At "Lord, I Call", sing the stichera verses (4) for the Resurrection in Tone 4.

Then the following stichera (3) for St. Anthimus in Tone 1
O divinely-wise and blessed one, you brightened your sacred and divine vestments with the dye of your blood. You went forth in faith from strength to strength and from glory to glory. Pray now that peace and great mercy may be granted to our souls!

You offered the Bloodless Sacrifice to God as a most obedient priest; later, as a most true martyr, you offered yourself with blood to Christ as an acceptable sacrifice and whole burnt offering, O divinely eloquent and honored one. Pray to Him for those who sing your praises!

You led legions of martyrs to Christ, O Father Anthimus, teaching and instructing by your doctrines and words. You openly presented yourself as an example for them, O wise one. Pray with them that peace and great mercy be granted to our souls!

Then the following stichera (3) for St. Theoctistus in Tone 1
O Father Theoctistus, your radiant memory gladdens the assemblies of monastics, who rejoice in the beautiful works of your life, the riches of your wonders and the brightness of your spiritual gifts. Entreat Christ that peace and great mercy be granted to our souls!

O Father Theoctistus, the enemies were terrified by the intensity of your ascetic discipline, and they were defeated by your unceasing prayers, O most praised saint; for you had Christ as a helper in your work. Pray to Him that peace and great mercy be granted to our souls!

O Father Theoctistus, you were truly God’s creature; for by preserving that which was according to His image, you showed by
your holy life that you were rightfully named, O most marvelous one.// Entreat Christ that peace and great mercy be granted to our souls!

After “Glory….” in Tone 6 (St. Anthimus)
O blessed Anthimus, you were a most obedient priest; the ultimate call was given to you, for while celebrating the divine and ineffable mysteries, you poured out your blood in behalf of Christ God. You brought yourself as a pleasing sacrifice to Him. Therefore, since you have boldness before Him, pray fervently for those who keep your memory with faith and love, that they may be rescued from evil,// and from all temptations, dangers, and afflictions!

After “Now and ever…” sing the Dogmatic in Tone 4
The Prophet David was Father to God through you, O Virgin. He foretold in songs the One Who worked wonders in you: “At Your right hand stands the Queen,” Your Mother, the mediatrix of life. For wishing to renew His fallen image made corrupt in passion, God, without human father, was freely born of her, lifted the lost sheep to His shoulders, and brought it to His Father, joining it to the heavenly pow’rs.// Christ, Who has great and rich mercy, has saved the world, O Theotokos.

At the Aposticha sing the stichera of the Resurrection, Tone 4.

After "Glory…" in Tone 6 (St. Theoctistus)
O venerable Father, the report of your good deeds went out into all the earth. Through them you have found in the heavens the reward for your labors. You destroyed the ranks of demons, and attained to the ranks of the Angels, whose life you blamelessly emulated.// As you have boldness before Christ God, earnestly entreat that peace be granted to our souls!

After “Now and ever…” sing the Resurrectional Theotokion in Tone 6
My Maker and Redeemer, Christ the Lord, was born of thee, O most pure Virgin! By accepting my nature, He freed Adam from his ancient curse! Therefore we magnify thee unceasingly as the
Mother of God! Rejoice, O celestial joy! Rejoice, O Lady: our soul’s protection, intercession and salvation!

Resurrectional Troparion, Tone 4
When the women disciples of the Lord learned from the angel the joyous message of Thy Resurrection, they cast away the ancestral curse and elatedly told the apostles: “Death is overthrown! Christ God is risen, granting the world great mercy!”

Troparion, Tone 4 (St. Anthimus)
By sharing in the ways of the Apostles, you became a successor to their throne. Through the practice of virtue, you found the way to divine contemplation, O inspired one of God; by teaching the word of truth without error, you defended the Faith, even to the shedding of your blood. Hieromartyr Anthimus, entreat Christ God to save our souls.

Troparion, Tone 8 (St. Theoctistus)
By a flood of tears you made the desert fertile, and your longing for God brought forth fruits in abundance. By the radiance of miracles you illumined the whole universe! Our Father Theoctistus, pray to Christ God to save our souls!

Rejoice, O Virgin Theotokos
Today we commemorate: The Hieromartyr Anthimus, Bishop of Nicomedia, and those with him suffered during the persecution against Christians under the emperors Diocletian (284-305) and Maximian (305-311). The persecution became particularly intense after a fire at the imperial court at Nicomedia. The pagans accused the Christians of setting the fire and reacted against them with terrible ferocity.

