

Vespers Propers on the Afternoon of
the Third Sunday of the Great Fast
March 8, 2026

The forty holy martyrs of Sebaste in Armenia. They were comrades, not in blood, but in faith and obedience to the will of their heavenly Father. At the time of the emperor Licinius, after binding and savage tortures, they were ordered to pass the night naked at the coldest time of winter in a swamp in the open air. They consummated their martyrdom by the breaking of their legs at crucifixion. (320)

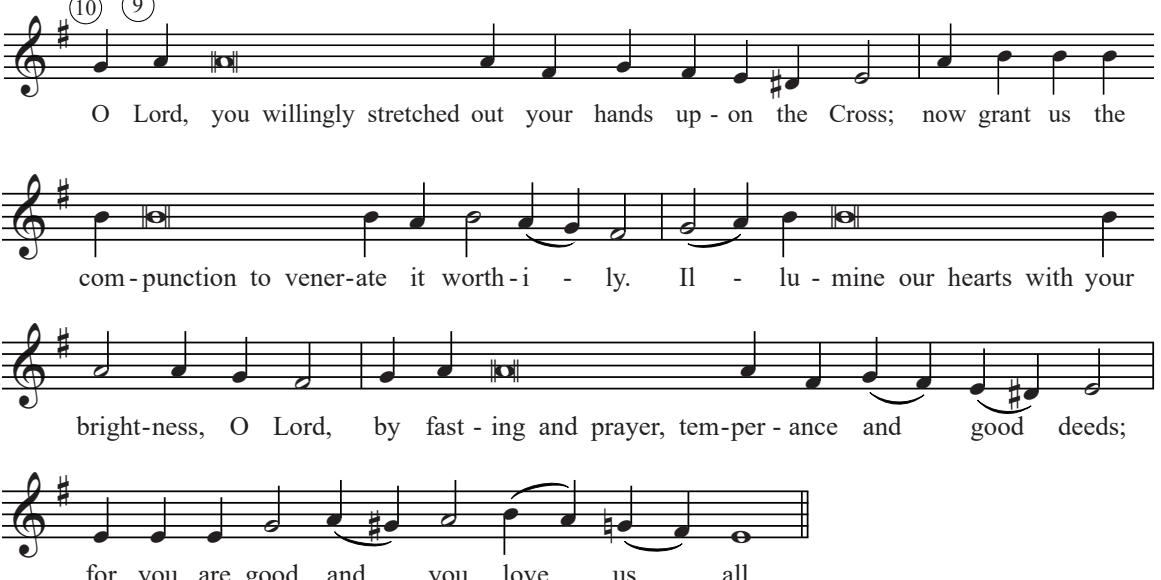
Supplement for The Order of Vespers on the Sunday of Forgiveness (Cheesefare Sunday) and the Sundays of the Great Fast.

"O Lord, I have cried" in Tone 8 (p. 52). The Penitential Stichera are not used; instead, sing the following.

Tone 8

(on 10)
Cantor: 
Bring my soul out of this pris-on and then I shall praise your name.

Stichera of the third Sunday of the Great Fast - Tone 8 samohlasen


O Lord, you willingly stretched out your hands up - on the Cross; now grant us the
com-punction to vener-ate it worth - i - ly. Il - lu - mine our hearts with your
bright-ness, O Lord, by fast - ing and prayer, tem-per - ance and good deeds;
for you are good and you love us all.

(on 9)

Cantor: 

A - round me the just will assem - ble be-cause of your good-ness to me.

All repeat: "O Lord, you willingly stretched our your hands upon the Cross..."

(on 8)

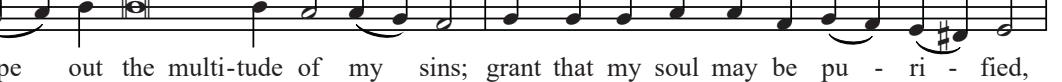
Cantor: 

Out of the depths I cry to you, O Lord; Lord hear my voice!

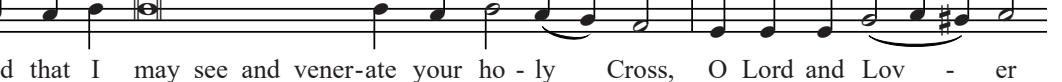
(8)



O Lord, in the a - bun-dance of your love, in this new week of the bright Fast,



wipe out the multi-tude of my sins; grant that my soul may be pu - ri - fied,



and that I may see and vener-ate your ho - ly Cross, O Lord and Lov - er



of us all.

