



**The Holy Hieromartyr Ignatius the God-bearer, Bishop of Antioch
Whom the Holy Church Celebrates on December 20.**

Saint Ignatius was a disciple of Saint John the Theologian, and a successor of the Apostles, after Evodus. He wrote many epistles to the faithful, strengthening them in their confession and preserving for us the teachings of the holy Apostles. Brought to Rome under Trajan, he was surrendered to lions to be eaten, and so finished the course of martyrdom about the year 107. The remnants of his bones were carefully gathered by the faithful and brought to Antioch. He is called the God-bearer, as one who bare God within himself and was aflame in heart with love for Him. Therefore, in his Epistle to the Romans (ch.4), imploring their love not to attempt to deliver him from his longed-for martyrdom, he said, "I am the wheat of God, and I am ground by the teeth of the wild beasts, that I may become the pure bread of God."

Wine and oil allowed.

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Dismissal Hymn of the Saint. Fourth Tone

AS a sharer of the ways and a successor of the throne of the Apostles, O inspired of God, thou foundest discipline to be a means of ascent to divine vision. Wherefore, having rightly divided the word of truth, thou didst contest for the Faith even unto blood, O Hieromartyr Ignatius. Intercede with Christ our God that our souls be saved.

*Kontakion of the Saint. Third Tone
On this day the Virgin*

THE divine and brilliant day * of thine illustrious contests * doth proclaim to all mankind * Him that was born of a Virgin; * for it was for Him that thou didst * thirst to delight in, * and in haste to be devoured by beasts in thy longing. * Hence, O glorious Ignatius, * the name God-bearer * was rightly given to thee.

LIKE a living monument and an animate image,
Thy yearly feast is come, O God-bearing Ignatius,
Proclaiming thy mystic teachings and thy heroic exploits,
Thy resistance unto blood,
And those blessed and celebrated words of thine, which said:
I am the wheat of God,
And in the teeth of beasts shall I be ground up.
Wherefore, as an imitator of the Passion of Christ,
Intercede that our souls be saved.

SYNAXARION

On the twentieth of this month we commemorate the holy Hieromartyr Ignatius the God-bearer, Bishop of Antioch.

Verses

Thou wast offered, O Ignatius, to the lions for their supper,
O partaker of the Mystic Supper, and lion of boldness.

On the twentieth Ignatius died in the lions' mandibles.