In Nicomedia alone, on the day of the Nativity of Christ, as many as twenty thousand Christians were burned inside a church. However, this monstrous inhumanity did not frighten the Christians, who firmly confessed their faith and endured martyrdom for Christ.

Sts Dorotheus, Mardonius, Migdonius, Peter, Indes and Gorgonius died during this period. One of them was beheaded by the sword, others perished by burning, or being buried alive, or by drowning in the sea. The soldier Zeno boldly denounced the emperor Maximian, for which he was stoned, and then beheaded.

Then the holy Virgin Martyr Domna, a former pagan priestess, perished at the hands of the pagans, and also Saint Euthymius, because of their concern that the bodies of the holy martyrs should be buried. Bishop Anthimus, who headed the Church of Nicomedia, hid himself in a village not far from Nicomedia at the request of his flock. From there he sent letters to the Christians, urging them to cleave firmly to the holy Faith and not to fear tortures.

One of his letters, sent with Deacon Theophilus, was intercepted and given to the emperor Maximian. Theophilus was interrogated and died under torture, without revealing to his torturers the whereabouts of Bishop Anthimus. After a while Maximian managed to learn where Saint Anthimus was, and sent a detachment of soldiers after him.

The bishop met them along the way, but the soldiers did not recognize the saint. He invited them to join him and provided a meal, after which he revealed that he was the one they sought. The soldiers did not know what to do. They wanted to leave him and tell the emperor that they had not found him. Bishop Anthimus was not one to tolerate a lie, and so he would not consent to this.
The soldiers came to believe in Christ and received holy Baptism. The saint ordered them to carry out the emperor’s instructions. When Bishop Anthimus was brought before the emperor, the emperor ordered that the instruments of execution be brought out and placed before him. “Do you think, emperor, to frighten me with these tools of execution?” asked the saint. “No indeed, you cannot frighten one who wishes to die for Christ! Execution is frightening only for the cowardly, for whom the present life is most precious.” The emperor then directed that the saint be fiercely tortured and beheaded by the sword.

Bishop Anthimus joyfully glorified God with his last breath, and received the crown of martyrdom. (See December 28 for another account of the Nicomedian martyrs.)
Saint Theophilus was a deacon who endured martyrdom during the persecution against Christians under the emperors Diocletian (284-305) and Maximian (305-311). The persecution became particularly intense after a fire at the imperial court at Nicomedia. The pagans accused the Christians of setting the fire and reacted against them with terrible ferocity.

St Anthimus, who was Bishop of Nicomedia, took refuge in a neighboring village during the persecution, and encouraged his flock through letters. One of his letters, sent with Deacon Theophilus, was intercepted and given to the emperor Maximian. Theophilus was interrogated and died under torture, without revealing the whereabouts of Bishop Anthimus.

Saint Theoctistus of Palestine was a great ascetic who lived in the Judean wilderness in the Wadi Mukellik. At first, he was the companion of Saint Euthymius the Great (January 20) in the ascetic life. So great was their mutual affection and oneness of mind that they seemed to live as one soul in two bodies. They were persons of similar virtue and holiness, and they encouraged one another in their struggles. Each year after the Leave-taking of Theophany, they would go into the desert to struggle and pray in solitude, returning to their cells on Palm Sunday.

After five years together, Saints Euthymius and Theoctistus went into the desert for Great Lent, and in a wadi they discovered a large cave which later became a church. They decided to remain there, believing that they had been led there by God. They ate wild herbs to sustain themselves, and met with no other people for some time.

The Lord did not wish these great luminaries to remain hidden, however. He wanted their wisdom and holiness of life to become known in order to benefit others. One day, shepherds from Bethany found the ascetics and went back to their village and told others about them. After that, many people came to hear of them, and monks came from other monasteries to visit them. Some even stayed there in order to be instructed by them.
So many monks gathered around them that they were obliged to build a lavra over the cave church. Saint Euthymius made Theoctistus the igumen of the lavra, while he himself lived in seclusion in the cave. The wise Theoctistus accepted all who came to him, confessing them and treating the infirmities of their wounded souls with appropriate spiritual remedies.

When he had reached an advanced old age, Saint Theoctistus became very ill. Saint Euthymius (who was ninety years old himself) visited him and took care of him. When Saint Theoctistus went to the Lord in 467, Patriarch Anastasius of Jerusalem came and presided at his burial service.

Saint Theoctistus of Palestine should not be confused with Saint Theoctistus of Sicily (January 4).