(on 7)

Cantor: 

Tone 3

Let your ears be at-ten - tive to the voice of my plead - ing.

(7)



O won - der, sur-pass-ing all the won-ders of old! We be-hold the Cross where

Christ was cru-ci - fied in the flesh. The world bows before its bright-ness and
 cries out: O the pow-er of the Cross! The sight of it puts
 de - mons to flight: its im - age burns them as a fire. I bless you, O
 pre - cious Cross; I ven - erate you and, in fear, I bow be - fore you;
 and I give thanks to God for life e - ter - - nal, which he grants to
 me through you.

Tone 2

Cantor: (on 6)

If you, O Lord, should mark our guilt, Lord, who would survive? But with you is
 found for - give - ness: for this we re - vere you.

Stichera of the Forty Martyrs - Tone 2 samohlasen

(6) (5)

Brave-ly en - dur - ing the pres - ent hap - pen - ings and re - joic - ing in things

hoped for, the ho - ly mar - tyrs said to each oth - er: We have not stripped our-selves of a gar - ment, but we have put off the old per - son.

The win - ter is bitter but Par-a - dise is sweet. Al - though the chill is painful, it be - comes sweet en - joy - ment. Let us not bow down, O cap - tains.

We suf - fer a lit - tle at pres - ent that we may re - ceive the crowns of vic - t'ry from Christ, since he is God and the Sav - ior of our souls.

(on 5)

My soul is waiting for the Lord. I count on his word.

My soul is longing for the Lord, more than watch-man for day - break.

All repeat "Bravely enduring..."

(on 4)

Cantor: Let the watch-man count on daybreak and Is - ra - el on the Lord.

*Then the Litany of Fervent Supplication is taken, and three prostrations are made in silence. (The Prayer of Saint Ephrem is **not** said.)*

The Lenten dismissal is replaced with the festal dismissal:

Deacon: Wisdom!

Response: Give the blessing.

Priest: Blessed is Christ our God, the One-Who-Is, always, now and ever and forever.

Response: Amen. O God, strengthen the true faith, forever and ever.

Priest: O most holy Theotokos, save us!

Response: More honorable than the cherubim, and beyond compare more glorious than the seraphim, who, a virgin, gave birth to God the Word, you, truly the Theotokos, we magnify.

Priest: Glory to you, O Christ God, our hope; glory to you!

Response: Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and forever. Amen. Lord have mercy, Lord have mercy, Lord have mercy. Give the blessing!

Priest: May Christ our true God have mercy on us and save us through the prayers of his most pure Mother; through the prayers of (*Name*), (*patron of the church*) and of the Forty Holy Martyrs of Sebaste, and of all the saints; for Christ is good and loves us all.

Response: A - - - - - - - - - men.

Cantor:

Glo - ry to the Fa - ther, and to the Son, and to the Ho-ly Spir - it,
now and ev - er and for - ev - er. A - men.

Festal theotokion - Tone 1

O ho - ly Tab - er - na - cle, Gabriel cried out to you: Re-joice, O Vir - gin,
full of grace: the Lord of All be - came in - car - nate of you,
as the right-eous Da - vid had fore - told. In bear - ing your Cre - a - tor,
you have shown yourself to surpass the vastness of the heav - ens. We there - fore
cry out: Glo - ry to him who dwelt in you! Glo - ry to him who came forth
from you. Glo - ry to him who has set us free through your life-giv - ing birth.

(4) (3)

Throw - ing off their gar - ments and go-ing in - to the lake with-out trem - bling,
the ho - ly mar - tyrs said to each oth - er: Since we have lost Par - a - dise,
let us not care for a cor -rup - ti - ble gar - ment to - day. Hav - ing once
been clothed in corrup - tion through the ser - pent, let us now beseech res - ur - rec - tion
for all. Let us de - spise the i - cy destroying cold and scorn the flesh,
that we may re - ceive the crowns of vic - try from Christ for he is God and the
Sav - ior of our souls.

(on 3)

Cantor:

Be -cause with the Lord there is mercy and fullness of redemp - tion, Is - ra - el
in -deed he will re - deem from all its in - i - qui - ty.

All repeat "Throwing off..."

(on 2)

Cantor: Praise the Lord, all you na - tions; ac-claim him all you peo - ples!

