

Month of September

THE 26TH DAY

Commemoration of Our Venerable Father Nilus the Younger, Abbot of Rossano

N.B.: So as not to conflict with the feast of the Repose of the Holy Apostle & Evangelist John the Theologian, the service of the Venerable Nilus the Younger is transferred to September 27th, where it may be celebrated either by itself or in conjunction with that of the Martyr Callistratus & companions; or, alternatively, may be moved to some other day deemed appropriate by the Superior or the Ecclesiarch.

At Vespers

On "Lord, I have cried...", 6 stichera: 3 of the martyrs, from the Menaion; and 3 of the venerable one, in Tone VI: Spec. Mel.: "Having set all aside..."—

Desiring to attain the beauty of grace, and wearied of the vanity of this world, forsaking wealth and exalted rank, thou didst live thy days in tears and sighing, furnishing thy mind with wings of prayer wherewith to fly to the heavens; wherefore, having acquired all the virtues, thou didst attain unto the mansions on high, where shineth the never-waning light of Christ our God, Whom do thou unceasingly entreat, O our God-bearing father Nilus, that He save and enlighten our souls.

Thou didst cause the uprisings of the flesh to cease, O venerable father, and didst make thy mind an pure abode of the Holy Trinity; wherefore, multitudes of monastics surrounded thee, seeking instruction of thee. But when the armies of the Saracens beset the Italian lands, thou didst flee their onslaught as Lot did Sodom, rightly giving place to wrath. And, standing now in glory before the throne of Christ in the highest, O glorious one, pray thou with boldness in behalf of our souls.

With the torrents of thy fervent tears, O saint of God, thou didst drown the legions of demons as in the mighty Nile; and by thine entreaties unto God thou didst utterly cast down vainglory and pride, and didst ascend unto the habitations of the angels, wherein thou joinest chorus with the saints, standing before the exalted throne of the Most High, making earnest supplication, that the Lord take pity on us for thy sake, and in His loving-kindness grant us remission of all our iniquities..

Glory...: Idiomelon of the martyrs, in the Menaion.

Now & ever...: Theotokion, or stavrotheotokion, in the Menaion.

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

Like King David the Psalmist thou didst water thy couch with tears, O most blessed father; and embracing repentance and forsaking the world, by thy pious words and deeds thou didst lead many to Christ; wherefore, assembling, we all honor thee, O Nilus most wise, keeper of the commandments of the Lord, immovable foundation of piety, sure haven for souls tempest-tossed upon the sea of life. And mindful of thy virtues, we now beseech thee most earnestly: Entreat our King, the Master of all, that He save and enlighten our souls..

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

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? How have the ungrateful people rewarded Thee for the good things Thou hast done for them? And dost Thou hasten to leave me childless, O most Beloved? I marvel, O Compassionate One, at Thy voluntary crucifixion!"

Troparion of the martyrs, in the Menaion; Glory..., that of the venerable one, in Tone VIII—

Taking thy cross upon thy shoulder like the yoke of the Gospel, thou didst follow after Christ most ardently, O father Nilus, and having cleansed thy soul of the passions of flesh and spirit, thou didst increase the flock of Jesus, the Chief Shepherd; Wherefore, thou dwellest eternally in the heavenly habitations, O scion of Calabria and glory of all Italy.

Now & ever...: Theotokion.

At Matins

At "God is the Lord...", the troparion of the martyrs, twice; Glory..., that of the venerable one; Now & ever...: Theotokion.

Canon from the Octoechos, with 6 troparia, including the irmos; canon of the martyrs, in the Menaion, with 4 troparia; and the canon of the saint, with 4 troparia, the acrostic whereof is "It is meet to honor our father," the composition of St. Bartholomew the Younger (the first two troparia of each ode, to which the acrostic applies) and the reader Isaac (the third troparion and the theotokion, to which the acrostic does not apply), 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.

Upborne by thy mighty faith as upon wings of hope, O Nilus of great renown, thou didst climb the ladder of the virtues, reaching the summit of loving-kindness. In thine entreaties pray that we, who glorify thee with faith, may come to share therein.

Thou didst flee the corrupt world that thou mightest have fellowship in the heavens, having delivered thy soul from the wicked passions, casting down the prince of evil as thou didst contend for the crown of eternal peace.

Deprived by death of wife and child, O Nilus, thou didst forsake the world and withdraw into solitude, finding sure refuge in a monastic haven, and praying: All-glorious is the Lord, for gloriously hath He been glorified.

Theotokion: From every quarter, O Theotokos, the demons ever assail my soul with manifold temptations, as with countless arrows, and I find myself in sore distress; but shield me, I beg thee, with the protection of thy supplications.

