such as the famous market named "Demetria". Traders and business people from Europe, Egypt, Arabia and Libya came to deal and trade. The festivities were also attended by philosophers, learned men of the time and artists. To this day, Thessaloniki hosts Greece's largest international trade exhibition each year.