(2) (1)

Look-ing up - on the tor-tures as pleas - ures and has - ten - ing towards the icy

lake as towards the heat, the ho - ly mar - tyrs said to each oth - er:

Let us stand fear-less in the win - ter sea - son that we may es - cape

the dread-ful fire of Ha - des. Let a foot be burnt that it may re-joice for - ev - er;

let a hand be lost that it may be lift - ed towards the Lord; let us not spare

the dy-ing na - ture. Let us now ac-cept death that we may re-ceive crowns of

vic - t'ry from Christ, for he is God and the Sav - ior of our souls.

(on 1)

Cantor: Strong is the love of the Lord for us; he is faith-ful for - ev - er.

All repeat "Looking upon the tortures..."

There-fore, we im-plore you, O La - dy, to in-tercede together with the apos-tles
and the saints so that we may ob - tain mer - cy for our souls.

The service continues with the Prayer of St. Simeon on page 14.

After the Trisagion Prayers and Our Father, the usual Lenten troparia, conclusion and dismissal (pp. 16-21) are not used, because of the feast. Instead, the following troparia are sung in place of the usual Lenten dismissal troparia:

Troparion of the Forty Holy Martyrs of Sebaste - Tone 1

O for - ty sol-diers of Christ and honora-ble mar - tyrs, you went through fire and
wa - ter, O might - y war - riors. and have come to live with the an - gels.

Join them in pray - ing to Christ for those who praise you.

Glo - ry to him who strength-ened you! Glo - ry to him who crowned you!

Glo - ry to him who heals us through you!

Therefore, we ask of you: Pray that our souls be de - liv - - - ered

from the snares of the En - e - my.

Tone 6

Cantor: Glo-ry to the Fa-ther, and to the Son, and to the Ho - ly Spir - it.

Doxastikon of the Martyrs - Tone 6 samohlasen

O faith - ful, let us praise the forty ho - ly mar - tyrs, and let us joy-ful - ly

sing to them: Re - joice, all you Mar - tyrs of Christ. We earn - estly ask

you to in - ter - cede with him that he may save all those who cel - e - brate your

ho - ly mem - o - ry with faith.

Cantor: Now and ev - er and for - ev - er. A - men.

Theotokion - Tone 6 samohlasen

O The-o - to - kos, you are the true vine laden with the fruit of life.

Cantor: Glo-ry to the Fa-ther, and to the Son, and to the Ho - ly Spir - it.

Doxastikon of the Martyrs - Tone 2 samohlasen

Brave - ly en - dur - ing the pres - ent hap - pen - ings and re - joic - ing in things

hoped for, the ho - ly mar - tyrs said to each oth - er: We have not stripped

our - selves of a gar - ment, but we have put off the old per - son.

The win - ter is bitter but Par - a - dise is sweet. Al - though the chill is painful, it

be - comes sweet en - joy - ment. Let us not bow down, O cap - tains.

We suf - fer a lit - tle at pres - ent that we may re - ceive the crowns of

vic - t'ry from Christ, since he is God and the Sav - ior of our souls.

Cantor: Now and ev - er and for - ev - er. A - men.

Dogmatikon - Tone 2 samohlasen

The shad - ow of the Law passed a - way when grace ar - rived; for, like
 the bush which burned but was not con - sumed, you gave birth as a virgin, and a
 vir - gin you re-mained. In - stead of a pil - lar of fire, the Sun
 of Jus - tice dawned; in - stead of Mo - ses, Christ, the sal - va - tion of our souls.

The service continues on page 9.

Prokeimenon for the Third Sunday, p.10, followed by the Readings for the Martyrs:

Isaiah 43:9-14	(EOT 303)
Wisdom 3: 1-9	(EOT 315)
Wisdom 5:15 - 6:3	(EOT 303)

The service continues with the Hymn of Glorification on page 11.

Aposticha

Aposticha of the third Sunday of the Great Fast - Tone 8 samohlasen

① & ②
 Woe is me! I dare not lift my eyes to heav - en be-cause of my e - vil
 deeds; but like the Publican I sigh and say: For - give me, for I am a

sin - - - ner, and pre - serve me from the hypocrisy of the Phar - i - see,
 O Lord, in your good - ness.

Cantor

To you have I lifted up my eyes, you who dwell in the heavens; my eyes, like the
 eyes of slaves on the hand of their lords. Like the eyes of a servant on the hand of
 her mistress, so our eyes are on the Lord our God till he show us his
 mer - - - cy.

All repeat, "Woe is me! I dare not lift my eyes..."

Cantor

Have mercy on us, Lord, have mercy. We are filled with contempt. Indeed all too
 full is our soul with the scorn of the rich, with the proud man's dis - dain.

③

O mar - tyrs of the Lord, you sanc - tify all places and heal all dis - eas - es.