Ode III

Irmos: The desert, the barren Church of the nations, blossomed like a lily at Thine advent, O Lord; and therein hath my heart been established.

Thou madest thyself a stranger to the world by severing carnal ties, O venerable father; and attaining the angelic life, thou didst put into practice the teachings of Christ.

With the rigors of penance thou madest thy heart a receptacle of light, O holy one, and by the constant memory of death thou didst blunt the terror thereof.

Thy soul blossomed like a rose in the stony ground of Calabria, O venerable one, and it filled all those around thee with the sweet fragrance of grace.

Theotokion: My heart is like a spiritual desert, barren and waterless, O Lady, and, lo! I perish; but let fall upon me the dew of thy loving-kindness, and revive my soul.

Kontakion of the venerable one, in Tone IV—

Having endured much suffering and grief in thy life, O Nilus, as a true shepherd thou didst establish worthy folds wherein to house thy monastic flock, and wast renowned for thy sublime speech, thine exalted mind, thy great wisdom and surpassing prudence. Wherefore, thou dost rejoice with the angelic choirs in the heavenly city on high. Pray thou unceasingly in our behalf, O venerable father!

Sessional hymn of the martyrs, in the Menaion; Glory..., that of the venerable one, in Tone IV : Spec. Mel.: "Having been lifted up..."—

O Nilus, in the depths of thy repentance thou wast shown to be a mighty river of miracles and a true initiate of the mysteries of God; for, having mortified thy body by fasting and ascetic feats, thou hast received divine grace in abundance, O venerable father, wherewith thou dost gladden all who honor thy holy memory.

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

O most immaculate Mary, Virgin Theotokos, who without seed gavest birth to the transcendent God: with the bodiless hosts beseech Him unceasingly, that before the end He grant remission of transgressions and correction of life unto us who hymn thee with faith and love as is meet, O thou who alone art hymned by all.

Or this stavrotheotokion—

O all-immaculate Virgin, Mother of Christ God, a sword pierced thine all-holy soul when thou didst behold thy Son and God nailed of His own will to the Cross. Wherefore, never cease to entreat Him, O blessed Maiden, that He grant forgiveness of transgressions unto us who hymn thee who art higher in honor than the seraphim.

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!

Having washed away the stains of thy soul with copious tears of contrition, thereby restoring its pristine beauty in the likeness of God and sweetening us as with perfume, O wise one, thou was clothed in meekness, the remedy for anger.

Fleeing slander as it were a plague, thou didst utterly consume the tinder of resentment with the burning flame of the love of Christ, O thou who art most rich in grace and wisdom.

They who sought out thy spiritual wisdom thou didst in nowise turn away, leading them by thy divine knowledge unto heartfelt repentance, that they might cry: Glory to Thy power, O Lord!

Theotokion: As thou didst humbly submit to the divine will, O all-immaculate one, the Word of God descended into thine all-pure womb and became man, taking flesh of thee, for the sake of our salvation.

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.

With the help of divine grace and the guarding thy lips, O father, thou didst stanch

the intemperate outpourings of the tongue, avoiding the poisonous taste of lies, and spending every hour in works of truth.

Overcoming idle sloth by the rigorous activity of thy spirit, and mortifying and reviving thyself with the bitter joy of abstinence as with swift lances, thou didst confound the demons.

When sickness and despair moved the prideful governor to repentance, O Nilus, thou didst clothe him in the angelic habit; wherefore, shedding all earthly attachments, he departed, rejoicing, into Light.

Theotokion: A pall of sin enshroudeeth us, cutting off the light of salvation, and we perish beneath its gloom; but as thou dost mediate in our behalf, O Mary, dispel this darkness, we pray.

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!

Greatly desirous of the splendor of purity, O father, thou didst show great aversion to pleasures, and didst quench the flame of greed with the oil of love, obeying the commandment of God.

Discarding the coarseness of the flesh, thou didst soar aloft on wings [of asceticism] unto heavenly fellowship with the angels; and with abstinence thou didst lay siege to the passions of the body.

In humility Nilus declined election to the hierarchy, nor would he agree to journey to the Imperial City when his holiness became known, but cried aloud: Lead me up from corruption, O God!

Theotokion: O Virgin untouched by corruption, save me who am drowning in the abyss of my sins, and lead me up, I beseech thee, to the haven of compunction.

Kontakion & ikos of the martyrs, in the Menaion.

Ode VII

Irmos: The command of the iniquitous tyrant, opposed to God, raised up a lofty flame; but Christ, Who is blessed and all-glorious, spread a spiritual dew upon the pious youths.

