

THE HOLY VENERABLE WOMAN-MARTYR MATRONA OF THESSALONICA

36th Day of the Holy & Great 40 Days Fast — March 27

As an orphan girl Matrona was a servant in the home of a Jew in Thessalonica. The wife of the Jew continuously mocked Matrona because of her faith in Christ and tried to persuade her to deny Christ and to attend the synagogue. But the meek Matrona went about her work conscientiously and did not say anything to her mistress. But in secret she prayed to Christ the God. On one occasion the Jewess discovered that Matrona was attending church unbeknown to her and, in anger, questioned her as to why she did not attend the synagogue rather than the church? To that, Matrona replied, "Because in the Christian churches, God lives and He withdraws from the Jewish synagogues." Furious, because of this type of bold reply, the Jewess beat Matrona, locked her up in a dark room, and, in addition to that, bound her hands. The next day as she was kneeling in prayer and glorifying God, her ropes had fallen off by the power of God. Afterwards, on two occasions, she was locked up again and, in the end, died of starvation. This evil Jewish woman then took the body of this holy maiden and hurled it to the ground from the heights of her home. Christians took the body of this martyr and buried it with honors. Alexander the bishop, learning of the many miraculous works of this holy martyr, erected a church over her grave. The evil Jewess received her just punishment when she slipped, fell to the pavement, and was smashed to death from the same spot at the top of the house from which she hurled down Matrona's body.

TROPARION of a Venerable Woman-Martyr (Tone 4 – pew book page 393)

Your lamb Matrona O Jesus cries out in a loud voice: * I love You my Bridegroom I seek You with painful longing; * I am crucified with You in Your baptism, I am buried with You; * I suffer for You that I might reign with You; * and I die for You that I may live with You. * Receive me as a spotless sacrifice immolated with love for You. * By her prayers O merciful One save our souls!

KONDAKION of a Venerable Woman-Martyr (Tone 5)

You worked with honor for the Master and steadfastly refused to dishonor Him. * You endured imprisonment and wounds for Him and went as far as to give your life for Him. * O martyr Matrona, so wise in God, pray for those who honor your memory.

PROKIMEMON of a Venerable Woman-Martyr (Tone 4 – pew book page 394)

God is wondrous in His saints * the God of Israel.

Verse: In the churches bless God; * from Israel's wellsprings bless the Lord.

ALLELUIA of a Venerable Woman-Martyr (Tone 1 – pew book page 395)

Verse: I have waited, waited for the Lord, * and He stooped toward me and heard my cry.

Verse: He drew me out of the pit of destruction, * out of the filthy clay.

COMMUNION HYMN (pew book page 395)

Rejoice in the Lord you righteous ones, * praise from the upright is fitting.

Alleuia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

Concluding Hymn sung once by Priest; twice by people

**Having suffered the Passion for us, Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on us!
Preterp'ivyj za nas Strasti, Isuse Christe, Syne Bozij, pomiluj nas!**



Daily Prayer During The Great Fast

(February 20 through March 31)

O Lord Jesus Christ, our God, and Hope of all on land and of those far away at sea; You have established these holy days of fasting by Your law and the prophets as a way for our mortification and repentance. At the proper time, You manifested Yourself in the flesh on this earth, and by Your fast of forty days and nights, You sanctified the practice of fasting and commanded us to follow Your example. As a merciful and gracious God, enable us to continue these holy days of The Great Fast with perfect repentance, with humility instead of hypocrisy, with fervent prayer, with hunger and thirst, with frequent prostrations, and with a contrite heart. Enable us, also, to complete this time of The Great Fast without fault and with a pure conscience, keeping our faith intact and achieving victory over sin. Send an angel of peace to watch over our lives, to protect us from all snares of our enemies, and to assist us in the performance of good deeds. Strengthen us by Your power so that we may accomplish the spiritual works of The Great Fast. Then, with our passions in control and our souls and bodies properly cleansed, we will be worthy to partake, without condemnation, of Your most pure Body and Your most precious and life-giving Blood. For You are the merciful and gracious Lover of Mankind, Who came down to earth to save all; and we give glory to You (+) and to Your Eternal Father, and Your All-Holy, Gracious, and Life-Giving Spirit, now and ever and forever. Amen.