As a vigilant guardian of the flock of Christ, O father, by thine earnest prayers thou didst drive far away the devil that slumbereth not, thus becoming a lamp for spiritual instructors; and thou dost now gaze upon the divine beauty of God with the purity of the eyes of thy soul.

Mightier than fire with the sword of thy strength, O most glorious one, thou wast feared by the evil spirits with a mighty fear; and despising the vain glory of this world, thou didst truly attain the true glory of God.

When the Saracens overran Calabria, pillaging its holy monasteries and ravaging its people, like the Babylonians of old, the flock of Nilus, with their holy shepherd, were sheltered by the monks of Saint Benedict.

Theotokion: The radiant angel called thee blessed among women, O Mother of God; and we rejoice to repeat his words, for with the dew of thy prayers thou dost quench the flame of our iniquities.

Ode VIII

Irmos: Once, in Babylon, the fiery furnace divided its activity at the command of God, consuming the Chaldæans, but bedewing the faithful, who chant: Bless the Lord, all

ye works of the Lord!

O thou whose soul was imbued with the simplicity of Jacob, the meekness of David, the innocence of Joseph, and the virtues of all the saints, lift from us the weight of our pride, and by your supplications cause us to overcome it.

Thou wast a faithful model of humility and as a wise spiritual architect wast an example of godly ascent. And, inspired by God, with thy splendid perception, works and discourse, thy teachings and precepts, thou didst move all.

Like the ascetics of old, Nilus and his flock dwelt in mean huts, destitute and impoverished; and their manifest austerities were such that the emperor, seeing them, cried out: Truly these men live as citizens of heaven and strangers on the earth!

Theotokion: Unlike the Babylonian furnace, which burned not the pious youths, the furnace of our passions consumeth us, O Lady; but cool its flames, that we may sing: Bless the Lord, all ye works of the Lord!

Ode IX

Irmos: God the Lord, the Son of the unoriginate Father, hath revealed Himself to us incarnate of the Virgin, to enlighten those in darkness and to gather the dispersed. Wherefore, we magnify the all-hymned Theotokos.

The well-seated power [of thy soul] bore thee up to the most sublime contemplation, and on the wings of stillness thou didst attain wisdom profound; and thou wast worthy to become a living angel, an image of the grace of God, O blessed one.

Now have we, thy children, gathered round about thee in beauty, to worship God, the Lord and King, and to make known unto all thy gifts and thine ineffable virtues, O father, who art a haven untroubled by the passions, and an ocean of divine love.

Passing from this vale of tears, the soul of our venerable father ascended on shining wings of grace; and like a nightingale hath it found a place of rest in the habitations of the just, where it singeth praise unceasingly.

Theotokion: In giving birth to thine only-begotten Son, the Word of the unoriginate Father, O Virgin, thou didst bring the deifying Light to us who sit in darkness and shadow; wherefore, we magnify thee with joyful voices.

Exapostilarion of the martyrs, in the Menaion; Glory..., that of the venerable one: Spec. Mel.: "The heaven with stars..."—

Thou didst adorn Calabria and the lands of Italy with citadels of prayer, O Nilus, and with thy pious children didst shine forth therein like radiant stars.

Now & ever...: Theotokion—

Glorifying thee as a wellspring ever pouring forth blessings upon us, O Maiden, with reverent voices we extol thee as the Eve-virgin Mother of our God.

Aposticha stichera from the Octoechos; and Glory...: Idiomelon of the venerable one, in Tone III—

With joyous hymnody let us crown Nilus, great among ascetics, full of wisdom divine and the beauty of eloquent discourse; for, gathering to him a pious company of monastics, he clad himself in the full armor of faith to enter boldly the spiritual fray, wounding the enemy with the sword of faith, and driving him headlong from the field of battle. Wherefore, let us cry aloud unto him: O most excellent father, with those whom thou didst guide to salvation entreat Christ Jesus our Lord in behalf of us sinners who celebrate thy most honored memory with love.

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

“Great is the power of Thy Cross...”—

A sword passed through thy heart, O all-pure one, when thou didst behold thy Son upon the Cross; and thou didst cry out: “Show me not to be childless, O my Son and my God, Who hast kept me a virgin even after giving birth!”

At Liturgy

Prokimenon of the feast; and that of the venerable one, 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 they that 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 vainglory, 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 of the feast; and of the venerable one, 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 seacoast 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 that hunger now: for ye shall be filled. Blessed are ye that 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: for in the like manner did their fathers unto the prophets.”

Communion Verse of the feast, and that of the venerable one--

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